

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: January 22, 2019

Subject: 2019 Annual Livable Communities Act Fund Distribution Plan

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes, Section 473.25

Staff Prepared/Presented: Paul Burns, Manager, Livable Communities (651-602-1106); Libby Starling, Director of Regional Planning (651-602-1135)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

None. Information and discussion only.

Background

The purpose of this information item is to continue the discussion on potential changes in the 2019 Livable Communities Act Fund Distribution Plan. At the Committee meeting, Council staff will provide a presentation with additional detail on the potential changes.

Rationale

These ideas are presented as possible improvements or refinements to the programs.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Livable Communities Act programs represent one of the Council's primary financial tools to advance and encourage development and redevelopment that advance Livability, Equity and Prosperity.

Funding

Staff is confirming account balances to determine if any funding can be added to the base amounts.

Known Support / Opposition

Staff is continuing to communicate with cities that objected to the elimination of the Tax Base Revitalization Account -- Transit Oriented Development category as well as the other changes and improvements staff is presenting. Attached is a copy of a memo from the City of Brooklyn Park.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 7, 2019

TO: Paul Burns, Manager of Livable Communities

FROM: Kim Berggren, Director of Community Development
Breanne Rothstein, Economic Development and Housing Director

SUBJECT: Brooklyn Park's comments on proposed LCDA changes

Brooklyn Park staff has reviewed the presentation regarding the recommended changes to the Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan and has the following comments:

- 1) The proposal to eliminate TBRA TOD grants.** Keeping the TOD portion of the TBRA program advances the stated goals of the Met Council as well as the City of Brooklyn Park to encourage and facilitate orderly development, particularly along transitways. If the process was amended to not require concurrent submittal to the LCDA-TOD program, it would encourage more applications to the TBRA portion of the program, therefore the city would support such action.

If the TBRA-TOD program is eliminated, the City suggests that extra points are awarded to projects within TOD areas within the overall TBRA scoring process.

- 2) The proposal to lower job requirements for TBRA grants.** The city supports this change. In addition, using other measures of economic development in the review beyond jobs numbers would be appropriate (square footage, types of jobs, for example).
- 3) The proposal to allow LHIA funds to be granted for non-MN Housing awarded projects.** We support this change, as it broadens the number of eligible applicants and allows for better timing of project funding outside of the Super NOFA.
- 4) The proposal to narrow the eligibility for land acquisition to affordable housing.** The city does not support this change, as affordable housing is not the only goal in the LCDA program and too narrowly limits the use of grant funds.
- 5) The proposal to lower score for repeat applications.** The city does not support this change, as each project should be evaluated independently against other applications and should be given the chance to re-submit in less competitive years without penalty.
- 6) The proposal to remove housing and/or affordable housing as a critical factor in LCDA/TOD project criteria.** This change would make economic development/jobs projects more competitive, which the city supports, especially given market trend fluctuations. This change may also encourage more applications to the program.

- 7) **The proposal to increase points in scoring for engagement and partnerships.** The city supports this change.

- 8) **The proposal to increase points in scoring to design in TOD applications.** The city believes TOD design components are critical in the evaluation of TOD applications. The city supports the application of design standards that follow commonly accepted pedestrian scale design standards, rather than applying subjective evaluation of design by review committee members. Furthermore, a context sensitive evaluation is in order that acknowledges that not all transit stations can be treated the same with regard to design.