

Letter to the Editor
Anacortes American/Skagit Herald
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I am writing to encourage voters to pass the February ballot measure to very slightly increase the sales tax by 1/10th of 1 percent—\$.10 cents for every \$100 spent— to support more affordable housing in Anacortes. As someone who has in the past worked several jobs to barely scrape the rent together, I understand the importance of *affordable* housing and that there is a very thin line between being sheltered and safe and not. There are many citizens who cannot afford to live in the community in which they were raised and/or work in. This measure will benefit Anacortes by allowing the city to move forward with its well-considered plan—three shovel-ready projects—to help meet the housing needs of *all* residents.

Unlike many communities facing this issue, Anacortes already has a responsive plan to help level the housing playing field and developed a strategy that includes, pending the passage of this measure, the immediate financing and construction of three buildings. By having these plans already in place, the city is well ahead of many other communities for shoring up the lack of more affordable housing.

Additionally, by passing this measure, Anacortes would increase the amount of state, in addition to local, funding for more affordable housing; approximately \$80,000 each year over the next 20 years. Governments are like people in that they very rarely allow other governments to keep their money, further underscoring the criticality of addressing the housing shortage in Washington state. Again, this measure must be passed in 2020 to keep these state funds.

Finally, I have seen first-hand the amazing generosity of this community and view passing this measure as not only yielding a high social return for a slight financial investment, but as yet another demonstration of how this community takes care of *all* of its citizens.

