

Sample of how the 5-year housing action plan could be framed/presented in the report.

Five-Year Housing Affordability Action Plan

This document sets forth HART’s recommendations to all Snohomish County Cities and Snohomish County government for responding to the housing affordability challenges we face. This action plan was developed over the course of 2019 with the participation of elected officials from xx cities and Snohomish County government, and dozens of stakeholders.

The Action Plan is based on five framework goals; three that focus on increasing housing affordability, and two goals that focus on how we will work together.



“**Early Action Items**” that our members will begin working on in early 2020 are presented first, followed by the **Framework Goals** with supporting **strategies** for each Goal. The strategies are divided into two types: **policy and regulatory strategies**, and **funding strategies**.

“**Joint Action Items**” – those that we recommend involve a countywide unified strategy/action, or alignment of individual jurisdiction action—are indicated as follows.

⇒⇒**Unified** indicates actions that we recommend be pursued in a unified, countywide approach

⇒⇒**Aligned** indicates actions we see as best pursued by individual jurisdictions but with alignment in our approach.

Early Action Items



(contents drafted in advance of meeting 7 – all subject to change)

1. Develop a toolkit for use by local jurisdictions to engage communities around the issue of affordable housing

- *Effective education and outreach is critical to build understanding and support for the strategies we identify in this plan to increase housing affordability.*
- **2020 Leadership:** Cities of ___ and _____ .

2. Implement SHB 1406: state sales tax shift to local governments for up to 20 years to fund affordable housing

- *2019 state legislation provides an opportunity to acquire state funds for affordable housing.*
- **2020 Leadership:** All cities and the County are currently engaged in applying for these funds and determining how to expend them.

3. Engage private sector stakeholders – large employers, others – in helping to finding solutions to our housing affordability challenge

- *Employers have a stake in housing affordability. The private sector is a key partner in the effort to improve housing affordability.*
- **2020 Leadership:** Mayor [___] and County Councilmember [_____]

Etc.....

5-Year Housing Affordability Action Plan Framework Goals and Supporting Strategies

Goal 1: Promote greater housing growth and diversity of housing types at all levels of affordability and improve jobs/housing

Sub-goal A: Actions to increase density, accelerate production of a variety of housing types at all price levels

Supporting Strategies:

Policy and Regulatory Strategies

- 1.A.1 Establish specific affordable housing goals (targets) in city and county comprehensive plans and provide more accurate information into the development of those plans
⇒⇒Unified
- *The County and cities will be working on updates to existing comprehensive plans to be completed by 2023.*
- 1.A.2 Ensure adequate Buildable Land Supply ⇒⇒Unified
- *The state Growth Management Act requires the County and cities periodically assess the adequacy of buildable land supply based on population and zoning.*
- 1.A.3 Increase SEPA¹ categorical exemption threshold for larger multi-family developments
- *This action item can reduce the process time and cost for developers.*
- 1.A.4 Increase SEPA categorical exemption thresholds for all types of housing development
- *This action item can reduce the processing time and cost for developers.*
- 1.A.5 Facilitate more efficient deal assembly and development timelines / promote cost-effectiveness through consolidation, coordination and simplification
- *A wide array of tactics could be deployed to make the permitting process somewhat quicker and easier for developers.*
- 1.A.6 Remove barriers to reducing construction costs and delays and expedite the permit process

¹ State Environmental Policy Act

- *A major role for cities and the county in the development of affordable housing is in the regulatory arena as the local land-use authority controlling the permit processes.*
- 1.A.7 Increase housing variety allowed at a range of affordability levels, in single family zones: zoning for duplex, triplex, 4-plex, courtyard apartments, etc.
- *When local zoning allows a greater variety of housing types, it makes it possible to create both more units per acre—facilitating increased supply of housing-- as well as less expensive units.*
- 1.A.8 Increase housing variety allowed at a range of affordability levels, with connections to jobs: zoning for duplex, triplex, 4-plex, courtyard apartments, etc.
- *Facilitating more housing close to jobs – either physically, or via transit access—will also reduce pressure on the transportation system as our population grows.*

Funding Strategies

- 1.A.10 Apply for state planning grants to develop housing elements of local comp plans in connection with increasing density. Apply alone or with other cities ⇨⇨Aligned
- *The state legislature in 2019 authorizes new funds for planning grants which may be helpful as jurisdictions look to update local plans in response to the affordable housing challenge.*
- 1.A.11 Implement Multi-Family Property Tax Exemption programs at local, county level ²
- *The Multi-Family Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) program has been in place in Washington for decades, and is available to all cities as well as the County (due to recent population growth). It provides a time-limited exemption from local property tax for developers as an incentive to build multi-family housing; depending on the time period involved, the deferral can be targeted to housing affordable to lower income housing, or to all multi-family housing.*

² This strategy can be targeted to support housing at all income levels, or just lower income housing; see funding strategy 1.B.____.