



Staff Report

June 21, 2021

City Council Public Hearing

Public Hearing for Camas Housing Action Plan

Presenters: Sarah Fox, Senior Planner and Mosaic Community Planning

Phone	Email
360.513.2729	sfox@cityofcamas.us

BACKGROUND

The City of Camas is creating a Housing Action Plan (HAP) to encourage housing diversity and affordability for people of all incomes. The goal of this plan is to further goals and policies of Camas 2035, the city’s comprehensive plan, to achieve a greater variety of housing types and costs to better meet the needs and desires of individuals and families. Funding for the project comes through a grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce.

The Housing Action Plan will:

- ❖ Rely on thorough data and an inclusive public participation process to understand current and future housing needs.
- ❖ Assess existing housing resources and policies and identify ways to build on or improve them.
- ❖ Outline strategies the City of Camas plans to take to meet the community’s housing needs over the next ten years and beyond.
- ❖ Further the city’s Comprehensive Plan housing goals and be adopted by City Council.

A public hearing before Planning Commission was held on April 20 and continued to May 18. The Commission forwarded a recommendation of approval that included a prioritization of the draft strategies. A workshop before Council was held on June 7, 2021. Council directed that the changes as recommended by the Commission be brought forward for a public hearing. Version 9 that is attached to this report reflects that direction.

Public Engagement Activities & Results

PUBLIC MEETINGS <i>[Note: Recordings of all meetings are available on the city’s website.]</i>	Council Workshops 2/19/19; 6/3/19; 6/17/19; 7/1/19; 12/7/20; 06/07/21 Planning Commission 6/16/19; 10/20/20; 2/17/21; 4/20/21; 5/18/21 Open House (via Zoom) 9/16/20; 9/17/20; 3/18/21 Focus Group Meeting 3/16/21
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Along with public meetings before Planning Commission and City Council, meetings were held with a stakeholder group, Discovery High School students, and at open houses. The project website had approximately 2,400 visitors.

ONLINE SURVEY

An online survey was available at www.letstalkcamashousing.us from mid-August to mid-November 2020 and received 307 responses. Demographic information for survey participants shows that:

- ❖ Most participants live in Camas (95%) and more than one-third (36%) work in Camas.
- ❖ Most participants own their homes (88%) and 9% are renters. The remaining 3% live with family or friends.
- ❖ The household income breakdown of survey participants is 31% with incomes under \$100,000, 29% with incomes from \$100,000 to \$149,000 and 40% with incomes over \$150,000.
- ❖ The racial and ethnic makeup of survey participants was 75% white, 5% Hispanic, 5% Asian or Pacific Islander, 2% Native American, 1% Black, and 1% Arab or Middle Eastern. About 12% of respondents selected "other" or declined to share their race/ethnicity.
- ❖ Participants come from throughout the city. The largest number of participants (59 people) live on or near NE Everett Street.

OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOPS

Two open houses open to the general public were held via Zoom on September 16 and 17, 2020. Eighteen people joined one of the meetings to discuss topics including: (1) need for variety in housing prices and types; (2) housing types needed in Camas; and (3) residential development opportunities and barriers.

The open houses and complete discussion notes are viewable at <https://letstalkcamashousing.us/community-meeting-march>.

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Targeted stakeholders representing a variety of viewpoints were invited to participate in a series of focus groups or interviews during September and October 2020. Twenty-nine people participated, including professionals in the fields of housing and homeless services, education, government, transportation, and urban planning and 9 high school students who joined a focus group during one of their classes.

Stakeholders discussed housing needs, affordability, development challenges, and potential ways to support a greater variety of housing types and price points.

Existing Conditions Review & Housing Needs Analysis (Chapters 1 – 6)

The draft HAP was broken into a two-part pdf for easier navigation during the meetings, and to focus on the changes. The first pdf contains the draft Existing Conditions & Housing Needs Analysis within Chapters 1 through 6. The key findings from the Existing Conditions Review & Housing Needs Analysis were presented to the Planning Commission at their meeting on February 17. The meeting is recorded and available on the city's website.

Draft Housing Strategies (Chapter 7)

The second pdf contains the draft strategies for enhancing housing diversity and affordability. The strategies were workshopped with City staff on January 14 and Planning Commission on February 17. The team revised initial strategies based on staff and Planning Commission input and presented the revised strategies to focus group participants and the public in virtual meetings held on March 16 and 18. At the public hearing on April 20 that was continued to May 18, the Commission rearranged the strategies by priority (Refer to draft Version 8). At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Commission unanimously forwarded a recommendation of approval to Council. At the Council workshop on June 7, the draft strategies were discussed with a few additional clarifications in regard to safety, parking considerations, and including housing education to include property management. Those additions are included within Chapter 7 pages 4 (par. 3), 13, and 19, and 20. [Note: As directed by Council, draft Version 9 does not include the "track changes" formatting that captured the Commission's recommendations].

Recommendation

That City Council conduct a public hearing on the draft Housing Action Plan (Ver. 9), deliberate, render a decision, and direct the City Attorney to prepare a resolution for adoption at the next meeting.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

What are the desired results and outcomes for this agenda item?

What's the data? What does the data tell us?

How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?

FINDING

Continued support from council on the path of this project, and ultimately, adoption of the plan.

Chapters 1 to 6 of the Plan includes the background and data to support the housing strategies and implementation options.

Invitations to join the open houses and take the survey were broadly sent on social media, CSD parent newsletter, city newsletter, newspaper advertisements,

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

FINDING

Who will benefit from, or be burdened by this agenda item?

yard signs, and to Vancouver Housing Authority residents in Camas.

As the city moves to implement the HAP, staff will continue engage the public and adapt outreach based on an analysis of who may be missing from the conversations.

What are the strategies to mitigate any unintended consequences?

The Camas Housing Action Plan will benefit our community by creating a future where more housing choices (size, type, price) will be available.

The city can amend development regulations at any time that we become aware of an unintended consequence.

Does this agenda item have a differential impact on underserved populations, people living with disabilities, and/or communities of color? Please provide available data to illustrate this impact.

The goal of the initiative is to increase the availability of housing types, sizes, and costs. Greater housing variety and affordability has the potential to better serve residents with disabilities and communities of color.

Will this agenda item improve ADA accessibilities for people with disabilities?

The goal of the initiative is to increase the availability of housing types, sizes, and costs. This will include housing for the disabled and seniors in our city.

What potential hurdles exists in implementing this proposal (include both operational and political)?

We anticipate that a proposal to change development or zoning regulations that affect existing neighborhoods could be met with an equal level of support and opposition. Strategies that are less controversial are typically those that apply to areas that are undeveloped.

How will you ensure accountabilities, communicate, and evaluate results?

We will continually update the city's website, utilize social media, and present draft recommendations at PC and Council workshops.

How does this item support a comprehensive plan goal, policy or other adopted resolution?

Neighborhood LU-3.1 "Create vibrant, stable, and livable neighborhoods with a variety of housing choices that meet all stages in the life cycle and range of affordability."

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

FINDING

Citywide Housing H-1, "Maintain the strength, vitality, and stability of all neighborhoods and promote the development of a variety of housing choices that meet the needs of all members of the community."

H-1.7, "Require all new housing developments to provide a range of housing types and sizes that are evaluated through the land use approval process and stipulated on the final plat."

H-3, "Encourage and support a variety of housing opportunities for those with special needs, particularly those with challenges relating to age, health, or disability."

BUDGET IMPACT:

The city was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Department of Commerce.