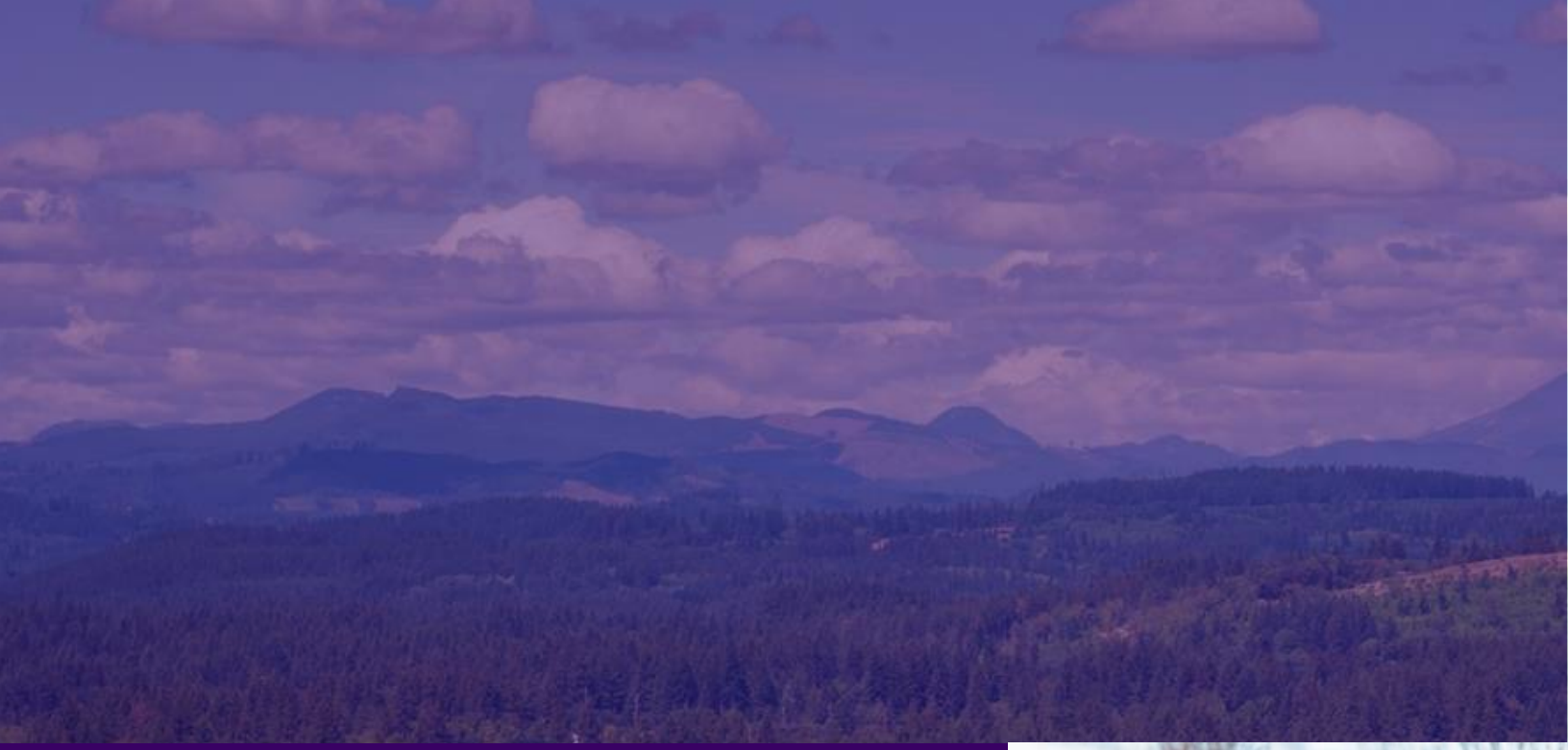


City of Battle Ground Housing Action Plan



REVISED FINAL DRAFT | June 2021



Many members of the community, as well as other city staff participated and contributed to the preparation of the Housing Action Plan. Their participation and contributions are appreciated.

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- Shane Bowman
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- Brian Munson
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Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee guided the development of the Housing Action Plan by providing insight on current housing issues and needs, guiding approaches to public engagement, informing priority focus areas, and reviewing and consulting on recommendations include as part of the final Plan.

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City of Battle Ground Housing Action Plan

Executive Summary | June 2021



The City of Battle Ground developed a Housing Action Plan (HAP) to define strategies and implementing actions to promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels in the City of Battle Ground. The HAP is a five-year strategy that supports and guides city actions and existing long-range planning, including the 2024 update of the City of Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan.

The Housing Action Plan (HAP) is a comprehensive analysis of housing in Battle Ground that includes

- An overview of housing needs,
- Current housing supply and development trends,
- Existing housing policies and programs, and
- Strategies to meet the highest needs and encourage more housing production for Battle Ground's residents.

Planning Context

The Housing Action Plan is informed by the city's larger planning framework, including:

- **The Growth Management Act (GMA)**, which establishes the planning framework for Washington State and cities and counties of a certain size, as well as those that opt in. This plan was funded through a grant that originated from a house bill and an amendment to the GMA.
- **Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan**, which broadly establishes policies for land use, transportation, and utilities, as well as land use categories and densities for the city (such as single-family, commercial, or public).
- **Battle Ground Roadmap**, which sets the vision for the city (see next page).

The City adopted a Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan, which reflects core community values, addresses emerging trends and issues, imagines a preferred future, and promotes local action (see right). This vision was created based on five focus areas that were identified as "top of mind" issues for Battle Ground residents (see below).



Battle Ground's vision statement calls for an unsurpassed quality of life for all residents, which framed the Housing Action Plan work.

In order to create a plan that reflects Battle Ground citizens, the HAP starts with an in depth look of community demographics, existing housing stock, land capacity, workforce profile, and housing needs.

BATTLE GROUND'S VISION

OUR VISION for Battle Ground is a vibrant, growing city that offers an unsurpassed quality of life for all residents, embracing its history, traditions and diversity. We celebrate our location at the foot of the Cascade Mountains, exploring and recreating in our natural surroundings. We value our exemplary education system that inspires excellence and innovation. Our economy is dynamic and diversified, with time-honored trades thriving alongside new, leading edge companies. Our downtown district cultivates a flourishing artisan community of distinctive restaurants, entertainment, arts and crafts. Our community centers and open spaces provide unique places for people to gather and connect year-round. Our neighborhood districts create a sense of identity, belonging and well-being, while our entire city is enhanced and connected by a network of pedestrian walkways, bike trails, and public transit.

Housing Goals

Based on the findings from the Housing Needs Assessment and stakeholder and community engagement, four goals were identified for the Housing Action Plan (HAP):

1

Encourage production of homes that meet community needs

The rate of housing production in Battle Ground is not keeping pace with the city's anticipated growth or creating a lifecycle of housing choices. The community expressed a desire for smaller housing types, affordable housing at every stage of the life cycle, and a general lack of housing inventory based on current demand. **To meet the projected housing needs - almost 14,000 units by 2035 - the city would have to add about 420 units per year to its housing stock.**

2

Increase variety of housing types

The city will need a variety of housing types to meet the needs of existing households and the increased future population. A large portion of housing is comprised of single-family homes (80%), and 14% of homes are in multifamily buildings of 5+ units. Filling the gap between multifamily and single family housing supply with "middle housing types" would increase the variation of housing types. **Increased variation would provide more options to older adults, first time homebuyers, single income households, and households of varied size.**

3

Expand supply and access to affordable homes

Housing costs are rising faster than incomes. From 2010 to 2020, the cost to purchase a home rose 64%, rents increased 59%, but area median income only increased by 29%. More affordable housing options are needed at all income levels, but especially for cost-burdened households: 32% of Battle Ground's households are considered cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on housing related costs. Furthermore, 63% of workers in Battle Ground earn less than $40,000 annually, compared to 48% of residents. **More housing options would help meet the housing needs of families in Battle Ground who are increasingly priced out of the community.**

4

Support homeownership

The rising cost of housing is a barrier to first time homebuyers. Between 2010 and 2020, the cost of owning a home has exceeded incomes: the average home value in Battle Ground increased 64% while area median income in Clark County increased 29%. As a result, only 26% of households in Battle Ground can afford a median priced home of $423,000, which requires an annual income of $107,291, and only 39% of households can afford a home at the lower market value of $332,000, which requires an annual income of $84,281. **Homeownership is a steppingstone to equity and asset-building and should be encouraged through various affordable homeownership options for first time home buyers.**

A summary of Stakeholder and Community Engagement and the full Housing Needs Assessment can be found in the appendices. **Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary** and **Appendix B: Housing Needs Assessment**

Priority Housing Strategies

Out of a comprehensive list of strategies, five strategies were prioritized by the stakeholder Advisory Committee and city staff based on their potential to address the housing need in Battle Ground.

Priority Strategies

	Strategy	Encourage production of homes that meet community needs	Increase variety of housing types	Expand supply and access to affordable homes	Support homeownership
1	**Invest in infrastructure to unlock land for development.** Cities can strategically invest in infrastructure to reduce one of the significant costs associated with development: upgrading or building new infrastructure to serve development. Prioritizing certain investments, such as sewer or water extensions, can support rezoned areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types or attract development to certain areas.	●	○	●	○
2	**Remove code and process barriers.** "Missing middle" housing helps fill the gap between single family and multifamily housing. By reviewing existing regulations for barriers to missing middle housing and identifying areas of existing permitting and subdivision procedures that could be streamlined, Battle Ground could help encourage production of more housing types and therefore increase the supply of affordable homes.	●	●	●	
3	**Adopt Planned Action Ordinances.** A Planned Action Ordinance (PAO) streamlines cities' environmental review processes and adds certainty for developers. If a PAO is in place, uncertainty round fees and or mitigation measures are removed and the time it takes to permit projects is reduced.	●	○	○	○
4	**Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types in existing zones.** 70% of the land within Battle Ground's city limits and Urban Growth Area (UGA) is zoned for residential. Current residential zones do not allow many of the housing types desired by the community, such as duplexes or townhomes. Strategic rezones in areas that have assets such as good schools, access to infrastructure and open space, can help the city meet the diverse needs of its community.	●	●	●	○
5	**Study parking requirements.** Parking can add significant costs to the development of new housing, particularly affordable housing. Because Battle Ground has limited transit and is car dependent, parking should be studied and "right sized" to avoid undue burdens on developers while also ensuring requirements don't undersupply parking, which can result in residential parking overflowing into business districts' street parking. Reducing parking requirements can help with affordability both to developers and to renters.	●	○	●	

KEY:

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ May support the housing goal, depending on implementation

"Blank" – Does not support the housing goal



INTRODUCTION



This Housing Action Plan (HAP) defines strategies and implementing actions that promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels in the City of Battle Ground. Pursuant to a grant agreement with the Washington Department of Commerce, the HAP is meant to identify housing needs for households across all income levels and different lifecycle phases in the City of Battle Ground and develop strategies to increase the supply of housing and variety of housing types to meet those needs.

The Housing Action Plan is a five-year strategy that supports and guides city actions and existing long-range planning, including the 2024 update of the City of Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan.

The Housing Action Plan is informed by the city's larger planning context, including:

- **The Growth Management Act (GMA)** which establishes the planning framework for Washington State and cities and counties of a certain size, as well as those that opt in. This plan was funded through a grant that originated from a House Bill[1] and an amendment to the GMA[2].
- **Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan**, which sets broad policies for topics such as land use, transportation, and utilities, and also establishes broad land use categories and overall density for land within the city, such as single-family, commercial, or public.
- **Battle Ground Roadmap**, which sets the vision of an unsurpassed quality of life for all residents (see image).

While the city plays a key role in local housing, the local housing system also includes for-profit and nonprofit developers and other stakeholders. The HAP articulates a clear set of housing strategies the city can work on in partnership with developers, community service providers, and other stakeholders.



Community members identified five focus areas for the Battle Ground Roadmap vision.

[1] Engrossed second substitute house bill (E2SHB) 1923.
[2] RCW 36.70A.600(2)

Plan Organization

The Housing Action Plan is organized as follows:

- **Developing the Housing Action Plan.** This section includes:
  - Summary of community input received for the Housing Action Plan.
  - Description of the key findings from the analysis of housing needs.
  - Findings from an evaluation of the city's adopted Comprehensive Plan, zoning, and land use code.
- **Goals and Strategies**. This section lists the four housing goals synthesized from community input, needs assessment findings, and policy review findings. Strategies addressing each housing goal are included with a detailed description, complementary strategies, considerations for Battle Ground, and examples from other communities.
- **Implementation.** This section includes a summary table of the strategies, timelines, resource requirements, responsibilities for leading the tasks, and partnership opportunities.





DEVELOPING THE HOUSING ACTION PLAN



The HAP was developed between October 2020 and April 2021 and benefited from the expertise and guidance of an Advisory Committee, interviews with stakeholders, a developer forum, and a communitywide survey. The HAP also used a wide range of quantitative data to help identify the housing needs and challenges of Battle Ground residents and workers. Existing policies and regulations were also evaluated to inform the strategies presented in the HAP.

Key findings from the engagement and analysis are presented in the following sections. See Appendix A, B, and C for a full engagement summary, needs assessment, and policy and regulatory review.

Community Input

The Battle Ground community was an important contributor to the HAP. The city conducted public engagement over the course of the project and heard from more than 370 members of the public. A summary of engagement activities is presented below. The full community survey results and a thematic summary from the stakeholder interviews and developer focus group are available in **Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary.**

Key engagement activities

- **A community survey** to gather feedback on current housing challenges and needed housing options was widely promoted through utility bills, flyers, and social media outlets. Responses were received from 365 participants.
- **A developer forum and stakeholder interviews** were conducted to better understand the city's rental options, supply and demand for housing, interest in different housing types, and policy or regulatory barriers to development. Detailed input was collected from 18 individuals.
- Four meetings of the **Advisory Committee** were held over the course of the project. The purpose of the Advisory Committee was to ensure the HAP is reflective of the current and future needs of the Battle Ground community. The Committee advised the project team on local conditions and served as a liaison between the community and HAP work.

Key takeaways

- Overall growth and demand for housing in Battle Ground has increased.
- Demand for rentals is greater than the supply.
- There is high demand for smaller units and for more variety in housing types.
- Some community members are concerned about rapid growth and the potential strain on infrastructure.

Battle Ground's Housing Needs and Gaps

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was prepared for the City of Battle Ground in January 2021 and updated in April 2021. Like other communities in Washington, Battle Ground faces a critical need for more housing that's affordable to the community. The needs assessment evaluates current housing supply and summarizes housing needs across the full spectrum of household types and income levels.

The key findings of the Battle Ground Housing Needs Assessment are below. The full housing needs assessment is available in **Appendix B: Housing Needs Assessment**.

- **The recent rate of housing unit production falls short of the rate needed to meet estimated future population.** Battle Ground has averaged 186 permitted units per year since 2015, an increase from an average of 88 per year from 2010-2014. This rate of production is still below the projected 420 housing units per year needed to meet projected housing needs in the next 15 years.
- **There is a lack of diversity in housing types available.** Almost 80% of housing units in Battle Ground are found in single family homes and 14% are in multifamily buildings of 5+ units. A larger variety of housing types that provide the "missing middle" between multifamily and single family would provide more options to seniors, entry level home purchasers, single income households, and households of varied size.
- **Battle Ground's population is growing and aging.** 10% of the population is currently aged 65 and over and this age range is projected to increase faster than all other age groups between 2020 and 2030. Many older adults will have special housing and service needs as they age. Battle Ground's older adult households, particularly those who live alone, are more likely to be cost burdened. Housing with access to transportation, community amenities, and healthcare needs becomes increasingly important for adults who want to remain in the community as they age.
- **Housing affordability is a rising challenge in the region.** Since 2010, Battle Ground home values have increased by 64%. During the same time period, the area-wide median family income (AMI) increased by only 29%. Average rental rates have increased almost as much as home values (59% from 2010 to 2020), resulting in average rents of $1,581.
- **Nearly one third of households (32%) in Battle Ground are housing cost-burdened**, spending more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing costs. High rates of cost-burdened households signal a lack of affordability in the housing market. Households with low incomes, older residents, small families, and renter households are particularly affected by cost burden. Cost burden affects well-being and health in significant ways, as cost-burdened households have less

money to spend on food, healthcare, and transportation.

- **Homeownership is out of reach for many residents.** Only 26% of households in Battle Ground can afford a median priced home of $423,000, which requires an annual income of $107,000 to avoid housing cost burden. Only 39% of households can afford a home at the lower market price of $332,000, which requires an annual income of $84,000.
- **Many individuals who work in Battle Ground cannot afford to live in the community**. The largest employment sectors in the city are construction (23% of workers), retail trade (20%), and accommodation and food services (15%). On average, 63% of people who work in Battle Ground earn less than $40,000 annually.
- **More housing is needed for households with low incomes.** Rental unit housing options are limited for low-income households, particularly for households with income below 50% of area median income. Communities typically contain a spectrum of households at different income levels and low- and moderate-income households are likely headed by young adults, older adults, or people employed in the service and retail sectors. Adequate housing for these households supports a thriving community.





Policy and Code Review Findings

The Housing Policy Review evaluated existing city plans and documents to determine progress in achieving their goals and policies, and their alignment with the goals of the Housing Action Plan and findings of the Housing Needs Assessment. Material evaluated included the current City of Battle Ground Comprehensive Plan Housing Element as well as other relevant elements that address housing policies; the city's zoning code; city initiatives and programs; and Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP's).

Overall findings from the review are presented below. The full policy review is available in **Appendix C: Housing Policy Review**.

Key Policy and Code Review Takeaways:

- Overall, objectives in Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan elements (housing, land use, and livability) are aligned with the findings identified in the HNA and with the HAP goals.
- Several existing and ongoing plans, including the Battle Ground Roadmap Community Vision and Action Plan, as well as the Land Use Master Plan (LUMP), help to support and guide the implementation of HAP goals. The LUMP process identifies civic centers and commercial areas that can be prioritized for nearby higher density housing. Both plans address population growth, which relates to the findings identified in the HNA.
- Battle Ground's zoning code does not prohibit missing middle housing, but there are opportunities to improve development feasibility, including adding language to clearly delineate where middle housing should be allowed, and where they are feasible. These opportunities are addressed in the HAP strategies.

Missing Middle Housing

Missing middle is a term that refers to a range of small to modest-scale housing types that bridge the gap between detached single-family homes and urban-scaled multifamily buildings.

These types of housing are compatible in scale with single-family or transitional neighborhoods and include duplexes, triplexes, cottage housing, townhouses, courtyard apartments and other small-scale apartment buildings that provide diverse housing options.



GOALS AND STRATEGIES



Four housing goals were identified for the Housing Action Plan (HAP) based on a synthesis of the findings from the Housing Needs Assessment and stakeholder and community engagement:

1. **Encourage production of homes that meet community needs**
2. **Increase variety of housing types**
3. **Expand supply and access to affordable homes**
4. **Support homeownership**

Strategies to address these housing goals were compiled using the State of Washington Department of Commerce Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan, Draft June 2020 (Commerce Guidebook), an audit of Battle Ground's zoning code, a review of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and feedback from community engagement and stakeholder interviews. Some of the strategies include removing barriers in development regulations, permitting processes, fees, and offering incentives and assistance.

Exhibit 1 identifies all of the proposed strategies and their relationship to the housing goals, using the following key. Strategies prioritized by the stakeholder Advisory Committee and city staff are listed first in **bold**. Descriptions of each strategy follow the table.

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ May support the housing goal, depending on implementation

"Blank" – Does not support the housing goal

Addressing Displacement

The Washington Department of Commerce grant requires that Battle Ground consider strategies that minimize displacement of existing residents. Displacement occurs when a household is forced to move against its wishes due to increased housing costs and redevelopment pressure on lower-cost housing. The HAP recommends several strategies to minimize displacement in Battle Ground, including: adopt a notice of intent to sell/sale ordinance; provide need-based rehabilitation assistance; encourage programs that protect tenants; and create community benefits/development agreements.

Exhibit 1. Matrix of Strategies and Relationship to Housing Goals

		Strategy	Encourage production of homes that meet community needs	Increase variety of housing types	Expand supply and access to affordable homes	Support homeownership
Priority Strategies	1	**Invest in infrastructure to unlock land for development.**	●	○	●	○
	2	**Remove code and process barriers.**	●	●	●	
	3	**Adopt Planned Action Ordinances.**	●	○	○	○
	4	**Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types in existing zones.**	●	●	●	○
	5	**Study parking requirements.**	●	○	●	
	6	Consider form-based approaches to regulate middle housing to encourage better design and greater variety.	●	●		○
	7	Review accessory dwelling unit (ADU) regulations.	●	●	●	○
	8	Review cottage home regulations.	●	●	●	○
	9	Provide need-based rehabilitation assistance for residents in older neighborhoods that may need revitalization or home repairs.			●	●
	10	Partner and maintain dialogue with developers and Vancouver Housing Authority.	○	○	○	
	11	Adopt a Notice of Intent to Sell / Sale Ordinance.			●	
	12	Put in place the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE).	○	○	○	○
	13	Work with faith-based organizations on housing.	○	○	○	○
	14	Create Community Benefits/Development Agreements.	○	○	○	○
	15	Encourage PUD/PRD and Cluster Subdivisions.	●	●	●	○
	16	Refine ground floor retail requirements.	●	○	●	
	17	Waive, reduce, or defer fees and charges for low-income housing projects to incentivize affordable housing.	●	●	●	●
	18	Increase funding for affordable housing through Local Option Taxes, Fees and Levies.	●		●	○
	19	Consider inclusionary zoning (IZ) ordinances require that all new construction within a specified zone include income-restricted affordable housing.			●	●
	20	Support programs that protect tenants.			●	
	21	Provide "Found Land": Surplus Land and Other Opportunities.	●	○	○	○
	22	Encourage supportive housing.	○	●	●	
	23	Encourage transitional housing.	○	●	●	

Priority Strategies

Out of the comprehensive list of identified strategies, five strategies were prioritized based on their potential to address the nature and scale of housing need in Battle Ground. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the Battle Ground Planning Commission, and city staff contributed input that shaped the prioritization of the five strategies. The remaining strategies are included as secondary strategies that would also help meet Battle Ground's identified housing goals.

The following information is included for each of the priority strategies: a description of the strategy, how the tool relates to Battle Ground's housing goals, complementary strategies, community and stakeholder input, considerations for applicability in Battle Ground, example communities or resources, and implementation considerations including:

- Timeline 🕒🕒🕒 short-term, 🕒🕒🕒 mid-term, and 🕒🕒🕒 long-term
- Cost $$$$ minimal, $$$$ moderate, $$$$ significant, and $$$$ major
- Effort ● ○ ○ minimal, ● ● ○ moderate, and ● ● ● significant





Strategy 1

Invest in infrastructure to unlock land for development

Cities can strategically invest in infrastructure to reduce one of the most significant costs associated with development: the cost of upgrading existing or developing new infrastructure to serve development. Prioritizing certain investments, such as sewer or water extensions can support rezoned areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types or attract development to certain areas. Strategic selection of priorities in the cities Capital Facilities Element can help support a housing program.

One way to raise funds for these investments is to use community revitalization financing (CRF). This program allows cities to create a tax "increment area" to finance public improvements within the area using increased revenues generated from local property taxes. This tool is best used in undeveloped and underdeveloped areas because the program depends on an increase in property value.

Complementary Strategies

- Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options.
- Adopt Planned Action Ordinances.

Community and Stakeholder Input

- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee noted that the western portion of Battle Ground is underdeveloped for employment and housing opportunities due to a lack of infrastructure available.
- Community members expressed the importance of planning for needed infrastructure to accommodate expected growth and maintaining existing infrastructure systems in place.

GOALS ADDRESSED

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

● Supports ○ Supports with conditions

IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	🕒🕒🕒
Cost	$$$$
Effort	● ● ●

Considerations

- Due to the number of infrastructure types included (roads, water, sewer, etc.) this strategy would require considerable coordination across departments within the City of Battle Ground as well as with partner organizations such as the Clark Regional Wastewater District and WSDOT.
- Funding for improvements could come from a mix of sources, including local sources; federal or state appropriations or grants; CRF financing; or bonding.

Example Community

Spokane created a tax increment area in West Central Spokane through an ordinance in 2007. Funds from the area were used to make trail and park improvements and construct a pedestrian bridge, and are planned to provide streetscape and infrastructure improvements. Recent developments in the once underserved area include Kendall Yards, a master planned community with a variety of housing types and commercial amenities, and the ongoing Sportsplex project, the Podium.

Next Steps

- Identify areas where city or partner infrastructure investments could help meet housing goals.
- Coordinate capital improvement plans across departments to meet broad city goals.
- To be pro-active in building infrastructure, the city should explore potential funding sources, including existing local capacity, other revenue tools available to cities (like CRF), federal or state appropriations or grants, or bonds.



Strategy 2

Remove code and process barriers

Missing middle housing is not explicitly prohibited in the Battle Ground code, but code standards and a lack of code support, discourages its construction.

In addition, providing a predictable, efficient, and user-friendly permitting and subdivision process can encourage new housing by reducing the perception of risk among developers and lowering their administrative carrying costs. There are several ways a jurisdiction can improve its process, including: simplifying procedures for projects with lower impacts, expediting review for types of development the community wishes to encourage, and increasing department staffing during busy cycles, among others.

Complementary Strategies

- Review accessory dwelling unit (ADU) regulations.
- Review cottage home regulations.
- Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options.
- Study parking requirements for multi-family projects.

Community and Stakeholder Input

- Housing affordability was the largest concern among survey respondents. The housing needs assessment found that nearly one third of residents are cost burdened by housing. Households with low incomes, older residents, small families, and renter households are particularly affected by cost burden.
- Almost half of Battle Ground's households (49%) are single or two-person households. Additionally, the city's population is aging. The 65+ community is expected to increase faster than all other age groups between 2020 and 2030. These statistics and concern over housing affordability heard through outreach show that a large portion of the community may be highly susceptible to housing cost burden.
- Removing process barriers is an important step to help provide smaller housing units and affordable housing. The increased administrative costs associated

GOALS ADDRESSED

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

● Supports ○ Supports with conditions

IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	🕒🕒🕒
Cost	$$$$
Effort	● ● ●

with longer review times can be transferred either to renters in higher monthly rent costs or to home purchasers through a higher home price.

Considerations

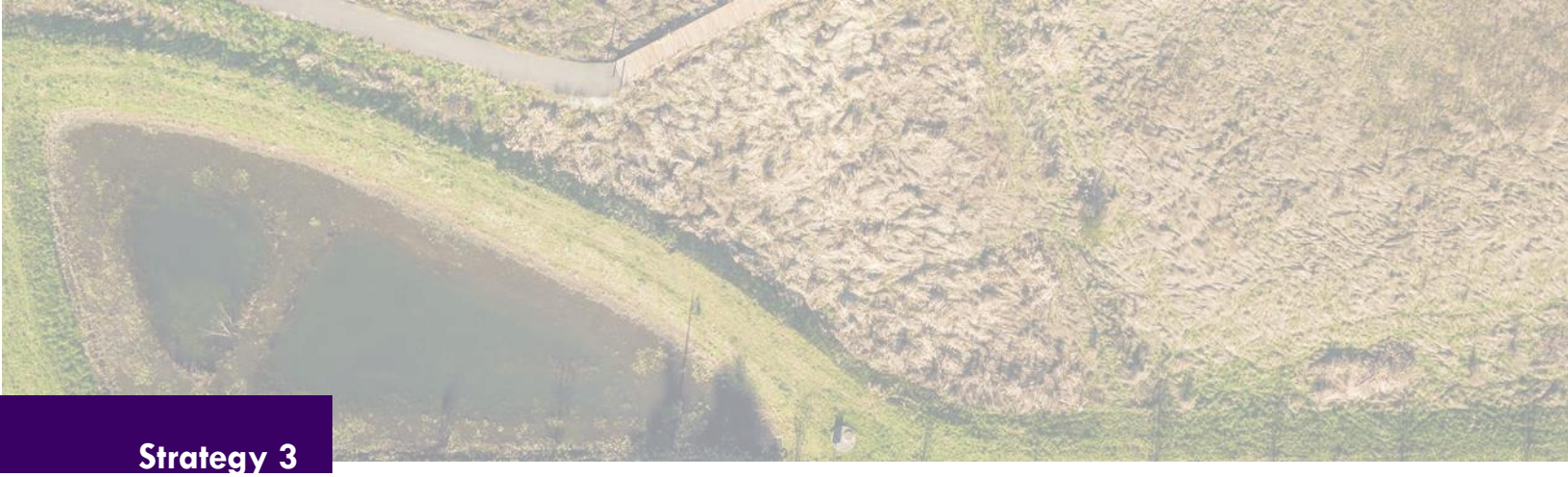
- The City of Battle Ground would need to implement significant code amendments to expand by-right housing type permissions. The city should also consider revising development standards to balance middle housing feasibility with compatibility objectives.
- Consider removing "single-family" designation from zoning and redesignate as "low-density" residential.
- Consider allowing duplexes by right on corner lots in lower density single-family zones such as R3 when they are designed to look more like single-family homes. Also consider allowing duplexes outright in a wider range of medium-to-higher-density zones such as R7.
- Battle Ground currently uses a 20' minimum garage setback. This allows a vehicle to park in the driveway area without obstructing the sidewalk. Townhouses, though, generally don't fit well with a 20' front garage setback, and so the distance could be reduced significantly to support better site efficiency.

Example Community

- The Sumner, WA municipal code includes specific duplex design and development guidelines, and regulates other aspects of duplex development under various multifamily and single family design guidelines.

Next Steps

- Study cities that have a hybrid-form-based approach to establish objective bulk/massing standards and certain building design requirements.
- Conduct a code review to explore barriers to accessory dwelling units and cottage housing developments.
- Implement code amendments to expand by-right housing type permissions.
- Revise development standards to balance middle housing feasibility with compatibility objectives.
- Remove "single-family" designation from zoning and redesignate as "low-density" residential.
- Decrease minimum garage setback to support better site efficiency for middle housing types, like townhomes.
- Review existing permitting and subdivision procedures to identify areas for increasing a predictable, efficient, and user-friendly process.



Strategy 3

Adopt Planned Action Ordinances

A Planned Action Ordinance (PAO) allows cities to streamline environmental review and increase clarity and certainty for developers. Planned actions provide more detailed environmental analysis at an area wide scale rather than in piecemeal fashion during permit review processes for individual sites. If a PAO is in place in an area, future projects in the area that develop under the designated Planned Action will not require SEPA determinations at the time of permit application if they are certified as consistent with the PAO. Fees and mitigation measures are also identified in the ordinance. This reduces the time it takes to permit projects and removes uncertainty around fees or mitigation measures.



Planned actions provide more detailed environmental analysis during the area-wide planning phase, rather than during the permit review process.

Complementary Strategies

- Invest in infrastructure to unlock land for development
- Remove code and process barriers
- Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types in existing zones

Community and Stakeholder Input

- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee noted a lengthy process for permitting an individual site due to on-site wetlands. A PAO would allow the city to review a

GOALS ADDRESSED

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ○ Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

● Supports ○ Supports with conditions

IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	🕒🕒🕒
Cost	$$$$
Effort	● ● ●

large portion of land and map out the highest value critical areas to protect. A site that has gone through an environmental review provides certainty for developers on the cost associated with mitigation and provides a more concrete timeline for the project to get through the review process.

- While environmental protection wasn't addressed in the housing survey, the community placed a high value on preservation during the visioning process in 2018. This strategy can help implement this part of the vision by protecting high quality critical areas on a larger scale rather than on a site by site analysis.
- The cost developers experience with longer review times is transferred to either the renter in higher monthly rent costs or to the person purchasing the property at a higher purchase price, which helps address housing affordability by minimizing carrying costs.

Considerations

- A PAO is an intensive effort that can be expensive to produce. The city will need to consider the level of effort before committing scarce public dollars to the strategy.

Example Community

- The Sunset area in the City of Renton used a PAO with complementary investments as part of an overall strategy to jumpstart development and improve the area.

Next Steps

- Identify areas in Battle Ground where a Planned Action Ordinance could help meet housing goals.
- Explore potential funding sources, including local capacity, federal or state appropriations or grants, or bonds.



Strategy 4

Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types in existing zones

Local governments do not typically build housing but play an important role in shaping the type, location, and amount of housing available by establishing zoning and setting standards around use, heights, bulk, density limits, and parking. These standards can have a significant impact on housing development. Stringent or overly restrictive zoning regulations are a leading cause of housing issues in communities across the region. Since local zoning is within the city's control, changes to zoning is one of the most effective strategies at its disposal to address housing challenges.

Battle Ground's zoning is based on the policy direction set by the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan establishes goals and objectives for future land use based on the community's vision for the future. It uses the future land use map to direct the growth and development of the community over the next 20 years.

Based on the current Comprehensive Plan, residential uses comprise the majority of Battle Ground's future land use, while commercial and mixed uses line the SR-502 and SR-503 corridors and form a commercial and civic heart near the center of the community.

Battle Ground's zoning map implements the future land use map. The map (Exhibit 2) shows the City's current zoning within city limits and Clark County zoning within the Urban Growth Area (UGA). Residential zones cover approximately 70% of the acreage in this area. Mixed use zones and commercial zones each account for about 11% of the community's acreage. Existing residential zones do not allow many housing types desired by the community such as duplexes or townhomes. Strategic rezones in areas that have assets such as good schools and access to infrastructure and open space, can help the city meet the diverse needs of its community.

GOALS ADDRESSED

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

● Supports ○ Supports with conditions

IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	🕒🕒🕒
Cost	$$$$
Effort	● ● ●

In addition to strategically rezoning for flexible housing options, allowing a more diverse group of housing types in more zones can increase housing supply and diversity of housing stock. This strategy could include middle housing types in what are now exclusively single-family residential zones or allowing small multifamily development in higher density residential zones. This strategy could also include exploring a variety of development standards that make it easier to produce mixed-use products in commercial areas. Additionally, encouraging a larger variety of housing types, like middle housing types, can offer more flexible ways to add compatible density into established neighborhoods. Missing middle housing types that could be added into the Battle Ground code include triplexes and quadplexes.

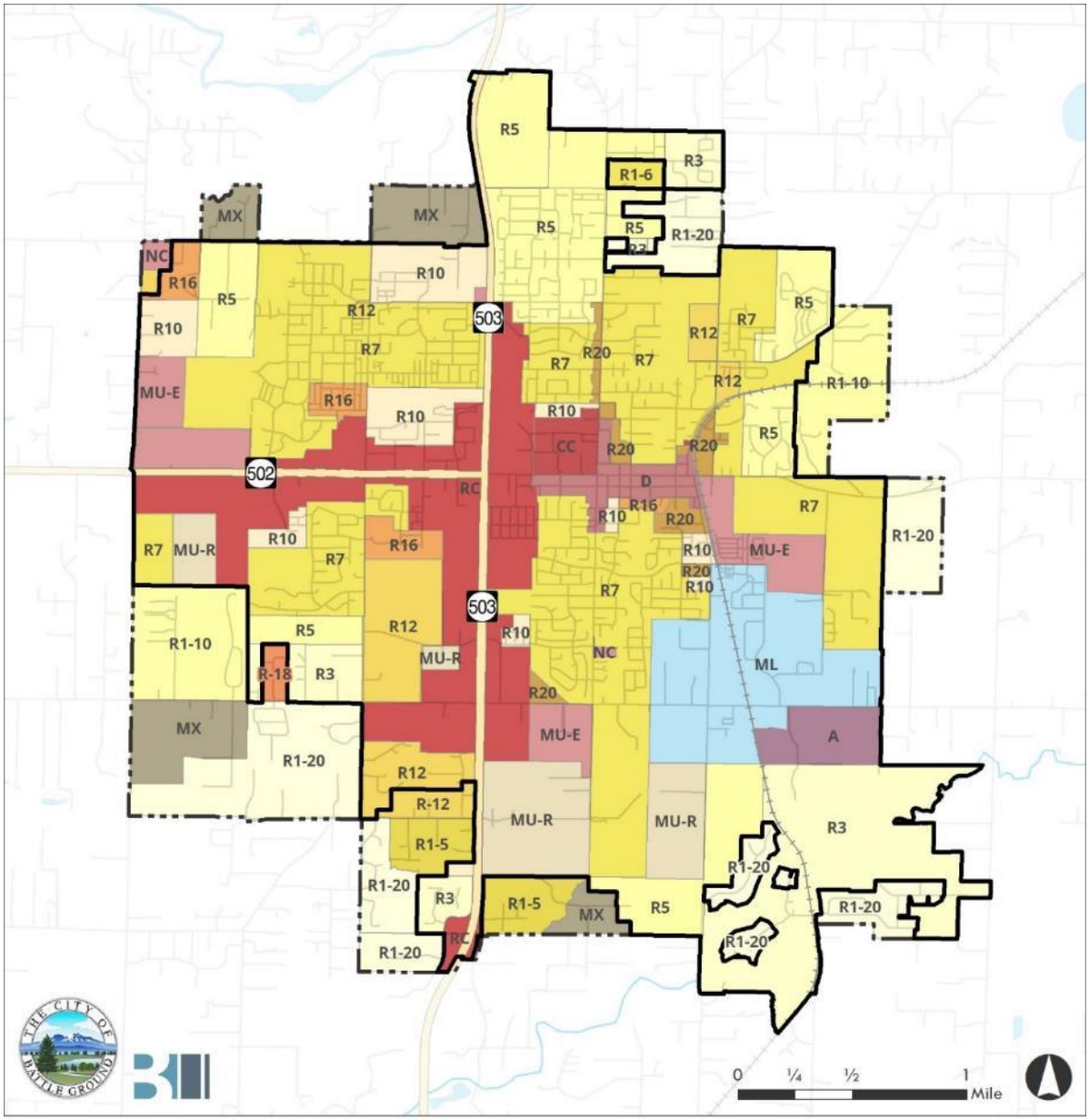
Complementary Strategies

- Remove code and process barriers.
- Consider form-based approaches to regulate middle housing to encourage better design and greater variety.
- Invest in infrastructure.

Community and Stakeholder Input

- As mentioned throughout this report, community members noted a lack of affordable and diverse housing options. The community survey highlighted the importance of helping people achieve homeownership, but only 26% of households in Battle Ground can afford a median priced home of $423,000. Battle Ground's housing stock is made up of nearly 80% of single-family homes and 14% are in multifamily buildings of 5+ units.
- A larger variety of housing types will help fill the gap between multifamily and single-family homes by providing more affordable options to seniors, entry level home purchasers, single income households, and households of varied size.
- This strategy also complements the first strategy of "Invest in infrastructure". The community noted a concern of existing infrastructure keeping up with growth and properly preparing for new infrastructure to meet this increased demand. Strategically rezoning areas for flexible housing types near existing infrastructure can help meet housing capacity needs in areas where it can be supported.

Exhibit 2. Battle Ground Zoning



Battle Ground Zoning

City Specific Zoning
- Residential 3 units/acre (R3)
- Residential 5 units/acre (R5)
- Residential 7 units/acre (R7)
- Residential-10 (R10, MF-10)
- Residential (R16, AR-16, MDR-16)
- Residential 20 units/acre (R20)
- Regional commercial (RC, CRB)
- Downtown commercial (D, DC,C-1)
- Mixed use - employment (MU-E)
- Mixed use - residential (MU-R)
- Airpark - airport/residential (A)

County Zoning
- Single-Family residential (R1-20, R-20)
- Single-Family residential (R1-10, R-10, R10)
- Single-Family residential (R1-6, R-6, LDR-6)
- Single-Family residential (R1-5)
- Residential (R-12, R12)
- Residential (R-18, MF-18)
- Neighborhood commercial (NC, C1, CN, CNB)
- Community commercial (CC, C2, CCB)
- Mixed use (MX)
- Light industrial (IL, ML, LI, IND, LI/EC)
- Battle Ground City Limits
- Urban Growth Area

Map Date: May 2019

Source: Clark County, 2019; BERK, 2019.

Considerations

- Battle Ground's Comprehensive Plan update is scheduled for 2024. This is the best opportunity to update the city's future land use map and coordinate with changes across city departments.
- Strong community engagement and dialogue with the community and housing developers are important for the success of these efforts.
- Consider tailoring new permitted housing types across the variety of residential zones and specifying which middle types are appropriate and feasible in each zone.
- Development standards could be revised to encourage feasibility in ways like loosening density limits, increasing site coverage allowances, and reducing parking requirements.
- The City of Battle Ground would need to ensure infrastructure concurrency and adequacy to support increased development.

Example Communities

- The City of Tacoma, WA has implemented a Residential Infill Pilot Program to increase the supply of affordable housing in existing residential areas.
- Olympia, WA amended its code to allow the development of more middle housing types. Its two-year code review and revision lead to several important lessons learned about this process, chronicled by MRSC of Washington in a series of blog posts.

Next Steps

- Identify changes to make in 2024 Comprehensive Plan update.
- Conduct a code review to identify ways to make the existing Infill Residential Development overlay better or broaden other areas suitable for the infill overlay.



Strategy 5

Study parking requirements

Parking can add significant costs to the development of new housing, regardless of whether it is built as surface spaces or structured facilities which gets passed on to the renter with higher rent prices. This cost is most significant to affordable housing developments and reducing parking requirements can help with affordability. In addition, overly prescriptive parking standards can limit housing diversity by making it more difficult to accommodate parking for small housing types such as cottage housing or accessory dwelling units. Because Battle Ground has limited transit and is car dependent, parking should be right sized so as not to create increased unaffordability, while ensuring that requirements don't undersupply parking, resulting in parking overflowing into street parking critical for business districts.

Battle Ground's code currently requires parking spaces based on the number of families served by a building (Exhibit 3). One exception is the properties in the downtown district, which are not required to provide any off-street parking. Under current code, a multifamily building must provide 1.5 spaces per unit, regardless of the size of unit (e.g. studio or three-bedroom)

Exhibit 3. Minimum Vehicular Parking Requirements

RESIDENTIAL USE	MINIMUM NUMBER OF VEHICULAR SPACES REQUIRED
One-family	2 spaces/dwelling unit
Two-family	2 spaces/dwelling unit
Three or more families	1.5 spaces/dwelling unit
Rooming or boarding house	1 for each sleeping room

Source: Battle Ground Municipal Code Table 17.133-1

GOALS ADDRESSED

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- Support homeownership

Key

● Supports ○ Supports with conditions

IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	🕒🕒🕒
Cost	$$$$
Effort	● ● ●

In addition to minimum vehicular parking requirements, Battle Ground's code outlines parking standards for cottage housing (17.106.060 - H) and accessory apartments (17.135.010 - D.6.).

- Vehicular parking for **cottage housing** must be clustered in a shared parking facility and separated from common areas, rights-of-way, and residential units by landscaping. Parking cannot occupy more than 50% of the lot frontage.
- **Accessory apartments** must provide one additional off-street parking space.

  The city should study parking requirements to evaluate if the number of parking spaces currently required aligns with the city's vehicle usage by unit size. In addition, the city could review the current parking standards to assess if changes are needed.

Complementary Strategies

- Refine ground floor retail requirements.

Community and Stakeholder Input

- The majority of residents (93%) commute outside of Battle Ground for work.[3] Both Vancouver and Portland have large employment centers where many people commute to work. The City of Vancouver is approximately 15 miles from Battle Ground and the City of Portland is approximately 30 miles from Battle Ground. The only public transit option to get to Vancouver is through the #7 route via C-Tran. A person travelling to Portland would then need to transfer to another line from Vancouver. Route #7 has infrequent service and many people rely on cars to commute to work.
- Through the City's visioning and land use map update, citizens voiced the need for employment centers so people can work and live within city limits. There is a community concern about how to plan for parking while the city strategizes on ways to bring employment to Battle Ground and explores multi-model transit within city limits.
- This strategy is intended to further study how parking facilities impact affordability in Battle Ground and how other cities found right size parking without oversupplying it and therefore impacting housing affordability.

Considerations

- Cities planning under GMA must follow maximum parking requirements for multifamily projects near transit. The requirements differ depending on who the project serves (e.g. low-income individuals, seniors, or those with disabilities), and

[3] Census on the Map, 2018.

the type of units provided (subsidized or market rate). In Battle Ground, due to the infrequency of transit, the only relevant requirement is the one for projects serving low-income households. If transit service was more frequent, requirements for market rate units and projects serving seniors and those with disabilities would be triggered. The requirement states that multifamily projects serving very low-income (<50% AMI) or extremely low-income (<30% AMI) individuals that are located within a quarter mile of the city's bus line (Route #7 C-Tran) may not impose parking requirements greater than one parking space per bedroom or .75 spaces per unit, unless the city has determined a particular housing unit to be in an area with a lack of street parking capacity or if there are other reasons supported by evidence that make on-street parking infeasible for the unit. [4] (RCW 36.70A.040)

- The city already allows developers to reduce parking stalls if they provide a parking study certified by a transportation planner or engineer that demonstrates minimum impacts to surroundings.
- Code changes can be completed by in-house staff. Outside services are recommended for a parking study, but numerous parking resources are available (see below).

Resources

- The Trouble with Minimum Parking Requirements – American Planning Association
- Parking Demand and Pricing – Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC)

Next Steps

- Study parking requirements to evaluate if the number of parking spaces currently required align with the number of vehicles available to households in specific unit sizes and types.
- Review the current parking standards for any requirements that may be a barrier to building diverse housing types.

[4] This requirement is because the bus line receives transit service two times per hour for twelve hours or more each day.

Secondary Strategies

Strategies to address the City's housing goals were compiled using the State of Washington Department of Commerce Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan, Draft June 2020 (Commerce Guidebook), an audit of Battle Ground's zoning code, a review of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and feedback from community engagement and stakeholder interviews. Secondary strategies were not prioritized for this plan but are still strong strategies that would help achieve Battle Ground's identified housing goals.

For **secondary strategies**, the following information is included:

- Description of the strategy
- How the tool relates to Battle Ground's housing goals (in the shaded box)
- Considerations for Battle Ground, if applicable

Strategy 6. Consider form-based approaches to regulate middle housing to encourage better design and greater variety.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Description. A form-based approach to regulating development emphasizes predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form and design rather than separation of uses and density limits. This approach uses prescriptive standards for building massing, layout, orientation, and design to help achieve a community's specific vision. It emphasizes the design of streetscapes and how private development looks from the street. Form-based codes (FBCs) were created in response to regulations more concerned with controlling land use than shaping the physical form of communities. Whereas a strict form-based code has little or no land use restrictions, many zoning codes for urban Washington communities now function as a hybrid of strict FBC and traditional zoning code by integrating stronger form-based design regulations with use-based regulations. FBCs can help add housing by allowing the market to determine how many units of what size are feasible.

A few standards FBCs commonly address include:

- Building height
- Lot coverage and lot lines/setbacks
- Window coverage and façade design

- Entrance and garage orientation
- Driveway and parking standards
- Open space standards and landscaping requirements

Considerations. Switching to a form-based code would require restructuring some development review processes to factor in form-based requirements. Battle Ground could use a hybrid-form-based approach to establish objective bulk/massing standards and certain building design requirements.

Strategy 7. Review accessory dwelling unit regulations.

Description. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are small dwelling units either attached to the primary dwelling or in a detached structure (DADU) typically placed to the side or rear of the primary dwelling. ADUs can increase housing options for a range of household types (income, size, etc.). They provide dwelling opportunities for extended family members and small households that prefer a neighborhood setting over apartment living. ADUs can also offer a critical source of monthly income for homeowners when rented out. ADUs have long been an important option for communities to add variety and housing choice in single-family neighborhoods. Allowing ADUs across the city's residential areas can add housing capacity in areas with existing infrastructure and amenities that support housing, such as schools and parks.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Key hurdles to ADU development often include the protracted permitting process cities can require, as well as the costs or difficulty associated with finding design professionals to create plans. Corrections to initial designs based on city feedback during the multi-stage permitting process is another factor that can add costs and delays to the process.

Reviewing ADU regulations for overly prescriptive requirements such as owner-occupancy, ADU size, and parking could help encourage ADU construction. In addition, making preapproved ADU plans available to potential property owners can reduce time and costs and add predictability to the permitting process. Easy access to design options diminishes the need for costly design services. Preapproved plans can be selected with multiple city goals in mind.

Close collaboration with prospective ADU developers in the community can ensure ADU designs balance housing needs while minimizing neighborhood impacts.

Considerations. ADUs are currently permitted in all of Battle Ground's residential zones and must be consistent in design style and materials with the primary structure. Regulations also stipulate a permanent foundation, owner occupancy of

the primary unit, size no larger than 40% of the primary dwelling unit or a maximum of 1,000 sf, and one off-street parking space requirement. Many communities in the Pacific Northwest are easing ADU requirements by not requiring owner-occupancy of either dwelling, setting an absolute ADU size maximum instead of a relative maximum, and not requiring dedicated parking for the ADU.

Many cities combine pre-approved ADU plans with easy-to-use guides (online or in paper) to navigate the process and determine whether a backyard cottage can fit on specific lots. A pre-approved design does not completely address all hurdles around widespread use of ADUs. For example, utility fees can add significant costs. Collaboration with the utility providers to scale fees so that ADUs aren't paying as much as full-sized single-family homes can help address these costs.

Strategy 8. Review cottage home regulations.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Description. Cottage housing typically refers to a cluster of small dwelling units (generally less than 1,200 square feet) around a common open space. This model has been very attractive to empty nesters, singles, couples and even some small families. Cottages offer a development approach that is appropriate and compatible with low-density residential neighborhoods. While the construction cost per square foot is often higher than a larger traditional single-family home, their smaller size makes them more affordable. While cottage clusters may be on a single lot and managed like an apartment complex or divided into separate condominiums, most cottages today are built on fee simple lots with common areas maintained by a homeowners' association.

Cottage regulations may be applicable in single family zones, in areas with large vacant or underdeveloped properties, or in neighborhoods built below the maximum density. When reviewing existing regulations, particular attention should be paid to density/massing standards and design standards. Cottage design standards, particularly porch design and entry orientation, and open space requirements are important to creating successful cottage developments.

Considerations. The City of Battle Ground may want to inventory vacant or development-ready parcels at sizes feasible for cottage development (12,000-15,000 sf or larger) to evaluate how prevalent cottage development could be. If production is expected to be rare, it could be more efficient to perform case-by-case development reviews. If cottage production is more likely, the city may want to establish more robust objective standards.

Because cottage clusters are developed at higher densities, capacity of stormwater, sewer, parking, and other critical infrastructure components may be a

concern in some neighborhoods, particularly where cottages are used as an infill development strategy.

Cottages are permitted in many R zones already. Determining whether the existing standards are accommodating or prohibitive to cottage developments is key.

Strategy 9. Provide need-based rehabilitation assistance for residents in older neighborhoods that may need revitalization or home repairs.

Description. Need-based rehabilitation assistance in older neighborhoods encourages community longevity and preserves existing housing that serves low-income, disabled, or senior residents. This assistance helps qualified homeowners make needed home repairs and safety upgrades by offering direct grant assistance, favorable financing terms, or time-limited tax abatements. They cover a range of projects such as weatherization and energy efficiency improvements. In addition to near-term upgrades, these investments can improve long-term affordability for homeowners by reducing monthly energy costs.

	Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
	Increase variety of housing types
●	Expand supply and access to affordable homes
●	Support homeownership

Key

● Supports the housing goal

○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Most Washington municipalities offering this assistance use federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant funds, HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) grant funds, or HUD/FHA lending programs. Cities may also contribute local funds to the program. The city may directly provide the grants or loans, or partner with non-profit organizations specializing in this type of work, such as Habitat for Humanity. The guidelines for the federal funds may limit the areas and households where this assistance is available. RCW 84.37 and RCW 84.38 provide for property tax deferral for homeowners with limited incomes.

Strategy 10. Partner and maintain dialogue with developers and Vancouver Housing Authority.

- ○ Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ○ Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Description. Partnering with developers can range in intensity and formality. At a minimum, maintaining regular dialogue about respective intentions and activities related to housing production and affordability in Battle Ground can support a productive relationship. At the other end of the spectrum, cities and developers can formally enter contractual partnerships for site-specific affordable housing development or regional partnerships and alliances.

The Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) and other non-profit and for-profit developers contributed important information, insights, and suggestions in the development of this Housing Action Plan. The city should continue to access their expertise on how the city's actions could affect housing production, mix, and affordability. Building ongoing relationships and conducting regular outreach with developers to act as a sounding board for proposals can help the city make thoughtful, informed decisions.

The VHA is the public housing authority that covers Clark County. It administers significant federal funds dedicated to affordable housing in the region, including the housing choice voucher program and the development of public subsidized housing. The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program assists very low-income families, older adults, and people with disabilities to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. VHA administers this subsidy to pay landlords the difference between market rate and the households' contribution to rent. It can be used on all types of rental housing, including single family homes, townhouses, and apartments and may be scaled according to household size and income. Site-based public housing provides decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, older adults, and persons with disabilities. VHA has two public housing properties in Battle Ground and is currently building another multifamily development.

Battle Ground could help promote their residents' access to VHA's existing offerings for affordable housing. This includes listing the local housing authority and its programs on the city of Battle Ground website and other communication materials and identifying and encouraging landlords in Battle Ground to accept Housing Choice Vouchers. The VHA or other agencies may also have staff and resources to help conduct affordability checks under a Notice of Intent to Sell (Strategy 11) and/or technical expertise related to inspections that might be necessary to start a rehabilitation program (Strategy 9). VHA can also supply important data about turnover and waitlists for their HCV and public housing in Battle Ground to help monitor demand and supply.

Strategy 11. Adopt a Notice of Intent to Sell / Sale Ordinance.

Description. A Notice of Intent to Sell policy is a strategy to advance preservation and acquisition of multifamily housing and to strengthen tenant rights by requiring owners of multifamily buildings to provide official advance notification of their intent to sell to tenants and local housing officials. The notice gives public authorities the opportunity to evaluate the property and potentially preserve low- or moderate-income residences. City actions for preservation could include incentives and/or partnership with community partners for affordable housing.

The National Housing Preservation Database (NHPD) identifies approximately 159 currently subsidized units in Battle Ground. Most of these units are located in a small number of apartment buildings (Cherrybrook owned by Farmers Union Senior Housing, Magnolia Square Senior Apartments, Mill Creek Apartments and Senior Estates and St. Helens held by VHA, and Rivergrove owned by Three County Partners). The income restrictions on these buildings are set to expire between 2027 and 2035. The City can use this information to track expiration and proactively identify strategies to preserve the affordability of these units for low-income households.

Considerations. This strategy is most effective when paired with strategies to partner with developers, including the Vancouver Housing Authority, and faith-based organizations. The Notice of Sale creates more time, and the partnerships allow entities interested in preserving affordable housing to move quickly together to acquire, finance, and develop available sites.

- Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Support the housing goal, with conditions

Strategy 12. Put in place the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE).

Description. The multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) program allows cities to exempt multifamily housing improvements from property taxes in designated areas. Approved project sites are exempt from property taxes on the residential improvement value for a period of eight or twelve years. The twelve-year exemption requires a minimum level of affordable housing to be included in the development. The development would be required to ensure at least 20% of the units are affordable to households making 80% of AMI or 100% if the building is fully owner-occupied. The eight-year exemption allows jurisdictions broad latitude to define eligibility conditions. Cities must pass an enabling ordinance to enact the MFTE and to allow applications for the exemption. According to the state statute, cities have the authority to approve or reject individual projects that apply for the exemption.

- ○ Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ○ Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

The MFTE program is a tool to incentivize multifamily development in designated areas. Eligible areas can include downtowns, commercial areas, or developed neighborhoods. Adopting income requirements that are lower than the statutory limits (e.g., 60% instead of 80% AMI) can be an effective way to maximize the program's impacts. As a voluntary program, the MFTE is only successful if developers use it. Providing information on the city's program and increasing awareness will be important pieces of implementation.

This tool is particularly effective to concentrate growth in specific areas where other complementary strategies can reinforce this program.

Considerations. According to an evaluation by the Washington State Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC), MFTE programs increase the financial feasibility of development. However, it is important to evaluate the impact of the program on attracting multifamily development. Cities can consider using a financial assessment when approving an exemption to avoid foregoing property tax revenue for projects that would have been built without the exemption.

Another consideration of the MFTE program is that rent limits are based on the Area Median Income (AMI). When median incomes increase, the MFTE rent limits increase and become less effective as affordable housing.

Strategy 13. Work with faith-based organizations on housing.

Description. Faith-based organizations often have unique assets and resources, such as land, as well as a desire to better the community that make them key partners in a local response to housing challenges. Existing land use in Battle Ground includes roughly 56 acres in Cultural Service uses, which includes many faith-based organizations.

Faith-based organizations can face challenges when trying to build housing on land they own. Zoning for the properties may limit housing types or intensity. Financial complexity, especially in navigating major sources of financing for subsidized housing (such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit), can also be a challenge.

- ○ Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ○ Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Support the housing goal, with conditions

Considerations. The city could identify land owned by faith-based organizations and provide educational resources about HB 1377 which provides incentives for using land owned by faith-based organizations for long-term affordable housing.

Strategy 14. Create Community Benefits/Development Agreements.

Description. Development agreements or community benefit agreements are voluntary, negotiated contracts between developers and municipalities. These agreements specify public benefits that the development will provide, along with the responsibilities of each party. They can support affordable housing, affordable commercial space, community gathering spaces, and other public amenities. The agreements provide assurances to developers that certain development regulations will not change during the term of the agreement and the city can, in turn, require conditions to mitigate project impacts, clarify project phasing, mitigate displacement of cultural institutions, and provide public improvements.

- ○ Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ○ Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Considerations. Battle Ground could use Development Agreements as a tool to require certain community-desired improvements such as parks or trails, in exchange for assurances to the developer.

Strategy 15. Encourage PUD/PRD and Cluster Subdivisions.

Description. Planned unit developments (PUDs) and planned residential developments (PRDs) are large integrated developments that offer special design, use/housing type mix, and development intensity flexibility, provided they conform to the city's comprehensive plan. PUDs and PRDs can include density bonuses for achieving specific goals or integrating community amenity features. They can also allow flexibility in the design of street and other public improvements. PUDs and PRDs can help integrate a greater mix of lot and housing types to meet community demographic needs while providing the environmental benefits of clustering housing to help preserve sensitive natural areas and/or provide a greater amount of usable community open space.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ○ Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Cluster subdivisions are groupings of smaller-than-normal parcels to provide opportunities to preserve open spaces, critical areas, or unique landforms that otherwise would not likely be preserved. Cluster subdivisions use lot size averaging to allow developers to subdivide land into a variety of lot sizes, provided the average lot size in the development meets the minimum requirement. This can allow for more efficient land use and the potential for additional housing units. Clustering can allow more compact roadway arrangements that use smaller private streets and driveways to access homes instead of full public streets. Clusters provide options to develop homes of various sizes within a project and encourage site design flexibility to fit in many lot shapes and sizes; this also allows for larger central common open spaces to supplement smaller private yards. Allowing for cluster subdivisions within the standard subdivision process can create

more predictability for the applicant by simplifying the development review process and eliminating or minimizing the possibility of costly conditions of approval.

Considerations. The Battle Ground code does not currently include any specific regulation of PUDs other than requiring PUD applications to have a Type III (Hearing Quasi-Judicial and Legislative) review.

Evaluating the prevalence of vacant or underdeveloped sites on which PUD/PDR may be suitable could help determine whether this would be an effective strategy to implement.

Strategy 16. Refine ground floor retail requirements.

Description. Successful neighborhood districts have a mix of uses, but some ground floor retail requirements for multifamily residential projects can both oversupply local retail and reduce project financial feasibility by requiring developers to build space that is less profitable.

Currently, Battle Ground requires ground floor space in commercial zones to be 100% dedicated to commercial uses if the developer wants to add residential uses on the upper floors. The city has less stringent requirements in other zones. Non-profit housing developers noted retail requirements for multifamily projects as a financial barrier.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ○ Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Considerations. Since Battle Ground recently changed its zoning to require that ground floor space in commercial zones be 100% dedicated to commercial uses, reducing retail requirements could be challenging. The city could explore strategically applying ground-floor retail requirements only on streets abutting main streets or intersections and allowing other uses on the remaining sides of the building which would help create a natural transition from commercial zones to residential zones.

Implementing this strategy along with the strategy to right-size parking requirements, would be attractive to for-profit developers looking to build market rate units as well as non-profit developers looking to build affordable units in Battle Ground.

Strategy 17. Waive, reduce, or defer fees and charges for low-income housing projects to incentivize affordable housing.

Description. Fee waivers or fee reductions can reduce up-front costs of construction for residential development. Fees, such as impact fees, utility connection fees, and project review fees can run in the tens of thousands of dollars per unit for residential properties in Battle Ground.[5] Waiving some or all of these fees for income-restricted units or reducing or scaling fees for different types of housing (like cottage housing or smaller housing types) can be a valuable incentive for encouraging the production of housing.

Considerations. This incentive is most effective when paired with a larger incentive package for affordable housing. Coordination with other city departments on fee waivers or fee reductions is needed.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
- ● Increase variety of housing types
- ● Expand supply and access to affordable homes
- ● Support homeownership

Key

- ● Supports the housing goal
- ○ Supports the housing goal, with conditions

Strategy 18. Increase funding for affordable housing through local option taxes, fees, and levies.

Description. Cities can provide direct funding to encourage the production of income-restricted affordable housing and/or supporting affordable homeownership through three main methods:

- **Affordable Housing Sales Tax.** A sales tax up to 0.1% for affordable housing and related services can be imposed in a city. As of June 2020, this sales tax may optionally be approved by a city council without voter approval. At least 60% of revenue must be used for constructing affordable housing, mental and behavioral health-related facilitates, or funding the operations and maintenance costs of new units of affordable housing and facilities. The affordable housing facilities must serve populations with incomes of 60% of AMI or less.
- **Affordable Housing Property Tax Levy.** Up to $0.50 per $1,000 of property tax can be allocated toward an affordable housing fund for projects serving very low-income households (<50% AMI) if approved by a majority of voters in a taxing district. Funds can be used for a variety of purposes such as:
  - Matching funds for nonprofit housing developments, which increases competitiveness for receiving additional financings from state or national sources.

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[5] More information about fees in Battle Ground, including project fee examples for Single Family Residences and Multifamily Development can be found on the Battle Ground Permit Fees webpage: https://www.cityofbg.org/146/Permit-Fees

  - Affordable homeownership, owner-occupied home repair, and foreclosure prevention for households up to 80% of AMI.
- **Real Estate Excise Tax (REET 2).** A city or town planning under GMA can impose an additional 0.25% real estate excise tax (REET 2). Revenues can only be used to finance capital projects in the Capital Facilities Plan of the comprehensive plan, which until January 1, 2026 may include up to $100,000 or 25% (up to $1M) of its available funds to rehabilitate/repair and/or purchase affordable housing.

Considerations. This strategy is best suited for communities facing a shortage of very low income restricted affordable units whose community would support a tax or ballot measure through a vote.

This strategy can carry a financial cost to homeowners (property tax levy) and specifically new homeowners (REET 2).

The City of Battle Ground already implements REET 2 to finance other capital projects, so reprioritizing funds for housing could be challenging.

This strategy would require staff time to create and administer an affordable housing program, including developing a financing plan or amendments to the CFP to direct the expenditure of funds, as well as public engagement to educate voters.

Strategy 19. Consider inclusionary zoning (IZ) ordinances that require all new construction within a specified zone to include income-restricted affordable housing.

Description. Inclusionary zoning is a tool that cities can use to require all new residential development in certain zones to include some proportion of affordable housing units or comply with alternatives ways to support affordable housing. Cities often provide additional development capacity through a density bonus to offset the costs associated with complying with the stipulation. In the state of Washington, all units developed through an inclusionary zoning program must remain affordable for at least 50 years (RCW 36.70A.540).

	Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
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Inclusionary zoning is different from incentive zoning because it *mandates* the inclusion of affordable housing. Jurisdictions often start with voluntary programs offering incentives to developers that choose to build affordable housing voluntarily and may later mandate inclusionary zoning if not enough affordable housing units are produced through voluntary incentives. Before 2006, mandatory inclusionary housing requirements were used infrequently

in Washington State due to concerns about legal challenges. However, amendments to the Growth Management Act in 2006 (RCW 36.70A.040) and other state laws allow jurisdictions to enact mandatory inclusionary zoning programs as long as they are tied to an upzone or other regulatory changes that increase the area's development capacity. Affordable housing must be mentioned as a public benefit to be provided with increased density, reduced parking, reduced fees or taxes, or other incentives.

Considerations. The city will need to make a variety of program design and implementation decisions related to which developments are covered under the program and how it would be administered. Poorly designed programs can reduce the production of market-rate housing and as a result increase housing costs. This outcome would be less likely if programs are tailored to the Battle Ground market and include a robust set of benefits that compensate developers for the costs associated with below-market units.

Strategy 20. Support programs that protect tenants.

Description. Tenant protections are important to consider even if Battle Ground takes no other action and are especially important to consider in conjunction with other strategies to mitigate displacement risk. They help avoid or slow the process of displacement for households by providing access to legal resources, more time, and/or resources to find another place to live. The Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 59.18) is the primary statute regulating landlord-tenant relationships at the state level, and there are several policies and programs that can go further at the local level. Some programs designed to protect tenants that could be implemented in whole or in part by the City of Battle Ground. Others could be led by partner community organizations but supported through referral and resource contributions on the part of the city. Some examples include:

	Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
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- **Rental assistance programs.** Tenant-based rental assistance is funded through federal HUD dollars administered via the local coordinated entry system, which is the Council for the Homeless for the Vancouver/Clark County region. The Council for the Homeless has the infrastructure set up for administering rent assistance, but the demand far outstrips the supply of funds for rent assistance. St. Vincent de Paul also may have back rent assistance programs available in Battle Ground. HB 1406 (2019) created a 20-year program where the state shares a portion of its sales tax receipts with cities and counties to support investments in affordable housing. All cities may use these funds to support the

construction and acquisition of affordable housing. Cities with 100,000 residents or less can use the funds for rental assistance programs[6].

- **Tenant education and landlord incentive programs**. Tenant education can be offered to both prospective and current renters. Topics such as Fair Housing Laws, rental screening, and communication with landlords prepare individuals to become successful tenants. Pairing this education with landlord incentive funds helps insure renters' security deposits when a landlord rents to graduates of the tenant education program. RentWell is an example curriculum and landlord incentive that is offered in Clark County by SHARE, in Cowlitz County by Housing Opportunities of SW Washington for veterans, and in Lewis County by Reliable Enterprises.
- **Legal services program for eviction defense and fair housing enforcement.** Clark County Volunteer Lawyers and the Housing Justice Project offer support for tenants facing eviction and legal assistance. Statewide resources and services are also available from the Northwest Justice Project, Solid Ground, Washington LawHelp, and the Fair Housing Center of Washington.
- **Rental inspection and registry program**. Rental registry programs inspect and inventory rental units for health and safety, adequate weatherproofing, provision of emergency egress, proper ventilation, and functional utilities under existing regulation. They help preserve rental units overall and provide a third-party actor in cases where renters feel they do not have the power to address safety and legal concerns with landlords directly.

Considerations. This strategy is essential if other implemented strategies increase developability and displacement risk, such as upzones. Partners, including VHA and faith-based organizations, may be well-situated with administrative and operational capacity and community connections to help administer some of these programs.

[6] AWC, 2021 *State of the Cities.*

Strategy 21. Provide "Found Land": Surplus Land and Other Opportunities.

- ● Encourage production of homes that meet community needs
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Description. Washington State allows any state agency, municipality, or political entity, with authority to dispose of surplus public property, to transfer, lease, or dispose of such property for affordable housing for low-income and very low-income households (RCW 39.33.015). This can lead to the effective use of publicly owned surplus and underutilized land and buildings to address community needs.

The City of Battle Ground may own land or properties, including buildings that are vacant, underutilized, or no longer useful for their original purposes. This could include facilities that could be repurposed for residential development such as under-utilized or low-density community centers or surface parking lots.

Considerations. Identifying and maintaining a surplus land and building inventory with key attributes of the property is a starting point to implement this strategy. The city can then consider a few options to leverage these resources. For example, some cities adopt policies to first make these properties available at no or reduced cost to developers of affordable housing. Once a designated period has passed, the properties can be opened up for other uses. Others consider each site on a case-by-case basis using specific criteria to determine whether to prioritize it for affordable housing or for another purpose.

Inter-agency coordination is an important piece of success in these efforts. Local agencies with real estate assets should be active participants in identifying land and buildings that are no longer needed or where affordable housing could be added. In some communities, the school district is the largest public landholder. Regular convenings of local agencies can facilitate the identification of available properties.

Strategy 22. Encourage supportive housing.

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Description. Supportive housing is designed to provide affordable housing with support services for households and individuals suffering from chronic mental illness, substance abuse disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), or other serious challenges to stable housing.

- **Housing for people experiencing homelessness.** Fair housing laws require that permanent supportive housing not be prohibited in areas zoned for multifamily housing (E2SHB 1923(2019) and Substitute House Bill (SHB)2343 (2020), RCW 35A.21.305, RCW35.21.689). However, cities can go further to encourage permanent supportive housing by exempting these housing types from development mandates, "fast-tracking" city processes for supportive housing developments, identifying zones near transit and other services to encourage this development, and/or helping to coordinate resources and partners and public support for supportive housing.
- **Housing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities** can span a wide range of types, just as there is a wide range in the severity and nature of the disabilities experienced by people. As a group, however, people with IDD face greater barriers to finding affordable housing. Access to services, transportation, employment centers, and supportive connections, including peers and family are at a premium. For those not living with family, the most common living arrangements include living on their own, group homes of 4 to 6 people, group homes of 1 to 3 people, host homes, and family foster housing[7]. Those living with a co-occurring behavioral health issue or with a more severe IDD may live in a specialized residential care, including those run by the Department of Social and Health Services, licensed psychiatric facility, or nursing home. Along with race, religion, sex, familial status, and national origin, disabled persons are protected by the Fair Housing Act from discrimination in housing.

  As most adults with IDD live independently, other strategies to improve affordable housing overall will support this community. The city can also play a role in facilitating access to services, subsidies, and programs geared toward improving housing access and stability for adults with IDD. For example, Section 811 is a federal project-based rental assistance grant administered by the Washington State Department of Commerce. The funding must be applied to a new or existing property funded by Washington State Housing Trust

[7] Human Services Research Institute, 2015. *Housing for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: How do We Ensure a Home of Their Own?*

Fund, HOME, Washington State Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, WSHFC Multifamily Bond program, or USDA – Rural Development. The Non Elderly Disabled Voucher (also known as the Mainstream Voucher) program is also federally funded and administered by public housing authorities in Washington State.

Group homes up to 6 people and residential care facilities are two housing types that are especially important to the disabled population. The city should review current zoning and code regulations to remove barriers removal and encourage expansion for these specific housing types.

Considerations. Definitions of group homes in the municipal code can sometimes be unintentionally restrictive. This should be kept in mind, when reviewing current zoning and code.

Strategy 23. Encourage transitional housing.

Description. Transitional housing is designed for people exiting homelessness as they move on to permanent housing. This housing is designed for stays of up to 24 months and may include access to services such as self-sufficiency and employment supports.

Fair housing laws prevent housing discrimination against group homes in single family zones. Reviewing Battle Ground's code for barriers to transitional housing and expanding Battle Ground's zoning for group homes and other types of transitional housing (currently only allowed in R16 and R20 zones) would increase affordability and inclusivity.

Considerations. Transitional housing projects can sometimes be controversial among neighbors, and thus difficult to site.

Transitional housing is most effective when sited near public amenities such as transit, employment centers, groceries and pharmacies, and health care facilities.

The city should coordinate with the local lead agency for homelessness services to ensure that any plans for transitional or permanent supportive housing are consistent with the countywide plan for homelessness services.

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IMPLEMENTATION

The HAP establishes a framework for aligning efforts across the city, coordinating with partners, and measuring progress. To support an effective implementation program, a comprehensive list of recommended strategies, timelines, resource requirements, responsibilities for leading the tasks, and partnership opportunities is provided. The City and community partners will need to work together to implement this plan. While this plan identifies potential community partners and leads, no commitments or agreements have yet been made.

Implementation Matrix Key

The matrix on the following page shows each strategy with the timeline, lead, cost, and level of effort. It also includes information about potential partners.

TIMELINE		COST		EFFORT	
🕒	Short-term (1-2 years)	$	Minimal Investment	● ○ ○	Minimal Effort
🕒🕒	Mid-term (3-5 years)	$$	Moderate Investment	● ● ○	Moderate Effort
🕒🕒🕒	Long-term (5+ years)	$$$	Significant Investment	● ● ●	Significant Effort
		$$$$	Major Investment		

Implementation Matrix

		STRATEGY	WHO WILL LEAD?	TIMELINE	COST	EFFORT
Priority Strategies	1	**Invest in infrastructure to unlock land for development.**	City of BG	🕒🕒🕒	$$$$	● ● ●
	2	**Remove code and process barriers.**	City of BG	🕒	$	● ● ○
	3	**Adopt Planned Action Ordinances.**	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○
	4	**Strategically rezone areas for flexible housing options and increase allowed housing types in existing zones.**	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	5	**Study parking requirements.**	City of BG	🕒	$$	● ● ○
	6	Consider form-based approaches to regulate middle housing to encourage better design and greater variety.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	7	Review accessory dwelling unit (ADU) regulations.	City of BG	🕒	$	● ● ○
	8	Review cottage home regulations.	City of BG	🕒	$	● ● ○
	9	Provide need-based rehabilitation assistance for residents in older neighborhoods that may need revitalization or home repairs.	Partner	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○
	10	Partner and maintain dialogue with developers and Vancouver Housing Authority.	Partner	🕒🕒	$	● ○ ○
	11	Adopt a Notice of Intent to Sell / Sale Ordinance.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$	● ● ○
	12	Put in place the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE).	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	13	Work with faith-based organizations on housing.	Partner	🕒🕒	$$	● ○ ○
	14	Create Community Benefits/Development Agreements.	City of BG	🕒🕒🕒	$	● ● ○
	15	Encourage PUD/PRD and Cluster Subdivisions.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	16	Refine ground floor retail requirements.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	17	Waive, reduce, or defer fees and charges for low-income housing projects to incentivize affordable housing.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○
	18	Increase funding for affordable housing through Local Option Taxes, Fees and Levies.	City of BG	🕒🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ●
	19	Consider inclusionary zoning (IZ) ordinances require that all new construction within a specified zone include income-restricted affordable housing.	City of BG	🕒🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	20	Support programs that protect tenants.	Partner	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○
	21	Provide "Found Land": Surplus Land and Other Opportunities.	City of BG	🕒🕒	$$	● ● ○
	22	Encourage supportive housing.	Partner	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○
	23	Encourage transitional housing.	Partner	🕒🕒	$$$	● ● ○

Potential Partners

Battle Ground Public Schools

Clark County Community Services

Clark Regional Wastewater District

Columbia River Economic Development Council

Community Services Northwest

Council for the Homeless

Developer Community

Vancouver Housing Authority

WSDOT



APPENDICES



Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary

Appendix B: Housing Needs Assessment

Appendix C: Housing Policy Review