

FAIR & AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION



Casey Holcomb
Commission Chair
FAHC@ci.moscow.id.us

Regular Meeting
~Minutes~

Michael Ray
Interim Staff Liaison
208.883.7008

<https://www.ci.moscow.id.us/358/Fair-Affordable-Housing-Commission>

Thursday
March 6, 2025

5:30 PM

Haddock Building
504 S Washington Street

Baukol called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Baukol, Vice Chair; Juan Albaitero, Jo Ellen Force, Leah Halterman, Sage McCetich, Ellen Peterson, Eija Sumner, Jennifer Wallace
MEMBERS ABSENT: Casey Holcomb
OTHERS: Julia Parker
STAFF: Michael Ray

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from February 6, 2025 (ACTION ITEM)

Presentation of minutes for approval.

Force moved for approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Peterson. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Albaitero, Baukol, Force, Halterman, Peterson, Sumner, Wallace (7). Nays: None. Abstentions: McCetich (1). Motion carried.

2. Public Comment

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Commission. Please state your name and city of residence for the record and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes.

None.

3. Wellness Fair (ACTION ITEM)

The Latah County Health and Wellness Fair is scheduled for March 15, 2025. The Commission will discuss the event sign up and final logistics.

The Commission discussed the upcoming Health & Wellness Fair and talked about coordinating the scheduling of Commissioners to attend and manage the booth.

McCetich arrived at 05:40 PM.

4. Housing Authority Discussion (ACTION ITEM)

Casey Bolt of Sojourner's Alliance has requested a discussion regarding the possibility of creating a Housing Authority. The Commission will hear a report and discuss feasibility and potential next steps, if any.

The Commission invited Breanna Siple, from the Moscow Housing Authority Working Group, and several others to present as described above (see attached). Brandy Brooks talked about her personal experience with living in Moscow; Nancy Chaney spoke about the League of Women Voters poverty study; Ryan Urie shared some of his personal experience with living in Moscow; Casey Bolt, from Sojourner's Alliance, presented on the economics of housing; and Suzy James described her experiences with living in Moscow.

The Commissioners had a discussion about the potential benefits of a Housing Authority and how the City would be involved if an Authority was created. They decided to table the conversation until the next meeting.

Force left the meeting at 7:19 PM.

REPORTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Commissioners decided to move the meeting time back to 5:15 PM instead of 5:30 PM, starting on April 3rd, 2025.

UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

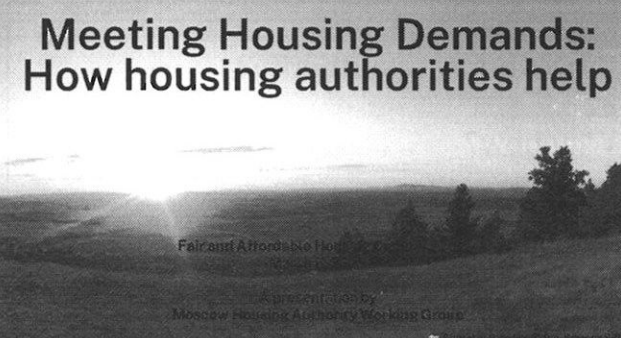
The next Fair & Affordable Housing Commission meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 PM



Randy Baukol, Vice Chair

Meeting Housing Demands: How housing authorities help



Fair and Affordable Housing
for All

A presentation by
Moscow Housing Authority Working Group

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MARCH 6, 2025

2

Gratitude

Thank you for having us!

Purpose

To present the rationale for recommending establishment of a Housing Authority in Moscow—and why we believe doing so is totally possible right now!

MARCH 6, 2025

2

Overview

*Central questions for consideration throughout presentation:
Why Housing Authority? Why now?

Background

About Us

Our Approach

Lived Experience - Brandy Brooks

League of Women Voters of Moscow Poverty Study Report

Social Work Perspective

Lived Experience - Suzy James

Manufactured Home Resident Cooperative

Resident Owned Communities

Economic Perspective

Lived Experience - Ryan Urie

Sojourner's Alliance

University town vs resort town

A Synergistic and Transformative Vision

What a housing authority can do

MARCH 6, 2025

3

About Us

Moscow Housing Authority Working Group

Casey Bolt

Brandy Brooks

Nancy Chaney

Kathy Dawes*

Suzy James

Leontina (LT) Hormel*

Chris Norden*

Breanna Siple

Ryan Urie

Supporters

League of Women Voters of Moscow*

ROC USA - Victoria O'Banion*

And Growing!

MARCH 6, 2025

4

Presenters

*Letters in Support

Our Approach

Leveraging the strengths on the Palouse towards a common solution, centering the experiences of those most impacted by housing insecurity

MARCH 6, 2025

5

A story: Brandy Brooks and Sojourner's

Background

Study found significant deficiencies in decent, affordable, accessible housing.

Poverty is a multi-faceted problem. Housing insecurity is an integral part.

Existing interventions have proven inadequate to meet the need.

Housing authority model would bring new tools to complement existing ones for urgently needed housing.

7

Why a housing authority?

Why now?

MARCH 6, 2025

8

A story: Ryan Urie and Robinson's

MARCH 6, 2025

Economic Perspective Summary

Population Growth Challenges - Under Serving our Current Population

Aging Housing Stock - Slowing Growth of Supply

Exacerbation by Economic Growth - Targeted Supply of Housing Units

MARCH 6, 2025

10

Housing Forecast

Table 1: Housing Needs Forecast Over Next 10-Years

Housing Units	2022	2032	CAGR 10-Year	Growth	Avg. Annual
Clearwater	4,660	4,736	0.08%	76	8
Idaho	8,862	9,282	0.30%	400	40
Latah	17,315	18,880	0.76%	1,565	157
Lewis	1,994	2,025	0.08%	32	3
Nez Perce	18,086	19,203	0.50%	1,117	112
Total	50,937	54,127	0.50%	3,190	319

Source: Points Consulting, 2022

Between now and 2032, the forecast for needed homes in Latah County is almost 160, which leads our entire region for housing demand. This is on top of the fact that we are under serving our current population which means this trend will just exacerbate the issue if something does not change.

11

Housing Costs

Table 13: Cost of Living Comparison, Selected Locations

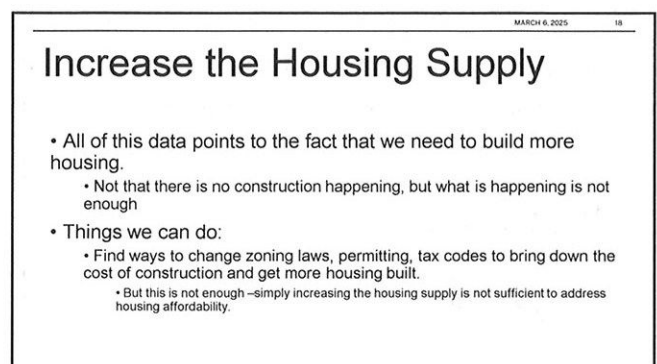
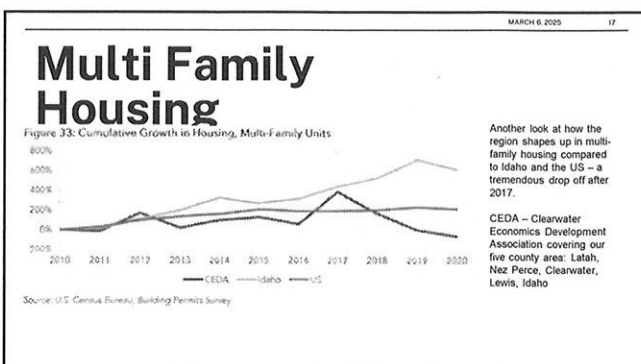
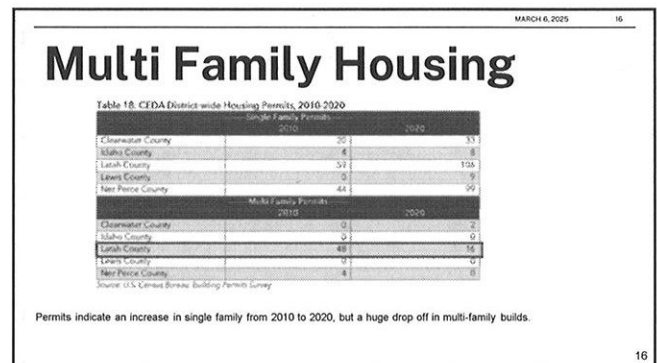
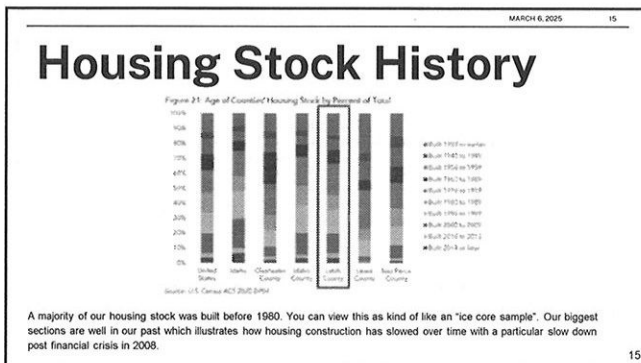
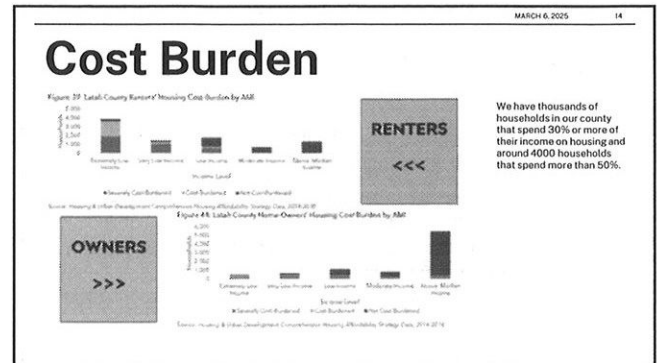
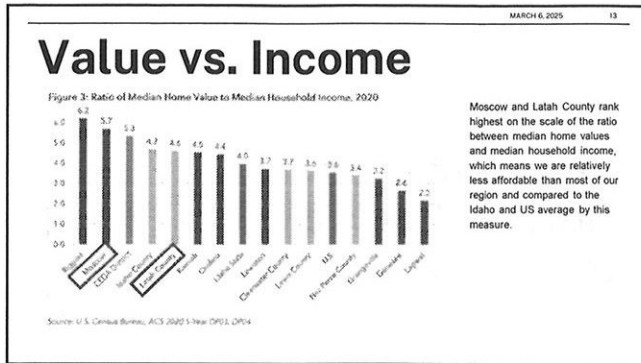
Region	Overall	Housing	Grocery	Health	Utilities	Transportation
Nez Perce	95.9	106.2	98.3	97.3	85.5	81.4
Latah	95.1	111.3	99.4	95.9	83.3	72.1
Idaho County	87.7	87.1	99.0	98.3	85.3	69.4
Clearwater	86.4	72.9	97.1	97.6	86.2	86.9
Lewis	79.2	56.9	97.4	97.3	83.3	76.2
Idaho	97.7	114.1	94.4	95.1	89.3	81.6
United States	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Sperlings Best Places, Cost of Living Comparison

Ability to make a living in a given area – and afford housing – is about income and employment levels but also about how far those dollars go in the place they live. Latah County is relatively favorable in terms of cost of living seeing as each aspect falls below the national average – except housing.

MARCH 6, 2025

12



MARCH 6, 2025

19

Dynamic Adjustment Process

- If we start to increase the supply of housing in a significant way then prices will start to go down.
- However, as prices go down here relative to out peers then we can induce more demand.
- This means that low-income people will always struggle with being priced out of the market.
- This is why units targeted for specific incomes is necessary.

Citation: Blaine County Nexus Study

A story: Suzy James and Hurst & Son's & Moscow MHRC

MARCH 6, 2025

21

Social Work Perspective

Social Policy Framework

HB 424

- Amends Idaho's Manufactured Home Residency Act
- Requires mobile home community owners to notify resident associations at least 15 days before entering into an agreement to sell
- Provides residents a chance to purchase their parks (well, those who have already organized to do so)

Social Issues Addressed

- Protect low/fixed-income mobile home residents from displacement due to rising rents or eviction
- Encourage resident ownership
- Stabilize rent and prevent sudden, exploitative market-driven changes in mobile home communities

Legislative Goals

- Short-term: increase notification of sales to resident associations
- Long-term: promote the conversion of privately-owned mobile home communities to resident-owned communities (MHRCCs)
- Impact: provide legal strategy to preserve affordable housing options

Social and Policy Impact

- HB 424 aligns with social work core values (social justice and inherent worth and dignity)
- Supporting affordable housing and empowering low-income residents, especially vulnerable populations, to secure stable housing
- While addressing market forces that prioritize private profit over residents' rights

Additional Considerations re: Housing Authorities and ROCs



As envisioned by Victoria O'Banion
with ROC USA*

- Housing authorities *should* purchase manufactured home communities
- Preserve affordable housing
 - Protect residents from displacement
 - Maintain stable, fair rent structures

Public ownership ensures community investments in infrastructure and essential services, preventing redevelopment into high-cost housing or commercial properties

- Leverage federal, state, and local funding
- Improve infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, roads)
- Collaborate with resident cooperatives, nonprofits, and land trusts
- Create sustainable management models
- Empower residents and keep housing affordable, strengthening long-term stability, equity, and local economic resilience

Vision: A Moscow community where everyone can thrive!

MARCH 6, 2025

24

A Synergistic and Transformative Vision

Benefits of Housing Authority

*as envisioned by Clarissa Connelley (Ketchum) from Blaine County Housing Authority

1. Legal restriction on property
2. Entity to enforce restriction
3. Compliance enforcement
4. Selective covenant restrictions
5. Community education
6. Robust community partnerships

Benefits of Housing Authority

*as envisioned by Clarissa Connelley (Ketchum) from Blaine County Housing Authority

7. Coordinated entry
8. Community partnership referrals
9. Reduced entry barriers
10. Longevity in vision planning
11. Centralized repository of community housing and expiration

What does it take?

- Funding*
- Staffing
- Resolution

Potential Board Composition

- 50/50 lived experience / advocates
- Grant writer
- Attorney*
- Community partners (2+)
- City liaison?
- Realtor / Developer?

Resolution

Thank You!

Questions?

Moscow Housing Authority
Working Group



March 3, 2025

Fair and Affordable Housing Commission
City of Moscow

RE: Support for Housing Authority

Dear Commissioners:

The League of Women Voters of Moscow is supportive of local efforts to establish a housing authority. Our 2024 poverty study identified significant deficiencies in decent, affordable, accessible housing. A housing authority is among potential resources we identified to address that need. We appreciate your interest in looking into the idea, and invite you to review our report and reference materials used in drawing our conclusions. (<https://my.lwv.org/idaho/moscow/position/poverty-latah-county-idaho-2024>)

The League of Women Voters is a well-regarded non-partisan non-profit organization, founded in 1920. Issue-specific studies like ours follow formal guidelines that call for a rigorous two-year-long process, requiring transparency, inclusivity, consensus, and publication of adopted positions. In the case of housing, positions articulated by the League of Women Voters of Moscow recognize poverty as a dynamic, multi-faceted problem, of which housing is an integral part. Specifically, we

- endorse programs that enhance the availability of appropriate and safe housing for the homeless, especially homeless families in Latah County
- advocate for more housing for low-income residents
- advocate for more programs to prevent housing insecurity and relieve causative elements
- advocate for more emergency shelters for inclement weather, and policies and funding to enable them

The gap in economic inequality is widening, even here. Costs for building materials, land, and labor are increasing. In-migration of residents from more expensive housing markets skews real estate prices. Even with governmental incentives like density bonuses, expedited permitting, liberalized zoning, and allowances for accessory dwelling units, the rate and range of market-rate housing are inadequate. Non-profit organizations like Hills and Rivers Housing Trust (previously known as Moscow Affordable Housing Trust) and Habitat for Humanity lack capacity to keep up with demand. Agency-subsidized housing and facilities offering temporary shelter (such as Sojourners and Family Promise) are typically at capacity. Seniors and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable. The housing authority model has worked well elsewhere in Idaho, and would bring new tools to complement existing ones and facilitate development of safe, affordable, accessible housing in Moscow.

The League of Women Voters of Moscow advocates for establishment of a local housing authority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kylee Britzman".

Kylee Britzman, President
LWVM

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nancy Chaney".
Nancy Chaney, Chair
LWVM Poverty Study

February 28, 2025

Dear Moscow Fair and Affordable Housing Commission,

I am writing in support of the creation of a City of Moscow housing authority. The need for such an authority can and should largely be understood in relation to the increasing unavailability and unaffordability of housing and safe and healthy residential infrastructure for a growing segment of working families, retirees, single-parent families, veterans, disabled citizens, and others within our community.

At the same time, I would suggest that a housing authority would also constitute an effective means of addressing environmental concerns in our community, both specifically in relation to human health (i.e. environmental justice), and in relation to healthy and sustainable ecosystems that our community depends on for its broader quality of life and ecological sustainability.

My wife Leontina Hormel and I spent many hours supporting residents of the now defunct Syringa mobile home park on Robinson Park Road both during and after the protracted water crisis that began in 2013 and resulted in the condemnation of many of the residential units in the park, and then the total closure and clearance of the park in 2018.

Dr. Hormel's book *Trailer Park America* (Rutgers UP, 2024) documents this history more fully, including the human health and ecological consequences of a low-income housing model that sacrifices human health and environmental quality in deference to maximizing profit, particularly by unaccountable absentee owners.

The crux of the Syringa crisis, which affected over 100 families and forced all residents to relocate on an emergency basis, was the park's absentee owner's refusal to provide a reliable and fully sanitary water system. Residents were forced to use bottled water for drinking and even bathing, due to repeated breaches of the park's water system and consequent e. coli contamination.

A Moscow housing authority of the sort we are advocating for would allow lower-income members of our community to better protect themselves against this sort of inadequate, unreliable, and often dangerous "best you can afford" standard of sanitation. Compromised water quality poses obvious and avoidable risks to human health, notably including the children, elders, and disabled citizens who comprise a large portion of our community's lower-income demographic.

A housing authority will offer lower-income members in our community more stable and predictable housing alternatives, as well as opportunities to be active participants in the design and management of their own housing rather than being passive and vulnerable victims when shoddy and ill-kept water systems and other infrastructure put their health and well-being at risk.

Equally to the point, and again referencing the Syringa mobile home park case (2013-2018), poorly maintained water and septic systems in lightly regulated and poorly maintained trailer parks also affect the environmental quality and ecological health of the broader community. Storm runoff and normal effluent runoff into rivers and streams as well as groundwater contamination are chronic risks that our state's laws only lightly address, with actual timely and effectively enforcement unlikely, historically speaking.

By contrast, housing created via a housing authority can be designed and maintained to meet our community's more optimistic and aspirational vision of how architectural design and urban planning can be done in ways that enhance both human health and wellness as well as environmental quality at the broader community level and ecological health more generally, rather than sacrificing those values as the presumed cost of doing business and making a profit from the community's increasingly acute need for affordable housing.

Simply put, lower-income housing does not need to be understood as sub-standard housing, neither from the standpoint of human health, nor from the standpoint of environmental quality and ecological health. The authorization and creation of a housing authority will move our community forward toward a more responsive and fully modern understanding of how proactive planning and collaborative design of housing infrastructure can improve the lives of all members of our community. In so doing, we help make Moscow a best place to live not just for those who can afford decent but increasingly expensive higher-end housing, but in fact for all members of our community, including the struggling working families upon whom our community's success ultimately depends.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Norden", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Norden
Emeritus Professor, Lewis-Clark State College
428 E. 7th St.
Moscow ID 83843
cnorden@lcsc.edu



University of Idaho

Department of Culture,
Society and Justice

February 27, 2025

Dear Moscow City Councilors,

I support the establishment of a Housing Authority in the city of Moscow and wish such an entity had been established a couple decades ago. My research focuses on community ethnography to illuminate people's efforts to make ends meet amid economic marginalization and consequent low access to social services (e.g., healthcare, childcare, and complete diets). It is my conviction that having a Housing Authority in place will enable our community to prepare for possible community disasters, especially to slow down economic evictions that have hit our neighbors who are on fixed or low incomes.

Moscow and Latah County have witnessed two very difficult, one might say tragic, situations unfold for low-income families between 2013 to present. The first of these events was the water and sewage lagoon degradation experienced at Syringa Mobile Home Park, which culminated in the highly publicized water contamination and 93-day water shutoff that took place between December 2013 to March 2014. I documented community members' experiences as they made ends meet during the roller coaster years, 2015 to 2018, the year Syringa closed, and families were forced to relocate. This research about Syringa homeowners is detailed in my 2024 book *Trailer Park America*, from which it is important to highlight a few important details about the kinds of people who were forced out of the homes they owned and to find housing - during a time when our housing prices and rents were widely understood to be outpacing average annual income growth.

Based on needs-based surveys and interviews in Syringa Mobile Home Park, I found the households that remained in Syringa up to the community's closure were disproportionately comprised of people with disabilities (47%). Several residents, some who were elderly and/or disabled, were living alone (37%), or had only one caretaker who could work and care for them (26%). Almost a quarter of the remaining families who were forced to relocate were caring for children who were younger than 18 years old. The experience of having no place for these families to move to was frustrating for community leaders, who knew that this could have been avoided with greater foresight and planning.

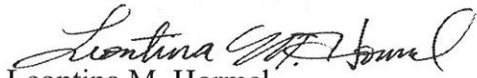
Shortly after the turmoil of the COVID-19 outbreak, in fall 2022, another significant shift in manufactured home community living took place. A corporation focused on purchasing mostly low-income manufactured home communities bought four communities in and near Moscow. This number has increased to six communities as of spring 2024 and includes Abiel Community, Appaloosa Court, Bluebird Community, Evergreen Community, Palouse Hills Community, and Woodland Heights. All of these communities were given illegal leases (not signed and dated and not distributed according to landlord-tenant law) that included rent increases of 40-55%. The most common monthly lot rent increased from \$375 to \$525. Recently, Hurst & Son has reimbursed many individuals living in at least 70 Washington communities for the same behavior exhibited in our communities here in the Moscow area. Thankfully, Moscow area communities

are represented pro bono by the Intermountain Fair Housing Council of Idaho and have established a Cooperative to strengthen their position as a unified entity.

Residents have managed to stay in their homes and push back on lot rent increases thus far, but Hurst & Son has recently announced it intends to raise rents even further, from \$525 to \$600. This lot rent increase has raised residents' fears even more and will likely create a surge in forced relocation, or what is known as economic eviction. Many of our neighbors in these communities are homeowners and represent similar demographics to those who were forced to leave Syringa Mobile Home Park. For instance, based on a needs-based survey conducted with four of these communities in the spring of 2023, fifty (50) percent of residents reported having a disability. Thirty (30) percent of residents reported having dependents under 19 years of age. Twenty (20) percent of households reported being single parents, grandparents, or guardians of dependent children.

The experiences of mobile or manufactured home communities shared in this letter illustrate that operating with the same tools we have had in Moscow is insufficient for the times. Throughout the state of Idaho and nationally we are witnessing declining opportunities for affordable housing, most especially for low-income families and, now, many professionals. Both Moscow and Latah County lack flexibility in their budgets, staff, and resources. The Housing Authority will increase our capacity to anticipate opportunities, to locate funding options, to create partnerships, and open innovative housing opportunities for the populations that have been economically marginalized and have lost out as our economy evolves.

Truly,



Leontina M. Hormel

Professor of Sociology

University of Idaho Department of Culture, Society, & Justice

Potential funding sources for housing authority:

Pooled funding model, evolving from start-up to full operations, including

- Private investors
 - Donations of cash, real property, stocks, other assets
- Local, state, and national government*
 - Cash
 - In-kind contributions like land, easements, engineering services, construction materials, inspection services, tax incentives, streamlined permits
- Health systems
- Nonprofit philanthropic organizations
 - Grants
 - Loans
- Housing authority powers
 - Bonding
 - Lease, sell, improve, exchange, transfer, assign real property
 - Investments (e.g. properties, securities)
 - Accrual in sinking funds
 - Enter into agreements (e.g. with other housing authorities)

*Governmental resources include:

- Idaho Rural Services - PABs, GEM
- Idaho Housing and Finance Association - HOME
- Idaho Department of Commerce - CDBG, RCIF
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality - SRF
- USDA Rural Development - MPR, Site
- Housing and Urban Development - PRO, RCB
- Economic Development Administration - PWEAA

Housing Authority Reference Materials

I.C. Title 50, Chapter 19, Sections 1901-1927 (I.C. § 50-1901 et seq.)

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title50/t50ch19/>

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Idaho 2022

<https://www.ci.moscow.id.us/DocumentCenter/View/33361/2022-State-of-Idaho-Analysis-of-Impediments-PDF>

Blaine County Housing Authority

<https://www.bcoha.org/>

Boise City/Ada County Housing Authorities

<https://bcacha.org/>

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025, Clearwater Economic Development Association

<https://clearwater-eda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2020-2025-CEDS-REVISED.pdf>

Comprehensive Plan, City of Moscow

<https://www.ci.moscow.id.us/268/Comprehensive-Plan>

Community Needs Assessment, Community Action Partnership 2021

<https://www.cap4action.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Attachment-D-2021-CNA-Report-Final.pdf>

League of Women Voters of Moscow Poverty Study 2024

<https://my.lwv.org/idaho/moscow/position/poverty-latah-county-idaho-2024>

Regional Housing Assessment commissioned by the Partnership for Economic Prosperity, 2017

<https://www.cacwhitman.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/PEP-Master-FINAL.pdf>

Housing Authorities in Idaho

Boise City/Ada County Housing Authority

1001 S. Orchard Street

Boise Idaho, 83705

(208) 345-4907

[Boise City/Ada County Housing Authority](#)

Southwestern Idaho Cooperative Housing Authority

377 Cornell Street

Middleton, ID 83644

(208) 585-9325

[Southwestern Idaho Cooperative Housing Authority](#)

Nampa Housing Authority

211 19th Avenue North

Nampa, ID 83687

(208) 466-2601

[Nampa Housing Authority](#)

Twin Falls Housing Authority

200 Elm Street N.

Twin Falls, ID 83301

(208) 733-5765

<https://twinfallshousing.com/>

Housing Authority of the City of Pocatello

711 6th Avenue

Pocatello, ID 83205

(208) 233-6276

[Pocatello Housing Authority](#)

Nez Perce Tribal Housing Authority

PO Box 305

Lapwai ID 83540

208-843-2253

<https://nezperce.org/government/housing/>

Coeur d'Alene Tribal Housing Authority

PO Box 408

850 A. St.

Plummer ID 83851

208-686-1800

<https://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/ss/coeur-d-alene-tribal-housing-authority/>

Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation

Pocatello Office

816 E. Lander St.

Pocatello ID 83201

208-478-5712

<https://www.nwbshoshone.com/housing-authority/>