

## ADVOCACY ALERT

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### Update

This Thursday, May 25, 2023, Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the draft Housing Action Plan (HAP). If commissioners are not ready to recommend adoption, the plan will appear before them a third time, when they will have another opportunity to offer minor changes and additions. Once it is approved, City Council is expected to vote to adopt.

With direction from planning commissioners from their [April 27, 2023 meeting](#), city staff have been reviewing the HAP, prioritizing actions and laying the ground for a final implementation plan.

### Background

The HAP identifies 9 strategies, with 30 possible actions (e.g., policy changes, incentives, etc.), that can help the city meet housing needs on Bainbridge Island for the next 20 years. They are as follows:

1. Enact affordable housing incentives and policies. (3 actions)
2. Allocate resources and funding for affordable housing. (4 actions)
3. Implement housing stability tools. (4 actions)
4. Promote housing for employees working on Bainbridge Island. (4 actions)
5. Pursue policy updates to support diverse missing middle housing development. (2 actions)
6. Promote sustainable housing development. (2 actions)
7. Support more diverse housing options by promoting ADU, cottage housing, and tiny home development. (5 actions)
8. Address transitional and supportive housing needs. (3 actions)
9. Increase housing development opportunities in designated centers. (3 actions)

All nine strategies entail actions that pertain to affordability and to provisions that allow lower-income households to live on Bainbridge Island. This is no accident. Our housing crisis is largely a crisis of affordability. Lack of supply drives up costs. But equally important, with 93% of lots zoned for more expensive, single-family homes, Bainbridge does not have sufficient housing diversity to meet the needs of people who do not earn the hundreds of thousands of dollars per year that it takes to buy a market-rate house on the island.

Some of these diverse housing types (e.g., cottage housing, multifamily, etc.) are naturally more affordable by virtue of their smaller size and can be built by private developers. But to create viable options for households earning 80% area median income or below, HRB's primary demographic and the one most vulnerable to displacement and exclusion, we need housing that is officially and permanently affordable. This kind of housing cannot be built by the private market alone and requires substantial assistance from the county, HUD, nonprofits, and most notable in this context, the city.

### Action

The meeting on Thursday is a public hearing, where community members are invited to

share their views. Please write to Planning Commission or deliver public comment, urging commissioners to recommend adoption of the HAP and to prioritize actions that will ensure permanently affordable housing on Bainbridge Island.

Submit written comments to [jsutton@bainbridgewa.gov](mailto:jsutton@bainbridgewa.gov) no later than Thursday, May 25 at 4:00 pm.

Read the HAP [here](#). (A summary of the nine strategies and their actions can be found on pp. 8-10)

### Key points to include in your email

- I support adoption of the Housing Action Plan and swift, unequivocal implementation.
- I want to see more permanently affordable housing on Bainbridge Island and support the funding and changes to municipal code that this requires.
- Changes to code are highly technical and require the expertise of professional staff. Please rely on city planners to guide this effort.

### Meeting details

Thursday, May 25, 2023  
6:00 pm  
Council Chambers  
City Hall  
280 Madison Avenue North  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

You can attend in person or via Zoom: <https://bainbridgewa.zoom.us/j/81285913438>

For more information, download the meeting agenda [here](#).



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