



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Housing Programs Division

Stanton Housing Strategy Workgroup Meeting #4 – April 28, 2025

	AGENDA
1.	Welcome – Rodney Rhodes, Director, Community Development Department
2.	New Housing Development Information
3.	Public Engagement Activities Discussion
4.	Local Housing Strategies Discussion
5.	Next Steps in Planning Process
6.	Additional Comments from Workgroup Members
7.	Adjournment
<p><u>Workgroup Meeting Schedule:</u> Mtg. 1 – Monday, September 30, 2024 ✓ Mtg. 2 – Thursday, November 7, 2024 ✓ Mtg. 3 – Wednesday, January 29, 2025 ✓ Mtg. 4 – Monday, April 28, 2025</p>	

“Home is where one starts from.” – T.S. Eliot

Stanton Housing Strategy Assumptions

- Everyone has a right to safe, sound, affordable housing.
- Housing is healthcare. Like any other aspect of healthcare each person’s situation is unique and requires solutions that meet their individual needs.
- Housing is a complex social issue and improving it is also complex with many moving parts.
- It is challenging, frustrating, and rewarding work to make a positive difference tackling a social issue. It is o.k. to feel uncomfortable with the process.
- Addressing housing challenges in a community cannot be solved by one organization or group of individuals on their own. To improve the housing challenges in the City of Stanton, it will take involvement of federal, state, and local government organizations, the private sector, nonprofit and for-profit housing and other service providers, and committed individuals.
- Programs, activities, or actions developed through the City of Stanton Housing Strategy will not duplicate existing housing efforts in the community or Stanton-Augusta-Waynesboro region.

Housing Strategy Community Engagement Report

Community Engagement Programs - Schedule				
Date	Time	Program	Location	Attendees
04.07.25	05:30p – 06:30p	Public Input Session	Virtual	11
04.08.25	05:30p – 06:30p	Public Input Session	Public Library	7
04.09.25	10:00a – 11:00a	Stakeholder Input Session	Virtual	11
04.12.25	10:00a – 11:00a	Public Input Session	Public Library	16
Total				45

Agenda of Sessions:

- Each session began with a review of the draft goals, strategies, and implementation framework.
- A discussion with participants centered around three questions.

Question 1: What is your greatest concern about housing in the City of Staunton?

Question 2: What types of housing or housing-related services would you like to see more of in our community?

Question 3: On a scale of 1 (not concerned) to 10 (extremely concerned) how secure do you feel in your current housing situation?

Input Received During Sessions and Via E-mail:

Question 1: What is your greatest concern about housing in the City of Staunton?

- There is not enough affordable housing in the City for people with/without resources.
- Affordable housing is not feasible for people with disabilities or without a source of income.
- Existing housing programs need support to keep up with demand.
- The uncertainty of funding for housing.
- Increased crime activity around Affordable Housing Units.
- Squeezing Affordable Housing into available space effectively.
- Maintaining housing stock in good condition.
- Numerous regulations increase the cost of housing development. Simplify licensing and permit laws.
- A plan to expand shelters while people wait for permanent housing.
- Zoning costs can be prohibitive.
- The community doesn't yet know enough to make smart choices. The city has inadequate financial resources to meet its housing challenges. Citizens are already experiencing burnout over the issues.

- During COVID, first-time flippers bought houses to work on which took a lot of houses off the market.
- Lack of information keeps people from homeownership.
- Hard to find housing with a blemish on your record such as bad credit or incarceration.
- Housing vouchers – having enough, finding landlords to accept them, use of vouchers for homeownership.
- Accessibility with sidewalks and bike paths.
- People don't understand what is considered personally affordable in terms of housing.
- People who live in houses for a long time can no longer afford to live here and new people taking over.
- Housing safety – people are not getting building permits on renovation work.
- Housing tasks are difficult for some.
- “Revitalize” housing stock not “gentrify”.

Question 2: What types of housing or housing-related services would you like to see more of in our community?

- A day shelter for people who are unhoused to have a place to go during the day, access services, and practice personal hygiene such as showers and clean laundry.
- Affordable housing for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Tiny homes in a variety of models; they could give an eclectic feel or a face-lift to areas that need that. Not everyone wants to live in an apartment. Factory built homes should also be considered.
- Ground housing floor options.
- An on-line resource that lists available rentals.
- Create condos and flats in old-fashioned brick buildings that are vacant or have multiple stories.
- Emergency and transitional housing with wrap around services for people who are homeless or about to lose their housing.
- A central information resource staffed by a person to field housing-related resources and directly link people to resources.
- Clean-up dilapidated buildings, use empty lots to develop housing.
- Create a directory of house sharing opportunities.
- Rent cap/rent control incentive for landlords not to raise rent.
- Weatherization assistance for renters.
- Small studios rental housing.
- Permanent, emergency transitional housing.
- Home-buying information in easy-to-understand language from people they trust.
- House-sharing model where people have equity in their room.

- Low-barrier homeless shelter.
- Create a better verification model to authenticate need way in advance of a person being evicted.
- Preserve history in Uniontown neighborhood.
- Landlord education for landlords that don't live in the area.
- Re-ignite the old "Youth-build" program.
- Capital for down payments to purchase houses for young people and rent -to-own programs.
- Incentives to get housing into peoples' hands.
- Free legal assistance for lower income tenants facing the threat of eviction.
- Rental assistance and mortgage assistance programs.

Question 3: On a scale of 1 (not concerned) to 10 (extremely concerned) how secure do you feel in your current housing situation?

Only 8 people felt comfortable answering this. 3 answered in the 1-3 (not concerned range) and 5 answered in the 8-10 (extremely concerned range).

DRAFT Goals, Strategies, and Implementation Framework (04.28.2025 revision)

The strategies will be implemented over an 18-month period, July 2025 to December 2026.

GOALS

The strategies are centered around three goals:

1. **Produce** Housing
2. **Preserve** Housing
3. **Provide** Housing Stability

STRATEGIES

1. **CDBG Funds** – Continue to commit CDBG Entitlement program funds for infrastructure projects that assist the City's housing partners who build affordable housing for persons with low-to-moderate incomes; to the City's housing partners for who repair, rehabilitate, and/or make accessible existing homes owned by persons with low-to-moderate incomes; and to nonprofit organizations that provide services that directly or indirectly increase persons with low-to-moderate incomes ability to find housing or thrive in their current housing situation.
2. **Housing Fund** – Research the potential of establishing a dedicated Housing Fund that would supply funding for affordable and workforce housing development and other housing activities; supply funding for rehabilitation and repair of existing housing stock, blight removal, and other housing activities; and supply funding for services that provide the stability people need to find housing or thrive in their current housing situation as well as other housing activities. Forming a Housing Fund

would provide the financial structure into which contributions could be made by the city, and/or public or private housing partners. A Housing Fund could allow for a consistent level of annual funding to be able to plan and budget for housing programs or projects each year.

Produce Housing

3. **Community Land Trust/Deed-restricted Homeownership** – Advocate for the creation of more permanently affordable housing by the City’s housing partners through the identification and development of potential housing suitable to be part of a local or the Statewide Community Land Trust Program or through deed restrictions.
4. **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** – Explore the zoning and other requirements needed to encourage additional housing options on existing properties through the addition of Accessory Dwelling Units, available financing options available for property owners to construct/renovate ADUs, and implementation of a city-wide education program regarding ADU requirements, costs, uses and other essential topics for their success.

Preserve Housing

5. **Redevelopment Strategies** – Prepare redevelopment strategies for underutilized properties identified through the Housing Conditions Windshield Survey. The survey will be conducted during the strategy implementation period.
6. **Landlord Education, Recruitment, and Retention** – In partnership with the City’s housing providers, host a workshop to educate landlords about the benefits of participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
7. **Land Bank** – Explore the potential of a city or regional landbank through examination of existing land banks in other communities.

Provide Housing Stability

8. **Housing For Everyone** – Housing activities planned and implemented by the City will take into consideration all of the members of the community.
9. **HUD-certified Housing Counseling Services** – Work with local housing providers, regional organizations, or housing providers from other areas to explore the potential to have HUD-certified housing counseling services provided in the city or regionally.
10. **Community Housing Advocate Training** – In partnership with the City’s housing providers, host a workshop for interested persons who are considered “trusted members” of the community to educate them on housing concepts, services, and resources providing them with the basic knowledge they need to become “Community Housing Advocates”.
11. **Legal Services For Renters** – Avoid and/or reduce the number of Evictions whenever possible by promoting accessibility of legal counsel for tenants facing evictions.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

In order for the proposed strategies to be successful, the following activities will also occur during the 18-month implementation phase from July 2025 to December 2026.

1. **Housing Commission**

City Council will determine if they would like to proceed with the formation of a Housing Commission who would continue to help shape housing policy and programs for the City beyond the Staunton Housing Strategy's Implementation Phase.

2. **Housing Conditions Windshield Survey and Assessment**

The City will apply for grant funding to conduct a survey that will examine the condition of the City's housing stock, assess local needs, and offer recommendations to bridge gaps in workforce and housing for persons with low-to-moderate incomes.

3. **Housing and Housing Stability Services Grant Resources Guide**

A resource guide will be compiled listing federal, state, and non-governmental grant opportunities available for the City and its partnering organizations that address housing issues and supportive services that provide housing stability.

It is the task of the Housing Planner to shepherd the City of Staunton Housing Strategy and associated housing projects through completion, along with appropriate city staff as needed. Valuable input from stakeholders and the City's partnering organizations will also inform the implementation process.

During the implementation phase, quarterly progress reports will be posted on the Housing Strategy page of the City's website to update stakeholders and community members of activities and accomplishments.