

# STAFF REPORT

Date: August 26, 2025

From: Erika Smith-Erickson, Housing and Land Use Planner, and Brad Medrud,  
Community Development Director



## 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update – Housing Element

On a ten-year cycle, Tumwater must conduct a Growth Management Act periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan and related development regulations. For the current cycle, Tumwater is obligated to complete work on the periodic update by December 31, 2025.

For the update, Tumwater combined public engagement efforts for both the Housing Element and middle housing development code updates, as the two updates are interrelated.

The intent of the City Council meeting on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, is to discuss how staff addressed state requirements and incorporated community feedback into the Housing Element's goals, policies, and draft implementation actions and the middle housing development code updates.

### Contents

Contents.....	1
1 – The Need for Housing in Tumwater .....	1
2 – Middle Housing Development Code Updates.....	7
3 – Overview of the Public Engagement Process .....	15
4 – Engagement Strategy .....	16
5 – Public Comment Period .....	23

### 1 – The Need for Housing in Tumwater

#### A. Requirements for the Housing Element Update

The state Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A Revised Code of Washington (RCW)) requires that Tumwater demonstrate that each Element in its Comprehensive Plan meets the relevant fifteen planning goals contained within the Act. The fifteen goals guide the development and adoption of Tumwater's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

The following is a summary of how the updated Housing Element will meet the housing goal of the Growth Management Act, which was substantially updated in 2022 by the state legislature.

**4. *Housing.*** *Plan for and accommodate housing affordable 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.*

How affordable housing is accommodated for all economic classes is specifically set forth in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Housing Element works with the Land Use Element to allocate sufficient land to insure an adequate supply of buildable land for housing serving each economic class. The 2021 Tumwater Housing Action Plan informed the update of the Land Use and Housing Elements. Each residential land use designation, including the Mixed Use designation, will provide a variety of housing types at varying densities.

Each neighborhood subarea identified in the Land Use Element contains sufficient variability in housing types to ensure housing needs can be met for all segments of Tumwater's population for the next 20 years. The goals, policies, and actions of the current Housing Element are found in Appendix B of this staff report.

## **1) Requirements for Housing Elements**

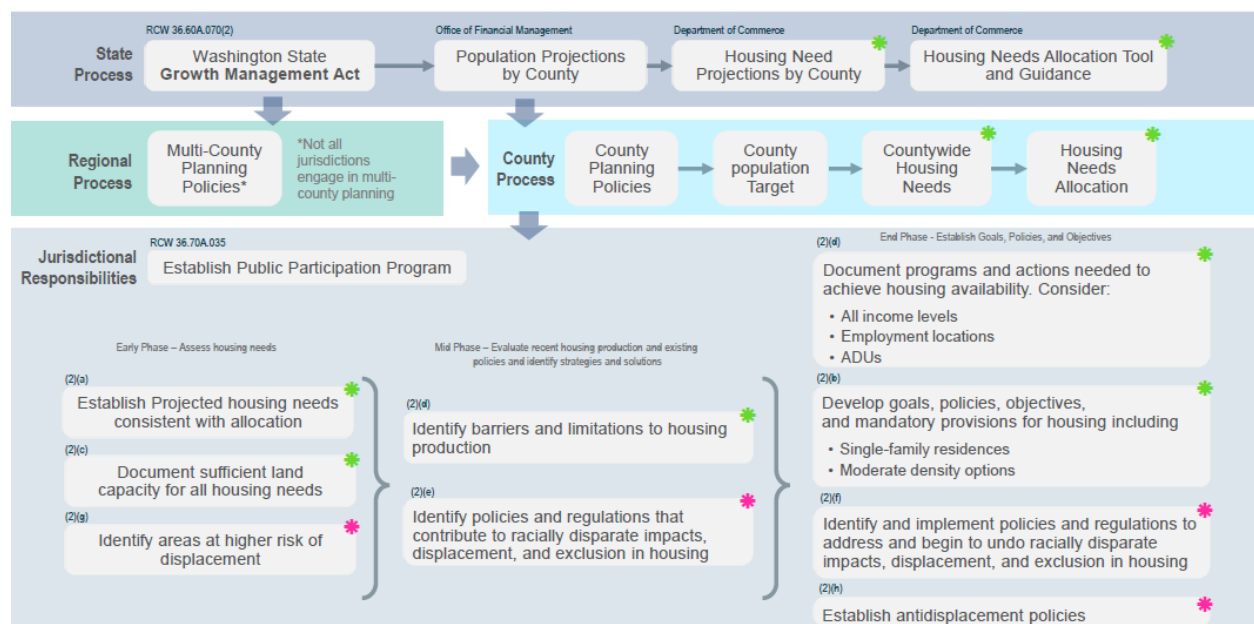
In addition to the Growth Management Act housing goal, Tumwater's Housing Element will address the following state requirements from RCW 36.70A.070, as substantially amended in 2023, to ensure the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods.

1. Include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth, as provided by the State Department of Commerce, including:
  - a. Units for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households; and
  - b. Emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing;
2. Include a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences, and moderate density housing options including, but not limited to, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes;
3. Identify sufficient capacity of land for housing including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes, foster care facilities, emergency housing, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, and consideration of duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes;
4. Make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community, including:
  - a. Incorporating consideration for low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households;

- b. Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations;
  - c. Consideration of housing locations in relation to employment location; and
  - d. Consideration of the role of accessory dwelling units in meeting housing needs;
5. Identify local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing, including:
  - a. Zoning that may have a discriminatory effect;
  - b. Disinvestment; and
  - c. Infrastructure availability;
6. Identify and implement policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions;
7. Identify areas that may be at higher risk of displacement from market forces that occur with changes to zoning development regulations and capital investments; and
8. Establish antidisplacement policies, with consideration given to the preservation of historical and cultural communities as well as investments in low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income housing; equitable development initiatives; inclusionary zoning; community planning requirements; tenant protections; land disposition policies; and consideration of land that may be used for affordable housing.

## New GMA Framework for Updating Housing Elements

✱ New or modified housing needs (PHN) requirement  
 ✱ New equity (RDI) requirement



Source: State Department of Commerce.

Several significant housing and land use bills were passed by the Washington State Legislature during the 2023 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Inslee, causing some observers to call 2023 “the Year of Housing” in our state. These bills are intended to expand the state’s housing supply and help address the ongoing affordable housing crisis.

Two of the more significant bills deal with “missing middle” housing (E2SHB 1110) and accessory dwelling units (EHB 1337). These two bills require many local governments to revise their regulations to allow for a greater number and increased types of housing in areas traditionally dedicated to single-family detached housing.

## B. Supply and Need

Since 2018, Tumwater has recognized that more needs to be done to increase City’s housing supply, even without the State requirements to do so.

Table 1 shows the 2020 housing supply of Tumwater and its associated urban growth area, and the expected 2020-2045 housing need based on the State’s allocation to the Thurston County and subsequent process through the Thurston Regional Planning Council to allocate housing needs across all the jurisdictions in the County. Table 2 shows the population of Tumwater and its associated urban growth area in 2020 and its forecasted population in 2045.

Table 1. Allocation of Projected Tumwater Housing Needs, 2020-45.

	Housing Units Available in 2020	Projected Housing Units Needed in 2045	2020-45 Projected Housing Need
<b>City</b>	11,064	17,740	6,676
<b>Urban Growth Area</b>	1,210	3,726	2,516
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,274</b>	<b>21,466</b>	<b>9,192</b>

Source: Thurston Regional Planning Council, Planning for & Accommodating Housing Needs in Thurston County, 2025.

Table 2. Tumwater & Its Urban Growth Area Population Forecasts, 2020-45.

	Population
<b>Population (2020)</b>	28,707
<b>Projected Population Increase (2020-2045)</b>	17,363
<b>Projected Population (2045)</b>	46,070

Source: 2020 Population includes the 2020 U.S. Census calibrated numbers both within Tumwater (25,573) and its urban growth area (3,134). Thurston Regional Planning Council, Table 3. Population Estimates and Forecast Thurston County Cities, Urban Growth Areas, and Reservations 2010-2045.

## C. Who Are We Planning For?

The State Growth Management Act requires Tumwater to “**plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population.**”

Housing is one of the most important parts of the everyday lives of Tumwater residents. One of Tumwater's top priorities is to work to provide opportunities for residents to have a range of housing options within their budget so that their home is suitable and affordable.

According to U.S. Housing and Urban Development, in 2024 a moderate income at 100% of area median income for a Thurston County household of four would be \$116,688. Table 3 shows equivalent household incomes and typical jobs that make up these categories.

Table 3. Household Income Categories Associated with Area Median Income for a Family of Four, Tumwater, 2024.

Household Income Category	Percent of Area Median Income	Equivalent Household Income for a Family of Four	Typical Jobs that May Fall in this Income Category
Extremely Low-Income	0-30% AMI	Less than \$35,000	Farm Workers, Fast Food Workers, Fixed Incomes
Very Low-Income	30-50% AMI	\$35,000 to \$58,350	Childcare, Administrative Assistants, Landscaping
Low-Income	50-80% AMI	\$58,350 to \$93,350	Veterinary Technicians, Construction Workers, Truck Drivers, Social Workers
Moderate-Income	80-100% AMI	\$93,350 to \$116,688	Nurses, Plumbers
Moderate-Income	100-120% AMI	\$116,688 to \$140,025	Analysts, Teachers
Upper Income	>120% AMI	More than \$140,025	Lawyers, Managers

Source: Income Limits, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2025.

## D. Anticipated Future Housing Need

Figure 4 shows the relationship in Tumwater and its urban growth area between area median income, the housing allocation for each of the income groups, the housing types most affordable for the income groups, and housing tenure.

This information informs the density ranges and types of permitted residential uses in land use designations and zone districts in the Land Use Element and Tumwater's development regulations.

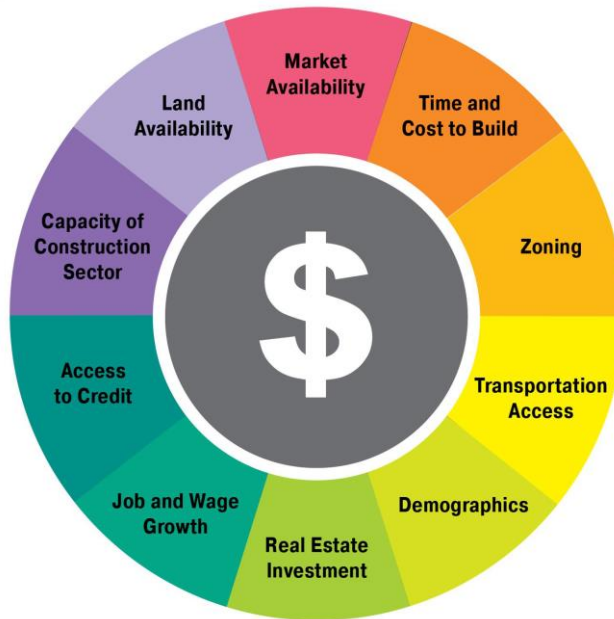
Figure 1. 2045 Tumwater & UGA Housing Need Allocation by Area Median Income, Housing Type, & Tenure.

0-30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-120% AMI	Above 120% AMI
<b>Housing Allocation:</b> <b>1,724 units</b> 26% of total	<b>Housing Allocation:</b> <b>1,033 units</b> 15% of total	<b>Housing Allocation:</b> <b>541 units</b> 8% of total	<b>Housing Allocation:</b> <b>1,036 units</b> 16% of total	<b>Housing Allocation:</b> <b>2,342 units</b> 35% of total
<b>Housing Type:</b> Low-rise and Mid-rise Multifamily (5+ housing Units)	<b>Housing Type:</b> Low-rise and Mid-rise Multifamily (5+ housing Units)	<b>Housing Type:</b> Low-rise and Mid-rise Multifamily (5+ housing Units) or Middle Housing	<b>Housing Type:</b> Low-rise and Mid-rise Multifamily (5+ housing Units) or Middle Housing	<b>Housing Type:</b> Single- Family or Middle Housing
<b>Rental:</b> Public support needed	<b>Rental:</b> Public support needed	<b>Rental:</b> Incentives needed  <b>Home Ownership:</b> Subsidy or incentives needed	<b>Rental or Home Ownership:</b> Incentives or zoning flexibility needed	<b>Market Rent and Home Ownership</b>

## E. City's Role in Development

Tumwater's zoning, regulations, permit procedures, and fees directly influence where and the intensity of what can be built:

- Zoning and regulations under the State Growth Management Act
- Permit procedures.
- Infrastructure that facilitates housing development.



## F. Development Code Update Process



Source: Department of Commerce, 2023.

## 2 – Middle Housing Development Code Updates

### A. State Requirements

The 2025 Development Code updates required by the State to address middle housing include:

- Allowing at least two units per lot in residential zone districts and at least four units per lot in residential zone districts if at least one unit is affordable housing. As an alternative, meet density requirements on 75% of City lots that are primarily dedicated to single-family housing. The City will be using the alternative means to meet State requirements.
- Allowing at least six of the nine types of middle housing in residential zone districts.
- Allowing zero lot line short plats.
- Limiting design review for middle housing to standards that apply to single-family houses.

- Limiting parking requirements for middle housing to one parking space on lots less than 6,000 square feet and two spaces on lots greater than 6,000 square feet.
- Requirements apply to zone districts that consist of “all lots zoned predominantly for residential use.”
- Unit density and allowed use standards do not apply to zoning districts “permitting higher densities or intensities.”
- Mixed-use zone districts which permit by-right multifamily and a variety of commercial uses are not included within the definition of “all lots zoned predominantly for residential use.”
- Manufactured home park zone districts are excluded from these requirements.

Other considerations:

- There is a possibility for Commerce approval of ‘substantially similar’ plans and regulations to those required by state requirements.
- There is a possibility for Commerce to give a timeline extension if it will result in displacement or overburdened infrastructure. The Capital Facilities Plan update can also be delayed by Tumwater if an extension is granted.
- Common Interest Communities (e.g., condominium or homeowners’ associations) cannot prohibit the implementation of the State requirements.
- Note that the other state requirements for accessory dwelling units, parking, and transit availability are broader than these State requirements.
- Meeting the two accessory dwelling units per lot requirements may address some of these requirements.

## B. Proposed Middle Housing Development Code Amendments

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update and the Middle Housing development code amendments, there will be changes to Tumwater’s residential land use designations, and zone districts:

- Low Density Residential (LDR) is a new proposed zone district that will combine and replace the Single Family Low Density Residential (SFL) and Single Family Middle Density Residential (SFM) zone districts.
- Medium Density Residential (MDR) is a new proposed zone district that will replace the Multifamily Medium Density Residential (MFM) zone district.
- High Density Residential (HDR) is a new proposed zone district that will replace the Multifamily High Density Residential (MFH) zone district.



## **1) Low Density Residential Zone District**

Remove references to “single-family” from the titles of the current Single-Family Low Density Residential (SFL) and Single-Family Medium Density Residential (SFM) land use designations and zone districts and combine these into one new Low Density Residential (LDR) land use designation and zone district.

References in the zone district intent statements to single-family housing being the primary form of development in those districts will be removed and the land use designation descriptions in the Comprehensive Plan have been updated.

Single-family detached dwellings will continue to be allowed in the new Low Density Residential (LDR) zone district but will no longer be the sole focus of the zone district.

## **2) Excluded Low Density Zone Districts**

The Residential/Sensitive Resource (RSR) and the Manufactured Home Park (MHP) zone districts are proposed to be excluded from middle housing development code updates as allowed under state law.

The intent of the Residential/Sensitive Resource (RSR) zone district is to accommodate and establish low density residential neighborhoods in a manner that is compatible with areas of unique open space character and environmental sensitivity with a minimum density of two dwelling units per acre and maximum density of four dwelling units per acre. The Residential/Sensitive Resource (RSR) zone district is found primarily on the west side of Tumwater in areas with large wetlands and Percival Creek or in the south side where there are high groundwater flooding concerns. The Residential/Sensitive Resource (RSR) zone district will continue to allow for duplexes and cottage housing.

The Manufactured Home Park (MHP) zone district is intended to provide sufficient land for primarily manufactured homes in manufactured home parks, so number of other uses allowed is limited.

## **3) Definitions**

The following definitions will be added or modified in TMC Chapter 18.04:

*“Administrative design review” means a land use permit review process whereby a design review application is reviewed, approved, or denied by the director of community development or their designee based solely on objective design standards found in the citywide design guidelines without an open recording hearing, unless such review is part of a consolidated review and decision process pursuant to TMC Title 14 Development Code Administration, otherwise required by state or federal law, or the structure is a designated landmark or historic district established under the city’s preservation ordinance. A city will utilize the process found in the citywide design guidelines to consider, recommend, or approve requests for deviations.*

*“Affordable housing” means, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, residential housing whose monthly costs, including utilities other than telephone, do not exceed thirty*

*percent of the monthly income of a household whose income is: (A) For rental housing, 60 percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States department of housing and urban development; or (B) For owner-occupied housing, 80 percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States department of housing and urban development.*

*Cottage housing” means residential units on a lot with a common open space that either: (A) Is owned in common; or (B) has units owned as condominium units with property owned in common and a minimum of twenty percent of the property as open space.*

*“Dwelling unit density” means the number of dwelling units, including accessory dwelling units, allowed on a lot, regardless of lot size.*

*“Major transit stop” means (A) a stop on a high capacity transportation system funded or expanded under the provisions of chapter 81.104 RCW; (B), commuter rail stops; (C) stops on rail or fixed guideway systems; or (D) stops on bus rapid transit routes, including those stops that are under construction.*

*“Middle housing” means buildings that are compatible in scale, form, and character with single-family dwellings and contain two or more attached, stacked, or clustered homes including duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, and cottage housing.*

*“Multifamily Dwelling” means a building designed and used for occupancy by five or more families all living independent of each other and where all dwelling units are located on the same lot.*

*“Quadplex” means a building designed for and used exclusively for occupancy by four families independent of each other where all four dwelling units are located on the same lot and are completely separated from each other, except for common stairwells or garages.*

*“Single-family detached dwelling” means a building that is not attached in any way to another dwelling unit or structure providing complete, independent living facilities for a family.*

*“Stacked flat” means dwelling units in a residential building of no more than three stories in which each floor may be separately rented or owned as one dwelling unit.*

*“Townhouse” or “rowhouse” means one of a line or row of three or more dwelling units attached one to the other, having common walls between individual units, generally two stories in height (and sometimes three). Each unit occupies the space between common walls from the lowest level to the roof, where common walls are the property lines between units and that have a yard or public or private street, alleys, pathways, or similar feature which the public has a right of use on not less than two sides.*

#### **4) Middle Housing Building Types**

Tumwater will be adding the following six of nine middle housing building types in its three primary residential zone districts:

**Duplexes**



**Triplexes**



**Quadplexes**



**Townhouses**



**Stacked flats**



### Cottage housing



Tumwater will not be adding the following three of nine middle housing building types in its Low Density Residential (LDR) and Medium Density Residential (MDR) zone districts, which will continue to fall under Tumwater's definition of multifamily dwelling. These uses will continue to be allowed in the High Density Residential (HDR) zone district.

### Fiveplexes



### Sixplexes



### Courtyard apartments



Table 4. Residential Uses by Residential District.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS	<u>LDR</u>	<u>MDR</u>	<u>HDR</u>
Cottage housing	P	P	
Designated manufactured home parks		P	
Designated manufactured homes	P	P	

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS	<u>LDR</u>	<u>MDR</u>	<u>HDR</u>
Duplexes	<u>P<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>P<sup>1</sup></u>	
Multifamily dwellings		P	P
Manufactured home parks			
Permanent supportive housing	P	P	P
Planned unit developments	P	P	P
Quadplexes	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	P
Senior housing facilities, assisted		C	C
Senior housing facilities, independent		P	P
Single-family detached dwellings	P		
Single-family detached dwellings existing prior to April 15, 2021		P <sup>2</sup>	
Stacked flats	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>
Townhouses and rowhouses	P	P	P
Transitional housing	P	P	P
Triplexes	<u>P</u>	P	P

Notes:

- Proposed amendments shown in red.
- Restrictions on the percentage of lots allowing duplexes in new subdivisions have been removed.

## 5) Dwelling Unit Density

The permitted dwelling unit density on all lots in the new Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), and High Density Residential (HDR) land use designations and zone districts will be two dwelling units per lot with four dwelling units allowed per lot if at least one dwelling unit on the lot is affordable housing that meets the requirements of TMC 18.42.160.

The dwelling unit density requirements would not apply to lots less than 1,000 square feet.

Because detached single-family residences are not a type of middle housing, Tumwater does not have to allow multiple detached single-family homes per lot.

## 6) Bulk and Dimensional Regulations

Rear yard setbacks would be reduced in the new Low Density Residential (LDR) zone district from twenty feet to five feet for middle housing dwellings, as is currently allowed for accessory dwelling units.

## 7) Citywide Design Review

The Citywide Design Guidelines will be updated to ensure that the requirements for middle housing dwellings are the same as single-family dwellings.



## **8) Accessory Dwelling Units**

Two accessory dwelling units will be allowed per residential lot, and the maximum area of an accessory dwelling unit will be increased from 800 to 1,000 square feet.

## **9) Affordable Housing Requirements**

To qualify for up to the four additional units under the middle housing development code updates affordable housing provisions, the required number of affordable housing dwelling units will be required to meet the following standards:

1. *Such dwelling units shall meet the definition affordable housing in TMC 18.04.010;*
2. *Such dwelling units shall be maintained as affordable housing in perpetuity;*
3. *A covenant or deed restriction shall be approved by the city and recorded by the property owner that ensures the rental or ownership of units subject to these affordability requirements will remain consistent with the conditions in chapter 84.14 RCW in perpetuity; and*
4. *Dwelling units dedicated as affordable housing shall:*
  - a. *Be provided in a range of sizes comparable to other units in the project;*
  - b. *Contain the same proportion of the number of bedrooms in affordable units as the other dwelling units within the project; and*
  - c. *Be distributed throughout the project.*

## **10) Off-Street Parking Requirements**

As required under state law, the off-street parking requirements for middle housing development codes will become:

*1.0 space per dwelling unit for lots no greater than 6,000 square feet and 2.0 spaces per dwelling unit for lots greater than 6,000 square feet (before any zero lot line subdivisions or lot splits).*

## **11) Cottage Housing Open Space**

As required under state law, the open space required for cottage housing will be:

- K. *Open space.*
  1. *Open space shall be provided equal to a minimum 20 percent of the lot size.*
  2. *Required open space may include common open space, private open space, setbacks, critical areas, and other open space.*
  3. *At least one outdoor common open space shall be provided.*

### **3 – Overview of the Public Engagement Process**

This **Public Engagement Results Report** summarizes engagement activities related to the development of Tumwater's Housing Element.

Public outreach and engagement were critical components of the Housing Element planning process. Tumwater presented its [Final Community Engagement Plan](#) for the [Tumwater 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update](#) in July 2023.

#### **B. Community Engagement Plan**

The Housing Element followed the Community Engagement Plan for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update, approved by the City Council on July 12, 2023, which outlined the process for community members to be involved in guiding policy decisions that will shape the future of Tumwater's housing.

The objective of the community engagement process established how Tumwater engaged with the community and stakeholders throughout the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. Staff utilized the IAP2 process to identify target audiences and stakeholders.

The community engagement process was flexible and changed to take advantage of events and opportunities that arose. The Community Engagement Plan utilizes identified tactics, strategies, and platforms to inform and consult the community and stakeholders in the periodic update. Staff worked with Tumwater's Communications Team on the final Plan that guided this process.

Middle housing is a major component of the Housing Element. Staff used the Community Engagement Plan to help guide discussions and plan development with the community regarding middle housing, affordable housing, and accessory dwelling units throughout the Comprehensive Plan update process.

#### **C. Goals for Housing Element & Middle Housing Engagement**

The Engagement Strategy is intended to provide as much opportunity to the Tumwater community to engage in the development of Housing goals and policies and middle housing development regulations as possible, while at the same time offering flexibility to Tumwater residents to provide input into other aspects of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Update as events and opportunities arise. Laid out here are vision and goals that are both specific to the housing element update process, as well as complementary to Tumwater's existing Community Engagement Plan.

The key goals of the Final Community Engagement Plan for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update extend to this Climate Element Engagement Strategy, which are to:

1. Provide information to enhance community understanding of issues.
2. Seek early and continuous involvement from people who care about the Comprehensive Plan and the community.

3. Offer opportunities for the community to provide feedback to staff and appointed and elected officials.
4. Develop an accessible, equitable, and engaging Plan.
5. Make community-driven planning the priority for the Plan.
6. Highlight projects implemented since the last Comprehensive Plan periodic update.
7. Use a flexible, phased approach.
8. Integrate and consolidate goals from all Elements of this Plan.
9. Develop a Plan that is in an easy to read and understandable format.
10. Rely on multiple communications strategies, tactics, and platforms to share information.

## **4 – Engagement Strategy**

### **A. Housing Stakeholders**

City of Tumwater issued invitations to stakeholders within and outside of Tumwater, aiming to capture a mix of representation from the following groups:

- **Government:** Local, regional, and Tribal.
- **Community** groups and organizations (e.g., local housing developers, real estate agents, Tumwater School Districts, non-profit and community-based organizations, charities, etc.).
- **Subject matter experts** from housing and social service providers, other jurisdictions, and consultants.
- **Affected populations** (e.g., Black and Indigenous communities of color, youth and elderly populations, low-income communities, workers, disabled and/or immunocompromised individuals, etc.).

### **B. Key Stakeholders and Community Groups**

**Which communities are most vulnerable and/or at risk of displacement?**

- Priority Audiences
  - Seniors
  - Families with Children
  - Individuals with disabilities or on fixed incomes
  - BIPOC
  - Other hard-to-reach populations



The Housing stakeholder workgroup was assembled starting with individual meetings with staff starting in April 2024 with many community members and service providers representing the above groups:

- Washington Homeowner Resource Center
- Olympia Master Builders
- Thurston County Food Bank
- Thurston Chamber of Commerce
- Thurston County Realtors
- Homes First
- Western Plaza
- Tumwater School District and Together!
- Thurston Housing Land Trust
- Individual Community Members
- Landlords
- Tenants
- South Sound Senior Services
- Land Trusts

The stakeholder workgroup was engaged continuously and substantively throughout the Housing Element and middle housing development code update planning process. For a complete list of stakeholders please refer to the Stakeholder Lists Folder. The workgroup provided feedback and advisory support with respect to the following issues and questions:

- **Community Needs:** What are the community's concerns and what are the barriers to accessing housing within the community? What could Tumwater be doing to help? What is the perception of affordable housing within Tumwater?
- **Public Engagement:** With whom and how should Tumwater engage with residents on the issues of housing? Who are the priority groups and individuals to engage? What are the appropriate times and venues for engagement?
- **Development Regulations and Process Obstacles:** Are permitting processing for building clear? What regulatory changes would make housing development more feasible to build?
- **Affordable Housing Funding Gaps:** What kinds of local funding or incentives have you found to be most effective in supporting project feasibility? What are your thoughts on Tumwater's Multifamily Tax Exemption program? Are there other factors that have made affordable projects more challenging from a design and construction perspective?

These following issues and topics are just a summary of questions and discussion items. For the full list of questions and feedback received, please see folders Spring and Fall 2024 Stakeholder Notes.

## C. Engagement Materials and Resources

A series of print and digital resources were developed to share with stakeholders, including the following:

- Housing Stakeholder meeting agendas, materials, sign in sheets, and guidance documents.
- Briefings and work sessions for the Tumwater Planning Commission, the General Government Committee, and City Council which included staff reports, PowerPoints, and other documents.
- FAQ sheets, handouts, QR codes, pamphlets created for tabling events.
- Comprehensive Plan Update website with resources, materials, public meetings, and links to virtual open houses.
- Summaries of comments collected and how they were addressed or incorporated into the Housing Element goals, policies, and actions.
- Public Engagement Results Report with data used to help guide future outreach efforts, demographics, and more.
- All materials can be found in the submittal folders associated with the specific events and the Public Engagement Results Folder.

## D. Community-wide Engagement for Draft Housing Element

The community-wide engagement process deployed various tools and strategies, including but not limited to:

- **Community-wide surveys** (digital or printed) focused on collecting general feedback on key priorities and interests.
- **Open houses and meetings** (in-person, virtual, and hybrid) designed to bring community members into shared spaces and guide participants through interactive visioning and strategizing processes.
- **Small-group workshops or community** dialogues with trusted community leaders and targeted communities for information sharing and gathering.
- **Pop-up events** that use existing community gatherings as venues for continued engagement on the Housing Element and Comprehensive Plan Update and gathering feedback on middle housing types.

- **Passive engagement**, including informational outreach through social media, mailings, and other media to keep community members updated and engaged throughout the Housing Element planning process.

This multi-faceted approach ensured that the Housing Element is driven as much by the community's priorities and interests as it is by state requirements and regional needs. Tumwater commits to a transparent, detailed, and thoroughly documented engagement process that strengthens community trust, creates shared ownership of the planning process, and establishes partnerships between and among groups that are mutual and lasting.

In addition, the diversity of tools and strategies listed provides multiple, accessible opportunities for stakeholders to engage, allowing stakeholders to be selective but also to have sufficient participation options about when they participate, preventing engagement fatigue and information overload.

All materials, notes, sign in sheets, and summaries of community engagement can be found in the event specific folders or in the "Public Engagement Results."

## D. Public Engagement Results Report

The report summarizes the methods and results of Tumwater's efforts to ensure community voices shaped local policies in the Housing Element and the middle housing development code updates. Following the model of other Comprehensive Plan elements, Tumwater collected public input in five primary ways between 2024 and 2025:

1. A **joint City Council and Planning Commission tour** that was open to the public. Members of the community joined the City Council, Planning Commission and staff in April 2024 on a tour around Tumwater and the surrounding areas identifying existing middle housing examples and how middle housing types can be incorporated into established neighborhoods.
2. The **Housing Stakeholder Workgroup** members provided feedback on each draft of the Housing Element and met with City staff to discuss housing issues, middle housing types, constructing accessory dwelling units, community needs, public services, and developing specific policy and implementation actions language, as well as review language recommended by Tumwater. The stakeholder workgroup was a core team of housing specialists such as developers, real estate agents, non-profits, a manufactured home community, the Tumwater School district, and social service providers.
3. An **in-person workshop**, held in November 2024, where stakeholders met in person and broke out into small groups and input was collected on housing goals via notes taken during breakout sessions, sticky notes left on posterboards, and group discussions. At the end of the workshop all groups gathered and discussed the feedback received by staff and collectively reviewed the goals highlighting key takeaways.
4. An **in person and virtual open house**, which featured an in person event and an online Story Map. At the in-person open house there was a table exercise that modelled different types of middle housing using figures on a neighborhood map within Tumwater,

boards explaining middle housing and its importance, and housing through life stages. The boards were incorporated into the online Virtual Open House.

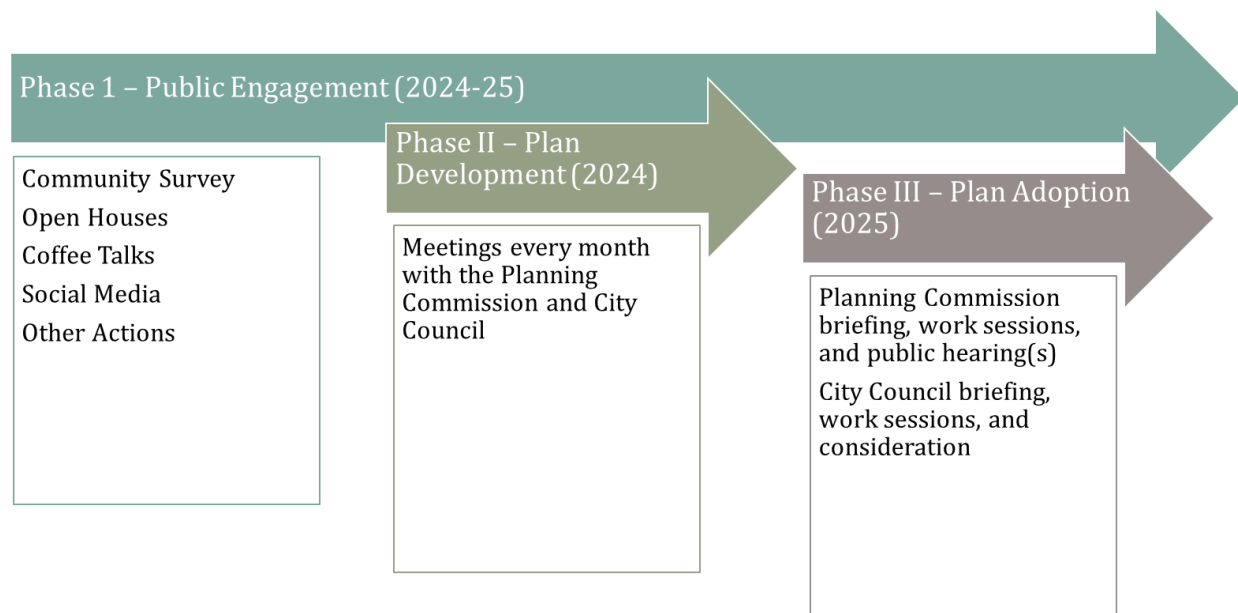
5. A **public comment period**, which occurred June through July 2025, allowed community members to share formal feedback on the draft Housing Element before its final form is included in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update ordinance.

## E. Engagement Themes & Topics

Themes	Topics and Priorities
<b>Introduction/Background</b>	Describe the Comprehensive Plan Update and how the Housing Element was established, the need for affordable housing, what affordable means, the importance of middle housing, and explain requirements of HB 1110 and EHB 1337. Introduce Middle Housing and start identifying established middle housing throughout Tumwater.
<b>Listening/Gather Feedback</b>	Meet with stakeholders, ask questions, and listen to their experiences and needs regarding housing.
<b>Data/Gap Analysis</b>	Utilizing data from Commerce, Thurston Regional Planning Council gather and share data regarding how much housing is needed, at what AMI threshold, and the housing types that would support those income limits. Gather feedback on preferred middle housing types through surveys and in person visual preference boards
<b>Equity and Displacement</b>	Work regionally with a consultant to identify types of displacement and at risk communities, review housing action plans, comprehensive plans, and regulations that might have racially disparate impacts or cause displacement. Post surveys and hold meetings with stakeholder groups regionally to identify actions to address equity, racially disparate impacts, and displacement.
<b>Policies</b>	Share and review draft goals, policies, and implementation actions with stakeholders and community. Ensure feedback from previous engagement was incorporated and talk next steps.
<b>Implementation</b>	Post draft Housing Element for public review and comment, and draft development code and design review updates.

## 1) Engagement Phases and Schedule

The Engagement Process primarily took place between March 2024 through July 2025. The table below outlines the phases, activities, and schedule by which Tumwater conducted its engagement process for the Housing Element and middle housing development code updates



Events	Date
<b>Community Survey</b>	February 2024
<b>Stakeholder Engagement/Email</b>	April 2024
<b>Stakeholder meetings</b>	April – May 2024
<b>Tabling at the Tumwater Regional Library</b>	May 17, 2024
<b>Housing Open House In-Person and Virtual</b>	May 29, 2024, in person event and virtual open house launch date – Fall of 2024
<b>Tabling Event at the Juneteenth Event, Lacey, WA; Juneteenth is hosted by the Fred U Harris Masonic Lodge in collaboration with the cities of Tumwater and Lacey</b>	June 15, 2024
<b>Stakeholder engagement round 2, in person on draft goals and policies</b>	November 6, 2024: Affordable Housing Conversations
<b>Meeting with Western Plaza for Round 2 of stakeholder engagement</b>	November 1, 2024
<b>Displacement Community Outreach in person meetings</b>	November – December 2024
<b>Video Ask Online Survey for Displacement</b>	December 2024 – January 2025

Events	Date
<b>Public Comment Period on Draft Housing Element Part 1 Goals, Policies, and Actions Items and Part 2- Technical Information</b>	June 4, 2025 – July 11, 2025

## 2) Engagement Metrics and Evaluation

In February of 2024 City staff posted a survey related to the Comprehensive Plan. The full survey and 975 responses show that many respondents selected “support the development affordable housing” as a strategy that Tumwater should pursue. However, this option was one of 9 choices, and responses were not ranked by priority or importance. In May of 2024 City Staff released a Housing survey specific to housing, affordable housing, and middle housing. The following metrics are being considered as potential measurements to record for the Public Engagement Results Report.

The community and housing survey results can be found in the Comprehensive Plan Update and Housing Surveys folder.

### Participation Metrics:

- Feedback on process and Housing Element draft: Number of comments.
- Event Attendance: Number of attendees at meetings, stakeholder workgroups, and various community events.
- Stakeholder Participation: Engagement levels of stakeholders, considering overall contribution, committee involvement, and quality of work.

### Engagement Quality Metrics:

- Feedback Quality: Evaluation of feedback from surveys, meetings, and other networks.
- Community Sentiment: Changes in community sentiment measured through surveys, meetings, and social media monitoring.
- Diversity and Inclusion: Representation of different community groups in engagement activities.

### Outcome Metrics:

- Implementation of Initiatives: Number of initiatives incorporated into the Element directly from community-based ideas.
- Online Activity: Measuring whether user interest and activity on Tumwater’s website have increased due to heightened engagement from the project.

**Although the Public Engagement Results Report will not be able to track long-term success, some indicator of future persistence of engagement include:**

- Long-Term Engagement: Continuity and frequency of engagement activities over time.
- Resource Allocation: Effectiveness of resource usage for engagement activities.

- Partnership Strength: Longevity and effectiveness of partnerships formed. The housing stakeholder workgroup asked to have continuous and ongoing meetings after the comprehensive plan to meet and discuss housing related work in Tumwater.

### **3) City of Tumwater Contact**

The periodic update email [compplan@ci.tumwater.wa.us](mailto:compplan@ci.tumwater.wa.us) was used for project communications. All documents related to the periodic update are located on Tumwater's periodic update webpage: [Comprehensive Plan Updates](#).

## **5 – Public Comment Period**

### **A. Overview**

Tumwater posted drafts of the Housing Elements Goals and Policies and middle housing discussion materials on its website for public comment. Tumwater's online posting provided the opportunity for all community members and those who spend time in Tumwater to review the draft and share formal feedback for Tumwater to further improve the document. Community members shared feedback in person, over the phone, and emailing the Comprehensive Plan team.

### **B. Summary of Responses**

Summaries of public comments can be found in the Public Engagement Results and Materials folder. The comments and feedback received on housing goals and policies for Tumwater were incorporated into the Housing Element Goals, Policies, and Action Items. To see where and how the feedback was incorporated in an early draft version of the goals, policies, and actions labeled "20250129 Housing Element- Part 1 Goals and Policies - Public engagement input" was provided as Attachment C.