

Comprehensive Plan: Housing & Residential Neighborhoods

Joint Special Work Session – Council & Planning Commission

Discussion Notes

April 27, 2015

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITION

Existing Conditions: Age of housing stock – maintenance costs; Overcrowding

Proposed Policy Issue: Resources for home repair and maintenance

Discussion:

- Minor Home Repair – health and safety focus
- City has a role, but a lack of funding – How big a role?
 - What kinds of incentives/encouragement can we offer?
 - Help for elderly, disabled, neighbors helping neighbors
 - Make use of tax breaks and peer pressure (neighborhood HOAs or programs for neighbors to encourage/incentive neighbors helping neighbors)
 - What kind of new partners can we find? There are partners looking to help in communities with characteristics like Tukwila's.
 - City could act as a promoter for existing programs and a coordinator
- Problems could have many roots – cultural, health/age, overcrowding
- Developers could improve adjacent homes
- Single contractor offering neighborhood deals – economy of scale

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Existing Conditions: Adequate supply for low and moderate income; undersupply for very low income

Proposed Policy Issue: Availability and preservation of housing for all income levels; Alternatives to substandard housing

Discussion:

- Explore energy efficient housing to lower costs
- Nearly half of our residents can't afford where they live
- Homelessness disproportionately affects children
- Should we tax already struggling residents to subsidize others?
- Maybe income support/better jobs is a better approach
- Already becoming unaffordable, residents moving out
 - Gentrification, location driving up prices
- People need safe, livable housing – what about existing tenants?
 - Improvements can increase rents
 - Look to approaches that other cities have taken to address replacement of substandard housing (i.e., example from Austin, TX where mobile homes were replaced with modular units designed with solar panels)
- Inclusionary affordable requirements, very few units in recent years

- Need a combination of subsidized units and economic development to provide opportunities for the City's low-income residents

DIVERSITY OF HOUSING

Existing Conditions: Supply for all life stages

Proposed Policy Issue: Diverse range of housing types, ownership choices

Discussion:

- Allow additional units on lots too small to subdivide (i.e., ADUs, corner duplexes)
 - Get lots on sewer instead of septic to open up opportunities for redevelopment
- Has been resistance to cottage housing – need good quality, CC&R's
- Encourage first time buyers, may stay for life, lots of existing programs
 - Set realistic expectations
 - Encourage renters to buy
- Encourage a range of housing options

RESIDENTIAL CONNECTIVITY

Proposed Policy Issue: Options for sidewalk development

Discussion:

- Apply sidewalk impact fee to short plats with less than 5 lots
 - Concern about raising prices
- How can City find funds to subsidize?

SINGLE-FAMILY INFILL COMPATIBILITY

Existing Conditions: House size is gradually increasing

Proposed Policy Issue: Explore neighborhood specific development standards

Discussion:

- Support for this idea; what are others doing?
- Lot size – should this be smaller?
- Big houses affect existing residents
- Should provide high quality, newer options in Tukwila
- How would lower lot sizes increase the number of houses Tukwila could accommodate?
- Conversation about rural-suburban – urban identity
- What do we want our neighborhoods to look like?
 - Visual preference survey