



# HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA) 2025

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## Rental (Multifamily) Production, Interim Housing, and Preservation Programs

2025 FUNDING ROUND

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 2024



**CITY OF BELLINGHAM HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND**  
NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)  
RENTAL (MULTIFAMILY) HOUSING PRODUCTION PROGRAM  
2025 FUNDING ROUND

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### **Application Round**

Applications are being solicited in order to establish a list of projects for funding in 2025. Funding from the City of Bellingham Housing and Community Development Fund may include one or more of these sources: Bellingham Housing Levy, Bellingham Affordable Housing Sales Tax, HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

### **Eligible Activities and Funding Available**

There are a variety of opportunities for City funding of projects. Funding is available in the following program areas:

- Rental Housing** - production of new rental (multifamily) housing primarily serving households that earn less than 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). Approximately \$9 million is available for both the Rental Housing and Housing Preservation programs, with multiple projects likely to be awarded funding.
- Rental Assistance and Supportive Services** - only those agencies that are requesting production of new multifamily housing under this NOFA may request rental assistance and supportive service funds. No additional funds are available, and services funding must be included within the Rental Housing request (above).
- Housing Preservation** - preservation of multifamily housing, including shelters and transitional housing. Approximately \$9 million total funding is available for both the Rental Housing and Housing Preservation programs, with preservation projects typically receiving a small portion of this amount.
- Community/Public Facilities and Infrastructure** – community/public facilities and improvements that principally benefit low-income persons or areas, including community facilities such as food banks, senior centers, childcare facilities, community centers, and acquisition-only of existing housing. Approximately \$250,000 available, with more possible for housing.
- Homeownership Production** - creation of ownership opportunities that expand homeownership while implementing the City's infill goals. Up to \$75,000 per unit available for ownership housing development, including federal funding assistance, through projects that maintain long-term affordability for low-income households.

### **Other Funding Available**

The City and partners provide other financial assistance, including Housing and Human Service grants, Emergency Multifamily Repair Needs (up to \$50,000), Acquisition & Opportunity Loans, Housing Repair and Weatherization and First Time Homebuyer

Downpayment Assistance. Contact the City for more information on these opportunities or referral to one of our partner agencies.

### **Applications**

Applications can be downloaded from Bellingham's web page at <https://cob.org/services/housing/funding-opportunities/partnerships-funding>

When submitting your application, make sure you do so in the original format provided. DO NOT convert your application to other formats. Technical corrections requested by staff will be allowed within three (3) working days of the request.

### **Consistency with Community & Regional Priorities and Plans**

Projects that are selected for funding have to demonstrate consistency with Community Priorities and Plans as further described below. But, even more important than demonstrating consistency, the City is looking for projects that specifically demonstrate how these community priorities will be implemented through the project. These Community Priorities and Plans include the following:

- ❑ **2023 -2028 Consolidated Plan** - this Plan outlines the housing and community development goals and strategies to meet the priority needs in the City of Bellingham. <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/Pages/consolidated-plan.aspx>
- ❑ **A Home for Everyone, Whatcom County Plan to End Homelessness** - this Plan provides a blueprint for how our community will work together to prevent and end homelessness. <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/homeless/Pages/homelessness.aspx>
- ❑ **Healthy Whatcom, Community Health Improvement Plan** – this plan outlines community health improvement goals including those specific to housing. <https://healthywhatcom.org/>
- ❑ **Zoning, etc.** - The City will not reserve funding for projects that require changes in zoning. <http://www.cob.org/services/planning/development>
- ❑ **WA State Commerce** –The City will utilize the 2024 Funding Round documents published by Commerce during the second half of last year. Note that the Excel CFA will be modified to include the City’s scoring. These reference materials can all be found here: <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/wcfjrlzje4vlqbl6r44su8kfd53ra63a/folder/271098877727>

### **Funding Available for Projects**

The funds that are available for 2025 are anticipated to be City Housing Levy and Affordable Housing Sales Tax funds, and Federal HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

## I. General Terms and Conditions

All projects must meet the requirements of the Housing Levy & Affordable Housing Sales Tax Administrative & Financial Plan: <https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/housing-levy-plan.pdf>. The City has established the following additional terms and conditions for Housing Production and Preservation; as consistent with City of Bellingham Guideline and Procedure Handbook: <https://www.cob.org/wp-content/uploads/housing-development-handbook.pdf>.

### 1. **Eligibility.**

- a. This NOFA is available to those *production* projects which would either i) create new income-restricted units, either through acquisition or construction, which are not currently income-restricted for those households earning less than 50% of Area Median Income (AMI); or ii) ensure existing housing affordable to those earning less than 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) at imminent risk of being lost within the next two (2) years remains viable and affordable.
- b. This NOFA is available to those *preservation* projects that are already existing projects and included in the City's Consolidated Plan inventory, unless explicitly approved through additional processes by the City. A capital needs assessment (CNA) is not required for an application to be submitted, but **WILL BE REQUIRED** as a condition of any financial award prior to execution of financial service agreements (contracts). The CNA must be prepared by a professional, independent third party. If the applicant is successful in having funds allocated, the applicant will need to submit a feasible plan to fund the financial reserves identified in the CNA.

### 2. **Income Targeting.**

- a. On average, at least 70% of the City's *production* housing funds must benefit households with incomes less than 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). For example, a 50-unit *production* project includes at least 35 units that serve households earning less than 50% AMI. And at least 90% of the City's *preservation* housing funds must benefit households with incomes less than 50% of Area Median Income (AMI). For example, a 50-unit *preservation* project must include at least 45 units that serve households earning less than 50% AMI.
- b. All City Rental Housing Production funds must benefit households earning less than 60% AMI.
- c. Preference will be given to those projects that include units that target extremely low-income households (less than 30% AMI).  
<http://www.cob.org/documents/planning/housing/hud-income-rent.pdf>

### 3. **Project Readiness.** Projects need to demonstrate their ability to carry out the project.

- a. The City will hold the funding commitment for no longer than two (2) years for production projects, and one (1) year for preservation projects. At that point, the project will need to have all necessary financing in place and be under contract.
- b. The City will require that the project is complete within four (4) years of funding commitment for production projects, and two (2) years of funding commitment for

preservation projects, although the City may extend that time for circumstances out of the control of the applicant.

- c. The project needs to demonstrate that revenues are sufficient to cover projected operating expenses (Operational Pro forma required).
- d. Applicant has sufficient capacity to develop, manage and deliver the project.
- e. Applicant must have site control.

4. **Funding Limits.** The City sets limits on funding for housing production based on unit size as shown in the table below. These limits are based on Total Development Costs (TDC) set by the Housing Finance Commission. In general, the City will pay no more than 25% of TDC. For projects which serve the Homeless, the City will contribute up to 40% of TDC for designated homeless units served through the community's homeless service center. Some exceptions are detailed in the Housing Development Handbook. All sources of City funds are included in these limits.

| Unit Size | Rental Units<br>(25% of TDC) | Homeless Units<br>(40% of TDC) |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (Studio)  | \$93,272                     | \$149,235                      |
| 1 Bedroom | \$108,797                    | \$174,074                      |
| 2 Bedroom | \$115,232                    | \$184,372                      |
| 3 Bedroom | \$136,247                    | \$217,996                      |
| 4 Bedroom | \$146,923                    | \$235,076                      |

5. **Evergreen Sustainability and Property Standards.** All City-funded Production and Preservation of Homes Program projects must follow the City’s implementation of the Washington State requirements for Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards, as specified in the Housing Development Handbook. Details are available through the Washington State Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/housing-trust-fund/housing-trust-fund-evergreen-sustainable-development/>), and the City of Bellingham Housing Development Handbook, Section 212.

Preservation or rehabilitation projects must result in housing that meets local housing standards adopted by the City (see [Housing Development Handbook](#), and the [local housing standards checklist](#)).

6. **Period of Affordability.** Projects require a minimum period of affordability of fifty (50) years from the date of project completion. A covenant will be recorded against the property that requires continued use of the property for low-income housing for the Period of Affordability. During this period, the owner or property manager will be required to do annual reporting of tenant incomes and rents to ensure that affordability requirements are met, and the City will monitor those reports to ensure compliance. If projects are awarded HOME funds, the HOME period of affordability is based on the

amount of funding per unit, and is shown in the table below. The City reserves the right to determine the period of affordability based on the level of investment and the type of project.

| Average \$ per-unit      | Minimum HOME Affordability Period |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| < \$15,000/unit          | 5 years                           |
| \$15,000 - \$40,000/unit | 10 years                          |
| > \$40,000/unit          | 15 years                          |

7. **Development Fees.** The City sets limits and requirements for fees as follows:
  - a. **Developer Fee.** The City will allow no more than 10% of the Housing Levy award go towards a Developer Fee. (See [Housing Development Handbook](#).)
  - b. **City Monitoring Fee.** The City will charge a Monitoring Fee, due at the time of loan closing that will be used to monitor the project for the 50-year period of affordability that is required for rental projects. Projects need to include this fee in their Project Budget. The annual fee is \$450 for projects with 10 or fewer housing units plus an additional \$25 per unit for 11 or more units. The fee is an eligible expense for City funds.
  
8. **Eligible Organizations and Capacity.**
  - a. Priority will be given to applicants that have demonstrated ability to develop, own, and/or manage affordable housing. Applicants that do not have previous experience in these areas will be expected to propose an appropriate relationship with an entity that does have this experience. See Housing Levy Administrative & Financial Plan for eligible borrowers.
  - b. Sponsor must demonstrate sufficient capacity to develop the project, manage the project long-term (50 years), and deliver appropriate services, if applicable.
  
9. **Financing Available.** The City's financial assistance is available as a loan, secured by financial interest in the affordable housing property. Loan terms will vary based on the financial needs of the project. The City may authorize deferred payment loans for those projects with inadequate sources to repay the loans. Deferred payment loans shall be secured in a manner to ensure that if the project no longer provides the benefits of affordable housing as approved by the City, that the loan (with interest) would become due and payable.

The interest rate for projects not using low-income housing tax credits will generally be 1% for nonprofit-sponsored projects and 3% for private for-profit-sponsored projects. The interest rate for projects using low-income housing tax credits will be a minimum of 1% simple interest and a maximum of the Applicable Federal Rate for the purposes of Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code, depending on the project's projected capacity



for repayment. The actual interest rate for projects using low-income housing tax credits will generally range from 1-3% and will be set on a case-by-case basis.

Applications should identify the proposed terms for the project, and include payments as applicable in the operating pro forma.

10. **Operating Expenses and Operating Reserves.** All applications must include an operating expense budget with sufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposal will have sufficient funds to operate once completed. Projects may be allowed to use cash flow to pay for services that are needed by project residents, subject to City approval. Affordable housing projects should not have a cash on cash return greater than 10%.

*Capitalized operating reserves are an allowed expense and can be included in the funding approved by the City.*

If the application for Housing Production is in conjunction with a request for Rental Assistance and Supportive Services, the application should make clear that a request for project-based Rental Assistance and Supportive Services funding is proposed.

Assistance with rent and supportive services must be applied for and approved by the City or other funder in order to be included in the Operating Expense budget.

*All projects must demonstrate in the operating pro forma the ability to capitalize an operating reserve by the end of the second full year of project operation. The operating reserve will be equivalent to three months of the project's first year operating expenses.*

11. **Replacement Reserves.** All applications must identify how the project intends to accumulate and provide funds when needed to replace or maintain major systems of the building in order to maintain long-term viability of the property. The assumptions behind the amounts put into the budgets should be stated as part of the narrative explanation for that line item. The per unit reserves need to be reflected in the development budget if they are capitalized and in the operating pro forma if they are to be deposited out of operating income.

*Capitalized replacement reserves are an allowed expense and can be included in the funding approved by the City. Reserves should anticipate the first ten years of capital replacement costs.*

12. **Wage and Labor Requirements.** Applicants seeking funds should assume that state prevailing wage rates (Chapter 39.12 RCW) will apply, and build the requisite costs into all project development budgets. Applicants are advised to consult with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries and/or private legal counsel prior to applying

for funding to determine whether prevailing wages must be paid and, if so, whether commercial or residential rates apply.

Applicants seeking funds should also assume that federal labor requirements will apply, if applicable, as the City reserves the right to assign federal and/or Housing Levy funds for projects. When federal funds trigger prevailing wages determined under the Davis-Bacon Act in a project, the higher of either the State Residential Prevailing Wage Rates (unless modified as stated below) or Davis-Bacon wage rates will apply to each job classification, unless applicable law requires otherwise. In cases where Davis-Bacon wages are triggered, Davis-Bacon monitoring procedures are followed instead of City monitoring procedures. Refer to the Housing Development Handbook for more information.

13. **Competitive Selection of Contractors.** Borrowers must follow competitive selection process, as described in the Housing Development Handbook. The borrower shall submit a summary of their proposed competitive selection process. The City reserves the right to review and approve the process prior to implementation.
14. **Project Location.** All projects funded under this program must be located within the City of Bellingham. The project must be located in an area that allows the proposed use and housing density without requiring zoning changes. Preference will be given for rental production projects located in areas which promote socioeconomic diversity. This can either be through working in low-income neighborhoods where there is a risk of displacement of existing residents, or through working in high-income neighborhoods where there is a lack of housing affordable to low-income households. All new construction and rental projects must be located no more than ½ mile from a public transportation route ([www.ridewta.com](http://www.ridewta.com)), and preference is given to those projects that are located in a high-frequency transit service area (30-minute headways).
15. **Project Sign.** All projects receiving funding must post a Project Funding Sign at the project construction site(s). Sign graphics shall be in accordance with the Funding Agreement approved by the City and must be installed at the commencement of work on the site through project completion and occupancy.
16. **Severe Weather Plan.** All projects receiving City funding must outline a plan within their operations manual describing how residents/facility guests will be supported in the event of a severe weather emergency. A severe weather emergency may include freezing temperatures and precipitation during the winter season, severely hot temperatures during the summer season, and severe smoke and reduced air quality during wildfire season.



## II. Competitive Selection Criteria – Rental/Interim Production

In addition to the general requirements, the City will evaluate Rental/Interim Housing Production Program proposals in the following areas.

| Housing Production Allocation Criteria | Basis  | Max Points |
|--|--|------------|
| A. Income Targeting                    | <i>Priority for additional very low-income set-aside targeting households below 30% AMI and below 50% AMI.</i>   | 30         |
| B. Population                          | <i>Priority for targeting special needs and homeless populations, as well as large families. Priority for projects with supportive services for special needs.</i> | 35         |
| C. Target Areas                        | <i>Priority for projects that support socioeconomically diverse neighborhoods.</i>   | 20         |
| D. Cost, Notice & Readiness            | <i>Priority for projects that have consulted with neighborhoods, have funding committed, and demonstrate cost effective project.</i>                               | 15         |
| E. Leveraging                          | <i>Priority for projects that leverage other funding, including private and philanthropic funds.</i>   | 20         |
| F. Sustainability                      | <i>Priority for projects that provide additional sustainability features.</i>  | 10         |
| G. Community Benefit                   | <i>Priority for projects that include a community room for use by tenants/community or high community-need commercial ground-floor use.</i>                        | 5          |
| H. Development Amenities               | <i>Priority for projects that provide onsite development amenities.</i>  | 5          |
| I. Equity and Social Justice           | <i>Priority for projects that integrate equity and social justice into their organizational ethos</i>  | 10         |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                         |  | <b>150</b> |

### A. Income Targeting (30 points max)

Projects must meet the minimum requirements regarding income targeting set forth in Section I.1 above, including all Rental Housing Production funds must benefit households earning less than 60% Area Median Income (AMI), and at least 70% of the City's housing funds must benefit households with incomes less than 50% of AMI.

Projects that exceed these minimum income targeting requirements by providing additional housing for lower-income populations will get preference as follows:

- Projects that set aside at least 25% of the City-funded units for households with incomes at 30% of area median income or below. (20 pts., plus 1 pt for each additional 1% to maximum of 25 points)  
<http://www.cob.org/documents/planning/housing/hud-income-rent.pdf>
- Projects that set aside more than 70% of the City-funded units for households with incomes at 50% of area median income or below. (1 pts., plus 1 point for every 1% up to max. 5 pts.)

**B. Population Served (35 points max)**

The Rental Housing Production Program does not have requirements for the population that would be served by a project. The Housing Levy and Consolidated Plan identify priorities and preferences based on need, equity and social justice. Projects that identify measurable ways to meet the following priorities will receive preference in the selection process:

- Projects in which at least 10% of the units have three bedrooms or more reserved for large households of four or more persons. (5 pts)
- Projects in which at least 20% of units are reserved for families with children, especially single-parent families. (5 pts)
- Projects in which at least 20% of the units are reserved for persons with physical or mental impairment. (5 pts)
- Projects in which at least 20% of the units are reserved for elderly (62+) persons. (5 pts)
- Projects in which at least 10% of the units are reserved for victims of domestic violence. (5 pts)
- Projects in which at least 20% of the units are reserved for those who experience homelessness or prevent homelessness,<sup>1</sup> and tenant selection is coordinated with the region's Homeless Service Center. (10 pts)
- Project with supportive services that will be provided to residents of a project (Supportive services plan and budget must be attached. Must include details about how services specifically support the needs of specific populations above, if selected). (5 pts)

Supportive Services: Additional points for those projects with supportive services can be allocated as follows:

- Staff will deliver the supportive services on-site. (1 pt)
- Operating budget for supportive services shows that costs are reasonable to similar services in the community. (2 pts)
- The organization's history of working with other service delivery agency partners in the community demonstrates that the organization has solid community connections. (2 pts)

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<sup>1</sup> Applicants should please take notice that other funding sources may use a different definition of homelessness. Check with other funders about income, rent and population restrictions applicable to that funding source.

The type(s) and intensity of supportive services the project will provide is well-matched to the needs of the population served by the project:

- Well-matched and supported by evidence/research (3 pts)
- Well-matched, but no supporting evidence/research cited (1 pt)

The organization's experience using this type of service package for the proposed population(s) to increase housing stability demonstrates:

- Organization (or partner) is experienced using this service package and demonstrates past experience measuring housing stability outcomes in such a setting (3 pts)
- Organization (or partner) is experienced using this service package, but poor or no demonstration of past experiencing measuring housing stability outcomes in such a setting (1 pt)

### C. Target (Geographic) Areas (20 points max)

All projects funded under this program must be located within the City of Bellingham. The project must be located in an area that allows the proposed use and housing density without requiring zoning changes. All projects must be located no more than ½ mile from a public transportation route ([www.ridewta.com](http://www.ridewta.com)).

Projects located in the following areas will receive preference. A map(s) which includes project location in relation to these target areas must be included in the application in order to be considered for these preferences:

- Project is located within ½ mile of a high frequency transit route (30-minute headways), including a safe walking path to the transit route. (5 pts)
- Project is located within an approved [Urban Village Plan](#) area. (4 pts)
- Rental housing project is located in an area with *less than* 60% rental concentration or outside a low-income neighborhood (See Figure 6 and 7 in [Consolidated Plan](#)). (5 pts)
- Project is located within ½ mile walkable distance of a park or public recreational facility. (3 pts)
- Project is located within ½ mile walkable distance of a community center/senior center. (1 pts)
- Project is located within ½ mile walkable distance of a grocery store that provides fresh produce and meat. (3 pts)
- Project is located within ½ mile walkable distance of a public school. (3 pts)
- Project is located within ½ mile walkable distance of an urgent care or emergency medical facility. (1 pts)

### D. Cost, Notice & Readiness to Proceed (15 points max)

Projects will be required to enter into a funding agreement within two years of the City's commitment to fund the project. All projects will have to be complete within four years.

*Projects require site control within one (1) year of funding commitment, or demonstration to the City's satisfaction of substantial progress in project development.* Proposals for quality affordable housing must demonstrate a cost effective, sustainable investment of public funding. Rental Housing Production is subject to limits on the amount of City funding that will be provided per unit based on unit size, as well as limits on Developer Fees, Contractor Overhead and Profit.

Those projects that demonstrate an ability to provide affordable housing in a shorter timeframe and can demonstrate how it will meet or exceed cost effective requirements, will get preference.

- Applicant has provided the Neighborhood Association an opportunity to review and comment on the project proposal. (<https://cob.org/wp-content/uploads/MNAC-Roster.pdf>) (3 pts)
- All capital and operating funds needed for the project are committed. (3 pts)
- The project demonstrates efficient design that will reduce operating costs, such as energy consumption, water conservation, etc. beyond minimum Evergreen Sustainability requirements or building/energy codes. (1-5 pts)
- The applicant presents an operating expense and capital reserve budget that demonstrates sufficient knowledge and experience to ensure that the project will perform as proposed. (1-6 pts)

#### **E. Leveraging (20 points max)**

The City sets limits on funding based on unit size as shown in the table below. These limits are based on Total Development Costs (TDC) set by the Housing Finance Commission. In general, the City will pay no more than 25% of TDC. For projects with 10-or less units that serve the Homeless, the City will contribute 40% - 50% of TDC. All sources of City funds are included in these limits. Some exceptions to these limits may be possible under limited circumstances.

Projects which leverage additional funds, requiring less investment than the maximum level allowed, will receive preference.

- Private funding (other than private funding through LIHTC) in an amount equal to at least 10% of project costs is provided. (5 pts)
- Philanthropic assistance from established organizations in an amount equal to at least 5% of project costs is provided. (5 pts)
- Developer equity contribution in an amount equal to at least 1% of the project costs is committed. (5 pts)
- The project request is 20% or more per unit *below* the maximum contribution levels, adjusted for unit size. (See table that follows.<sup>2</sup>) (5 pts for 20%-29%, 11 pts for 20-39%, 20 pts for 40+%)

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<sup>2</sup> The maximum per unit amounts may be adjusted if criteria is met per WSHFC policy.

| Unit Size | City Funding Limits             |  | 20% Below City Funding Limits   |  |
|-----------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|           | Rental projects<br>(25% of TDC) | Homeless projects<br>- 10 or less units<br>(40% TDC) | Rental projects<br>(25% of TDC) | Homeless projects<br>- 10 or less units<br>(40% TDC) |
| (Studio)  | \$93,272                        | \$149,235  | \$74,617                        | \$119,388  |
| 1 Bedroom | \$108,797                       | \$174,074  | \$87,037                        | \$139,260  |
| 2 Bedroom | \$115,232                       | \$184,372  | \$92,186                        | \$147,497  |
| 3 Bedroom | \$136,247                       | \$217,996  | \$108,998                       | \$174,396  |
| 4 Bedroom | \$146,923                       | \$235,076  | \$117,538                       | \$188,061  |

#### F. Sustainability (10 points max)

All City-funded Production and Preservation of Homes Program projects must follow the City's implementation of the Washington State requirements for Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards, where applicable. Details are available through the Washington State Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/housing-trust-fund/housing-trust-fund-evergreen-sustainable-development/>), and through the City Housing Development Handbook, Section 212.

Projects that provide one or more of the following sustainability features would get preference.

- The project renovates or rehabilitates an historic structure eligible for listing on the local, state or national register of historic places. (4 pts)
- The site is a grayfield (abandoned site), brownfield (hazardous site requiring remediation) or an adaptive reuse (converting non-residential). (3 pts)
- The project includes additional reduction in energy use, beyond minimum requirements, outlined in Section 5.2 of the [Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards](#). (4 pts)
- The project exceeds minimum requirements for retention of stormwater, including use of water-permeable materials in walkways or parking areas, and other methods of cleansing stormwater before infiltration or discharge. (3 pts)
- The project includes advanced water-conserving fixtures and water reuse beyond mandatory requirements. (3 pts)

#### G. Community Benefit (5 points max)

Projects that include a high community-need commercial ground-floor use would receive preference:

- Provide for a high-need ground floor use, such as:
  - Childcare/early-learning facility. (3 pts)
  - Senior center (2 pts)
  - Job training center (1 pts)
  - Neighborhood resource center (1 pts)
  - Offices for nonprofits, offered at below-market rate rents (1pts)

- Other community uses, as described by applicant and approved by City (1pts)

**H. Development Amenities (5 points max)**

Projects that provide any of the following amenities currently non-existent for its residents would receive preference:

- Provide an onsite community room for resident use. (1 pts)
- Provide an onsite community garden or pea-patch for resident use. (1 pts)
- Provide onsite computer business/learning center with high-speed internet. (2 pts)
- Provide onsite playground or fitness trail (1 pts)
- Provide a fitness center (2 pts)

**I. Equity and Social Justice (10 points max)**

The city supports the [Healthy Whatcom](#) approach to elevate and activate principles of anti-racism in participating organizations and increase the representation of client and Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) voices within and across agencies for program/process design and review.

The rubric below describes examples of evidence of these principles in practice. To receive the maximum number of points, responses must be specific, and related to the agency department managing all project activities.



| <b>Equity and Social Justice</b>  | <b>Points</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <u>Best practice:</u> Exemplary in Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) for other organizations. D&I is a core organizational value and not seen as an isolated program. For example, D&I is regularly reviewed, and employees are generally representative of their clients.  | 10            |
| <u>Progressive:</u> Implementing D&I systemically; D&I is well integrated into organization’s strategy with adequate staff, resources, and support to ensure implementation. For example, shows more than one cycle of training, reflection, and implementation or necessary changes as a result.                 | 8             |
| <u>Proactive:</u> D&I is broadly defined to include disability, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, race, and ethnicity. Starting to implement D&I systemically. For example, shows at least one cycle of training and reflection. Specific desired outcomes are expected, but not yet seen in evidence. | 6             |
| <u>Reactive:</u> D&I is narrowly defined. Compliance mindset; actions taken are primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. For example, has a policy stating that they do not discriminate, use a Fair Housing logo, a “Black Lives Matter” signs in the window, etc.                           | 4             |
| <u>Inactive:</u> No D&I work has begun; D&I are not part of organizational structure or any program goals or activities. For example, applicant articulates the importance of D&I in their application response, but sites no evidence of any specific actions that have been taken.                              | 2             |
| <b>TOTAL points possible</b>  | <b>10</b>     |

This scale is adapted from Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks, *Standards for Organizations around the World* (September 5, 2017)

### III. Competitive Selection Criteria – Housing & Shelter Preservation

In addition to the general requirements, the City will rank the Multifamily, Transitional Housing and Shelter Preservation Program projects based on the following criteria:

| Housing Preservation Allocation Criteria | Basis  | Max Points |
|--|--|------------|
| A. Population Served                     | <i>Priority for targeting lowest income, special needs and homeless populations.</i>   | 40         |
| B. Need                                  | <i>Priority for projects at risk of being lost without action and priority for projects with demonstrated financial need.</i>  | 35         |
| C. Target Areas                          | <i>Priority for preservation projects that support socioeconomic diversity.</i>  | 10         |
| D. Extended Affordability                | <i>Priority for projects that provide an extended affordability period.</i>  | 20         |
| E. Building Improvements                 | <i>Priority for projects that exceed accessibility requirements, and implement energy efficiency or sustainability measures.</i>   | 15         |
| F. Cost Effectiveness                    | <i>Priority for projects that show future costs are reasonable and addressed; priority for projects that decrease operating costs; and priority for projects that address long-term maintenance.</i> | 15         |
| G. Equity and Social Justice             | <i>Priority for projects that integrate equity and social justice into their organizational ethos</i>  | 10         |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>                           |  | <b>145</b> |

#### A. Population Served (40 points max)

Priority would be given to those projects that preserve existing affordable housing that serves those households and persons with the least income, have special needs, are homeless or are at risk of being homeless. Points will be awarded as set forth below.

1. **Low-income set aside** -- Up to **20 points** will be given for those projects that provide housing to the following income groups:
  - All units serve households with incomes less than 30% AMI - **20 points**, or
  - 50% of the units serve under 30% AMI and 50% of the units serve under 50% - **15 points**, or
  - All units serve between 30% and 50% AMI - **10 points**, or
  - 50% of the units serve under 30% AMI, 20% of the units serve under 50% AMI, and 30% of the units serve under 60% AMI - **5 points**
2. **Special Needs and Homeless** -- Up to **20 points** (maximum) will be given for those projects that provide housing to the following populations:
  - Supportive Housing Units for Homeless:

- A minimum of 75% of the housing units which serve below 30% AMI are committed as Supported Housing for the Homeless, with tenant selection coordinated with the region's Homeless Service Center - **3 points for every unit, up to a maximum of 20 points**, or
- Housing units currently not committed as Supportive Housing for the Homeless, with tenant selection coordinated with the region's Homeless Service Center will be committed with the project funding - **2 points for every unit, up to a maximum of 15 points**.
- The following Special Needs housing commitments are worth **2 points** each:
  - Projects in which at least 20% of the units are reserved for persons with physical or mental impairment.
  - Projects in which at least 20% of the units are reserved for elderly (62+) persons.
  - Projects in which at least 20% of units are reserved for families with children, especially single-parent families.
  - Projects in which at least 10% of the units are reserved for victims of domestic violence.

**B. Need (35 points max)**

Those affordable housing projects that are at risk of being lost from the city's existing inventory will be awarded points based on the following criteria:

1. **Building Useful Life** -- The long-term viability of the housing helps determine the investment risk of city funding, and future expectations of funding assistance. The following points (**25 points** maximum) would be awarded based on useful life identified in a completed Capital Needs Assessment (useful life can include the result of the project funding):
  - The remaining useful life is more than 50 years for the following elements: plumbing supply and waste lines, sewer and storm drainage, electrical distribution, exterior envelope/siding -- **15 points**
  - The remaining useful life is more than 20 years for the following elements: all items listed above plus fire sprinklers, windows, exterior and interior doors, exterior and interior lighting, walkways, floor covering -- **10 points**
  - The remaining useful life is more than 10 years for the following elements: all items listed above plus HVAC, roof, appliances, cabinetry, plumbing fixtures, ventilation -- **5 points**
2. **Building Safety** --Ensuring the safety of buildings is a high priority. In order to secure these points, the Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) needs to address these building safety components. Up to **15 points** is available as follows:
  - Projects that address, or have no structural defects in foundation, roof and accessible pathways. – **10 points**
  - Projects that address, or have no identified safety defects in electrical system, fire sprinklers/alarms, and emergency egress. -- **10 points**

- Projects that address, or have no other safety defects, such as trip hazards, building security, etc. – **5 points**
3. **Financial Need** -- Up to **5 points** (maximum) will be given to projects that show a financial need for assistance as follows:
- Applicant has financial reserves, but reserves are shown to be needed for operational costs or replacement reserve – **3 points**
  - Applicant has requested funding from three or more public or philanthropic organizations – **3 points**

**C. Target Areas (10 points max)**

Ten points will be awarded for projects located in neighborhoods which promote socioeconomic diversity. This can either be through working in low-income neighborhoods where there is a risk of displacement on existing residents, which includes: Roosevelt, Birchwood, Meridian, or Cordata; or through working in high-income neighborhoods where there is a lack of housing affordable to low-income households, which includes: Columbia, Edgemoor, Fairhaven, South, or South Hill. See maps for neighborhood boundaries: <https://www.cob.org/services/planning/neighborhoods>

**D. Extended Affordability (20 points max)**

One point will be awarded (up to a maximum of **20 points**) for every two years of additional low-income housing use period *beyond fifteen years*. See example below.

| Average Housing \$ per-unit | Minimum Affordability Period | Affordability Period Proposed | Additional Affordability Period > 15 | Points Awarded |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| < \$15,000/unit             | 5 years                      | 20                            | 5                                    | 3              |
| \$15,000 - \$40,000/unit    | 10 years                     | 30                            | 15                                   | 8              |
| > \$40,000/unit             | 15 years                     | 55                            | 40                                   | 20             |

**Caution:** the City Monitoring Fee is based on the Period of Affordability. The project must include the monitoring fee in total project costs based on the proposed affordability period.

**E. Building Improvements (15 points max)**

All City-funded Production and Preservation of Homes Program projects must follow the City’s implementation of the Washington State requirements for Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards, where applicable. Details are available through the Washington State Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/housing-trust-fund/housing-trust-fund-evergreen-sustainable-development/>), and Section 212 of the City Housing Handbook. In addition, all Preservation projects must meet the City's Minimum Standards for Multifamily Housing Rehabilitation (see [Housing Development Handbook](#)).

Those projects that incorporate the following features into their proposal, or have been addressed within their existing project, will be awarded points.

1. **Accessibility** -- Projects that meet, or will exceed with this assistance, ADA and Section 504 accessibility requirements. This criterion can be demonstrated through additional units being made accessible to household members with disabilities, installation of ramps, grab bars, handrails and non-skid surfaces not otherwise required by existing codes and regulations. **10 points**
2. **Sustainability** -- Projects awarded funding must meet the Evergreen Sustainable Development Standards. Projects would be awarded points for the following optional measures:
  - Meets optional additional points in the Evergreen Sustainability Standards for energy efficiency – **3 points**
  - Provides water-conserving features beyond mandatory requirements -- **3 points**
3. **Preservation – 5 points** will be given to projects that renovate or rehabilitate an historic structure eligible for listing on the local, state or national register of historic places.

**F. Cost Effectiveness (15 points max)**

Competitive proposals need to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the investment of City Housing funds in the project. Points would be awarded as follows:

1. **Operational Funds** – the applicant demonstrates that adequate funds to operate the housing units for the next seven years are available. This can be demonstrated through submission of the past three years of financial audits or financial statements. Consideration is given to looking at current assets over current liabilities, cash ratio, day’s cash at its disposal, trends in net assets and cash flow statements. – **5 points**
2. **Development costs** – the applicant demonstrates that the total indebtedness of the project does not exceed the total development cost per-unit established by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission for the prior year (<http://www.wshfc.org/mhcf/index.htm>). The applicant must provide information that shows existing indebtedness on the property through a preliminary title report. -- **3 points**
3. **Reduces cost** - the applicant demonstrates that the project will reduce operating costs through lower utility costs, building maintenance or operations. -- **3 points**
4. **Leveraging** - the project includes financial assistance, or in-kind assistance from non-City sources as follows:
  - Cash contributions equivalent to at least 50% of the project budget - **5 points**, or
  - Cash contributions equivalent to at least 25% of the project budget - **3 points**, or
  - Cash and/or in-kind contributions equivalent to at least 25% of the project budget - **2 points**

**G. Equity and Social Justice (10 points max)**

The city supports the [Healthy Whatcom](#) approach to elevate and activate principles of anti-racism in participating organizations and increase the representation of client and Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) voices within and across agencies for program/process design and review.

The rubric below describes examples of evidence of these principles in practice. To receive the maximum number of points, responses must be specific, and related to the agency department managing all project activities.

| <b>Equity and Social Justice</b>  | <b>Points</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <u>Best practice:</u> Exemplary in Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) for other organizations. D&I is a core organizational value and not seen as an isolated program. For example, D&I is regularly reviewed, and employees are generally representative of their clients.  | 10            |
| <u>Progressive:</u> Implementing D&I systemically; D&I is well integrated into organization’s strategy with adequate staff, resources, and support to ensure implementation. For example, shows more than one cycle of training, reflection, and implementation or necessary changes as a result.                 | 8             |
| <u>Proactive:</u> D&I is broadly defined to include disability, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, race, and ethnicity. Starting to implement D&I systemically. For example, shows at least one cycle of training and reflection. Specific desired outcomes are expected, but not yet seen in evidence. | 6             |
| <u>Reactive:</u> D&I is narrowly defined. Compliance mindset; actions taken are primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. For example, has a policy stating that they do not discriminate, use a Fair Housing logo, a “Black Lives Matter” signs in the window, etc.                           | 4             |
| <u>Inactive:</u> No D&I work has begun; D&I are not part of organizational structure or any program goals or activities. For example, applicant articulates the importance of D&I in their application response, but sites no evidence of any specific actions that have been taken.                              | 2             |
| <b>TOTAL points possible</b>  | <b>10</b>     |

This scale is adapted from Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks, *Standards for Organizations around the World* (September 5, 2017)



#### **IV. Application Information**

The City encourages prospective applicants to review this document thoroughly to understand City funding priorities, program requirements, and the City's application and decision-making process. City staff are available to assist applicants understand City programs and policies, and to provide feedback and comments on project concepts in the early stages of pre-development. The City expects applicants to have real estate, development, affordable housing, and management experience or to partner with agencies or firms that do.

##### **Pre-Application Meetings**

Applicants are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the City prior to submitting an application for funding. In the meeting, applicants should demonstrate how the proposed project meets the City's goals and priorities. The City will provide feedback as to how the project aligns with available funding and program policies. To arrange a pre-application meeting, please call Heather Aven at (360) 778-8345 or email [haven@cob.org](mailto:haven@cob.org).

##### **City's Rights to Limit Funding**

The decision to reserve and allocate funding rests with the Mayor of the City of Bellingham, with advice provided by the Community Development Advisory Board and Loan Review Board. Projects with federal HUD funds must be included in the Annual Action Plan of the City, and approved by the City Council. The City may choose not to fund any project which scores less than 90 points. In the event of a tie, the Mayor will choose which project to fund using the Community Priorities and Plans as a guide, along with the amount of funding requested. The City also reserves the right to not allocate all funds being announced in this NOFA. Any uncommitted funds will be reallocated to a future application cycle.

##### **Application Components**

Applications can be downloaded from the City of Bellingham's web site at <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/Pages/preservation-and-production.aspx> via the forms provided. Note that the City of Bellingham utilizes the Commerce Combined Funder Application (CFA) forms, but the Excel CFA is modified to include the City's scoring. If you would like to reference other Commerce materials from the 2024 year, you may do so here: <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/wcfjrlzje4vqlbl6r44su8kfd53ra63a/folder/271098877727>

All applicants will be expected to include the certification form at the time of application submittal. Applicants will be providing assurance as follows:

*To the best of my knowledge and belief that the information provided herein is true, complete, and accurate. I am aware that the provision of false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative consequences including, but not limited to violations of U.S. Code Title 18, Section 2, 1001, 1343 and Title 31, Section 3729-3730 and 3801-3812.*

## Background Information

The following information is available to assist you in preparing your application:

1. **2023-2028 City of Bellingham Consolidated Plan** - <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/Pages/consolidated-plan.aspx>
2. **A Home for Everyone, Whatcom County Plan to End Homelessness** - <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/homeless/Pages/homelessness.aspx>
3. **Rent and Income Limits** - <http://www.cob.org/documents/planning/housing/hud-income-rent.pdf>
4. **Urban Village Plans** - <http://www.cob.org/services/planning/urban-villages>
5. **Whatcom County's Healthy Whatcom plans** - <https://healthywhatcom.org/>

## NOFA Schedule

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Invitation to Submit Applications (NOFA released) .....                 | November 19, 2024                |
| Application Office Hours #1 .....                                       | December 3, 2024, 1:00 PM        |
| Application Office Hours #2 .....                                       | December 5, 2024, 10:00 AM       |
| Last day for questions .....  | December 6, 2024, 4:30 PM        |
| Application FAQ available online .....                                  | December 13, 2024                |
| <b>Applications due – Services and Community Facilities NOFAs .....</b> | <b>January 16, 2025, 4:30 PM</b> |
| Services and Facilities Initial Review and Screening .....              | January 17 - 31, 2025            |
| <b>Applications due – Housing Development NOFAs .....</b>               | <b>February 6, 2025, 4:30 PM</b> |
| Initial Review and Screening .....                                      | February 7 - 21, 2025            |
| Draft (unbalanced) Action Plan Released .....                           | March 7, 2025                    |
| Opportunity for Public Comment .....                                    | March 10 - April 9, 2025         |
| Community Development Advisory Board Public Hearing .....               | March 13, 2025                   |
| Community Development Advisory Board Recommendation .....               | April 10, 2025                   |
| Council Action on HUD 2025 Action Plan .....                            | May 5, 2025                      |

**Rental Production, Interim Housing and Preservation Applications are due no later than 4:30 p.m. on Thursday February 6, 2025**

## Submission Format

Only electronic submissions of the application forms and supporting materials will be accepted. All application materials must be made available electronically via a file sharing site (e.g. GoogleDocs, Dropbox). Application documents are typically too large to be attached to an email; applicants should NOT attempt to submit their application materials via email.

Links to application document locations on the file sharing sites must be submitted via email to the City by email to [HAVEN@COB.ORG](mailto:HAVEN@COB.ORG), with “CITY NOFA RESPONSE – PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION” and your project name listed in the subject line. Please follow the Commerce naming convention instructions related to the CFA required documents.

## Commerce Box site with reference materials –

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/wcfjrlzje4vlqbl6r44su8kfd53ra63a/folder/271098877727>

NOTE: the City of Bellingham CFA form is modified from Commerce's version; please use the CFA Excel form provided from the City's website.

### **Disclosure of Documents**

All proposals and related materials become the property of the City upon delivery to the City. State law, RCW Ch. 42.17, provides that public records are subject to public inspection and copying unless specifically exempted. RCW Ch. 42.17 enumerates limited exemptions a public agency's obligation to disclose public records. If the applicant believes that portions of its proposal are exempt from disclosure to third parties, the applicant must clearly label the specific portions sought to be kept confidential and specify an exemption that the applicant is relying on. However, acceptance of an application containing such designations by the City is not an agreement that such material is legally confidential, and the City cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed. Marking all or substantially all of an application as confidential may result in the application being rejected.

The applicant recognizes and agrees that the City will not be responsible or liable in any way for any losses that the applicant may suffer from the disclosure of information or materials to third parties, nor for any use of information or materials by third parties. Materials submitted by unsuccessful applicants are subject to disposal unless picked up promptly by the applicant, except that the City will maintain one copy in compliance with public record laws.

### **Interpreter Services**

Interpreter services for the deaf and materials in alternative formats are available upon advance request. TTY users please call (360) 778-8382 or the Washington State Relay Service at 1-800-833-6388 and ask to be connected with the City of Bellingham, Housing & Services Program Manager at (360) 778-8385.

### **Questions**

Please contact Samya Lutz at (360) 778-8385 or email [sklutz@cob.org](mailto:sklutz@cob.org) with any questions about the application process.

*The City of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identify, religion, age, families with children, and disability in employment or the provision of services. With five business days' notice, special accommodations will be provided. Refer any inquiries or complaints related to HUD regulations implementing Section 504 to the Housing & Services Program Manager. Contact 778-8385 (voice) or 711 (TTY).*