Developing a 5-Year Affordable Housing Action Plan: adopted goals and sample strategies under consideration

September 2019

**Purpose of the HART 5-Year Affordable Housing Action Plan:**
Accelerate the ability of Cities and the County to help meet the affordable housing needs of all County residents and set a foundation for continued success through 2050.

**Supporting Goals:**
1. Promote greater housing growth and diversity of housing types at all levels of affordability and improve jobs/housing connections.

**HART Sample strategies:**
- Provide surplus public land for affordable housing
- Update zoning and land use regulations to increase and diversify housing choices
- Provide incentives/zoning to locate affordable housing units in proximity to transit and other services
- Allow increased building heights in exchange for production of affordable housing
- Increase incentives for density

**Policy & Regulatory Work Group priorities:**
- Increase residential density to support development of housing for all income levels
- Require or incentivize market rate developers to produce housing for lower income levels
- Reduce construction costs for housing for households at 50% AMI or below

2. Identify and act on strategies to preserve existing affordable housing, acknowledging that the need for increased density may create tension with this goal in some instances.

**HART Sample strategies:**
- Protect low income communities from displacement by taking steps to identify and preserve affordable housing at risk of redevelopment

**Policy & Regulatory Work Group priorities:**
- Establish strong anti-displacement strategies for communities of color and low-income households

3. Take steps to increase density of housing on transit corridors and in job centers, while acknowledging that additional housing is needed across the entire County.

**HART Sample strategies:**
- Prioritize affordability within a half-mile walkshed of existing and planned frequent transit services, especially high-capacity transit stations
- Increase zoning density along transit corridors
- Increase SEPA categorical exemptions for multi-family projects near transit

**Policy & Regulatory Work Group priorities:**
- Increase residential density to support development of housing for all income levels

**Funding Strategies under discussion to achieve goals 1-3:**

**HART Sample strategies:**
- Implement HB 1406 (Laws of 2019)—capture portion of state sales tax for affordable housing. (Could generate up to $2.3 million per year for 20 years)
- Encourage cities to apply for state planning grants of up to $100,000 to develop residential housing capacity plans (HB 1923, Laws of 2019)
- Encourage banking and insurance industry support for condominium projects as a homeownership solution
- Maximize resources available for Transit Oriented Development

**Funding Work Group priorities:**
- Countywide housing levy
- Make available at low cost or deep discount, under-utilized public, nonprofit and faith community real property suitable for affordable housing.
- Create a housing growth fund for affordable housing through set aside of a portion of new construction property tax revenue

4. Develop and implement outreach and education programs, for use countywide and by individual cities, to raise awareness of affordable housing challenges and support for action.

**HART Sample strategies:**
- Create a toolkit of engagement strategies for use by jurisdictions
- Authentically engage communities of color and low-income communities in affordable housing development and policy decisions

These strategies are also priorities for the **Outreach & Community Engagement Work Group.**

5. Identify an ongoing means of tracking our progress and supporting ongoing regional collaboration. – TBD –

**Policy & Regulatory Work Group priorities:**
- Lay the groundwork for continued progress toward housing goals through jurisdictional collaboration.

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The Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce (HART) has not made any final recommendations. This document provides a sample of some of the strategies now under consideration by HART and some of the priorities presented to HART by three stakeholder workgroups.