

3225 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 226
BARNSTABLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02630



CAPE COD
COMMISSION

(508) 362-3828 • Fax (508) 362-3136 • www.capecodcommission.org

TO: Assembly of Delegates Human Services Standing Committee

FROM: Patty Daley, Deputy Director, Cape Cod Commission
Beth Albert, Director, Barnstable County Human Services
Department

DATE: January 21, 2015

RE: Barnstable County HOME Program: Proposed Transition
from Cape Cod Commission to Human Services

The Cape Cod Commission and Barnstable County Human Services staff present the following memorandum.

Proposal

To relocate administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Home Investment Partnerships Act (HOME Program) from the Cape Cod Commission to Barnstable County Human Services to combine and strengthen these complementary programs and services.

Summary

- The 2014 – 2018 Barnstable County Strategic Plan recommended consideration of relocating the work of the HOME Consortium from the Cape Cod Commission to the Department of Human Services. (Section 4.6 Affordable Housing/Low-Income Rental.)
- The Commission's long-time Affordable Housing Specialist, who administered the HOME Program for the past 12 years, retired in November of 2014.
- The regional HUD McKinney- Vento Continuum of Care program will be relocated to Human Services by the end of calendar year 2014. The Department will act as the collaborative applicant for the CoC grant, which annually brings \$1.5 million dollars to the region for permanent housing for chronically homeless and people with disabilities. As part of its role as the Collaborative Applicant, the Department will conduct planning for the CoC and Regional Network to Address Homelessness.



- The Department of Human Services convenes the Regional Network to Address Homelessness and supports a part time contractor to coordinate its work.

Goals and Objectives

- There is an opportunity for increased efficiency and coordination in managing affordable housing and human services at the County level. HOME funds may be programmed to directly support the core mission of Human Services, which includes promotion of human rights, homelessness prevention, and support for mental health, substance abuse and targeted populations programs. For example, HOME funds may be dedicated to provide Tenant Based Rental Assistance to support self-sufficiency programs, targeted population programs, anti-displacement assistance programs, and security deposit programs.
- The Commission's past dedication of 1.5 FTEs to HOME Program administration has limited the ability of the Commission's Affordable Housing Specialist to perform other duties related to affordable housing planning. Transitioning the HOME Program to Human Services will restore capacity at the Commission to conduct housing planning assistance as originally envisioned by the Cape Cod Commission Act. These planning activities include assisting towns with housing planning to promote higher density housing types that are more affordable and will help to retain young families in the region, as well as planning for the creation of mixed use, smart growth development that provides a mix of housing types within walking distance to jobs, services and shopping.

Meeting Current and Future Housing Needs

Current housing needs far outpace the ability of the HOME Program to fund unit production. There is an especially acute need for affordable rental units in the region (See, June 2010 Consolidated Plan). The level of funding provided through the HOME Program is not, and never has been, sufficient to address regional needs. Transitioning the HOME Program to Human Services will add 1.5 FTE to the County staff (further supported by 1/2 FTE presently funded through administration reimbursement funds from HOME); these new 1.5 FTE will be dedicated to administering the HOME Program in a way that is consistent with the human services needs identified in the county, including rental and home ownership needs as well as targeted population needs and homelessness prevention. Adding this 1.5 FTE to administer HOME and Human Services programs will enable the Commission to devote its current Affordable Housing Specialist position (1 FTE) to housing planning needs discussed above. The specialist position would also be available to identify and leverage affordable housing support services outside of the HOME Program.

Background

In April 1992, the County approved Ordinance 92-3 to create the Barnstable County HOME Consortium Advisory Council and Ordinance 92-4 to authorize the County Commissioners to enter into agreements for the purpose of establishing the HOME Consortium Advisory Council. Every Cape town signed on to participate in the Consortium. The Council is comprised of one member from each town and two at-large members. Its primary responsibilities include determining the allocation of HOME Program funds to approved activities and acting as liaison with their local housing partnership/committee. Over the years, the HOME Consortium has allocated funds to housing production, primarily rental housing development projects, homeowner rehabilitation projects, and homeownership opportunities through the Down Payment/Closing Cost program. Participation in the HOME Program requires a Consolidated Plan to address the needs of the region and to assist in prioritizing the use of future funds. The Commission is funding the development of the HOME Consortium's most recent Five Year Consolidated Plan which has just gotten underway with assistance from OKM Associates to conduct a needs assessment and market analysis and work with the Consortium to develop goals, priorities and strategies for the next five years.

Current HOME Staffing

From its inception, the HOME Program has been staffed by the Commission's Affordable Housing Specialist along with a part-time assistant. The previous Affordable Housing Specialist had dedicated most of his time to administering the HOME Program, primarily for production of rental units. Administrative duties include project identification and support, coordination with developers, local entities and applicable subsidizing agencies, real estate closings, and monitoring units created with HOME funds. While the workload varies, the on-going monitoring that is required to ensure continued affordability is increasing, as more affordable units are created with HOME funds and as HUD regulations require increased monitoring and reporting for subsidized units.

Transition

To consolidate programs under the Human Services department, a full time program specialist and full time program assistant is needed to manage the requirements of both the HOME Program and Continuum of Care programs. For FY 2015 the Continuum of Care received a \$20,000 planning grant to be used to administer required CoC planning activities. The HOME Program provides funding to offset the cost equivalent to a half time assistant, approximately \$40,000. This position currently has an incumbent. The additional annual operational costs would, therefore, include 1.5 full time equivalents as outlined.

Budget Category	Annual Cost
Salaries:	
Program Specialist (SPT6-1)	\$63,722
Project Assistant (SPT2-3)	24,138
Benefits @ 40%	35,144
Travel	500
Total	\$123,504

Additionally, nominal start-up expenses including computer equipment and office furniture may be needed.

While the long term location of the HOME Program is being considered, the Commission has held off advertising its statutorily required Affordable Housing Specialist position. The ideal candidate to manage the HOME Program is likely very different than what would be sought for a regional affordable housing specialist. Management of the HOME Program is a primarily administrative function, currently focused on isolated ownership and rental unit production throughout the region. Section 3(h) of the Cape Cod Commission Act states that the Commission's affordable housing specialist shall: (1) assist each municipality in developing the low and moderate income housing component of its local comprehensive plan; (2) evaluate the adequacy and fairness of the low and moderate income housing component of each local comprehensive plan submitted to the commission for certification; (3) monitor the progress of each municipality in implementing the low and moderate income housing component of its local comprehensive plan; and (4) report to the commission on the progress of each municipality in implementing the low and moderate income housing component of its local comprehensive plan. In keeping with the mandate of the Cape Cod Commission Act, it is recommended that the specialist position will provide planning, policy recommendations, and technical assistance to support local planning efforts, as well as regulatory review related to affordable housing issues.