

## City wants green Northside homes

Written by

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City of Minneapolis calls for proposals by developers to build 100 "green" homes in North Minneapolis;

\$3 million in construction loans and grants available

A new housing program, called Green Homes North, will build sustainable homes to green standards using local minority and women contractors, workers, and locally-sourced green products. The program will target areas of North Minneapolis where, according to program official, neighborhood stabilization is most needed. Proposals are due by Aug. 15.

The city is seeking proposals from developers to construct 100 "green" homes on city-owned vacant lots in North Minneapolis in the next five years.

"A green home is an economical home which means more money in your pocket each month, making home ownership sustainable," said Barbara A. Johnson, 4th Ward Council President. "The initiative is yet another great partnership with the development community that is bringing new energy and investment in North Minneapolis."

Officials say proposals that minimize the use of the subsidy and provide the highest standards of quality design, energy efficiency and overall sustainability will be prioritized in the selection process. Proposals will be reviewed by a design committee and by the neighborhood where the property is located.

"Green Homes North is the next step in the city's aggressive, ongoing efforts to rebuild neighborhoods impacted by foreclosures," said Tom Streitz, City of Minneapolis Director of Housing Policy and Development. "We are seeing great progress in restoring our housing market in the city of Minneapolis as evidenced by the recent increases in home sale prices in the city and this will help build on that trend."

Funding from the city, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and the Family Housing Fund, will provide \$1 million in grants and up to \$2 million in loans to private and non-profit developers with demonstrated new-home construction knowledge and experience.

"We have built green homes with our partners in North Minneapolis, and they have been a huge success, so now we're taking that experiment to scale," said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. "Green Homes North will provide another boost of confidence for the housing market, the building trades and the neighborhood."

Program funds will assist developers with development gap financing, a grant to cover the difference between the fair market value sales price and the total development cost. Interim construction financing will come in the form of a loan to the developer. Terms will be based on the funding provided to the project.

Homes will be built in targeted areas of development where there is existing city and partners' investment or blocks with several vacant lots to be developed. Existing incentive programs will assist in bringing new homebuyers to this market. Buyer income restrictions will apply.

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Officials say the city encourages local workforce hiring and the use of local, minority and women contractors and businesses to participate in the construction of these homes. Minneapolis Employment and Training Program (METP) will provide free training and job placement services through its RENEW Minneapolis- Green Homes North program that focuses on green construction skills.

To learn more about Green Homes North and the City's foreclosure recovery plan, visit [www.minneapolismn.gov/foreclosure/foreclosure\\_citys\\_foreclosure\\_recovery\\_plan](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/foreclosure/foreclosure_citys_foreclosure_recovery_plan)