



PLANNING FOR HOUSING CHOICES

Overview

The Town of Branford is preparing an affordable housing plan for the community. The preparation of this affordable housing plan by June 2022 is required by the Connecticut General Statutes (Section 8-30j).

Addressing changing housing needs and promoting diverse housing opportunities are important for the Town of Branford and its current and future residents. People's housing needs and desires change over the course of their lives and providing for a diverse mix of housing helps ensure that people of all ages and characteristics will be able to find housing in Branford to meet their needs.

GOAL

Seek to provide for a variety of housing choices in Branford for people and households of all ages and characteristics.

“Housing is absolutely essential to human flourishing.

Without stable shelter, it all falls apart.”

Matthew Desmond,
American Sociologist
Princeton University

Ivy Street



John B. Sliney House



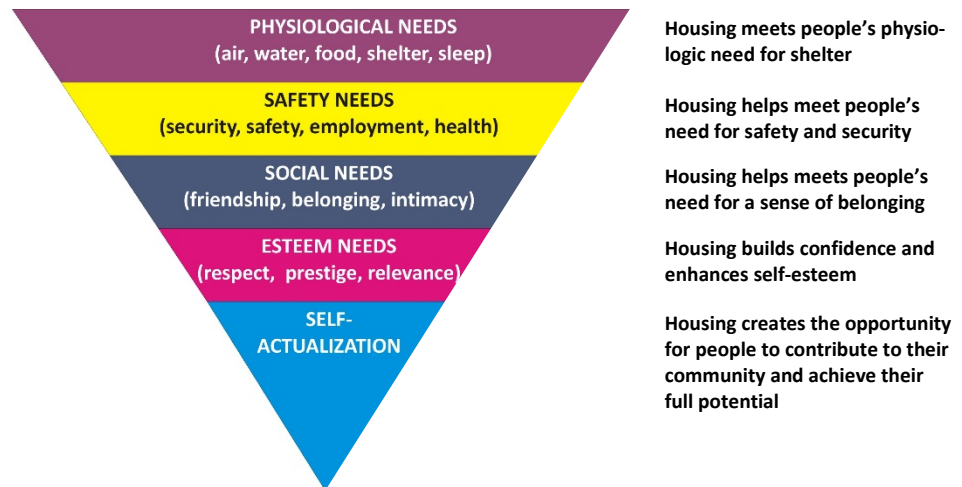
Rosenthal Gardens



Reasons For Addressing Housing

Everyone Needs Housing

Everyone needs housing and for a variety of reasons. In fact, housing plays a part in almost every level of Maslow's "hierarchy of human needs":



And everyone wants housing that is affordable:

- For households earning more than the average income, they generally have the means to find housing that addresses their income and personal needs/desires.
- Households earning less than the average income, however, generally have a harder time finding decent housing they can afford or the cost burden of the housing they can find takes away from other life needs (health, transportation, etc.).

Some housing discussions focus mainly on the social responsibility related to addressing housing and housing affordability (equity, desegregation, etc.).

However, housing and housing affordability are also important to the local and regional economy. Research consistently shows that attractive, well-planned housing that is affordable to a range of socio-economic and age groups:

- Provides *housing for essential employees* (in areas such as emergency services, health care, education, government, retail, etc.),
- Helps retain and attract existing businesses,
- Increases jobs and consumer spending in the surrounding economy, and
- Helps people stay in a community they love through whatever circumstances they may find themselves in.

State Statutes Require Preparation Of An Affordable Housing Plan

CGS Section 8-30j requires Branford adopt an affordable housing plan by June 2022:

1. *At least once every five years, each municipality shall prepare or amend and adopt an affordable housing plan for the municipality.*
2. *Such plan shall specify how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments in the municipality.*

Zoning Authority Requires Consideration Of Housing Needs

Branford, like all Connecticut municipalities, gets its authority to enact zoning regulations from the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS):

1. *Such regulations shall also encourage the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located ... (CGS 8-2)*
2. *Such regulations shall also promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate-income households, and shall encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified ... (CGS 8-2)*

Plan Of Conservation And Development Must Consider Housing Needs

State statutes also require that Connecticut municipalities prepare a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) at least once every 10 years and the parameters relevant to housing include the following:

1. *In preparing such plan, the commission ... shall consider the ... (2) the need for affordable housing, ... (8) the needs of the municipality including, but not limited to ... housing (CGS 8-23(d))*
2. *Such plan ... shall ... (G) make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region ... (H) promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs ... consider allowing older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible. (CGS 8-23(e))*
3. *Such plan may show the commission's ... recommendation for ... the extent and location of public housing projects ... [and] programs for the implementation of the plan, including ...plans for implementation of affordable housing ... (CGS 8-23(f))*

Proposed Approach

Scope Of Work

A. Scoping / Researching

1. Preliminary meetings including:
 - One (1) meeting with Town Planner / Town staff to discuss/confirm the goals of the project (in-person or virtual)
 - One (1) meeting with the Affordable Housing Plan working group to discuss/confirm the goals of the project (in-person or virtual).
2. Review plans, regulations, and other documents to identify opportunities for and/or impediments to affordable housing development (Plan of Conservation and Development, Zoning Regulations, Subdivision Regulations) including:
 - Opportunity factors - infrastructure, capacity, transit, etc.
 - Constraint factors – natural resources, access, etc.
3. Review Census and other data with regard to:
 - Demographic / socio-economic conditions and trends
 - Housing demand / supply / needs assessment / “gap analysis”
4. Conduct an on-line survey to get community input including:
 - 1 meeting to discuss and refine survey questions
 - administer the on-line survey
 - prepare a report summarizing survey results
5. In conjunction with SCRCOG, facilitate a public information meeting (including other boards/commissions/agencies) to discuss housing-related issues
6. Review and consider work being undertaken by SCRCOG as they collect information and prepare strategies related to preparation of affordable housing plans
7. One (1) meeting to discuss survey results, public information meeting, and other information with the Affordable Housing Plan working group (in-person or virtual).

B. Organizing / Strategizing

1. Prepare a report outlining possible affordable housing strategies to address issues including:
 - a. Possible revisions to the Plan of Conservation & Development
 - b. Possible revisions to the Zoning Regulations
 - Accessory dwelling units
 - Inclusionary zoning techniques
 - c. Other regulations
 - d. Property tax, including incentives for long-term affordable housing.
2. Prioritize strategies which would be the most effective for Branford to encourage affordable housing and potential “best practices” applicable to a town like Branford
3. One (1) meeting to discuss summary report of strategies with the Affordable Housing Plan working group (in-person or virtual).
4. Revise strategies report, if needed.



C. Preparing / Adopting

1. Prepare a draft affordable housing plan including:
 - a. A list of goals, policies, and action items to increase the amount of affordable housing in Branford
 - b. Recommendations regarding new and/or modified Town regulations and policies
 - c. Identification of areas/parcels identified as potentially able to support a variety of housing densities
 - d. An implementation table.
2. One (1) meeting to discuss draft affordable housing plan with the Affordable Housing Plan working group (in-person or virtual).
3. Revise draft affordable housing plan, if needed
4. Seek public input / feedback on draft affordable housing plan (format to be determined).
5. Finalize Affordable Housing Plan with the Affordable Housing Plan working group (in-person or virtual).
6. Issue proposed Affordable Housing Plan
7. Present the Affordable Housing Plan (adopting entity to be determined) at a public hearing on adoption in accordance with CGS 8-30j (1 meeting)













Draft Housing Plan



Plan Presentation



Conceptual Schedule

	2021		2022	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
1. SCOPING / RESEARCHING				
Kick-off meeting(s)				
Research / material review				
Discuss research / refine survey				
On-line community survey				
Community input session(s)				
Discuss survey results / Material review				
2. ORGANIZING / STRATEGIZING				
Discuss possible strategies				
3. PREPARING / ADOPTING				
Draft preliminary housing plan				
Discuss / refine draft housing plan				
Community input session(s)				
Discuss community input				
Finalize / adopt AH Plan				

Notes & Comments

