



# NEWS

*City of Shoreline, 17544 Midvale Ave. N., Shoreline, WA 98133-4921*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Shoreline City Council gives direction on three major projects**

At its April 3 meeting, Shoreline City Council gave staff direction on three major projects:

- The Sidewalks Priority Routes Program that will build four to six sections of sidewalk that were identified in the Transportation Master Plan;
- A program to develop a Comprehensive Housing Strategy that will address the housing needs of Shoreline's changing demographics and other community objectives; and
- A program to address housing needs of low-income senior citizens.

### **Sidewalks Priority Routes Program**

Shoreline City Council approved plans to build four priority routes this year identified by the community in the recently adopted Transportation Master Plan: two by Einstein Middle School, one by Shorewood High School and St. Luke and one by Ridgecrest Elementary School. Depending on the outcome of the construction bids and schedule, two other sections may also be built in 2006: another by Shorewood High School and one by Echo Lake Elementary School. Construction is expected to begin in June and be complete before school starts again in the fall.

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The Sidewalks Priority Routes program in the 2006-2011 Capital Improvement Program sets aside \$5.4 million over the next six years to build both standard sidewalks and other “pedestrian facilities.” Since the standard curb-gutter-sidewalk configuration does not easily work in some areas and is costly, the City is considering alternatives that will stretch tax dollars and provide more linear feet of pedestrian improvements. Examples of these alternatives include concrete curbs with asphalt sidewalks and separated pathways.

## **Comprehensive Housing Strategy**

Shoreline is considered a “first ring suburb,” referring to the first suburbs that were built around major metropolitan areas after World War II. They were often bedroom communities for commuters and may still be bedroom communities. According to the 2000 Census, 45% of Shoreline’s homes were built before 1960 compared to 38% in Lake Forest Park, 26% in Edmonds and 30% in Mountlake Terrace. Shoreline’s percentage of housing built before 1960 most closely compares to Burien’s which is 46%.

Many first suburbs are experiencing similar changes such as aging housing stock, aging populations, smaller household sizes and more ethnic diversity. As our City continues to age, Shoreline’s housing stock will change as homes are either maintained or torn down to make way for new housing.

Staff presented a proposed program for developing a Comprehensive Housing Strategy that will guide what actions the City takes to influence these changes.

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Some of the questions the strategy would answer include:

- How could the housing needs of Shoreline's changing demographics be met?
- Whom do we need to serve?
- What kind of housing mix do we want?
- How active should the City be in implementing new housing?

Council will review and fine-tune the scope of the strategy and the work plan for developing the strategy at its retreat later this month.

## **Housing Needs of Low-Income Seniors**

While the Comprehensive Housing Strategy will look at the housing needs of all segments of the population, Council decided it wanted to move more quickly on addressing the housing needs of low-income seniors.

Data shows that one in five households in Shoreline have incomes below 50% of the median and that seniors make up a disproportionate share of these limited-income households. Last year, Council requested the proposed plan following a review of Shoreline's population data. As part of developing the plan, the City held a January workshop with six experts in the housing field.

The action plan includes four parts:

- Inventory housing needs and development opportunities. This inventory will likely be conducted in conjunction with the Comprehensive Housing Strategy if the City Council decides to pursue developing such a strategy.
- Educate the community about existing programs that help seniors with housing issues, such as the Major and Minor Home Repair programs.

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- Support applications from developers building housing for low-income seniors.
- Establish a local fund to support housing development for low-income seniors.

Shoreline already uses some of its federal dollars for Community Development Block Grant funds for this but the City Council is interested possibly augmenting these funds through the City's General Fund.

Staff will develop a proposal for establishing a local fund that addresses criteria, budget amount and funding sources to bring back to the City Council for further consideration and decision.

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