

CITY OF BILLINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Affirmative Marketing Plan

Statement of Policy: In accordance with the Affirmative Marketing Regulation of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s HOME Investment Partnership program (24 CFR Part 92.351) and in furtherance of the City’s commitment to non-discrimination and equal opportunity in housing, the City has established the following procedures to affirmatively market units assisted under the City’s Affordable Housing Development program. These procedures are applicable to projects consisting of five or more HOME-assisted units.

Purpose: Provide information to and otherwise attract eligible persons, especially those least likely to apply, from all racial, ethnic, and gender groups in Billings to ensure equal opportunity to housing developed through the City’s Affordable Housing Development program.

Methods for Informing the public, owners, and potential tenants about federal fair housing law and the City’s Affirmative Marketing efforts:

- Advertise in local newspaper of availability of funding opportunities for housing development.
- Provide brochures with information on HOME program activities made available in the Community Development Division’s publically accessible office and on the City’s website.
 - Information provided in brochures will be provided in accessible formats upon request.
- Provide brochures with information on HOME program activities are provided to a variety of organizations primarily serving low income, minority, and female-headed households, including:
 - Mayor’s Committee on Homelessness
 - Billings Area Resource Network
 - Housing Authority of Billings
 - Neighborhood Task Forces
- Provide fair housing information through the Community Development Divisions publically accessible office and on the City’s website.
- Coordinate fair housing education efforts city-wide, as staff resources allow.

Requirements and practices each property owner must adhere to in carrying out Affirmative Marketing procedures to inform and solicit applications from persons in the housing market area who are least likely to apply for housing opportunities without specialized outreach:

- Notify the Housing Authority of Billings about upcoming vacancies prior to utilization of other advertisement methods including posting ads, etc.
- Require a 30-day notice to vacate from tenants intending to voluntarily move from units to assure the Housing Authority of Billings can be notified of the vacancy prior to other public notification efforts.

Records required to document actions taken by the City and property owners to market units:

- The City and property owners will keep documents of all efforts to affirmatively market activities to low income households, including:
 - Date and method of notification to the Housing Authority of Billings regarding vacancies and other forms of advertisement to affirmatively market units.
- Property owners will be required to keep demographic records on race, ethnicity, gender, household income at a minimum for a period of at least five years.

Assessment of the success of affirmative marketing actions and corrective Actions:

- The City will examine records provided by property owners on a routine basis to ensure compliance with the City's Affirmative Marketing plan.
- Corrective action includes, but is not limited to:
 - Providing additional guidance regarding compliance and methods for documenting compliance.
 - Increased audit and review frequency.
 - If lesser corrective actions have not remedied the issue, the City may disqualify the property from further participation in City-funded assistance programs.

Minority & Women Outreach Program

The City of Billings - Community Development Division will oversee an outreach program to ensure inclusion and equal access opportunity in all contracts entered in to by the City in efforts to provide affordable housing, to the maximum extent possible to minorities and women. This program shall include:

- The language, "Minorities and women encouraged to apply" will be included on all program brochures.
- Annual advertisements and Requests for Proposals for contracts will include the above language.
- MBE / WBE reports shall be submitted twice annually, as required.
- The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program [website](#) for Montana will be checked for special notifications of contracting opportunities.