

Working Together

The 2002 *Report* included a chapter entitled, “Recommendations for Working Together,” which consolidated the issues that emerged from that evaluation, and gave recommendations for resolving those issues. Using the theme of “working together,” we focus this chapter on the four Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) that call for cooperation between local governments to achieve housing objectives. Following this evaluation, we revisit those recommendations from the 2002 *Report* and comment on how they have been addressed.

We obtained the information for this chapter from the narratives submitted by each jurisdiction as part of the self-assessment survey (described in the Action chapter). As a result, the findings are largely anecdotal, pertaining to specific projects or programs, and do not indicate significant trends.

Countywide Planning Policy Housing Objective 3

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

Similar to HO 2, this is a very general, overarching type of policy, in this case for directing cities and the county to work together for the benefit of residents of all income levels; but at least one anecdotal finding fits best under this objective.

The City of Everett and Snohomish County have adopted an interlocal agreement, which is intended to encourage infill housing in Everett through Transfer of Development Rights (described further in the Action chapter), and which makes use of density incentives; however, no such transactions have occurred.

Countywide Planning Policy Housing Objective 4

Adopt and implement a fair share distribution of low-income and special needs housing so as to prevent further concentration of such housing into only a few areas. The county and cities will collaborate in formulating a methodology to assess existing and projected housing needs of the county’s population and a fair share housing allocation methodology.

SCT adopted a new Fair Share Housing Allocation in 2005 for planning through the year 2025. The SCT Steering Committee advised cities and the County to adopt their allocations into comprehensive plan updates. Through SCT’s Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), all jurisdictions assisted in developing the new Allocation. See HO 5, in the Action chapter, concerning implementation.

The Steering Committee also directed the PAC to propose a new method that would be easier to understand and implement. That revision process is scheduled to begin in 2008.

Countywide Planning Policy Housing Objective 6

Production of an adequate supply of low and moderate income housing will be encouraged by exploring the establishment of interjurisdictional private/public financing programs which involve local lenders and foster cooperative efforts with non-profit housing developers. (Amended Mar. 31, 2004 – Amended Ord. 04-007)

Two new events have addressed the intent of HO 6 (although some of the specific policy details are missing) to produce more affordable units through cooperation between local governments and nonprofits. One is a recently awarded grant from the Washington Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) to SCT for a study of cooperative programs between local governments to increase the supply of affordable housing. Snohomish County wrote the grant application and will manage the project, and the

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City of Lake Stevens will administer the grant. This will help SCT and its local governments identify successful programs from other housing affordability-challenged regions and adapt them for our use.

The second is a 2007 deal between Snohomish County, the YWCA, and the Everett Housing Authority. The County has lent its credit to the YWCA so that the latter benefits from lower borrowing costs. This makes possible the purchase and rehabilitation of three multi-families housing complexes in Everett, Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace. A total of 220 units will serve families at or below 50% of area median income.

No other interjurisdictional private/public financing programs we know of have reached the implementation stage.

Responses to Recommendations of the 2002 Housing Evaluation Report

The 2002 *Report*, as recommended by the PAC, included eleven recommendations, which arose from issues identified through the consultants' surveys, interviews, and meetings with representatives of the jurisdictions and other stakeholders. The table below lists these recommendations and comments about follow-up activity. It would appear that, aside from monitoring reports, little follow-up has taken place.

2002 Recommendations	Responses
1. "Consider revising/re-organizing the objectives, putting objectives that are means hierarchically beneath them."	SCT has not undertaken an effort to reorganize or revise the CPPs on housing in this manner.
2. "Promote the widespread use of an analysis, similar to the Residential Land Use Needs Analysis the County uses, to determine the amount of land, designated at various densities, needed to accommodate fair share housing goals for a given area."	Snohomish County and the City of Lake Stevens collaborated on an RLUNA for the city's planning purposes, but it has not been updated or used in subsequent comprehensive plans. This is the only known quantitative effort outside of the County's Comprehensive Plan to ensure that enough land is designated at appropriate quantities for accommodating Fair Share Allocations.
3. "Provide forums and guidance to jurisdictions to achieve the proper balancing between objectives seen to be in conflict."	An example given in the 2002 <i>Report</i> is the often-cited competing needs to accommodate affordable housing and to preserve open space. No special forums or guidance to local governments for resolving these issues are known to have occurred in Snohomish County.
4. "Encourage jurisdictions with similar housing needs and conditions to work together on housing alternatives, and resources, with outside partners appropriate to their needs."	The main idea behind this recommendation was that "Working together ... would reduce the duplication of individual jurisdiction meetings with providers and advocates." No efforts of this nature have been identified.

<p>5. “Facilitate formation of partnerships to plan and implement appropriate housing solutions between jurisdictions or groups of jurisdictions, and housing providers and advocacy organizations.”</p>	<p>The Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County has succeeded in bringing representatives of Snohomish County and the cities of Everett and Lynnwood into its membership, and to meet with housing authorities and nonprofit housing providers serving a variety of needs.</p> <p>Late in 2007, the Consortium initiated an effort to produce an Affordable Housing Action Plan, and secured a partnering agreement with the county.</p> <p>In turn, the County Executive convened a Housing and Homelessness Policy Oversight Committee to focus on ways of improving living conditions for low- and middle-income residents throughout the county. The Committee is charged with advising the Executive on the Consortium’s Plan, as well as other long-term strategies. Represented are leaders of local and state governments, the housing and real estate industries, educators, nonprofit executives, other businesses, and faith communities.</p>
<p>6. “Facilitate educational events and special studies related to meeting Snohomish County Housing Objectives and to removing impediments to success that draw on successful solutions to similar problems and needs from inside and outside of the County.”</p>	<p>The idea of this recommendation was for SCT to be a focal point for special studies and follow-up, public discussions about issues and opportunities affecting multiple jurisdictions; e.g. “methods to accommodate affordable housing that also preserve existing neighborhood character.” As far as we know, SCT has not taken on this role.</p>
<p>7. “Actively work with housing event sponsors to frame housing events that contribute to meeting better understanding of housing alternatives and to local partnerships for housing affordability.”</p>	<p>SCT members have attended and participated actively in events, such as the Housing Consortium’s 2007 Affordable Housing Conference, but were not active in planning such events or framing the featured issues.</p>
<p>8. “Coordinate a system of housing data sources and countywide housing planning that works together to provide appropriate data for local plans.”</p>	
<p>o “Housing Evaluation Report”</p>	<p>Fulfilled in this Report</p>

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○ “Consolidated Plan”	The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) requires Consolidated Plans of local governments that receive and distribute Community Development Block Grants and other housing funds. The City of Everett and the Snohomish County Department of Human Services last prepared their five-year plans in 2005, with the cooperation of Snohomish County Planning & Development Services, the Housing Authority of Snohomish County, and the Everett Housing Authority.
○ “2060 Interlocal Agreements”	This is a state program that created county-level Affordable Housing Trust Funds, including one in Snohomish County. It is funded by a \$10 recording fee on real property sales, and has since been supplemented by an extra \$8 recording fee (HB 1359, 2007).
○ “Assisted Rental Housing Inventory”	Snohomish County Department of Human Services is preparing a new Inventory at this time.
○ “Reasonable Measures”	“Reasonable measures” are actions that a city or county may take to increase residential capacity in urban areas. Many reasonable measures amount to affordable housing strategies, such as allowing accessory dwelling units or density bonuses. Snohomish County Planning & Development Services released a GMA reasonable measures report in 2005, which includes statements by most Snohomish County cities self-certifying their compliance with the reasonable measures requirements of GMA.
○ “Annual Growth Monitoring Reports”	Every Growth Monitoring Report (GMR) includes population and employment growth trends, as well as reports on new residential development activity. The 2003 GMR included a short research paper on Housing Affordability Trends. The 2004 GMR did not include an extra section on housing needs, prices, or affordability. The 2005 GMR provided a rental housing affordability survey. The 2006 GMR was passed over in favor of preparing the Buildable Lands Report and this Housing Evaluation Report.
9. “Adopt the Growth Monitoring Reports to include an every other year expanded affordable housing assessment composed of three sections.”	This recommendation was intended to cause more frequent re-evaluations of the type in the 2002 Report, based on the idea that five-year Housing Evaluation Reports “do not provide information often enough to support an active multi-jurisdictional housing effort.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Assisted Housing Provision” 	<p>This has not been done.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Action steps implemented according to specific local plans” 	<p>This has not been done.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Affordability as measured by Housing Sale and Rental Survey information” 	<p>Prior to this <i>Report</i>, the rental housing affordability survey was last published in the 2005 GMR. The previous sales housing affordability report appeared in the 2003 GMR.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Continue the Five-Year Housing Evaluation Reports to evaluate progress meeting housing goals, building on this report and the reporting and planning measures recommended above.” 	<p>Continued with this <i>Report</i>.</p>
<p>10. “Retain the 95% of median Fair Share standard, but consider changing income subcategories to match HUD definitions.”</p>	<p>Fulfilled in the 2025 Fair Share Housing Allocation, the 2005 GMR (rental housing affordability report), and this <i>Report</i>. Subcategories or thresholds are now set at 30%, 50%, and 80% of the countywide median household income.</p>
<p>11. “Consider adopting, possibly as a subset, targets for households within or below standard HUD income ranges of 50 and 80 percent. Consider a standard based on meeting the affordability needs of new households only. Consider converting the numeric goal to a percentage of new housing standard that can be more easily applied to current production.”</p>	<p>This pertains to the Fair Share Housing Allocation model. As stated in the 2002 <i>Report</i>, referring to the 2012 Allocation, “Fair Share Housing Allocations provide a single goal for each jurisdiction of the number of household with annual incomes below 95% of median income that should be affordably housed in the year 2012. The goal includes all need, projected future as well as historic, producing a very high target. A goal to be met so far in the future is difficult to apply to current housing activities.”</p> <p>The recommendation is based on King County’s policy, which the 2002 <i>Report</i> characterizes as a “much simpler and less idealistic approach to meeting growth management housing obligations.” King County jurisdictions are required to ensure that 17% of all new housing is affordable to low-income households, and 20% or 24% (depending on the community) are affordable to very low- or extremely low-income households.</p> <p>This recommendation is bound to be considered as the Fair Share remodel study proceeds in 2008.</p>

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