

Invitation to Submit a Letter of Intent to Request Funding from the City of Bellingham

The following programs are accepting Letters of Intent to assess project and funding needs:

- Development of Rental Housing
- Preservation of Housing (including shelter and rehabilitation of existing affordable housing)
- Rental Assistance and Supportive Services associated with a city-funded Rental Housing project
- Homeownership opportunities - new development
- Public Facilities
- Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) embarking on a development project may also request limited additional funding

Projects must primarily serve low-income households, with an emphasis on very-low income households, within the City of Bellingham.

Please reference the [City of Bellingham 2012 Housing Levy Administrative and Financial Plan](#) and [City of Bellingham Housing Development Guideline and Procedure Handbook](#) for questions about eligibility, eligible costs, and details on what the City's priorities are.

The Letter of Intent should include the following information:

- Description of the organization sponsoring the project or activity, including whether it has been designated as a CHDO for prior development projects.
- Description of project or activity, including project type (one of above categories), need, location, number of units/households to be assisted, work to be embarked upon, timing and readiness to proceed.
- Description of funding needed for project or activity, likely request from the City (this could be represented as a range), any known constraints on the ability to use federal HOME and/or CDBG funding, and likely financial terms requested (if known).
- Any additional information about the project or activity you would like the City to know at this stage, including any major areas of uncertainty.
- Using the prior year applications as a guide (posted here <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/pages/funding-opportunities.aspx>), the date at which the organization could be ready to submit a complete application to the City for funding for the project or activity.

Detailed descriptions for each program follow. Contact Samya Lutz at slklutz@cob.org or 360-778-8385 with any questions.

Development of Rental Housing

The Rental Housing program would fund the development of affordable rental housing in Bellingham. This program emphasizes housing for those earning below 50% of the area median income. Preference is given to projects that provide housing that utilizes the Coordinated Entry system managed by the Whatcom Homeless Service Center and/or focus on target population groups or areas identified as priorities by the City. Projects require an affordability period of 50 years from the date of project completion.

Preservation of Housing

This program includes preservation of multifamily housing, including shelters and transitional housing. Emphasis and requirements for this program are the same as the Rental Housing program listed above.

Rental Assistance and Supportive Services

This program serves vulnerable families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness. The priority of this program is to provide the necessary supportive services and rental assistance for housing units developed with the support of City funds. Requests under this program will only be considered as part of an integrated project request with that of Rental Housing Development or Housing Preservation.

Homeownership - New Development

This program includes assistance for low-income homebuyers to purchase homes in the City of Bellingham. Funding can be used for site acquisition and development costs for affordable for-sale homes that will be sold to eligible first-time homebuyers, displaced homemakers and homeowners in default or distress.

Public Facilities

This program includes public facilities and infrastructure projects that can utilize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Acquisition, construction or rehabilitation of community facilities, such as food banks, senior centers, and community centers will be considered, as well as acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, or installation of public facilities and improvements such as sewer projects, flood drainage facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, parks, recreation, open space, streets, sidewalks and walkways, and removal of architectural barriers. Preference will be given to projects in neighborhoods within the City's geographic priorities (as written in the Administrative and Financial Plan).

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO)

CHDOs are encouraged to apply for any of the programs listed, provided they anticipate being able to use HOME Investment Partnership Funds for a project within the next two years. A limited amount of operating and/or predevelopment funding may be available to help CHDOs prepare for their development project.

Letters of Intent must be received at the Planning and Community Development Department in Bellingham City Hall by **5 PM on Thursday, January 12**. Address letters to:

ATTN: Samya Lutz
Housing & Services Program Manager
Planning & Community Development Department
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225