

## **Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program**

The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program were released on June 30, 2009 and have clarified a number of issues. Please note the following variations between RFP-ND-09-01 and the Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program recently released by the province.

### **Revised Submission Dates**

The submission dates as outlined in the RFP, issued on June 17, 2009, were as follows: proposals that were ready to start construction within 3 months of signing a Contribution Agreement with the Province were due on July 10, 2009. The second deadline for submissions that would be ready a little later was July 24, 2009.

The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program provided a revised set of submission dates. The Guidelines indicate that the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program is to be divided into Year 1 and Year 2 segments of the program. The timing is as follows:

#### **Year 1 – Quick Starts (June 2009)**

The submission date to the Province for “Quick Start” projects under the Guidelines is July 31, 2009. Submissions to the Province require that the recommended proposals have been approved by the NRH Board of Directors and Regional Council. NRH timelines do not allow for participation in this part of the program.

Proposals that receive consideration and approval by NRH as an “Early Start” proposal will be submitted to the Province by the September 30, 2009 deadline for the Year 1 segment of program.

#### **Year 1 – (July 2009 – March 2010)**

For the remainder of Year 1, the ministry will allocate funding to project proposals that are submitted to the Province by the following dates:

- September 30, 2009
- November 2, 2009

Year 1 projects must be committed (Contribution Agreement signed) and begin construction between June 2009 and March 31, 2010. Funding approvals for these projects will begin shortly after each submission date has closed. AHP Extension (2009) funding must be used within its specified year as funding will not be carried over.

#### **Year 2 (April 2010 – March 2011)**

Project proposals can be submitted for Year 2 of the program. Year 2 submissions to the ministry will be considered after February 1, 2010. Projects receiving funding approval in Year 2 should be committed (Contribution

Agreement signed) and begin construction between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011.

Funding approvals for these projects will begin shortly after each submission date has closed. AHP Extension (2009) funding must be used within its specified year as funding will not be carried over.

### **Contribution Agreements and Construction Starts**

Funding for the New Rental Housing Component is offered on a strict “use it or lose it” basis. Funding that is uncommitted by each fiscal year-end will lapse. Housing proponents not able to sign Contribution Agreement or begin construction by the required dates will have their funding re-allocated.

### **Payments and Construction Milestones**

The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program indicate that funding will be triggered by the following construction milestones;

- ❖ 10% of the funding will flow once the proponent confirms title to the land, registers notice of the Contribution Agreement and securities on title and the first building or demolition permit has been received.
- ❖ 40% of the funding will flow at the start of construction.
- ❖ The remaining monies will flow once the occupancy certificate is received and the 45 day lien period has ended.

Please note that with this program there will be no Provincial affordability payment over 20 years.

### **Target Populations and Other Possible Tenant Groups**

Although low income seniors and persons with disabilities have been identified as the target tenant group for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, priority funding may be available for projects that create units for the following tenant groups:

- Aboriginal people (status/non-status, Inuit, Métis)
- Recent immigrants
- Victims of domestic violence
- Working poor.

Projects with units that accommodate households that are on, or eligible to be on, social housing waiting lists are also eligible for funding.

## **Ineligible Projects**

For the most part the list of ineligible project is the same in the RFP and the Guidelines with one exception. The Guidelines also state that the development of social housing that receives ongoing federal subsidies would not be eligible.

Social housing providers who want to build and/or add an addition, without severing the land and incorporating a different corporation will **not** be eligible under the program.

## **Project Development Funding**

The Guidelines indicate that there is no project development funding (seed money / start-up funding) available through this program.

## **Energy Efficiency & Smart Metering**

Proponents who decide to install smart meters (either in directly metered units or by submeter) in their social or affordable rental buildings should refer to the *Electricity Act, 1998*, to ensure that the installation of the meters does not contravene the legislation.

Proponents may also contact the Ontario Energy Board to confirm if the installation of meters (individual and/or sub-meters) is currently authorized and who is authorized to install the metering equipment. For further information, please contact the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) Consumer Relations Centre at 1-877-632-2727 or 416-314-2455, or go to [www.oeb.gov.on.ca](http://www.oeb.gov.on.ca) .

**Other Energy Efficient Initiatives** - Proponents are encouraged to utilize all other incentives available in their location. The Energy Efficiency Resource & Funding Guide provided by the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure provides an overview of available programs:

[http://www.mei.gov.on.ca.wsd6.korax.net/english/pdf/conservation/energyefficiency\\_funding.pdf](http://www.mei.gov.on.ca.wsd6.korax.net/english/pdf/conservation/energyefficiency_funding.pdf)

## **Combining Programs**

The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program indicate that projects that have received funding under AHP Wave 1 and Residual rounds cannot receive AHP Extension (2009) funding (for example, as a top-up) for the same units. However, those wanting to propose alternate units should speak with staff.

## **Completion Date**

The RFP stated that the completion date for projects was March 31, 2011. The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program do not include a deadline for completion but approved projects will be expected to meet the agreed-upon timeframes of the work program.

### **Rents**

The Guidelines for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program and the RFP both state that the rents must not exceed 80% of CMHC average market rents. The Guidelines do however encourage the provision of more affordability for units that are designated for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities.

### **Occupancy Plan**

The Guidelines require that proponents have an occupancy plan in place to ensure that units will be occupied in a timely fashion.

### **Environmental Assessment**

Projects funded under this program are subject to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA). To be eligible for funding, housing proponents must confirm that project proposals do not impose adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated. The following is a checklist that will help determine if a proposal would require an Environmental Assessment (EA). If one of the following is an issue, an EA may be required and the proponent should consult a planning or an engineering firm that specializes in EA's. Considerations include:

1. Projects that involve construction, expansion, modification or demolition within 30m of a water body.
2. Projects that involve construction, expansion or modification with a footprint of more than 500m<sup>2</sup> on land not serviced at the time of the commitment.
3. Does not involve the likely releasing of a polluting substance into a water body.
4. Projects that involve the demolition of a building where its floor area is more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or where the proposal is to be carried out within 30m of another building.
5. Does not:
  - (i) possibly affect the permafrost AND
  - (ii) take place on land not serviced at the time of the commitment AND
  - (iii) involve construction or expansion of a sidewalk, boardwalk, path, pedestrian ramp or access road longer than 100m<sup>2</sup>.
6. Projects that involve construction or expansion or modification in a national park, park reserve, national historic site or historic canal.
7. Does not involve a USE OTHER THAN:

- residential accommodations
- institutional accommodations/offices
- common-carrier-passenger facilities and services
- retail sales facilities
- medical, educational, informational or recreational facilities or services
- food services
- parking facilities
- non-hazardous storage facilities
- presenting artistic, cultural, sporting or other community-related events.