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Anacortes Planning Commission
Municipal Building - Council Chambers
904 6th Street

July 9, 2025
6:00 PM

PRELIMINARY AGENDA
[Packet Materials](#) / [Watch Meeting](#)

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Minutes**
 - a. Minutes of February 12, 2025 and June 11, 2025 were submitted for approval.
4. **Public Comment**
 - a. Public comment received 7/2/25
5. **Public Hearings**
6. **Other Business**
 - a. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update: Draft development regulation amendments addressing STEP housing (emergency Shelters, Transitional housing, Emergency housing, and Permanent supportive housing)
7. **Planning Department Update**
8. **Adjournment**

**Citizens wishing to comment on items not on the agenda may do so under Public Comment. Citizens wishing to comment during a public hearing may do so as those items are considered by the Planning Commission during the course of the meeting.*

The City of Anacortes is committed to making public meetings available and accessible to all members of the community. For assistance with special needs, please contact the City Clerk at 360-299-1960 in advance of the meeting.

Anacortes Planning Commission Minutes - June 11, 2025

Roll Call

Chairperson Linda Martin called to order the Anacortes Planning Commission meeting of June 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Jim Stoneman, William McCombs, Paul Ryan, Luke Currier, and Mike Mills were present. Jim Stoneman moved to excuse Frank Jeretzky. Will McCombs seconded. All ayes.

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes

Minutes of 01/22/2025 and 05/28/2025 were submitted for approval.

Paul Ryan moved to approve the minutes for 01/22/2025 as submitted. Jim Stoneman seconded. All ayes.

Luke Currier moved to approve the minutes for 05/28/2025 as submitted. Will McCombs seconded. All ayes.

Public Comment

There was no public comment taken.

Linda Martin pointed out that there was a written comment submitted late that the Commissioners reviewed before continuing.

Public Hearings

Other Business

2025 Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Update - Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) draft code amendments

Libby Grage said tonight's meeting is on the draft code amendments for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's). She reviewed the history of ADU's in Anacortes. The first regulations were in 2008 and there have been 3 updates. ADU's are allowed in R1, R2, R3 and R4. The code used to require public notice and comment period but no longer does. Current code restrictions include entry location and off-street parking requirements. The code doesn't require impact fees or general facility charges. In the 2019 update there were design standards added to code. Today you can build an ADU in any zone on a lot with an existing single-family home (SFR). ADU permits are a type 1 administrative ministerial action. They are reviewed for compliance with building & fire code, zoning, form intensity standards, site access and utilities, ADU-specific standards, critical area regulations and stormwater regulations. HB1337 was enacted in 2023 to ease barriers to ADU construction. This bill required that jurisdiction be consistent with the new requirements. This update is to be completed by 12/31/2025.

Ms. Grage reviewed the legislature findings that drove the changes to ADU regulations. She summarized the key requirements of HB1337: allow 2 ADU's on lots in zones allowing for SFR's (that meet minimum size for principal unit); owner occupancy not required; not charge more than 50% of impact fees charges for principal unit; allow at least 1000 sq ft, 24' in height, 0' set back to alley; and set parking requirements based on distance from transit and lot size. HB1337 does not restrict the use of ADU's for short-term rentals, but the City of Anacortes has regulations regarding STR's, so this doesn't apply.

Libby Grage reviewed the proposed amendments to comply with HB1337. The proposed language in A2 was added by staff to clarify that a breezeway connection does not make the ADU considered as attached. There has been confusion in the past, so this clarifies it. The existing purpose statements are proposed to be removed. There is new language for standards and criteria. The subdivision section was removed. The size for an ADU was increased to a maximum of 1000 sq. ft.

Linda Martin commented that the State says we have to allow at least 1000 sq ft.

Libby Grage clarified that we cannot set a maximum size for an ADU that is any less than 1000 sq. ft.

John Coleman stated that if we don't set a limit, ADU's could be allowed at any size.

Commissioner Martin said the State says the minimum size is 1000 sq. ft., but the City is saying the maximum size is 1000 sq. ft.

Mr. Coleman clarified that the City cannot restrict an ADU to be any smaller than 1000 sq. ft.

Libby Grage moved on to the maximum height. She explained the current height and daylight plane regulations. The proposal is a maximum height of 25' for detached ADU's. Attached ADU's are subject to the maximum building height of the primary unit.

Linda Martin reminded commissioners to keep the minimum lot size in mind because the Comprehensive Plan update has some proposed lot size changes.

Paul Ryan pointed out that smaller lots could have a single structure with 2 ADU's inside.

Ms. Grage moved on to the minimum setback requirements. Staff is proposing to allow siting at the lot line if it abuts the public alley. If the ADU contains a garage perpendicular to the alley, the setback should be 10 feet.

John Coleman said if the garage door is on the side of the building (not along the alley), then the ADU can be at the property line. If the vehicle access is directly from the alley, it needs to be set back 10 ft for vehicle maneuverability.

Libby Grage said that these still have to comply with the maximum lot coverage and landscaping & open space requirements. One off-street parking space per ADU is required. Where paved on-street parking meeting city standards is available abutting the lot, it may satisfy applicable ADU parking requirements.

They also added that ADU's are not allowed on properties not served by city sewer. ADU's are subject to the public health, safety, building codes, and environmental permitting requirements that are applicable to the principal unit unless specifically stated otherwise in this section.

Will McCombs clarified that the City is required to allow at least 2 ADU's, but they also have to meet the lot coverage requirements. If the SFR is already at 50% coverage, then 2 detached ADU's would not be allowed

Libby Grage agreed.

Linda Martin said if the neighborhood has an HOA, what prevails.

Ms. Grage clarified that the city only enforces the city regulations. It would be a private matter between the HOA and the homeowner.

Linda Martin stated that means that the HOA would prevail. The homeowner signs a covenant with the HOA.

Libby Grage agreed.

Commissioner Martin commented she's really in favor of ADU's. They can solve a lot of problems. In order to solve the housing issues, we either add more density or more sprawl. This proposal has more density in a way that is more amenable to the neighborhood.

Libby Grage asked if the Planning Commissioners need any additional information brought back.

Mike Mills pointed out that we don't currently charge impact fees for ADU's, but they do have an impact. He wondered if that needs to be reviewed.

Ms. Grage said staff is not reviewing that at the moment.

Mike Mills referenced the new language regarding the proximity to public transit. He pointed out that public transit routes are subject to change.

John Coleman clarified that references a "major transit stop". The definition doesn't apply to Anacortes.

Libby Grage reviewed the definition from the RCW.

Planning Department Update

John Coleman referenced the Shoreline Development permit for Curtis Wharf went to City Council Monday. They approved it as the Planning Commission recommended. He also updated the City Council with where the Planning Commission was at with the Comprehensive Plan update process. Last Friday there was a North Star symposium regarding housing, homeless services and behavioral health. They delved into the human aspect of homelessness. It was an enlightening event. He moved on to the department update, stating we're close to completing 2 studies: (1) Sharpes Corner to determine if there's capacity for low-income housing opportunities on city-owned property there and (2) working on the Economic Development Strategic Plan draft based on the

Anacortes Planning Commission Minutes - June 11, 2025

community survey and the 2 workshops we had.

Luke Currier said he attended the North Star event. One major takeaway was the correlation between housing and homelessness is clearly defined. Where there is more housing, there's less homelessness. There was a lot of discussion about infill and creating more housing.

Mike Mills commented that was a fantastic meeting. The keynote speakers were at opposite ends of the spectrum. He was inspired by both of them. He has an expanded appreciation of the problem.

John Coleman said the book, Homelessness is a Housing Problem, shows the strong correlation between homelessness and housing prices. The higher the costs, the higher the homelessness. We need to create more affordable housing to potentially get us out of this problem. Skagit County has the lowest vacancy rate, lower than 1% for 5+ years. We are headed for a crisis if we do nothing.

Adjournment

Linda Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Anacortes Planning Commission Minutes - February 12, 2025

Roll Call

Chairperson Linda Martin called to order the Anacortes Planning Commission meeting of February 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners William McCombs, Frank Jeretzky, Paul Ryan, and Mike Mills were present. Commissioners Jim Stoneman and Luke Currier were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes

There were no minutes submitted for review.

Public Comment

There was no public comment taken.

Public Hearings

Other Business

2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Proposed amendments to the goals and policies in the Capital Facilities & Utilities elements, continued discussion

Libby Grage pointed out that at the last meeting there were questions from the Commissioners about levels of services for Fire/EMS and Police. That information is included in the packet.

Linda Martin asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

There were none noted.

Commissioner Martin referenced the NFPA standards in a few sections, but under effective response force Chief Harris said it does not match the NFPA standards but it's comparable.

Will McCombs commented this seems backwards. If there is a standard that they should be meeting, shouldn't that be the focus instead of adjusting the standards to meet our staffing levels. He expressed concern that our figures are lower than the national standard.

Paul Ryan agreed that NFPA 1710 calls for a 4-man minimum, but ours is 3.

Libby Grage said she will check with them and get back to you.

Ms. Grage moved on to the proposed policy update to item CF1.2. The changes from last meeting are highlighted in the packet. Staff suggested removing the residential, commercial and industrial as we want the concurrency standards applied to all development types. Concurrency review happens during review of a development permit application where staff routes the documents to all departments that are responsible for providing concurrent services and facilities. Staff reviews what impact the new development will have on facilities and services. Staff added some clarifying language for utilities; such as water, wastewater and stormwater, that concurrent with development means, prior to the actual use of the facilities. For other services and facilities, concurrent with development means that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within 6 years of occupancy of the development.

Frank Jeretzky referenced San Juan Passage which took a long time to build out. He asked if concurrency applies only to those that are developed during that 6-year period.

Libby Grage said she was not sure, but it should be based on the deficiencies identified during the initial review and then the time clock starts.

Linda Martin pointed out that there are areas in Anacortes that have several HOA's. She wonders if that was their way of getting around the concurrency. If a developer built section A and deemed it complete, would that satisfy the concurrency.

Ms. Grage clarified that there are provisions for projects that have different phases to avoid that.

Mike Mills said that San Juan Passage was developed in 4-5 phases that were City approved.

Libby Grage stated the facilities need to be in place before final plat approval, regardless of how long it takes for the homes to be built. The public comment period for Capital Facilities and Utilities is going on now and the public hearing will be the next Planning Commission meeting. She reviewed where people can view the documents and how & where to provide public comment.

2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Housing Action Plan (HAP) strategies discussion, continued

Ms. Grage provided some background on the Housing Action Plan (HAP) purpose and the process so far. She reviewed the tracker for the recommended changes to the HAP. To help with the discussion, staff compiled a draft amendment proposal with strike through and underline. Staff also added information boxes (in blue) with helpful information or resources.

Linda Martin recommends picking up where the Planning Commission left off. She noticed that there was public comment provided a while ago that the GMA does not require greater density for communities under 25K in population. She asked if that was true.

Libby Grage stated that there was a housing bill passed in the last 1-2 years that requires increased densities in urban growth areas allowing for more units on lots which applies to jurisdiction of 25K or more, so that particular law does not apply to Anacortes.

Linda Martin said we want to hone these down for City Council to determine if (1) this will increase density, (2) would it tend for more affordability or promote more affordable housing and (3) would the community accept it. These are the questions she keeps in mind when reviewing the HAP.

Will McCombs pointed out the move towards increased density may be necessary, but one thing people appreciate about Anacortes is the small town feel. He cautioned that there are places where increased density makes sense, but not across the board.

Frank Jeretzky said it could be impossible to achieve all three of those things.

Commissioner Martin stated that our population includes a large number of senior citizens. Increased density usually comes hand in hand with stairs which is not congruent with an aging population.

Mr. McCombs asked if the changes to the HAP are still being reviewed by City Council or have they already accepted it.

Libby Grage said the City Council docketed consideration of the HAP recommendations as part of the Comprehensive Plan process. The Council planning committee made recommendations on which from the HAP would have the likelihood of moving forward. Those recommendations were accepted by the City Council and forwarded to Planning Commission for review. The expectation is that the Planning Commission will make recommendations on which will move forward. The final draft will go to public comment public hearing, and then a Planning Commission recommendation to Council for adoption. The Planning Commission left off at 2.1.9, single-room occupancy housing. Staff has not completed their review of those, so that will come back to the Commission. Staff is also working on 2.1.10 and 2.3 so that will come back as well.

Mike Mills referenced 2.4.1, stating that there is supporting information on page 15 & 25 of 61 and page 9 & 19 of 39.

Ms. Grage agreed that they work together.

The Commissioners would like to start on page 9 of 39.

Mike Mills pointed out that HAP 2.4.1 regarding lot size for a minimum lot size for a duplex does not match the lot size for R2 listed on page 25.

Libby Grage clarified that in R2 the minimum lot size for a standard-size duplex is 9000 sq ft. With a small duplex, where there are maximum sizes per unit, the minimum lot size would be 7500 sq ft.

Mr. Mills referenced page 19 and suggested adding "small duplex" to section 2.a.

Linda Martin wondered why Old Town was left off the chart regarding reducing lot sizes.

Libby Grage said the HAP did not make recommendations for the Old Town zone related to duplexes and minimum lot sizes. The Planning Commission can make a recommendation to include that.

Linda Martin pointed out that when you include the small-sized duplex, it could make it more affordable. It seems like we make changes to all the residential zones except Old Town. That is an area that has comparable zoning to R3.

Mike Mills recommended paralleling R2A or R3 for Old Town.

Will McCombs asked if there special considerations for Old Town to not treat it like other residential areas. Libby Grage clarified that approximately 15 years ago, there was an effort to create new design standards. These were applied to Old Town in order to make sure that new development is more consistent with the more historic structures. There are requirements for modulation, height, etc. Old Town is close to downtown, amenities, walkable, etc. This is an area that people want to live in.

Mr. Mills commented that the look and feel of the area is determined by the design standards, not the size of the dwellings.

Libby Grage said there are no new developable lots in this area. There is the possibility for redevelopment and infill.

Linda Martin asked if Commissioner Mills was suggesting adding 6000 sq ft lot size for a small duplex in Old Town.

Mike Mills agreed. He moved on to ADU for Old Town suggesting that they add 1500 sq ft.

Ms. Grage pointed out that may require making changes to the future land use section of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff would need to review that before making changes.

Linda Martin said "attached" and "duplex" are important caveats in these situations.

Libby Grage stated that currently, there is no minimum lot size for an ADU, but adding this would change that. Staff may need to bring this back to the Planning Commission. ADU's are still required to comply with the rest of the development and zoning regulations.

Linda Martin summarized that for 2.4.1, the Planning Commission is okay with adding to the Old Town column - the lot size for a small duplex would be 6000 sq ft and the additional lot size for additional attached dwelling unit to be 1500 sq ft.

Libby Grage commented that adding the 1500 sq ft sounds like we are okay with a triplex in Old Town. She referenced the uses in AMC 19.41.030 - triplexes and townhomes are not currently permitted in Old Town. If the Commissioners want that change, this will need to be updated.

Frank Jeretzky expressed concern that the community will not be ok with that.

Libby Grage reminded the Commissioners that currently only duplex is permitted in Old Town.

Mrs. Martin suggested that the Council planning committee provide some insight as to why Old Town is treated differently.

Mike Mills said it would be a good idea to pass this back to planning committee. He separates the design from the other metrics. The visual aspects of the district can still be maintained via the design standards.

Ms. Grage pointed out that the HAP has a recommendation to look at the Old Town zone and consider changing the zoning for a portion to transition to higher density. That was not one of the HAP proposals that the City Council moved forward. She will follow up on this.

Linda Martin moved on to 2.4.4 asking if staff has a recommendation.

Libby Grage reviewed the staff recommendation to add a minimum density for lots that are greater than 6000 sq ft in the R4 zone. This would allow for a SFR to be placed on a lot smaller than 6000 sq ft. There are some changes staff is working on based on the future land use map.

Mr. Mills asked if there is something that makes this special.

Libby Grage clarified this is the highest density residential zone that we have. It makes sense to have the highest density for this area. There are also minimum densities in our mixed-use zones.

Will McCombs suggested some sort of grandfather clause. We want people that own property in that area to be able to develop the property.

Libby Grage asked if the recommendation for lots that are over 6000 sq ft, that this new regulation for minimum density should not apply to those.

Mr. McCombs stated that if someone already owns a lot, they should be able to develop that lot. If it changes ownership, then we could apply the new regulations.

Libby Grage expressed concern as to how that could be done. Staff doesn't track change of ownership. There is a concept called vesting, but that requires a complete application be in place prior to the change. We could recommend a pause on the effective date to allow people to submit a proposal if they want.

Will McCombs pointed out that real estate transactions are public record, so that can be checked. Ms. Grage clarified that this doesn't say they cannot develop it, just that they have to comply with the regulations. The Planning Commission can make that recommendation and staff will verify if additional changes need to go along with that.

Linda Martin moved on to 2.4.6.

Libby Grage referenced AMC 19.42.050 which proposed changing from 600 sq ft to 650 sq ft per unit. This allows for additional storage space. We have some indication from developers that the additional space is important to the functionality of the units. This is saying that if you do a percentage of small units, you get additional height. She clarified that the 600 sq ft was a number from the past and there is no specific requirement for 600. If 650 sq ft will make the units more functional and increase livability, staff agrees with that change.

Mike Mills said if that additional 50 sq ft was conditioned space, it would add to the livability. If it's just storage, it doesn't make sense. He referenced 2.4.7 regarding the new technology for elevators.

Commissioner Martin expressed concern that this change will not increase density or affordable units, and will not be accepted by the community.

Frank Jeretzky pointed out that the extra floor increases density and hopefully provides more affordable units. The additional height is only the elevator, not the entire building.

Libby Grage reminded the Commissioners that the new technology gets rid of the mechanical room, which adds livable space.

Mr. Mills clarified he's ok with 2.4.6 if it's conditioned space. Regarding 2.4.7, he's more amenable to allowing the additional height since it is only for the elevator shaft, not the entire building.

Linda Martin said it sounds like we are ok with 2.4.6 and 2.4.7.

Will McCombs moved on to 2.5.1. He asked if the State provides a definition of family. He expressed concern that this is misleading. He suggested changing the language to household.

Paul Ryan recommends clarifying family to include: (1) related individuals (one or more persons living together in a household or dwelling unit), (2) unrelated individuals in a nonprofit setting, and (3) unrelated persons in a state-licensed home (up to 6 persons not related to the provider). He also recommends determining who the point of contact is for #2 and #3.

Linda Martin expressed concern that the HAP says to amend the definition of family per state law, but there is no definition in state law.

Ms. Grage said the only law states that the city is not allowed to limit the number of unrelated persons in a unit. A change is required to comply with the state law.

Linda Martin asked if the proposed language is too broad. It sounds like Paul is recommending keeping the language that was proposed to be stricken and adding clarification.

Paul Ryan said he started with the HAP language and added clarification, especially for unrelated persons living together.

Frank Jeretzky pointed out that Bellingham had to deal with this due to the university. They banned people filling up residential homes with too many people and all that comes with them, such as vehicles.

Libby Grage said maximum occupancy is in the building codes, so that would help with the amount of people living in one space.

Mr. McCombs suggested that "family" needs to be removed and replace with "household". We use the term family, but don't really mean what the definition is. A single-family home is usually one household.

Libby Grage pointed out that staff considered that.

Paul Ryan said if we use household, we will need to add that definition.

Frank Jeretzky asked why #3 is included in this section.

Libby Grage said she's unsure of that origin. She clarified that adult family homes are regulated separately under group living.

Linda Martin suggested the commissioners bring this back with "household" instead of family. She moved on to 2.5.2.

Will McCombs said this seems reasonable. He wonders if the standards apply to greater than 4 units for a

townhouse.

Mr. Ryan clarified that a townhouse is defined in AMC as 3 units or more.

Libby Grage referenced page 30 of 39. This is proposed to be added because townhouse developments have their own site and building design standards in AMC 19.43. We've run into confusion when new proposals come in to determine if the block frontage standards apply to townhomes. This was to clarify that block frontage standards, etc are also required.

Will McCombs wants to clarify that those standards will still apply if there were 4 or more units in the townhome. It looks like there may be a loophole if there are more than 4 units.

Libby Grage said the intent was to make sure that the requirements that are applicable to townhomes are called out in one place. Staff recommends making block frontage standards applicable to townhomes as there has been confusion in the past.

Paul Ryan moved on to 2.5.3, page 22 of 39.

Ms. Grage commented that this adds clarification on townhome development. This is pointing back to the block frontage and setback tables. This doesn't change the standards; it tells them where to look.

Paul Ryan expressed concern that some of the original references or links in the HAP are no longer available.

Libby Grage clarified that subsequent to the HAP being adopted, there was an update to the development regulations numbering scheme, specifically the design standard provisions. Each housing type now has it's own section number, instead of being a run-on section.

Mr. Ryan provided suggested language changes: "with regard to the design of planned and future development frontage projects regulated by the AMC". This cross-references other sections for ease of use.

Linda Martin suggested that for 2.5.3, Paul will meet with Libby to clean this up due to some references being removed or renumbered. They moved on to 2.5.4.

Will McCombs asked for examples of indoor recreational / leisure space.

Libby Grage said these provisions apply to all new multi-family and mixed-use developments. Internal open space does not mean within the building; rather it must be on the site. The minimum open space is based on the number of bedrooms for the project. The open space can be shared, ground level, private, common indoor recreational areas, etc. The developer can determine how they want to provide it.

Will McCombs commented that they have a minimum square footage they have to meet, but they chose how to achieve that.

Ms. Grage stated that the concern was developers providing non-functional open spaces.

Will McCombs asked for clarification on the open space requirement in regard to the proximity to an existing park.

Libby Grage said the thought was that if there is an existing park, the residents have access to that. This would reduce the total amount of required open space which could add additional dwelling units. It's likely that if they live next to a park, they will use the park instead of the onsite open spaces.

Will McCombs moved on to roof decks. He expressed his preference for 50% for a shared roof deck. If the only open space is on the roof, it may not be usable for all residents.

Linda Martin summarized that the HAP recommendations in 2.5.4 are fine by the Planning Commission. She moved on to the chart on page 32 of 39. She wonders why permanent supported housing doesn't have regulations for open space.

Libby Grage clarified that staff is working on those regulations. Staff will be bringing that back as we are still going through the new guidance from Commerce for this type of housing.

Commissioner Martin moved on to 2.5.5.

Will McCombs and Paul Ryan said they are okay with the language in the HAP recommendation.

Mr. McCombs moved on to 2.5.6. On page 39 of 39, the recommendation is to reduce the minimum planting area widths to allow for more efficient use of land. He said he hates to give away landscaping. He recommends maintaining as it currently is.

Linda Martin agreed to the proposed changes in 2.5.6a, but wants to keep 2.5.6b at 10 feet.

Libby Grage clarified that type c landscaping requires 10 ft width. There have been many requests to reduce

this because it is measured from the property line. Anacortes has wide ROW's. Requiring the full 10 feet eats into the developable area. There is the potential to use the ROW for some of the landscaping.

Paul Ryan asked if language should be added; such as, "to include ROW".

Ms. Grage pointed out the ROW depth can vary, so there may be some need for flexibility.

Linda Martin asked staff to bring back additional language.

Libby Grage gave the example of a project on an alley, where the parking is off the alley. As the code is currently, they would need a 10-foot landscaping strip on both sides. That reduces the available parking by 20 feet. There are alternatives; such as a fence, that could achieve the same purpose in less space. The recommendation is to reduce it to 5 feet on each side.

Will McCombs said that's understandable, but he is hesitant to pave everything. If we reduce all our standards and setbacks, we will have all pavement. He would like to maintain some of that landscaping area.

Libby Grage clarified that the intent is to provide screening and buffering of the parking to the neighboring properties. If that can be achieved in other ways, we would like that flexibility.

Frank Jeretzky commented that 5 feet limits the type of screening that can be planted.

Linda Martin said the Planning Commission is okay with the HAP recommendation in 2.5.6a, but they would prefer to leave 2.5.6b as is.

Mike Mills suggested changing it to 7.5 feet. This could encourage development and would be consistent.

Commissioner Martin said the Planning Commission is okay with 2.5.6b changing to 7.5 feet.

Paul Ryan and Will McCombs moved on to 2.5.7. This cleans up the service areas to make them look better while still allowing access. We are okay with the HAP recommendation. They moved on to 2.5.8.

Will McCombs pointed out that most of these are aesthetic to make the block look consistent. Awnings can make walkability better. This should encourage people to come downtown.

Paul Ryan referenced 2.5.10, suggesting changing prohibited to not permissible.

Mr. McCombs said the change to the design standards was to remove perforated metal screening, but there are some good applications of that material. He recommended the Commissioners review this again.

Linda Martin clarified that the Planning Commission is okay with the changes in 2.5.8; 2.5.9 and 2.5.10. She reminded Commissioners Currier and Mills that their section of the HAP review will be at the next meeting.

Planning Commission Rules of Procedure discussion

Linda Martin stated this was added to the agenda to determine if we wanted to add 35a to our charter. Since not all of the Planning Commission members are here, this will be carried over to the next meeting.

Planning Department Update

No update provided by staff.

Will McCombs commented that he attended the planning committee meeting of City Council. They discussed transportation and the Anacortes Family Center housing. It was good to see their process.

Adjournment

Linda Martin adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Libby Grage

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 10:14 PM
To: Libby Grage
Subject: Comments for the July 9 Planning Commission Meeting (and the Comment Section on the CP/DR Update)
Attachments: EDITORIAL.pdf

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I would appreciate it if this went out with the Planning Package, thanks Libby.

Smoke and Mirrors

Dear Planning Commissioners

To date in my comments to you I have tried to submit informative comments but now I take this opportunity to editorialize.

R1 Zone

I have lived in Anacortes at the same home now for 40 some years, serving as Planning Director from 1981 to 2008. I am now fully retired and do not, and will not, have clients either as a planning consultant or attorney. I had not planned on re-engaging on planning issues, but enough is enough.

My first concern, as with most people, is my home and my neighborhood. I thought that if I politely pointed out the protected natural characteristics of the R1 zone that I live in that would be enough to allow for careful, thoughtful development. When the City issued a Declaration of Non-Significance for a short plat at 4417 H Avenue I was forced to appeal a short plat proposal that involved a residential driveway through a wetland and no proper stormwater provision; the proposal was abandoned as unsupportable, but no \$400 SEPA appeal fee refund, no apology, and no procedural corrections. Later at 4419 H Avenue the same wetland was converted into acres of residential lawn contrary to wetland and stormwater mandates; the City defended its 'oversight' in Superior Court arguing, unsuccessfully, that it had no duty to administer and enforce its regulations and could pick and chose what regulations to apply and enforce. Currently, the City is processing a short plat at 4219 H Avenue, and has been for years, without staff requiring, reviewing, and considering the mandatory SEPA checklist. The professional term for this behavior, behavior that spans administrations, is 'ridiculous'. Neighbors deserve better. Neighbors have property rights too, an adage cited by multiple former city council members.

Apparently these days applicants can file any old nonsense and that is fine if someone with authority mutters 'neighborhood disagreement', 'property rights' or 'affordable housing'. Under Mayors Rice and Maxwell applicants secured timely approval for thousands of homes after public notice, outreach, engagement, and addressing substantive issues, e.g. San Juan Passage, Rock Ridge, The Orchards, Creekside, Cedar Springs, and multiple short plats and conditional uses. As I have previously pointed out to you, after reviewing Planning Department files it is clear that most delays are associated with the applicant failing to submit the information required by City Code and the City not just closing the file but the City actually pleading for the necessary information. Again, 'ridiculous'. Neighbors deserve better.

I keep having the recurring thought that this cannot be happening, and should not be happening, here in Anacortes, but my attempts to participate going forward, as is every citizen's right, have been stonewalled at every turn, e.g. the \$3,000 fee to play and a citation to the wrong state statute governing your procedures (the City has for decades been governed under RCW 35A and not RCW 35). Please see the attached correspondence with the State Department of Commerce. Attachment A. Starting over, again, ridiculous.

Citywide

Having been forced by my neighborhood concerns to review the context for the City Council's proposal to double the density in my R1 zone as part of their 'Middle Housing Proposal' from two to four units an acre, I discovered that the necessary groundwork for this has not been laid. For instance, the so called Housing Action Plan produced by the City Council's Planning Committee, affectionately known as the Real Estate and Development Committee, has not yet been balanced, as required, against competing interests, e.g. protection of our natural environment and small town character, and has not been subject to SEPA review or neighborhood and HOA engagement.

I submit that as the City contractually transferred the stormwater management responsibilities to multiple Homeowners Associations over the past decades, the City has the responsibility to enforce the agreed upon covenants. The City needs to engage the HOAs on its Middle Housing Proposal not just from common courtesy but in order to gauge the extent of the environmental impacts. Further, the draft Stormwater Plan does not yet address the population that is being planned for, citing confidentiality! Yes, really. The plan does document the woeful current stormwater deficiencies and there are rumblings about the need for a \$80 million capital program but no actual detail on necessary remedial actions to prevent urban flooding (dirty street runoff), flooding projected, acknowledged and quantified to increase due to climate change. A significant discussion as to how much of this cost is applicable to current stormwater customers and how much to charge new development is absent. This is not only ridiculous but easily challenged as not meeting State concurrency requirements.

This Stormwater Plan was supposed to be complete at the end of last year so that you could factor this into your deliberations. Anacortes currently has about 8,000 households and is being asked to accommodate 2,000 more over the next 20 years. Then, even though we are not required to allow Middle Housing, as we are well under the 25,000 threshold set by State law, we may well end up with another 2,000 households if we somehow chose to take discretionary action on this. A new sewer plan was also due for public consideration at the end of last year, but is currently unavailable. I take this opportunity to point out that the current plant peak capacity, not average capacity, was pretty much designed for our current population. Another \$80 million?

In closing, I attach my letter to the editor from two weeks ago. The feedback that I received is 'dah', 'of course'. Most don't think that this is all really going on and can't be happening, but you know that it is and any densification that you propose will be immediately rubber stamped by a majority of the current City Council. Please take charge.

For those who read this far, thank you.

Ian Munce

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 26, 2024, at 8:44 AM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

Good morning,
The city has a Public Participation Plan for the Comprehensive Plan Update project (attached).

The process you are referring to below is the annual amendment process, which is a little different. However, including the annual Comp Plan Amendments for consideration as part of the ten-year Update is consistent with Commerce's guidance on how to review amendments concurrently so cumulative impacts can be ascertained (RCW 36.70A.040)

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

Phone: [360-259-0487](tel:360-259-0487)
<image001.gif>

www.commerce.wa.gov | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Email communications with state employees are public records and may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to Ch. 42.56 RCW

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 8:05 AM
To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

ATTACHMENT A

From: Ian Munce ianmunce@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting
Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024
Citizen Comments
Date: Jul 1, 2025 at 3:02:04 PM
To: Valerie Smith valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov
Cc: Darcy Swetnam darcys@anacorteswa.gov
Morgan.Krueger@dfw.wa.gov, bill.h.turner@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Smith

Thank you for this timely response. It is very much appreciated. I just wanted to be sure of your position.

It just seems ridiculous to me that I should have to go to the GMHB on this but I guess I will have to schedule for this. It is just that if I prevail the only remedy will be for the City to start all over again.

It would be my earnest hope that any comments that your Department submits on the City's 2025 Periodic Update will somehow acknowledge that meaningful citizen input was not/may not have been included in the final version.

Thank you again.

Ian Munce, J.D., AICP

On Jul 1, 2025, at 2:46 PM, Smith, Valerie (COM)
<valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Munce,

Thank you for your message.

To clarify: general participation in a periodic update process should not require a fee. However, site-specific amendments or docketed proposals may be subject to the city's adopted procedures and associated fees. Jurisdictions may integrate their annual amendment process into the periodic update to ensure consistency and cumulative

review.

Commerce's role under the Growth Management Act is advisory. While we encourage jurisdictions to ensure broad public access and transparency, we do not have enforcement authority. Concerns about public participation, proposal consideration, or local process implementation are more appropriately directed to the Growth Management Hearings Board.

Commerce is not withdrawing or modifying any prior guidance.

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

Pronouns: [she/her/hers](#) | [Why I share my pronouns](#)

Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

(desk) [360-725-3062](tel:360-725-3062) (cell) [360-259-0487](tel:360-259-0487)



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From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 30, 2025 3:34 PM

To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

Cc: Long, Lexine (COM) <lexine.long@commerce.wa.gov>; Holman, Carol (COM) <carol.holman@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Dear Ms. Smith

This is just to let your Department know that despite your advise regarding the inappropriateness of charging a fee to participate in the 2025 CP/DR the City has made no adjustment(s). The Planning Commission is scheduled to release a draft CP next month without making any significant effort that I can locate to address citizen proposals. It is hard to tell because the Planning Commission minutes are trending about five months behind, but there appears to be no significant discussion regarding multiple citizen proposals.

I for one will be forced to appeal to the GMHB on the City's refusal to meaningfully engage the public contrary to the plain language of the statute and relevant case law. The only proposals that seem to have been considered by the Planning Commission are those forwarded by the City Council and recommended by City staff and consultants. I question whether this approach fulfills the terms of their GMA update grant from your Department.

I thought that I should advise that my case will begin with the fact that without explanation the City has declined to follow your advise regarding fees. So, if you wish to withdraw this advise I would like to know sooner rather than later.

Thank you.

Ian Munce, AICP

On Jun 26, 2024, at 9:20 AM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

That is not my understanding of the city's process.

If you are proposing a site specific map amendment, you would need to go through the process for the annual amendment, and pay the fee.

Otherwise, participation, recommendations, requests, and/or public comments will be reviewed consistent with the Public Participation Plan, with no fee required.

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

Phone: [360-259-0487](tel:360-259-0487)

<image001.gif>

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From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 9:17 AM

To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Valerie

Thanks for the prompt response.

However, my reading of the City documents is that they are attempting to apply the annual amendment process to the ten year update and impose \$3,000 fees for citizens to 'pay to play'. I think this is outrageous and something that I would like to submit a formal complaint to Commerce on if you will advise me of the proper procedure.

Ian

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 26, 2024, at 8:44 AM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

Good morning,
The city has a Public Participation Plan for the Comprehensive Plan Update project (attached).

The process you are referring to below is the annual amendment process, which is a little different. However, including the annual Comp Plan Amendments for consideration as part of the ten-year Update is consistent with Commerce's guidance on how to review amendments concurrently so cumulative impacts can be ascertained (RCW 36.70A.040)

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

Phone: [360-259-0487](tel:360-259-0487)

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Email communications with state employees are public records and may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to Ch. 42.56 RCW

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 8:05 AM

To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Good day, Ms. Smith

I believe that some early guidance from Commerce would be helpful.

Thank you.

Ian Munce, AICP

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Date: June 26, 2024 at 7:58:16 AM PDT

To: CityClerk <cityclerk@cityofanacortes.org>

Cc: Dave Andersen <dave.andersen@commerce.wa.gov>, Lexine Long
<lexine.long@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Good day,

I write to file a formal protest at the City excluding regular citizens in general, and me in particular, from participating in the regular ten year Comprehensive Plan update due to:

1. The fees required, \$960 initially and \$1870 later, presumably for each discrete language change.
2. The notion that the City Council will pick and choose which proposals will receive full consideration before the Planning Commission.

This approach may have some merit as part of the annual amendment process if a map amendment is proposed. However, I submit that it is illegitimate for the regular, State mandated ten year thorough review of a jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan. It violates the Growth Management Act's mandate for meaningful 'early and continuous' public participation' and, I suspect, the terms of the State grant. It is also irresponsible as it just creates grounds for appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted in 2025: will the City be directed to start over?

Please open an additional submittal period for Comprehensive Plan language changes and please do not require any filing fee for such proposals. As there does not appear to be a filing fee, I will be filing proposed Development Regulation changes.

Ian Munce, AICP
1711 Quail Drive
Anacortes

<Resolution 3156-PPP-executed.pdf>

ATTACHMENT B

https://www.goskagit.com/anacortes/views/letters_to_editor/letter-city-s-growth-plan-ignores-community-values/article_0c9e6c1a-32e6-426f-988e-f117bc7f6772.html

Letter: City's growth plan ignores community values

Jun 6, 2025

Current City leadership seeks to outright reject our long established principles that we need to work project by project to ensure that our small town character is maintained, that new growth pays for itself (and is not subsidized by existing ratepayers and taxpayers), that we protect our natural areas, that we add the large scale stormwater improvements necessary to remediate current urban flooding events, and that climate change mandates serious enforcement actions.

They then go on to rely on developer submissions and tell neighbors that their comments and concerns are unhelpful to the City's pursuit of more market rate housing. They seem unphazed by the fact that just as many people commute out of Anacortes as commute into Anacortes and that we are part of a regional housing and workforce market.

Without evaluating the infrastructure upgrades necessary, the City has concluded that we can accommodate our 'share' of regional growth under existing zoning. This would bring our population from about 18,000 to 24,000

over the next 20 years. Adding the City Council's proposal to allow duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and cottage housing on small single family lots will just about double our current population.

I had the privilege of serving as City Planning Director from 1981-2008 and still talk to enough people to assert that the Council's vision does not in any way square with the expectations of those who call this town home. That is why they have done little or no public outreach-they do not want our opinions that we pretty much like things much as they are.

They take this approach in order to facilitate more market rate housing, i.e. duplexes, tri-plexes, and four plexes on small lots in established residential neighborhoods.

Documentation for my positions is in the Comment Section of the City's 2025 Comprehensive Plan Webpage.

Ian Munce

Anacortes

Learn more about your privacy options



Planning Commission Agenda Bill

Meeting Date: July 9, 2025

Agenda Item: 6.a.

Subject: 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update: Draft development regulation amendments addressing STEP housing (emergency **S**helters, **T**ransitional housing, **E**mergency housing, and **P**ermanent supportive housing)

Staff Contact: Libby Grage, John Coleman

Approved for Submittal to Commission by

Libby Grage
John Coleman

Action Type

Discussion

Summary Statement: Staff will introduce draft development regulation amendments (to AMC Title 19, *Unified Development Code*) intended to comply with state law requirements for STEP housing.

See attached staff report for more info.

Background: See attached staff report dated 7/2/25.

Previous Action:

Competing Viewpoints Considered: Development regulation amendments will undergo public review, comment and public hearings later in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update process.

Recommended Motion: N/A - discussion only

Alternative Actions:

Attachments (listed in order presented):

1. Staff Report, 7/2/25



Date: July 2, 2025

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning, Community & Economic Development Department (PCED)

Re: 2025 Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Update
Draft regulations for STEP housing

Purpose

This staff report summarizes changes proposed to the development regulations in AMC Title 19, *Unified Development Code*, to comply with state law regarding the planning for, siting, and permitting of Emergency Shelters, Transitional housing, Emergency housing, and Permanent supportive housing (**STEP** Housing) within the City of Anacortes.

Background

As part of the required periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan, the City must also review and update its development regulations to ensure they are consistent with the Plan's policies and with recent changes in state law.

Over the past 8 months, the Planning Commission has been reviewing [potential code changes](#) aimed at carrying out key recommendations of the Anacortes' [2023 Housing Action Plan](#) (HAP), including recommendations for amendments to comply with [HB 1220](#) (2021), codified at [RCW 36.70A.070](#)(2); [RCW 35A.21.430](#) and [RCW 35.21.683](#). Subsequent to the adoption of the HAP, the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) published [STEP housing guidance](#) to assist local jurisdictions with planning for STEP housing, comply with state and federal laws, and address local housing needs. The guidance includes a model ordinance and best practices report, which staff consulted in the development of the proposed draft regulations.

STEP Housing – Statutory Requirements

House Bill 1220 (HB 1220, 2021) amended the Growth Management Act (GMA) and municipal code requirements to require local government to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels. The law outlines specific zoning and development regulations for four different housing types: Emergency Shelter, Transitional housing, Emergency housing and Permanent supportive housing (STEP).

Under the new law, Commerce provided projections of housing need for each county, including permanent supportive housing, emergency housing, and emergency shelters. Each county and its cities then decided how to allocate the projections. Each jurisdiction must then document its share of countywide housing needs by income level and plan for and accommodate that share of housing needs in their comprehensive plan. By the periodic update deadline (December 31, 2025), cities must:

- Develop policies to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments
- Identify barriers to the development of affordable housing and take action plan to remove those barriers
- Update the land use regulations to specifically allow permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, emergency housing, and emergency shelters in enough zones to allow the development of housing sufficient to meet jurisdictions' local housing needs.

STEP Housing Types & Definitions

The following terms are defined in the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.030). Commerce recommends jurisdictions use these terms and definitions in their regulations for consistency.

Emergency housing (EH) is defined as temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. [RCW 36.70A.030\(14\)](#)

Emergency shelter (ES) is defined as a facility that provides a temporary shelter for individuals or families who are currently homeless. Emergency shelter may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. Emergency shelter facilities may include day and warming centers that do not provide overnight accommodations. [RCW 36.70A.030\(15\)](#)

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is defined as subsidized, leased housing with no limit on length of stay that prioritizes people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy and utilizes admissions practices designed to use lower barriers to entry than would be typical for other subsidized or unsubsidized rental housing, especially related to rental history, criminal history, and personal behaviors. Permanent supportive housing is paired with on-site or off-site voluntary services designed to support a person living with a complex and disabling behavioral health or physical health condition who was experiencing homelessness or was at imminent risk of homelessness prior to moving into housing to retain their housing and be a successful tenant in a housing arrangement, improve the resident's health status, and connect the resident of the housing with community-based health care, treatment, or employment services. Permanent supportive housing is subject to all of the rights and responsibilities defined in chapter 59.18 RCW. [RCW 36.70A.030\(31\)](#)

Transitional housing (TH) is defined as a project that provides housing and supportive services to homeless persons or families for up to two years and that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless persons and families into independent living. [RCW 84.36.043\(3\)\(c\)](#)

STEP Housing Examples

The Anacortes Family Center operates [emergency housing](#), [transitional housing](#), and affordable housing at its campus located near Commercial Avenue and 26th/27th Streets in Anacortes.

Commerce guidance includes

Benefits of STEP

Some of the potential benefits of STEP housing include¹:

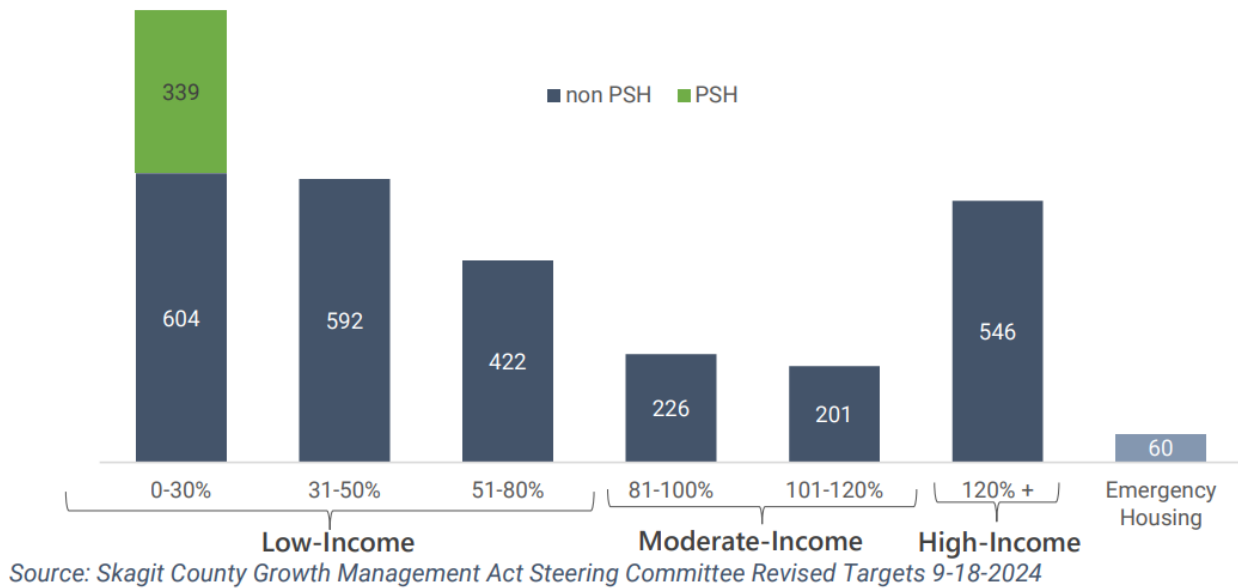
- Reduces the number of people living and sleeping in unsafe conditions and public spaces
- Helps various populations, including people who are currently homeless or housing insecure, formerly homeless aging adults, families with child welfare involvement, individuals with chronic patterns of homelessness, people involved with the justice system, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Provides tenancy support services to help vulnerable people maintain stable housing
- Connects participants to essential services such as health care, job opportunities and public benefit income
- Improves participants' mental and physical health through timely medical care
- Enhances participants' employment prospects and incomes and fosters social connections
- Reduces the likelihood of residents being incarcerated
- Decreases the public cost burden on other services, such as hospitals and emergency response, and therefore costs the same amount or less than its alternatives

Anacortes' STEP Housing Need & Capacity

Anacortes' existing and projected housing unit needs by income band for 2020-2045 are shown below:

¹ Department of Commerce, [STEP 101 Fact Sheet \(PDF\)](#), (<https://deptofcommerce.box.com/s/d8agh8i3hgdgsbuff2pvgf77mua1usce>)

Figure 14. Anacortes Projected Housing Needs by Income Band, 2020-2045



Anacortes’ projected need for STEP housing is 60 new emergency housing beds/units and 339 new permanent supportive housing units through 2045.

A Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) was completed during the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan. The LCA found that Anacortes has sufficient zoned capacity for the 2020-2045 planning period to accommodate its allocations for overall housing, permanent supportive housing, and emergency housing/ shelter beds².

The LCA also reviewed Anacortes’ existing development regulations for potential barriers to STEP housing production:

Barrier	Why	Actions needed to address barriers
Parking requirements	Assuming multifamily parking standards are applied to STEP housing, parking requirements could impact feasibility. Car ownership is typically lower for residents of PSH / emergency shelters.	Remove or reduce parking requirements for PSH and emergency shelters.

² Final Land Capacity Analysis Methodology, Nov. 21, 2024.

<https://www.anacorteswa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29663/Anacortes-LCA-Methodology-and-Adequate-Provisions-FINAL-2024-11-21>

On-site recreation and open space requirements	Currently, there are no specific standards for PSH / emergency housing	Remove or reduce on-site recreation and open space requirements for PSH and emergency shelters
Restrictions on support spaces, such as office space, within transitional or PSH building in a residential zone	Office space is not allowed in residential zones. PSH with supportive spaces could only be built in the CBD zone.	Consider allowing supportive commercial uses in multifamily zones for PSH.
Other restrictions specific to emergency shelters, emergency housing, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing	It is not clear where - if anywhere – these types of housing are allowed in Anacortes.	Ensure that the code clarifies where these types of housing are allowed.

The draft regulations have been drafted to incorporate the suggested actions above.

Considerations

The following requirements from HB 1220 and other state laws guide how local jurisdictions are able regulate STEP housing:

- **Where permitted.** Cities may not prohibit indoor emergency housing and indoor emergency shelters in zones that allow hotels. Cities must allow permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in all zones that allow hotels and residential development.
- **Spacing, occupancy and intensity restrictions.** Local restrictions relating to spacing, occupancy and intensity of use that differ from other residential development types must be linked to public health and safety in the ordinance’s findings. These regulations must also not be so restrictive that they prevent the development of a sufficient number of STEP units to meet the city’s local share of the countywide housing needs projected by Commerce and allocated by Skagit County.
- **Development standards.** The city may not have requirements on affordable housing developments that are different/more restrictive than the requirements imposed on standard housing developments generally (RCW 36.130.020).
- **Modifications.** RCW 36.130.020 does not prohibit cities from extending preferential treatment to affordable housing developments, including but not limited to a reduction or waiver of fees, changes in applicable requirements or treatment that reduces or is likely to reduce the development or operating costs of an affordable housing development.
- **Permit process.** STEP housing with individual leases to residents (PHS & TH) should have the same local permitting and other requirements as standard housing types to be consistent with state law. Commerce recommends reducing the use of discretionary review processes and conditional use permits for STEP developments to encourage more production.

Draft Amendments

See **Attachment A** for the specific text amendment proposals in ~~strike-through~~/underline format.

The following table provides a summary of key provisions of the proposed amendments:

STEP Type	Emergency Shelters* (Indoor***)	Emergency Housing* (Indoor***)	Transitional Housing**	Permanent Supportive Housing**
Proposed Regulations - Summary				
Zones where permitted	CBD, C, MMU & CM	CBD, C, MMU & CM	CBD, C, MMU & CM All residential zones	CBD, C, MMU & CM All residential zones
Development Standards (Form & intensity; site & building design, etc.)	Considered multifamily for purposes of applying Div. 6 standards (except parking & open space)	Subject to the same development standards as the ‘household living” dwelling type form proposed (e.g. single family, duplex, triplex, multifamily, etc.) in the respective zone, consistent with RCW 36.130.020.		
Parking	Director Discretion	Per the ‘household living” dwelling type form proposed, except when applicant submits a parking study that demonstrates a reduction is warranted due to site and project-specific characteristics.		
Modifications	The Director may modify one or more standards in this section only if the applicant submits a description of the standard to be modified and demonstrates how the modification would result in a safe supportive housing facility and benefit the community under the specific circumstances of the application.			
Review Process – Meets all development standards	Type 1 or Type 2 (based on development size thresholds for site plan review)			
Review Process – Modification requested	Type 2			

*City must allow STEP type in zones where hotels are allowed

**City must allow STEP type in zones where residential dwelling units or hotels are allowed

***Indoor implies that buildings are affixed to the ground and have indoor plumbing, and therefore would exclude forms on wheels (e.g. RVs) or that lack internal sanitation and/or cooking facilities, such as tiny shelters or pallet shelters.

Attachment A – STEP Housing Amendments

19.41.050 Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones.

Table 19.41.050 below provides the list of permitted principal uses in mixed-use and industrial zones.

Table 19.20.030-1: Review classification and process matrix (excerpt)

Types of Review	Type 1 Administrative Ministerial Actions	Type 2 Administrative Decisions	Type 3-HE Hearing Examiner Decisions	Type 3-PC Planning Commission Decisions	Type 4 City Council Decisions
Type of application	STEP housing that meets applicable development standards (<10 dwelling units /beds)	STEP housing that meets applicable development standards (10+ dwelling units/ beds) STEP housing that requests a modification from development standards			
....	...	...	...		
Notice of Application	No	Yes	Yes		
Comment period	None	14 days	21 days		
Rec. By	None	None	Director		
Pre-Decision Open Record Public Hearing	No	No	Yes, before Hearing Examiner		
Closed record Decision Hering	No	No	No		
Decision By	Director	Director	Hearing Examiner		
Notice of Decision	No	Yes	Yes		
Local Appeal To....	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	City Council		

AMC 19.41.040 Principal uses permitted in residential zones

Table 19.41.040 below provides the list of permitted principal uses in residential zones.

....

Table 19.41.040: Principal uses permitted in residential zones (excerpt)

Principal Use	R1	R2	R2 A	R3	R3 A	R4	R4 A	OT	Reference & special use limitations
RESIDENTIAL									
.....									
Supportive living, as listed below									AMC 19.43.010(C)
Permanent supportive housing	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	AMC 19.43.170
Transitional housing	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	AMC 19.43.170
Emergency housing									
Emergency shelter									

AMC 19.41.050 Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones

Table 19.41.050 below provides the list of permitted principal uses in mixed use and industrial zones.

Table 19.41.050
Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones.
(Excerpt)

Principal Use	CBD	C	MMU	CM	CM2	LM	LM1	MS	I	HM	Reference
RESIDENTIAL											
Household Living, as listed below											AMC 19.43.010(A)
.....											
Townhouse	P	P ^(X)	P ^(X)								AMC 19.43.070
Multifamily dwellings, 4+	P	P ^(X)	P ^(X)	C ^(X)							AMC 19.43.080
.....											
Supportive living, as listed below											AMC 19.43.010(C)
Permanent supportive housing	P	P	P	P							AMC 19.43.170
Transitional housing	P	P	P	P							AMC 19.43.170
Emergency housing	P	P	P	P							AMC 19.43.170
Emergency shelter	P	P	P	P							AMC 19.43.170
COMMERCIAL											
<i>[no changes to remaining sections]</i>											
Overnight Lodging, except as listed below	P	P	P	P		C					AMC 19.44.050(A)
Short-term rental											AMC 19.44.050(D)

Chapter 19.43 Residential Uses

AMC 19.43.010 Categories of residential uses

- A. [no change]
- B. [no change]
- C. [Supportive Living Use Category.](#) Residential facilities intended to house individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness, and paired with on-site or off-site supportive services designed to maintain long-term or permanent tenancy, or to eventually transition the residents to independent living arrangements.
 - 1. [Emergency housing.](#)
 - 2. [Emergency shelter.](#)
 - 3. [Permanent supportive housing.](#)
 - 4. [Transitional housing.](#)

AMC 19.43.020 – 19.43.150 [no change]

[19.43.160 Reserved for Co-Living Housing \(coming soon\)](#)

[19.43.170 Supportive Housing \(STEP Housing\)](#)

- A. [Definitions.](#)
 - 1. [Emergency Housing.](#) Emergency housing is temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. (RCW 36.70A.030(14))
 - 2. [Emergency shelter.](#) An emergency shelter is a facility that provides temporary shelter for individuals or families who are currently homeless. Emergency shelter may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. Emergency shelter facilities may include day and warming centers that do not provide overnight accommodations. (RCW 36.70A.030(15))
 - 3. [Permanent supportive housing.](#) Permanent supportive housing is subsidized, leased housing with no limit on length of stay that prioritizes people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy and utilizes admissions practices designed to use lower barriers to entry than would be typical for other subsidized or unsubsidized rental housing, especially related to rental history, criminal history, and personal behaviors. Permanent supportive housing is paired with on-site or off-site voluntary services designed to support a person living with a complex and disabling behavioral health or physical health condition who was experiencing homelessness or was imminent risk of homelessness prior to moving into housing to retain their housing and be a successful tenant in a housing arrangement, improve the resident's health status, and connect the resident of the housing with community-based care, treatment, or employment services. Permanent supportive housing is subject to all of the rights and responsibilities defined in chapter 59.18 RCW. (RCW 36.70A.030(31))
 - 4. [Transitional housing.](#) Transitional housing is a project that provides housing and supportive services to homeless persons or families for up to two years and that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless persons and families into independent living. (RCW 84.36.043)
- B. [Purpose.](#) The purpose of these regulations is to:

1. [Ensure compliance with the Washington State Growth Management Act and other laws.](#)
 2. [Support implementation of Anacortes' comprehensive plan.](#)
 3. [Encourage the development of emergency housing, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing and transitional housing consistent with best practices for these development types to help address local housing needs.](#)
 4. [Direct STEP development to areas with existing amenities, like jobs, services, and transit, to ensure occupants have access to opportunities.](#)
 5. [Protect the health, safety and welfare of the individuals served by these development types and the broader community.](#)
- C. **[Standards.](#)** STEP Housing is subject to the following standards:
1. **[Permanent supportive housing and transitional housing](#)** are subject to the same development standards as the “household living” dwelling type/ form proposed (e.g. single family, duplex, triplex, multifamily, etc.) in the respective zone, consistent with RCW 36.130.020, except for AMC 19.64 [Parking](#) and except for AMC 19.62.040 [Internal open space](#).
 2. **[Emergency shelters and emergency housing](#)** are considered multifamily for the purpose of meeting project design standards in Division 6, except for AMC 19.64 [Parking](#) and except for AMC 19.62.040, [Internal open space](#).
 3. **[Modifications.](#)** The Director may modify one or more standards referenced in these standards only if the applicant submits a description of the standard to be modified and demonstrates how the modification would result in a safe supportive housing facility and benefit the community under the specific circumstances of the application. In considering whether the modification should be granted, the Director must first consider the effects on the health and safety of the housing facility residents and the neighboring community. Modifications must not be granted if they would result in an adverse impact on the residents of the supportive housing facility or the broader community.

19.62.040 Internal open space.

A. Purpose.

1. To create usable space that is suitable for leisure or recreational activities for residents.
2. To create open space that contributes to the residential setting.
3. To provide plazas that attract shoppers to commercial areas.
4. To provide plazas and other pedestrian-oriented spaces in commercial areas that enhance the employees' and public's opportunity for active and passive activities, such as dining, resting, people watching, and recreational activities.
5. To enhance the development character and attractiveness of commercial development.

B. Usable Residential Open Space.

1. Usable residential open space must be provided as follows:

Housing Type	Quantity
Multifamily (including multifamily portions of mixed-use development)	100 sq. ft. / per dwelling unit for studio and 1-bedroom dwellings 150 sq. ft. per dwelling unit for dwellings with 2 or more bedrooms

Co-living housing	Reserved
Permanent supportive housing and transitional housing (new development)	100 sq. ft. per dwelling unit.
Emergency shelter	None

~~All multifamily development, including multifamily portions of mixed-use development, must provide minimum usable open space equal to 100 square feet per dwelling unit for studio and one-bedroom dwellings and 150 square feet per dwelling unit for dwellings with two or more bedrooms.~~
[moved this language to the table above]

Chapter 19.64 Parking

AMC 19.64.030 Computation of required parking spaces

- A. [no change]
- B. Guest parking requirements.
 - 1. [no change]
 - 2. [no change]
 - 3. Minimum Guest Parking Ratios by Housing Type.

Table 19.64.030
Minimum guest parking spaces required by housing type.

Housing Type	Minimum guest parking ratio
Single-Family	1 per 2 units
Cottage	1 per 4 units
Duplex or Triplex	1 per 4 units
Townhouse	1 per 4 units
Multifamily	1 per 8 <u>units</u> ; 1 per 10 <u>units</u> if the multifamily use parking is provided entirely by <u>structured</u> parking; Where <u>units</u> average less than 700 square feet, 1 per 4,000 sq. ft. of net leasable floor area.
Supportive Living – All STEP Housing Types	Guest parking not required

19.64.040 Number of parking spaces required

- A. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces must be determined in accordance with Table 19.64.040.

- B. Special cases are indicated by the term “Director Decision”, in which case parking requirements must be established by the Director. For determination by the Director, the applicant ~~must~~ [may be required to supply a parking study per AMC 19.64.020\(H\).](#) ~~one of the following:~~
1. ~~Documentation regarding actual parking demand for the proposed use.~~
 2. ~~Technical studies prepared by a qualified professional relating to the parking need for the proposed use.~~
 3. ~~Documentation of parking requirements for the proposed use from other comparable jurisdictions.~~
- C. [no change]
- D. [no change]

Table 19.64.040

Off-street parking spaces required.

Use	Minimum Parking Spaces Required	Maximum Parking Spaces Allowed
RESIDENTIAL		
Household Living, as listed below		
Single-family	2 per unit	
Single-family, small lot	1 per unit	
Accessory dwelling unit	See AMC 19.47.030(C)(8)	
Cottage housing	1.5 per unit	
Duplex or triplex	Same as multifamily (based on number of bedrooms)	
Townhouse	Same as multifamily (based on number of bedrooms)	
Multifamily dwelling, one bedroom or studio	1.0 per unit	1.5 per unit
Multifamily dwelling, two bedrooms	1.4 per unit	2.0 per unit
Multifamily dwelling, three or more bedrooms	1.6 per unit	2.5 per unit
Multifamily dwelling, restricted (as defined in AMC 19.43.090)	25% reduction in base multifamily parking requirements above (based on number of bedrooms)	Same as multifamily uses above
Co-living housing	0.25 per sleeping unit	
Supportive Housing, as listed below		
Emergency housing & emergency shelter	Director Decision	

Permanent supportive housing & transitional housing	Per the applicable household living dwelling type except when applicant submits a parking study that demonstrates a reduction is warranted due to site and project-specific characteristic.	
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[no changes to the remaining table]