



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6648
March 18, 2025
Consent Agenda**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6648: ARCH Housing Trust Fund Project Approvals	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Approve the use of \$52,400 from the City’s contributions to the ARCH Housing Trust Fund.	

DEPARTMENT:	Community Planning and Development
STAFF:	Jeff Thomas, Community Planning and Development Director Alison Van Gorp, Community Planning and Development Deputy Director
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Fall 2024 Housing Trust Fund Recommendation
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to appropriate funds from the ARCH Housing Trust Fund (HTF) to five projects recommended by the ARCH Executive Board.

- Mercer Island is a member of ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) and like the other local government members, Mercer Island contributes annually to ARCH to provide operational support for the organization and capital support for affordable housing projects (via the HTF).
- The ARCH Executive Board recommends that Mercer Island support the two housing projects listed below, drawing on \$52,400 from the City’s contributions to the ARCH HTF:
 - Kenmore - Larus Senior Housing – TWG/Imagine Housing (\$41,400)
 - Bellevue - The Aventine - Low Income Housing Institute (\$11,000)
- City Council approval is required to allocate these funds.
- Should the City choose not to fund some or all these projects, the unallocated funds would remain in the City’s HTF account and earn interest until they are allocated to projects in future years.

BACKGROUND

ARCH was established in 1993 by an [Interlocal Agreement](#) to create and preserve affordable housing throughout the greater East King County community. Member jurisdictions include Beaux Arts Village, Bellevue, Bothell, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Issaquah, Kenmore, King County, Kirkland, Medina, Mercer Island,

Newcastle, Redmond, Sammamish, Woodinville, and Yarrow Point. By participating in ARCH, member cities are part of a joint and cooperative undertaking to collectively plan for and provide affordable housing in East King County communities. ARCH staff serve as additional housing staff to each member city and coordinate with member city staff in various housing-related projects, plans and services.

Like other local government members, Mercer Island contributes annually to ARCH to provide administrative support for the organization's housing activities and capital support for the creation and preservation of affordable housing. The coordinated approach used by ARCH provides for an efficient use of resources in fulfilling each member city's obligations under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) to make adequate provisions for the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community (RCW 36.70A.070(2)), as well as sharing resources with regional partners in the provision and administration of affordable housing.

ARCH HOUSING TRUST FUND

The ARCH Housing Trust Fund (HTF) was created by ARCH member cities in 1993 to directly assist the development and preservation of affordable housing in East King County. The HTF enables ARCH members to capitalize a joint housing development fund and directly control the use of their housing funds through ARCH's funding recommendation process. The HTF is the primary means by which ARCH members assist in creating and preserving housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households. The HTF awards loans and grants to Eastside developments that include below-market rate housing. HTF projects primarily create housing that is affordable for households earning 60% of the area median income or less. Over the last three decades, ARCH has supported over 6,000 units of affordable housing and shelter beds. Funds invested in the HTF have been leveraged over 10:1, bringing in \$1 billion in other investments to East King County.

Mercer Island's contributions to the ARCH HTF come from the City's General Fund, designated to ARCH for the purpose of creating affordable housing. The City contributed \$96,000 in 2018, \$50,000 in 2019, \$33,768 in 2020, and \$35,000 in each year since 2021. Funds contributed to the HTF are held in a centralized account at the City of Bellevue and earn interest. Mercer Island's annual contributions, plus loan repayments and interest earned, are held in reserve until allocated to specific projects. The balance of Mercer Island's portion of HTF account was \$53,154 at year-end 2024.

Affordable housing projects are identified for HTF funding via a competitive process each fall. ARCH staff, member city liaisons, the ARCH Community Advisory Board, and the ARCH Executive Board review and recommend projects for grants or loans from the HTF. Allocation of funds from Mercer Island's portion of the HTF to specific projects must be approved by the City Council, per the terms of the [ARCH Interlocal Agreement](#).

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

2024 HTF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2024 ARCH HTF received \$11.7 million in funding requests from ten projects proposing 749 units of affordable housing. While it was not possible to fully fund all of these requests, the ARCH Executive Board, in concurrence with the ARCH Community Advisory Board (CAB), is recommending full funding for three projects, with \$4.3 million in Trust Fund dollars included in the recommendation, plus an additional \$599,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, resulting in \$4.9 million in awards. Details of the Executive Board's rationale for recommending each project are included in Exhibit 1.

The ARCH Executive Board recommends that Mercer Island support two of the three recommended projects, drawing on \$52,400 from the City’s contributions to the ARCH Housing Trust Fund, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Project Summary

Project Name	Location	Developer	Affordability Levels and Unit Count	Total Project Cost	2024 ARCH Contribution	Mercer Island Contribution
Larus Senior Housing	Kenmore	TWG/Imagine Housing	40% AMI – 10 50% AMI – 113 60% AMI – 52	\$72,803,262	\$3,400,000	\$41,400
The Aventine	Bellevue	Low Income Housing Institute	30% AMI – 12 50% AMI – 20 60% AMI – 19 80% AMI – 15	\$33,003,027	\$900,000	\$11,000
Emily House	Issaquah	Life Enrichment Options	30% AMI – 3 40% AMI – 1	\$1,930,748	\$482,687 (CDBG funds)	-

The recommended projects will provide a range of affordable housing options throughout East King County, including very low-, low-, and moderate-income units. The recommended projects represent 245 total units of affordable housing; the unit count at each affordability level is shown in Figure 1, on the next page. HB 1220 required Mercer Island to establish affordable housing targets as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. King County will be tracking data and evaluating progress towards these targets in 2029. Staff expect a proportionate share of housing units created through Mercer Island’s contributions to these projects to be counted toward the City’s affordable housing targets.

The recommended projects meet diverse needs throughout the region, including:

- Preservation of existing affordable housing;
- Speedy delivery of projects to meet the urgent need for affordable housing;
- Aligning and leveraging public dollars to maximize the impact of limited resources; and
- Local partnerships to serve diverse populations, including low-income seniors, families and individuals exiting homelessness, persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and veterans.

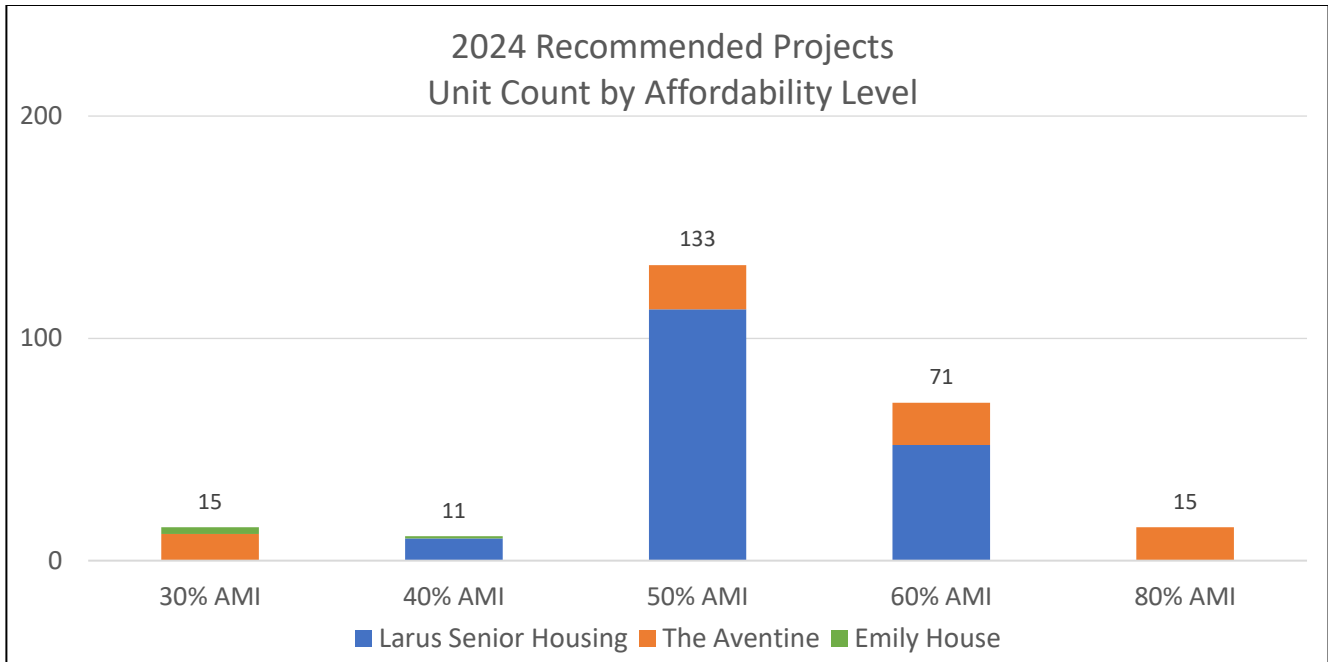


Figure 1: Housing Unit Affordability Level

The ARCH contributions to the recommended projects are just a small share of the funding and financing that it takes to construct/acquire these affordable housing units. For each ARCH HTF dollar contributed to a project, more than \$15 in additional funding will be secured. The proposed projects expect to attract more than \$102 million in other funding sources, including federal tax credits and tax-exempt bonds, State of Washington and King County funding, the funding from cities of Bellevue and Issaquah as well as contributions from the Amazon Housing Equity fund.

Exhibit 1 is the ARCH Fall 2024 Housing Trust Fund Recommendations memo, detailing the projects recommended for funding by the ARCH Executive Board, including the following supporting documents:

1. [Attachment 1: Proposed Funding Sources](#) provides a chart showing how proposed ARCH funding is distributed among ARCH cities (Exhibit 1, page 16).
2. [Attachment 2: Project Economic Summaries](#) provides economic summaries of the recommended projects showing sources of funding and project expenses (Exhibit 1, pages 17-21).

NEXT STEPS

If the \$52,400 for the recommended projects listed above is approved by the City Council, the funds will be drawn from Mercer Island’s portion of the HTF account. Approval of the Housing Trust Fund project funding will conclude this matter. Staff will continue to coordinate with ARCH and King County related to the accounting of housing units created through the ARCH HTF, ensuring they are properly tracked towards Mercer Island’s HB 1220 affordable housing targets.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the use of \$52,400 from the City’s contributions to the ARCH Housing Trust Fund as recommended by the ARCH Executive Board and authorize execution of any related agreements and documents.