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NEWS RELEASE

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Dubuque Considers Closing Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List

DUBUQUE, Iowa — The Dubuque Housing Commission’s April 28 meeting agenda will include consideration of a proposal to close Dubuque’s waiting list for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s rental assistance voucher program.

City of Dubuque Housing and Community Development Director Alvin Nash recommends closing the list because Dubuque currently has 1,500 applicants on the HCV wait list and the average wait time for a voucher is currently 388 days. “We are recommending closing the HCV waiting list to prevent false hope among our applicants that rental assistance will be available in the near future,” said Nash.

HUD regulations state, “If the PHA (public housing authority) determines that the existing waiting list contains an adequate pool for use of available program funding, the PHA may stop accepting new applications...” Nash said HUD has given approval of the recommendation to close the Dubuque waiting list. If the Dubuque Housing Commission approves the recommendation, Dubuque will close the list, effective May 1, 2015.

Nash also said that, because of a shortfall in funding of Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) for the 2015 calendar year, the City does not plan to issue any new vouchers during calendar year 2015 to applicants currently on the waiting list. As a result, the

City is projecting that current HCV applicants would likely be on the waiting list for two years before being offered a voucher. City staff are working with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create and implement strategies to prevent termination of benefits for current HCV participants. Nash does not expect any changes for current voucher participants.

The HCV program is a federal program through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As of March 1, 2015, vouchers were being used by 914 Dubuque households, 50 percent of which have an elderly or disabled head of household. Seventy-eight percent of the 914 households have a gross income of less than \$15,000 per year.

Although the waiting list may be closed for the HCV program, the City will continue to accept applications for the Project-Based Voucher Program to assist with elderly and/or disabled households at The Rose of Dubuque assisted living facility and applicants interested in the Moderate Rehabilitation Program, a project-based rental assistance tied to specific units located within the city for low-income households.

For additional information on rental assistance programs offered by the City of Dubuque Housing and Community Development Department, call 563-589-4230 or visit www.cityofdubuque.org/housing.

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