

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ADVISORY TEAM

1. Help Create More Affordable and Supportive Housing Units

Relates to Red Wing 2040 Plan Strategy #8.A.: Increase the quantity and diversity of affordable housing options for the community's range of household types.

2040 Strategy #8.D: Resolve the city's housing shortage by increasing the quantity and diversity of new housing development.

Relates to City Strategic Plan Strategy #2: Expand opportunities and create a multi-faceted program that reinvigorates houses (owner-occupied and rental homes), focusing first on homes geared toward low- and moderate-income households. City Strategy #3: Evaluate zoning, subdivision, and other regulatory standards to provide flexibility and cost reductions in housing options, including allowing for more small homes.

A. Commit to working with developers for transitional, supportive housing.

Transitional, supportive housing, as defined for this document, is affordable housing combined with coordinated support services to help those struggling with maintaining permanent housing. Advisory Team members shared experiences and knowledge and made this a high priority. These are four areas of support needed:

- (a) drug and/or alcohol addiction recovery support
- (b) criminal background history support (one member mentioned NuWay as a good resource: <https://www.nuway.org/>)
- (c) mental health and behavioral health support
- (d) support for those with one or more documented disabilities or with backgrounds that make it challenging to become a tenant (such as a prior eviction).
Accessibility is necessary for those with physical limitations.

B. Commit to working with partners to create affordable housing units. Units can be either new construction or upgraded current houses and apartments. Yearly increases in units should progressively close the gap in needed housing every two years until the city reaches the recommended 5% vacancy rate (it's now 1.4% for affordable housing in RW).

C. Research and add new local incentive(s) for homeowners, landlords, and developers to build or upgrade units or houses into affordable and supportive housing. Prioritize creating incentives for revamping vacant or dilapidated homes.

D. Help combat the stigma of affordable and supportive housing in a community.

- (a) Designate City time and/or funding to collaborate with community partners and provide a unified message to the public about the economic, social, health, and community benefits of these units. Utilize data, along with stories, to show reality versus myths about these types of housing.

E. Make changes to City zoning rules and practices.

- (a) Write more flexibility into the City's zoning code related to the number of parking stalls necessary for units/projects. (Not all people need two parking stalls per unit.)
- (b) Research the pros and cons of using the *Red Wing* median income (\$54,785) instead of the Goodhue County median income (\$66,800) when calculating Tax Increment Financing projects.
- (c) Update the language in our current local zoning language (i.e. "half-way house" would become "supportive housing.")

F. Research possibilities for a small-home/small lot development, with amenities that include green space, transportation options, and walkability.

2. Convene Community Partners to Collectively Provide More Education, Resources, and Mediation to Community Members.

Relates to City's Strategic Plan Strategy #64: Consistently evaluate and reassess the way our city government makes information and services accessible and transparent to all residents. Research and consider making improvements in the ways we provide information in multiple languages. City Strategy #6: Work with community partners to develop a coordinated communication program [in housing].

A. Work with housing partners to better provide and promote educational opportunities to landlords, tenants, and potential first-time homebuyers.

Three Rivers provides many of these classes right now, but they are not promoted to or targeted to residents of Red Wing. Increasing our residents' awareness of these classes will help build knowledge and stability and prevent eviction and the risk of homelessness. Partners include Three Rivers Community Action, the HRA, Habitat for Humanity, Goodhue County Health and Human Services, United Way, and others. City could provide financial support and/or promotional support.

Advisory Team identified these areas of need:

- (a) Financial literacy for new renters, landlords, and first-time homebuyers
- (b) Available programs such as the homebuyer's assistance loan program, owner-occupied rehab loans, etc.
- (c) Rights and responsibilities for renters, landlords, and homeowners
- (d) Access to housing assistance for undocumented residents with a Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)
- (e) Mediation services and legal aid, especially for tenant-landlord conflicts

- (f) How to expunge an eviction and assistance along the way to get it accomplished
- (g) Anti-discrimination information (such as the Fair Housing Act) and how renters can utilize it and get help
- (h) Anti-discrimination laws and education for the real estate community and landlord community
- (i) Classes for young adults who want to rent. This would help them gain “points” and help give landlords a nudge to be more willing to rent to them.
- (j) Training for landlords on de-escalation

B. Collaborate with housing partners and research ways to make it easier for residents to find available, affordable housing quickly.

- (a) This should allow residents to easily learn what is available and which properties or landlords take different vouchers such as Bridges vouchers, Housing Choice vouchers, etc.). This is a big challenge because properties and landlords who participate in programs change often, but this is still a goal that deserves more time and research into how other cities provide this information to their residents.

C. Convene partners like school district teachers and Youth Outreach staff to see how young people could learn more about renting and homeownership.

- (a) The High School’s new Adulting Class is a good start. Help find ways our housing partners and others can assist with additional education to our older teens and young adults.

D. Write a regular “City Question and Answer” series on housing topics in 2022.

- (a) Include facts on services, rules, regulations, etc. Also incorporate things for the public like “why is housing an issue?” “why do we need all types of housing?” and “why do some people have trouble getting housing?”
- (b) Share in English and Spanish through traditional and social media.

3. Help Decrease Discrimination in Local Housing

Relates to Red Wing 2040 Plan Strategy #8.C.1. Action 4: Educate and promote awareness of implicit bias in housing.

A. Support local partners to bring in anti-discrimination education and best practices and share with landlords and real estate agents.

This may include a small amount of funding to help those partners bring in those educational campaigns– and City staff time to promote the information. Partners can be

housing agencies, such as the HRA and Goodhue County – and also partners outside the housing industry, such as the Chamber of Commerce and United Way.

B. Increase education to community members on their rights through the Fair Housing Act, the Minnesota Human Rights Act, and others. This would include staff time to promote the information.

C. Research the idea of hiring a Housing Advocate or helping fund an advocate through another agency.

4. Encourage More Housing Assistance Programs for Undocumented Residents and Reduce Language Barriers.

Relates to City's Strategic Plan Strategy #59: Be more purposeful in monitoring, evaluating, reassessing, and improving our policies and systems so they are fair and equitable for all. City Strategy #64: Consistently evaluate and reassess the way our city government makes information and services accessible and transparent to all residents. Research and consider making improvements in the ways we provide information in multiple languages.

A. Support the HRA in researching and then implementing or expanding a housing assistance program for undocumented residents in 2022.

B. Use City resources to help housing partners close the language gap in promoting housing programs to residents in 2022. This includes supporting the HRA in making sure many materials are translated into Spanish.

5. Ensure Red Wing's Mobile Home Neighborhoods are the Best They Can Be.

Relates to Red Wing 2040 Plan Strategy #8.C.2: Create a community consortium focused on the reinvigoration of existing homes for low- to moderate-income homeowners. 6th action - Explore ways to improve housing conditions in the city's two mobile home parks.

Based on the experiences shared by team members, there is a need to prioritize looking at Red Wing's two mobile home neighborhoods and see what local government can do and should do to ensure the health of the residents who live there. More time is needed to research and create a plan focused on our mobile home parks.

A. Reach out to mobile home residents in Red Wing to listen to their needs and follow up with opportunities to improve things that are within local government's control.

B. Research ways in which local government can ensure the health and safety of the mobile home structures (inside and out) and the neighborhood structures around them (roads, parks, etc.).

- C. **Ensure that local mobile home management companies offer contracts, licenses, and agreements to people in English, Spanish, and other languages as requested.**

6. Decrease Homelessness

Relates to City's Strategic Strategy #7: Collaborate with a consultant and community partners on a long-term solution for residents who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

- A. **Work with partners so Red Wing provides a stable, consistent emergency shelter system.** (This includes working with partners to create an "Opportunity Center" for daytime needs – and other steps as outlined in the *Plan to Increase Housing Stability and Reduce Homelessness*.)
- B. **Share emergency shelter information more often and in better ways** so residents know what options are available to them when they are in crisis.
- C. **Work with community partners to find storage solutions for people in transition.** Having storage would help people store their belongings short-term while they are finding new housing.