PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Vancouver City Hall – Council Chambers – 415 W. Sixth Street
PO Box 1995 – Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995
www.cityofvancouver.us

Marjorie Ledell • Steve Schulte • Larry Blaufus • Zachary Pyle • Hannah Burak • Nena Cavel

April 26, 2022

REGULAR MEETING (Convened telephonically, no in person attendance)

Vancouver City Hall - 415 W. Sixth Street, Vancouver WA

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The April 26, 2022, meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Ledell.

Present: Marjorie Ledell, Zachary Pyle, Larry Blaufus, Steve Schulte, and Nena Cavel
Absent: Hannah Burak

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Cavel, second by Commissioner Schulte, and carried unanimously to adopt the April 12, 2022, minutes as written.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, indicated the May meeting was cancelled, and the next meeting in June will be a hybrid of in person and remote participation.

Motion by Commissioner Schulte, second by Commissioner Blaufus, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Commissioner Burak.

WORKSHOPS

4:05 P.M. HOUSING CONDITIONS OVERVIEW

Michael Wilkerson, Senior Economist and Director of Analytics, ECONorthwest

Rebecca Kennedy introduced the workshop, which provided a report on the conditions of the housing market at they exist in Vancouver and the broader region. This workshop is intended as an initial discussion to support the Commission's upcoming work updating the City Comprehensive Plan, which will include policy and regulatory updates intended to address housing needs at a variety of income and affordability levels and increase housing supply to support future growth, in alignment with City policies and goals for equity, climate action, and economic opportunity.

Michael Wilkerson presented on the current conditions of the housing market in Vancouver and the region.

Commission Discussion
The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- Income requirements for rental properties. Staff responded it's common to see a landlord require a renter's income be two or three times the monthly rent, which aligns with HUD's guidance that says no more than 30% of your income should go to housing. This can pose challenges to those who have lower incomes, and limits what housing is available.

The presentation continued, covering housing demand, population growth rates, and a comparison of incomes.

Commission Discussion
The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- What policies are used in counties where the population is growing but cost is moderate. Staff responded it can be challenging to find specific policies to replicate. Some of those counties may have been shrinking previously and has an abundance of housing. Most communities on the west coast are seeing high costs and growing markets.
- For the household income data, does it assume one earner or more per household? Staff responded the data is a 1% sample of the county population, which may not perfectly align with HUD data. HUD conducts extensive studies every 10 years and uses inflation data to grow incomes without resampling, so income targets may deviate from what is actually observed. When setting policies, its best to look at actual income for the area, rather than estimates from HUD.

The presentation continued, covering housing supply, permit applications in Vancouver, apartment production, and housing units at the state and county level.

Commission Discussion
The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- What percentage of existing units are available in the market versus units that are occupied and not available. Staff responded it's a small number and has been decreasing over the last few years. The number of houses available for sale is much lower than demand, which has created an imbalance in the market.
- Impacts of short-term rentals and vacation homes on affordability. Staff responded that in markets that are highly constrained, removing units has a greater impact than in a market where there is an abundance of housing. You also need to look at the local conditions such as location of the units, price, quantity, and occupancy rates, as well as the need these are filling and what otherwise may occur if that need goes unmet.
- The number of units demolished recently. Staff responded they would follow up with the exact details, but a relatively small number of units that were demolished in the last year.

The presentation continued with housing market economics, income sorting and cost burdening, and how renting down reduces the availability of affordable units. The next section of the presentation covered homeownership impacts, housing price to income ratios across the US and in Washington, homeownership readiness, sizes of new build homes, and middle housing.

Commission Discussion
The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- The previous trend of people downsizing later in life is no longer happening as expected. Staff responded that it used to be that older generations would downsize their homes once there were fewer people living there, but that trend has changed lately. There are a variety of factors affecting this, but the result is a mismatch in the housing ladder, where it's less attainable to buy a house as a first time buyer.
- Comparing wage growth and renter filtering with appreciation and paying down a principal on a mortgage. Staff responded historically these two have not been similar, with homeownership the predominant vehicle for wealth generation

The presentation concluded with policy options, a balanced approach to the growth development pattern, the environmental and economic benefits of this approach, housing density, land use policies to promote density, incentive programs for density, and predictable processes for development.

Commission Discussion
The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- Opportunities for projects like the Heights in Vancouver. Staff responded the Heights was a unique opportunity, but there are other smaller properties that the City is looking at in terms of strategic value. One example is the Operations Center site on Fourth Plain, which will be available in a few years and the City will look to redevelop. Regarding privately owned property, areas such as Columbia Tech Center and the Vancouver Innovation Center still have housing to develop.
- Height limits for timber frame residential structures. Staff responded it's limited to eight stories, with some exceptions. The national building codes are out of date related to mass timber, and around the world there are examples of 20 and 30 story buildings with mass timber.
- Coordination between cities and counties to solve housing issues. There are a few examples of this, though they have not necessarily been successful in providing affordable housing. Metro in Portland is another example. In Clark County, it's unusual to have such a large urban growth area.
- Opportunities to update the zoning in urban growth areas. Staff responded the annexation process now typically assigns the most similar zoning within the jurisdiction annexing, but this is generally used in individual annexations, and it is possible to change zoning for both small and large annexations if desired. Staff noted the County will similarly go through an update to their Comprehensive Plan, so there is opportunity to coordinate efforts.
- The economics of incentive programs and the benefit of density to a community. Staff responded in the cost and benefit spectrum, there's a myriad of benefits. The primary benefit of density is more units, and with that shared affordability across the region. The costs of not incentivizing density can include fewer or no units. Other public benefits include job growth and sales tax for the local jurisdiction. If cases where housing is developed as part of a mixed-use building or development, there may be other benefits as well. The goal is to align the market with what is planned by the City. Incentives can help bridge those gaps to avoid underutilization of a site.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Glen Yung was present to provide comments on home ownership opportunities and equity. He supports the Commission's work to consider ways to increase the opportunities for home ownership. He suggested looking into the causes of larger home development. He stated that he believes there is trend emerging

where fewer builders are operating in the region due to changes in the process to become licensed, and that this will likely impact development in the future.

ADJOURNMENT 6:36 PM

_____
Marjorie Ledell, Chair

To request other formats, contact Julie Nischik, Community Development Department|360-487-7813. WA Relay: 711|julie.nischik@cityofvancouver.us

Boards and Commissions Introduction to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Planning Commission

CITY OF Vancouver WASHINGTON

June 14, 2022

Vancouver Planning Commission Workshop

Alicia Sojourner, Director of diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Expectations for our time

- Shared understanding
- Why Equity in planning
- Intentional reflection
- Understand possible next steps for Commissioners

Overview and Assumptions

DIVERSITY MATTERS

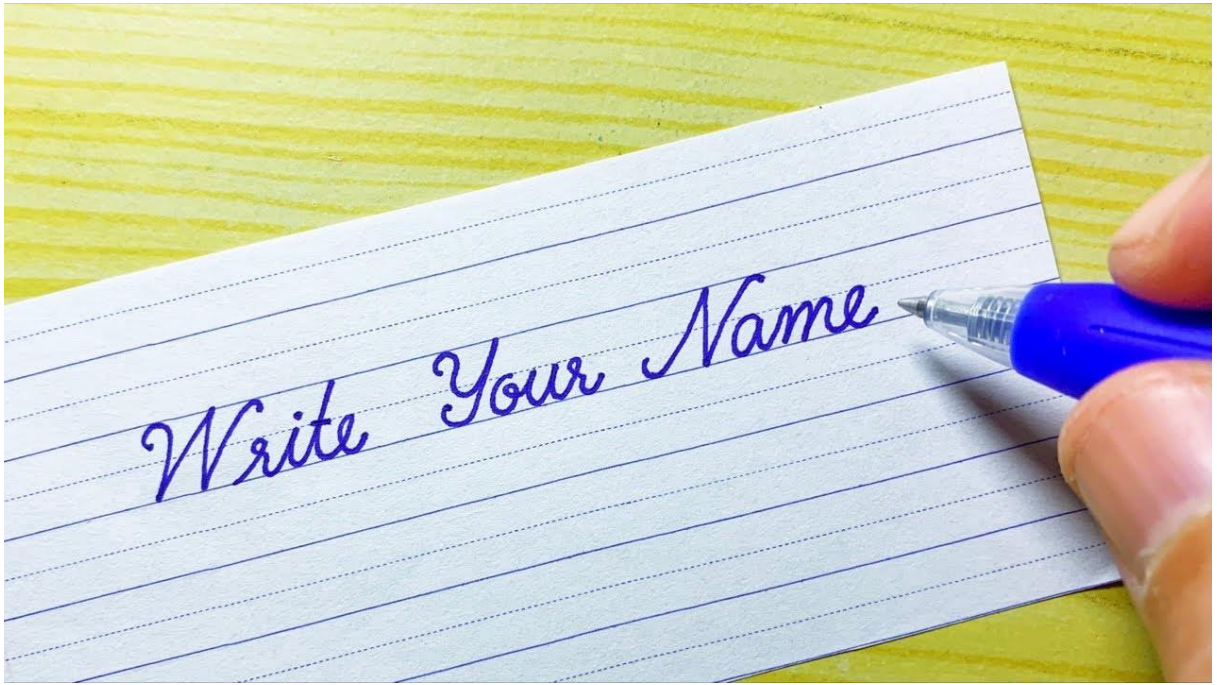
WE AREN'T JUST TALKING ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF BIGOTRY.

INSTITUTIONS RELY UPON PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES THAT CAN PERPETUATE INEQUITY. WE ARE ALL A PART OF INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS.

INTERSECTIONALITY HAS A PLACE.

WE ALL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADVANCING EQUITY WITHIN GOVERNMENT.

Comfort Test



Questions

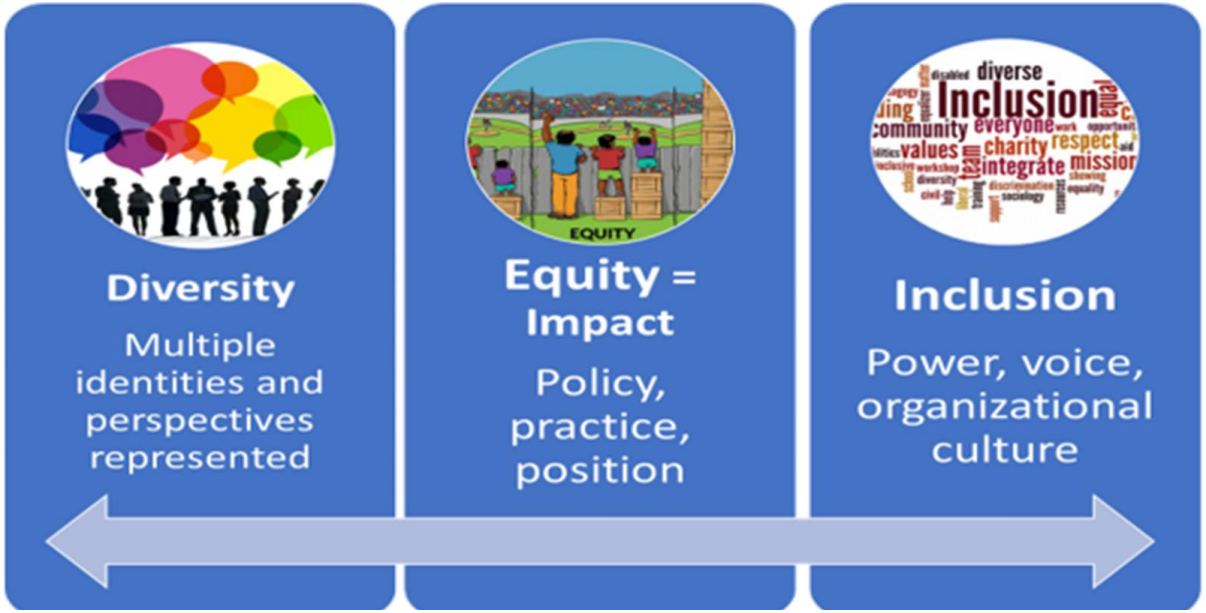
Pair-off:

Why do you think the City is working to advance DEI?

In what ways does DEI matter to our community?

Why is diversity, equity and inclusion important for the Planning Commissions?

What is DEI?

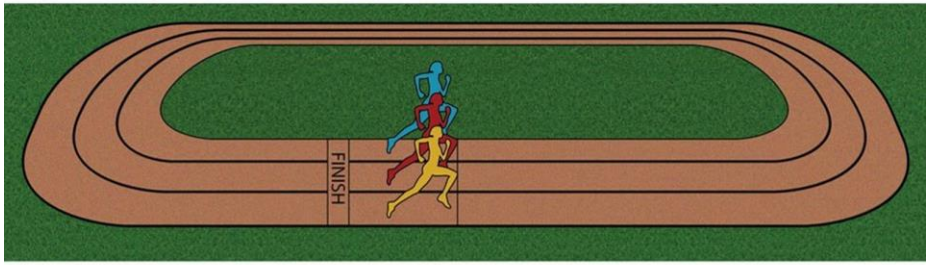

Diversity
Multiple identities and perspectives represented
EQUITY
Equity = Impact
Policy, practice, position
Inclusion
Power, voice, organizational culture

Diversity

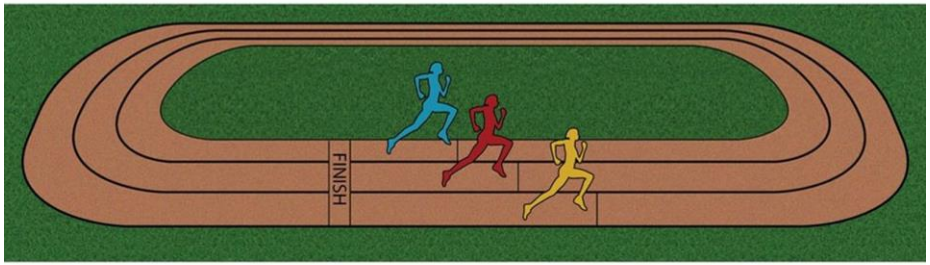
Waterline of Visibility
Skin Colour
Gender
Race
Age
Nationality
Physical Ability
Ethnicity
Wealth
Social Status
Culture
Religion
Value Systems
Learning Styles
Heritage
Role/Function
Political Views
Life Experiences
Personality Profile
Languages
Education
Sexual Orientation
Thinking Style
Family Status
Talents
Sexual Identity
Skills
Perspectives
Beliefs
Work Style
Location/Division

Equity

"Closing the gaps" so that a single identity does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all.

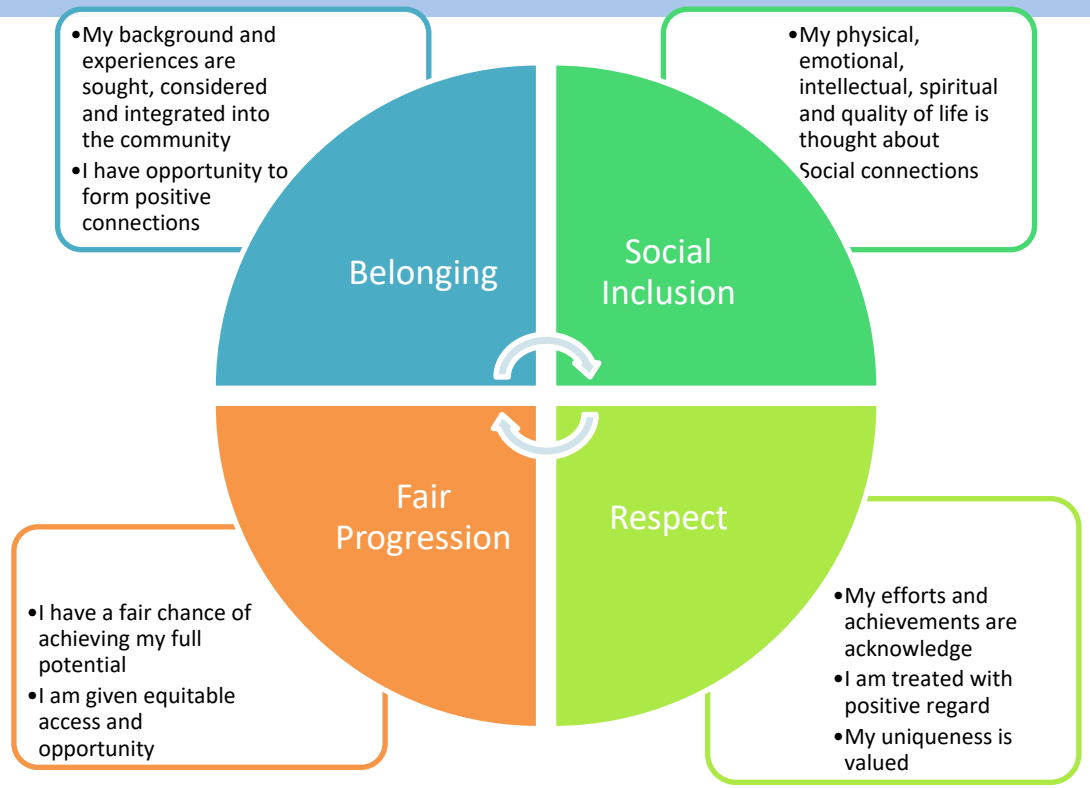


EQUALITY



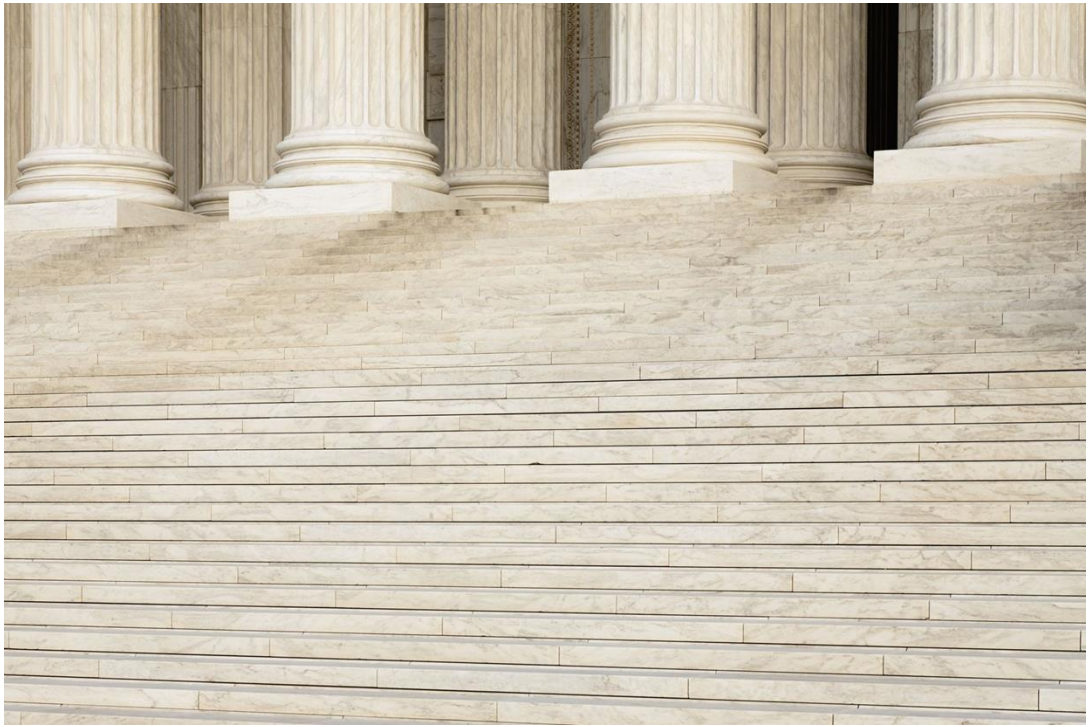
EQUITY

Inclusion


•My background and experiences are sought, considered and integrated into the community
•I have opportunity to form positive connections
Belonging
•My physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and quality of life is thought about
Social connections
Social Inclusion
Fair Progression
•I have a fair chance of achieving my full potential
•I am given equitable access and opportunity
Respect
•My efforts and achievements are acknowledge
•I am treated with positive regard
•My uniqueness is valued

Going Deeper…Race & Equity

The Role of Government



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLMsI92crZw

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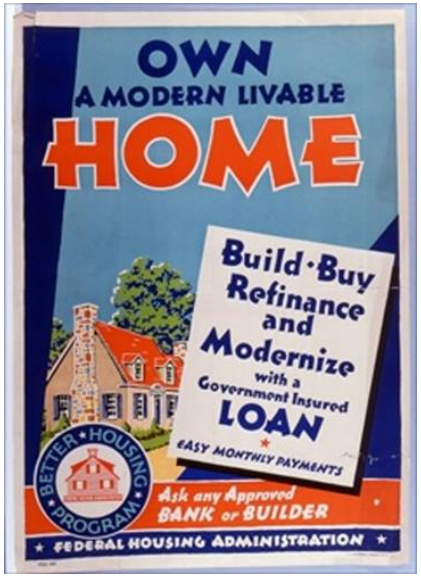
Values and Realities

All men are created equal

With liberty and justice for all

Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth

History of government and race



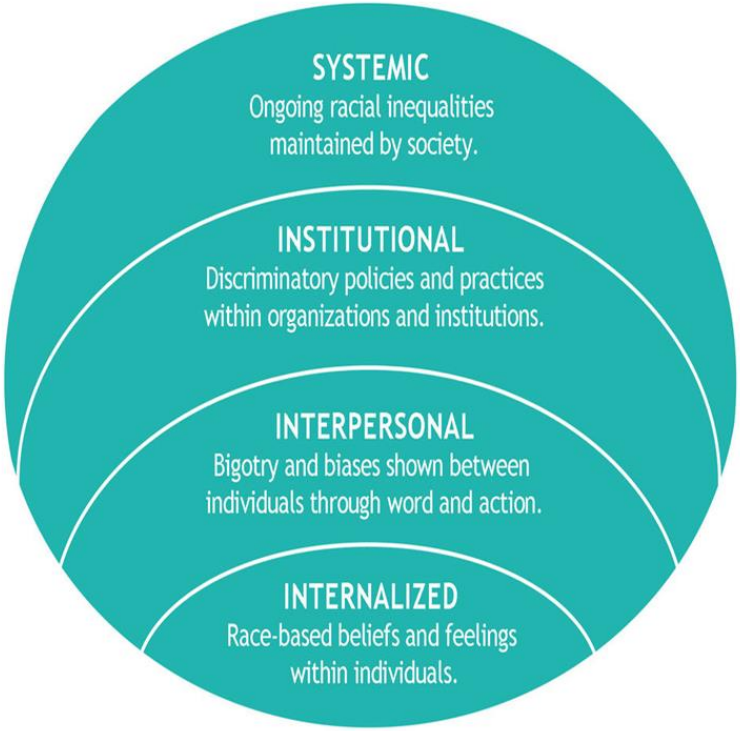
Explicit Law History

Government explicitly creates and maintains racial inequity.

Implicit Law History

Discrimination illegal, but "race-neutral" policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Levels of Racism



Why Lead with Race in Planning?

Racial inequities deep and pervasive

Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room

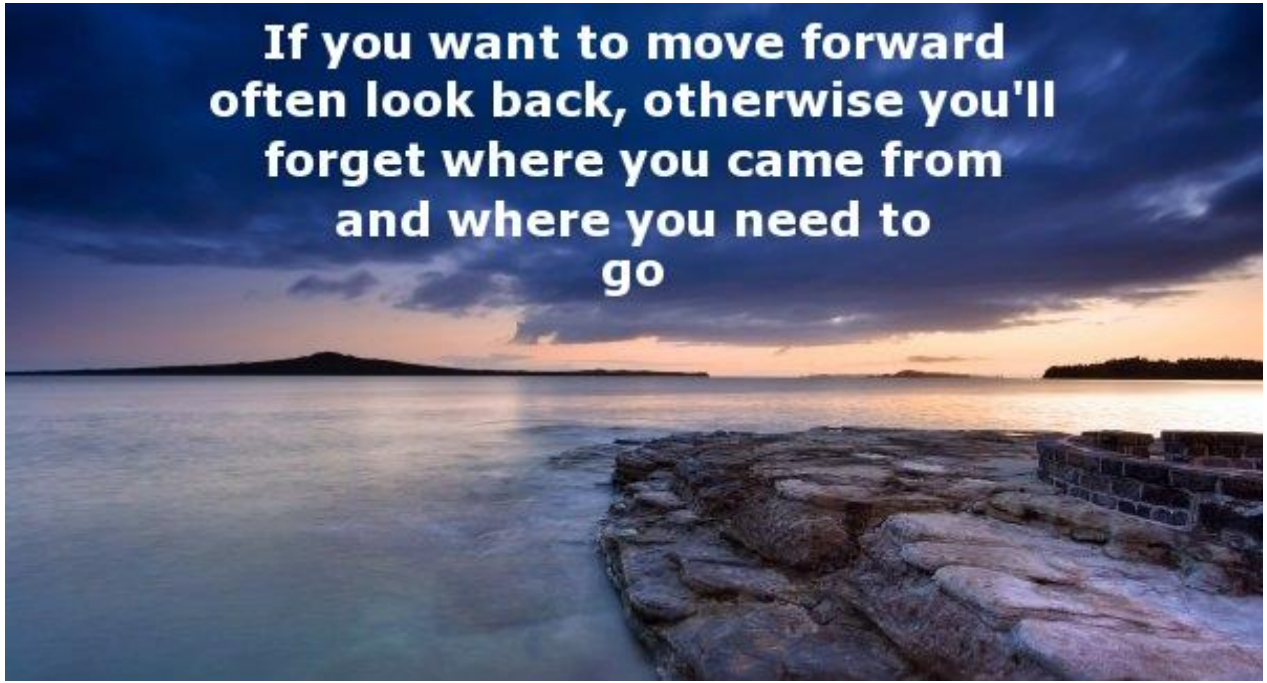
Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization

Specificity matters

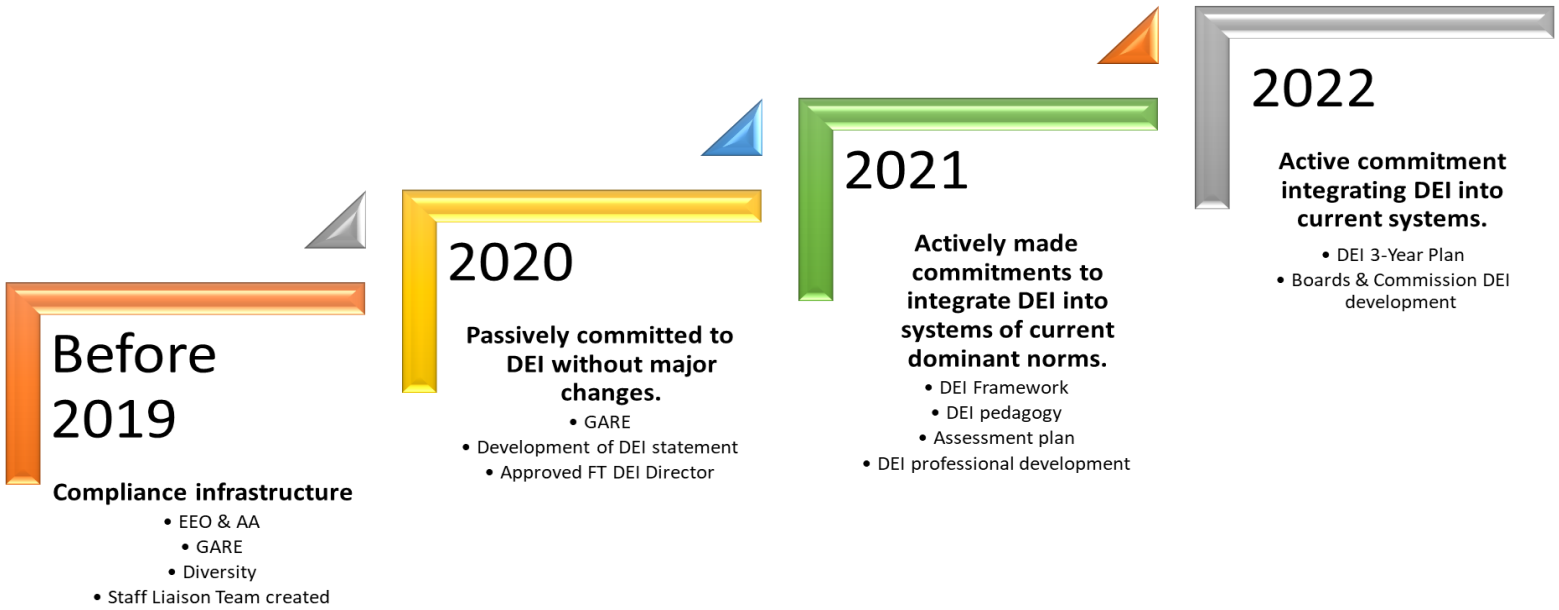
US cast system. We created race and racism

Race *explicit*, <u>not exclusive</u> always bring an "intersectional" analysis

Looking Back to Move Forward



City of Vancouver DEI Journey



CITY OF Vancouver WASHINGTON

Three-year plan

- **Culture:** Ensure that leaders at all levels promote the vision and business case for DEI by taking actions to increase diversity and equity in the workforce and maintain an inclusive workplace.
- **Career:** Recruit, hire, and develop a high-performing workforce that reflects the communities we serve by optimizing experiences throughout an employee's career.
- **Communication:** Develop compelling messages, including opportunities for dialogue, that encourage all employees and community to see the importance of DEI to their personal success and the success of the City.
- **Consistency:** Mature the DEI model to improve the consistency of desired outcomes by strengthening policies and procedures, utilizing technology, and enhancing DEI learning through data.
- **Community:** Encourage DEI within the community. Fostering an equable and an inclusionary community to live, work, play and learn.
- **Council:** Ensure Councilmembers promote DEI through policymaking, community outreach, and through Boards & commissions.

Currently, how do WE do our work?

Talk: Normalizing the conversation

Developing and sharing tools to talk about DEI.

Build: Capacity building

Building leadership capacity through coalition building, leadership development and trainings.

Shift: Institutional change

Developing and implementing institutional change strategies to operationalize structural DEI.

Bridge: Policy and research

Working with community groups, other government and national organizations to develop policies that advance DEI.

What is MY role?

Create opportunities throughout your board and commission meetings have conversations about diversity, equity and/or inclusions

Grow awareness about your board/commission's history and how inequalities have been created

Send/share resources with each other i.e. articles, books, podcast, documentaries

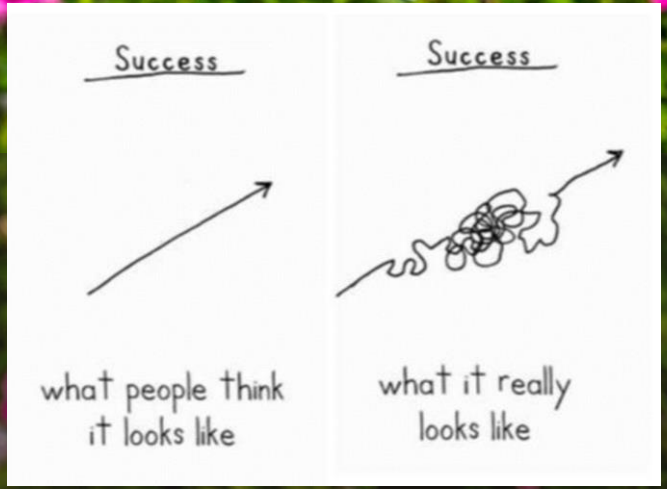
Gain deeper personal awareness

Model inclusiveness

Who is at your table?

Next Steps & Questions

- Alicia Sojourner, Director DEI
- 360-487-8618



CITY OF Vancouver WASHINGTON

Clark County Housing Options Study and Action Plan for the Unincorporated VUGA

CITY OF Vancouver WASHINGTON

June 14, 2022

Vancouver Planning Commission Workshop

Jacqui Kamp and Jenna Kay, Clark County Community Planning Department

Bryan Snodgrass, City of Vancouver Community Development Department

Presentation Outline

- Review of County process and recently adopted recommendations for the unincorporated Vancouver UGA
- Next steps
- City and County staff available to answer questions

Comparing County and City Approaches

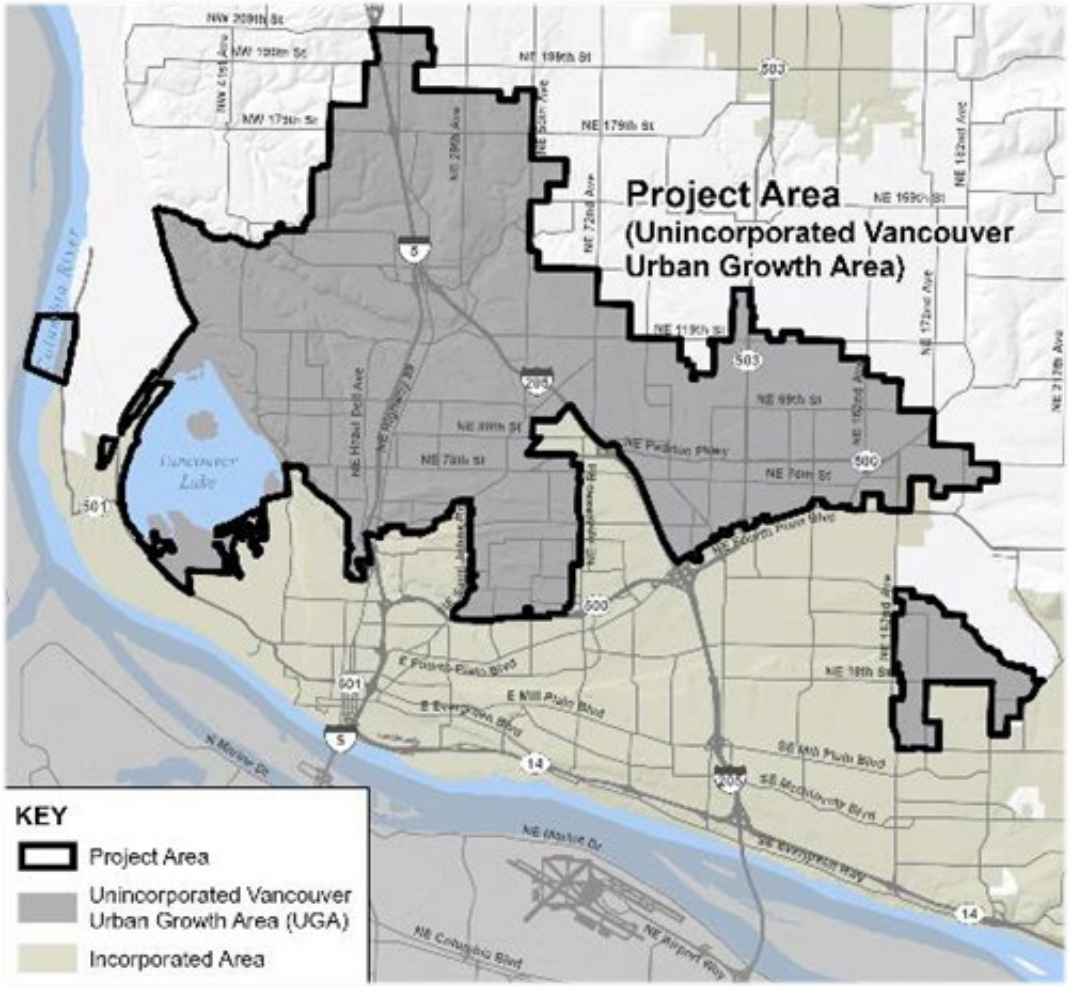
- Different Scope. County process is broader, currently identifying and prioritizing strategies, with code changes later. City process has developed code changes, many from previous strategies.
- Similarities and Differences in Areas. City and VUGA relatively similar in land area and population. Zoning and recent development more focused on single family lots in VUGA. More recent multi-family housing in City.
- Both focusing on facilitating smaller, market rate home options, with some opportunities for affordable housing as well

Clark County Housing Options Study and Action Plan

City of Vancouver
Planning Commission
Workshop

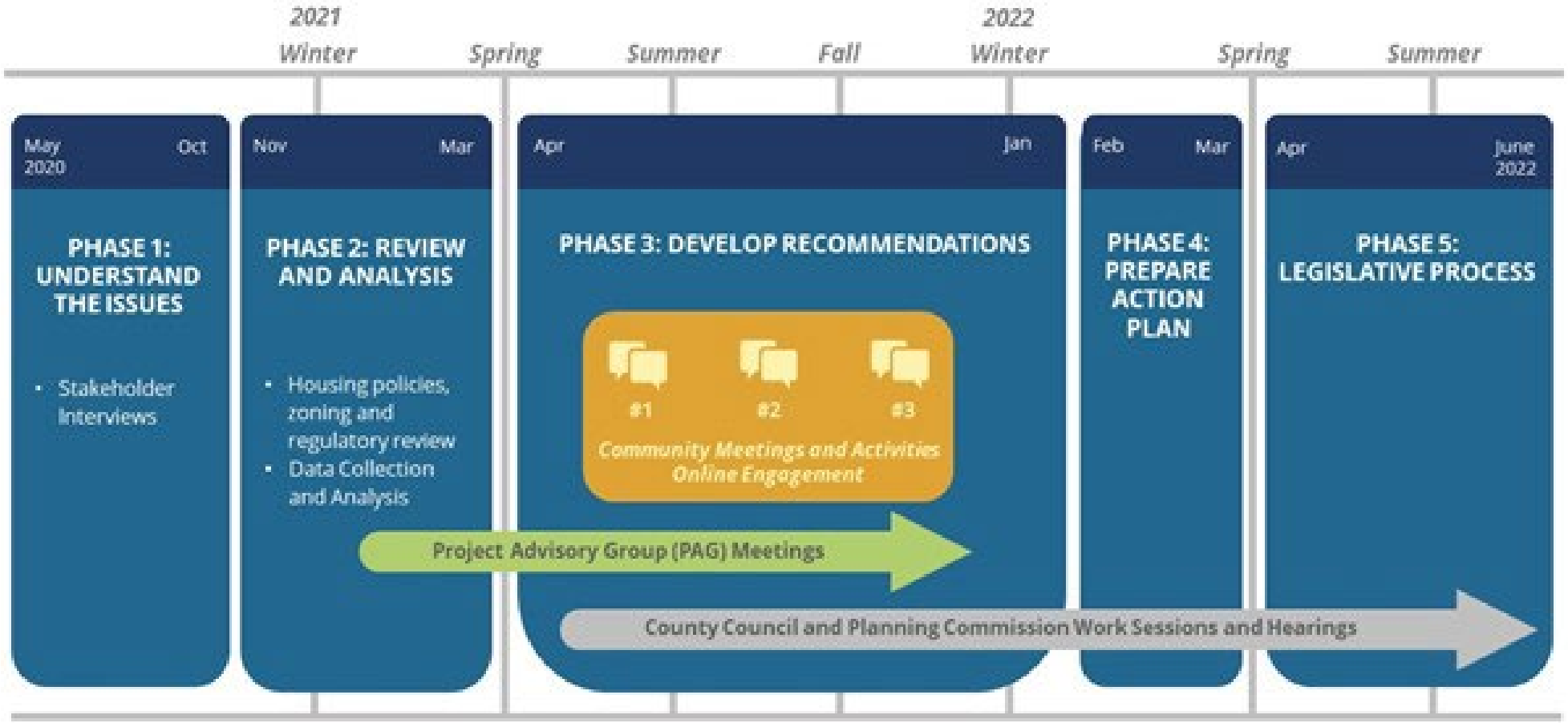
June 14, 2022

Presenters:
Jacqui Kamp, Community Planning
Jenna Kay, Community Planning



Clark County Housing Options Study and Action Plan

- Understand local housing challenges in the Unincorporated Vancouver UGA
- Encourage creation of housing affordable to low and moderate-income households by:
  - Removing regulatory barriers and consider other strategies
  - Providing access affordable, quality, and flexible housing for future generations



Clark County Housing Options Study and Action Plan Schedule

Project Schedule

County Council	Elected leaders with decision-making authority
City of Vancouver	County seat and largest city in Clark County
Public housing developer	Affordable housing development through federal and state aid
Nonprofit developer	Housing development through public-private partnerships
For-Profit developer	Market-based housing development
Innovative builder	Builder of innovative housing types, cutting-edge practices and funding mechanisms
Schools	Planning for student/community growth
Feasibility and financing	Housing financing and development feasibility
Real estate	Understanding of housing market, buyer needs and preferences

Older adults	Housing access for populations aging-in-place or with shifting housing needs
Community/ neighborhood group	Local, neighborhood-based interest groups
Houseless community	Housing access for most vulnerable/ at-risk populations
Communities of color	Housing access for populations disproportionally affected by systems of racism and oppression
Persons with disabilities	Housing access for populations with special needs and accommodations
Youth	Future housing access for first-time homebuyers, new workforce
Large employer	Driver of regional wages and housing needs for employees

Community Engagement – Project Advisory Group

HOUSING OPTIONS STUDY
KEY FINDINGS

- **Stakeholder Interviews**: Understanding development trends, barriers and opportunities.
- **Housing Data Collection and Analysis**: Understanding trends in housing production and demographics.
- **Land Use Policies, Zoning and Regulation Audit**: Understanding the existing regulatory landscape.
- **Legislative Review:** To summarize recent Washington state housing legislation.
- **Case Studies:** To gather inspiration, learn from mistakes, and discover which initiatives may be utilized in Clark County.

Housing is getting increasingly expensive in the VUGA.

From 2012-2019…

Wages
+12%

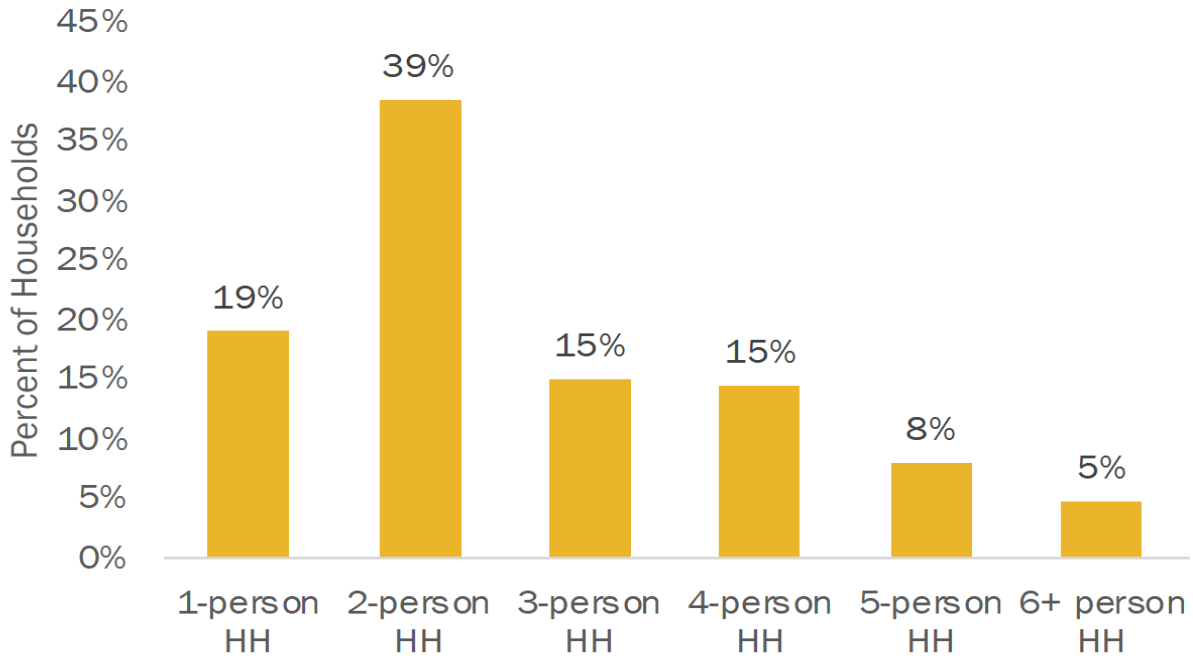
Rents
+23%

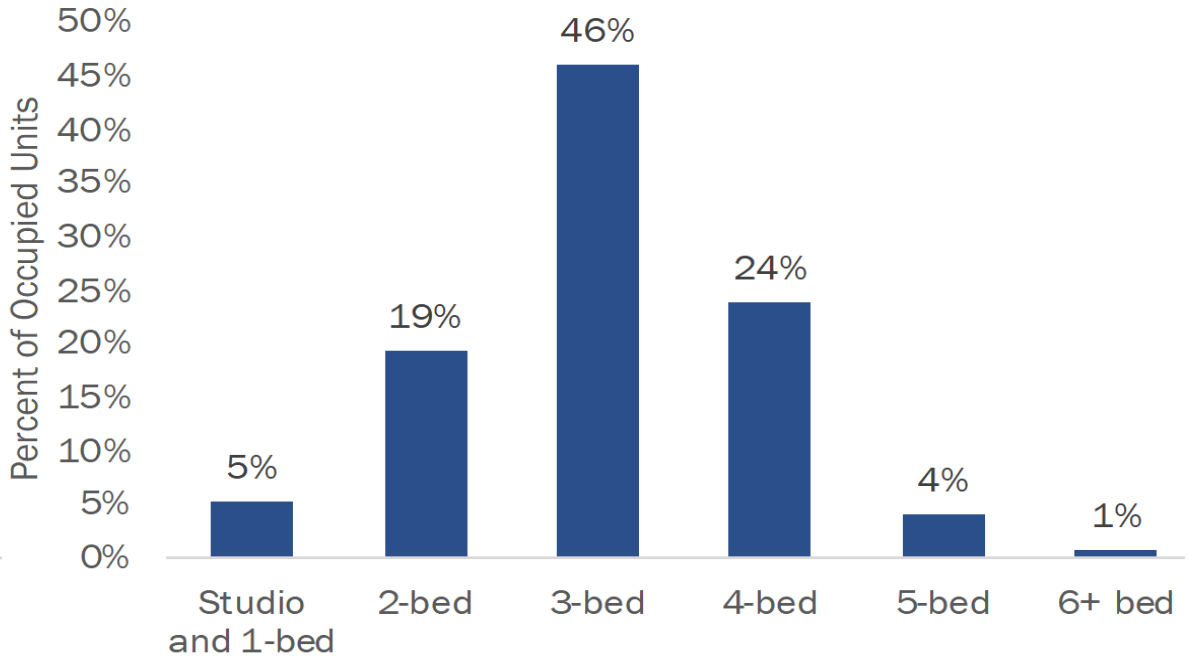
Avg. Home Sales Price Per Lot SF
+95%

Single family, owner-occupied dwellings are the predominate housing type in the county, but do not reflect the entirety of local needs.

Comparison of Household Sizes and Occupied Housing Units, Unincorporated Vancouver UGA, 2019

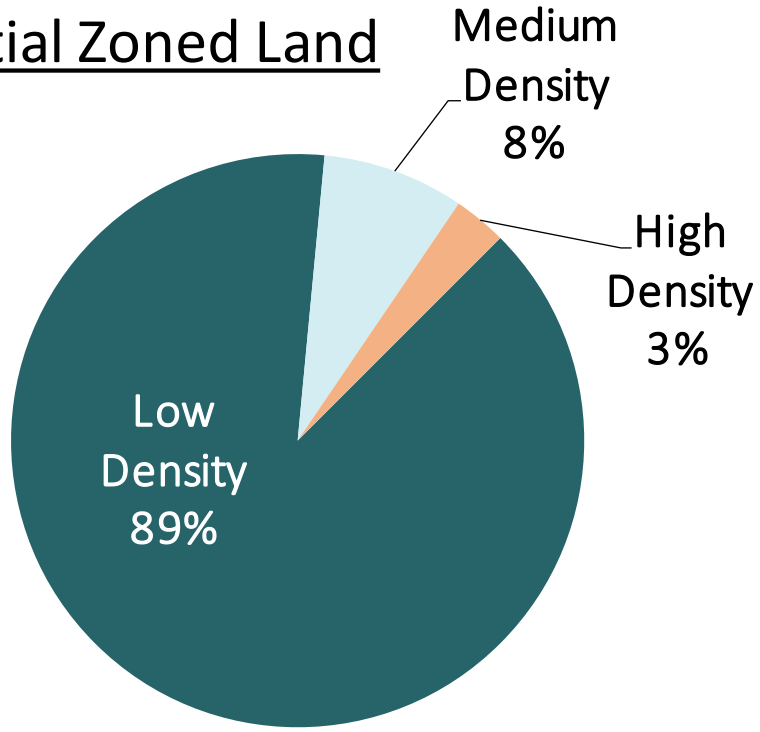
Source: U.S. Census PUMS, 2019.



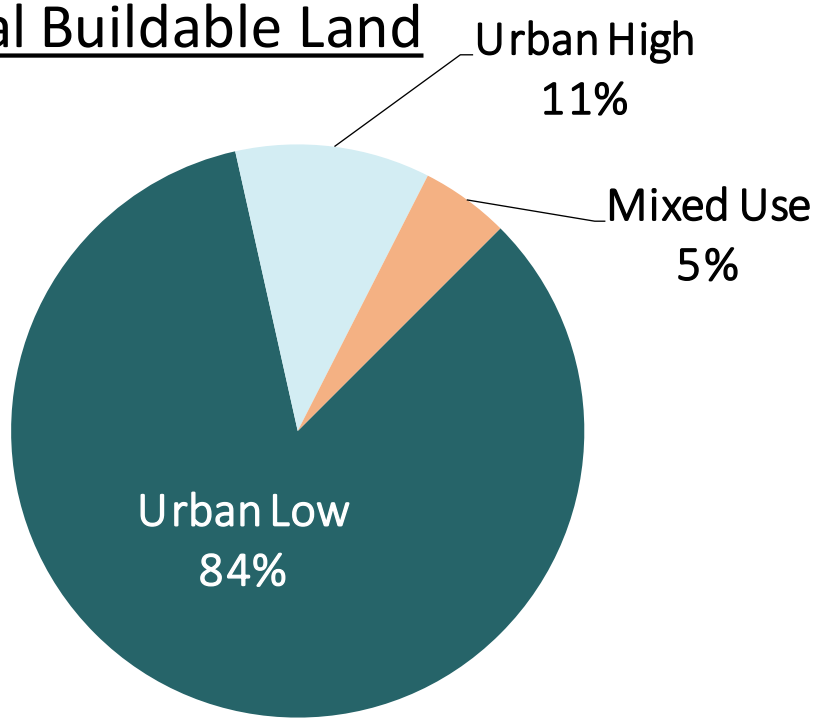


The relatively small supply of land for medium and high density limits the variety of housing options that get built.

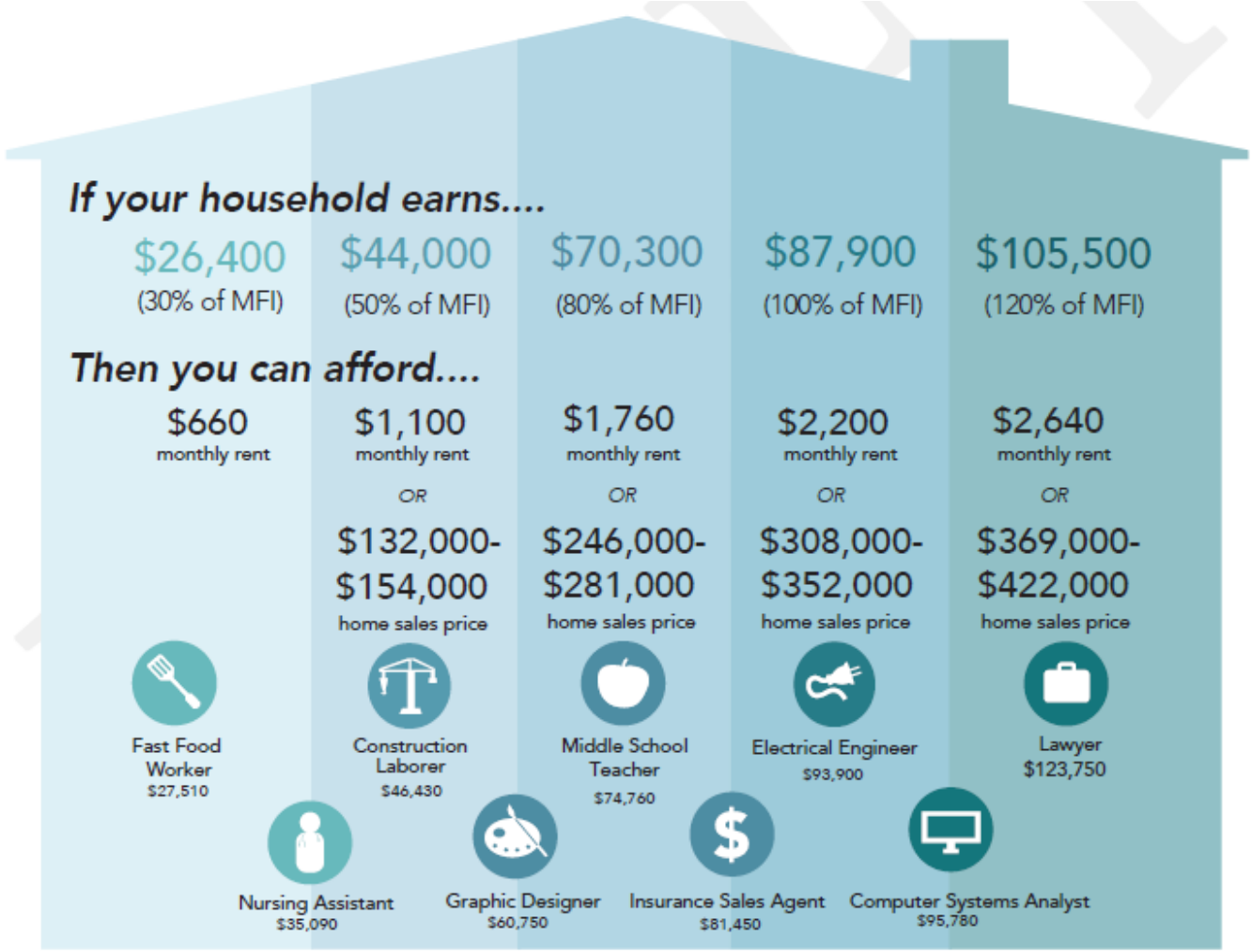
Residential Zoned Land



Residential Buildable Land



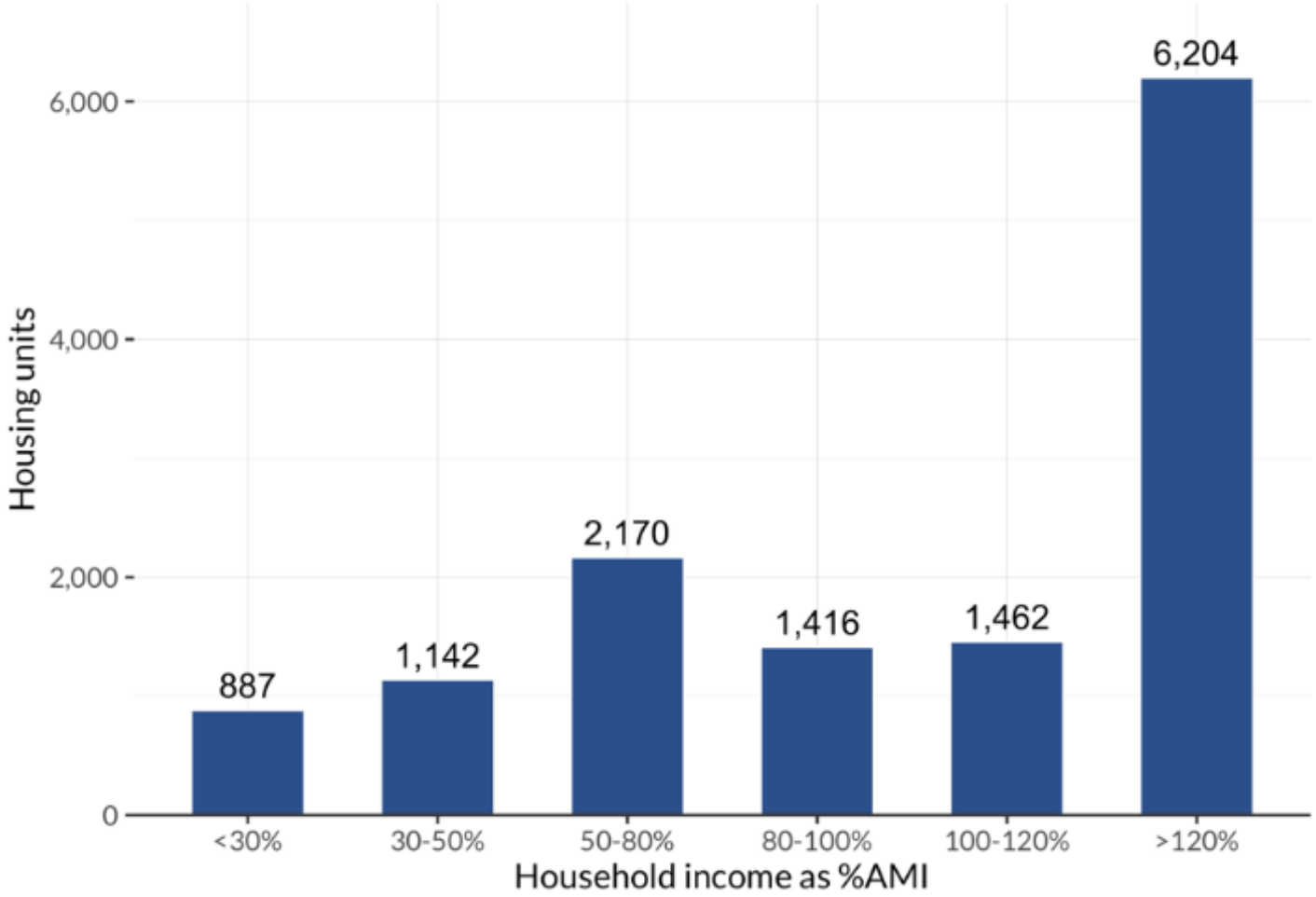
The aging of Baby Boomers and the household formation of Millennials will drive demand for renter and owner-occupied housing of all sizes.



Underproduction (2020)
2,571 units
+
Future Need (2020-2035)
10,710 units
=
Total Needed Housing Units
13,281 units

Existing Housing Underproduction and Forecasted Future Housing Need by AMI, Unincorporated Vancouver UGA , 2020 to 2035

Source: OFM SAEP, Clark County, U.S. Census PUMS 2019.



Housing Options Study: Key Findings

1. Encourage housing development that meets the needs of **middle-income households** who are not being served in the current housing market.
2. Develop strategies to support the development of housing that is **affordable to low, very low, and extremely low-income households.**
3. Encourage **diversity in housing types and tenure** (rental/ownership), including expanding middle housing options and increasing **multifamily** feasibility.
4. Encourage the creation of a broad range of housing sizes to **match the needs of all types of households** (families, singles, students, older adults, disabled, or other unique population groups), with a focus on 1-2 person households not being served in the current housing market.
5. Guide development of diverse **housing options to areas with access to transportation corridors and transit**, commercial services, schools and parks, and conversely, support development of those same amenities in areas where more housing is added.

Housing Action Plan Objectives

COUNTY COUNCIL DECISION

On May 17, the Clark County Council voted to approve Resolution No. 2022-05-11 which adopts the Housing Options Study & Action Plan and directs staff to begin implementation of the plan.

County Council Decision

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Implementation of the HOSAP will take place at the direction of the County Council or County Manager
- Staff has current capacity and resources for consultant support to begin immediate implementation work of short-term strategies to complete within a year.

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

Housing Options – Regulatory strategies that expand housing development options and enhance residential development feasibility of existing housing options.

Affordable Housing – Increase the feasibility of subsidized affordable housing for low, very low, and extremely low-income households.

Programs and Partnerships – Strategies relating to the administration of county programs (e.g., development permitting) or where the county's role is to support and/or collaborate with partners to develop solutions to community concerns.

Advocacy – Advocating for state legislative changes to allow strategies and tools not currently available to the County.

HO-1. Reduce minimum lot sizes for permitted housing types in low and medium-density zones to use existing land more efficiently and make supporting revisions to maximum densities that align with new lot sizes.

HO-3. Increase minimum density in high-density zones from 47-60% to 60-80% of the maximum density, to support multifamily residential and smaller dwelling units.

HO-4. Expand middle housing types permitted in the low and medium residential zones to expand housing options and set dimensional and density standards equivalent to single-family detached dwellings to enhance development feasibility.

HO-5. Introduce minimum parking requirements specific to duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes that are less than parking requirements for single family dwellings to balance site development feasibility with desire for off-street parking options.

HO-6. Revise minimum parking requirements for narrow lots, specifically townhouses, such as adjusting driveway spacing and access requirements.

HO-7. Implement state-mandated multifamily parking ratios of one per bedroom or 0.75 space for a studio for sites with access to high-quality transit, including regulated affordable housing.

HO-9. Revise cottage housing standards to improve feasibility of clusters of small-scale units that provide a coherent site design with a balance of amenities.

HO-10. Revise open space and recreation area requirements for larger multifamily projects (13+ units), to reduce competition for site area on the highest density projects while focusing on the quality and accessibility of the open spaces to incentivize higher density development.

HO-11. Build on strong ADU provisions.

HO-14. Revise the definitions of "household," "housekeeping unit," and "family" per state mandate to remove numbers of unrelated persons that may define a household, a family, or occupy a dwelling unit.

AH-1. Expand options for affordable residential uses in commercial zones by **allowing eligible affordable multi-family housing with no commercial component in all commercial zones**.

AH-2. Revise code to provide clarity on the review process and requirements for the **conversion of existing motels and hotels into temporary or permanent affordable housing.**

PP-10. Create a mobile and manufactured home resource page on the county webpage. The page should include links to state programs for park preservation and relocation assistance.

PP-11. Support state and partner efforts to monitor regulated affordable housing properties that are nearing their affordability expiration dates.

- Staff will report to Council annually on the progress of implementing the strategies. Council may elect to proceed with implementation of medium- and long-term strategies.
- The proposed monitoring program will provide a system for measuring the effectiveness of strategies in achieving the HOSAP Objectives.

Monitoring

QUESTIONS?

www.clark.gov/housingoptions