

DRAFT Public Engagement Framework

City of Bellevue

Affordable Housing Strategy
Implementation Program

July 6, 2017



INTRODUCTION

What is the Affordable Housing Strategy?

Bellevue has been taking action for many years to address affordable housing. At the regional level, the city is a founding member of A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), working in collaboration with other eastside jurisdictions to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing and directly support affordable housing through the ARCH Housing Trust Fund. At the local level, the city has adopted a multifamily tax exemption and developed code incentives to promote private sector development of affordable housing. All of these current tools together produce about 40 affordable homes per year. Even with these efforts, it is clear that current tools are not keeping pace with the increasing need.

Approved by the City Council in June 2017, Bellevue's Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) builds from and supplements these efforts with additional effective tools. The primary purpose of AHS is to improve affordable housing opportunities throughout the City consistent with City Council priorities, comprehensive plan guidance, and economic development plan strategies. Specifically, AHS is intended to substantially increase the City's existing affordable housing stock over the next ten years.

AHS Implementation Program

In order to substantially increase affordable housing in Bellevue as authorized by the City Council, AHS identifies five major strategies (see sidebar) and 21 implementing actions (see Exhibit 1). These actions are planned for implementation over the next three years in order to increase affordable housing stock over the next ten years. Progress of the AHS implementation program will be monitored and actions adjusted periodically based on performance, new information and established review time lines. Exhibit 2 on the following page illustrates the anticipated time-frame for implementation of all 21 actions.

AHS Strategies

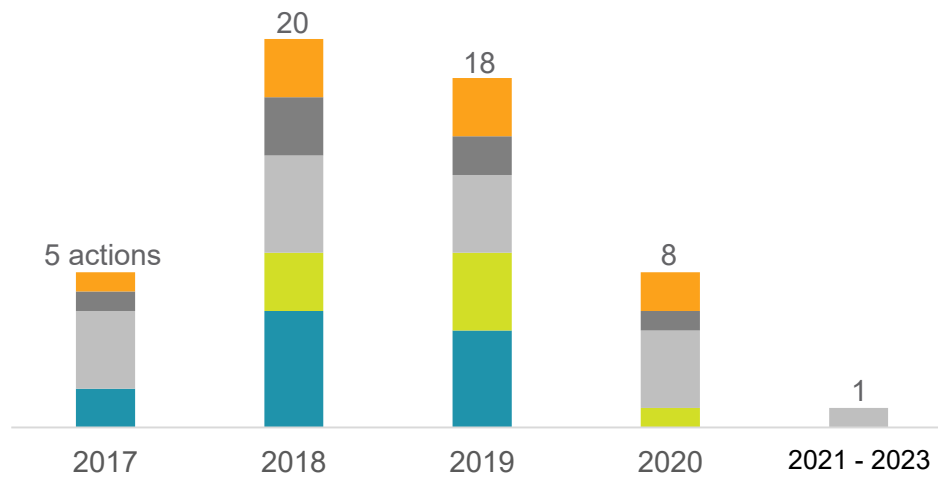
- A. Help people stay in affordable housing
 - B. Create a variety of housing choices
 - C. Create more affordable housing
 - D. Unlock housing supply by making it easier to build
 - E. Prioritize state, county, and local funding for affordable housing
-

Exhibit 1 AHS Implementation Actions

AHS Number	Action	Timeframe
Phase 1		
C-3	Update existing tax exemption programs for affordable housing to increase participation by developers of new housing.	2017 – 2018
C-1	Increase development potential on suitable land owned by public agencies, faith-based groups, non-profit housing entities.	2017 – 2020
C-4	Inclusionary zoning: provide voluntary density incentives in exchange for providing affordable units. a. Downtown PHASE I 2017 b. Eastgate PHASE 1 2017 d. East Main PHASE 2 2018/2019 d. Wilburton PHASE 2 2019	2017 – 2020
C-2	Develop affordable housing on suitable public lands in proximity to transit hubs.	2017+
A-2	Partner with non-profit orgs and housing agencies to fund the purchase/preserve existing affordable multifamily housing.	2017+
2018 Budget Proposal for Phase 2 Action		
E-1	Tap additional local sources to dedicate more funding to affordable housing.	
A-4	Increase funding and expand eligibility for the city's home repair and weatherization program.	2018 – 2019
A-5	Promote energy efficiency in design and construction of affordable units to reduce costs for residents.	
A-6	Promote existing utility rate relief, utility tax relief, and property tax programs to income eligible residents.	
Legislative Agenda Ongoing Advocacy		
A-2	Advocate for state legislation to extend property tax exemptions to existing multifamily properties with affordable set-aside.	
D-2	Advocate for amendments to state condominium statutes to increase condominium development.	2018+
E-3	Advocate for legislative actions that expand state and local funding tools.	
Phase 2		
E-2	Pursue funding partnerships with employers, financial institutions, foundations, and others.	
B-1	Encourage micro-apartments around light rail stations through actions such as reduced parking requirements.	2019 – 2020
B-4	Consider changes to the down payment assistance program for low-income and first time homebuyers	

AHS Number	Action	Timeframe
Phase 2, cont.		
C-5	Reduce costs for building affordable housing	2019 – 2020
B-3	Promote design in affordable units that ensures accessibility for all ages and abilities.	
A-3	Promote programs that provide social and physical support to allow seniors and disabled persons remain in their homes.	
B-2	Update accessory dwelling unit standards and allow detached units in self-selected neighborhoods.	
D-3	Change the city's approach to density calculation in multi-family zones to allow more flexibility in unit size and type.	
D-1	Revise code to reduce costs and process time for building multi-family housing.	

Exhibit 2 Implementation Timeline



Note: Totals include implementation actions that occur over multiple years

- A - Preserve existing affordable housing
- B - Create housing choices
- C - Create more affordable housing
- D - Expand housing supply
- E - Increase funding

Why do we need a public engagement framework?

The City recognizes that many citizens are highly interested in city actions to promote affordable housing. This public engagement framework will ensure that interested persons continue to have the opportunity to stay informed and participate in the implementation of AHS.

The AHS implementation program is comprised of 21 distinct actions that work in an integrated manner. AHS actions range from administrative measures, such as promotion of programs and interagency coordination, to legislative actions, such as changes to development regulations and zoning designations. Because of this range, it is anticipated that the public may have limited interest in some actions and high interest and desire to participate in others. The public engagement framework provides a flexible set of tools to assess and deliver engagement methods tailored to different types of actions.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The public engagement framework provides an easy to use and flexible set of tools to assess and deliver engagement methods tailored to the varying engagement needs of different actions. It should be used in conjunction with consideration of other factors — such as resource availability, planned time-frames, and related mandates. As implementation evolves over time, changing circumstances may result in changing needs for public engagement. The framework provides the flexibility to modify the types of tools and to increase or decrease the level of engagement as needed.

This public engagement framework follows a three-step process:

1. Conduct an **assessment** of engagement needs based on best available information about potential impact and level of public interest;
2. Compare the assessment conducted in Step 1 with the **public engagement continuum** to help to determine the level of public engagement that best fits the action; and
3. Select engagement activities from the menu of potential public engagement tools in the **public engagement toolkit**, guided by the findings of public engagement continuum evaluation in Step 2.

These steps are further described below:

The public engagement framework provides a flexible set of tools to assess and deliver engagement methods tailored to different types of actions.

Assessment is a first step toward developing a tailored public engagement approach appropriate to each action.

1. Assessment

Determine potential impact and public interest

Assess potential impact and public interest in participation through responses to the questions shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3 Assessment Questions

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
1. What is the anticipated level of conflict, opportunity, or controversy on this action?					
2. How significant is the potential citywide impact of the action?					
3. How significant is the potential neighborhood-specific impact of the action?					
4. What degree of involvement does the public likely to desire or expect?					
5. To what extent do stakeholders care about this issue?					
6. What is the potential for broad public interest in the action?					
7. What is the potential for neighborhood specific interest in the action?					

Differing levels of participation are appropriate for different actions, depending on the goals, levels of interest, time frames, resources, and other factors.

2. Public Engagement Continuum

Determine level of public engagement

Based on the findings from Step 1, the public engagement continuum shown in Exhibit 4 can help determine a level of public engagement that best reflects the likely interest and impact of individual implementing actions.

Exhibit 4 illustrates five levels of public outreach: **INFORM** represents the smallest public role and steps up to **EMPOWER**, which represents the largest public role. For each of the five levels of involvement, Exhibit 4 describes the corresponding public participation goal, the city's commitment to the public, and some example tools.

For example, AHS implementation actions that are primarily focused on promoting existing programs may not generate significant public interest or concern. In that case, public engagement at the **INFORM** end of the continuum may be appropriate. In contrast, an action to allow detached accessory dwelling units would likely generate significant interest and could only occur when a neighborhood makes a decision to self-select this action, consistent with the **EMPOWER** end of the continuum.

The baseline level for AHS implementation actions will be to conduct engagement at the **INFORM** level and build from this foundation to the level of engagement that meets the needs of the proposed implementing action. As noted previously, the framework provides the flexibility to modify the types of tools and to increase or decrease the level of engagement as needed.

Exhibit 4 Public Engagement Continuum

	Public Engagement Goal	City Commitment	Example Tools	
Inform	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to support an understanding of the problems, alternatives and/or solutions	Keep the public informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses 	
Consult	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	Keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meetings • Focus groups • Surveys 	
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	Work with the public to ensure that their concerns are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public workshops • Surveys, informal polling 	
Collaborate	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including development of alternatives and identification of a preferred alternative.	Partner with the public in each aspect of decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc and formal committees • Participatory decision-making 	
Empower	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.	Implement what the public decides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots • Delegated decisions 	

Adapted from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum (www.iap2.org)

The public engagement toolkit provides a useful resource for identifying possible outreach tools for each different level of engagement

3. Public Engagement Toolkit

Identify public engagement tools

Following the evaluation in Step 2, the public engagement toolkit (Exhibit 5 on the following page) provides a resource for identifying possible outreach tools. For ease of use, Exhibit 5 is organized according to the levels of involvement identified in the public involvement continuum (Exhibit 4).

The list of outreach measures is not all inclusive; additional measures should be added over time as they are identified. It should also be noted that outreach for some AHS implementation actions would likely be integrated with related city initiatives. For example, the process for a neighborhood to self-select to allow detached accessory dwelling units could occur as part of a neighborhood planning process.

AHS PHASE I IMPLEMENTATION

As shown in Exhibit 1, Phase I implementation consists of five actions, with work beginning in 2017 and concluding between 2018 and 2020, depending on the action. These Phase I actions have been reviewed through the public engagement framework process described in this document; see Exhibit 6 for conclusions and the recommended level of engagement. A specific public engagement plan and tools will be identified as part of the work plan for each action. Updated information about the status of the ongoing and planned implementation actions can be found at <https://planning.bellevuewa.gov/planning/planning-initiatives/affordable-housing-strategy/>.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness of public engagement will be evaluated and adjusted as part of the monitoring effort for AHS implementation.

Exhibit 5 Public Engagement Toolkit

Public Engagement Level	Potential Engagement Tools
Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project website with information and updates • MyBellevue app and email notifications • Collateral material: fact sheets, FAQ, brochure, postcards • Social media communication • City newsletters • Unstaffed displays at locations with high public visibility • Neighborhood briefings
Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All methods listed above • In-person open house and public meetings, comment feedback cards • Virtual open house • Focus groups • Sounding boards, ad hoc committees • Interest group meetings • Instant polling at meetings • Surveys: meetings, online, other • Staffed displays at locations with high public visibility
Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All methods listed above • Community workshops • Expert panels • Task forces/advisory committees • Focus groups
Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All methods listed above • Facilitated dialogue • Community driven meetings • Consensus building techniques • Design charrettes • Tactical urbanism projects • Community polling
Empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All methods listed above

Exhibit 6 Phase I Implementation: Public Engagement

Action	Notes	Recommended Public Engagement Level
<p>Action C-3</p> <p>Update existing tax exemption programs for affordable housing to increase participation by developers of new housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential revision to existing city MFTE (multifamily tax exemption) program Likely to be of greatest interest to multifamily housing developers Unlikely to result in significant neighborhoods-specific or citywide impacts Limited interest or concerns expressed about this action during the prior AHS outreach process; most concern related to potential impacts to tax base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INFORM: general public, including opportunities for public comment CONSULT: key stakeholders, including residential developers
<p>Action C-1</p> <p>Increase development potential on suitable land owned by public agencies, faith-based groups, non-profit housing entities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation would increase permitted density on qualified properties throughout the city Prior AHS outreach identified significant public concern if changes zoning in single family areas proposed; less concern about changes in existing commercial areas First step in implementation will identify proposed criteria for evaluation of sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INVOLVE: beginning with proposed criteria and evaluation of sites; review and adjust outreach as indicated based on selected sites
<p>Action C-2</p> <p>Develop affordable housing on suitable public lands in proximity to transit hubs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing coordination with Sound Transit regarding potentially available sites at the 120th and 130th station locations Both sites are located in commercial areas and prior AHS outreach identified relatively little public concern about these sites No additional sites are currently under consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INFORM: for sites at the 120th and 130th station locations; review and adjust as needed based on public feedback Public outreach for other locations to be determined based on assessment through the public engagement framework
<p>Action A-1</p> <p>Partner with non-profit organizations and housing agencies to fund the purchase/preserve existing affordable multi-family housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing coordination with non-profit organizations and housing agencies Implementation would occur as opportunities for purchase and preservation are identified Prior AHS outreach identified general support for this action, with limited level of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INFORM: as sites are identified, review and adjust as needed based on public feedback

Action	Notes	Recommended Public Engagement Level
<p>Action C-4</p> <p>Inclusionary zoning: provide voluntary density incentives in exchange for providing affordable units.</p> <p>a: Downtown PHASE I 2017</p> <p>b: Eastgate PHASE I 2017</p> <p>c: East Main PHASE 2 2018/2019</p> <p>d. Wilburton PHASE 2 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of inclusionary zoning in Downtown and Eastgate underway as part of Downtown Livability Initiative and Eastgate Comprehensive Plan (CPA) and Land Use Code (LUCA) amendments, respectively. Inclusionary zoning in the East Main station area to be reviewed as part of implementation of the East Main Station Area Plan recommendations. Inclusionary zoning in the Wilburton commercial area to be reviewed as part of implementation of the Wilburton commercial area study. Prior AHS outreach identified a mix of support and concerns about this action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INVOLVE: consistent with prior and ongoing outreach activities for the Downtown Livability Initiative and the Eastgate CPA and LUCA review process. Public outreach for the East Main station area and Wilburton commercial area will be integrated with implementation of related actions in these areas