

**KING COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**AGENDA TITLE:** Affordable Housing Committee Program Update  
**PRESENTED BY:** Isaac Horwith, Senior Housing Planner, Housing and Community Development Division, King County Department of Community and Human Services

**Today's Meeting**

The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) will be briefed on recent Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) work, with a focus on the status of the Housing-Focused Draft Comprehensive Plan Review Program (plan review program), including:

- an overview of jurisdiction submissions completed and under review;
- an update to the [Housing-focused Draft Comprehensive Plan Review Program Guide](#);
- staff updates;
- ending the pilot Housing Interjurisdictional Team (HIJT) peer review program; and
- future AHC plan review work.

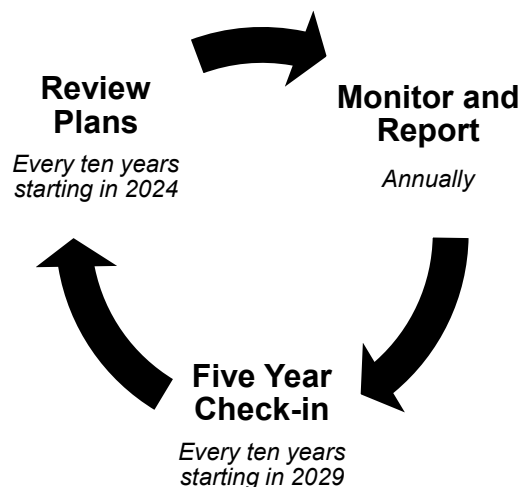
**Background on the Housing-focused Draft Comprehensive Plan Review Program**

In 2023, the King County Council amended the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) Housing Chapter to establish new authority for the GMPC and Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) to hold jurisdictions accountable to planning for and accommodating their housing needs, using a three-step process led by the GMPC or its designee:

1. Review draft comprehensive plans for alignment with the CPP Housing Chapter and provide comments.
2. Monitor and report on progress annually.
3. Assess progress five years after plan adoption, identify the nature of any shortfalls which jurisdictions then have to address.

The AHC conducts the plan review program on behalf of the GMPC. The goal of the program is to review the housing-related components of each jurisdiction's draft plan for alignment with the CPP Housing Chapter goals and policies prior to plan adoption and provide comments. AHC staff, in coordination with local jurisdiction staff, are reviewing jurisdiction's draft plans and preparing comment letters for AHC members to consider and potentially approve. The state-mandated deadline for King County jurisdictions to adopt their plans is December 31, 2024.

Figure 1. Countywide Planning Policies Housing Chapter Accountability Framework



GMPC members can find more information about the program, including resources for jurisdictions and the comment letters approved so far, in the “Housing-focused Draft Comprehensive Plan Review” dropdown section of the [AHC’s website](#).

### **Overview of Completed Plan Reviews and Plans Under Review**

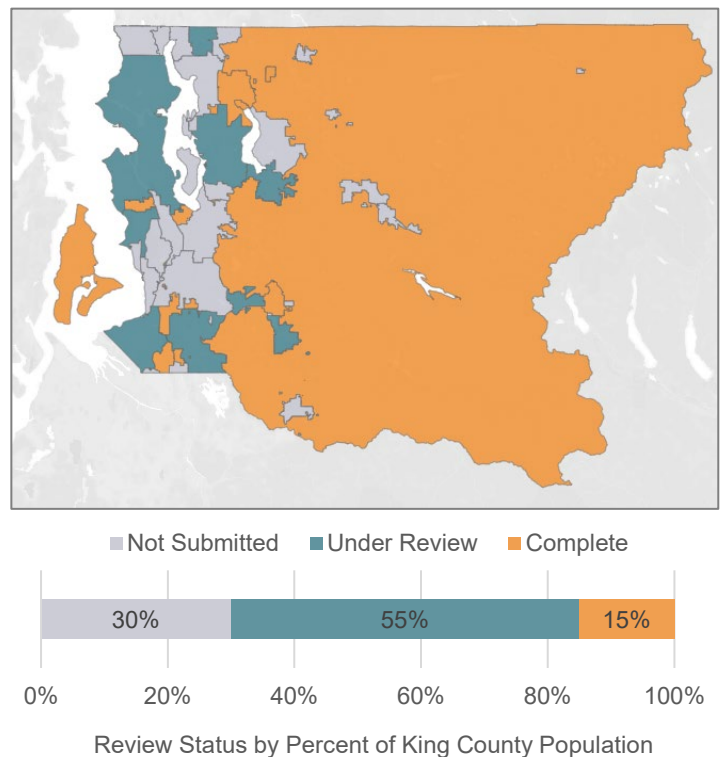
The AHC has so far approved comment letters on the draft plans of King County and the cities of Algona, Burien, Maple Valley, and Redmond.

AHC staff are currently reviewing submissions from the cities of Auburn, Bellevue, Black Diamond, Bothell, Covington, Federal Way, Issaquah, and Seattle.

Based on their submission date and the expected review time, AHC staff tentatively expect to prepare comment letters for the cities of Auburn, Bellevue, Bothell, Federal Way, Issaquah, and Seattle for review and potential approval at the July 23 AHC meeting.

AHC staff will continue to provide technical assistance, coordinate with jurisdiction staff, and work in the spirit of dialogue and shared learning as the County and the cities in the county seek to meet their housing needs and comply with the new requirements.

**Figure 1. Review Status of Jurisdictions in King County**



### **Update to Plan Review Guide**

On April 30, 2024, AHC staff sent a memo to the King County Planning Directors group describing common gaps or misalignments with the CPP Housing Chapter from reviewing the first four draft comprehensive plans submitted to the AHC. Most of the gaps are in areas where the CPPs go beyond the state and multicounty planning requirements. At a high level, the common gaps AHC staff identified include:

- plans not explicitly prioritizing the housing needs of extremely low-income households, as required by CPP H-2;
- missing data points and analysis as required by CPPs H-3 and H-4;
- incomplete responses to CPPs H-5 and H-9, which require jurisdictions document and repair harm to Black, Indigenous, and other people of color households from past and current land use and housing policies and practices; and
- plans not providing access to affordable housing *throughout* the jurisdiction, with a focus on areas of high opportunity, as required by CPP H-18(a).

AHC staff incorporated this memo, relevant guidance from the CPP Housing Technical Appendix, CPP Housing Chapter Frequently Asked Questions, and additional guidance on how accessory dwelling units can meet the needs of different income levels into the guide. The updated guide can be found [here](#).

### **New Affordable Housing Committee Staff**

Christoph Strouse joined the Regional Affordable Housing team in May in a term-limited position to support the plan review program. This brings the plan review program to three full-time staff. Cacima Lee also joined the Regional Affordable Housing team in June to support to the Affordable Housing Committee.

### **HIJT Peer Review Pilot Program Update**

At the September 21, 2023 AHC meeting, Committee members directed staff to pilot a HIJT peer review program, where HIJT members review draft housing-focused comprehensive plan review comment letters prior to AHC review and provide comments.

At the June 6, 2024 AHC meeting, AHC staff shared initial takeaways from the pilot program, which included HIJT member review of the Burien and Algona plan review letters. Staff noted that conversations with reviewers added value to the review process, but coordinating with reviewers' schedules and preparing review packets created bottlenecks in a process that is already on a tight timeline and difficult to coordinate. After a brief discussion, the AHC decided to end the peer review pilot program.

### **Future Plan Review Activity**

AHC staff will continue to review jurisdictions' submissions to the plan review program and prepare comment letters for AHC review and approval through the end of 2024.

AHC staff anticipate that jurisdictions whose plans the AHC reviews after the September 5, 2024 meeting may not be able to fully incorporate comment letter feedback before the state-mandated periodic update adoption deadline of December 31, 2024). The AHC will encourage those jurisdictions who are unable to incorporate AHC plan review feedback before the deadline to amend plans at the earliest date possible in 2025.<sup>1</sup>

### **Update on AHC Work Plan**

The AHC adopted its [2024 work plan](#) in November of 2023. The plan included six areas of focus:

1. collaborating with the Community Partners Table;
2. concluding monitoring for the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force;
3. executing comprehensive plan review;
4. informing the development of an annual monitoring system for the CPP accountability framework;

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<sup>1</sup> Per state law, jurisdictions may update comprehensive plans outside of a periodic update, but no more frequently than once a year (RCW 36.70A.130 2(a))

5. supporting state and federal legislative priorities; and
6. recommending charter amendments to improve AHC effectiveness.

In 2024, AHC staff priority has been on providing robust and timely technical assistance to jurisdictions through the housing-focused comprehensive plan review program. As a result, some items in the work plan have been scaled down or shifted to later dates, including:

- Work Plan Focus Area 2 | Jurisdictional survey  
Instead of releasing an extensive survey to collect data required by CPP H-27(a), AHC staff released a narrowly focused data collection form to select cities in order to update the income-restricted housing unit database with 2022 and 2023 data. Jurisdictions will fulfill other data reporting requirements in CPP H-27(a) through participation in the housing-focused comprehensive plan review program.
- Work Plan Focus Area 4 | Annual monitoring and reporting strategy  
AHC staff are developing a proposal for an annual monitoring and reporting strategy, as required by CPP H-28. In February, staff presented a proposal for method of comparing jurisdictional progress on planning for and accommodating housing needs. Staff are developing additional elements of the proposal and anticipate bringing it to the Committee for approval in Quarter 1 of 2025.
- Work Plan Focus Area 6 | Charter amendments  
The AHC met in early January 2024 to discuss the future of the Committee and charter amendments necessary to execute components of the CPP accountability framework (Figure 1). Now, the Community Partners Table, which advises the AHC and is composed of representatives of organizations who serve communities most disproportionately impacted by housing cost burden, will inform the charter amendment process in their last four meetings of 2024. The AHC will approve final charter amendments in early 2025.

AHC staff will brief the GMPC at every GMPC meeting this year on the AHC's progress to implement its 2024 work plan.

### **For More Information**

If members and/or their staff are interested in additional detail, please contact Isaac Horwith at [isaac.horwith@kingcounty.gov](mailto:isaac.horwith@kingcounty.gov) or 206-477-7813.