

Whatcom Countywide Housing Action Plan

In December 2007 a random sample of resident voter households in Whatcom County were contacted to participate in a controlled sample survey concerning the housing needs, trends, policy and project proposals, and financing options.

450 households agreed to participate in the survey and were mailed a copy of a summary description of the plan and a copy of the questionnaire. Survey results were compiled for the first 200 households who completed the surveys by follow-up telephone call - the number planned for in the original survey scope.

The resulting survey results are accurate to within +/-8 % of the opinions of the general population (the statistics are rounded and may not add to 100%). The statistics (indicated by nr) also account for undecided, did not know, or refused a response. Following is a summary of the results for the total sample group.

Background

The federal government estimates an average household should pay no more than 30% of all household income (including all wages, salaries, pensions, stock and bond interest, and other income) for housing costs (including rent or mortgage payments, utilities, insurance, and other incidentals) if a household is to be able to pay for food, health, clothing, transportation, and other basic needs.

At the present time (2007), Whatcom County has a population of 186,479 persons that reside in 74,455 households countywide (**the county or countywide in this survey refers to the total county including all cities and unincorporated areas of the county**). Approximately 18,785 households or 25% of all countywide households are paying more than 30% of their total household income for housing. Approximately 10,180 households or 14% of all countywide households are paying more than 50% of their total household income for housing.

As a result of these conditions, we are developing a countywide housing action plan to address rising housing costs for all kinds of housing products, for all kinds of households, for all areas of all cities and the county. **Our objective is to develop policies and programs that provide housing that is affordable for all countywide resident households - and to develop strategies for assisting with housing solutions for households that can not live affordably** (those paying more than 30-50% of their household income for housing).

We would like to know your opinions about current housing conditions, preferences, and priorities. Please read these questions carefully, circle the appropriate response, and be prepared to read your answers when we call.

Existing countywide housing conditions

How would you rate **housing conditions in general countywide?**

		poorest / best					
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
5	Quality - construction, design, and visual appearance?	0%	6%	59%	31%	4%	2%
6	Density - range of lot sizes and housing types including single and multi-family housing units?	3%	23%	47%	23%	5%	2%
7	Hazard management - floodplains, mud and landslide risks, septic and well contamination?	3%	25%	44%	23%	3%	4%

8	Infrastructure - roads, curbs, gutters, storm water management, and sidewalk improvements?	2% 28% 45% 20% 5% 1%
9	Environment - woodlands and natural area retention or preservation areas within housing developments?	5% 20% 30% 36% 9% 2%
10	Amenities - street lights, trees, landscaping, and signage?	2% 18% 40% 33% 6% 2%
11	Common areas - parks, playgrounds, and open spaces?	3% 15% 25% 41% 15% 2%

How would you rate **your own current housing conditions?**

		poorest / best																					
		1	2	3	4	5	nr																
12	Overall satisfaction - with your apartment or house?	1%	3%	14%	49%	34%	0%																
13	Cost - for rent or mortgage payments?	2%	11%	22%	26%	35%	7%																
14	Cost for housing related services - including utilities and property taxes?	9%	25%	39%	18%	10%	1%																
15	Location - community and neighborhood you live in?	0%	3%	14%	43%	41%	0%																
16	Space - number of bedrooms and bathrooms?	0%	5%	23%	34%	39%	0%																
17	Features - kitchen, family room, fireplace, garage?	1%	5%	21%	43%	31%	0%																
18	Infrastructure - roads, curbs and gutters, sidewalks?	7%	22%	29%	24%	18%	1%																
19	Amenities - playgrounds, parks, landscaping?	7%	15%	26%	28%	24%	1%																
20	Services - schools, fire, police or sheriff, roads?	2%	11%	26%	38%	25%	0%																
21	What percent of your household's gross monthly income - do you pay for rent or a mortgage?	27%	0%	10%	10%	21%	20%	20%	30%	10%	40%	4%	50%	2%	50%+	7%	nr						
22	What percent of your household's gross monthly income - do you pay for sewer, water, power, natural or propane gas, and other utilities?	4%	1%	6%	2%	16%	3%	6%	4%	14%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	12%	8%	4%	9%	20%	10%+	0%	nr
23	What percent of your household's gross monthly income - do you pay for transportation including gas, ferry, and transit?	12%	1%	9%	2%	12%	3%	9%	4%	16%	5%	5%	6%	4%	7%	10%	8%	4%	9%	17%	10%+	5%	nr

Countywide housing trends

The results of the housing analysis indicate the following factors may contribute in various ways to rising housing costs on a countywide basis. To what extent do you disagree or agree with the trends where 1 is where you most disagree and 5 where you most agree with the statement?

Market trends		disagree	/				agree
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
24	Construction materials – wood, asphalt, insulation, and other materials are rising in cost increasing the average price of a house or apartment countywide?	1%	6%	21%	35%	37%	2%
25	Permit application times and fees – are time consuming and expensive increasing the average price of an apartment or house countywide?	4%	8%	24%	25%	37%	3%
26	Sewer, water, and storm water utility connection fees and charges – are necessary but expensive increasing the average price of an apartment or house countywide?	2%	8%	30%	35%	22%	5%
27	School, traffic, and park growth impact fees – that pay the costs of providing facilities that will be ultimately required by a housing development are necessary but nonetheless expensive increasing the average price of an apartment or house countywide?	3%	12%	29%	30%	25%	3%
28	Land supply in urban growth areas – that limits urban development to areas that are capable of being provided utilities and other urban services are important but nonetheless limit available land increasing the average price or cost of build-able lots with which to construct houses or apartments on a countywide basis?	5%	12%	27%	30%	21%	6%
29	Low interest, variable interest, and principal only loans – are allowing households to buy higher priced homes, sometimes beyond their ability to repay?	2%	2%	10%	30%	56%	2%
30	Population growth from in-migration – is increasing as people move into our area and buy available houses driving up market prices on a countywide basis?	2%	6%	14%	37%	40%	2%

The following statements were made during housing workshops concerning trends that may be affecting the housing market and household ability to cope with housing trends on a countywide basis. To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following?

Market assumptions		disagree	/				agree
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
31	Older or retired adults – move in to live full-time and buy available houses at high prices driving up the price of the houses that remain for local residents	9%	15%	25%	34%	16%	3%

32	Public workers – teachers, police officers, fire fighters, and other critical public service workers can not pay rising housing costs and are not accepting local job offers?	12% 19% 35% 23% 9% 4%
33	Service workers – technical and entry level manufacturing, retail, health, and other service workers can not afford rising housing costs and are not accepting jobs affecting our ability to realize economic development on a countywide basis?	6% 19% 28% 28% 16% 4%
34	Young adults – are increasingly unable to rent or buy an affordable living unit that is manageable with local entry level job incomes?	2% 8% 14% 32% 44% 1%
35	Single headed families, especially female – are unable to rent or buy an affordable living unit and pay for daycare, health costs, and other family expenses?	0% 5% 12% 33% 50% 1%
36	Elderly adults, including single individuals – are increasingly unable to find affordable housing that fits their changing life style needs. As a result, they continue to live in and keep older lower priced housing units out of the market – possibly to the point where the house starts to deteriorate because the occupant can not accomplish or afford to pay for maintenance?	4% 13% 19% 33% 30% 3%
37	Special populations, including the mentally ill, victims of domestic abuse, and the temporary homeless – are unable to be economically housed – possibly to the point where current sponsors are unable to develop and operate necessary housing units?	3% 8% 23% 33% 29% 5%

Possible countywide housing program approaches

All cities and the county have initiated a number of actions to manage rising housing costs and growth impacts on a countywide basis. Such actions include measures that cluster housing to reduce environmental impacts and site development costs; allow innovative housing and mixed-use projects to increase site and cost efficiencies; adopt performance related design and development standards to improve the quality of the housing product and reduce development costs – to name a few. In addition, the cities and county have also amended codes to allow accessory dwelling units, cottage or small lot houses, duplex and townhouses, manufactured and modular housing products that reduce costs and provide a wider variety of rental and purchase options.

In addition to the measures listed above, the cities, county, non-profit, and for-profit housing market participants could also adopt the following measures to reduce costs and increase choice. Each one of these program approaches will involve costs to the public in some manner, some approaches costing more than others, and some programs having more impacts on housing costs and public policies and funds than others. Based on your knowledge of existing conditions, how would you prioritize the following possible programs?

		lowest	/	highest			
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
Education and mentoring							
38	Conduct housing finance classes - that provide education and mentoring assistance on how to budget and pay for household purchases, maintenance, insurance, utilities, and other expenses?	10%	19%	27%	22%	23%	1%
Rehabilitation programs to retain affordable housing							
		lowest	/	highest			
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
39	Establish a home rehabilitation and deferred payment program - where the eligible house is refurbished and the cost is deferred for payment until the house is sold to allow the current occupant to continue to reside in the house with current home payments? The rehabilitation loan is repaid when the house is eventually sold by the current occupant at no or a low cost interest rate.	9%	19%	32%	31%	10%	2%
40	Renovate eligible housing - working with Habitat for Humanity, USDA, Americorp, and other volunteer programs to reduce improvement and construction costs?	4%	5%	18%	39%	35%	1%
41	Renovate eligible housing with sweat equity - allowing the home buyer to perform some of the construction labor involved in the renovation rather than a cash down payment?	5%	6%	21%	35%	34%	0%
42	Retain and upgrade and possibly develop new mobile or manufactured home parks - to continue to provide this low cost housing alternative in the county?	14%	19%	22%	25%	22%	0%
Regulatory process governing new construction							
		lowest	/	highest			
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
43	Establish progressive building permit fees - based on the actual hours required to review each building submission to reduce charges where builders use pre-approved or simplified building methods?	7%	6%	20%	38%	28%	2%
44	Establish progressive park, traffic, and school growth impact fees - based on the number of people who will actually reside in each type of housing product?	9%	7%	23%	37%	24%	1%
45	Create a catalogue of pre-approved building plans - which builders may use instead of submitting custom-designed plans that require more extensive review and higher building permit review times and fees?	10%	11%	23%	27%	29%	1%
Measures that reduce land costs							
		lowest	/	highest			
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
46	Define minimum density requirements - for proposed moderate to high density residential districts so that developable sites are not used up at less than capacity?	8%	10%	29%	31%	20%	4%
47	Increase higher density zoning districts - of moderate to high density residential districts so that more developable sites are made available for lower cost single family and multi-family housing products?	8%	13%	31%	31%	15%	3%

48	Establish performance based design standards – that provide quality but flexible requirements for road widths, sidewalk locations, landscaping, and other amenities within more cost efficient designs?	7% 11% 21% 37% 24% 2%
49	Allow attached accessory dwelling units (ADU) – that build separate single family housing units that are attached to an existing single family house in established neighborhoods to increase housing where community, transportation, and other public services are already provided?	8% 14% 24% 28% 26% 0%
50	Allow detached accessory dwelling units (ADU) – that build separate single family housing units over the garage or as separate structures on single family lots in established neighborhoods to increase housing where community, transportation, and other public services are already provided?	8% 16% 19% 31% 27% 0%
51	Allow cottage/small lot developments – that allow smaller lots and cottage sized single family housing units in single family neighborhoods to increase housing where community, transportation, and other public services are already provided?	7% 7% 20% 35% 33% 0%
52	Allow planned unit developments (PUDs) – that allow single and multi-family housing units on the same site to increase housing density, choice and reduce land costs?	9% 15% 27% 28% 22% 1%
53	Allow infill development – of townhouse, manor house, and other attached single family housing units on vacant or underused land within existing urban neighborhoods to increase housing density, choice, and reduce land costs?	9% 11% 29% 30% 21% 1%
54	Establish transfer development rights (TDRs) – that transfer housing unit densities from less urban to more urban sites to increase density and reduce land costs where community, transportation, and other public services are already provided?	8% 17% 32% 23% 17% 5%
55	Establish differential taxing rates – that reduce tax rates for land trusts, open space, commonly-owned areas, and other properties that support residential uses but are not part of a house’s market value or price appreciation?	9% 9% 17% 28% 36% 3%
		lowest / highest
Measures that reduce labor/material costs		1 2 3 4 5 nr
56	Adopt performance based building codes – that allow new, innovative materials and methods that can reduce construction and assembly costs?	2% 3% 16% 42% 35% 3%

57	Adopt manufactured/modular design standards - that require front porches, gable roofs, garages, and other building improvements so that manufactured housing fits into traditional single family housing neighborhoods?	8% 13% 21% 34% 24% 1%
		lowest / highest 1 2 3 4 5 nr
Measures that reduce operating costs		
58	Adopt green energy efficient building codes - that make use of solar energy, passive heating, increased insulation, energy efficient appliances, and other features that may increase initial construction costs but reduce long term operating and utility costs?	8% 7% 16% 21% 49% 1%
		lowest / highest 1 2 3 4 5 nr
Measures that reduce infrastructure development costs		
59	Establish low impact site development standards - that use natural storm drainage and treatment systems that reduce site development costs rather than the more expensive methods of creating storm water ponds or collecting and transporting storm water off-site?	4% 13% 22% 28% 32% 2%
60	Design and authorize community septic drain fields - that build clustered housing projects using shared septic drain fields within commonly-owned open spaces?	11% 14% 20% 33% 21% 2%
61	Design and authorize package treatment plants - that build housing projects in phases using package or interim sewer treatment plants until public sewers can be built to the site?	13% 14% 32% 26% 11% 5%
62	Adopt progressive sewer connection fees - based on the number of people who will actually reside in each type of housing providing reductions or waivers when affordable housing is provided?	8% 10% 28% 36% 16% 3%
63	Pre-develop public facilities - including parks, schools, fire stations, and other services on sites that will provide higher density, more affordable housing?	5% 9% 26% 39% 20% 2%
		lowest / highest 1 2 3 4 5 nr
Affordable housing bonus or quota measures		
64	Establish voluntary bonus incentives - that increases the number of allowable housing units, reduces parking requirements, and/or waives height limits when a project provides a minimum number of affordable housing units?	22% 19% 31% 21% 6% 3%
65	Establish voluntary cash incentives - that reduces or waives building permit fees, utility connection fees, park, traffic, and school growth impact fees, and other costs when the project provides a minimum number of affordable housing units? <i>Note -permit, utility, and impact fee costs that are reduced or waived to provide cash incentives for affordable housing must be repaid from other public funds.</i>	32% 21% 27% 15% 4% 3%

66	Require <u>mandatory</u> affordable housing quotas <u>if the voluntary approach does not produce affordable housing units</u> - where each development project must provide a minimum number of affordable housing units in exchange for the density bonuses, reduced parking and other requirements, reduced or waived permit, utility, and impact fees, and other cost offsets? <i>Note -the permit and impact fee costs that are reduced or waived to provide cash incentives for affordable housing must be repaid from other public funds.</i>	28% 17% 26% 20% 8% 3%
67	Require <u>mandatory</u> affordable housing quotas <u>without testing the voluntary approach to ensure the earliest production of affordable housing units</u> - where each development project must provide a minimum number of affordable housing units in exchange for the density bonuses, reduced parking and other requirements, reduced or waived permit, utility, and impact fees, and other cost offsets? <i>Note -the permit and impact fee costs that are reduced or waived to provide cash incentives for affordable housing must be repaid from other public funds.</i>	32% 23% 25% 12% 7% 2%

lowest / highest
1 2 3 4 5 nr

Accountability and follow-up

68	Issue annual reports and update this housing action plan on a frequent basis - to ensure the above measures continue to provide quality and affordable housing for all income groups and household types on a countywide basis?	10% 7% 29% 26% 28% 1%
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lowest / highest
1 2 3 4 5 nr

Action plan organization and funding

69	Establish a permanent countywide housing action plan committee - to coordinate, oversee, and implement the projects and programs described in the items above?	13% 11% 24% 30% 23% 1%
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lowest / highest
1 2 3 4 5 nr

Financing options

70	Create a countywide housing action revolving fund -with which to create the funds necessary for accomplishing the housing projects and programs described in the items above?	19% 17% 24% 24% 15% 2%
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71	Assuming some public monies would be required to create the countywide housing action revolving fund - how much would your household be willing to pay <u>per year</u> to sponsor such an effort?	29% \$0 9% \$5 10% \$10 4% \$15 8% \$20 10% \$25 12% \$50 3% \$75 13% \$100 1% \$100+ 4% nr
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Countywide housing trust fund options

Whatcom County and its cities, like all jurisdictions in Washington State must structure fiscal policies to reflect recently adopted restraints on the use of property, license, and other taxes for the financing of general governmental services including any funds spent on affordable housing strategies.

Subject to voter approval, the Whatcom County Council could adopt one or more of the following alternative methods for financing affordable housing strategies on a countywide basis. How would you rate each of the following alternatives?

Alternative funding sources		lowest	/	highest		
		1	2	3	4	5 nr
72	Real Estate Excise Tax (REET-3) - an additional 0.25% assessment of the sales price of all real estate property (equal to \$250 per \$100,000 of sale price) paid by the seller?	34%	17%	21%	13%	13% 3%
73	Local Option Sales Tax - an additional 0.1% sales tax (equal to \$0.10 for a \$100 purchase) to be paid by residents and tourists?	44%	13%	19%	13%	11% 2%
74	Limited duration (6 year) property tax levy - a special purpose property tax that would add a limited levy assessment (between \$25 and \$50 per house per year) for up to 6 years for the sole purpose of funding affordable housing projects and programs?	39%	15%	18%	15%	12% 2%

Countywide housing action plan responsibilities

Who do you think should be primarily responsible for providing conditions that reduce housing costs as outlined in the action items described in this survey?

Sponsor		disagree	/	agree		
		1	2	3	4	5 nr
75	Public entities - Bellingham/Whatcom County Housing Authority, Whatcom County, Blaine, Lynden, Sumas, Nooksack, Everson, Ferndale, Bellingham, and Washington State?	12%	11%	25%	25%	25% 4%
76	Non-profit organizations - including community land trusts and affordable housing interest groups?	14%	16%	35%	23%	11% 3%
77	Private market - developers, realtors, and lenders?	20%	13%	24%	21%	21% 2%
78	Joint ventures - involving the public, non-profit, and private market entities?	10%	7%	22%	26%	33% 3%

Countywide housing competition prototypes

A countywide housing action organization could package properties or acquire land, create housing plans, mitigate environmental and community impacts, and then conduct design/develop competitions whereby the non-profit and private market compete to build affordable housing of most need and interest to residents on a countywide basis. How would you rate the following process and prototypes as a method of meeting affordable housing needs in each of the examples shown in the following pages?

Affordable housing project competitions - see page 11

		lowest	/			highest	
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
79	Acquire and package land for affordable housing competitions - with which to develop high quality, innovative, cost efficient, mixed income housing at priority locations on a countywide basis similar to the Tierra Contenta project in Santa Fe, New Mexico?	11%	7%	29%	29%	17%	8%
80	Pre-design and pre-approve development plans - for the competition sites that resolve environmental impacts, provide public infrastructure, and integrate the site with local community objectives and interests?	7%	7%	22%	35%	22%	8%
81	Conduct design/develop competitions or request-for-proposals (RFPs) - where non-profit and for-profit builders and developers compete for the right to develop affordable housing based on design quality, cost reductions, innovative construction techniques, housing products and mix, financing assistance, and other public benefit criteria established for the project?	7%	10%	31%	32%	16%	6%
82	Establish a management program for common improvements - to ensure the housing produced by competitions remain high quality and desirable and the housing remains affordable as the houses are sold and resold in the market place?	8%	8%	25%	35%	21%	4%

Accessory dwelling units - see page 12

		lowest	/			highest	
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
83	Accessory detached dwelling units - are additional housing structures built behind or alongside existing single family housing units in urban neighborhoods similar to the Katrina housing illustrated. Accessory dwelling units provide housing for individuals or small families at in-town locations that are close to public transportation, work, schools, daycare, health and other services. Accessory dwelling units can increase density without altering the character of the neighborhood.	9%	13%	28%	28%	20%	3%
84	Would a member of your household be interested in living in an accessory dwelling unit?	yes 15%	no 46%	maybe 39%			

85	Would you accept accessory dwelling units in your neighborhood if properly located and of quality construction?	yes 49%	no 27%	maybe 23%	2%
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Cottage housing - see page 13

		lowest / highest					
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
86	Cottage houses - are small single family cottage-type houses built on small lots in urban neighborhoods with a shared common courtyard or green space. Generally cottage houses are small efficient single family units occupied by empty-nester households, individuals, and small families. Like accessory dwelling units, cottage housing can be located in existing urban neighborhoods that are close to public transportation, retail, and health services. Cottage houses can increase density yet retain the single family character of the neighborhood.	4%	3%	19%	40%	34%	1%
87	Would a member of your household be interested in living in cottage housing?	yes 28%	no 26%	maybe 46%	1%		
88	Would you accept cottage housing in your neighborhood if properly located and of quality construction?	yes 55%	no 16%	maybe 28%	1%		

Pre-fabricated single family housing - see page 14

		lowest / highest					
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
89	Modular single family housing products - are built and assembled in a manufacturing plant then trucked and assembled at a project site. Modular housing is built to the same code as on-site or stick-built housing but save costs ranging from 5-20% over stick-built housing construction due to schedule, materials, labor, and other cost savings. Modular housing products are now available in a variety of housing types including the single family products shown.	10%	10%	28%	31%	21%	2%
90	Would a member of your household be interested in living in single family modular housing?	yes 26%	no 39%	maybe 35%	1%		
91	Would you accept modular single family housing in your neighborhood if properly located and of quality construction?	yes 47%	no 30%	maybe 24%	0%		

Mixed-use and energy efficient - see page 15

		lowest / highest					
		1	2	3	4	5	nr
92	Mixed use developments - are medium to high density structures built in downtown locations with ground floor retail and upper story housing. Mixed use developments provide housing for young and elderly individuals, couples, and small families in locations that are convenient to public transportation, parks, retail, entertainment, and health services. Mixed use developments can provide increased density in a structure that also provides urban activities and services.	4%	6%	18%	37%	34%	2%

93	Would a member of your household be interested in living in a mixed-use development?	yes 26%	no 42%	maybe 33%	0%
94	Would you accept mixed-use developments in your community if properly located within the most urban areas and of quality construction?	yes 60%	no 22%	maybe 18%	1%

Pre-fabricated mixed-use developments - see page 16

		lowest 1	/	highest 5	nr
95	Modular mixed-use housing products - are built as described for the single family products above but assembled in multi-story structures as mixed-used developments. Modular multi-family products can achieve the same 5-20% saving over stick-built structures.	12%	12%	36%	24% 14% 3%
96	Would a member of your household be interested in living in a modular mixed-use development?	yes 11%	no 54%	maybe 35%	1%
97	Would you accept modular mixed-use developments in your community if properly located within the most urban areas and of quality construction?	yes 35%	no 35%	maybe 30%	1%

Land trusts - see page 17 and 18

		lowest 1	/	highest 5	nr
98	Land trusts - can be created for any type of housing including single family houses and mixed-use condominiums. In a land trust, the trust organization owns and leases the land to the individual household who owns the housing unit. The individual household may also participate in a homeowners association that assumes responsibility for managing the land and common road and utility improvements. Typically, the land leases and thereby overall housing costs are kept low under agreements that fix or limit the ultimate value appreciation of the land. Individual households still realize all increases in value of the housing structure but only to a limited extent in the value increases of the land.	9%	6%	32%	26% 25% 3%
99	Would a member of your household be interested in living in a land trust development?	yes 20%	no 47%	maybe 33%	1%
100	Would you accept a land trust project in your community if properly organized?	yes 47%	no 25%	maybe 29%	0%

Your household characteristics

101	How long have you lived in Whatcom County?	1% 0-1 8% 2-5 11% 6-10 9% 11-15 14% 16-20 58% 20+ years
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102	Which community do you live in or nearby?	5% Blaine 6% Lynden 1% Sumas 3% Nooksack/Everson 3% Birch Bay 1% Kendall 13% Ferndale 51% Bellingham 3% Sudden Valley 16% Other Whatcom County
103	Do you rent or own your residence?	rent own 7% 93%
104	What type of house do you live in?	83% single family 5% duplex or town 5% multifamily 8% mobile home
105	What age group are you in?	1% 19-24 5% 24-34 10% 35-44 21% 45-54 36% 55-64 28% 65+ years
106	What is your household status?	13% live alone 4% live in unrelated household 84% live in a family
107	What income group is your household in?	10% under \$20,000 7% \$20-29,999 8% \$30-39,999 12% \$40-49,999 32% \$50-74,999 14% \$75-100,000 14% \$100,000+ 5% nr

Comments

Do you have any specific comments or recommendations to make about the housing action plan or this survey, or affordable housing in general?

103 or 42% had comments

Call Dave Cahill at the Bellingham Planning Department at 676-6982 for additional information about the housing action plan or this survey. For more information, go to: www.cob.org/government/public/chat

CASE 0001 COMMENTS [3/1]: OUR LOWEST UINCOMEGROUP SHOULD HAVE TOP PRIORITY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING. DEFINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AS COSTING UP TO 50% OF 80% OF MEDIAN INCOME IS LAUGHABLE AND MERELY A SUBSIDY FOR DEVELOPMENT. THIS SURVEYS REQUIRES TOO MUCH SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE. IF YOU RECIEVE MANY RESPONSES IEPECT MOST WOULD BE ILL INFORMED.

CASE 0004 COMMENTS [3/1]: WHAT ARE THE POSITIONS OF PEOPLE ON THE TASK FORCE? ARE THESE EXISTING PEOPLE OR DO THEY COME IN FROM OTHER AREAS? I FEEL THIS INTRUSIVE AND MEDDLING!

CASE 0005 COMMENTS [3/1]: POORLY DESIGNED AND WORDED SURVEY. SO POOR THAT ANY MEANINGFULL RESULYTS SHOULD BE QUESTIONED. I CAN ONLY AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH A STATEMENT-A TITLE SUBJECT FOLLOWED BY A

QUESTION, AS A SURVEY TAKER. IT IS AWKWARD TO AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH A QUESTION.

CASE 0006 COMMENTS [3/1]: I THOUGHT SOME OF THE QUESTIONS WERE\DIFFICULT TO ANSWER AND SOME ISSUES WERE UNSPECIFIED\IT WAS HARD TO ANSWER GIVEN THE INFORMATION GIVEN

CASE 0008 COMMENTS [3/1]: SURVEY WAS DIFFICULT AND I'M NOT SURE HOW VALID MY ANSWERS ARE BECAUSE I FELT I WAS IGNORANT OF THE CORRECT TERMS. I KNOW I DISTRUST VENTURES LIKE LARRABEE SPRINGS FOR HOUSIMNG DEVELOPMENT HERE. I REALLY LIKE VENTURES LIKE STERLING MEADOWS.

CASE 0009 COMMENTS [3/1]: MORE HOUSING LIKE ANKAR RETIREMENT PARK, SHOULD BE BUILT WITH PERHAPS MORE STRUCTURED REQUIREMENTS, TO BE LOW INCOME, NO WINTER ESCAPE HOUSE IN ARIZONA AND NO OWNERSHIP OF OTHER RENTAL PROPERTY.

CASE 0010 COMMENTS [3/1]: PRIMARY CONCERN IS THE RUNDOWN HOUSING AREA OF BELLINGHAM\THE WOBUREN CORRIDORE\SHOT GUN SHACKS SURROUNDING BELLING HAM AREA

CASE 0011 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE SHOULD BUILD UP INSTEAD OF OUT FOLLOWING EUROPEAN MODELS SUCH AS IN SPAIN. THAT ALTHOUGH WE WOULD LIKE TO WE CANNOT ALL LIVE IN SINGLE FAMILY HOMES. WE SHOULD INCREASE THE HOUSING DENSITY DRAMATICALLY. WE SHOULDN'T COVER ALL THE LAND WITH HOUSES WITH HOUSES, SIDEWALKS, PARKING LOTS AND ROADS. THAT BECASUE WE ARE COVERING SO MUCH OF THE GROUND WE ARE REDUCING WATER INFILTRATION INTO THE SOIL AND THAT THIS SHOULD REQUIRE A WATER RIGHT PERMIT JUST AS FARMERS ARE REQUIRED TO GET A WATER RIGHT PERMIT.

CASE 0012 COMMENTS [3/1]: IN BELLINGHAM AND THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY BALANCE AFFORDABILITY AND DENSITY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RETAIN OPEN SPACE WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS TO CREATE COMMUNITY GARDEN SPACE. I SOULD SUGGEST NEW HOUSING AND SOLD WITHIN THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM REQUIRE THAT ALL OR A LARGE PERCENTAGE BE OWNER OCCUPIED INSTEAD OF SECOND HOMES OR VACATION HOMES. I DON'T FEEL AT THIS TIME THERE IS A NEED FOR HIGH RISES HIGHER THAN 10-15 STORIES TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH. IT NEEDS TO BE MORE THOUGHT OUT ESPECIALLY WITHIN THE CITY TO THINK MORE OF 24 STORY HIGH RISES NOT AT THIS TIME. I APPRECIATE THIS WAS DOUBLE SIDED WITH EXTRA INFORMATION PROVIDED.

CASE 0016 COMMENTS [3/1]: A LOT OF THE SURVEY REQUIRED GUESS WORK ON MY PART IN THAT I WAS UNFAMILIER WITH THE TERM\AS THE POPULATION GROWS WE HAVE A CHOICE TO GO UPWARDS LIKE THE EAST COAST OR GO OUT LIKE LOS ANGELES\I WOULD RAYHER GO UP RATHER THASN OUT TO PRESEREV AREAS FOF THE COUNTY\I WOULD ALSO FAVOR INCREASED DENSITY\WE DON'T ALL OF US NEED Az ONE ACRE LOT\I APPROVE OF A SMALLER COTTAGE TYPE HOUSE YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT AS STARTER HOMES FOR YOUNF FAMILIES OR THE ELDERLY AS THEY NEED LASS ROOM

CASE 0023 COMMENTS [3/1]: ABOUT LOW INCOME HOUSING,CLUSTER HOUSING, I THINK ALL INCOMES SHOULD BE MIXED TOGETHER.

CASE 0024 COMMENTS [3/1]: A COUNTY NEEDS A MASTER PLAN AND THIS TALKS TO ALL THESE ISSUES. I LIVE IN AN AGRICULTURE ISSUE WHICH EXPLAINS MY ANSWERS.

CASE 0025 COMMENTS [3/1]: BELLINGHAM NEEDS TO DENSIFY BEFORE\EXPANDING USE MAXIMUM DENSITY ALLOW ADU'S AND TALLER\BUILDINGS PROTECT RURAL AREAS SURROUNDING CITIES

CASE 0027 COMMENTS [3/1]: PEOPLE IN BELLINGHAM SHOULD LET THE OTHER PEOPLE IN THE COUNTY TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN LAND BECAUSE WE WILL TAKE CARE OF IT BETTER THAN BELLINGHAM\WILL TAKE BETTER CARE OF IT THAN THEY WILL WE ALWAYS HAVE\I REALLY DISLIKE ANY TYPE OF COMMITTEE TRYING TO TELL US WHAT TO DO WITH OUR OWN LAND\PUT THE SHOE ON THE OTHER FOOT\LET ME AND MY FRRIENDS GET TOGETHER IN A COMMITTEE AND TELL THE PEOPLE IN BELLINGHAM HOW TO LIVE AND THEN WE'LL CALL IT EVEN\THE GLACIER AREA PAYS AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT OF TAXES AND WE RECEIVE LITTLE OR NO SERVICES FROM THE COUNTY\THEY WANT US TO PAY HIGH TAXES AND WE RECEIVE NO SERVICES IN MY AREA\I'M NOT HAPPY WITH THE COUNTY AT ALL\I DON'T KNOW TOO MANY PEOPLE UP HERE THAT OWN HOUSES THAT ARE HAPPY WITH THE COUNTY\WE ARE WILL BE PAYING AN ASSESSED VALUE IN TAXES OF SOMEWHERE AROUND 80 TO 90 MILLION DOLLARS FOR WHICH WE RECIEVE NOTHING OR VERY LITTLE SERVICES FROM THE COUNTY\AT THE CURRENT RATE I WILL HAVE PAID OVER \$100,000 OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS FOR WHICH I'M RECIEVING NOTHING FOR MY MONEY.\I'M PAYING TAXES ON MY HOUSE AND JURR 4 AND A HALF ACRES

CASE 0028 COMMENTS [3/1]: NO COMMENTS

CASE 0030 COMMENTS [3/1]: WANT KNOW HOW YOU TRANSFER DEVELOPEMENT RIGHTS TO INCREASE DENSITY\THIS WAS ON Q # 54

CASE 0035 COMMENTS [3/1]: SHOULD BE CAREFULL ADDING REQUIREMENTS IN A BUILDING CODE AND MAKE SURE THOSE REQUIREMENTS GROW AND EVOLVE AS NEW TECHONLOGY EVOLVES.

CASE 0036 COMMENTS [3/1]: I WAS THRILLED TO GET A CHANCE TO GIVE MY OPINION

CASE 0038 COMMENTS [3/1]: I WAS DISSAPOINTED THAT YOU SHOWED PICTURES OF LAND TRUST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SAN JAUNS BUT, THEY DIDN'T SHOW ANY PICTURES OF THE ONE ON LUMMI ISLAND\I BELIEVE THAT ALL OF THE DEVELOPMENTS SHOW ALLOW MITIGATION FOR ROADS, SCHOOLS ETC IN FRASTRUCTURE THAT SHOULD BE PAID FOR BY THE DEVELOPERS AND I CAN'T EMPHASIZE THAT ENOUGH\ABOUT A YEAR AGO MY WIFE AND I WERE THINKING ABOUT MOVING TO LUMI ISLAND AND BUILD ON PROPERTY THAT WE OWNED BUT, THE OBSTECLES WERE SO GREAT AND IT WOULD HAVE COST OVER \$100,000 TO EVEN START WITH ALL THE PERMITS AND REQUIREMENTS REGARDING SUBMITALS ETC., IT JUST TURNED OUT TO NOT BE WORTH IT TO EVEN START\DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD REQUIRE MITIGATION FOR SCHOOLS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SO THAT IT WOULD BE PAID FOR BY THE DEVELOPERS\REGARDING BUILDING ON LUMI IT WOULD HAVE COST OVER \$100,00 TO HIRE PEOPLE TO GET OVER THE OBSTICLES OF PERMITS AND REGULATIONS ETC. MY RESEARCH INDICATED THAT IT WOULD HAVE COST OVER \$100,000 RESEARCH LED ME TO BELIEVE IT WOULD HAVE COST OVER \$100,000\THERE WERE AT LEAST EIGHT DIFFERENT SUBMITTALS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO GET STARTED AND IF THINGS DIDN'T GO WELL THERE WOYULD HAVE BEEN ADDITIONAL SUBMITTALS REQUIRED

CASE 0041 COMMENTS [3/1]: I THINK GREEN IS GOOD.LISTEN TO AL GORES ACCEPTANCE SPEECH FOR THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE. MY BELIEFS ARE RIGHT IN LINE WITH THAT.I WANT MORE SLOAR AND WIND POWER SO THAT FAMILIES CAN BE MORE SELF SUSTAINING. I AM IN FAVOR OF COMMUNITY GARDENS.

CASE 0042 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE CITY AND COUNTY SHOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN REDUCING HOUSING COSTS BUT SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN ENHANCING AND PRESERVING COMMUNITIES THROUGH STRICT ZONING AND PERMITTING REGULATIONS.

CASE 0043 COMMENTS [3/1]: THIS IS NOT A GOOD WAY TO DO THIS

CASE 0044 COMMENTS [3/1]: I THINK WE SHOULD BE USING LEED BUILDING\CODES TO MAKE SURE ALL STRUCTURES ARE GREEN

CASE 0046 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE QUESTIONS ON 24 THROUGH 28 WASN'T CLEAR. THE WORDING WAS CONFUSING. IT IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE

CASE 0049 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IS TO OFFER SUPPORT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH POLICIES AND REGULATION BUT NOT TO FUND OR SUBSIDIZE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

CASE 0052 COMMENTS [3/1]: LOW COST APTS. WITH PUBLIC FINANCING IS A GOOD THING.I DONT SEE HOME OWNERSHIP AS A GOD GIVEN RIGHT, BUT,ALL PEOPLE DESERVE A DECENT DOMICILE.2)OUR EXPERTIENCE W/ RENTERS IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS MIXED, SOME GOOD, MANY BAD:NOISE,JUNK CARS,DRUGS,PROPERTY DECAY...3) MULTI-STORY BUILDINGS SHOULD HAVE STREET LEVEL RETAIL SPACE REDUCED. THERE IS ALREADY TOO MANY HOLE IN THE WALL SPACES.DO MORE ONSITE PARKING. PARKING IS A MAJOR ISSUE IN ALL RESIDENTIAL ARENAS. ONE CAR PER 16 YEAR OLD PERSON IS BECOMING THE NORM.4) ANY ACCESSORY DWELLING SHOULD ONLY BE OCCUPIED BY A FAMILY RELATIVE, NO STUDENTS OR OTHER PEOPLE.

CASE 0054 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE COUNTY HAS TO LET GO OF THIS IDEA OF LOT SIZE, LOTS CAN BE ONE ACRES OR MORE OR LESS BUT YOU HAVE TO GET REAL AS TO WHAT A PIECE OF LAND IS, \IF YOU HAVE A PIECE OF LAND THAT WILL ACCOMADATE A HOME WITH WATER AND SEWER WHY NOT OPEN IT UP \IF A PERSON HAS AN ACRE OR TWO AND CAN GET WATER AND SEWER WHY NOT LET HIM BUILD\THIS MIND SET IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD JUST COME OUT AND SAY THAT WE DON'T WANT ANY GROWTH IN BELLINGHAM OR WATCOM COUNTY THEN THEY SHOULD JUST COME OUT AND SAY IT SO THAT THEN PEOPLE WOULD KNOW\THERE'S WAY TOO MUCH REGULATION AS TO WHAT A PWERSON CAN DO WITH THEIR LAND\TOO MANY REGULATIONS AND RULE \PEOPLE CAN'T USE THEIR OWN LAND

CASE 0056 COMMENTS [3/1]: I LEARNED A LOT FROM DOING THIS SURVEY\WE'RE STILL NEW HERE AND BASING ANSWERS ON IMPRESSIONS\RATHER THAN KNOWLEGE\THIS IS AN IMPRESSIVE EFFORT TO GATHER PUBLIC INPUT

CASE 0058 COMMENTS [3/1]: A BALANCE OF HOUSING OF ALL KINDS. BE CAREFUL OF LOADING APARTMENTS ALL IN ONE YEAR. INFILL THEIR CITY LIMITS BEFORE THE GO INTO OTHER COMMUNITIES. SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING SHOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE. PARKLAND WITHIN THE URBAN AREA BETWEEN BELLINGHMAN AND THE BORDER. WATKING COUNTY DONE A FANTASTIC JOB IN ACQUIRING LAND. FOLLOW THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANS FOR THE PARK, GOOD PLAN.

CASE 0061 COMMENTS [3/1]: BE SURE DEVELOPERS PAY ALL THE FEES WHEN THE BUILD HOUSING. NO SPRAWL IN RURAL AREAS.

CASE 0062 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE NEED MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND THE MEANS\TO ACCOMPLISH THAT SHOULD COME THROUGH THE DEVELOPERS\SALWA SALES TA DX WON'T WORK

CASE 0071 COMMENTS [3/1]: SURVEY CUMBERSOME, WOULD BE BETTER IN A FOCUS GROUP WHERE YOU WOULD BE PAID. GOOD SURVEY BUT LONG, DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY COMPLETED IT.

CASE 0074 COMMENTS [3/1]: EVANOL AND OTHER DEVELOPERS IN TOWN RUNNING ROUGHSHOT IN OUR COMMUNITY, THEY ARE MAKING THE RULES, NO REGARD FOR THE CITY AND WHAT THEY THINK.

CASE 0075 COMMENTS [3/1]: FEEL THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY APARTMENTS, CONDO'S, MULTI STORY APARTMENTS BEING BUILT IN BELLINGHAM AND WHATCOM COUNTY. EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON INCREASING DENSITY AND SINGLE FAMILY AREAS. RELAXING BUILDING CODES TO CONVERT GARAGES AND ATTACH APARTMENTS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS. TOO MANY LARGE SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES WITH FEW PEOPLE IN THEM AND TO ME IT WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE TO HAVE MORE PEOPLE LIVING IN THESE AREAS WHERE THERE ARE LARGE HOUSES..

CASE 0077 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE'RE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH THE BEST QUALITY POSSIBLE REQUIRE COUNTY TO MAINTAIN QUALITY STANDARDS FOR NEIGHBORHOODS CLEAN UP TRASH IF HIGH DENSITY LIVING NEED MORE PARKS WALK AREAS AND OPEN SPACES NEW MOVE INS MUST COMPLY WITH CLEAN HEALTH STANDARDS AND COUNTY ENFORCED ORDINANCES

CASE 0078 COMMENTS [3/1]: PROTECT EXISTING MOBILE HOME PARKS FROM BEING SOLD. I WORRY ABOUT PEOPLE ON SOCIAL SECURITY NOT BEING ABLE TO AFFORD HOUSING. STOP ALLOWING WETLAND DEVELOPMENT. UGLY CONCRETE PONDS DO NO EQUAL WETLAND HABITAT. SHAME ON BELLINGHAM FOR ALLOWING CONCRETE PONDS THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE BUILDING ON. AT 66, NOT SHODDY AND LOWER QUALITY CONSTRUCION. #55, OR OPOSITE THE LUXRY OF OPEN LANDS. AT #73, I WROTE ALL, RATHER THAN GIVE ONE ANSWER. AT #9, I WROTE WETLAND RAPE. I ENJOYED DOING SURVEY.

CASE 0079 COMMENTS [3/1]: WHATEVER THE COMBINATION OF HOUSING ACTION PLANS ARE FINALIZED, THE DEVELOPERS SHOULD NOT HAVE A MAJOR SAY IN THE CRITERIA INVOLVED. THE DEVELOPERS SHOULD ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE INTRA STRUCTURE OF ROADS, UTILITIES, SCHOOLS, AND SO ON.

CASE 0080 COMMENTS [3/1]: WHY ARE YOU DOING IT BY PHONE INSTEAD OF HAVING IT MAILED IN?

CASE 0084 COMMENTS [3/1]: WOULD LIKE TO SEE RENTS LOWERED, AND PROPERTY FOR LOWER INCOME FAMILIES AVAILABLE.

CASE 0085 COMMENTS [3/1]: A LOT OF IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR TRYING TO BUILD A COMMUNE. SO MANY OF THEM, LIKE 80-100, LOOK LIKE THAT. EVERYTIME THIS IS DONE, WHENEVER THE COMMUNITY DOES THESE, THEY DISCOUNT THE VEHICLE/PARKING AREA. THERE ARE A LOT OF CARS IN THIS AREA SO I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY KEEP DOING THAT. WHY DOES THE COMMUNITY WANT TO GIVE HOUSING WHEN WE SHOULD BE CREATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO EARN IT. MORATORIUMS, ANYTIME YOU DECREASE THE ABILITY FOR PEOPLE TO BUILD OR HINDER THEIR ABILITY, IT INCREASES THE DEMAND AND COST AND THAT CREATES A BIGGER DEMAND. THEY WANT WHAT THEY CAN'T HAVE.

CASE 0086 COMMENTS [3/1]: SINCE WE HAVE LIVED IN THE SAME HOME 50 YEARS I AM SOMEWHAT IGNORANT ABOUT WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING. I KNOW HOUSING IS EXPENSIVE AND RENT IS TO AND I DO NOT KNOW HOW THOSE COMPARE.

CASE 0088 COMMENTS [3/1]: I DONT BELIEVE IT IS THE HIGH COST OR LACK OF HOUSING THAT IS THE PROBLEM. THE PROBLEM IS THE POOR SALARIES AND HIGH TAXES!

CASE 0089 COMMENTS [3/1]: I FIND THAT AT TIMES THE THINGS PUT IN PLACE ARE NOT FOLLOWED UP ON, PERSONEL WISE. WE NEED CLEAR STANDARDS ON HOUSING.

CASE 0090 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE RECENTLY WERE IN SURY BC AND NOTICED THAT THE DENSITY BUILDINGS WERE VERY NICE AND NOT CHEAPLY BUILT.

CASE 0092 COMMENTS [3/1]: I BELIEVE THAT COSTS THAT IVE SEEN GOING INTO BUILDINGS AND NEW HOMES COMES FROM PERMITS AND GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS. IT HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY IN THE LAST 30 YEARS.

CASE 0093 COMMENTS [3/1]: I LIKE IT THE WAY IT WAS IN 1977

CASE 0094 COMMENTS [3/1]: 31 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER SINGLE MOTHER WITH 2 CHILDREN WHO HAD RESIGNED HERSELF THAT SHE NEVER CAN SAVE UP A DOWN PAYMENT.

CASE 0095 COMMENTS [3/1]: AFFORDABLE HOUSING HAS BECOME AN OXIMORON

CASE 0096 COMMENTS [3/1]: HAVING 4 YOUNG ADULT CHILDREN NONE OF WHOM OWN HOMES YET, THIS SURVEY ADDRESES AN IMPORTANT ISSUE. IF THEY CHOSE TO LIVE IN WHATCOM COUNTY THEY NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING WHETHER IT IS TO RENT OR OWN. WITH LIVING COST ESCALATING, HAVING FAMILIES LIVING CLOSER TOGETHER IT GIVES THEM MORE SUPPORT. THEY NEED JOBS THAT WILL PAY FOR HOUSING.

CASE 0097 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE LESS GOVERNMENT INTERACTION, THE BETTER. ENCOURAGE BETTER APARTMENT HOUSING COMMUNITIES. APARTMENTS HERE SEEM TO BE MORE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AS OPPOSED TO SOMETHING YOU COULD REALLY CALL HOME. INSTEAD OF BUILDING THEM WITH MINIMUM STANDARDS, BUILD THEM SO THAT PEOPLE WILL ACTUALLY WANT TO STAY. HOMEOWNERSHIP IS NOT AN AMERICAN RIGHT.

CASE 0098 COMMENTS [3/1]: YOUNG AND DISADVANTAGED SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO LIVE IN MOSDEST ACCOMADATIONS AND SHOULD BE MOTIVATED TO IMPROVE ON THIER OWN. ALLOW BIG HOMES AND SMALL COTTAGES, PLEASE ALLOW FOR PEOPLE TO HAVE OTHER OPTIONS BESIDE BUILDING BIG HOMES ON THIER LOTS. IF ABLE TO HAVE SMALLER ACCOMADATIONS, THOSE WHO NEED LOWER INCOME HOUSING WILL BE MORE APT TO FIND IT. ALSO IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR THE ECOLOGY IF PEOPLE LIVE MORE MODESTLY.

CASE 0105 COMMENTS [3/1]: THIS WHOLE SURVEY IS DID I AGREE WITH ALL THE THINGS IN IT AND I HARDLY AGREE WITH ANY OF IT. I DON'T THINK YOU OR YOUR GROUP KNOW WHAT I NEED AND I DON'T THINK YOU DO. IU DONT THINK LAND USE IS THOUGHT THROUGH RIGHT. THERE'S A LOT OF ROOM FOR PROPERTY BUT BECAUSE OF ZONING, IT CAN'T BE USED. WE OWN 13 ACRES AND THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO IS USE IT FOR AGRICULTURE AND THE ONLY THING WE COULD GROW IS BUSHES. WE CAN'T USE THE LAND FOR ADDITIONAL HOUS.

CASE 0106 COMMENTS [3/1]: I DOBNT THINK THE COUNTY SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN PURCHASING ANY LAND FOR HOUSING AT ALL. IM AWARE OF MANY PEOPLE WHO CURRENTLY HAVE PROPERTY ZONED TO BE USED IN A CERTAIN WAY AND THE COUNTY HAS SO MANY RULES AND REGULATIONS THAT THE PROPERTY

CANNOT BE USED FOR WHAT IT WAS ZONED FOR AND I DONT THINK THATS RIGHT AND IT SHOULD BE CHANGED. CONCERNING #65, THEY HAVE A NOTE THERE AND IT SAYS IF THE IMPACT FEES ARE REDUCED THEN THE FUNDS WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE AND MY RESPONSE TO THAT IS THEY SHOULD LIMIT SPENDING. CONCERNING #89, ON MODULAR HOME, IM CONCERNED ABOUT MODULAR HOMES INSURANCE WISE, MY FOLKS LIKE IN A MODULAR HOME AND HAVE FOR 10 YEARS AND HAVE A PROBLEM GETTING INSURANCE BECAUSE IF SOMETHING HAPPNES THE ENTIRE HOME HAS TO BE REPLACED.

CASE 0107 COMMENTS [3/1]: NO COMMENTS OTHER THAN I FEEL THIS IS A GOOD WAY TO DO A SURVEY.

CASE 0111 COMMENTS [3/1]: H\I AM AGAINST MODULAR HOUSING, THEY ARE NOT LONG LASTING OR DURABLE, SO\THEY COST MORE IN REPAIR AND REPLACE,MENT. LEAVE AND RETAIN WHAT IS\ALLREADY IN EXIANCE BUT DO NOT BUILD MORE AS IT IS NOT COST EFFECTIVE\TO DO SO.

CASE 0112 COMMENTS [3/1]: OUR FAMILY LONG MEMBER OF COUNTY, ONE OF THE PIONEERS. WE HAVE FAMILY PROPERTY OWNED BEFORE WASHINGTON WAS A STATE, HAD THE PROPERTY BEFORE THE COUNTY WAS A COUNTY AND WE CAN NOT DO ANYTHING WITH IT EXCEPT FARM, CAN NOT BUILD A HOUSE ON IT, AND WE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO IT. 15 ACREA PLOT AND OUR FAMILY WOULD EACH LIKE 5 ACREAS. ZONING SHOULD BE CHANGED AND DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION OR KNOW WHAT TO DO.

CASE 0114 COMMENTS [3/1]: WITH ALL THE GOOD KNOWLEDGE THAT HAS BEEN LEARNED, FIND THE RIGHT LOCATION AND BUILD A NEW CITY WITH ALL THE NEEDS AND PLAN FOR GROWTH.

CASE 0116 COMMENTS [3/1]: IMPORTANT AND GREAT IDEAS. I HOPE TO SEE IT MOVE FORWARD.

CASE 0118 COMMENTS [3/1]: OWNERS WHO ARE IN SERVICE AREAS WHO WOULD LIKE\TO HOOK UP TO SEWER AND WATER SERVICE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY\EXTREMELY HIGH COSTS TO GET SERVICE BECAUSE THE UTILITIES\REQUIRED TO INSTALL MAIN LINES RATHER THAN FEEDER LINES

CASE 0123 COMMENTS [3/1]: I WOULD RECOMMEND THESE QUESTIONNARES SHORTER. (I WAS AT FIRST OVERWHELMED LOOKING AT IT.)

CASE 0126 COMMENTS [3/1]: A LOT OF THESE QUESTIONS ARE WRITTEN IN SUCH A WAY THAT I HAVE TO GUESS THE ANSWERS, RATHER THAN HAVING STATISTICS AVAILABLE SO THAT I CAN COME TO A BETTER CONCLUSION.

CASE 0128 COMMENTS [3/1]: WHY IS THE CITY AND THE COUNTY DRAGGING THEIR FEET ON PIPE STEM LOTS?

CASE 0129 COMMENTS [3/1]: DEPENDANT ON WHO THE RESPEONDENTS ARE THIS IS A TECHNICALLY ACCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCCDEPENDING ON WHO THE RESPONDENTS ARE THIS IS AN EXTREMELY TECHNICALLY SURVEY AND VERY HARD TO COMPLETE.

CASE 0130 COMMENTS [3/1]: THE BUILDING WHERE I AM LIVING IS THE ARCHDIOCIAN CATHOLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY. IT IS STILL HIGH RENT EVEN THOUGH I QUAQLIFY FOR LOW INCOME HOUSING, I STILL AM PAYING OVER 50% OF MY RENT.\WHRE SOME OF THE PEOPLE ARE GETTING TAX BREAKS IN SEATTLE SOME OF THE LOWER INCOME RESIDENTS CAN NOT AFFORD TO MOVE IN. IT

SHOULD BE WELL DEFINED. SUCH AS A TAX BREAK FOR LOWER INCOME THERE SHOULD BE AN INCOME GUIDELINE.

CASE 0131 COMMENTS [3/1]: LOWER INTEREST RATES SO YOUNG PEOPLE CAN PURCHASE HOMES

CASE 0132 COMMENTS [3/1]: I LIKE THE IDEA OF ADD ONS TO HOUSES, BECAUSE THIS WOULD BE GOOD FOR STUDENTS. THE LOOK OF MOBILE HOMES BRINGS DOWN THE VALUE OF THE AREA. PEOPLE WITH BIG HOUSES WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO RENT OUT THE HOUSES PERHAPS IF THEY COULD GET PERMITS TO DO SO. THE COST OF LIVING FOR HOUSING IS SUCH THAT INFLATION GOES UP FASTER THAN WAGES.

CASE 0133 COMMENTS [3/1]: WATER RUNS DOWNHILL AND WATER MUST NOT FLOOD EXISTING STRUCTURES. THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAS TO SET THE TONE WITH THE PROPERTY LINES AND INSETS REGARDING EXISTING STRUCTURES TO BE REBUILT OR IMPROVED REFLECTING THE CODES AT THE TIME OF THE EXISTING CONSTRUCTION. EXAMPLE GARAGES ON SMALL LOTS MAY BE LOCATED NEAR THE PROPERTY LINE. GARAGES ON SEPERATE PROPERTIES SHOULD SHARE A COMMON WALL. ELECTRIC INSULATION AND PLUMBING SHOULD STAY AT CURRENT STANDARDS WITH INCENTIVES TO UPGRADE. ANY COUNTY MONEY INVESTED IN PROJECTS SHOULD BE RECYCLED INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

CASE 0134 COMMENTS [3/1]: MOST IMPORTANT TO ME ARE STREET UPGRADES SIDEWALKS AND CROSSWALKS BELLINGHAM DOES NOT LACK FOR PARKS IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EXTEND SEWER AROUND LAKE WHATCOM AND THROUGHOUT THE WATERSHED

CASE 0135 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE NEED TO MAKE MORE ACCESSIBLE SIMPLER AND MORE PROGRESSIVE POND TYPE SEPTIC SYSTEMS IN WHATCOM COUNTY. THE CURRENT HARDWARE (AND ELECTRICAL) INTENSIVE DRAIN FIELD SYSTEMS ARE NOT THE ONLY EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS IN EXISTENCE. WHILE THESE POND SYSTEMS ARE CURRENTLY ALLOWED, ONLY THE WEALTHY CAN AFFORD THEM BECAUSE OF THE BURDEN OF DOCUMENTATION PUT ON THE HOMEOWNER BY THE COUNTY.

CASE 0136 COMMENTS [3/1]: THEY ARE GETTING TOO UNREASONABLE WITH PERMITS AND PERMIT FEES (NEW HOUSING PERMITS, SPECIFICALLY). THE COUNTY IS ALLOWING THE LAND OWNER NEXT DOOR WHO IS BUILDING A NEW HOUSE TO LET THE WATER DRAIN INTO THE DITCH INTO OUR PROPERTY WHICH COULD CAUSE FLOODING. THE HOUSING PERMIT PROCESS IS TOO CUMBERSOME AND IT TAKES FOREVER TO GET A PERMIT FOR EXAMPLE TO BUILD A SIMPLE LITTLE GARAGE.

CASE 0137 COMMENTS [3/1]: CONCENTRATE THE DENSITY SO THAT THERE ARE OPEN SPACES AND WE HAVE FARM LAND. CONCENTRATE THE DENSITY, SO THAT SERVICES ARE ALREADY THERE AND WE DON'T NEED MORE SERVICES GENERATED IN NEW AREAS. I DON'T THINK IT IS REALISTIC TO BUILD NEW AND BIG HOUSING PROJECTS IN SUMAS, ETC WHICH IS SO REMOTE. HAVE NEW HOUSING PROJECTS CLOSE TO BELLINGHAM WHERE SERVICES ALREADY EXIST.

CASE 0138 COMMENTS [3/1]: SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE ABOUT THE INFORMAL WRECKING YARDS THAT ARE SPRINGING UP ALONG THE MOUNT BAKER HIGHWAY. THESE WRECKING YARDS ARE VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION.

CASE 0139 COMMENTS [3/1]: BOY, THIS WAS SOME SURVEY!!

CASE 0140 COMMENTS [3/1]: SURVEY NOT AS SPECIFIC AS IT SHOULD BE, NOT WELL DONE.

CASE 0141 COMMENTS [3/1]: I USED TO LIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO WHERE THERE IS LITTLE OR NO FRONT YARDS. THAT REQUIRES SMALLER LOTS, COURTYARD TYPE BACK YARD PROVIDED PRIVACY AND FAMILY SPACE. HOUSES WITH FRONT PORCHES CLOSE TO THE SIDEWALK, PROMOTED NEIGHBORNESS AND INTERACTION WITH THE STREET. LARGE FRONT YARDS HERE SEEM WASTEFULL AND PROVIDE LITTLE BENEFIT.

CASE 0144 COMMENTS [3/1]: STRESS OPTIONS FOR THE FREE OR NON-PROFIT MARKET. GET GOVT BLOCKAGE CLEAR (I.E. PERMITING PROCESS IS A NIGHTMARE). BLDG INSPECTORS ARE CORRUPT; RUMORS OF ASKING FOR BRIBES, CONTRADICTIONARY INSTRUCTIONS; RIP IT DOWN AFTER BEING APPROVED. WHEN THERE ARE MANY OPTIONS THE MARKET WILL DECIDE WHAT PEROPLE WANT OR ARE WILLING TO TOLLERATE.

CASE 0146 COMMENTS [3/1]: VERY IMPORTANT TO LIVE IN A GOOD COMMUNITY. DEVELOPERS SHOULD NOT COME IN AND DRIVE PRICES UP AND REALTORS AND DEVELPORS DRIVE PRICES UP.

CASE 0151 COMMENTS [3/1]: UNNECESSARY WAITING PERIOD TO PUT TRAILER AND HOUSE ON SAME PROPERTY; TO HOOK UP DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE. WHY?

CASE 0152 COMMENTS [3/1]: URBAN SPRAWL PUT A LIMIT, MORE AFFORDABLE SINGLE FAMILY UNITS.

CASE 0153 COMMENTS [3/1]: ANYTHING THAT LOOKS AT ALTERNATIVES, CREATIVE CLUSTERING AND GREEN CONSTRUCTION IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

CASE 0154 COMMENTS [3/1]: WHILE I APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS PUT OUT TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THE HOUSING ISSUES IN OUR COUNTY, I BELIEVE IN LESS GOVT INVOLEMENT. THERE NEEDS TO BE A PUSH FOR LESS GOVT INVOLVEMENT TO MAKE PEOPLE REALIZE THEIR OWN NEED & FIND IT IN THEMSELVES TO PERSUE IT. IF THAT MEANS RELOCATION TO FIND A FINANCIALLY SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT, SO BE IT. THE AMERICAN DREAM IS TURNING INTO AN AMERICAN DREAM SUPPORTED BY THE US GOVT. PEOPLE NEED TO FIND THEIR OWN WAY IN LIFE. WHEN THEY HAVE COME TO A POINT OF TRUE NEED THEY NEED TO FIND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES FOR ASSISTANCE. WE NEED TO CREATE A SYSTEM THAT ENABLES WITHOUT HINDERING, SELF RELIANCE GIVES SELF ASSURANCE & CONFIDENCE IN ONE'S OWN ABILITY TO SUCCESSFULLY EXIST.\]

CASE 0155 COMMENTS [3/1]: VERY PLEASED WITH THIS EFFORT. COMMUNAL LIVING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

CASE 0156 COMMENTS [3/1]: A REDICULOUS WAY TO CONDUCT A SURVEY. I COULD HAVE MAILED IT IN.

CASE 0157 COMMENTS [3/1]: WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE SIDEWALKS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND AREA, AND LITTLE KIDS WALKING IN THE STREETS.

CASE 0159 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE LIVE IN BIRCH BAY BECAUSE WE COULD NOT FIND ANYTHING AFFORDABLE IN BELLINGHAM SO OUR GAS HAS INCREASED IN COST. WE GET LOW INTEREST FHA MORTGAGE RATE FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS, IT WOULD BE NICE FOR OTHER BUYERS TO HAVE THIS.

CASE 0160 COMMENTS [3/1]: IN MOST ITEMS HEREIN, I HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS. OVERALL IT SOUNDS LIKE A VIABLE SITUATION. WATCH FLOOD ZONES.

CASE 0162 COMMENTS [3/1]: HIGHEST PRIORITY IS THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IS MINIMAL.

CASE 0165 COMMENTS [3/1]: INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON MAXIMIZING LAND USE AND REDUCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE I WOULD EMPHAZISE MINIMISING THE LAND USE FOR A QUALITY OF LIFE. INSTEAD OF LIMITING SPACE BETWEEN PEOPLE , I WOULD MARK AREAS AS FULL WITH A WAITING LIST AND THATS IT AND CREATE WAITING LISTS UNTIL SOMEONE MOVES OUT. PROPERTY VALUE THEN GOES UP AND NOT DOWN. THE CITY CONTROLS THE ZONING AND REGULATIONS FOR SO MANY HOMES PER LOT AND DEVELOPMENT. NEW HOMES WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE TO GO OUTWARD INTO THE COUNTY. THERE ARE ALREADY AMENITIES CLOSE BY WITH SCHOOLS , SHOPPING CENTERS, AND STRIP MALLS. THE COTTAGES ARE A GREAT IDEA IF THEY ARE PUT INTO THE UNDER POPULATED AREAS. I HEARD COUNTY AND CITY PLANNERS HERE ARE STRICT AND PICKY ABOUT ISSUING BUILDING PERMITS FOR PEOPLE WHO ALREADY HAVE PROPERTY TO BUILD ON AND THEY CAN NOT GET THE COOPERATION BECAUSE OF MORATORIUMS. WHAT WE COULD USE DOWN SIZE EMERGENCY HOUSING FOR WEATHER RELATED HOME LESS FAMILIES OR FORECLOSED INDIVIDUALS AND PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY. I DO BELIEVE FLOODS AND SUCH ARE GOING TO REDUCE BUYERS IN THIS AREA.

CASE 0166 COMMENTS [3/1]: VOLUNTARY BONUS INCENTIVES SOMEWHAT RISKY, WITHIN REASON , STRONG LIMITS AS FAR AS THE BUILDING INDUSTRY IS CONCERNED. DO NOT ALLOW BUILDERS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE. VERY STRONG WORKING IN CONCERT WITH THE HOMELINESS REDUCTION PROGRAM. NEEDS TO BE A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE DEVELOPERS AND A FIUION SUCH AS A LIASON FOR THE COMMUNITY. PROVIDING FOR THE HOMELESS ACTUALLY REDUCES COSTS FOR THE COMMUNITY.

CASE 0168 COMMENTS [3/1]: HIGH DENSITY, MINIMUM 4 STORY, MULTIPLE UNIT WITHIN PARKS, SCHOOLS, SHOPS AND BUSINESS, SERVED BY MASS TRANSIT SERVED FREQUENTLY IN OTHER WORDS DIRECT OPPOSIT OF TODAY WHERE EVERYTHING INVOLVES A CAR. WHAT WE DO NOW ENCOURAGES FUTURE TRAFFIC JAMS AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE THINGS CHANGES. BIKES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS FIRST, CARS LAST. SHOULD CONSIDER ARTICULATED BUSES. LOTS OF PROMENADES.

CASE 0170 COMMENTS [3/1]: WE NEED MORE OPTIONS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS IN THIS COUNTY. WE NEED TO PROTECT OUR FARMLANDS IN WHATCOM COUNTY. I HAVE SEEN THE COUNTY SHRINKING QUITE A BIT. I HAVE FAMILY MEMBERS WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO HEAT THEIR HOMES BECAUSE IT IS SO EXPENSIVE. I DON'T LIKE TO SEE THE ELDERLY TO GO WITHOUT HEAT. ALOT OF THE KIDS GRADUATING CANNOT AFFORD TO RAISE THEIR FAMILY IN THE AREA SO THEY END UP LEAVING AND WE HAVE LITTLE EXTENDED FAMILIES IN THE AREA. ALOT OF PEOPLE ARE MOVING OUT OF THE AREA BECAUSE THEY CANNOT AFFORD THE HOUSING.

CASE 0172 COMMENTS [3/1]: I THINK A SURVEY WRITTEN TO ADDRESS THE REALITIES OF THE FUTURE WOULD LOOK QUITE DIFFERENT THAN THIS ONE. THIS SURVEY ASSUMES WE WILL BE LEAVING IN AN ERA OF PLENTY AS WE ARE TODAY IN TWENTY YEARS AND BEYOND. THE FUTURE ORGANIZATION OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES WILL SURELY LOOK QUITE DIFFERENT THAN WHAT THIS SURVEY SUGGESTS.

CASE 0173 COMMENTS [3/1]: DOES NOT PERTAIN TO THE NORTH WEST PART OF WHATCOM COUNTY WHICH IS BASICALLY AGRICULTURAL AND ALSO THE N/E OF LYNDEN WHICH WOULD ALSO BE AGRICULTURAL. PREFER JUST SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS IN THE COUNTY. LEAVE THE COTTAGE AND OTHER HOUSING IN THE CITY AREAS.

CASE 0177 COMMENTS [3/1]: I FEEL THAT MOST NEW CONSTRUCTION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY IS EITHER EXPENSIVE, MC MANSIONS, OVER 2000 SQUARE FEET, OR LOW QUALITY MANUFACTURED HOMES. MOST CONSTRUCTION IN THE COUNTY CHEAP OR EXPENSIVE IS UGLY.. THE MOST IMPORTANT DUTY OF COUNTY IS TO PRESERVE WATER QUALITY AND FARM LAND. COUTNY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO BE CURTAILED. I ALSO DO NOT TRUST MANY OF THE BUILDERS, DEVELOPERS AND THE REAL ESTATE AGENTS IN THE AREA. I FEEL THESE GROUPS ARE PROFITING WHILE ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY MUST PAY THE PRICE BAG.

CASE 0181 COMMENTS [3/1]: BUILDING PERMIT SYSTEM PROCESS IN THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM IS DISORGANIZED, MULTIPLE PERMITS TAKES TOO LONG, CUMBERSOME AND DOES NOT ENCOURAGE BUILDING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD. MULTIPLE PLANS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, CURRENT PROCESS INCREASES COST , SHOULD BE DOING MULTIPLE THINGS AT THE SAME TIME.PROCESS IS RIDICULOUS AND STUPID.

CASE 0182 COMMENTS [3/1]: MORE ADU'S IN THE SOUTH HILL NEIGHBORHOOD.

CASE 0183 COMMENTS [3/1]: THERE NEEDS TO BE AFFORDABLE HOUSING, BUT MARKED DRIVEN; EDUCATING THE HOME OWNERS ABOUT LAND TRUSTS. VALUE WILL WILL NOT GO UP WITH IMPROVEMENTS ALONE.

CASE 0185 COMMENTS [3/1]: NOT EVERYONE CAN AFFORD TO LIVE WHERE THEY WANT TO AND I THINK THAT IS OKAY.

CASE 0188 COMMENTS [3/1]: I LIKE TO SEE MORE TREES IN THE DEVELOPMENTS. ENVIRONMENTAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE ON THE COMMITTEES ESPECIALLY TO INSURE THE BEAUTY AND SAFETY OF ENVIRONMENT. ITS NOT JUST ABOUT MONEY. WE ARE INTERESTED IN THE IDEA OF LIGHT POLLUTION, LOWERING THE LIGHTS SO WE CAN SEE THE STARS, LIGHT POLLUTION AT NIGHT. UNDERGROUND UTILITY LINES. OPEN GREEN SPACES SHOULD BE REQUIRED. WILDERNESS AREAS CAN BE LEFT IN THE CENTER AND AROUND THE RIM OF DEVELOPMENTS, CAN BE BEAUTIFUL. LAWS SHOULD BE MADE IN BUILDING CONTRACTS ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENTS AND WILDERNESS. GLAD THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELDERLY, SHOULD BE SOME SORT OF INCENTIVE TO COOPERATE. HAVE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES ON HOUSING AND LIVING SKILLS.

CASE 0194 COMMENTS [3/1]: I AM 79, LIVE ALONE, EVENTUALLY LOOKING INTO GOING INTO LOW COST HOUSING. A LOT OF LOW COST FACILITIES, ARE SCRUNCHED INTO SMALL AREAS , NO ROOM FOR ANYTHING LIKE CRAFTS, HOBBIES, STORAGE OR HOBBY ROOM WHERE PEOPLE CAN STORE THEIR MATERIALS. NEED MORE ROOM FOR LOW COST HOUSING AND SENIORS.

CASE 0196 COMMENTS [3/1]: OVERALL I AM OPPOSED TO ANY TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT. ROAD INTRA STRUCTURE,\PUBLIC SERVICES ARE NOT IN PLACE TO HANDLE DEVELOPMENT.

CASE 0197 COMMENTS [3/1]: I WOULD LIKE TO SEE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OTHER THAN THE SURVEY.

CASE 0199 COMMENTS [3/1]: IMPACT FEES THAT PEOPLE ARE CHARGED. SOME OF THAT IS FOR ROADS AND OUR ROADS ARE VERY POOR OUT HERE.