

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM
AND WHATCOM COUNTY REGARDING COST SHARING TO OBTAIN
CONSULTANT SERVICES**

This Interlocal Agreement by and between the City of Bellingham (hereinafter, the City) and Whatcom County (hereinafter, the County) is entered into pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 39.34 RCW, for the purposes of sharing expenses for taskforce staffing and consultant services to develop appropriate strategies and programs that address housing affordability issues in a regionally comprehensive and equitable manner.

WHEREAS, housing in Bellingham and Whatcom County is becoming increasingly unaffordable for the average resident; and

WHEREAS, according to the Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, median home prices throughout the county increased 80% between 2000 and 2005; and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the countywide need for additional housing units that are affordable to families earning 80% or less of the county median income will be approximately 11,000 units by the year 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City and County have a responsibility under state law to provide housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City and County comprehensive plans contain a number of goals and policies related to the provision of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the City's comprehensive plan calls for the development of incentives, strategies and requirements to achieve a mix of housing sizes, types and prices; and

WHEREAS, both the City Council and the County Council have each directed their respective staffs to develop strategies to address housing affordability issues; and

WHEREAS, the County and the City desire to work cooperatively to complete a comprehensive review of affordable housing issues and to develop implementation strategies; and

WHEREAS, the City and County agree that a taskforce and professional consulting services are necessary to complete a comprehensive study of countywide housing affordability issues and to develop implementation strategies in a comprehensive and timely manner.

NOW, THEREFORE IT IS AGREED THAT the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County will work together as follows to fund development of a comprehensive affordable housing strategy in 2007:

Section 1. Funding

The City of Bellingham and Whatcom County agree to equally share the cost of administrative expenses incurred by the Countywide Affordable Housing Taskforce identified in Section 4, and for consultant services needed to prepare a comprehensive affordable housing strategy. Each jurisdiction shall contribute an amount not to exceed \$75,000 for these activities. The County shall provide reimbursement to the City within 60 days of receiving invoices from the City.

Section 2. Program Responsibilities

The City and County agree to provide the staff support and, in consultation with the taskforce, hire a qualified consultant to complete the strategy. A detailed scope of work for the project will be finalized after a consultant is hired. In general, the scope of the project includes using the taskforce and consultants to develop and recommend specific action strategies and programs that, when implemented by the City and County, will address, to the greatest extent possible, the anticipated need for about 11,000 additional housing units that are affordable to families earning 80% or less of the county median income by the year 2022. The specific scope of work shall be as approved by the City and County Councils, unless revisions are mutually agreed upon by the parties. The City and County agree to provide staff support, comments and background information for development of the strategy, including GIS data and information available from City and County plans and files.

Section 3. Administrative Responsibilities

The City Planning and Community Development Department will be responsible for consultant contract administration.

The City administrative officer for the purpose of this Agreement is:

David Cahill, Block Grant Programs Manager
City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department
210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

The County representative for the purpose of this Agreement is:

Hal Hart, Director
Whatcom County Planning and Development Services
5280 Northwest Annex, Suite A
Bellingham, WA 98226-9099

Section 4. Taskforce

A Countywide Housing Affordability Taskforce has been established by the Mayor and the County Executive to assist in preparation of the strategy. The taskforce includes representatives from the construction, real estate, mortgage lending and social service fields and other advocates for lower income residents.

The role of the taskforce is to analyze current countywide housing dynamics and recommend to the City Council and County Council appropriate strategies and programs to address housing affordability issues in a regionally comprehensive and equitable manner.

Section 5. Effective Date, Duration, Amendment and Termination

This agreement shall be effective five (5) days after its approval and signature by the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County and shall remain in effect until the affordable housing strategy is published and distributed and the taskforce completes its work. The scheduled completion date is for the project is December 31, 2007. This agreement can be terminated, amended or extended by mutual agreement of the two parties.

