

Governor's Smart Communities Awards - 2024

Smart Vision

Recognizes a local comprehensive plan, subarea plan or specific planning policies.

Airway Heights Comprehensive Plan Update – city of Airway Heights

Located near the city of Spokane, Airway Heights is one of the fastest-growing cities in the state. Providing an example of innovative community engagement that includes a user-friendly web portal available on mobile devices, the city's 2023 Comprehensive Plan update focuses on accommodating additional growth through rezoning, a greater variety of housing types and facilitating an Urban Growth Area land swap. This planning process has helped the city to plan for growth in a complicated environment with many adjacent land uses amidst other jurisdictions.

For more information, checkout their dedicated comprehensive plan update webpage, [the city of Airway Heights Comprehensive Plan Update](#).

Smart Partnership Awards

Recognizes a joint public project that implements a comprehensive plan.

Lacey MakerSpace Expansion – city of Lacey

With a long and impressive list of community partners, Lacey's MakerSpace was founded in 2019 with the partnership completing a major expansion in early 2024. A joint endeavor between the city of Lacey, Saint Martin's University and the Thurston County Economic Development Council, the Lacey MakerSpace provides community access to high-tech equipment, education and workforce training. The new expansion required \$1.4 million in new investments, creating additional space for high-tech manufacturing equipment, welding, wood working, textiles and 3D printing.



Photo credit: city of Lacey

“The Lacey MakerSpace is a shining example of what can be accomplished through strong partnerships, collaboration, shared vision, and commitment,” said City Manager Rick Walk. “The newly expanded facility provides space and services for entrepreneurs and small business owners to learn new skills and enhance their products, and for supporting workforce development by connecting hands on training and apprenticeship programs with employers. This speaks directly to our vision for economic development for the city of Lacey.”

Sunset Gardens – city of Renton

A model in coordinated funding, Sunset Gardens is a four-story mixed-use building providing affordable apartments for veterans, individuals with disabilities and seniors who earn less than 50 percent AMI. The Renton Housing Authority, city of Renton, JP Morgan Chase Bank, King County, and the Washington State Housing Finance Commission all partnered to complete the project in April 2024. With a project cost of \$50 million, not including the land donated by the housing authority, Sunset Gardens fulfills part of Renton's 2015 comprehensive plan and highlights the city's use of a .1% sales tax increase to help with affordable housing and mental health services.



Photo Credit: city of Renton

Smart Project Awards

Recognizes a local project that implements a comprehensive plan.

Little Bear Creek Advance Mitigation Site – Snohomish County

LBCAMS is a six year project created by Snohomish County to mitigate transportation projects identified in the comprehensive plan. Totalling \$4.2 million through 2023, the wetland project acquired land, used non-linear planning and field-fit designs and constructed a 17 acre wetland mitigation bank. With an ongoing maintenance cost of \$400,000 over the next 10 years, the project will save \$30 million for at least 10 transportation projects already identified in the comprehensive plan.

“We know that combining the mitigation needs for future road projects and mitigation efforts into a single site before it's needed, we create significant financial savings and a strong ecological impact. This was a bold public works project as very few organizations handle wetland mitigation in this way,” Snohomish County Public Works Director Kelly Snyder said. “In all, creating the mitigation site took seven years, however it benefits the County and the public in perpetuity.”

Cochran Basin Stormwater Improvement Project – city of Spokane

Doing everything the way you're supposed to, the Cochran Basin Stormwater Improvement Projects integrates stormwater management facilities into infrastructure and park facilities while enhancing and protecting the environment. The largest Stormwater Basin in the city, it encompasses residential, commercial and light industrial areas. Saving millions of gallons of water, the project includes two stormwater treatment facilities with technically engineered landscapes that support recreation, including: disc golf, non-motorized boating and community trails.



Photo credit: city of Spokane

“The Cochran Basin Stormwater Improvement series of projects demonstrates the City's commitment to protecting the health of the Spokane River,” said Mayor Lisa Brown. “I am proud to be on a team that voluntarily saw the benefits of an integrated approach and put forth the energy and expertise to plan, coordinate, and holistically improve Spokane's quality of life in so many ways.”

Smart Housing Strategies

Recognizes creative plans, policies, programs and/or actions.

Anacortes Housing Action Plan – city of Anacortes

Led by strong community feedback and over a thousand responses to a community survey, Anacortes adopted a new Housing Action Plan (HAP) in 2023. Using the housing plan to guide the city's 10-year update to their comprehensive plan, the HAP has led to multiple new city ordinances all designed to accommodate a variety of new housing types. Public engagement was a strong driver in these new changes. Anacortes shared a part of their community engagement in their award application.

“One of the survey questions presented a list of land use and zoning concepts that could be considered in the Housing Action Plan to help stabilize housing prices and improve access to housing in Anacortes. The survey asked if people support or oppose these concepts.” – Anacortes Application for the GSCA

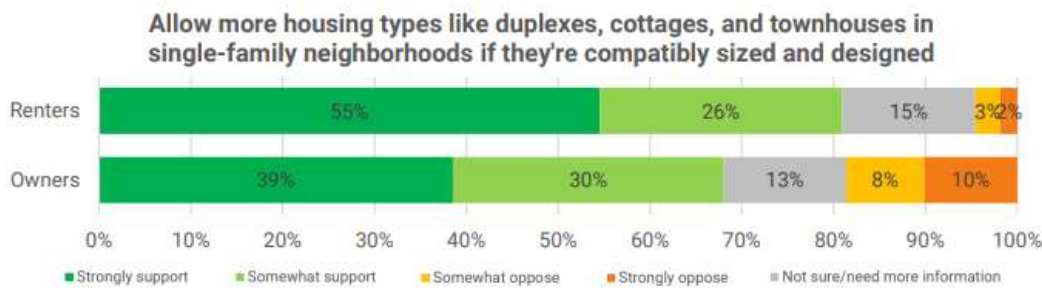


Figure 1: Example figure from Anacortes Public Engagement Summary.

Housing Stability Program (HSP) – city of Bellevue

More than just a single project, Bellevue's Housing Stability Program (HSP) is a dedicated taxation program developed to generate capital for projects that serve the city's most vulnerable residents. The HSP provides funding for construction, acquisition, operation, maintenance and on-site support services. Using the .1 percent tax option, the HSP has provided \$16 million in project funding over the last two years for construction and preservation, serving households earning 30 percent or less of AMI. The HSP supports Bellevue's strategic housing goals under their existing comprehensive plan and their 2017 Affordable Housing Strategy.



Groundbreaking for LifeWire, a development that received funding through the Housing Stability Program. Photo Credit: city of Bellevue

Middle Housing and Low Density Residential Code Amendments to Implement HOSAP – Clark County

Lauded for their willingness to do more than what is required, Clark County recently adopted code amendments in low-density residential to provide expanded access for ADU's, multi-plexes, townhouses and cottages with the goal of increasing diversity in housing and affordability within the greater Vancouver Urban Growth Area. Starting with a public participation plan in 2020 that eventually led to the Housing Options Study and Action Plan (HOSAP) adopted in 2022, Clark County adopted the final ordinance in early 2024.



Photo credit: Clark County

"I was excited to learn that the county is being awarded the Governor's 2024 Smart Housing Strategies Award. Nearly 60% of Clark County households are comprised of one or two people, such as empty nesters, retirees, young couples, single-parent households, and single adults," said Kathleen Otto, County Manager. "The awarded project aims to expand opportunities to create additional smaller homes that can meet the needs of these types of households and expand homeownership possibilities for many Clark County residents. I appreciate the hard work of everyone involved with the project to make these important changes for our community."

Smart Climate Strategies

Recognizes local plans, policies, programs and/or actions addressing community climate impacts.

Community Solar East Project – Port of Camas/Washougal

Started in 2022 and completed in early 2024, the Port of Camas/Washougal partnered with Clark Public Utilities to install \$1.4 million in solar panels on five industrial sites on port land. Using a concept known as "virtual net metering", customers can participate in a renewable energy solution that pay them back with financial energy credits towards their electric bill. With varying subscription levels, the port's residential offering sold out in less than three hours. Of the 799 kW produced, 199 kW goes directly to the Operation Warm Heart fund supporting customers on limited incomes. A part of the 5-year Strategic Plan, the port is providing direct benefits to the environment and their community.



Photo credit: Port of Camas/Washougal

"The Port of Camas-Washougal, and Clark County Public Utilities are proud to champion the Community Solar East project," said David Ripp, CEO. This partnership exemplifies our commitment to a sustainable future, showing that by harnessing the power of the sun, we can make a lasting difference in both our community and the environment. Our united efforts illuminate a brighter path towards clean energy and a greener tomorrow for all."

Smart Equity Strategies

Recognizes community plans, policies and programs and/or actions addressing equity.

Equity Pilot: Empowering Community to Elevate Equity in PSRC's Federal Transportation Funding Competition – Puget Sound Regional Council

Providing us with a statewide model for equity, PSRC staff collaborated with their board and their Equity Advisory Committee to pilot equity in the agency's transportation funding competition. The board raised \$6 million to help test strategies for improving equity in the distribution of transportation funding. Using a pilot program, the EAC

developed policy recommendations that were adopted by the PRSC board for future transportation funding competitions. This will strongly influence how transportation investments are identified and implemented to support communities, helping to incorporate equity into \$300 million in annual federal transportation funding.

"We are honored to receive this award for our Equity Pilot program, representing a significant step forward in integrating equity into our transportation funding award process," said Charles Patton, Program Manager - Equity Policy and Initiatives at Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). "The feedback and lessons learned from the community members serving on PSRC's Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) changed our funding process to address racial disparities and prioritize services for historically underserved communities in our region."



Puget Sound Regional Council

Judges Merit Awards

Recognize success in more than one judged category.

Clark County Aging Readiness Plan: 10-year Update – Clark County

Originally submitted for a Smart Vision award, this update to Clark County's Aging Readiness Plan (ARP) reminds us that we can consistently support our most vulnerable populations with forward thinking and collaborative teamwork. A long-range planning document, the ARP was first developed in 2012 to support the county's growing number of older residents. With a huge list of partners, including all of the incorporated cities in the county, recommendations within the ARP focus on addressing missing or lacking public infrastructure, support for social services, and zoning and planning standards that encourage age-friendly community's older adults can thrive in. The latest iteration of the plan codified in 2023 expands on existing topics by including an emergency preparedness chapter. The sheer scope of work, extensive outreach and long term partnerships represented here have earned this project the Judge's Merit Award.



Photo credit: Clark County

"The Clark County Commission on Aging is excited to have our updated Aging Readiness Plan chosen for recognition with the Governor's 2024 Smart Vision Award," said Franklin Johnson, Clark County Commission on Aging Chair. "We want to thank all the Clark County staff who worked so hard on the Plan and nomination for the award. The Commission especially wants to express appreciation to all the residents who participated in the community workshops providing their input, and of course our appreciation to the Clark County Council for their support and funding to get the Plan updated. The updating of the plan and the implementation of the strategies will help support an age-friendly community that Clark County older adults can thrive in."

Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan – King County/city of Bellevue

Originally submitted as a Smart Partnership, the Eastrail Wilburton Framework plan was jointly developed by King County Parks and the city of Bellevue. Recognizing a unique opportunity, Bellevue used trail-oriented development to make this a part of their Transit Oriented Development corridor and helped King County parks create a roadmap for a more than 100-foot wide linear park through the heart of one of the fastest growing cities in the Puget Sound region. Bellevue will be adding the Wilburton TOD Access Concepts Design Guide as a supplemental document to the city's Transportation Design Manual making this process very repeatable. The level of outreach, innovative designs and effective partnership around the planning process all earn this plan the Judge's Merit Award.



Photo credit: King County Parks

"The Eastrail Wilburton Framework Plan shows how community members, partners, and the public and private sector can come together to envision a multi-benefit trail and transit-oriented neighborhood that is accessible and welcoming to all," said Warren Jimenez, Director Parks and Recreation Division, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. King County is proud to be a partner in developing the future of Wilburton, with King County Park's Eastrail as a highlight, providing the region a healthy recreational opportunity and an essential, scenic connection to job centers, housing and this exceptional neighborhood."