



City Council Agenda Bill

20318

Bill Number

Subject: Report on Community Solutions work group recommended action items for Countywide Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) implementation.

Summary Statement: In 2013, Mayor Linville in conjunction with Council President Fleetwood convened the first in a continuing series of Community Solutions work groups. This work group, comprised of former Countywide Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) members, focused on recommending action items to implement the 2008 CHAT report to provide for and lower the cost of housing within the City of Bellingham. A total of 17 action items were recommended by this work group. Staff will provide a summary of the recommended action items.

Previous Council Action: 2008 - review of the original CHAT report

Fiscal Impact: All recommended action items in the City's current work program have been allocated staff and/or financial resources.

Funding Source: Various

Attachments: Community Solutions - CHAT Participants
Summary of Recommended CHAT Action Items

Meeting Activity	Meeting Date	Staff Recommendation	Presented By	Time
Committee Briefing Information Only	24-Feb-2014	Information Only	Jeff Thomas, PCD Director	10 min

Council Committee:

Planning
Jack Weiss, Chair
Roxanne Murphy; Gene Knutson

Agenda Bill Contact:

Jeff Thomas, PCD Director 778-8300

Reviewed By
Jeff Thomas, PCD Director

Initials	Date
BT	2-19-2014

Committee Actions:

Legal
Mayor

AA	2/19/14
KL	2/19/14

Council Action:

Community Solutions - CHAT Participants

Facilitators

Mayor Kelli Linville

President Seth Fleetwood

Organization

City of Bellingham

City of Bellingham

Participant

Liz Evans

John Harmon

Brian Evans

John P.C. Moon

Dean Fearing

Riannon Bardsley

Dick Skeers

Derek Long

David Edelstein

David Finet

Perry Eskridge

Charlotte Eastman-Pros

Brandon Priest

Organization

AGC Whatcom County

Bellingham Housing Authority

BIA of Whatcom County

Habitat for Humanity

Whatcom County Kulshan Community Land Trust

Northwest Youth Services

Skeers Construction

Sustainable Connections

Greenbriar Construction

Opportunity Council

Whatcom County Association of Realtors

Sterling Bank

Washington Federal Bank

Summary of Recommended CHAT Action Items

The following recommended action items have been completed or are already included in the City's 2014 work program. Additional actions items considered that did not make the final recommendation list are also part of the 2014 work program.

1. Defer payment of System Demand Charges (water and sewer capacity fees) to final inspection.
COMPLETED - January 2014
2. Allow single-family homes to include an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and cottage housing. Allow detached two-story garages to house ADUs, allow conversion of garages to ADUs, and reduce impact fees on ADUs.
NOTE - Part of 2014 ADU Ordinance Update Project, Legislative Action Required - Working on public outreach
3. Offer neighborhoods the opportunity to pilot ADU projects.
NOTE - Part of 2014 ADU Ordinance Update Project, Legislative Action Required - Working on public outreach
4. Allow "lot size averaging" in all short plats and subdivisions, which allows a parcel of land to be divided into unequally-sized lots as long as the average of all the lot sizes remains equal to or above the minimum zoned lot size.
NOTE - Part of 2014 Subdivision Ordinance Update Project, Legislative Action Required- Working on scope and public outreach
5. Allow condo development in single family zones as long as there is no common wall construction.
NOTE - Part of 2014 Subdivision Ordinance Update Project, Legislative Action Required - Working on scope and public outreach
6. Inventory all City and other public agency purchases of land since adoption of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. Quantify any residential unit yield eliminated by changing the use of that land. Define specific steps to return that residential unit yield to the land supply. Require that if the city buys land zoned for residential use, the lost density must be offset.
NOTE - Part of 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update Project, Legislative Action Required - Commencing Phase II
7. Defer payment of impact fees (transportation, parks) to final inspection.
NOTE - Part of 2014 Impact Fee Analysis Project, Legislative Action Required - Working on scope

8. Provide a sliding scale for impact fees and System Demand Charges (SDCs), descending from the current fee structure, to reflect the size of the house. Larger houses or projects pay a larger share of fees, smaller houses pay smaller fees.

NOTE - Part of 2014 Impact Fee Analysis Project, Legislative Action Required - Working on scope

9. Use real estate tax abatements and put in place an affordable housing fund that would be loaned to worthy projects. Hold an annual contest for projects.

NOTE - The Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program continues to be utilized with a total of 662 units having been constructed to date. The implementation of the Housing Levy continues in 2014. Through the various Housing Levy program, a total of 259 units received financial assistance totaling \$3.88m in 2013.

10. Permit and develop off-site wetland Mitigation Banking.

NOTE - The development of a city wide Habitat Restoration Master Plan is in progress. The first off-site wetland mitigation location for development is being permitted. Wetland mitigation banking and fee in-lieu of programs are being assessed for feasibility.

The following recommended action items are proposed to be part of the City's 2015 - 2016 work program, subject to staff and financial resource availability. These action items are listed in order of relative ease of completing.

11. Reconsider the cost of all regulatory fees involving SFH construction.
12. Change the rules defining a "building lot," so clustering by right is allowed in single family zones.
13. In some circumstances allow duplexes in single family zones.
14. Extend water and sewer services to vacant land the city has identified for development.
15. Establish performance based site design standards – sidewalks, landscaping, road widths, stormwater, etc.

The following recommended action items are not supported by staff to be added to the City's future work program.

16. Extend water and sewer services to vacant land in the UGA prior to annexation.
17. Existing platted lots determined to have no wetlands features within their boundaries should not be subject to wetlands review/mitigation from features existing outside their boundaries.