

To: Oskaloosa Housing Trust Fund Committee  
From: Michael Schrock, City Manager  
CC: Shawn Christ, Amy Miller, Stephanie Faulkes  
Date: June 23, 2020



Re: *Oskaloosa Housing Trust Fund Committee Dissolution*

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***Item under consideration:***

Dissolution of the Oskaloosa Housing Trust Fund (OHTF) Committee. Programs of the OHTF shall continue, but be administered by city staff. The OHTF programs include Demolition Assistance I (rebuild); Demolition Assistance II (greenspace); First Time Homebuyer Assistance; Upper Story Housing Life/Safety; and special projects (i.e. Comprehensive Housing Needs Analysis; and project specific housing incentive grants/loans).

***Recommendation:***

Dissolve the OHTF Committee by ordinance amendment thereby permitting city staff to administer OHTF programs by the city manager or designee.

***More detailed action sought:***

Prior to action by city council, seek concurrence from the existing OHTF Committee membership to recommend the dissolution of the OHTF Committee. Recommendation to include a request for formal action by the city council, via Ordinance amendment. As a result of the dissolution, programs currently administered by the OHTF would be done so by city staff, using existing program guidelines that were previously approved by the OHTF and city council.

Existing programs will continue to receive an annual purpose and need evaluation as part of the city's budgeting process. Recommendations on the continuation or modification of OHTF program plans, the continuation of the fund, and associated funding sources for OHTF programs will involve the city manager (or designee), Mayor, and city council. An ad-hoc committee from the community (former members) could be utilized during this process if desired. City council will be the authority to approve modifications or changes to existing program plans and allocation of funding. Performance metrics for programs offered by the city using OHTF funds will continue to be tracked and reported in the city's annual activity report.

If the OHTF Committee is dissolved, staff recommends current committee members continue serving on other city boards, committees, or commissions that presently have vacancies (i.e. Planning & Zoning, Historic Preservation, Civil Service, Board of Adjustment, Water Board of Trustees). If the desire is to remain connected specifically with "housing" related matters more in line with the OHTF Committee's mission, staff recommends contact with the Mahaska Chamber and Development Group (the Chamber) for the purpose of serving on that organization's Housing Committee.



The Chamber's Housing Committee was formed as a result of extensive community conversations focused on developing a strategic vision and plan for the organization. The Chamber's strategic plan concentrates on the following priorities: Workforce; **Housing**; Tourism/Recreation/Quality of Life; and Business Development/Business Recruitment/Infrastructure.

The Chamber's Housing Committee includes a wide array of members from the community and a vested interest in addressing housing needs in Mahaska County. The members are charged with:

1. Creating a process to report total county starts with a goal of 50 per year;
2. Exploring options for senior housing starts;
3. Identifying and addressing barriers to upper story housing for Oskaloosa Main Street;
4. Exploring county-wide Revolving Loan Fund for housing; and
5. Establishing protocol for regular open communication with builders and developers.

***Additional Background:***

The OHTF and the OHTF Committee were formed by Ordinance No. 1085, approved by City Council on November 6, 2000, published November 14, 2000. This Ordinance is codified in the Oskaloosa Municipal Code as Chapter 2.90 – Housing Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund. The purpose of the trust fund shall be to collect and disburse revenue to meet the housing needs of the community as defined in the city comprehensive plan and housing needs assessments. The trust fund, as a permanent and revolving source of revenue, will provide for loans, grants and other financing mechanisms to finance projects including but not limited to the acquisition, demolition for redevelopment purposes, rehabilitation and/or new construction of rental and owner-occupied housing, as well as to provide money for relocation assistance to income-qualified displaced tenants. Funds deposited in the trust fund shall be deposited in a separate account from other city funds, including the general fund.

The OHTF Committee Purpose. The OHTF Committee is charged with recommending policy direction and oversight to the administration and operation of the housing trust fund by: 1. Soliciting funding; 2. Developing bylaws to govern the committee's operations; and 3. Developing policies and guidelines for acquisition and distribution of funds. Such solicitation, bylaws, policies, and guidelines shall be approved by the city council.

The OHTF Committee shall also coordinate an effective mechanism for public participation in the operation of the trust fund, recommend projects to the city council for funding approval, and engage in activities providing for the efficient use of the trust fund.

In addition, the OHTF Committee is granted specific powers and is assigned certain duties. The committee has the authority to do the following:



- A. Conduct and/or participate in studies for the purpose of identifying housing needs within the community.
- B. Shares information contained in any studies with private and/or public developers.
- C. In addition to the above-mentioned duties and powers specified, the committee may, with city approval:
  1. Accept unconditional gifts and donations of real and personal property, including money;
  2. Acquire by purchase, bequest, or donation, fee and lesser interests in real estate;
  3. Preserve, maintain, operate, develop or redevelop properties under the ownership or control of the trust fund committee;
  4. Lease, sell, and otherwise transfer or dispose of properties subject to rights of public access and other covenants and in a manner that will address identified housing needs within the community;
  5. Contract, with approval of the city council, with the state or federal government or other organizations;
  6. Cooperate with the federal, state and local governments in the pursuance of the objectives of the housing trust fund;
  7. Provide information for the purpose of the housing trust fund to the governing body; and
  8. Promote and conduct educational programs related to identified housing issues within the community.

OHTF Financials. The following information provides the most recent balance of funds used for the purpose of administering programs of the OHTF Committee, as of June 9, 2020.

Fund 138: \$ 34,741  
Fund 140: \$231,034  
 Total: \$265,775

Program activity levels for the past five fiscal years:

| Program              | FY15 | FY16 | FY17 | FY18 | FY19 | FY20 YTD |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| First Time Homebuyer | 8    | 2    | 6    | 2    | 0    | 2        |
| Demolition I (paid)  | 5    | 8    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 4        |
| Demolition II (paid) | 1    | 6    | 3    | 1    | 2    | 5        |

