

Housing & Neighborhoods



What is the Housing & Neighborhoods Element?

Housing within the Village is provided by the private sector and market demand generally dictates the type and location of housing developments. The Housing & Neighborhoods Element focuses on preserving the character, quality, physical condition, and value of housing in Wellington. The element addresses new residential development and redevelopment as key elements supporting economic growth and maintaining housing and neighborhood viability. The element addresses contemporary housing needs and seeks to ensure a sufficient supply of quality housing targeted to the needs of a growing, and socio-economically diverse, population. The element provides principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to improve livability of neighborhoods, provide a range of housing choices, improve equity of the housing market, and increase efficiency of housing delivery system.

2020 Existing Housing

The U.S. Census Bureau 2020 estimated population for Wellington is 66,324 persons residing in 21,395 households (3.1 person average per household). There were 24,571 dwelling units in Wellington at the beginning of 2020, based on Census estimates. Approximately 3,200 dwelling units are used seasonally. The current inventory of approved, but unbuilt and not yet permitted, dwelling units in Wellington as of midyear 2020 is approximately 850 units, which places Wellington at 96% of our built-out condition based on the Future Land Use Map. The bulk of the undeveloped inventory is comprised mostly of large lot, equestrian farm properties located within the Equestrian Preserve. There are approximately 218 unbuilt units in the Wellington Country Place Planned Unit Development (PUD) and potentially another 340 units scattered throughout the non-PUD portions of the Equestrian Preserve.

New Housing

At the time of adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, there were active Land Use and Zoning amendment applications that would increase the potential residential housing stock in Wellington by approximately 1,612 conventional dwelling units (191 age restricted for seniors) and 110 assisted living units. All applications are for properties located along the State Road 7 corridor. All proposed dwelling units are multi-family attached construction and all are proposed as rental occupancy.

New housing will occur from four sources:



1. Build-out of residential properties already recognized by the previous Comprehensive Plan (approximately 850 dwelling units);
2. Infill development on previously vacant or farmed land;
3. Redevelopment of land previously developed as golf courses; and
4. Reinvestment/redevelopment of existing residential and commercial properties.

This plan anticipates that most new development, especially along the State Road 7 corridor, will be part of mixed-use projects and the residential component will be predominantly multi-family. Further, new development will have a higher percentage of smaller units. The shift in unit type and size is consistent with the findings and recommendations of our 2018 Housing and Economic Studies and Strategic Plan.

When considering new residential development proposals requiring amendments to the Future Land Use Map of this Comprehensive Plan, applicants will be required to provide professionally prepared market and economic analysis demonstrating that the proposed housing both meets current market demand and furthers Wellington's economic objectives.

Senior Housing

Over the last two decades, our population has aged. The 2000 Census indicated that 8% of Wellington residents were 65 or older, by 2010 that percentage had increased to 10.5 and current estimates place our over 65 population at 16%. Doubling the population percentage does not bring us to the real impact of senior population growth. In real numbers mean that Wellington's senior population has grown by 336% from 3,100 in 2000 to 10,600 in 2020. Although the percentage of our residents that are seniors is lower than the State of Florida overall (20.5%) and Palm Beach County overall (23.9%), our senior population is growing at a higher rate than either the State or the County

In 2017, Wellington conducted a survey of our senior residents to assist in determining their needs. We found:

- 87% live in single-family detached homes;
- 94% own their dwelling;
- 79% live in 2 person households with a spouse or roommate;
- 75% have lived in Wellington for over 10 years; and
- 93% live here year-round.

Additionally, we found that 16% of respondents anticipate moving within the next 5 years. The primary reasons are:

- 55% of this group desire to downsize;
- 32% of this group desire to reduce housing costs; and



- 28% of this group desire to reduce responsibilities.

Seniors overwhelmingly want to age in place and expect to do so for an extended period. Our ageing residents will increasingly rely on home maintenance services, community provided recreational services, transportation, home health support services and meal assistance.

An increasingly important component of senior housing is assisted living operations, which provides housing alternatives ranging from independent living units, congregate living facilities (CLF) and finally skilled care facilities (nursing homes). At the time of adoption of this Plan, more than 500 units in this category are either under construction or are in the approval process.

It is Wellington's intent to ensure that a full range of housing opportunities are available to the senior population.

Wellington-Based Employment Housing

Wellington adheres to the generally accepted standard that an "affordable" home is a household paying 30% or less of its annual income for gross housing costs. Renter-occupied gross housing costs include rent plus utilities costs, while owner-occupied housing may include costs such as mortgage loan principal, interest, taxes, and insurance (PITI), plus utilities and association fees. Wellington's current inventory of rental and privately owned housing stock meets the requirements of all income levels and fulfills the needs for these housing categories as demonstrated in Tables 1 through 4, along with the Housing Study that found that we have an excess supply of units in the lower ranges.

Wellington has a large variety of housing types with a wide range of housing costs. In order to calculate availability of housing inventory for different income groups, the following ratios are used:

1. Housing Purchase Ratio – approximately three times annual household income.
2. Rental Ratio – approximately 30% of monthly household income.

Tables 1 and 2 correlate household income categories with the appropriate cost and owner-occupied housing stock for each income range. This is intended to only be a guide to provide a general overview of the current conditions in the range of owner-occupied housing stock within Wellington for the very low income to middle-income families. Tables 3 and 4 provide rental information and correlates household income categories with appropriate cost and rental unit stock for each income range.



**Table 1
Housing Affordability per Wellington Income Range**

Income Category	Income Limit	Approximate Housing Cost Limit
Very Low Income (31 - 50%)	\$45,544	\$136,632
Low Income (51 - 80%)	\$72,870	\$218,610
Moderate Income (81 - 100%)	\$91,088	\$273,264
Middle Income (101 - 120%)	\$109,306	\$327,918

*Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2018 5-Year Estimates.
Wellington Median Household Income (MHI) = \$91,088*

**Table 2
Wellington Owner-Occupied Units by Home Value**

Home Value	Number of Units
\$100,000 - \$149,999	484
\$150,000 - \$199,999	738
\$200,000 - \$299,999	3,352
\$300,000 - \$499,999	7,215
\$500,000 - \$999,999	3,272
\$1,000,000 or more	461

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2018 5-Year Estimates.

**Table 3
Approximate Monthly Rental Limit per Wellington Income Range**

	Income Limit	Approximate Rental Limit
Very Low Income (31 - 50%)	\$45,544	\$1,138.60
Low Income (51 - 80%)	\$72,870	\$1,821.75
Moderate Income (81 - 100%)	\$91,088	\$2,277.20
Middle Income (101 - 120%)	\$109,306	\$2,732.65

*Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2018 5-Year Estimates.
Wellington Median Household Income (MHI) = \$91,088*

**Table 4
Wellington Occupied Rental Units by Monthly Rental Cost**

Occupied Units Paying ...	Number of Units
\$1,000 - \$1,499	1,275
\$1,500 - \$1,999	1,684
\$2,000 - \$2,499	690
\$2,500 - \$2,999	498
\$3,000 or more	173



No rent paid	194
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Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2018 5-Year Estimates.

The tables above demonstrate that Wellington has more than an adequate inventory of housing stock that meets the income challenged categories.

At the time of the adoption of Wellington’s original Comprehensive Plan in 1999, it was anticipated the private sector would provide a substantial number of very low, low, and moderate income and workforce housing during the development/redevelopment of the State Road (SR) 7 Corridor. The SR 7 Corridor Study was initiated by Wellington in 2006 in conjunction with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, Palm Beach County, the Village of Royal Palm Beach, and the City of Greenacres. The primary objective of the study was to attempt to establish an acceptable roadway Level of Service for over eight miles of shared roadway, from Okeechobee Boulevard on the north and Lake Worth Road on the south. The corridor study, a requirement of the county’s comprehensive plan, was conducted over a period of approximately 24 months. Ultimately, the proposed study was not transmitted by the county to State of Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), due to concerns raised by Palm Beach County and Royal Palm Beach regarding the potential for a CRALLS (Constrained Roadway at Lower Level of Service) designation for the entire corridor. Since the study was abandoned in 2008, most of the undeveloped parcels in the corridor have been developed, and although most newly developed property is commercial uses, a substantial number of residential units have been produced. The Park Aire apartments in Royal Palm Beach (adjacent to Wellington), the Quaye apartments in Wellington, and the Greyson Townhomes in Royal Palm Beach have been developed, and together provide 715 dwelling units, ranging in size from 1 to 4 bedrooms. Based on current rents and sales prices, some of the units within these projects fall into the moderate-income category of housing. Wellington is currently in the process of preparing its own SR 7 Corridor and Master Plan, as detailed in the Land Use and Community Design Element of this plan.

Only three significant vacant properties remain in the SR 7 corridor that could potentially provide Wellington employment based housing, and one property that is actively a candidate for redevelopment. The vacant properties include a 60-acre (approximate) tract that is not within Wellington but is in discussions to annex prior to development (surrounded on 3 ½ sides by lands within Wellington), an adjacent 65-acre property in the development review process at the time of the adoption of this Plan and a 70-acre (approximate) Village owned property. The Mall at Wellington Green is a potential candidate for redevelopment with the recent closing of several anchor stores and active discussions involving additional multi-family areas.

Sustainability



Wellington continues to support environmental sustainability within the built community and encourages builders and homeowners to utilize products and processes that reduce energy consumption, avoid or minimize heat islands, and reduce the community's carbon footprint.

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS GOALS	
GOAL H&N 1	PROTECTION & PRESERVATION Protect, preserve, and enhance the character, quality, and value of existing neighborhoods.
GOAL H&N 2	HOUSING CHOICE & AVAILABILITY Establish a balance of dwelling choices within the community by providing housing availability for the workers employed by the industries Wellington seeks to attract, and reinvestment in neighborhoods that have experienced economic, physical, and aesthetic decline.
GOAL H&N 3	SENIOR HOUSING Serve the needs of the existing and future senior community in Wellington to age in place, and facilitate the development of a full range of senior housing options.
GOAL H&N 4	ATTAINABLE HOUSING Retain residential development that provides attainable housing choices for the full income spectrum of workers within the community and encourage new residential development that promotes economic development by providing housing availability for the workers employed by the industries Wellington seeks to attract and accomplishes reinvestment in neighborhoods that have experienced economic, physical and aesthetic decline.
GOAL H&N 5	SUSTAINABILITY Promote sustainability for new residential construction and major renovations.



**GOAL H&N 1
NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION & PRESERVATION**

Protect, preserve, and enhance the character, quality, and value of existing neighborhoods.

[Revised Policy 1.3.3]

***Objective H&N 1.1
Neighborhood Character***

Continue to protect the character and quality of neighborhoods through the enforcement of setbacks, height, density, and intensity regulations, and adopted residential appearance standards.

[Revised Policy 1.3.3]

**Policy H&N 1.1.1
Uniform Enforcement**

Conduct uniform code enforcement programs to implementing adopted maintenance, appearance and landscape standards to maintain the character and quality of neighborhoods.

[Revised Policies 1.4.4 and 1.4.6]

**Policy H&N 1.1.2
Housing Code**

Wellington has previously adopted, and hereby retains by reference, the Palm Beach County Housing Code as part of its own land development code or any appropriate modification thereof. Any modification that has the net effect of lowering standards shall be deemed inconsistent with this plan.

[Revised Policy 4.4.4]

**Policy H&N 1.1.3
Minimum Housing Standards Evaluation**

Wellington shall from time to time evaluate alternate enforcement and education strategies to guide implementation of the minimum housing standards code to achieve maximum effectiveness. It is recognized by this policy that both systematic and *ad hoc* inspections are most appropriate at different times and in different subareas of Wellington.

[Revised Policy 1.3.2]

***Objective H&N 1.2
Housing Reinvestment***

Structurally and aesthetically improve housing, and conserve and rehabilitate housing, by requiring housing conditions that fall below the standards established by the state mandated housing code, the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), Wellington's Code of Ordinances, Wellington's Land Development Regulations, and the Palm Beach County Housing Code to be eliminated.

[Revised Policy 1.4.6]



**Policy H&N 1.2.1
Substandard Housing Conditions**

Require the prompt rehabilitation or demolition, by the owner(s), of any substandard housing condition that may be found.

[Revised Policy 1.4.1]

**Policy H&N 1.2.2
Housing Assistance – Substandard Housing**

Assist qualified owners of substandard housing to obtain financial assistance for renovation from Palm Beach County, the State of Florida, Federal or private sources.

[Revised Policy 1.4.3]

**Policy 1.2.3
Neighborhood Improvement Programs**

Continue neighborhood improvement programs to provide community enhancements that improve neighborhood appearance, safety, security and values. Programs may include, but are not limited to, streetscape, signage, drainage, grants, low interest loans and Village acquisition and renovation of properties.

[New]

**Policy H&N 1.2.4
Housing Inventory**

Maintain an inventory of various housing units and types within Wellington.

[Revised Policy 1.4.5]

**Policy H&N 1.2.5
Update Regulations**

Maintain and improve land development regulations that require and enable the private sector to renovate buildings.

[Revised Policy 1.4.6]

***Objective H&N 1.3
Home-based Businesses***

Facilitate the preservation of desirability and value of existing homes that are larger than current market demand by encouraging reinvestment for use as home-based business locations.

Note: Wellington’s 2018 Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies home based businesses as a significant and growing sector of the community economy.

[Revised Policy 1.9.8]

**Policy H&N 1.3.1
Home-based Businesses**

Support and enhance Wellington’s vibrant home-based business industry through flexibility in the LDR.

[Revised Policy 1.9.8]



**GOAL H&N 2
HOUSING CHOICE & AVAILABILITY**

Establish a balance of dwelling unit choices within the community by providing housing availability for the workers employed by the industries Wellington seeks to attract, and reinvestment in neighborhoods that have experienced economic, physical, and aesthetic decline.

[New]

**Objective H&N 2.1
Neighborhood Reinvestment**

Support reinvestment in neighborhoods that have experienced decline in quality, character, and value as a result of antiquated building types and design, as well as lack of proper maintenance and/or aesthetics through development incentives.

[Revised Policy 1.3.3]

**Policy H&N 2.1.1
Reinvestment Incentives**

Encourage reinvestment through incentives identified in the Land Use and Community Design Element of this Plan including, but not limited to, density bonuses, financial assistance programs, and relaxed height limitations.

[New]

**Policy H&N 2.1.2
Design Principles**

Promote new housing development and redevelopment that utilizes compact building design principles, promotes pedestrian activity and supports multi-modal transportation options by ensuring land use and zoning categories permit such development.

[Revised Policy 1.9.1]

**Policy H&N 2.1.3
Mixed-Use Development**

Encourage mixed-use development and concentrations of higher residential densities along major transportation corridors and nodes and utilize mixed-use land development regulations to accommodate such development.

[Revised Policy 1.9.3]

**Policy H&N 2.1.5
Energy Sources**

Allow the use of renewable sources of energy, including the use of solar panels in residential areas.

[Revised Policy 1.9.6]



***Objective H&N 2.2
Infill Development – Residential***

Promote new development on infill properties within the SR 7 corridor and consider golf course conversions that are residential or include residential components that predominantly contain dwelling unit types, sizes, and values consistent with Wellington’s goal of providing housing opportunity for workers in the businesses and industries Wellington seeks to attract as well as senior housing.

[New]

**Policy H&N 2.2.1
Housing Information**

Provide information and assistance to the private sector in maintaining a housing production capacity sufficient to meet the identified demands.

[Revised Policy 1.1.1]

**Policy H&N 2.2.2
Efficient Permitting Processes**

Implement permitting processes to provide more efficient mechanisms for reviewing all proposed developments, including housing projects, to accomplish reduced processing times.

[Revised Policy 1.1.2]

**Policy H&N 2.2.3
Review Process Monitoring**

Continually monitor the development review processes, internally, to determine if there are potential substantive changes that can be made to further improve expeditious processing and streamlining.

[Revised Policy 1.1.2]

**Policy H&N 2.2.4
New Housing Compatibility**

Assure that all new housing is compatible with adjacent development by utilizing sufficient buffers and feathering densities, intensities, and dwelling types.

[New]



**GOAL H&N 3
SENIOR HOUSING**

Serve the needs of the existing, and future, senior community in Wellington to age in place and facilitate the development of a full range of senior housing options.

[Revised Objective 1.8]

***Objective H&N 3.1
Aging in Place***

Assist the senior community desiring to age in place by continuing to provide social, recreational, and financial assistance programs.

[Revised Policy 1.8.1]

**Policy H&N 3.1.1
Funding - Seniors**

Utilize grant and low interest loan programs for those in need to provide funding for senior households to make home improvements and adjustments to accommodate senior living needs.

[New]

**Policy H&N 3.1.2
Grant Programs**

Continue to utilize grant programs for those in need to provide funding to senior households for maintenance services.

[New]

***Objective H&N 3.2
Independent Senior Housing***

Support private development initiatives for the provision and construction of independent senior housing.

[New]

**Policy H&N 3.2.1
Incentives for Senior Housing**

Allow density bonuses and other incentives for senior housing based on impact equivalency determinations.

[New]

**Policy H&N 3.2.2
Reinvestment Incentives for Senior Housing**

Encourage and provide incentives for the development of senior housing in areas identified for reinvestment/redevelopment.

[New]



Policy H&N 3.2.3

Senior Housing Projects

Support senior housing projects seeking to utilize federal, state or county housing incentives, tax credits, and other programs to provide affordable housing for seniors.

[Revised Policy 1.8.2]

Policy H&N 3.2.4

Reduced Construction Costs

Support housing construction techniques that assist with reducing the overall costs of providing senior housing.

[Revised Policy 1.8.3]

Objective H&N 3.3

Assisted Living Facilities

Support private development initiatives for the provision of assisted living facilities for seniors.

[Revised Policy 1.8.1]

Policy H&N 3.3.1

Congregate Living Facilities

Continue to allow congregate living facilities in residential areas.

[Revised Policy 1.8.1]

Policy H&N 3.3.2

Group Homes

Wellington shall maintain existing land development code regulations that permit HRS-licensed small group homes in any neighborhood where single-family detached homes are permitted.

[New]

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**GOAL H&N 4
ATTAINABLE HOUSING**

Retain residential development that provides attainable housing choices for the full income spectrum of workers within the community and encourage new residential development that promotes economic development by providing housing availability for the workers employed by the industries Wellington seeks to attract and accomplishes reinvestment in neighborhoods that have experienced economic, physical and aesthetic decline.

[Revised Objective 1.2]

**Objective H&N 4.1
Affordable and Workforce Housing**

Preserve affordable and workforce housing for all current and anticipated future residents and preserve the existing housing stock in sound condition.

[Revised Objective 1.2]

**Policy H&N 4.1.1
Housing Information**

Maintain formal communications with appropriate private and non-profit housing agencies so that adequate information on Wellington's housing policies and availability is continuously issued to housing providers.

[Revised Policy 1.7.1]

**Policy H&N 4.1.2
Grooms Quarters**

Continue to allow grooms quarters within the Equestrian Preserve Area. Encourage the inclusion of grooms quarters in the stable or barn for properties that are less than five acres.

[Revised Policy 1.1.4]

**Policy H&N 4.1.3
Wellington-based Employment Housing**

Facilitate private sector development of Wellington-based employment housing for all current and anticipated future residents needing such housing.

[Revised Policy 1.2.2]

**Policy H&N 4.1.4
Agency Monitoring**

Monitor housing and related activities of Palm Beach County agencies, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and nearby local jurisdictions that could help encourage the provision of adequate sites for the distribution of very low, low, and moderate-income families in communities with land values that can reasonably accommodate such housing.

[Revised Policy 1.2.1]

**Policy H&N 4.1.5
Manufactured Housing**

Permit manufactured/modular housing as defined in Florida Statute Sec. 553.36 in any area designated for residential use.

[Revised Policy 1.2.4]



**GOAL H&N 5
SUSTAINABILITY**

Promote sustainability for new residential construction and major renovations.

[New]

**Objective H&N 5.1
Residential Construction – Environmental Impact**

Endeavor to accomplish reduced environmental impacts from existing and new residential construction by encouraging energy conservation and the emission of harmful waste products.

[New]

**Policy H&N 5.1.1
Florida Building Code**

Continue to enforce the Florida Building Code, including Chapter 13 relating to energy efficiency.

[Revised Policy 1.9.2]

**Policy H&N 5.1.2
Green Building Standards**

Encourage developers to comply with green certification standards of Florida Green Building Coalition, US Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or other acceptable environmental and commercial building standards by offering incentives to qualifying developments such as Wellington’s Expedited Permitting program.

[Revised Policy 1.9.5]

**Policy H&N 5.1.3
Educational Materials – Energy Savings**

Provide educational materials to residents and property owners on energy saving strategies, including the suggested placement of landscape materials to reduce energy consumption.

[Revised Policy 1.9.7]

**Policy H&N 5.1.4
Tree Preservation**

Enforce minimum tree preservation and planting requirements for all existing and proposed development to reduce heat transfer and replenish oxygen in the atmosphere.

[Revised Policy 1.9.4]

**Objective H&N 5.1
Competitive Sustainability**

Retain competitive sustainability in the housing market by continuing to encourage new housing that is consistent with market demand and encouraging modernization and upgrading of existing homes.

[New]



Policy H&N 5.2.1

Full Range of Housing

Promote the opportunities for renovation and redevelopment of properties, including incentives for reinvestment, consistent with Goal 1, Objective 1.1.2 and Table LU and CD 1-1; and Goal 3, Objective 3.5 and Policies 3.5.1 through 3.5.4 of the Land Use and Community Design Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

[New]

Policy H&N 5.2.2

Smart Home Technology

Promote smart home technology for new residential construction and renovations to existing dwellings.

[New]

Policy H&N 5.2.3

High-Speed Internet

Facilitate the installation of high-speed internet by requiring conduit for future installation in all new residential development projects and including conduit in all infrastructure related projects in existing development areas.

[New]