

# Business Item

Community Development Committee



Committee Meeting Date: November 20, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: December 13, 2023

## Business Item: 2023-269

Funding Recommendations for 2023 Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) Homeownership Program

**District(s), Member(s):** All  
**Policy/Legal Reference:** Minn. Stat. § 473.253  
**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Ashleigh Johnson, Senior Planner, Livable Communities (651) 602-1106  
**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Award five homeownership Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) grants as shown in Table 1, totaling \$2.9 million.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of Community Development to execute the grant agreements on behalf of the Council.

Table 1. Recommended Homeownership Proposals

	Project	City/Applicant	Number of Homes	LHIA Funding Recommendation
1	Affordable Ownership Preservation	City of Edina	2	\$366,604
2	Affordable Twin Home Project	City of Minnetonka	2	\$746,996
3	HOPE Round 2	City of Golden Valley HRA	6	\$948,000
4	PPL Greenbelt Homes	City of Minneapolis	5	\$568,400
5	Serenity Townhomes	St. Paul Port Authority	4	\$270,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>\$2,900,000</b>

### Background

The Livable Communities Act (LCA) awards grants through the Local Housing Initiatives Account (LHIA) for the production and preservation of affordable rental and ownership housing. The Council adopted the 2023 LHIA guidelines, criteria, and evaluation process as part of the Annual LCA Fund Distribution Plan (FDP) ([Business Item 2023-48](#)) on February 22, 2023.

The Metropolitan Council's Affordable Homeownership Program is intended to prioritize affordable homeownership opportunities in communities and populations that are underserved. Specifically, the program aims to address two priorities originally derived from 2020-2022 strategic plan objectives:

1. Racial Equity: create homeownership opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and other ethnic or racial groups that own homes at disproportionately lower rates than white households in the region; and
2. Geographic Choice: create affordable homeownership opportunities in parts of the region where it is most challenging to do so.

**Program Requirements**

The following requirements apply to all applications in this program:

1. Local Match: Dollar-for-dollar
2. Grant Terms: 3 years from date of award
3. Term extensions: 2 years
4. Award Limits: None
5. Application Limit: None
6. Excess available funding: If funding applied for or awarded through the LHIA Homeownership Program is less than the funding available, the remaining funds may be made available for award through the regular LHIA category

**Application Review Process**

For this funding cycle, the Council received applications for eight homeownership proposals. From these proposals, projects eligible for program funding were then evaluated on the criteria outlined in the 2023 FDP.

Table 2, below, summarizes the applications received.

Table 2. Summary of Applications

	Project	City/Applicant	Homes Proposed	Points	Total Requested	LHIA Funding Recommendation
1	HOPE Round 2	Golden Valley	6	45.5	\$948,000	\$948,000
2	Serenity Townhouses	St. Paul	4	42.5	\$270,000	\$270,000
3	PPL Greenbelt Homes	Minneapolis	5	42.25	\$568,400	\$568,400
4	Affordable Twin Home	Minnetonka	2	40.75	\$746,996	\$746,996
5	Affordable Ownership Preservation	Edina	5	38.75	\$750,000	\$366,604
6	ReFresh Minneapolis	Minneapolis	4	37.5	\$439,999	\$0
7	ARTWorks CDC	St. Paul	2	33.75	\$150,000	\$0
8	AACDC	Minneapolis	2	33.25	\$300,000	\$0
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>		<b>\$4,173,395</b>	<b>\$2,900,000</b>

The program scoring committee was comprised of staff from the Council’s Community Development Division and an external panelist from a city in the region. Award recommendations are based first on an eligibility analysis, and then on the score ranking of each proposal (see more details about scoring in Appendix B). Five proposals are recommended for full funding and one proposal is recommended for partial funding (see Appendix A). Three proposals are not recommended for program funding based on their score ranking (see Appendix C). The total of unfunded requests is over \$1.2 million.



## Rationale

The housing proposals recommended for LHIA funding support housing development, preservation, and affordability opportunities consistent with both local and regional policies and goals. They include both new construction and rehabilitation of ownership units that support revitalization and reinvestment efforts in aging and/or declining areas and provide affordable housing opportunities near areas of significant employment and population growth. These housing efforts involve activities and public investment that advance *Thrive MSP 2040* outcomes and principles.

In addition to implementing the Livable Communities Act - Local Housing Incentives Account and the Council's *2040 Housing Policy Plan*, these grant awards also further the Council's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The foremost Housing Priority in the Strategic Plan is to "become a region with a broader housing spectrum that meets the region's needs and provides choice so that all people can thrive." This program and its accompanying funding recommendations are also consistent with the Investment and Investment and Operations Objective of the Housing Priority which is to "increase the rate of homeownership for people of color and indigenous people across the region."

## Thrive Lens Analysis

The Council's investment in these affordable housing projects advances several Thrive outcomes.

- The Council will "encourage preservation of existing housing where rehabilitation is a cost-effective strategy to maintain housing" and "collaborate with regional housing partners and funders to identify priorities for preserving affordable housing and available resources" (Stewardship).
- Many of these projects introduce new affordability levels, or housing types, to the areas in which they are located which "helps create and preserve mixed-income neighborhoods and housing choices across the region" (Prosperity).
- These projects also "help close the gap between the region's affordable housing need and the supply, especially in areas underserved by affordable housing and to house extremely-low-income households earning less than 30% of the area median income" (Equity).
- Several of the LHIA projects also support the Council's efforts to "encourage and invest in a wide variety of housing options throughout the region to serve an increasingly diverse population, including viable housing choices for low- and moderate-income households and senior households" (Livability).

## Funding

In its 2023 [Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan](#) (FDP), the Council allocated \$2.9 million for LHIA Affordable Homeownership Program awards. This funding level is also included in the Council's 2023 authorized budget. Reserves may need to be amended into a future annual budget to meet cashflow needs on Livable Communities multi-year grants.

## Attachments

Attachment A: Project Summaries for LHIA Homeownership Funding

Attachment B: LHIA Homeownership Scoring Criteria

Attachment C: Proposals Not Recommended for Funding



## Attachment A: Project Summaries for LHIA Homeownership Funding

### Livable Communities Project Summary

**Grant #** SG  
**Type:** LHIA Homeownership Program  
**Applicant:** City of Edina  
**Project Name:** Affordable Ownership Preservation  
**Project Location:** City of Edina  
**Council District(s):** District 8 – Anjuli Cameron

#### Project Overview

The City of Edina will partner with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (TCHFH) and Homes Within Reach (HWR) to acquire, rehabilitate, and sell homes through a community land trust (CLT). City staff engaged owners of moderately priced homes in Edina, of which 56 homeowners expressed interest in selling their homes to the CLT for future affordable ownership. The Edina Housing Foundation (EHF) will provide homebuyers up to \$60,000 of down payment assistance which can complement Come Home 2 Edina's \$15,000 forgivable loan for first-generation homeowners.

Edina is confronted with entry-level properties being overpriced for most work-force households, combined with large ownership disparities between White and BIPOC people. The Affordable Ownership Preservation program is designed to create housing affordability while preserving the modest priced homes in the city. Edina's Affordable Housing Trust Fund will provide the upfront financing and gap financing needed to keep the homes affordable for first-time homebuyers. This program combined with the down payment assistance program has served to create ownership opportunities for BIPOC households at a greater ratio than seen otherwise.

#### Project Details

Development Team	City of Edina Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity Homes within Reach
Development Type	Preservation
Recommended Number of Homes	2
Affordability <i>Area Median Income (AMI)</i>	50-80%
Funding request	\$750,000
Anticipated use of funds	Acquisition, rehabilitation, interior and exterior finishing



## Livable Communities Project Summary

**Grant #** SG  
**Type:** LHIA Homeownership Program  
**Applicant:** City of Golden Valley HRA  
**Project Name:** HOPE Round 2  
**Project Location:** 1611 & 1131 Lilac Drive, Golden Valley MN  
**Council District(s):** District 8 – Anjuli Cameron

### Project Overview

The Home Ownership Program for Equity (HOPE) makes public land available for affordable and equitable homeownership development opportunities in the City of Golden Valley. The city will provide a land write-down as an incentive for affordable home development at 60-80% of Area Median Income.

The HRA has completed a Request for Qualification or Proposals process and will enter contracts for development with non-profit and private affordable housing developers. Proposals from organizations that have demonstrated success in building relationships of trust with Black, Indigenous and people of color and in serving first generation homebuyers are a priority.

### Project Details

Development Team	City of Golden Valley Magnolia Homes Greater Metropolitan Housing Corp. (GMHC)
Development Type	New
Recommended Number of Homes	6
Affordability <i>Area Median Income (AMI)</i>	60%
Funding request	\$948,000
Anticipated use of funds	Site preparation, general construction, interior and exterior finishing, roofing, electrical, plumbing, and/or heating



## Livable Communities Project Summary

**Grant #** SG  
**Type:** LHIA Homeownership Program  
**Applicant:** City of Minneapolis  
**Project Name:** PPL Greenbelt Homes  
**Project Location:** 3020 6th Street North, 3024 6th Street North, 429 31st Avenue North, 427 31st Avenue North, 419 31st Avenue North, 415 31st Avenue North, 409 31st Avenue North  
**Council District(s):** District 7 – Yassin Osman

### Project Overview

PPL's Greenbelt Homes development is a part of the larger Hawthorne Ecovillage Redevelopment in North Minneapolis. The development will construct five three-bedroom, two-bathroom homes on seven existing lots located along 6th Street North and 31st Avenue North. The existing lots have been replaced to create the five needed for development. Each unit will have its own patio or deck, backyard space, detached garage, and landscaped front yard with a rain garden.

### Project Details

Development Team	City of Minneapolis Project for Pride in Living (PPL)
Development Type	New
Recommended Number of Homes	5
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	80%
Funding request	\$568,400
Anticipated use of funds	Construction cost gap which includes site preparation and grading, general construction, roofing, electrical, plumbing, heating and ventilation, and interior and exterior finishes.



## Livable Communities Project Summary

**Grant #** SG  
**Type:** LHIA Homeownership Program  
**Applicant:** City of Minnetonka  
**Project Name:** Minnetonka Affordable Twin Home Project  
**Project Location:** 5432 Rowland Road. Minnetonka, MN 55343  
**Council District(s):** District 3 – Tyrone Carter

### Project Overview

The city currently owns the parcel at 5432 Rowland Road and aims to sell the properties to a builder with single-household affordable home-building experience. In May of 2023, City staff released a Request for Developer Interest (RFI). The request was broadly distributed, and ultimately, the city received a compelling proposal from Amani Construction and Development. The city council's direction is to continue to execute a contract with Amani Construction as the building partner.

The goal is to build affordable twin homes which will be sold to owner-occupants at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). The homes will consist of three bedrooms on one level and 2.5 bathrooms. Each unit will have an attached garage and plenty of storage space. If it is financially feasible, the units could be constructed to DOE's Zero Energy Ready Home program specifications.

### Project Details

Development Team	City of Minnetonka, Amani Construction
Development Type	Preservation
Recommended Number of Homes	2
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	80%
Funding request	\$746,996
Anticipated use of funds	Construction costs, including elements to conform to the Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Home program guidelines.



## Livable Communities Project Summary

**Grant #** SG  
**Type:** LHIA Homeownership Program  
**Applicant:** St. Paul Port Authority  
**Project Name:** Serenity Townhouses  
**Project Location:** Bush Ave & Cypress St.  
**Council District(s):** District 13 – Chai Lee

### Project Overview

Amani Construction will collaborate with Rondo Community Land Trust to ensure long-term affordability and sustainable homeownership within the community. Serenity Townhouses will include 17 units, of which LHIA funds are requested for four 4-bedroom end units.

Amani is committed to ensuring sustainability and energy efficiency in every unit, adhering to the Department of Energy Zero Energy Ready Home (DOE ZERH) program. Energy-efficient homes feature superior insulation, high performance windows, and energy-efficient appliances, not only reducing utility costs but also leaving a smaller carbon footprint for a more sustainable future.

### Project Details

Development Team	St. Paul Port Authority Amani Construction Rondo Community Land Trust
Development Type	Preservation
Recommended Number of Homes	4
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	80%
Funding request	\$270,000
Anticipated use of funds	We are requesting funds to construct four 4-bedroom end units to the DOEs ZERH standards.





## Attachment B: LHIA Homeownership Scoring Criteria

The program scoring structure includes two steps. Step One evaluates the project location’s ability to achieve program priorities for either Racial Equity or Geographic Choice, considering city or census tract level data on:

- shares of Black, Indigenous, and other residents of color
- homeownership rates across race/ethnicity
- average home sale prices
- single family land use shares, and
- the city’s allocation of affordable housing need

Table 4. Step 1 scoring criteria for LHIA Affordable Homeownership Program

Racial equity		Points
Criteria		Points
Project is in a city with higher racial disparities in homeownership than the regional average		5
OR	Project is in a census tract with higher racial disparities in homeownership than the regional average	3
Project is in a city with a higher share of Black, Indigenous, and other residents of color than the regional average		3
OR	Project is in a census tract with a higher share of Black, Indigenous, and other residents of color than the regional average	2
<b>Highest possible subtotal for racial equity</b>		<b>8</b>
Geographic choice		Points
Criteria		Points
Project is in a city with an average home sale price higher than what is affordable to a household earning 80% AMI		5
OR	Project is in a city with an average home sale price higher than what is affordable to a household earning 60% AMI	3
Project is in a city where the share of single-family housing stock is higher than the regional average		2
Project is in a city with an affordable housing need less than 20 OR more than 50% of their need is in the 51-80% affordability level.		2
Highest possible subtotal for geographic choice		<b>9</b>
<b>Highest possible total for both priorities</b>		<b>17</b>
<i>A minimum of 5 points would be required to ensure the project sufficiently addresses one or both priorities</i>		

Step Two criteria primarily evaluates the individual *project’s* ability to achieve program goals. The proposed criteria include scoring on efforts to ensure populations with lower homeownership rates than white residents have equitable access to the affordable



homeownership opportunity that's being funded, the proposal's ability to meet unique local needs, and the proposal's ability to provide deeper and/or longer affordability.

Table 5. Step 2 scoring criteria for LHIA Homeownership Program

<b>Equitable access</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
Developer or program partner has a demonstrated record of serving Black, Indigenous, and/or other households of color in homeownership at rates equal to or greater than the city and or region's homeownership rates for those same groups	3
Developer or program partner has current waiting list consisting of Black, Indigenous, or other households of color at levels equal or greater to the regional and/or city population	3
Project team includes a lender, realtor, or other homebuyer-facing team member that is reflective of the Black, Indigenous, or other households of color that have disparate homeownership rates in the region	2
Project will be made available to a first-generation homebuyer	2
Marketing efforts for sale of the project affirmatively further fair housing	1
Other efforts as described by applicant that further equitable access to homeownership	Up to 11
<b>Total for Equitable Access</b>	<b>11</b>

<b>Unique needs and affordability</b>	
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
Project addresses a need specific to the community in which the project is located, through financing, marketing, design, size, or other unique need	3
Project will be affordable to homebuyers earning less than 80% AMI	3
Project will remain affordable upon resale for more than 15 years	3
Project is in a city with a net fiscal disparity of \$200 or more per household	1
Total for Unique Needs and Affordability	10
<b>TOTAL Points Possible (Step 1 and Step 2)</b>	<b>49</b>



## Attachment C: Proposals Not Recommended for Funding

Development Team	City of Minneapolis ReFresh Real Estate City of Lakes Community Land Trust (CLCLT)
Development Type	Preservation
Number of Homes	4
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	50%
Funding request	\$439,999
Anticipated use of funds	Acquisition, demolition, alterations, and rehabilitation, interior and exterior finishing, roofing, electrical plumbing, heating, and ventilation.
Determination	Limited funds, project did not score high enough to receive funding

Development Team	City of Minneapolis ARTWorks CDC
Development Type	Preservation
Number of Homes	2
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	80%
Funding request	\$150,000
Anticipated use of funds	Eligible activities include alterations and rehabilitation; interior and exterior finishing; plumbing, electrical, and HVAC; and roofing.
Determination	Limited funds, project did not score high enough to receive funding

Development Team	City of Saint Paul African American Community Development Center (AACDC)
Development Type	Preservation
Number of Homes	2
Affordability Area Median Income (AMI)	60-80%
Funding request	\$300,000
Anticipated use of funds	Acquisition of a multiplex unit that can accommodate, or be converted to accommodate, mid-to large-sized families in East Saint Paul.
Determination	Limited funds, project did not score high enough to receive funding

