



August 30, 2013

N.C. Housing Finance Agency
Attn: Rental Investment
3508 Bush Street
Raleigh, NC 27609

Dear Madame/Sir:

The Town of Morrisville values the work that NCHFA does to promote affordable housing development in North Carolina and appreciates the opportunity to comment on the 2014 Qualified Allocation Plan standards. We are committed to promoting housing opportunities for a diversity of people with varying income levels, including working families.

The Town of Morrisville understands that in addition to high housing costs, transportation costs can also have a major impact on the average household budget. Many families are forced to locate farther away from their employers than they would like in order to find housing that they can afford.

As the Triangle region works to expand transit service, Morrisville is pursuing a new opportunity to pair savings from reduced transportation costs with reduced housing costs and enable working families to live closer to where they work. One way that this can be accomplished is through “transit-oriented development”, which brings housing and other land uses in close proximity to efficient and affordable transit service.

In June of 2013, the Morrisville Town Council adopted the McCrimmon Transit Small Area Plan, which describes a vision and supporting actions for promoting transit-oriented development at the site of a planned future transit station at the intersection of McCrimmon Parkway and NC 54 in Morrisville. The plan includes strong goals for incorporating workforce housing into this development. To view a copy of the plan, please [click here](#).

The current Qualified Allocation Plan point system does not reflect the value of pairing affordable housing with affordable transit. In fact, some of the criteria penalize efforts to bring the two together. As a result, we would like to provide the following comments:

- 1) **Please provide points in Section (IV)(A)(1)(b)(ii) for projects that are located within ½ a mile walking distance of an existing or planned public transit line that connects to a grocery, shopping, or pharmacy.** Access to transit can connect residents to shopping and other important services in an affordable manner.

- 2) **Please remove the site suitability penalty in (IV)(A)(1)(b)(iii) for a proposed project located close to a “high traffic corridor” or “frequently used railroad tracks” that supports current or planned transit service.** Commuter rail and light rail systems often utilize existing railroad rights-of-way in order to efficiently provide service. Housing located nearby can take advantage of this amenity. Furthermore, transit agencies often run bus routes on heavily traveled corridors in order to provide an alternative means of commuting and ease congestion. Projects should not be penalized for their proximity to transit amenities for residents.

- 3) **Please add bonus points for projects that locate housing in close proximity to transit, such as within ½ a mile walking distance.** Projects should be rewarded for combining affordable housing with affordable transportation.

Transportation is the second highest cost center in the average household budget. Implementing these recommendations will help families that locate in affordable housing to also access affordable transportation and free up financial resources to better meet other important needs. Thanks again for the chance to submit comments.

Sincerely,



Tim Gauss, AICP
Senior Director of Development Services