



Community Development Department

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MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission
From: Emily Arteche, Director
Date: September 5, 2023
Subject: Comprehensive Plan – Housing Element Policy Review

Background

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 (referred to as an “element”) is the core of the Comprehensive Plan and must incorporate updated growth targets and show how the City is planning to grow and change over the planning horizon of 20 years.

Legislative Changes Related to the Housing Element

Two primary pieces of legislation listed below were adopted to guide the development of Housing Elements. The City has already made great strides in addressing both bills with the completion of a Valley-wide Housing Needs Analysis, a City Housing Needs Analysis, a Housing Strategy Plan and a Middle Housing Analysis. Draft accessory dwelling units code amendments were recently reviewed by the Planning Commission in August 2023.

- HB 1220 - Supporting emergency shelters and housing through local planning and development regulations. The law also directs the Department of Commerce to project future housing needs for jurisdictions by income bracket and made significant updates to how jurisdictions are to plan for housing in the housing element of their comprehensive plans. These new changes to local housing elements include planning for sufficient land capacity for housing needs, providing for moderate density housing options inside the urban growth area, making adequate provisions for housing to existing for projected needs of all economic segments of the community and identifying racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion.
- HB 1337 - Expanding housing options by easing barriers to the construction and use of accessory dwelling units.

Analysis

The City’s housing element will provide for policies in Affordable Housing, Sustainable Design and Constructions, and Diverse Housing to address the legislation. On September 5th, staff will present an introduction to the Housing element including about half of draft policies in all three areas for the Planning Commission to review and discussion. A large factor contributing to draft policies are the findings and recommendations from Snoqualmie’s Housing Strategy Plan, Middle Housing Analysis, and Housing Needs Assessment. At the next upcoming meeting, staff will present remaining draft policies including draft goals for the three sections.