



Community Development Department

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MEMORANDUM

To: City Council
From: Emily Arteche, Community Development Director
Date: February 26, 2024
Subject: Comprehensive Plan – Housing Element Policy Review

Introduction

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) requires King County and cities within King County to update their comprehensive plans on or before December 31, 2024. The housing chapter (sometimes referred to as an “element”) is a core required element of the Comprehensive Plan and must incorporate updated growth targets¹ including King County Countywide and Jurisdictional Housing Needs 2019-2044. As part of the update cities will plan for an accommodate the jurisdiction’s allocated share. The Element also must be compliant with all the legislative changes at the State, Regional and County level since the previous Comprehensive Plan completed over 8 years.

To facilitate the review and approval of the draft Element a roundtable discussion will be held on the recommended draft goals and policies, (see Attachment 1, PC Recommendation with Community Development Council Committee Recommended Edits, dated February 5, 2024). The roundtable will be followed by a City Council motion on the Element at an upcoming Council meeting.

Background

The Housing Element draft goals and policies were discussed at a series of meetings with the public, Planning Commission, and the Community Development Council Committee on the following dates:

- On April 6, 2023, City Staff and consultants held a Comprehensive Plan Open House and received input from the public on the Element.
- On September 5, 2023, City Staff and consultants introduced the Housing Element, (provisions of RCW 36.70A.070 and House Bills 1220 and 1337) and presented on draft polices on Diverse Housing, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Design and Construction for the Planning Commission to review and discuss.
- On September 18, 2023, City Staff and consultants presented revised and new draft policies on Diverse Housing, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Design and Construction as well as draft Housing goals.
- On October 2, 2023, the Planning Commission completed work on the draft Housing Use Element, with recommended draft goals and policies (see Attachment 2).

¹ Resolution No. 1680, Revised 2044 Growth Target, dated February 12, 2024

- On October 16, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On October 18, 2023, City Staff and consultants held a Comprehensive Plan Open House and received input from the public on the Element.
- On November 11, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On November 20, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On December 4, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element.
- On February 5, 2024, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting including amendments to the draft Housing goals and policies based on comments received from Puget Sound Regional Council, PSRC.

The draft recommended goals and policies were solicited for early review at the state and regional level for GMA and Vision 2050 consistency. Review comments were received from the Puget Sound Regional Council, Liz Underwood-Bultmann Principal Planner, Growth Management Planning on December 21, 2023, (see Attachment 3, PSRC Comments Snoqualmie transportation housing). Recommended edits to the Planning Commission recommended goals and policies shown below were approved by the Community Development Council Committee on February 5, 2024.

Draft Goal 1. A sufficient mix of housing types, sizes, costs and densities enables current and future citizens ~~from a wide range of~~ all economic levels, age groups and household make-ups to live within the City and provides housing to meet the needs of local employees.

And,

Draft Policy 2a. Work towards meeting ~~the targets established and defined in the Countywide Planning Policies for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income housing as a percentage of projected overall household inventory~~ and for emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing.

Analysis

A part of the review processes the Element was expanded to include policies on HB 1220 – Housing requirements for all income levels, equity and displacement risk, supporting emergency shelters and housing through local planning and development regulations and HB 1337 – Expanding housing options by easing barriers to the construction and use of accessory dwelling units. Technical housing reports and analysis including a Valleywide Housing Needs Analysis, Citywide Housing Needs Analysis, Middle Housing, Housing Strategy will be supporting documentation to the Element (see Attachment 4, 2044 Snoqualmie Comprehensive Plan Outline).

The updates to this Element are intended to improve clarity, remove duplicative language, update terminology, reflect the values of the community and meet recent changes to the Growth Management

Act and other laws. Approximately 46 bills related to the Comprehensive Plan were passed during the timespan since the last Comprehensive Plan was adopted (see Attachment 5, GMA-amendments-1995-2023). As a result, total of 13 new housing definitions were formed of the new legislation (see Attachment 6, Key Housing Definitions). Such terms include but not limited to:

- Vulnerable Populations,
- Permanent Supportive Housing,
- Green Infrastructure.

The Housing Evolution Spreadsheet, (see Attachment 7) demonstrates the evolution of goals and policies, i.e., when policies were combined, moved, updated to address public comment, eliminated to reflect current conditions and/or adapted to fit the PSRC Vision 2050. This Element is rewritten and will fit into a reorganized Plan.

The Housing Element recommendation was developed with information from the Tribe and reflects public comments received during the planning process. Tribal coordination began in the Fall of 2022 and included early review before the completion of the legislative process. The Two public open house events with dozens of attendees were held on April 6 and October 16, 2023. A “Take the Comp Plan Update Survey” provides an active -ongoing way for the public to share thoughts on our community. Combined public outreach efforts generated 46 public comments related to this Element since the launch of the Plan update in January 2023, (see Attachment 8: Housing Element Public Comment Table). Comments received emphasize affordability including but limited to the follow:

Affordability

- “affordable housing is beyond reach”,
- “It seems like we need more affordable housing. But nobody wants it.”,
- “appreciate it if there were more affordable housing options available..”,
- “Housing is unaffordable for any middle-class person or family”,
- “biggest concern is being priced out of Snoqualmie”,
- “...include plans for senior housing”,
- “need for Affordable & alternative housing needs to be addressed.”.

Next Steps

Discuss the draft Housing Element as recommended by the Community Development Committee shown in Attachment 1.

Attachment 1: PC Recommendation with Community Development Committee Recommended Edits

Attachment 2: Signed PC Recommendation

Attachment 3: PSRC Comments on Snoqualmie Draft Housing Element

Attachment 4: 2044 Snoqualmie Comprehensive Plan Outline

Attachment 5: GMA-amendments-1995-2023

Attachment 6, Key Housing Definitions

Attachment 7: Housing Element Evolution Spreadsheet

Attachment 8: Housing Element Public Comment Table