

Appendix 1 to AP-12: Final Public Comment

Final Public Comment and Response
2022 Annual Action Plan
30-Day Public Comment Period -
March 23, 2021, through April 22, 2022

#	Comment	HSD Response
1	<p>Duane Leonard, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Snohomish County, March 29, 2022:</p> <p>As Snohomish County plans for the coming year, the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO) would like to encourage the county to consider creating and funding a local voucher program that project bases vouchers (PBVs) at projects that apply for 9% tax credit awards from the WSHFC. This will ensure that the County can utilize this valuable resource that leverages investments in permanent supportive housing in our community. In the past, HASCO has provided PBVs to qualifying households in our community; but with increasing costs of housing in Snohomish County rapidly outpacing wages earned, and the lack of funding for additional vouchers, HASCO has reached capacity for the number of PBVs we can reasonably provide. If the county hopes to continue to develop 9% tax credit projects, which we know our county desperately needs, the county must supplement the amount of PBVs available or provide direct operating subsidy. Without additional supplementation from the County will lose this important resource for developing permanent supportive housing.</p>	<p>The County is aware of the need for operating support for permanent supportive housing which is one issue the County considers in planning for affordable housing. The County is aware that Washington State has a program that funds operating costs in some projects around the state, including Snohomish County.</p> <p>In 2019, Snohomish County Executive, Dave Somers, created the Housing Affordability Regional Task Force (HART), to bring together elected leaders from cities across Snohomish County and the County Council, to collaboratively develop a five-year action plan to meet the affordable housing needs of all County residents. One action item in the HART report was the need to find additional resources to build more affordable housing. In the 2019-2020 legislative session, the Legislature passed HB 1590 which allows for the imposition of a local sales and use tax of up to 0.1% for affordable housing and behavioral health facilities creation, operations and maintenance, and associated services. On December 15, 2021, the Snohomish County Council authorized using the authority granted in HB 1590, to increase the stock of affordable housing in Snohomish County, including a source for potential operating subsidies. The County is gathering input into the draft 1590 plan for Council action.</p>