



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

1011 Plum Street SE • PO Box 42525 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 • 360-725-4000
www.commerce.wa.gov

January 13, 2026

Ashley Mathews, Mayor
C/O Patricia Charnas, Planning Director
City of Bainbridge Island

Sent via electronic mail: amathews@bainbridgewa.gov and pcharnas@bainbridgewa.gov

Re: Housing Accountability Act Selected Review

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

In 2025, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5148 ([Chapter 269, Laws of 2025](#)), also known as the Housing Accountability Act (HAA), was adopted to support robust and accountable housing planning by providing voluntary and selected review processes for the housing elements of local government comprehensive plans and housing development regulations. These processes are intended to assist local jurisdictions to align local plans and regulations with the housing planning requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and plan for and accommodate local allocations of countywide housing needs. More details about the HAA can be found in [RCW 36.70A.835](#) and on Commerce's [Updating GMA Housing Elements web page](#).

The HAA Selected Review process provides that Commerce may select up to 10 cities and/or counties each calendar year for selected review. Commerce must select jurisdictions using criteria outlined in [RCW 36.70A.835\(9\)\(a\)\(i\)\(A-C\)](#). In this first year of the program, Commerce is selecting from those jurisdictions that have not planned for and accommodated their portion of countywide housing needs and whose 2024 periodic updates were due on or before December 31, 2024.

Commerce has identified eight jurisdictions for selected review in 2026. These jurisdictions:


- Did not submit a draft comprehensive plan for review and did not adopt a comprehensive plan by the statutory deadline, **or**
- Submitted a draft plan to Commerce which was inconsistent with state housing element requirements and did not adopt a comprehensive plan, **or**
- Adopted a comprehensive plan, but the housing element is inconsistent with state requirements after review and comment by Commerce planners.

Based on these criteria, Commerce has selected the City of Bainbridge Island for the HAA Selected Review program. Based on our review, it appears the City of Bainbridge Island has not submitted a housing element in an adopted comprehensive by the required periodic update deadline in [RCW 36.70A.130\(5\)](#).

As a jurisdiction selected for review, Commerce will be reaching out to staff in January 2026 to initiate conversations with the goal of the adoption of a comprehensive plan housing element and associated development regulations that are consistent with the requirements in RCW 36.70A.835(7). For more information, review the [HAA Selected Review Criteria and Procedures](#) document. During this process, Commerce will provide technical assistance as you amend your plan and regulations.

We look forward to working with the City of Bainbridge Island. We appreciate your coordination with our agency to implement the goals and requirements of the GMA. Laura Hodgson is the key contact for this work. She can be reached at laura.hodgson@commerce.wa.gov or 360-764-3143.

Sincerely,



David Andersen, AICP, Managing Director, Growth Management Services

cc:

Valerie Smith, AICP, Deputy Managing Director, Growth Management Services

Ben Serr, AICP, Eastern Regional Manager, Growth Management Services

Carol Holman, MUP, Western Regional Manager, Growth Management Services

Anne Fritzel, AICP, Housing Section Manager, Growth Management Services

Laura Hodgson, Housing Planning and Data Manager, Growth Management Services

Ted Vanegas, Regional Planner, Growth Management Services

Jennifer Sutton, Senior Planner, City of Bainbridge Island