



REGIONAL
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
TASK FORCE

Summary of Final Report and Recommendations for King County, WA



December 2018

FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Task Force recommended a Five-Year Action Plan as a way to spur the region into action quickly. The Action Plan includes seven goals and each goal has a number of strategies to achieve the goal. The Action Plan also identifies specific actions that can be taken in the near term to implement the strategies. While encouraging quick action, the Plan also establishes the structure for ongoing collaboration to carry the work forward past the five-year action plan.

The region should adopt strategies to ensure an adequate housing supply countywide to meet the needs of low-income individuals and families who are cost-burdened. This includes constructing new housing, preserving the quality and affordability of existing housing, and providing subsidies when needed. Public resources should be prioritized for serving households earning 50 percent AMI and below, while also leveraging private investments to support affordability from 50 percent to 80 percent AMI. However, private market participation alone will be insufficient to address the full need at 80 percent AMI and below.¹ These recommendations are not mandates. They are not intended to place limits on local actions or override local control.



¹ With significant public support (reduced land costs and fees and significant density), some markets may be able to incorporate lower affordability into private market developments.



OVERARCHING GOAL:

Strive to eliminate cost burden for households earning 80 percent Area Median Income and below, with a priority for serving households at or below 50 percent Area Median Income.



Create and support an ongoing structure for regional collaboration

STRATEGY A: Create an Affordable Housing Committee of the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC)	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Maintain a website and prepare an annual report to collect data and report on progress toward implementing the Action Plan			✓	
ii. Review and make recommendations to other governing bodies regarding funding/pursuing new and innovative financing strategies, land use policies and State legislative agenda items			✓	
iii. Make recommendations to the GMPC for Countywide Planning Policies updates and to the PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board			✓	
iv. Coordinate support for increased federal funding			✓	
v. Provide technical support to cities and the County and support new and existing sub-regional collaborations			✓	
vi. Review and evaluate the Committee and recommend alternative governance structures if needed to implement the Action Plan			✓	
STRATEGY B: Support the creation and operation of sub-regional collaborations to increase and preserve affordable housing				
i. Support the creation of sub-regional collaborations in all parts of King County	✓	✓	✓	
ii. Fund operations of sub-regional collaborations	✓	✓		
iii. Encourage the growth and success of existing sub-regional collaborations	✓	✓	✓	



Increase construction and preservation of affordable homes for households earning less than 50% area median income



STRATEGY A: The Affordable Housing Committee will work with cities and the County to identify and prioritize new resources to build or preserve 44,000 units in the next five years and track progress toward the goal	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Identify revenue sources sufficient to support the local share of funding 44,000 units over five years	✓	✓	✓	
ii. Collectively advocate to maintain and increase Federal resources directed toward affordable housing in King County	✓	✓	✓	
iii. Collectively advocate for increased State resources to support affordable housing in King County	✓	✓	✓	✓
iv. Explore unused authority to raise revenue to support the goal of building or preserving 44,000 units over five years	✓	✓	✓	
v. Work with business and philanthropy to increase and effectively leverage private investments in affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	
vi. Pursue strategies to reduce the cost of developing affordable units	✓	✓		
vii. Monitor County and city progress toward raising funds necessary to produce 44,000 units in the next five years			✓	
STRATEGY B: Make available at no cost, at deep discount, or for long term lease, under-utilized property from State, County, cities, and non-profit/faith communities				
i. Expand coordination to identify, acquire and develop property for affordable housing	✓	✓		✓
ii. Track and report progress on REDI fund and Home & Hope			✓	
iii. Identify one or more parcels in their boundaries to prioritize for affordable housing (for-profit or non-profit, new or preserved)	✓	✓		
iv. Develop policies for the sale of County-owned property at reduced or no cost when used for affordable housing, which may be used as a model ordinance by cities	✓			
STRATEGY C: Develop a short-term acquisition loan fund to enable rapid response to preserve affordable housing developments when they are put on the market for sale				
i. Identify entity to inventory all large (50+ unit) privately owned affordable multifamily properties at risk of redevelopment or rapid rent escalation	✓	✓	✓	
ii. Measure and monitor progress in preserving privately owned affordable housing through nonprofit or public housing authority acquisition, or other means			✓	



Prioritize affordability accessible within a half mile walkshed of existing and planned frequent transit service, with a particular priority for high-capacity transit stations

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STRATEGY A: Implement comprehensive inclusionary/incentive housing policies in all existing and planned frequent transit service to achieve the deepest affordability possible through land use incentives to be identified by local jurisdictions	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Provide technical assistance in designing inclusionary/incentive housing programs	✓		✓	
ii. Provide website of example ordinances	✓		✓	
iii. Propose and apply for state planning dollars	✓	✓		✓
iv. Evaluate and update zoning in transit areas in advance of transit infrastructure investments	✓	✓		
v. Evaluate the impact of development fees in transit areas and implement reductions if positive impact found	✓	✓		
vi. Regularly measure implementation against goal	✓		✓	
vii. Coordinate with local housing authorities to use project-based rental subsidies with incentive/inclusionary housing units to achieve deeper affordability	✓	✓		
STRATEGY B: Maximize resources available for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the near term				
i. Consider bonding against future Lodging Tax revenues for TOD and use a portion of the funds to incentivize cities to support more affordable housing	✓			
ii. Evaluate potential for the current Transfer of Development Rights program, which preserves rural and resource lands, to incentivize affordability outcomes if a receiving site is within a transit walkshed, among other places	✓			
STRATEGY C: Create and implement regional land acquisition and development strategy				
i. Identify priority “pipeline” of property for acquisition and development	✓	✓		
ii. Adopt and implement property value discount legislation/guidance as needed, including updated valuation guidance	✓			
iii. Fund land acquisition, aligned with Goal 2, Strategy B	✓	✓		✓
iii. Adopt increased zoning to maximize affordable housing on acquired parcels	✓	✓		
iv. Identify entity to purchase and hold land prior to construction	✓	✓	✓	
v. Fund capital construction and preservation	✓	✓		✓



Preserve access to affordable homes for renters by supporting tenant protections to increase housing stability and reduce risk of homelessness

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STRATEGY A: Propose and support legislation and statewide policies related to tenant protection to ease implementation and provide consistency for landlords	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Support the development and adoption of statewide legislation and policy related to tenant protections	✓	✓	✓	✓
ii. Review proposed statewide policies and legislation	✓		✓	
iii. Develop tools landlords can use to help low-income renters, such as a fund landlords can access to make repairs so costs are not passed on to low-income renters	✓		✓	
STRATEGY B: Strive to more widely adopt model, expanded tenant protection ordinances countywide and provide implementation support				
i. Provide model ordinances	✓	✓	✓	
ii. Pursue a signed ILA for enforcement support	✓	✓	✓	
iii. Identify resources to conduct work	✓		✓	
iv. Increase education for tenants and property owners regarding their respective rights and responsibilities	✓		✓	
v. Adopt ordinances as appropriate	✓	✓		
STRATEGY C: Expand supports for low-income renters and people with disabilities				
i. Utilize funds from the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy for shallow rent subsidies to help keep people in their homes	✓			
ii. Increase funding for emergency rental assistance	✓	✓		
iii. Increase deep rental subsidies (in addition to shallow)	✓	✓		
iv. Fund services to address barriers to housing	✓	✓		
v. Expand civil legal aid support	✓	✓		
vi. Expand education of tenant and property owner rights and responsibilities	✓	✓		
vii. Increase funding for services that help people with disabilities stay in their homes and/or age in place	✓	✓		

Strategy D: Adopt programs and policies to improve the quality of housing in conjunction with necessary tenant protections

i. Adopt and implement proactive rental inspection policies	✓	✓		
ii. Implement robust, proactive code enforcement programs, in partnership with marginalized communities to avoid inequitable impacts	✓	✓		
iii. Invest in community health workers to promote healthy housing education and housing maintenance for highest risk of adverse health outcomes	✓	✓		
iv. Partner with Aging & Disability organizations to integrate accessibility services	✓	✓		



Protect existing communities of color and low-income communities from displacement in gentrifying communities.

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STRATEGY A: Authentically engage communities of color and low-income communities in affordable housing development and policy decisions

	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Provide capacity grants to small organizations representing communities of color or low-income communities to support their engagement in affordable housing development	✓			
ii. Contract for a toolkit/checklist on community engagement in planning discussions	✓			
iii. Utilize the toolkit and intentionally include and solicit engagement from members of communities of color or low-income households in policy decision-making and committees	✓	✓		

STRATEGY B: Increase investments in communities of color and low-income communities by developing programs and policies that serve individuals and families at risk of displacement

i. Use Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative as a model for how government can invest in under-represented communities to promote community-driven development	✓	✓		
ii. Build upon the work of the Communities of Opportunity initiative	✓	✓		
iii. Include cities, investors, and community-based organizations in development of certification process and matching dollars for socially responsible, equitable Opportunity Zone investments that prevent displacement	✓	✓	✓	
iv. Expand requirements to affirmatively market housing programs and enhance work to align affordable housing strategies with federal requirements to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing	✓	✓		
v. Encourage homeownership opportunities as a way to prevent displacement within communities of color while also promoting the growth of intergenerational wealth	✓	✓		
vi. Where appropriate, acquire and preserve manufactured housing communities to prevent displacement	✓	✓		



Promote greater housing growth and diversity to achieve a variety of housing types at a range of affordability and improve jobs/housing connections throughout King County

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STRATEGY A: Update zoning and land use regulations (including in single-family low-rise zones) to increase and diversify housing choices	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Provide model ordinances	✓		✓	
ii. Incentivize cities adopting and implementing strategies that will result in the highest impact towards addressing the affordable housing gap, specifically at the lowest income levels	✓			
iii. Review and update zoning and land use code to increase density	✓	✓		
iv. Explore opportunities to pilot innovative housing in industrial zones, with a focus on TOD and industrial buffer zones	✓	✓		
v. Update building codes to promote more housing growth and innovative, low-cost development	✓	✓		
vi. As part of any updated zoning, to evaluate feasibility of incorporating affordable housing provisions	✓	✓		
vii. Promote units that accommodate large households and/or multiple bedrooms	✓	✓		
STRATEGY B: Decrease costs to build and operate housing affordable to low-income households				
i. Maximize and expand use of Multi-Family Tax Exemption	✓	✓		
ii. Reduce sewer fees for affordable housing	✓			
iii. Reduce utility, impact and other fees for affordable housing and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)		✓		
iv. Streamline permitting process for affordable housing development and ADUs	✓	✓		
v. Support condominium liability reform	✓	✓	✓	
vi. Exempt affordable housing from sales tax				✓
vii. Explore incentives similar to the Multi-Family Tax Exemption for the development of ADUs for low-income households	✓		✓	

(Continued on next page).

STRATEGY C: Incentivize growth and affordability goals by expanding tools for investments in local infrastructure

i. Advocate for a strong, equitable financing tool that captures value from development to fund infrastructure and affordable housing investments (aka: value-capture or tax-increment financing tools)	✓	✓		✓
ii. Advocate for state public works trust fund investments	✓	✓		✓
STRATEGY D: Expand and preserve homeownership opportunities for low-income households				
i. Increase educational efforts to ensure maximum use of property tax relief programs to help sustain homeownership for low-income individuals	✓	✓		
ii. Support alternative homeownership models that lower barriers to ownership and provide long-term affordability	✓	✓		
iii. Expand targeted foreclosure prevention	✓	✓		
iv. Where appropriate, preserve existing manufactured housing communities through use-specific zoning or transfer of development rights	✓	✓		
v. Encourage programs to help homeowners (esp. low-income) access financing, technical support or other tools needed to participate in and benefit from infill development opportunities	✓	✓		



Better engage local communities and other partners in addressing the urgent need for and benefits of affordable housing

STRATEGY A: Support engagement of local communities and residents in planning efforts to achieve more affordable housing

	County	Cities	Housing Committee	State
i. Develop toolkits and strategies to better engage neighborhoods and residents in affordable housing development	✓		✓	
ii. Use existing data and tools to greatest extent possible, i.e. PSRC Vision 2050 work	✓		✓	
iii. Use community engagement techniques that promote more equitable community engagement in zoning and siting decisions	✓	✓		

STRATEGY B: Expand engagement of non-governmental partners (philanthropy, employers, investors, private developers and faith communities) to support efforts to build and site more affordable housing

i. Create stakeholder partnerships with business, philanthropy, non-profits, faith-based organizations, the health care sector, and others to encourage investments in affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	
ii. Encourage business, organized labor, and philanthropy to support public dialogue on affordable housing	✓	✓	✓	