



CLINT ZWEIFEL
MISSOURI STATE TREASURER

December 11, 2014

Via email to kstetzler@mhdc.com

Mr. Kip Stetzler
Executive Director
Missouri Housing Development Commission
3435 Broadway St.
Kansas City, MO 64111

Re: Request for review of policies related to low income housing concentration

Dear Mr. Stetzler,

The recent events in Ferguson, Missouri have shined a light on numerous issues that exist in North St. Louis County and have led to many individuals and organizations coming together to study various matters in an attempt to make life better for all affected citizens. Most of the topics that have been identified involve residents' relationships with law enforcement and the municipal and state justice systems. However, other issues have emerged that directly relate to the Missouri Housing Development Commission. Of particular concern for residents in the Ferguson area and surrounding communities is the disproportionately high concentration of low-income housing in North St. Louis County. This includes not only MHDC housing, but also Section 8 voucher usage. According to recent media reports, the census tract with the highest Section 8 usage in the state is located in North St. Louis County and the three census tracts that encompass parts of Ferguson, Dellwood, Jennings and unincorporated North County have more Section 8 renters than all areas of St. Louis County south of Olive Boulevard.

At Friday's Commission meeting, through my Deputy State Treasurer I brought forth questions and comments regarding the approval of two additional projects in North County and staff's current process in evaluating the locations of potential projects. As illustrated by those questions and comments, and in consideration of my recent request for information related to the quality of life of those living in MHDC projects in the Ferguson area, I believe the Commission has a continuing obligation to provide its services in the most responsible way possible. We must ensure that the housing produced is not only affordable and high-quality, but that it is appropriate under the circumstances.

I am requesting the staff of the Commission review our current policies and procedures that analyze the need for housing and the existing density of low-income housing in any particular area. This analysis should include not only existing MHDC housing, but also other subsidized rental housing. Further, staff should bring forward their review and propose any needed changes to policies or procedures for the Qualified Allocation Plan at the February 27, 2015 Commission meeting.

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The Commission's Housing Needs Study will be delivered by the University of Missouri – St. Louis in February of next year. Staff should engage UMSL in looking at this issue with regard to housing needs in any particular area. Staff should also engage the recently formed Office of Community Engagement and the Ferguson Commission, as each of these organizations will be reviewing housing policies as part of their work. Finally, we must continue to engage local elected officials as well as other leaders and organizations such as housing authorities, law enforcement and education officials in the communities we serve to ensure that all of the projects recommended by staff and presented to the Commissioners are appropriate under the circumstances.

Sincerely,



Clint Zweifel

cc: Ms. Tina Beer, Missouri Housing Development Commission
Missouri Housing Development Commissioners
Rev. Starsky Wilson, Chairman of the Ferguson Commission
Rich McClure, Chairman of the Ferguson Commission
Ms. Maida Coleman, Director of the Office of Community Engagement