

WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE AGENDA



Thursday, September 8, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.
City Hall - Whitefish City Council Conference Room

1. Call to Order
2. Communications from the Public
3. Approval of Minutes from August 11, 2022:
 - a. Housing Refresh Team Meeting 2
 - b. Strategic Housing Plan Steering Committee
4. Housing Refresh 2022 Updates
5. Update on Affordable Housing Strategies in Progress
 - a. City of Whitefish
 - b. Whitefish Housing Authority
 - c. Chamber of Commerce
6. Next Committee Meeting
 - a. Regular Meeting: October 13, 2022
7. Adjourn

Committee Documents:

Click [here](#) to access the Workforce Housing Needs Assessment

Click [here](#) to access the 2017 Whitefish Strategic Housing Plan

REFRESH 2022 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT REVIEW MEETING

MINUTES

August 11, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Dana Smith

Present: Ben Davis, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Kevin Gartland, Rebecca Norton, Dana Smith, Bob Horne, Addie Brown-Testa, Kate Berry, Linda Grady, Casey Malmquist (for Dan Weinberg), Ryan Porter (Glacier Bank for Lin Akey)

Absent: Wendy Compton-Ring, John Muhlfeld, Kevin Abel, Lori Collins, Katie Williams, Dave Means

Staff: Riss Getts, Nelson Loring

Consultants: Wendy Sullivan (WSW Consulting), Seana Doherty (Agnew::Beck), Aaron Mondada (Agnew::Beck) via Teams

Others: One (1) person from the public was in attendance

2. Communications from the Public: None

3. 2022 Refresh Process Overview

Seana - Overview of housing needs, Housing Strategy plan, Management and Monitoring. This is the second meeting in a three-meeting process

Riss - For the outreach and draft plan we will take a team approach to build and educate the public.

Seana - In meeting #1 we decided the plan purpose was creating homes for locals when we defined success within breakout sessions.

4. Presentation of DRAFT 2022 Housing Needs Assessment

PowerPoint Presentation available in Appendix

Wendy - Our goal is to take input on report. We defined common language in the community around housing so we can be on the same page (definitions included in attached PowerPoint). The study area is the zip code because affordability is a regional issue that does not end at city boundaries.

Rebecca - We should use just city data because we don't make policy decisions in the county.

Wendy - This is really a regional issue and data does not differ much between city boundaries and outside of city boundaries. Not scoped to do analysis for both on each point.

Rhonda - City limits has distinctions because we can only make policy within city limits. Need to have data relevant with need of the city because public tools only applicable in the city. Also, many short-term rentals outside city limits where cannot control / regulate, so distinction is important. Community Housing definition is super helpful.

Wendy Sullivan - Quoted from 2016 Needs Assessment (quote in PowerPoint), noting that the situation has not changed much. 1/3 employers lost employees. Trends have continued. Housing bridge (in PowerPoint) summarizes update with a spectrum of housing. Area median income is the HUD standard calculation for affordability in every county because the federal government uses this standard.

Rebecca - 4,637 owners 2,020 renters - is that for the zip code? What are the City numbers?

Rhonda - Thought this was helpful. Great tool. City limits would be helpful. 6 years haven't gotten anywhere with the yellow (middle income) group. Didn't realize how bad the situation was for higher income levels

Kate - disagreed - we have been focusing on 80-120% instead of lower income groups who have greater needs.

Riss - Agreed with Kate - we have to take into account that the lowest income groups are the ones who have already been displaced. The lower AMI groups are those who have already been displaced, so if their numbers look smaller on the bridge, it is because they have already left. We don't even know how many folks in town are rent burdened and precariously here. These are very useful tools and we need to add more in our outreach to tell the entire story.

Rhonda - many family homes have converted to investments

Seana - The bridge helps the conversation and shows the needs for community housing. Framework and reference point to use in planning.

Wendy Sullivan - We need to catch up with deficiencies in the community, job growth, retirement. Progress has been made in deed-restricted houses built. A lot of challenges going on because second home / investment demand is significant.

Casey - There are other international buyers beyond Canadians.

Wendy - 70% owner occupied housing. This is a highlight report to see key concern. What else do they need to create an effective strategy for Whitefish? This is an evolving process.

Dana - Housing is an investment both for short-term rentals and long-term rentals.

Seana - Short term rentals can be a too big of focus, when it is only a piece of the puzzle

Casey - Caution on focusing on STR policy thing. City policy can't do what we would need it to do to make progress.

Wendy - Wages are not keeping up with prices and rent. 57% commutes into area. Housing becomes a competitive advantage. Not just about volume but about price as well. Community housing is being lost. Lost opportunities totaled 137 proposed community housing units not approved since 2016.

Rebecca - Have you seen solutions?

Wendy - Multi-pronged, no matter how good policy is neighbors will complain. Education component is helpful. Need political will to know what is best for the community.

Rhonda - Can we list approved projects but not built?

Wendy - Forward momentum is important; then we can build on that. Will be open to feedback until Friday afternoon.

5. Feedback + Questions

Casey - Data is consistent throughout the Valley. Community is more than the city limits. Data is clear and challenging. We need to move forward.

Addie - Very good project.

6. Communications from the Public: None

7. Close + Next Steps

Seana - Community outreach coming up – look for email from Riss. September 13th is the next Refresh meeting.

8. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

August 11, 2022 at 7:15 p.m.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 p.m. by Kevin Gartland

Present: Bob Horne, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Dana Smith, Kevin Gartland, Rebecca Norton

Absent: Wendy Compton-Ring, John Muhlfeld, Lori Collins, Ben Davis

Staff: Riss Getts, Nelson Loring

Others: No (0) people from the public were in attendance

2. Communications from the Public: None

3. Approval of Minutes from July 14, 2022

Rhonda / Dana moved to approve the July 14, 2022 meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

4. Update on Affordable Housing Strategies in Progress

a. City of Whitefish

- Dana - 5k for consultants to assist Riss with graphic design for public outreach.
- Bob - Needs direction for Housing Task Force.
- Riss - Working on this and strategy, communications piece. ADU admin pieces and reimbursement, short term rental conversion to long term rentals.

b. Whitefish Housing Authority

- Riss - No one from WHA today, but was told that Alpenglow II is going forward through Housing Whitefish.

c. Chamber of Commerce

- Kevin: Interesting projects happening right now. Realtors group thinking through closing donation on a voluntary basis. Trying to figure out donation flow. Glacier Bank looking at Bozeman housing loan fund program.

- Riss – Explained to group that loan funds generally for purpose of providing lower cost financing for community housing projects.
- Kevin - Logan Health not going to build their own.
- Dana - BNSF not privy to working with the city.
- Rhonda - Hotel convert rooms to apartments.

5. Next Committee Meeting: September 8, 2022

6. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.