

From: [Ben McCarty](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Written testimony for April 27
Date: Monday, April 27, 2026 10:10:25 AM

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To the City Council,

My name is Ben McCarty, the Vice President of the Northwest Neighborhood Association and I live at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in Vancouver. I'm writing on my own behalf to encourage you to place the Northwest Neighborhood entirely within the Low Scale Neighborhood designation.

The Environmental Impact Statement for the City of Vancouver's proposed comprehensive plan update stands on two pillars: "anticipated changes under the action alternatives would occur incrementally" and "property owners decide if and when changes occur."

These two assurances are used to handwave away concern ranging from redeveloping historically designated properties with maximum infill (p. 104), the environmental impact of max densification in environmentally sensitive areas (P. 93), max densification having a negative impact by allowing investment corporations to bid against first-time homeowners or prey or senior citizens to put pressure on them to redevelop their property (Page 234) or the possibility of max infill overwhelming infrastructure and causing significant impacts on utilities and emergency services (P. 162).

The Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed comprehensive update states that "intense development is focused in specific areas like urban centers and corridors."

While I would love to see a thorough analysis of the impact 75-foot buildings would have on wildlife, green spaces and more in the EIS, I'll leave those efforts to environmental organizations and land use attorneys tackling individual projects in the future. However, when the misnamed "Medium Scale" is applied to previously low density areas we're no longer looking at simple increased densification as intended by the new state requirements, we're looking at "intense development" and ensuing intense impacts on the environment, on infrastructure, and in the ability of the public and wildlife to access critical green spaces that are now walled off behind wood, concrete and glass. The city handwaves these concerns away by saying all changes would be "incremental." But the pace of change is something beyond the City's control

We see this with the current environment. The city saw less than 50% of it's housing target constructed this year – not because of lack of effort, incentive or land, but because of external forces like the economy, tariffs, and materials and labor costs. External forces don't just disappear because the city projects impacts will be "incremental"

In the Preferred alternative, the city projects that its designated zones will yield 44,000 housing units over the life of the plan. The city's target is 38,000. Moving the Northwest Neighborhood entirely into Low Scale would have next to no impact on the city's goals. Instead of embracing the use of potentially destructive Medium Scale zoning in neighborhoods such as Northwest that cannot logistically handle growth at that level, I would encourage you go embrace smart growth and the true "middle housing" intended by the legislature and return the Northwest Neighborhood to the Low Scale Neighborhood designation.

I've seen mixed messages from the city on why the neighborhood was placed partly in Medium Scale. On one hand, any compromises to the medium scale zoning have been rejected

because “they would be too restrictive to what developers could do.” And I’ve been told that the neighborhood had to be included in medium scale due to equity concerns and because “developers do not take down new 1.5-million-dollar homes to make multi-family housing they take down older homes” – homes where the residents don’t have the wealth or resources to fight back.

On the other hand, I’m told intense development “Probably won’t happen” in our neighborhood anyway.

If that is true, then moving the neighborhood back to Low Scale would have no practical impact on the city’s projected yields or targets. However, if the goal is to encourage private equity, and mega development corporations to bid for land and homes against first time homebuyers and senior citizens for property and cut out the “middle” of middle housing, then leave the plan as is.

I want to see increased growth and more density in my Neighborhood - we absolutely need it - but I also want to see it done in a smart way that is both pro-people, pro-housing accessibility and pro-upward mobility.

I would encourage you to choose people over private capital, senior citizens over sovereign wealth funds, middle housing over the mega rich, and smart *development* over wealthy *developers* and place the Northwest Neighborhood entirely back in the Low Scale Neighborhood designation.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben McCarty

From: [Monica Zazueta](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Letter of Support
Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026 12:09:29 AM

Dear members of the City Council,

I'm writing to you because I care deeply about what we are doing as a city. For the last couple of years, many of us have put in the work to make sure that people of color in our community aren't just "consulted" on this Comprehensive Plan, but are actually at the heart of it, especially as we work to heal the damage of past injustices.

We need you to approve this plan. I know some people are pushing back because they're afraid of change or "infill," but we can't let that stop us from getting truly affordable housing. Life is all about change, and the truth is, if the system isn't working for all of us, then it isn't working. If we want a city where the people who work here can afford to live here, we have to be brave enough to build that reality.

I'm asking you to transform our economic system into a model that is both ecologically safe and socially just. By staying within the means of our living planet, we can meet the needs of all people today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

Let's start by changing our language. Let's stop treating "economic growth" as the only measure of success. Let's change that goal to thriving in balance with our natural systems. And let's stop saying "affordable housing" and start committing to truly affordable housing. We need to move past the idea that "affordable" is just a percentage of some median income that doesn't match our reality. We need housing that actually fits the real life survival budget of a family in our city, not some outdated federal number from the 60's.

I want to see a city that can actually breathe. I'm talking about "rewilding" our neighborhoods, trading in those manicured lawns for food forests and places where pollinators can thrive. We shouldn't just "prioritize" pesticide-free zone, we need to get rid of these toxins completely. We have to do this for the health of our soil and for our children.

I also want us to rethink how we make a living. Why are we still stuck in this "boss and worker bee" model? Let's support shared ownership businesses, where everyone who helps create the value gets a fair share. And let's set up a "Bioregional Finance Facility" so people who want to put their money back into our local land and ecology actually have a way to do it.

Please look at the models that are already working, like social housing in Vienna or the community projects in Amsterdam. We don't have to reinvent the wheel, we just have to be willing to turn it.

Please, don't just "encourage" these changes. Support them. Fund them. Require them. Let's build a city that doesn't just grow, but heals.

This comprehensive plan will help us take the necessary steps to become a more equitable, more livable, more just city. I'm urging you to pass the plan.

Thank you.

The future is not planned, it's seeded.

Monica Zazueta Tabor



The videos below enriched my life. I see the world from a wider lens. I really hope you choose to watch them.

1.
Doughnut Economics 7 Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist by Kate Raworth, 29 minute video

<https://youtu.be/qwyzsAWRMew?si=Hut&czYBLqAjOBpb>

2.
The Superorganism Explained in 7 Minutes
The Great Simplification

<https://youtu.be/h5VWZm7ESfk?si=PCvre3pYNXCFhhGX>

From: emily@iccbusiness.org
To: [McEnery-Ogle, Anne](#); [City Council](#); [Planning Commission](#); [Pluckhahn, Lon](#)
Subject: ICC Comment Letter Vancouver Comp Plan
Date: Friday, April 24, 2026 2:38:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[ICC Comment Letter Vancouver Comp Plan 042426.pdf](#)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

On behalf of ICC Chair Josie Hyde and ICC President Ron Arp, please accept the attached letter regarding the City of Vancouver's Comprehensive Plan Update.

Thank you,

Emily Graham, *Project Assistant*

Identity Clark County



We look forward to working with city leaders as planning concludes and everyone's attention shifts to the challenging work of delivering projects as projected in these plans.

Sincerely,



Josie Hyde, ICC Chair
Division President, WFG National Title



Ron Arp, ICC President

From: [Dollar, Sarah](#)
To: [Our Vancouver 2045](#); [Dollar, Sarah](#)
Subject: FW: Vancouver 2045 Comments
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2026 5:23:03 PM

Testimony 4/27

Sarah Dollar | Executive Assistant to the City Council
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON
City Manager's Office (CMO)
Primary (Cell): 360-624-2949 | **Desk:** 360-487-8641
www.cityofvancouver.us

From: Sharon R <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2026 3:00 PM
To: City Council <Council@cityofvancouver.us>; Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@cityofvancouver.us>
Subject: Vancouver 2045 Comments

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Dear City Council and Planning Commission,
Please include my following written comments as public testimony.

Canopy cover is an important measure of the health of our community. Urban trees provide numerous ecological, economic, and social benefits, including neighborhood livability, and improved public health outcomes. Maintaining our urban canopy is a cooperative effort between property owners, developers, neighbors, and the City.

To reduce climate impact exposure in our neighborhoods and support climate resilient development, I urge the City of Vancouver **adapt a tree protection code for developers**. I live in the Hough neighborhood among 100 year old homes. Hough is a historic neighborhood with many heritage and 100-year old trees. It is a mix of duplexes and single family homes ranging from low income to million dollar homes. As the neighborhood grows and changes, there are several abandoned or foreclosed homes. I understand the need to build units to sustain a low scale neighborhood, but developers are simply **clear-cutting** lots with no regard to the valuable urban tree canopy.

I urge the city of Vancouver to adapt a tree protection code to implement the goals and policies of Vancouver's Comprehensive Plan, especially those in the Environment Element dealing with protection of the urban canopy while balancing other citywide priorities including housing production.

- Preserve and enhance the City's physical and aesthetic character by preventing untimely and indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees
- Facilitate tree protection efforts for development standards, and promote site planning and horticultural practices that are consistent with the reasonable use of

property

- Protect trees by not allowing tree removal except in hazardous situations, to prevent premature loss of trees so their retention may be considered during the development review and approval process

I urge the City of Vancouver to follow the City of Seattle's commitment to protecting valuable urban canopy. Refer to Seattle's Tree Protection Code, Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) [25.11](#), limits the number, size, and type of trees that may be removed from private property. These regulations help protect our urban canopy.

Thank you,

Sharon Rickman



Vancouver, WA 98660

From: [Dollar, Sarah](#)
To: [Dollar, Sarah](#); [Our Vancouver 2045](#)
Subject: FW: No Title
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2026 7:01:35 AM

Testimony – 4/27

Sarah Dollar | Executive Assistant to the City Council
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON
City Manager's Office (CMO)
Primary (Cell): 360-624-2949 | **Desk:** 360-487-8641
www.cityofvancouver.us

From: Paul Gardner <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 2:02 PM
To: City Council <council@cityofvancouver.us>; Planning Commission <planningcommission@cityofvancouver.us>
Subject: No Title

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Dear City Council,

I am writing again regarding the Vancouver Comprehensive Plan Draft Preferred Alternative and its impact on the Dubois Park Neighborhood. I previously raised this concern in December but did not receive a response. With upcoming council discussions, I want to ensure this issue is clearly seen and considered before decisions move forward.

A specific group of lots—those west of Devine Road and just south of MacArthur Boulevard—has been designated Medium Scale Neighborhood (up to 5 stories / 75 feet), while the rest of Dubois Park remains Low Scale Neighborhood (up to 3 stories / 45 feet). This inconsistency is not minor—it fundamentally alters the character and future of this neighborhood.

As currently proposed, Dubois Park could effectively be surrounded by 5-story, 75-foot multi-family buildings. This is not a theoretical concern. It directly translates to increased congestion, parking pressure, safety issues, and real impacts on property values for existing residents.

I ask you to look closely at the map and consider the lived reality: a homeowner on Santa Fe Drive facing a 5-story structure across the street. This is a significant and permanent change to light, privacy, and neighborhood scale—one that is not being applied evenly across Dubois Park.

This concern is compounded by the fact that the area east of Santa Fe Drive is already facing major impacts from the Heights Redevelopment project. The current zoning proposal adds a second layer of intensity on the same area, creating a disproportionate burden on a small portion of the neighborhood.

My request remains straightforward and reasonable: align the zoning of the lots west of Devine Road and south of MacArthur Boulevard with the rest of Dubois Park by designating them as Low Scale Neighborhood.

This is a small, targeted adjustment that preserves consistency, fairness, and the intended character of the neighborhood—without undermining the broader goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

I respectfully ask that this issue be acknowledged and addressed as part of the current review process. I would also appreciate confirmation that this concern has been received and considered.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Paul Gardner



Vancouver, WA 98661



March 31, 2026

Stephen W. Horenstein
Admitted in Washington and Oregon



VIA E-MAIL

Mark Person & Rebecca Kennedy
City of Vancouver
415 W. 6th St.
Vancouver, WA 98660
Email: mark.person@cityofvancouver.us;
rebecca.kennedy@cityofvancouver.us

RE: Proposed Zoning Code Issues

Dear Mark and Rebecca:

At Rebecca's request we are reaching out to Mark on behalf of the Southcliff Neighborhood regarding potential impacts of applying the middle housing zoning code to current subdivisions and lots zoned for single-family homes.

I would like to have a meeting with Mark to discuss issues with the new code language that result in not providing the protection necessary for such single-family residences. It is becoming more and more clear that the City desires to do what it can to eliminate single family homes wherever possible in favor of multifamily development. That is not what my client or others in the community want. And, it is not what the market or the law calls for.

It appears that proposed code provision 165.020(3) provides a limited exemption for single-family residences from being developed for middle housing. It states as follows:

3. Lots developed or approved before June 30, 2026, in the Medium-Scale Neighborhood (MS) district where there are six (6) or fewer existing dwelling units that are demolished and will be developed with the same number of dwelling units or more within one (1) year of demolition.

We believe this language does not go far enough to truly protect such single-family residences as Rebecca and Brian have repeatedly assured me would happen. Specifically:

1. If we are protecting these residences from becoming nonconforming uses, why include a one-year deadline? Our request is that there be no time limit included in this section. For example, insurance claims for a fire or other casualty often take longer than one year to resolve. (The Pacific Palisades Fire in Los Angeles occurred in January 2025, and many of those homeowners are still dealing with insurance claims in order to rebuild.) (I am aware of an incident where one home that burned in McLoughlin Heights in recent years that took much longer than a year to resolve insurance issues before the funds existed to rebuild.) Are we truly interested in protecting exiting homeowners' residences rather than potentially forcing them to comply with

middle housing requirements? My client clearly believes more strongly than ever that staff is interested in the latter. The homeowners are not.

2. This code language can create what I hope staff will see as an unintended consequence. If, for insurance or other reasons, the one-year time frame is exceeded, it will be the case that in Southcliff and other neighborhoods, nothing can be built on the property. The reason for this is that Southcliff and many other subdivisions have a “one single family dwelling unit per lot” limitation in their CC&Rs. This would preclude building a single-family residence if, for some reason beyond the control of the owner of the single-family lot, the one-year requirement is not met. And, the CC&R covenant will preclude building anything more dense. Rebecca has agreed with us that the covenant I describe does supersede a local zoning code as a matter of law.

3. What does the language “developed within one (1) year of demolition” mean? Filing for a building permit? Receipt of a building permit? Commencement of construction on a new home? Completion of construction of a new home?

4. What development codes will apply to developing a new home?

5. Is a homeowner required to build a dwelling within the same footprint of the prior home? We assume not.

This code language needs more work. A good place to start is removing the one-year requirement.

We have long maintained that the City’s approach to accommodating new growth in this planning cycle may solve a math problem but is not truly providing the opportunity for new housing. The City is attempting to solve a math problem by imposing middle housing zones over many single-family neighborhoods and then counting the dwelling units this will create. Although this perhaps “adds up” to the number of dwelling units Clark County is requiring of Vancouver in this GMA planning process, doing so:

A. Goes far beyond the requirements of the 1110 legislation.

B. Is not what homeowners including those in Southcliff or other neighborhoods with single-family dwellings want for their neighborhoods.

C. Will not, as practical matter, create the number of housing units being planned for. Neighborhoods are not going to develop as proposed – even over time as Rebecca often suggests. We need housing now – not over a long period of time where we depend on single family neighborhoods to redevelop into multi family projects.

D. Is forcing something on the community that can otherwise be handled by better utilization and perhaps some expansion of the urban growth boundary.

Mark Person & Rebecca Kennedy
March 31, 2026

E. Will reduce the value of existing single family residences and correspondingly reduce tax revenue to the City of Vancouver.

Please let me know when you might be available for a discussion.

Best regards,

SCHWABE, WILLIAMSON & WYATT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen W. Horenstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen W. Horenstein

SWH:cjh

From: [Justin Wood](#)
To: [McEnerny-Ogle, Anne](#); [Perez, Diana](#); [Hansen, Bart](#); [Stober, Ty](#); [Fox, Sarah](#); [Paulsen, Erik](#); [Harless, Kim](#)
Cc: [City Council](#); [Dollar, Sarah](#)
Subject: Title 20 Code Update Letter of Comment- Clark County Association of REALTORS®
Date: Friday, April 24, 2026 11:25:01 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[CCAR COV Council Title 20 Letter of Comment 4.24.2026.pdf](#)

Good Morning, Mayor McEnerny-Ogle, Mayor Pro-Tem Fox, and Councilors Paulsen, Hansen, Harless, Stober, and Perez

Please accept this letter of comment on behalf of our association. We ask this council to consider minor modifications to the Title 20 code update to better reflect market demand and enhance housing production. Our association is comprised of over 1,900 real estate professionals, including REALTORS®, lenders, engineers, developers, contractors, and others who operate their business and support the housing market here locally.

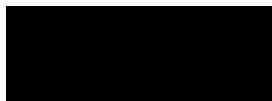
As you move towards final adoption of the city's comprehensive plan, slated for June 1st, We are available as a resource to help you make these important decisions for our community. Thank you.

Best Regards,

Justin T. Wood

AHWD,

Government Affairs Director



1514 Broadway, Ste 102, Vancouver WA
98663



Clark County Association of REALTORS®

Vancouver City Council
415 West 6th St.
Vancouver, WA 98660



Dear Mayor McEnerly-Ogle, Mayor Pro-Tem Fox, and Councilors Paulsen, Hansen, Harless, Stober, and Perez:

Vancouver has consistently been ranked as one of the most livable and desirable communities in the United States. Recently, Vancouver was ranked 14th out of 100 small to mid-sized cities for livability nationwide and *#1 among cities in the Pacific Northwest*.

Our association commends city volunteers, staff, citizens, and the council for putting in the effort to enhance our community through the comprehensive plan update and changes to Title 20 within the city's code. Much of this work supports the city's goal of a more equitable, affordable, and prosperous community through 2045. Housing and more broadly, neighborhoods define a city's character and function. Our members are experts in housing markets and demand here locally, and across the metro region. Based on that expertise, we would like to share concerns and ask this body to consider minor adjustments that have come to our attention within the city's proposed updates to Title 20.

Market Demand & Detached Housing

Unequivocally, the vast majority of home buyers prefer to purchase detached housing types. This is made clear by a variety of surveys and studies, both within Washington State and nationwide. Historically, home buyers have chosen markets where detached housing is more affordable and available, especially among larger or multi-generational households. The 5,000 sq ft lot maximum lot for new development outlined in Title 20 will push homebuyers into other markets. Home buyers may choose other local markets that may provide bigger yards, off-street or garage parking, greater space between neighbors, and in some communities, a lower tax burden. In the future, home buyers may want to be in Vancouver, but simply can't find the product that fits their needs at a price point they can afford.

Our association appreciates the need for both attached and detached housing types, but we must ensure Title 20 allows the development community to foster an ample supply of attached *and* detached owner-occupied housing to fit market demand. Over 30% of the

Vancouver City Council
415 West 6th St.
Vancouver, WA 98660

growth the county will see in the next 20 years will come from folks earning at or above 120% of area median income, according to the county's growth allocation work in response to the passage of House Bill 1220. The city should consider minor modifications to Title 20 to accommodate this income group's market demand, while still being able to provide housing for middle and low income folks and preserve the city's density and land use goals.

If this code goes into effect, existing home values, especially homes on larger legacy lots will skyrocket. It may create incentives working against middle housing, where high-income earners are competing for dwindling product (homes on larger legacy lots), negatively impacting redevelopment and infill housing. This is clearly displayed in some jurisdictions where the value of the home and larger legacy lot is greater in the marketplace than the whole process of redevelopment, especially given current interest rates, the cost of construction, and the lack of economies of scale on smaller infill lots. Providing an exemption from some code requirements may alleviate this market pressure. In agreement with a variety of members within our association and the broader local development community, *we recommend waiving or lowering minimum density requirements and providing lot dimension flexibility for small parcels in the low and medium-scale zones (under 0.5 acres)*. This will provide greater gentle density for neighborhoods and better recognize market demand in these zones.

Housing Production

One size does not fit all, particularly for infill on irregular parcels. Many lots are constrained by circulation, setbacks, critical areas, topography, and lot shape.

Waiting for the "highest and best" use through blanket upzoning may indeed worsen our housing crisis and compound the problem. High-density projects often do not get built quickly, or they convert late in the cycle, which delays supply when it is most needed. The economics of high-rise and podium construction—higher financing costs, higher per-unit construction costs, and the need for expensive ground-floor commercial build-outs—make those projects less likely to deliver affordable and attainable units. Density alone does not equal affordability; recent projects show per-door prices that are far from the attainable requirements outlined in House Bill 1220. A recent middle housing-owner occupied project off Broadway Street in Uptown Vancouver wouldn't have met the minimum density requirements under the new code. Please consider flexibility in minimum density requirements and strategic annexation or expansion of the urban growth area, as this body adopts Title 20 and the city moves through the twenty-year comprehensive plan cycle.

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Vancouver, WA 98660

Market demand will shift as existing home prices rise and new construction increasingly targets renters and higher earners. Current land-use choices, escalating regulatory requirements, and a growing tax burden are a cause for concern for renters, home buyers, businesses, housing providers, and the development community here in Vancouver.

Tree Preservation and Landscaping Requirements- Impact on Feasibility & Affordability VMC 20.450.006

The benefits of our mature trees, vegetation, tree canopy, and open spaces are real. However, to deliver the density and urban growth that the city hopes to foster, modifications may be needed within this section of the code.

- *General Requirements: “Enhanced mitigation costs of one and a half (1.5) times the regular mitigation costs are required to be paid to the City Tree Account based on the largest tree units of existing non-exempt trees permitted to be removed below the thirty-three (33%) percent preservation threshold.”* Consider lowering the 33% threshold and/or use an average size of tree units of existing non-exempt trees.
- *Exemptions to Standards: “Removal of trees on parcels of less than one acre in size shall be limited in proportion to six (6) trees per acre (i.e., on a half (1/2) acre parcel can remove three (3) trees).”* Consider increasing the exemption for the number of tree removals for parcels at or under 0.5 acre.
- *Preservation of Existing Trees and Vegetation: “When there are feasible and prudent location alternatives on site for proposed building structures or other site improvements, existing native vegetation and trees are to be preserved, even if the minimum tree density and minimum tree canopy percentage is exceeded. This may require site redesign including but not limited to: redesign of streets, sidewalks, stormwater facilities, utilities; changing the shape and size of the parking lot; reducing or limiting proposed site grading; construction of buildings on pier foundations, and changing the location or reducing the number of buildings or building lots as long as the project is within the allowed density range.”* Mandating location alternatives or mitigation when the preservation requirement has already been exceeded seems onerous and raises another impediment to feasibility, affordability, and housing production.

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Vancouver, WA 98660

Requested actions

- Reconsider density minimums in the low and medium scale zones on parcels under 0.5 acres and pursue flexible and targeted tools that preserve projected density while enabling feasible infill on constrained lots.
- Remove or relax the ground-floor commercial ceiling height requirements in certain zones and overlays, and other mandates that increase construction cost without guaranteeing long-term commercial viability. With this commercial viability issue, especially ground floor retail, the legislature is moving in the opposite direction of the city with the passage of Senate Bill 6026.
- Reassess the 5,000 sq ft lot cap and other limits that make Vancouver less competitive with neighboring jurisdictions for owner-occupied housing.
- Reduce requirements or provide flexibility within VMC 20.450.006- Landscaping and Tree Preservation. Consider the impact this code will have on feasibility, affordability, and the number of units delivered, especially where urban growth is supposed to occur according to GMA- within cities.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns. Our association appreciates all the work the city has done to balance growth, affordability, and livability, and we urge you to adopt practical, flexible policies that produce housing now while preserving long-term planning goals for the future. Our association and its 1,900+ members are available to discuss these points further or provide examples from specific parcels and projects in the city.

Sincerely,

Justin Wood

**Government Affairs Director,
Clark County Association of REALTORS®**

From: [Dollar, Sarah](#)
To: [Our Vancouver 2045](#); [Dollar, Sarah](#)
Subject: FW: Submission: Contact City Council
Date: Monday, April 27, 2026 11:59:35 AM
Attachments: [Cooling Equity Affordable Housing Vancouver Policy Brief.pdf](#)

4/27 Testimony

Sarah Dollar | Executive Assistant to the City Council
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON
City Manager's Office (CMO)
Primary (Cell): 360-624-2949 | **Desk:** 360-487-8641
www.cityofvancouver.us

From: City of Vancouver, WA <noreply@cityofvancouver.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2026 10:33 PM
To: City Council <council@cityofvancouver.us>
Subject: Submission: Contact City Council

Contact the City Council

Name
Savannah Durkin
Email

Address
Vancouver, WA United States Map It
Subject
Share an Opinion of a City project or Initiative
Choose Recipient
All the Council
Message
Dear Mayor and City Council Members, I am resubmitting my policy brief regarding cooling equity in affordable housing, which addresses extreme heat risk in Vancouver's urban heat islands.

Please use this updated version for the official public record for the 04/27/2026 City Council meeting and disregard the previously submitted version. If additional time is needed for review, I kindly ask that it be included in the public record for the following City Council meeting on May 4, 2026.

I am submitting this document for your review and request that it be included as my written testimony in lieu of speaking during the meeting.

I am happy to answer any questions via email or provide any additional information if needed.

Thank you for your time and service to the Vancouver community.

Best regards,

Savannah Durkin
Leadership Clark County, Class of 2026

File

- [Cooling_Equity_Affordable_Housing_Vancouver_Policy_Brief.pdf](#)

Policy Brief

Cooling Equity in Affordable Housing: Addressing Extreme Heat Risk in Vancouver's Urban Heat Islands

Prepared for: City of Vancouver

Prepared by: Savannah Durkin, MS, Applied Anthropology

Date: April 22, 2026

Developed through Leadership Clark County 2026

Executive Summary

Extreme heat events are becoming more frequent and severe, posing growing risks to public health and safety (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2024). These impacts are not evenly distributed across communities; residents living in urban heat islands and households without access to adequate cooling infrastructure face disproportionately high risks of heat-related illness (Clark County Public Health, 2024b; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2023).

In Vancouver, the Fourth Plain corridor has been identified as a documented urban heat island through Clark County's Heat Watch mapping project (Clark County Public Health, 2024a). Many residents in this area live in affordable housing without air conditioning or cooling-ready infrastructure (Clark County Public Health, 2024a). Because many households are renters, residents often lack the ability to install cooling systems independently (Clark County Public Health, 2024a). As extreme heat events become more common (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2024), this gap in housing infrastructure presents a growing public health and environmental justice concern.

This policy brief recommends that the City of Vancouver adopt a cooling equity approach to climate and housing policy by requiring cooling-ready infrastructure and installed air conditioning in new affordable housing developments capable of maintaining safe indoor temperatures during extreme heat events (e.g., 100°F+ conditions), while also developing a phased retrofit strategy for existing city-supported affordable housing in these high-risk areas.

Cooling-ready infrastructure refers to housing with the electrical capacity, wiring, ventilation, and physical provisions necessary to safely support installed air conditioning systems during extreme heat events.

These recommendations align with broader emergency management goals by prioritizing life safety and risk reduction before extreme heat events occur, while also reducing strain on emergency response systems during heat-related incidents.

The Problem: Extreme Heat Is a Growing Public Health Risk

Extreme heat is one of the leading weather-related causes of illness and death in the United States (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2024). Lack of access to air conditioning is one of the strongest risk factors for heat-related illness during extreme heat events (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023).

Urban heat islands occur in areas with extensive pavement, dense development, and limited tree canopy. These conditions cause neighborhoods to retain more heat than surrounding areas (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2023).

Clark County's Heat Watch mapping project documented significant variation in temperatures across neighborhoods. The study found that the Fourth Plain corridor in Vancouver, Washington experienced some of the hottest afternoon temperatures recorded during the study period (Clark County Public Health, 2024a).

The Fourth Plain corridor is one of Vancouver's most diverse and economically vulnerable areas and is home to a large multicultural community, including many Latino and immigrant households (City of Vancouver, 2023). People living in urban heat islands or without access to air conditioning face significantly higher risks of heat-related illness (Clark County Public Health, 2024b).

While cooling centers and emergency response programs are important, they do not replace the need for safe indoor temperatures in people's homes.

Community Vulnerability in the Fourth Plain Corridor

The Fourth Plain corridor is one of Vancouver's most diverse and economically vulnerable areas. Data from the City of Vancouver's Fourth Plain Forward initiative highlights several factors that increase vulnerability during extreme heat events (City of Vancouver, 2022b):

- 69% of residents are renters (48% citywide)
- 17% of families live below the poverty line (8% citywide)
- 34% of residents speak a language other than English at home (20% citywide)
- 21% of residents rely on public transportation (3% citywide)
- 46% of residents live with a disability (38% citywide)

These overlapping social and environmental conditions increase the risk of heat-related illness for residents living in affordable housing without access to cooling.

Housing Infrastructure and Cooling Capacity

Many affordable housing developments rely on passive cooling strategies or heat pump systems. While these systems may provide moderate cooling under normal conditions, they may not maintain safe indoor temperatures during extreme heat events, particularly in buildings without sufficient cooling capacity (Vrettos et al., 2022).

Ensuring that housing developments include reliable cooling infrastructure, such as cooling-ready systems and installed air conditioning, is therefore an important climate adaptation and public health strategy.

As climate conditions change, housing design must consider both energy efficiency and resilience to extreme heat.

Policy Recommendation

To address growing heat-related risks and housing inequities, the City of Vancouver should adopt a cooling equity policy for affordable housing developments located within documented urban heat islands.

The City of Vancouver should:

- Require that new city-funded and city-supported affordable housing developments located within documented urban heat islands include cooling-ready infrastructure and installed air conditioning systems capable of maintaining safe indoor temperatures during extreme heat events.
- Prioritize implementation in neighborhoods identified as urban heat islands through Clark County's heat mapping project, including areas along the Fourth Plain corridor.
- Develop a phased retrofit strategy to install air conditioning in existing city-supported affordable housing located within documented urban heat islands, prioritizing buildings serving seniors, people with disabilities, low-income households, and other communities disproportionately impacted by extreme heat, including multilingual, immigrant, and historically underserved residents along the Fourth Plain corridor.

Possible implementation strategies may include:

- Incorporating cooling requirements into affordable housing funding agreements.
- Integrating cooling upgrades into housing rehabilitation or preservation programs.
- Utilizing climate resilience, infrastructure, or housing funds to support cooling retrofits.

Conclusion

Extreme heat is an emerging public health challenge in Vancouver and across Clark County. Residents living in urban heat islands, particularly renters in affordable housing, face disproportionate risks when adequate cooling infrastructure is not available.

By requiring cooling-ready infrastructure and installed air conditioning in affordable housing developments located in urban heat islands, the City of Vancouver can reduce heat-related inequities and strengthen long-term community resilience. Ensuring safe indoor temperatures will become increasingly critical as extreme heat events intensify.

These recommendations align with and operationalize the City of Vancouver’s Climate Action Framework, which prioritizes climate resilience for overburdened communities and supports both cooling-ready infrastructure in new affordable housing developments and air conditioning retrofits in existing housing as key adaptation strategies (City of Vancouver, 2022a).

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apenergy.2022.119323>

From: [City of Vancouver, WA](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Submission: Contact City Council
Date: Monday, April 13, 2026 6:37:39 PM

Contact the City Council

Name
Jeff Weaver
Email
[REDACTED]
Phone
[REDACTED]
Address
[REDACTED] Vancouver, WA 98663 United States Map It
Subject
Share an Opinion of a City project or Initiative
Choose Recipient
All the Council
Message
I would like you to eliminate the max service in the new I-5 replacement bridge. The cost are simply to high.

From: [City of Vancouver, WA](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Submission: Contact City Council
Date: Monday, April 13, 2026 4:51:20 PM

Contact the City Council

Name
mike yamamoto
Email
[REDACTED]
Address
[REDACTED] Vancouver 98684 United States Map It
Subject
Share an Opinion of a City project or Initiative
Choose Recipient
All the Council
Message
<p>Hello. I am writing to express strong support for extending the IBR Light Rail to the original Modified Locally Preferred Alternative terminus at Library Square, and to request improvements ensuring robust multimodal connections there.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Support extending Light Rail to Library Square.-Multimodal connections for IBR must be strongly linked to the transit services at Library Square. Terminating Light Rail or the Multi Use Path at the Waterfront does not provide a true multimodal connection between Portland and Vancouver.-Under the current plan, accessing Library Square from IBR by walking or biking requires descending ~100 feet via a half-mile spiral ramp and then riding back uphill through downtown — a configuration we call “the Vancouver Dip.” This is impractical and discourages active-transport connections.-The current plan fails to connect transit with the Multi Use Path; this omission should be corrected. We strongly request that any Light Rail connection from the Waterfront to Library Square also include the Multi Use Path to ensure continuous, multimodal linkage. <p>Thank you for considering these requests. -Mike yamamoto</p>

From: [Jenny J](#)
To: [City Council](#); [McEnerny-Ogle, Anne](#); [Fox, Sarah](#); [Hansen, Bart](#); [Stober, Ty](#); [Paulsen, Erik](#); [Pluckhahn, Lon](#)
Subject: Interstate Bridge Replacement
Date: Monday, April 13, 2026 5:10:42 PM

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Hello Mayor Ann, City Manager and Council,

As a homeowner and longtime resident of Vancouver, I am writing to you with regard to decisions about the interstate bridge replacement and light rail.

This is a vital piece of transportation that will lead us into the future. It must be built right with a long-term vision that includes multimodal mobility and reduced climate impacts.

I encourage you to support extension of IBR Light Rail to the Preferred Alternative terminus at **Library Square**. This would enable linkages to transit connections and provide light rail access to a larger populace. While the light rail must also connect with the multiuse path and waterfront, terminating it at the waterfront lacks true transportation connections and limits access for the community due to the distance and steeper grade.

We have a unique opportunity to make our community stronger and more resilient into the future. This will provide individuals without cars or difficulty walking long distances with true connectivity and empowerment. It will help Vancouver reduce harmful particulate emissions and work towards meeting our climate goals. It makes good sense. Let's do it right!

Jenny Jasinski
Hough Resident