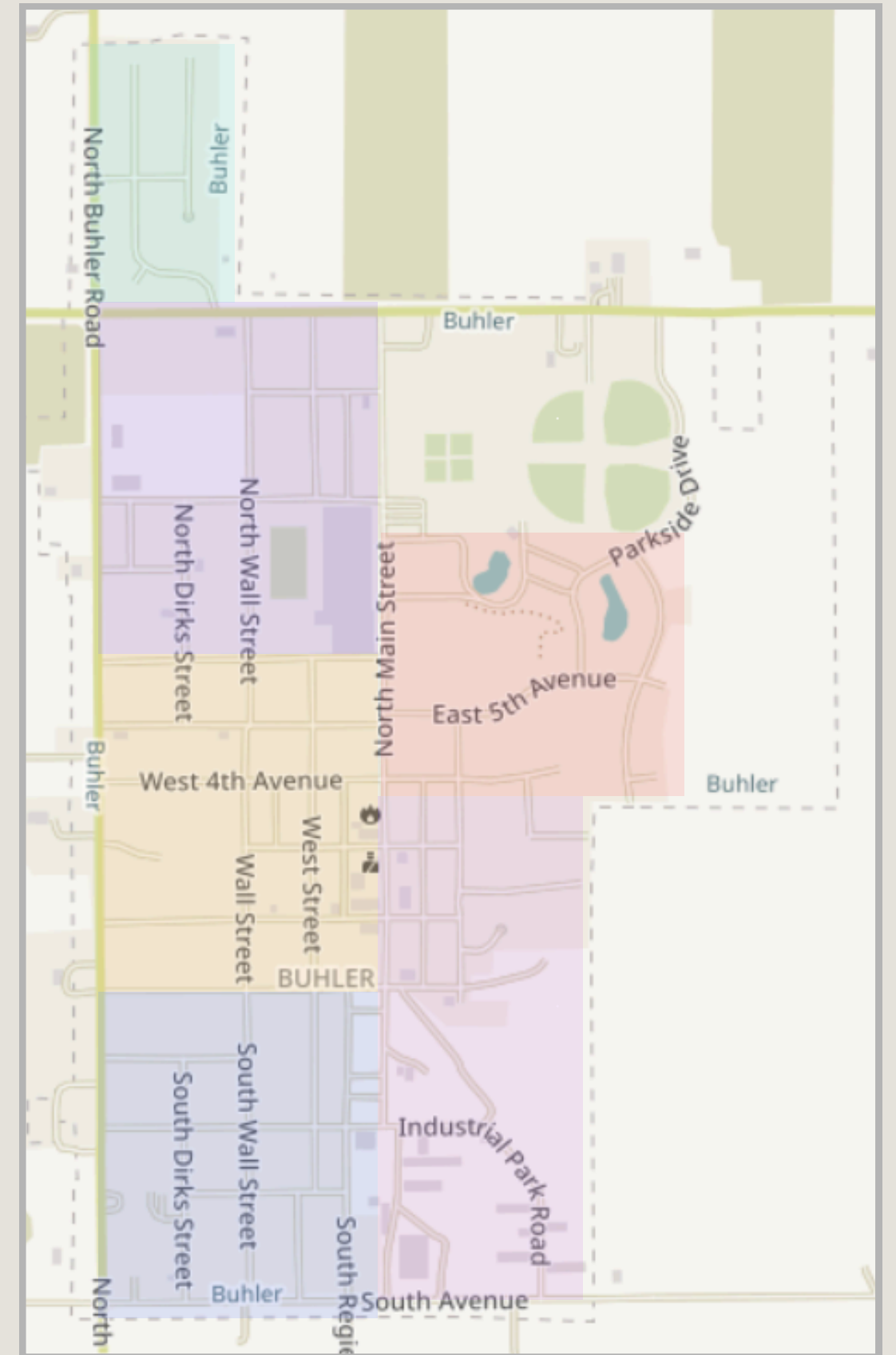




[HTTPS://BUHLERKS.ORG/ZONING-AND-PLANNING-COMMISSION/HOUSING-STANDARD-REVIEW/](https://buhlerks.org/zoning-and-planning-commission/housing-standard-review/)



HOUSING STANDARD REVIEW UPDATE



JANUARY 2026



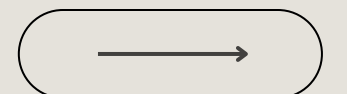
MISSION

Review Buhler's current housing ecosystem to define a housing policy that reduces blight, preserves neighborhood character, and expands opportunities for safe, affordable homes.

SUMMARY

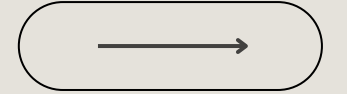
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Balance** the freedom of residents to live as they choose with the need to preserve the quality of our neighborhoods as a community asset.
- **Remove barriers** that could limit the supply of affordable homes. Allowing Buhler to remain friendly to builders and developers who are working to add more housing choices for working families.
- **Create tools** that will aid in addressing concerns by staff and housing organizations. Ultimately leading to reinvestment in existing housing and neighborhoods.
- **Empower enforcing agenc(ies)** so they may continue to hold property owners to the set standard of housing, keeping in mind their limited capacity.
- **Protect** Buhler's vulnerable residents, who are physically or financially unable to complete repairs and maintenance on their homes.





DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS



Reports & Studies

- 2025 Buhler Housing Analysis
- 2024 Reno County Housing Needs Assessment
- 2024 Love Where You Live Benchmarking Report

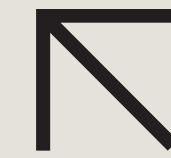
Current Code

Ordinance 588 Trees and Shrubs - designates when the City would remove/prune trees and shrubs; indicates what may cause a tree/shrub to be pruned or removed by homeowner; states clearances or sidewalks, streets, street lights, and fire hydrants.

Ordinance 591 Dangerous and Unfit Structures - outlines why a structure could be cited and the process for removal.

Ordinance 650 Health, Weed, and Motor Vehicles Nuisances - indicates cause for citation and process for citation and remediation. Health refers to trash (i.e. filth, lumber, excrement, ect), Weeds are outlined with the maximum height set at 12". Motor vehicles targets untagged, nonoperating, illegally parked, and junked vehicles.

**While there are exceptions, codes largely require a citizen to report non-conforming properties to the City before they can be cited.*

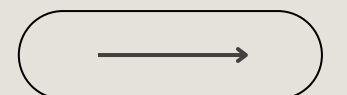


COMMUNITY INPUT

Community Forums

2 Community forums, a landlord meeting and private conversations informed the following data. Each group were given a summary of the recent reports and studies and spoke to their concerns, goals, and how they would like to be supported.

These efforts resulted in 53 voices from various sectors of the community.



TOP CONCERNS

*Designates the number of reoccurrences throughout all meetings and conversations

AMOUNT OF HOUSING STOCK

- Lack of land available to be developed * * *
- High cost of construction and development * *
- Rise in popularity of aging in place, slowing return of homes to the market * *
- Lack of housing across all income levels
 - Lack of desirable retirement housing
 - Lack of opportunity for in migration
 - Lack of affordable 3+ bedroom homes
- Rental supply cannot keep up with high demand

QUALITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS

- Inconsistent standards in property upkeep and generally unmaintained properties * *
- High number of vacant buildings and houses
- Lack of funds available to the City government to make or incentivize improvements

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Lackluster Downtown- desire to keep downtown alive/thriving
- Lack of awareness when programs are available (such as BrushUp Reno)
- Effects of low enrollment at Buhler Grade School
- Balance code enforcement and compassion

TOP GOALS

*Designates the number of recurrences throughout meetings and conversations



HIGH QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS

- Clear, consistent housing standards enforced without the need for citizen complaint **
- All homes are well maintained
- A mix of internal resources and grants used to have modern infrastructure
- Members of the community step up to take care of each other

HOUSING STOCK THAT MEETS DEMAND

- New housing (Infill and new development) ***
 - High quality retirement housing **
 - Ample housing can be used to attract business
 - Incentivized by the City and County
 - In migration was possible and accessible **
- High cost of construction
- Lack of land ready to be developed
- Inability of rental stock to meet the growing demand

HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

- Full and vibrant Downtown **
- Childcare advantage is able to attract business and new families
- Opportunities to take care of each other
- Good communication between entities and residents
- The community is engaged - youth are included
- Availability of youth focused activities
- Strong, self-sustaining businesses

Desired Support from the City

HIGH QUALITY

NEIGHBORHOODS



- Incentivize infill development and then new development * *
- Consider those who are unable to perform maintenance themselves
 - Coordinate neighbors interested in volunteering to help disadvantaged homeowners become code compliant
 - Improve the code enforcement system to break down barriers to those who need to ask for help
 - Partner with volunteer organizations and training programs to complete repairs/maintenance
- Create a vacant house registry and incentivize returning the houses to active use * *
- Use a Land Bank to actively return blighted/uninhabitable houses to active use and compliance * *
- Extend City Cleanup day program with more days and longer drop-off windows * *
- Seek outside funding to improve infrastructure and incentivize development
 - Replace water pipes causing brown water
 - Update necessary sewer capacity
 - Purchase land and pay for new infrastructure
- Generate marketing to encourage in migration, especially of families work work in town but live elsewhere
- Pay for demolition of vacant properties
- Use codes to move unsightly housing from prominent locations (i.e. trailer houses on Buhler Rd)

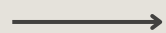


Desired Support from the City

AVAILABLE HOUSING



- Partner with a teaching institution to bring back or start a new home building program * * *
- Purchase land for new development * * *
- Incentivize new development to reduce specials to be paid by developers and new home owners
 - Focus incentives on affordable family and retirement housing
- Advocate to double lot owners to split their lots for the construction of new homes * *
- Continue participation in Reno County's Neighborhood Revitalization Plan





STAFF RECOMENDATIONS

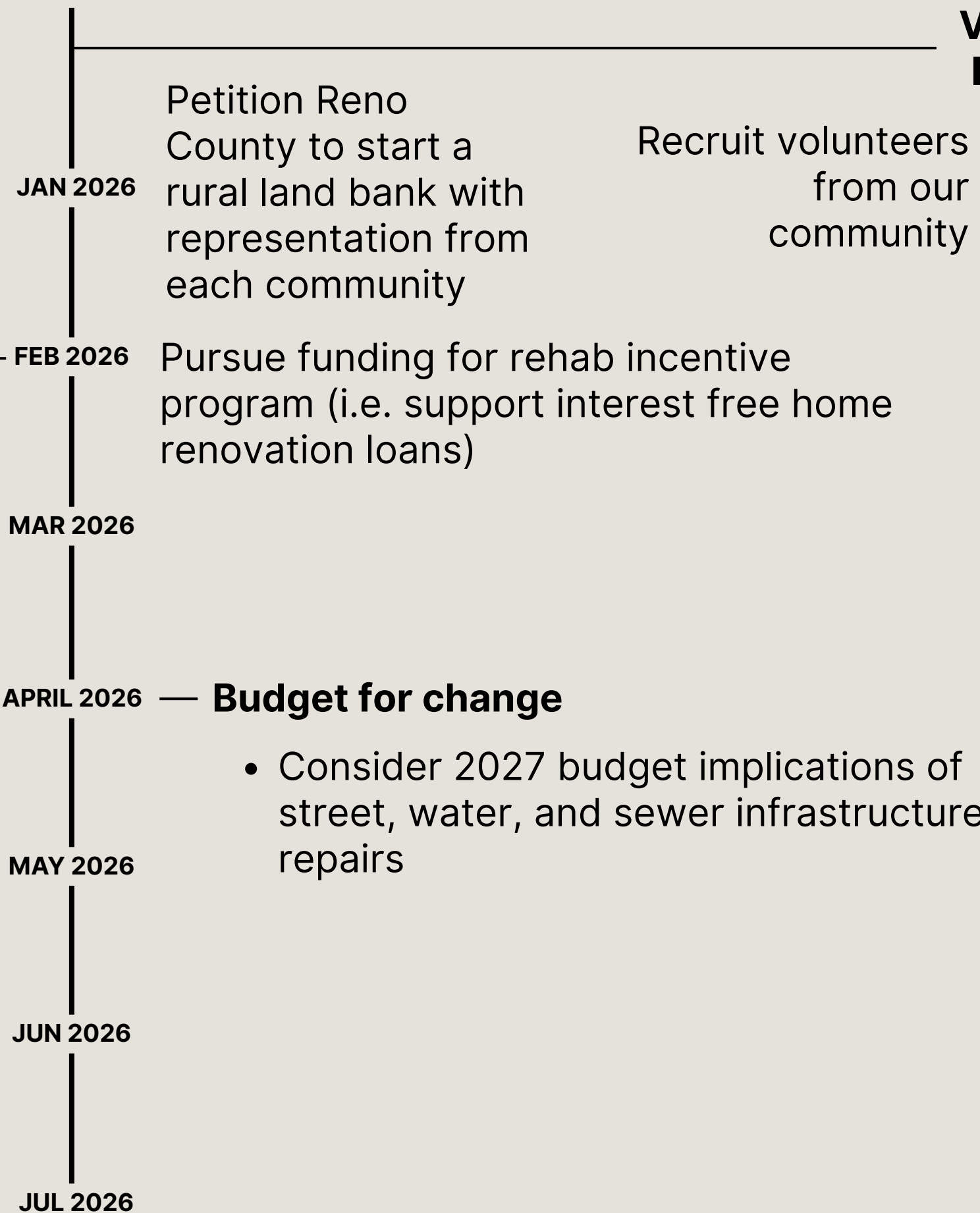
For each option, we weighted the cost (both financial and of staff time) and the potential impact. With those things in mind, we recommend the following initiatives and timeline.

QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Make Code Update Recommendations to Codification Committee

- Create a public vacant housing registry with growing charges at the time of renewal
- Clarify enforcement and remove need for neighbors to complain to begin the process. Consider including additional enforcement partners
- Change maximum grass and weed height to 8"
- Create a clear condemnation process or minimum housing standard
- Add park land to Tree and Shrub encroachment restrictions (currently just street and sidewalks)
- Discuss that trailer house district zone

TIMELINE



Volunteer Initiative

Recruit volunteers from our community



AVAILABLE HOUSING

List available rental properties on City Website

Petition USD 313 and Interfaith Housing to build and renovate homes in Buhler as part of a home building education course

Active Initiatives

- Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP)
 - 3 residential applications
- Make My Move
- Reno County Housing Growth Grant

TIMELINE

DEC 2025

JAN 2026

FEB 2026

MAR 2026

MAY 2026

APR 2026

MAY 2026

JUNE 2026

Explore programs from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka and CDBG Housing Rehab

Create "no cost" Incentives

- Waive water/sewer/permit fees for new infill houses. Consider also targeting affordable, senior, or multi-family houses
- Advertise bond financed tools like Tax Increment Financing and Reinvestment Housing Incentive Districts to attract developers

Budget for change - Capital Improvement Plan

- Include funds for home demolition program in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Add a public facing incentive such as down payment assistance or reimbursement of closing costs or student loans to the CIP
- Add land purchase of 20-50 acres for a new residential neighborhood to the CIP and find developers with RFP



