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Snohomish County Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce Releases Final Report

The Taskforce's report creates a framework for improving affordable housing supply

LYNNWOOD, Wash., February 5, 2020 – Today, the Snohomish County Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce (HART), launched by Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers in May of 2019, released their [final report](#) after [six months of collaborative work](#), including engagement by 15 local elected officials and over 40 community members and experts. The HART report establishes a five-year action plan, including early action items, identifying priorities for county and city governments to meet the affordable housing needs of all Snohomish County residents. Executive Somers co-Chaired the Task Force with Nicola Smith, Mayor of the City of Lynnwood.

“Too many people have been priced out of housing, causing widespread hardships and ever-worsening traffic,” said Executive Somers. “HART’s work over the past six months has now given us a plan to make steady progress on needs across all housing spectrums, from the working poor to the middle class. The only way we can address housing affordability is through sustained leadership, creative solutions, and strong partnerships with our cities and the private sector.”

“Much like the rest of the county, Lynnwood is growing, and the prices for apartments and houses continue to rise faster than salaries,” said Mayor Smith. “The recommendations in the HART report provide a way for us to work collaboratively to encourage smart growth, engage residents in the process of finding solutions, and achieve equitable outcomes for all members of our community. I fully appreciate all of the hard work that lies ahead of us but know that it is essential for keeping our communities livable and vibrant.”

HART’s report makes several recommendations for action over the next five years. HART recommended several early action items for completion in 2020, including:

- Encouraging local cities to enter into cooperation agreements with the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO) and/or Everett Housing Authority;
- Implementing the state sales tax shift to local governments to fund low-income housing;
- Lobbying for changes in state and federal law to consolidate and streamline funding to support low-income housing;
- Fostering community conversations about density;

- Engaging private sector stakeholders in helping to find solutions to our housing affordability challenge; and
- Confirming and supporting an ongoing structure for regional collaboration around production of housing across the entire income spectrum.

HART identified five goals for addressing housing affordability with suggested policy, regulatory, and funding strategies. To view the full report, please visit <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/HARTReport>.

About The Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce

The Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce was launched by Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers on May 31, 2019 as a way to convene the county's local partners, the community, and housing experts to address the housing crisis facing Snohomish County. The Taskforce released its final report with recommendations in January 2020. For more information on the Taskforce, go to <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/HART>.

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