



BROADVIEW
PLANNING

206.709.9588
andrea@broadviewplanning.com
www.broadviewplanning.com

10 June 2018

To: Meredith Penny, Beverly Mesa-Zendt; Island County
From: Andrea Petzel, Valerie Pacino; Broadview Planning
Cc: Erik Rundell, Morgan Shook; ECONorthwest
Re: Summary of the Final Public Outreach Process for the Housing Element Update Draft Goals + Policy Recommendations

This memo aims to memorialize the final phase of the year-long public engagement process for Island County’s Housing Element Update draft goals and policy recommendations.

The project launched in September 2017, and engagement was quickly underway with a community survey, stakeholder interviews, background research, and data analysis. The final phase of engagement began in April 2018 when a draft policy was ready for public review. This phase included the following presentations and events:

- City of Langley Planning Commission
- Coupeville Lions Club
- District 1 officials
- Camano Library drop-in session
- Coupeville Farmers Market
- Camano Rotary
- Community Open House at the Oak Harbor Senior Center
- Bayview Farmers Market

Events were publicized via emails to the project’s listserv, on social media (Facebook and Twitter), and on the project website. In addition to public comments received at events, the public was encouraged to submit feedback via email at: CompPlan@co.island.wa.us.

Based on public comments, revisions to the draft policy are currently underway, and a final public hearing is scheduled next month. A final policy is anticipated to be adopted in July 2018.



GMA 13711

Key Themes

The public comments during this final phase of engagement and outreach largely echo what we have heard through previous phases. Appendix A contains a compiled list of all comments received.

Themes from this phase of engagement include:

- There is a lack of diversity of housing types in Island County and a particular lack of multifamily development.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are a compelling housing option that would allow residents more flexibility in housing choices, give older folks an opportunity to age in place, and would diversify housing types across the county.
- People continue to have questions about the data used in the needs analysis, who was reached through engagement, whose voices weren't included, and other sources of data.
- Renters are particularly cost-burdened and struggle to find available housing options.
- As the county prioritizes more housing and a diversity of affordable housing options across income levels and other demographics, it must also continue to develop the infrastructure to accommodate more people.
- Workforce housing, particularly farmworker housing, requires strategies specific to these demographics.
- Policies to explore subsidized affordable housing are encouraged.
- This is not a challenge Island County can tackle alone – there are organizations and other jurisdictions working on these issues, and a collaborative approach will be necessary to see any progress.

Evaluation

- As people were generally positive about the overall process and receptive to the draft goals and policies, engagement during this phase was successful.
- Meetings and events during this phase were focused and productive.
- Attendance at the open house (~35 people) was less than the target, but all in attendance were engaged and actively participated in the meeting.
- Most people who participated in this phase of the process learned about events through emails to the listserv.
- The first phase of the engagement process included a wide-reaching community survey. The final phase did not reach as many people. Were budget and resources available, it would have been ideal to reconnect with everyone who participated in the first phase to report back on the draft policy and demonstrate about how their input was used to shape recommendations.
- This process piloted social media as a strategy of engagement. While not wildly successful, it was a good first step.

Recommendations for Next Steps

- People are ready for action. They feel positive about the engagement process for the Island County Housing Element Update, and there's generally support for the draft goals and policy recommendations.
- Do not squander this support. Instead, continue to communicate next steps via the listserv; provide regular updates, and enlist the support of your constituents as you begin to implement policy recommendations.
- More and more, people use social media as a way of engaging with their local governments, providing input, and learning about surveys and events. That's not the norm in Island County yet, but that does not mean social media should be abandoned as a channel for conversations between residents and officials. If you continue with social media, make it countywide and post on a consistent basis with information that is relevant and compelling.

Appendix A

Public Comment Matrix—Island County Housing Element Update

Date	Event	Name	Topic	Comment
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House	Beth Munson	ADUs, compostable toilets	1. Actually promote ADUs on Camano via emails and public meetings, and reasons that would prevent developmenmt. 2. Why no compostable toilets
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Data Requests	1. Updated population numbers for Camano 2. How do you get estimate for grants? 3. Transient population
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Volunteer Opportunities	Carolyn Spector, volunteer opportunities
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Traffic Impacts, Development	Slow down development, unless you provide for a redundant way for folks to get on and off the island—traffic is already very bad, only two lanes
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Senior Housing, Farmworker Housing	1. PBRS—to leverage affordable housing for seniors 2. large rural property; open space and affordable workforce housing 3. Farm Worker housing on rural parcels
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Landlord education	Put landlord notifications into property tax mailers or reach out to property management companies, there's a level of gaurentee with vouchers.
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Landlord education	1. Make a greater effort to help landlords understand the BENEFITS of HUD, Dept. of As housing vouchers 2. Work with groups like the Salvation Army on vouchers
4-13-18	Camano Island Library Open House		Fair Houisng	I OPPOSE a so-called "Fair Housing Ordinance." HUD and the federal Dept. of Agriculture make use of Housing vouchers. There is no need for Island County to involed itself. Anti-discrimination laws are already in effect at the state and federal level.
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Data Requests	Did you survey people in the cities/town?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Data Requests	What is considered acceptable for housing costs? Is the county going to be doing a lot of rezoning to more urban to encourage housing to be built?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Zoning	Do vouchers count towards someone's income in your study?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Vouchers	Have you looked at the causes of high housing cost?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Housing Cost	Does the Navy bare any responsibility?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Navy	Does the Navy bare any responsibility?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Data Requests	Is this a current target or more long term?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Misc	Are you taking into account business opportunities?
4-4-18	Coupeville Lions Club		Fair Houisng	Are you planning to increase subsidized housing?
4-26-18	Email	Langley Planner	Rental Housing	Are there any policies related to the conversion of rental units to condos? Goal 1: Establiish goal of new low income housing units in Island County to support Human Services ---Coordinate funding from federal and state funs to purchase or build housing units. ---Use Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) and Community Psychiatric Clinic in Seattle and Compass Health in Everett to operate. ---Most severe need is dual diagnosed mentally ill, and cluster houses have been very successful with sponsorship of NGO/church.
4-18-18	Open House		Access to Housing	Goal 1 (cont.): Airbnb, etc. exacerbates housing affordability and Island County should establish a new tax and use funds to purchase and build low-income housing. Goal 2: Please explore regulatory barriers of accessory dwelling units on/in ---Sites less than one acre ---RA Zone
4-18-18	Open House		Airbnb	Goal 1 (cont.): Airbnb, etc. exacerbates housing affordability and Island County should establish a new tax and use funds to purchase and build low-income housing. Goal 2: Please explore regulatory barriers of accessory dwelling units on/in ---Sites less than one acre ---RA Zone
4-18-18	Open House		ADUS	---Caretaker units with kitchen Goal 4: Consider to be allowed on RA zoning of sites less than one acre: ---Accessory Dwelling Units ---Guest Cottages ---Caretaker Units ---There's an issue with two kitchens ---Immediately creates incentives for owners to double affordable housing units easily on a private basis
4-18-18	Open House		ADUs, Zoning	Goal 4 (continued): Goosefoot owns property at Bayview Center zones Rural Center RAID and we are very interested in affordable housing.
4-18-18	Open House		Affordable housing	Engage with real estate investors interested in providing properties that will fill the need for decent priced rentals. We have a ton of real estate agencies on Whidbey Island as well as property management firms who may be able to facilitate some awareness of the benefit of owning rentals.
4-18-18	Open House		Landlord education	As a private real estate investor I can see several options that could assist in solving these issues. It's good to see the studies and statistics – it does affirm the need. But we need an action plan with target completion dates also. Accountability will help get stuff done.
4-18-18	Open House		Data Requests	Does the County intend to increase the allowable density on the north end of the island to accomplish affordable housing goals or is the intent to have Oak Harbor, with its infrastructure, be the place this type of development takes place?? You can't create affordable housing when the density is 1- or 2-units per 5 acres. ---Maybe the County should allow Oak Harbor to expand the UGA somewhat so more land could be available. More land becoming available means the price could go down and a lower price = more affordably priced housing.
4-18-18	Open House		Zoning	Does the County intend to increase the allowable density on the north end of the island to accomplish affordable housing goals or is the intent to have Oak Harbor, with its infrastructure, be the place this type of development takes place?? You can't create affordable housing when the density is 1- or 2-units per 5 acres. ---Maybe the County should allow Oak Harbor to expand the UGA somewhat so more land could be available. More land becoming available means the price could go down and a lower price = more affordably priced housing.

4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	2016 Comp Plan update entailed a population projection, which determines future housing needs... ---Has the actual versus projected numbers for 2017 and 2018 year-to-date been analyzed to assess accuracy and/or the need for revision? Projections are preliminary in nature [sic] but a small under projection could be exacerbated due to populations being modeled by exponential equations, leading to a larger shorter/tighter market. Establish a definite timeline, as part of a goal, to adopt ordinances as allowed under RCW 36.70A.040 – Affordable Housing Incentive Program: ---Density Bonus ---Fee Waivers ---Expediated permitting
4-18-18 Open House	Incentives	What's the goal for building affordable housing units this year?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	Why are more permits issued in Camano than in Oak Harbor? ---How many applications are there in Oak Harbor?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	When adopted, are there any plans for deadlines and accountability? What are you going to do next?
4-18-18 Open House	Accountability	Are the forty recommendations from the Task Force available somewhere?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	Why don't we set deadlines for action?
4-18-18 Open House	Accountability	Air BNB -are they taxed and can we direct funds from that tax where it's needed for housing?
4-18-18 Open House	Airbnb	Is there an expectation on the County's part to create housing incentives to build actual units? Are you exploring any partnerships?
4-18-18 Open House	Incentives	How many affordable housing units were built in Island County last year?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	How can we encourage/incentivize property owners who have low-income housing that's expiring to keep it in place? What's the County doing?
4-18-18 Open House	Incentives	What happens when low-income housing units reach their maturity date? Does the property go out to bid?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	Lack of emergency housing/shelters – homeless can be hidden
4-18-18 Open House	Emergency Housing	Any multifamily projects for Camano Island planned?
4-18-18 Open House	Data Requests	Concerns about the effect on property taxes if a manufactured housing project gets constructed
4-18-18 Open House	Camano	Camano does not get the same resources as Whidbey – homeless, housing
4-18-18 Open House	Zoning	Someone wanted to put in 55+ years manufactured home park but told no zoning on Camano Island allowed it.
4-18-18 Open House	Infrastructure	Can do septic systems for Multifamily that reduce space needs – Amy Moe, Greenworks Septic
4-28-18 Bayview Farmers Market	Cost	-Reduce cost of construction (septic, foundations etc.) especially for smaller houses, will make housing more affordable for homeowners, landlords, and tenants. Could provide alternative waste management strategies for tiny homes under x square feet
4-28-18 Bayview Farmers Market	ADUs, Tiny Homes	-Even if it is already allowed, it is somewhat of a gray area, and we need a clear and streamlined process/section of code for alternative housing (tiny homes, yurts, and RVs) -Every time a development is built, they should have to build extra housing/an extra building on site, so if someone who lives in that development can't make payments and becomes homeless, they have shelter without having to move/be displaced until they can get back on their feet
4-28-18 Bayview Farmers Market	Emergency Housing	Map showing Zoning on Langley Road from 525 beside Ken's Korner New regulations and zoning for mobile home parks. Notification of county meetings dealing with zoning issues for multiple family residences especially for tiny house communities offering affordable housing. Our website is THINCwhidbey.org. The letters stand for Tiny Houses In Name Christ. Our non profit, Tiny Houses In the name of Christ, is composed of a board of members of 7 South end churches who care for those for whom the inflated housing market has left many struggling to find affordable housing. It is getting harder everyday for The Help (those who wait on us as clerks and restaurant workers, those who clean and labor among us) to live here, due to the increase in rents. Without them, our large retirement community and summer residents will have to leave and move elsewhere. I think of my own family here in Whidbey. Not everyone has a family member that can buy them a mobile home as Chich did for her grand daughter, nor do many family members even have space to park one legally on their property, thus providing free parking. Airbnb's have taken over most apts in homes that used to be affordable rentals for local workers. When I served on the board for the Whidbey Homeless Coalition I became acuity aware of the shortage of affordable housing. Whole families were happy to share just 1 BR with their kids in a house w rooms for 4 families, all sharing 1 small kitchen- just to have a roof over their heads. Please take a peak at our website and let us know how we can help move the agenda for affordable housing forward.
4-11-18 Email	ADUs, Tiny Homes	Together, we can make a difference in our community. When our local churches band together, we are the largest company in our area. And we are given the command to reach out and help. Deuteronomy 15:11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be open handed toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.