



Housing Studies and Programs

The Human Services and Rent Stabilization Department and Community Development Department have primary responsibility for fulfilling the City's housing programs. The Departments are currently focused on the following key actions:

Completing a Study of Rehabilitation Incentives for Aging Apartment Buildings. (Housing Program 1a & 6c) Ninety-one percent of housing in the city is 30 years old or older, a threshold when housing begins to show signs of aging and may need major upgrades to the physical structure and systems. This study is underway to identify incentives the City could provide to encourage landlords to undertake major improvements to aging apartment buildings.

Developing a Seismic Retrofit Program. (Housing Program 1a & 1c) Recognizing the need to ensure that apartment buildings are seismically secure, the City initiated a study in 2015. This study is currently underway.

Completing a Study of Rehabilitation Incentives for Historically Designated Apartment Buildings. (Housing Program 1b & 4) Recognizing that historically designated properties have different rehabilitation needs and costs, in 2013, the City initiated a study of incentives specifically designed to appeal to the owners of West Hollywood's historically designated apartment buildings. This study is underway and draft policy recommendations are anticipated to be released for consideration in 2016.

Initiating a community-based study to evaluate housing development in West Hollywood's multifamily zoning districts (R2, R3 and R4). (Housing Program 14 and 18) The study will kick-off in July 2016 and will engage the community in identifying issues and opportunities around new development in WeHo's eclectic neighborhoods and prepare a report summarizing key findings and actionable, implementable recommendations.

Perform a survey of the Craftsman homes on the Eastside. (Housing Program 4) The study is in progress and will complete a cultural resource survey of a specific area within the City: Lexington Avenue between Genesee Avenue and Curson Avenue. The survey should evaluate the appropriateness of an individual designation for specific properties in the area or the designation of several properties as a thematic grouping.

Offering No Cost Safety and Security Devices to Qualifying Households. (Housing Program 3) In 2015, the City reinstated the Home Secure Program. This is a program that offers low income seniors and disabled residents with free safety and security devices such as no-slip strips and grab bars in the bathroom, and security deadbolts and window locks on doors and windows.

Enforcing Rent Stabilization and Tenant Eviction Protections. (Housing Program 6, 22, 23) The Rent Stabilization Ordinance protects tenants from unlawful eviction and sets a limit on annual rent increases. The City continues to administer the ordinance and assists tenants in exercising their rights.

Implementing the Aging in Place/Aging in Community 5-Year Strategic Plan 2016-2020. (Housing Program 6 b) The vision of the Strategic Plan is to support individuals living in the

housing of their choice within a community where they can thrive regardless of age, income, or mobility. The vision will be achieved through a combination of activities occurring organically, supported by non-profit agencies and assisted by policies and programs established by the City.

Developing Information on Unit Transfers. (Housing Program 6b & 24) In 2016, the City will develop materials to assist tenants successfully request and receive unit transfers, Under FEHA/FHA a unit transfer must be granted by a landlord when a tenant can no longer easily reach his or her home.

Reviewing the Net Operating Income (NOI) calculation. (Housing Program 6 c) NOI is a means by which a landlord can share some of the costs of building improvements with tenants. It has rarely been used since 2002.

Providing Educational Seminars. (Housing Program 6d) The City offers an educational series providing information for tenants and landlords on a variety of housing and rent stabilization topics.

Protecting Section 8 Tenancies. (Housing Program 7) The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) in West Hollywood is run by the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA). The program assists extremely low and very low income households make their monthly rent payments by providing a subsidy directly to the participating landlord. Section 8 landlords in West Hollywood traditionally received a set subsidy amount without the ability to raise rent. In 2014, in accordance with HUD regulations, HACoLA eliminated the local rent standard and began allowing landlords to raise Section 8 rents based on fair market values. At the same time, HACoLA began reducing rent subsidies. In response, the City amended the Rent Stabilization Ordinance applying the Annual General Adjustment (AGA) to Section 8 tenancies. The City also, in coordination with HACoLA, set up assistance for Section 8 tenants through Jewish Family Service and Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The result has been successful. Section 8 tenants have remained in their homes.

Providing a Rental Referral List. (Housing Program 10) The City provides a list of available apartments in the City weekly. The list is free to both landlords and prospective tenants. In 2015, the City upgraded the rental referral list to be more user-friendly. The list is now available through the City's mobile app, and is map based and searchable.

Encouraging Inclusionary Housing. (Housing Program 12) The City continues to require 20-percent of units in new apartment and condominium buildings to be set aside as affordable housing, or in certain instances collects a fee. Fees are accumulated in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and used to provide low interest loans to non-profit housing providers to construct new affordable/supportive housing.

Continuing to Build Affordable Housing through Partnerships. (Housing Program 13) In 2014 the City approved a \$1 million loan to the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation to acquire the property at 1127 North Detroit Street. In 2015, WHCHC submitted plans and was approved to construct a 22 unit low/very low income apartment building known as Blue Hibiscus. In 2016, the City approved commitment letters for an additional \$1 million. Development is anticipated to begin in early 2017.

Initiating a Study of Innovative Housing Types and Policies. (Housing Program 14 & 18) Upcoming 2016, the City will review a variety of housing types and evaluate the advantages or challenges of each related to West Hollywood's particular needs, barriers, and goals.

Promoting Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation. (Housing Program 16) In 2014, the City updated its website to provide information and links to energy efficiency and water conservation programs offered by service providers. The City currently allows a 50-percent pass-through of water surcharges to tenants provided the landlord has installed water efficiency devices including low-flow toilets, shower heads and faucets.

Reviewing Options to Provide Tenants' First Right to Purchase. (Housing Program 18) In 2016, the City will explore a program that would allow tenants first option to purchase their building if the property owner wishes to sell.

Providing Education on Reasonable Accommodations (HE Program 24) The City has developed an educational seminar on reasonable accommodations with information what the requests can cover, who is eligible, and how a tenant would go about filing a reasonable accommodation.

Continuing to Advocate for Housing Legislation. The City actively supports legislation that would reform the Ellis Act, reverse the decision in *Palmer/Sixth Street Properties v. City of Los Angeles* removing the limitation set on inclusionary housing, and maintain and increase funds for affordable housing such as Federal HOME funds.