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Mike Smith, Secretary

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Affordable Housing Partners
FROM: Agency of Human Services
RE: Affordable Housing Priorities
DATE: December 20, 2019

Stable, safe, affordable housing is critical to the health and well-being of all Vermonters. The Agency of Human Services (AHS) cannot achieve its mission when people are experiencing homeless or are at-risk of homelessness. The goal of AHS housing-related investments is to end homelessness in Vermont.¹

Purpose: This document is intended to provide public, private and non-profit housing partners with the Agency's priorities regarding resources that support the development, operation and/or restoration of affordable housing.

Priorities: Above all, AHS prioritizes permanent housing that is 1) affordable to those making less than 30% of Area Median Income (AMI)² and 2) that accommodates the needs of AHS clients struggling with any number of challenges like poverty, family instability, and disabling medical conditions including substance use and mental health issues³.

In addition, AHS supports permanent affordable housing that:

- gives preference to homeless households and utilizes data from the State's annual Point in Time (PIT) count to target the most vulnerable households in geographic areas where there is the most need⁴;

¹ Housing Stability Policy, August 2012

² Vermont Council on Homelessness, 2018-2022 State Plan to End Homelessness

³ Roadmap to End Homelessness (2016) <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Homelessness-Study.pdf>

⁴ In accordance with the Governor's priority of ending homelessness, and as stated in the AHS Housing Stability Policy

- uses evidence-based and best practice approaches to the design, production and location of units,
- eliminates unnecessary barriers to entry and is in close physical proximity to community-based services including public transportation;
- is centrally located and integrated with market rate, affordable and permanent supportive housing units⁵
- facilitates the well-being and self-sufficiency of tenants; and preserves individual dignity and choice⁶.

AHS values and relies on our partnership with the affordable housing community and looks forward to our continued work together to ensure that all Vermonters are safe and stably housed.

⁵ https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2017/01/HIAP_annual-report-2017.pdf

⁶ AHS Trauma-Informed Policy (2017)