

## Community Development Committee

Meeting date: August 20, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of August 22, 2018

**Subject:** Approval to Request Moving to Work Program Designation

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** 24 CFR Part 982

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Terri Smith, Director, Housing and Redevelopment Authority (651) 602-1187

**Division/Department:** Community Development / HRA

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to make a formal request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to have the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority's Moving to Work Program designation extended to the Council's HRA.

### Background

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated 39 housing authorities in the country with program flexibilities to design and test innovative, locally-designed strategies to use federal rent assistance funds more efficiently. The designation is called Moving to Work (MTW). MTW agencies are permitted to seek exemptions from program rules and test more efficient ways to administer federal rent assistance.

The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) is designated as an MTW agency. The Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has a potential to obtain MTW designation through MPHA. Congress authorized the HUD Secretary to extend MTW status to one or more adjacent public housing agencies in the same area through Public Law 114-113.

The goals of the MTW program expansion would cover a range of regional strategies while maintaining independent governance and operation structures. The goal would be to expand housing choice, create efficiencies in service delivery, and shift the focus from administrative process to family success.

This designation would provide the Council's HRA with great flexibility to operate the Housing Choice Voucher program in a less administratively burdensome manner. Program flexibilities can range from simple process changes to full rent reform to complete program re-design.

Applying for MTW designation does not commit the Council to anything. If approved by HUD, Council staff would seek Council approval on associated agreements and program set up. There will also be extensive community engagement, including a public hearing process, prior to any implementation.

### Rationale

The MTW designation would provide administrative efficiencies and allow for local control of the Council's federal rent assistance programs. Obtaining this designation would be a win-win for the Council and the families it serves.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

The MTW designation request would support the Thrive outcomes of equity, livability, and stewardship. By using a Thrive Lens, discretionary policies of the

HRA promote equity and choice, while ensuring that the federal resources to fund the Housing Choice Voucher Program are maximized to serve families efficiently.

### **Funding**

Funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The funding under MTW would provide flexibilities in how federal funding is spent.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

There appears to be federal support for this concept as it is included in the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act language.