

Agenda Report

March 22, 2021

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: William K. Huang, Director of Housing

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING: SUBMITTAL OF PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY ANNUAL PLAN (2021) TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City of Pasadena (the "City"), as Successor Agency to the Pasadena Community Development Commission, after a public hearing:

- 1) Find that the recommended action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per 15061 (b)(3), as it will not have a potentially significant environmental effect, and, therefore, falls under the "common sense" exemption; and
- 2) Approve the City's Public Housing Agency Annual Plan (2021), and authorize the City Manager to execute any and all documents regarding its submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

BACKGROUND:

It is an annual requirement for the City of Pasadena ("City") to submit the Public Housing Agency Annual Plan ("Annual Plan") to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") in order to remain eligible for funding for the Housing Choice Voucher ("HCV") program, commonly known as Section 8. The Annual Plan, along with the Five-Year Plan, make up the Public Housing Agency Plan ("PHA Plan"). The PHA Plan consists of a HUD template and required attachments, the most significant of which is the Administrative Plan. The Administrative Plan lays out the policies and procedures of the rental assistance programs.

The current Five-Year Plan covers the period of 2020-2025 and was adopted by City Council on October 5, 2020. The Annual Plan 2021 describes the City's progress on goals that were set in the current Five-Year Plan, as well as any new project-based voucher activities that are planned.

The HCV Program administered by the City’s Housing Department provides housing assistance to approximately 1,400 very low and low-income households. This represents assistance for approximately two and a half percent (2.5%) of the households residing within the City of Pasadena. For the current fiscal year 2021, the total federal appropriation for the HCV Program is approximately \$15 million.

ANNUAL PLAN OVERVIEW:

The Annual Plan 2021 describes the progress made on the goals and objectives set in the current Five-Year Plan. Progress on goals and selected objectives include the following:

GOALS:	OBJECTIVES:	PROGRESS:
<p>Improve the availability of safe, decent, & affordable housing.</p>	<p>Strengthen outreach to the landlord community.</p> <p>Increase the availability of rental vouchers by applying for special needs vouchers when available.</p> <p>Increase housing choice through monitoring of the payment standards in relation to average rents for modest dwelling units within the City.</p>	<p>Implemented landlord incentive program to provide monetary incentives to landlords to rent to voucher holders.</p> <p>Successfully applied for 75 vouchers for adults with a disability, to be prioritized for homeless households.</p> <p>Increased payment standard for rental vouchers, lowering rent burden for participating families.</p>
<p>Promote fair housing and equal opportunity.</p>	<p>Provide training to employees, owners, and residents through workshops and mailers.</p>	<p>Two virtual workshops were held in September 2020 and February 2021 for Pasadena landlords in partnership with the Housing Rights Center.</p>
<p>Ensure effective operations and program management.</p>	<p>Maintain Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) High Performer status.</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19, no 2020 SEMAP score was issued. The City retains the High Performer status that was earned in 2019.</p>

The Annual Plan 2021 also reports on any new project-based voucher activities. Progress for this activity in the last reporting period is as follows: an RFP was issued in April 2020 to allocate PBVs to Permanent Supportive Housing projects for persons experiencing homelessness. Two projects, Hope Center (The Salvation Army) and Heritage Square South (BRIDGE Housing Corp.), were selected through this process. Hope Center was allocated 65 vouchers and will provide permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals once construction is complete. Heritage Square South was allocated 69 vouchers and will provide permanent housing for formerly homeless seniors when constructed.

WAITING LIST STATUS:

The HCV Program last opened its waiting list for applications from households in need of rental assistance in October, 2014 for a two-week period. At that time, over 26,000 households applied for assistance. PHAs may not restrict applications to households living within the PHA's jurisdiction, and most of the households who applied neither live nor work in Pasadena, but live in other areas of Los Angeles County or beyond. HUD allows PHAs to give local preference for residents living in their jurisdiction. Approximately 5,000 households who applied in October, 2014 claimed the live/work Pasadena preference. Those households with a Pasadena preference are assisted before households who do not have a Pasadena preference. There are 22,250 households remaining on the waiting list as of March, 2021.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The PHA Plan 2021 advances Policy HE-3.6 in the City's Housing Element (2014-2021), which calls for the City to "support the provision of rental assistance for residents earning lower incomes, including persons with special needs consistent with City preference and priority categories and fair housing law."

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENTS:

The Annual Plan 2021 was reviewed by the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) at its meeting of February 19, 2021. The RAB, which is comprised of Section 8 HCV Program participants, recommended that the Annual Plan 2021 be approved by the City Council.

Copies of the Annual Plan 2021 have been made available to the general public on the Housing Department website for a public review and comment period beginning February 21, 2021 through the present, as required by HUD. Public notices of the City public hearing, were posted on the Housing Department website on February 21, 2021, and published in the *Pasadena Journal* on March 4, 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

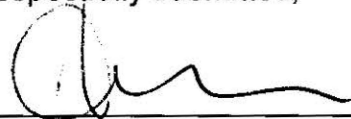
The action proposed herein is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the "common sense" provision of CEQA, as it will not have a potentially significant environmental effect and therefore falls under the "general rule" exemption.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Submission of the Annual Plan 2021 will have no direct fiscal impact on the General Fund.

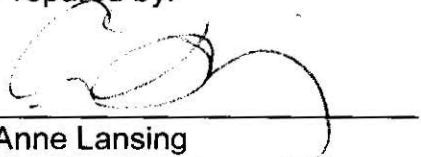
Its submission will ensure compliance with HUD-stipulated regulations for the City's receipt of federal funds in excess of \$15 million to administer and provide HCV rental subsidies.

Respectfully submitted,



for WILLIAM K. HUANG
Director of Housing
Department of Housing

Prepared by:



Anne Lansing
Housing Assistance Officer

Approved by:



STEVE MERMELL
City Manager

ATTACHMENT: PHA Annual Plan (2021)