

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 08/27/07		Item Number: <u>A-3</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Approval of the Certification and Submission of the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).			
Contact Person/Dept.: Tevis Barnes, Mona Karroum-Community Development Department/Housing Division		Phone Number: (310) 253-5782	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Master Notification List: (08/22/07).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (07/31/07)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Iker) (08/21/07)	
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang (08/21/07)		City Manager Approval Jerry B. Fulwood (8/22/07)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council: 1) Approve the certification and submission of the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and, 2) Authorize the Mayor and the City Manager to execute the SEMAP Certification. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> On September 10, 1998, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP). SEMAP was designed to assist HUD with measuring the performance of Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) that administer the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. Under SEMAP, PHA's conduct a "self-evaluation" that is based on fourteen (14) key indicators. These indicators are as follows: 1. Selection of applicants from the waiting list 2. Reasonable rent 3. Determination of the adjusted income 4. Utility Allowance Schedule 5. Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Control Inspections 6. HQS Enforcement 7. Expanding housing opportunities			

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

8. Payment Standards
9. Annual program participant reexamination
10. Correct tenant rent calculation
11. Pre-Contract HQS Inspection
12. Annual HQS Inspections
13. Lease-up
14. Family Self Sufficiency

PHA's are required to transmit their SEMAP certification via the Internet within sixty (60) calendar days of Fiscal Year (FY) end (August 29, 2007).

DISCUSSION:

The Culver City Housing Agency (CCHA) is required to perform its own self-evaluation under SEMAP on an annual basis. In order to accurately complete this certification, thirty (30) randomly selected Section 8 HCV Program participant case files were evaluated.

Outlined below is the scoring of Key Performance Indicators. These eight (8) Key Performance Indicators were highlighted based on the fact that they outline the essential core functions of Section 8 HCV Program case management and program participant file maintenance. To date, the Performance Indicators not highlighted in this report, all received a score of one hundred percent (100%). The highlighted indicators for CCHA are as follows:

Indicator 2 – Reasonable Rent –Thirty (30) files from the survey sample had proper documentation for this category. Files resulted in a one hundred percent (100%) performance result.

Indicator 3 – Determination of Adjusted Income – The survey resulted in a one hundred percent (100%) performance rating. This high score in calculating adjusted income and calculating correct tenant rent is directly related to the creation of an internal Rent Calculation Worksheet for each file managed by the housing staff. Additionally, the supervisor reviews each file upon completion. Based on HUD rules, governing tenant rent calculations are consistently changing. Where appropriate, staff will receive appropriate training.

Indicator 5 – Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Control Inspections – The Housing Division remains in full compliance in FY 2006/2007 in terms of performing and subsequently auditing annual inspections. Fifteen (15) HCV Program participant files were randomly selected and the Senior Structural Rehabilitation

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Specialist or Housing Administrator re-inspected the units to ensure HQS compliance.

Indicator 7 – Expanding Housing Opportunities - Our strategy to encourage owner participation of units outside of poverty areas and to minimize concentration of subsidized households is implemented by our increased efforts to enhance property owner outreach. A strong relationship with property owners is essential to maintaining existing and attracting greater property owner participation which results in expanded housing opportunities. The activities created to maintain and attract property owners to participate in the Section 8 HCV Program include small gestures like giving hand-written "thank you" notes to property owners who participate in our housing programs and also giving twenty-five dollar (\$25) gift cards to property owners who enter into new leases through our Section 8 HCVP. To maintain excellent customer service, staff responds to owner and participants telephone calls within twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) hours. Inspections for new lease-ups or rent increases are also scheduled either same day or within twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) hours.

This year we will hold our fourth annual Property Owner Appreciation Dinner on September 6, 2007 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel. This year's Western themed dinner is held to recognize outstanding property owners who both manage and maintain their property in an excellent manner. Approximately sixty-five (65) people are scheduled to attend this event. A Certificate of Appreciation and a small gift will be presented to each attendee.

Housing staff continues to seek out new strategies to improve owner participation. These new strategies include:

- Working with Big Imagination, a local public relations agency, to help create and facilitate our outreach/public relations campaign.
- Hosting a Housing Agency Management Association (HAMA) roundtable in November 2006 where local Housing Agencies meet and discuss different ways of encouraging property owners to participate in the Section 8 program.
- Hosting an "Open House" in October 2006 for Culver City property owners so they may meet Housing Staff and learn more about the Section 8 Program and other programs offered by the CCHA.
- Creating the HQS Grant which allows qualified owners with failed properties to participate in a \$500.00 reimbursement towards the improvement of their property.

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

- The Division's website is updated quarterly with the current Housing information.

Our strategies to encourage property owners to continue participation in the Section 8 HCV Program resulted in a high score for this Indicator.

Indicator 10 – Correct Tenant Rent Calculations – Compliance is at one hundred percent (100%). To assure continued compliance in this area, staff will be given ongoing training and the Housing Specialist will continue to review each file upon its completion.

Indicator 11 and 12 – Pre-contract HQS Inspections and Annual HQS Inspections – One hundred percent (100%) of all units newly leased passed the HQS inspection before the execution of a lease and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract. Additionally, one hundred percent (100%) of all units undergo an annual inspection. Housing staff also guarantees that initial inspections will be scheduled within forty-eight (48) hours.

Indicator 13 – Lease-Up - The CCHA is currently below the required lease-up percentage. HUD requires a lease-up rate of at least ninety-five percent (95%). We currently have approximately two (2) active voucher holders conducting housing searches. In addition, we have one (1) household waiting to be briefed and certified pending clearance of their criminal background check.

In the effort to improve the lease-up condition, CCHA started to purge its waitlist of over eight thousand (8000) people in September 2006. To date, over twelve hundred applicants (1200) have updated their application and remain on the waitlist. Approximately six thousand eight hundred (6800) have failed to respond and will be made inactive. Before an applicant is made inactive, the CCHA transmits three (3) fourteen (14) day notices. If the applicant fails to respond to the third notice they are sent a final notice.

CCHA anticipates calling people off the waitlist and issuing vouchers within the next ninety (90) days. Approximately one hundred (100) of the applicants are Culver City residents and the CCHA is hopeful that they will locate units within our jurisdiction and successfully lease up.

As stated above, the CCHA recently entered into a contract and is currently working with Big Imagination, a local public relations firm, to assist in putting a new face on affordable housing by creating consumer friendly marketing pieces for community wide distribution and have marketing materials and brochures that will help to "Tell

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

our Story". The CCHA is very encouraged that this marketing/public relations campaign and outreach will assist in increasing property owner participation.

The Housing Division has also contacted our local HUD field representative to request a meeting sometime in the end of August to discuss other possible strategies and suggestions that may help increase our lease-up numbers.

Indicator 14- Family Self Sufficiency- The Housing Division recently submitted its 2007 Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinator Grant renewal application. Since 1999 the CCHA has been awarded funding which has allowed the CCHA the ability to assist Section 8 HCVP participants achieve their goal of self sufficiency. It is hopeful that an award amount of \$64,266 will be granted this year. The FSS Coordinator position has been vacant the past year due to a termination of contract with Beyond Shelter. Beyond Shelter had provided a contract employee to CCHA the previous years but decided to terminate their services to CCHA this year due to a multi-million dollar contract with the City of Los Angeles. The Housing Division has collected resumes from qualified applicants and plans on hiring someone for the position as soon as possible.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

HUD requires submission of SEMAP to ensure continued funding. For Calendar Year 2008, the Section 8 HCV Program is budgeted for approximately \$2.2 million dollars.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) SEMAP Certification (HUD Form 52648)

MOTION:

That the City Council:

- 1) Approve the certification and submission of the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and,
- 2) Authorize the Mayor and the City Manager to execute the SEMAP Certification.