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TO: Board of Selectmen  
 FROM: Acton Community Housing Corporation  
 SUBJECT: Housing Production Plan  
 DATE: September 15, 2014

Members of the Acton Community Housing Corporation will be attending your September 22 meeting to update you on the Town's Housing Production Plan which will be kicking off on October 1. The Town has contracted with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to prepare the plan for \$15,360 to be funded with housing gift funds. We have included the Scope and Budget for your information.

A Housing Production Plan is used to guide affordable housing development within a community. It helps communities to influence the type, amount and location of housing; to set a numerical goal for affordable housing production; and to enable the ZBA to approve 40B's under flexible rules.

The Plan is required to include the following components:

- Data Collection, Inventories, Analysis, Supply and Demand
- Current 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory
- Housing Needs
- Housing Vision, Goals and Objective
- Constraints on the Development of Affordable Housing
- Implementation Strategies and Action Plan

In the past several months, ACHC has received a number of inquiries from developers interested in finding sites for affordable housing development in the Town. The sooner we have an approved Housing Production Plan, the sooner we can help guide such development. During the Acton2020 process, the consensus was that the Town did not support a large rental type of development even though it could bring us to 10%. ACHC is in full agreement with that decision. An approved Housing Production Plan will help us all retain the collaborative approach that has been so successful in the past.

The important point to understand about a Housing Production Plan is that it is the Town of Acton's plan, not the ACHC's. The final step in the process is adoption by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. MAPC will hold two separate meetings by June 2015 with the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen to adopt the final draft of the HPP. Once approved and adopted by both boards, MAPC will submit the final Plan to the MA Department of Housing and Community Development for approval. ACHC will facilitate the HPP process with the assistance of the Planning Department. The first step will be a public meeting scheduled this fall to put the housing needs in perspective. We look forward to your support and participation.



## **Town of Acton Housing Production Plan** **Scope of Work – August 4, 2014**

This scope of work defines the tasks and deliverables associated with the drafting of a five-year Housing Production Plan (HPP) for the Town of Acton. The Town's current plan expired in 2010. Now, the Town is seeking assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to maintain and grow its existing housing inventory to meet need, and to establish clear roles for municipal entities to achieve this objective by implementing a housing plan. This project is supported by \$15,360 in funding from the Town of Acton.

### **Project Connection to MetroFuture**

MetroFuture, MAPC's plan for our region, serves as a guide for the agency's work related to smart growth and regional collaboration. The plan comprises 65 specific goals for the year 2030, many of which are relevant to this project. They include:

- Goal #10: Growth in the region will be guided by informed, inclusive, and proactive planning.
- Goal #14: An increasing share of the housing in each municipality will be affordable to working-class families and fixed-income seniors.
- Goal #16: Low-income households will be able to find affordable, adequate, conveniently located housing, in suburbs as well as cities, and they will be able to avoid displacement.<sup>1</sup>

### **Deliverables**

The HPP is required to include the following components in compliance with 760 CMR 56.03(4):

- A housing needs and demand assessment based on current data, population trends, and regional growth factors, including an analysis of town:
  - Demographics
  - Housing Stock, including Current M.G.L. Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory
  - Housing Affordability
- An analysis of regulatory and non-regulatory constraints on the development of affordable housing
- Housing vision and goals, including:
  - A numerical annual housing production goal
  - The identification of specific sites where the Town will encourage 40B development
- Strategies for achieving goals
- An implementation plan

Community outreach and participation will be important in developing the plan. MAPC will design and the Town will circulate a community survey of housing needs. The Planning Board and Community Housing Corporation will host two public forums, which MAPC will facilitate. One meeting will offer the opportunity for MAPC to share the findings of the housing needs and demand assessment and to

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<sup>1</sup> Others may also apply, such as Goals #4, #13, #15, #17, #18, and #19.

facilitate discussion of potential housing goals; the other meeting will provide a forum to share implementation strategies with the community.

The approved plan will be made available on the Town's website.

### **Project Context**

The following data is attributed to the 2010 Census unless otherwise noted. Acton has a population of 21,924 that form 8,187 households. By 2030, the population is projected to be 23,625, living in 9,971 households, an 8% and 22% increase, respectively, according to MAPC's MetroFuture. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the population live in family households. The overall median household income is \$114,458 and the median family income is \$141,860, according to 2008-2012 ACS estimates. In Acton, 41% of the population is cost-burdened, also according to 2008-2012 ACS estimates, but only 1.8% of households have income below the poverty level.

More than half (51%) of the population is age 35-64 and more than a quarter (26%) of the population is school age (5-19). MAPC projections indicate that those aged 35-64 will increase 26% by the year 2030, while the school-age population will decrease by 43%. More than three-quarters (76%) of the population is white; African-Americans make up barely 1% of the population and Hispanics 3%. However, there is a significant Asian population (19%).

Acton has a low 4% vacancy rate. Of the total housing stock, 70% is single-family housing. However, multi-family housing developments of significant size are not rare, with 10-19-unit developments comprising 11% of the stock and 20-plus-unit developments comprising 9%, according to 2008-2012 ACS estimates. Acton's housing stock was largely built between 1960 and 1979, with 45% of housing units constructed then. Since 2000, the stock has increased by 10%. More than three-quarters (76%) of the occupied housing stock is owner-occupied. Of the 8,475 year-round housing units, 547 (6.45%) are currently listed on the State Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory.

### **Partners and Responsibilities**

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman, and Bob Van Meter, Vice Chairman, both of the Acton Community Housing Corporation, will be the primary contacts working with MAPC Chief Housing Planner Jenny Raitt and Housing Planner Karina Milchman. Assistant Town Planner Kristen Guichard will offer assistance.

The Town will circulate the community survey, as well as share HPP presentations and draft materials via the Town website and distribute the information in print format. The Town will also aid in organizing the two public forums, including securing a venue and promoting events.

The Planning Board and Board of Selectmen will hold meetings to adopt the final draft of the HPP. Once approved and adopted by both boards, MAPC will submit the HPP to the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for approval.

**Project Work Plan:**

- *Data Collection & Research.* A comprehensive housing needs and demand assessment will be conducted. This will include an analysis of current data, population trends, and regional growth factors pertaining to Acton’s demographics, housing stock, and affordability. Other research includes an exploration of constraints and limitations of affordable housing development in town.
- *Public Forums & Community Outreach.* The housing production planning process will include two public forums facilitated by MAPC, including a visioning meeting at which MAPC’s Tim Reardon will provide regional context for Acton’s housing demand and supply and a strategies meeting. In addition, MAPC will design a community survey to be circulated by the Town.
- *Map-Making.* The plan will include several maps, most of which will be provided by the Town. MAPC will draft a map of sites identified for potential housing development.
- *Visioning & Implementation.* Based on the housing needs assessment, discussion during the first public forum, and development constraints, affordable housing goals will be set for the Town and implementation strategies will be developed.
- *Preparation & Presentation of Deliverables, & Submission to Appropriate Entities.* There will be one round of revisions to the final plan based on feedback from the Town. MAPC will then present it to the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, and Community Housing Corporation. Once adopted, MAPC will submit it to DHCD on behalf of the Town.
- *Project Management.* Tasks include entering contacts into CRM and evaluating meetings.

The following table summarizes tasks associated with each of the above elements and is organized by hours allotted, budget, and timeframe.

**Project Budget**

<b>Task #</b>	<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Budget (\$)</b>	<b>% of Total Budget</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Task 1: Housing Inventory, Needs, and Demand Analysis</b>					
<b>1.1</b>	Housing Inventory, Needs, and Demand Analysis (including public forum #1 with Planning Board and Community Housing Corporation)	75	\$6,000	39%	October 2014-February 2015
<b>1.2</b>	Design and administer community survey (for inclusion in the January 2015 tax bill)	20	\$1,600	10%	November 2014
<b>Task 1 Subtotal</b>		<b>95</b>	<b>\$7,600</b>	<b>49%</b>	
<b>Task 2: Future Housing Goals/ Objectives</b>					
<b>2.1</b>	Housing Goals and Objectives (including public forum #2 with Planning Board and Housing Committee)	30	\$2,400	16%	February-April
<b>Task 2 Subtotal</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>\$2,400</b>	<b>16%</b>	
<b>Task 3: Implementation Plan</b>					

<b>3.1</b>	Plan Implementation Strategies Development and Discussion (including public meeting presentation to Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, and Community Housing Corporation)	30	\$2,400	16%	March-June 2015
<b>3.2</b>	Map (1) - Sites Identified for Potential Housing Development	7	\$560	4%	April-June 2015
<b>Task 3 Subtotal</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>\$2,960</b>	<b>19%</b>	
<b>Task 4: Final Plan Document</b>					
<b>4.1</b>	Final Report (including two meetings with Planning Board and Board of Selectmen)	30	\$2,400	16%	June 2015
<b>Task 4 Subtotal</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>\$2,400</b>	<b>16%</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>192</b>	<b>\$15,360</b>	<b>100%*</b>	

\*Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### **Project Objectives**

#### **Process Benchmarks**

- Distribution of community survey
- Public Forum #1: Visioning
- Public Forum #2: Strategies
- Presentation to Planning Board and Board of Selectmen
- Endorsement of HPP by the Town's Community Housing Corporation
- Adoption of HPP by the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen
- Submission of HPP to DHCD

#### **Project Outcomes**

- Approval of HPP by DHCD

#### **Equity Outcomes**

- Higher success rate of meeting the housing needs of a diverse Acton population
- Increased housing opportunities for lower-income residents
- Increased and more diverse suburban housing options within the region

#### **Scope Approved:**

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Steven L. Ledoux, Town Manager, Acton, MA

Date