



## Board of County Commissioners

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### Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lewis County, Washington – February 15, 2022

## County develops plan for housing crisis, passes Housing Initiative

In an effort to increase the availability and affordability of housing countywide, the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners voted today to pass the Lewis County Housing Initiative, a 12-step blueprint to address the local housing crisis.

This resolution adopts a set of objectives and a work plan to implement the 2020 Strategic Plans' directive regarding housing needs in the county. Specific to Lewis County, home prices have doubled since 2012, drastically outpacing wage growth, and at a time when the overall number of homes for sale have plummeted.

“We had planned for a housing study however, as we collected county housing data ahead of the Housing Summit last November, we saw that we didn't need more studying,” said Commissioner Sean Swope. “We need housing action and we need it now. That is why we shifted efforts to developing the Lewis County Housing Initiative.”

The initiative includes increased coordination between county officials and city mayors and staff. Earlier this month at the county's monthly mayors' meeting, these two levels of local government demonstrated that coordination when Centralia Community Development Director Emil Pierson presented examples of how their city is planning for growth. The presentation provided insight to the other cities on how items like zoning can be used to make future plans for their respective towns.

Lewis County Public Works is slated to complete another one of the initiative's action items this summer when it concludes its infrastructure needs assessment to support residential housing and commercial development growth countywide.

A complete list of objectives and success metrics can be found in the full copy of the Lewis County Housing Initiative and accompanying 2022 work plan, located on the new webpage devoted to the effort here: <https://lewiscountywa.gov/offices/commissioners/lewis-county-housing-initiative/>

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