



City Council

Briefing on Regional Housing Needs

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Title

Briefing on Regional Housing Needs

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing from local affordable housing advocates and representatives of nonprofit groups about the current state of affordable housing in Thurston County.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing about housing affordability.

Staff Contact:

Steve Hall, City Manager 753.8447
Keith Stahley, Director, CP&D 753.8227

Presenter(s):

Housing Panel:
Paul Knox, United Way
Phil Owen, Sidewalk
Chris Lowell, Housing Authority of Thurston County
Schelli Slaughter, Family Support Center
TJ LaRocque, Providence St. Peter's Hospital

Background and Analysis:

At the City Council's annual retreat in January, some Councilmembers members that they had not received information from the local group about the housing affordability data, priorities and strategies. Consequently, the Council asked that the group be invited to a City Council study session as soon as possible to provide a briefing.

Housing affordability is a growing concern in Olympia, neighboring communities and Thurston County. According to local housing providers and others, large numbers of households throughout

Thurston County are rent burdened and many are struggling to afford decent housing. In addition, housing and services to support the most vulnerable populations of children, the elderly and the homeless are insufficient to meet needs.

Thurston County is in the process of completing a 10 year Plan to address Homelessness. The document can be used as a guide for prioritizing federal, state, county and other local dollars that can be invested in housing and related services. That report is now due to be completed and adopted by the County by the end of March.

Representatives of the cities of Tumwater and Lacey, in addition to Thurston County, have been invited to the briefing. Although this is not a formal joint meeting of the jurisdictions, there is a high level of interest among all four parties with regard to this topic.

The City of Olympia has a long history of providing assistance through regulatory help, funding, land donation and other mechanisms to support affordable housing in the community. Thurston County has allocated federal HOME dollars, state recording fee dollars and other resources to also address the need. In addition, Lacey and Tumwater have both added resources over the years to support affordable housing. Despite these efforts, some community members believe that more local dollars are needed to address the issue.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Housing affordability is are regional issue and a community issue

Options:

Receive a briefing from local housing advocates and nonprofit representatives

Financial Impact:

There is no financial impact of the briefing. It is Informational only.

Attachments:

None