

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT

Implementation Program for the Affordable Housing Strategy approved by Council on June 5.

STAFF CONTACTS

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POLICY ISSUES

The purpose of the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Program is to improve affordable housing opportunities across the City. This is consistent with City Council Priorities, Comprehensive Plan Housing Policy, and Economic Development Plan Strategies.

Project Goal: Implement the actions of the City's Affordable Housing Strategy with clarity about objectives the City is working to achieve, tools to be utilized, a timeframe for implementation, and metrics to gauge performance.

Comprehensive Plan Policy HO-24:

Develop and implement an effective strategy to ensure affordable housing opportunities are available in Downtown and throughout the City at a range of affordability levels. Monitor quantity, types, and affordability of housing achieved for potential unintended consequences and to determine if the need is being met.

Economic Development Plan Strategy E.1:

Develop a City-wide strategy to expand workforce housing options by exploring all manner of tools, including a multifamily tax exemption program, a revolving fund for transit-oriented development, zoning changes, and other options.

Stakeholder input to the Economic Development Plan identifies lack of workforce housing for employees as a primary challenge for Bellevue. The plan notes:

To support a thriving economy, there is a need for workers at all income levels; however, the limited range of housing options in Bellevue challenges the availability of a varied workforce. Bellevue needs a City-wide approach to housing options for different income levels in different growth areas of the city.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

ACTION

DIRECTION

INFORMATION ONLY

Staff has prepared an Implementation Program for the Affordable Housing Strategy consistent with Council direction and approval on June 5. The Implementation Program is being presented for information. No specific direction is required at this time.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

On June 5 Council approved the Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) and directed staff to return in the next quarter with a detailed work program that assigns lead and partner department responsibility for each action and describes specific tasks, a phasing schedule, Council actions, public and stakeholder engagement, and a prioritization for implementation.

The purpose of the AHS is to improve affordable housing opportunities throughout the city consistent with City Council priorities, Comprehensive Plan policy, and Economic Development Plan strategies. The AHS represents a culmination of more than one year of research, analysis, review and input from the technical advisory group (TAG), stakeholders and the public.

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

- Help people stay in their 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.

The detailed work program includes the elements described below.

Implementation Program: Attachment A provides an overview of the AHS Implementation Program. For each of the 21 actions the table shows phasing, a set of tasks, City department lead and partners, and prioritization. Implementation will be rolled out in two phases aligned to the City's biennial budget process. The timeline was established based on prioritization criteria and the availability of resources. City departments have been consulted about the availability of resources to lead and support each action. An initial review of the Program indicates there are sufficient resources to implement Phase 1 actions and to make significant progress on many Phase 2 actions. Those actions that require additional resources (e.g. increased funding for home repair and weatherization programs), including staffing for implementation, will be proposed in future budget requests for Council consideration at that time. The Implementation Program also includes mechanisms to assess progress and maintain accountability that will be coordinated by Planning and Community Development.

Phased Schedule: Attachment B is a timeline from 2017 through 2020 that shows the AHS actions grouped into 2 phases. Phase 1 actions proposed for implementation in 2017 and 2018 are primarily those actions identified as a priority by Council or actions related to city initiatives already underway. In addition, the Phase 1 work program includes actions that may require additional investments. These investments, if needed, will be requested as part of future budget proposals. Further development of the affordable housing objectives and metrics for each action to measure and monitor implementation and performance is also included in Phase 1. Phase 2 roughly coincides with the next biennial budget and includes actions that may require increased resources, additional lead time or coordination with outside partners to implement. Additional resources, if needed, will be requested in future budgets.

Prioritization Criteria: Attachment C shows the complete set of Guiding Principles established by Council at the start of the AHS and highlights the principles that are relevant to implementation. These particular principles provide a basis for the criteria used to prioritize actions in the Implementation Program. The prioritization criteria are:

1. Directly creates or preserves affordable units
2. Identified by Council as a work program priority
3. Leverages affordable housing efforts by partner agencies and non-profits
4. Builds on existing city initiatives and programs
5. Timely to City's budget and funding processes

Pubic Engagement Framework: (Attachment D) Throughout the Implementation Program there will be opportunities for the community to stay informed and provide input on various actions. The Program is comprised of 21 distinct actions that range from administrative measures to state legislation. Because of this range, opportunities for public engagement will be tailored to the action's varying level of interest. The public engagement framework provides a flexible and adaptable set of tools to assess and deliver engagement methods appropriate to different types of actions and stakeholders.

Based on Council direction in June, staff is proceeding with the Implementation Program and Phase I actions. There will be updates and requests for Council direction as the Program progresses.

OPTIONS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Program
- B. Phase 1 and Phase 2 Timelines
- C. Affordable Housing Guiding Principles
- D. Public Engagement Framework

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL DOCUMENT LIBRARY

- A. Affordable Housing Strategy
- B. Affordable Housing Strategy Appendix