



Island County Planning and Community Development

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~MEMORANDUM~

TO: **Island County Planning Commissioners**

FROM: **Emily Neff, Long Range Planning
Island County Planning & Community Development**

DATE: **March 11, 2024**

SUBJECT: **Planning Commission Meeting March 20, 2024**

The Planning Commission meeting on March 20, 2024, will include the following items:

Workshop: Staff will lead a discussion and review of the 2018 Housing Element Goals and Policies with the Planning Commission.

Please consider the following questions in your review:

1. Are the Goals or Policies still applicable?
2. Do the Goals and Policies need to be updated to reflect our current values or current reality?
3. Are we missing any Goals or Policies that need to be added?

Attachments:

- Excerpt from Island County Comprehensive Plan – 2018 Housing Element

For more information, please contact:

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EXCERPT FROM THE ISLAND COUNTY 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – Housing Element

Goal 1. Encourage preservation of existing housing stock capacity, subsidized affordable housing units, and the character of existing communities.

- H 1.1. Sustain and enhance the vitality, diversity, and quality of life within existing neighborhoods through the promotion of development that is sensitive to the quality, design, scale, and character of those neighborhoods.
- H 1.2. Preserve the existing housing stock to meet the changing needs of residents by continuing to improve the permitting process for remodels/additions, accessory dwelling units, and guest cottages.
- H 1.3. Monitor properties with expiring subsidies and identify strategies and resources to preserve their affordability.
- H 1.4. Identify and promote awareness of resources and programs available for housing repair and rehabilitation for homeowners with low incomes; examples may include, weatherization, septic repair or compliance with flood hazard regulations.
- H 1.5. Support the preservation of manufactured home parks in Island County as a component of the County's affordable housing stock.
- H 1.6. Develop strategies to encourage the re-use of existing housing structures in rural areas including potential incentives for relocation to other sites.
- H 1.7. Monitor the impacts of vacation rentals on housing availability in the County.
- H 1.8. Consider development regulations for the RAIDs and NMUGAs that are compatible with residential community character, that promote pedestrian connectivity and ensure the long term vitality of Island County neighborhoods.

Goal 2. Promote the development of different housing types, such as rentals and manufactured homes, to meet the needs of all demographic segments of the population, housing tenure choices, and income levels. Provide for these housing types in appropriate locations where infrastructure, public transit, and community services are readily accessible, planned in the near future, or are included as part of a new fully-contained

community as described in RCW 36.70A.350.

- H 2.1. Encourage the construction of multi-family units, primarily rentals, in areas where higher densities are permitted and where infrastructure, including public transportation, is already available.
- H 2.2. Encourage housing suitable to the needs of older adults, including independent and assisted living housing, in Mixed Use RAIDs and UGAs.
- H 2.3. Encourage the siting of duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in Rural Residential zones that are near Mixed Use RAIDs and UGAs.
- H 2.4. Identify innovative housing approaches for Camano Island where the predominance of rural zones and lack of a UGA presents challenges for meeting a diversity of housing needs.
- H 2.5. Evaluate and modify as needed, Planned Residential Developments and clustered housing code provisions to ensure that they provide adequate incentives to achieve desired densities.
- H 2.6. Evaluate regulations to determine appropriate locations, provide expanded opportunities, determine potential incentives, and remove unnecessary barriers and/or impediments to the development of the following housing types: permanent and seasonal farm worker housing; accessory dwelling units and guest cottages; manufactured housing communities and manufactured homes; small multi-unit structures; cottage housing; and other small dwelling unit types.
- H 2.7. Encourage infill development in RAIDs and UGAs through zoning regulations and incentives with specific attention to the incentives identified under RCW 36.70A.540.
- H 2.8. Explore options to allow temporary housing structures to accommodate short-term housing needs related to limited-term employment and the homeless population.
- H 2.9. Monitor Island County's housing development and periodically compare to housing development targets in the Comprehensive Plan and buildable land supply.
- H 2.10. Ensure that innovative housing options are considered and addressed in county housing policies, programs, funding, and local zoning regulations.
- H 2.11. Develop and allow "pre-approved" or "permit ready" house plans for accessory dwelling units, guest cottages, cottage housing and other potential housing types in appropriate locations.
- H 2.12. Identify opportunities to lower labor and materials costs by supporting and encouraging alternative housing designs, materials and construction, such as self-help/sweat-equity housing, owner-built housing, and the use of existing or reclaimed building materials.
- H 2.13. Provide additional locations for, and encourage the siting of, recreational vehicle parks as a temporary lodging option.

H 2.14. Continue to identify and evaluate opportunities to streamline interdepartmental permitting review where possible.

Goal 3. Promote fair access to housing and shelter for all persons.

H 3.1. Identify appropriate locations to support and facilitate transitional housing, coordinated with critical support services, for youth, adults, seniors, families, and those with disabilities.

H 3.2. Identify appropriate locations to support and facilitate the development of emergency shelters and short-term housing for those in need.

H 3.3. Ensure that community housing and shelter needs are considered and addressed in county housing policies, programs, funding, and local zoning regulations.

H 3.4. Evaluate and consider implementing the recommendations of the Tri-County Consortium's 2018 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and successor Fair Housing Plans to affirmatively further Fair Housing in Island County.

H 3.5. Promote community and landlord awareness of and compliance with federal and state Fair Housing laws.

H 3.6. Promote diverse representation on boards and committees that make recommendations concerning housing-related policies, programs or funding.

Goal 4. Promote policies that facilitate the reduction in the share of cost burdened households by increasing the supply of subsidized housing.

H 4.1. Define subsidized and low-income housing needs and establish measurable subsidized and low-income housing targets relative to those needs.

H 4.2. Encourage a range of permanent subsidized housing options through small project-based structures, administration of rental assistance, and supportive housing.

H 4.3. Ensure publicly-funded, low-income housing is located in appropriate locations where infrastructure, public transit, and community services are readily accessible, planned in the near future, or are included as a part of a new fully-contained community as described in RCW 36.70A.350.

H 4.4. Review existing surplus public land owned by Island County and other public agencies to determine if any such lands are appropriate to be transferred to a non-profit housing agency for subsidized or low-income housing.

EXCERPT FROM THE ISLAND COUNTY 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- H 4.5. Evaluate opportunities to reduce or eliminate permit fees for subsidized and low-income housing.
- H 4.6. Implement incentives for subsidized housing projects within non-municipal urban growth areas and mixed use RAIDs.
- H 4.7. Ensure coordination between the policies addressed in the Comprehensive Plan and those outlined in Island County's Homeless Housing Plan.
- H 4.8. Collaborate with municipal jurisdictions to develop mutual policies and agreements that facilitate the siting and subsequent annexation of subsidized housing in unincorporated UGAs.

Goal 5. Collaborate with other jurisdictions and housing organizations to address county-wide housing issues.

- H 5.1. Actively convene committees to coordinate county-wide housing issues.
- H 5.2. Evaluate the potential for a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for the Freeland NMUGA, or in conjunction with incorporated communities, that allows higher densities within city boundaries and urban growth areas.
- H 5.3. Continue to maintain partnerships and support collaboration with the Housing Authority of Island County, the Opportunity Council, local industries, major employers, and different groups including nonprofit, faith-based, public, and private interests in ongoing efforts to fund and sustain existing subsidized and low-income housing projects in Island County.
- H 5.4. Support collaboration between private developers, public agencies, and non-profit organizations so that a variety of housing options are dispersed throughout the county and develop these partnerships to collaboratively advocate for more financial resources from the federal and state government for subsidized, low-income housing.
- H 5.5. Continue to coordinate with, and provide staff support for the Housing Provider Network and other housing-related committees.
- H 5.6. Support applications for federal, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and other available incentives for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new constructions of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.
- H 5.7. The Board shall consider housing related policy implementation actions as part of the annual work plan review.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

A tax incentive intended to increase the availability of low-income housing. The program provides an income tax credit to owners of newly constructed or substantially rehabilitated low-income rental housing projects. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Transfer of Development Rights

Methods for protecting land from development by voluntarily removing the development rights from a sending area and transferring them to a receiving area for the purpose of increasing development density or intensity in the receiving area.

Workforce Housing

Workforce housing is housing that is affordable to workers and close to their jobs. It is homeownership, as well as rental housing, that can be reasonably afforded by a moderate to middle income, critical workforce and located in acceptable proximity to workforce centers. The most common definition of workforce housing comes from the Urban Land Institute, which defines workforce housing as: "housing that is affordable to households earning 60 to 120 percent of the area median income."

National Association of Realtors

New Fully-Contained Community Development proposed for location outside of the existing designated urban growth areas which is characterized by urban densities, uses, and services, and meets the criteria of RCW 36.70A.350

WAC 365-196-210 - The Growth Management Act Procedural Criteria