

KING COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL

AGENDA TITLE: Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Recommendations

PRESENTED BY: Interjurisdictional Staff Team (IJT)

Topics for Discussion:

Affordable housing has been a regular issue for the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) since 2012 when the Housing Chapter of the Countywide Planning Policies was updated to better encourage individual and collaborative action to address regional affordable housing needs. The GMPC will hear about the draft Action Plan for the Regional Affordable Housing (RAH) Task Force, including a recommendation for a new GMPC committee dedicated to affordable housing.

The Regional Affordable Housing Task Force

In fall 2016, the King County Council called for a regional planning effort to address housing affordability.¹ The County Council and Executive worked together to establish a RAH Task Force along with an associated standing advisory panel and appointed members to the task force.² The Task Force is comprised of elected officials representing King County, the City of Seattle, and the Sound Cities Association. The standing advisory panel is comprised of people working on affordable housing in the community including representatives of the three Housing Authorities, non-profit developers, for-profit developers, and advocates. The Task Force, which has been meeting regularly since July 14, 2017, is working to develop a recommended regional affordable housing strategy by December 31, 2018.

As provided for in Motion 14873, the objectives of the Regional Affordable Housing Force are to:

1. Assess the current state of regional housing affordability in King County, including ongoing efforts by jurisdictions;
2. Develop a recommended statement of intent to address the regional housing affordability crisis in King County;
3. Identify collective tools and actions that can be taken at the regional level to create more affordable options where needed and preserve affordable housing

¹ Motion 14754

² Motions 14873 and 14874

where it exists today, which could include a recommended plan for new partnerships, local strategies, regulatory reform, and funding approaches that include, but is not limited to, evaluating a countywide sales tax levy under RCW 82.14.530;

4. Develop a recommended state legislative strategy to address issues relating to affordable housing and homelessness; and
5. Develop a dashboard for displaying region-wide progress in meeting the Countywide Planning Policies.

Since its kick-off meeting in July 2017, the RAH Task Force has met nearly monthly. In April 2018, the Task Force adopted a Statement of Intent which finds that for low-income households (those earning at or below 80 percent of the area median income) there will be a housing gap of 244,000 homes by 2040.

To address this gap, the Task Force is working to develop strategies which:

- Support affordable homes in close proximity to jobs, transit, and key services;
- Reduce the disproportional impacts of housing affordability challenges, including displacement, on communities of color, older adults, and others with fixed or limited-incomes; and
- Address affordability and accessibility needs of large households, individuals with mobility or behavioral health challenges, and to allow people to age in place, if they desire.

Draft Recommendations

The Task Force is currently deliberating over policies that can be implemented at the local, regional, county and state level to address housing affordability through a Five-Year Action Plan with seven identified goals. The overarching goal is that the region should strive to eliminate cost burden for households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with a priority of serving households at or below 50% AMI. The specific goals of the draft Five-Year Action Plan address:

1. Creating an ongoing structure for regional collaboration;
2. Securing housing stability for the lowest-income households by increasing construction and preservation of affordable homes for the lowest-income households;
3. Prioritizing affordable housing accessible within a half mile of existing and planned frequent transit service, with a particular priority for high-capacity transit stations;
4. Preserving access to affordable homes for renters by supporting tenant protections to increase stability and reduce risk of homelessness;
5. Protecting existing communities of color and low-income communities from displacement;
6. Promoting greater housing growth and diversity and improve jobs/housing connections throughout King County; and
7. Better engaging local communities and other partners in addressing the urgent needs for and benefits of affordable housing.

The Task Force plans to deliver a recommended regional affordable housing strategy, including a Five-Year Action Plan, to the King County Council and Executive by December 31, 2018.

GMPC Regional Housing Committee Proposal

The draft RAH Action Plan proposes the creation of a committee of the GMPC dedicated to affordable housing. Per the draft plan, the committee will serve as a regional advisory body with the goal of advocating and assessing progress toward implementation of the Action Plan and would function as a point of coordination and accountability for affordable housing efforts across King County.

The GMPC would be responsible for appointing members of the committee, which would be comprised of approximately twenty members representing an equal balance of both governmental and non-governmental organizations, including representation of communities impacted by displacement. The committee would:

- Hold regular meetings;
- Maintain a website of information and/or release an annual report;
- Review qualitative and quantitative metrics regarding countywide and jurisdictional progress to implement the Action Plan and address the countywide need and/or cost-burden gap;
- Review and make recommendations to other governing bodies regarding actions to implement the Action Plan, including:
 - Funding/pursuing new and innovative financing strategies to significantly address the affordable housing need in King County for adoption by jurisdictions and/or voters in 2020;
 - Local land use policies; and
 - State legislative agenda items, such as increasing state funding for affordable housing, expanding options for local funding, supporting the creation and preservation of affordable housing, and creating uniform statewide laws for tenant protections.
- Recommend policy positions for PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board's consideration and approval;
- Review and provide guidance regarding alignment between the Action Plan and comprehensive plans;
- Recommend amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies including regional goals/metrics and policies;
- Coordinate support for increased federal funding for affordable housing;
- Work with existing and new sub-regional collaborations, such as A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH);
- Provide incentives for regional solutions which promote strategies that are cross-jurisdictional;
- Provide technical assistance to the cities and county on affordable housing policy, including identification and sharing of best practices and model legislation; and
- Periodically review and evaluate the composition and authority of the committee as established based on this proposal and recommend alternative governance

structures as needed to better accomplish the Action Plan. The Regional Housing Committee will provide input on updates to the Countywide Planning policies to reflect new information and approaches to affordable housing

The Regional Housing Committee will meet regularly and provide progress reports to the GMPC at their meetings. The committee will also assist with community outreach throughout the county. Further, the committee will seek direction from the GMPC as needed as it carries out its work plan.

The committee will be supported by an Affordable Housing Inter-Jurisdictional Team (Housing IJT) that will coordinate with the existing IJT. Staff members of the Housing IJT will include representatives of: King County Council staff, King County departments, ARCH, South King County Housing Homeless Partners, City of Seattle, additional city staff in proportion to county staff, and additional staff from external/non-governmental partners.

Next Steps:

- GMPC appointment of a Regional Housing Committee during the first quarter of 2019
- Formation of the Housing IJT
- Continue dialogue regarding regional efforts to implement the Countywide Planning Policies
- Consider updates to the Countywide Planning policies to reflect new information and approaches to affordable housing