

APPENDIX 2

Rental Development Underwriting

In reviewing applications for HOME assistance, as required by §92.250(b) and prudent business practices, the City's underwriting framework includes evaluations of:

- **Regulatory requirements applicable to the project**, including compliance (or ability to become compliant) with HOME's affordability restrictions, property standards, and cross-cutting federal requirements;
- **Market risk**, including whether or not sufficient demand exists for the project, the anticipated lease-up period, and whether general economic conditions and other competition supports ongoing viability;
- **Developer risk**, focusing on whether the owner/developer (including but not limited to the underlying owners of special purpose entities) have the technical capacity to develop and operate the property and the financial capacity to safeguard public funds and backstop the project if the event of poor financial performance; and
- **Project risk (or "financial underwriting")**, testing the economic and financial projections for the transaction including both sources and uses as well as ongoing operating assumptions. This includes confirmation that all sources of project financing are available, commercially reasonable, and have been appropriately maximized prior to awarding HOME funds.

Market Assessment

All HOME project applications must include a third-party market study prepared in a manner consistent with TDHCA's market analysis requirements. Unless otherwise approved by the City, market studies shall be prepared by providers included on the list of TDHCA Approved Market Analysts. Owner's may generally submit the market study used in conjunction with the Owner's LIHTC application, if applicable. Market studies must be less than one year old at the time of commitment of HOME funds. For market studies that are more than one year old, the City will typically require an update from the original analyst or a new market study from another analyst. Proposed rent levels must be supported by the applicant's market study and be within HOME regulatory limits.

Additionally, the market study should demonstrate the following:

- All units, including any "market rate" units as well as any units with income/rent restriction imposed by other programs such as LIHTC, must demonstrate viability within the primary market area taking into account any known rent concessions being offered by competing properties;
- Income and rent restricted units must have "discounts" of at least 15% relative to comparable un-restricted units;
- Achievable occupancy rates, based on a comparison of comparable properties in the primary market area, must be at or above 95% (physical occupancy);
- Capture rate for the development as a whole is no more than 10%, and no capture rate for specific unit sizes (e.g. 3-bedroom units) exceeds 25%; and
- Absorption can be expected to result in underwritten occupancy levels within six (6) months of units being ready for occupancy.

For projects not meeting these standards the City, in its sole discretion, may also consider the following:

- For project targeting special needs populations (e.g. homeless households, domestic violence victims, veterans, or other specific subpopulations), the City may accept higher capture rates if data from the local Continuum of Care and/or service providers specializing in the targeted populations (e.g. VA service centers) suggest an adequate pipeline of eligible renters exists and will be consistently referred to the development.
- For existing projects being rehabilitated, the City will consider the recent operating history of the project in terms of actual rents charged/received, eligibility of in-place tenants, and the like for evidence that the development's projections are supported by actual performance.

The City may also consider offsetting the risk of relatively “weaker” market study findings by offering HOME assistance as permanent debt only, to be disbursed following actual lease-up of the development at proforma levels and achievement of stabilized occupancy.

Developer and Development Team

In most cases, projects considered by the City will be owned by single-purpose, single-asset entities created to hold title the development. For various purposes, including structuring necessary to comply with industry norms and take advantage of other funding sources such as LIHTC, the “owner” and “developer” of a project are often legally distinct entities, even if ultimately owned and controlled by the same underlying parties.

Developer Technical/Professional Capacity

In evaluating the capacity of the “developer” the City will use the term more loosely to refer collectively to the underlying corporate entities and individuals that will own and control the single-purpose entity (excluding the investor member/limited partner). Additionally, the City requires various guarantees and indemnities from all of the underlying corporate and individual owners of the various limited partnership or limited liability corporation entities involved in the ownership and development of the project.

Developers should demonstrate:

- Recent, ongoing, and successful experience with the development of similar regulated affordable housing; and
- The presence of adequate staff, with specific experience appropriate to their role in the project, to successfully implement and oversee the project. This includes the assembly and oversight of the development team.

The City requires applicants to provide lists of real estate owned (including partnership/membership interests) by the developer as well as all projects underway. The City will review the performance of those projects, including financial factors like net occupancy, actual DCR, cash flow received, outstanding loan balances, and net equity of individual projects and the developer's overall portfolio.

Applicants are also required to provide descriptions of the role played by specific staff members relative to the proposed project along with resumes or other similar information demonstrating experience appropriate to the assigned staff member's role.

Financial Capacity

Developers must also demonstrate the financial capacity to support the proposed project both during construction and lease-up as well during ongoing operations. This includes not just that the applicant has sufficient financial resources but that it has adequate financial systems in place to appropriately manage project funding, accurately account for all project costs, and provide reliable reporting to the City and other project funders.

At minimum, the City will review audited financial statements, interim financial statements, and individual personal financial statements to ensure that:

- The “primary” development entity’s most recent audit must demonstrate compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principals (GAAP) and must not express material weaknesses in the entity’s system of internal controls or financial management systems;
- The developer’s net worth (including the un-duplicated net worth of other guarantors) is equal to at least 10% of the total development cost of all projects underway (i.e. those that have received funding commitments from HOME or LIHTC but have not yet been completed and converted to permanent financing); and
- The developer has net liquid assets (current assets less current liabilities) equal to at least 3% of the total development cost of all projects underway.

Development Team

The City will also review the capacity of the development team including but not limited to the general contractor, architect, engineer, market analyst, management company, accountant, attorney, and any other specialized professionals or consultants.

As a whole, the development team should have the skills and expertise necessary to successfully complete and operate the development. Inasmuch as possible, on balance the development teams should have worked successfully on other projects in the past. That is, while a developer may identify new development team members from project to project, an “entirely new” team may present added risk.

Additionally, when using development team members from outside of the region, the City will consider whether assigned team members have recent local experience or have been supplemented with local professionals. This may be particularly important for design professionals and legal counsel.

In no case, may any owner/developer/applicant or any member of the development team be a suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded party.

Identify of Interest Relationships & Costs

Applicants must disclose all identity of interest relationships/contracts and/or costs involved in a transaction, including during the development period and following completion of the project. The City reserves the right to review any such costs further to ensure they are reasonable and consistent with the costs expected from arms-length relationships.

An “Identity of Interest” (whether or not such term is capitalized) is any relationship based on family ties or financial interests between or among two or more entities involved in a project-related transaction which reasonably could give rise to a presumption that the entities may not operate at arms-length. The City will take a broad approach to defining identities of interest and expects all applicants to err on the side of disclosure. That is, if there is any question about

whether an identity of interest may exist, the relationship should be disclosed and explained to the City.

Beyond this general definition, an identity of interest relationship will be deemed to exist if:

- An entity, or any owner of any direct or indirect ownership interest in such entity, or any family member of any such owner is also an owner, through a direct or indirect ownership interest, or an officer, director, stockholder, partner, trustee, manager, or member of the counterparty; or
- Any officer, director, stockholder, partner, trustee, manager, member, principal staff, contract employee or consultant of an entity, or any family member of thereof, is an owner, through any direct or indirect ownership interest, or an officer, director, stockholder, partner, trustee, manager or member of the counterparty.

For purposes of this definition, “family member” means the spouse, parents or stepparents, children or stepchildren, grandparents or step-grandparents, grandchildren or step-grandchildren, aunts, uncles, parents-in-law, and siblings-in-law (or their children or stepchildren). It also includes any other similar relationship established by operation of law, including but limited to guardianship, adoption, foster parents, and the like.

Financial Analysis

As noted in the introduction, the City views underwriting as more than just the financial review of a project. However, a revive of the underlying financial assumptions is still a critical and core part of underwriting. In reviewing projects, as a public funder the City must to balance two somewhat competing perspectives.

Projects must be viable, that is they must have sufficient allowances for all costs to maximize the chances the project can meet or exceed its financial projections and thereby succeed in the marketplace. In other words, the project must represent a “safe” investment. However, taken to an extreme, “safe” or overly conservative projections can also result in a project that is over-subsidized and risks providing excessive returns to the owner/developer.

As a steward of very limited public funding for affordable housing, the City also needs to ensure that costs are reasonable, that they represent a “good deal” to the public, and that returns to the owner/developer are fair but not excessive. In seeking to balance these perspectives, the City has established the following review factors and principals.

Development Costs

In general, the City will review the entire project budget to all costs are reasonable yet that the budget is sufficient to complete and sustain the project. All line items, whether or not paid directly with HOME funds, must be necessary and reasonable.

The City will consider the cost of both specific line items as well as the total development cost on a per unit and per square foot basis, comparing costs to other projects from the City’s portfolio, similar projects in the region (such as those funded by TDHCA), City-data from the Building Department, and/or third-party indices such as RS Means.

Selected Development Cost Items

Acquisition – Acquisition costs must be supported by an independent third-party appraisal prepared by a state-licensed appraiser. The purchase price must be at or below the as-is market value of the property. In the event an applicant has previously purchased land prior to applying to the City, the project budget may only reflect the lesser of the actual purchase price or the current market value. Standard closing costs from the acquisition may be included.

Applicants who purchased property prior to applying to the City, or following environmental releases under NEPA but prior to closing, may not charge or include financing costs associated with interim financing, whether from third-party or related lenders.

Architectural Fees – Architectural fees cannot exceed the following:

Design services: 6% of total construction costs

Supervision/Administration: 2% of total construction costs

City Soft Costs – The development budget for each project must include an allowance for the City's internal project-related soft costs as specified in periodic RFPs issued by the City. Similar to lender due diligence or lender legal costs, the inclusion of soft costs allows the City to recoup its direct costs of underwriting, processing, closing, and monitoring the project prior to project completion. These costs will be included in the HOME loan but may be drawn directly from HUD by the City rather than via payment requests from the project owner.

Construction Interest – Any budgeted line item for construction interest must be supported by developer period cash flow projections, modeling the actual expenditure of development costs and the anticipated pay-in of equity, HOME funds, and other construction period sources. For presentation purposes, only interest from the date of initial closing through the end of the month in which the building(s) are placed in service (i.e. approved for occupancy) may be included as construction interest. Additional interest following that date and prior to the conversion to (or closing on) permanent debt must be separately itemized and modeled. In most cases, this should be included in the "lease up reserve" noted below.

Contingencies – Applicants should include a contingency (inclusive of hard and soft costs) within the minimum and maximum amounts noted below. The contingency will be measured as a percentage of hard costs (including the construction contract plus any separate contracts for off-site work but excluding contractor fees).

- New construction projects should include a contingency of least 3% and no more than 7% of hard costs;
- Acquisition/rehabilitation projects, including adaptive reuse projects, should include a contingency of at least 5% and no more than 10% of hard costs.
- The City may consider higher contingencies based on identified risk factors such as the known need for environmental remediation or poor subsurface soils.

Contractor Fees – Contractor fees are limited as a percentage of net construction costs as further identified below. Net construction costs exclude the contractor fees, any budgeted contingency, and (even if otherwise included in the construction contract) permits and builder's risk insurance.

- Contractor Profit: 6% of net construction costs

- General Requirements/General Conditions: 6% of net construction costs. General requirements include on-site supervision, temporary or construction signs, field office expenses, temporary sheds and toilets, temporary utilities, equipment rental, clean-up costs, rubbish removal, watchmen's wages, material inspection and tests, all of the builder's insurance (except builder's risk), temporary walkways, temporary fences, and other similar expenses.
- Contractor Overhead: 2% of net construction costs.

With prior approval of the City, contractor fees may vary from the limits above provided the gross contractor fees do not exceed 14% of net construction costs.

Developer Fees – Developer fees are intended to compensate a developer for the time and effort of assembling a project, overseeing the development team, and carrying a project to fruition. Developer fees are also intended to compensate for the risk inherent in the development process, including that not every potential project proves viable and that developers must necessarily advance funds for their own operating costs and various third-party predevelopment costs prior to closing (or in some cases for projects that never proceed). The City, therefore, allows the inclusion of developer fees as follows:

- Developer Fee: 15% of total development costs less a) the developer fee itself; b) organizational expenses and/or syndication fees/cost (including investor due diligence fees); and c) reserves, escrows, and capitalized start-up/operating expenses (such as working capital, marketing, etc.).
- Maximum Limit: Regardless of percentage, the maximum developer fee shall be \$1.5M.
- Combined Contractor & Developer Fees: When an identity of interest exists between the owner/developer and the general contractor, the combined total of contractor fees and developer fees cannot exceed 20% of total development cost less a) the developer fee and b) other cost elements excluded from the calculation of the developer fee itself (see above).

In some cases, developers may delegate some of its responsibilities to third-party professionals or consultants. This may include contracting specific tasks – such as construction oversight of the builder or specialized consulting related to applying for or structuring various financial incentives like LIHTC. The costs of engaging such professionals, whether they are third parties or identity of interest relationships, must be paid from (and if separately itemized will be counted against) the allowable developer fee.

Reserves – Capitalized reserves to facilitate the initial start-up and to protect the ongoing viability of the project will include the following:

- Deficit Reserve: The City anticipates that in most cases, developments with predicted deficits during the affordability period would not be funded. However, in the event a development's long-term operating proforma projects actual cash deficits during the affordability period, an operating deficit reserve must be included in the development budget in an amount sufficient, taking into account any interest on reserve balances, to fully fund all predicted deficits through the affordability period.
- Lease-Up Reserve: A lease-up reserve intended to cover initial operating deficits following the completion of construction but prior to breakeven operations may be included. Any such reserve must be based on lease-up projections/cash-flow modeling and the lease-up (or absorption) period identified in the project's market study. In evaluating the

appropriateness of any lease-up reserve, the City will consider whether the development budget includes specific line items for other start-up expenses that otherwise are typically part of the ongoing operating budget for a development. This may include budgets for marketing, working capital, etc.

- **Operating Reserve:** An operating reserve equal to three (3) months of underwritten operating expenses, reserve deposits, and amortizing debt service must be included in the development budget. The operating reserve is intended as an “unexpected rainy day” fund and will only be accessible after a project has achieved stabilized occupancy.
- **Replacement Reserve:** For acquisition-rehabilitation projects, a capitalized replacement reserve must be included in the development budget. The capitalized replacement reserve should be funded at the greater of i) \$1,000 per unit; or ii) the amount determined by a capital needs assessment approved by the City.
- **Other:** The City may consider other specialized reserves as appropriate based on unique features of the project and/or requirements of other funding sources. These may include special security reserves, supportive service reserves, or transition reserves for projects with expiring project-based rental assistance contracts, etc.

Operating Revenues

The City will review an applicant’s projection of operating revenues to ensure they are reasonable and achievable both initially and through the affordability period. In evaluating operating revenues, the City will take into account the i) project-specific market study; ii) actual operating performance from other comparable projects including those from the applicant’s existing portfolio of real-estate owned; iii) data available from comparable projects in the City’s portfolio; and/or iv) information available from actual performance within TDHCA’s portfolio.

For purposes of the long-term operating proforma, operating revenue projections cannot be increased by more than 2% per year. The City reserves the right to “stress” proposals for underwriting purposes to assess the impact of lower inflationary increases, such as modeling the impact of only 1% rent increases for the first three to five years of a project’s affordability period.

Rents

All rents should be supported by the market study. Including the utility allowance, the gross rent for any income/rent restricted unit should demonstrate at least a 15% “discount” compared to comparable “market rate” units.

Additionally, to hedge against flat or declining rents to the owner in the event that income limits (and therefore rents) do not increase in a given year (particularly between commitment and lease-up), gross rents should demonstrate at least a 2.5% discount from the regulatory limit imposed on any income/rent restricted units by HOME, LIHTC, or other similar sources. As an alternative to setting rents below the applicable regulatory limit, the City will consider increasing the allowance for vacancy by 2.5%.

Non-Rental Revenue

Non-rental revenue must be fully explained and conservatively estimates. In general, no more than \$60-\$240 per-unit, per-year may be budgeted in “other revenue” including that from tenants fees (such as fees for late payment of rent, nonsufficient funds, garage/carport upgrades, pet fees, etc. or interest on operating account balances). Exceptions may be considered by the City based on the operating history of an acquisition/rehabilitation project or normalized operations are other comparable properties in the same market area.

Vacancy

Total economic vacancy includes physical vacancy (a unit is unrented), bad debt (a unit is occupied but the tenant is not paying rent), concessions (a unit has been leased for less than the budgeted rent), and “loss to lease” (an pre-existing lease is less than the most recently approved annual rent but will be adjusted upward at renewal).

In all cases, based on the market study or other data available to the City, the City reserves the right to require higher vacancy projections. This may include higher vacancy rates for small developments (e.g. less than 20 unit) where standard percentage assumptions about vacancy may not be appropriate. Minimum allowances for vacancy must include:

- 5% for projects where all units are supported by a project-based rental assistance contract with a term equal to or in excess of the affordability period (e.g. project based Section 8); or
- 7% for all other projects.

As noted above, the minimum vacancy rate will be increased by 2.5% if budgeted gross rents are at the applicable regulatory maximums.

Operating Costs

The City will review an applicant’s projection of operating expenses to ensure they are reasonable and adequate to sustain ongoing operations of the project through the affordability period. In evaluating a proposed operating budget, the City will compare projects costs to i) actual operating expenses of comparable projects in the applicant’s existing portfolio of real-estate owned (insomuch as possible, comparable projects will be in the same vicinity and operated by the same management company); ii) actual operating expenses of other comparable projects in the City’s portfolio; iii) data available on the operating costs of affordable housing in the TDHCA portfolio; and/or iv) minimum per-unit, per-year allowances established by the City through periodic RFPs for rental housing.

For purposes of the long-term operating proforma, operating expenses, including reserve deposits, will be inflated at no less than 3% per year. The City reserves the right to “stress” proposals for underwriting purposes to assess the impact of higher operating cost factors, such as modeling the impact of higher inflation rates in general or for specific items of cost (for example, assessing the impact of high rates of increase for insurance or development paid utility costs).

Selected Items of Operating Cost

City HOME Monitoring Fee – Pursuant to 24 CFR 92.214(b)(1)(i), the City assesses an annual HOME monitoring fee. The operating budget for each project must include an allowance for the City’s annual HOME Monitoring Fee as specified in periodic RFPs issued by the City.

Property Management Fees – An allowance of 5% of effective gross income (i.e. gross rent potential plus other revenues minus actual vacancy, bad debt, concessions, etc.) should be included. In the event a lower management fee is proposed, the City will consider using a fee as low as 3% provided the proposed management company is acceptable to the City and has agreed in writing to the lower fee.

Property Taxes – Applicants must provide detailed explanations of property tax projections and, as applicable, provide documentation that any anticipated partial or full exemptions or payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) have been approved by the appropriate tax assessor. In the absence of

a tax exemption or PILOT, the operating budget must provide for a tax rate equal to 1.25% of the market value of the property or the City, at its option, may require confirmation from the tax assessor of the applicant's projection.

Replacement Reserve Deposits – The operating budget must include minimum replacement reserve deposits of:

- New Construction Family: \$300 per-unit, per-year
- New Construction Senior: \$250 per-unit, per-year
- Rehabilitation: The greater of i) \$300 per-unit, per-year; or ii) a higher amount established by a CNA approved by the City.

Note: The City will reserve the right within a project's transactional documents to require periodic CNAs for all projects and to adjust ongoing replacement reserve deposits base on the results of the CNA to ensure that the replacement reserve is sufficient to address all anticipated needs for the project's affordability period of the term of the City's loan, whichever is longer.

Items Payable only from Surplus Cash

Certain costs, sometimes identified by project owners as "operating costs" cannot be included in the operating budget and will only be payable from surplus cash (aka cash flow). These include:

- Incentive Management Fees payable in addition to the allowable management fees noted above, whether paid to related party or independent third-party management fees.
- Asset Management Fees payable to any investor, general or limited partner, or member of the ownership entity.
- Deferred Developer Fees
- Operating Deficit Loan Payments made to any related party including any investor, general or limited partner, or members of the ownership entity.
- Other payments to investors, general or limited partners, or members of the ownership entity, however characterized, including but not limited to negative adjustors, yield maintenance fees, etc.

Ongoing Economic Viability

The City will review the ongoing economic viability of all projects, taking into account long-term projections of revenue and expenses. Projects must demonstrate they can be expected to remain viable for at least the affordability period, taking into account trending assumptions noted above, as well as other any other changes in operating revenues or expenses that can reasonably be anticipated based on other information available to the City or other project funders. In particular, the City will review the debt coverage ratio and operating margin as outlined below.

Debt Coverage Ratio

Projects must demonstrate a minimum debt coverage ratio (DCR) of 1.25 (Net Operating Income divided by amortizing debt service) throughout the affordability period. In some cases, for projects with relatively small levels of mortgage debt, this may require a higher initial DCR to ensure that the DCR in later years remains at or above the appropriate level.

Operating Margin

In addition to considering the DCR, the City will review the operating margin (surplus cash divided by total operating expenses and amortizing debt service). The operating margin must remain at or above 5% for the period of affordability.

Other Funding Sources

Prior to committing funds, all other funding sources necessary for a project must be identified, committed in writing, and consistent with the both the City's underwriting requirements and the affordability restrictions of the HOME program. In general, developers must make all reasonable efforts to maximize the availability of other funding sources, including conventional mortgage debt and tax credit equity (as applicable), within commercially available and reasonable terms.

Additionally, restrictions or limitations imposed by other funding sources cannot conflict with any applicable HOME requirements and cannot, in the discretion of the City, create undue risk to the City.

Senior Mortgage Debt

Any amortizing mortgage debt that will be senior to the City's HOME loan must:

- Provide fixed-rate financing;
- Have a term equal to or in excess of the HOME affordability period. The affordability period will generally be 15 years beyond the date of "project completion" as defined in 24 CFR 92.2 for acquisition/rehabilitation projects and 20 years for new construction projects. In practice, the date of "project completion" will not be the same as "placed in service" date for tax purposes but for most projects will occur prior to permanent loan conversion following property stabilization. Insomuch as possible, the first mortgage should have the longest amortization period available but cannot balloon prior to the expiration of the affordability period; and
- Allow the City's HOME covenant running with the land (i.e. the deed restrictions imposing the HOME affordability requirements) to be recorded senior to all other financing documents such that the HOME covenant is not extinguished in the case of foreclosure by a senior lender. Note the City HOME loan itself will be junior to conventional amortizing loans; only the deed restrictions must be senior.

Tax Credit Equity

Projections of tax credit equity must be documented by letters of intent or other similar offers to participate in the transaction by the proposed tax credit investor. Prior to committing funds, the applicant must provide evidence it has received a tax credit reservation from TDHCA and provide the proposed limited partnership agreement or operating agreement, as applicable, documenting the terms of the equity investment.

The City will review proposed equity pricing against information from other projects in the region to assess whether the pricing and terms are reasonable.

Deferred Developer Fee

It is common for projects to include deferred developer fees as a financing source. The City will generally require:

- That projections of surplus cash available (after any cash-flow contingent payment due the City) be sufficient to repay the deferred fee within 15 years (notwithstanding other "waterfall" provisions in the partnership or operating agreement, the City will assume that all surplus cash distributions will be credited against the developer fee);
- That following the initial application to the City, the level of deferred developer fee will remain fixed (in nominal dollar terms) in the event City underwriting identifies cost

reductions, increases in other funding sources, or other changes that result in a net reduction of the “gap” to be filled with HOME funds; and

- That any net savings (or increased funding sources including but not limited to upward adjusters for tax credit equity) at project completion and cost certification will be used in equal parts to reduce the deferred developer fee and the City’s permanent HOME loan. In the event savings are sufficient to eliminate the deferred fee in this manner, any remaining net savings will be used to further reduce the City’s HOME loan, or in the sole discretion of the City, to increase the operating reserve.

Exceptions and Interpretation

The City has developed these guidelines for several reasons. Not only are they required by HUD as part of the City’s role as a HOME PJ, but more generally they are intended to provide clarity to applicants on what the City expects and transparency about the “rules of the road.” However, the City recognizes that it cannot pre-emptively identify every possible special circumstance that may warrant an exception to its general requirements, nor can it identify every possible “loophole” whereby a creative presentation of costs or other projections might subvert the general need to balancing of viability and reasonable returns, risk to the City and public benefit.

Consequently, the City reserves the right to waive specific underwriting criteria for specific projects when, in its judgement, the purposes of the program can be better achieved without taking on undue risk. When waiving any given requirement, the City may impose additional special conditions or business terms that are not otherwise typically applied to all projects.

For administrative ease, the City may also align its underwriting standards with those required by other public funders involved in a given transaction, particularly if those standards are more restrictive or conservative than the City’s. However, the City retains the right, in its sole discretion, to decide whether to accept alternative standards.

The City also reserves the right to reject any element of a transaction that, despite not being specifically prohibited, was not anticipated by these guidelines of such an element or business term otherwise creates unacceptable risks, excessive returns to the owner/developer, or otherwise undermines the public purposes of the City’s program.

Inasmuch as is reasonable, the City will update and clarify these guidelines over time to account for exceptions, waivers, or additional restrictions it imposes.

APPENDIX 3 UNIVERSAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

This portion of the manual outlines the City's policy on Universal Design and the minimum design criteria for new affordable housing projects.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the projects supported by CDBG and HOME funds, the City has established guidelines in relation to Universal Design. In addition, the City wants to ensure that newly constructed units are compatible with existing neighborhoods.

Universal Design

This comprehensive housing policy creates a Universal Design construction requirements for all new single-family homes, duplexes, and triplexes using financial assistance from the City.

The goal of "Universal Design" is to ensure that housing can accommodate the needs of people with a wide range of abilities, including children, aging populations and persons with disabilities. Consequently, all new construction housing projects using City of Dallas CDBG and/or HOME funds will meet all the following criteria:

- At least one entrance shall have 36-inch door and be on an accessible route.
- All interior doors shall be no less than 32-inches wide; except for a door that provides access to a closet of fewer than 15 square feet in area. Each hallway shall have a width of at least 36-inches wide and shall be level and ramped or beveled changes at each door threshold.
- All bathrooms shall have the walls reinforced around the toilet, bathtub and shower; for future installation of grab bars.
- Each electrical panel, light switch or thermostat shall be mounted no higher than 48 inches above the floor. Each electrical plug or other receptacle shall be at least 15 inches from the finished floor.
- An electrical panel located outside the dwelling unit must be between 18 inches and 42 inches above the ground and served by an accessible route.
- All hardware installed to open/close doors and operate plumbing fixtures shall be lever handles.

Universal Design Waiver or Exterior Accessibility Requirements

The Director of Sustainable Development or his designee may only grant modifications or an exemption to the requirements of the Ordinance regarding full compliance with the exterior path of travel on an individual case-by-case basis. The criteria for granting a modification or exemption are as follows:

- The lots rise or falls so steeply from the street that a maximum 1:12 slope cannot be achieved without extensive grading; and
- No vehicular access to the back of the house will be available by means of an alley.
- Appeals of orders, decisions of determination made by the Director of Sustainable Development may be made to the Board of Adjustments.

Universal Design Implementation

- Clearly stamp or print "Universal Design" on plans submitted
- Clearly Identify design elements outlined in Ordinance.
- Certify that the plans comply with the requirements of the Ordinance.
- Plan checking, construction inspections and enforcement shall be accomplished by the Development Services Department in accordance with existing procedures.