



Staff Report

For City Council Meeting - 8/2/2023

Subject - New Business - Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Housing Planning Grant

Synopsis: City staff is seeking preliminary support for joining a DLCD Housing Planning Grant application. The City Council's approval via motion is needed to move forward and join the County and neighboring cities who are applying for the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Housing Planning Grant. This grant, initiated by Clatsop County, aims to conduct buildable land inventories, development readiness studies, and coordinated strategies to address housing challenges in Clatsop County. The City of Gearhart expresses its preliminary support for this grant application and seeks the Council's approval to participate in this collaborative effort.

Background

Housing affordability and availability have become pressing issues faced not only by the City of Gearhart but also by communities throughout Clatsop County. As our population grows and the demand for housing increases, it is crucial that we take proactive measures to plan for the future and ensure that our residents have access to suitable housing options. The DLCD Housing Planning Grant offers an opportunity to address these challenges collectively and develop a unified approach to housing planning in Clatsop County.

Collaborative Efforts and Initiatives

The City of Gearhart has been actively working on addressing affordable housing needs within our community. We have undertaken initiatives to explore potential rezoning and evaluate the possibility of future Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) adjustments to accommodate the city's growth and assess the current housing inventory accurately. Additionally, we are collaborating with Portland State University on a comprehensive study to identify environmentally suitable land for housing development.

As part of our commitment to tackling housing issues collectively, the City of Gearhart is an active participant in the Clatsop Regional Housing Task Force—a countywide coalition of government and community partners working together to address housing needs and issues.

This partnership has strengthened our collaborative efforts and provided a solid foundation for undertaking this project.

Unique Challenges and Opportunities

Clatsop County, being a coastal community with an economy dependent on natural resources and tourism, faces unique housing challenges. The well-being of our communities is closely tied to the affordability and availability of housing options. By conducting the BLI, we aim to gain better insights into our buildable lands, leading to the creation of well-informed housing policies, funding opportunities, and development solutions tailored to our specific needs. The City of Gearhart intends to use the BLI along with the results of the Oregon Housing Needs Assessment to develop a Housing Capacity Analysis, Housing Implementation Strategies, and other housing policies and practices.

Benefits of DLCD Housing Planning Grant

By participating in the DLCD Housing Planning Grant application process, the City of Gearhart and other municipalities in Clatsop County can leverage valuable resources to address affordable housing challenges effectively. This grant funding will enable us to work collaboratively, pool our resources, and create a robust foundation for housing production and access throughout the county.

Conclusion

City Staff request that City Council adopt a motion in support of the grant proposal.

The City of Gearhart recognizes the importance of cooperative efforts in addressing affordable housing issues, and we are pleased to express our preliminary support for the Housing Planning Assistance Grant application led by the City of Astoria. By participating in this grant initiative, we can work together as a county to develop coordinated housing strategies that will benefit all communities within Clatsop County. We look forward to the opportunity to leverage the DLCD Housing Planning Grant funding to strengthen our foundation for future housing production and improve access to homes for our residents.

Thank you for considering this matter. Your approval of our preliminary support will enable us to move forward with the motion and take significant steps toward addressing our housing challenges effectively.

Recommended Motion: The City staff recommends that the City Council grant preliminary support for Clatsop County's Housing Planning Assistance Grant application and motion to authorize our participation in this collaborative effort with the County and neighboring cities. By joining forces, Clatsop County municipalities can collectively address housing challenges and lay the groundwork for future housing development and accessibility.

Legal Analysis: Next Steps:

1. DLCD award announcements are expected in October 2023.

2. The City will actively participate in the project, providing necessary data and information to support the countywide analysis.
3. The City will engage with relevant stakeholders, community partners, and residents to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to housing planning.

Financial Analysis: N/A

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the name 'Chad', written in a cursive style.

Chad



Mayor Kerry Smith
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Ethan Stuckmayer
Housing Program Division Manager
Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
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July 18, 2023

Dear Mr. Stuckmayer and DLCD Housing Team.

The City of Gearhart is pleased to express our support for the Housing Planning Assistance Grant application submitted by the City of Astoria (Clatsop County) to conduct Astoria's required Housing Capacity Analysis (HCA). We are appreciative of Astoria's approach to this work that will allow cities throughout Clatsop County to use a uniform set of data and information to develop coordinated strategies in all the cities of Clatsop County, even those of us that are not required by state law to conduct a Housing Capacity Analysis.

We in Gearhart have been keenly aware of and diligently working on the issue of affordable housing in our community. Gearhart is actively exploring potential future rezoning and evaluating the possibility of future Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) adjustments as the city identifies the need for additional housing. In order to accommodate the city's growth and accurately assess the current inventory, an evaluation of the required availability for future housing (BLI) is essential as strategic planning for essential infrastructure development. The City of Gearhart would like to complete a more current study with Portland State University to evaluate additional land in our environmentally constrained city that could be suitable for housing development. We are investigating such tools as the transfer of development rights and land exchanges in order to facilitate the addition of housing in our city. We were also very pleased to see the opening of Trillium Housing in Warrenton in June of this year, adding 42 permanently affordable homes for very low-income residents, much needed in our community.

We are also active participants in the Clatsop County Housing Task Force, a countywide group of government and community partners working together to address our communities' housing needs and issues. This coalition has given us a strong foundation of collaboration that will serve us well as we undertake a unified approach to analyzing our housing capacity and developing strategies to produce the range of housing that is needed throughout our county.

Clatsop County not only shares many of the same affordable housing challenges as many communities throughout Oregon, but we also have unique issues as a result of being a coastal community with an economy dependent on natural resources and tourism. The well-being of our communities is deeply interconnected with the affordability and availability of housing, and we are hopeful that the work we will undertake through the HCA across the county will give us better information that will help us create a range of housing policy, funding, and development solutions to address all of our needs.

One of our greatest strengths as a county is our ability to work together in partnership to accomplish our shared goals, and to overcome community challenges, even with scarce resources and limited capacity. The City of Gearhart is confident that the DLCDC Housing Planning Assistance Grant funding will provide much-needed resources to help us all leverage what we each bring to the table and allow us to strengthen our foundation for further housing production and access to homes in our county.

Should our application be selected for funding, we will submit a formal city council resolution in support of this work, but for purposes of this application, this letter conveys our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kerry Smith
Gearhart City Mayor



Chad Sweet <chadsweet@cityofgearhart.com>

DLCD Housing Planning Grant Next Steps

1 message

Elissa Gertler <egertler@clatsopcounty.gov>

Wed, Jul 12, 2023 at 5:13 PM

To: Jay Blake <jblake@ci.warrenton.or.us>, "stclair@ci.cannon-beach.or.us" <stclair@ci.cannon-beach.or.us>, Steve Sokolowski <sokolowski@ci.cannon-beach.or.us>, "jflory@cityofseaside.us" <jflory@cityofseaside.us>, "chadsweet@cityofgearhart.com" <chadsweet@cityofgearhart.com>, Angoleana Brien <planning@cityofgearhart.com>, "sspence@astoria.or.us" <sspence@astoria.or.us>, "nate.stice@oregon.gov" <nate.stice@oregon.gov>, "brett.estes@dlcd.oregon.gov" <brett.estes@dlcd.oregon.gov>, Garrett Phillips <gphillips@columbiaestuary.org>, Gail Henrikson <ghenrikson@clatsopcounty.gov>, Denise Lofman <DLofman@columbiaestuary.org>, Chet Moritz <chet@northcoasthousing.org>

Hello colleagues,

Thank you for a productive conversation this past Monday regarding how we will move forward to seek a grant from DLCD for a Clatsop County-wide Housing Capacity Analysis. We have a great opportunity to do some cool work together.

As follow up to the discussion, Garrett and I have been working on two items—the grant application and work program itself, and a letter of support template that can be used by all of you as part of the application. I am attaching the draft letter for your use and customization as you see fit. Please strive to have those letters returned to me no later than Wednesday, July 26, two weeks from today (also the date of our next Housing Task Force meeting).

Next steps for the grant application and work program is for Astoria (Scott) to review it with DLCD (Brett and colleagues) and provide us their feedback by the end of next week, Friday, July 21 (though sooner is always better). We will then make needed changes and get the information needed to finalize the budget and prepare to submit the application by Friday, July 28. If any of you would like to review the work scope either before or after we get DLCD feedback, please let me know. We will plan to review and discuss the work program at the Housing Task Force meeting on the 26th.

Please feel free to reach out to Garrett or me to discuss any of this further.

Thank you,

Elissa

Elissa Gertler

Housing Manager

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