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Housing solutions for people with disabilities

May 2, 2019

TO: Dane County Affordable Housing Task Fund Staff Team
FROM: Kathryne Auerback and Dave Porterfield, Movin' Out, Inc.
RE: Comments on Draft RFP
Date: May 2, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the draft of RFP 119037, Affordable Rental Housing Affordable Housing Development Fund.

Movin' Out is a non-profit agency that has created more than 450 units of affordable rental housing in Dane County over the past 12 years and over 1,000 units statewide. We support ongoing efforts to improve the transparency and fairness of the Dane County Affordable Housing Fund award process. We also support efforts to align the County's goals for the development of affordable housing with the scoring/award process as described in this draft RFP.

To both those ends, we offer the following suggestions for improving the RFP:

Scoring

- Additional points should be awarded for nonprofit ownership and for projects that agree to longer periods of affordability, i.e. beyond 30 years. Consideration should also be given to indexing points for longer term affordability, such as adding three additional points for every five additional years.
- Additional points should be awarded for the number of three-bedroom units in projects.
- As drafted, the RFP describes scoring as both points and percentages. Either one metric or the other should be used consistently.
- Five points are to be awarded for local vendors per the County's buy local ordinance (section 1.12 of the RFP). Those points should be reflected in section 2.4 of the RFP, Evaluation Criteria.
- The scoring overview in Section 2.4 incorrectly references sections of the RFP. Those inconsistencies should be corrected (i.e, the Housing First is covered in section 4.9 not section 4.11, etc.).
- The supportive services plan (section 4.10) is a critical component in the success of Housing First projects. This area should be given greater weight, i.e. a greater number of points should be possible for bidders based on the plans they present in this area.

Tenancy Addendum

- The RFP does not indicate the criteria that will be used or how points will be awarded if respondents submit an "alternative tenant selection description." Scoring in this area should be detailed and transparent.
- Thought should be given to the negative consequences of allowing higher rent-to-income ratios which may increase the problem of individuals paying too much for rent.
- In the General Screen Process, bullet "i", the time period for considering violent criminal behavior is set at one year. That is too short a time and should be lengthened to 5 years.

- In the Denial Process section, in paragraph 1, the process described is duplicative of the hearing that already occurs per HUD regulations. The process the County is adding should be modified or eliminated in order to avoid such duplication which does not provide benefit and which will increase management costs.
- in order to help tenants who may fall behind in their rent to maintain tenancy and to assist property owners to manage higher risks associated with requested tenant selection, tenancy addendum and Housing First, Dane County should consider establishing a pool of funding available to assist individuals in arrears.

We also urge the County to include oral presentations as part of the selection process. Proposers should have the opportunity to convey their vision and the impact of their work and reviewers would obtain insight into a higher purpose for a project as part of those face-to-face presentations.

Finally, we urge the County to expand the membership of the committee tasked with reviewing and evaluating responses to the RFP. Increased membership would provide the opportunity for more expertise to be brought to bear in evaluating the RFPs.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide input into the draft RFP. If there are further questions please feel free to contact Kathryn Auerback at 608/251-4446 x3 or ka@movin-out.org or Dave Porterfield at 608/ 251-4446 x8 or dp@movin-out.org.