



BUSINESS

## These Bellingham construction, housing projects will keep workers busy this winter

BY DAVE GALLAGHER

OCTOBER 08, 2021 5:00 AM



Corey Gittens of Velocity Electric installs frame mounts for solar panels on a new house in the Cordata area of Bellingham. Caitec, the developer in the area, has made solar panels a standard part of the new homes it is building in that area. STEVE DALRYMPLE, VELOCITY ELECTRIC COURTESY TO THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Bellingham construction activity is expected to remain busy heading into the fall and early winter as more projects continue to go through the permitting process.

According to the city's [construction dashboard website](#), 1,446 residential units are currently under construction, with 855 in review as of Wednesday, Oct. 6. The total units currently under construction is similar in total that [it was back in July](#), but the total going through the permit is down about 100 units.

About \$52.5 million in commercial projects is currently under construction, up from \$37 million in July. Projects valued at \$11.3 million are currently in the permitting process, down from \$24 million in the summer.

Here's an update on some of the residential and commercial construction projects either under way or going through the permit process:

- Caitac is getting ready to start phase 5 of its major home-building project in the north Cordata area.

It's building 47 units in what is known as the Northview Homes. Since it began work in 2016, the company has built 309 homes in the area. In recent projects, solar paneling is a standard feature in each of the single-family houses or townhomes.

Future additions in Phase 5 will include up to 65 homes, either of the single-family or duplex variety.

Alex Wynstra of AJW Builders estimates that 1,600 solar panels have been installed to this point., contributing more than \$50,000 back to the grid a year.

Phases 6 and 7 are in the planning stages and are expected to be townhomes, Wynstra said in an email.

With [Bellingham lacking in new home inventory](#), each phase is selling more quickly than the last, Wynstra said, adding that by Phase 4, the homes were pre-sold. With the first part of Phase 5, the company is taking reservations but selling after framing is in place so that they can keep up with the serious cost fluctuations in lumber and other material.

In terms of who is buying the houses, Wynstra said it's been a mix of seniors, professionals and families, with about 30%-40% moving into the area and the majority being local buyers.

Longer-term, Caitac is hoping to continue building neighborhoods further north, closer to its North Bellingham Golf Course. That will include working to incorporate it into Bellingham's urban growth area.

"We have been working with the local community, city and county leaders to develop a master plan which will be responsive to current and future social, economic and environmental challenges associated with housing and employment opportunities," Wynstra said.

Details about the project can be found on the [Larrabee Springs website](#).