



MEMBERS:

City of Lacey
City of Olympia
City of Rainier
City of Tenino
City of Tumwater
City of Yelm
Confederated Tribes of the
Chehalis Reservation
Nisqually Indian Tribe
Town of Bucoda
Thurston County
North Thurston Public Schools
Olympia School District
Tumwater School District
Intercity Transit
LOTT Clean Water Alliance
Port of Olympia
PUD No. 1 of Thurston County

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Policy Board
FROM: Katrina Van Every, TRPC
DATE: July 7, 2021
SUBJECT: Local Housing Action Planning

PURPOSE

Staff will provide an overview of the housing action planning process, which was performed as a regional effort between the Cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater with the help of TRPC. The project included four parts: a housing needs assessment, a gap analysis, a landlord survey, and a draft housing action plan.

REQUESTED ACTION

None – informational only.

kv:bl

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

Lacey Fire District #3
Puget Sound Regional Council
The Evergreen State College
Thurston Conservation District
Thurston Economic
Development Council
Timberland Regional Library



Marc Daily
Executive Director

2411 Chandler Court SW
Olympia, WA 98502
360-956-7575
360-741-2545 Fax
www.trpc.org

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

About one in four Thurston County residents is a person of color – those who are Hispanic or Latino of any race and those who are any race other than white alone. People of color generally have more people in their household, are less likely to own their own home, have a smaller household income, and are more likely to experience homelessness than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts. Increasing housing equity is not a single action; affordable housing opportunities cannot be created without also reducing housing-related inequities faced by people of color. Each strategy in the draft housing action plan includes a discussion of how it — and the actions associated with it — will reduce inequity in our community.

BACKGROUND

Thurston County is home to more than 294,000 people. By 2045 this is expected to grow to more than 380,000 people, and 64% will live in Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater or their respective unincorporated urban growth areas. At the same time, finding housing – especially affordable housing – is becoming more difficult in Thurston County and the rest of Washington state.

To address housing affordability problems, the state passed legislation in 2019 encouraging all cities planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) to adopt actions to increase residential building capacity. Funding was made available to cities to develop and adopt housing action plans, and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater received grants from the Washington State Department of Commerce to do just that.

Because the cities have one interconnected housing market, Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater elected to pool their action planning resources. TRPC was contracted to develop four things: a housing needs assessment, a gap analysis, a landlord survey, and a draft action plan.

Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis. The needs assessment provides a baseline inventory of the current housing stock, household characteristics, the population's housing needs, and any gaps in housing availability. TRPC staff compiled more than 50 datasets (generally pre-pandemic) to develop a holistic understanding of housing needs in the Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater urban area.

The gap analysis helps identify the amount and the type of housing needed over the next 25 years to ensure residents will have access to affordable housing. The gap analysis is included in the overall need's assessment.

Seven housing gaps were identified in the Housing Needs Assessment:

1. Reduce housing costs for low-income and cost-burdened households.
2. Increase the overall housing supply.
3. Increase the variety of housing sizes and types.
4. Increase senior housing options.
5. Maintain in good condition and improve the existing housing stock.
6. Provide safe, stable options for both renters and homeowners.
7. Increase permanent housing options for people with disabilities and those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Landlord Survey. The results of the landlord survey provide valuable context about the local rental housing market, including single-family dwellings, which are generally not included in local rental housing data. In October 2020, the landlord survey was mailed to a total of 9,834 addresses in Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater as well as their unincorporated UGAs. Over 1,200 surveys were returned, including 151 surveys indicating they did not own or manage rental properties in the Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater urban growth area. This resulted in a response rate of about 13% and represented at least 5,430 dwelling units.

[Draft Housing Action Plan](#). The draft Housing Action Plan TRPC developed is a menu of actions intended to help Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater meet their respective housing needs and strategic objectives. It centers on the actions each city can take to increase:

- Housing supply.
- Types of housing in the supply.
- Housing affordability.

In addition to the work each of the cities has already accomplished, the draft plan identifies a menu of 52 actions Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater can take to address housing gaps, needs, and equity:

- 16 actions that help increase the supply of permanent, income-restricted affordable housing.
- 7 actions that make it easier for households to access housing and stay housed.
- 15 actions that help expand the overall housing supply.
- 5 actions that help increase housing variety.
- 4 actions that help the cities maintain forward momentum in implementing housing strategies.
- 5 actions that help establish a permanent source of funding for low-income housing.

Not every action in the draft plan will be implemented by each city, and all actions should be investigated for their effectiveness before being implemented. The menu of options is intended to provide the cities flexibility as they investigate their communities' specific housing needs and play a part in meeting the needs of the greater Lacey/Olympia/Tumwater urban area.

By pooling their resources, the three cities have been able to identify baseline demographic and market data that grounds the planning work across jurisdictions. This has also helped the cities identify actions that may be appropriate to take at the regional level. Over the coming months, each city will adopt their own individualized action plans and begin prioritizing actions for implementation.