



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## Housing Element

# Welcome!

## The Comprehensive Plan Update

A comprehensive plan helps the public and elected officials define objectives, set priorities, and seek solutions to long-term issues. The Skagit County Comprehensive Plan provides a sense of direction, as well as a broad overview of where a community is and how it will grow over a 20-year horizon.

Skagit County last completed a major Comprehensive Plan update in 2007. This current update process responds to Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements to update the County's plan for 2016.

## Why We Are Here

The public workshop you're attending today is intended for public input on county-wide housing policies and needs. Today, we are asking you to:

- Help us ensure that the housing element describes your vision for Skagit County's housing needs
- Tell us any concerns, comments, or priorities you may have

## Today's Forum

Around the room you will find a variety of posters providing information for you to gain further understanding of the Housing Element and the update process.

Feel free to browse the stations in any order. If you have questions or comments, please find a staff member and they will be happy to speak with you.



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### Housing Element Requirements

#### **The Growth Management Act (GMA) goal for housing:**

*Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.*

(RCW 36.70a.020(4))

#### **The GMA requires housing elements to:**

- Include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs.
- Have a statement of goals, policies, objectives and mandatory provisions for preserving, improving, and developing housing.
- Identify sufficient land for housing, including government-assisted housing, low-income family housing, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes, and foster care facilities.
- Make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.





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### Existing Element Goals

- **Goal A.** Ensure that the supply of housing and sufficient land capacity keep pace with population growth.
- **Goal A-I.** Maintain a progressive program of financial, regulatory, and development measures that will produce opportunities for a full range of housing affordability.
- **Goal B.** Strive to preserve, conserve, and enhance the existing housing stock, including historic structures and sites; develop design guidelines and standards to improve the quality of new housing consistent with applicable building codes.
- **Goal B-I.** Manage regulatory, administrative, funding and information programs that contribute to the development and maintenance of high quality housing and strong communities throughout the County.
- **Goal C.** Strive to ensure that a variety of housing types, densities, and value can be produced in the rural area, Urban Growth Areas, and Rural Villages appropriate to the character of the individual communities. Additionally, ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity is available to accommodate growth and provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the population.
- **Goal C-I.** Ensure the availability of housing for people with special needs.
- **Goal D.** Strive for an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of farm workers and the agriculture industry.
- **Goal E.** Recognize the value of manufactured housing as an affordable housing solution.

The current Housing Element and Profile were developed in 2007 and do not reflect recent data or countywide housing studies.



Source: ibike.com



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### Recent Demographic Trends and Housing Conditions



Skagit County has grown, but more recently at a slower rate. There was a 2014 population of 119,500 (OFM)

Human services help support households in need

The population is aging and those that are aging tend to have more disabilities

Farmworkers have a need for **safe, affordable** housing



Housing stock is predominantly single family

Skagit County's population is becoming **more diverse**

Homelessness is a special need in the County, and affects children and adults



Household sizes are getting smaller

There is a greater need for affordable ownership and rental housing

Household poverty has increased





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### Key Questions going forward:

1. What can Skagit County do to “preserve, conserve, and enhance the existing housing stock” in its rural communities and neighborhoods, consistent with Goal B of the Comp Plan’s Housing Element?
2. Given a trend of smaller household sizes and an aging population, what can the County and cities do to promote housing variety for the current and next generation?
3. What are the appropriate and respective roles of the private sector and the public sector in meeting current and future housing needs?
4. The County allocates growth over the 2016- 2036 planning period in consultation with the cities. The County is required under the GMA to limit residential growth and densities in the rural area, while the cities are encouraged to accommodate population growth through encouraging multi family housing and residential density. The County provides human services countywide. There is a gap in the supply of affordable housing for the range of incomes in the County. What role should the County play? What role should the cities have?
5. As one of the more prominent employment sectors in Skagit County, agriculture generates a need for farmworker housing. While the agricultural jobs are generally in the rural county, the location of services and infrastructure is concentrated in the cities. What should be the County’s role? What should be the cities’ role?

Comment cards are available for feedback.