

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Briefing on the King County Housing Authority

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DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**INFORMATION
ONLY**

Stephen Norman, Executive Director of the King County Housing Authority (KCHA), will provide an overview of the KCHA organization and housing programs it provides in Bellevue and King County. No action is required by Council. Bellevue's work with the KCHA is a key component in the implementation of Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy, adopted by Council in 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

The King County Housing Authority (KCHA) is an independent municipal corporation, separate from King County or cities. It was authorized by state law and subsequently created by King County in 1939 to provide affordable housing and related services. The KCHA receives no ongoing operating funds from the state, King County or cities. Operating costs are primarily covered by rents charged to tenants and federal funding. Its annual budget is approximately \$300 million, and it has 400 full-time employees throughout King County. The KCHA is governed by a five-member volunteer Board of Commissioners, who are appointed by the King County Executive and approved by the King County Council.

The KCHA provides rental housing and rental assistance to more than 20,000 households, serving low-income people in 33 cities, not including Seattle and Renton, and in unincorporated parts of King County. The KCHA owns and manages over 4,000 units of federally funded housing for families, the elderly and people with disabilities. An additional 6,000 units of low-and moderate-income housing are financed through tax credits or tax-exempt bonds. Federally funded Section 8 Vouchers help more than 10,000 households rent affordable housing on the private market.

The KCHA actively acquires properties and builds new housing. Projects are primarily funded through combining federal, state and local money with tax-exempt bonds, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, or both. Since 1990, the KCHA has issued more than \$350 million in housing bonds. The program also helps nonprofit and for-profit developers buy or build multi-family rental housing in King County with below-market rate financing.

In addition to housing development, the KCHA provides \$5 million each year for low-income home repair and weatherization services. Funding for this program comes from federal sources, the state,

King County and cities like Bellevue. About 525 privately owned single-family, multi-family and mobile homes are upgraded each year. The KCHA also spends more than \$5 million each year on resident education and self-sufficiency programs such as after-school programs, adult job counseling, and other educational services.

In Bellevue, the KCHA operates 15 apartment complexes and eight rental homes, totaling 1,789 affordable housing units in the City. The KCHA also provides over \$19 million annually in housing voucher subsidies in Bellevue alone. Finally, the KCHA partners with the Bellevue Boys and Girls Club to provide after school programs in three housing developments in the City. Stephen Norman, Executive Director of the KCHA, will provide additional information during the Council presentation.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Council adopted Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) in 2017 in order to improve affordable housing opportunities across the City. The AHS is consistent with Council priorities and housing policies in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, policies in the Comprehensive Plan provide support for actions that:

- Address the entire spectrum of housing needs, including the need for affordable housing for very low, low and moderate-income households;
- Promote regional cooperation to create affordable housing;
- Provide funding to support housing needs, especially for low and very low-income households; and
- Partner with not-for-profit agencies to provide permanent low-and moderate-income housing.

The AHS consists of five interrelated strategies and a set of actions for each that are designed to address key aspects of housing affordability:

- Help people stay in existing affordable housing
- Create a variety of housing choices
- Create more affordable housing
- Unlock housing supply by making it easier to build
- Prioritize state, county and local funding for affordable housing

OPTIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

N/A

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A