

Chapter 9: Housing

Goal: Maintain and diversify the City's housing stock.

Background

Dundas had approximately 237 housing units in 2000. Prior to the construction of the Millstone Addition, there were about 170 dwelling units in the City.

Dundas has two primary housing issues:

- There is very little diversity of housing types and choices – virtually no apartments and only 13 rental units (6%).⁴
- A fairly large percentage (35%) of the housing is at least 60 years old.⁵ The age of housing results in the need for major repairs in a number of housing units. The Rice County Housing Study done in February of 2000 estimated that 30 housing units in town were in need of major repair. Housing conditions are summarized in the table below.

Housing Condition

Dundas	Sound	Minor Repair	Major Repair	Dilapidated	Total
	42 / 27%	84 / 53%	30 / 17%	2 / 1%	158

Source: Rice County Housing Study – February 2000 – Community Partners Research windshield survey.

These housing conditions have not gone unnoticed by Dundas residents. The number one response to the question about what people do not like about Dundas was that there are too many unsightly and unkempt properties.⁶ Some of the older residential properties in town are in the worst condition. However, there are many older properties that have been very well maintained and are still an asset to the community.

The new Millstone Addition has contributed significantly to expanding the diversity of housing choices in Dundas. It has brought twin homes and townhouse units to Dundas. It also has a hundred lots intended for higher priced homes that were not generally available in Dundas prior to the subdivision.

⁴ Rice County Housing Study, January 2000, page D-12.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Dundas Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting, June 17, 2002.

Objectives

Housing Choice

Objective: Expanded housing choices.

Policies:

H 1 The City will identify sites for apartment construction.

H 2 The City may acquire sites for development of apartment construction.

H 3 All developers of new housing subdivisions should be encouraged to include affordable housing units.

Housing Condition

Objective: Improvement of the condition of the City's existing housing stock.

Policies:

H 4 The City will work with property owners to identify housing improvement strategies.

H 5 The City will attempt to connect property owners with agencies that can assist them in funding and improving housing conditions.

H 6 The City will strengthen its housing maintenance codes to encourage increased upkeep and property maintenance and less clutter.

Objective: Protection of the area's natural features.

Policies:

H 7 Subdivisions should be designed to protect and preserve existing tree stands, water courses, steep slopes, flood plains, river banks, and wetlands.

H 8 The City supports the preservation of the aforementioned natural features and will consider cluster developments as a way to preserve the features while still allowing development on the land. (clustering, is a practice whereby the gross number of housing units or buildable space is located, or clustered, on a property so as to preserve natural amenities or other desired features on the land.)

Implementation Directions/Actions

Dundas needs to amend its **subdivision regulations** to require the inclusion of affordable housing, a variety of housing types, sidewalks, and links to other subdivisions.

Dundas needs to conduct a stronger **code enforcement** program. Staff needs to work with property owners on property condition and clutter problems.

The City's **zoning codes** should be updated to include performance standards on clustering.