

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

6. Prioritizing SMART Housing Project Review

Direction:

Consider a "Prioritized" Expedited Review for S.M.A.R.T. Housing projects program in which projects would be reviewed ahead of other applications included where an expedited review fee has been paid.

Specific Language provided by housing groups:

23-3E-4060 Prioritized Expedited Review.

Prioritized Fast-Track review means a S.M.A.R.T. Housing project under this section is reviewed before all other applications including those where an expedited review fee has been paid. Prioritized fast-track review shall include all City of Austin departments including, but not limited to Watershed Protection, Development Services, Austin Energy, Water Utilities, and the Austin Fire Department.

NOTES:

The primary purpose of the SMART Housing Program to incentivize market development to include restricted affordable housing units where other Affordable Housing Bonus Programs (AHBP) are ineffective or to increase the number of affordable units within an AHBP area. It does this by reducing development costs and development time by waiving fees, reimbursing specific expenses and by expediting plan review, building inspections and other City services. In order for the program to work effectively, the benefits of waived fees, reimbursements and expedited review must compensate the developer for reduced revenue from rent or sale of the housing being developed. It, therefore, is essential that the value of waived fees, cost reimbursement and expedited service is sufficient for SMART Housing to be a successful program.