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## MEMORANDUM

To: Communities in the Chicago Region  
From: Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Local Councils of Government (COGs)  
Re: How to Use the Guidelines for a Model Affordable Housing Plan  
Date: April 2004

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The attached Guidelines for a Model Affordable Housing Plan are meant to help local officials to prepare a housing plan for their community. While it was created based on the requirements of the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act, this document can be used by any municipality which wishes to produce a strong and well-thought-out plan addressing housing issues. The Guidelines present a checklist of policy options, policy and programmatic tools, funding sources, and other resources. These are all provided so that local officials can compare the choices in the document with the realities and character of their communities, discarding the options that would not be appropriate and researching and implementing those that would be appropriate.

These Guidelines for a Model Affordable Housing Plan have been created to aid communities as they put together an affordable housing plan. It is meant to be as comprehensive as possible, and, as a result, contains a large amount of information on a myriad of organizations, programs, and policies. Not every town will institute an inclusionary zoning policy, just as not every town will impose a teardown tax or form a Housing Commission. It is expected that local officials will read through the document, determine the types of policies that would work best in their communities, and then focus on implementing these choices.

There are five sections of the main Guidelines document:

- *Section 1 (10% Test)* is simply a statement of the community's current percentage of affordable housing, and the number of units needed to bring the municipality up to a 10% level of affordability.
- *Section 2 (Goal-Setting)* discusses the three goals a community can choose to pursue in order to meet the requirements of the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeals Act. This section of the guidelines helps local officials to think about which of the goals would be most appropriate for their community.
- *Section 3 (Planning for Affordable Housing)* addresses the law's requirement that plans identify land and/or buildings that could be used for development or redevelopment into affordable housing. This section outlines factors that towns should take into consideration when making these decisions. In addition, Section 3 presents information on inclusionary zoning, for the use of communities which choose to implement such a policy.
- *Section 4 (Affordable Housing Policies and Incentives)* has three subsections. The first (Issues to Consider) lists a number of questions/issues the community should think about when preparing a housing plan. The second (Affordable Housing Policies and Incentives) provides short blurbs on a number of policies which local officials could implement to encourage the production of affordable housing in their communities. The third sub-section (Financing Tools) presents short descriptions of funding sources which could be used to help to finance affordable housing.
- *Section 5 (Communications/Public Outreach)* is not a section that is required by the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeals Act. Rather, this section is meant to be a tool for communities as they begin the process of educating the public about the new law and their efforts to create a plan in response to it. This

section provides local officials with information that can be used to dispel some of the myths regarding affordable housing, as well as with suggestions for conducting the planning process in order to create a positive environment for the discussion of the types of housing being addressed by the community.

The attachments to the Guidelines provide other useful information. Attachment 1 is a comprehensive guide to creating an inclusionary zoning ordinance. Those communities which choose to implement such a policy can review this document and modify it to fit their needs and policy goals. Attachment 2 is the Mayors Caucus' Housing Endorsement Criteria and Housing Action Agenda, which can be used by municipalities to describe the types of housing they want to pursue, and to help them to identify steps which can encourage these types of housing. Attachment 3 presents two examples of Housing Resolutions that have been passed by communities in the region. Those communities wishing to pass their own Housing Resolution can use these as a guideline. Finally, Attachment 4 provides a list of resources upon which communities can draw as they begin the process of producing a housing plan.

***For questions on the Guidelines or the Affordable Housing Planning and Appeals Act in general, please contact Beth Dever at the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus: 312.201.4507 or [beth.dever@mayorscaucus.org](mailto:beth.dever@mayorscaucus.org).***

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