



Planning Commission

Housing Action Plan Briefing

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Title

Housing Action Plan Briefing

Recommended Action

Receive a briefing on the Housing Action Plan. Briefing only; No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing on the Housing Action Plan. Olympia's Housing Action Plan will define strategies and actions that promote more housing, more diverse housing types and affordability.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Strategic Projects Manager

Background and Analysis:

In 2019, the Washington state legislature made grant funds available to cities to develop housing action plans that promote more housing, more diverse housing types and affordability. In recognition of our shared housing market and the cross-jurisdictional need for affordable housing, the Cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater jointly applied for and received funds to collaborate on this effort.

With help from TRPC, the cities have now completed several deliverables that provide necessary background information and identify strategies and potential actions the cities can take, including:

- A housing needs assessment, including a 25-year projection of housing affordable at different income levels
- A landlord survey, to better understand what residents are paying for rent and how rents are changing
- A draft regional housing action plan (menu of actions) cities can take to ensure housing stock adequate and affordable for current and future residents

Each of these documents can be found at the attached link to TRPC's project website.

The Draft Regional Plan will not be adopted. Rather, beginning at this time each city will conduct their own public review process to determine which actions they will take. Each city will adopt their own housing action plan by June of 2021, in order to meet the requirements of the grant which funds this work.

At the meeting, staff will provide:

- A quick overview of the project and key findings from the Housing Needs Assessment
- Overview of six strategic focus areas identified in the draft regional housing action plan, including why these are important and how they address housing affordability and equity
- Next steps in the public process
- Discussion

Attached is a quick list of the actions identified in the regional report along with their current status in Olympia. Some initial action recommendations are made (many of which are already underway or fairly simple) while others are noted for further consideration (usually the more complex or costly actions). While Olympia has already implemented many important actions, with this effort we are only just beginning the process of identifying which additional actions are right for Olympia. The early recommendations on the list are subject to change as we learn more and hear from the public and stakeholders.

Next Steps - Public Process

The public engagement timeline is attached. At the end of February, the City will release a storymap and survey on Engage Olympia. The storymap will provide an overview of the housing needs assessment, strategies identified for meeting our housing needs and how new housing fits into the Olympia's Comprehensive Plan vision.

On March 31st the City will host an online Housing Action Plan Open House from 5:00-6:30 pm. Participants must register in advance (see attached registration link.) The event will include an overview of the strategies and specific actions under consideration, followed by time for questions. There will be a public comment period in April to gather feedback on the actions to inform the final housing action plan.

Olympia's Housing Action Plan will be adopted in June of 2021. Public engagement and implementation of housing actions will be ongoing. A public process to update the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan will kick off later in 2021, with adoption in 2022.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Housing affordability and development are major issues of importance to the community. The recently developed homeless response plan identified building more housing of all types for all incomes as a key priority moving forward.

Options:

Briefing only.

Financial Impact:

The Washington State Department of Commerce awarded Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater grants totaling \$300,000 for development of housing action plans. Under an interlocal agreement, \$150,000 will be directed to the Thurston Regional Planning Council for supportive tasks. Olympia will use its remaining \$50,000 to support staff work on the effort.

Attachments:

Link to TRPC project website and reports
Action Status List for Olympia
Link to March 31 Open House Registration
Process Timeline