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**Sent:** Thursday, October 16, 2014 12:12 PM

**To:** Steve Auger; Ken Reecy

**Subject:** Public Comments - RFA 2014-115 Housing Credit Financing for Affordable Housing Developments Located in Large Counties

Good afternoon:

I am writing to request that you consider including two additional proximity criteria for affordable housing development applicants in the upcoming 2014-15 Housing Credit Financing Cycle for Affordable Housing Developments Located in Large Counties application. Both proximity measures have been included in the past but are currently excluded in the proposed RFA.

1. The first proximity criteria which is of great value and should be included for both families and seniors would be Community Recreation Centers. Community recreation centers are for the benefit of the public and are especially important in helping families and seniors of affordable communities engage in healthy lifestyles and activities, and are an important resource to foster and promote healthy communities. Many families and seniors in affordable rental communities cannot afford to pay for memberships to health facilities or gyms, and/or have limited time and access options. Consequently, it is important to provide these families and seniors with access to community recreation centers that are close. Recreational centers offer, or make their facilities available to, team sports and other positive activities throughout the year. Building affordable housing closer to these Centers expands the availability to seniors and families of affordable housing and thus should be established as a proximity requirement.
2. The second proximity criteria we would ask to include solely for affordable "family" applications would be Schools. Meeting or events can frequently occur before or after school hours. If students need to stay late for extracurricular activities or meetings, or if parents need to meet after hours with a teacher or counselor, school proximity is important. Being in close proximity to schools provides families with many more transportation options for their children both before and after school that may not otherwise be available:
  - Reduced drive time which is important for working families balancing job requirements
  - More car-pooling options which may not be present for a family residing a considerable distance from the school
  - Ability for youths of appropriate ages to walk or ride their bicycle to and from school

We respectfully request that when evaluating proposals for affordable housing in Large Counties/Pinellas County, that these two proximity criteria be added into the qualifying selection process.

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