

November 1, 2006

**Request for Proposals**  
**Homeownership Choice Programs**  
**Excellence in Design Initiative PILOT**

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA or Agency) announces a Request for Proposals (RFP) to participate in the Homeownership Choice Programs (HCP), Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI). The HCP Initiatives are intended to help Pennsylvania municipalities transform blighted neighborhoods into healthy, vibrant and attractive places to live.

The Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI) is a pilot initiative intended to encourage quality design for all affordable housing developments, and in the process, help elevate the role of design in achieving PHFA goals. Under EDI, a development is well designed if it meets the four basic criteria identified in the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* ([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)) as follows: 1) meets user needs; 2) understands and responds to its context; 3) enhances its neighborhood; and 4) is built to last. These criteria are in concert with community development efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing, improve the quality of life for residents, and build neighborhood stability.

EDI also values and supports preliminary design early in the development process and is intended to help developers recognize that quality design is a key means for adding value to affordable housing. By utilizing the design criteria and innovative land use planning concepts established in the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* as a standard, development teams will integrate the meaning, value and process of quality design in the construction and rehabilitation of homes in urban settings. Well designed affordable housing adds assets to a community, improves quality of life, integrates communities and creates long term value.

**Goals**

**1. Increase homeownership opportunities and choices in urban areas**

The focus of the EDI is on the development of homeownership opportunities in disinvested urban areas through the rehabilitation of existing and/or construction of new homes. This may include development of condominiums, duplex and town homes as well as detached homes. The product mix is to be based upon the overall needs of the community and consistent with the market analysis. Homeownership opportunities must provide attractive choices and potential alternatives to homeownership opportunities in the suburbs.

EDI funding is intended to be used for the construction of new buildings and or the rehabilitation of vacant properties. The funds may NOT be used by property owners for the rehabilitation of their own, occupied properties. The use of local programs that support the rehabilitation and renovation of owner-occupied homes to complement HCP/EDI efforts is encouraged.

**2. Promote design excellence and innovation in affordable housing**

EDI will establish a standard for preliminary design – the Design Study – to help development teams integrate the meaning, value and process of good design in the new construction and rehabilitation of homes in urban settings. For purposes of the EDI, a well designed development meets the four basic criteria which form the framework of the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor*. (See Appendix B.) EDI encourages and supports upfront investment in preliminary design early in the development process. Qualified submissions may be eligible for a preliminary design grant.

**3. Partnering and transfer of cost-effective homebuilding skills to urban areas**

EDI seeks to make urban homebuilding sufficiently attractive to transfer the efficiencies and techniques which enable builders to produce low-cost, high-quality, sustainable homes to urban areas. In order to ensure the transfer of skills beyond the program, for-profit developers should work in partnership with local non-profit developers or Community Development Corporations (CDCs). Proposals for funding must be a joint effort between a for-profit builder/developer; community based non-profit builder/developer or CDC which has been previously engaged in housing development in the community, and the local government. An Architect experienced in designing housing must be an integral part of the development team while not necessarily a financial partner. **Note:** Proposals without the above-stated partnership will not be reviewed.

**4. Links to comprehensive approaches**

In order to achieve measurable impact, EDI development proposals need to be conceived within the context of a community's overall strategic plans, designed to produce significant scale to ensure impact. PHFA intends to maximize potential impact by coordinating program funding with efforts that seek to address other factors that contribute to negative urban environments (i.e., unemployment, crime, lack of green or open space, etc.)

**5. Encourage diversity of homeownership**

An important element of strengthening urban neighborhoods is reducing economic and social isolation. Each development proposal must provide for at least five percent (5%) of these homes to be Accessible. VisitAble design features should be incorporated wherever possible. All EDI development proposals must include an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan.

**6. Build mixed-income communities**

Proposals must delineate the income groups being targeted for the housing to be developed through the EDI, and must provide evidence that purchase prices will be

affordable to such populations. PHFA encourages proposals which include homeownership opportunities for persons of low and very low income within mixed income communities. While the EDI will pursue the development of affordable housing opportunities and should encourage first time homebuyers, the homes produced in EDI should enhance neighboring market-rate properties.

**7. Focus on strategic locations**

Proposals should target those areas within municipalities of a sizable population which have experienced significant depopulation while their surrounding suburban communities have experienced significant growth. EDI will favor contiguous site development plans so as to minimize “scattered site” approaches to neighborhood redevelopment efforts; thereby creating the greatest impact within the community.

**8. Develop at scale**

To have an impact on an urban area’s economic and social viability, it is necessary to achieve a scale of development sufficient to generate spontaneous reinvestment in that targeted community.

**9. Leverage PHFA funds**

To extend the impact of PHFA’s funding, support through EDI must be matched on a 1:1 basis by local applicants. Of this amount, a minimum of fifty percent of the funding must be contributed by the local government. Examples of sources for local government matching funds may include, but are not limited to, funds made available through CDBG, HOME, Act 137 and funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. **Note:** EDI funds may be used for housing development and housing related expenditures only. For example: land acquisition, infrastructure, construction costs and mortgage write-downs for qualifying buyers (at or below 115% of area median income). Development fees are NOT an eligible use of EDI funds.

**10. Ensure long-term affordability**

In order to maintain affordable operating costs, energy efficiency of housing is an important factor. Attaining an Energy Star Label on each home is mandatory. Sustainable design features must be utilized to the greatest extent possible. Following the proposed LEED for HOMES criteria is recommended.

**11. Increase net investment**

The EDI is intended to, in a small yet ambitious manner, counteract some market inefficiencies and is not intended to address the viability of public housing and HUD’s efforts to shift the costs for the operation of such public housing units. Thus, proposals which are an integral part of a HOPE VI transaction will not be considered for participation in this pilot initiative as the outcome of the EDI should be a net increase in local affordable housing investment.

## **Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI)** **Proposal Requirements**

This section outlines the specific requirements for proposals under the Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI). Proposals must be tabbed numerically with the information submitted in the same order as indicated below.

1. Overview. Complete and insert Fact Sheet (See Appendix A).
2. Narrative. A summary description of the proposed EDI development, its scope, and a comprehensive description of the need for and the expected effect of the EDI development and funding. All key features of the proposed development including specific outcomes to be achieved, and how EDI funds will make urban homeownership more attractive and affordable should be addressed.
3. Comprehensive Plan. Evidence that the site is part of an existing or proposed comprehensive municipal strategic plan, with a detailed description of the plan. The strategic plan should specify plans for economic development and include other physical or public safety improvements proposed or in place, such as sidewalks, street lights and the proximity to, or availability of, other community services and amenities such as transportation, schools, shopping areas and parks, etc.
4. Site Control. Evidence of site control, or in the alternative, evidence of the ability to acquire the proposed site in a timely manner, with a timeline for acquisition.
5. Zoning. Evidence satisfactory to PHFA that the proposed development complies with zoning ordinances and local land development plans.
6. Financial Plan. A detailed plan to leverage resources for the development, a list of the sources of matching and/or leveraging funds including percentage of funding support and degree of municipal participation and the status of the funding availability (requested/committed). Letters evidencing commitment of financing from all funding sources must be included
7. Location Map. A map of the site and neighborhood identifying any proposed municipal improvements or private development not part of the EDI proposal. The map of the area and neighborhood should identify any privately or publicly owned subsidized developments or other developments with PHFA involvement.
8. Architectural Drawings. (See item 17, Design Study)
9. Photos: Existing Conditions Documentation. (See item 17, Design Study)
10. Timeline. The proposal must show an overall time-line to completion and occupancy for the proposed development, including but not limited to: budgets, access to matching or leveraging funds, site control, bidding (if anticipated) and contracting, construction schedule and all other efforts that will be offered or undertaken in support of the applicant and the proposed EDI development.
11. Neighborhood Impact. A narrative on the impact the proposed EDI development will have on the neighborhood and any residential occupants including any plans that may be necessary for relocation.

12. Appraisal. An appraisal of the property to be included in the proposed development.
13. Market Study. A market study, prepared by an independent, experienced market analyst, applicable for the development proposal showing the EDI development as complementing or part of a comprehensive municipal plan that would include other physical improvements either existing or proposed for the neighborhood. The market study must also include:
  - 13.1. An analysis of the local housing market comparing home prices and amenities to the expected sales prices and amenities (such as number of rooms, bedrooms, and baths, square footage of living space, garage/carport, porches, yard, appliances, heating and air conditioning, etc.) of the new EDI homes;
  - 13.2. A narrative analysis by the appraiser regarding the marketability of the EDI homes;
  - 13.3. An as-built estimation of cost of home.
  - 13.4. Supplemental data showing the area to be “disinvested”, such as number and percentages of: vacant homes or lots, homes in disrepair, homeowners to renters, absentee landlords and other pertinent information in support of this designation.
14. Sales Prices. Proposed sales prices for the new homes and delineation of the income group(s) being targeted for purchase of the homes. Provide evidence that the proposed sales prices will be affordable to such population. The market study should reflect the targeted group(s).
15. Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. A narrative statement describing how the housing units will be marketed to ensure fair housing and equal opportunity.
16. Prior Experience. A description of any previous experiences in the community, for the developer, the non-profit or CDC, etc.
17. Design Study. The goal of the Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI) is to promote design excellence and innovation in affordable housing. A design team comprised of the Architect, Developer, and Contractor must collaborate on the Design Study. EDI requires the submission of a Design Study, prepared by the design team, demonstrating how the proposed development meets user needs, understands and responds to its context, enhances its neighborhood and is built to last. The design team must utilize the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* tools in preparing the study, which must include the following: (See Appendix B for further description of each).
  - 17.1 General Approach to Design Excellence, Narrative.
  - 17.2 Photos: Existing Conditions Documentation.
  - 17.3 Architectural Drawings and Specifications.
  - 17.4 Design Advisor Steps for Design Quality from Project Book.
  - 17.5 Design Advisor Design Considerations Checklist Narrative.

- 17.6 Principles for Sustainability/Energy Efficiency and VisitAbility/ Accessibility/ Adaptability Narrative.
- 17.7 Design Study Submissions Checklist.
- 17.8 Design Advisor Certification.

## **Decision Factors, Processing and General Information**

Funding decisions will be based upon the Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI) goals enumerated in the program description and the criteria set forth within this Request For Proposals. For purposes of the EDI, a well designed development meets the four basic criteria of the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* ([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)).

While PHFA recognizes that not all design considerations can or should be incorporated into a single development, the Agency will expect proposal teams to address as many as possible and use the *Design Advisor Design Considerations Checklist* as part of the narrative report review process.

Although all criteria must be addressed and all will be evaluated, priority will be given to those proposals that evidence excellence in design, demonstrate a high degree of community support, and leveraging funds. Proposals that evidence contiguous site development plans; demonstrate a substantial positive overall effect on the neighborhood/community; build upon the existing network of community organizations, programs and services; build mixed-income communities, are sustainable, accessible, VisitAble, cost effective and/or are evaluated to be a vital part of a comprehensive economic development plan will also be considered more favorably.

Other significant factors are site control and financial commitments. Those developments exhibiting the greatest degree of site control and firm commitment of leveraging funds will be viewed as being most ready to proceed and therefore, receive favorable consideration in the competitive evaluation process. PHFA encourages and will favorably consider proposals providing housing opportunities to persons of low or lower income as part of a mixed income proposal. PHFA strives to achieve geographic distribution in its funding decisions.

Additionally, consideration will be given to the experience and previous success of the partners' prior developments. PHFA recognizes that in some areas of the Commonwealth, due to the lack of experienced non-profit partners, home builders may have to partner with less experienced non-profit partners. Although a local non-profit builder/developer is preferred, if no acceptable entity exists within the municipality or local area, consideration will be given to an experienced non-profit builder/development partner from outside the immediate area. It is incumbent upon the development partners to show, to the satisfaction of PHFA, that no local non-profit builder/developer is available.

Once a proposal has been submitted, and until the development has been completed, developers must immediately report in writing to PHFA any material changes in ownership, staffing or financial condition of the developer or ownership entity. Proposals not in concert with the Proposal Requirements may be considered ineligible.

PHFA staff will schedule a meeting with each developer and their team to be held at the site. In this meeting the Development Team will have the opportunity to more fully describe the design and how it will enhance the community.

### **Loan Repayment**

PHFA funding through the Excellence in Design Initiative is a loan. However, in order to allow communities to sustain the renewal efforts, PHFA will not require repayment of EDI funds as homes are sold or re-sold. Repayment of this loan, as set forth in the PHFA Note and Loan Agreement, may be deferred for up to thirty years (unless there is an uncured event of default). This loan will be secured by dedicating ten percent of the EDI funds allocated to each development proposal to the purchase of an investment security. The investment security will be a zero coupon investment in a direct U.S. Treasury, government agency, or rated corporate security, selected and wholly owned by PHFA. An amount equal to ten percent of the EDI funding requested should be budgeted for the purchase of the repayment security.

### **Home Purchase Mortgage Financing**

The use of PHFA mortgage loan products through the participating lender network is encouraged. Working through this network will provide below market rate end mortgages to those purchasing HCP developed properties.

### **Recapture of Funding Award by PHFA**

Developers must provide evidence of substantial progress to ensure development feasibility within 12 months of the date of the EDI funding reservation. PHFA retains the right to recapture any funds provided or terminate any commitment or funding reservation in the event of material deviations from the projected timeframes.

### **Mandatory EDI Pre-Development Information Seminar**

PHFA will conduct two pre-development information seminars for prospective EDI participants. The seminars will be held at the Agency's offices located at 211 N. Front Street in Harrisburg on **Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday, December 1, 2006** from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The Architect and other members of the Design Team must attend one of the seminars. Attendance is **mandatory**, and registration is **required**. **NO** proposals will be accepted from entities other than those who have attended. To register for the seminar, contact Jennifer Gerace in the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy via e-mail at [jgerace@phfa.org](mailto:jgerace@phfa.org).

## **Proposal Submission Process**

All proposals must be in three-ring binders, indexed and each section must be tabbed. Submit four (4) complete “hard” copies of the EDI development proposal, in three-ring binders, and a **complete** electronic copy of the proposal; including digital photographs, floor plans, area maps, etc. to: **Robert F. Bobincheck, Director – Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, 211 North Front St., P.O. Box 8029, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8029 (zip code for express deliveries is 17101).**

All electronic files should be submitted on CD or DVD. The format for all electronic files should be Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel. Pictures must be in a jpg or gif format and optimized to a size of less than 50 kb. Most digital cameras automatically save images at 640 x 480 pixels or greater resulting in a very large file size and image. Please reduce (CROP/OPTIMIZE) the image by at least 50% (320 x 240 pixels or less). We may accept up to 100 kb if the image has a great amount of detail. **Note:** To avoid loss of detail, set the resolution to the highest setting when you crop the picture. Publisher or any digital camera image viewing software will NOT be accepted. **DO NOT PASSWORD PROTECT ANY OF THE FILES CONTAINED IN THE ELECTRONIC COPY OF YOUR APPLICATION.**

All proposals and supporting materials will become the property of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. PHFA reserves the right to amend or modify this program at any time and may determine to discontinue this program at any time. All costs associated with this proposal/application will be the responsibility of the applicant.

Questions regarding the program may be submitted to Robert F. Bobincheck, Director – Office of Strategic Planning and Policy, in writing, via mail - 211 N. Front St., P.O. Box 8029, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8029, fax– 717.780.1865 or e-mail at [bbobincheck@phfa.org](mailto:bbobincheck@phfa.org).

**All proposals and supporting documentation must be received by PHFA no later than 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2007.**

**APPENDIX A**  
**Homeownership Choice Programs**  
**Excellence in Design Initiative**  
**Fact Sheet**

**(Please note:** All information provided in this fact sheet will be the final information used during the funding decision process.)

**1. Development Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Amount of EDI funding requested**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Total development cost**

\_\_\_\_\_

Total development cost per home

\_\_\_\_\_

PHFA funding per home

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Total number of homes** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of new construction homes** \_\_\_\_\_

• two bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath \_\_\_\_\_

• three bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath \_\_\_\_\_

• four bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath \_\_\_\_\_

**Number VisitAble** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number Accessible** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of rehabilitated homes** \_\_\_\_\_

• two bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath \_\_\_\_\_

- three bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath\_\_\_\_\_
- four bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ bath\_\_\_\_\_
- **Number VisitAble** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number Accessible**\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Average square footage**

- two bedroom \_\_\_\_\_
- three bedroom \_\_\_\_\_
- four bedroom \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Any additional amenities:**

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**8. Sales prices**

- two bedroom \_\_\_\_\_
- three bedroom \_\_\_\_\_
- four bedroom \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Property address(es) with zip code and census tract numbers**

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**10. City Council representative and district number** (if applicable) (name, address, phone and e-mail)

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**11. State House Representative and district number** (name, address, phone and e-mail)

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**12. State Senator and district number** (name, address, phone and e-mail)

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**13. United States Congressional Representative and district number** (name, address, phone and e-mail)

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**14. Development Team Contact Information** (name, address, phone and e-mail)

For-profit partner: \_\_\_\_\_

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e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Non-profit partner: \_\_\_\_\_

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e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Municipal entity: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail\_\_\_\_\_

Architect:  
(consultant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail\_\_\_\_\_

Market Study:  
(consultant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail\_\_\_\_\_

**15. If awarded funding, please list the legal name of the entity (and contact information) in which the preliminary reservation of funding would be listed and loan documents should be prepared.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 16. Provide brief narrative describing how the proposal will impact the community and the number of jobs expected to be generated through the construction and permanent operation of the project.**

**Please attach additional pages as required.**

## APPENDIX B

### Homeownership Choice Programs Excellence in Design Initiative PILOT Design Study Submission Requirements

The goal of the Excellence in Design Initiative (EDI) is to promote design excellence and innovation in affordable housing. EDI requires the submission of a Design Study, prepared by a design team, demonstrating how the proposed project meets user needs, understands and responds to its context, enhances its neighborhood and is built to last.

PHFA will use the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* ([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)) as the basis for its Excellence in Design Initiative and as the underpinning for the Design Study. The Design Study is intended to establish a standard for preliminary design that will allow development teams to integrate the meaning, value and process of quality design in the development of affordable housing. The Design Study can also be used to help focus community participation in the design process as well as help guide decision-making during the critical early phases of the design process.

Appendix B provides guidance on what is expected from the Design Study, how to use the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* ([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)) as part of the process, and, more specifically, *what to do* and *what to submit*. The purpose of the Design Study is threefold:

1. To provide design guidance to development teams;
2. To indicate the type and level of documentation that development teams must submit;  
and
3. To systematize and streamline PHFA review.

#### The Affordable Housing Design Advisor

The *Design Advisor* is a web-based tool created with funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The purpose of the tool is to provide community development organizations with straightforward, easy-to-use guidance on how to achieve cost-effective design excellence in their affordable housing developments. It provides a wealth of information, including detailed case studies of more than 100 successful affordable housing developments, on what good design is, why it is valuable, and how community organizations can achieve design excellence in their own developments. The *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* can be found on the web at [www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)

#### Creating the Design Study Utilizing the Design Advisor Project Book

All EDI applicants are required to utilize the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor*, paying special attention to the Project Book, 20 Steps to Design Quality, and Design Considerations Checklist

and certify that they have read and understand the design process and parameters set forth in the document. The Design Study is not about simply going through a process. Rather, the purpose of the Design Study is to utilize the Design Advisor process to influence and improve your design. Therefore, private/nonprofit developers, together with the architect and other members of the design team, should work collaboratively to use the Design Advisor in preparing the submission of the Design Study.

The Project Book is the key document you will use when making your submissions to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA). It contains print versions of each of the 20 Steps to Design Quality, together with all the forms and checklists that need to be filled out to complete each step. The 20 Steps to Design Quality are what you are required to do as a part of the EDI Design Study; the worksheets and narratives are what you are required to submit. Both can be found in the Project Book.

**NOTE:** While all the steps in the Project Book are important for achieving a well-designed development, PHFA will place particular emphasis on those that are most relevant to the proposal submission process: Steps 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13. It is strongly suggested that the remaining steps also be reviewed and their guidance incorporated into any project as it moves forward.

The Design Advisor website is the key resource you will use when preparing your Project Book. It contains electronic versions of each of the 20 Steps to Design Quality, together with a wealth of additional information and resources on the value of good design and how to incorporate it into affordable housing developments.

The following pages describe the information to be submitted as part of the Design Study for a proposal for the EDI. Please note that the process is divided into two sections: *What you need to do* and *What you need to submit*. The “To Do” sections describe various steps you need to complete as part of the overall process. The “To Submit” sections describe the forms, checklists, drawings and/or narratives you must provide in order to verify that you have completed the required steps.

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO DO**

### **Step 1. Start the Project Book.**

- Find the Project Book.
  - Go to the Design Advisor home page on the web – [www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)
  - Click on the Steps tab.
  - From left hand navigation bar on the Steps home page, click on Step 1. Start Project Book.
  - On the Step 1 page, find the yellow, right-hand navigation bar and click on the “Project Book (Complete)” heading. This will launch a .pdf file and you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to read it. (If you don’t have the Reader, go to [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) to download a free copy.)

- Print the Project Book.
  - Be patient. The document is over 100 pages long.
  - Once the download is complete, you can print the Project Book immediately or save it and print it later.
- Review the Project Book
  - Since the Project Book will form the core of your Design Study submission to PHFA, familiarize yourself with the document at the very beginning of the submission process.
  - Budget roughly two hours to get a good working knowledge of the Project Book – its basic content and organization.

## **Step 2. Review Advisor Resources**

- Visit the Design Advisor website – [www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org) - and familiarize yourself with the tool.
  - Begin with the *Quick Guide to Using the Site*, which can be found on the home page. This will give you an overview of what’s contained in the site and how it’s organized.
  - Review the *What* and *Why* sections for a definition of ‘good design’ and a discussion of its role in affordable housing.
  - Visit the *Gallery* where over 100 examples of well-designed affordable housing developments from across the country are displayed, including a special section on “green affordable” design.
  - Browse the *Design Considerations Checklist*, where over 60 key design issues – from parking security to building height to landscaping – are discussed.
  - Finally, review the *20 Steps to Design Quality*. These steps will form the basis of your submissions to PHFA.
- Be patient. There’s a lot of information on the site, and it may seem a little overwhelming at first. However, after spending a little time with the tool you’ll find that it’s very well organized and relatively easy to navigate and use.
- Budget a minimum of two hours to get a good working familiarity with the Design Advisor. After that, you should be able to find what you need, when you need it, with relatively little difficulty.

## **Step 5. Establish Design Goals for Occupants**

- Review Step 5.
  - Analyze comparable developments.
  - Assemble relevant guidelines.
  - Click on and review the Activity-Based Design Overview.
  - Consult the other resources listed on the page.
- Review and fill out (in the Project Book) the User Activity Checklist. Use the filled out example as a guide.
- Complete the Short Statement of Resident-Related Design Goals at the end of the Checklist. Be sure to document your process for getting user input.

### **Step 6. Establish Design Goals for the Community**

- Review Step 6.
- Review and fill out (in the Project Book) the Neighborhood Context Analysis Worksheet. Use the filled out example as a guide.
- Complete the Short Statement of Community-Related Design Goals at the end of the Checklist. Be sure to document your process for getting community input.

### **Step 7. Test the Site**

- Review Step 7. Click on and review the Dwelling Types Overview.
- Review and fill out (in the Project Book) the Access to Services Checklist. Use the filled out example as a guide.
- Review the Site Suitability Test discussion and example, then conduct and document a suitability test for your own site.

### **Step 10. Develop 3 Alternative Site Plan Concepts**

- Review Step 10. Click on and review the Dwelling Types Overview.
- Create a minimum of three distinct alternative site plan concepts for your development.
  - The plans do not need to be elaborate, but they should explore alternative building types together with alternative parking and open space layouts.
  - The goal is to make sure that the final site plan is the best possible for the development.
- Document the process
  - Assemble drawings or sketches for your alternative site plan concepts.
  - Develop a short narrative (1 typed page maximum) describing each concept and explaining how you arrived at your final selection.

### **Step 11. Use the Design Considerations Checklist**

- Review Step 11. Access and review the Design Considerations Checklist. Analyze the case study examples included for each “design consideration.” **Note:** To reach the web version of the Checklist, click on the ‘Checklist’ tab on the top navigation bar.
- Provide a brief narrative describing how the proposed development will achieve design excellence in each of the nine main categories of design considerations: parking, public open space, private open space, landscaping, building location, building shape, building appearance, building layout, and unit layout.

### **Step 13. Identify and Prioritize Key Design Components**

- Review Step 13
  - Click on and review the Prioritized List of Key Design Components form.
- Fill in the Key Design Components form.
  - Prioritize the list of key components in terms of their impact on meeting user needs, responding to the surrounding context and enhancing the overall neighborhood.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO SUBMIT

### Design Study Submission Requirements

1. **General Approach to Design Excellence, Narrative** Provide a brief narrative describing your approach to design excellence and innovation for the proposed project. Describe the general approach to Design Excellence and how it was accomplished, then discuss how the results of process have influenced and been incorporated into the design proposed.
2. **Photos: Existing Conditions Documentation** Digital photographs of existing conditions including the proposed site, contiguous sites, surrounding area and neighborhood.
3. **Architectural Drawings and Specifications** Design products that delineate how the team has addressed design considerations in the form of plans, elevations, and/or perspective renderings. (Full architectural drawings are not required at the time of application.)
  - 3.1. Site and floor plans including existing context
  - 3.2. Elevations and/or perspective renderings including existing context
  - 3.3. Outline specifications of the proposed dwellings.
4. **Design Advisor Steps for Design Quality from the Project Book** Review Steps 1 and 2. Submit completed worksheets/narratives for Steps 5, 6, 7, 10 and 13.

#### **Step 5. Establish Design Goals for Occupants**

- User Activity Checklist (Worksheet)
- Resident-Related Goals (Worksheet Narrative)

#### **Step 6. Establish Design Goals for the Community**

- Neighborhood Context Analysis (Worksheet)
- Community-Related Design Goals (Worksheet Narrative)

#### **Step 7. Test the Site**

- Access to Services Checklist (Worksheet)
- Site Suitability Test (Narrative and sketches corresponding to the A through L outline found in the Project Book)

#### **Step 10. Develop 3 Alternative Site Plan Concepts**

- Three Alternative Site Plan Concepts (Narrative and sketches illustrating alternatives and a narrative explaining why your final choice was selected.)

#### **Step 13. Identify and Prioritize Key Design Components**

- Prioritized List of Key Design Components (Step 13, Worksheet)

5. **Design Advisor Design Considerations Checklist, Narrative (Step 11.)**

Provide a narrative addressing how the proposed development will achieve design excellence in each of the nine main categories of design considerations: parking, public

open space, private open space, landscaping, building location, building shape, building appearance, building layout, and unit layout.

In preparing this section, pay close attention to the individual design considerations listed under each category (**e.g.** “Overall Impact,” “Access and Surveillance,” “Vehicle/Pedestrian Interaction” etc. for the Parking category).

Indicate how the team addresses these considerations in their designs. While PHFA recognizes that not all considerations can, or should, be incorporated into a single development, it will expect proposing teams to address as many as possible and will use a checklist based on the *Design Advisor* Design Considerations criteria as part of the EDI review process. This checklist may be viewed at PHFA’s website ([www.phfa.org](http://www.phfa.org)).

6. **Principles for Sustainability/Energy Efficiency and VisitAbility/Accessibility /Adaptability Narrative** Describe how principles for sustainability, energy efficiency, VisitAbility (5% of units required) adaptability and accessibility (5% of units required) will be applied to the design of the site and units.
7. **Design Study Submissions Checklist** Applicants are required to provide verification of submission materials for the Design Study (Appendix C.)
8. **Certification** Applicants are required to utilize the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor*, paying special attention to the Project Book, 20 Steps to Design Quality, and Design Considerations Checklist. Certification that the team has read and understands the design process and parameters set forth in the document must be submitted. (Appendix D).

## APPENDIX C

### Homeownership Choice Programs Excellence in Design Initiative PILOT

### Design Study Submission Checklist

We are submitting the following items of the Design Study in support of our EDI proposal:

- \_\_\_ 1. General Approach to Design Excellence, Narrative (*Narrative Report*)
- \_\_\_ 2. Photos: Existing Conditions, Documentation
- \_\_\_ 3. Architectural Drawings and Specifications
  - \_\_\_ 3.1. Site and floor plans including existing context
  - \_\_\_ 3.2. Elevations and/or perspective renderings including existing context
  - \_\_\_ 3.3. Outline specifications of the proposed dwellings
- \_\_\_ 4. Design Advisor Steps for Design Quality from the Project Book
  - \_\_\_ 4.1. User Activity Checklist (Step 5, Worksheet)
  - \_\_\_ 4.2. Short Statement of Resident-Related Goals (Step 5, Worksheet Narrative)
  - \_\_\_ 4.3. Neighborhood Context Analysis Worksheet (Step 6, Worksheet)
  - \_\_\_ 4.4. Short Statement of Community-Related Design Goals (Step 6, Worksheet)
  - \_\_\_ 4.5. Access to Services Checklist (Step 7, Worksheet)
  - \_\_\_ 4.6. Site Suitability Test (Step 7, Narrative and sketches, A through L outline found in Book)
  - \_\_\_ 4.7. Three Alternative Site Plan Concepts (Step 10, Narrative and sketches illustrating alternatives and a narrative explaining why your final choice was selected.)
  - \_\_\_ 4.8. Prioritized List of Key Design Components (Step 13, Worksheet )
- \_\_\_ 5. Design Advisor Design Considerations Checklist, Narrative (Step 11, *Narrative Report*)
- \_\_\_ 6. Principles for Sustainability/Energy Efficiency and VisitAbility/Accessibility/Adaptability, Narrative
- \_\_\_ 7. Design Study Submissions Checklist (Appendix C)
- \_\_\_ 8. Certification (Appendix D)

## APPENDIX D

### **Homeownership Choice Programs Excellence in Design Initiative PILOT**

### **Design Advisor Certification**

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that I have visited the Affordable Housing Design Advisor webpage ([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)) and have thoroughly reviewed and understand their “Design Considerations Checklist” and “Project Book” and have incorporated, to the greatest extent possible, their tenets and recommendations into this submission.

Private Developer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Nonprofit Developer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Architect: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_