



## Planning Commission

### Briefing on Olympia Housing Action Plan

**Agenda Date:** 5/3/2021  
**Agenda Item Number:** 6.B  
**File Number:**21-0423

---

**Type:** report **Version:** 2 **Status:** Filed

---

#### **Title**

Briefing on Olympia Housing Action Plan

#### **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, affordability and stability.

#### **Staff Contact:**

Amy Buckler, Strategic Projects Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.280.8947

#### **Presenter(s):**

Amy Buckler, Strategic Projects Manager

#### **Background and Analysis:**

Last February, the Planning Commission heard a briefing on the Housing Action Plan project, and in particular findings from the Housing Needs Assessment. In preparation for the May 17 public hearing, this briefing will focus on the recommended strategies and actions for meeting local housing needs.

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 completed several deliverables that provide necessary background information and identify strategies and potential actions the cities can take. These are available on the attached Engage Olympia page and include:

- 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.

At this time each city is conducting their own public review process to determine which actions to include as they adapt the regional draft into city-specific housing action plans. 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.

A draft of the Olympia-specific housing action plan will be included in the staff report for the Planning Commission's May 17 public hearing, and available on the Engage Olympia site no later than May 7. The key difference between the regional draft and the Olympia specific draft are the details about how the specific actions identified are currently addressed in Olympia and which are recommended for further consideration moving forward. Otherwise, the body of the report and the strategies are essentially the same.

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). The recommendations on the list are subject to change as we learn more and hear from the public and stakeholders.

### **Next Steps - Public Process**

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Olympia's Housing Action Plan on May 17. Chair Millar will attend the May 27 Land Use Committee meeting to provide a report out. Also, with help from staff, the Commission will write a letter to the City Council summarizing what was heard at the public hearing. The Commission is not asked to make a formal recommendation on the plan.

- May 3 - OPC Briefing
- May 17 - OPC Public Hearing
- May 27- Land Use Committee Briefing
- June 7 - OPC to complete comment letter
- June 17 - Land Use Committee Briefing
- June 22 - City Council Adoption

Following adoption of the Housing Action Plan, public engagement and implementation of housing actions will be ongoing. The City will also hold a public process to update the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan between 2022-2025.

### **Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

A report from the housing survey posted at Engage Olympia in March is attached.

Housing affordability and development are major issues of importance to the community. Olympia's recently developed One Community (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:**

Action list

Regional draft

Survey report

[Link to Engage Olympia page](#)

[Link to Housing Storymap](#)