

**Short Title: Metro Workforce Housing Implementation**

Overview

Hardworking families, seniors, and people with disabilities should be able to afford housing and still have enough money for groceries, medicine, and other basic needs. Yet too many of our residents lack housing options in the region and are forced to choose between paying for rent, medicine, or food. These consequences have enormous implications to the public in terms of financial, social, and environmental costs.

For these reasons, Metro has a long-standing role in planning to ensure housing opportunities are available through local and regional actions<sup>1</sup>. Among these planning documents is the Housing Choice Task Force Implementation Strategy, which encouraged the Metro Council to take a more active role in advancing the production of workforce housing throughout the region. While some of the recommendations outlined in this strategy were implemented, several of them did not receive attention or the resources needed to see them through.

This proposal aims to reinforce Metro's role in advancing regional housing goals. By implementing the objectives outlined below Metro will build capacity for immediate action and lay the foundation for work in the near future.

Objectives

**1. Implementation of best practices**

- **In partnership with community based organizations, develop and operate education and technical assistance program for cities and counties concerning the tools available for workforce housing development**
  - Develop and deliver education and technical assistance program exploring tools like tax deferrals and exemptions, SDC waivers, tax credits, streamlined permitting, accessory dwelling units, flexible codes, parking requirements, equity mapping tools and more. Provide technical assistance to implement policy changes to codes, permitting, and other jurisdictional programs.
  - Look at existing models for SDC waivers and determine how it can be replicated in other jurisdictions (Are the cost of the waiver program picked up by the jurisdictions' general or other fund, or are they spread to other development projects); look at SDC policies generally across the region and impact on affordability (i.e. some SDCs are \$40k for a permit)
  - Work could be accomplished through a variety of efforts: solicit RFP to support consortium of community-based organizations for implementation of education services program and technical assistance that works with local jurisdictions' decision makers and senior staff.

## 2. Altering state and local policy

- **Explore whether changes can be made to strengthen timelines for LUBA and LCDC land use decisions, so that workforce housing can be developed on a predictable and reliable timeline**
  - Work with local jurisdictions and stakeholders to develop strategies for strengthening timelines at local level
  - Partner with private and non-profit developers to explore statewide strategies to improve LUBA/LCDC timelines
- **Determine feasibility of expedited UGB expansions in jurisdictions with track record or future plans for workforce housing implementation**
  - Funding and UGB expansion priorities should be set for jurisdictions that incent and advance the region's workforce housing goals. Policy options should be developed for Council consideration exploring processes that might allow local jurisdictions and their stakeholders to trigger UGB expansion for property owners that meet voluntary inclusionary housing targets.
- **Support the Community Planning and Development Grants Program and advisory committee's recommendation to develop criteria that encourages social equity through the development of workforce housing**

## 3. Resource development

- Develop long-range strategy for increasing funding for workforce housing development akin to our efforts to build resources for transportation and other infrastructure needs.

Duration (put an 'x' in the appropriate line, for specific length write in the length)

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ One-time

Specific length: \_\_\_X\_\_\_

\_\_\_ On-going

### Cost Estimate

Initial costs are estimated to be \$200,000 for the RFP to implement education program over a two-year period (objective 1) in partnership with community based organizations, plus some internal staff time to manage and develop associated contracts. The foundational work described in objectives 2 & 3 may be accomplished utilizing existing staff in legislative affairs, planning, and the RISE team.

### Funding Options

The budget for this effort could come from the Council Opportunity Fund balance remaining in FY 2013-2014 or from the new balance projected in FY 2014-2015.

### Relationship to other programs

This effort will be informed and enhanced by Metro's equity strategy. Additionally, the work will advance in coordination with the extension and update of the Community Planning and Development Grants Program.

### Stakeholders

Several of the objectives outlined in this proposal were developed with input from stakeholders working in non-profit affordable housing development, including the Oregon Opportunity Network, Northwest Housing Alternatives, and the Community Housing Fund, as well as stakeholders from the Home Builders Association. This approach aims to implement tools that will increase needed work-force housing in willing

jurisdictions while continuing to build an understanding about the importance of affordable housing in successful communities.

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<sup>i</sup> The Regional Framework Plan (Framework Plan) articulates Metro’s policy to increase housing choices throughout the region so that families of modest means are not forced to live concentrated in a few neighborhoods, and to effectively reduce the number of households paying more than 50 percent of their incomes on housing and transportation (“cost-burdened households”). The Framework Plan also includes the six outcomes that have been adopted by the region as characteristics of a successful region. Among these desired outcomes are that people have the ability to live in vibrant communities where they have easy access to everyday needs and that the benefits and burdens of growth are shared equitably. Title 7 in the Regional Functional Plan aims to reduce barriers to sufficient and affordable housing for all income levels in the region. Metro has worked with numerous partners to seek federal grants aimed at improving the link between affordable housing and the other key services that provide for community livability.