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# Low Barrier Housing Initiative Guidelines and Procedures

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City of Minneapolis  
Department of Community Planning and Economic Development  
105 5th Avenue South, Suite 200  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

## PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

### Background

The Mayor and City Council approved \$250,000 in the 2020 Budget for a new Low Barrier Housing Initiative. While the total number of people experiencing homelessness has decreased by 19% since 2014, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness more than doubled during this time. Low-income persons experiencing homelessness in Minneapolis are disproportionately people of color. Black/African American and American Indian/Alaska Native populations experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate, comprising about 68% of the total population of persons experiencing homelessness. Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) represent about 78% of the population experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County.

### Objective

The Low Barrier Housing Initiative will support creative, community-led, short-term housing solutions that are cost-effective, culturally appropriate, leverage other public, non-profit and/or philanthropic funding, and can be implemented within a one-year period. Funds will be deployed quickly to respond to urgent needs.

### Eligible Expenses/Costs

Funding may only be used for capital costs of new construction, or acquisition costs, for projects that offer transitional or permanent housing for persons experiencing or at significant risk of experiencing homelessness.

### Eligible Projects

Projects must help transition persons experiencing homelessness or housing instability into permanent housing, with a focus on reducing the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Eligible projects must offer wrap-around services to residents to support improved long-term housing stability.

### Process

Proposals will be selected through a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). The NOFA will specify application requirements, which will include information on households served, services provided, length of stay, State licensure questions, project cost details, sources and uses, and other items. If funds remain after the initial NOFA, they will be awarded to quality, eligible projects on a pipeline basis, subject to funding availability. Selected applicants will enter into a loan or grant agreement with the City as determined by staff. Projects must demonstrate alignment with Initiative goals, feasibility, and readiness to proceed.

### Priority

Priority will be given to projects that meet the following criteria:

1. Extent to which proposal minimizes City subsidy and leverages non-City funding
2. Proposal addresses a priority population, as defined by Hennepin County:
  - People experiencing homelessness for at least a year – or for a total of 12 months over 3 years – while struggling with a disability (chronic homelessness)
  - People with severe addictions who frequently use withdrawal management services
  - People with developmental disabilities and either:
    - Co-occurring mental illnesses or substance use disorders, or
    - Needing to move from group settings to more independent living to make room for those needing more intensive care
  - People leaving mental health treatment
  - People with complex medical conditions experiencing homelessness
  - People with a disability and a level 3 predatory offense
  - Youth with neuro-diverse conditions (such as autism spectrum disorders, brain injuries, or fetal alcohol syndrome)
  - Youth experiencing sexual exploitation
  - Unaccompanied minors experiencing homelessness
  - Youth in and leaving extended foster care
  - Families with disabilities who are involved with child protection services