

# AWARDING YOUR LIHTC SUPPORT LETTER

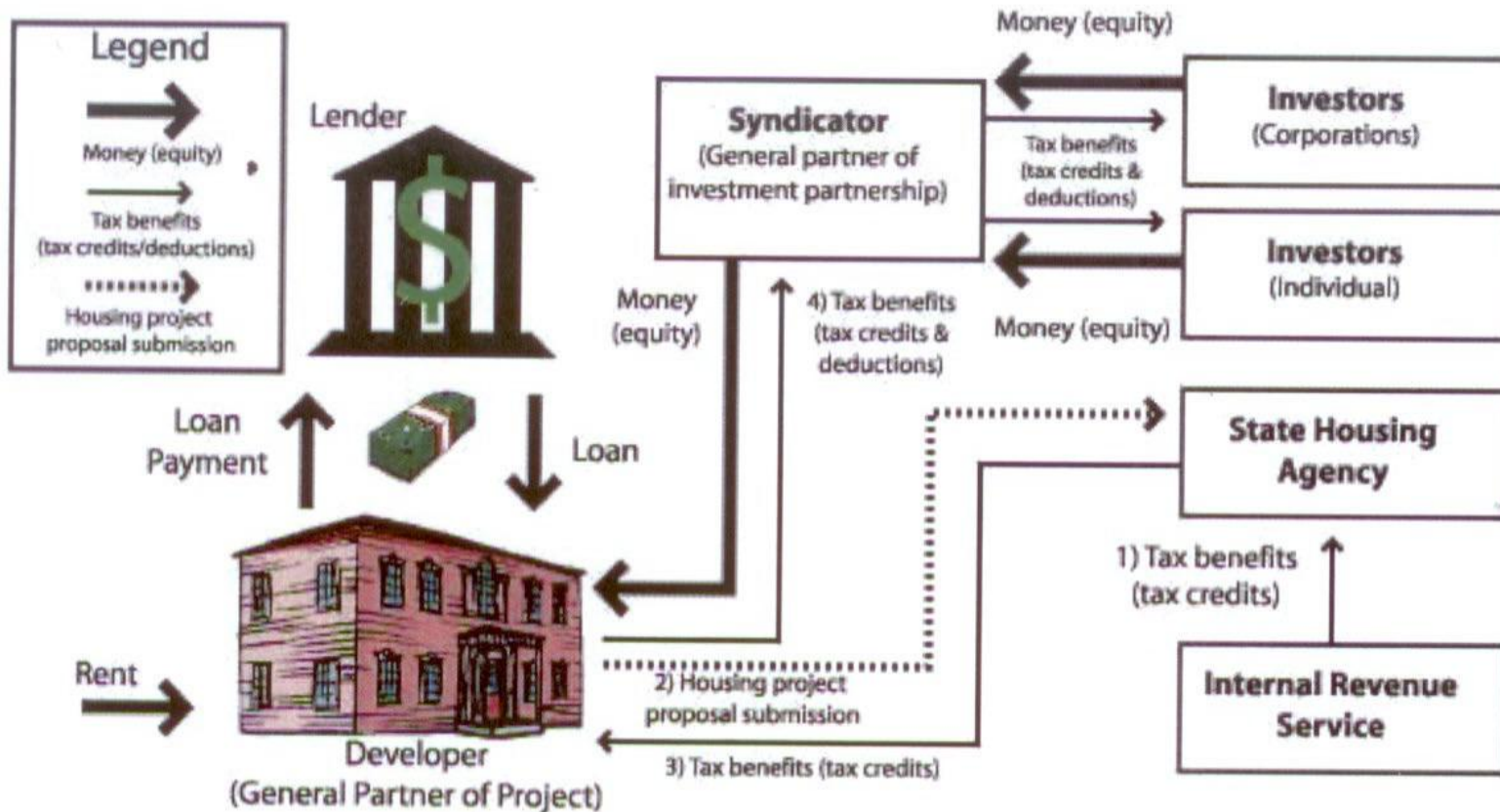
MANDY REEVES YOUNG  
AMERICUS-SUMTER GICH ALUMNI TEAM  
CHAIRMAN  
GICH TEAM SINCE 2010

# LIHTC Overview

---

- Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986
- Allows investors to reduce their federal income taxes by \$1 for every dollar of tax credit they receive. Investors receive the credits for 10 years
- Tax credits are assigned to individual developments by designated state agencies (GA Department of Community Affairs)
- Total dollar amount of credits available is determined by state population. In 2020, states could allocate \$2.81 or a total of \$3.2 million
- Properties must remain occupied by low-income households for at least 30 years
- Both 9% and 4% tax credits
- The size of the tax credit is based on the housing development's cost and the proportion of units occupied by low-income households





# Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

- Developers compete to win award for 9% credits
- Housing developers receive tax credits from state housing agency and sell them to investors for construction funds
- Private investors contribute equity and receive benefits of the tax credits
- Investors, syndicators, and developers form limited partners in a tax credit development
- Housing is built and rents must be affordable (typically 60% AMI) for at least 30 years
- In some cases, “gap financing” is needed for the development to pencil out

# DCA LIHTC Incentives for GICH Communities (2024 QAP)



- Provides competitive advantage for current GICH communities and certified alumni
- Developers can earn up to 2 additional points on LIHTC applications
- Each GICH team may issue only one (1) letter for one project. Issuing more than one (1) will result in no project in that community being awarded this point.
- Additional local government letter in support of decision is required
- For Scattered Site Projects, the above documentation is required from each Local Government for each non-contiguous site.

# GICH HOUSING TEAM LIHTC SUPPORT LETTER REQUIREMENTS

## XXIV. DCA COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

---

### 2 Points

#### Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH)

DCA will award points for projects with a letter from a DCA Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) team (currently active or certified alumni as defined by GICH administrators) which:

- Identifies the boundaries of their GICH community;
- Identifies the project as located within their stated GICH community boundaries; and
- Is executed by the GICH community's primary or secondary contact on record with the University of Georgia Housing and Demographic Research Center as of Application Submission.

Each GICH team may issue only one letter for one project in this year's competitive round. Issuing more than one will result in no project in that community being awarded this point.

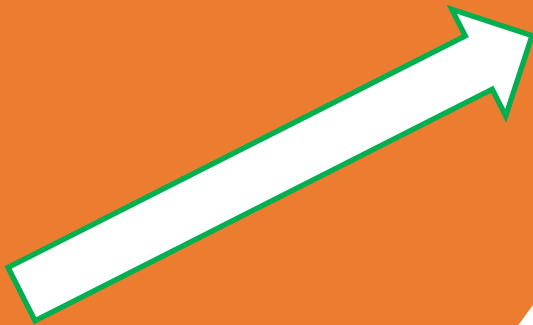
Alumni GICH Teams must be certified GICH Alumni Communities whose certification has not expired as of the Competitive Application deadline to be eligible.

#### Minimum Documentation:

- Letter executed by the GICH community's primary or secondary contact on record with the University of Georgia Housing and Demographic Research Center as of Application Submission, committing the formal support of the majority of GICH members.
- Letter from Local Government agreeing to the issuance of the letter.

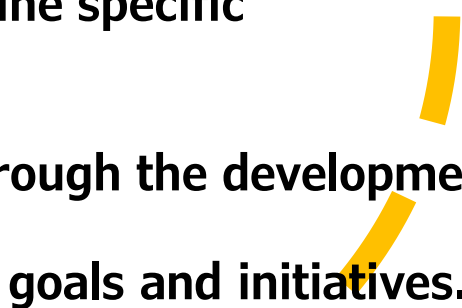
GICH HOUSING TEAM

LIHTC SUPPORT LETTER  
REQUIREMENTS





# PROS, POSITIVES, & BENEFITS OF ESTABLISHING GICH TEAM LIHTC SUPPORT LETTER GUIDELINES & PROCESS

- Standardizes the criteria for a community to determine who to support.
  - Provides a clear process for developers to receive housing team support.
  - Provides opportunity for community to determine specific housing interests.
  - Ensures that local housing interests are met through the development.
  - Creates transparency for community's housing goals and initiatives.
- 

# GICH TEAM LIHTC SUPPORT LETTER GUIDELINES

## XXIV. DCA COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

### 2 Points

#### Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH)

DCA will award points for projects with a letter from a DCA Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) team (currently active or certified alumni as defined by GICH administrators) which:

- Identifies the project as located within their stated GICH community boundaries; and
- Identifies the project as located within their stated GICH community boundaries; and
- Is executed by the GICH community's primary or secondary contact on record with the University of Georgia Housing and Demographic Research Center as of Application Submission.

Each GICH team may issue only one letter for one project in this year's competitive round. Issuing more than one will result in no project in that community being awarded this point.

Alumni GICH Teams must be certified GICH Alumni Communities whose certification has not expired as of the Competitive Application deadline to be eligible.

#### Minimum Documentation:

- Letter executed by the GICH community's primary or secondary contact on record with the University of Georgia Housing and Demographic Research Center as of Application Submission, committing the formal support of the majority of GICH members.
- Letter from Local Government agreeing to the issuance of the letter.

- Determine process for YOUR community
- Determine timeline and deadlines
- Determine key factors for YOUR community
- Reassess annually
- Revise process/approach/implementation method
- Educate elected officials on process
- Determine level of complexity for YOUR community



Rome-Floyd County Housing Team

Rome, Georgia

## GICH Point Application

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Developer name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Total number of developments: \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of units: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you apply for LIHTC credits in the previous year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If awarded, where is the project located? \_\_\_\_\_

If not awarded, what was your application's score? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received a GICH point in the past? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, list the community and year: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently have any developments in the City of Rome or Floyd County? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list the property name & address(es) below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL PRIORITIES

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of units: \_\_\_\_\_ Tenancy: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the proposed development within a LMI census tract/area? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is the proposed budget for this project and the funding sources? \_\_\_\_\_

Will your development use energy efficient measures (i.e. solar panels or LEED standards)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the materials and design attributes you anticipate using for this project. Please attach any renderings showing streetscapes, façades, frontage elements, and construction materials. \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ACCESSIBILITY

How will you obtain citizen input from residents affected by your project? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your site near public transportation, recreation areas, or other amenities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

### PARTNERSHIPS

List & describe any partnerships with local affordable housing stakeholders. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any partners who will be included in your LIHTC application:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### REFERENCES

Please list two references from previous developments.

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your self-score for this proposed development (without the GICH points factored in)? \_\_\_\_\_

Why should we award your development the GICH points? Please attach any supporting documents, renderings, letters, etc. that support your project. \_\_\_\_\_

### DISCLAIMER & SIGNATURE

I certify by signing below that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return completed applications to:**

Bekki Fox  
Community Development Department  
607 Broad St.  
Rome, Georgia 30161  
bfox@romea.us



## Guide to Requesting the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Letter of Support

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit or LIHTC program was enacted in 1986 during the Reagan Administration by the Tax Reform Act and is the largest producer of affordable housing today. The LIHTC program allocates Federal and State tax credits to qualified developers to construct rental units for low to moderate-income renters. The program is an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) program rather than a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program, and it is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the state's housing and community development agency.

The Housing Tax Credit program can be a positive asset for a community as it has stringent accountability standards from application through the 30-year affordability period, a period of time in which the owner must keep the rent affordable and is subject to DCA inspection and compliance requirements. It addresses the need for available, attractive, and attainable housing for seniors, working families, and individuals with disabilities.

### The Basics of How the Housing Tax Credit Program Works

The Housing Tax Credit Program follows these basic steps:

1. The IRS allocates tax credits to each state.
2. The State Housing Finance Authority, DCA, sets rules for developers annually through the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). The QAP development process begins in the summer months during public input and listening sessions and ends with the QAP workshop each February followed by approval of the governor.
3. Developers compete to win 9% tax credits.
4. If housing tax credits are awarded, private investors contribute equity to build the housing development and receive the benefits of the tax credits.
5. Housing is constructed, typically within two years of award, and rents must remain affordable for at least 30 years. Usually, rents are 60% of the Area Median Income.
6. The tax credit is distributed over 10 years and begins once the unit or units are inhabited.

### DCA Community Initiatives

Housing Tax Credits are awarded from the results of an extremely competitive point-driven application with scoring defined by the annual QAP. DCA may award 2 points to an application that seeks to develop in a community that has undertaken planning through the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH). The local GICH housing team, current or certified alumni, may provide a letter indicating the majority of the members of the housing team support the project.

The letter must incorporate the following elements:

1. It must identify the boundaries of their GICH community.
2. It must identify the development as being within the community's stated GICH boundaries.
3. The letter must be executed (signed) by the GICH community's primary or secondary contact on record with the University of Georgia Housing and Demographic Research Center as of the date provided in the annual QAP.

The GICH housing team may issue only one letter for one project during each Housing Tax Credit competitive round. If the community issues multiple letters for submittal, no project within the community will receive the Community Initiative point. A letter from Local Government agreeing to the issuance of the letter must also be provided.

### Americus-Sumter GICH Housing Team Point-based Scoring System

Since becoming a GICH community in 2010, Americus-Sumter County has seen significant interest from developers hoping to receive LIHTC funding. Project proposals and applications for these projects are submitted to Georgia DCA for consideration.

Applicants are evaluated through a highly competitive, point-based scoring system developed by DCA. Project criteria and funding decision authority are determined at the State level. Nevertheless, as a GICH community, the City of Americus, Sumter County, and the Americus-Sumter GICH housing team can provide input to DCA on proposed projects that would be located within the Americus-Sumter County community. Any member organization (and/or their representative) on the Housing Team who has a vested interest in any LIHTC points request will need to abstain from any discussions or voting on the points allocation process.

DCA's funding award decisions are made on a point-based scoring system with specific criteria. Should they so elect, the Americus-Sumter GICH Housing Team, may provide a letter of support endorsing one project for the current application cycle. Letters of support are highly coveted by project developers because it results in two scoring points being awarded to the application/project. Commonly referred to as the GICH support letter, the correspondence states that the project is located within the established boundaries and meets the community's affordable housing goals.

Due to the importance of such a letter of support from the Americus-Sumter GICH housing team, the following criteria shall apply to projects proposed for location within the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Americus and Sumter County.

Requests for a letter of support shall be submitted to the Americus-Sumter GICH team Chairman in the form of the Americus-Sumter GICH team's GICH Support Letter Application and shall include:

#### Development & Management Experience

- History managing LIHTC projects, examples of past projects (ideally, with contact information), non-LIHTC affordable housing projects, staff experience with LIHTC or other affordable housing projects
- Prior development experience as it relates to the proposed project site
- Success with previous LIHTC projects in Rome-Floyd County or other communities

#### Proposed Development, Location & Consistency with Local Priorities

- Description of how your LIHTC proposal is consistent with local affordable housing priorities and needs
- Proposed concept or site plan and a written statement highlighting specific design attributes and land uses
- Project budget to include funding resources
- Description of any energy efficient measures that will be used at the property

#### Community Engagement, Partnerships & Accessibility

- Citizen input plan for obtaining input from residents affected by your proposed project (relevant groups may include: current residents in proposed site, residents of surrounding neighborhoods, community organizations, and any other relevant community stakeholders)
- Proposed site's proximity to public transportation, recreation areas, and other amenities
- Description of partnerships with local affordable housing stakeholders

#### References

- Two references from previous developments and/or projects

The Americus-Sumter GICH Housing Team realizes that development-related activity is a fluid process. In order to thoroughly review all materials and request any additional information or clarification, it is required that the application/information requested in this letter be submitted not later than 5:00 p.m. on February 14<sup>th</sup> of the current year.

Questions and completed applications need to be directed to Mandy Reeves Young, Americus-Sumter GICH Chairman, [gacommunityworks@gmail.com](mailto:gacommunityworks@gmail.com), 229.938.7979.



## GICH Support Letter Application

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Developer name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Total number of developments: \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of units: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you apply for LIHTC credits in the previous year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If awarded, where is the project located? \_\_\_\_\_

If not awarded, what was your application's score? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received GICH support letter(s)/points in the past? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, list communities and year: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently have any developments in the City of Americus or Sumter County? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list the property name & address(es) below:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL PRIORITIES

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of units: \_\_\_\_\_ Tenancy: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the proposed development within a LMI census tract/area? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is the proposed budget for this project and the funding sources? \_\_\_\_\_

Will your development use energy efficient measures (i.e. solar panels or LEED standards)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the materials and design attributes you anticipate using for this project. Please attach any renderings showing streetscapes, facades, frontage elements, and construction materials. \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ACCESSIBILITY

How will you obtain citizen input from residents affected by your project? \_\_\_\_\_

Please list what amenities are near your site:

### PARTNERSHIPS

List & describe any partnerships with local affordable housing stakeholders. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any partners who will be included in your LIHTC application:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### REFERENCES

Please list two references from previous developments.

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Property name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your self-score for this proposed development (without the GICH points factored in)? (Include scoring breakdown) \_\_\_\_\_

Why should we award your development the GICH support letters? Please attach any supporting documents, renderings, letters, etc. that support your project.

### DISCLAIMER & SIGNATURE

I certify by signing below that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed applications to:







Mandy Reeves Young  
Americus-Sumter GICH Team Chairman  
gacomunityworks@gmail.com

APPLICATIONS DUE: FEBRUARY 14

# GICH TEAM LIHTC LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST REQUIRED INFORMATION

## REQUIRED INFORMATION

**\*\*LIHTC DEVELOPERS MUST PROVIDE DETAILED INFORMATION FOR BULLETED ITEMS OUTLINED & INCLUDE WITH ANY LOS REQUEST\*\***

-  List of all requested letters from local government.
-  Outline of proposed project/housing development components (i.e., timeline, zoning changes, compliance, etc.)
-  Description of proposed project/housing development (i.e., development site plan, tenancy, unit mix, number of units, building type, building use, etc.)
-  Impact statement that details projected outcomes of the proposed project/housing development.
-  Total project cost/estimated economic impact on respective community.
-  Details and information about the development team and members comprising the development team.

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEVELOPER



# CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEVELOPER

## PROJECT APPROACH

- Does the development proposal have a feasible timeline included?
- Does the development proposal clearly explain the project?
- Does the proposed project consider the goals of the LIHTC program?
- Are the project renderings clear, easy to read, and detailed?
- Are there any potential zoning or other land use issues related to the proposed development?

## DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE

- Does the developer have experience in the city/county or nearby jurisdictions?
- Does the developer provide examples of completed LIHTC projects?
- Does the developer provide references for previous projects?
- Has the developer ever received a GICH point, and if so, where? Is contact information provided for that community?



# THINGS TO CONSIDER...

---

## Streetscape

- Do the proposed streetscape elements effectively fit into the existing network?
- Is the project's block and street pattern conforming with the surrounding neighborhood?
- Are sidewalks present and continuous in all public frontages in urban areas? Do the sidewalks connect with existing streets and pathways?
- Is on-street and private parking addressed effectively in a manner that maximizes pedestrianism?
- Is the continuity of built-out frontages appropriate given the surroundings?

## Architectural Aesthetics

- Is the proposed development architecturally pleasing?
- Does the architecture of the project match the surrounding community?
- Are the building elements and proportions appropriate for the area, including height?
- Is the proposed density appropriate for the surrounding area, including potential increased traffic effects?
- Does the developer use high-quality, durable building materials?



# THINGS TO CONSIDER CONTINUED...

---

## Connectivity

- Does the proposed project support increased connectivity to the community as a whole?
- Does the project fit within the existing street network without significant new construction necessary?
- Does the project increase connectivity options for pedestrians and bicyclists, including sidewalks?
- Is the project located within ¼ mile of existing transit options?
- Does the development appear inclusive to the larger community instead of exclusive?

## Location

- Neighborhood infill/urban development – does the development use existing streets, water, sewer, and other utilities?
- Urban greenfield development – is the proposed location on previously vacant property within an urban area?
- Suburban greenfield development – is the proposed location on previously vacant property in a suburban area?
- Development in floodplain, wetlands, wildlife habitat, or other vulnerable location

# THINGS TO CONSIDER CONTINUED...

---

## **Civic, Green, and Recreational Space**

- Does the project incorporate effective use of nearby civic, green, or recreational space within ¼ mile (walking distance)?
- Consider parks (passive, active, or pocket), Center Park, plazas or squares, sports complexes, trails or greenways, and gardens.

## **Mixed Use (Non-Residential)**

- Does the project contribute to mixed land uses within ¼ mile (walking distance)?
- Consider retail and services (grocery, convenience, personal care, pharmacy, banks, etc.), restaurants, entertainment, churches, education, government services (City Hall, library, museums, etc.), medical facilities.

## **Housing Choice and Inclusiveness**

- Is the proposed development located ¼ mile (walking distance) of other diverse housing establishments which would promote a more inter-connected community and increase the variety of housing options?





# THINGS TO CONSIDER CONTINUED...

---

## **Economic and Sociological Impact**

- Overwhelmingly positive effect on the community at large with little or no potential negative impact resulting from the development.
- Positive effect on community at large with a mild chance of negative impacts resulting from the development.
- Positive effect on the community with a greater chance of negative impacts resulting from the development.
- The likelihood of positive effects of the development only slightly outweighs potential negative impacts.
- Negative impacts outweigh positive impacts.

# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

---

## Community Engagement

- Developer identifies important and relevant stakeholders, utilizes best practices in community engagement, and has a reasonable timeline of completion.

## Local Partnerships

- Developer has formal partnerships and involvement with affordable housing stakeholders in.

## Commitment to Diversity

- Developer has demonstrated experience working with women and minority-owned businesses. Applicant has demonstrated Section 3 contracting experience.





-QUESTIONS  
-COMMENTS  
-FEEDBACK