

HOUSING ACTION PLAN

Executive Summary

What is a Housing Action Plan?

Lynnwood's housing market demonstrates three major themes:

1. Lynnwood is experiencing unprecedented growth;
2. A significant number (37%) of Lynnwood households are cost-burdened; and
3. A majority of pipeline housing projects will not offer ownership opportunities.

To comprehensively address housing affordability, the City of Lynnwood applied for and received a \$100,000 grant from the Department of Commerce (under ES2HB 1923) to develop a Housing Action Plan.

The Housing Action Plan will utilize an equity lens to develop clear, actionable strategies that meet the current and projected housing needs of the City of Lynnwood. State law requires that the Housing Action Plan identify strategies to encourage construction of additional affordable and market rate housing in a greater variety of housing types and at prices that are accessible to a greater variety of incomes.

Why does Lynnwood need a Housing Action Plan?

Housing affordability is a high priority for residents and elected officials. While several housing policies and programs are occurring in the City of Lynnwood, there is no overall housing strategy. These policies miss opportunities to better complement each other and leverage resources to increase benefits. The Housing Action Plan will maximize existing policies, create strategies to fill gaps, and present a unified housing vision.

A robust Housing Action Plan with effective and achievable policy recommendations will enable City leadership to best target scarce resources. The creation of the Housing Action Plan allows Lynnwood to thoroughly review policy options, provide recommendations, and implement a pathway City leadership can have high confidence in.

Housing Action Plan strategies will be used to inform and further develop the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan, which is required by state law to be revised by 2024. A Comprehensive Plan informed by a Housing Action Plan will result in a more cohesive and effective planning effort.

How will the Housing Action Plan work with existing housing efforts?

The Housing Action Plan builds on several existing housing efforts. In July 2019, City staff developed a white paper titled "Housing in Lynnwood: A Review of Housing Trends, Conditions, and Programs." The paper was presented to City Council for review and discussion. The need for an organized housing strategy was identified through this process.

In December 2019, City Council adopted a resolution of intent to adopt legislation to authorize a sale and use tax for affordable and supportive housing (HB 1406). HB 1406 is not a new tax. Rather, it allows cities and counties to receive a portion of the State's share of sale and use tax (sales tax) revenue. The Housing Action Plan will provide strategy and guidance on how to best utilize the HB 1406 funds.

Mayor Nicola Smith co-chaired the Snohomish County Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce (HART). On February 5, 2020, HART released a five-year Report and Action Plan for jurisdictions to collaboratively and proactively address housing affordability needs throughout Snohomish County. The Housing Action Plan will evaluate the City's current progress and future ability to further implement HART strategies. Community Development staff will also continue to coordinate and share lessons learned with neighboring jurisdictions and housing groups, such as the Alliance for Housing Affordability (AHA).

The Housing Action Plan will build on existing efforts to reduce duplication of work. City staff are evaluating work by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), housing organizations, and other jurisdictions. The Housing Action Plan will identify for Council's consideration the strategies and solutions specific to Lynnwood's resources and needs.

When will the Housing Action Plan be complete?

Commerce requires the Housing Action Plan be adopted in early 2021. The timeline below identifies major project milestones and their estimated completion. The final plan will detail next steps for implementation so the Housing Action Plan's goals may be fully realized.



How can I learn more?

The Community Development Department is the project lead for the Housing Action Plan. To learn more, reach out to the project managers listed below.

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