
Community Development Analysis

One of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston's goals is to encourage the development of efficient, integrated communities that include a mixture of land uses and diverse housing types that serve people of all economic levels, cultures, and age groups. The following is a list of questions designed to inform local housing-development decisions.

1. Describe how the development responds to the particular needs of the community and its residents. Describe any social services that will be available to residents of the housing and specify those residents who will receive the services.
2. Describe any plans to retain the housing as affordable over time. Describe the time period for which the housing will remain affordable and any legal mechanisms to preserve it as such.
3. Is the development part of a mixed-use community? List the shopping, cultural, recreational, educational, and health resources available within walking distance (1/2 mile) of the proposed housing. List the employment opportunities available within walking distance of the proposed housing.
4. Does the development reuse existing buildings, formerly developed, or formerly contaminated land? If so, describe.
5. Will mass transportation or other transportation services be available to the residents of the development? If so, describe the type of transit available and the distance from the proposed housing development. Does the development allow for reduced parking ratios? Is the development designed to encourage walking, cycling and other alternatives to driving?
6. Does the development create or maintain green spaces? Does the development avoid fragmenting existing green space, especially natural habitats and forests? Does the development avoid converting working lands, such as farms, into development?
7. Does the development design avoid increasing the risk or negative impact of natural disasters?
8. Does the development design protect the natural watershed? Describe the treatment of waste and ground water.
9. Does the development use compact design to minimize the amount of land per dwelling unit? Describe the density of the development in housing units per acre.
10. Describe the energy-efficient elements of the development, including landscaping, and any energy-efficient ratings being sought. Describe any evaluations of capital, operational, and maintenance costs that have been done. Describe any waste-management and recycling plan for construction and occupancy. Describe any measures to mitigate potential housing-related health issues. Describe the "green building" experience of the development team.
11. Does the housing have high-speed Internet capabilities? If so, what will be the cost to the residents?
12. Describe how the design complements the environmental setting and the surrounding area's architectural features. Describe how the development enhances the desirability of the area within which it is built.
13. Describe how the development is built to last.
14. Describe any distinctive features of the design that will make the development a source of pride.