



2020 Action Plan

Covering the period from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

a component of the
2018 – 2022 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

City of Bellingham

Washington

June 9, 2020

Executive Summary

AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

The City of Bellingham approved the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan on May 17, 2018 (Resolution No. 2018-07). Since its adoption, the following has occurred:

- On July 20, 2018, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the Consolidated Plan and 2018 Action Plan.
- On May 6, 2019, the 2019 Action Plan was approved by the City Council (Resolution No. 2019-14).

2020 is the third action plan year under the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. New activities selected for funding in the Plan are based on solicitation of proposals. Funding sources for these activities include federal HOME and CDBG funds (including the potential use of Section 108), as well as local City funds (Housing Levy and General Fund). Specifically, the City sought applications for the following:

- **Rental Housing Development** – released on December 6, 2019, with applications due by February 7, 2020. Three applications were received.
- **Housing Preservation and Shelter** – released on December 6, 2019, with applications due by February 7, 2020. One application was received.
- **Community Facilities and Improvements** – released on December 6, 2019, with applications due by February 7, 2020. Four applications were received.
- **Rental Assistance and Supportive Services** – survey released in May 2020 for additional COVID-19 related social service needs. Nineteen agencies participated.

Several existing commitments from previous years are carried forward, including the homebuyer program, tenant based rental assistance, public facility improvements, preservation and rehabilitation projects, and rental housing development. One existing commitment from 2019 was unable to go forward, so one Human Services grant resubmission was requested from an applicant who was not awarded funding in the previous funding cycle. Numerous housing services and social services agencies were committed two years of funding through a review process leading up to the 2019 Action Plan year.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

The City continues to prioritize housing development, preservation, homebuyer support and community facilities and services. The City has also developed a response to the economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with related services identified in the Plan. The City's priorities are in keeping with the 2018 Consolidated Plan.

Within the community facilities program, the City has a specific priority of increasing the availability of affordable childcare facilities. In keeping with this, the City contemplates utilizing a Section 108 loan in order to support the acquisition and/or development of additional childcare facilities, essentially allowing greater use of funds in the short-term in exchange for dedicating a portion of CDBG funds for

repayment over the long term.

New Project Funding:

- Three housing construction/development projects would add affordable housing units to the inventory: an 80-unit housing facility for low-income families; a 54-unit housing facility for low-income seniors; and a 16-bed housing facility for those in recovery related to substance use.
- One housing preservation project would receive additional investment for emergency repairs: Mount Baker Apartments that has 84 low-income units.
- Childcare facilities would be supported with community facilities funds for development, acquisition, or improvements.
- New services funding is allocated for one human and social services agency providing low income childcare services, and for multiple agencies responding to the COVID-19 crisis through addressing housing security, food security, childcare and other social services that address or prevent homelessness.

Carryover and Continuing Projects: Activities funded prior to 2020, or ongoing programs, are adjusted for remaining amounts anticipated to be spent in 2020-21 and/or adjustments in funding sources. These activities include: the homebuyer down payment assistance program, homebuyer new construction (Telegraph Rd project), housing production projects (FFC, Housing for Developmentally Disabled adults; Lydia Place, Heart House; Lydia Place, A Place for Dads; Sun, Nevada St PSH; Bellingham Housing Authority, Samish Way Redevelopment phase 1), general public facilities, housing preservation activities (manufactured home repair and City owner-occupied rehabilitation program), and rental assistance and supportive services (Tenant Based Rental Assistance, housing services programs, human & social services programs). This is the second year of a two-year commitment for services grants, some of which have CDBG funding (agencies provide case management, counseling, childcare, nutritious food, vocational readiness and literacy, chores for disabled and elderly, supportive services to special needs populations, and mediation – all to low income persons and households). Ongoing programs in the rental assistance and supportive services program that are levy-funded include the Homeless Outreach Team, Homeless Service Center, NWYS Ground Floor day center, and project-based housing assistance.

Contingency Projects: In the event that appropriations are greater or less than anticipated, or planned activities are cancelled, the following activities are proposed as contingencies: Tenant Based Rental Assistance (HOME), Housing Rehabilitation (CDBG and/or HOME), Housing Finance Commission Homebuyer (HOME), Public Facilities (CDBG), and Human Services (CDBG), as well as modified funding amounts or sources for listed projects, in accordance with the Community Participation Plan.

3. Evaluation of past performance

This Action Plan is for the third year of the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. The City has completed one performance evaluation report under the new Consolidated Plan, reporting on the July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 Action Planning year. This performance report showed some early progress toward goals, including:

- The goal of ‘Increase affordable housing supply for rental and interim housing’ showed thirteen percent progress;
- The goal of ‘Rehabilitation of existing units’ showed thirty-four percent progress;

- The goal of ‘Increase affordable housing supply for homeownership’ showed three percent progress;
- The goal of ‘Promote neighborhood equity’ showed eleven percent progress; and
- The goal of ‘Address and prevent homelessness’ showed seventy-seven percent progress.

4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process

The public consultation process for the 2020 Action Plan included a 30-day public comment period, and a public hearing before the Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB) (on March 12, 2020). The public was invited to comment on the Action Plan during the written comment period, which was held from March 12, 2020 through April 16, 2020.

The display ad providing notice of the public hearing and plan publication was published in Bellingham Herald on February 16, 2020. All public participation and consultation was done in accordance with the City’s Community Participation Plan that was adopted as part of the 2018 Consolidated Plan development process.

Additional consultation occurred with CDAB on May 14 and the Bellingham City Council on June 8, both of which were open public meetings.

5. Summary of public comments

No one from the public chose to speak at the March 12 public hearing, and no written comments were received.

6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them

Not applicable.

7. Summary

The 2020 Action Plan is intended to implement the priorities and strategies set forth in the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan.

Lead & Responsible Agencies

PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies – 91.200(b)

The following describes the agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

Agency Role	Name	Department/Agency
Lead Agency	BELLINGHAM	
CDBG Administrator	BELLINGHAM	Planning and Community Development
HOPWA Administrator	N/A	
HOME Administrator	BELLINGHAM	Planning and Community Development
HOPWA-C Administrator	N/A	

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information:

Samya Lutz, Housing & Services Program Manager
Planning and Community Development Department
City of Bellingham
210 Lottie Street - Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: 360-778-8385 or E-mail: slklutz@cob.org

Consultation

AP-10 Consultation – 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)

The City of Bellingham works in partnership with other agencies, nonprofit organizations, the public housing authority and other citizens and stakeholders to identify the needs for affordable housing, community development and homelessness. These needs are documented in the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. Based on these needs, the Consolidated Plan consultation process included setting priorities based on the financial resources available through HUD and local sources.

The consultation process for an Annual Action Plan is to align resources with the goals and strategies outlined in the Consolidated Plan. The City provided an opportunity for agencies and nonprofits to submit proposals for funding assistance that would work to implement the goals and strategies of the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. The process to accept proposals resulted in numerous activities.

Additional consultation and discussion followed the COVID-19 disruption and announcement of CDBG-CV funding for response activities related to the impacts of the pandemic, including with philanthropic and county staff to coordinate available funding and responses to community needs.

Funding requests exceeded the amount of anticipated resources in most categories. Where additional resources are available, it is within the City's local Housing Levy. CDBG (including CDBG-CV) and HOME grants, including program income, are fully allocated in the 2020 Action Plan.

Including the listed agencies that were consulted, 167 individuals from at least 90 agencies were contacted to provide them with an advance opportunity to know that applications for funding assistance to implement the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan were being accepted.

Enhancing Coordination (91.215(l))

The public and assisted housing providers, as well as governmental health, mental health and service agencies, and the philanthropic community all have close working relationships in Bellingham and Whatcom County. The Whatcom County Health Department is the lead agency for homeless housing, as well as public health, mental health and veteran's needs in our community. The City is an active member of the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness and its Steering Committee, as well as a member of the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee and Whatcom County's Community Health Improvement Plan workgroup. The City also sits on the steering committee of the Whatcom Housing Alliance, a multi-sector group that advocates for equitable housing policies. The City's Community Development Advisory Board includes membership that represents housing and social service providers, including a representative of the Housing Authority.

Continuum of Care - Coordination

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness.

Whatcom County is the lead agency for the Continuum of Care and the Plan to End Homelessness. The Whatcom Homeless Service Center is the coordinating entity for homelessness, including a single point of entry. The City has incorporated the goals, strategies, activities and outcomes for addressing homelessness in our community into the plan, ensuring consistency in policies and efforts.

The City participates in the local Coalition to End Homelessness, including the Steering Committee for this group, which strives to actively engage people who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness, identify their needs, and respond accordingly.

The City has coordinated with Whatcom County and has incorporated their goals, strategies, activities and outcomes in the Consolidated Plan. The City helps fund the Whatcom Homeless Service Center, which administers the Homeless Management Intake System (HMIS) for the community. City staff meet regularly with County staff and staff from the Whatcom Homeless Services Center (WHSC), as well as other partner agencies who participate in taking WHSC and Coordinated Entry referrals. The City and County strive to align their performance standards and expectations as much as possible and are in regular communication about funding allocations and changes over time. The City has a seat on the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations on County funding allocations.

Continuum of Care - Consultation

Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the jurisdiction's area in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards for and evaluate outcomes of projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS.

The City is not an ESG funder, but does coordinate closely with the County (who is). City funding is closely coordinated with County funding, including reporting and performance review. The City also closely coordinates with the Homeless Service Center that administrates the HMIS system in partnership with the County. The City reviews HMIS reporting for all agencies funded through City contracts, and requires housing agencies to participate in the Homeless Service Center’s coordinated process for housing placements.

1	Agency/Group/Organization	BELLINGHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing PHA
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy Market Analysis
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	The Executive Director of the Bellingham Housing Authority is a member of the city's Advisory Board which recommends priorities and funding of the Action Plan.

2	Agency/Group/Organization	OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-Victims of Domestic Violence Services-homeless Services-Health Services-Education Services-Employment Service-Fair Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	The Opportunity Council was consulted and participated in development of the action items. In addition, because the Homeless Service Center is hosted by the Opportunity Council, strategies regarding homelessness were coordinated with them. A representative of the Opportunity Council is a member of the City's advisory board.

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Continuum of Care	Whatcom County	Whatcom County drafted the Homelessness Strategy, and reviewed and commented on the Consolidated Plan. They also developed and continue to update the Countywide Health Improvement Plan. Whatcom County and City staff frequently assist one another in coordinated review of agency funding and activities.

Table 1 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Participating agencies, groups, organizations and others

Including the listed agencies that were consulted, more than 90 agencies and organizations were contacted to provide them with an advance opportunity to know that applications were being accepted for funding assistance to implement the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. In addition, discussion about the 2020 Action Plan process was included at Whatcom Coalition to End Homelessness steering committee meetings, and at the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee meetings, both of which include representatives from many local housing-related agencies as well as public representatives. The City also continues to follow its Community Participation Plan; specifically, the elements relevant to Action Plan development or modifications.

Participation

AP-12 Participation – 91.105, 91.200(c)

1. Summary of citizen participation process

A public display ad for this Action Plan was published in the Bellingham Herald on Sunday, February 16, 2020 notifying the public of an opportunity to comment on the Action Plan and attend a public hearing. Notices were also sent out to stakeholders and the media and posted on the city's web site. In addition, multiple Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs) were published in December and distributed broadly, as discussed elsewhere in this plan. Responses to these NOFAs were what primarily impacted the goal setting. The public hearing was held on March 12, and the public comment period was open through April 16. Additional discussion took place at open public (virtual) meetings with CDAB on May 14 and City Council on June 8.

Citizen Participation Outreach

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
1	Public Hearing & comment period	Non-targeted/broad community	CDAB and public attendance; no speakers during public hearing	None	None	
2	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	Display ad - no direct response requested	Display ad - no direct response requested	Display ad - no direct response requested	
3	Public Meetings	Non-targeted/broad community	Regular meeting - no direct response requested	None	N/A	https://www.cob.org/gov/public/bc/cda-board/Pages/meeting-materials.aspx

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.220 (c) (1, 2)

HUD's 2020 formula allocation to the City of Bellingham was released on February 18, 2020. HUD's additional COVID-19 response allocation was released on April 3, 2020. If allocations change, adjustments will be made in accordance with the contingency funding plan and the Community Participation Plan. The City also is including the possibility of utilizing a Section 108 loan for childcare facilities.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available				Expected Amount Avail Remainder of ConPlan (\$)	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: (\$)	Program Income: (\$)	Prior Year Resources: (\$)	Total: (\$)		
CDBG	Public - Federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Housing Public Improvements Public Services	\$842,553	\$210,000	\$256,078	\$1,308,631	\$2,105,106	Funds used for priority needs, including preservation of housing stock, lead-based paint, public improvements, public services and administration and planning.
HOME	Public - Federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction TBRA	\$586,798	\$120,000	\$222,644	\$929,442	\$1,413,596	Funds used for homebuyer assistance, tenant-based rental assistance, housing development (including CHDOs) and administration.
CDBG-CV	Public - Federal	Public Services	\$495,646			\$495,646		Funds used for human services response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Section 108	Federal	Acquisition Community Facilities	\$2,000,000			\$2,000,000		Loan funds potentially used for capital acquisition/development for childcare facilities.

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available				Expected Amount Avail Remainder of ConPlan (\$)	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: (\$)	Program Income: (\$)	Prior Year Resources: (\$)	Total: (\$)		
Other	Public - Local	Acquisition Admin and Planning Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Housing Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership Public Services TBRA	\$6,826,518		\$3,809,817	\$10,636,335	\$8,000,000	The City of Bellingham has a voter-approved housing levy that supports development and preservation of housing, as well as rental assistance and housing services.
Other	Public - Local	Admin and Planning Public Services TBRA Childcare improvements	\$353,100		\$184,860	\$537,960	\$706,200	This is the city's investment in housing, human and social services.

Table 5 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

Federal Funds / Additional Resources

In 2018, for every dollar of federal funds the City expended on activities that were completed, the City leveraged over \$14 of non-federal funds. In particular, rental housing development and human (public) service funding leverage considerable funding from non-federal sources, tapping into the local commitment of nonprofit agencies delivering critical housing and services to our community.

Publicly Owned Land

In 2016, City staff developed a replicable process for evaluation of City properties to determine and recommend which properties are potentially surplus to the City's needs. This report is updated annually; the most recent update is from 2019. The City is currently in the process of transferring a single family lot to a Community Housing Development Organization that creates affordable homeownership opportunities. The City will continue to analyze available lands for the potential to partner with local agencies to meet community needs.

Discussion

Bellingham voters approved a Housing Levy renewal in 2018, assessing \$4 million per year to address housing development/preservation and housing services. These funds are used to help support capital costs, rent and services for some federally funded projects, thus contributing to the matching

requirements. The needs, priorities and strategies of the Consolidated Plan are assisted by these additional resources in the community, and aligned with the priorities of the local Housing Levy.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives - 91.420, 91.220(c)(3)&(e)

Goals Summary Information

The following table is a summary of the 2020 goals.

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Increase affordable housing rental supply	2018	2022	Affordable Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs	MORE AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING	HOME \$716,263 Local Housing Levy \$4,871,092	Rental Units Constructed:150
2	Address and prevent homelessness	2018	2022	Affordable Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development	ADEQUATE RESPONSE TO HOMELESS CRISIS	CDBG \$531,352 CDBG-CV \$495,646 HOME \$142,500 General Fund \$517,960 Local Housing Levy \$1,365,159	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 1,206 Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 202 Tenant-based rental assistance / Rapid Rehousing: 146 Homeless Person Overnight Shelter: 50
3	Preserve existing housing	2018	2022	Affordable Housing Non-Homeless Special Needs	REHABILITATION OF EXISTING UNITS	CDBG \$417,640 Local Housing Levy \$425,000	Rental units rehabilitated: 84 Homeowner housing rehabilitated: 16

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
4	Increase affordable homeowner housing supply	2018	2022	Affordable Housing	MORE MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTS AS HOMEOWNERS	HOME (already committed) Local Housing Levy (already committed)	Direct Financial Assistance to Homebuyers: 8 Homeowner Housing Added: 8
5	Promote neighborhood equity	2018	2022	Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development	EQUITY AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY	CDBG \$149,129 Section 108 \$2,000,000 General Fund \$20,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 1,085
6	Coordinate and improve delivery of services	2018	2022	Other	EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON HOUSING ISSUES	CDBG \$210,510 HOME \$70,679 Local Housing Levy \$165,268	Other (Administrative and coordination functions, as well as education and technical assistance to agencies.)

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Increase affordable housing rental supply
	Goal Description	The private market is unable to meet the demand for affordable housing units without assistance. The rise in housing costs, together with historically low vacancy rates and sluggish wage growth, makes it very difficult to find affordable housing. This need is the result of several contributing factors: lack of affordable, accessible housing in a range of unit sizes; low vacancy rate; and displacement of residents due to economic pressures.
2	Goal Name	Address and prevent homelessness
	Goal Description	Support low barrier shelter, rental assistance, and case management and diversion programs, as well as basic needs and assistance to very low income households. One of the contributing factors to this problem is lack of assistance for transitioning from institutional settings to integrated housing. This goal also includes our COVID response strategy.

3	Goal Name	Preserve existing housing
	Goal Description	Rehabilitate owner-occupied and rental housing for low-income residents. The contributing factors this goal addresses are: displacement of residents due to economic pressures; and lack of assistance for housing accessibility modifications.
4	Goal Name	Increase affordable homeowner housing supply
	Goal Description	Support down-payment assistance and new homeownership opportunities. The contributing factor this addresses are: impediments to (economic) mobility and displacement of residents due to economic pressures. This goal is implemented through the City's homebuyer program administered by the Housing Finance Commission and support for new homeownership development.
5	Goal Name	Promote neighborhood equity
	Goal Description	Improve infrastructure and connectivity (including childcare infrastructure), equity of affordable housing distribution, and investments in facilities in low-income neighborhoods. The contributing factors this goal addresses are: lack of investment in specific neighborhoods, including services or amenities; land use zoning laws; disparities in access to opportunity.
6	Goal Name	Coordinate and improve delivery of services
	Goal Description	This goal is about education and administration supports. This includes public education on Fair Housing and housing issues, disaster preparedness, outreach to funding decision makers and policy makers. The contributing factor this goal addresses is disproportionate housing needs.

Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing as defined by HOME 91.215(b):

271 Extremely low-income

277 Low-income

16 Moderate income

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

The 2020 Action Plan includes continuation of existing activities, renewal of ongoing activities, and new projects, including the City’s response to the COVID epidemic.

Projects

#	Project Name
1	Rental Housing Development
2	Human and Social Services
3	Housing Services
4	Rental Assistance
5	Renter/transitional housing preservation
6	Owner-occupied rehab and repair
7	Homebuyer Program
8	Public Facilities and Improvements
9	Planning and Management

Table 2 - Project Information

Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

These allocations selected for funding were primarily based on solicitation of proposals which used the City's priorities identified in the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. Priorities reflect the goals in the Consolidated Plan, as combined with the local capacity to deliver housing and services. Bellingham continues to need a drastic increase in the supply of housing as the vacancy rate is very low. Human services needs are great due in part to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic.

AP-38 Project Summary

Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	Rental Housing Development
	Goals Supported	Increase affordable housing rental supply
	Needs Addressed	MORE AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING
	Funding	HOME: \$716,263 Local Housing Levy: \$3,813,319 (+ previously committed funds)
	Description	This project includes multiple activities to increase the supply of affordable housing for families, special needs, the general low-income population, and homeless-on-entry.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	150 units of housing are estimated to be established through these project activities - all serving low and very low income households
	Location Description	Samish Way, phase 2 – 315 Samish Way Barkley Family Housing – Rimland Drive Recovery House – 1211 Girard Street
	Planned Activities	Two projects are new construction of affordable housing for a mix of families, seniors, those with special needs, and general low-income; the other is a major renovation that will serve those actively engaged in recovery from substance use disorders.
2	Project Name	Human and Social Services
	Goals Supported	Address and prevent homelessness
	Needs Addressed	ADEQUATE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS CRISIS
	Funding	CDBG: \$427,138 CDBG-CV: \$495,646 General Fund: \$423,100
	Description	This human and social service funding opportunity is limited to those services that meet one or more of the following goals: Increase access to affordable childcare; Increase economic security and reduce vulnerability; Increase access to mental health services, including case management; Increase access to basic needs (excluding housing); Promote integration and coordination between systems. They are all COVID-related as all these activities have high demands in response to the pandemic crisis.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021

	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	1,206 general and special needs low-income individuals, including those experiencing or at risk of homelessness
	Location Description	scattered
	Planned Activities	<p>Project Name, Allocation (all are COVID-related):</p> <p>GRACE project, 140,000</p> <p>Lydia Mental Health Counseling, 22,444</p> <p>Free Grocery Program, 26,900</p> <p>Providing Help & Healing for Children of DV Victims ‘Safe Start’, 21,350</p> <p>Vocational Readiness, 25,900</p> <p>Volunteer Chore Program, 29,600</p> <p>Teen Court, 24,300</p> <p>Gaining Jobs through Literacy, 12,490</p> <p>Target Intensive Case Management, 30,000</p> <p>Generations Childcare & Early Learning, 15,000</p> <p>Parent / Teen Mediation, 15,000</p> <p>Maple Alley Inn meal program, 22,100</p> <p>Meals on Wheels, 30,000</p> <p>Rebound Roots, 22,000</p> <p>Childcare & Early Learning Center, 30,000</p> <p>Services for Adults Living with AIDS / HIV, 12,000</p> <p>Farm Worker & Senior Support Services, 14,800</p> <p>Additional food security support, up to 300,000</p> <p>Additional childcare support, up to 350,000</p> <p>Additional social services support, up to 200,000</p> <p>Project Homeless Connect, 2,000</p>
3	Project Name	Housing Services
	Goals Supported	Address and prevent homelessness
	Needs Addressed	ADEQUATE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS CRISIS
	Funding	<p>CDBG: \$104,214</p> <p>General Fund: \$94,860</p> <p>Local Housing Levy: \$1,034,299</p>

	Description	The housing services' program is limited to those services that meet one or more of the following goals: Reduce the number of homeless (including reduce those who newly enter homelessness); Reduce the length of time spent homeless; Increase the number of people moving into permanent housing after receiving assistance; Reduce the number of people who return to homelessness after obtaining permanent housing. Increased needs as a result of COVID result in additional support provided here to respond to the epidemic.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	252 general and special needs low-income households, including those experiencing or at risk of homelessness
	Location Description	scattered
	Planned Activities	Project Name, Allocation: Homeless Service Center and Housing Lab assistance, \$132,500 Lydia Place - Family Services, \$93,500 Transitional Housing - Homeless Women with Children, \$28,500 RRH and Diversion for Families & Seniors, \$195,727 Transitional Living, \$36,000 Positive Adolescent Development, \$49,995 Domestic Violence Safe Shelter, \$29,700 Larrabee Residence, \$25,000 OC - Homeless Outreach Team, \$210,000 Additional COVID-related housing support, \$200,000 NWYS – Ground Floor youth \$85,000 Winter emergency shelter/vouchers for cold weather needs for homeless families and special needs populations, \$50,000
4	Project Name	Rental Assistance
	Goals Supported	Tenant-based rental assistance/rapid rehousing
	Needs Addressed	ADEQUATE RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS CRISIS
	Funding	HOME: \$142,500 Local Housing Levy: \$659,500 (+previously committed funds)
	Description	This project includes tenant-based rental assistance, rapid re-housing vouchers & housing assistance, and project-based housing assistance, including additional assistance as a result of the COVID epidemic.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	146 households - all low income or very low income.

	Location Description	Scattered sites for tenant-based rental assistance and rapid rehousing vouchers. Project-based housing assistance is dedicated on an annual basis to Francis Place, 22 North, Greggie’s House, Nevada St PSH, and Lydia Place Heart House.
	Planned Activities	The activities in this project include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant-based rental assistance - HOME and local Levy funds are provided to the Opportunity Council and Lydia Place to provide tenant-based rental assistance, with the priority being families that are homeless. • Rapid re-housing vouchers and diversion - Local Levy funds are provided to the Opportunity Council and Lydia Place to support rapid re-housing of homeless persons & associated services, or assistance that diverts households from homelessness. • Project-based Housing Assistance - Local Levy funds are provided to projects to support operating costs (rent payments or services). • Additional COVID-related project- or tenant-based rental assistance
5	Project Name	Shelter/rental/transitional housing preservation
	Goals Supported	Preserve Existing Housing
	Needs Addressed	REHABILITATION OF EXISTING UNITS
	Funding	Local Housing Levy: \$300,000
	Description	Includes facility support of existing facilities that provide shelter, rental and transitional housing
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	88 low and very low-income households will benefit from these activities (including use of previously committed funds).
	Location Description	Mt. Baker Apartments – 308 W. Champion St Emergency repair – locations TBD (scattered)
	Planned Activities	Repair of Mt Baker Apartment window lintels (84 unit building); Annual offering of funds for emergency repair of transitional, permanent housing or shelter facilities.
6	Project Name	Owner-occupied rehab and repair
	Goals Supported	Preserve Existing Housing
	Needs Addressed	REHABILITATION OF EXISTING UNITS
	Funding	CDBG: \$417,640 Local Housing Levy: \$125,000
	Description	This project includes both the city's owner-occupied rehabilitation program and a manufactured home repair program sponsored by the Opportunity Council.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021

	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	16 households are estimated to benefit over the Action Plan year - mostly low-income, with some very low and moderate income.
	Location Description	scattered sites
	Planned Activities	This project consists of two activities: City of Bellingham Homeowner Rehabilitation Program - the City offers financial assistance to owner-occupied homes that need critical repairs to meet minimum housing standards. The City uses CDBG funding to meet this need. Manufactured Home Repair Program - the City provides local housing levy funds to the Opportunity Council to repair and weatherize owner-occupied manufactured homes.
7	Project Name	Homebuyer Program
	Goals Supported	Increase supply-affordable owner-occupied housing Direct financial assistance to homebuyers
	Needs Addressed	AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNER HOUSING IN A RANGE OF UNIT SIZES
	Funding	All funding for this is carried over from prior years; no new funding is allocated (prior HOME remaining commitment: \$405,823; prior remaining Local Housing Levy commitment: \$237,998)
	Description	The City supports financial assistance to low-income homebuyers through downpayment assistance programs with the WA State Housing Finance Commission, as well as new homebuyer acquisition and construction projects.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	16 low-income households
	Location Description	Scattered sites and Telegraph Road new home development project
	Planned Activities	Two activities supported by this program are managed through the WA State Housing Finance Commission for low-income and very-low income households on a scattered site basis: Restricted downpayment assistance program (in partnership with Kulshan Community Land Trust); and Unrestricted downpayment assistance program. In addition, the Telegraph Road new construction project managed jointly by Kulshan CLT and Habitat for Humanity was a previously supported project of this program.
8	Project Name	Public Facilities and Improvements
	Goals Supported	Promote Neighborhood Equity
	Needs Addressed	EQUITY AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY
	Funding	Section 108 loan: \$2,000,000 CDBG: \$149,129 General Fund: \$20,000

	Description	Continuing and new community/public facilities projects.
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	56 households - all low-income - are estimated to benefit from these activities, increasing to about 723 households if the Section 108 loan is utilized.
	Location Description	Scattered
	Planned Activities	Support for improvements and acquisitions of childcare facilities, including those serving low-income and special needs individuals and households.
9	Project Name	Planning and Management
	Goals Supported	Coordinate and improve delivery of services
	Needs Addressed	EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON HOUSING ISSUES
	Funding	CDBG: \$210,510 HOME: \$70,679 Local Housing Levy: \$165,268
	Description	Planning, management and administration of the CDBG and HOME program (and City levy).
	Target Date	June 30, 2021
	Estimate the number /type of families that will benefit	N/A – Planning & management activity
	Location Description	Throughout Bellingham – Planning & management activity
	Planned Activities	Planning & management activities for CDBG, HOME, and Housing Levy.

Geographic Distribution

AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)

Funds are distributed throughout the City. The City does not have any target areas nor areas of minority concentration. Many projects are delivered city-wide or are in scattered locations. The Central Business District and urban village areas include land that is compatible with multi-family development with access to services.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
City of Bellingham	100

Table 4 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

The City encourages equity in affordable housing and services throughout the geographic area. This includes diversifying urban village areas, investment of public facilities and improvements in low-income neighborhoods, adding new subsidized housing units in higher income neighborhoods, and acquiring existing ‘naturally occurring’ rental units in higher poverty neighborhoods.

Discussion

Program activities are not strictly limited to serving any areas but are instead designed to promote geographic equity of housing and services throughout the City.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Affordable housing support includes rental assistance, new rental construction, homebuyer program and housing services.

One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported	
Homeless	252
Non-Homeless	381
Special-Needs	30
Total	663

Table 6 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement

One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through	
Rental Assistance and Services	398
The Production of New Units	158
Rehab of Existing Units	99
Acquisition of Existing Units	8
Total	663

Table 7 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type

Discussion

Leveraging local levy and federal dollars has helped create more opportunities for housing locally, yet there is still a vacancy rate hovering close to 2%, high homeless population, and severe need for additional affordable housing.

Public Housing

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

The Bellingham Housing Authority provides public housing and affordable housing in Bellingham. The Housing Authority has been innovative in their pursuit of projects to meet the needs of the community.

Action to address Public Housing Needs

The City will continue to work with the Bellingham Housing Authority (BHA) to address their needs.

1. The City will continue to support the Bellingham Housing Authority's program to involve residents in the management of the Housing Authority and their property.
2. The City will involve public housing residents in future updates to Fair Housing plans and provide them with Fair Housing information.
3. The City will encourage the Housing Authority to provide information about homeownership opportunities to public housing residents.
4. The City continues to collaborate with the Housing Authority on the development of the Samish Way site which was sold by the City to the Housing Authority with flexible terms. Phase I is now under construction with the development of 69 units, and phase II is included in this Action Plan with 54 additional units anticipated. The full build out (through phase III) will offer 178 affordable housing units.

Actions to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership

The City will continue to share educational information about the City's homeownership downpayment assistance program, and about Kulshan CLT's and Habitat for Humanity's homeownership programs. The City is collaborating with the BHA on the disposition of over 20 single family homes that was approved by HUD OPH, and distributed information on first time homebuyer assistance to the BHA to share with impacted residents. The City also assisted in the transfer of some of these properties to nonprofits and/or first time homebuyers.

If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance

N/A

Discussion

The City is fortunate to have a well-managed public housing authority. The City will work to support their efforts to meet the needs of their residents, whether in their inventory of public housing or their multifamily (tax credit) projects.

Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

The Whatcom Homeless Service Center (HSC), a program of the Opportunity Council (OC), operates a centralized and coordinating homeless housing service center that serves the homeless population in the City of Bellingham. This Center serves as a hub for all homeless housing related activity in the community, including the coordination of homeless housing service providers and the management of the local homeless management information system (HMIS) by operating a single-point of entry.

One-Year Goals and Actions for Reducing & Ending Homelessness

The City's two highest priorities regarding addressing homelessness are to: support the development of emergency shelter in a safe, permanent location; and support programs to prevent chronic homelessness through intervention services like diversion and light touch case management. This Action Plan reflects increased support for agency programs that provide diversion and rapid rehousing for families and seniors. The City is also working with partner agencies to locate a permanent emergency shelter (or multiple small shelter) location(s).

People who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless enter the housing system and are assigned case management as available from an array of partnering, non-profit housing agencies. Housing counseling and advocacy become a significant part of the case management support provided. More general counseling and advocacy services are also available to low-income people at the Community Resource Center (drop-in service center) of the Opportunity Council which offers information and referral services to help people seeking a variety of services in addition to housing services. Bellingham has a variety of outreach services targeting the homeless population. The City continues to support the Homeless Outreach Team ("HOT team") using local Housing Levy funds, operated through the Opportunity Council. The City is also part of a program in coordination with the County, and with the support of health care providers, called Ground Level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE). The GRACE program targets both housed and unhoused individuals who are frequent users of emergency services and offers additional assistance through embedded case workers within the Fire and Police departments. Both the HOT team and GRACE will continue their operations this Action Plan year.

Other services available to assist those experiencing or at risk of homelessness include: Hope House, a program of Catholic Community Services; the Homeless Disability Benefits Advocacy Program; the Drop-In Center and shelter and program services run by Lighthouse Mission Ministries including a Mobile Outreach Team; the CORES program targeting mental health needs; and several meal programs. UnityCare Community Health Center provides on-site medical care services at the Lighthouse Mission Drop-In Center one day per week and offers dental services at their downtown site. The Project Homeless Connect event brings in mobile dental clinics once a year for homeless and low-income people to receive free dental services. Seasonal mobile vaccine clinics are provided by the County Health Department for low-income residents. All of these programs may look different with the advent of COVID-19, but services are adapting and continuing, despite the added challenges that the pandemic has brought forward.

Emergency Shelter / Transitional Housing

The City's strategy on homelessness encourages rapid rehousing of those that are homeless and targeted prevention for those that are at risk of becoming homeless. The City supports existing emergency shelter and transitional housing in the community through the city's public (human) service grant program, and a partnership with the Opportunity Council to provide overflow winter emergency shelter capacity.

As seen across the State, the number of homeless persons in Bellingham and Whatcom County is not subsiding. The City administration is seeking ways to partner with agencies to increase the number of beds available to persons living unsheltered, including looking at the feasibility of emergency shelters. City funds supported two seasonal winter shelters in 2019-20. This work will continue in the 2020 Action Plan year.

Helping homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living

The Homeless Service Center (HSC) administers rental subsidies (local funds) to homeless and at-risk households and matches the subsidy with case management support provided by one of several partnering, nonprofit housing agencies. Families with children, youth, and veteran households are among the populations that are supported by rental subsidies and case management. Additionally, the HSC administers Supportive Housing Program (SHP) subsidies to people who are chronically homeless. HSC also operates the Rapid Rehousing program for families with moderate housing barriers who are homeless, including survivors of domestic violence. The following are some of the employment and job training programs that serve people who are homeless in Bellingham: WorkSource One-Stop Center, Opportunity Council employment specialist, Lake Whatcom Treatment Center and Compass Health employment specialists, Northwest Youth Services jobs training, and Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless

The Homeless Service Center (HSC) helps to coordinate housing placements for people re-entering the community from institutions and implements a housing program for people on State disability assistance. Pioneer Human Services operates a 37-unit apartment (City Gate) that includes units for offenders re-entering from jail, as well as units for veterans. The City's increased support for diversion services targeting families with children and seniors offers assistance for those at risk of homelessness, with referrals coming both through the HSC and through the school district homeless liaisons. This year, the City's strategy also includes a focus on providing more support to childcare facilities that provide services to low-and moderate-income families. Low-incomes families who have reliable and affordable childcare are more resilient to homelessness as parents can further their careers, providing more stability for their families.

Discussion

Despite past strides in bringing down the numbers of homeless families awaiting housing, Bellingham has struggled to maintain low numbers. The most significant barrier to accomplishing the goal to end homelessness in the community is funding and the constraint in the supply of housing. With additional funding, the community has shown that it can have a significant effect on the number of homeless families in our community. Targeted outreach to families from Whatcom County, the Homeless Service Center and others has led to dramatic reductions in the time spent on the street for families, and we strive to get close to functional zero for families experiencing homelessness.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.220(j)

The foundation of the City’s Consolidated Plan was built on a variety of public outreach activities aimed at understanding barriers to affordable housing and fair housing. Specifically, the City convened a Community Solutions Workgroup (CSW) with multi-disciplinary stakeholders to tackle these issues and make recommendations that fed into the Consolidated Plan. The City also continues to review Countywide Housing Affordability Task Force (CHAT) 2007 recommendations that were targeted at countywide affordable housing goals. Three of CHAT’s six goals addressed strategies to remove barriers to affordable housing: 1) Create a housing trust fund; 2) Strive to reduce land and building costs; and 3) Provide incentives for the creation of affordable housing. Most of these measures have been implemented, though the City annually reviews what is still needed to be done. In addition, the current County Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process has identified housing for families with children as one of three top priorities for improving community health. The City is an active participant in implementation efforts related to the CHIP.

Barriers to households attempting to find housing are often related to health or past housing or behavioral issues. Nearly three-quarters of those experiencing homelessness who are searching for housing have one of the following barriers to finding housing: no rental history, past pay or vacate notice, past eviction notice, past money owed to a landlord, one or more felonies in past 5 years, four or more misdemeanors in past 5 years, arson conviction, someone in the household with open cases/warrants, someone in household with meth charge, arrest, or conviction, registered sex offender, someone with a history of arrest, charge, or conviction for a violent criminal act. Forty-three percent of the households searching have two or more barriers.

Actions planned to remove barriers

The City continues to work with developers to encourage utilization of multifamily tax exemption incentives, and partners with developers on low income tax credit and bond financed projects. City staff are currently working on an analysis of the menu of incentives available to housing developers, to determine the most effective way to encourage more for-profit developers to build additional affordable housing units. The city also analyzes any unutilized or underutilized land that may be able to be used for housing development partnerships. The City also offers reductions for low-income housing in certain fees and charges that affect affordability. The recovery housing being developed in this Action Plan year will offer housing for those with some of the barriers mentioned earlier.

Discussion

The City remains committed to removing or ameliorating the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing.

Other Actions

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

The City will undertake, or support the efforts of other agencies, that meet the needs of low-income persons and households.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

- The City will work with other funding agencies, including Whatcom County, United Way of Whatcom County and private foundations, to coordinate funding to more effectively meet the needs of the community.
- The City will seek opportunities to increase funding available for affordable housing, and for more types of housing.
- The City will work to inform lenders and households regarding Fair Housing laws, and in particular, to encourage greater participation by minorities and ethnic groups disproportionately represented in homeownership.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

- Most of the city's affordable housing inventory is owned and managed by non-profit housing providers. There is very little risk that projects will be lost from the affordable housing inventory. Regardless, the City will work with these providers when time comes to renew tax credits or pursue other strategies to ensure continued viability of the housing.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

- All housing rehabilitation efforts on homes that were built before 1978 will include lead-based paint hazard evaluations. All hazards will be addressed, either through abatement or interim controls to minimize the hazards.
- The City will continue to provide educational information about the hazards of lead-based paint. Information is available on the City's web site, and City staff provides information targeted to parents of young children through specific outreach to day care centers.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

- The City will support the efforts of non-profit agencies that are working to reduce the number of poverty-level families. These efforts include the Asset Building Coalition sponsored by the Opportunity Council, and the work of United Way, the Whatcom Community Foundation, and Chuckanut Health Foundation of Whatcom County.
- The City will support the efforts of other public agencies that work to reduce the number of people in poverty. Whatcom County and Washington State's WorkFirst Program work towards this end, as well as WorkSource and GoodWill Industries.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

- The City will continue to work with public and nonprofit funding agencies to identify ways to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of the institutional system of funding housing and low-income community development needs in the community.
- The City will continue to work with all housing and human service agencies to coordinate and improve communications. The Community Development Advisory Board will be one mechanism for hearing other program and institutional issues, and addressing ways to improve the system in Bellingham.

Actions planned to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies

- The City will continue to support the efforts of the Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness Steering Committee, which coordinates the actions of housing and social service agencies in the community; as well as participate in committees focused on addressing supportive services in all housing where it's needed.

Discussion

Voters in the City of Bellingham approved a Low-income Housing Levy in 2012, and again in 2018. This levy is now providing \$4 million per year over ten years. The City began implementation of this levy in 2013, using the needs and priorities identified in the Consolidated Plan as a baseline for this program. As a result of this levy passage, significant attention is able to be paid to addressing obstacles, affordable housing supply, institutional structure and coordination.

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.220(l)(1,2,4)

The 2020 Action Plan continues proven programs that the City has implemented for many years, including rehabilitation of homeowner units, homebuyer assistance, public (human) services, tenant-based rental assistance and housing development. The entirety of the anticipated CDBG program income has already been reprogrammed through projects included in this action plan (and tied to this or previous years).

The City is proposing the utilization of the Section 108 loan program this year for the acquisition, (re)development, and/or expansion of childcare facilities serving low-income households.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(l)(1)

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. The total amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed | 0 |
| 2. The amount of proceeds from section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the grantee's strategic plan. | 0 |
| 3. The amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements | 0 |
| 4. The amount of any grant funds returned to the line of credit for which the planned use has not been included in a prior statement or plan | 0 |
| 5. The amount of income from float-funded activities | 0 |
| Total Program Income: | 0 |

Other CDBG Requirements

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. The amount of urgent need activities | 0 |
| 2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan: 2020, 2021, 2022 | 75.00% |

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(l)(2)

1. A description of other forms of investment being used beyond those identified in Section 92.205 is as

follows:

No other forms of investment are used beyond those identified in Section 92.205.

2. A description of the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HOME funds when used for homebuyer activities as required in 92.254, is as follows:

The City of Bellingham has selected the resale and recapture provisions that comply with HOME statutory and regulatory requirements. These policies are selected based on program, and not on a case-by-case basis. The City's Resale and Recapture policies are included by reference, and also in the unique appendices to this Action Plan.

3. A description of the guidelines for resale or recapture that ensures the affordability of units acquired with HOME funds? See 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4) are as follows:

The City has a monitoring policy and procedure to ensure affordability of units acquired with HOME funds. Annual notices are provided to HOME-funded properties regarding new income determinations, HOME rents and utility allowances. Annual income certifications are received from the properties, a desk review is completed, and on-site inspection is completed based on a risk-assessment schedule and HOME rules for monitoring.

4. Plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds along with a description of the refinancing guidelines required that will be used under 24 CFR 92.206(b), are as follows:

HOME funds are not proposed to assist in the refinancing of existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds.