

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 08/14/06		Item Number: <u>C-4</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 (08/09/06)			
Department Approval: Susan Evans (08/03/06)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (08/09/2006)	
City Controller Approval:		C-5	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

- 1) Approve the certification and submission of the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) for the year ending June 30, 2006 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.

BACKGROUND:

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

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7. Expanding housing opportunities
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 end (August 29, 2006).

DISCUSSION:

The Community Development Department (CDD), Housing Division, is required to perform its own self-evaluation under SEMAP on an annual basis. In order to accurately complete this certification, thirty-one (31) 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. Regarding the Performance Indicators not highlighted in this report, all received a score of one hundred percent (100%). The highlighted indicators are as follows:

Indicator 2 – Reasonable Rent –Twenty-eight (28) files from the survey sample had proper documentation for this category. Files resulted in a ninety percent (90%) 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.

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

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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 Housing Choice Voucher Program or Rental Assistance Program. 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 third annual Property Owner Appreciation Dinner on August 3, 2006 at the Radisson Hotel. This year’s Hawaiian themed dinner is held to recognize outstanding property owners who both manage and maintain their property in an excellent manner. Over thirty (30) owners 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. Some of these new strategies include:

- Contacting local radio stations for further information on broadcasting information regarding the program.
- Scheduling meetings with local cable advertisement representatives to discuss a possible televised commercial broadcast.
- Purchasing advertisements in local newspapers to recruit owners for the program.
- Creating a “Coupon Book” to distribute to new participating owners. This coupon booklet may include such items as a free carpet shampooing.
- Planning a Housing Agency Management Association (HAMA) roundtable discussion where local Housing Agencies meet and discuss different ways of encouraging property owners to participate in the Section 8 program.

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- Hosting an “Open House” for Culver City property owners so they may meet Housing Staff and learn more about the Section 8 Program.
- HQS Grant which allows qualified owners with failed properties to participate in a \$500.00 reimbursement towards the improvement of their property.
- Culver City is currently a Westside Rentals client. These rental listings are distributed to Culver City Housing Choice Voucher holders.
- The Division’s website is updated quarterly with the current Housing information.

Additionally, we are conducting Owner Workshops where we provide information and training about property management and maintenance.

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 one hundred percent (100%) compliance in this area, staff will be given ongoing training.

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 – Our current lease-up rate is eighty percent (80%). HUD requires a lease-up rate of at least ninety-five percent (95%). As of June 30, 2006, we had 216 lease-ups (207 vouchers and 9 welfare-to-work). We currently have approximately eleven (11) active voucher holders conducting housing searches. In addition, we have four (4) households waiting to be briefed and certified pending clearance of their criminal background check. The Housing Division continues to aggressively pull eligible households from our Section 8 HCV Program waiting list. Based on a vacancy rate of less than two percent (2%), securing an affordable unit is challenging.

The Housing Division has contacted our local HUD field representative to schedule a meeting sometime in the end of August to discuss the possibility of opening up the

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Section 8 waitlist sometime early next year. This will be done in attempt to increase the lease-up rate.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

HUD requires submission of SEMAP to ensure continued funding. For Fiscal Year 2006/2007, the Section 8 HCV Program is budgeted for approximately \$2.4 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.