



2006

THE ROBERT L. WOODSON, JR., AWARD

**FOR EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP
IN REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS
TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**An Annual Award Program of the
America's Affordable Communities Initiative
U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

NOTE: APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MARCH 31, 2006!

HUD's **Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award** is an annual award program designed to acknowledge and honor those communities that are expanding affordable housing opportunities by reducing regulatory barriers. In so doing, these communities are creating an environment supportive of the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing throughout America. This award program is a component of the Department's *America's Affordable Communities Initiative: Bringing Homes Within Reach Through Regulatory Reform.*



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0001

December 12, 2005

Dear Governmental or Community Leader:

I invite you to apply for the Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award. This award is named in memory and in honor of the Department's late Chief of Staff, and is designed to recognize state and local governments that aggressively work to reduce regulatory barriers to affordable housing. Prior to coming to HUD and serving as the Department's Chief of Staff in 2002, Rob Woodson served as a senior policy advisor to President George W. Bush on housing and community development issues during the President's first presidential campaign. The award program commemorates the spirit and relentless commitment of Rob Woodson to bring homes within reach to hard-working families.

With recognition that housing affordability is an issue requiring national attention, the Department formed America's Affordable Communities Initiative (AACI) in 2003. AACI is a departmentwide effort to help communities across America identify and overcome regulatory barriers that impede the availability of affordable housing, as well as help HUD identify its own regulations that present barriers to the development of affordable housing. While many local housing development requirements were well-intentioned and even useful in their early implementation, many have become outdated and have made housing less affordable and increasingly scarce to hard-working American families across the nation. Through America's Affordable Communities Initiative, the Department has forged a strong and collaborative working relationship with state and local governments to remove barriers to affordable housing.

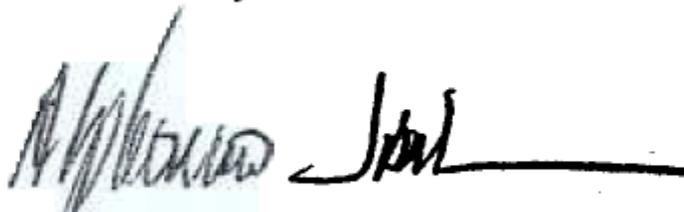
In 2004, the Department solicited nominations for the first recipients of the Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award. In June 2005, 14 communities from across the nation were honored for their outstanding leadership in reducing burdensome regulations that either increased the cost or reduced the supply of affordable housing. These 14 recipients were recognized model communities for others looking to increase affordable housing. The Department encourages other communities and the public to look at the creative ways in which these 14 award recipients reduced regulatory barriers and thereby made it easier for working families to find local affordable housing. (To learn more about the 2005 award recipients and *America's Affordable Communities Initiative*, please visit HUD's website at www.hud.gov/affordablecommunities).

In 2006, the Department again seeks to acknowledge state and local governments that have been successful in reducing regulatory barriers to affordable housing. The Department recognizes that every day, state and local governments make important decisions that affect affordable housing opportunities in their communities. I am gratified that so many of these governments support and sponsor efforts to provide affordable housing. The Department believes it is important to recognize and honor communities that have assumed a leadership role in taking a fresh look at their existing regulatory systems, and have taken the often difficult statutory and administrative steps necessary to create an environment in which affordable housing of all types - from workforce housing for teachers and civil servants to lower-income housing for those most in need - is welcome and can flourish as a community asset.

State and local governments are eligible to be nominated for this award. These governments may nominate themselves or they may be nominated by others, such as builders, developers, nonprofit organizations, national organizations, faith-based groups, and individuals for the 2006 Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award. As in 2005, the awards will be given to states, counties, towns, cities, and other municipalities that have instituted lasting, creative, institutional reforms that significantly increased the supply of affordable housing in their communities.

I look forward to learning about the extraordinary accomplishments that states and local governments have made this past year in expanding affordable housing opportunities for all American families, and honoring the next group of recipients that have brought affordable housing within reach in their communities through regulatory reform.

Sincerely,



Alphonso Jackson

Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award

A. Eligibility

Recipients of the Robert L. Woodson, Jr., Award will be selected from nominated states, counties, cities, towns, townships, and other municipalities that have significantly reduced regulatory barriers to the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families.

This national award program will recognize state and local governments that have taken a leadership role in regulatory barrier removal and will serve as national models for others. Although no monetary award will be given, recipients of the award will be nationally recognized and honored at a major ceremony during which the activities of the award recipients will be highlighted. HUD will also widely disseminate the activities of the award recipients through a variety of publications, as well as the website of HUD's America's Affordable Communities Initiative (www.hud.gov/affordablecommunities), and publication of a book of best practices that can serve as models for other communities that are working on regulatory barrier removal.

B. What is a Regulatory Barrier to Affordable Housing?

Barriers are public statutes, ordinances, regulatory requirements, fees, processes, and procedures that significantly impede the development or availability of affordable housing without providing commensurate health or safety benefits. Affordable housing is decent quality housing that America's hard-working families can buy or rent by spending no more than 30 percent of their income, which means they would not be forced to sacrifice other necessities of life. Regulatory barriers may have serious adverse impacts upon the affordable housing supply and the lives of those who need such housing.

The lack of affordable housing has multiple adverse impacts on the community at large, including the following:

- Middle-income workers, including workforce heroes, such as nurses, police officers, firefighters, teachers, and other vital employees, who often live far from the very communities they serve.
- Workers who are forced to live far from their jobs must regularly commute long distances by car, increasing congestion on roads and highways, contributing to air pollution, and resulting in significant losses in productivity.
- Low-income, minority, and disabled persons have an especially difficult time finding suitable, affordable housing alternatives near their place of employment.
- Elderly Americans – soon to include the “baby boom” generation – are increasingly unable to find affordable homes or apartments near their children or grandchildren.
- Young families just starting out in life may not be able to find appropriate housing choices in the very communities in which they were raised.

C. Nominations

Interested individuals, local or national organizations, nonprofit organizations, builders, developers, faith-based organizations, or governmental entities may submit a nomination to recognize **states or local governments** that have demonstrated extraordinary achievement in eliminating regulatory barriers to housing affordability. State and local governments may nominate themselves or other state or local governments for this award.

D. Selection Criteria

A committee formed of members of HUD's ***America's Affordable Communities Initiative Team (AACI)*** will evaluate the nominations. The AACI Team consists of senior-level HUD staff representing all major components of the Department, who have been selected for their expertise in housing issues and their knowledge of regulatory barriers. In selecting award winners, the AACI Team will consider the following factors:

1. Nature of the Regulatory Reform

1a. Scope. The breadth and scope of the reforms adopted by the nominated state, locality, or group of localities that allows increased development, construction, or rehabilitation of affordable housing. Preference will be given to efforts that involve multiple reforms as part of a larger strategy of regulatory barrier removal. Actions that assist only a limited number of projects, but fail to also address broad-based institutional and systemic barriers to the overall affordable housing supply will not qualify.

1b. Magnitude of Regulatory Barrier Addressed. Many regulatory barriers involve deep-seated economic and institutional preferences and interests. This factor will give greater preference and weight to those regulatory reforms that have the greatest impact on affordable housing availability in the nominated state or local government.

2. Impact: Demonstrated impact of the regulatory change on the cost and supply of new and rehabilitated affordable housing in the community.

3. Transferability: The degree to which the reform implemented in a community may be successfully applied throughout the nation.

4. Partnership: The degree to which public, private, and nonprofit sectors and key constituencies worked together to accomplish the regulatory reform.

5. Innovative Approaches: The degree to which the community has applied new approaches and solutions to address regulatory barriers.

E. Nomination Instructions

Deadline for Submissions: ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31, 2006 (Extended)

Applications must include the following:

- Completed checklist of materials;
- All required materials;
- Supporting documentation, as determined necessary.

Photographs of representative projects resulting from the instituted reforms are permitted, but not required. The minimum font size is 11 points.

Application packets for the 2006 award process must be postmarked no later than **March 31, 2006**, and submitted to the Regulations Division, Office of General Counsel, Room 10276, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410-0500. Applicants will receive an acknowledgement notice from the AACI Team upon receipt.

Nominated governments selected for the award will be notified on or about May 15, 2006.

2006 AWARD TIMELINE

November 30, 2005 Award program announced and applications available from www.hud.gov/affordablecommunities or hard copy available from the AACI Office at HUD Headquarters or HUD Field Offices.

March 31, 2006 Extended Deadline Completed Application Packets must be postmarked no later than this date.

May 15, 2006
(on or about this date) Finalists will be chosen and notified.

June 2006
(Tentative) Award Presentation, Washington DC

2006 NOMINATION DATA SHEET

1. Award Consideration Category:

Each application may be nominated for one award category only. Please check the appropriate box before beginning the application process.

State_____ City_____ County_____

Town, Township, or other Incorporated Municipality_____

2. Nominating Organization/Individual:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone (business/day): _____

Fax (business/day): _____

Email Address: _____

3. Nominated Government (Separate form for each nomination):

Government Name & Location: _____

Primary Government Contact person with knowledge of the reforms:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone (business/day): _____

Fax (business/day): _____

Email Address: _____

4. Essay:

Please respond to each of the essay topics in narrative form using the following guidelines:

- Headers on each page should include the applicant's name and the contact name.
- **Each essay response should be no more than four typed pages. Alternatively, the total for all four essay questions should not exceed 16 typed pages.**
- Provide supporting documentation.
- Ensure that all responses are neatly typed and double-spaced, and have one-inch margins on all sides.
- Identify each essay element described below with the appropriate identifying alphabetical header (A-D).

A. Briefly describe the condition of the affordable housing market and regulatory constraints in your community prior to the adopted reform.

B. Briefly describe the political and institutional environment that resulted in recognition by the community that the instituted reform was necessary.

C. Provide a brief summary of the actions taken by the community to address one or more regulatory barriers, including implementation measures. Briefly describe why each particular reform was selected.

D. Briefly describe or cite, to the best of your knowledge, using empirical or anecdotal evidence, the impact that these reforms have had in the nominated community on the production, cost, supply, or rehabilitation of affordable housing. Include number of additional units, construction costs, housing prices, and rents. Describe, where applicable, any relevant partnership or collaboration involved in

the initiation, development, or implementation of the reform, including names and contacts of participating organizations. These individuals or groups may be contacted about the project submitted.

5. Supporting Documentation:

In addition to the narrative statement, the applicant is encouraged to submit documentation to support the statements made in the narrative statements. Such documentation may include items such as:

A. New or modified statutes, ordinances, administrative processes, handbooks, resolutions, etc., which provide evidence to support adoption of the regulatory reforms; and

B. Data, newspaper articles, studies, etc., which provide evidence that the adopted reforms have been fully implemented and show the impact of the reforms upon the supply of affordable housing in the community. Photographs and other evidence of any development resulting from the reforms are also permitted.

Extraneous documentation (documentation not directly supportive of the narrative statements) is strongly discouraged.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. The information collection items contained in this document have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520) and assigned OMB control number 2501-0020. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

JOIN THE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Whether or not you choose to nominate a community for this award, the AACI Team invites you to continue to work toward increasing the supply of affordable housing in your community, and to visit the following websites:

www.hud.gov/affordablecommunities, or <http://www.regbarriers.org/>. If you would like to receive periodic updates on regulatory reform activities, please join HUD's listserv at rbc@huduser.org.