



Planning Commission Agenda

Wednesday, October 1, 2025 at 7:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers
700 Highway 2, Leavenworth, WA

Meeting hosted at City Hall with option to join via Webinar by:

- (1) connecting via the Zoom app: Meeting ID: 91854580303 Passcode: 093075
- (2) using the web link: <https://zoom.us/j/91854580303?pwd=GasMP6FqBaaYWQ4XjWzWJf3u6SEbdT.1>
- (3) calling: 1-253-215-8782. Alternative call-in phone numbers: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91854580303?pwd=GasMP6FqBaaYWQ4XjWzWJf3u6SEbdT.1>

The Planning Commission is responsible for long range planning and legislative policy recommendations to the City Council. Recommendations are based on thorough understanding of options and public comment/discussion. Every year, the City Council directs the Planning Commission work through the establishment of the [Docket](#).

Meeting Etiquette:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Have one discussion at a time and limit distractions. | 3. Be respectful of each other; by assuming good intentions and acknowledging it is ok to disagree. |
| 2. Seek to understand before being understood. | 4. Focus on constructive problem solving. |
-

1. Call Meeting to Order, 7:00 pm

2. Roll Call: *Planning Commission Chair: Drew Foulk (position #4 - expiration 2029)*

Planning Commission Commissioners: Elizabeth Sall (#1 - 2026), Amanda Taub (#2 - 2027), Simon Farivar (#3 - 2028), James Whitesides (#5 - 2029), Colin Forsyth (#6 - 2026) and Alison Miller (#7 - 2026)

3. Review and approval of September 2025 Minutes – (sent separately)

- a. Sample Motion: *I move to approve the Planning Commission minutes September 3, 2025.*

4. Triplex Design Standards

- a. Review draft code updates to the following Sections:
 - i. LMC 18.36.025 Residential Design Standards
 - ii. LMC 18.36.045 Duplex and Triplex Standards
 - iii. LMC 18.25.030 Updated District Use Chart
 - iv. LMC Chapter 21.90 Definitions

5. Discuss Housing Element Goals and Policies

- a. Review existing housing goals and policies. What new goals/policies should be added?
 - i. See Commerce's [Guide for Updating your Housing Element](#) for additional information
<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/1d9d517g509r389f0mjpowh8isjpirlh>

6. Discuss Off-Street Parking Code Updates and Next Steps

7. Open discussion items, at the Chair's discretion

8. Adjournment



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Open of the Meeting: Commissioner Chair Drew Foulk called the meeting to Order at 7:00 pm.

Planning Commission Roll Call: *Drew Foulk, Simon Farivar, James Whitesides, Alison Miller, Elizabeth Sall, Colin Forsyth and Amanda Taub.*

City Staff: Celeste Barry, Senior Planner; Amy L. McCoy, Assistant Planner

Community Present (in person and online): Beejay Robinson

New Commissioner Introduction: Amanda Taub introduced herself.

Review and approval of Minutes: The minutes for August 6, 2025, were reviewed. Simon Farivar motioned to approve as amended, James Whiteside seconded. Motion carried by all.

Triplex Design Standards

Ms. Barry presented the question “what creates a neighborhood feel” and shared results of the research Ms. Boles and herself worked assist with code development about triplex design standards. Discussion ensued.

Housing Element Goals and Policies

Ms. Barry reviewed the need to produce more goals and policies about housing elements. Ms. Barry handed out policy examples from other cities. Discussion ensued.

Climate Action Team

Ms. Barry explained the Climate Action Team and the need for a volunteer. Elizabeth Sall volunteered.

Housing Advisory Joint Meeting

The Housing Advisory committee would like to have a joint meeting with the Planning Commission. Simon Farivar and Elizabeth Sall volunteered to be representatives at an upcoming Housing Advisory meeting.

Parking Discussion

The parking discussion was tabled to another meeting. The Commission was tasked with developing a table that matches the district use chart.

Future Meeting: October 1, 2025

Adjournment: Chair Drew Faulk adjourned the meeting at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy McCoy
Assistant Planner

18.36.025 Residential dwellings standards – All types of construction.

The following standards shall apply to all single-family homes, modular homes, and manufactured homes, or other related types of construction:

A. Glazing. ~~If the main entry door of the dwelling does not face the street from which the front yard setback is derived,~~ a minimum of 15% of wall area 30 square feet of glazing shall be on the portion of the dwelling facing the street on which the front and/or street side yard setback is located;

B. ~~Entry porches/landing areas shall be constructed as an integral part of the dwelling architecture and of materials which complement the primary structure;~~ Weather Protection.

(i) All new primary dwellings shall provide a covered pedestrian entry facing a street on which the front yard setback is located.

(ii) For entries serving a single dwelling and facing the street a minimum weather protection of four feet wide by three feet deep shall be provided.

(iii) For all other entries serving a single dwelling, a weather protection at least two feet deep shall be provided.

(iv) For all primary building entries that serve more than one dwelling unit, a minimum weather protection of at least six feet wide and five feet deep shall be provided.

C. Garages. ~~Attached/detached garages shall be constructed with siding materials which are the same or similar to those of the primary structure;~~

Garage fronts shall not exceed 50% of the front façade, without utilizing at least two of the following design elements:

(i) A decorative trellis over at least the entire width of the garage door(s).

(ii) A window or windows are placed above the garage on a second story or attic wall.

(iii) A balcony that extends out over the garage and includes useable space and decorative support columns.

(iv) Windows on the garage door.

(v) Decorative details on the garage door. Standard squares on a garage door will not qualify as a decorative detail.

D. Articulation or modulation for townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, multifamily.

If a front façade is greater than 50' in length, articulation or modulation shall be used to break up the appearance of a long blank wall. Articulation or modulation may include the following:

(i) bays, bump outs, alcoves that change the wall plane.

(ii) second story set back or recessed.

(iii) gables, dormers, parapet height changes

(iv) useable balconies and porches

(v) overhangs

(vi) architectural design changes; accent panels, shutters, window trim, cornices, or changes in building materials such as brick, stone, cement fiber, stucco.

E.D. All dwellings shall be permanently connected to foundations, and must meet wildland-urban interface, seismic, snow, and wind loading standards for the city of Leavenworth;

F.E.-All foundations shall meet International Residential Code standards for site-built homes;

~~G.F. Any support structure built to meet snow loading standards shall be designed to integrate with the building and shall not be a separate support structure, such as a portico; (is this something you all want to leave in here?)~~

~~H.G. On level grades, no more than 12 inches of foundation wall shall be exposed on the walls facing a street (an additional factor of plus two percent (above the 12-inch maximum) may be included for drainage); greater than 12 inches of foundation wall may be exposed in cases where the slope of the lot necessitates this;~~

~~I.H. All siding shall extend below the top of the foundation one and one-half to two inches. A bottom trim board does not qualify as siding and cannot be used to cover the top of the foundation; (why is this here. Is is necessary?)~~

J. All skirting materials shall resemble a typical residential foundation;

K.J. All wheels, tongues, and other transportation equipment shall be permanently removed.

L. City of Leavenworth Pre-Approved Dwelling Units are not subject to the design standards in Sections A-C of this Chapter. [Ord. 1694 § 1 (Att. A-1), 2024.]

18.36.045 Duplex and triplex dwellings.

Two-family dwelling/duplex and three-family dwelling/triplex shall meet the following minimum requirements:

A. Two-family dwelling unit/duplex and three-family dwelling/triplex shall conform to all other provisions of city code. Conversions of existing structures to a duplex or triplex shall be allowed in conformance with Chapter 18.68 LMC, Nonconforming Provisions, excepting setbacks whereby the legally established structure may receive an administrative deviation to encroach no more than 20 percent into the setback; and

B. Separate water and sewer utilities shall be required for each unit. [Ord. 1640 § 1 (Att. A), 2022; Ord. 1628 § 1 (Att. A), 2021.]

Chapter 18.25
DISTRICT USES

Sections:

- 18.25.010 Purpose.
- 18.25.020 Shoreline Master Program.
- 18.25.030 District use chart.

18.25.030 District use chart.

The following acronyms apply to the district use chart. If there is no notation in the chart for the zoning district, that use is not permitted. All uses must meet city standards:

“P” Permitted Use. Those uses/development which are permitted when meeting the city regulations.

“AU” Accessory Use. A use or structure on the same lot that is incidental or subordinate to the primary use or structure, and which may exist only when a primary use is existing on the same lot. The floor area of the accessory use must be less than that devoted to the primary use or structure.

“C” Conditional Use. A use allowed in one or more zones as defined by the zoning code and this district use chart, but which, because of characteristics peculiar to such use, the size, technological processes or equipment, or because of the exact location with reference to surroundings, streets, and existing improvements or demands upon public facilities, requires an approval as provided by the code in order to provide a particular degree of control to make such uses consistent and compatible with other existing or permissible uses in the same zone and mitigate adverse impacts of the use.

“ ” (blank) Prohibited. A use/development which is not permitted.

Zoning Districts:

- (RL6) Residential Low Density 6,000.
- (R-8) Residential 8.
- (MF) Multifamily Residential.
- (GC) General Commercial.
- (CC) Central Commercial.
- (TC) Tourist Commercial.
- (CDMUI) Commercial District Mixed Use Incentives (overlay).
- (LI) Light Industrial.
- (REC) Recreation.
- (RP) Recreation-Public.

Land Uses	RL6	R-8	MF		CDMUI	GC	CC	TC	LI	REC	RP
Residential (Specified Use Below)											
Accessory Dwelling Unit	AU	AU	AU								
Boardinghouse, Lodging House, Rooming House			P								

Land Uses	RL6	R-8	MF		CDMUI	GC	CC	TC	LI	REC	RP
Dwelling, Above Ground Floor					P	AU	AU	AU			
Dwelling, Cottage Housing	P	P	P								
Dwelling, Duplex	P	P	P		AU						
Dwelling, Multifamily			P		P	P	P	P			
Dwelling, Single-Family	P	P	P		AU						
Dwelling, Tiny Home	P	P	P								
Dwelling, Triplex	P	P	P		AU						
Emergency Shelter						P	P	P		P	P
Manufactured Home, Designated	P	P	P								
Manufactured Home/Mobile Home											
Vacation (Short-Term) Rental						P	P	P			
Accessory Structures and Uses											
Accessory Structure	AU	AU	AU			AU	AU	AU	AU	AU	AU
Adult Family Home	P	P	P		P	P	P	P			
Bed and Breakfast	C	C	C								
Child Day Care	AU	AU	AU		P	P	P	P			
Day Care Center	C	C	C		C	P	P	P			
Foster Home	P	P	P			P	P	P			
Group A Home Occupation	AU	AU	AU								
Group B Home Occupation	AU	AU	AU								
Nursing/Convalescent Home, Congregate Care Facility	C	C	C			C					
Stacked Parking	AU	AU	AU			AU	AU	AU			
Swimming Pools	AU	AU	AU			P	P	P		P	P
Youth Home			C								
Public/Semi-Public (Specified Use Below)											
Bus or Taxicab Stop	C ¹	C ¹	C ¹		P	P	P	P	P		
Clinic						P	P	P	P		
Community Center	C	C				C				C	C
Composting Collection Center					P	P		P	P	P	P
Educational Centers	C	C			C	P	C	C	C	C	C
Educational Facilities	C	C			C						
Golf Courses										P	P
Hospital						C	C	C		C	

DRAFT UPDATES TO LMC 21.90 COMMON DEFINITIONS

Term	Current Definition	New Definition	Rationale
"Dwelling, triplex" or three-family dwelling"	Not defined	"Triplex" means a multifamily building, which is located on one legal lot, containing three dwelling units designed exclusively for occupancy by three single households living independently of each other.	Term has been added to the district use chart and requires a definition.

DRAFT

Goals and Policies



H Goal 1: Encourage the availability of affordable housing for all economic segments of the population.

H Policy 1.1: Support regeneration/preservation/rehabilitation of existing housing by:

- Considering permitting the division of existing structures in designated single-family neighborhoods.
- Considering removal of barriers to siting manufactured homes.
- Considering expansion of rehabilitation programs.
- Encouraging use of Leavenworth’s existing grant/loan options for low-income housing, using planned developments which include a full range of housing to all economic segments, using housing rehabilitation options for low-income residents.

H Policy 1.2: Promote affordable housing, particularly for low- (1-80% Average Median Income) and moderate-income (workforce – 80%-120% AMI) residents by exploring all available options, including but not limited to:

- Innovative zoning techniques
- Pursuing grant and loan programs
- Coordinating housing development options with private and public agencies.

Lower housing costs require greater public intervention



H Goal 2: Promote diversity of residential densities and housing types, being mindful for racial disparities and accommodating a range of housing needs, including elderly, physically challenged, mentally impaired, special needs segments of the population, low-income, workforce and emergency housing needs by:

- Supporting affordable housing needs for low-income residents.
- Encouraging cluster subdivision, planned developments and other zoning techniques that allow for density bonuses or other mechanisms for higher density and greater utilization of land.
- Supporting moderate density housing types, including accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes and townhomes within all residential zones.

H Policy 2.1: Evaluate existing land uses by housing type and densities, and regulations, which may be presenting barriers to the development, to proactively address changes in housing needs for all economic segments of the population.

H Policy 2.2: Promote transitions between multifamily residential development, commercial districts and low-density residential districts to provide an evolution between high intensity and low intensity uses.



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

We strengthen communities

Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element - Public Review Draft

To meet evolving community needs

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION
GROWTH MANAGEMENT
SERVICES

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For people with disabilities, this report is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 360.725.4000 (TTY 360.586.0772).

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Housing is the most basic of human needs. When people can secure stable and affordable housing near locations of jobs and opportunity, they are able to focus on achieving other life goals, such as education, career advancement, health and wellness or raising a family. Without stable and affordable housing, they face significant and sometimes insurmountable challenges to achieving these goals.

Local governments do not provide housing, but they set the conditions in place to encourage the market to develop housing affordable to all members of the community. Housing planning and policymaking are integral functions of cities and counties, and essential for supporting inclusive, diverse and economically vibrant communities. Reviewing, evaluating and updating housing plans, policies, and associated development regulations can help jurisdictions meet evolving community needs for housing variety and affordability, as well as achieve other planning goals for land use, economic development, transportation and the environment.

Each county and city in Washington state is to review and revise, if needed, their comprehensive plan and development regulations every eight years, according to a schedule in RCW 36.70A.130. At these times, a jurisdiction should review the housing element and assess the performance of implementing development regulations and programs, in order to prepare a thorough update. Local governments may also amend their comprehensive plans each year in order to address pressing needs and/or requests from the community.

The guidance is a resource to support cities and counties in Washington state to review and update the housing element of their comprehensive plan. It clarifies required and recommended steps for communities planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA). It provides examples of best practices from a wide variety of community types and it references other resources that provide more detailed guidance on topics such as housing needs assessments and housing action plans.

Purpose of a Housing Element

Washington cities and counties all have their own unique housing context and challenges. However, our state's natural beauty, temperate climate and healthy economy continues to attract new residents. This has increased competition for existing housing, raising costs and increasing the demand for more housing and a wider variety of housing types. Local governments must grapple with the complications of accommodating this projected growth in

Reader's Guide

This guidebook is a resource to support cities and counties with developing or updating the housing element of their comprehensive plan, with a focus on the legal and policy framework in Washington state. It is organized in eight parts:

- 1. Introduction:** Overview of the guidebook and purpose of preparing a housing element.
- 2. Housing Needs Assessment:** Required and recommended topics, relationship to the comprehensive plan and available resources to support preparation.
- 3. Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs):** Requirements and best practices for developing CPPs related to housing, as well as guidance for maintaining consistency between local plans and CPPs.
- 4. Housing Element Review:** Guidance for evaluating your current housing element, including alignment with needs, implementation of policies and achievement of growth targets.
- 5. Updating Goals and Policies:** Best practices for evaluating and updating existing goals and policies and crafting clear and effective new ones.
- 6. Identifying Strategies to Implement Your Policies:** How to select strategies to implement your policies.
- 7. Adopting your Housing Element:** Recommendations for managing a successful adoption process, including public and stakeholder engagement.
- 8. Implementing and Monitoring:** Guidance for developing an effective implementation plan and monitoring program.

a manner that takes into account the needs of all economic segments of the community while managing impacts to neighborhood character and quality of life.

The housing element provides the opportunity to identify and prioritize local housing problems and trends, and to craft solutions appropriate to the local context. Such solutions are likely to involve a mix of strategies that can work together to shape opportunities for development and encourage the kinds of housing production that are in greatest need.

Recognizing that most communities already have a comprehensive plan and housing element they need to update, the comprehensive planning process provides an opportunity to evaluate existing housing policies and analyze what's changed within the housing context. This exercise may demonstrate a need to strengthen the policies by adding more specific guidance, and/or it may demonstrate a need to shift policies in a new direction.

The main objectives in preparing or updating a housing element are to:

- Understand the county-wide housing market(s) and the local community's role in it.
- Update the local housing needs assessment to understand how the community's housing stock does or does not meet the needs of the population.
- Assess the amount of land available to meet projected housing needs.
- Consider strategies to address housing needs by estimating their potential impact on the housing market.
- Adopt or update local housing goals, policies and implementation strategies that provide solutions to existing problems and guidance to future housing development,

Ultimately, there's substantial flexibility in how local communities craft their housing elements. Beyond integrating the components listed above, there's no prescribed format for the element. Each community should choose an approach that fits its unique context and needs, ensuring the housing element is consistent with the land use element and supported by the other elements of the plan.

Requirements for a Housing Element under GMA

Cities and counties fully planning under the GMA¹ must include a housing element in their comprehensive plans. [RCW 36.70A.070\(2\)](#) sets out the requirements for a housing element, which must include the following components:

- **Housing Needs Assessment:** An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth.
- **Goals, Policies and Objectives:** A statement of goals, policies, objectives and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing.
- **Residential Land Capacity Analysis:** Analysis to identify sufficient land to accommodate housing growth targets.
- **Provisions for all Economic Segments:** Adequate provisions to address existing and projected needs of households at all income levels.

Exhibit 1 lists both required and recommended topics for a housing element based on RCW 36.70A.070(2) and WAC 365-196-410.

¹ Requirements for who must plan under GMA are defined in RCW 36.70A.040. A list and map of counties that are fully and partially planning under GMA is available here: <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/z8ygn0ifeimybnlh4j6v8cl1wxkp1jfa>.

Exhibit 1. Required and Recommended Topics for a Housing Element

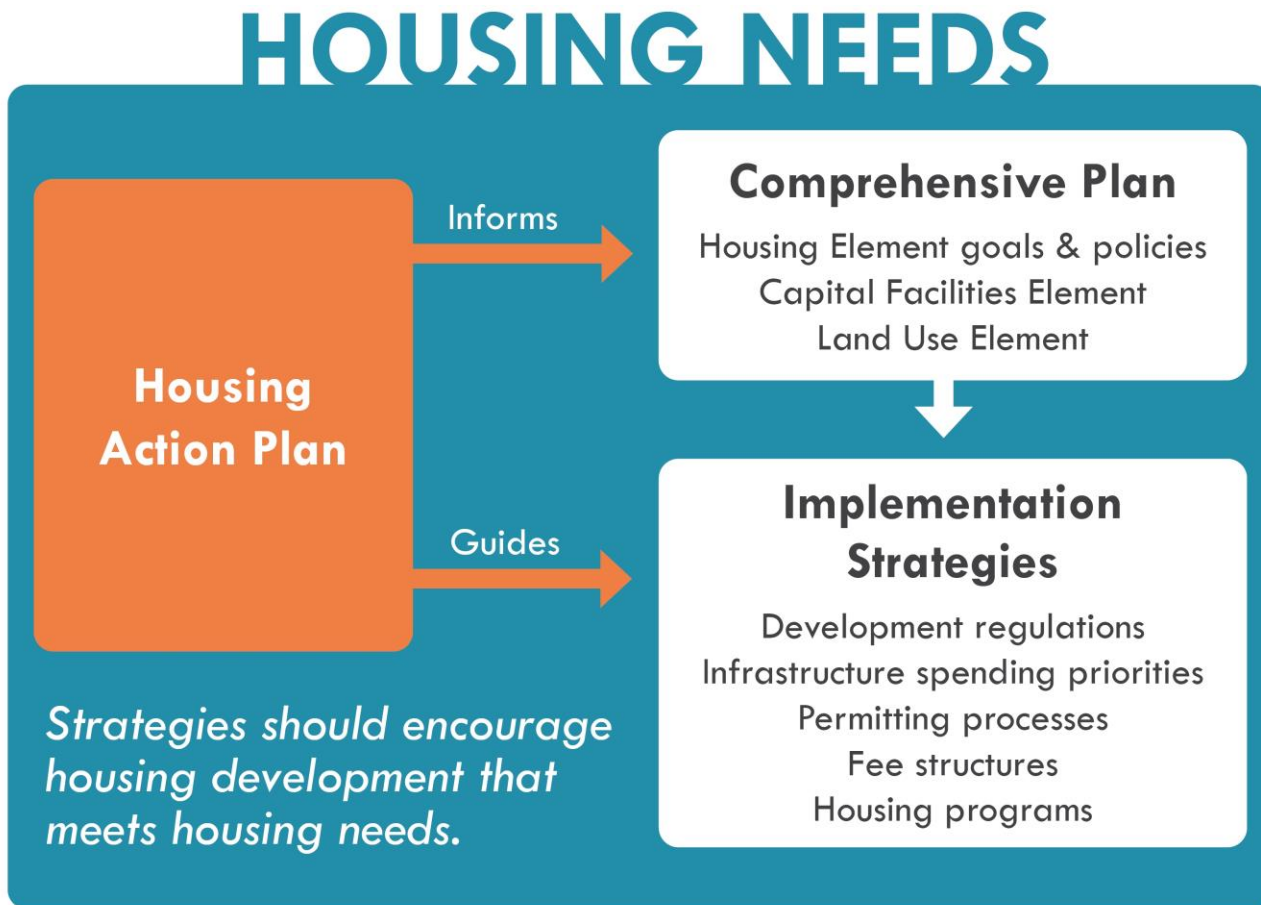
Topic	Guidance	Notes
Housing needs assessment		See Chapter 2. Housing Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community profile (population and household characteristics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	For details on required and recommended contents for a housing needs assessment, see the separate Commerce report Guidance for Developing a Housing Needs Assessment , p. 16.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing inventory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap analysis by income level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units needed to manage projected growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land capacity analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing market conditions 	<i>Recommended</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce profile and employment trends 	<i>Recommended</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special housing needs 	<i>Recommended</i>	
Outreach and engagement		See "Public Engagement" in Chapter 7 as well as Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan (Commerce, 2020) for more detailed recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	RCW 36.70A.130(2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad public and stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
Housing element review		See Chapter 4. Housing Element Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate progress to meet housing targets (including types and units) 	<i>Recommended</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate achievement of housing element goals and policies 	<i>Recommended</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate implementation of the schedule of programs and actions 	<i>Recommended</i>	
Goals, policies and objectives		See Chapter 5. Updating Goals and Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals, policies, objectives and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisions for all economic segments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required 	
Implementation and monitoring		See Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule of programs and actions to implement housing policies 	<i>Recommended</i>	WAC 365-196-410 subsection (2)(f)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring program to track progress towards goals and objectives as well as outcomes of implemented policies 	<i>Recommended</i>	WAC 365-196-410 subsection (2)(f)

Source: [RCW 36.70A.070\(2\)](#); [WAC 365-196-410](#)

Relationship between Housing Element and Housing Action Plan

In 2019, many cities across Washington state were awarded grants from Washington State Department of Commerce to prepare a Housing Action Plan (HAP). The process of developing a HAP includes preparing a housing needs assessment and conducting an evaluation of existing policies, plans and regulations in relation to identified needs or gaps.² The HAP should also include strategies to address housing needs and an implementation plan. This work can be directly used to support future housing element updates. Other portions of the HAP can be used to guide action steps for the housing element.

Exhibit 2. Relationship between a Housing Action Plan and Comprehensive Plan



Source: Commerce, 2020; BERK, 2020

² See [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan](https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/) (Commerce, 2020) at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/>.

Chapter 2. Housing Needs Assessment

This chapter reviews requirements for cities and counties planning under GMA to conduct a housing needs assessment (HNA) as part of their comprehensive plan update. It also provides guidance for evaluating progress towards your housing targets and conducting a land capacity analysis. For more detailed guidance on preparing an HNA, see the separate report from Commerce: [Guidance for Developing a Housing Needs Assessment](#).³

An HNA is a study to identify current and future housing needs to serve all economic segments of the community. To do this task, your HNA should answer the following kinds of questions:

- Who lives and works here and what are their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics?
- What types of housing currently exist in the community?
- Are there any groups of people who are not able to find housing that is safe, affordable and meets their household needs? If so, what are their housing needs?
- How many new units are needed to accommodate current needs as well as planned population growth over the 20-year planning horizon? How is this broken down by affordability level?
- What types of housing could accommodate these needs and price points?
- Is there enough buildable land capacity to accommodate this growth and housing diversity?

Answering these questions typically involves the quantitative analysis of data from the Census, county assessor, city permit records or other sources. However, important insights should also be gained through engagement with community members and service providers that can describe challenges that are not well reflected in available data. See the "[Public Engagement](#)" section of Chapter 7 of this guidance for a more detailed discussion of public and stakeholder engagement.

Requirements for an HNA

The housing needs assessment should include two of the four housing element topics required by the Growth Management Act⁴:

- *1) An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;*
- *3) Identification of sufficient land for housing including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes and foster care facilities.*

Jurisdictions should begin preparing their HNA in advance of (or as a first step to) the comprehensive plan update. The HNA should consider population and housing growth targets and how that will impact land use and capital facility investments.

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) provides advisory guidance for completing a housing element.⁵ It recommends that jurisdictions complete an inventory and needs assessment, and identifies specific components for analysis. The inventory should include information about current housing including number of units, types of housing and affordability. It should also include information about housing for populations that

³ Find this report on the Commerce website at:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/>

⁴ RCW 36.70A.070(2)

⁵ WAC 365-196-410

may have special needs such as the elderly, differently abled or people with low incomes. A needs assessment should also determine housing needed to accommodate the populations at the end of the planning period and ensure sufficient land capacity to meet these needs.

[Exhibit 3](#) provides a detailed list of information that can be included in your HNA. It also notes which of these topics are required or recommended for cities and counties preparing an HNA as part of their GMA comprehensive plan update (see "GMA Housing Element"). To read a more detailed description about what each of these topics entails, see [Guidance for Developing a Housing Needs Assessment](#). These required and recommended topics are similar to those required for inclusion in a Housing Action Plan (HAP), described in RCW 36.70A.600(2). Those cities preparing a HAP can typically use the same HNA to support their subsequent housing element update.

Housing Targets

Chapter 3 describes how 20-year population growth targets are developed by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) for each county, and then allocated to cities, urban growth areas and rural areas as a countywide process. Based on countywide population growth targets, individual jurisdictions should ensure their portion of the housing growth targets can be accommodated within the existing or planned capacity of land and capital facilities.⁶

In addition to determining the total number of housing units needed to accommodate projected growth, jurisdictions also should review if there are any existing housing gaps that exist today and identify types of housing needed based on the income levels of current and expected future residents. This section provides guidance on how to determine if there are existing housing gaps, or underproduction, within your community and how to develop future housing targets broken down by different income segments based on population growth targets. It also explains how to track progress toward those targets. For more information on how to break down total housing unit targets by types of housing that are aligned with housing needs, see "[Targets by Housing Unit Types](#)" in Chapter 4.

⁶ See WAC 365-196-410 (2d)

Exhibit 3. Comparison of Various Housing Planning Requirements

Housing Needs Assessment	GMA Housing Element	HB-1923 Housing Action Plan	HUD Consolidated Plan
Community Profile			
Population Characteristics			
Count of population	•	•	•
Population by age group		•	•
Population diversity: Race, ethnicity, languages spoken, etc		o	•
Population forecasts	20-year	Planning period	5 -year
Household Characteristics			
Household count	•	•	•
Household sizes		•	•
Household types		o	
Household tenure (rental versus ownership)	•	•	•
Overcrowding estimates			•
Household income and cost burden	•	•	•
Extremely low-, low-, moderate-, and middle-income families	•	•	•
Displacement risk		•	
Special Housing Needs			
Groups with special housing needs	o	o	•
Individuals and families experiencing homelessness	o	o	•
Workforce Profile			
Local workforce characteristics		o	
Jobs to housing ratio	o	o	
Employment trends and projections	o	•	
Housing Supply			
General Housing Inventory			
Unit count by type (single or multifamily, manufactured)	•	•	•
Size (number of bedrooms)	•	•	•
Housing Market Conditions			
Housing development trends		o	
Sales prices	o	o	
Rental rates	o	o	
Vacancy rate		o	
Housing condition			
Housing production			o
Housing affordability	o	o	o
Special Housing Inventory			
Subsidized/public housing units	•	•	•
Group homes or care facilities	•	•	•
Housing for homeless individuals: shelters, transitional housing, etc	o	o	
Gap analysis			
Quantity of housing units available to various income brackets	•	•	•
Alignment of household size to housing unit sizes	o	o	•
Units needed for special demographic groups	o	o	•
Projection of future housing demand	•	•	
Land capacity analysis			
Land available to meet housing unit demand	•	•	
Land available to meet special housing needs	o	o	

Legend

- Requirement
- o Recommendation

Sources: WAC [365-196-410](#), RCW [36.70A.600](#), HUD Consolidated Plan [24 CFR Part 91](#)

Underproduction

In recent years, housing production decreased after the great recession of 2008. Fewer housing units combined with significant in-migration into Washington state has led to an imbalance in supply and demand of housing. This imbalance is evident in the abnormally low vacancy rates across many jurisdictions in the state which many speculate has led to escalated prices. This overall lack of supply has been called underproduction.⁷ To truly meet a community's housing needs, a community should examine the level of underproduction and factor that into their plans for future housing. While there are several methods to calculate underproduction,⁸ a simple approach most consistent with the methodology in this guidance and Commerce's Guidance for Developing a Housing Needs Assessment includes the following steps:

- 1) Go to data.census.gov and pull up Occupancy Status (TableID: B25002) for your jurisdiction. This table provides total units, occupied units, and vacant units.
- 2) Calculate the vacancy rate by dividing vacant units by total units (vacant units/total units). If the rate is less than 5%, there is a shortage of housing; move on to Step 3. If the vacancy rate is 5% or greater, there may not be a noticeable underproduction issue within your community.
- 3) Calculate the total units needed to bring the vacancy rate to 5% by dividing the occupied units by 0.95.
- 4) Calculate the baseline housing deficit by subtracting the total existing units from the total units calculated in Step 3 (total units needed – total existing units).

It is important to note that this baseline housing deficit or underproduction calculation, has the potential to oversimplify baseline housing deficits and needs. Additionally, caution should be used in areas with significant numbers of vacation homes or short-term rentals. In those areas, consider using the Vacancy Status (TableID: B25004) estimates from the Census' American Community Survey (ACS) to refine these calculations by subtracting units "for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use" from both the vacant units and the total units before Step 2 if you are assuming these are units that are not effectively available on the market for long-term housing needs.⁹ Even with this adjustment, jurisdictions facing this issue should be careful when interpreting the results and consider other indicators of baseline housing deficits that are more targeted at specific populations in need. [Leavenworth's Housing Needs Assessment](#) provides one example of how to examine the housing needs of specific populations while considering the city's high demand for vacation homes.

Targets for Total Housing Growth

[Exhibit 4](#) walks through an example method for calculating housing growth targets based on the City of Yakima's 2040 population target. Here the City of Yakima assumes that current average household size will remain constant over the entire planning horizon. However, some jurisdictions may wish to consider whether the average household size may be expected to change in future years due to the kinds of new housing that are anticipated to be built or demographic trends. In many communities, household sizes have been declining over time -- particularly those in which much of the historic housing stock was single family homes but much of the newer development is multifamily.

⁷ Up for Growth, "[Housing Underproduction in Washington State](#)," 2020.

⁸ Other methods to calculate under production include the following: (1) Methodology in Up for Growth's "[Housing Underproduction in Washington State](#)," 2020. (2) Methodology in the [Palouse Regional Housing Assessment](#) (2019) on pages 96-99. (3) Methodology in [Redmond's Housing Needs Assessment](#) (2020) on pages 33-34, that is similar to the Up for Growth methodology.

⁹ Comparing property addresses to owners' addresses and reviewing utility records can provide additional information about vacant and second homes.

Exhibit 4. Example Method for Calculating a Housing Growth Target (City of Yakima)

Variable	Value	Notes
Estimated population in 2020	95,490	Source: OFM, 2020
Population target, 2040	110,387	Source: City of Yakima, 2017; Yakima County, 2017
Target population growth, 2020-2040	14,897	Target population minus 2020 population
Average household size	2.7	Source: American Community Survey Table S1101, 5-year estimates 2014-2018
Target household growth, 2020-2040	5,517	Planned population growth divided by assumed household size (assumes no growth in group quarter population)
Target housing unit growth, 2020-2040	5,808	Assumes 5% vacancy ¹⁰ (divide households by 0.95)
Average annual housing unit production needed to achieve target in 2040	290	Target housing unit growth divided by planning period (20 years)

Breaking Down the Housing Target to Income Segments

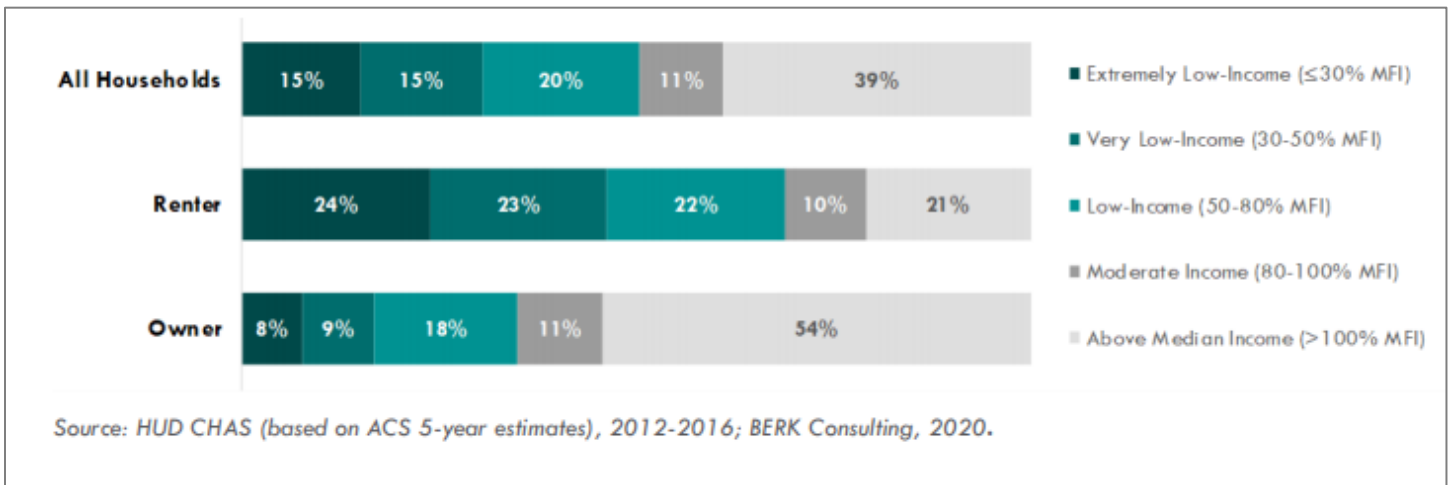
Unless there are specific countywide planning policies allocating how affordable housing is to be planned for or unique circumstances within the county, jurisdictions should assume that they should plan for housing to meet the needs of the various economic segments within the county. This is important because housing is regional in nature and people may not be able to afford to live in the community that they would otherwise choose. Commerce recommends projecting housing needs by income segments at both county and city levels and selecting targets that are appropriate for your unique circumstances that meet the goal for affordable housing.¹¹

A simple way to translate future housing needs into income brackets is to take the projected housing needs and break them down by the income segments within the county. Continuing the example, we use Department of Housing and Urban Development's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data to understand the approximate distribution of income segments in Yakima County. [Exhibit 5](#) and [Exhibit 6](#) show both City of Yakima and Yakima County's households by income segment. These graphics show there are proportionately more lower-income people within this particular city, which you might expect given subsidized housing within urban areas. Using the countywide breakdown of housing needs by income level, the City of Yakima would need to provide the number of units shown in [Exhibit 7](#).

¹⁰ A five percent vacancy rate across all housing types (ownership and rental included) is generally considered enough to provide for housing choices and options for residents seeking to move. Vacancy rates much higher than this indicate an oversupply of housing which can depress housing values. A lower vacancy rate results in increased competition for housing and can drive up housing prices.

¹¹ For example, if you're calculating housing targets for Federal Way, using King County's income breakdown for future growth may not be appropriate, given that the county's incomes are so much higher than local incomes, and will continue to be so in the future.

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Households by Income Level in City of Yakima, 2012-2016



Source: [City of Yakima DRAFT Housing Needs Assessment](#), April 22, 2020

Exhibit 6. Percentage of Households by Income Level in Yakima County, 2013-2017

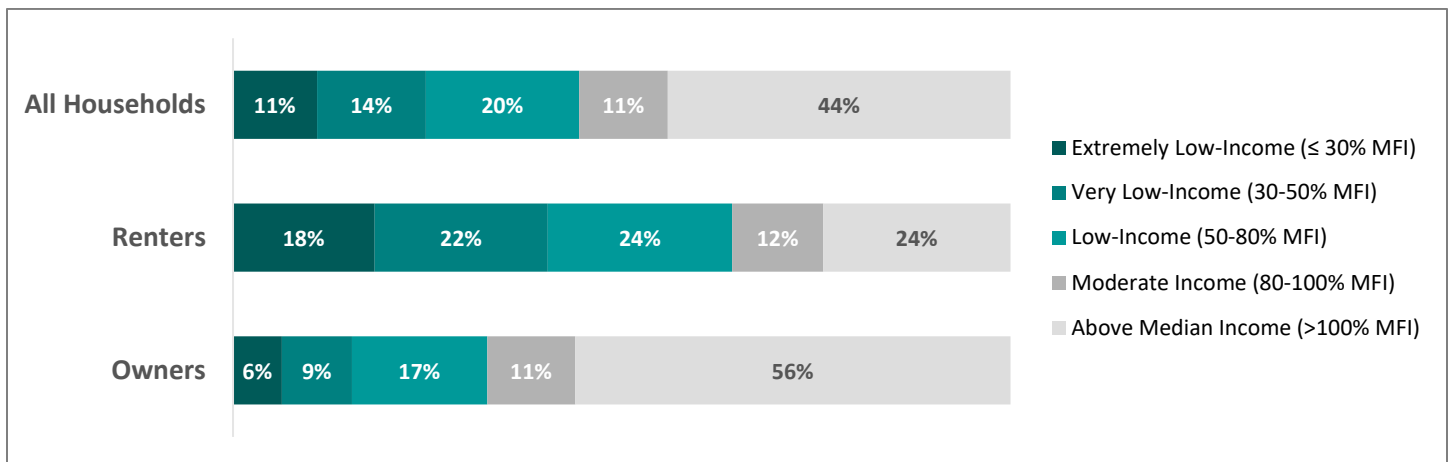


Exhibit 7. Growth Related Housing Need by Income Segment

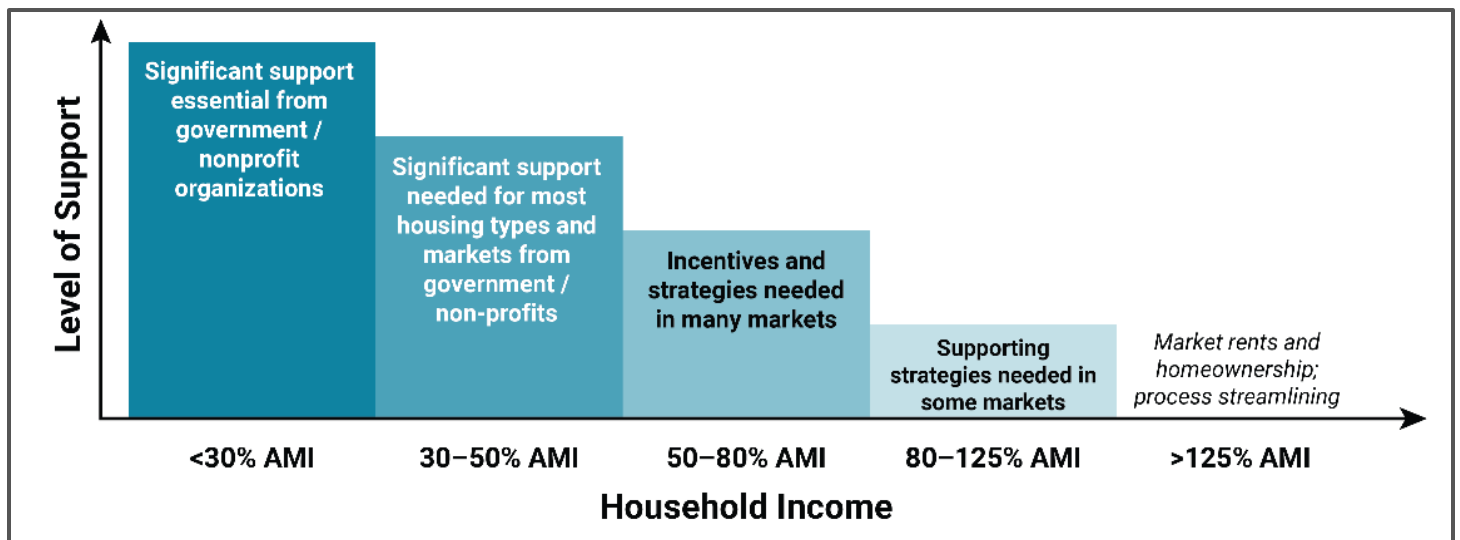
Household Income Distribution (MFI = median family income)	County Percentage	Total Future Units Needed
Extremely Low-Income (\leq 30% MFI)	10.8%	625
Very Low-Income (30-50% MFI)	14.0%	811
Low-Income (50-80% MFI)	19.7%	1,147
Moderate Income (80-100% MFI)	11.4%	664
Above Median Income ($>$ 100% MFI)	44.1%	2,562
TOTAL	100.0%	5,808

Source: HUD CHAS, 2013-2017

[Exhibit 7](#) shows that the majority of future housing will be needed at the $>$ 100% area median income (AMI) bracket (2,562 units or 44%), and 2,583 housing units (or 44%) will be needed at the low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income segments. Special measures will be needed to encourage and enable production of new housing or rehabilitation of existing housing to meet the needs of these groups. [Exhibit 8](#) below notes that subsidies, incentives and partnerships are necessary to achieve housing for lower income segments (100% AMI and below). In addition to new production, "filtering" may help to meet the needs of lower income segments in some markets. Filtering is the idea that as new market-rate housing is built, higher-income people move into it, leaving behind older housing stock for lower-income people.

In order to plan for the lower income segments, we need to make assumptions about the types of housing each household is likely to occupy. It can be assumed that the extremely low- and very low-income segments will require multifamily housing, manufactured housing, and/or subsidized housing (25% of housing needs). Low-income housing needs may be met with attached housing types (20%), and moderate and higher income segment will be able to afford single-family housing (55%). In addition to tailoring housing typologies and associated policies to meet the needs of lower income segments, support will be needed for developers of affordable housing. See [Chapter 6. Identifying Strategies to Implement Your Policies](#) for more on strategies to meet various housing needs.

Exhibit 8. Strategies Needed for Different Income Segments



Source: BERK, 2020

Evaluating Progress toward Housing Targets

After adopting housing targets, jurisdictions should evaluate their past progress towards their housing targets. The purpose is to determine whether the jurisdiction's rate of growth puts it on track to meet or exceed its planned target, or whether additional actions may be necessary to encourage certain types of housing production. This evaluation should also look at the production of various housing types to meet housing needs.

Data about historic housing production can be in city or county permit records or summarized in [annual housing unit estimates](#) from OFM.¹² When using permit data, make sure to subtract demolished units to calculate the net new housing units added during the period of analysis.

[Exhibit 9](#) provides an example summarizing net new units with City of Yakima permit data between 2015 and 2019. During this period, a total of 1,391 net new units were produced, or about 278 units per year. This is slightly short of the 290 units needed each year to reach the city's housing target (see [Exhibit 4](#) above). However, the last two years in this series show an uptick in housing production of attached and multifamily types, following adoption of the city's comprehensive plan in 2017 and subsequent implementing actions. Continued monitoring of this trend will help determine whether additional actions are necessary to encourage an increase in housing production or additional incentives are necessary to guide production towards attached units for people with lower incomes.

¹² See the "Housing units Excel" link on this page: <https://www.ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-estimates/april-1-official-population-estimates>, which includes permits, completions, and demolitions for various housing types.

Exhibit 9. Permitted Housing Units in City of Yakima, 2015 - 2019

Housing Type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Single Family	114	107	90	144	89	544
Duplex	26	40	32	70	96	264
Multifamily with 3 & 4 unit in structure	3	0	3	36	35	77
Multifamily with 5 + unit in structure	0	0	0	15	616	631
Mobile Home	15	10	18	15	16	74
Total New	158	157	143	280	852	1,590
Demolitions (all types)	40	29	27	48	55	199
Net New Units (all types)	118	128	116	232	797	1,391
Average Annual Net New Units (2015-2019)	278					

Source: City of Yakima; BERK 2020

If the City of Yakima had adopted targets by housing type, rather than a total housing production target, then this same kind of analysis could be used to determine whether there has been an over- or under-production of units within any of those types compared to the targets. See "[Targets by Housing Unit Types](#)" in Chapter 4 for additional guidance on creating targets by housing unit type based on housing needs.

Land Capacity Analysis

The GMA requires that housing elements identify "mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing" and "sufficient land for housing including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes and foster care facilities."¹³ In other words, the HNA should evaluate whether the jurisdiction has sufficient land capacity available to allow for the types of new housing needed to meet identified housing needs.¹⁴

One way to fulfill this requirement is conducting a land capacity analysis (LCA). This is a study conducted by counties and cities to determine the amount of vacant, partially used and under-utilized lands, as well as the redevelopment potential of built properties, to accommodate new residential development. This process identifies the potential for land within a community's boundaries to accommodate anticipated housing growth, given its current zoning restrictions. Analysis is typically conducted with Geographic Information System (GIS) and should consider capacity by housing type, such as single family detached, single family attached (e.g.,

¹³ RCW 36.70A.070(2)

¹⁴ RCW 36.70A.115 says that fully planning counties and their cities must "provide sufficient capacity of land suitable for development within their jurisdictions to accommodate their allocated housing and employment growth." This guidance focuses on the housing portion of sufficient capacity within this statute.

duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes), and multifamily units. Counties and cities use an LCA to determine if existing urban growth areas (UGAs) can accommodate twenty years of urban growth. The LCA involves applying assumptions of future densities and deduction factors, such as critical areas, rights-of-way and a market factor since all land is not going to be available for sale within the planning period. It is important to check whether these assumptions are realistic based on past development trends.

To inform the housing element update, you should review the LCA and consider how likely it is that designated zones will produce housing of different densities, types and affordability levels. See [Chapter 4. Housing Element Review](#) regarding the review of future land use designations and targets by housing unit types for more information. A more detailed discussion of methodology is also available in the [Department of Commerce's UGA Guidebook](#) (2012)¹⁵, starting on page 84.

Requirements for Buildable Lands Counties

If you are in a “buildable lands” county, subject to RCW 36.70A.215, then your jurisdiction has extra responsibilities. These counties (which include Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom) and the cities and towns within their boundaries, must gather data on the density and type of development that is occurring to understand whether development is occurring as planned. Unlike the LCA, which looks forward at how your current capacity and new population targets will work as you update your plan, buildable lands looks back at how your current comprehensive plan is functioning and whether the jurisdiction met their assumed density goals. The buildable lands review must be completed prior to the periodic review and update of the comprehensive plan and development regulations required under RCW 36.70A.130. If actual development patterns are different than those planned for in the comprehensive plan, the jurisdiction must adopt “reasonable measures” that will address those inconsistencies during the next update period. Any observations on development patterns and achieved densities are useful for making assumptions about undeveloped land and can be used for completing an LCA.

Revisions to the buildable statute under Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5284 (2017) now requires a deeper analysis related to the availability of infrastructure and housing affordability. In response, Commerce developed two new guidance documents, [Buildable Lands Guidelines \(2018\)](#) and [Housing Memo: Issues Affecting Housing Availability and Affordability](#). The guidelines provide general guidance for developing a land capacity analysis. The Housing Memo provides information on housing economics and provides advice for addressing various trends in the housing market.

Technical Resources

[UGA Guidebook \(Department of Commerce, 2012\)](#) - Detailed guidance for land capacity analysis methodology can be found starting on **page 84**.

[Buildable Lands Guidelines \(Department of Commerce, 2018\)](#) - Guidance on methodology starts on **page 30**.

[Housing Memo: Issues Affecting Housing Availability and Affordability \(Department of Commerce, 2019\)](#) - Considerations for housing trends in your community.

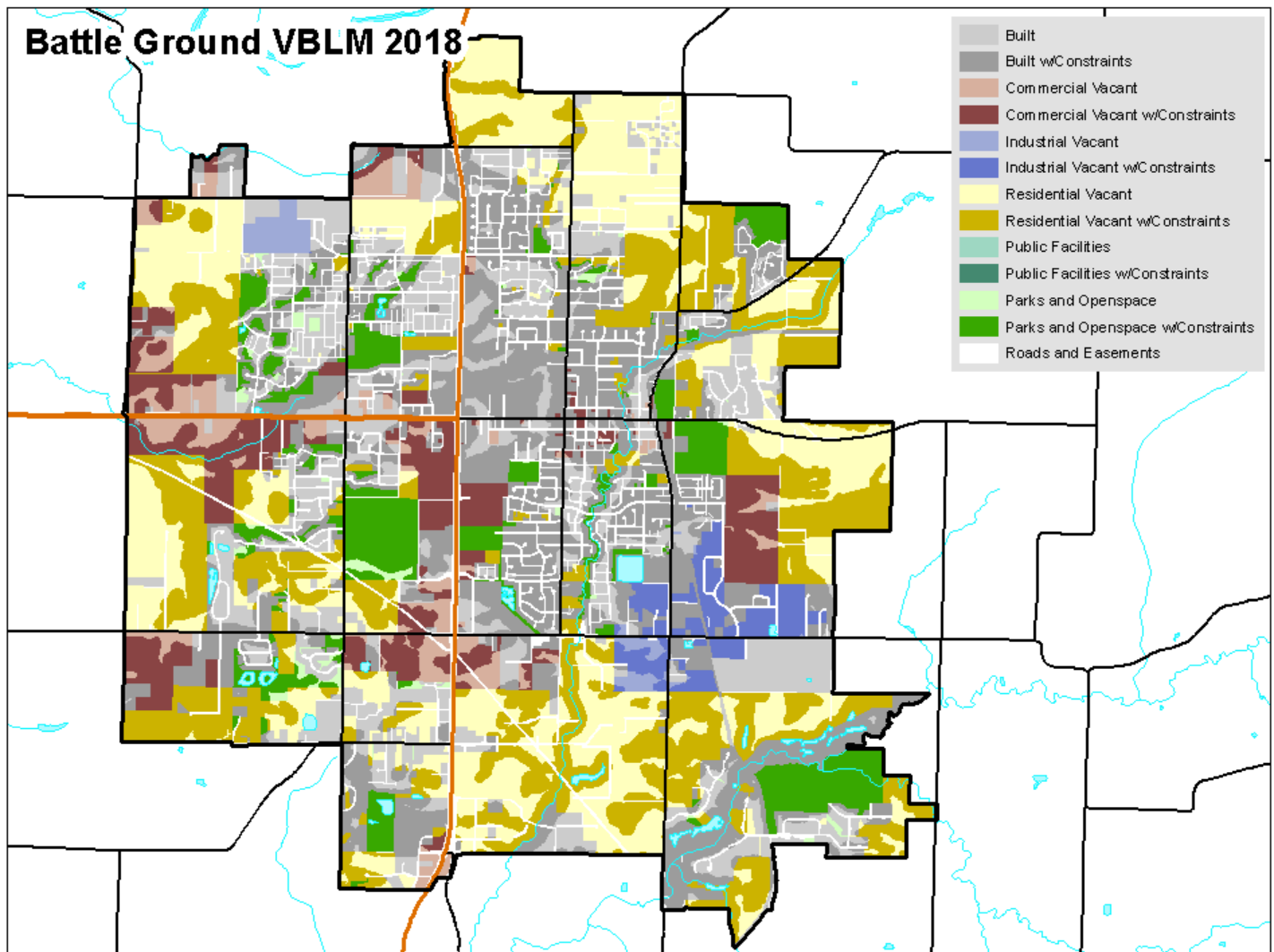
County-level buildable lands reporting should offer detailed methodology notes for reference by included communities.

¹⁵ <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/pnkar5j81ghxrqfdgr3ofa7pmw5v37da>

Calculating Available Land Capacity for Residential Development

Each community should review available land for development, and assess whether existing zoning provides capacity for a sufficient number of housing units to meet the 20-year population forecast. Associated housing targets may also include housing type and density assumptions which are needed to estimate the amount of land needed to meet housing targets. The capacity for future housing units should close the gap between the existing housing inventory and projected needs accounting for unit size, affordability and type, while taking into account regional housing needs. [Exhibit 10](#) maps vacant and underutilized parcels for Battle Ground, a first step in estimating available land for development.

Exhibit 10. Clark County Parcel Capacity Designations for Battle Ground, 2018



Source: [Clark County Vacant Buildable Lands Model \(VBLM\) Maps and Data, 2018](#)

The LCA steps that focus on housing and affordability include the following:

1. Calculate total available land capacity by zone.
 - Identify parcels where residential or mixed-use development are permitted.

- Classify each parcel as either vacant, partially-utilized, under-utilized or developed. Jurisdictions must select a reasonable threshold for determining which parcels are partially-utilized, under-utilized or built-out.
 - Vacant parcels have no development.
 - Partially-utilized parcels have some development, but contain enough land to be subdivided without an upzone.¹⁶
 - Under-utilized parcels are built at a density level significantly below what is allowed under current zoning. Therefore, they could conceivably see redevelopment during the planning period.¹⁷
 - Developed parcels already built out are not expected to see additional infill or redevelopment activity.
2. Subtract land that will not see new residential development. This typically includes critical areas, utility easements and lands for public uses such as parks and schools, but may also include other local factors such as historic districts.
 3. Identify any infrastructure and utility service gaps that could inhibit residential development during the planning period. Review whether service is planned within the capital facilities or transportation elements. If it is not planned, this points to infrastructure as a strategy to address affordability.¹⁸
 4. Calculate total number of parcels and total acreage classified for accommodating growth by zone. Deduct a percentage of acreage for infrastructure such as roads and market factors.¹⁹ Consider whether deductions should be adjusted for vacant, partially-utilized and under-utilized lands.
 5. Use current zoning and density assumptions to estimate the total capacity for housing on these parcels.
 6. Subtract housing that already exists on these parcels from the total capacity to estimate the net new housing units that could be built.
 7. Summarize total capacity for net-new housing in each zone. Then, based on allowed housing types in each zone, summarize potential capacity by housing type. Select categories for summarization that align with housing targets (or vice-versa). For example:
 - Single-family detached
 - Single-family attached
 - Multifamily

Comparing Capacity to Housing Targets

After completing an LCA, the next step is comparing capacity to projected housing needs. This analysis should help answer the following questions:

¹⁶ When setting these thresholds, consider local context, current market building trends and possibly a simple pro-forma analysis. Examples of thresholds for vacant, partially-used and under-utilized parcels have been set by Whatcom County and are included on page 95 and 96 of the [Urban Growth Area Handbook](#) (2012).

¹⁷ Some communities use a ratio of a parcel's improvement to land value to determine if a parcel is underutilized. In Kittitas County, if that value is below 0.5, they assume the parcel is underutilized and available for additional development. The county also assumes that any single-family home on a commercial, industrial or multi-family parcel is underutilized and can be removed for redevelopment. ([BERK, 2016](#))

¹⁸ See WAC 365-196-325 to 330 for details on infrastructure phasing. A dedicated funding source or sources must be a part of the six-year capital improvement plan. The 20-year capital facilities plan should support the desired growth patterns. See [Commerce's Capital Facilities Planning Guidebook](#) (2014) for more guidance on planning for and financing infrastructure and services needed to accommodate anticipated growth.

¹⁹ A market factor is often set in countywide planning policies, and are usually consistent across the county, but may be adjusted on type of land use. County-level buildable lands reports are a good resource for estimating these percentage deductions. For example, Snohomish County uses a market factor of roughly 17% based on information collected from surveys.

- Is there enough buildable land capacity to accommodate the total net new housing units projected to be needed for the planning period?
- Based on assumptions about the affordability of various types of housing, is there enough zoned capacity to accommodate future needs by housing type?

Other Questions the LCA Can Help Answer

- Is the new capacity in areas with the greatest opportunity? Map land capacity along with "opportunity" factors such as public transportation, job centers, schools and amenity clusters. Note areas in the community where zoned capacity is low, while opportunities are present. These may be focus areas for zoning and land use changes.
- Are there infrastructure gaps that could slow or hinder development? Use maps to show where public infrastructure is not available to support new growth. These areas should be a focus of public investment in infrastructure and should be addressed in the capital facilities element.
- What do the results tell you about the 'key findings' list from the gap analysis? Compare these findings with the needs in the HNA to identify where gaps exist, and what types of changes to the housing element, development regulations, development review processes or development incentives may be necessary to encourage the needed types of development.

What if There is Not Enough Capacity?

If your land capacity analysis shows there is insufficient capacity to meet new housing demand, or doesn't allow for the types of housing in greatest need, you should first consider increasing allowed residential densities and housing types within existing zones to increase capacity. This should be considered in combination with the housing needs and incomes of the community to ensure alignment of zoned capacity with housing needs and housing production targets by housing type.

Another option is to examine other zones, such as the potential for mixed-use or residential development in excess commercially-zoned land. Increasing densities in existing zones or encouraging redevelopment of excess commercial land can leverage your existing infrastructure investments. You also could consider reassessing your growth targets with your county planning partners, or expanding the UGA boundary in areas suitable for development. Expanding UGA boundaries should include consideration for the cost of providing infrastructure in new areas. For more information, refer to Commerce's [Urban Growth Area Guidebook](#).

- If an examination of affordability shows there are not enough ownership units at the low end of the spectrum, then increasing density through land use and zoning changes to allow smaller and more attached units may be an important strategy. When adding attached units as an allowed use, it may be useful to reconsider the use of unit-based densities (e.g., seven units per acre), and instead consider minimum lot size (e.g., 6,000 square feet) so that a given parcel is able to add units through attached housing types and not be limited by density restrictions. Infrastructure must be considered with these changes. See Commerce's [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan \(2020\)](#) for a more detailed discussion of these and other strategies.
- If the gap analysis shows there are not enough rental apartments, additional land may need to be zoned at multifamily densities. Local strategies may require incentives such as bonus densities for the development of more rental units or, if eligible, incentives such as multifamily tax exemption.

Land Available to Meet Special Housing Needs

Another useful analysis is a review of properly zoned land to allow for the development of housing for special needs populations. The housing element requires local governments to identify “sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing and group homes and foster care facilities” ([RCW 36.70A.070\(2\)](#)). The gap analysis between the community profile and housing inventory is an opportunity to review where there are sufficient facilities. The land capacity analysis provides the opportunity to determine whether there is enough land zoned to allow construction of senior homes, group homes or other types of needed housing identified in the needs analysis. You should also consider if available land is located in areas with sufficient amenities, such as transit and other services.

Next Steps: How the HNA fits into your Comprehensive Plan

As noted above, an HNA should be prepared in advance of the comprehensive plan update and consider population and housing growth targets. The HNA should inform housing element goals and policies, as discussed in [Chapter 5. Updating Goals and Policies](#). Typically, the HNA is integrated with the comprehensive plan as an appendix, separate from the housing element.

Chapter 3. Countywide Planning Policies

The Growth Management Act (GMA) includes a requirement that fully planning counties and their cities develop countywide planning policies (CPPs) to promote coordination and consistency for items of regional importance within the county (see [Exhibit 11](#) below). The framework CPPs²⁰ must include policies for:

- Designating urban growth areas (UGAs) per RCW 36.70A.110;
- Promoting contiguous and orderly development and providing urban services to such development;
- Siting public capital facilities of a countywide or statewide nature, including transportation facilities of statewide significance as defined in RCW 47.06.140;
- Countywide transportation facilities and strategies;
- Considering the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution;
- Joint county and city planning within urban growth areas;
- Countywide economic development and employment, which must include consideration of the future development of commercial and industrial facilities; and
- Analysis of the fiscal impact.

Many of these CPP topics directly or indirectly inform a coordinated county-city approach to housing including: allocating population growth among cities, unincorporated urban growth areas and rural areas; providing necessary infrastructure for housing (water, sewer, roads, etc.) and services to support residents (fire, school, parks, transit, etc.); fair share of affordable housing (subsidized, permanent supportive housing, shelters) and their siting within the county; joint planning for housing in unincorporated UGAs; and the support of economic development with workforce housing.

This chapter provides an overview of the role of CPPs in preparing and updating housing elements, and in guiding collective strategies to achieve affordable housing. It is organized as follows:

- Coordinated housing planning under the GMA
- Updating countywide planning policies
- Example countywide planning policies for housing
- Regional housing studies and strategies

Coordinated Housing Planning Under the GMA

The GMA includes specific requirements for how cities and counties should plan for housing, including especially housing affordable to lower-income households. The requirements apply in the 28 “fully planning” counties that must plan under the GMA (see [Exhibit 11](#)). Implementation of the GMA is guided by 14 overlapping goals including a housing goal (see sidebar).

GMA Housing Goal

The GMA housing goal is to “encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.” ([RCW 36.70A.020](#))

Countywide Planning Policies must include policies that consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution. ([RCW 36.70A.210 \(3\)\(e\)](#))

²⁰ RCW 36.70A.210

As housing is of a regional nature, countywide planning policies are an important tool to coordinate local approaches. Countywide planning policies should establish goals and policies that are consistent with the GMA housing goal, and provide a framework to address local and regional needs. The CPP policy topics must consider the need for affordable housing, for all economic segments and parameters for its distribution (see sidebar on previous page). Some counties include housing targets within CPPs. Local goals and policies must be consistent with countywide planning policies.²¹

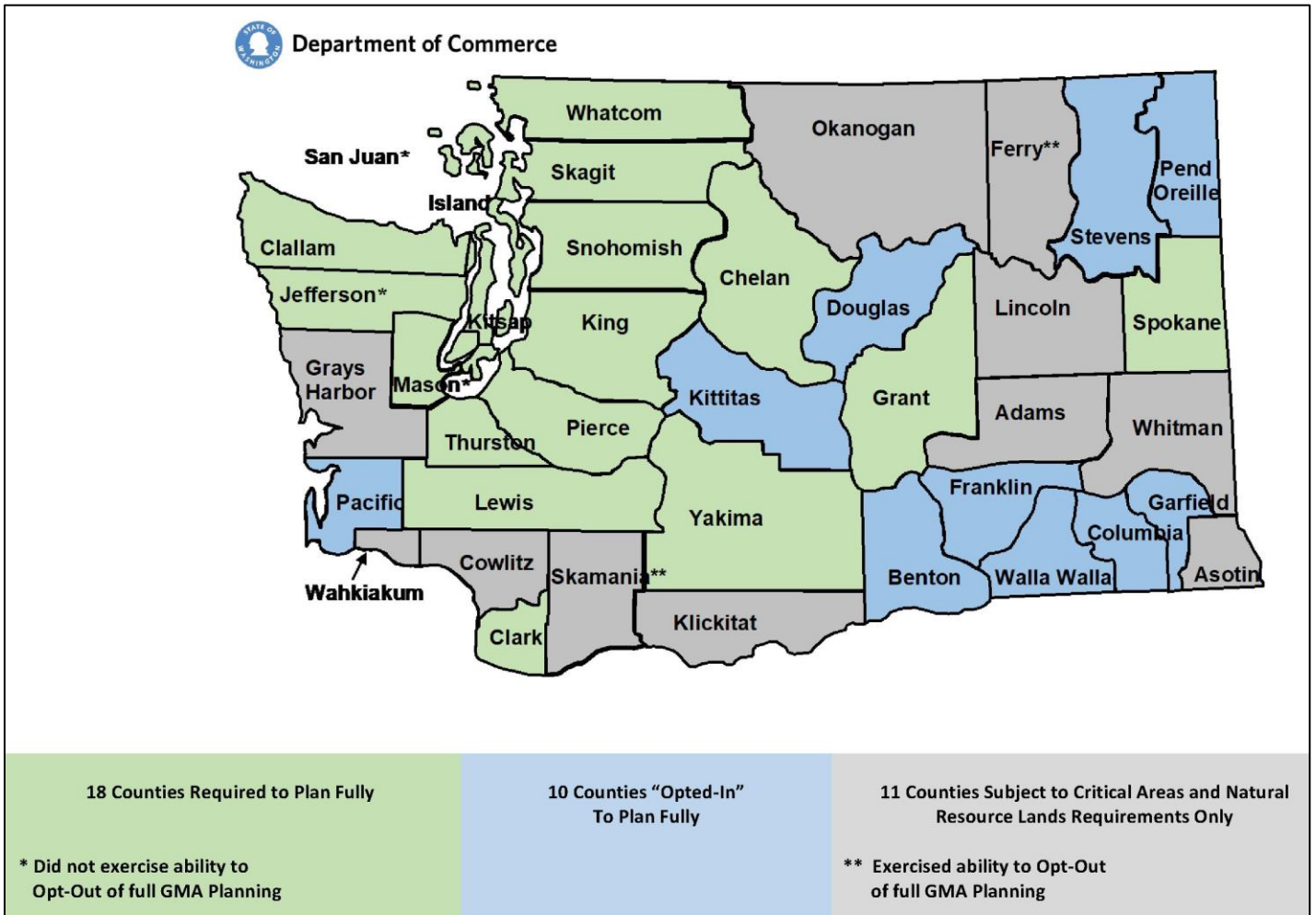
The policies of city and county comprehensive plans in Kitsap, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties must also be consistent with the multicounty planning policies (MPPs) in [Vision 2050](#) approved by the General Assembly of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in October 2020. VISION 2050 includes a housing vision and housing goal, which reflect the GMA housing goal (see sidebar). The vision and goal emphasize a range of housing choices and affordability across income levels. The related housing policies also address health and safety, equity, preventing displacement, supporting ownership and public cooperation to provide housing for the most vulnerable (see [Exhibit 12](#)). Vision 2050 includes several actions for local jurisdictions: to conduct a housing needs analysis, to consider affordable housing incentives such as inclusionary and incentive zoning regulations, to assess displacement risk, and to update housing regulations to remove barriers to housing development.

Vision 2050 Housing Goal:

"The region preserves, improves and expands its housing stock to provide a range of affordable, accessible, healthy and safe housing choices to every resident. The region continues to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people."

²¹ See Paul Stickney and Richard Birgh v. City of Sammamish, Case No. 15-3-0017.

Exhibit 11: "Fully Planning" Counties in Washington State



Source: Washington State Department of Commerce, 2017

Exhibit 12. PSRC's VISION 2050 Plan

"VISION 2050 calls for cities and counties to support the building of more diverse housing types, especially near transit, services, and jobs, to ensure all residents have the opportunity to live in thriving urban places. VISION 2050 also calls for more housing affordable to low- and very low-income households. It recognizes that providing long-term affordable housing for the region's most vulnerable residents requires public intervention through funding, collaboration, and jurisdictional action and cannot be met by market forces alone." ([Vision 2050](#), page 4)

- MPP-H-1: Plan for housing supply, forms and densities to meet the region's current and projected needs consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and to make significant progress towards jobs/housing balance.
- MPP-H-2: Provide a range of housing types and choices to meet the housing needs of all income levels and demographic groups within the region.
- MPP-H-3: Achieve and sustain – through preservation, rehabilitation and new development – a sufficient supply of housing to meet the needs of low-income, moderate-income, middle-income and special needs individuals and households that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the region.
- MPP-H-4: Address the need for housing affordable to low- and very low-income households, recognizing that these critical needs will require significant public intervention through funding, collaboration and jurisdictional action.
- MPP-H-5: Promote homeownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families and individuals while recognizing historic inequities in access to homeownership opportunities for communities of color.
- MPP-H-6: Develop and provide a range of housing choices for workers at all income levels throughout the region that is accessible to job centers and attainable to workers at anticipated wages.
- MPP-H-7: Expand the supply and range of housing at densities to maximize the benefits of transit investments, including affordable units, in growth centers and station areas throughout the region.
- MPP-H-8: Promote the development and preservation of long-term affordable housing options in walking distance to transit by implementing zoning, regulations and incentives.
- MPP-H-9: Expand housing capacity for moderate density housing to bridge the gap between single-family and more intensive multifamily development and provide opportunities for more affordable ownership and rental housing that allows more people to live in neighborhoods across the region.
- MPP-H-10: Encourage jurisdictions to review and streamline development standards and regulations to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility and minimize additional costs to housing.
- MPP-H-11: Encourage interjurisdictional cooperative efforts and public-private partnerships to advance the provision of affordable and special needs housing.
- MPP-H-12: Identify potential physical, economic and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations that may result from planning, public investments, private redevelopment and market pressure. Use a range of strategies to mitigate displacement impacts to the extent feasible.

Source: PSRC, "[Vision 2050](#)," 2021. All policies above are direct quotes.

Updating Countywide Planning Policies

Each fully planning county has adopted countywide planning policies in cooperation with their cities. Typically, there is an interjurisdictional body that provides recommendations to the county legislative body, and a process by which the policies are reviewed and amended. For example, in some counties the interagency body provides recommendations to the county government. Some counties also have a ratification process where a number of cities representing a majority share of population must affirm the amendments prior to final approval by the county legislative body.

The original deadline for fully planning counties and cities to prepare CPPs was very early after the GMA was passed, as one of the first steps in implementing growth management (see [RCW 36.70A.210](#)). Most counties adopted policies in the mid-1990s, and have updated their policies at least once or more ([Exhibit 13](#)).

There is currently no recommendation to update countywide planning policies, however it may be appropriate to review and revise CPPs periodically. This update could be after a new 20-year population forecast from the state Office of Financial Management (generally every five years, RCW 36.70A.040) or prior to a periodic review and update (RCW 36.70A.130), as appropriate.

COUNTY-CITY INTERJURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION

Each county and city that develops CPPs often works through existing cooperative bodies or specifies the formation of such a body in its CPPs or in other interlocal agreements. Two examples are described below.

Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT): SCT began in March 1989 as a voluntary association of cities, towns, the county and the Tulalip Tribes. In July 1991, SCT agreed to use the SCT Goals as a basis for establishing the countywide planning policies required by RCW 36.70A.210. SCT has six committees that meet monthly. A full assembly of all the entities meets annually. Refinements and future amendments to CPPs involves one of the standing committees of SCT – usually, but not always, the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) – to take the lead in formulating draft policy amendments to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee then takes input and forwards its recommendation(s) to the county council. Finally, the council holds a public hearing and takes final action. A complete update of CPPs was accomplished in 2011 but there have been several amendments between 2011 and 2016.

Kittitas County Conference of Governments (KCCOG): This regional county-city body was organized under RCW 36.70.060. A primary duty at its founding in 1995 was to create the CPPs under GMA. The KCCOG also reviews population projections under GMA. A super majority vote is needed to decide issues of land use (60% of voting members representing 75% of population). The board meets monthly.

Exhibit 13. Countywide Planning Policies Dates Amended as of 2020

GMA Fully Planning Counties	CPPs Last Amended	GMA Fully Planning Counties	CPPs Last Amended	GMA Fully Planning Counties	CPPs Last Amended
Benton	2017	Jefferson	2015	San Juan	2008
Chelan	1992	King	2016	Skagit	2016
Clallam	2018	Kitsap	2015	Snohomish	2016
Clark	2016	Kittitas	2016	Spokane	2011
Columbia	2019	Lewis	2017	Stevens	1995
Douglas	2002	Mason	2016	Thurston	2015
Franklin	2019	Pacific	1997	Walla Walla	2005
Garfield	2008	Pend Oreille	2020	Whatcom	2005
Grant	2009	Pierce	2018	Yakima	2003
Island	2017				

Source: BERK review of County Countywide Planning Policies, October 2020

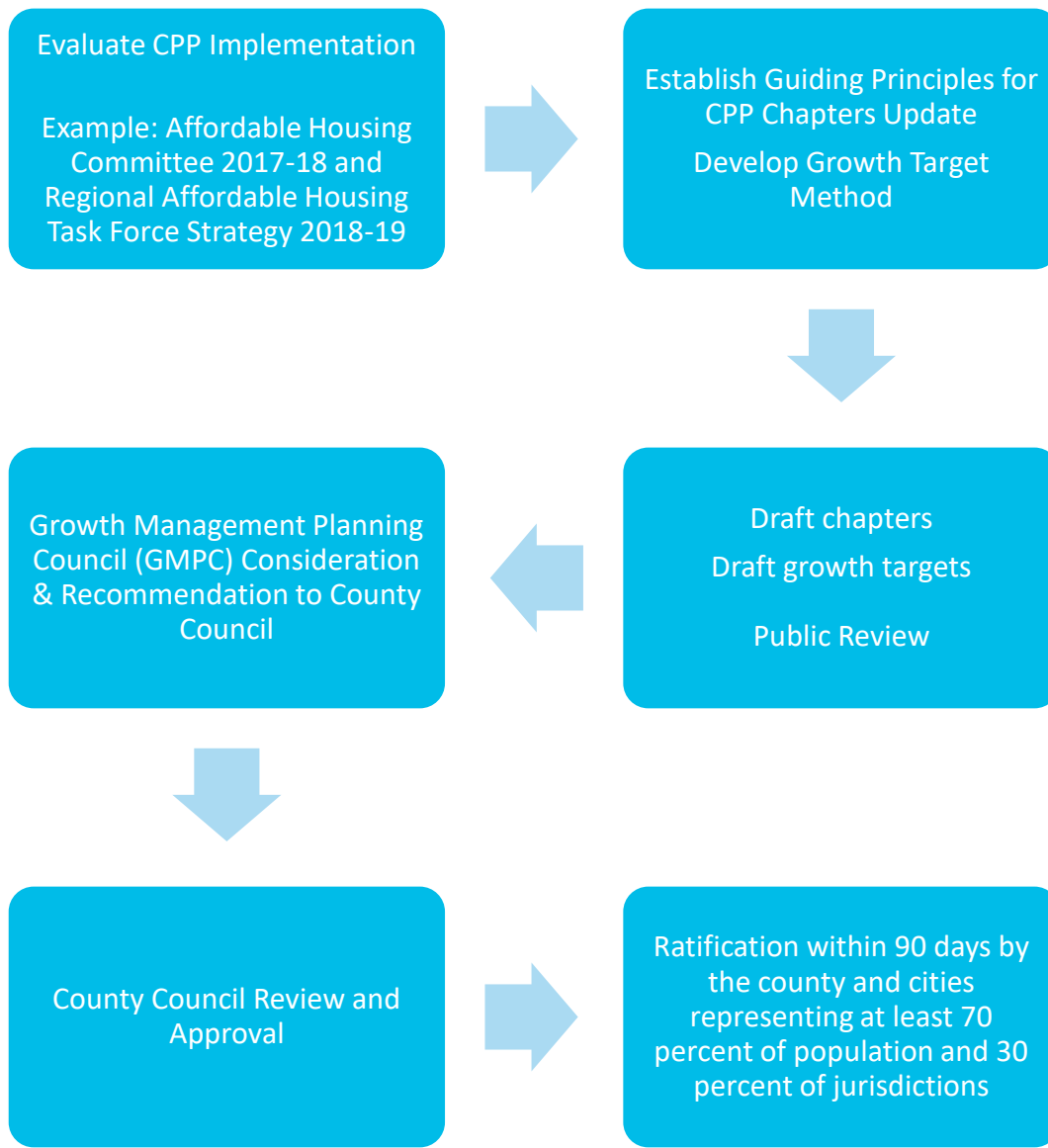
For example, King County is planning to prepare updates to CPPs to respond to OFM population allocations and prepare for a periodic review due by 2024. As part of the process, King County and its cities anticipate addressing the work of a 2017-2018 Affordable Housing Committee and to consider more local responsibility. Drawn from the 2018-19 Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Strategy²², one regional housing strategy likely to be considered in CPPs:

- "STRATEGY A: The Affordable Housing Committee will work with cities and the county to identify and prioritize new resources to build or preserve 44,000 units in the next five years and track progress toward the goal." The methods to address the strategy include more federal and state funding as well as "explore unused authority to raise revenue."

The King County process to update the CPPs regarding housing and other related growth management topics is illustrated in [Exhibit 14](#).

²² Regional Affordable Housing Task Force. December 2018; Revised October 2019. Final Report and Recommendations for King County, WA. Available: <https://kingcounty.gov/initiatives/affordablehousing.aspx>.

Exhibit 14. King County CPP Amendment Process, 2021

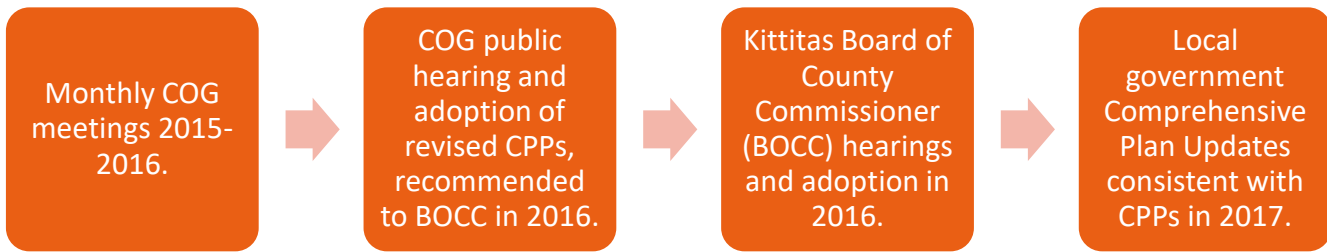


Source: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/regional-planning/Growth-Management/GMPC.aspx>

Other counties have similar procedures to amend their CPPs. Kittitas County's Conference of Governments (KCCOG), attended by elected officials from each city and the county, prepares policy amendments and approves them periodically. Since 1998, the CPPs had been lightly amended, but KCCOG conducted a thorough update of them in 2016 ([Exhibit 15](#)), ahead of the required periodic updates of county and city comprehensive plans, due in 2017.²³

²³ Per KCCOG bylaws, a super majority vote is needed to decide issues of land use (60% of voting members representing 75% of population).

Exhibit 15. Kittitas County Conference of Governments CPP Amendment Process, 2016



Example Countywide Planning Policies for Housing

One key function of CPPs or MPPs should be to provide a coordinated framework that ensures regional housing needs, including needs among households of all income levels, are collectively addressed in local housing plans. In other words, the goals and targets in local housing plans should, in aggregate, collectively address needs for housing by type in the county or multi-county area. This is because housing is a regional issue, and should be addressed at a regional level. Different counties and metropolitan regions have taken different approaches to creating this framework.

This section presents example policies in the following order, from most common to least common:

- Affordable Housing: "Policies that consider the need for affordable housing..." (RCW 36.70A.210(3)(e))
- Growth Target Allocation and Monitoring: Policies to implement urban growth areas (RCWs 36.70A.210(3)(a) and 36.70A.110) including specific policies regarding growth target allocations²⁴
- Fair Share Affordable Housing: "... housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution." (RCW 36.70A.210(3)(e))

Affordable Housing Policies

CPPs guide each community's housing element, and vary in their detail, including listing housing types or regulatory techniques to address housing affordability. See examples in [Exhibit 16](#).

Exhibit 16. Examples of Countywide Policies Regarding Affordable Housing

County	Policy Text Quote
Spokane County	<p>4. Each jurisdiction's development policies, regulations and standards should provide for the opportunity to create affordable housing in its community, such policies may include regulatory tools, such as inclusionary zoning, performance/impact zoning, mixed-use development and incentives for increasing density to promote greater choice and affordable housing.</p> <p>6. In conjunction with other policy topics, coordinate housing, transportation, and economic development strategies to ensure that sufficient land and densities for affordable housing are provided in locations readily accessible to employment centers.</p>

²⁴ A few counties and cities ratify growth targets in their CPPs, though most counties adopt growth targets in other formats outside their CPPs following interjurisdictional coordination.

County	Policy Text Quote
Snohomish County	<p>HO-2. The county and cities shall make provisions in their comprehensive plans to accommodate existing and projected housing needs, including a specific assessment of housing needs by economic segment within the community as indicated in the housing report prescribed in CPP.</p> <p>HO-5. Those provisions should consider the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Avoiding further concentrations of low-income and special needs housing. b. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable housing in urban centers. c. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable housing close to employment, education, shopping, public services, and public transit. d. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable and special needs housing in areas where affordable housing is currently lacking. e. Supporting affordable housing opportunities in other Snohomish County jurisdictions, as described below in CPP HO-4.
Clark County	<p>2.1.7. Encourage flexible and cost efficient land use regulations that allow for the creation of alternative housing types which will meet the needs of an economically diverse population.</p>
Walla Walla County	<p>8.5. The housing and land use elements of the local comprehensive plans will include an assessment of land availability and general criteria for siting special purpose housing within the UGA to ensure that such housing can be accommodated. The assessment should include the extent to which demands from all segments will be met.</p> <p>8.6. Special purpose housing should include, but not be limited to, migrant farm worker housing and homeless shelters, as well as transitional and/or group homes for the developmentally or mentally disabled, recovering chemically dependent persons and the chronic mentally ill.</p>
Whatcom County	<p>5. The county and the cities shall review existing regulations and policies that exclude or discourage affordable housing in their communities and shall not adopt regulations and policies which do so. Mobile, modular, and manufactured homes on individual lots, mobile home parks, accessory units, inclusionary zoning, mixed use, and increased densities shall be reviewed as affordable housing alternatives.</p> <p>7. Low income housing shall not be concentrated in only a few communities or neighborhoods.</p> <p>8. The county and the cities shall consider reducing impact and/or mitigation fees for affordable housing provided in a proposed development.</p>

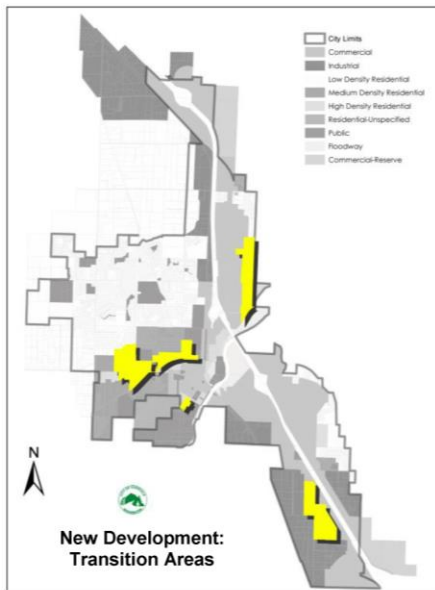
Source: BERK review of CPPs in Washington State, October 2020.

CPPs lead to more detailed locally-developed policies by individual cities. For example, consistent with Whatcom County CPPs, the City of Ferndale adopted a housing element that identified a range of housing types by neighborhood. See example in [Exhibit 17](#).

Exhibit 17. Ferndale Housing Element Excerpt

CHAPTER 3: HOUSING ELEMENT FERNDALE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

NEW DEVELOPMENT – TRANSITION AREAS (PORTAL WAY, LABOUNTY, WEST MAIN):



Properties along Portal Way, LaBounty Drive and Main Street west of Washington Avenue have been designated for high density residential uses that may be used as a buffer or transition area between single family and mixed use or commercial development. In addition to duplexes, cottage housing and mixed-density Planned Unit Developments which are shared between single family and transition areas, the following housing forms will likely be the dominant type of development in these areas (though they may not be applicable to all zones):

Source: [City of Ferndale](#), 2016, p. 37

Ferndale also adopted policies that are consistent with CPPs about housing types and locations, such as:

- "Allow for alternative high density developments in multifamily zoning that allow for owner-occupied units, zero lot line development, duplex divisions and more."
- "Consider amending development regulations to consider the overall cost of residential occupancy, including additional costs associated with inefficient design, access to transportation (including transit), access to recreational opportunities, access to schools and access to employment opportunities."²⁵

Growth Target Allocation and Monitoring Policies

Most CPPs give guidance to how growth would be allocated across jurisdictions. Targets themselves are often adopted outside the CPPs. Counties that provide for growth targets in their CPPs also address the factors considered in allocation including housing (e.g., jobs/housing balance) and reference updating targets per Office of Financial Management (OFM) county forecasts. For selected examples, see [Exhibit 18](#). Cities then

²⁵ City of Ferndale, [City of Ferndale - Comprehensive Plan](#), 2016, p. 52

implement the targets in their land use and housing elements. Where CPPs provide population targets, local governments can adapt them into housing targets including by type as described in Chapters 2 and 4.

Exhibit 18. Growth Target Allocation and Monitoring

County	Growth Target Allocation and Monitoring, Policy Quote Text
Benton County	<p>Policy #2: The County shall allocate future projected populations through the use of the latest population projections published by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). Allocation of future populations shall be based on the following distribution: City of Kennewick 40% of total county population; City of Richland 28% of total county population; Benton County 19% of total county population; City of West Richland 8% of total county population; City of Prosser 3% of total county population and City of Benton City 2% of total county population. The County, in consultation with the Cities, will review the OFM population projection ranges (Low, Medium and High) and allocation percentages whenever OFM publishes new GMA population projections.</p>
King County	<p>DP-11: GMPC [Growth Management Planning Council] shall allocate residential and employment growth to each city and unincorporated urban area in the county. This allocation is predicated on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodating the most recent 20-year population projection from the state Office of Financial Management and the most recent 20-year regional employment forecast from the Puget Sound Regional Council; • Planning for a pattern of growth that is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy including focused growth within cities with countywide designated centers and within other larger cities, limited development in the Rural Area, and protection of designated Resource Lands; • Efficiently using existing zoned and future planned development capacity as well as the capacity of existing and planned infrastructure, including sewer and water systems; • Promoting a land use pattern that can be served by a connected network of public transportation services and facilities and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities; • Improving the jobs/housing balance within the region and the county; • Promoting sufficient opportunities for housing and employment development throughout the Urban Growth Area; • Allocating growth to individual Potential Annexation Areas within the urban unincorporated area proportionate to its share of unincorporated capacity for housing and employment growth. <p>DP-12: GMPC shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update housing and employment targets periodically to provide jurisdictions with up-to-date growth allocations to be incorporated in state-mandated comprehensive plan updates; • Adopt housing and employment growth targets in the Countywide Planning Policies pursuant to the procedure described in policy G-1; and • Adjust targets administratively upon annexation of unincorporated Potential Annexation Areas by cities. Growth targets for the 2006-2031 planning period are shown in table DP-1. <i>[Table contains detailed growth allocations.]</i>

Fair Share Affordable Housing Policies

Each county has taken a different approach in developing policies that address affordable housing and parameters for its distribution. Most focus on guiding planning for affordable housing including housing supply, housing variety and type of housing in urban areas. Fewer identify a policy for determining each jurisdiction's fair share contribution to regional affordable housing needs. "Fair share" means that a county has determined the need for housing at various affordability levels and has allocated that across the jurisdictions with a coordinated approach (see [Exhibit 19](#)).

Exhibit 19. Example Fair Share Policies in Countywide Planning Policies

County	Fair Share Policies, Policy Quote Text	Fair Share Allocation Method
Jefferson County	6. Each UGA shall accommodate its fair share of housing affordable to low and moderate income households according to its percentage share of the county population and by promoting a balanced mix of diverse housing types.	There are two UGAs, the City of Port Townsend (36% of allocated population), and the unincorporated Port Hadlock-Irondale UGA (21%).
Thurston County	8.4. Establish and maintain a process to accomplish a fair share distribution of affordable housing among the jurisdictions.	Regional Housing Plan, Final December 2013, Appendix Table 2.1: Fair Share Distribution of Renter- and Owner-Occupied Housing in Thurston County. Allocated to each City and County. Based on Cost-burdened households, adjusted for transportation costs and accessibility to low-wage jobs.
Pierce County	3.3. It shall be the goal of each jurisdiction in Pierce County that a minimum of 25% of the growth population allocation is satisfied through affordable housing.	Each jurisdiction creates a Comprehensive Plan that identifies how 25% of the population allocation from 2008-2030 could be accommodated in affordable housing.
King County	<p>H-1. Address the countywide need for housing affordable to households with moderate, low and very-low incomes, including those with special needs. The countywide need for housing by percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 50-80% of AMI (moderate) - 16% of total housing supply ○ 30-50% of AMI (low) - 12% of total housing supply ○ 30% and below AMI (very-low) - 12% of total housing supply <p>H-2. Address the need for housing affordable to households at less than 30% AMI (very low income), recognizing that this is where the greatest need exists, and addressing this need will require funding, policies and collaborative actions by all jurisdictions working individually and collectively.</p>	<p>The percent share by income is based on existing need. All must work individually and collectively to promote affordable housing for those earning less than 30% AMI.</p> <p>Each city and the County identifies how it contributes to meeting the countywide need for all income levels by preparing affordable housing need analysis.</p> <p>CPP Appendix 4 indicates: In order for each jurisdiction to address its share of the countywide housing need for very-low, low and moderate income housing, a four step approach has been identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct an inventory and analysis of housing needs and conditions; 2. Implement policies and strategies to address unmet needs; 3. Measure results; and 4. Respond to measurement with reassessment and adjustment of strategies.

County	Fair Share Policies, Policy Quote Text	Fair Share Allocation Method
Snohomish County	<p>HO-3. County and city comprehensive plans shall include policies for accommodating affordable housing goals throughout the County consistent with Vision 2040. The land use and housing elements should demonstrate they can accommodate needed housing availability and facilitate the regional fair share of affordable housing...</p> <p>HO-5. The cities and the county shall collaborate to report housing characteristics and needs ... this report shall, for the entire county and each jurisdiction:</p> <p>a. Describe the measures that jurisdictions have taken (individually or collectively) to implement or support CPPs on housing, especially ... housing affordability.</p> <p>b. Quantify and map existing characteristics ...</p> <p>c. Identify the number of housing units necessary to meet the various housing needs ..., by income ranges, and special needs populations. The number of units identified for each jurisdiction will be utilized for planning purposes and to acknowledge the responsibility of all jurisdictions to plan for affordable housing within the regional context.</p>	Requires each local government to evaluate their need and plan individually and collectively facilitate the regional fair share of housing.

Source: BERK review of CPPs in Washington State, October 2020

As an example of implementation, the City of Wenatchee has adopted the following policy regarding its fair share of housing affordable to low and moderate income households:

- Coordination, Policy 4: "Coordinate with regional agencies to stay abreast of and share in the responsibility for achieving a reasonable and equitable distribution of affordable housing to meet the needs of middle and lower income persons."²⁶

Example of Planning for All Housing Needs: California, Bay Area

Since 1969, California law requires cities, towns and counties to plan for housing needs, regardless of income. A regional housing needs allocation is prepared every eight years by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Each region then allocates the need for housing at all income levels to individual local governments. A new allocation has been developed for 2022-2030.

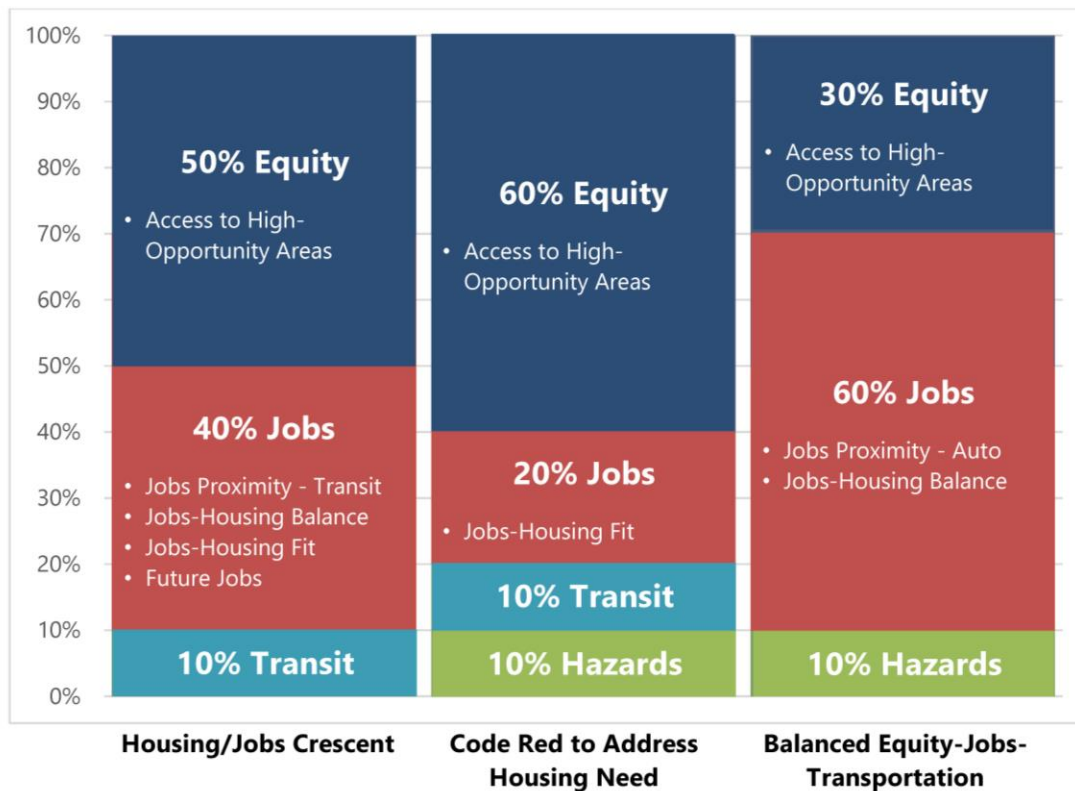
For example, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), is developing a methodology to allocate each jurisdiction's fair share of the regional allocation in a multi-county area of the San Francisco Bay Area (see [Exhibit 20](#)). In the spring of 2020, several methodologies were developed to consider how to allocate affordable housing, balancing different considerations. Factors include:

- Equity - access to high opportunity areas

²⁶ [Planning to Blossom 2037: Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan](#)

- Jobs - jobs/housing balance, jobs-housing fit²⁷
- Transit - proximity
- Hazards - consideration of natural hazards

Exhibit 20. Association of Bay Area Governments Regional Housing Needs Allocation Factors and Weights Method Options, Spring 2020



Source: https://abag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/hmc_rhna_methodology_update_april2020.pdf

In the fall of 2020, the region's Housing Methodology Committee developed six methods and screened them according to criteria including:

- **Objective 1:** Does the allocation increase the housing supply and the mix of housing types, tenure and affordability in all cities and counties within the region in an equitable manner?
- **Objective 2:** Does the allocation promote infill development and socioeconomic equity, the protection of environmental and agricultural resources, the encouragement of efficient development patterns and the achievement of the region's greenhouse gas reductions targets?
- **Objective 3:** Does the allocation promote an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing, including an improved balance between the number of low-wage jobs and the number of housing units affordable to low wage workers in each jurisdiction?
- **Objective 4:** Does the allocation direct a lower proportion of housing need to an income category when a jurisdiction already has a disproportionately high share of households in that income category?

²⁷ Jobs-housing fit refers to the "extent to which locally available housing fits the ability of locally employed workers to afford it." See <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2020/08/10/488313/expanding-supply-affordable-housing-low-wage-workers/>, by Michela Zonta, dated August 10, 2020.

○ **Objective 5:** Does the allocation affirmatively further fair housing?²⁸

A final allocation will be approved by the region after consideration of these recommendations.

A critique of California's regional housing needs allocation process cited lack of local government implementation of policies that increase housing supply and diversity and corresponding lack of enforcement by the state.²⁹ Oregon's statewide housing policy requires implementation include a continuous review of housing need projections and a process for accommodating those needed revisions.³⁰

Regional Housing Studies and Strategies

Many housing issues cross boundaries and strategies of one community may influence another. Regional housing studies can form the basis for coordinated housing policies and strategies. Coordinating across communities can build understanding of the region's housing market and leverage resources to achieve regional housing strategies that more fully address needs than any jurisdiction can do on their own. Example efforts and strategies across Washington state include, but are not limited to:

- [Chelan Valley Housing Needs Assessment](#), 2018, and resulting [Chelan Valley Housing Trust](#)
- King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force, [Final Report and Recommendations for King County, WA, 2019](#)
- [Puget Sound Regional Council, Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Regional Housing Strategy, 2021](#)
- Skagit County Council of Governments, [Housing Inventory and Transportation Analysis Report, 2017](#) and [Skagit County Housing Action Plan, 2017](#)
- Snohomish County [Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce \(HART\), 2019](#)
- [South King County Housing and Homelessness Partners \(SKHHP\)](#)
- Walla Walla Regional Housing Action Plan, 2021
- Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater Regional Housing Action Plan, 2021

²⁸ ABAG describes "affirmatively further fair housing" as focusing "on overcoming patterns of segregation and fostering inclusive communities."

²⁹ See Bromfield et al, 2017: <https://medium.com/the-block-project/ensuring-fair-shares-of-housing-across-local-jurisdictions-324b5f525054>.

³⁰ Oregon Department of Land and Conservation and Development, [Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals & Guidelines: Goal 10: Housing](#)

Chapter 4. Housing Element Review

Reviewing and evaluating the current housing element is a recommended step for any jurisdiction that is undergoing a comprehensive plan update. The best time to conduct this review is after completing a preliminary housing needs assessment and after the county has developed new CPPs that address housing and population growth. This chapter provides guidance on how to carry out a housing element review.

Purpose of a Housing Element Review

A housing element review can serve several purposes:

- Assess the alignment of goals and policies with:
 - Growth Management Act goals
 - CPPs and MPPs (for jurisdictions in the Central Puget Sound region)
 - Other comprehensive plan elements
 - Current and projected housing needs in your region and jurisdiction
 - Community vision and engagement findings
 - Regional plans and initiatives
- Evaluate progress in meeting housing targets or objectives for housing types
- Consider new opportunities that were not foreseen by the current comprehensive plan
- Review the future land use map and designations for potential to meet housing needs
- Identify related infrastructure or service needs, including those that are barriers to new housing development
- Consider reasonable measures identified in buildable lands reports

The findings from a housing element review can inform the development of new goals and policies (see [Chapter 5. Updating Goals and Policies](#)) as well as strategies for effective implementation.

Review of Housing Element Goals and Policies

Alignment with GMA

First and foremost, the housing element review should confirm whether the element reflects the GMA goal for housing (see sidebar). During this review, the following questions should be considered:

- Do housing element policies reflect the GMA goal for: housing production; a variety of housing types, densities and price points; and housing preservation?
- Is the housing element update consistent with the latest GMA requirements (tip – see [Commerce’s Periodic Update Webpage](#))? The GMA is frequently updated and new requirements may present a need for policy updates.

In their efforts to align with GMA, some communities approach housing policy as a balancing act between encouraging new types of housing development to meet housing needs and "ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods" as called for in RCW 36.70A.070(2). It is important to keep in mind that these two

"Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock."

Growth Management Act Housing Goal, RCW 36.70A.020(4)

goals are not necessarily in conflict. All neighborhoods and communities in Washington will change over time as residents move in and out and the demographic profile of our population continues to evolve. Planners have an important role to play in making sure that our neighborhoods can also evolve and change over time to adapt to the changing needs of residents. Policies that seek to preserve neighborhoods from any new forms of development can contribute to housing supply shortages and the displacement of long-time residents when housing costs escalate. These outcomes fail to align with the GMA housing goal and can detract from the vitality and character of established neighborhoods.

Alignment with CPPs and MPPs

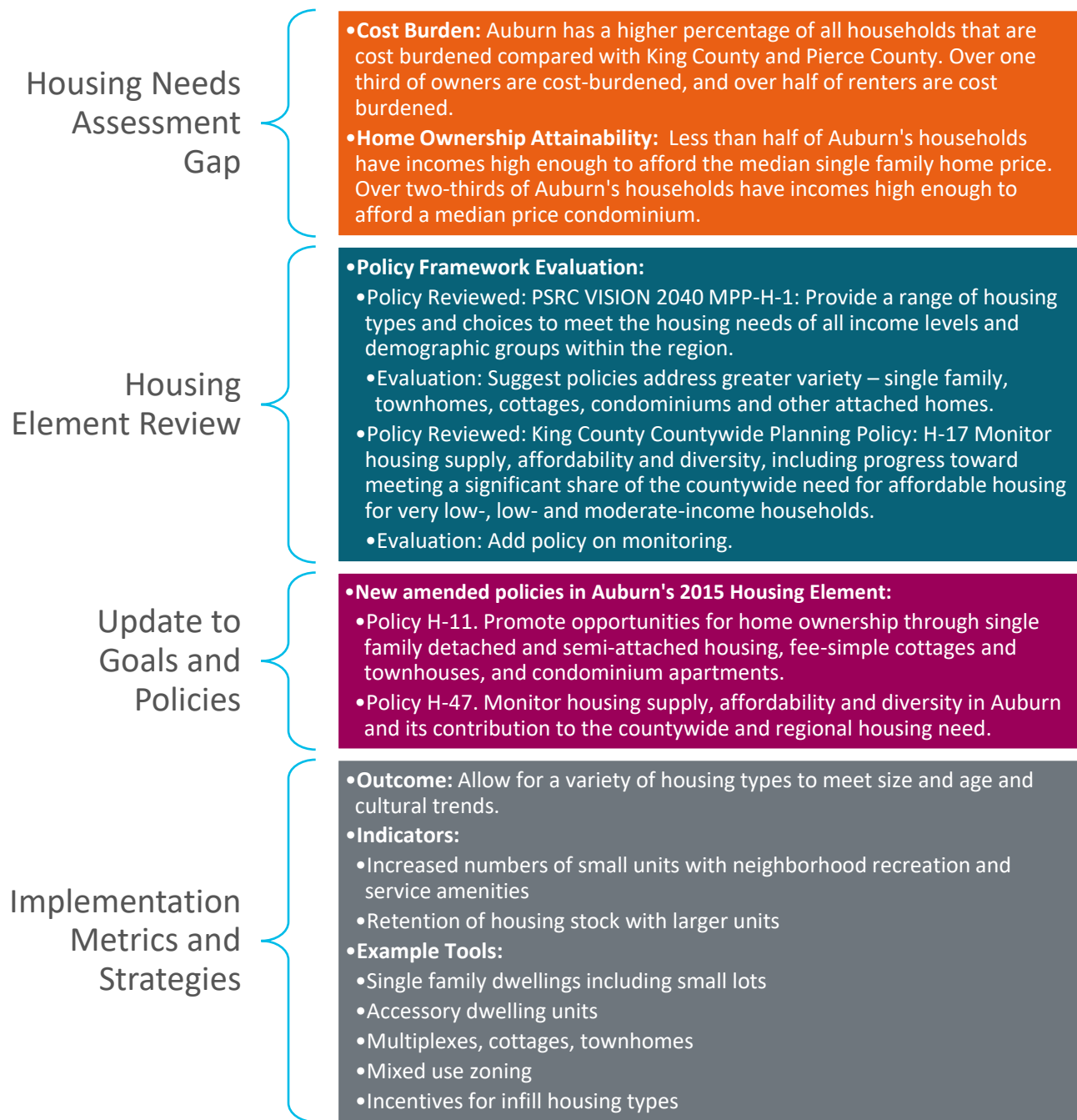
As discussed in Chapter 2, the housing element must be consistent with, and help to implement, countywide planning policies. Therefore, the housing element review should consider whether the goals and policies are, in fact, consistent with CPPs (and MPPs, where applicable). It should also consider whether those goals and policies help to implement CPPs/MPPs at the local level.

For example, during the City of Auburn Housing Element Update (2015), planners reviewed housing policies from PSRC VISION 2040, including MPP-H-1: "Provide a range of housing types and choices to meet the housing needs of all income levels and demographic groups within the region." The city's own housing element partially implemented this policy (e.g., mixed use, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), manufactured homes) and needed some adjustment to add additional housing types (e.g., single family - small lots, townhomes, cottages, and other attached homes) to further promote housing diversity. Therefore, the city identified a new policy in its housing element update: "Policy H-11. Promote opportunities for home ownership through single family detached and semi-attached housing, fee-simple cottages and townhouses, and condominium apartments." This is a simple example of the types of findings that a housing element review can reveal. [Exhibit 21](#) provides additional details about Auburn's housing element review process.

WAC 365-196 defines consistency as: "...no feature of a plan or regulation is incompatible with any other feature of a plan or regulation. Consistency is indicative of a capacity for orderly integration or operation with other elements in a system."

Vision 2040 has been updated into Vision 2050 applies to King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties, as well as cities, towns, ports, state and local transportation agencies, and tribal governments within the region. It includes 12 housing policies to guide the development of countywide planning policies and local policies ([Exhibit 12](#)). It also includes five local actions to address the housing policies at the local level. This progressive and comprehensive document is likely to be useful to other Washington communities as they develop countywide planning policies and comprehensive plan goals and policies.

Exhibit 21. Example - Auburn Housing Element Update, 2015



This example walks through how the City of Auburn's housing element review aligned with findings from their housing needs assessment, update to goals and policies, and ultimately their implementation metrics and strategies.

Source: City of Auburn 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update; BERK, 2020

Alignment with Housing Needs

A community's housing element policies will be most effective if they recognize the diverse housing needs of its population including affordability, life cycle, cultural desires and others. The housing needs assessment is the primary way to identify these needs and gaps. Review existing policies to see whether they guide and authorize actions to address these needs, or if they need updates to reflect changes in the community. The example from Auburn's [2015 Comprehensive Plan Update](#) (Exhibit 21) shows the link between gaps identified in their housing needs assessment and new housing policies selected to address those gaps.

Alignment with Community Vision and Engagement Findings

Through the public engagement process, planners may find qualitative housing needs not seen in data and the interrelationships of housing and services. For example, Auburn found in its [housing needs and characteristics assessment](#) a concern about the cost of assisted living with seniors, and a desire for improved safety and children's play areas affecting quality of life for a Latinx community. These kinds of insights can also inform the housing element review and development of updated goals and policies.

Alignment with Regional Plans and Initiatives

The review should also consider whether the housing element is aligned with, and implements, regional plans and initiatives, such as regional transportation plans or countywide homeless housing plans. For example, consider questions such as:

HOMELESSNESS PLANNING

In 2006, the Washington state Legislature passed the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act ([RCW 43.185c](#)) directing Commerce to [grant document recording fees](#) to local governments to help meet the need of homeless families and individuals. This includes writing a local five-year plan to address homelessness, responsibility for administering the annual [Point-in-Time Count](#), reporting client data in the [Homeless Management Information System](#), conducting outreach to landlords, ensuring [coordinated entry](#) and more. Lead grantees are also responsible for ensuring their homeless crisis response system prioritizes people most in need and that services meet funders' performance expectations. As your housing element should consider countywide housing needs, policies should be consistent with the needs identified in the five-year and Continuum of Care (CoC) plans. Countywide planning policies should also be considering these plans to align strategies and approaches on a countywide basis.

The following definitions are used with homelessness planning:

- Emergency shelter provides temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness.
- Rapid rehousing quickly moves homeless people into permanent housing by providing temporary rent subsidies and housing-focused case management. The household does not have to leave when services end.
- Transitional housing provides housing for no longer than 24 months and is designed to move people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing.
- Homeless prevention resolves imminent homelessness with housing-focused case management and temporary rent subsidies. The services are time-limited and the household does not have to leave when services end.
- Permanent supportive housing is subsidized, non-time-limited housing with support services for homeless households that include a household member with a permanent disability.

The [Homelessness & Housing Toolkit for Cities](#) produced by Association of Washington Cities and Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) (2020) provides resources and case studies.

- Does your housing element and comprehensive plan concentrate higher densities of housing in areas of opportunity such as designated centers and transit hubs?
- Does your housing element promote greater access to jobs and services, particularly among residents with low- and moderate-incomes?
- Does this analysis identify logical places for higher density housing with infrastructure or priorities for investment in capital facilities to further the regional and local land use plan?
- Are the land use, transportation and capital facilities elements also consistent with the regional plan?

RURAL HOUSING

Rural elements must protect rural character and provide for a variety of rural densities (RCW 36.70A.070(5)). Counties should define rural development both in terms of its visual character and in terms of the density and intensity of uses (WAC 365-196-425 (2)(c)).

Clustering and density transfer are some potential tools to protect rural character. Counties should establish a limit on the size of residential cluster so that a cluster does not constitute urban growth in a rural area; it is possible to have multiple smaller clusters that are separated from each other and use a different access point (WAC 365-196-425 (5)(b)).

There are also opportunities to define Type 1 limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDs), which recognize pre-GMA villages and allow for infill. Infill development or redevelopment in Type 1 LAMIRDs may be allowed and encouraged if it is consistent with the character of the LAMIRD's building size, scale, use and intensity (WAC 365-196-425 (6)(b)).

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) can provide extra units but should be planned carefully in rural areas. The ADU should share infrastructure and be secondary to the primary unit.

Policy examples include:

Walla Walla County: Policy RL 2.2 - "Encourage affordable housing opportunities that are compatible with rural character, including farm worker housing and accessory dwelling units."

Snohomish County: LU Policies 6.B.1 - "Use of a clustering subdivision technique should be encouraged ... to 1) preserve the rural character of Snohomish County; 2) avoid interference with resource land uses; 3) minimize impacts upon critical areas; 4) allow for future expansion of the UGAs, where appropriate, and 5) support the provision of more affordable housing in rural areas. ... Modest density incentives should be provided in a manner which encourages use of the technique and maximum preservation of open space and maintenance of rural character ..."

Alignment with the Comprehensive Plan

It is a requirement for comprehensive plans to be internally consistent.³¹ This means that all elements of the plan include goals and policies that are both consistent and mutually supportive. An important step in the housing element review is to compare the goals and policies in the housing element to those in other elements, such as land use, capital facilities and economic development. For example, this review could

³¹ RCW 36.70A.070

identify issues such as whether the land use element and future land use map designate sufficient land for higher density housing development to meet identified housing needs, and whether that housing capacity is focused in areas with investments in public transportation and other supporting facilities. Have you considered programming investments in areas that need facilities in order to develop? Along with the land use element, counties should also review rural elements at the same time as the housing element update. (See "Rural Housing" sidebar above.)

Consider Opportunities and Trends Not Foreseen by the Comprehensive Plan

The housing element review can highlight new opportunities for development including surplus public land, changing land needs and other trends that may have come about after the last comprehensive plan update. Land may no longer be needed for its original purpose, and new opportunities for housing can present themselves. For example, former military or institutional sites, power and utility properties, vacant commercial areas and others can be locations for new housing opportunities. Major transportation investments may also bring opportunities for new transit-oriented development (TOD). See sidebar for examples.

Examples of New Opportunities

Non-Residential Sites Converted to Mixed Use

- [Vista Field, Kennewick](#), former airport
- [Southport, Renton](#), former power plant

Major Transportation Investments and TOD

- Bothell, SR-522 and SR-527 Improvements and [Downtown Revitalization Plan](#)
- Seattle, Othello Station light rail station and [transit oriented development](#)

Societal and cultural trends can also shape housing needs and land use implications. While some topics like demographic trends should be identified and considered in the housing needs assessment, other topics may be worth considering for their implications. For example, previous comprehensive plans could not have anticipated the rapid shift to widespread teleworking that occurred in 2020 due to COVID-19. There are signs this shift could have permanent impacts in some economic sectors, as could the increasing use of retail delivery. Planners may also consider how technological changes looming on the horizon, such as autonomous vehicles, have the potential to impact housing and land use before the next comprehensive plan update. Another trend to look for is short term rentals which may take available homes off the market. A quick review of some of the rent by owner websites can tell you whether this is an issue in your community. MRSC provides guidance on this topic.³²

Another example is the increased focus on equity and past discrimination, and the need to address exclusionary zoning policies in local plans. Local governments should review how discrimination may have affected land use and housing policies. Displacement may also be a factor where redevelopment and public investment are planned. Policies should guide how potential displacement will be avoided and mitigated.

Evaluating Progress towards Growth Targets

Many jurisdictions have targets or objectives for either population or housing growth. These may be found in countywide planning policies, the county or city comprehensive plan, or other programs. [Chapter 2. Housing Needs Assessment](#) provides guidance on how to measure progress towards these targets. The housing element review should consider the findings of this analysis and its implications for progress towards achieving goals and policies. It should also consider whether total housing growth targets should be broken

³² See MRSC's [12 Examples of Short-term Vacation Rental Regulations](#) and other webpages.

down by housing types to promote new housing production that is more closely aligned to housing needs (see "Targets by Housing Unit Types" below). Adjustments to goals, policies or implementing actions may be necessary when housing production is not keeping pace with targets, or when the diversity of new housing produced does not align with housing needs.

Policies for Monitoring Progress

Some jurisdictions also include policies regarding monitoring progress towards housing growth targets. See [Exhibit 21](#) for an example from the City of Auburn, or [Exhibit 22](#) from Snohomish County. These represent good first steps for developing an annual monitoring program to track growth trends and support course-correction as necessary in between comprehensive plan updates. See [Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element](#) for more details on monitoring.

Exhibit 22. Example of a Monitoring Policy: Snohomish County HO Policy 4.B

Objective HO 4.B: "Track the provision of affordable housing units to assess whether an adequate supply of housing affordable to the county's lower income and special needs residents, as defined in the Housing Characteristics and Needs report for Snohomish County, is being provided."

Policy 4.B.1: "In support of countywide housing policies, the county shall seek partnerships with other jurisdictions, through the Alliance for Housing Affordability, the Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County, Snohomish County Tomorrow and similar forums, to track the provision of housing by type and affordability. This effort will include an assessment of progress toward meeting the county's housing goals, including housing that addresses the needs of households within the Under 30% area median income (AMI), 30-50% AMI and 51-80% AMI segments, as projected in the current Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County."

Policy 4.B.2: "Based upon the monitoring and evaluation results from Policy 4.B.1, the county shall evaluate the effectiveness of its zoning regulations to produce housing developments that meet the diverse housing needs identified in the Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County."

Source: <https://snohomish.county.codes/CompPlan/GPP-HO>

Targets by Housing Unit Types

The GMA housing goal is to "[e]ncourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types." This goal can be supported by developing targets for specific housing types in goals and policies, as detailed in WAC 365-196-410 (2)(d) and (2)(e). When developing these targets, it often makes sense to consider broad categories that are associated with local zoning, such as detached single family, attached single family (or "missing middle"), and multifamily. This makes it easiest to compare targets for these housing types to capacity in land zoned for these housing types. Some communities also adopt targets for subsidized and income-restricted affordable housing production. As described in Chapter 3, these kinds of targets are sometimes adopted in CPPs. They can also be adopted by individual cities.

There are several types of findings from the housing needs assessment that can be used to help evaluate which kinds of housing are likely to be in greatest need or demand. A few examples to consider are:

- **Housing costs:** Consider how the affordability of various housing types lines up with local incomes. Are new single-family homes affordable to middle-income families in your community? Are ownership housing types available at lower price points, such as townhomes or condominiums? What income level is needed to afford local apartment rents? Based on this analysis, consider what kinds of units are most likely to be affordable at each income level. The answer to this question may vary based on local market conditions and should be analyzed with best available housing market data.³³ [Exhibit 23](#) provides an example of aligning income level to housing types. [Exhibit 24](#) provides an example of how projected housing needs might be broken out by housing type for Walla Walla and neighboring jurisdictions.
- **Household incomes:** Select a mix of housing types that align with the household incomes in your community. For example, if over half of the households in a jurisdiction have incomes below 50% of area median income (AMI), then the housing targets should assume at least over half of housing growth will be in types that are more likely to be affordable to these households. See [Exhibit 23](#) and [Exhibit 24](#). [Exhibit 25](#) shows an example of projected housing needs by income level for the Walla Walla region.

Exhibit 23. Assumptions about Housing Types Needed for Various Income Segments

Household Income Level	Housing Types (Examples only: Conduct local market analysis for you area)
Greater than 120% AMI	Single family homes
80 - 120% AMI	Small lot single family, cottage homes, townhomes, row houses, condominiums
50-80% AMI	Apartments, accessory dwelling units
30-50% AMI	Manufactured homes, subsidized apartments, single-room occupancy (SRO), shared housing
Below 30% AMI	Subsidized apartments, tiny homes villages, permanent supportive housing

Note: Housing types can fit in more than one income bracket.

Exhibit 24. Projected Housing Need by Housing Type, Walla Walla Region, 2021

Projected 2040 Housing Needs						Remainder of
Housing Type	Walla Walla UGA	College Place UGA	Waitsburg UGA	Dayton UGA	Walla Walla Region	Walla Walla County
Single-Family Detached						
Standard Lots	1,142	261	112	9 +	1,523	225
Small Lots, cottages, mfg. homes (lots)	899	205	-	-	1,104	-
Townhouses / Plexes (units)	556	155	19	1 +	732	-
Multi-family units (5+ units per structure)	816	78 +	-	-	894	-
Mobile homes/ADUs/other (units)	297 +	78 +	56 +	3 +	433	56 +
Total Dwelling Units	3,710	776	187	13 +	4,685	282

Source: FCS Group, [Walla Walla Regional Housing Action Plan, Task 2: Housing Needs Assessment](#), 2020

³³ Multiple Listing Services (MLS), a tool such as [Zillow](#), or the Washington [Center for Real Estate Research](#).

Exhibit 25. Projected Housing Need by Income Level, Walla Walla Region, 2021

Family Income Level	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Total	Dist. %	Attainable Housing Products
Upper (120% or more of MI)	2,361	260	2,621	56.0%	Single Family Lots
Upper Middle (80% to 120% of MI)	384	347	730	15.6%	Cottage Homes, Townhomes, Apartments
Lower Middle (50% to 80% of MI)	207	693	900	19.2%	Townhomes, Mfgd. Homes, Plexes, Apartments
Low (less than 50% of MI)	0	433	433	9.3%	ADUs, Govt. Assisted Apts.
Total	2,952	1,734	4,685	100.0%	

*Derived from Appendix A.

Source: FCS Group, [Walla Walla Regional Housing Action Plan, Task 2: Housing Needs Assessment](#), 2020

- **Housing tenure:** A healthy housing stock includes a mix of ownership and rental housing. While any housing unit type can be rented, multifamily products like apartments typically provide the most cost-effective way to increase the supply of rental housing. Also consider needs for lower cost ownership products, such as townhouses or small lot single family, to help make homeownership attainable to more residents.
- **Household sizes:** An HNA should present breakdowns of owner- and renter-households by size (number of members living together). Comparing this breakdown to the current housing stock can reveal misalignments, such as a shortage of smaller units for 1 and 2 person households, or a shortage of larger renter housing for low-income families.
- **Gaps in the current housing supply:** Jurisdictions should also consider and account for current shortages in the housing stock which can be addressed through future growth. For example, a housing market analysis could estimate only 1,000 units are affordable to households with incomes between 30% and 50% AMI, but in fact there are 2,500 households in this category. This indicates a gap of 1,500 units that are affordable to households at this income level.
- **Worker housing needs:** The workforce profile section of an HNA can identify housing needs among workers, including those who live outside of the jurisdiction. In many communities, low- and even moderate-wage workers commute long distances to their jobs due to a lack of affordable housing options within the jurisdiction. Consider using information about the number of workers in these categories and/or employment projections to inform housing targets.

- **Special needs populations:** The HNA should also identify special housing needs, such as housing for the elderly, which are forecast to increase as the baby boomer generation ages. These needs can also be considered in your targets, housing policies and design standards.

There is no one correct way to translate these kinds of findings to targets by housing type. However, these findings can be used to inform the selection of targets. Engagement with local housing stakeholders, employers or service providers can also provide insights regarding issues and needs to consider when setting targets. The goal is to select targets for production by housing type that are aligned with the expected income levels and housing needs of current and future residents.

Review the Future Land Use Map and Designations

Future land use maps and corresponding designations function like the "heart" of a comprehensive plan, and are usually found in a plan's land use element. Getting these components right is critical in creating an effective plan ultimately meeting the community's growth targets, goals and policies. A well-crafted land use map and corresponding designations can simplify the development process and ultimately facilitate production of the types of housing necessary to address community needs.

Using the findings from your community's HNA, how can the map and designations be updated to meet those needs? While there is likely to be a general need to increase the overall housing supply, the HNA may illustrate key gaps in specific types of housing that will guide the efforts in map and land use designation updates. The solution is likely to involve a combination of strategies.

Strategies for crafting a good land use map and designations easily warrants an entire guidebook on its own. This guidebook focuses on a handful of land use designation and mapping components and strategies:

- **Alignment with goals, policies and growth targets:** As discussed above, examine whether the designations and map align with the community's housing needs, vision and engagement findings, regional transportation system and growth targets (see [Exhibit 29](#)). From a mapping perspective, are adjustments needed to:
 - Update the boundaries of existing designations? Perhaps a mixed-use or multifamily designation could be extended a block or two based on a combination of evolving context, community needs, planned transportation infrastructure and/or community engagement?
 - Change to another designation? Perhaps an existing designation such as commercial or office isn't developing due to changing trends in shopping and work. A change to another existing designation might be better suited to the evolving context and community needs and objectives.
 - Create a new designation? Sometimes, key sites or areas warrant creation of a new designation to help fit the evolving context and community needs and objectives.

- Simplify and/or reduce the list of land use designations? Ideally, comprehensive plan future land use maps are not the same as the zoning maps. When they are, each rezone will require a comprehensive plan amendment, which is a lengthy process that delays new housing. The plan works better when it employs broad, rather than narrow, land use designations. For example, two or three implementing zones under one land use designation allow more flexibility with future rezones and responses to unforeseen market changes (see Prosser sidebar at right). [Exhibit 28](#) below illustrates an example of this.
- Completely update the map and designations to fit new approach? In some cases, the map and designations are so out of date that communities seek a new approach to fit the evolving context and community needs and objectives.

The City of Prosser's recent comprehensive plan update is another good example of simplifying land use designations, as it consolidates residential areas into two designations: (1) Residential, and (2) Steep Slope Residential. This allowed for three higher density rezones and the City's first private affordable housing development, which would not have been allowed under the previous comprehensive plan.

- Make the map and designations clear and usable. Many land use maps and designation text aren't easy to read. Specifically:
 - The designations on the map and legend should be very easy to follow.
 - The colors/patterns and order of land use designations should be logical (see [Exhibit 26](#)).
 - Simple and descriptive naming conventions are also helpful.

Exhibit 26. Typical Land Use Map Colors

Yellows	Single family residential	Blues	Institutional/public
Oranges	Low density multifamily	Purples	Industrial
Browns	High density multifamily	Greens	Park/recreational
Reds	Retail/commercial	Grays	Utilities

- Include descriptive purpose statements, including a summary of principle uses and densities. Land use designation purpose statements aren't required, but they can be a useful communication tool and helpful in describing unique locational attributes and/or community intentions that may apply. It's important here to provide a useful description without getting too detailed. In some cases, it may make sense to establish appropriate density ranges or maximums. It's better to leave other dimensional standard details to the zoning code. See [Exhibit 27](#) below for an example.
- Align the land use designations with their implementing zoning districts. Comprehensive plans should provide clear guidance on future city and privately-initiated rezone applications. For each land use designation, providing the list of implementing zoning designations is an obvious solution (see the case studies in [Exhibit 27](#), [Exhibit 28](#), and [Exhibit 29](#) for good examples). Some designations may have only one implementing zone, while most others include multiple implementing zones. In such cases where there are multiple implementing zones, it's important to add language in the land use designation descriptions (and even more important in the purpose statements for the zones in the zoning ordinance) to help guide the siting of the various zones. Simple example: "The permitted density is between 4 and 8 dwelling units per gross acre, depending on the established development pattern and character of the area."

Example Land Use Designations: Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

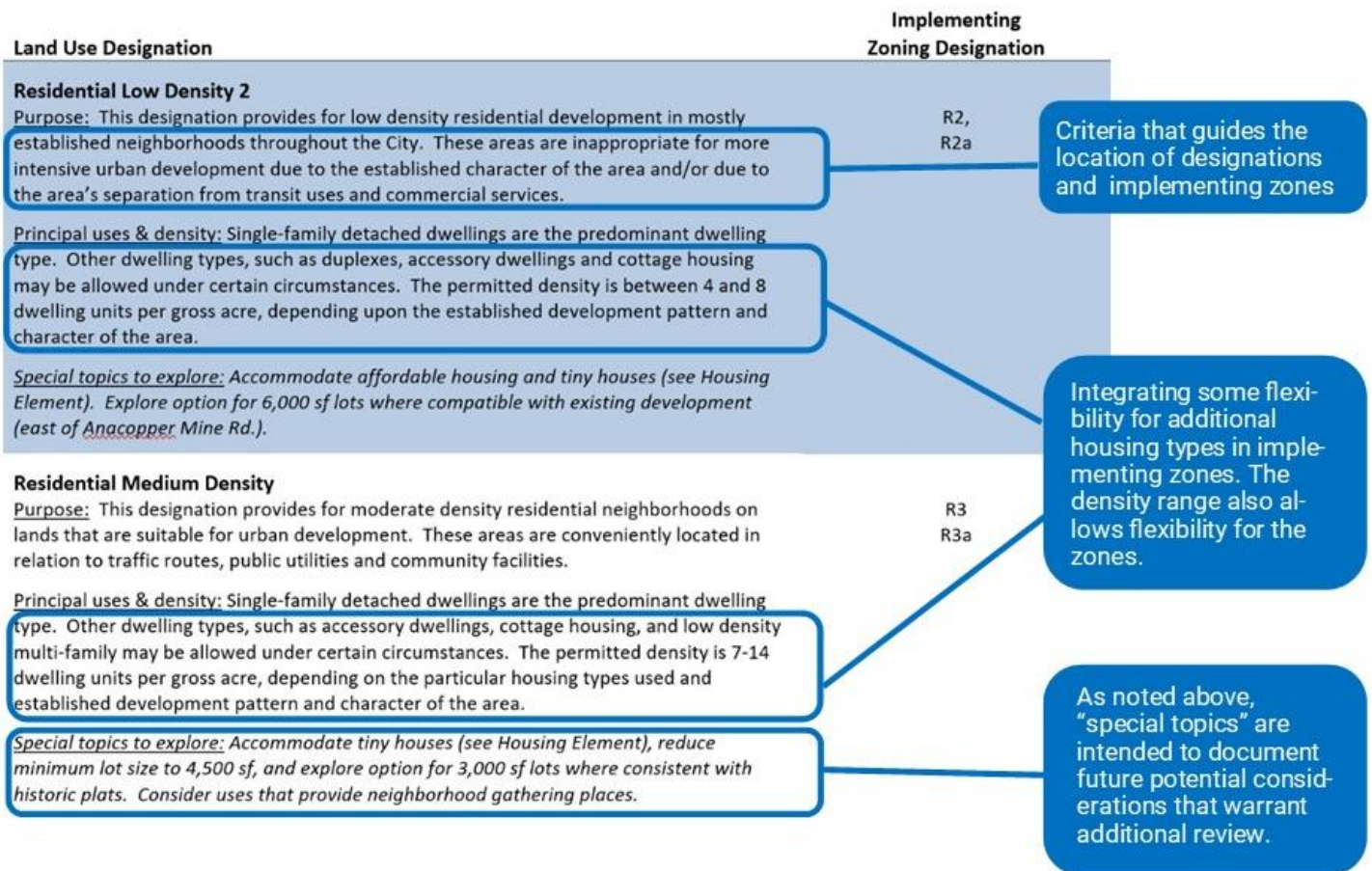
Anacortes's land use designation statements were crafted after an intensive community engagement process with close analysis of alternative lot sizes, densities and permitted housing types for each designation and implementing zone.

Exhibit 27. Land Use Designations in Anacortes

Table LU-1. Land use designations.

The allowed uses and densities noted herein are intended as a summary of key provisions to guide implementing zoning codes, and not as a complete description of all possible uses.

“Special topics to explore” are intended to document future potential considerations that may warrant additional review.



Source: City of Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016; MAKERS, 2020

Example of Implementing Zones: City of Yakima Comprehensive Plan

Exhibit 28 shows a simple chart from the City of Yakima Comprehensive Plan that clearly spells out the implementing zones for each land use designation. Note that there are two implementing zones for each of the two residential designations. The "Community Mixed-Use" designation includes five implementing zones, allowing flexibility based on the context and community objectives.

Exhibit 28. Land Use Designations and Implementing Zoning Districts in City of Yakima

Zoning District	Land Use Designation						
	Low Density Residential	Mixed Residential	Community Mixed-Use	Commercial Mixed-Use	CBD Commercial Core	Regional Commercial	Industrial
SR	X						
R-1	X						
R-2		X					
R-3		X	X				
B-1			X				
B-2			X				
HB			X				
SCC			X				
LCC				X			
GC				X			
CBD					X		
M-1							X
M-2							X
RD						X	
AS				X			X

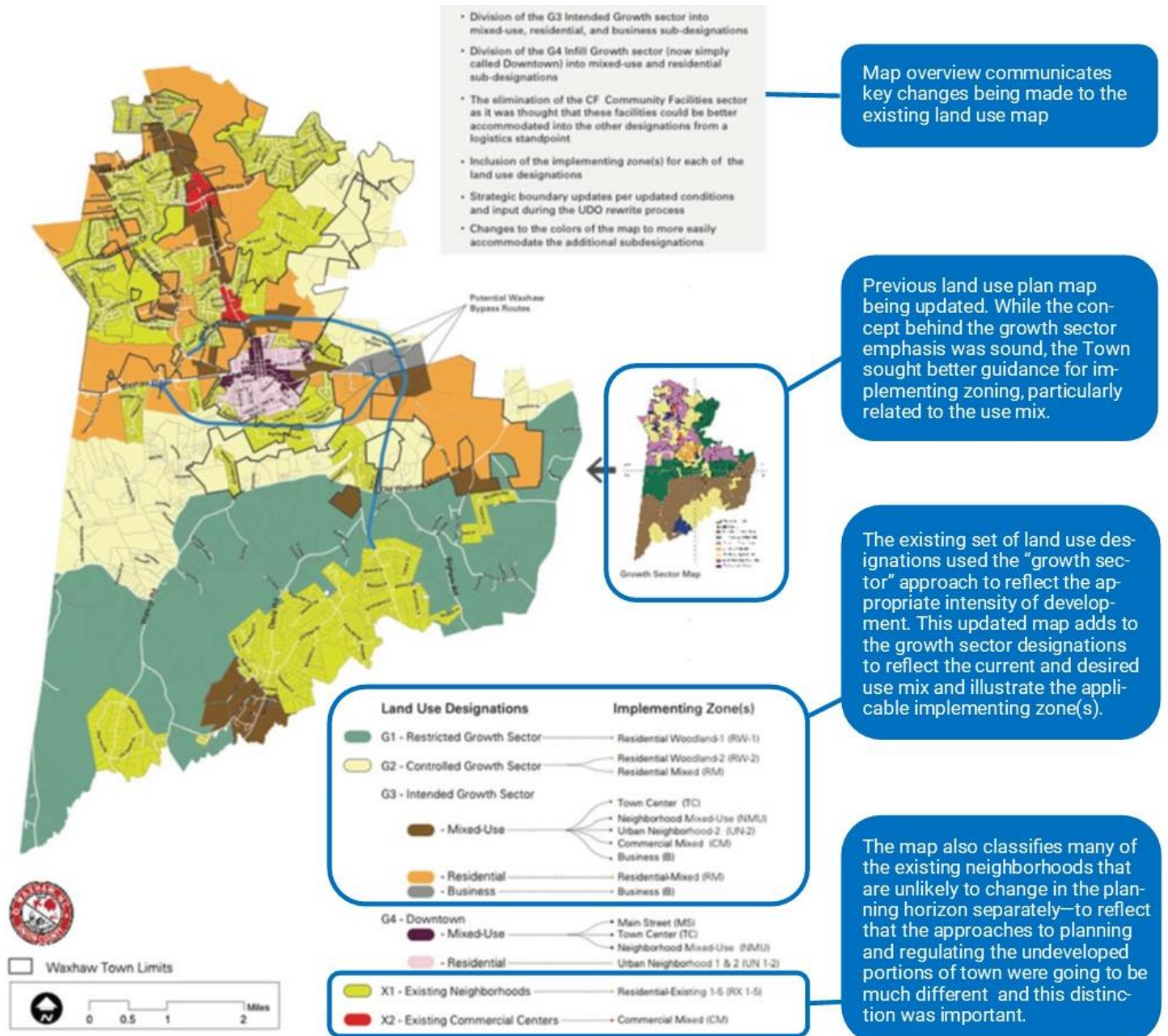
The blue shaded boxes denote the implementing zoning district for the applicable land use designation.

Source: Yakima Comprehensive Plan, 2017

Example: Town of Waxhaw (North Carolina) Comprehensive Plan

Waxhaw is a rapidly growing suburb of Charlotte that features a historic downtown and numerous stream corridors and wetlands. The community sought ways to better protect the character of established neighborhoods while promoting compatible infill in historic areas and a greater mix of housing types and better subdivision design in areas identified for growth. The map shown in [Exhibit 29](#) adds a finer level of detail to help guide the City's future zoning map decisions.

Exhibit 29. Waxhaw Future Land Use Map



Source: Town of Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Policy Bridge, NC, 2016, MAKERS, 2020

Identify Related Infrastructure or Service Needs

When evaluating the housing element, the type and location of housing should be supported by necessary infrastructure, or it may impede the timing, cost and quality of housing. Evaluating infrastructure needs in already built communities can help support infill development and protect existing affordable housing. Anticipating new infrastructure needs in redeveloping or newly developing areas can help facilitate desired growth and increase housing variety and supply. Based on the evaluation, supporting housing element and capital facilities plan element policies and implementing regulations can be developed that show a balance of public and private responsibilities and incentives.

Costs: New residents can increase demand for transportation, parks, schools and public safety. Local governments and special districts are required to develop system plans and system development or connection charges for improvements to water, stormwater, sewer and other infrastructure designed to address increased demand.

A critical part of a community's growth strategy is assessing what infrastructure is needed to support the growth strategy and estimating the cost. Communities then must decide how to allocate those costs between new development and existing residents and rate payers. Impact fees, system development charges, certificates of concurrency or State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) mitigation are all different strategies to link the financing and construction of needed infrastructure to the pace of new development driving the need.

To support affordable housing, local governments can structure fees to recognize differences in demand and costs and housing goals (see sidebar), as well as consider deferrals and exemptions. These structures should be guided by policy. For example:

- Tukwila waives park impact fees for accessory dwelling units (Ordinance 2599).
- Port Townsend allows deferrals of connection fees for affordable housing until units are occupied (PMC 13.03.115).

ACCURATELY ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF IMPACT AND UTILITY CONNECTION FEES

For the sake of simplicity, communities tend to base impact fees on average impacts of a residential unit when the marginal impact of a particular unit can vary greatly. The structure of how these charges are assigned to duplexes, triplexes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) can influence the development of these types of units.

For example, a new unit on an existing lot near the center of town with good transit access can generate significantly less demand for infrastructure than a new unit on a relatively large lot on the edge of town. Lower average trip distance, compact development patterns and use of existing infrastructure all tend to reduce marginal cost of serving infill development. The City of Spokane has recognized this correlation and implemented significantly reduced transportation impact fees for housing in the downtown area, compared to areas outside of the downtown.

A system reliant on average costs will tend to subsidize expensive development types (such as large single-family homes at the periphery) and overcharge less expensive development types (such as infill ADUs), creating an incentive to build more costly housing types.

Carefully examining how you calculate the charge for different housing types in different parts of the community can help identify when you are sending signals to the market at cross purposes with your community goals. This same type of review can be applied to connection fees as well.

Gaps, Phasing and Urban Densities: Local governments can review gaps in the sewer, water, transportation and other systems and prioritize funding and phasing mechanisms. A first step should be prioritizing appropriate areas for infrastructure to support higher density housing. Where urban infrastructure is not fully available or is scheduled for later years in the capital facilities plan, jurisdictions can set regulatory standards to maintain the ability to achieve urban densities in the long run while allowing for some incremental development in the meantime.

Examples include requiring building placement that preserves the ability to achieve future urban densities and allowing for interim water and interim septic systems provided such systems allow for full-service connections in the future (also called shadow platting). Example communities with such standards include Pierce County interim urban septic systems and City of Chelan rural to urban transition standards. If certain areas are too difficult or too expensive to serve, they could be considered for removal from the urban growth area. Review [WAC 365-195-320](#), which notes the limited circumstances in which reduced infrastructure is acceptable, and review Commerce's 2012 [Urban Growth Area Guidebook](#).

Consider Reasonable Measures Identified in Buildable Lands Reports

In buildable lands jurisdictions³⁴ (Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom counties, and the cities and towns within their boundaries), RCW 36.70A.070(2) requires that "any revision to the housing element shall include consideration of prior review and evaluation reports and any reasonable measures identified." Reasonable measures often include strategies to encourage more housing production, or the production of higher density housing types that are in short supply. When reviewing the housing element, consider whether the goals and policies are consistent with, and supportive of, these reasonable measures.³⁵

Next Steps

The housing element review should identify a list of issues to address in the housing element update. These may include the need to revise, consolidate or write new housing goals and policies. Guidance for this step is provided in [Chapter 5. Updating Goals and Policies](#). See [Chapter 6. Identifying Strategies to Implement Your Policies](#) for housing strategies to implement your housing goals and policies. The review might also reveal the need for the development of an implementation plan or stronger monitoring program. Guidance for these topics is provided in [Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element](#).

³⁴ Those subject to the review and evaluation requirements of RCW 36.70A.215.

³⁵ Examples of reasonable measures are in Appendix 2 of the [Housing Memorandum: Issues Affecting Housing Availability and Affordability](#).

Chapter 5. Updating Goals and Policies

This chapter provides guidance for crafting clear and effective goals and policies for your housing element.

What are Goals and Policies?

Goals and policies in a housing element should describe how the community proposes to address identified needs and wants. They should articulate local priorities for the production of specific housing types, housing design, housing affordability, preservation of existing housing and allocation of local resources.³⁶

Even in comprehensive plan updates, it's useful to take a step back and consider how goals and policies differ from each other. For the purpose of this guidebook and crafting goals and policies in comprehensive plans, consider the following definitions:

- **Goal.** Goals are statements of desired outcomes or intended achievements. For example: "Provide for a range of housing opportunities to address the needs of all economic segments of the community."
- **Policy.** Policies are specific statements guiding actions and implying commitment to these actions. Policies provide the framework for future decisionmaking and authorization for regulations to implement the policies. Policies may express intent, such as: "Encourage townhouses and multifamily development designed and scaled consistent with the surrounding neighborhood." Policies may also describe an action to be taken. For example: "Allow townhouses and multifamily development designed and scaled consistent with the surrounding neighborhood."

A number of policies may be associated with each goal. For example, for the goal to zone for a variety of housing densities and types, policies may address various density or affordability incentives.

Goals and policy statements can be very specific if they are intended to describe a future accomplishment, or more general if they are intended to provide direction to later planning efforts and implementation decisions. Communities need to decide how specific they want to be in expressing goals and policies depending on the purpose and desired outcome.

When crafting goals and policies or reviewing them, the strength of the words makes a difference. Language like "encourage", "consider" and "should" are very tentative, exploratory words which could be used to articulate policies that the community would like to consider and include in their plan, but is not yet ready to implement. Language such as "allow", "ensure" or "require" are much stronger and point to policies that should be implemented in the near future. When reviewing your housing element, consider strengthening and adjusting policies by changing the words based on alignment with state law and alignment with your community's vision.

Regardless of the degree of specificity, goals and policies need to clearly and accurately describe the intended outcome. Many older comprehensive plans suffer from overly vague policy language that offers minimal guidance to future decisionmaking. More specific policies have a greater likelihood to produce results that meet the desired intent. [Exhibit 30](#) below, adapted from the City of Bellevue Transit Master Plan and illustrated in PSRC's 2014 Housing Element Guidance, provides guidance on crafting strong, active policies.

³⁶ Some of the content in this section is adapted from Washington's Department of Community Development's 1993 [Housing Element Guide](#).

Exhibit 30. Policy Strength Continuum



Source: PSRC, 2014

Housing goals and policies should be written to allow the evaluation of progress toward achieving the housing element's goals and policies. Clear language will help staff to review whether policies have been implemented or direct the community to evaluate the development of housing units of different types. See [Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element](#).

Requirements and Guidelines for Housing Goals

The GMA provides direction on what should be in the housing element. The goal for housing is to encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock. Countywide policies should be consistent with and reflect this statewide goal. Local goals and policies should also be consistent with this cascading policy hierarchy while also reflecting local needs and goals.

The GMA requirements for the housing element are to ensure the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and the element must include a statement of goals, policies, objectives and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing, including single-family residences. Given that direction, housing goals should address the following:

- Working towards housing that is affordable to all economic segments of the population, with special consideration for the lowest income segments, recognizing that the market will not provide this without policy direction.
- Zoning for a variety of housing densities to encourage the development of a variety of housing types.
- Ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods, recognizing that neighborhoods will change over time.
- Preservation and improvement of existing housing, especially affordable housing.

- Considering other local goals for housing to address local needs.

Recent Updates to Housing Laws

Some things are not policy choices and are required by law. You should review your policies to ensure they do not conflict with housing laws. Some recent housing laws are noted below, but you should review the full list in [Appendix C: Housing Law and Case Law](#). If you are considering policies on these topics, you may want to also provide more policy detail as to how your jurisdiction would apply these laws.

- **ADU Parking:** Cities may not require off-street parking for ADUs within ¼ mile of a major transit stop. More detail at [RCW 36.70A.696-698](#).
- **Affordable housing on religious property:** If asked, communities must provide a density bonus for affordable housing located on property owned by a religious organization. See RCW [36.70A.545](#).
- **New definitions** for affordable housing, low-, very low- and extremely low-income households at [RCW 36.70A.030](#).
- **Limits on parking requirements** for low-income, senior, disabled and market-rate housing units located near high-quality transit service at [RCW 36.70A.620](#).
- **Tiny homes and recreational vehicles:** cities and towns may regulate in manufactured home parks, tiny home communities and new definitions according to [RCW 35.21.686](#).
- **Surplus land for affordable housing:** local governments can sell or give land for a public benefit, defined as affordable housing in [RCW 39.33.015](#).
- **Smaller units:** local governments can eliminate minimum floor area requirements in [RCW 19.27.060](#).
- **No impact fees for emergency housing:** [RCW 82.02.090](#) provides an exemption from impact fees for emergency housing.

Hearings board and court decisions also have an impact on your local housing policies. You should be familiar with recent decisions. Refer to [Appendix C: Housing Law and Case Law](#) for a list of important decisions.

Updating Existing Housing Goals and Policies

Some comprehensive plan updates only require modest adjustments to the housing goals and policies, whereas other situations may call for a complete update. The nature of the update depends on a variety of factors:

- **Age and quality of the existing housing element.** Plans that are outdated and/or not easy to read usually warrant a complete update. These factors, along with changing housing needs and evolving community objectives, made it an easy decision for the City of Anacortes (see [Exhibit 31](#) below) to start over in their most recent update.
- **Changing physical context, including growth.** Rapidly growing outer suburb communities are a good example of a type of community that may need a complete update as their housing inventory and population change. Land-locked established suburbs with slower growth or population change, on the other hand, may only require some strategic adjustments to align with changing state laws or regional policies, and evolving local housing needs and community objectives.
- **Alignment with GMA, CPPs and MPPs.** The future land use map, land use designations and goals and policies should be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with changes to state law, or applicable county and multi-county planning policies. See Chapters 3 and 4 for details.
- **Changing demographics and housing needs.** As referenced in Chapter 2, the housing needs assessment is the primary way to identify the needs and gaps beyond the existing housing element. Integrating goals and policies to address evolving gaps in special needs housing will be important (e.g., senior housing, farmworkers, homelessness, and adults with disabilities), as discussed in Chapter 4.

- **Changing community objectives.** The public engagement process is likely to lead to adjustments in goals and priorities. Examples might be a greater emphasis in missing middle housing types, housing affordability, housing design and compatibility, and the location and type of growth.

Exhibit 31. Example Housing Affordability Goal and Policies in Anacortes's Comprehensive Plan

The City of Anacortes's most recent comprehensive plan update is a good example of a complete update, based on the age of the previous plan, evolving housing context and changing community objectives. Below is an example goal and policies involving affordable housing.

The city's Affordable Housing Task Force developed an initial draft set of policies which were refined by staff and consultants consistent with the plan and document, community engagement process and planning commission and city council's review. While most of the policies are advisory in nature, they provide enough detail to guide future decisionmaking. The column of strategies on the right provides useful details that don't fit in the policy format. These policies later proved useful in the subsequent land use code update and other affordable housing actions.

Goal H-3. Housing Affordability. Provide for a range of housing opportunities to address the needs of all economic segments of the community.

Policy H-3.1. Encourage preservation, maintenance, and improvements to existing affordable housing.

Policy H-3.2. Develop meaningful, measurable goals and strategies that promote the development of affordable workforce housing to meet local needs and monitor progress toward meeting those goals.

Policy H-3.3. Support non-profit agencies and public/private partnerships to preserve or develop additional housing for very low, low and moderate income households.

Policy H-3.4. Support both rental and ownership forms of affordable housing in a variety of types and sizes.

Policy H-3.5. Locate affordable housing throughout the city and especially in areas with good access to transit, employment, education, and shopping.

Policy H-3.6. Consider a housing levy to provide ongoing funding for affordable housing.

Policy H-3.7. Consider developing an inclusionary zoning program as a means of increasing the City's affordable housing supply.

Policy H-3.8. Require that affordable housing achieved through public incentives or assistance remains affordable for the longest possible term.

Policy H-3.9. Evaluate land owned by the City and other public entities for use for affordable housing utilizing a community land trust,-or similar, -type model.

Possible Workforce & Affordable Housing Strategies:

Incentive zoning. Development incentives such as increased height or floor area ratio, could be tied to the provision of affordable housing or payment of a fee-in-lieu to an affordable housing fund.

Inclusionary zoning. Requires that a given share of new construction is set aside to be affordable to low to moderate income households.

Multi-family Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program. Washington state law authorizes this program, which offers a limited 12-year tax exemption from ad valorem property taxation if 20% of the housing is affordable.

Fee reduction or waivers. Costs associated with the development process, such as impact fees and building permit fees, can be reduced or eliminated to encourage selected types of development.

Source: City of Anacortes, 2016

In some cases, housing goals may still be valid, yet new policies are needed as new strategies to address housing needs are identified. For example, some policy support may be needed to authorize the community to adopt tax incentive programs, inclusionary zoning or other programs. [WAC 365-196-410](#) emphasizes that goals and policies serve as a guide to the creation and adoption of development regulations and may also be used to guide decisionmaking in the permitting process. See [RCW 36.70A.120](#) and [WAC 365-196-800](#) for requirements and guidance on consistency between the plan, regulations and capital budget.

What Related Policy Changes May Be Needed in Other Comprehensive Plan Elements?

Changes to housing element policies may require policy changes in other related elements of the comprehensive plan, and vice versa.

The community's land use element sets the future land use designations and growth targets and is a key element to consider in tandem with the housing element. Housing growth is also supported by, and should be consistent with, capital facilities, utilities and transportation elements. The housing needs identified by an HNA may require another look at other elements in the comprehensive plan. Some common scenarios could include:

- **Higher density land use designations and corresponding transportation and/or capital facilities investments:** Where the HNA and housing policy evaluation show greater housing affordability is required, the land use element may need to be reconsidered to add higher density designations, particularly in places of opportunity. Consequently, this higher density designation change may require improvements to transportation systems, water, sewer or stormwater infrastructure.
- **Smaller dwelling units and opportunity for walkable districts with amenities:** Compact development with greater numbers of smaller housing units could increase demand for services and amenities. In many areas, amenities and an improved design context may be needed to attract new housing investments. Such amenities could include strategic streetscape improvements and sidewalks along with updated standards to accommodate more intensive development patterns. More people brings demand for more services, such as coffee shops, restaurants, grocery stores and daycares and therefore the potential need to adjust zoning for neighborhood centers.
- **Need for more public open space and connectivity:** As private open space gets smaller with compact development, access to public open space such as parks, trails or complete sidewalks becomes more important to support housing development. Amendments to the parks and recreation plan and transportation improvement plan could focus on providing high quality, but potentially smaller amenities in proximity to higher intensity neighborhoods. Such changes could support multiple goals and policies across several elements including reducing sprawl, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing walkability and supporting active living.
- **Balancing jobs with housing:** Some communities may wish to seek a greater balance of jobs and housing for more complete communities where people can live and work in the same area. This proximity improves work-life balance, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improves overall quality of life. This may require stronger policies to support new businesses and appropriately zoned land. If the economic development strategy will attract more employers and new jobs, it should also consider housing for those new workers and their prospective incomes.

See [Exhibit 32](#) illustrating how the housing policy framework is integrated in multiple elements of a comprehensive plan, a consideration when setting up a policy review.

Exhibit 32. Example of Housing Policy Framework Integrated in Multiple Comprehensive Plan Elements – Jefferson County



Note: *In 2020, the state of Washington's capital budget included funding for design and engineering of the Port Hadlock sewer project.
Source: Jefferson County, 2018

Additional Housing Policy Issues

Beyond those factors noted above, below are some additional considerations in updating your housing goals and policies:

- Address housing design and compatibility.** As many communities have run out of large vacant lands to develop and now require increases in density in existing neighborhoods to support growth, policies that emphasize compatible design have become more important. Such policies should provide guidance on the types of lot and building design provisions that should be addressed in implementing zoning codes and design standards or guidelines. See [Exhibit 33](#) for sample policies promoting compatible infill development, and see [Exhibit 34](#) and [Exhibit 35](#) for relevant housing design polices in Kirkland and Walla Walla. While compatibility is important, design policies can add complexity and expense to housing development. Your community may wish to balance these objectives.

- **Address special needs housing.** Every community contains its own mix of special needs housing issues (e.g., senior housing, farmworkers, homelessness, and adults with disabilities). With aging populations and increasing economic pressures, addressing these needs requires increasingly proactive efforts. Policies may include barrier free design to allow people of various abilities to use the housing stock. See [Exhibit 36](#) for Bellingham's special needs housing goal and policies.

- **Address inequality and equity.** Chapter 1 of the HAP Guidebook (see section "How is Housing Policy Related to Race and Inequality") provides useful context on historic practices that have contributed to patterns of inequality in many communities. Policies that help expand the supply and diversity of housing are the primary ways that communities can address existing inequalities. Policies promoting diverse housing options in areas with access to transportation, parks, schools and amenities are also particularly important. Tacoma's Goal H-2 from One Tacoma Housing Element in [Exhibit 37](#) illustrates policies focusing on equity issues.

- **Address displacement.** For those many Washington communities facing rapidly increasing rental and for-sale housing prices, displacement is a very significant issue. Chapter 5 of the HAP Guidebook examines a great variety of strategies for minimizing and mitigating displacement. A list of these displacement strategies is also included in [Appendix B: Housing Strategies](#). Policies H-2.5 and H-2.6 illustrated in Tacoma's housing element in [Exhibit 37](#) address displacement.

- **Monitor housing supply and affordability.** Policies for monitoring progress towards achieving goals and growth targets can be an important first step towards realizing your community's vision. See [Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element](#) for more details on monitoring.

- **Plan for housing away from natural hazards.** Hazards could include wild fire, floods or steep slopes.

- **Encourage sustainable housing models.** Consider solar access, passive solar design, energy efficiency and net zero buildings.

[Appendix D: Housing Element Policy Examples](#) includes additional housing policy examples from jurisdictions in Washington. The National American Planning Association (APA) Housing Policy Guide (2019) also includes policies for local governments to consider.³⁷

EXAMPLE POLICIES IN APPENDIX D

- Preservation (*Maintenance and Code Enforcement*)
- Variety of Housing Types (*ADUs, Tiny Homes and Manufactured Housing, Infill Development and Density Near Places of Opportunity*)
- Home Ownership
- Accommodate Growth
- Housing Location and Transportation and Land Use (*Location of Affordable Housing, Jobs/Housing Balance*)
- Infrastructure (*College Housing, Rural and Farmworker Housing*)
- Affordable or Subsidized Housing (*Incentives or Requirements, Funding or Financing, Prevent Barriers*)
- Vulnerable Populations and Homelessness (*Special Needs Housing, Homeless Focus, Aging Adults Focus, Surplus Land and Non-Profit Housing*)
- Equity, Displacement and Integration
- Regional Coordination and Fair Share
- Design and Development Standards (*Sustainable Housing, Historic Preservation*)
- Tracking and Monitoring

³⁷ <https://www.planning.org/publications/document/9178529/>

Exhibit 33. Sample Policy Language Promoting Compatible Infill Development

Enhanced design standards can be important to communities accepting more density in established neighborhoods. Below are sample policies that provide guidance for new or refined design standards associated with small lot infill and multifamily development. While these do not reference missing middle housing types, the same design components largely will apply.

Policy: Adopt design standards for small lot and attached housing development to gracefully integrate these uses into existing neighborhoods in ways that maintain general neighborhood scale and character. Key concepts to consider in the design standards:

- Encourage a covered entry facing the street.
- Minimize the impacts of garages and driveways on the streetscape.
- Provide usable open space.
- Set a maximum floor area ratio to better ensure that homes are proportional to lot sizes.
- Require a minimum amount of façade transparency to promote more “eyes on the street” for safety and to create a welcoming streetscape.

Policy: Adopt design standards for new multifamily development to promote neighborhood compatibility, enhance the livability of new housing, and enhance the character of residential and mixed-use areas.

- Emphasize pedestrian oriented building frontages.
- Emphasize façade articulation consistent with neighborhood scale.
- Integrate high quality durable building materials and human scaled detailing.
- Provide for usable open space for residents.
- Provide compatible site edges and sensitive service area design.
- Provide for vehicular access and storage while minimizing visual and safety impacts of vehicles.
- Integrate landscaping elements to soften building elevations, enhance neighborhood compatibility and improve the setting for residents.

Exhibit 34. Example Design Standard Policy in Kirkland's Comprehensive Plan

Kirkland's Policy H-2.4 focuses on integrating greater housing options in single family areas and emphasizes the importance of site and building design provisions to best ensure neighborhood compatibility.

Policy H-2.4: Allow a broad range of housing and site planning approaches in single-family areas to increase housing supply and choice, to reduce cost, and to ensure design quality and neighborhood compatibility.

Clustering and innovative housing types may include cottages, compact single-family, zero lot line, clustered and common wall housing. These development styles can allow for more environmentally sensitive site planning by concentrating development on the most buildable portion of a site while preserving natural drainage, vegetation, and other natural features. Similarly, allowing zero lot line or other design innovations in these areas can further help to lower land and development costs.

Innovative housing types also may be appropriate on sites in single-family neighborhoods that do not have environmental constraints. The demographics of our population are changing, with the average number of people living in each housing unit decreasing and the average age increasing. Cottage, compact single-family and common-wall housing can provide more housing on the same land area, in smaller structures that better match the needs of our population. In addition, housing affordability can be improved through reduced construction costs resulting from smaller or common-wall development.

In all cases, design standards are important to ensure that new development is integrated sensitively with its neighbors. Greater attention to building and site design, such as building bulk, roofline variation, garage and parking location, and landscaped buffers can enhance aesthetic appeal and neighborhood compatibility.

Source: City of Kirkland, 2015

Exhibit 35. Example Design Policies in Walla Walla's Comprehensive Plan



Duplex at the Corner of South 2nd Avenue and Howard Street (top) and Single Family Home with Accessory Dwelling Unit on East Chestnut Street (bottom)

HOUSING GOAL 2 Goal H-2: Attractive and functional neighborhoods are welcoming to all types of households.

- H Policy 2.1** Integrate housing for lower and moderate income households and those with special needs into a variety of geographical locations throughout the city.
- H Policy 2.2** Develop minimum property maintenance standards to ensure the safety and suitability of existing housing stock.
- H Policy 2.3** Develop design guidelines to ensure that all new housing, including that for lower and middle income owners and renters, adheres to good standards of planning, design, and construction.
- H Policy 2.4** Enhance the character of neighborhoods through superior design, responsible stewardship, the application of sustainability principles, and historic preservation.
- H Policy 2.5** Plan for energy efficient housing that is designed to maximize use of renewable resources such as solar and wind power.

Source: City of Walla Walla, <https://www.wallawallawa.gov/home/showdocument?id=854>

Exhibit 36. Example Special Needs Housing in Bellingham's 2016 Comprehensive Plan

Special Housing Needs and Homelessness (*excerpt from Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan 2016*)

Special needs citizens include people who require some assistance in their day-to-day living such as the mentally ill, people with developmental or physical disabilities, victims of domestic violence, at-risk youth, veterans and the elderly. Housing for special needs citizens may or may not incorporate supportive services, and may be permanent or transitional. Examples include adult family homes, assisted living facilities and group homes for people with developmental disabilities.

Due to rising housing costs and general unavailability of affordable housing for low-income households, homelessness is recognized as the most basic and extreme housing problem. According to the 2015 point-in-time count, there are least 651 homeless persons (a person may be part of a family household or an unaccompanied individual) and 449 homeless households (a household may include one or more persons) in Whatcom County. Twenty-six percent of all homeless households are considered chronically homeless. According to the 2015 Annual Report by the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness, point-in-time counts generally underestimate the number of people who are homeless.

GOAL H-4: Support housing options for special needs populations.

- Policy H-46: Work with agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations to locate housing to serve Bellingham's special needs populations, particularly those with challenges related to age, health or disability.
- Policy H-47: Allow housing opportunities for special needs populations in appropriate locations throughout the community.
- Policy H-48: Encourage and consider incentives for the dedication of a portion of housing in new projects to special needs housing.
- Policy H-49: Support implementation of the Whatcom County Plan to End Homelessness.
- Policy H-50: Continue to encourage and support the development of emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing with appropriate on-site services for people with special needs and the homeless throughout the City and county. Moving people into permanent housing as quickly as possible should be a priority.
- Policy H-51: Maintain an inventory and expand the city's supply of interim housing for target populations.
- Policy H-52: Foster and support partnerships that have proven to be successful in reducing homelessness, preventing homelessness and assisting the chronically homeless with needed care.
- Policy H-53: Support a range of housing types for retirees and seniors, including townhomes, condominiums and assisted living and independent living communities near daily needs and transit.
- Policy H-54: Support ways for older adults and people with disabilities to remain in their homes and the community as their housing needs change by encouraging universal design and home retrofits for lifetime use.

Source: City of Bellingham, [Bellingham Comprehensive Plan 2016](#), updated 2019

Exhibit 37. Example of Anti-Displacement Policies in One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan

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GOAL H-2 Ensure equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for people of color, low-income households, diverse household types, older adults, and households that include people with disabilities.

Policy H-2.1 Foster inclusive communities, overcome disparities in access to community assets, and enhance housing choice for people in protected classes throughout the city by coordinating plans and investments with fair housing policies.

Policy H-2.2 Support barrier-free access for all housing consistent with the Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA). Consider additional actions to increase access such as implementation of visitability and universal design features.

Policy H-2.3 Coordinate plans and investments with programs that prevent avoidable, involuntary evictions and foreclosures.

Policy H-2.4 Evaluate plans and investments and other legislative land use decisions to identify potential disparate impacts on housing choice and access for protected classes.

Policy H-2.5 Evaluate plans and investments for the potential to cause displacement in areas with concentrations of communities of color, low- and moderate-income households, and renters.

Policy H-2.6 When plans and investments are anticipated to create neighborhood change, pursue corrective actions to address involuntary displacement of under-served and under-represented people. Use public investments, incentives, and programs, and coordinate with nonprofit housing organizations, to mitigate the impacts of market pressures that cause involuntary displacement.

Policy H-2.7 Encourage a range of housing options and supportive environments to enable older adults to remain in their communities as their needs change.

Policy H-2.8 Help people stay in their homes through expanded tenant's protections, providing resources for households experiencing a crisis, increasing community organizing capacity, and other means.

Source: City of Tacoma, https://www.cityoftacoma.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/cms/Planning/OneTacomaPlan/1-5%20Housing.pdf

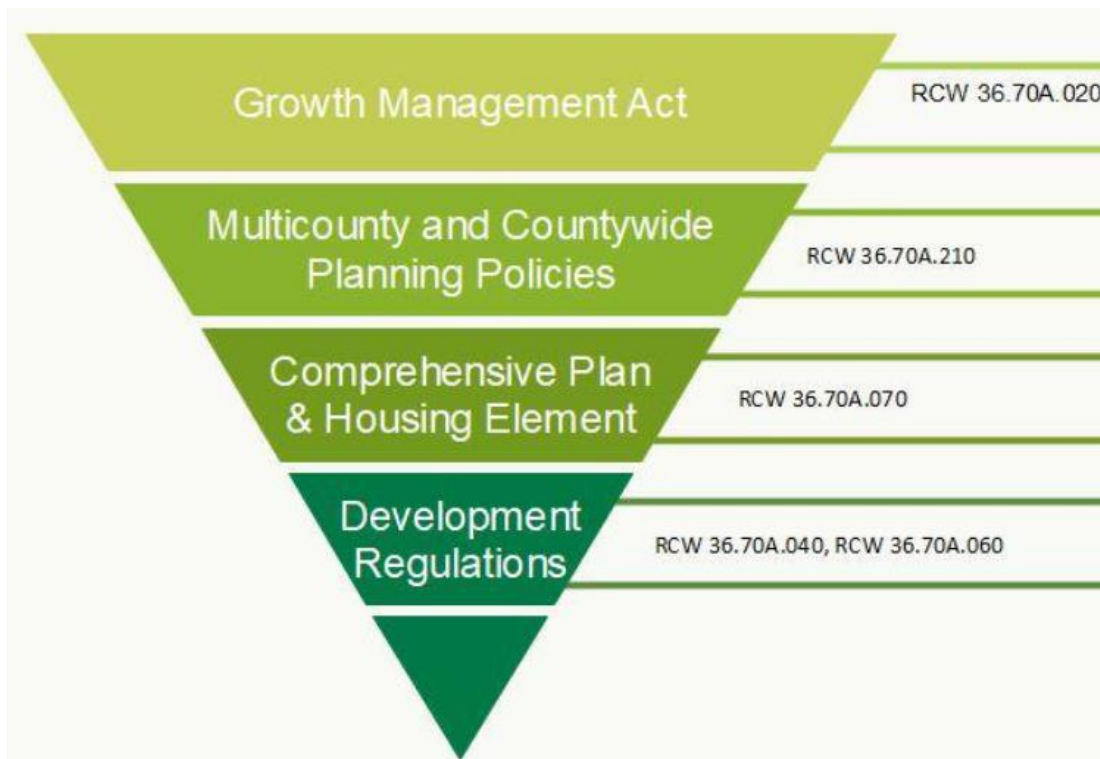
Evaluating your Goals and Policies

As you review existing goals and policies for a potential update, consider the following questions:

- Are all the goals and policies consistent with the state laws and GMA requirements?
- Are all the goals and policies consistent with countywide planning policies and multi-county planning policies (if applicable)?
- Do the goals and policies reflect the needs identified in the housing needs assessment?
- Are some policies no longer relevant, or do some need to be updated because community opinion has changed?
- Are there new concerns such as homelessness, equity or affordable housing in proximity to opportunity that should be addressed in policies?
- Are any of the policies inconsistent with each other or other parts of the plan?
- Can some policies be adjusted to be stronger, increasing the strength of the words?
- Are policies clear about how they would be implemented in your development regulations, permitting processes, development fee structures and other programs?
- How will you measure success? Are there specific goals or policies that could be measured, such as the number of new accessory dwelling units, or the size of new housing units?

Final Check on Policies

As you finalize your policies, take a minute to make sure they are consistent with countywide and multi-county planning policies and the GMA goal. Will their implementation development regulations and other tools result in housing that will meet these goals?



Source: BERK, 2020

Chapter 6. Identifying Strategies to Implement Your Policies

Implementing goals and policies is most effective if you select realistic strategies that help you move toward your goals. Housing strategies are individual actions, such as regulatory policies, tools or programs, that jurisdictions can take to encourage and facilitate the kinds of housing production called for in policies and achieve housing element goals. Strategies are strongest when they are included in the policies themselves, or they can be listed in comments associated with policies or selected later through local implementation actions.

Commerce's 2020 [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan](#)³⁸ (referred to as "HAP Guidance" herein) provides detailed recommendations for identifying and selecting strategies that have the greatest potential to address housing needs given your community's unique characteristics and market conditions. It also describes a wide range of possible strategies that jurisdictions can use to achieve housing supply, diversity and affordability goals, including case studies and tips for most effective implementation.

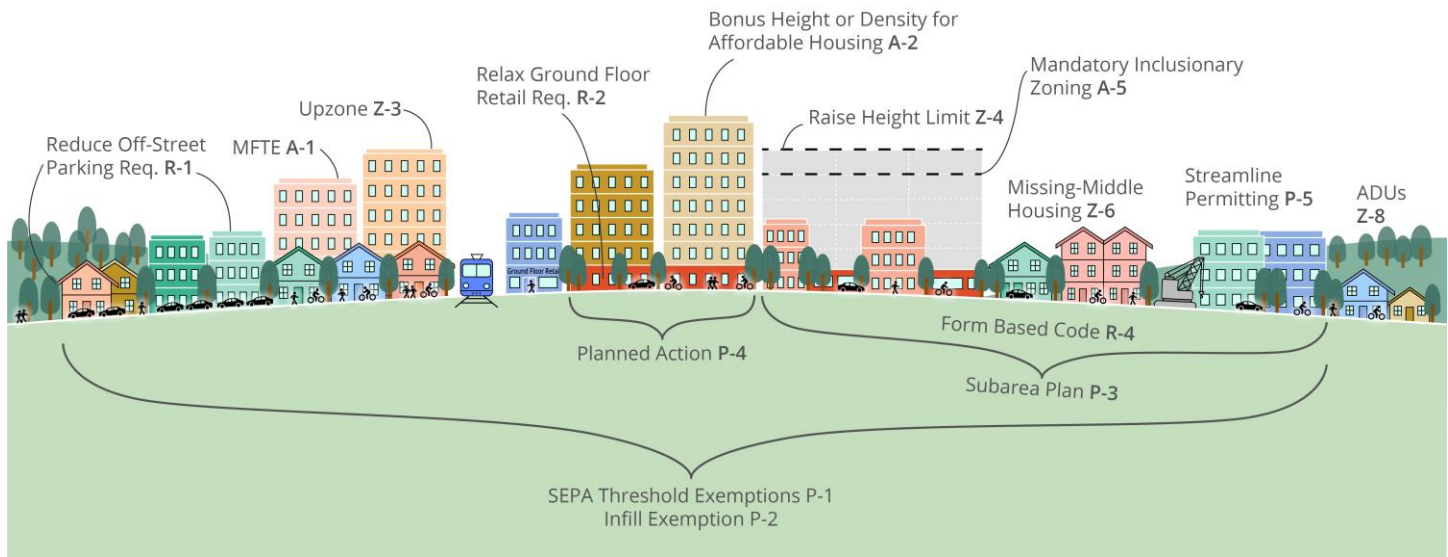
In 2019, funding was provided for cities to develop housing action plans as described in RCW 36.70A.600(2). Cities that received grant funding were required to identify strategies to encourage housing development that meets housing needs, as well as a plan for implementing those strategies. This chapter adapts and summarizes key recommendations in the HAP Guidance.

Strategies Should Work Together

A key takeaway from the HAP Guidance is that no single housing strategy is a complete solution. Housing strategies do not generally work in isolation. Multiple strategies can work together to shape opportunities for development and encourage the kinds of housing production that are in greatest need. Due to the unique size, demographic, and physical and political context of each community, the most effective combination of strategies will also be unique. [Exhibit 38](#) shows examples of how multiple housing strategies can encourage the kinds of development needed to reach a community's housing goals.

³⁸ <https://deptofcommerce.box.com/shared/static/pophc16jetggsctctmnbjomm0qa7tpu8.pdf>

Exhibit 38. A Mix of Interrelated Housing Strategies



Note: The letters and numbers next to each strategy correspond to Commerce's [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan](#) (2020)
Source: MAKERS, 2020

Types of Housing Strategies

The HAP Guidance includes six categories of housing strategies. A full list of strategies can be found in [Appendix B: Housing Strategies](#). See the [HAP Guidance report](#) for detailed descriptions of individual strategies, including tips for prioritization and effective implementation.

1. **Revising Zoning Standards:** Strategies for regulating building heights, density levels and permitted uses.
2. **Additional Regulatory Strategies:** These include adjusting other regulatory standards such as parking requirements, setbacks and design standards that can affect the feasibility of projects.
3. **Process Improvements:** Strategies to provide for a smoother, faster and/or more predictable permitting process for developers seeking to build housing that is consistent with jurisdictional goals. Many developers maintain that providing for predictability is the most important thing jurisdictions can do to encourage housing production. Therefore, jurisdictions should give particular attention to the value provided by discretionary processes such as design review and consider whether there are other ways to achieve similar goals.
4. **Housing Incentives:** Strategies to encourage and support multifamily and affordable housing development, particularly income-restricted affordable housing, such as fee waivers, multifamily tax exemptions or inclusionary zoning.
5. **Funding Options for Affordable Housing Development:** These are options for directly funding or subsidizing affordable housing production, including grants, loans and new revenue generation.
6. **Other Strategies:** Such as strategic infrastructure investments or programs to support homeowners with ADU financing, design, permitting and/or construction.

Many strategies are most effective when implemented with the support of partners. Examples might include engaging a housing authority or other agency to help conduct annual affordability checks to ensure units with affordability covenants are still affordable.

Identifying Strategies for Implementing Housing Policies

This section describes common themes and needs identified in housing policies as well as considerations for selecting the kinds of housing strategies that can be most effective for implementation. [Exhibit 39](#) provides a simple example of how a single housing policy may call for more than one strategy for successful implementation.

Exhibit 39. Example of Linking Housing Policies to Implementation Strategies

Housing Policy: Promote more opportunities for home ownership through single-family detached and semi-attached housing, fee-simple cottages and townhouses, and condominium apartments.

Strategy 1. Reduce minimum lot sizes in residential zones.

Strategy 2. Allow for additional housing types in residential zones, including fee-simple cottages and townhouses.

Increase Housing Supply

Each community has its own unique target, goal and/or projection for accommodating new housing units over its comprehensive planning horizon. Some housing strategies will have a greater impact than others in helping to meet those targets. In addition to strategies that increase capacity, such as increasing density limits, you should consider strategies to address other barriers that prevent developers from taking advantage of available housing capacity, such as reducing parking requirements or process improvements that help increase predictability for developers.

Housing Diversity

Housing diversity refers primarily to the mix of housing types and unit sizes that meet the unique demographic needs of each community. In many communities, the housing supply is dominated by single-family homes, or by single-family and apartment homes only. For example, if the housing needs assessment shows a mismatch between small household size and large housing units, an increase in housing diversity can help provide housing that more closely matches household need. Strategies that can effectively promote the development of missing middle housing types are particularly important for achieving housing diversity. These may include regulatory strategies to allow for missing middle housing types and development standards that support their construction.

Affordable Homeownership

In many communities, home sales prices are rising faster than local incomes. This can put homeownership out of reach for lower-, moderate- and even middle-income households, denying the stability and wealth-building opportunities that come with it. If your housing needs assessment shows a significant cost burden, particularly at the lower end of the spectrum, strategies to encourage the development of more affordable types of for-sale housing may be needed. These places can benefit from strategies to promote the production of a greater diversity of ownership housing types that can be constructed at lower cost per unit than traditional single-family homes. This may include adding flexibility to allow smaller cottage-style single-family homes, attached houses like townhomes or condominiums in residential zones. Communities can also address regulations that increase the cost of housing construction, such as addressing off-street parking requirements and fee waivers for affordable housing. Finally, many communities also partner with organizations like Habitat for Humanity or community land trusts to support subsidized ownership housing opportunities for qualified residents with low-incomes.

Middle-Income Rental Housing

Middle-income rental housing, also referred to as workforce housing, typically refers to housing that is affordable to people who are fully employed but whose incomes may be lower than those of many area residents. These populations with middle-incomes work in the community as retail or food service workers, teachers, firefighters, police, nurses or office support staff. Many of these workers either cannot afford or are not ready for homeownership. Areas with a lack of rental housing options affordable to households with moderate- and middle-incomes can benefit from strategies focused on increasing the quantity or density of apartments, particularly in areas with access to transit, services and amenities.

Many of the same strategies used to increase multifamily housing supply can be relevant to middle-income rental housing (see "Increase Housing Supply" above). In some communities, additional incentives are required to encourage developers to provide new units at price-points affordable to households with moderate-incomes, such as multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) and inclusionary zoning.

Senior Housing

Seniors have special housing needs due to increasing mobility challenges and a greater risk of disability and chronic diseases. Due to demographic trends, many communities in Washington are expected to see a rapid increase in the number of elderly residents in the coming decade. While some seniors will choose to "age in place" (stay in their current residence), others may wish to downsize to smaller units within the same community. Many others will choose to live with younger family members or will require specialized housing solutions, such as senior apartments (independent living), assisted living facilities, memory care facilities and nursing homes.

In many communities, there is a need for additional market-rate senior housing facilities, as well as subsidized facilities for seniors with little or no savings and fixed incomes. Those seeking to "age in place" will eventually require additional support services such as home modification, transportation, recreation and socialization, yard care, care management, and/or counseling. These kinds of services can also be considered as part of a holistic senior housing strategy to respond to the policies established earlier in the process.

Strategies to encourage the production of senior housing solutions include special incentives or alternative development standards that reduce the cost of developing senior housing, such as fee waivers and senior bonus densities. Regulations that permit accessory dwelling units can also allow seniors to live close to family or allow a home health aide to live near a senior in the primary unit.

Very Low-Income Housing

For households with incomes below 50% of median family income, new housing cannot be provided at an affordable price-point without public subsidy. As a result, residents with very low-incomes often struggle with severe cost-burden and even homelessness. Cities and counties can support and encourage the development of income-restricted housing through funding contributions, donation of surplus public land, reducing costs to build new affordable housing projects and incentives to include affordable units in new market-rate developments. Most often, it takes a combination of coordinated strategies to most effectively support affordable housing development, as well as partnerships with local housing authorities, nonprofits or faith-based institutions. Some strategies for this housing need include:

- Allow for the development of low-cost “tiny homes,” including “villages” with several homes and common space.³⁹
- Allow for development of manufactured home communities, particularly cooperatively owned.
- Donate surplus public land for affordable housing development or reuse underutilized land.
- Seek new funding options to support affordable housing development.
- Permit fee waivers for affordable housing projects.
- Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing projects.
- Allow temporary emergency housing.

³⁹ A new Washington state law, RCW 35.21.684, allows for tiny homes in manufactured home parks, and allows local jurisdictions more flexibility to authorize them in other zones. Additional information about tiny home villages can be found in Alexander, Lisa T., Texas A&M University School of Law, "Community in Property: Lessons from Tiny Homes Villages," (2019), <https://scholarship.law.tamu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2332&context=facscholar>.

Chapter 7. Adopting Your Housing Element

A comprehensive plan may only be amended once per year, but must be amended periodically according to the schedule in RCW 36.70A.130.⁴⁰ The periodic review or annual amendment process is navigated frequently by planners, and each agency will have its own approach to ensure a transparent and predictable review process. Routine amendments may be straightforward. Other amendments may garner more public interest. In any case, below are tips for managing the adoption process to a successful conclusion.

- **Plan for adoption at the beginning:** Preparing for adoption should begin when establishing the project plan and schedule and public participation plan at the start of the project. Establish a critical path, and work backward from desired legislative action dates with the city council. Allow for some cushion in case more time is needed to respond to public and decisionmaker comments. Ensure that any administrative appeal periods for environmental review are accounted for as well.
- **Engage decisionmakers along the way:** Addressing critical housing needs and defining strategic actions can inspire enthusiasm and concern from a range of stakeholders, including elected and appointed officials. Engaging with decisionmakers early and continuously will create a smoother path for the adoption process.
- **Simplify the process:** Integrating the requirements of environmental review and planning can reduce paperwork and align public comment opportunities, which creates a streamlined schedule and a more accessible process for members of the public. See discussion of SEPA/GMA integration below in the "Adoption Process" section below.

Public Engagement

When community members and stakeholders help shape a housing element's policies, it reflects their interests and they become its advocates. Public engagement is an important part of gathering and verifying information, highlighting and addressing inequities, and building support for an implementable plan. A well-rounded public engagement approach includes developing a public participation program as one of the first steps, engaging a wide spectrum of the public and stakeholders, particularly people having trouble finding housing that meets their needs. It is important to reflect this public input in the housing element updates so it can be included in the final decisionmaking process.

This section summarizes a more complete description of public engagement recommendations in the [Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan](#). Highlights are provided below.

TIPS FOR ADOPTION SUCCESS

Inform and empower participants using simple, legible graphics and narrative allowing them to critically assess the housing system.

Go on tours, either real or virtual to provide a more concrete and less threatening image of possible future outcomes.

Test preferred concepts such as with a pro-forma analysis.

Bring in experts to answer questions.

Be clear about what policy options will mean to people.

Provide strong visual examples.

Deal with controversy early, ensure diverse representation on committees, avoid jargon and use the planning process to cultivate advocates.

⁴⁰ See "Keeping your Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations Current" at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/periodic-update/>.

Develop a Public Participation Program

RCW 36.70A.140 states: "Each county and city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall establish and broadly disseminate to the public a public participation program identifying procedures providing for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive land use plans and development regulations implementing such plans. The procedures shall provide for broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, opportunity for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, provision for open discussion, communication programs, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments."

Though this statute refers to the whole comprehensive plan, applying this statute is also required when a single element is being revised. Regardless of whether you are updating just your housing element or your entire comprehensive plan, early and continuous public involvement is essential.

Though the public participation plan is created early to set the direction, be ready to revisit it throughout the process and update as needed to fill in emerging gaps. An engagement plan should identify:

- Public engagement goals
- Audience(s) for engagement, including community members, stakeholders, staff, boards, commissions, council, any advisory committees and other parties involved (e.g., state agencies)
- Appropriate engagement activities, such as open houses, surveys, web-interface community meetings and web pages
- Draft engagement schedule with re-evaluation opportunity(ies)
- Media contacts and timelines for communication about the project

Exhibit 40. Spectrum of Public Participation

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner.	To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions.	To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE	"We will keep you informed"	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns."	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible."	"We will implement what you decide."

Source: International Association for Public Participation, www.iap2.org

A useful tool for considering public engagement plan goals and types of engagement is the International Association for Public Participation’s (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation; see Exhibit 40 above. All stages on the spectrum are valuable. Depending on whether you are educating about options (“informing”), extracting information about community preferences (“consulting”) or problem-solving together (“collaborating”), you will

choose your venues and design your methods and activities for the right level of communication. Regardless of where you are on the spectrum, listening to community members with an open mind is an important skill.

Identify Audiences

Though housing policy affects all members of a community, focusing your engagement efforts helps set a timely, budget-efficient and equitable process. The Stakeholder Prioritization Chart ([Exhibit 41](#)) offers a way to narrow your efforts by identifying important stakeholders and defining an approach to their engagement.

Shifting decisionmaking power toward traditionally at-risk groups (the “Prioritize” quadrant) and truly listening to their needs and interests is fundamental to creating socially equitable housing policies. These steps ensure that their needs are met and help the project team to understand potential unintended consequences of housing policies.

At the same time, powerful influencers (the “Collaborate” quadrant) must also be heavily involved to ensure the policies are feasible and implementable. This means higher levels of engagement and true collaboration are important with these two groups. Those in the “Monitor for Change” and “Leverage” quadrants are important for verifying data and building advocates, so informing and consulting are appropriate levels of engagement with these groups.

Prioritize At-Risk Communities

The people most impacted by housing policies – the **at-risk communities** in the stakeholder prioritization chart – often have the most challenges to participating in traditional meetings and outreach methods. For that reason, extra effort should be made to identify populations and stakeholders who could be most impacted by housing policies and potential barriers to participation.

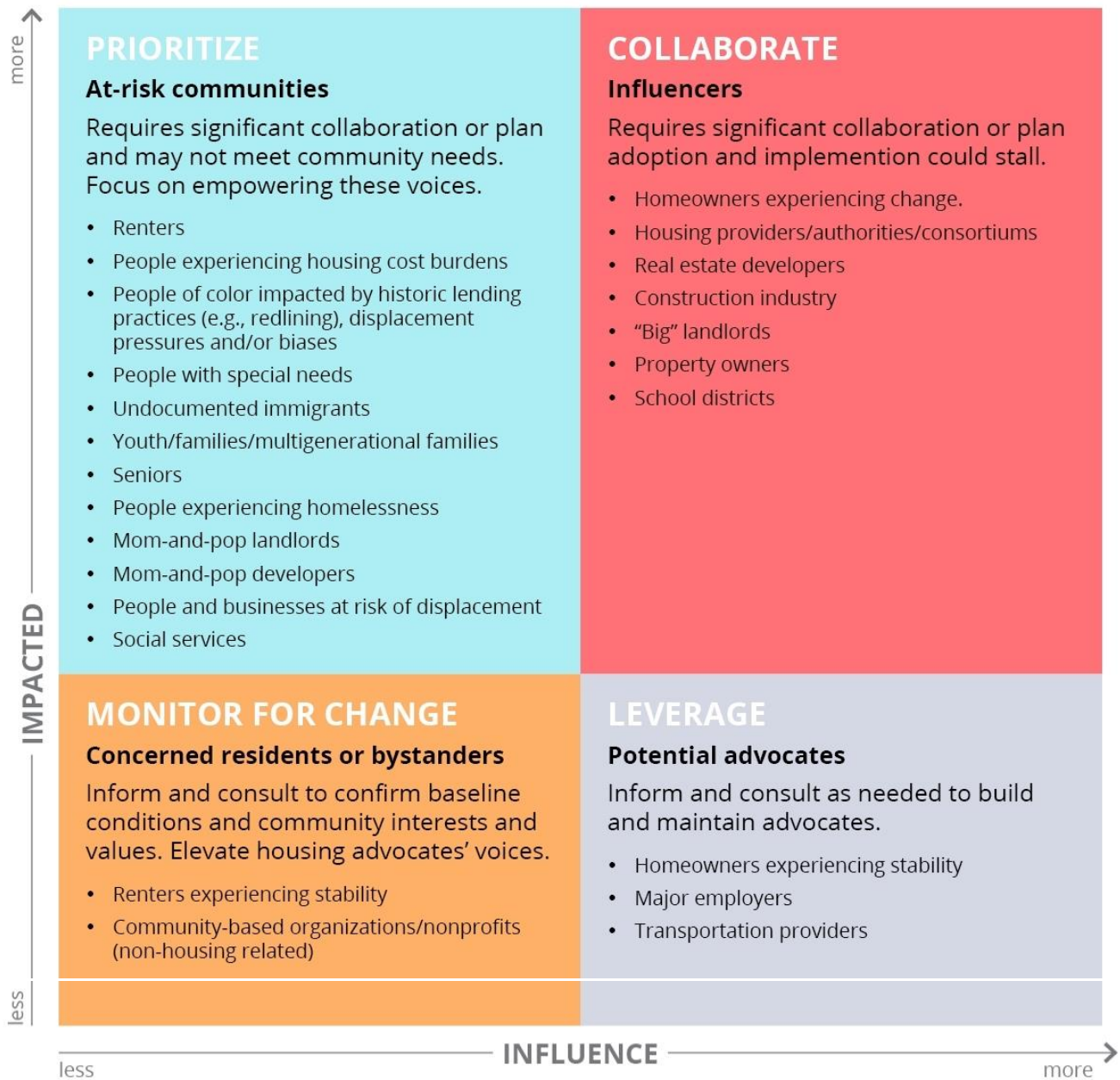
Collaboration with people who have historically been left out can lead to more creative and productive problem-solving. Good practices and goals include:

- Identify communities at risk of displacement and other impacts
- Build capacity of disadvantaged communities to meaningfully participate and affect decisions – i.e., prioritize engagement with at-risk communities
- Identify potential unintended consequences of proposed strategies (e.g., displacement of vulnerable populations and/or affordable community spaces with redevelopment, construction impacts to local businesses, etc.)
- Jointly find housing solutions and strategies to prevent and/or mitigate negative impacts

Ways to engage at-risk communities include:

- **Value Participants’ Time and Expertise:** Pay participants for their time and expertise, especially when they come from communities that have been systemically underserved. Compensation can range from stipends (e.g., \$50 per meeting) for participating in a stakeholder work group, consultant funding for engaging their community, raffles and gift cards for attending an event, to providing food at events.
- **Avoid Engagement Fatigue:** Some community leaders and organizations feel they have been asked for their opinion in numerous processes, but often are not seeing how their input has been used or results from their efforts. This is leading to “engagement fatigue.” The best way to prevent future engagement fatigue is to show that participants’ efforts were fruitful. Throughout the process, show how participants’ needs, ideas, preferences and solutions are being incorporated.

Exhibit 41. Stakeholder Prioritization Chart



Source: MAKERS, 2020, adapted from multiple versions, including Kapwa Consulting's emphasizing a social equity lens and the original "power-interest" matrix (Mendelow, 1991).⁴¹

- **Make Engagement Methods Accessible:** Consider hiring community liaisons, providing translations, offering childcare, providing food, etc.
- **Focus Efforts:** When developing your plan, consider and plan for the various barriers to participation. Not every barrier can be mitigated, and regardless of how welcoming events are, people have competing demands on their time. To prioritize your efforts, consider what will help you meet these basic needs:

⁴¹ Mendelow, A. "'Stakeholder Mapping', Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Information Systems." Cambridge, MA 5, no. 2 (1991): 61.

gather the information needed to understand the full housing picture in your community, build advocates and empower at-risk communities.

Engage Stakeholders

How much you engage people will vary by audience and point in the process, as well as the nature and extent of the housing element update or amendment process. The size and type of community, complexity of housing issues and strategies under consideration will also factor into your engagement plan.

Think strategically about who will be involved, which methods to use and at what times. Consider the most basic engagement needs – to gather information, build plan “authors”/advocates and empower underserved communities. Also consider your more specific desired outcomes to match stakeholders/community members with appropriate engagement activities, timing and level of effort.

The methods listed below are ordered roughly from broadest to most in-depth and focused. The engagement plan should include a mix of engagement methods depending on the engagement goals for different audiences and phases of the project.

- **Online Presence:** An online presence is useful for making the process accessible to people not typically engaged in government activities, pointing participants to surveys and events, providing project updates and inviting people to join a project listserv. At its simplest, a project website provides a clearinghouse for the housing element’s goals, schedule and draft materials.
- **Focus Groups and Interviews:** One-to-one or small-group meetings with people who share a special knowledge base or identity can be a highly effective way of gathering information and identifying potential solutions.
- **Social Media:** Interactive platforms and/or social media (e.g., Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, WeChat, WhatsApp) go beyond a simple website to allow for online engagement.
- **Online Engagement Platforms:** Online engagement platforms like surveys and discussion forums can offer a broad and accessible opportunity to be involved.
- **Public Open House:** Open houses offer more flexibility in timing and time commitment than a workshop and consequently lower barriers to access. A secondary objective of the open house is to build up the project contact list for future events and announcements. A virtual option is to hold an “online open house,” which presents information about the project and can be combined with an online survey.
- **Public Workshop:** The most effective workshops tend to be planned for participant education, working through issues as a group and collecting input on the matters at hand.
- **Pop-up at Community Hotspot:** Pop-ups are like mini-open houses: staff set up at a popular public location – a grocery store, coffee shop or street corner – to share information with community members who may or may not have been aware the event would occur.
- **Piggyback on Public Events:** Similar to pop-ups, piggybacking integrates public engagement with the ongoing civic life of the community. A table and brief announcement at an event like a farmers market, street fair, outdoor movie or parade provides an excellent opportunity to engage with members of the public that might never choose to attend an open house or workshop.
- **Piggyback on Pre-existing Meeting/Community Conversations:** By attending a stakeholder group’s own meeting (e.g., religious institution board/committee, chamber of commerce, homeowners’ association, neighborhood council, business district advocate group, neighborhood potluck, community center event or interest group happy hour), you respect the participants’ time, avoid engagement fatigue and meet them in their comfort zone.
- **Community Liaisons:** Community liaisons serve as a link between municipal government and hard-to-reach communities. They are especially valuable for reaching communities with language barriers and/or

hesitancy to trust public authorities. Liaisons advise on the best methods for gaining the community's insights.

Set Activities to a Timeline

To develop the schedule and select engagement activities, consider the sequencing of events relative to expected milestones. Sequencing considerations include:

Get started:

- Identify likely groups and individuals to include in your process.
- Conduct interviews with key stakeholders, decisionmakers and community liaisons to inform engagement strategies and expand the list of participants.
- Build awareness of the housing element process through broad outreach.
- Learn about key housing issues, e.g., verify the HNA through focused conversations with impacted and knowledgeable parties or reach out to developers to understand barriers to the development of the housing you need.

Identify issues and potential goals and policies:

- Engage broadly to build awareness about the project and learn from residents on how to best focus the discussion. Open houses, workshops, surveys, pop-ups and piggyback events, or their online counterparts, can be especially useful for these purposes.
- Build a deep knowledge base to identify and evaluate needs through interviews and focus groups with experts and community members that have specialized knowledge. Look for information about local housing markets, barriers to housing access, or impacts to specific populations.

Evaluate potential goals and policies with the public:

- As the goals and policies come into focus, hold events like charrettes or workshops to dive deep into the issues and potential outcomes and give community members ownership over the housing element.
- Continue dialogues with heavily impacted groups to workshop strategies and understand potential unintended consequences.

Set implementation plan/prioritize actions:

- Identify near-, medium- and long-term actions, and work with the public to prioritize them.

Throughout the process:

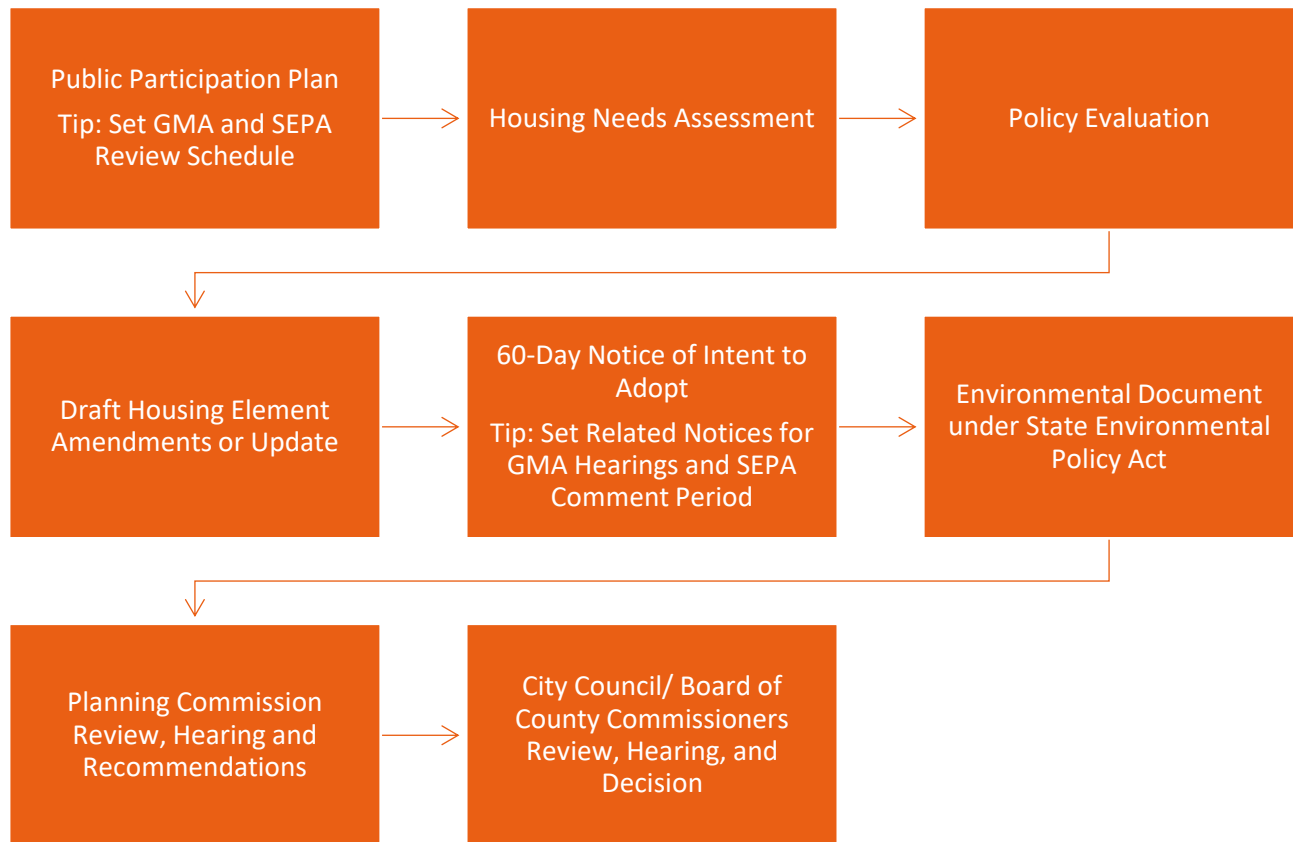
- Build in time to re-evaluate your engagement methods and fill in any information or advocacy gaps rising to the surface.
- Continue opportunistic piggybacking on pre-existing community meetings and popping up at events.
- Continue to provide information through websites.

Adoption Process

Opportunities for public comment and engagement with the public and stakeholders, as well as review and recommendations by the planning commission, ultimately culminate in a review and decision by the city council. Generally, there will have been opportunities for public engagement in reviewing the housing needs assessment and considering policies. The final draft of the housing element will require at least one public hearing prior to adoption ([RCW 36.70A.130\(1\)\(b\)](#)). The planning commission typically holds a hearing; the city council or board of county commissioners may also hold a hearing depending on whether there are substantial changes to planning commission recommendations and the nature of the local government's procedural regulations. Adoption of a comprehensive plan or single elements must be part of the annual comprehensive plan amendments or the periodic updates, and must be adopted by ordinance. See [Exhibit 42](#) for an example

adoption process. Two examples of adoption ordinances include [Anacortes' Ordinance 2982](#), adopting a complete update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2016, and [Island County's 2018 Ordinance C-97-18](#), updating the housing element after a comprehensive review of housing affordability.

Exhibit 42. Housing Element Update or Amendment: Adoption Steps Flow Chart



In tandem with preparing the housing element update or amendments, planners will need to conduct non-project environmental review under the State Environmental Planning Act (SEPA) ([RCW 43.21c](#)). SEPA considers the adoption of plans, policies and programs under any law to be non-project actions⁴², and SEPA applies to these types of actions.

SEPA ([RCW 43.21c](#)) helps government agencies consider the environment before taking actions, which includes “non-project” actions like the adoption of plans, policies and programs as well as “project” actions like development proposals ([WAC 197-11-060\(3\)](#)).

Amendments to the comprehensive plan, including the housing element, are considered a non-project action and require SEPA review. A jurisdiction may have several options for completing the SEPA process:

- **Relying on existing relevant SEPA documents** and adopting, adding or supplementing them along with threshold determinations as appropriate ([WAC 197-11-600](#)).

⁴² See description of non-project actions at [WAC 197-11-060](#).

- **Creating a new SEPA document** and threshold determination addressing the housing element update or amendments as a new non-project proposal. This may mean a determination of non-significance (DNS) and a checklist ([WAC 197-11-340](#)). Potentially a determination of significance (DS) and environmental impact statement (EIS) could be prepared if the housing element identified substantial proposed changes in policies and regulations such that it was important to review the proposals early ([WAC 197-11-360](#)).
- Local governments are encouraged to **integrate SEPA and GMA requirements** so that the decisions benefit from environmental information and the engagement process is seamless for the public ([WAC 197-11-235](#) et seq.). SEPA/GMA integration could include:

Environmental Review Resources

- [SEPA Handbook \(2018 update\)](#)
- [SEPA Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [WAC 197-11: SEPA Rules](#)
- [WAC 197-11-210](#) thru 235: GMA / SEPA integration

- Preparing studies that inform both GMA and SEPA procedures,
- Identifying early the features of the legislative proposal and potential alternatives for the decisionmaking and environmental review process,
- Considering the likely threshold determination at the beginning,
- Preparing a complete analysis of likely impacts even if using a non-project checklist,⁴³
- Determining the associated schedule of document and notice preparation (see [Exhibit 43](#)), and
- Early identification of policy or code-based mitigation measures (e.g., compatibility measures for different density housing types, etc.).

See the tips on SEPA/GMA integration in [Exhibit 43](#), as well as the [SEPA Handbook](#) for more information.⁴⁴

Exhibit 43. SEPA/GMA Integration Tips

- **Integrated Process:** Required notices and public meetings or comment opportunities can be combined to meet SEPA and GMA requirements. For example, if the local government issues a DNS with a 14-day comment period, that could overlap the periodic review or annual amendment hearing(s) so that the public comment opportunities are in alignment and people can comment on both the proposals and the environmental review.
- **Integrated Document:** An integrated SEPA/GMA process can also mean an integrated document where the proposed policies and regulations are integrated with the SEPA-required analysis in one document. More commonly, GMA and SEPA documents are issued in separate volumes and at the same time for coordinated review. They could also be integrated in the same document, which may be more complex for future housing element amendments.

Final Steps

The final adopting ordinance may include key findings from the housing needs assessment as the rationale for adopting the amendments or update.

⁴³ See OLYMPIANS FOR SMART DEVELOPMENT & LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS, et al., Petitioners, v. CITY OF OLYMPIA, Respondent: Final Decision and Order, Case No. 19-2-0002c, available at: <https://www.qmhb.wa.gov/search/case>.

⁴⁴ SEPA Handbook, 2018: <https://ecology.wa.gov/DOE/files/4c/4c9fec2b-5e6f-44b5-bf13-b253e72a4ea1.pdf>.

Chapter 8. Implementing and Monitoring Your Housing Element

Adopting an updated housing element is only the first step toward achieving your new housing goals, policies and objectives. Moving from adoption of new or updated goals and policies to seeing new housing production that meets your community's needs would be more effective with an implementation and monitoring plan. This chapter provides guidance for the development of an implementation plan and monitoring framework.

While not required for a GMA housing element, identifying implementation steps and monitoring performance are important ways to help your community work toward housing goals. WAC 365-196-410(2)(f) lists a series of potential implementation steps and suggestions for monitoring. Some communities include an implementation and monitoring plan directly in their housing element or elsewhere in the comprehensive plan. Others treat this step as separate from, and subsequent to, the adoption of the housing element or comprehensive plan. Either approach can be appropriate.

Develop an Implementation Plan

An implementation plan identifies specific actions that will be needed to carry out the policies and/or strategies. It also organizes and prioritizes them in the form of a work plan that can guide next steps. When drafting your implementation plan, consider including the below components. Keep in mind that public and stakeholder engagement are essential for developing a successful implementation plan. See [Chapter 7. Adopting Your Housing Element](#) for recommendations.

Implementation Planning Matrix

An implementation planning matrix is a useful framework for organizing and prioritizing actions that will be needed to implement the housing element. Each housing policy and its associated strategies can require several actions to support effective implementation. A planning matrix is a way to identify, for each action, the responsible party (or parties), resources needed, implementation steps and a target timeline for completion. The same matrix can be used to track progress toward implementation in annual reports or as a live document on your website. Topics to consider in your implementation planning matrix include:

- An action's **priority** is determined by how critical it is for accomplishing the housing goals or objectives.
- The anticipated **timeline** for each action refers to how long it will take to implement that action. For example, categorizing actions as near-term (0-2 years), medium-term (3-5 years) and long-term (6-10 years).
- The matrix should identify **responsible parties** for each action. These can be departments or organizations that are key players in completing this step. Categorize parties as primary and secondary according to their needed level of involvement.
- The **method of accomplishing the action**, such as legislative, administrative or partnership development, should be noted.
- It is important to assess and plan how much **investment** and the level of effort an action requires, including staff and volunteer hours and financial resources, which can affect the action's timeline. This may be measured as a gradation of effort - minimal, moderate or significant.
- **Comments** such as potential resource needs, challenges, opportunities or other considerations.

[Exhibit 44](#) shows a simple example format for an implementation planning matrix for organizing this information. After identifying these elements for each action, they can be grouped to reveal priorities and

responsible parties. You can use this tool to begin allocating resources and starting processes necessary to accomplish the actions you've identified to meet your community's housing needs.

Exhibit 44. Example Format for an Implementation Planning Matrix

Policy H-3: Encourage the development of workforce housing supply in mixed-use centers.

Strategy H-3.1: Create a density bonus to incentivize new workforce housing production by private developers.

Action H-3.1.1: Conduct a market study to determine which kinds of incentives would maximize impacts.

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Lead Party</i>	<i>Who can assist?</i>	<i>Investment</i>
High	6 months	Administrative	Community and Economic Development Department		Staff – 0.5 Full-time employee (FTE)

Action H-3.1.2: Develop and adopt new density bonus program.

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Lead Party</i>	<i>Who can assist?</i>	<i>Investment</i>
High	1 year	Legislative	City Council	Community and Economic Development Department	Staff – 0.5 FTE

Implementation Schedule and Work Plan

A good example of a schedule and implementation work plan is shown in the [Bainbridge Island 2017 Comprehensive Plan](#), which identified 56 action items. In order to provide clarity about what would be necessary to achieve these items, each element of the comprehensive plan includes a work plan. The work plans consist of a matrix describing each action, along with tasks necessary to complete the action, tasks currently in progress and any completed tasks. The work plan also includes a graphic schedule, showing timing and required staff effort from different departments for each high-priority action. Progress toward implementation is reported annually. [Exhibit 45](#) shows some excerpts from the comprehensive plan and annual work plan priorities report. Beginning in 2019, the city now provides a report on progress to implement the actions identified within the comprehensive plan.

When developing your schedule, think about the following:

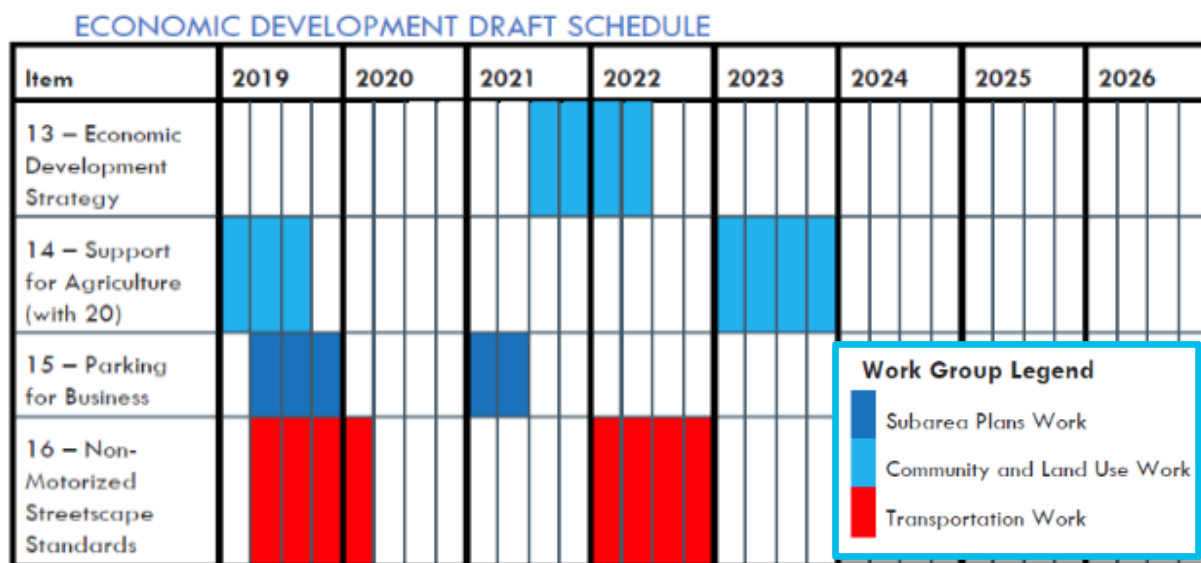
- Whether there are any windows of opportunity or time constraints that might motivate the scheduling of a high-priority action
- Steps, tasks and processes that will be required to implement the action
- Investment needed for each program or action (staff time, budget, etc.)
- Annual resources available (staff time, budget, partner capacity)
- Sequencing of actions with other actions, plan updates or work priorities

Next, start putting actions on the calendar, making sure to avoid overcommitting annual resources available to support implementation. The Economic Development Draft Schedule in [Exhibit 45](#) is a simple example.

Exhibit 45. Bainbridge Island 2017 Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Element Work Plan and 2019 Year-End Plan Priorities

	Implementing Actions	Tasks to Complete	Tasks in Progress	Completed Tasks
15	<u>High Priority EC Action #3</u> Assure that adequate parking is available to support businesses.	Begin strategy development Develop code updates	Implement medium term strategies	Winslow parking study
16	<u>High Priority EC Action #4</u> Identify capital projects and streetscape standards to implement Policy EC 11.1, to improve non-motorized facility links between the ferry terminal, downtown Winslow, and the harbor.	Transportation Improvement Plan Update Update streetscape standards	Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Update	

Source: [City of Bainbridge Island, Economic Development Element Workplan and Schedule, 2019, p. EC-1](#)



Source: [City of Bainbridge Island, Economic Development Element Workplan and Schedule, 2019, p. EC-2](#)

Task 2.3.2

Jan 01, 2019 - Dec 31, 2019 Completed Progress 100%

EC Action #3 - Task 2

Implement Medium Term Parking Strategies

During mid-2019, City staff met with downtown Winslow stakeholders to review options for short-term parking initiatives identified in the 2017 parking study. There was no consensus from community stakeholders to support the proposed changes. No further action is planned.

Source: City of Bainbridge Island, [2019 Year End Report Comprehensive Plan Implementation Update](#), p. 16

Another example of a housing implementation plan is included in Appendix D of [Redmond's Housing Action Plan](#), which includes the recommended actions, the phase of Redmond 2050, implementation timeframe, who is responsible, the amount of city resources needed, considerations and next steps, challenges, regulatory impacts and staff notes.

Develop a Monitoring Program

An important step of implementing your housing element is developing a program to monitor outcomes. A monitoring program can be designed to track progress toward achieving housing goals and evaluate the effectiveness of implementing actions.

Identify Performance Metrics

For each implementing action, identify performance metrics that can be used to track progress or outcomes over time. To identify appropriate metrics, first consider what change the action is designed to make in your housing system. Then consider the best available data source for tracking outcomes associated with that change.

A simple example of a performance metric is shown in [Exhibit 46](#). It links a housing action to a measurable goal and an appropriate performance metric for which data is already being collected. It also provides a goal that can be used to evaluate whether the action is working well enough or whether additional actions are needed.

WAC 365-196-410(2)(f)(iv): "The housing element should include provisions to monitor the performance of its housing strategy. A monitoring program may include the following:

(A) The collection and analysis of information about the housing market;

(B) Data about the supply of developable residential building lots at various land-use densities and the supply of rental and for-sale housing at various price levels;

(C) A comparison of actual housing development to the targets, policies and goals contained in the housing element;

(D) Identification of thresholds at which steps should be taken to adjust and revise goals and policies; and

(E) A description of the types of adjustments and revisions that the county or city may consider."

Exhibit 46. Example Framework for Performance Measurement

Action	Goal	Performance Metric	Performance Target
Allow detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs) in single family residential zones	Increase the diversity of housing options available in historically single-family neighborhoods	DADU permits	Permit 40 new DADUs before 2024 (10 units per year)

Redmond's [Final Housing Action Plan \(HAP\)](#) includes another example of potential indicators to consider for monitoring housing progress that can be applied to a housing element monitoring plan. A sampling of the general performance metrics and potential indicators in that report are included in [Exhibit 47](#). See Redmond's adopted HAP for the final list (forthcoming in 2021).

Exhibit 47. Redmond's Final HAP Potential Indicators for Monitoring Progress

General Plan Performance Metrics	Potential Indicators
Increase affordable housing units	Number of properties or units acquired/preserved by City, King County, ARCH or other organizations (report by AMI). Potential Data Sources: Assessor's data, ARCH, City of Redmond Data.
	Share of rent-burdened residents. Potential Data Sources: Census Data.
	Number of new affordable housing units built via MFTE and through the Inclusionary Housing/Zoning policy (report by AMI). Potential Data Sources: ARCH, City of Redmond Data.
	Number and description of affordable housing projects and partnership driven projects (describe partners and contributions). Potential Data Sources: King County, ARCH, Community Partners, City of Redmond, Assessor's Data.
	Share of rent-burdened residents. Potential Data Sources: Census Data.
	Number of requests ARCH and King County receives for tenant assistance from Redmond (waiting list information). Potential Data Sources: King County, ARCH Data.
Increase both market-rate and affordable housing production	Number of new market-rate and affordable homes in Redmond. Potential Data Sources: Assessor's Data, Agency Partners, Census Data.
Support TOD and investments in transit corridors	Number of new market-rate and affordable homes within ½ mile proximity/10- to 15-minute walk to transit stations. Potential Data Sources: Assessor's Data, Agency Partners, Census Data.
Increase housing options and choices	Number and type of new homes produced and total within the City over time - location, tenure, size, sale price/asking rent, and unit type (ADUs, backyard homes, condos, duplex, triplex, quadplex, townhome, etc.). Potential Data Sources: Assessor's Data, City of Redmond Data, CoStar, Census Data, or the State of Office of Financial Management Data.
	Share of homebuyers receiving assistance (e.g., down payment assistance). Potential Data Sources: ARCH, King County, Community Partners.
Increase in home-ownership support (targeting households not considered high-income)	Amount of funding and number of households supported by home-ownership programs. Potential Data Sources: ARCH, King County, Community Partners.
Increase in education and awareness on housing topics	Number of factsheets and educational materials released (including languages). Potential Data Sources: City of Redmond, ARCH.
	Number of meetings, training/educational workshops, events. Potential Data Sources: City of Redmond, ARCH, Community Partners.
	Number of participants, views to city website, requests for information. Potential Data Sources: City of Redmond.

Source: [Redmond's Final Housing Action Plan](#), 2021

In some cases, it doesn't make sense to have a unique performance metric and goal for each individual action. For instance, a city may adopt a series of different incentives for affordable housing production that are meant to work together as a package. The strategic objective of the entire package is to increase the number of new income-restricted affordable units built. Therefore, it makes sense to use an individual performance metric (affordable units built) for evaluating the effectiveness of the package. In this case it may also make sense to track how often developers use the individual incentives to determine if some are created in a way that makes them difficult to use. Interviews with housing developers following implementation can also be helpful to get feedback on what is working well and where there may still be barriers.

Integrate your Monitoring Program with Established Practices

One challenge many communities face is maintaining a monitoring program after the planning process is complete. This challenge is particularly acute in smaller jurisdictions with limited or no spare capacity for taking on additional tasks. One solution is to select performance metrics and a schedule for monitoring that builds on existing activities that are already being tracked. These could include:

- Comprehensive plan monitoring programs
- Buildable lands reports
- Growth monitoring
- Priority-based budgeting⁴⁵
- Annual reports or updates to elected officials

By building your monitoring program on established practices or efforts within your jurisdiction, you can gain efficiencies, promote coordination and consistency between initiatives, and decrease the chances that your ongoing monitoring program will be deprioritized in years to come.

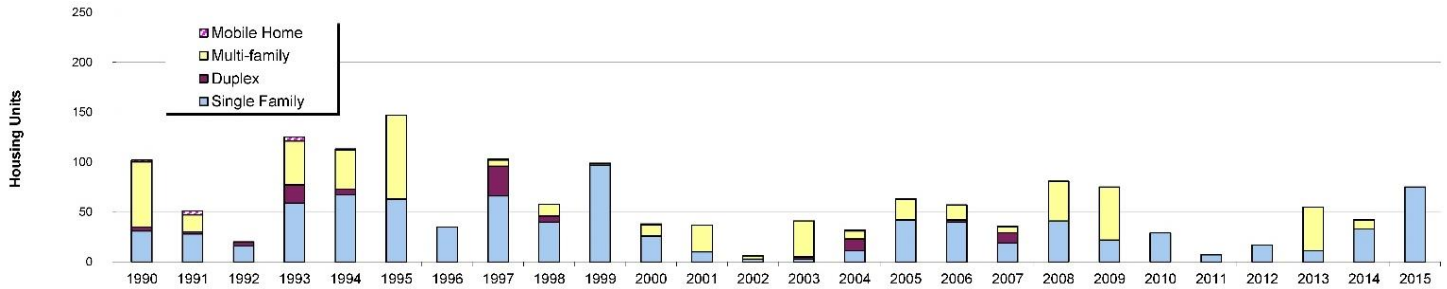
Example: Integrating performance measures into a growth monitoring report

Snohomish County and cities have adopted housing targets [for the number of units to go into each community](#).⁴⁶ Snohomish County has also committed to track the provision of affordable housing units in its [policy HO 4.B.1 to assess whether an adequate supply of housing affordable to residents of the county with lower incomes and special needs is being provided](#). Snohomish County also tracks development of residential units in its [Growth Monitoring Reports](#). The example from the City of Snohomish and its UGA shows the numbers of duplex, multifamily and single-family units built year to year ([Exhibit 48](#)).

⁴⁵ For examples see: Baily, Mike. 2015. Building the Budget around the Community it Serves. <http://mrsc.org/Home/Stay-Informed/MRSC-Insight/June-2015/Building-the-Budget-around-the-Community-it-Serves.aspx>

⁴⁶ Snohomish County Municipal Code, Appendix D: Growth Targets, <https://snohomish.county.codes/CompPlan/GPP-AxD>

Exhibit 48. Snohomish UGA (City and Unincorporated UGA) – New Housing Units Permitted by Type 1990-2015



Source: Snohomish County Tomorrow, 2016

Report on Outcomes

There are three ways to track and report on outcomes in your monitoring program. Each serves an important purpose.

1. Track and Report on Progress

Track and report on progress toward implementation of actions identified in your plan. As discussed in the implementation plan section above, this includes identifying whether work on an action has begun, what tasks or portions of the work have been completed, or whether the action is complete. [Exhibit 45](#) (above) includes an [example](#) from Bainbridge Island Comprehensive Plan.

2. Measure Progress Toward an Outcome Goal

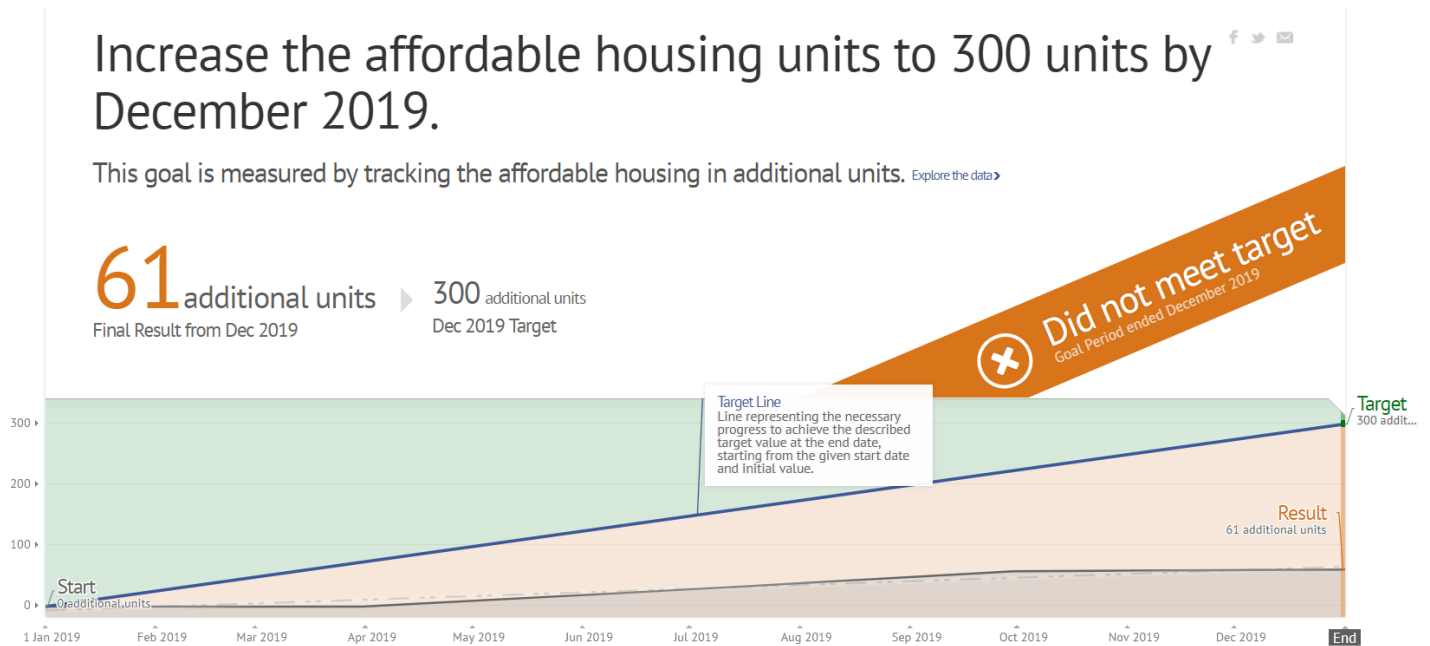
Assess whether you are on track to achieve an outcome goal, such as a target number of new affordable units built by a certain year. The city of Tacoma does this in its [Results 253](#) website for performance monitoring across multiple city programs. An example visualization showing cumulative progress over time is shown in [Exhibit 49](#). The city also includes a discussion about the actions it has taken to achieve the goal.

3. Monitor Outcomes Over Time

In addition to measuring progress from implementation toward a target goal, it can be helpful to track and visualize a performance metric over time, including before and after implementation of an action. This can be useful for understanding whether the actions taken had their intended effect or not. An example of this kind of tracking can be seen in the "[Draft Reasonable Measures Assessment](#)" conducted in support of the Kitsap County comprehensive plan update in 2015 ([Exhibit 50](#)). The visualizations clearly show the peak of units generated in 2005 followed by fluctuation. The dotted black line showing non-single family unit permits as a percentage of all permits provides useful context, since all permit activity reduced during the last economic recession.

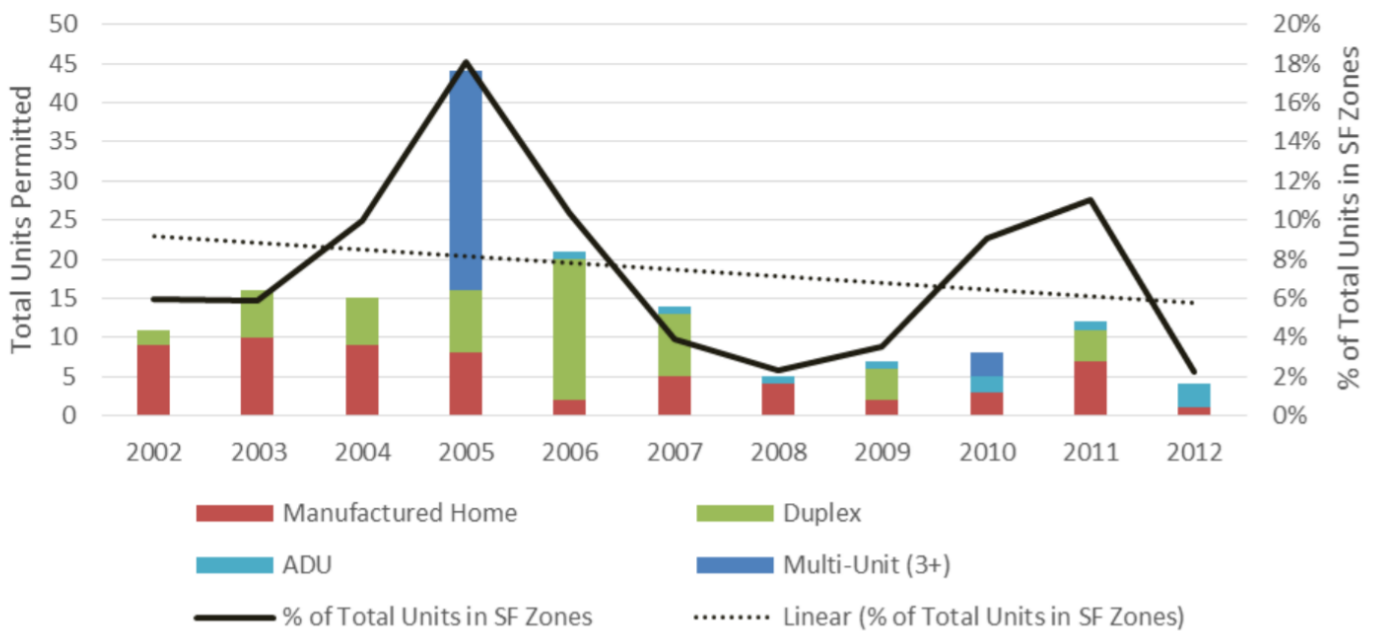
This kind of performance monitoring is best for supporting a diagnosis of what may be the cause of outcomes. For instance, there may have been a change in permit staffing levels one year and an inconsistency in the way applications were handled. Or a peak may be due to a single atypical development that isn't expected to be a trend.

Exhibit 49. Affordable Housing Stock Goal in Tacoma's Results 253 Data Portal



Source: [City of Tacoma](#), 2020

Exhibit 50. Housing Diversity: Non Single-Family Units Permitted in Urban Growth Area (UGA) within Single Family Zones by Housing Type: 2002-2012



Source: Kitsap County Draft Reasonable Measures Assessment, 2015

Additional Examples of Monitoring Programs

- Skagit County and cities: The Skagit Council of Government's [Housing Action Plan](#) (2017) has an [annual growth monitoring report](#) that includes population, housing and jobs, as well as households by income level and units available by affordability level.
- The city of Chelan's [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2017) identifies measurable objectives for evaluating the implementation of the plan. These include several measures related to housing and affordability. See Exhibit 1-4.
- Snohomish County releases annual [Growth Monitoring Reports](#) that include residential development profiles showing unit mix produced for each city/UGA.

What Is the Monitoring Telling You?

As you conduct annual monitoring, you should be looking at what the results are telling you about policy implementation. Are you noticing the trends you expected as a result of policy changes? Are there other sources of data that might inform your progress and understanding of the trends you are seeing? Are there ways you can tweak the performance metrics to help understand barriers or track new trends? For example, if you are measuring the number of new accessory dwelling units and not seeing as many as you expected, how can you identify what the barriers are? Reasons may include development fees, access to financing, or regulatory barriers (i.e., setbacks, lot coverage).

Appendix A: Acronyms

ACS - American Community Survey
ADU - accessory dwelling unit
ARCH - A Regional Coalition for Housing (King County)
AMI - area median income
CHAS - Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy
CPP - countywide planning policies
DADU - detached accessory dwelling unit
GIS - Geographic Information System
GMA - Growth Management Act
GMPC - Growth Management Planning Council (King County)
HAP - Housing Action Plan
HNA - housing needs assessment
KCCOG - Kittitas County Council of Governments
LAMIRD - local area of more intense rural development
LCA - land capacity analysis
MFI - median family income
MFTE - multifamily tax exemption
MPP - multicounty planning policies
OFM - Office of Financial Management
PSRC - Puget Sound Regional Council
RCW - Revised Code of Washington
SCT - Snohomish County Transit
SEPA - State Environmental Planning Act
SRO - single room occupancy
UGA - urban growth area
WAC - Washington Administrative Code

Appendix B: Housing Strategies

Revising Zoning Strategies	Process Improvements
Z-1: Reduce Minimum Lot Sizes	P-1: SEPA Threshold Exemption
Z-2: Require a Minimum Density	P-2: SEPA Infill Exemption
Z-3: Upzone	P-3: Subarea Plan with Non-Project EIS
Z-4: Increase Building Height	P-4: Planned Action
Z-5: Integrate or Adjust FAR Standards	P-5: Protection from SEPA Appeals on Transportation Impacts
Z-5: Increase Allowed Housing Types	P-6: Permitting Process Streamlining
Z-6a: Cottage Housing	P-7: Subdivision Process Streamlining
Z-6b: Duplexes, Triplexes and Fourplexes	Affordable Housing Incentives
Z-6c: Townhouses	A-1: Multifamily Tax Exemption
Z-6d: Courtyard Apartments	A-2: Density Bonuses for Affordable Housing
Z-6e: Micro-housing	A-3: Alternative Development Standards for Affordable Housing
Z-7: Increase or Remove Density Limits	A-4: Fee Waivers for Affordable Housing
Z-8: Revise ADU Standards	A-5: Inclusionary Zoning
Z-9: Offer Density and/or Height Incentives for Desired Housing	Funding Options for Affordable Housing Development
Additional Regulatory Standards	F-1: Local Option Taxes, Fees and Levies
R-1: Reduce Off-Street Parking Requirements	F-2: Local Housing Trust Fund
R-2: Relax Ground Floor Retail Requirements	F-3: "Found Land": Surplus Land and Other Opportunities
R-3: Reduce Setbacks, Lot Coverage and/or Impervious Standards	F-4: Partner with Local Housing Providers
R-4: Adopt Design Standards	Other Strategies
R-5: Use a Form-Based Approach	O-1: Strategic Infrastructure Investment
R-6: PUD/PRD and Cluster Subdivisions	O-2: Simplify Land Use Designation Maps
R-7: Manufactured Home and Tiny House Communities	O-3: Local Programs to Help Build Missing Middle Housing
Economic Displacement Strategies	O-4: Strategic Marketing of Housing Incentives
ED-1: Community Land Trusts	O-5: Temporary Emergency Housing
ED-2: Need-based Rehabilitation Assistance	Physical Displacement Strategies
ED-3: Down Payment Assistance	PD-1: Strategic Acquisition and Financing of Existing Multifamily Development
ED-4: Property Tax Assistance Programs	PD-2: Support Third-party Purchases of Existing Affordable Housing
Cultural Displacement Strategies	PD-3: Notice of Intent to Sell / Sale Ordinance
CD-1: Grants/Loans to Directly Support Small Businesses	PD-4: Foreclosure Intervention Counseling
CD-2: Financing Ground Floor Commercial	PD-5: Mobile Home Park Preservation and Relocation Assistance
CD-3: Preservation Development Authorities (PDA) and Ports	PD-6: Mobile Home Park Conversion to Cooperative
CD-4: Commercial Community Land Trust	PD-7: Tenant Relocation Assistance
CD-5: Community Benefits/Development Agreements	PD-8: Just Cause Eviction Protections
CD-6: Micro-retail and Flexible Cultural Space Design	PD-9: "Right to Return" Policies for Promoting Home Ownership
CD-7: Business Incubators, Co-working Spaces and Artisan/Makers Spaces	PD-10: Regulation Short-term Rentals

Appendix C: Housing Law and Case Law

Washington State Housing Requirements

Requirement	GMA	Code Cities	Cities & Towns	Counties	General Provisions
Accessory dwelling units: New GMA definitions and limits to parking limits within ¼ mile of a major transit stop. ESSB 6617 (2020)	RCW 36.70A.696 – 699.				
A local government is limited in the amount of parking it may require for certain types of development occurring within ¼ mile of a transit stop. SHB 2343 (2020)	RCW 36.70A.620				
A city may regulate religious organizations that host temporary encampments for the homeless. ESHB 1754 (2020)		RCW 35A.21.360		RCW 36.01.290	RCW 35.21.915
Group homes and inpatient facilities may not be precluded by local zoning. GMA jurisdictions should review list of essential public facilities. Updated in HB 2640 (2020)	RCW 36.70A.200 WAC 365-196-550		RCW 35.64.140		
Permanent supportive housing must not be prohibited in areas zoned for multifamily housing. Definition in RCW 36.70A.030 (16), E2SHB 1923 (2019), and SHB 2343 (2020)	SHB 2343 (2020)	RCW 35A.21.305			RCW 35.21.689
Manufactured homes must be allowed on all lots. A city or town may not discriminate against consumers' choices in the placement or use of a home. This statute sets out design requirements, but this was revised in 2019 to state that a city may not use setbacks on an existing lot to prohibit a manufactured home. It also sets standards around recreational vehicles and tiny homes. Updates by ESSB 5183 (2019)		RCW 35A.21.312 RCW 35A.63.146 For non-conforming use protections	RCW 35.63-161	RCW 36.01.225 RCW 36.70.493	RCW 35.21.684
A city or town may adopt an ordinance to regulate the creation of tiny home communities. ESSB 5383 (2019)					RCW 35.21.686
Communities must allow density bonuses for affordable housing located on property owned by a religious organization. SHB 1377 (2019)	RCW 36.70A.545	RCW 35A.63.300	RCW 35.63.280		

Requirement	GMA	Code Cities	Cities & Towns	Counties	General Provisions
GMA updates to definitions for “affordable housing,” “low-,” “very low-” and “extremely low-income households.” E2SHB 1923 (2019) and permanent supportive housing	RCW 36.70A.030				
Parking near transit: A local government planning under the GMA is limited in the amount of parking it may require for certain types of development occurring within ¼ mile of a transit stop. E2SHB 1923 (2019)	RCW 36.70A.620				
Residential structures that are occupied by persons with handicaps must be regulated the same as a similar residential structures occupied by a family or other unrelated individuals. (1993)	RCW 36.70A.410 WAC 365-196-860	RCW 35A.63.240	RCW 35.63.220	RCW 36.70.990	
Family day-care facilities may not be prohibited. No county or city may prohibit the use of a residential dwelling, located in an area zoned for residential or commercial use, as a family day-care provider's home facility.	RCW 36.70A.450 WAC 365-196-865	RCW 35A.63.215	RCW 35.63.185	RCW 36.70.757	RCW 35.21.688
Accessory dwelling units must be allowed by communities over 20,000 and counties over 125,000 in population.	RCW 36.70A.400	RCW 35A.63.230	RCW 35.63.210	RCW 36.70.677	
Rent control is prohibited. May not regulate the amount of rent to be charged for single-family or multiple-unit residential rental structures or sites other than properties in public ownership, under public management or properties providing low-income rental housing.				RCW 36.01.130	
OPTIONAL TOOLS					
GMA cities may enact affordable housing incentive programs. (2009)	RCW 36.70A.540 WAC 365-196-870				
GMA cities may adopt provisions to increase residential capacity. Such provisions are protected from SEPA and GMHB appeal until April 2023. E2SHB 1923 (2019) and SSB 2343 (2020)	RCW 36.70A.600				

Requirement	GMA	Code Cities	Cities & Towns	Counties	General Provisions
Disposal of surplus government property for housing. Property may be offered at low or no cost for a public benefit of affordable housing. 3SHB 2382 (2018), RCW 39.33.015					
Exempting emergency housing from impact fees. SHB 2538 (2018)	See RCW 82.02.060 (2)-(3)				

Legal Cases to Consider

In some cases, case law sets the standard for what may or not be included in local policies. A local government can only be held to the decisions of its regional Growth Management Hearings Board, so we recommend reviewing the digests and cases from the regional board, and any subsequent appeals, however, some general themes have emerged that can provide guidance to all jurisdictions.

City responsibility to “set the table” for the development of affordable housing: “Developing programs that will provide affordable housing opportunities and special needs housing opportunities for the low-income, very low-income, extremely low-income, and disabled and senior citizens of Lakewood is, as the City acknowledges, its responsibility.” [LIHI II, 01-3-0023, FDO, at 14]

“The Board recognizes too that the County is not obligated to add to the stock of low income housing but instead to set the framework in which the market can provide housing for all segments of the population.” [Campbell v. San Juan County, Case No. 09-2-0104, FDO at 14 (Jan. 27, 2010)]

Local governments have choices in planning for housing: “RCW 36.70A.020(4) does not require that each and every land use designation of a jurisdiction provide for affordable housing.” [LMI/Chevron, 98-3-0012, FDO, at 29.]

“The Act requires cities and counties to preserve existing housing while promoting affordable housing and a variety of residential densities and housing types. No jurisdiction is required to reconcile these seemingly inconsistent requirements by totally focusing on one requirement, for instance preserving existing housing, to the exclusion of other requirements, such as encouraging more affordable housing. Instead, jurisdictions must reconcile the Act’s seemingly contradictory requirements by applying and necessarily balancing them.” [WSDF I, 94-3-0016, FDO, at 30.]

“...each housing element must be considered on its own merits under a fact-specific analysis, and each city or county necessarily plans and words its housing element differently in order to address local needs.” Each jurisdiction “has the discretion to determine the zoning required – whether small lot, duplex, multi-family, or mixed use – so long as the plan includes sufficient land for housing all economic segments of its community...” [Futurewise V, 07-3- 0014, FDO, at 8.]

“A comprehensive plan policy regarding affordable housing must be specific and must be implemented by development regulations to comply with the GMA.” [Friday Harbor v. San Juan County 99-2-0010 (FDO, 7-21-99)]

Local housing elements must be consistent with countywide planning policies and must plan for all economic segments: “The City’s Housing Element must “make adequate provision” for existing and projected housing needs of this economic segment of the community” The challenged Comprehensive Plan Housing Element was inconsistent with the Countywide Planning Policies for King County because Ordinance O2015-396 failed to establish any numeric or percentage goals for the City’s “share” of countywide housing needs in the moderate, low, and very low income housing categories, contrary to RCW 36.70A.100 and RCW 36.70A.210(1). [Paul Stickney and Richard Birgh v. City of Sammamish, Case No. 15-3-0017, affirmed by Court of Appeals of Washington, Division 1, in Stickney v. Cent. Puget Sound Growth Mgmt. Hearings Bd., 11 Wash. App. 2d 228, 453 P.3d 25 (2019)].

More diverse residential landscape: “In the GMA, there are a number of specific references that address housing and residential land uses, some of them more explicit and directive than others. There are at least five sections of the Act that are on point. When these sections are read together, they describe a legislatively preferred residential landscape that, compared with the past, will be less homogeneous, more diverse, more compact and better furnished with facilities and services to support the needs of the changing residential population.” [Children’s I, 95-3-0011, FDO, at 5.]

Preserving neighborhood character: “The GMA clearly encourages the preservation of existing housing stock (See [RCW 36.70A.020\(4\)](#)) and provides for ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods (See [RCW 36.70A.070\(4\)](#)). However, as the Board stated, supra, “any opportunity to perpetuate an “historic low-density residential” development pattern, [in the subarea], ended in 1994 when the County included the area within the UGA.” It is clear that existing housing stock and neighborhoods may be maintained and preserved, however existing low-density patterns of development cannot be perpetuated.” [MBA/Brink, 02-3-0010, FDO, at 14-15.]

“The requirement to “ensure neighborhood vitality and character” is neither a mandate, nor an excuse, to freeze neighborhood densities at their pre-GMA levels. The Act clearly contemplates that infill development and increased residential densities are desirable in areas where service capacity already exists, i.e., in urban areas – while also requiring that such growth be accommodated in such a way as to “ensure neighborhood vitality and character.” [Benaroya I, 95-3-0072c, FDO, at 21.]

Rural ADUs: “All three Hearings Boards have discouraged detached accessory dwelling unit provisions without specific criteria to curtail indiscriminate increased density.” [Loon Lake, et al. v. Stevens County, EWGMHB Case No. 01-1-0002c, Order on Motions, at 10 (Oct. 25, 2007)].

Monitoring progress: “The Board observes that the affordable housing percentages for income levels are targets to be adjusted and/or met over the 20-year life of the Plan. One should not expect them to be achieved half-way into the Plan’s time horizons. Peaks and valleys in progress will obviously occur over time depending upon numerous factors. But monitoring progress toward the targets is essential – which the County clearly does as reflected in the Housing Appendix and Benchmarks Reports.” [S/K Realtors, 04-3- 0028, FDO, at 36.]

Homelessness: There has been significant work on addressing homelessness. MRSC has a number of blog articles on this topic. The fundamental point is that a local government cannot render homelessness a crime if there is not sufficient housing/shelter options available. From MRSC:

- [Is Your Camping Ordinance Constitutional?](#)
- [What Are Local Governments Doing in Response to *Martin v. City of Boise*?](#)
- [New Legislation on Temporary Homeless Encampments](#)
- [Homelessness and the Limits of Enforcement](#)
- [Living in Vehicles: How Homestead Rights Affect Municipal Impounds](#)

Appendix D: Housing Element Policy Examples

The Department of Commerce has collected a variety of housing element policies as examples. **The policies have been arranged by topic and then arranged from strong policies to softer, longer-range policies.** See where in the range your community would fit within the ranking of the policies, based on their strength.

- Preservation
 - Maintenance and Code Enforcement
- Variety of Housing Types
 - ADUs, Tiny Homes and Manufactured Homes
 - Infill Development and Density Near Places of Opportunity
- Home Ownership
- Accommodate Growth
- Housing Location and Transportation and Land Use
 - Location of Affordable Housing
 - Jobs/Housing Balance
- Infrastructure
 - College Housing
 - Rural and Farmworker Housing
- Affordable and Subsidized Housing
 - Incentives or Requirements
 - Funding or Financing
 - Prevent Barriers
- Vulnerable Populations and Homelessness
 - Special-Needs Housing
 - Homeless Focus
 - Aging Adult Focus
 - Surplus Land and Nonprofit Housing
- Equity, Displacement and Integration
- Regional Coordination and Fair Share
- Design and Development Standards
 - Sustainable Housing
 - Historic Preservation
- Tracking and Monitoring

PRESERVATION

Policy Text Quote	Source
Continue to fund the repair and rehabilitation of single-family and multi-family housing using federal, state, and local funding sources.	Public Service Policy PS8.1, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Coordinate with local organizations and agencies to provide sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services.	Housing Element - Goal H-3, Policy A, Program 2, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Pursue public-private partnerships to preserve existing affordable housing stock and develop additional units.	Housing Element Policy H20, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
In conjunction with public and private housing providers, the City should identify and encourage preservation of affordable units in publicly assisted (subsidized) housing developments that are at risk of converting to market rate housing.	Housing Element Policy 4.2.1, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Promote the maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation of the City's existing housing stock. Pursue financial incentives and funding for housing improvement programs, especially for low-income households.	Housing Policy H-2.2, Prosser Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Encourage and support efforts to maintain opportunities for lower-cost housing where relatively affordable housing exists through preservation or other efforts and particularly in centers where most redevelopment pressure will occur.	Housing Policy HO-41, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Encourage homeowners to take advantage of existing maintenance and preservation programs, services, and resources including the Wenatchee Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program.	Housing Element – Maintenance & Preservation: Policy 3, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Encourage the rehabilitation, relocation and reuse, rather than demolition, of existing housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-34, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

NOTE: Be careful of policy language that is about protecting character or seems exclusionary.

Maintenance and Code Enforcement

Policy Text Quote	Source
Enforce the City's Rental Registration and Safety Inspection Program to ensure that rental housing units comply with life and fire safety standards and provide a safe place for tenants to live.	Housing Chapter Policy H-30, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Develop minimum property maintenance standards to ensure the safety and suitability of existing housing stock.	Housing Element Policy 2.2, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018

VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES

Policy Text Quote	Source
Accommodate changing demographic trends and housing preferences by allowing accessory units, co-housing, and other nontraditional housing types in appropriate locations.	Housing Element Policy H-3.3, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Provide incentives for developers that include a mix of housing types within new housing developments such as a broader assortment of housing sizes, accessory apartments, duplexes, etc.	Housing Element Policy H-3.6, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Develop and implement regulations that encourage diversity of new housing types and expand housing choices throughout Wenatchee.	Housing Element – Housing Affordability: Policy 1, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Ensure policies, codes and ordinances allow for a compatible mix of uses and housing types in neighborhoods.	Housing Element Policy H-3.1, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Allow a variety of housing types to meet needs of households of varying sizes, income levels and preferences. Create regulations that allow alternatives to single-family detached housing such as attached housing, townhomes, cottage or cluster housing, accessory dwelling units, manufactured housing, floating homes, housing in multiuse projects, and other innovative housing types.	Housing Policy HO-6, Ridgefield Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Support variable lot sizes in new subdivisions and housing type diversity within development projects.	Housing Element – Housing Equity: Policy 3, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Provide an array of housing choices such as apartments, small lot single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, townhomes, manufactured homes, and cottages to meet the needs of people of all incomes throughout their lifespan.	Housing Element Policy 1.1, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Provide for a range of housing types and densities for all economic segments of the population. Encourage equal and fair access to housing for renters and homeowners.	Housing Policy H-1, Vancouver Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Promote a wide range of housing types and housing diversity to meet the needs of the diverse population and ensure that this housing is available throughout the community for people of all income levels and special needs.	Housing Element Policy H 1.18, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017

ADUs, Tiny Homes and Manufactured Homes

Policy Text Quote	Source
Support the creation and preservation of manufactured home parks as an important source of affordable housing in the city.	Housing Element – Maintenance & Preservation: Policy 5, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014

Policy Text Quote	Source
Allow one accessory dwelling unit as an ancillary use to single-family homes in all designated residential areas as an affordable housing option.	Housing Element Policy H 1.20, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) within new and existing single-family developments. Consider incentives for new housing developments that include a percentage of ADUs as part of the new construction, as well as explore opportunities to promote ADU construction in existing homes.	Housing Policy HO-32, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Integrate smaller housing types, such as cottages, duplexes, townhouses, and accessory dwelling units, into residential neighborhoods.	Housing Element Policy H-1.3, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Facilitate lifecycle or “cradle to grave” neighborhoods and community stability by promoting alternative living arrangements such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), shared housing, cohousing, and smaller housing types.	Housing Element – Housing Equity: Policy 2, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Allow development of single-room occupancy units in downtown Spokane and in other areas where high-density housing is permitted.	Housing Element Policy H 1.21, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Consider the potential for development of tiny houses in selected areas of the city.	Housing Element Policy H-1.4, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Consider regulations that would allow cottage housing in residential areas, and revise the Development Code to allow and create standards for a wider variety of housing styles.	Housing Element Policy H6, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Encourage demonstration projects of innovative housing types or programs, such as co-housing, tiny houses, or others.	Housing Element Policy H-1.9, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016

NOTE: Manufactured homes must be allowed on all lots. Manufactured housing must not be regulated differently from site-built housing, but jurisdictions may require certain standards. Jurisdictions may not use setbacks limits to prohibit placement of a manufactured home on an existing lot. See [RCW 35A.21.312](#), [RCW 35A.63.145](#), [RCW 35.63.160-161](#), [RCW 36.01.225](#) and [RCW 35.21.684](#).

Infill Development and Density Near Places of Opportunity

Policy Text Quote	Source
Actively support residential rehabilitation and infill. Incentives such as reduction of System Development Charges (SDC) and Traffic Impact Fees (TIF) for infill projects can ease the financial burden of such developments enough to make these profitable and attractive for developers. The City can also actively seek grants and funding from State and Federal sources to partially subsidize development or redevelopment of infill lots.	Housing Policy HO-9, Ridgefield Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Promote residential development of infill sites throughout the urban area by increasing densities where appropriate.	Housing Element – Housing Affordability: Policy 3, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014

Policy Text Quote	Source
Encourage residential infill development on existing lots in the City, including the preparation of an inventory of potentially available lots with utilities, adoption of a zone code amendment that facilitates development of substandard lots for infill residential development, and amendments to appropriate codes to simplify and encourage consolidation of substandard lots to facilitate residential infill.	Housing Element Policy Implementation 4.3, Fife Comprehensive Plan, 2005
Encourage infill as a redevelopment concept. Appropriate development regulations that accomplish infill should consider: 1. The Impact on older/existing neighborhoods; 2. Development that is compatible with the surrounding residential density, housing types, affordability or use characteristics; 3. Encouragement of affordable units; 4. The provision of development standards and processes for infill regardless of the sector (public, not-for-profit, or public sectors) creating it; and, 5. Compatibility with historic properties and historic districts.	Housing Element Policy H-3.2, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Encourage infill housing on vacant or underutilized parcels having adequate services, and ensure that the infill development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.	Housing Element Policy 2.1.1, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Consider adopting regulations such as flexible lot sizes that encourage infill development on small lots consistent with the neighborhood's character.	Housing Element Policy 2.1.3, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Review commercial zoning regulations that require commercial development along with residential development. Consider adding criteria that would allow, in certain circumstances, residential uses to develop independently or within commercial flex space.	Housing Chapter Policy H-6, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage increased density residential development in mixed-use and town center zones, especially those located within the City's Regional Growth Center, subject to compliance with appropriate development and design standards. Discourage or prohibit new detached single-family dwellings in these areas to promote more intensive use of commercial and mixed-use properties in order to accommodate an increasing share of the City's anticipated future population growth.	Housing Element Policy HS2D, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015

HOME OWNERSHIP

Policy Text Quote	Source
Create opportunities for ownership housing in a variety of settings, styles, sizes and affordability levels throughout Redmond.	Housing Policy HO-12, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Provide information to residents, including underserved populations, on affordable housing opportunities and first-time homeownership programs.	Housing Chapter Policy H-23, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Help low-income and special needs residents find ways to purchase housing, such as shared or limited-equity housing, lease-purchase options, co-housing, land trusts, and cooperatives.	Public Service Policy PS9.6, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019

Policy Text Quote	Source
Encourage existing housing providers and private lenders to provide homebuyer education seminars for potential first-time homebuyers; include outreach to current renters.	Housing Element Policy YKH 1.2, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Promote opportunities for home ownership and owner occupancy of single- and multifamily housing.	Housing Policy H-7, Vancouver Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Explore with the County, other local jurisdictions, and private lending institutions the availability and enhancement of educational programs for first time homebuyers.	Housing Element Policy 4.3.5, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016

ACCOMMODATE GROWTH

Policy Text Quote	Source
Support increasing housing densities through the well-designed, efficient, and cost-effective use of buildable land, consistent with environmental constraints and affordability. Use both incentives and regulations, such as minimum and maximum density limits, to achieve such efficient use.	Housing Policy PL16.1, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Provide a continuous and adequate supply of residential land to meet long-range multifamily and single-family housing needs for the City's anticipated population growth. The City shall adopt policies and regulations to meet the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New overall density target of six units per net acre. • No more than 75% of new houses shall be of a single housing type. • A minimum density of four units per net acre (10,890 sq. ft. average lot size) for single-family dwellings in any single development. 	Housing Policy HO-1, Ridgefield Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Prohibit any rezone that results in a reduction in residential capacity without first approving another rezone or rezones, resulting in at least a replacement of the lost residential capacity elsewhere in the city.	Housing Policy HO-17, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Consider the impacts on Citywide housing capacity, affordability and diversity when making land use policy decisions and code amendments.	Housing Chapter Policy H-13, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Consider minimum density requirements for residential zones and commercial zones where residential development is allowed.	Housing Chapter Policy H-5, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Promote a mix of new residential units and use other strategies that are designed to at a minimum meet the targets called for in the King County Countywide Comprehensive Planning Policies for creating residences that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households.	Housing Policy HO-2, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011

HOUSING LOCATION AND TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

Policy Text Quote	Source
Direct new residential development into areas where community and human public services and facilities are available.	Housing Element Policy H 1.4, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Ensure that plans provide increased physical connection between housing, employment, transportation, recreation, daily-needs services, and educational uses.	Housing Element Policy H 2.4, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Provide for development of multifamily housing in areas close to shopping, employment, services and public transportation.	Housing Element Policy H-1.7, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Create opportunities for housing developments to be easily accessible from both vehicle and bike/ped transportation corridors.	Housing Policy H-5.5, Prosser Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Support high-density and mixed commercial/residential development in the City's urban villages, high capacity transit corridors connecting the villages and other appropriate areas that allow people to work, shop and recreate near where they live.	Housing Chapter Policy H-1, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage and provide incentives for residences above businesses.	Housing Policy PL16.8, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Encourage residential development in commercial and mixed use zones, especially those within proximity to transit.	Housing Element - Goal H-2, Policy B, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Promote accessible and affordable housing in areas that are close to services and the rest of the community.	Housing Element - Goal H-3, Policy A, Program 1, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Consider the impacts of transportation costs on housing affordability and accessibility of services and other opportunities when planning for housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-17, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Increase the supply of affordable rental and ownership housing that is context sensitive throughout the City, especially in areas with good access to transit, employment, education and services.	Housing Chapter Policy H-16, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Jobs/Housing Balance

Policy Text Quote	Source
Ensure an appropriate supply and mix of housing and affordability levels to meet the needs of people who work and desire to live in Redmond, especially near existing and planned employment centers, such as Downtown, Overlake and SE Redmond.	Housing Policy HO-18, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011

Policy Text Quote	Source
Encourage development of housing at pricing levels affordable for workers in a variety of sectors in Ridgefield, to increase the percentage of people who work in Ridgefield that can also find suitable housing in Ridgefield. Work with employers to promote residential options in Ridgefield to their employees, and to understand the housing needs of their employees.	Housing Policy HO-5, Ridgefield Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage the creation of mixed-use areas throughout the City characterized by living wage jobs, mixed income housing, and ample public open spaces all within a walkable urban context.	Housing Element Policy 3.1.1, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage Redmond employers to develop employer-assisted housing programs and provide technical assistance to employers wishing to obtain information on model programs.	Housing Policy HO-20, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011

Location of Affordable Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
Locate affordable housing throughout the city and especially in areas with good access to transit, employment, education, and shopping.	Housing Element Policy H-3.5, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Integrate housing for lower and moderate income households and those with special needs into a variety of geographical locations throughout the city.	Housing Element Policy 2.1, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018

Note: Policy choices may include providing affordable housing in a variety of locations around the city, preferably with a special focus on areas close to transit and other services. Be careful of language that may seem exclusionary or “not in my backyard” (NIMBY).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy Text Quote	Source
Provide physical infrastructure, recreational and cultural amenities, and educational facilities in Downtown and Overlake to support the creation of attractive neighborhoods for residents of all ages, incomes and household types.	Housing Policy HO-16, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Support public and private investment in improved infrastructure and amenities in existing neighborhoods, particularly in areas with high concentrations of low-income housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-29, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Leverage private investment in distressed neighborhoods through strategic infrastructure and service improvements.	Housing Element – Maintenance & Preservation: Policy 4, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Work closely with local governments and the private sector to extend infrastructure and provide other services to accommodate residential growth, particularly in Urban, Rural Settlement and Rural Transitional areas which are suitable for higher density development.	Housing Element Policy H-1.5, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017

College Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
<p>Work with local institutions of higher education to develop a comprehensive strategy addressing issues associated with off-campus student housing, including adequate off-campus housing that is high quality and compatible with its surroundings (see Land Use Chapter).</p>	<p>Housing Chapter Policy H-43, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016</p>

Rural and Farmworker Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
<p>Continue to allow seasonal and accessory farm worker accommodations in rural and agricultural resource areas, with the requirement that one or more persons in each household must be employed by the property owner.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-7.1, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>
<p>Work with the agricultural community to develop criteria and a process for siting permanent and migrant farm worker housing in rural and agricultural resource areas with consideration given to neighborhood and project security, health and sanitation, availability of public services, access, child care, and the availability of affordable housing in a nearby urban area.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-7.2, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>
<p>Provide a siting process to expedite farm worker housing projects using preapproved designs for housing of both temporary and permanent farm workers employed by the property owner.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-7.3, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>
<p>Continue to work with state and local agencies to remove barriers to providing farmworker housing, and explore innovative approaches to meeting farm worker housing needs.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-7.4, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>
<p>New, residential construction adjacent to designated forest, agricultural or mineral resource lands should be designed and sited to reduce potential conflicts between residents and adjacent resource lands.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-5.1, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>
<p>Housing in designated agriculture, mineral or forest lands should be considered secondary to the primary use of those areas.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-5.2, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017</p>

AFFORDABLE OR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

Policy Text Quote	Source
<p>Develop and implement a detailed affordable housing program that identifies specific actions to increase the supply of housing that is affordable to low to middle-income individuals and families.</p>	<p>Housing Element Policy H-3.10, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016</p>

Policy Text Quote	Source
Provide affordable housing by formulating innovative policies, regulations and practices, and establishing secure funding mechanisms. Target affordability programs toward households with incomes below the median.	Housing Policy H-2, Vancouver Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Achieve a minimum of 25 percent of the Pierce County 2030 growth population allocation for University Place through affordable housing -- consistent with CPP AH-3.3.	Housing Element Policy HS3E, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015
Develop meaningful, measurable goals and strategies that promote the development of affordable workforce housing to meet local needs and monitor progress toward meeting those goals.	Housing Element Policy H-3.2, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Participate in and promote the development of educational resources and programs that assist low and moderate-income households in obtaining affordable and suitable housing.	Housing Element Policy H 1.5, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Where affordable housing is proposed together with market rate housing, affordable housing units should be comparable in design, integrated into the whole development, and should match the tenure of the whole development.	Housing Element Policy 4.1.5, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Support both rental and ownership forms of affordable housing in a variety of types and sizes.	Housing Element Policy H-3.4, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Incentives or Requirements

Policy Text Quote	Source
Include a percentage of affordable housing within all new developments that include housing.	Housing Element Policy H 1.8, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
As part of any rezone that increases residential capacity, consider requiring a portion of units to be affordable to low- and moderate-income households.	Housing Policy HO-38, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Maintain and explore enhancing regulatory incentives to encourage the production and preservation of affordable ownership and rental housing such as through density bonuses, impact fee reductions, permit fast-tracking, or other methods.	Housing Element Policy 4.1.6, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Provide incentives including density bonuses, parking reductions, and flexible design standards to developments that include a percentage of affordable units to households at 30%, 50%, and 80% of median income.	Housing Element – Housing Affordability: Policy 2, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Offer exemptions or reduced impact fees for construction of affordable housing units in qualifying developments.	Housing Policy HO-49, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Create meaningful incentives to facilitate development of affordable housing in both residential and commercial zones, including consideration of exemptions from certain development standards in instances where strict application would make incentives infeasible.	Housing Element Policy H7, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012

Policy Text Quote	Source
Evaluate the adoption of zoning regulations targeted at otherwise market-rate developments that require or incentivize a minimum percentage of new dwelling units and/or lots that are created (whether multi-family or single-family) be income restricted.	Housing Element Policy 4.1.1, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Explore a variety and combination of incentives to encourage market rate and non-profit developers to build more units with deeper levels of affordability.	Housing Element Policy H8, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Consider developing an inclusionary zoning program as a means of increasing the City's affordable housing supply.	Housing Element Policy H-3.7, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Require that affordable housing achieved through public incentives or assistance remains affordable for the longest possible term.	Housing Element Policy H-38, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Consider mandating an affordability component in Light Rail Station Areas or other Transit-Oriented Communities.	Housing Element Policy H18, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Consider revising the Property Tax Exemption (PTE) incentive to include an affordability requirement in areas of Shoreline where it is not currently required, and incorporate tiered levels so that a smaller percentage of units would be required if they were affordable to lower income households.	Housing Element Policy H13, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012

Funding or Financing

Policy Text Quote	Source
Develop a housing assistance program that helps homeowners with low incomes with small remodeling projects to improve weatherization, increase sustainability, and provide accommodations for disabilities.	Housing Element Policy 2.7, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Maintain a City housing trust fund for low- and moderate-income housing that is based on the number of affordable units needs to serve Redmond's projected population and job growth changes.	Housing Policy HO-51, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Consider a housing levy to provide ongoing funding for affordable housing.	Housing Element Policy H-3.6, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Help educate builders about the availability of funding and incentive programs to promote the construction of affordable housing in Redmond.	Housing Policy HO-47, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Use all available federal, state and county programs, as well as private and nonprofit options for financing affordable housing.	Housing Policy HO-53, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Support the development of affordable housing development funding sources.	Housing Element Policy H 1.12, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Support and expand low-income housing programs and public funding (e.g., the Housing Levy and HUD entitlement funds).	Housing Chapter Policy H-22, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Policy Text Quote	Source
Advocate for regional and state initiatives to increase funding for affordable housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-27, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Prevent Barriers

Policy Text Quote	Source
Continue streamlining the regulatory review and building permit process and reviewing the cost of infrastructure improvements and their impact on housing costs.	Housing Chapter Policy H-24, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
<p>Periodically review and update the City's residential zoning regulations and design standards to promote quality development with timely and predictable outcomes.</p> <p>Ensure that policies, codes and procedures do not create barriers to affordable housing opportunities. Ensure that existing regulations, procedures or practices do not increase the cost of housing without a corresponding public benefit. Strive to increase benefits to the community while lowering housing costs by periodically reviewing, at a minimum, the following areas for possible revision or amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive plan policies • Zoning and subdivision regulation • Infrastructure requirements • Development standards • Building and fire codes • Administrative procedures • Processing times • Fees and exactions • Inspection procedures 	<p>Housing Chapter Policy H-44, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016</p> <p>Housing Element Policy HS3M, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015</p>
Craft regulations and procedures to provide a high degree of certainty and predictability to applicants and the community-at-large to minimize unnecessary time delays in the review of residential, permits applications, while still maintaining opportunities for public involvement and review.	Housing Policy HO-29, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Evaluate barriers to achieving increased density in multifamily residential and mixed use zones and revise regulations if appropriate.	Housing Element Policy H-1.6, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Consider housing cost and supply implications of proposed regulations and procedures.	Housing Element Policy H4, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Consider modifying codes to maximize economical wood frame construction.	Housing Chapter Policy H-8, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Policy Text Quote	Source
Minimize unnecessary housing development costs through regulations and standards contained in the Zoning Code and other City regulatory documents that are balanced with and maintained in concert with public safety considerations and all other goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.	Housing Policy HO-48, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND HOMELESSNESS

Policy Text Quote	Source
Coordinate and collaborate with private agencies to ensure housing for people with special needs including seniors, people with physical and developmental limitation, victims of domestic violence, and homeless individuals and families.	Housing Element Policy 1.5, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Continue to encourage and support the development of emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing with appropriate on-site services for people with special needs and the homeless throughout the City and county. Moving people into permanent housing as quickly as possible should be a priority.	Housing Chapter Policy H-50, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Develop or amend and support codes and ordinances that allow for a continuum of care and housing opportunities for special needs populations in the same manner as standard housing.	Housing Element Policy H-2.1, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Encourage opportunities for assisted housing for people with special needs by: a. Adopting land use policies and regulations that treat government-assisted housing and other low-income housing the same as housing of a similar size and density; b. Permitting group living situations, including those where residents receive such supportive services as counseling, foster care or medical supervision in accordance with State and Federal Laws; and, c. Encouraging developers and owners of assisted housing units to undertake activities to establish and maintain positive relationships with neighbors.	Housing Element Policy 5.1.1, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Through building and site plan codes, encourage the development, rehabilitation and adaptation of housing that responds to the physical needs of special populations.	Housing Element Policy H-2.2, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Encourage and consider incentives for the dedication of a portion of housing in new projects to special needs housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-48, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

NOTE: "Treatment of residential structures occupied by persons with handicaps" is not a policy choice; it is a state law ([RCW 36.70A.410](#)). Housing needs assessment could pay attention to needs of specific groups, such as elderly and disabled residents, and support housing for those groups.

Special-Needs Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
Include units that are affordable for low-income special need families in all housing developments.	Housing Element Policy H 1.23, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Ensure that facilities and services to meet the health care, treatment, social service, and transit needs of households with special needs are part of housing development plans.	Housing Element Policy 5.1.6, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Support actions to secure grants and loans tied to the provision of special needs housing by agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations.	Housing Policy HO-23, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Work with agencies, private developers and nonprofit organizations to locate housing in University Place intended to serve the community's special needs populations, particularly those with challenges related to age, health or disability.	Housing Element Policy HS4A, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015
Facilitate housing for special needs populations dispersed throughout Vancouver and the region. Such housing may consist of residential-care facilities, shelters, group homes, or low-income housing, and should be located near transportation and other services such as health care, schools, and stores.	Housing Policy H-6, Vancouver Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Encourage, assist, and support social and health service organizations that offer housing programs for targeted populations.	Housing Element Policy H25, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012

Homeless Focus

Policy Text Quote	Source
Coordinate with the homeless housing task force to implement short and long-term activities as identified in the Plan to End Homeless in Chelan & Douglas Counties.	Housing Element – Coordination: Policy 3, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Work with other jurisdictions and health and social service organizations to develop a coordinated, regional approach to homelessness.	Housing Element Policy HS4I, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015
Support development of programs that offer assistance to persons identified as being homeless.	Housing Element Policy YKH 2.1, Yakima Horizon 2040, 2017
Foster and support partnerships that have proven to be successful in reducing homelessness, preventing homelessness and assisting the chronically homeless with needed care.	Housing Chapter Policy H-52, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Support the development of public and private, short-term and long-term housing and services for Shoreline's population of people who are homeless.	Housing Element Policy H29, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012

Policy Text Quote	Source
Encourage a strong network of emergency shelter resources for homeless and at-risk families with children, childless adults, unaccompanied youth, and victims of sexual and domestic violence.	Public Service Policy PS7.1, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019 (other shelter/housing policies in Olympia's plan)

Aging Adults Focus

Policy Text Quote	Source
Provide for a variety of residential options for older adults in the community including aging in place, assisted living facilities, and age-restricted senior communities. Strategies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Universal Design and visitability standards to create new housing stock that allows aging in place. Review development regulations to address types of housing options allowed and permitting requirements for new construction and accessibility modifications to existing development. Recruit developers and offer incentives for creation of new senior-oriented residential options. 	Housing Policy HO-7, Ridgefield Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Support ways for older adults and people with disabilities to remain in the community as their housing needs change by encouraging universal design or retrofitting homes for lifetime use.	Housing Element Policy H-4.4, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage the development of senior-friendly housing opportunities, particularly in areas near services and amenities.	Housing Element Policy H-4.2, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage a range of housing types for seniors affordable at a variety of incomes, such as independent living, various degrees of assisted living and skilled nursing care facilities. Strive to increase opportunities for seniors to live in specialized housing.	Housing Element Policy HS4F, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015
Promote a range of housing types for seniors; e.g., adult family homes, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, and independent living communities.	Housing Element Policy H-4.3, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Promote the use of universal design principles for new development or redevelopment housing projects.	Housing Element - Goal H-3, Policy A, Program 3, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019

Surplus Land and Nonprofit Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
Identify and catalogue real property owned by the City that is no longer required for its purposes and is suitable for the development of affordable housing for very-low to moderate income households.	Housing Element Policy 4.1.8, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Policy Text Quote	Source
Give priority to the use of surplus, publicly owned land for housing that provides for a range of household incomes, with an emphasis on encouraging housing for low-income families.	Housing Policy HO-54, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Explore and identify opportunities for non-profit developers to build affordable housing.	Housing Element Policy Implementation 4.5, Fife Comprehensive Plan, 2005
Support non-profit agencies and public/private partnerships to preserve or develop additional housing for very low, low and moderate income households.	Housing Element Policy H-3.3, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Evaluate land owned by the City and other public entities for use for affordable housing utilizing a community land trust or similar type model.	Housing Element Policy H-3.9, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage establishment and funding of a Community Affordable Land Trust to acquire land and build affordable housing within the urban area.	Housing Element – Coordination: Policy 1, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Explore and identify opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing – consistent with CPP AH7.	... Housing Element Policy HS3K (sub-policies excluded), University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015
Cooperate with nonprofit housing organizations and regional efforts to develop a long-term management strategy for creating and preserving existing subsidized affordable housing.	Housing Policy HO-42, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Support organizations that construct, manage and provide services for affordable housing, including permanently affordable housing.	Housing Chapter Policy H-26, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage self-help housing efforts in which people earn home equity in exchange for renovation or construction work, such as "sweat equity" volunteer programs.	Public Service Policy PS5.5, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Pursue creative methods within existing programs, such as the City's transfer of development rights (TDR) program, impact fee waivers, ARCH Housing Trust Fund, and state enabling legislation for property tax relief, as a means to provide direct assistance to builders and leverage funds for construction of affordable housing.	Housing Policy HO-46, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011

EQUITY, DISPLACEMENT AND INTEGRATION

Policy Text Quote	Source
Prevent discrimination and encourage fair and equitable access to housing for all persons in accordance with state and federal law.	Housing Element Policy HS2H, University Place Comprehensive Plan, 2015

Policy Text Quote	Source
Support fair and equal access to housing for all persons, regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, age, household composition or size, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or economic circumstances.	Housing Chapter Policy H-15, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Participate in relocation assistance to low- and moderate-income households whose housing may be displaced by condemnation or City-initiated code enforcement.	Housing Policy HO-50, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Enforce policies ⁴⁷ that provide financial and relocation help to people who are displaced from their homes as a result of construction and development projects using federal funds.	Public Service Policy PS8.5, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Initiate and encourage equitable and inclusive community involvement that fosters civic pride and positive neighborhood image.	Housing Element Policy H21, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Strive to increase class, race, and age integration by equitably dispersing affordable housing opportunities. Discourage neighborhood segregation and the isolation of special needs populations.	Housing Element – Housing Equity: Policy 1, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
When Community Development Block Grant or Housing and Urban Development-funded buildings are at risk of being converted to market-rate status, inform the tenants of any purchase and relocation options available. When possible, help the Housing Authority of Thurston County and non-profit organizations buy such housing.	Public Service Policy PS8.5, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Encourage relocation assistance and replacement housing to be developed, where feasible, to help low-income households when displacement is unavoidable.	Housing Element Policy 4.2.2, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016

REGIONAL COORDINATION AND FAIR SHARE

Policy Text Quote	Source
Support the Fair Share Housing allocation process and work with other jurisdictions to monitor progress toward achieving agreed upon goals.	Public Service Policy PS5.2, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Actively coordinate with public and private partners in efforts to meet regional housing needs.	Housing Chapter Policy H-14, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Partner with private and not-for-profit developers, social and health service agencies, funding institutions, and all levels of government to identify and address regional housing needs.	Housing Element Policy H31, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012

⁴⁷ Per section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, requiring the replacement of low- and moderate-income housing units that are demolished or converted to another use, in connection with a Community Development Block Grant project.

Policy Text Quote	Source
Coordinate with regional jurisdictions to develop a regional assessment and report to share in the responsibility for achieving a reasonable and equitable distribution of affordable housing to meet the needs of middle and lower income persons.	Housing Element – Coordination: Policy 4, Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan, 2014
Work regionally and with other jurisdictions to jointly fund affordable housing.	Housing Element Policy 4.3.3, Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Cooperate with King County, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), and other Eastside jurisdictions and housing agencies to assess housing needs, create affordable housing opportunities, and coordinate a regional approach to funding and meeting the housing needs of Eastside Communities.	Housing Policy HO-4, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Improve coordination among the County and other jurisdictions, housing and service providers, and funders to identify, promote, and implement local and regional strategies that increase housing opportunities.	Housing Element Policy H28, Shoreline Comprehensive Plan, 2012
Strive to implement the City’s “fair share” of affordable housing units as outlined in the cooperative effort among Pierce County jurisdictions.	Housing Element Policy Implementation 5.1, Fife Comprehensive Plan, 2005
Encourage local and regional affiliations and alliances to provide affordable housing.	Housing Element Policy H-2.1, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Policy Text Quote	Source
Require effective, but not unreasonably expensive, building designs and landscaping to blend multi-family housing into neighborhoods.	Housing Policy PL16.10, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Develop design guidelines, standards or other measures to achieve the following benefits: A. Allow growth without sacrificing Anacortes’s unique small town character. B. Facilitate compatibility between existing and new housing. C. Integrate and connect multifamily developments with surrounding development to enhance a sense of community in neighborhoods. D. Allow for compatible integration of attached and detached accessory dwelling units in residential neighborhoods.	Housing Element Policy H-2.2, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Develop design guidelines to ensure that all new housing, including that for lower and middle income owners and renters, adheres to good standards of planning, design, and construction.	Housing Element Policy 2.3, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Promote high quality design that is compatible with the overall style and character of established neighborhoods.	Housing Element - Goal H-1, Policy D, Program 1, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019

Policy Text Quote	Source
Integrate new development, with consideration to design and scale that complements existing neighborhoods, and provides effective transitions between different uses and intensities.	Housing Element - Goal H-1, Policy A, Program 1, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Allow "clustering" of housing compatible with the adjacent neighborhood to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas.	Housing Policy PL16.3, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Encourage housing types and design that reinforce and enhance the character and scale of established neighborhood development patterns.	Housing Element Policy H-2.1, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Increase open space requirements for multi-family, high-density development. Locate required open space either on site or in public park space.	Housing Chapter Policy H-38, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Enhance the appearance of and maintain public spaces in residential areas.	Housing Policy H-5.2, Prosser Comprehensive Plan, 2018

Sustainable Housing

Policy Text Quote	Source
Plan for energy efficient housing that is designed to maximize use of renewable resources such as solar and wind power.	Housing Element Policy 2.5, Walla Walla Comprehensive Plan, 2018
Foster innovative housing and mixtures of housing types that preserve natural resources and consolidate open space (e.g., context-sensitive residential clustering).	Housing Chapter Policy H-40, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage housing retrofits that make them more resilient to natural disasters and climate change, are more energy efficient, and provide healthier indoor environments, including good air quality.	Housing Chapter Policy H-37, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage the use of long-lived, low-maintenance building materials; high-efficiency energy systems; and low impact development techniques that reduce housing lifecycle costs and provide better environmental performance consistent with the City's Climate Protection Action Plan.	Housing Chapter Policy H-41, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage health-related improvements to older homes, including the removal of lead-based paint, asbestos, and other potentially harmful materials.	Housing Chapter Policy H-36, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.	Housing Policy PL16.13, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019

Historic Preservation

Policy Text Quote	Source
Support the preservation of Ellensburg’s historically-significant housing through the City’s historic preservation program, which maintains a list of historic properties and districts, and provides education and incentives.	Housing Element - Goal H-1, Policy D, Program 2, City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, 2019
Encourage neighborhoods and property owners to identify high-integrity historic areas that should be protected through the local historic district program.	Housing Chapter Policy H-33, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016

TRACKING AND MONITORING

Policy Text Quote	Source
Track the provision of affordable housing units to assess whether an adequate supply of housing affordable to the county’s lower income and special needs residents, as defined in the Housing Characteristics and Needs report for Snohomish County, is being provided.	Snohomish County HO Policy 4.B Objective HO 4.B
In support of countywide housing policies, the county shall seek partnerships with other jurisdictions, through the Alliance for Housing Affordability, the Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County, Snohomish County Tomorrow and similar forums, to track the provision of housing by type and affordability. This effort will include an assessment of progress toward meeting the county’s housing goals, including housing that addresses the needs of households within the Under 30% AMI, 30-50% AMI and 51-80% AMI segments, as projected in the current Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County.	Snohomish County HO Policy 4.B Policy 4.B.1
Based upon the monitoring and evaluation results from Policy 4.B.1, the county shall evaluate the effectiveness of its zoning regulations to produce housing developments that meet the diverse housing needs identified in the Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County.	Snohomish County HO Policy 4.B Policy 4.B.2
Provide a report annually to the City Plan Commission that monitors progress toward achieving the housing goals and includes recommended policy change if positive direction toward achieving the housing goals is not occurring.	Housing Element Policy H 2.5, Spokane Comprehensive Plan, 2017
Maintain a housing database to inform city officials and the public on the status of the City’s housing market and effectiveness of Redmond housing policies and regulations.	Housing Policy HO-9, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Monitor the City’s housing affordability market, including housing demand by housing type across all income levels and in all neighborhoods, and report on the effectiveness of the City’s housing affordability policies.	Housing Chapter Policy H-25, Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Monitor housing supply, type and affordability, including progress toward meeting a proportionate share of the countywide need for affordable housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.	Housing Element Policy H-6.2, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016

Policy Text Quote	Source
Assess the effectiveness in meeting housing demands and monitor the achievement of the housing policies not less than once every 5 years.	Housing Element Policy Implementation 3.1, Fife Comprehensive Plan, 2005
Monitor local data and routinely reassess and adjust policies, strategies and regulations to improve effectiveness of programs to meet local housing needs.	Housing Element Policy H-6.3, Anacortes Comprehensive Plan, 2016
Monitor the number, type, and affordability of housing units being built annually to ensure consistency with the number of planned housing units, particularly in Mixed-Use zones.	Housing Policy HO-10, Redmond Comprehensive Plan, 2011
Provide annual information on affordable homeownership and rentals in the City, including the operative definitions of affordable housing, criteria to qualify for local, state, and federal housing assistance, data on current levels of market-rate and affordable housing, demand for market-rate and affordable housing, and progress toward meeting market-rate and affordable housing goals.	Housing Policy PL16.14, Olympia Comprehensive Plan, 2019

Jurisdictions Examined for Appendix B:

Anacortes	Mount Vernon	Ridgefield	Vancouver
Bellingham	Olympia	Shoreline	Walla Walla
Ellensburg	Prosser	Spokane	Wenatchee
Fife	Redmond	University Place	Yakima

Appendix E: Federal and State Housing Policy History

Federal Housing Policy Timeline

1867: In New York City, the first tenement-law regulation in America is enacted to ban the construction of rooms without ventilators and apartments without fire escapes, while also requiring one toilet per 20 people. However, these regulations weren't often enforced until 1901 when the city passed the Tenement House Law, which mandated improved sanitary conditions, fire escapes and access to light.⁴⁸

1923: The first U.S. public-housing project is constructed in Milwaukee.⁴⁹

1926: The first significant effort in the country to offer any kind of subsidy for affordable housing when New York State passed the Limited Dividend Housing Companies Act.⁵⁰

1934: In response to the Great Depression, the National Housing Act established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which was created to guarantee loans and insure mortgages for single-family homes as well as private multi-family housing. At this time, America was primarily renters, with only four in 10 households owning homes. Mortgage loan terms were limited to 50% of the property's market value, with short three- to five-year repayment schedules that ended with a balloon payment.⁵¹

1937: The Wagner-Steagall Housing Act established the U.S. Housing Authority, the first federal agency devoted solely to housing, and a new Low-Rent Public Housing program. Originally intended to create public housing for families with low incomes, it required partnerships between federal, state and local governments.⁵² The U.S. Housing Authority gradually expanded from low-income housing projects to middle-class development in suburban areas during World War II.⁵³

"The federal government has been involved in providing housing assistance to lower-income households since the 1930s. In the beginning, the federal government played a role in supporting the mortgage market (through establishment of the Federal Housing Administration [FHA] and the government-sponsored enterprises) and in promoting construction of low-rent public housing for lower-income families through local public housing authorities (PHAs). Over time, the federal government has shifted away from providing construction-based subsidies toward providing rental subsidies, and private developers and property owners have been playing a larger role."

~Congressional Research Services, "Overview of Federal Assistance Programs and Policy," Overview section

⁴⁸ History.com Editors, "Tenements," (updated October 10, 2019; original April 22, 2010), <https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/tenements>.

⁴⁹ Milwaukee County Historical Society, "Daniel Hoan Collection," <https://milwaukeehistory.net/unlocking-the-vault/daniel-hoan-collection-text/>.

⁵⁰ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁵¹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "The Federal Housing Administration (FHA)," https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/fhahistory.

⁵² Congressional Research Service (CRS), "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p.2, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁵³ National History Center, "Housing Policy in the United States," p. 3, <https://nationalhistorycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Housing-Policy.pdf>.

1942: "The Emergency Price Control Act establishe[d] federal rent control for the first time. By January 1945, Scranton, Pennsylvania, [was] the only city of more than 100,000 residents with unregulated rents."⁵⁴

1944: The GI Bill provided mortgage-loan guarantees for home purchases by veterans.⁵⁵

1949: Following a post-war housing shortage, the Housing Act under Truman's Fair Deal bolstered the Housing Authority's budget and capabilities, allowing the federal government to undertake larger urban renewal projects (replacing slum properties with sites for redevelopment). The Housing Act of 1949 also reactivated the public housing program for families with low incomes (which was on hold during WWII), authorizing subsidies to low-income housing authorities to build housing.⁵⁶

1955: New York state began subsidizing the construction of moderate- and middle-income housing with the introduction of the Mitchell-Lama program that was created by the Limited Profit Housing Act. Under this program, over 105,000 apartments were generated after clearing formerly rundown parts of the city; today, about 45,000 apartments are left.⁵⁷

1959: "The Housing Act of 1959 (P.L. 86-372) was the first significant instance where government incentives were used to persuade private developers to build housing that would be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. As part of P.L. 86-372, Congress created the Section 202 Housing for the Elderly program. Through the Section 202 program, the federal government extended low-interest loans to private nonprofit organizations for the development of affordable housing for moderate-income residents age 62 and older."⁵⁸

1960s: Various other housing acts (1961, 1965, 1968) further expanded the role of the private sector providing housing to multifamily housing of various income levels through the federal government insuring mortgages of private developers of multifamily housing and providing loans to developers at low interest rates (1961), providing rental assistance (1965) and subsidizing private developers' mortgage interest payments (1968).⁵⁹

1965: "The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created in a largely symbolic move to bring housing and slum-clearance programs to the cabinet level."⁶⁰ It was created to manage public housing and its affairs, as the size of public housing had grown tremendously. FHA was encompassed within this new department.

1968: Congress passed the Fair Housing Act, which outlawed discrimination in housing and in mortgage lending and gave HUD enforcement responsibility. Up to this point, there had been years of governmental and

⁵⁴ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁵⁵ Ibid. (*The Nation*)

⁵⁶ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 3, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁵⁷ Kamping-Carder, Leigh, "Hit the NYC jackpot: How to get an affordable Mitchell-Lama apartment to call your own," (March 15, 2018), https://www.brickunderground.com/blog/2014/10/mitchell_lama_affordable_housing_guide.

⁵⁸ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p.3, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 4. (*CRS*)

⁶⁰ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

private discrimination in the provision of housing, which limited minority households' opportunities to achieve homeownership and contributed to patterns of racial segregation.⁶¹

1969: "The Brooke Amendment, which was included as part of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-152), limited tenant contributions toward rent in all rent assisted units (including public housing and all project-based rental assistance units) to an amount equal to 25% of tenant income (this was later raised to 30%). The Brooke Amendment is considered to be responsible for codifying an income-based rent structure in federal housing programs."⁶²

1970: The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970 introduced the Federal Experimental Housing Allowance Program (EHAP). EHAP tested two different versions of housing allowances: the "demand experiment," between 1973 and 1976, and the "supply experiment," between 1974 and 1979. Before the research was complete, Congress moved ahead with legislation in 1974 to create the housing allowance program that we know today as the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program (see second 1974 entry on the Section 8 program below).⁶³

1973: The Nixon administration issued a moratorium on almost all subsidized-housing programs due to a number of concerns.⁶⁴

1974: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program was authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended. Prior to this time, numerous federal programs addressed community development issues. CDBG consolidated eight programs under which communities competed nationally for funds.⁶⁵

1974: The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 also established Section 8 housing programs as a replacement for public housing, creating a tenant-based certificates program to increase low-income tenants' choice of housing. "Although the 1960s had seen rental assistance programs like Rent Supplement and Section 23, the scale of the Section 8 program made it the first comprehensive rental assistance program."⁶⁶

1976: "The Supreme Court rule[d], in *Hills v. Gautreaux*, that the Chicago Housing Authority contributed to racial segregation in Chicago through discriminatory practices. HUD [began] offering vouchers in the city to address poverty and segregation."⁶⁷

1977: The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) "affirm[ed] that federally insured [banks] have an obligation to meet the credit needs of the communities in which they are chartered and accept deposits ... and require[d] federal banking regulators to assess the extent to which banks are meeting those needs. The enactment of the CRA grew out of concern that banking deposits were funding lending activities across the country at the

⁶¹ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 5, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁶² Ibid, p. 5. (CRS)

⁶³ HUD Edge, "Message from PD&R Leadership: Blast from the Past: How the Experimental Housing Allowance Program of the 1970s Can Inform the Moving to Work Expansion Today," <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr-edge-firm-asst-sec-032017.html>.

⁶⁴ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 6, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Basically CDBG," (2007), https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/DOC_16470.PDF.

⁶⁶ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 6, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁶⁷ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

expense of providing credit in certain areas where deposits were collected, thereby contributing to neighborhood disinvestment."⁶⁸

1982: Under President Ronald Reagan, HUD's budget was slashed to under \$40 billion, a decrease of more than 50% from 1976, when it was \$83.6 billion.⁶⁹

1983: The Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983 (P.L. 98-181) limited HUD's authority to issue new Section 8 contracts to existing properties only, as the use of Section 8 in new construction and rehabilitation was found too expensive. "The act also created a new demonstration program to test a modified use of Section 8, referred to as vouchers. Vouchers were similar to the use of Section 8 rent subsidies in existing housing, but they provided more flexibility to public housing authorities, particularly by permitting families to pay more than 30% of their incomes in rent. The demonstration was made permanent in 1985."⁷⁰

1986: The Low Income Tax Credit (LIHTC) program was created as part of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which remains the primary source of federal funding for low-cost housing today.⁷¹ Giving a large level of control over to states for the first time, the tax credits are allocated to states based on population. While states must prioritize projects to serve low-income populations, states have discretion in setting priorities as to how the credits will be used.⁷²

1987: Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, which included funding for several grants that states

Mid-1980s: "By the mid-1980s, federal housing programs had gone through a number of iterations. Some programs had been scrapped as inefficient, subject to fraud and abuse, or too expensive. Shifting federal priorities – toward reducing taxes and increasing military spending in response to the Cold War – reduced funding available for social programs, including housing assistance. Creation of assisted housing with federal funds was on the decline, with production slowing significantly between 1982 and 1988." In addition, existing affordable rental units were being lost as HUD contracts expired or owners chose to repay their low-interest mortgages and charge market rent.

Late 1980s through 1990s: State and local governments and other organizations began taking the initiative to develop housing within their communities as a result of reduced federal support for housing. "From the late 1980s through the 1990s, Congress acknowledged the value of local control and gave more decisionmaking authority over housing policy to state and local governments through the creation of block grants and tax credits."

~Congressional Research Services, "Overview of Federal Assistance Programs and Policy," p. 6-7

⁶⁸ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 5-6,

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁶⁹ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁷⁰ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019),

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁷¹ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁷² CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 7,

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

and localities could use to assist people experiencing homelessness. Grants were available for permanent and transitional housing, as well as supportive services.⁷³

1990: Congress authorized the HOME Investment Partnership program through the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, creating another large, flexible block grant program to states and localities. Funds were apportioned based on a formula and were to be used to assist families at or below 80% of area median income. Use of the funds was broad (including both homeowners/buyers or rental construction or assistance), and municipalities were required to establish plans for spending their funds, including matching requirements and partnerships with local nonprofits.⁷⁴

1992: "Congress authorize[d] the HOPE VI urban-revitalization demonstration program to provide grants to support low-rise, mixed-income housing rather than high-rise public housing to address a severe lack of funding for repairs. Atlanta use[d] its funds to clear slums and construct mostly private housing, an approach copied by cities across the country."⁷⁵

1996: President Clinton signed into law the Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996, which announced the "one strike and you're out" policy in public housing communities to ensure that tenants who partook in criminal or illegal drug use faced eviction. One year later, 75% of public housing authorities had One Strike policies in place.⁷⁶

1998: As concern over the condition of public housing grew, proposals for public housing reform were considered. After several years of debate, Congress approved public housing reforms through the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) "to reduce segregation by race and income, encourage and reward work, bring more working families into public housing, and increase the availability of subsidized housing for very poor families."⁷⁷ "QHWRA also featured the so-called 'Faircloth Amendment,' which prohibited the use of public housing funding for the development of any net new units of public housing."⁷⁸

2004: America's homeownership rate reached a record-high of 69%.⁷⁹

2005: HUD conducted its first official point-in-time count of homeless people in the country.⁸⁰

2007: The housing market crashed and nearly 3 million homes were foreclosed on in both 2009 and 2010.⁸¹ "During the 'Great Recession' of 2008-2013, FHA played an important countercyclical role, propping up the housing market to supply access to mortgage credit when other sources of financing were limited and the capital markets had seized up."⁸²

⁷³ Ibid, p. 7. (CRS)

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 7-8. (CRS)

⁷⁵ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁷⁶ HUD, "Meeting the Challenge: Public housing authorities respond to the 'One Strike and You're Out' initiative," (September 1997), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Photocopy/183952NCJRS.pdf>.

⁷⁷ HUD, "The Federal Housing Administration (FHA)," https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/fhahistory.

⁷⁸ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 8, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁷⁹ HUD, "Timeline," https://www.huduser.gov/hud_timeline/.

⁸⁰ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁸¹ Ibid. (The Nation)

⁸² HUD, "The Federal Housing Administration (FHA)," https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/fhahistory.

2008: The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 was enacted in response to the subprime mortgage and national financial crisis. The act created the Federal Housing Finance Agency and improvements in federal regulation of mortgage lending institutions.

2010: "The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (P.L. 111-203) instituted new rules related to mortgages intended to protect consumers and the financial system from some of the lending practices that preceded the financial crisis, among other reforms."⁸³

2012: "The Obama administration create[d] the Rental Assistance Demonstration program, which authorize[d] the transformation of public housing into private-sector Section 8 housing."⁸⁴

2012: "The Section 8 waiting lists stretch so long that nearly half of them are simply closed."⁸⁵

Today: "Today's federal housing assistance programs fall into three main categories: rental housing assistance, assistance to state and local governments, and assistance for homeowners. Most of these programs are administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Current housing assistance programs include Section 8 vouchers and project-based rental assistance, public housing, housing for the elderly (Section 202), housing for persons with disabilities (Section 811), rural rental assistance (the United States Department of Agriculture's Section 521 program), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Block Grants, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), homeless assistance programs, Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and Department of Veterans Affairs mortgage insurance, and the mortgage interest deduction in the tax code."⁸⁶

"Most federal housing assistance programs are aimed at making housing affordable for low-income families. Affordability – defined as housing that costs no more than 30% of a family's income – is considered to be the largest housing problem today. Rental assistance programs, which are the largest source of direct housing assistance for low-income families, all allow families to pay affordable, income-based rents; however, different forms of assistance target different types of households including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families with children."⁸⁷

Housing Policy in Washington State

This section covers notable housing policy milestones in Washington state, with a focus on land-use policies or those policies that contribute extensively to affordable housing. Additional policies, including financial policies, can be found in the report titled "[There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington! Summary of Washington State Housing-Related Legislation](#)" (2019) by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

⁸³ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), p. 9, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁸⁴ The Nation, "151 Years of America's Housing History," (May 24, 2018), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/americas-housing-history/>.

⁸⁵ Ibid. (*The Nation*)

⁸⁶ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), Overview, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

⁸⁷ CRS, "Overview of Federal Housing Assistance Programs and Policy," (Updated 2019), Overview, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34591>.

1939: Public Housing Authorities (RCW 35.82) - In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Washington authorized the creation of public housing authorities in response to an appeal from the federal government to give greater access to affordable housing to residents.⁸⁸

1981: Rent Control (RCW 36.01.130) - Rent control is prohibited.

1982: Creates and Supports Homeless Shelters (Operating Budget) - The state committed a \$1 million appropriation for operating support of homeless shelters, the first commitment of public funds for housing in Washington state by the Legislature. Today, the Legislature continues to support homeless shelters through funding sources including the Emergency Shelter Assistance Program (ESAP), Emergency Shelter Homeless Prevention (ESHP) and Overnight Youth Shelter (OYS) programs.⁸⁹

1982: Real Estate Excise Tax 1 (RCW 82.46.010) - Cities and counties were given the option of levying a local 0.25% real estate excise tax (REET) to pay for capital projects. "If a county imposes this tax, it is applied within the unincorporated areas only. This tax may be imposed by the legislative body and does not require voter approval. Almost all cities, towns, and counties in the state have imposed REET 1, with the exception of a few very small jurisdictions. [These] REET 1 revenues are restricted and may only be used for certain purposes. However, the exact purposes depend on the jurisdiction's population and whether or not it is fully planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA)."⁹⁰

1983: Washington State Housing Finance Commission (RCW 43.180) - Washington became one of the last states to establish a housing finance agency, amidst a recession that included high unemployment and mortgage interest rates exceeding 20%. Housing advocates, lenders and businesspeople worked together to establish the commission as a public-private partnership with the intention of helping the economy.⁹¹

1986: Housing Trust Fund Created (E2SSB 4626; RCW 53.185 & 43.185A) - The Housing Trust Fund and the Housing Assistance Program were "created 'to assist low and very low-income citizens in meeting their basic housing needs.' In 1991, the Housing Trust Fund was expanded to include the Affordable Housing Program, serving households at or below 80% of area median income and creating down payment assistance opportunities. Opened with a \$1 million investment in 1986, the Washington Housing Trust Fund (HTF) has become the primary vehicle for the state's direct investment in affordable housing. The HTF supports the construction, acquisition or rehabilitation of more affordable housing every two years when fully funded; creates rental and homeownership opportunities in every region of the state for low-income people (more than 70% of units serve extremely low-income people); and supports special needs housing for clients of the Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Health."⁹²

1990: Growth Management Act (SHB 2929; RCW 36.70A) - The Growth Management Act (GMA) is a series of state statutes that required fast-growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan to prepare for and manage their population growth. Comprehensive plans must address 13 goals, including affordable

⁸⁸ Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), "There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington!" (July 1, 2019), p. 54, <http://wshfc.org/admin/LegislationSummary.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 54. (WSHFC)

⁹⁰ MRSC, "Real Estate Excise Tax" (last updated January 19, 2021), <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Finance/Revenues/Real-Estate-Excise-Tax.aspx>.

⁹¹ Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), "There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington!" (July 1, 2019), p. 54, <http://wshfc.org/admin/LegislationSummary.pdf>.

⁹² Ibid, p. 53. (WSHFC)

housing.⁹³ Within the comprehensive plans, counties that are required to or have elected to plan must develop housing policies to ensure there is adequate housing for the future.

1993: Authorizing Conversion of Surplus Public Property to Use for Affordable Housing (EHB 1824; Amending RCW 43.63A.510, 36.34.135, and 47.12.063) - "With concern that local governments and school districts may have under-utilized land and buildings, the Legislature directed the Department of Community Development to work on an inventory of state-owned land and buildings for possible lease as sites for affordable housing. In doing so, this act provides a centrally located inventory of state and publicly owned land and buildings that may be suitable to be marketed, sold, leased, or exchanged for the development of affordable housing; and encourages an effective use of publicly owned surplus property."⁹⁴

1993: Housing Policy Act and the Affordable Housing Advisory Board (SB 5584; RCW 43.185B.020, RCW 43.63A) - The Housing Policy Act established "the policy base for the state's involvement in housing" and created the Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB) to advise the Department of Commerce on housing policy issues. With a broad board of 19 representing various public and private housing interests, the group studies housing issues and recommends solutions. "Their recommendations have become the basis for countless pieces of successful housing legislation."⁹⁵ This act also established that local governments shall allow accessory apartments or accessory dwelling units in cities over 20,000 and counties over 125,000 in population.

1993: Mobile Home Landlord Tenant Act (SB 5482) - Allowed a qualified mobile home park tenant organization consisting of 60% of tenants to have the opportunity to purchase the park should the park be put up for sale. The tenant organization must provide a fully executed purchase sale agreement to the owner with 1% of the purchase price within 90 days.⁹⁶

1995: Property Tax Exemption Supports Urban Housing Projects (2SSB 5387; RCW 84.14.020) - "The Legislature granted a 10-year property tax exemption for urban housing preservation and renewal projects in locally designated areas. The exemption created an incentive for housing developers to acquire and rehabilitate abandoned buildings or construct new apartments in dilapidated urban centers, bringing residents back downtown. The exemption is an economic development tool for local governments to attract multifamily rental and ownership housing in neighborhoods targeted for growth. The program was for cities with populations above 50,000."⁹⁷ This law has had multiple modifications over the years (1997 through SB 6094; 2000 through HB 2505; 2002 through SHB 2466; key changes in 2007 through E2SHB 1910 to create the current eligibility for cities and the current eight- and 12-year tax exemptions; 2012 through SB 6277) and has become what today is often referred to as the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program.

1997: Growth Management Modifications, including Review and Evaluation or Buildable Lands Program (ESB 6094, RCW 36.70A.215) - A number of modifications to the Growth Management Act (GMA) were enacted in 1997, including the Review and Evaluation Program under [RCW 36.70A.215](#), which is often referred to as the Buildable Lands Program. The Buildable Lands Program "require[d] that Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom (as of 2017) Counties and the cities within them complete a Buildable Lands report

⁹³ MRSC, "Growth Management Act" (last updated January 15, 2020), <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/General-Planning-and-Growth-Management/Comprehensive-Planning-Growth-Management.aspx>.

⁹⁴ Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), "There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington!" (July 1, 2019), p. 51, <http://wshfc.org/admin/LegislationSummary.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 52. (WSHFC)

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 52. (WSHFC)

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 50. (WSHFC)

every eight years. The Buildable Lands reports are a look back at actual development to determine if cities and counties have designated adequate amounts of residential, commercial and industrial lands to meet the growth needs incorporated in their comprehensive plans. ... Guidelines for local governments were adopted in 2000 and technical summaries were prepared and issued in 2003 and 2007. In 2017 a number of changes were made to the Review and Evaluation Program through [E2SSB 5254](#).⁹⁸

1998: Public Housing Authorities (HB 2175; Amending RCW 35.82) - This law gave the Housing Finance Commission "compliance and enforcement abilities by allowing it to impose covenants running with the land."⁹⁹

1999: Nonprofit Multifamily Low-income Rental Properties Exempt from Property Taxes (HB 1345; RCW 84.36.560)

2002: Real Estate Excise Tax for Affordable Housing (SB 5965; Adding a new section to 82.46 RCW) - "An additional real estate excise tax [was] authorized for counties equal to 0.5 percent of the selling price to be used exclusively for the development of affordable housing, including the acquisition, building, rehabilitation, maintenance and operation of housing for very low, low- and moderate income persons and those with special needs."¹⁰⁰

2002: Low Income Housing \$10 Surcharge - The Affordable Housing for All Surcharge (HB 2060; RCW 36.22.178) - "Recognizing the need for additional housing resources, and also understanding that affordable rents for extremely low-income people are not sufficient to cover the cost of building operations and maintenance, in 2002 the Legislature established a \$10 document recording fee to support both the development and operation of affordable housing. At the county level, this funding supports a variety of affordable housing needs for households at or below 50% of area median income. At the state level, fees are used to provide Operating and Maintenance (O&M) grants to subsidize the cost of serving households at or below 30% of area median income."¹⁰¹ This surcharge was renamed in 2007 (E2SHB 1359) as the Affordable Housing for All Surcharge.

2004: Manufactured Homes Regulation (SB 6593) - "This law require[d] that cities and counties must regulate manufactured homes built to federal manufactured housing construction standards no differently than they regulate other types of homes."¹⁰² See [RCW 35.21.684](#), [RCW 35A.21.312](#) and [RCW 36.01.225](#).

2005: Homeless Housing Task Force (SSB 5787; adding a new Chapter to section 43 RCW) - "Created a homeless housing task force in each county to develop a ten-year plan addressing short- and long-term housing solutions for the homeless; provided guidelines and other conditions for participation or opting out."¹⁰³

2005: Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (E2SHB 2163; RCW 43.185C) - Created with a goal to reduce homelessness, this act created a requirement for a statewide homeless housing strategic plan with

⁹⁸ Washington State Department of Commerce, "Buildable Lands Program Overview." <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/buildable-lands/>.

⁹⁹ Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), "There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington!" (July 1, 2019), p. 48, <http://wshfc.org/admin/LegislationSummary.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 44-45. (WSHFC)

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 43. (WSHFC)

¹⁰² MRSC, "Local Land Use Regulation of Manufactured Housing," (last modified July 2, 2018), <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Development-Regulations/Local-Land-Use-Regulation-of-Manufactured-Housing.aspx>.

¹⁰³ Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC), "There's No Place Like Home... Because There's No Place Like Washington!" (July 1, 2019), p. 42, <http://wshfc.org/admin/LegislationSummary.pdf>.

performance measures and goals to reduce homelessness. Thirty-seven counties also participate and create their own local homeless housing plans. "The Homeless Housing and Assistance Program is funded by a \$10 surcharge for certain documents recorded by the county auditor. The Homeless surcharge generates around \$16 million each year to support programs. Of that \$10 surcharge roughly 60% remains at the county level and 40% are deposited into the state Home Security Fund. The Department of Commerce uses these funds to create the statewide homeless housing strategic plan, administer the Homeless Housing and Assistance program, measure program performance, provide technical assistance to local governments, and manage the homeless housing grant program."¹⁰⁴

2006: Inclusionary Zoning Bill (ESHB 2984; Amending RCW 82.02 and adding a section to 36.70A RCW) - "Jurisdictions fully planning under the Growth Management Act may enact or expand affordable housing incentive programs providing for the development of low-income housing units through development regulations under certain income guidelines and other conditions (commonly referred to as the "inclusionary zoning bill").¹⁰⁵

2007: Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Program (2SHB 1401; RCW 43.185A.110) - Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Program (LAP), appropriated to the Department of Commerce to be administered by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (HFC), was created as a revolving loan fund to meet the challenge of low-income housing developers obtaining funds quickly enough to purchase and hold land for affordable housing development.¹⁰⁶

2007: Affordable Housing for All Surcharges (ESHB 1359; RCW 36.22.1791) - "This bill added an additional \$8 document recording fee surcharge to support low-income housing projects. Counties must use their funds (90% of the total funds collected) for housing activities which directly accomplish the goals of the county's local homeless housing plan. The portion of revenue due to the state (10%) is remitted to the Home Security Fund and the Department of Commerce uses these funds to provide housing and shelter for extremely low-income households and for program administration, housing and shelter assistance for homeless persons, and the Homeless Housing Grant Program."¹⁰⁷

2008: The Rapid Response Loan Program (EHB 3142; RCW 43.185A.210) - Similar to the Affordable Housing for All program (2007), this local program was created "to quickly assist Washington nonprofit organizations purchase real property (including land, buildings or mobile home parks) for the preservation or development of affordable housing and community facilities. ... Applicant properties must be located in rapidly gentrifying or redeveloping areas, or in communities with a significant low-income population that is threatened with displacement."¹⁰⁸

2008: Protecting Apartment Dwellers in the Event of "Condominium Conversions" (SHB 2014; RCW 64.34.440) - This program gave existing apartment tenants 120-day notice in the event of a condominium conversion. With this program, the Legislature recognized the right of property owners to convert properties, but sought a balance with renters' well-being.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 41. (WSHFC)

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 40. (WSHFC)

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 38. (WSHFC)

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 37. (WSHFC)

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 36. (WSHFC)

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 35. (WSHFC)

2008: Protecting Manufactured/Mobile Home Communities (E2SHB 1621; RCW 59.20.300) - "E2SHB 1621 require[d] landlords [of manufactured housing communities] to alert the Department of Commerce and the community's tenants if their community is for sale. The bill also require[d] that landlords negotiate in good faith either with a tenant organization, a nonprofit organization, local government or Indian tribe interested in preserving the property for manufactured housing. The Legislature went further to incentivize landlords to consider such a sale by exempting sales to these groups from the state and local Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)."¹¹⁰

2009: Concerning Affordable Housing Incentive programs (EHB 1464; RCW 36.70A.540) - "Within the GMA, incentive programs were encouraged, in order to facilitate the construction of affordable housing within the larger context of urban planning and zoning. The key language in EHB 1464 is that it changed 'construction' to 'development.' In so doing, the bill changed the law to allow for incentives to be granted even where no new construction was occurring, but where low-income units were being developed (i.e., acquisition/rehab or converting market rate units to affordable units). It also allowed for greater flexibility regarding location of the units (in the general area, as opposed to in adjacent buildings) as well as the type of development within which the units are located. The bill also allowed for a mechanism by which individual jurisdictions could accept money or property from developers who chose not to build affordable housing within the areas designated for the incentive programs, so long as the jurisdiction deemed said payments to achieve a result equal to or better than providing the affordable housing itself."¹¹¹

2010: Homeless Camps on Church Properties (ESHB 1956; RCW 35A.21.360, RCW 36.01.290, RCW 35.21.915) - "ESHB 1956 authorized religious organizations to host temporary encampments for the homeless on any property owned or controlled by such organizations. It went further by precluding counties, cities and towns from enacting regulations that impose any conditions, other than those for health and safety concerns, upon religious institutions; imposing excessive fees for permitting the encampments; or requiring the religious institutions to obtain liability insurance for the encampments or from indemnifying the municipalities against such liability."¹¹² In 2020, this act was amended with [ESHB 1754](#) to institute additional limitations, public noticing requirements and safety precautions for these temporary encampments.

2012: Creating an exemption from impact fees for low-income housing (EHB 1398; RCW Amend RCW 82.02.060) - Twenty-eight of Washington's 39 counties, and the cities within those counties, are planning jurisdictions defined under the Growth Management Act. "Planning jurisdictions may impose impact fees on development activity as part of the financing of public facilities needed to serve new growth and development. These jurisdictions may provide an exemption for low-income housing and other development activities with a broad public purpose. These exemptions are not required to be paid from public funds other than impact fee accounts. The legislation stipulate[d] that a covenant must be recorded by the developer prohibiting the use of the property for anything other than low income housing."¹¹³

2016: Disposing tax foreclosed property to cities for affordable housing purposes (SSB 6337) - "Prior to disposing of tax-foreclosed property, the county legislative authority gives notice to any city in which any tax foreclosed property is located within 60 days of acquiring the property. This notice must offer the city the

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 34. (WSHFC)

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 32. (WSHFC)

¹¹² Ibid, p. 30. (WSHFC)

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 24. (WSHFC)

opportunity to purchase property for the original minimum bid under RCW 84.64.080 plus any direct costs incurred by the county in the sale."¹¹⁴

2017: Clarifying the type of land eligible for purchase under the affordable housing land acquisition revolving loan program (HB 1616) - "The type of allowable land that loans may be made for, under the Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Revolving Loan Fund Program, is expanded to include vacant or improved land."¹¹⁵

2018: Expanding access to homeless housing and assistance (HB 1570) - An additional increase in real estate document recording fees helped an additional 11,500 people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness access housing assistance and services. This surcharge for local homeless housing and assistance in RCW 36.22.179 "is the state's primary source for funding homelessness services and is split between the state and counties so local communities can quickly address their most pressing needs. The increase will generate approximately \$26 million each year to fight homelessness. Additionally, this bill remove[d] the expiration date on the fee so that communities have a permanent and reliable source of funding to reduce homelessness."¹¹⁶

2018: Tiny homes (HB 1085) - Gave "local governments the authority to modify minimum floor-space requirements to accommodate innovative forms of affordable housing."¹¹⁷

2019: Tiny home communities (ESSB 5383) - "Provide[d] that cities and counties may adopt ordinances regulating the creation of tiny house communities, including using the binding site plan method. They may not adopt ordinances that prevent entry or require removal of a tiny house with wheels used as a primary residence in a manufactured/mobile home community if the house contains at least one internal toilet and one internal shower unless these are provided by the community. The owner of the land must make reasonable accommodations for utility hookups in compliance with MHLTA. Tiny houses and tiny house communities are defined in the act and may be subject to certain standards and the State Building Code Council must adopt tiny house standards by the end of 2019."¹¹⁸

2019: An act relating to increasing urban residential building capacity (E2SHB 1923) - This act removed barriers to building affordable homes by providing incentives to local jurisdictions to increase housing supply and reduce barriers to developing housing. The act authorized grants to support cities developing and adopting action plan; "exempt[ed] from appeal under state SEPA and GMA certain non-project actions taken by cities to increase residential capacity; authorize[d] grants for certain cities that take certain actions to increase residential building capacity; direct[ed] the WA Center for Real Estate Research at University of Washington to prepare a biennial report on housing supply and affordability; establishe[d] minimum residential parking requirements in certain cities; and, create[d] a document recording fee to be deposited into the GMA Planning and Environmental Review Fund."¹¹⁹ This act also updated definitions for affordable housing and mandated that cities may not prohibit permanent supportive housing in areas where multifamily housing is permitted.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 18. (WSHFC)

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 14. (WSHFC)

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 11. (WSHFC)

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 10. (WSHFC)

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 8. (WSHFC)

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 5. (WSHFC)

2019: An act relating to encouraging investments in affordable housing and supportive housing (SHB 1406) -

"This act authorize[d] the governing body of a county or city to impose a local sales tax, credited against the state sales tax, for affordable and supportive housing."¹²⁰

2019: Concerning affordable housing development on religious property (HB 1377) -

"Require[d] certain cities and counties engaged in comprehensive planning to allow an increased density bonus for certain affordable housing development on property owned or controlled by a religious organization."¹²¹

2019: An act relating to providing cities and counties authority to use real estate excise taxes to support affordable housing and homeless projects (EHB 1219) -

"Authorize[d] counties and cities required to plan or who are planning under the Growth Management Act to use real estate excise tax (REET 2) revenue for the planning, acquisition, construction, reconstruction, repair, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of facilities for persons experiencing homelessness and affordable housing projects until January 1, 2026."¹²²

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 3. (WSHFC)

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 3. (WSHFC)

¹²² Ibid, p. 3. (WSHFC)