

January 28, 2019



City of Bothell™

Ms. Christine Gregoire, CEO  
Challenge Seattle

Ms. Gregoire:

On behalf of the City of Bothell, I want to congratulate Challenge Seattle's accomplishment in securing Microsoft's \$500 million in affordable housing financing. Local governments and the State have identified affordable housing as a top pressing issue facing the Puget Sound region. Cities are in desperate need of support focused on real solutions, and Microsoft's investment to offer financing for affordable housing gives us hope.

The City of Bothell supports the actions outlined by the Eastside Mayors' statement recently published in the Seattle Times to perpetuate affordable housing opportunities. In 2018 Bothell City Council adopted an affordable housing strategy that aligns with many of the actions listed in the Eastside Mayor's statement and the Sound Cities Associations Affordable Task Force recommendations. We will consider opportunities to advance housing affordability in the region, including but not limited to:

- Making available at no cost, at deep discount, or for long-term lease, under-utilized publicly-owned properties,
- Updating zoning and land use regulations to increase density near current and planned public transit,
- Reducing or waiving parking requirements in transit corridors to help reduce overall development cost,
- Reducing or waiving impact and other development-related fees,
- Streamlining and accelerating the permitting process for low- and middle-income housing development,
- Providing tax exemptions and credits to incentivize low- and middle- income housing development, and
- Updating building codes to promote more housing growth and innovative, low-cost development.

The City of Bothell owns surplus property in downtown Bothell. We believe there is an opportunity to engage with Challenge Seattle to leverage some of the \$500 million from Microsoft in downtown Bothell. We would be interested in exploring this opportunity because our purchase and sale agreement with a perspective buyer could include affordable housing and completion date requirements to meet the three-year completion target outlined by Microsoft.

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Outside of affordable housing, the City appreciates Challenge Seattle's areas of focus. We are encouraged that Challenge Seattle wants to engage cities through Sound Cities Association because cities have the same areas of focus. We both need strong partners to tackle our regional issues. Local governments can't solve our regional issues by ourselves but are ready and willing to be part of regional solutions.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We wish you much success and hope there may be opportunities for us to work together in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Rheume". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Andy Rheume

Mayor

Cc: Bothell City Council  
Jennifer Phillips, Bothell City Manager  
Deanna Dawson, Sound Cities Association