

To: Chair Pramuk and Planning Commissioners,  
From: Terra Wilcoxson, Senior Planner  
Memo Date: July 18, 2022  
Meeting Date: July 25, 2022  
Subject: Housing Production Strategy Work Session #1

Urban Design and Planning staff and the project consultant, ECONorthwest, will meet with the Planning Commission on July 25, 2022. The purpose of this work session is to keep the Commission updated and solicit input on the Housing Production Strategy (HPS). This is the first of two Planning Commission Work Sessions on the HPS. The Planning Commission hearing for the project is anticipated in Spring of 2023.

The 2022 Council Work Plan includes Housing and Houselessness Support as one of five focus areas. Under Council's leadership, the City has committed to addressing Gresham's short- and long-term housing challenges because everyone deserves a secure and reliable place to call home. The City is working to influence the conditions that will result in more equitable access to housing for all community members. The purpose of the HPS is to select strategies to be implemented over the next six years that will aid in the development of housing options. The project is focused on housing equity and builds on data that was collected in 2021 as part of the City's Housing Capacity Analysis. However, it provides a deeper dive into Gresham's housing needs and evaluates policies and actions measures the City may adopt. The project is in fulfillment of state mandates from House Bill 2003 and, once adopted, this plan will be updated every six years.

Key points from the work to date include:

- Even though Gresham is one of the most affordable communities within the Portland region to live in, housing costs for rental and ownership units are both higher than many community members can afford.
- Meeting the housing needs of extremely low-income households (less than 50% median family income (MFI)) will require a combination of preserving existing and developing new income-restricted affordable housing. Development of income-restricted affordable housing typically requires extensive subsidy, with funding from state and federal sources, in addition to any support from the city and other partners.
- Meeting the housing needs of low-income households (50-80% MFI) will require a combination of preserving existing "naturally occurring affordable housing," development of new income-restricted affordable housing in this price range (for households with income of 50% to 60% of MFI) and developing new market-rate housing.

- Meeting the needs of middle-income households (80-120% MFI) will require a combination of the development of rental housing and lower-cost housing for homeownership. Some homeownership opportunities for this income range will likely be related to housing developed by nonprofit organizations, possibly with some subsidy.
- Addressing affordability issues, ensuring that people with disabilities have access to housing that addresses their disability, and that they have access to housing without discrimination will require increasing awareness of Fair Housing rules. It will also require approaches that encourage development of housing with specialized design standards to accommodate special needs.
- Ensuring that people of color have access to housing that they can afford without discrimination will also require increasing awareness of Fair Housing rules for property owners and managers, tenants, City decision makers, and City staff. It will require review of policies to evaluate if there are areas that may increase barriers to accessing housing by people of color.
- In order to meet the needs of people experiencing houselessness, potential strategies may range from emergency assistance (including rent and utility assistance), permanent supportive housing (including supportive housing with services), and improved access to an affordable housing unit.
- City staff and ECONorthwest are currently in the process of identifying potential policies and action measures. The City is looking for strategies that help to encourage the production of housing units, are controlled and implemented by the City of Gresham, and can be administered by existing City staff or a limited amount of new FTE, provided budgetary resources are available.
- As part of the process of evaluating potential action measures, ECONorthwest will provide additional information and qualitative and/or quantitative evaluation of up to seven strategies.

A project update and preliminary information on draft policies will be presented to the Planning Commission on July 25, 2022. Then, at the second Planning Commission work session, staff and the project consultant will solicit additional feedback on potential policies and land use actions to support the development of housing to meet current and future needs. Thank you in advance for your consideration.