



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve



MEMORADUM

R-19

Date: July 19, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilwoman Stacy Mungo Flanigan, Fifth District

Subject: **Recommendation to Establish Permittee Incentive Program that supports water and energy conservation opportunities for Housing Choice Voucher Tenants**

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager to direct the appropriate departments to review the existing process for individuals entering the permitting process for apartments and Accessory Dwelling Units and design a program that would both incentivize acceptance of vouchers for housing and educate landlords on how Housing Choice Vouchers work.

Request a letter outlining potential incentives related to the Water Department be sent to the Water Commissioners for consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Currently, ADUs are not required to have a separate water and gas meter for each unit. Installation of these tools can be expensive for the permittee but once installed helps the occupant know and understand their usage, supports the water and energy departments to communicate with the occupant as a customer, and incentivizes the tenant to conserve.

Long Beach has hundreds of individuals that have qualified housing vouchers but have not found a landlord/property that meets their needs. New/refurbished units and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) can play an important role in supporting these individuals.

This year alone, approximately 400 Long Beach residents submitted applications for construction of an ADU. These residents may not be aware of they could be eligible to receive Housing Choice Vouchers.

To better educate and incentivize permittees, a program can include information and rebates such as:

- A letter to the homeowner from the Housing Authority, after submitting an ADU, outlining the benefit of accepting Housing Choice Vouchers.

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- Reimbursement of permit fees after having demonstrated acceptance of Vouchers for a certain period.
- Reimbursement of various costs associated with the installation and permitting of dedicated gas and water meters connected to each unit.
- Ongoing rebates for specified city services associated with maintaining the unit for ongoing acceptance of vouchers.

As staff continues to work on establishing a more streamlined pre-approval process for housing construction and permitting, there is a benefit to working on a companion program to establish incentives to accept Housing Choice Vouchers.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation is anticipated to require a minimal level of staff hours beyond normal budgeted scope of duties and is expected to have a minimal impact on existing City Council priorities.