

# New Requirements for Local Housing Planning

Updating your housing element

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MIDDLE HOUSING TECHNICAL TEAM

CITY OF SNOHOMISH JOINT CITY COUNCIL/ PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING – 02.21.23



Washington State  
Department of  
**Commerce**

# We strengthen communities



HOUSING  
HOMELESSNESS



INFRASTRUCTURE AND  
BROADBAND



SMALL BUSINESS  
ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING AND TECH  
ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY  
SERVICES AND FACILITIES



CRIME VICTIMS AND  
PUBLIC SAFETY



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT

# Overview

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## Tonight we will cover:

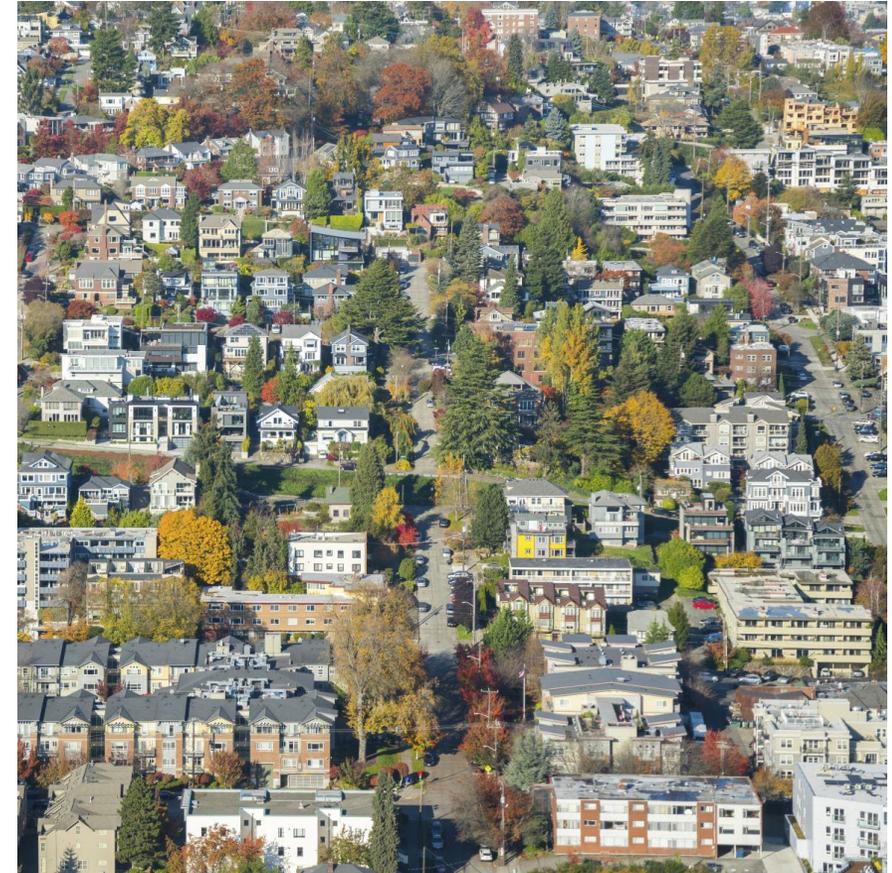
- Quick Growth Management Act background
- New housing requirements under the GMA
- Recent statewide and regional opinion survey
- Commerce assistance available to cities

# Why does the Growth Management Act exist?

## The GMA was adopted in 1990 as a statewide planning framework to:

- Address uncoordinated development and urban sprawl
- Manage threats to the quality of life in Washington
- Require local planning, guided by state law, and regionally coordinated

State law: **RCW 36.70A**  
Guidance statutes: **WAC 365-196**

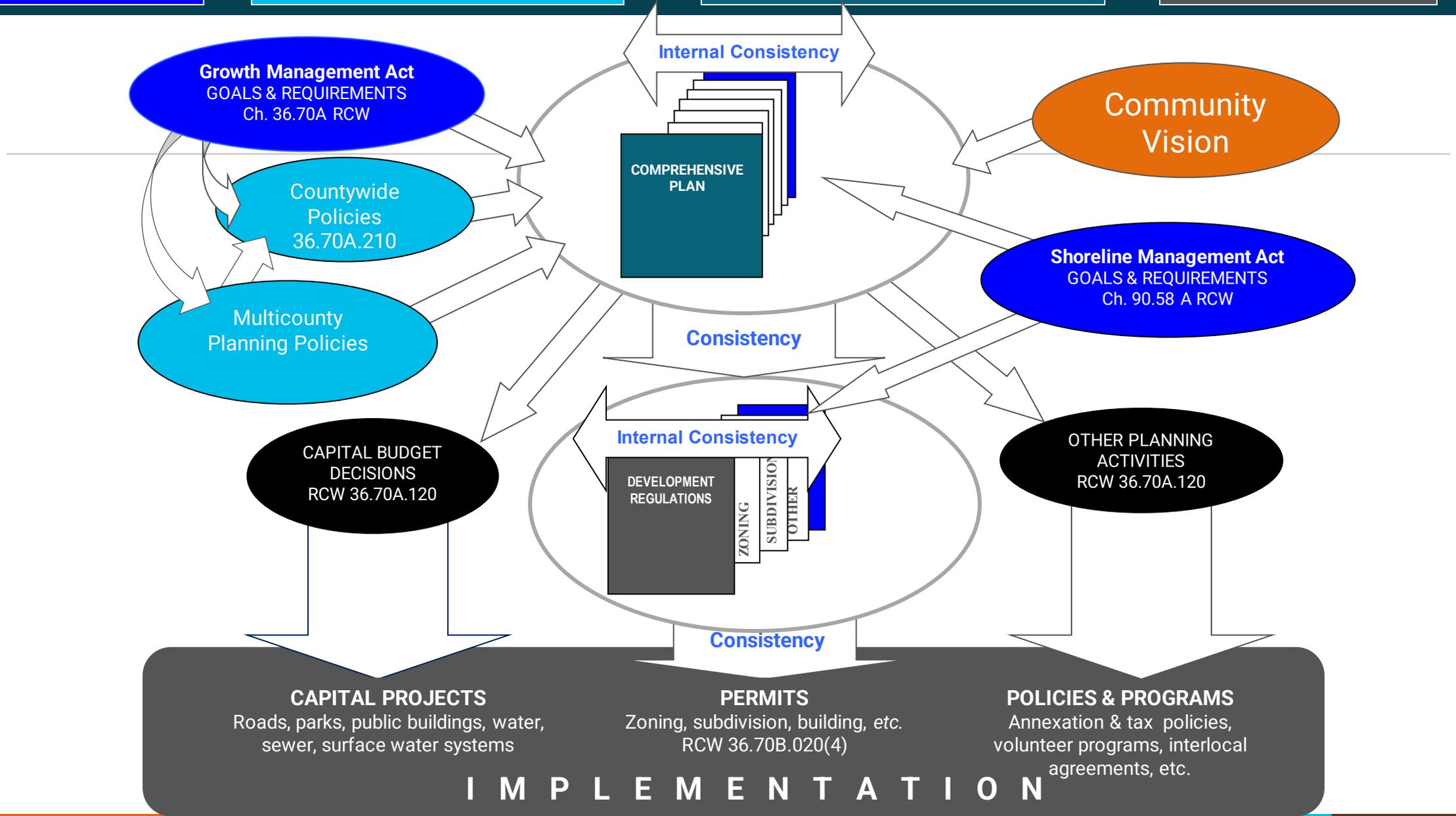


State Laws

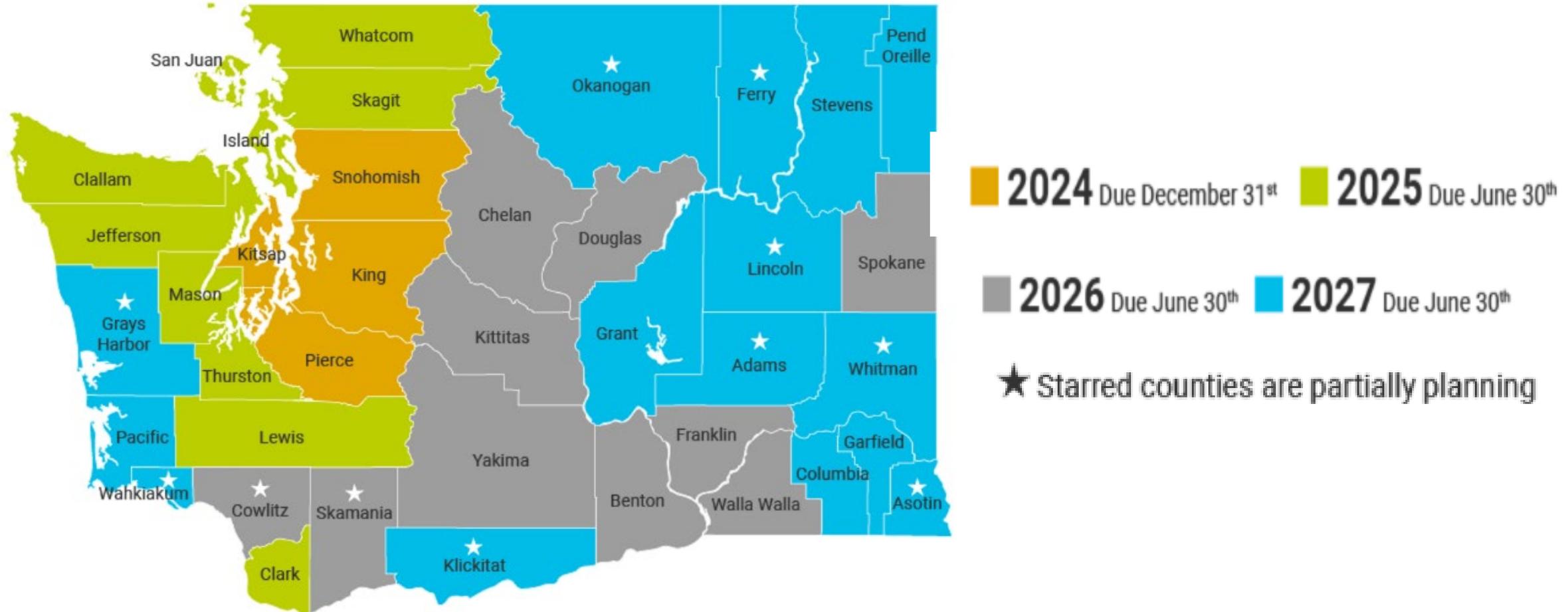
Regional Policies

Comprehensive Plan

Implementation



Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that comprehensive plans and development regulations be updated every 10 years



# Required elements of a GMA comprehensive plan

**Land Use:** Land uses, stormwater planning, ground water, physical activity

**Transportation:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, bicycle and pedestrian component

**Housing:** Inventory of existing housing, and, using state-projected needs, planning for and accommodating housing for all income levels, with a variety of housing types

**Utilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination between providers and land development

**Capital Facilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination of planning affordability analysis of serving the land use plan

**Rural (counties only):** Define and protect rural character  
RCW 36.70A.070 and WAC 365-196



# Need for more robust housing planning

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- From 2000-2015, Washington state fell over 225,000 homes short of meeting its housing needs\*
- Disparities in housing in Washington:
  - Rates of cost-burden highest in communities of color (BIPOC)
  - The homeownership rate for households with people of color in Washington is 19 percentage points below that of non-Hispanic white households\*\*
- In 2021, Washington adopted HB 1220 to direct communities to strengthen how they accommodate housing

\*Source: UpForGrowth, 2020 \*\*Source: Washington State Homeownership Disparities Work Group Report, 2022

HB 1220 (laws of 2021):  
Changed RCW 36.70A.070 (2) The Housing Element

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### **Changed GMA housing goal:**

- “Plan for and accommodate ~~encourage the availability of affordable~~ housing affordable to all economic segments.”

### **Requires Commerce to provide projected housing need to local governments:**

- For moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households
- For permanent supportive housing, emergency housing and emergency shelters (referred to as special housing needs)

# HB 1220:

## Changed RCW 36.70A.070 (2): The Housing Element

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### **Local housing element to:**

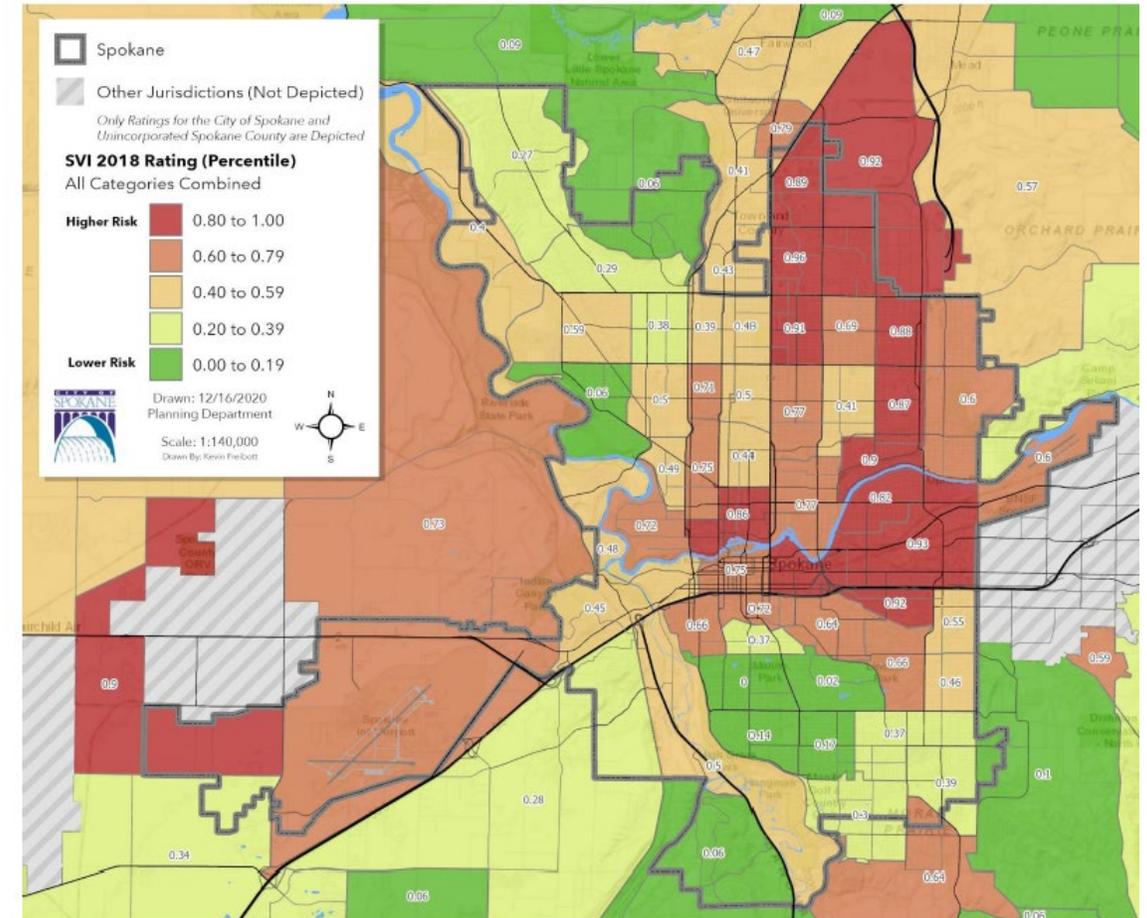
- Identify sufficient capacity of land for identified housing needs, including the number of units and types provided by Commerce
- Within urban growth areas (UGAs), provide moderate density housing options (such as townhomes, duplexes, and triplexes)
- Document barriers to housing availability, such as gaps in local funding, development regulations, etc.
- Make adequate provisions for housing needs for all economic segments, with consideration for:
  - Low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households
  - Housing locations in relation to employment locations
  - Role of accessory dwelling units (ADUs)

# HB 1220: More changes...

## Disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion

- Identify local policies and regulations (including zoning, disinvestment, and infrastructure availability) that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing
- Begin to undo these impacts through policies and regulations
- Identify areas at higher risk of displacement and establish anti-displacement policies

Figure 5: Overall SVI Value, Combined Value for All Categories by Tract



# What is city's responsibility?

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- Consider what is needed for comprehensive plan & development regulations to provide enough housing
- Consider whether incentives or other programs & partnerships can help
- Coordinate at regional level with County & PSRC
- Get broad & inclusive public input on needs/ opportunities
- Consider what can be done to reduce past racial impacts
- Adopt changes, as needed, to comp plan & development regulations **by December 2024**

# Assistance available from Commerce

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- Accessory dwellings guidance
- Land capacity guidance
- Guidance to reduce disparate impacts
- Guidance to plan for housing by income brackets
- Middle housing toolkit of housing types & menu of standards that a city may choose to adopt as part of the 2024 update



# Commerce has projected housing needs

Over 1 million more homes needed statewide over next 20 years

	Total	Non-PSH	0-30% PSH	30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120%	Emergency Housing/Shelter
Future Housing Needed (2044)	<b>1,269,628</b>	112,927	54,994	139,725	176,906	195,358	135,408	454,310	63,318
Estimated Housing Supply (2020)	<b>960,951</b>	32,115	6,266	91,505	155,214	181,009	119,133	375,709	5,991
New Housing Needed (2020-2044)	<b>308,677</b>	80,813	48,728	48,220	21,692	14,349	16,274	78,601	57,327

\*PSH = permanent supportive housing

# Local governments have key role to allocate & plan for housing

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## Allocate countywide housing needs by income bracket

- Commerce will provide allocation tool and countywide housing needs
- Counties & cities should agree on housing needs allocations that sum to total countywide need

## Plan for housing needs

- Review and update policies
- Review zoning assumptions and identify land capacity
- Make adjustments to zoning & any other regulations to have sufficient capacity for housing needs
- Review other regulations, fee structures, incentives, etc. which influence housing & identify actions to address barriers
- Authorize and use available local funding tools

# What housing options to consider, and where?

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## Especially in areas well-served by transit

- Mixed use areas with mix of multi-unit housing & commercial,
- Opportunities for people with special needs (disabled, seniors, veterans, etc.)
- Opportunities for people with lower incomes

## In neighborhoods

- ADUs (attached & detached)
- Small-scale “**middle housing**” mixed in with detached houses
- Other traditional & innovative ideas

# Multi- and countywide planning policies are to guide local plans

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## PSRC countywide planning policy excerpts for housing:

- Achieve and sustain...a sufficient supply of housing to meet the needs of low-income, moderate-income, middle-income, and special needs individuals and households...
- Promote home ownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families and individuals, while also recognizing historic inequities...

## Snohomish countywide planning policy excerpt for housing:

- **HO-4** The county and cities should implement policies that allow for the development of moderate density housing to help meet future housing needs, diversify the housing stock, and provide more affordable home ownership and rental opportunities. This approach should include code updates to ensure that zoning designations and allowed densities, housing capacity, and other restrictions do not preclude development of moderate density housing.

2022

# Joint Housing Opinion Survey



Puget Sound Regional Council



Washington State  
Department of  
**Commerce**

## Housing costs and homelessness are the top two issues throughout Washington state

**78%** say they want more housing options for seniors, teachers, firefighters, childcare workers, and health care workers

**74%** prefer most new housing to be in walkable neighborhoods

**64%** agree that their community needs more diverse and affordable types of housing



**77%** say rents are too high

**75%** say it costs too much to buy a home

**83%** say more reasonably priced housing is needed in their communities



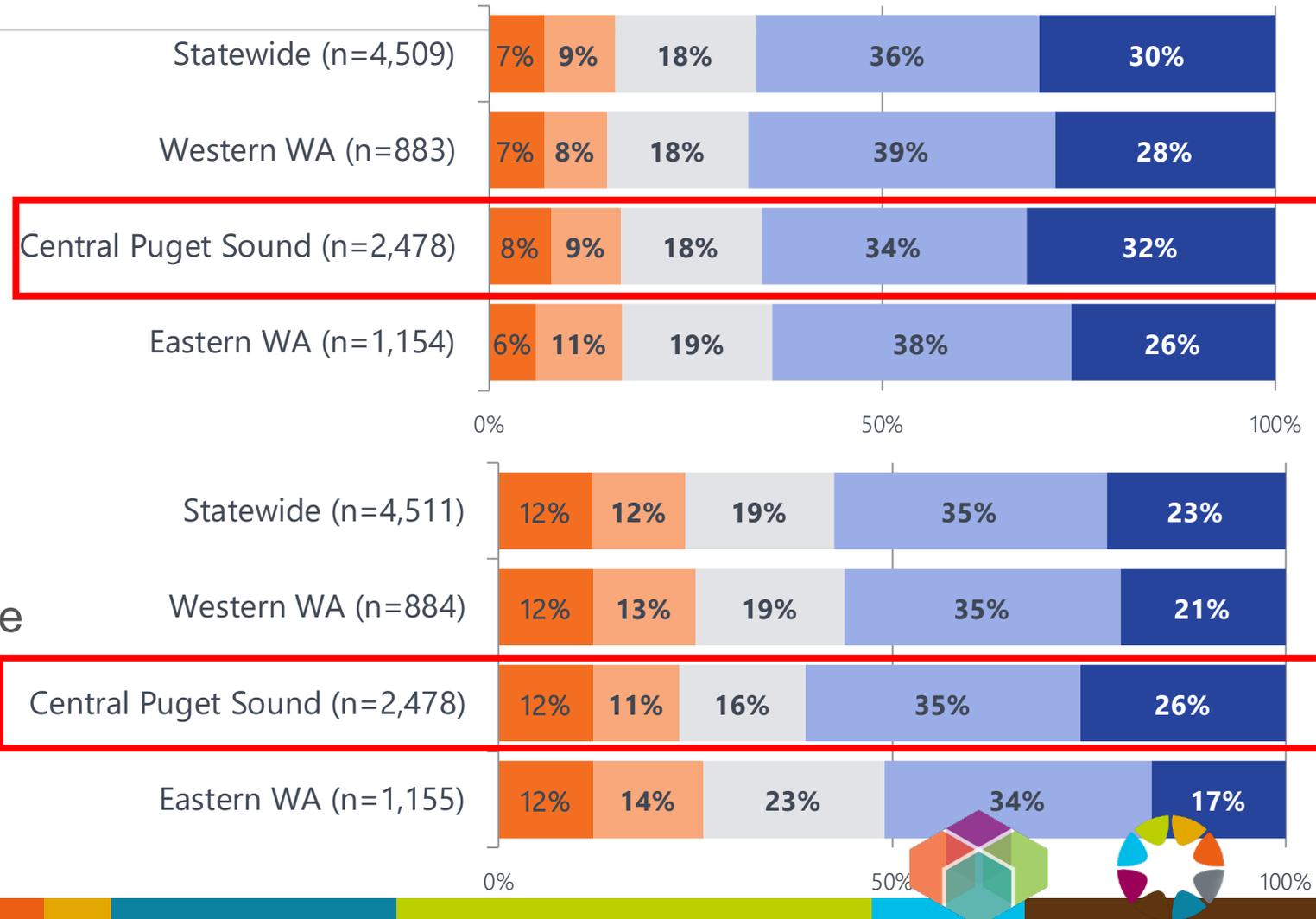
# Strong Statewide Support for More Diverse Housing

Communities need more diverse & affordable housing types, such as duplexes, cottages, courtyard apartments, townhomes and mixed developments.

**66% Agree**

Multi-family housing, like triplexes, should be allowed in single-family zones when all standards of the zone are met, such as heights, setbacks, and parking.

**58% Agree**



# Government Should Address Urgent Need to Tackle Housing Supply

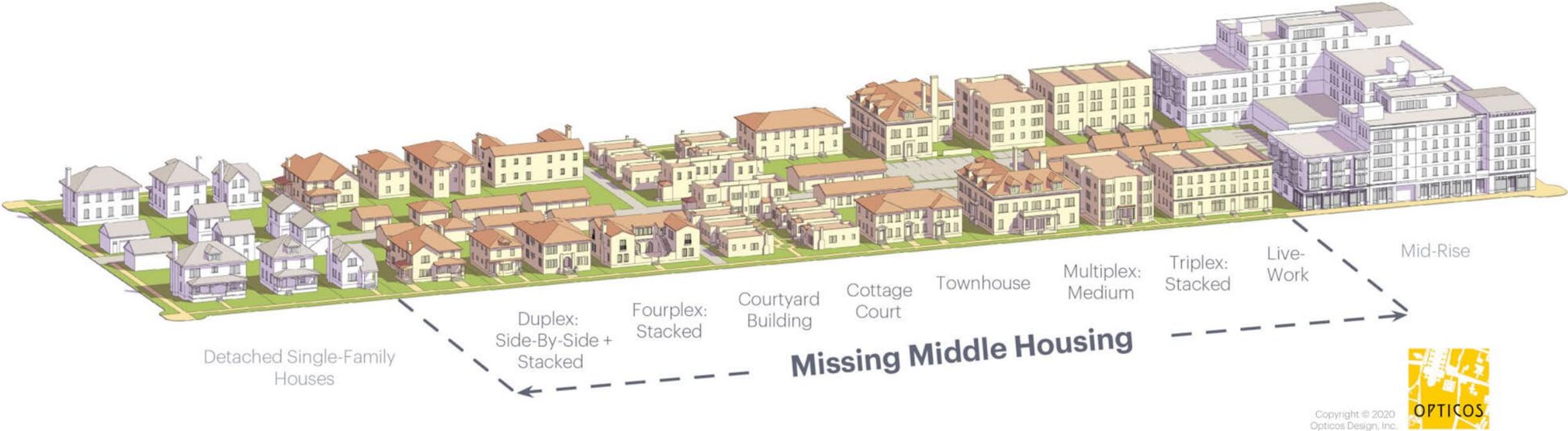
## Residents want government to do more

**83%** say government agencies should work together to address the need for housing

**64%** say government agencies should do more to provide housing not being delivered by the market



Snohomish is one of thirty grantee cities in this region who have agreed to consider middle housing as a component of their plan and regulations



So, what is middle housing and why is it sometimes called “missing middle”?

# Middle housing is house-scale attached, stacked, or clustered homes

- Approval or denial is based on locally adopted objective design standards that mirror form, scale, and character of detached houses
- Standards may establish roof height and shape, façade dimensions, window and door treatments, lot width and depth, and orientation of building to the sidewalk, street, or alley
- Design and development standards increase predictability for city administrator, permit applicant and neighbors because everyone knows what the rules are before any application is made



# Middle housing has been a small % of new units

Snohomish County and Cities

	SF	MF 1-2	MF 3-4	MF 5 - 9	MF 10 -19	MF 20 -49	MF 50+
<b>2015</b>	2,203	85	33	26	229	284	1,020
2015 %	56%		10%				34%
<b>2016</b>	2,514	94	157	169	195	428	301
2016 %	65%		15%				20%
<b>2017</b>	2,464	179	116	341	266	368	91
2017 %	64%		23%				12%
<b>2018</b>	2,144	158	262	374	290	895	939
2018 %	42%		22%				36%

Net Change In Units By Units Per Structure

Source: [Puget Sound Regional Council Residential Building Permits Survey](#)

# Commerce assistance

## Main Housing Web Page (picture at right)

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/>

## Growth Management: HB 1220 Guidance

[www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/updating-gma-housing-elements/](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/updating-gma-housing-elements/)

## Middle Housing Technical Team

New 3-person team (experienced directors) hired in 2022

## Growth Management: Periodic updates web page

[www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/periodic-update/](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/periodic-update/)

## Short Course on Local Planning

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/short-course/>

## Planning for Housing



### Jump to

[Updating GMA Housing Elements \(HB 1220\)](#)

[Multi-Family Housing Property Tax Exemption program](#)

[Housing EZView website](#)

# Questions?



Washington State  
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<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/>

[www.commerce.wa.gov](http://www.commerce.wa.gov)



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*Thanks for your work to help your community plan for a healthy and equitable future!*