

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: July 20, 2020

Subject: Metro HRA Administrative Plan Proposed Changes

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

Policy/Legal Reference: 24 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 982.54

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

Division/Department: Community Development / Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Proposed Action

None. Information and discussion only.

Background

The Metropolitan Council is required to adopt a written Administrative Plan that establishes local policies for administration of the Housing Choice Voucher program through the Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA). The Administrative Plan is the Metro HRA's main policy document that becomes an attachment to the PHA Annual Plan which is open for public comment ([Metro HRA Administrative Plan](#)).

The purpose of this information item is to have discussion and receive Committee feedback on the main Administrative Plan revisions for the upcoming year, 2021. The primary revisions include:

- Adoption of a Homework Starts with Home Preference
- Revisions to the Project Based Vouchers offer and award criteria

Homework Starts with Home (HSWH)

The suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative and Solid Ground, in partnership with suburban Ramey County school districts, received a 3-year Homework Starts with Home grant through Minnesota Housing to provide temporary rent assistance to people of underserved and under-supported populations including black, indigenous and people of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and Intersex (LGBTQI) students and families who are homeless, doubled up (over-crowded) or at imminent risk of homelessness.

The HSWH rent assistance is temporary for 18 months. The Metro HRA is proposing to revise the Administrative Plan to include a waiting list preference, for up to 15 vouchers, to provide continued rent assistance for families to transition from the HSWH program to the Housing Choice Voucher program after the initial 18-month period is up. The project partners would continue to provide services toward success as families transition from HSWH to the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Project Based Voucher Offer and Award Criteria

The Metro HRA offers and awards Project Based Vouchers according to the criteria established in the Administrative Plan. There are revisions being recommended in how the Council awards Project Based Vouchers. The proposed revisions are intended to better align with Council housing policy priorities and with the Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan.

Table 1. Existing Project Based Voucher Selection Criteria

Criteria	Possible Points
Owner experience and capability to build or rehabilitate housing	5
Extent to which the project furthers the goal of deconcentrating poverty and expanding housing and economic opportunities	10
To promote projects located outside of Areas of Concentrated Poverty, unless the project is preserving an existing subsidy to help maintain affordability	15
To increase the supply and availability of affordable housing for very low and extremely low-income households in the metro area and to contribute to the upgrading and long-term viability of metro area housing stock	5
To integrate housing and tenant services for special needs tenants and to promote cooperative partnerships that link support services with affordable housing	20
To encourage economic integration in housing development	10
To the extent possible, encourage the development of housing for larger families needing 3 or more bedrooms	10
Extent to which the proposed project promotes linkages among housing, jobs and transportation and/or promotes higher-density development along selected transportation corridors	15
Extent of community support for the proposed housing	10
Total Points	100

Table 2. Proposed Revised Project Based Voucher Selection Criteria

Criteria	Possible Points
Project readiness including regional system and regulatory conformance, financial readiness, status of funding commitments, and applicant’s capacity to manage the project.	15
Extent to which the project provides or preserves housing types that contributes to a full range of housing choices, the addition of or preservation of affordable units in an Area of Concentrated Poverty or improved housing choice in an area of Affluence.	20

The extent to which the project integrates housing and tenant services for specialized populations such as people experiencing homelessness, people living with disabilities, veterans or other specialized population.	25
The extent to which the project supports mixed income through providing a variety of units at different income levels.	5
The extent to which the project supports housing for larger families needing 3 or more bedrooms.	10
The extent to which the proposed project maximizes connections between housing, centers of employment, education, retail, and recreation uses through location or design.	15
The extent of local support for the proposed housing including project teams that involve partnerships among government, private for-profit, and nonprofit sectors and the local community.	10
Total Points	100

Rationale

The Homework Starts with Home program aligns with a 2020 and 2021 Metro HRA goal to develop investment in place strategies. The revised Project Based Voucher award criteria better align with Council priorities and current goals.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The suggested revisions support the Thrive outcomes of equity, livability, and prosperity by increasing the housing choices available to low income families across the region. Families that have stable housing in a community of their choice are better able to thrive and flourish.

Funding

N/A

Known Support / Opposition

None.