



City Council

Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability Status Report

Agenda Date: 5/23/2017
Agenda Item Number: 2.A
File Number: 17-0572

Type: study session **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

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Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability (AHCOHA) will provide Council an overview and status report on the committee's work to date.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a status report from the AHCOHA and provide feedback and direction to the committee as it continues to examine issues and options related to affordable housing and homelessness.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a status report on the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability (AHCOHA). The AHCOHA's Charter asks the Committee to gather information and develop options for Council's consideration. After five meetings, the Committee will provide a status report and update to the full Council.

Staff Contact:

Keith Stahley, Director Community Planning and Development Department 360.753.8227

Presenter(s):

Keith Stahley, Director Community Planning and Development Department

Background and Analysis:

The Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability (AHCOHA) has now held five meetings, and all members of the Committee attended the Olympia Home Fund's Housing Forum held on March 29, 2017. Over these five meetings and through the Housing Forum, the Committee has gathered information and gained perspective on housing affordability and homelessness in our region.

Attached, Council will find a document titled Meeting Highlights. This document attempts to provide a summary of the five meetings to date as well as observations about information gathered. This document will provide an outline for the staff presentation.

Tool Kit -- Staff Note: Siting and development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) will be addressed through the ongoing Missing Middle Process, as will an exploration of other tools and strategies to encourage the production of affordable housing.

Warming Center -- Staff Note:

- Encourage Thurston County to start work on a 2017-2018 shelter now
- Pursue regional support for a cold weather shelter through a regional task force
- Find a location that meets operational and community needs

Shelter Beds -- Staff Note: City staff reported that there are currently 210 shelter beds. There are 138 permanent beds that are approximately 90 percent full. There are an additional 72 winter shelter beds. These are 44 percent full on average. (See as noted in the Pathways Home document, shelters must be seen as a preferable alternative to sleeping outside.)

Bellingham -- Staff Note: Bellingham moved quickly on its housing levy with the process being initiated in January 2012 and the vote in November of that same year. This effort was preceded by a yearlong community conversation in 2008 known as the County-wide Affordability Task Force (CHAT).

Vancouver - Staff Note: The City of Vancouver adopted the following ordinances early in their process to help provide some minimal levels of protections for vulnerable renters:

- 45 day notice of rent increase beyond 10 percent
- 60 day notice of no cause eviction
- No discrimination based on source of income (Olympia adopted this language in 2016)

Should Council direct staff to move forward with these ordinances staff recommends that outreach be done to land lords, property owners and rental management agencies to inform them of these proposed changes and receive their feedback.

Staff recommends that we examine how we can fine tune our multiple family tax exemption program to pursue housing affordability goals while continuing to encourage downtown housing development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Everett Staff Note: The Mayor of the City of Everett convened a broad based task force to examine street life issues effecting downtown Everett. This group met from July 2014 until November 2014 and developed 63 recommendations for consideration by the City. Two of the more interesting actions included in Everett's plan are the Embedded Social Worker and the Chronic Utilizer Alternative Response Team. Both efforts would appear to be approaches worth exploring in Olympia.

Downtown Strategy -- Staff Note: The Downtown Strategy encourages Council and the City to take a leadership role in convening a broad-based community conversation about housing, homelessness,

and its effects on downtown. While these efforts can be coped in 2017, staffing and funding will be required in 2018 to move these conversations forward.

Coordinated Entry -- Staff Note: City Staff has continued its efforts to better understand the coordinated entry process and what models are most effective. Jeff Spring recommended that staff contact Kitsap County. Leonard Bauer and Keith Stahley had a telephone conference with Monica Bernhard the Director of Housing and Community Support for Kitsap Community Resources. Monica described their coordinated entry system. Most significantly they are the sole provider of coordinated entry for the entirety of Kitsap County (same population as Thurston County and similar homeless population), they provide coordinated entry at five different locations throughout the county, they receive \$295,000 in funding from Kitsap County (\$100,000 in Thurston County) and the County does not include this funding in their competitive process.

Public Participation -- Staff Note: Continuing Staff Work Related to Public Participation:

- Present options for public participation re: funding option;
- Present options for public participation re: vulnerable renter protection; and
- Present options for whether or not City Council should direct staff to further flesh out a broader public participation plan around housing affordability and homelessness

If Council proceeds with funding in the fall of 2017, some options have short timeframes for action. Any property tax consideration would need to go to the county auditor no later than August 1. Sales tax funding could be considered in the spring of 2018. Generally, there is little time for the City to gather information for either public safety or housing. The current Elway survey will provide some indication of community support and priorities.

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

Housing affordability and homelessness are issues that have a community-wide impact and are of community-wide interest.

Options:

Hear committee report and provide feedback and direction.

Financial Impact:

None at this time.

Attachments:

Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Housing Meeting Highlights
Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Housing Charter
Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Housing 2017 Work Plan