

From: [Shyla Patera](#)
To: [Krista Artis](#)
Subject: Fwd: Hud community needs hearing
Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 11:53:22 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Shyla Patera <shycpat@icloud.com>
Date: April 5, 2022 at 11:49:41 AM MDT
To: Lisa Kunz <lkunz@greatfallsmt.net>, commission@greatfallsmt.net, Carol Bronson <cbronson@nwgf.org>, Amanda Brownlee <abrownlee@greatfallsmt.net>, Lanni Klasner <lklasner@greatfallsmt.net>, tshumaker@greatfallsmt.net, Alicia Eatherly <aliciaeatherly@gfhousing.org>, Tom Osborn <tosborn@ncils.org>
Subject: Hud community needs hearing

My name is Shyla Patera. I am an Independent Living Specialist employed by and representing North Central Independent Living Services, Inc. in Black Eagle, Montana. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend in person tonight and for the foreseeable future as there is no mobility and disabilities accessible after hours transportation options in the city of Great Falls at the present. On the community needs hearing for Home and HUD opportunities, Great Falls and north central Montana need more community options for accessible, visitable, affordable universal designed housing stock. The city also needs to invest in rehabilitation housing and accessible contracting options. NCILS knows that the City of Great Falls has the revolving loan fund from Neighborworks, but expenses often are tight for those landlords and renters who experience disabilities or have a disabled tenant. NCILS knows that Neighborworks has undertaken a permanent supportive housing project in the Batz building but we need to ensure that all of our HUD contracts that we currently have or are close to renewal don't price people with disabilities out or leave people with disabilities stranded in subpar housing or housing that either has been built or rehabilitated with other funding sources. The City of Great Falls needs to ensure that all opportunities for housing vouchers are taken advantage of and applied for in our community. The City may need to approach how long a tenant of Great Falls Housing or any other landlord in the amounts of time a tenant is given to appeal medical or financial issues in eviction processes. I ask that the City of Great Falls to approach HUD and or Montana Housing to prorate fees paid to Great Falls Housing Authority and other landlords based upon disabilities income. The current policies and standards may have a disparate impact on housing disparities in our region. While there are no visible impacts to fair housing policy as these are evenly enforced in the City of Great Falls, if we do not examine our housing policy and issues surrounding said policy, we may lose opportunities to keep people housed in the present and future.

I encourage the both Great Falls Rescue Mission and the new Family Promise shelter to ensure that accessibility needs are taken into account when admitting potential consumers or families. As the Great Falls Rescue is private and religiously affiliated that organization has undertaken efforts to ensure disability accessibility is met. Efforts often incremental in nature as it often is with businesses and community agencies.

The City needs to ensure that all homeless providers advocates and interested parties know how to assist homeless individuals with disabilities in accessing our H CBS Waiver system. The crisis intervention team housed at Alluvion and the center for mental health are great starts for our community because they provide the housing navigation but efforts need not be siloed based. upon consumers or medical needs.

On the physical infrastructure of the City of Great Falls, the focus needs to be upon accessible disability parking as well as streets sidewalks and winter snow removal. The city has dynamic leaders in our downtown and our accessibility efforts must expand to our neighborhoods. The City of Great Falls does have an ADA transition plan. All city departments should outline present and future efforts to increase accessibility. Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments.

Shyla Patera IL Specialist
North Central Independent Living Services, Inc.

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