



Staff Report

June 7, 2021

City Council Workshop

Camas Housing Action Plan

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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. Attached to this report are two files (Draft HAP Chapters 1-6 and Chapter 7) with the red-lined corrections that were included in their recommendation.

Public Engagement Activities & Results

<p>PUBLIC MEETINGS <i>[Note: Recordings of all meetings are available on the city’s website.]</i></p>	<p>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</p>
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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 2.4k 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. The public virtual meeting and discussion notes are viewable at <https://letstalkcamashousing.us/community-meeting-sept>. At the public hearing on April 20 that was continued to May 18, the Commission rearranged the strategies by priority and provided other recommended edits that are captured in their decision in the next section.

Draft Housing Action Plan

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Draft Housing Action Plan, Chapters 1 to 7 as attached to this report, which included the following amended strategies:

Strategy 1: Expand housing opportunity in mixed use and downtown commercial districts

Strategy 2: ~~Explore density modifications in R-zones~~ Consider targeted rezones during comprehensive plan updates

Strategy 3: Diversify allowed housing types and update related lot and dimensional standards

~~Strategy 4: Update lot and dimensional standards that limit density and housing types~~

Strategy 54: Focus on key areas with residential development or redevelopment potential. Expand more mixed use areas throughout the city.

~~Strategy 6: Cultivate an inclusionary housing policy~~

Strategy 75: Continue community conversations around housing and housing for all

Strategy 86: Communicate available affordable housing resources

Strategy 97: Build partnerships to develop and preserve affordable housing for individuals, families, and seniors. Explore expansion of MFTE program.

Strategy 108: Explore funding source and cost reduction options for affordable housing

~~Strategy 11: Consider opportunities for supporting affordable homeownership~~

Recommendation

That City Council schedule a public hearing on the draft Housing Action Plan for June 21.

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?

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

What are the strategies to mitigate any unintended consequences?

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.

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

FINDING

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

Data is available on the website and will be shared throughout the project. [LetsTalkCamasHousing.us](https://lets-talk-camas-housing.us)

Invitations to join the open houses and take the survey were broadly sent on social media, CSD parent newsletter, city newsletter, newspaper advertisements, yard signs, and to Vancouver Housing Authority residents in Camas.

As the project progresses, we will utilize other strategies to hear from groups that have not responded to the outreach efforts to date.

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.

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.

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.

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

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

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

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

FINDING

We anticipate that a proposal to change development or zoning regulations will be met with an equal level of support and opposition.

We will continually update the website (letstalkcamashousing.us), utilize social media, and present draft policy recommendations at PC and Council workshops. All of the feedback received throughout the project will be incorporated in the draft Camas Housing Action Plan.

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."

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.