

Seattle and NW Washington

SPOTLIGHTS

Murray, O'Brien Introduce Legislation to Build New Affordable Housing

This week Mayor Ed Murray and Councilmember Mike O'Brien introduced legislation that will create 6,000 units of affordable housing throughout Seattle. The proposal comes from the Mayor and City Council's 28-member Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) advisory committee, and has been hailed as a "Grand Bargain" between affordable housing advocates and real estate developers.

There are two major components to the "Grand Bargain." The first establishes an Affordable Housing Impact Mitigation Program (AHIMP) – commonly referred to as a commercial linkage fee – that will directly fund the construction of new affordable housing by requiring developers to pay a fee on every square foot of new commercial development. The linkage fee will range from \$5 to \$17 per square foot.

The second part of the "Grand Bargain" calls for Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) for new multifamily developments, requiring five to eight percent of units be affordable for residents earning up to 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for 50 years. In 2015, 60 percent of AMI is \$37,680 for an individual and \$53,760 for a family of four. As an alternative to on-site units, developers can pay a fee to construct new affordable housing offsite.

In exchange, the City will look to increase development capacity in various ways throughout the city. New developments in downtown and South Lake Union will be allowed an extra 1,000 square feet per floor. Outside of the downtown core, new buildings will be allowed approximately one additional story in height. These changes will be subject to program design and the existing legislative rezoning process. The full chart of proposed changes can be viewed here.

The "Grand Bargain" will be phased in over a number of years. When fully implemented, it will create at least 6,000 new affordable homes over 10 years.

Current market rates for a newer one-bedroom unit range from \$1,399 to \$1,887. The table below shows average monthly rent rates by neighborhood for buildings built since 2010:

- Ballard \$1,769
- Capitol Hill/Eastlake \$1,887
- Green Lake / Wallingford \$1,671
- Queen Anne \$1,694
- Rainier Valley \$1,399
- West Seattle \$1,615

In comparison, the affordable rate (30 percent of a household's monthly income) for a one bedroom unit for an individual earning 60 percent AMI is \$1,008. Under the proposed "Grand Bargain" framework, rents for new affordable housing units would be set at this price or lower.

More than 45,000 households spend more than half their incomes on housing in Seattle.

In July, the HALA advisory committee delivered to the mayor 65 recommendations after 10 months of work. The consensus-driven proposal was crafted by affordable housing advocates, community voices, developers and housing experts appointed by the mayor and Seattle City Council in September of 2014.

The legislation will be taken up by the City Council's Select Committee on Housing Affordability.

Deadline Approaches for Funds to Support Neighborhood Projects

The deadline for the city's Small and Simple Projects Fund is 5 p.m. Oct. 5. This fund provides awards of up to \$25,000 to for community-building projects that are matched by community contributions.

Black Weirdo Party



People dance during the Black Weirdo Party Aug. 29 at the Northwest African American Museum.

To learn about the Small and Simple Projects Fund, visit seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nmf/smallandsimple.htm. This is the last opportunity in 2015 to apply to this fund.

The Neighborhood Matching Fund staff is available to advise groups on ways to develop successful applications and projects. You are strongly encouraged to call (206) 233-0093 or email NMFund@seattle.gov to discuss your project idea with one of our project managers.

A program of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) Program awards matching funds for projects initiated, planned, and implemented by community members. Its goal is to build stronger and healthier neighborhoods through community involvement and engagement. Every award is matched by a neighborhood's contribution of volunteer labor, donated materials, in-kind professional services, or cash.

Northwest Companies Settle with the EPA for Chemical Reporting Violations

Two Pacific Northwest companies have settled with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency after failing to report the release of extremely hazardous substances to federal, state, and local agencies in violation of federal laws designed to protect communities and first responders.

Goodrich Corporation, Washington:

Goodrich Corporation in Spokane, Washington failed to immediately report the release of hydrogen cyanide to the National Response Center, the State Emergency Response Commission, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee, as required by Section 103 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act and Section 304 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act.

EPA alleges that on Oct. 6, 2014, Goodrich released 25.5 pounds of hydrogen cyanide over a two-hour period. EPA alleges that Goodrich had knowledge of the release of hydrogen cyanide in quantities equal to or greater than 10 pounds, the reportable quantity, but did not report the re-

lease for nearly six weeks. Hydrogen cyanide is a hazardous substance listed in 40 C.F.R. § 302.4 and must be reported if 10 pounds or more is released.

Hydrogen cyanide is highly flammable and soluble in water. It may form explosive mixtures with air and be ignited by heat, sparks or flames. Hydrogen cyanide may be fatal if inhaled or absorbed through skin. Initial odor may be irritating or foul and may deaden the sense of smell.

Goodrich has agreed to pay a penalty of \$52,000.

Partner's Produce, Inc., Idaho:

Partner's Produce, Inc. in Payette, Idaho failed to immediately report the release of anhydrous ammonia to the National Response Center, State Emergency Response Commission, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee, as required by Section 103 of CERCLA and Section 304 of EPCRA.

EPA alleges that Partner's Produce released approximately 378 pounds of anhydrous ammonia Feb. 14, 2014, from its Payette, Idaho facility.

Anhydrous ammonia is a poisonous gas. Exposure to vapors can cause temporary blindness and eye damage, as well as irritation of the skin, mouth, throat, respiratory tract and mucous membranes. Prolonged exposure to anhydrous ammonia vapor at high concentrations can lead to serious lung damage and even death.

EPA also alleges that Partner's Produce violated Section 312 of EPCRA for failing to file annual Tier II Hazardous Chemical Inventory Reports for anhydrous ammonia at its facility in Payette, Idaho. EPCRA Section 312 requires companies to file hazardous chemical inventory reports with the State Emergency Response Commission, the Local Emergency Planning Committee, and the local Fire Department each year by March 1st.

Partner's Produce agreed to pay a penalty of \$67,392.

EPCRA was created in 1986 after the tragedy at the Union Carbide Pesticide plant in Bhopal India in which methylisocyanate was accidentally released killing and injuring thousands.

SEATTLE COMMUNITY CALENDAR 2015

THE SKANNER.com

If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to The Skanner at info@theskanner.com

Thursday, September 3

GOOD OL' SQUARE DANCE IN THE PARK! Come and join us for a Good Ol' Square Dance. Come and swing your partner round and round! 6 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Freeway Park, 700 Seneca St.

Friday, September 4

KIDS CARNIVAL: Themed family swim includes games, activities, prizes and family fun: Children under six must be accompanied in the water by

an adult within arm's reach. \$5.25 adults, \$3.75 youth/seniors. 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Mounser pool, 2535 32nd Ave. W.

Saturday – Monday, September 5 – 7

SUMMER CONCERTS AT THE BALLAD LOCKS: Season's final free band concerts on the lawn adjacent to Ballard's Hiram M. Chittenden Locks. 2 p.m., 3015 NW 54th St.

THE 26TH ANNUAL BLACKBERRY FESTIVAL: Come to the Blackberry Festival to experience some of the greatest food vendors around in the Northwest. No admission fee. The festival takes over the waterfront in Bremerton. All-day event. Bremerton Boardwalk, 100 Washington Beach, Bremerton.

Friday, September 11

BIG BOOK SALE: Books, books, books... and some movies and music! Find all kinds of great items

priced at \$1 and \$2. Over 10,000 items will be for sale, including children's books, novels, cd's, movies. There is something for everyone. 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Magnuson Park, 7400 Sand Point Way NE.

Saturday, September 12

POULSBO KIDS DAY! Poulsbo Kids Day was created to bring the community together for a good time and a good cause. Families are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items to the North Kitsap Fish line. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., 1st Security Bank Parking Lot, 21650 NW Market St., Poulsbo.

Sunday, September 13

LIVE ALOHA HAWAIIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL: The 8th Annual Live Aloha Hawaiian Cultural Festival enlivens Seattle Center. Enjoy live performances, historical exhibits, films, food, Hawaiian crafts and much more. 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Seattle, Center, 305 Harrison St.