



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

Transit-Oriented Development

PSRC TOD Meeting

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

Tyler Bump

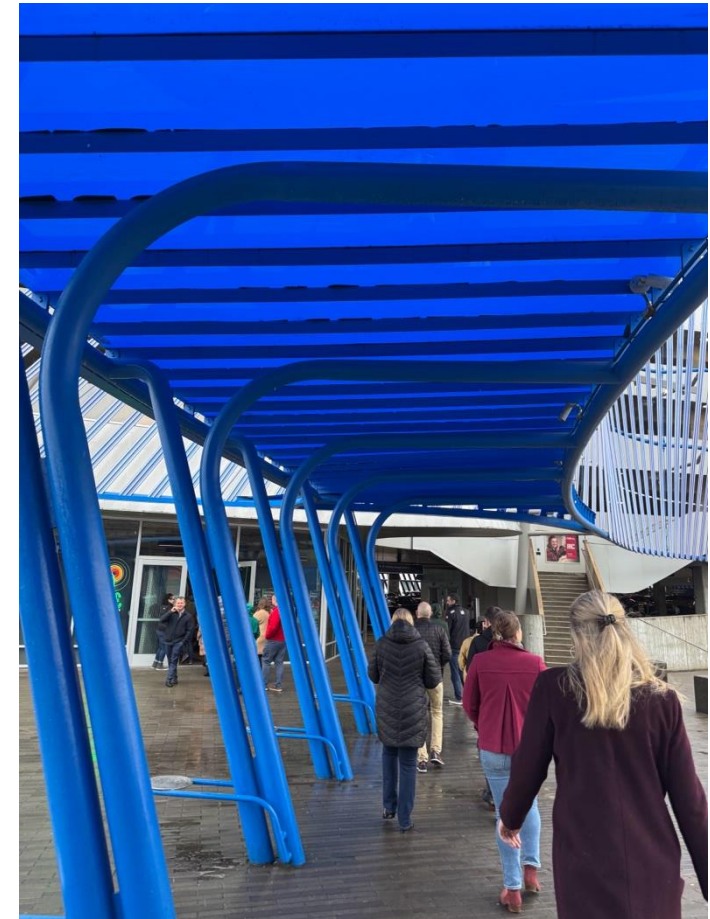
PROJECT DIRECTOR,
ECONORTHWEST

Invest. Build. Serve.



Today's meeting

- Project overview
- TOD guidance and resources, and organization of the Draft Guidebook
- Substantially similar and station area modification guidance
- Discussion



Project overview



TOD resources

Tools (available now, completed)

- TOD Quick Guide
- TOD Checklist
- TOD Case Studies
- TOD Station Area Map
- TOD Webinars
- Draft TOD Guidebook
- TOD Preemptive Code
- Parking Fact Sheet

Tools (in development)

- Fact Sheets
 - Housing Fact Sheet (Affordable, Supportive, and Workforce housing)
 - Financing & Infrastructure Fact Sheet for Station Areas
- TOD Videos
- TOD Implementation Tools

TOD Website: www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/housing-planning/transit-oriented-development/

Project objectives and deliverables



- Create TOD guidance and educational materials
- Create supporting documents to support jurisdictions
- Develop ongoing collaboration tools and topics, engage urban planning students

Engagement

Ensure TOD guidance supports diverse community needs and effective implementation.

- **Inform** communities about new state TOD requirements (HB 1491)
- **Gather input** on where additional clarification, examples, and resources are needed
- **Consider diverse perspectives** to support equitable, context-sensitive TOD
- **Identify tools**, information, and support needs for compliance
- **Support implementation** of TOD (i.e. HB 1491)

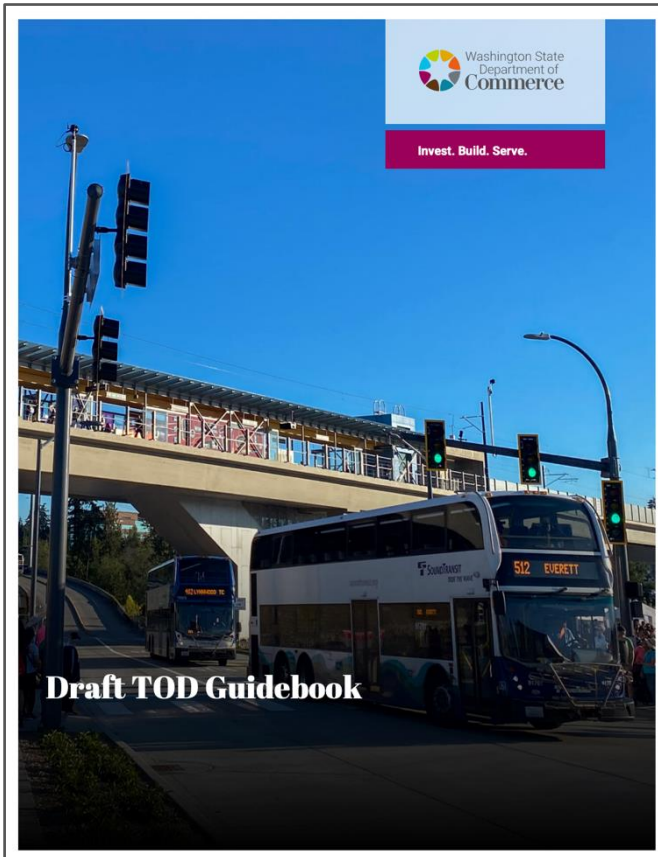
Methods of Engagement

- Advisory Committee
- Focus Groups, Workshops, and Key Informant Interviews
- Conferences and Discussions at Group Meetings (such as the PSRC TOD Committee Meetings)
- Webinars and Public Comment Period for Public Review Drafts
- Newsletter Project Updates

TOD Guidebook



Purpose of the TOD Guidebook



The TOD guidebook is a resource for local implementation.

The guidebook is intended to:

- Explain applicable TOD requirements
- Walk local jurisdictions through station area planning and code development
- Clarify where requirements apply and where local flexibility exists
- Support implementation beyond minimum statutory requirements
- Provide recommendations, best practices, examples, and additional resources

How the guidebook is organized

Four sections move from requirements to best practices.

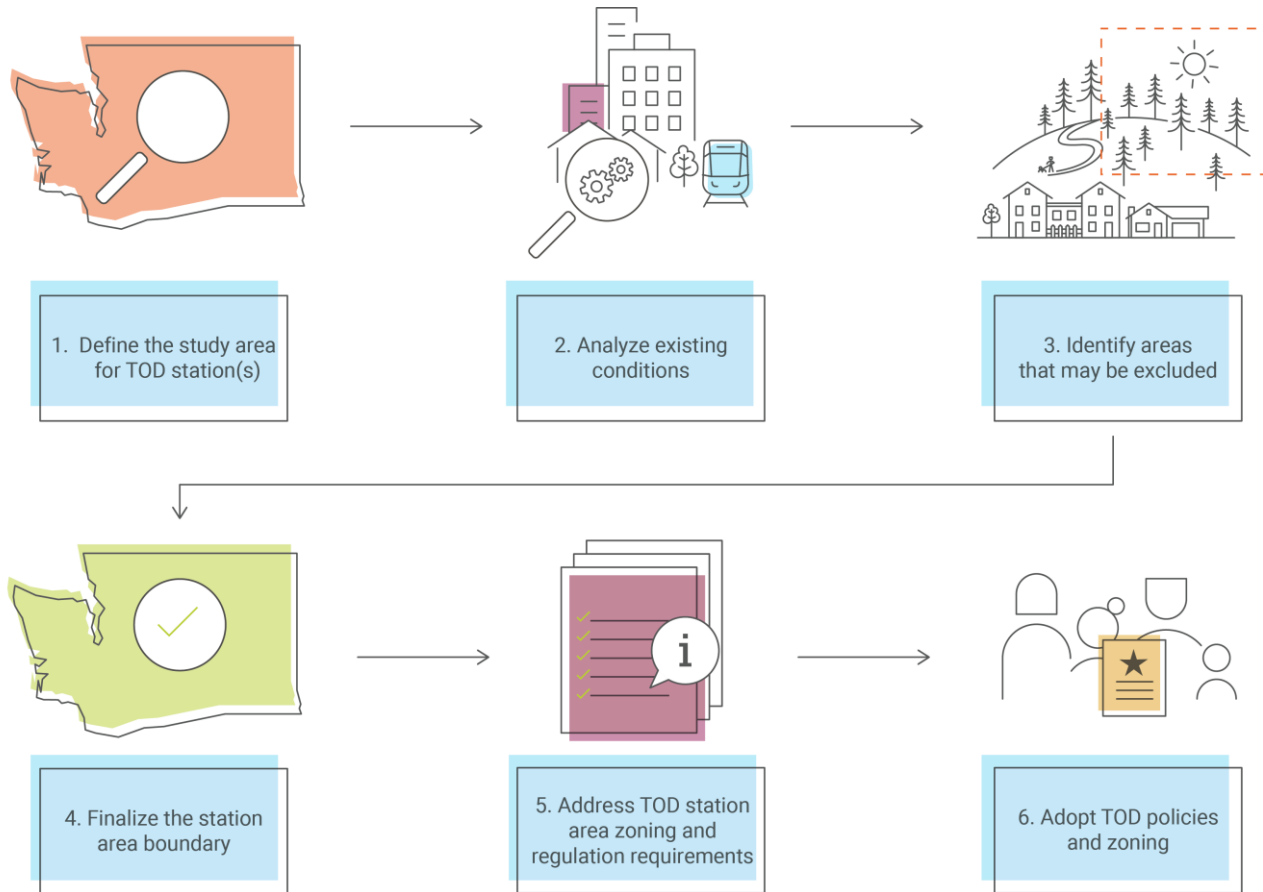
Section one: Introduction, that covers applicability, deadlines, and TOD requirements

Section two: TOD planning steps + code development, that covers station areas, existing conditions, zoning and regulations, adoption.

Section three: Implementation, permitting, impact fees, infrastructure, funding, monitoring.

Section four: Best practices, engagement, anti-displacement, multi-modal transportation, design and place.

Step-by-step TOD planning process



Section 2 of the guidebook organizes TOD planning into six steps.

1. Define the study area for TOD station(s)
2. Analyze existing conditions
3. Identify areas that may be excluded
4. Finalize the station area boundary
5. Address TOD station area zoning and regulation requirements
6. Adopt TOD policies and zoning

TOD planning approach considerations

Before you begin, consider different approaches and the combination of different approaches

- Subarea or corridor planning
- Station area zoning
- Overlay zones or districts



Step 1, define station area

TOD requirements apply within walking distance of qualifying transit.



Light Rail

- Generally, ½-mile walking distance.
- ¼-mile for certain commuter rail stations in smaller cities.



Bus Rapid Transit

- ¼ mile walking distance.

Station area planning should also consider:

- Walking networks
- Applicable statutory exclusions
- Overlapping station areas
- Potential boundary modifications

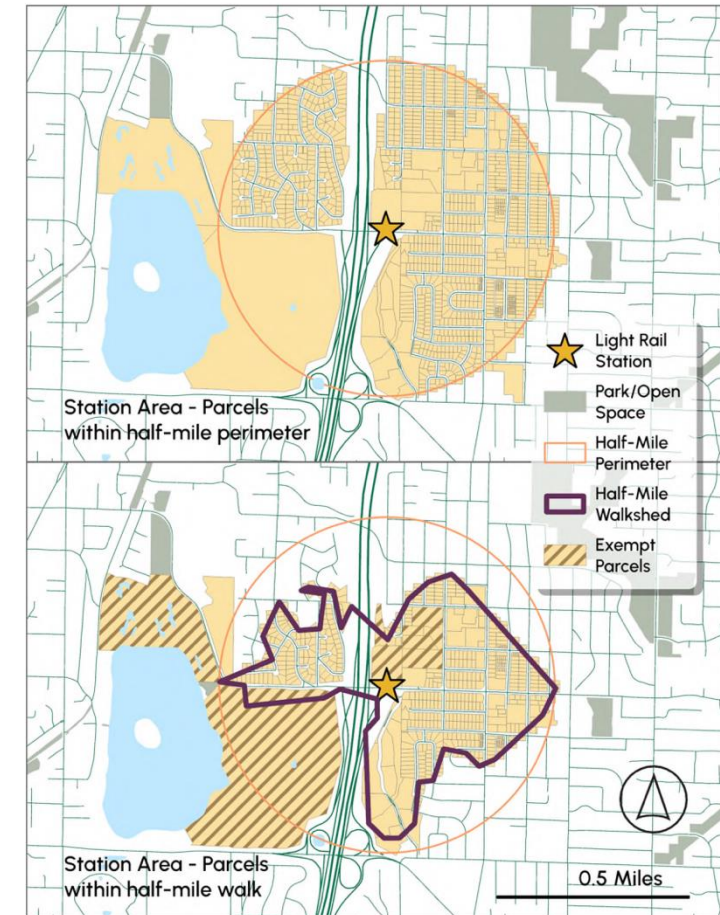
Steps 2-4, station area(s)

Local context should inform implementation.

The guidebook recommends evaluating:

- Existing land use and zoning
- Transportation and walkability
- Infrastructure and public services
- Environmental conditions
- Development market conditions
- Housing and displacement risk
- Community assets and priorities

An existing conditions analysis is recommended but not required.



Step 5, address zoning code changes

- TOD state law requires FAR to regulate intensity of development
- Jurisdictions may request a substantially similar determination if using other tools for FAR.
- Guidebook includes recommendations on:
 - Building height
 - Setbacks
 - Lot coverage/open space



Development requirements

Station areas must accommodate additional housing and mixed-use development.

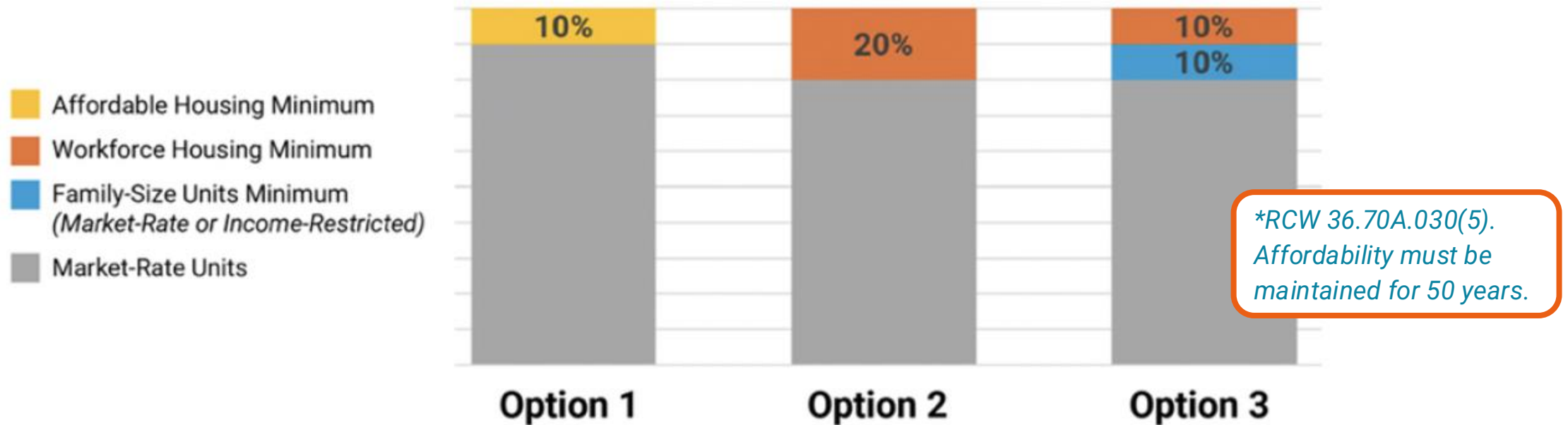
At a high level:

- Multifamily residential development must be allowed in applicable areas
- Mixed-use development must be allowed
- Rail station areas generally require **3.5 FAR on average**
- BRT station areas generally require **2.5 FAR on average**
- Cities may use FAR averaging within station areas
- Maximum residential density limits are not allowed



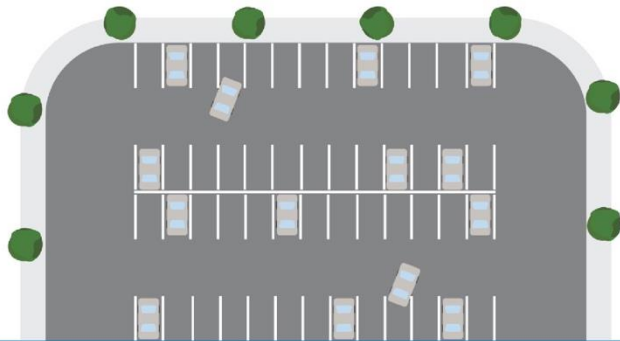
Affordable housing requirements

Mandatory 20-year MFTE for TOD areas



Key Exception: Cities with established mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Program can keep existing program.

Parking requirements



Parking can generate ridership
but more is not always better,
and unused spaces benefit no one.



TOD generates ridership
and makes station areas better
places to live, work, and connect.

- Minimum off-street parking generally may not be required in TOD station areas.
- Developers may still choose to provide parking.
- Parking fact sheet

TOD implementation

Successful TOD requires more than zoning changes.

Section three provides guidance on:

- Permitting considerations
- Impact fee requirements
- Infrastructure capacity and capital planning
- Funding TOD-related infrastructure
- Coordinating public investment
- Monitoring progress over time



Section four TOD best practices

Supporting successful, connected station areas.

Section 4 addresses:

- Community engagement
- Anti-displacement and equitable TOD
- Multimodal transportation
- Parking and transportation demand management
- Place (making and keeping)
- Public realm design
- Private development design
- Health, climate, and resilience



Multimodal access best practices

TOD is about development and how station area's function.

Multimodal access

- Safe and comfortable walking and rolling
- Bicycle and transit connections
- First- and last-mile access
- Strategic infrastructure investment
- Parking (shared, ADA access, time limited)

Transportation Demand Management:
maximize efficiency and improve mobility
with strategies, programs, services,
infrastructure, and incentives



An intersection showing clear and safe crossings for all transportation modes. Source: VTA

Place best practices

- Active and welcoming public spaces, strong neighborhood identity
- Connected street and block networks, active ground floors and pedestrian-oriented development



Above: Successful TOD implementation takes a village, from transit agencies, local government, investors, developers, the existing community and advocates, to contractors, owners, and suppliers. Sources: Mithun and Sound Transit.

Public realm best practices

- Pedestrian realm enhancements: pedestrian-only streets, plazas, parks, lighting, wayfinding, kid-friendly places, through-block connections
- Public art and culturally responsive design
- Partnerships with local organizations



Image: Main street with wide sidewalk, outdoor seating, furnishing zone and active frontages. Burlingame, CA. Source: [Mithun](#).

Health best practices

- Health impact assessments
- Consider air quality
- Active design and access to nature
- Social connection and safety
- Healthy food access



Denver Housing Authority food access efforts including a community garden and market vendor selling fruit and vegetables. Additional efforts include community garden partnerships, and creation of healthy food corner stores and cafes that are also coordinated with a youth employment training program and workforce development. Source: [Denver Housing Authority](#).

Community resilience

- Regional stormwater, supporting development, reducing need for on-site infrastructure
- Energy and decarbonization
- Considering hazards
- Resilience hubs, climate action planning



At South Landing Ecodistrict in Spokane, WA, buildings share energy through a micro-transactive grid, which minimizes impact on the City's power grid and creates a local energy market. Source: Catalyst Spokane.

Substantially similar
Station area modification



Substantially similar determination

An alternative pathway for cities with existing TOD plans and regulations

Cities may request Commerce approval of adopted station area development regulations that are **substantially similar** to the TOD requirements.

Commerce must consider each of the following to be substantially similar:

- Provide **equivalent development capacity**
- Provide **equivalent opportunity for affordable housing**
- Allow a pathway for **buildings over 85 feet**
- Do not zone station-area lots exclusively for **detached single-family residences**

The review focuses on whether local regulations achieve outcomes comparable to the TOD requirements, rather than whether they use the exact same standards.

What does a jurisdiction need to document?

Demonstrating comparable TOD outcomes

A substantially similar request needs to document:

- **Development capacity**
 - Applicable zoning and allowed uses
 - FAR, density, height, parking, and other development standards
 - Comparable housing and mixed-use development potential
- **Affordable housing**
 - Local affordable housing requirements, programs, and incentives
 - MFTE, fee reductions, development bonuses, or other tools
 - How those tools provide a comparable opportunity for affordable housing

Station Area “Modifications”

***A city may modify the TOD station area boundary after consultation with and approval by the Department of Commerce.**

- Modifications may be made to adjust station areas. No modification determination is required if a city expands a station area beyond the required area.
- Commerce recommends that any reductions to address barriers, should be balanced with corresponding increases in other areas, to provide TOD opportunities slightly beyond the walkshed boundaries.

What does a jurisdiction need to document?

- **Description of request**
 - Application and cover letter describing request
- **Detailed maps and supporting documentation showing items such as:**
 - Location of the station stop, boundary of the station area, walkshed (method documented), and exempted lots
 - Area of modification and rationale for change
 - Zoning districts within the station area
 - Identification of physical and natural barriers affecting access, as applicable

Station Area “Modifications”

Review Criteria based on draft Washington Administrative Code:

- i. How the proposed modification is consistent with implementation of the state law. This may include consideration of parcel configuration, adopted planning area, infrastructure, or other local conditions.
- ii. How the proposed modification addresses current and future pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access within the station area.
- iii. Whether rezoning or other actions have provided more useable station area.
- iv. If the modification is necessary to address a physical or natural barrier which cannot be addressed through a realistic capital project.
- v. How residential development capacity may be changed by the modified station area.

Discussion, next steps



Discussion

- **Do you have any questions or areas that need to be clarified?**
- **Do you have any useful relevant wisdom on TOD implementation?**
- **Any other comments or questions?**

Upcoming project milestones

Now

- Review Draft TOD Guidebook
- Submit comments by September 30, 2026

Later this year (2026)

- Revise and finalize the Guidebook
- Complete housing and infrastructure guidance
- Develop implementation tools and videos

Additional resources are available on Commerce's TOD website.

Submit public comment

Commerce wants your feedback before the Guidebook is finalized.

As you review the draft, consider:

- What information is most helpful?
- What could be clearer?
- Where would additional explanation or examples help?

Submit comments by September 30, 2026

Link to form:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/01a043b9340c7988a4cc83db80e17b4b>



Thank you!

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) at Commerce

Commerce TOD website:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/housing-planning/transit-oriented-development/>

Sign up for our monthly newsletter

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/>

Anne Fritzel

HOUSING PROGRAM MANAGER

Anne.Fritzel@commerce.wa.gov

Lilith Vespier

INFILL HOUSING MANAGER

Lilith.Vespier@commerce.wa.gov



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