



August 15, 2018

Regional Affordable Housing Task Force
516 Third Avenue, Suite 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Task Force Recommendations

Dear Members of the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force:

Thank you for your conscientious work to develop a countywide affordable housing strategy—including a five-year action plan to create a broader range of housing options to address the needs of all King County residents.

Population growth that significantly exceeded forecasts, a persistent lack of land supply, and other barriers to new home construction have contributed to escalating housing costs and an acute supply shortage, making it increasingly difficult for families and job seekers to find and keep housing near employment centers. Your leadership and voice in addressing this as a regional issue is recognized and appreciated.

The Master Builders of King and Snohomish County (MBAKS) concurs with the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force that we must act in concert across all levels of government and all sectors to address multiple factors driving this crisis to ensure the sustained economic health, livability, and quality of life for people and communities in our region. Founded in 1909, MBAKS has grown to become the largest local residential homebuilders association in the United States. With 2,900 member companies in the local homebuilding industry, MBAKS is especially attuned to homebuilding challenges in the Puget Sound region.

MBAKS believes that, along with public housing programs, significantly increasing housing supply must be part of the solution to addressing our housing affordability crisis. As the Task Force finalizes its list of recommendations, MBAKS would like to offer the following suggestions related to Goals 6 and 7 in the draft recommendations. Specifically, we urge you to include the following measures:

- Enable local jurisdictions to accommodate the strong demand for housing by establishing reasonable definitions of net urban density (Goal 6);
- Adjust zoning in all jurisdictions designated for urban growth to ensure the full range of housing types the market demands, from multifamily to detached single-family homes (Goal 6);
- Add Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) as a housing choice (Goal 6);
- Change the urban standard for short plats to nine lots in urban growth areas (UGAs) with a local option to allow short plats up to 30 lots (Goal 6); and
- Support local engagement of neighborhoods and residents in planning for affordable housing and more density (Goal 7).

Finally, strategies and adequate funding for both housing and homeless programs must occur conjointly with reasonable efforts to increase housing supply near job centers, offering a mix of housing types. Our current housing affordability crisis cannot be solved without increasing our overall supply of housing to keep pace with population growth. MBAKS stands ready to collaborate and partner with regional leaders and stakeholders. We are convinced that only by working together can we advance meaningful solutions to address our lack of housing at all price points, including subsidized and workforce housing options.

Sincerely,



Kat Sims
Executive Director