

Status Update: 2018 Fair Housing Workgroup Recommendations

December 2023

About the Status Update: 2018 Fair Housing Workgroup Recommendations

Context

In 2017, the Fair Housing Workgroup was formed. In 2018, the Fair Housing Workgroup delivered a recommendation report to the City Council.

The 2018 Fair Housing Workgroup recommendation report can be found at:

<https://stpaul.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6198817&GUID=D371B2C9-7CE5-484B-BDD0-251C8FD44BD5>

How the status update report was compiled

This status report was compiled throughout 2023 by the Fair Housing Coordinator with input and partnership from staff in the Planning and Economic Development Department (PED), Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI), Human Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (HREEO), and Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE).

What's next?

HUD will be releasing guidance on the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule, which currently includes the development of fair housing equity plans. It is likely any next action items related to the City's fair housing activities may be included in that HUD-required fair housing equity plan. HUD guidance is expected by mid-year 2024.

Questions

For questions, contact Faith Dietz, Fair Housing Coordinator, Office of Financial Empowerment, City of Saint Paul at faith.dietz@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-266-8890.

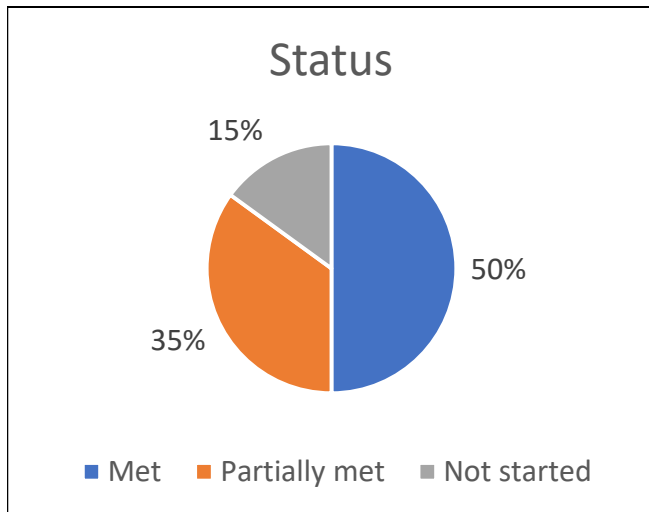
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Summary Status Update: 2018 Fair Housing Workgroup Recommendations

Top-line takeaways

- Significant action and progress was made on the 2018 Fair Housing recommendations from 2019-2023, with the City taking action on 17/20 (85%) of the 2018 recommendations (see pages 3-6)
- The City has implemented additional activities above and beyond the 2018 recommendations to affirmatively further fair housing (see page 7)



- Met: 10/20 = 50%
- Partially met: 7/20 = 35%
- Not started: 3/20 = 15%

Definitions

Met = Completed the recommendation as outlined in the 2018 recommendation report, further actions could still be ongoing.

Partially Met = Some parts of the recommendations were completed; further actions could be ongoing.

Not started = No parts of the recommendations were started; further action could happen.

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Detailed Status Update: 2018 Fair Housing Workgroup Recommendations

	2018 Recommendation	Progress status as of 2023	Current status	Future considerations
<i>Preservation and Production of Affordable Housing</i>				
1	NOAH Preservation	Met, and on-going	NOAH analysis conducted in 2019	NOAH analysis completed and NOAH Loan Fund approved with \$3M allocation by the HRA in 2023
2	4d Preservation of Affordable Housing	Met, and ongoing	4(d) program launched – 3,004 units preserved via 4d to date	Annual support / funding to administer program
3	Monitor Effectiveness of Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program and Suggest adjustments as Needed	Partially met, and ongoing	Funds are available for rehabilitation	Revisions to the program, including alignment with 4(d) Program, approved by the HRA in 2023
4	Expand Access to Housing Choice Voucher Program	Not started	Did not advance this activity (PHA may have done it on their own)	Consider collaboration with Saint Paul Public Housing Authority (PHA) or other partners
5	Research and Support Alternative Affordable Homeownership Options	Met, and ongoing	Community Land Trust RFP for HRA owned properties released in 2020, 2 projects completed, 8 underway.	Second RFP planned for 2024
<i>Displacement Prevention</i>				
6	Tenant Protections	Partially met	Tenant Protections – passed in 2020 then repealed in 2021	Explore future of tenant protections considering other policy changes since the repeal
7	Gentrification & Displacement	Partially met	Anti-displacement study launched	In progress – PED is finalizing the study
8	DSI Fire Certificate of Occupancy Program and Housing Equity	Met, and ongoing	Property inspection reports are online and can be accessed by searching the property address	New software will change how these are viewed Will keep in mind other tools within new software that would be beneficial for renters
9		Met, and ongoing	Certificate of Occupancy (CofO) map that notes grades of properties	With new software, explore other information which would be helpful to include on this map

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<i>Displacement Prevention continued</i>				
10		Met, and ongoing	DSI's process is added to the Early Notification System (ENS) ENS reviewed by tenant legal advocates at Southern Minnesota Regional Law Services (SMRLS) & HomeLine for follow up	As above, new software will change how this occurs but same/similar functionality will remain
11	Commercial Vitality Zone	Met, and ongoing	Consistent Investments made since 2015	
Enforcement and Education				
12	Expanding HREEO's Fair Housing Program	Partially met, and ongoing	HREEO the only HUD-designated Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) in the State. HREEO investigates fair housing complaints on behalf of HUD; staff turnover at 35% in 2022 and only 15% in 2023. Capacity was impacted. Now, investigation team is in place and maximizing outreach and engagement efforts.	Further collaboration with departments (HREEO, DSI, OFE, PED) is in pre-planning stage to bolster fair housing education
13	Landlord 101 trainings	Met, and ongoing	Landlord 101 trainings were on hold during COVID; resumed in Fall 2023 by DSI. Fair Housing information is included in trainings.	Continue Landlord 101 trainings

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Infrastructure to Support Implementation				
14	Engage renters, landlords, housing partners and other stakeholders for input and advice via public meetings and regular consultations	Partially met, and ongoing	Previous trainings and outreach (pre-COVID) were well attended in partnership with council members and their wards.	<p>Opportunities for new connections with tenants, community events, and other partners.</p> <p>Create presentations, brochures, flyers for trainings and outreach/education opportunities</p>
15	Community Engagement	Partially met, and ongoing	HREEO has radically redefined outreach and engagement in the Department. They have also created a Know Your Rights (KYR) presentation and have been delivering trainings in 2023. In 2022, HREEO did a total of 4 outreach and engagement events. In 2023, they have done 35 events with 12 KYR and 23 tabling events. HREEO has also been deliberate in reaching out to housing-specific rights organizations to make intros.	Further opportunities to be explored. Currently developing a Housing specific KYR PPT. HREEO has a \$20K engagement grant from HUD that they will look to award in 2024 to a local organization to do Fair Housing outreach.
16	Fair Housing Overview for policy makers	Partially met, and ongoing	<p>Fair housing updates provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/7/2019 – Workgroup Report Update • 4/14/2021 – Fair Housing Month Update • 4/12/2023 – Fair Housing Month Update <p>Did not conduct deep education on disparate impact and AFFH.*</p>	<p>Continue to provide updates to policymakers; consider deepening education on disparate impact and affirmatively furthering fair housing for policymakers</p> <p>*Affirmatively furthering fair housing</p>

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	Infrastructure to Support Implementation continued			
17	Formation of fair housing taskforce (internal and community stakeholders)	Not started	Did not advance recommendation	Consider future configuration of a fair housing taskforce
18	Hire fair housing coordinator	Met, and ongoing	Initial recommendation was for a Fair Housing Implementation Manager	Continue work of Fair Housing Coordinator
19	Further Fair Housing Goals	Met, and ongoing	Saint Paul is represented on the Fair Housing Implementation Council	Keep in Mind: Updated 2015 AFFH rule and Equity Plan requirements
20	Saint Paul Fair Housing Website	Not started	Did not advance recommendation; a fair housing portal was scoped but pandemic impacted moving forward	Initial capacity pre-planning for a fair housing web portal started again in 2023; currently scoping

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Additional activities to affirmatively further fair housing

In addition to the recommendations outlined above, City staff added 8 additional activities/strategies that were not in the 2018 recommendations to affirmatively further fair housing:

Actions	Department
30% AMI Deeply Affordable Housing Fund	PED
Inheritance Fund	PED
Families First Housing pilot	PED
Housing Trust Fund for Downpayment Assistance and Land Trust Financing	PED
Rent Stabilization	DSI
Just Deeds	CAO
Returning Home Saint Paul	OFE
Twin Cities Regional Fair Housing Implementation Council	OFE/PED

Descriptions of additional actions to affirmatively furthering fair housing

- **Twin Cities Regional Fair Housing Implementation Council** – an active participant and leading entity in guiding the 2020/21 Regional Analysis of Impediments
- **30% AMI Deeply Affordable Housing Fund** – Utilizing American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, the City in partnership with Ramsey County established a \$74 million fund with the purpose of increasing the supply of housing affordable to those at or below 30% of the Area Median Income.
- **Housing Trust Fund for Downpayment Assistance and Land Trust Financing** – expands options for affordable and perpetually affordable homeownership
- **Families First Housing pilot** – provides a rent supplement and ongoing services to families connected with the Saint Paul Public Schools
- **Returning Home Saint Paul** – supports residents with criminal histories secure rental housing by providing a landlord risk mitigation fund and renter supports through a city-community partnership
- **Inheritance Fund** – families from the redlined, historic Saint Paul Rondo Neighborhood can rebuild wealth through fully forgivable financing towards homeownership or home renovations
- **Rent Stabilization** – a resident-driven ballot initiative to advance a rent stabilization ordinance for Saint Paul renters, major amendments by Council in 2022 for a 1/1/23 implementation
- **Just Deeds** – City of St Paul and joined the Just Deeds coalition. The City is committed to assisting property owners in removing racial covenants from their deeds in partnership with Mitchell Hamline Law School’s Center for the Study of Black Life and the Law