

# Keys to the Valley – Municipal Policy Review: *Rapid Assessment*



To further your community’s vision for current and future homes, this municipal policy review will support your effort to evaluate the current content and functioning of municipal regulations.

AUDIENCE: It is intended to provide for common understanding among municipal staff, volunteers, elected officials, and engaged citizens.

SUMMARY: This review requires that you identify existing goals within your community’s Master Plan, or other visioning documents. Within the context of these goals, you will rate your regulations (REGS) to reflect current code and work in progress; followed by implemented achievements (CUR) to reflect whether the needs of the community are being addressed and methods are working as intended; and lastly other contributing factors (OTH) to include additional influences, such as state or federal requirements or limitations. You can rate each item as **fully met**, **partially met**, **not met** and **not considered**. Through this you will see how

1. you have met your goals
2. you still need to do the work
3. your regulations are not adequately meeting their intended targets
4. new goals need to be set

This document is a guide and should be adjusted to meet your community’s needs. It can be revisited periodically to assess progress in meeting your community’s vision.

Once completed and discussed with your community, complete the following in regards to your community’s homes:

## *Celebrate - 3 Accomplishments*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## *Low Hanging Fruit - 3 Short Term Goals*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## *Need the Toolbox - 3 Long Term Goals*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

HOMES FOR NOW AND TOMORROW - MUNICIPAL POLICY REVIEW					
OPPORUNITY OR BARRIER TO LOCAL TARGETS	VISION & MASTER PLAN	REGS	CUR	OTH	COMMENTS
<b>HOME TYPES AND DENSITY:</b>					
<i>Example</i>	<i>Give option to attend meetings virtually</i>				Implemented as part of state emergency order
<p>Assign a rating for your community’s housing regulations and approval processes, and the impacts that they may have on developing new homes that are affordable and meet the needs of residents. Here are some questions you can consider in developing your answer (there may be others relevant to your community that you want to consider as well):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is it possible for a resident to create a new home that is affordable under current regulations/processes?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are density standards (e.g., minimum lot sizes) limiting opportunities for creating new homes that are affordable? Would it be possible to permit greater density in keeping with community planning goals?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there opportunities to permit needed home types and more affordable homes in ways that are consistent with the character of the community?</i></li> <li>• <i>If a senior resident wanted to downsize in your community (i.e., build a small, affordable home on a small property) could they?</i></li> </ul>					
<b>PROCESS:</b>					
<p>Is your community’s land use permitting process reasonable, efficient, and effective? Here are some questions you can consider in developing your answer (there may be others relevant to your community that you want to consider as well):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is the permitting process well-defined and easy to navigate?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is the development review process for small/infill development (e.g. properties ≥ 1ac) reasonable in time and number of steps?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is administrative review always being applied where appropriate?</i></li> <li>• <i>Does the process promote dialogue with current residents?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are the fees reasonable to diverse incomes?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do municipal boards and staff have a trusting and functional relationship?</i></li> </ul>					

**RATING KEY BY LOCAL TARGET (LT):**    ● - FULLY MET            ● - PARTIALLY MET            ● - NOT MET            ● - NOT CONSIDERED

**DOCUMENT KEY:**    ✕ REGS – LOCAL REGULATIONS (E.G. ZONING, SUBDIVISION, SITE PLAN REVIEW)  
                                  ✕ CUR – CURRENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION & RESIDENT EXPERIENCE            ✕ OTH – OTHER (E.G. STATE, FEDERAL REGULATIONS)

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OPPORUNITY OR BARRIER TO LOCAL TARGETS	VISION & MASTER PLAN	REGS	CUR	OTH	COMMENTS
<b>HOMES MAINTENANCE, CONDITION &amp; LOT DESIGN:</b>					
<p>Are home structures safely and appropriately built and maintained in your community? Here are some questions you can consider in developing your answer (there may be others relevant to your community that you want to consider as well):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are existing regulations clear and adequate to maintain aesthetically pleasing and safe housing exteriors?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is there a method to bring non-conforming units into compliance with current regulations?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there inspections of rental properties? Are they adequately keeping rentals safe?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there any educational services available to property owners in maintaining healthy housing and adequate financing?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is there tracking of inspections, complaints and other relevant data to evaluate the condition and safety of existing stock?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there issues with lead paint contamination? If so, are these being adequately addressed?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are accessible design features such as wheelchair compliance required or recommended in new developments or major renovations? These may include features that allow easy changes to achieve accessibility.</i></li> </ul>					
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE:</b>					
<p>Do your community's land use regulations and plans consider the role of municipal infrastructure (water, sewer, stormwater)? Here are some questions you can consider in developing your answer (there may be others relevant to your community that you want to consider as well):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are there municipal stormwater regulations? Have these stormwater regulations proven reasonable, not a barrier to new housing units?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is there an existing (or planned) public or community water/sewer system? Are there incentives for new units along water/sewer lines? Is there capacity for new development?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is there sufficient broadband for optimal use of existing structures?</i></li> </ul>					

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<b>TRANSPORTATION:</b>					
<p>Do your community’s land use regulations and plans consider the relationship to the transportation network? Here are some questions you can consider in developing your answer (there may be others relevant to your community that you want to consider as well):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Are parking requirements reasonable? Are they adaptable to changes in demand?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there incentives to encourage development that enhances the viability of public transit?</i></li> <li>• <i>Are there provisions or plans for walkable neighborhoods in the community? Consider both the availability of sidewalks/safe streets and proximity to destinations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Is safe bicycle travel encouraged?</i></li> <li>• <i>Does the municipality have a “complete streets” policy to provide for multi-modal access?</i></li> </ul>					

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