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From: Shawn Wilson [SWilson@blueskycommunities.com]
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2013 08:41 AM Eastern Standard Time
To: Kevin Tatreau; Steve Auger
Subject: High Priority Special Needs RFP

Gentlemen, thank you very much for the opportunity to provide written input on this RFP.

Comments to High Priority Special Needs RFP:

NOTE: we have used the abbreviation VSN for "Veterans with Special Needs."

1.b.

The definitions of VSN seem limiting, when the universe of potential qualifying persons is already very narrow. Perhaps it would be more effective to use this definition (or modify it slightly) from the Florida Statutes:

*295.187 Florida Veteran Business Enterprise Opportunity Act—
"Service-disabled veteran" means a veteran who is a permanent Florida resident with a service-connected disability as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or who has been terminated from military service by reason of disability by the United States Department of Defense.*

When comparing the "Funding Selection" section to 1.b., it seems unlikely that any Applicant intending to serve VSN will select sub-population (2). Furthermore, we are concerned that focusing on sub-population (2) might exclude very worthy Disabled Veterans. This could become a public relations problem.

1.e.(5).

Is it the intent of FHFC to allow a simple 1-pager, performed perhaps by the Applicant to suffice for this section, as has been the recent UAC practice? If not, then please specify what is considered acceptable for this section.

At least for VSN Applications, the phrase "local need" might extend beyond the standard 5 and 10-mile rings. Since the "marketing" of the completed units will occur almost exclusively through specific outreach activities to existing service organizations and governmental agencies, it might result in a draw from a wider area. This is especially true if the proposed Development is itself close to a VA hospital. A Disabled Veteran who presently lives 20 miles away (in another County?) might be the perfect candidate because they need to be able to get to the VA frequently.

3.a.(1).

This ought to remain unchanged from the draft language. There is no specific reason to further limit this RFP to non-profits or any other type of entity. Furthermore, such a limitation will prohibit potentially innovative joint ventures or public-private-partnerships.

3.a.(3).

This section assumes that the “Developer” will “operate” the VSN housing, which might not be the case. In such event, the Applicant should state as such, and should then describe its own experience.

In awarding points under this section, more points should be available to an Applicant who has Experience within its ownership structure, than should be available to an Applicant who supplements its own experience with a consultant.

4.b.

New construction ought to be favored for VSN housing. This type of housing will be occupied by a high percentage of substantially physically disabled persons, making any sort of retrofit much more complicated than a standard rehab.

4.c.

Based on several stakeholders meetings held in Pinellas County, it was determined that VSN housing will work best if it is configured in a low-rise building type. Thus the Mid-rise option should be eliminated for VSN applications.

7.a.(2).

This section should be softened, to provide perhaps that there shall be a live-in on-site management employee to deal with after-hour emergencies. The way it’s currently drafted, an employee will basically have to be available to deal with mundane issues. Part of what will make these communities succeed will be the fact that our residents will be independent enough to recognize that they have to deal with mundane issues during regular business hours. We think that, as drafted, it crosses the line beyond Permanent Supportive Housing into something more “institutional.”

10.

Yes, there should be substantial points awarded based on Local Government Support. For example, an Application that demonstrates a substantial commitment of Additional Funding, say \$2,000,000, from a local governmental agency (including PHA’s) AND a commitment for either Rental Assistance or other type of Operating Funding (such as ACC) ought to receive the maximum points under this section.

Thanks again, Shawn



Shawn Wilson
President

Blue Sky Communities, LLC
5300 W. Cypress Street, Suite 200
Tampa, Florida 33607
Ofc 813-384-4825
Mob 561-301-3132
swilson@blueskycommunities.com