

HOMEWorks!

Creating stronger communities through housing solutions

Request for Expressions of Interest to Develop Affordable Family Rental and Cooperative Housing

Questions and Answers

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Q: What is the purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest?

A: There is a recognized need for additional affordable housing in Manitoba. To help address this, the Province has made a commitment to develop 1,500 new affordable housing units by March 31, 2014.

Additional affordable family housing is a key element of Manitoba Housing's overall 1,500 unit delivery strategy. Manitoba Housing presently has financial assistance available to fund the development of such projects. The purpose of the request for expressions of interest is to solicit ideas, concepts, or specific responses from housing providers to create additional affordable family housing.

Q: What types of projects are eligible under this invitation?

A: Eligible projects include rental or cooperative housing projects for low- to moderate-income families that increase Manitoba's existing rental/cooperative housing supply. Projects must contain four or more units and may take the form of new construction, conversion from non-residential to residential use, or the rehabilitation of vacant, derelict residential buildings.

Project units must provide modest, self-contained accommodation of suitable space and size to meet household needs. Projects need to meet respective Median Market Rent (MMR) affordability provisions.

Ineligible projects include ownership housing of any kind and any other project which does not provide permanent affordable housing or security of tenure, such as hostels, shelters, and residential/medical care facilities.

Q: How much and what kind of financial assistance is available?

A: Manitoba Housing is allocating \$50 million to support the development of new affordable family housing projects proposed through this request for expressions of interest. Manitoba Housing can fund up to 100 percent of eligible project development costs but will require ownership of the project. There is no set maximum level of funding support in absolute dollars, but projects need to be designed and built to select modesty standards and in a cost-effective manner.

Rent-geared-to-income assistance shall be provided to help further decrease rents or cooperative housing charges so that they are affordable to lower-income households. The amount of such assistance shall be dependent upon an approach that best serves the target population and which addresses community need.

Q: What is the process once an expression of interest is submitted to Manitoba Housing?

A: Submitted expressions of interest will be reviewed by Manitoba Housing with a view to determining Manitoba Housing's basic interest in the proposed project. Once this review is complete, a request for a more detailed project proposal shall be directly extended to those respondents who have expressed interest and who Manitoba Housing wishes to further explore project development opportunities with.

As part of a second review round, detailed proposals will be evaluated by Manitoba Housing with the intent to enter into an agreement for project development.

Accepted proponents may opt to enter into a Sponsor Management Agreement with Manitoba Housing for post-construction property management of the project. Proponents will have the option to accept transfer of the project at the end of the project's amortization period, subject to adherence to the Sponsor Management Agreement.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: Eligible proponents include municipalities, private and public/municipal non-profit housing corporations, housing cooperatives, and private developers.

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Q: Where can proposed projects be located?

A: Proposed projects may be located anywhere in Manitoba, with the exception of recognized or designated First Nation communities. Prospective proponents are cautioned to carefully consider the existing and long-term need and demand for family housing in the proposed market location.

Q: Are there any set requirements or restrictions on project design?

A: Expressions of interest must target the development of projects that provide modest, self contained accommodation of suitable space and size to meet household needs. Proponents shall ensure a modest project design in relation to select modesty assurance criteria as outlined in the request for expressions of interest document.

Proponents are strongly encouraged to develop expressions of interest with a unit mix that is most desirable to serve the target population and which best address community need. Proposed projects may include a range of unit types, however, preference will be given to projects that include a higher proportion of larger units (i.e., three bedrooms and more) where appropriate.

All project units will need to be built to the visitable design standards, with preference given to responses that appropriately incorporate energy efficiency measures and accessible design criteria.

Q: Are there any occupant eligibility restrictions?

A: Eligible households are low- to moderate-income renters and housing cooperative resident members with a total household income at, or below, the upper limit of the Second Quintile of Family Housing Income (2QFI) for Manitoba. At this time, the current upper income limit of 2QFI in Manitoba is \$60,211

Q: What is the deadline to submit expressions of interest?

A: The submission deadline is November 30, 2011, 4:30 p.m. Central Time.

Proponents are strongly advised to carefully review the request for expressions of interest guideline document in its entirety before preparing and submitting a response. Full submission information and related requirements are contained therein.