**FAQs: BAYVIEW VISION**

Prepared by Goosefoot Community Fund

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***Why are you looking at the feasibility of affordable, workforce housing at Bayview?***

Bayview is one of three county-designated RAIDs (Rural Areas of Intense Development) where mixed-use and multi-family housing can be built on South Whidbey. The City of Langley and the (NMUGA Sub-Area) of Freeland are two other such locations. State regulations under the Growth Management Act (GMA) prohibit this type of development anywhere else.

The need for affordable housing throughout Whidbey Island has been well documented. A 2018 Island County housing needs study calls attention to the lack of available housing for low- to moderate income workers. A 2019 survey of residents and businesses identified affordable housing as key for our local businesses and essential workers. A series of Housing Roundtables sponsored by then Commissioner Helen Price Johnson and Island County in 2019 found widespread community agreement.

***Why is Goosefoot involved in this project?***

Goosefoot is a major landowner in the Bayview RAID, with a keen interest in developing its own properties in the best interests of the community. We think our work at Bayview Corner—with the renovation of the historic Bayview Cash Store and surrounding grounds—and Bayview Center—with our ownership of the Goose Grocer and various improvements—speak to our commitment and experience with community development projects.

Our vision is a thriving South Whidbey. We believe that responsible, collaborative planning for any future development at Bayview will be of most benefit to our community. Our hope by looking forward is to provide more predictable and sustainable development in the Bayview area, rather than a piecemeal approach.

***Who else is involved? Who is leading the planning process?***

Goosefoot formed *the Bayview Vision Steering Group* to manage the master planning process and has hired Schemata Workshop to lead the master planning team, which includes Spectrum Development (housing development consultant) and MIG (civil engineers).

The Henny Family and Legacy Family Tree, LLC, and Island Senior Resources (ISR) are Goosefoot’s land-owning collaborators on this project.

Island County government is being kept informed as affordable housing is identified as a priority in existing County plans. Whidbey Health—as the Island’s second largest employer— is invested in the success of affordable workforce housing as well.

***Won’t this bring more people to Whidbey Island to live and increase traffic?***

Any housing options considered will provide housing to workers already on the Island—those who may be living at a parent’s or friend’s house temporarily, in an RV, or for families who are underhoused. There are also restaurant and service staff who work on Island full-time, but have to live over town because of the rental housing shortage. They should have housing options in the community they work in as well. This will help strengthen the next generation of Whidbey families and keep our community vibrant.

The *Bayview Vision Steering Group* and our master planning consultant are in close contact with both the Island County and State Departments of Transportation. Transportation studies will be a required part of any project that moves forward. Will traffic increase in the Bayview area with new development? Yes. Can that be planned for? Yes. Through effective planning, we can get ahead of new development in a way that protects and improves our great community spaces.

***What will potential housing look like?***

In three words—attractive, functional, and environmentally friendly. With a consideration of the rural landscape and strong sense of community that defines Whidbey Island.

Select quotes from our master planning architect’s firm say it all: *“We believe that all people deserve great architecture…our projects foster a higher sense of community…we strive to achieve a strong sense of place that is deeply rooted in the people who use our buildings… green development principles have been implemented to varying degrees on all of our projects”*

Two public meetings will be held—in early May and October—to present our results and initial design plans for feedback.

***How long has this been in the works?***

Goosefoot has been interested in affordable workforce housing at Bayview for over 15 years. Our attempts in the past were thwarted by zoning regulations, but the need has always been in the back of our mind, especially as a large property owner in the area.

A confluence of events motivated Goosefoot to step up the pace in the Summer of 2018: 1) increasing frustration by restaurant, retail, and service employers who couldn’t find employees due to the lack of rental housing; 2) a Housing Roundtable initiated in December 2018 by then County Commission Helen Price Johnson and involving the County Planning and Housing Departments; and 3) the full realization that if multi-family housing was to ever be built on the South End, Bayview was the most appropriate location.

***How do I keep informed of what you’re doing?***

Right now, we are in the quiet, research phase of a feasibility study. Please note there will probably be no updates until our first community meeting in early May. Any updates that there may be will be posted on Goosefoot’s Facebook page. In addition, you can sign up to be on our email list by contacting events@goosefoot.org and ask to be placed on our mailing list or signing up on our website at [www.goosefoot.org](http://www.goosefoot.org)

**Contact Information for Goosefoot**

info@goosefoot.org

360-321-4145

www.goosefoot.org