



City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray
Mayor

September 1, 2015

Honorable Tim Burgess, President
Seattle City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor

Dear Council President Burgess:

I am pleased to transmit the attached proposed Council Bill to renew the Multifamily Housing Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) program, which is due to expire at the end of 2015. The MFTE program is one of the City's most effective tools in creating affordable housing for low and moderate income people. The proposed legislation would continue to calibrate the MFTE program to maximize the public benefit garnered through the incentive.

One of the many recommendations made by the Housing Affordability and Livability Action Committee, this strategy reflects Seattle's core values of equity and inclusion and will ensure affordable housing in multifamily development projects throughout the city. My goal with this legislation-- in combination with the other housing affordability legislation I will introduce in the coming weeks and months--is to foster a city where people of all backgrounds can find affordable homes in walkable, livable neighborhoods. Together, we can move forward with this plan and ensure Seattle is a place for people of all incomes to live and enjoy.

Key features of the Multifamily Tax Exemption program include:

- The proposed legislation would make several key policy changes to increase public benefits:
 - Align the program with City goals to create more housing for families—particularly more affordable housing for families—in key locations throughout the city. To do so, it would incentive the creation of family-size housing units and require participating developers who do not produce family-sized units, to provide a larger number of rent- and income-restricted affordable units.
 - Expand the program's geographic applicability to all multifamily zoned land to create opportunities for affordable housing in neighborhoods across the city where development is occurring.
 - Increase the breadth of permitted housing types by including new unit types in the program.
- Strengthen compliance monitoring procedures and clarify sections of the Seattle Municipal Code in order to remove ambiguity regarding definitions and program requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation. Should you have questions, please contact Leslie Brinson Price at 206-549-7505.

Sincerely,

Edward B. Murray
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Honorable Members of the Seattle City Council

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