

What is the Tactical Infill zoning amendment project?

This project is about removal of barriers in zoning code to incentivize housing supply, but most importantly, it's about empowerment of the community to build housing.

By reducing barriers to housing supply, the City hopes to place downward pressure on escalating housing prices. The proposed ordinance includes measures such as (but not limited to):

- achieve supply by empowering individuals such as allowing two accessory dwelling units per lot or employers to provide housing in certain open space, commercial, marine and manufacturing zones,
- streamlining permitting such as decreasing the level of review required for cottage housing projects,
- facilitating variety by removing ambiguities in code so that it's clear that attached single family units like triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses can be constructed in clustered fashion and along zero lot lines.
- The proposal also includes a new subdivision tool that allows attached housing types to be created without a need to form an expensive condominium.

Learn more about the project [here](#).

The City wants to provide insight and clarification on some of the points made in recent conversations on KPTZ radio [forums](#) regarding housing.

What is a Comprehensive Housing Plan/strategy and how/when is the City getting one?

There are several prongs that inform housing strategy and its affordability in the City of Port Townsend: 1. Comprehensive Plan Housing [Element](#) (updated in 2016), 2. Housing Action Plan (updated in 2006), 3. Housing Inventory and Needs [Assessment](#) (updated in 2015). The Housing Assessment indicated that "inclusionary housing is a strategy that works best in markets with substantial new construction and larger developments and it can be problematic to implement. It's potential impacts in Port Townsend was determined to be minimal at best."

Since 2016, the City has been [accomplishing](#) the goals and policies in the Housing Element. The next step in the City's overall Housing strategy is to begin work on a Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, which is required every 10 years. Port Townsend is due in 2025. The City plans to start working on the update this year (2023), as soon as funding opportunities open for 2025 cities hopefully this summer. The Department of Commerce offers more information on what will be [required](#). This grant funding will enable the City with staff and consultant hours to study housing units needed at various state mandated affordability levels and analyze anti-displacement policies.

While waiting for funding, the City will focus on eliminating barriers in the code and examining altering densities where circumstances have changed through an annual Comprehensive Plan amendment. We will also contribute to affordable and workforce housing development by working on the Evans Vista Master Plan and capital developments so this neighborhood will be ready for development. Learn more [here](#).

Nested within the Comprehensive Plan housing strategy is the overall strategy the City has planned in order to appropriately schedule and leverage funding for housing related projects. Strategy is the task

staff works on daily amongst all other tasks. Learn more about the City's [Roadmap to Housing](#), which is part of a several years-long strategy to leverage short, mid, and long term gains in housing. The 2023 Council Workplan includes a goal to prioritize and deliver targeted, timed, and impactful zoning code changes to help unlock and inspire affordable, dense, quality infill development.

It looks like we need data first!?!

The Growth Management Act changed the update cycles to provide more time for implementation. There is now a potential 10-year update cycle for our community. Yes, the City will be collecting data for the next Comprehensive Plan update cycle. For example, it will conduct a buildable lands inventory to identify lands unencumbered by critical areas and lots that are more easily served by infrastructure. This information can help inform land purchases and possible transfer of development rights. The City will also begin scoping for a Housing Action Plan and Inventory. The Department of Commerce only recently (early March 2023) [published](#) projected housing needs and indicates that based on Office of Financial Projections to 2044, 3,985 housing units will be needed in Jefferson County. The Periodic Update requires the City to evaluate this data at the City level, and identify land for the various income levels of housing needed [along with other policy analysis and implementation](#). In order to promote housing construction in cities, the 2021-2022 legislature passed SSB [5818](#) to encourage cities to take an array of specified planning actions to increase residential building capacity without being subject to administrative or judicial appeal under State Environmental Policy Act or legal challenge under the Growth Management Act. The Tactical Infill Housing amendments leverage the legislature's intent to provide a short gap measure to get housing units in the pipeline until the time of the Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

Why does the City have sidewalks that go to nowhere?

Developers must pay for their cost of public infrastructure so that the taxpayers don't pay those costs. Unfortunately, Port Townsend's rocky economic history and preplatted condition meant that a City intended to be home to over 30,000 people at the turn of the century resulted in a county street development pattern rather than a city street pattern home to only 10,000 or so residents today. At the same time, the Community Direction Statement in the Comprehensive Plan is to have narrow streets with walkable multimodal transportation facilities that are accessible. Accessibility with less dependency on vehicles means improved walkability for all users including those who are disabled. This means sidewalks must meet ADA standards and create connections. The City code requires sidewalks be constructed with development along arterial streets in locations where the Non-motorized plan shows connectivity. Development in many areas of town do not currently require sidewalks. However, as the City grows, there will be increasing demand for safe connectivity and additional sidewalks and non-motorized paths. Nobody likes sidewalks to nowhere, but backing down on requiring them due to cost isn't an option that the community direction and Comprehensive Plan allows and ultimately places the burden on existing residents.

The City is working on its Comprehensive Streets Program, which would include funding sources to help manage the streets program in a holistic and fiscally sustainable way (i.e. operations, new construction, preservation etc.) This program connects to Fiscal Sustainability as the City explores how to leverage financing tools such as Developer Transportation Impact Fees or Transportation Benefit District taxation to maintain existing infrastructure and help finance new infrastructure for eligible projects. The City is considering developing funding to support housing infill and affordable housing projects to lessen the

burden of infrastructure to ensure that all income levels of the community has access to safe streets and sidewalks. . Learn more about Comprehensive Streets by browsing the City's Infrastructure and Development [agendas and videos](#).

What is the City doing to help landowners understand infrastructure costs and extension requirements?

Much of the Port Townsend's vacant land that is not readily available with adequate infrastructure (water, sewer, and streets). However, it is challenging to understand as a buyer what will be required to develop the land; thus listed land prices can inaccurately reflect the intrinsic value of the land that may have significant costs to develop. The City is working to create and to publish a Development Review map identifying utility and street infrastructure extension requirements while preserving multi modal trails. This will help inform lot owners and purchasers of the costs to meet sewer, water, streets, and sidewalk development requirements for buyers and realtors. This will result in greater predictability and more informed decision making for developers and prospective home owners