



HOUSING FACT SHEET

OBJECTIVE

By 2025, Midland will increase the affordability and availability of housing to accommodate the needs of our workforce.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify and increase the amount of land available to support new housing.
 2. Increase the amount of and access to funding to build new and support the affordability of existing housing.
 3. Develop new and align existing policies and programs to support additional housing.
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WHAT

Q: What is the most important takeaway for the community regarding the Housing objective and strategies?

A: Creating an adequate supply of affordable housing is of highest importance for the Midland-area community and, therefore, for Priority Midland. We recognize that housing is often the highest expense for all residents, and if it is out of balance with income, it creates a hardship that impacts quality of life. This includes financial impacts, in which high housing costs force difficult choices when paying for other necessities such as medicine, utilities, or food; the increased time spent commuting between home and work when the only affordable housing is far from a place of employment; and the challenges of an individual or family wanting to stay in one place despite rapidly and unpredictably rising housing costs.

Q: How does Priority Midland define “housing”?

A: Priority Midland’s focus is on permanent housing, including single family and multi-family housing of various types.

Q: How do you define “affordability”?

A: For the purpose of this work, “affordability” means housing that costs no more than 30 percent of someone’s income, with a special focus on workforce housing, which is generally defined as housing for those making 60-120% of the area median income. For reference, Midland’s median household income in 2017 was \$75,646 (per latest available data from census.gov).

Q: How do you define “availability”?

A: “Availability” refers to creating an adequate supply of affordable housing choices for people who live and work in Midland.

Q: How do you define “workforce housing”?

A: In this case, “workforce housing” is affordable to those making 60-120 percent of the area median income. This income range is often associated with community-critical occupations such as teachers, first responders (e.g., police, fire, EMS), nurses, and other positions where wages often do not match local market costs for housing.

WHY

Q: Why was housing identified as an area of need for Midland?

A: Housing availability and affordability impacts Midland’s ability to meet the needs of its current residents and its ability to attract future residents. Without an adequate housing supply, other community priorities suffer – infrastructure is strained as people must drive further between their homes and places of employment; it becomes more difficult to recruit and retain employees, including teachers, healthcare workers, and first responders; and schools may face increased student turnover as families relocate in search of available and less expensive housing.

Q: Why is housing a challenge in the Midland area?

A: Several factors have influenced Midland’s current state of housing. (1) A history of boom and bust cycles has made it a riskier environment for developers and builders to construct housing on a large scale, (2) less land is available for development due to underground wells and pipelines, (3) land prices are high due to a constrained supply, (4) similar constraints have made it difficult to develop infrastructure sufficient to support residential development, and (5) regulatory policies, such as zoning and development standards, often prioritize creating stand-alone, single-family housing – generally the most expensive, least sustainable type of housing in terms of infrastructure costs, environmental impact, and the accommodation of future growth.

MEASUREMENT

Q: What are Priority Midland’s metrics for this objective?

A: At this time, Priority Midland has not yet set specific metrics for housing. Based on the recently-released [Midland Economic Impact Study](#), it has been acknowledged that there is a significant gap between demand and supply and that this will likely continue for some time. One of the initiatives of the group is to conduct a more detailed housing analysis to better quantify the gap between the supply of and demand for affordable housing and set metrics for housing. A housing analysis could also identify which strategies would be most impactful as well as metrics for measuring success.

Q: What can reasonably be accomplished by the 2025 date stated in the objective?

A: Since housing is primarily driven by market conditions, requiring responsive and continually updated policies and programs to ensure an adequate supply of workforce housing, it is unlikely the challenge will ever be fully solved to a point that everyone is able to find the perfect housing solution at the perfect price. However, Priority Midland’s aim is for significant improvement in that timeframe. This is not an uncommon challenge in growing communities across the country.

POTENTIAL IMPACT

Q: What would achieving this objective mean for Midland?

A: It would mean more of the people who work in Midland would be able to access housing that is affordable relative to their incomes, creating a more stable community. Adding housing that is affordable for the workforce will result in an enhanced ability to keep and attract teachers, first responders, nurses, etc. – all examples of critical positions needed in the community.

Q: What characterizes Midland’s current state of housing availability and affordability?

A: Midland has some of the highest purchase and rental prices in the state. It is difficult to find land suitable for housing; funding housing developments and finding a construction workforce to build them is a challenge; and in many places, infrastructure is inadequate to support a great deal of new housing.

Q: What will characterize Midland’s state of housing availability and affordability upon achieving the stated objective?

A: There will be enough housing available at a variety of price points that Midland’s workforce has the opportunity to affordably live in the city where they are employed.

HOW

Q: How will you identify and increase the amount of land available to support new housing (strategy #1)?

A: Land availability is the primary obstacle to building more housing in Midland – most of the land within city limits is occupied by buildings, encumbered by oil and gas wells or pipelines, or has unclear title and is therefore undevelopable until the title issues are resolved. In response, the Housing Working Group has prioritized identifying land available for housing and increasing the amount of land available to support new housing. This could be accomplished by:

- **Identifying land**: this is primarily a GIS exercise by which potentially available land is identified and analyzed to determine ownership, allowed uses, oil and gas well or pipeline status, and whether there are near-term plans for development.
- **Increasing the amount of land**: this will be accomplished by converting otherwise vacant or underutilized land into workforce housing. One way to do this is through creating a community land trust, in which housing is affordable for up to 99 years. The City is also considering establishing a land bank, in which tax delinquent property can be reclaimed and converted into workforce housing by a developer or community land trust. Other potential tactics include updating zoning regulations and development standards to allow more housing on specific parcels than what is allowed today, and redeveloping existing non-residential buildings into housing.

Q: How might Priority Midland impact the amount of funding available to support affordable housing (strategy #2)?

A: Tactics for increasing the funding available to support affordable housing to include local nonprofit organizations and designated Community Development Housing Organizations (CDHOs) to acquire the necessary funding to complete Hillcrest Village (a workforce housing development currently in the design phase), creating a housing fund with money from private investment, and establishing a homebuyer’s assistance fund.

Q: How will Priority Midland impact the development of new and alignment of existing policies and programs to support additional housing (strategy #3)?

A: Meeting this strategy will include:

- Creating a regularly occurring housing solutions forum. This may be an extension of the Housing Working Group or a group that convenes under the umbrella of an existing organization in the community. The goals of this forum are to share information about housing opportunities and funding strategies, to use shared knowledge to advance affordable housing opportunities, and to collaboratively identify solutions to shared challenges in the housing market.
- Utilizing opportunities for infill and redevelopment of existing buildings and sites. The first step in this initiative is to create an inventory of redevelopment opportunities, identify any zoning or development standard changes needed to increase housing availability, and ensure the density bonus program is properly calibrated so the incentive is strong enough to encourage the workforce housing development.

Q: How will this work be funded?

A: Where additional resources are needed, Priority Midland is in the process of identifying potential sources.

WHO

Q: Who is leading this effort?

A: At the outset, it was important to make sure there was representation from stakeholders across the community who impact the housing realm, including affordable housing specialists (e.g. MCDC, Habitat for Humanity and local Public Housing Authorities), funding experts, wrap-around services, city housing officials, builders, developers, real estate agents, bankers, private land owners, and oil & gas companies.

Q: Who will undertake the work required to meet the objective and strategies?

A: This will be accomplished through cooperation between government agencies, private entities, and public-private partnerships such as Priority Midland.

Q: Is there an opportunity for Midland-area residents to get involved with and support this endeavor?

A: At this time, the community volunteers that make up the Housing Working Group are doing the initial detailed planning work. Soon, there will be opportunities for more community volunteers to provide input during the planning process or support on a project basis. For more information, please fill out the form on the prioritymidland.com homepage, and note your interest in Housing.

Additional information on the Strategic Framework can be found at prioritymidland.com/priorities/.

About Priority Midland: Priority Midland is a community-led initiative designed to bring together Midland-area citizens, taxing entities and other stakeholders into a collaborative forum to provide input into the development of a roadmap for the community, increase overall funding available for projects, and reduce timeframes in which projects are started and completed. The initiative will provide a framework and blueprint to help guide Midland's future growth and development. For more information about Priority Midland, please visit www.prioritymidland.com, and follow and connect with the initiative on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).