

1 Adopted: October 12, 2016
2 Effective: November 10, 2016

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5
6 SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
7 SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON

8
9 ORDINANCE NO. 16-076

10
11 RELATING TO THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT, AMENDING THE LAND USE AND
12 HOUSING CHAPTERS OF THE GENERAL POLICY PLAN OF THE SNOHOMISH COUNTY
13 GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
14 (GPP6 – HOUSING)

15
16 WHEREAS, RCW 36.70A.130 directs counties planning under the Growth Management
17 Act (GMA), chapter 36.70A RCW, to consider amendments and revisions to the GMA
18 Comprehensive Plan (GMACP) or development regulations on a regular basis; and

19
20 WHEREAS, the Snohomish County Council (“county council”) has determined that the
21 consideration of the proposed amendments and revisions to the General Policy Plan (GPP) of
22 the GMACP would promote a county purpose as established under RCW 36.70A.130; and

23
24 WHEREAS, on July 15, 2015, the county council approved, by Amended Motion No. 15-
25 226, a list of proposed county-initiated GMACP amendments for consideration and final action
26 in 2016, and authorized the Snohomish County Executive, through the Department of Planning
27 and Development Services (PDS), to process the proposals consistent with chapter 30.73
28 Snohomish County Code (SCC); and

29
30 WHEREAS, included in Amended Motion No. 15-226 was a proposed amendment,
31 known as GPP6 – Housing, for potential policy and text amendments to the Housing and Land
32 Use chapters of the GPP as a result of completion of a housing policy review by PDS and the
33 Department of Human Services; and

34
35 WHEREAS, pursuant to chapter 30.73 SCC, PDS completed final review and evaluation
36 of the GPP6 – Housing proposal and forwarded recommendations to the Snohomish County
37 Planning Commission (“planning commission”); and

38
39 WHEREAS, on April 26, 2016, PDS briefed the planning commission on the GPP6 –
40 Housing proposal; and

41
42 WHEREAS, the planning commission held a public hearing on May 24, 2016, to receive
43 public testimony on the GPP6 – Housing proposal, and recommended adoption of the

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1 amendments contained in this ordinance, as shown in its recommendation letter of June 21,
2 2016; and

3
4 WHEREAS, on October 12, 2016, the county council held a public hearing, after proper
5 notice, and considered public comment and the entire record related to the proposed
6 amendments contained in this ordinance; and

7
8 WHEREAS, following the public hearing, the county council deliberated on the proposed
9 amendments contained in this ordinance;

10
11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:

12
13 Section 1. The county council adopts the following findings in support of this ordinance:

- 14
15 A. The foregoing recitals are adopted as findings as if set forth fully herein.
16
17 B. This proposal is to amend the Land Use and Housing chapters of the GPP as a result of
18 the completion of a housing policy review by PDS and the Department of Human Services.
19
20
21 1. The proposed addition of LU Policy 3.H.3 to the Land Use chapter of the GPP directs
22 the county to pursue zoning and other strategies to support the production of
23 affordable housing and promote affordable housing production as part of sustainable
24 and equitable development patterns around transit oriented development (TOD) sites
25 in advance of market activities that could limit future potential public benefits at those
26 sites.
27
28 2. The proposed addition of HO Policy 1.A.5 to the Housing chapter of the GPP reflects
29 the county commitment to serving those with special needs by supporting the
30 coordination of housing and service providers.
31
32 3. The proposed amendments to HO Policy 1.B.2 of the Housing chapter of the GPP
33 strengthen the county commitment to encourage affordable ownership and rental
34 housing opportunities for those with special needs.
35
36 4. The proposed amendments to HO Policy 1.C.3 of the Housing chapter of the GPP
37 provide an enhanced policy basis to explore regulatory or other strategies for
38 encouraging an increase of affordable housing, particularly in mixed-income
39 communities. The expanded policy also calls for the county to use incentives and
40 other techniques to encourage a balance of affordable housing and market-rate
41 housing in urban centers and along transit emphasis corridors.
42
43 5. The proposed addition of Objective HO 4.B and HO Policies 4.B.1 and 4.B.2 call for
44 the county to track the provision of affordable housing units to monitor progress

1 towards addressing identified housing needs. The policies direct the county to
2 continue seeking partnerships with other local jurisdictions in this endeavor and to
3 evaluate the effectiveness of zoning regulations to produce housing that addresses
4 affordable housing needs.
5

6 C. The GPP6 – Housing proposal is consistent with the following GMA requirements: RCW
7 36.70A.130(1)(d), which requires that amendments to a comprehensive plan be
8 consistent with the GMA; RCW 36.70A.130(2)(a), which requires that proposed
9 amendments to a comprehensive plan be considered no more frequently than once
10 every year; RCW 36.70A.070, which requires internal consistency of a comprehensive
11 plan; and RCW 36.70A.210, which requires that a comprehensive plan be consistent
12 with the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP).

13 D. The GPP6 – Housing proposal is consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council
14 Vision 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPP) including:

- 15 1. MPP-H-1 “Provide a range of housing types and choices to meet the housing needs
16 of all income levels and demographic groups within the region.”
- 17 2. MPP-H-2 “Achieve and sustain — through preservation, rehabilitation, and new
18 development — a sufficient supply of housing to meet the needs of low-income,
19 moderate-income, middle-income, and special needs individuals and households
20 that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the region.”
- 21 3. MPP-H-9 “Encourage interjurisdictional cooperative efforts and public-private
22 partnerships to advance the provision of affordable and special needs housing.”

23 E. The GPP6 – Housing proposal is consistent with the CPP, including:

- 24 1. HO-2 “The county and cities shall make provisions in their comprehensive plans to
25 accommodate existing and projected housing needs, including a specific assessment
26 of housing needs by economic segment within the community as indicated in the
27 housing report prescribed in CPP HO-5. Those provisions should consider the
28 following factors:
 - 29 a. Avoiding further concentrations of low-income and special needs housing.
 - 30 b. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable housing in urban centers.
 - 31 c. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable housing close to employment,
32 education, shopping, public services, and public transit.
 - 33 d. Increasing opportunities and capacity for affordable and special needs housing in
34 areas where affordable housing is currently lacking.
 - 35 e. Supporting affordable housing opportunities in other Snohomish County
36 jurisdictions, as described below in CPP HO-4.”

- 1 2. HO-4 “The county and cities should participate in a multi-jurisdictional affordable
2 housing program or other cooperative effort to promote and contribute to an
3 adequate and diversified supply of housing countywide.”
- 4 3. HO-14 “The county and cities should provide incentives for affordable housing such
5 as height or density bonuses, property tax incentives and parking requirement
6 reductions. The incentives should apply where feasible to encourage affordable
7 housing.”

8 F. The GPP6 – Housing proposal is consistent with the GPP, including:

- 9 1. Goal LU 3 “Establish a system of compact, clearly defined mixed-use centers that
10 promote neighborhood identification, reduce vehicle miles traveled, promote physical
11 activity, and support the county’s sustainability goals.”
- 12 2. Goal HO 1 “Ensure that all county residents have the opportunity to obtain safe,
13 healthy, and affordable housing.”
- 14 3. Goal HO 4 “The county shall monitor progress toward achieving the housing goals,
15 objectives and policies of this General Policy Plan and the countywide planning
16 policies.”

17 G. Procedural requirements.

- 18 1. The proposal is a Type 3 legislative action pursuant to SCC 30.73.010.
- 19 2. The environmental impacts of this proposal are within the range of impacts analyzed
20 by the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and final environmental impact
21 statement (FEIS) during the Update to the GMACP in 2015. No new probable
22 significant adverse environmental impacts from this proposal have been identified.
23 Therefore, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements with respect to this
24 non-project action have been met through issuance on May 20, 2016, of Addendum
25 No. 4 to the FEIS for the 2015 Update to the GMACP.
- 26 3. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106(1), a notice of intent to adopt this ordinance was
27 transmitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce for distribution to state
28 agencies on February 25, 2016.
- 29 4. The public participation process used in the adoption of this ordinance has complied
30 with all applicable requirements of the GMA and the SCC.
- 31 5. The Washington State Attorney General last issued an advisory memorandum, as
32 required by RCW 36.70A.370, in December of 2015 entitled “Advisory Memorandum:
33 Avoiding Unconstitutional Takings of Private Property” to help local governments avoid
34 the unconstitutional taking of private property. The process outlined in the State
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39 the unconstitutional taking of private property. The process outlined in the State

1 Attorney General's 2015 advisory memorandum was used by Snohomish County in
2 objectively evaluating the regulatory changes proposed by this ordinance.
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4 H. This ordinance is consistent with the record as set forth in PDS staff reports relating to this
5 proposal dated April 12, 2016, and May 11, 2016.
6

7 Section 2. The county council makes the following conclusions:

8 A. The amendments are consistent with and comply with the procedural and substantive
9 requirements of the GMA.

10 B. The amendments are consistent with and comply with the MPPs, CPPs, and goals,
11 objectives, and policies of the GPP.

12 C. All SEPA requirements with respect to this non-project action have been satisfied.

13 D. This proposal does not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property for a public
14 purpose and does not violate substantive due process guarantees.
15

16 Section 3. The county council bases its findings and conclusions on the entire record of the
17 planning commission and the county council, including all testimony and exhibits. Any finding
18 which should be deemed a conclusion, and any conclusion which should be deemed a finding, is
19 hereby adopted as such.
20

21 Section 4. The Land Use chapter of the GPP, last amended by Ordinance No.15-105 on
22 February 3, 2016, is amended as indicated in Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and
23 incorporated by reference into this ordinance.
24

25 Section 5. The Housing chapter of the GPP, last amended by Amended Ordinance No.14-129
26 on June 10, 2015, is amended as indicated in Exhibit B, which is attached hereto and
27 incorporated by reference into this ordinance.
28

29 Section 6. The county council directs the Code Reviser to update SCC 30.10.060 pursuant to
30 SCC 1.02.020(3).
31

32 Section 7. Severability and Savings. If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance
33 shall be held to be invalid by the Growth Management Hearings Board, or unconstitutional by a
34 court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or
35 constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance. Provided,
36 however, that if any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is held to be invalid by
37 the Board or court of competent jurisdiction, then the section, sentence, clause or phrase in effect
38 prior to the effective date of this ordinance shall be in full force and effect for that individual section,
39 sentence, clause or phrase as if this ordinance had never been adopted.
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1 PASSED this 12th day of October, 2016.

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SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington


Council Chair

ATTEST:


Clerk of the Council

- APPROVED
- EMERGENCY
- VETOED

DATE: 10/31, 2016


Snohomish County Executive

ATTEST:


Justice E. Palmer

Approved as to form only:

/s/ Justin Kasting 07/27/16
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

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Centers

Centers have been identified by the county and its cities where significant population and employment growth can be located, a community-wide focal point can be provided, and the increased use of transit, bicycling and walking can be supported. These Centers are intended to be compact and centralized living, working, shopping and/or activity areas linked to each other by transit emphasis corridors. Centers are pedestrian and transit oriented with a focus on circulation, scale and convenience with a mix of uses.

An important component of Centers is the public realm. The public realm is the area that the public has access to for informal rest and recreation activities such as walking, sitting, games and observing the natural environment. The public realm along with residential and employment uses help define a sense of place and give Centers an identity.

The pedestrian and transit-oriented design of Centers helps reduce single-occupancy auto trips and promote physical activity, which can reduce obesity. Similar attention to the transit emphasis corridors that connect the Centers can further reduce such trips and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions – a main contributor to climate change. A reduction in vehicle miles traveled helps the county in meeting its goals for climate change as detailed in the Natural Environment chapter of this comprehensive plan.

Specific Centers also promote the county's goals for sustainability by incorporating environmentally friendly building design and development practices into the development process such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Built Green and low impact development (LID) techniques.

Snohomish County has four types of Centers in unincorporated UGAs that are differentiated by purpose, location, intensity, and characteristics:

- Urban Centers
- Transit Pedestrian Villages
- Urban Villages
- Manufacturing and Industrial Centers

Whenever possible, it is the county's intent to support the efforts of the cities to preserve, enhance, or develop centers within their city limits. Centers within unincorporated UGAs will be established with special emphasis on areas within the Southwest UGA cognizant of the cities' efforts for their own centers. The county will explore incentives and develop other techniques to make center development viable in the long term. Careful attention must be given to the recreational and cultural needs of those who will live and work in unincorporated county areas.

GOAL LU 3 Establish a system of compact, clearly defined mixed-use centers that promote neighborhood identification, reduce vehicle miles traveled, promote physical activity, and support the county's sustainability goals.

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Objective LU 3.A Plan for Urban Centers within unincorporated UGAs consistent with Vision 2040 and the CPP’s.

- LU Policies** 3.A.1 The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and UGA land use plans shall include designations and implementation measures for Urban Centers, based on the characteristics and criteria below.
- 3.A.2 Urban Centers shall be located within a UGA and:
- Be sized up to 1.5 square miles;
 - Contain a mix of high-density residential and higher-intensity commercial, office, and public uses;
 - Be pedestrian and transit-oriented;
 - Include urban services;
 - Reflect high quality urban design;
 - Emphasize open spaces, parks, and plazas to create a sense of place;
 - Develop/redevelop over time and in phases;
 - Plan for “complete streets” that are designed and operated to allow safe access for users of all modes and ability levels with a street center line mile average of no less than 30 center line miles per square mile, as a measure of street connectivity. Street grids should strive to have blocks no larger than three hundred feet by three hundred feet square. In areas where this is not possible, well-designed mid-block pedestrian and bicycle pathways could be used to accomplish a similar result;
 - Plan for sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure commensurate with population and traffic patterns, including measures of street type, vehicle volume and speeds;
 - Plan for housing affordable to low-income and moderate-income households commensurate with the identified need through Snohomish County’s fair share housing methodology;
 - Include plans and regulations that encourage no net loss of affordable housing;
 - Plan and zone for a balance of residential, commercial, retail, and recreational uses. At least one housing unit shall be allowed for each employment unit in the center;
 - Develop with the community design guidelines and standards for buildings and streets that include criteria to make safe and active streetscapes, discourage uses and designs that disrupt pedestrian and bicycle flow and access, incorporate locally important characteristics and historic structures, and promote good building design;

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- Prohibit surface parking lots and at-grade parking, with the exception of on-street parking; and
 - Have good access to the local and regional transportation and transit system.
- 3.A.3 Urban Centers shall be located adjacent to a principal arterial road, and meet one of the following additional locational criteria (measured along existing road rights-of-way):
- Be within ½ mile of an existing high capacity transit station;
 - Be within ½ mile of an existing transit center; or
 - Be within ¼ mile of an existing bus stop on a major transportation corridor.
- 3.A.4 Residential net densities shall not be less than 12 dwelling units per acre; maximum densities may be established as part of more detailed planning. Population and employment size will be consistent with criteria in the Countywide Planning Policies and General Policy Plan.
- 3.A.5 Urban Centers are designated on the FLUM and additional Urban Centers may be designated in future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.
- 3.A.6 Desired growth within Urban Centers shall be accomplished through application of appropriate zoning classifications, provision of necessary services and public facilities, including transit, sewer, water, stormwater, roads and pedestrian improvements, parks, trails and open space, and protection of critical areas. The County will identify and apply methods to facilitate development within designated Urban Centers, including supportive transit, parks, road and non-motorized improvements.
- 3.A.7 All Urban Centers are designated as TDR receiving areas and all development approvals in Urban Centers shall be consistent with adopted TDR policies in this chapter.

Objective LU 3.B Plan for Transit Pedestrian Villages within Urban Centers.

- LU Policies**
- 3.B.1 Transit Pedestrian Villages are areas that surround an existing or planned high capacity transit center. Transit Pedestrian Villages may be designated on the FLUM.
- 3.B.2 Transit Pedestrian Villages will be located around existing or planned transit centers.
- 3.B.3 Minimum densities within Transit Pedestrian Villages shall be determined through more detailed planning and implementing development regulations.

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- 3.B.4 The county shall develop and adopt a detailed master plan for each Transit Pedestrian Village as an amendment to the GPP. State Environmental Policy Act review shall be conducted for each plan. The plan and planning process shall include the following elements:
- (a) a survey of local residents and property owners to identify local issues;
 - (b) analysis of land use, including an assessment of vacant and redevelopment land potential, ownership patterns, and a ranking of sites based on their potential for development/redevelopment in the near and long terms;
 - (c) analysis of demographic and market conditions, to help identify the most feasible mix of land uses;
 - (d) assessment of environmental constraints and issues (e.g., wetlands, streams, views);
 - (e) identification and mapping of the geographic boundaries for each Transit Pedestrian Village;
 - (f) identification of and creation of a conceptual plan for each Transit Pedestrian Village, indicating the general location and emphasis of various land uses including residential, employment and the public realm, and any potential phases of development;
 - (g) review and allocation or reallocation of targets for population and employment growth and affordable housing, in conjunction with land use planning;
 - (h) identification of public service and capital facility needs (e.g., drainage, sewerage facilities, parks, cultural/educational facilities, transit facilities), and development of a targeted, phased capital improvement program;
 - (i) development of a circulation plan, including street improvements, parking management, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements;
 - (j) recommendations to address specific design concerns and planning or regulatory issues; and
 - (k) analysis of existing and potential transit service.
- 3.B.5 Transit Pedestrian Villages shall be regulated through appropriate zoning classification(s).
- 3.B.6 Snohomish County will work with key service providers and agencies to develop coordinated capital facility plans for each

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designated Transit Pedestrian Village. The county will also use its budgeting process to target and prioritize provision of adequate county services and facilities to designated centers.

Objective LU 3.C

Plan for Urban Villages within unincorporated UGAs.

LU Policies 3.C.1

Urban Villages shall be planned as compact pedestrian-oriented areas within designated Urban Growth Areas. Urban Villages are generally smaller than an Urban Center and provide an intermediate level of commercial or other services for an existing community, or take advantage of unique characteristics of an area that provide opportunities for higher intensity development with public benefits of open space or other public amenities. The development will include a variety of small-scale commercial and office uses, public buildings, high-density residential units, and public open space. Pedestrian orientation includes circulation, scale and convenience with connections between neighborhoods, communities and other centers. Urban Villages should also include urban services and reflect high quality urban design. Urban Villages serve several neighborhoods within a radius of about two miles. Urban Villages will develop/redevelop over time and may develop in phases.

3.C.2

Urban Villages shall be located where access to transportation facilities is available or can be improved based on the demands of the specific site and intensity of development and shall be designed to maximize use of nearby transit facilities. Locations may be on or adjacent to a minor arterial road, or within one-fourth mile of existing or planned access to local transit service, or within one-half mile of a high capacity transit station.

3.C.3

Residential net densities shall be at least 12 dwelling units per acre; maximum densities may be established as part of more detailed planning.

3.C.4

Additional Urban Villages may be designated in the future through amendments to the comprehensive plan.

3.C.5

Urban Villages will be implemented through application of appropriate zoning classifications, provision of necessary services and public facilities (including transit, sewer, water, stormwater, roads and pedestrian improvements, parks, trails and open space) and protection of critical areas. The county will identify and apply methods to facilitate development within designated Urban Villages, including targeting of public facilities such as transit, parks and road improvements. Provision of needed public services provided by entities other than the county shall be incorporated in the Capital Facilities Plans of the service providers and may be planned and

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programmed in phases. Capital Facilities Plans shall provide for urban services needed at the time of development approval of specific phases of a project. The intensity of development may be tied to implementation of specific elements of Capital Facilities Plans including provision of roadway, transit, utility and public service facilities.

- 3.C.6 The urban village at the county Cathcart site will be developed with principles of sustainability that conserve resources, use materials that consider occupant health, and provide opportunities for physical activity, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Built Green, to serve as a vibrant community focal point for the surrounding neighborhoods in the northeast areas of the Southwest UGA. Neighborhood-serving businesses and service providers – including public services such as library and postal service - will be especially encouraged to locate at the village.
- 3.C.7 The Urban Village at Point Wells is singularly unique due to its location, geography, access points and historical uses. The site is a relatively isolated area of unincorporated Snohomish County, bounded by Puget Sound to the west and a steep bluff to the east. It is bisected by a rail line running north/south and is accessible only by a two-lane road from the south that passes through a low-density residential community and across the Snohomish/King County line to Point Wells. In addition, the re-designation of Point Wells from its longstanding industrial status to that of Urban Village poses unique challenges to its re-development. Due to its uniqueness, Point Wells requires a land use policy that applies to it alone. The Urban Village at Point Wells will be developed to provide a location for high intensity residential development oriented to the amenities of Puget Sound with a mix of uses to serve the development and the surrounding neighborhoods. It will provide neighborhood-serving businesses and service providers. The urban village will provide public access to Puget Sound available to the larger regional population and provide for ecological restoration appropriate to the site. Uses proposed must be supported by adequate transportation facilities including local bus service or customized transit. Public services and infrastructure required to support Urban Village development at Point Wells shall be incorporated in the Capital Facilities Plans of the County; or if provided by entities other than the County, the property owner must successfully negotiate binding agreements with other entities to provide such services, utilities or infrastructure prior to the County approving a development permit that necessitates the provision of services, utilities or infrastructure. Urban Village development projects at Point Wells may be planned

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and programmed in phases. The intensity of development shall be consistent with the level of service standards adopted by the entity identified as providing the service, utility or infrastructure.

Objective LU 3.D **Identify and plan a network of transit emphasis corridors to link significant concentrations of population and employment, which may be in new and redeveloped neighborhoods, centers, or existing neighborhoods, commercial development, and employment areas.**

- LU Policies**
- 3.D.1 The county shall work with affected cities, transit service providers, and other stakeholders to pursue integrated land use and transportation planning along identified transit emphasis corridors, consistent with policy direction concerning these corridors in the Transportation chapter.
 - 3.D.2 The county shall work to create pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation linkages between new and redeveloped areas within the corridors and adjacent neighborhoods to reduce the dependence on the automobile and promote improved human health through increased physical activity.
 - 3.D.3 The county shall work to link new and existing neighborhoods within and near identified transit emphasis corridors creating a sense of community and shall include sidewalks and paths, where practicable, for safe passage to schools and other places of activity in the community.

Objective LU 3.E **Plan for Manufacturing and Industrial Centers within the unincorporated UGA.**

- LU Policies**
- 3.E.1 Manufacturing and Industrial Centers shall allow a mix of nonresidential uses that support the center and its employees.
 - 3.E.2 The Manufacturing and Industrial Centers shall be sized to allow a minimum of 20,000 jobs. Development regulations should allow an employment density of at least 20 employees per employment acre for new growth.
 - 3.E.3 The Manufacturing and Industrial Centers shall be shown on the Future Land Use Map as an overlay.
 - 3.E.4 Within Manufacturing and Industrial Centers large retail or non-related office uses shall be discouraged.

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- 3.E.5 Manufacturing and Industrial Centers shall be supported by adequate public facilities and service, including good access to the regional transportation system.
- 3.E.6 The county shall designate the Paine Field-Boeing area as a Manufacturing/Industrial Center in coordination with the City of Everett.
- 3.E.7 Land uses and zoning of Paine Field will continue to be governed by the Snohomish County Airport Paine Field Master Plan and Snohomish County Zoning Code consistent with federal aviation policies and grant obligations.

Objective LU 3.F Support city efforts to preserve enhance or develop urban or small town centers and main streets.

- LU Policy** 3.F.1 Coordinate land use planning efforts with towns and cities and encourage development within the unincorporated area that enhances the vitality of a city's center or main street.

Objective LU 3.G Investigate and develop techniques to ensure the long-term success of center development.

- LU Policies** 3.G.1 The county shall recognize the importance of centers in setting high priorities for development and installation of capital improvements within urban centers, and shall encourage similar recognition by other service providers.
- 3.G.2 The county shall coordinate the design and development of centers and their connecting transit emphasis corridors in unincorporated areas with developers, transit planning agencies, and service providers, and other stakeholders to achieve compatibility of land use, transportation, and capital facility objectives within centers. (See Urban Design Section)
- 3.G.3 The county shall develop and implement techniques within designated centers that allow the phasing of development and ensure the centers' long-term development potential.
- 3.G.4 The county shall investigate innovative methods that will facilitate center development such as land assembly, master planning, and urban redevelopment.
- 3.G.5 Centers should be located and designed to be connected to bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- 3.G.6 The county shall explore the suitability of incentives used by other jurisdictions to encourage mixed-use development for use in appropriate locations within unincorporated UGAs, such as along

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transit emphasis corridors connecting urban centers, in urban villages, and in other concentrations of employment and population.

3.G.7 The county shall codify suitable incentives for mixed-use development.

3.G.8 REPEALED BY AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 14-129.

3.G.9 Snohomish County shall support city annexation of areas designated Urban Center, Transit Pedestrian Village, or Urban Village after the annexing city and the county adopt an interlocal agreement consistent with the annexation principles developed by Snohomish County Tomorrow. The interlocal agreement shall address the smooth transition of services from the county to the city and shall ensure that the city comprehensive plan and development regulations provide capacity for at least the same overall density and intensity of development provided by the county comprehensive plan and development regulations. If the area to be annexed includes an area designated as a receiving area under the county’s Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, then the interlocal agreement shall also ensure that the area remains a TDR receiving area or that other areas of the city are designated TDR receiving areas so that the city development regulations provide equivalent or greater capacity for receiving TDR certificates and equivalent or greater incentives for the use of TDR certificates.

3.G.10 The county shall pursue lease, purchase and/or development agreements with all development partners at the county Cathcart site to support that county objectives for the site, generally, and the urban village in particular, are achieved.

3.G.11 The county shall explore potential incentives for small to medium-sized businesses that commit to employing local residents to locate at the county Cathcart site as a means to reduce commute trips and strengthen the local economy.

Objective LU 3.H Encourage transit-supportive land uses that are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods to locate and intensify within designated centers and along transit emphasis corridors.

LU Policies 3.H.1 The county shall encourage mixed-use and/or higher density residential development in appropriate locations along transit emphasis corridors. Corridor planning can help identify those locations where higher densities and mixed uses can best support transit and non-motorized access.

3.H.2 Projects within or near designated centers or along transit emphasis corridors shall provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit

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facilities and/or the center to encourage pedestrian activity, support transit use and decrease auto trips.

3.H.3 In advance of market activities that may limit future potential public benefits, the county should pursue zoning and other strategies around transit oriented development (TOD) sites to guide sustainable and equitable development patterns that incorporate affordable housing production.

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Housing

Background

The availability of healthy and safe housing that people can afford is pivotal to the success of our communities. Decent housing in a suitable living environment - our nation's housing goal - is essential to the pursuit of a vital economy and a healthy community. While nearly two-thirds of Snohomish County households are currently enjoying home ownership, this rate is falling and is expected to fall further in the future. In addition, many low and moderate income households are paying more for housing than they can afford.

Durable and safe housing located in areas that promote healthy living is essential to the pursuit of a vibrant economy. Housing should be built to last beyond 50 years and be built mindful of energy demands and environmental impacts to protect housing investments and resources. Moreover, there is a direct link between housing and the well-being of Snohomish County communities. Indoor air quality is a major contributor to asthma and other indoor-related health illnesses. Establishing walkable communities and equitable distribution of neighborhood amenities such as parks, schools, and community centers can help address health issues such as childhood obesity.

The GMA requires a housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods, that:

(a) includes an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;

(b) includes a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences;

(c) identifies sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and

(d) makes adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. (RCW 36.70A.070)

The inventory and analysis is included in the Housing Needs Analysis technical report prepared for the Comprehensive Plan. It includes an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs for the planning horizon. The Needs Analysis also includes the analysis of the adequacy of the capacity of lands zoned in various residential categories to meet the needs of all economic segments of the population. This analysis is called the residential land use needs analysis (RLUNA). Additional information on housing supply and demand, both countywide and by jurisdiction, is found in the Introduction of the Comprehensive Plan, and in the *Snohomish County Housing Characteristics and Needs Report* prepared in collaboration with Snohomish County cities through Snohomish County Tomorrow. This report is the common data foundation for all housing elements among Snohomish County jurisdictions. The focus for affordable housing is on the three

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lowest HUD groupings for household incomes:

- Extremely Low Income (less than 30% Area Median Income (AMI));
- Very Low Income (30% to 50% AMI); and
- Low Income (51% to 80% AMI).

Goals, objectives, and policies are based on the Needs Analysis, the other requirements of the GMA, the recommended procedural criteria included in WAC 365-196-410, the countywide planning policies, other documents prepared by the county and cities cooperatively, and public input.

The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) coordinate county and city efforts to meet GMA housing goals. They set requirements for the county and the cities to report on housing characteristics and needs, utilize consistent definitions of housing income classifications, monitor the effectiveness of housing actions, and reconcile neighborhood preservation with special needs housing. The CPPs also encourage infill housing, support a relationship between the location of housing and jobs, environmental sensitivity in housing development, and consideration of the impact of regulations, mitigation fees and processing time on housing costs.

The Countywide Planning Policies are addressed, though not duplicated, in the goals and policies of the Housing Element.

The CPPs provide guidance for a housing report prepared by the county and cities to prepare for conducting comprehensive plan updates and assessing progress on achieving policies relating to housing. This report monitors the performance of jurisdictions in meeting housing needs, particularly of low and moderate income households. It also monitors the supply of housing units,

including the availability and location of housing and the number of housing units to meet the various housing needs of the projected population.

Also included in the Housing Element are policies and measures which the county intends to implement to ensure that sufficient land for housing is identified and will be available in an efficient and competitive land market.

The housing element assumes that the market place will guarantee adequate housing for those in the upper economic brackets but that some combination of appropriately zoned land, regulatory incentives, financial subsidies, and innovative planning techniques will be necessary to make adequate provisions for the needs of lower income households.

The GMA Housing Element provides the overall housing policy guidance to the county. Other policy documents deal with more specific policies and implementation devices for housing programs funded under state and federal legislation. Chief among these is the Consolidated Plan, prepared by the county's Office of Housing and Community Development every five years. It focuses on the housing needs of low and moderate income households. The county's Homeless Policy Task Force prepares a plan to deal with homelessness from prevention to provision of permanent housing.

While government policies and programs alone cannot ensure that everyone is adequately housed, attention has been given to removing regulatory barriers to affordable housing where such action is otherwise consistent with the Act.

Relationship to other GPP elements

The Housing Element relates closely to many elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The

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Land Use Element determines the types and locations of various types and densities of residential uses. This is part of the Land Use Element’s function of laying out all land uses in suitable amounts, locations and relationships to each other.

The Housing Element is also closely tied to the county’s land capacity evaluation program, particularly efforts to use urban land more efficiently (RCW 36.70A.215). Residential land uses are analyzed to assure that there is sufficient land devoted to the more dense housing types where low and moderate cost housing development typically takes place.

The Housing Element and Economic Development Element are closely related. Affordable, well-planned housing located with good accessibility to employment is an essential part of a healthy economy.

The Housing Element is related to Utilities, Capital Facilities and Transportation, as well as education and government services. All these facilities and services are necessary to support households directly, or support their ability to connect to jobs and government support programs.

The integration of housing and transportation planning is especially important because of the inter-connection between housing and transportation costs in the household budget.

The ability of transportation projects to transform land use patterns, and of land use to either support or subvert transportation investments, particularly in mass transit projects, is another key factor in crafting housing policy and programs. The federal government has recognized these relationships in its Sustainable Communities Initiative. These and similar federal policy initiatives will likely exert a significant influence on local comprehensive planning.

Current Housing Trends

The Introduction includes description and analysis of significant demographic trends that affect housing policies. Most critical are the changes in household composition. While in 1990 close to half the households were traditional married couples with children, by 2012 the proportion was under one-quarter.

Other trends: aging of the population; increasing ethnic diversity; and high mobility all point toward increasing flexibility in the types and locations of housing that the county should permit and encourage.

GOAL HO 1 Ensure that all county residents have the opportunity to obtain safe, healthy, and affordable housing.

Objective HO 1.A Ensure fair and equal housing opportunities.

HO Policies 1.A.1 County regulations shall continue to be in compliance with state and federal fair housing laws.

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- 1.A.2 The siting of group homes shall be facilitated, especially those designed to house special needs populations.
- 1.A.3 Broader public understanding of fair housing shall continue to be promoted through support of educational and informational outreach programs.
- 1.A.4 Information regarding the development of ADA-accessible housing units, or units that can be easily modified to meet the individual needs of a person with disabilities, shall be developed and promoted.
- 1.A.5 Support the coordination of housing and service providers to serve persons with special needs.

Objective HO 1.B Ensure that a broad range of housing types and affordability levels is available in urban and rural areas.

- HO Policies**
- 1.B.1 The county shall facilitate affordable home ownership and rental opportunities by promoting an increased supply of safe and healthy lower-cost housing types, such as housing on small lots, townhouses, multiplexes, manufactured housing, mobile homes, and mixed-use housing.
 - 1.B.2 The county shall recognize the increasing diversity in the cultural and economic backgrounds of its residents and shall encourage a broad range of affordable ownership and rental housing opportunities, including opportunities for persons with special needs.
 - 1.B.3 The county shall support the development and preservation of mobile and manufactured home parks.
 - a. Create a comprehensive plan designation and development regulations that will encourage the long-term preservation of mobile and manufactured parks.
 - b. Investigate the development of site size and buffering standards for mobile and manufactured parks that permit development in all medium and high density residential zones and conditional development in low density residential zones.
 - 1.B.4 The county shall encourage and support the development of innovative housing types that make efficient use of the county land supply such as residential units in mixed-use developments, accessory-dwelling units, cottage housing, co-housing, and live/work units.

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- 1.B.5 The county shall allow for new residential development at the county Cathcart site that incorporates a mix of housing types and densities and is supported by public and private infrastructure, including transit, pedestrian facilities and adequate parking. This development shall provide complementary housing types not generally available within the neighborhood.

Objective HO 1.C Make adequate provisions for the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the population.

- HO Policies** 1.C.1 The county shall cooperate with public, private and non-profit providers in applying techniques for increasing the supply of owner-occupied homes, including affordable home ownership opportunities.
- 1.C.2 REPEALED BY AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 14-129.
- 1.C.3 The county shall encourage ~~((private))~~ for-profit and non-profit sector production of new housing units that are affordable to and occupied by low income households.
- a. Explore and evaluate various fiscal and regulatory tools and funding resources and strategies to encourage housing providers to increase the supply of affordable housing units generally, and particularly within mixed-income developments and communities.
- ((a)) b. Provide incentives that encourage for-profit and non-profit residential developers to address low- and moderate-income housing needs, such as priority permit processing and exemptions or reductions in impact fee mitigation payments for low-income projects with long-term affordability commitments.
- ((b)) c. Evaluate the feasibility of reducing minimum permitted lot sizes in non-PRD developments.
- d. Encourage through incentives and other techniques a balance of affordable and market-rate housing within urban centers and along transit emphasis corridors.
- 1.C.4 The county has implemented and shall maintain the Snohomish County Affordable Housing Trust Fund to develop and maintain housing affordable to households with incomes below 50 percent of median.
- 1.C.5 The county shall continue to support the efforts of the Housing Authority of Snohomish County to increase the supply of low and moderate income housing

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- 1.C.6 The county shall encourage the capacity of nonprofit housing and community development organizations to develop and manage low income housing.
- 1.C.7 The county shall pursue techniques to minimize the displacement of low and moderate income households resulting from losses in the county's existing stock of low-cost housing.
- 1.C.8 The county shall evaluate the feasibility of implementing a mitigation program for low-income households (<50 percent of median income as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the agency that defines eligibility for assistance based on that definition) displaced as a result of manufactured or mobile housing community closures, or the conversion of public assisted housing stock to market rate housing.
- 1.C.9 The county shall investigate methods of ensuring that redevelopment will not result in a net loss of affordable housing; i.e. every unit of affordable housing lost to redevelopment is replaced with like, affordable housing, suitable for and in a location beneficial to the same demographics as those displaced by redevelopment. To this end, the county shall consider requirements for the inclusion of low-income housing or fees in lieu of providing low-income housing.
- 1.C.10 The county should consider measures that avoid concentrations of low-income and special needs housing.
- 1.C.11 The county shall, through the *Snohomish County Housing Characteristics and Needs Report*, update the demographic changes and housing needs of county residents, as required by the county's Consolidated Plan and in other planning efforts, to identify the gaps in housing availability for low-income households, special needs populations, and the homeless.
- 1.C.12 The county should encourage developments that include units affordable to a spectrum of incomes, including low and moderate income households.

Objective HO 1.D Maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned developable land.

- HO Policies**
- 1.D.1 The county shall establish a mix of densities in residentially zoned land that is served with adequate infrastructure based on the public's housing preferences, demonstrated need of low and moderate income households, preservation of critical areas, and coordination with the transportation system.
 - 1.D.2 The supply and mix of residentially zoned developable land that is served with adequate infrastructure shall be sufficient to

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accommodate the needs of low-income, moderate income and special needs households and support an efficient and competitive market for market-rate housing to meet the county’s changing demographic profile.

- 1.D.3 The county shall encourage expeditious and efficient infill development in urban growth areas.
- 1.D.4 The county shall encourage housing in mixed-use and mixed-income developments in designated Urban Centers in unincorporated Snohomish County.
- 1.D.5 The county shall assure that there is sufficient zoned land allowing group homes to accommodate the demand for this type of residence.

Objective HO 1.E Strengthen interjurisdictional cooperative efforts to ensure an adequate supply of housing is available to all economic segments of the county.

- HO Policies**
- 1.E.1 Snohomish County in cooperation with cities, public housing agencies, and other public, non-profit and private housing developers shall continue to strive to meet the housing needs of all income groups and demographic groups within the county as provided in the joint housing report as prescribed in countywide planning policy HO-5.
 - 1.E.2 In cooperation with the cities, the nonprofit housing development community, and local housing advocacy organizations, investigate the feasibility of initiating an effort to pass a voter-approved countywide low-income housing levy.
 - 1.E.3 The county should continue to participate in the multi-jurisdictional affordable housing collaboration known as the Alliance for Housing Affordability, and other cooperative efforts to promote an adequate and diversified supply of housing countywide.

Objective HO 1.F Encourage and support housing programs and policies that promote healthy living and improve occupant health and safety.

- HO Policies**
- 1.F.1 The county shall encourage housing developments that incorporate healthy living features such as non-toxic building materials and green design, access to transit and healthy foods, pedestrian-friendly environments, and safe routes to school.
 - 1.F.2 The county shall promote public understanding of healthy homes, through programs such as the Healthy Homes Initiative from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that educate

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on issues regarding indoor air quality, safe drinking water, and mold and moisture.

1.F.3 For affordable housing projects supported by county funding, the county should encourage, and where applicable, require green building design and practices that promote sustainability, such as the Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), or Built Green consistent with county and state building codes.

1.F.4 The county shall provide support, subject to funding availability, for weatherization, repairs, and/or replacement of substandard units to benefit occupant health and safety.

GOAL HO 2 Ensure the vitality and character of existing residential neighborhoods.

Objective HO 2.A Promote opportunities for all county residents to reside in safe and decent neighborhoods.

HO Policies 2.A.1 The county should preserve the character of stable residential neighborhoods through selective and innovative land use measures.

2.A.2 The county shall continue programs to repair and maintain existing housing in neighborhoods to reduce blight and deterioration and preserve and enhance the housing stock.

2.A.3 The county shall encourage the distribution of assisted rental housing in communities where less than 30 percent of the housing stock is assisted rental housing.

2.A.4 The county shall encourage development and maintenance of safe and secure outdoor environments, including the development of sidewalks in new subdivisions.

Objective HO 2.B Encourage the use of innovative urban design techniques and development standards to foster broad community acceptance of a variety of housing types affordable to all economic segments of the population.

HO Policies 2.B.1 The county shall encourage a variety of housing types and densities in residential neighborhoods.

2.B.2 The county shall facilitate the development of urban centers and urban villages in appropriate locations within UGAs.

2.B.3 The county shall work to develop and update, as needed, technical resources, such as those in Appendix I, to encourage innovative residential design and development practices.

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2.B.4 The county shall encourage the integration of a variety of dwelling types and intensities in residential neighborhoods.

GOAL HO 3 **Land use policies and regulations should contribute as little as possible to the cost of housing.**

Objective HO 3.A **Encourage land use practices, development standards, and building permit requirements that reduce housing production costs.**

HO Policies 3.A.1 The county shall complete an economic analysis of all proposed building and land use regulations. The economic analysis shall evaluate the regulations’ impact to the cost of housing and the county’s fair-share housing goals. The county shall ensure that the intent of proposed building and land use regulations be achieved in a manner that imposes the least amount of additional economic costs to development, including infill development, redevelopment, new housing, and renovation of existing housing.

3.A.2 Development standards and building permit requirements shall be reviewed every five years to ensure clarity and consistency while providing for a timely, fair, and predictable application processing outcome.

3.A.3 The county shall encourage cluster housing in order to minimize land and infrastructure costs.

3.A.4 Snohomish County shall endeavor to process completed development applications within 120 days.

3.A.5 The county’s impact fee program shall be based on a fair assessment of the cost of new public facilities needed to accommodate each housing unit.

Objective HO 3.B **Evaluate the feasibility of reducing housing development costs.**

HO Policies 3.B.1 The county shall analyze alternative funding methods to finance low-income housing, such as local improvement districts, bond levies, partnerships with non-profit agencies and housing authorities, and grants.

3.B.2 The county shall consider reducing residential parking requirements in neighborhoods with high levels of public transportation.

3.B.3 The county shall determine the feasibility of preparing programmatic areawide environmental impact statements for housing developments in communities where residential development is targeted.

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- 3.B.4 The county shall evaluate mechanisms to facilitate land assembly for residential developments in UGAs.
- 3.B.5 The county shall continue the demonstration program that provides for the use of environmentally sensitive housing development practices that minimize the impacts of growth on the county’s natural resource systems without adding to the cost of housing.

GOAL HO 4 The county shall monitor progress toward achieving the housing goals, objectives and policies of this General Policy Plan and the countywide planning policies.

Objective HO 4.A Maintain a long-term monitoring process through Snohomish County Tomorrow to evaluate the progress of housing strategies and the need for adjusting housing goals and policies.

- HO Policies**
- 4.A.1 The land capacity analysis of urban and rural unincorporated areas shall continue to include housing data.
 - a. The county shall monitor the adequacy of the supply of appropriately zoned developable land within urban and rural areas including land and housing prices and rents, in comparison with trends in household income.
 - 4.A.2 Based on the evaluation of housing data and the adequacy of the supply of developable residential land, the county shall, if necessary, apply reasonable measures and revise county comprehensive plan designations, housing densities, and zoning regulations to increase land capacity. If these measures do not suffice, the county may consider expanding UGA boundaries, consistent with RCW 36.70A and Snohomish County policies and codes.
 - 4.A.3 The county shall monitor housing discrimination complaints in Snohomish County.

Objective HO 4.B Track the provision of affordable housing units to assess whether an adequate supply of housing affordable to the county’s lower income and special needs residents, as defined in the *Housing Characteristics and Needs report for Snohomish County*, is being provided.

- HO Policies**
- 4.B.1 In support of countywide housing policies, the county shall seek partnerships with other jurisdictions, through the Alliance for Housing Affordability, the Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County, Snohomish County Tomorrow and similar forums, to track the

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provision of housing by type and affordability. This effort will include an assessment of progress toward meeting the county’s housing goals, including housing that addresses the needs of households within the Under 30% AMI, 30-50% AMI and 51-80% AMI segments, as projected in the current *Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County*.

4.B.2 Based upon the monitoring and evaluation results from Policy 4.B.1, the county shall evaluate the effectiveness of its zoning regulations to produce housing developments that meet the diverse housing needs identified in the *Housing Characteristics and Needs Report for Snohomish County*.

GOAL HO 5

The county shall support efforts to generate additional housing finance resources and programs that assist in addressing the housing goals, objectives and policies of this General Policy Plan and the countywide planning policies.

Objective HO 5.A

The county shall pursue new local resources necessary to leverage federal and state programs that support the development and preservation of affordable housing and increase the capacity of the county to meet the identified housing needs in the county.

HO Policies

5.A.1 The county shall support the continuation of existing affordable housing financing programs to the county, including those enabled by state authorizing law.

5.A.2 The county shall work to secure new local resources for affordable housing, particularly dedicated and on-going funding sources, including those enabled by state authorizing law.