

By ROBERT PIERCE

- Leader & Times

The Liberal City Commission may take a step toward solving some of the community's housing problems this evening.

The board will look at the Rural Housing Incentive District program, which is designated by state statute for cities with a population of less than 40,000 in counties with less than 60,000 residents.

Liberal Housing and Community Development Director Karen LaFreniere said the RHID program allows qualifying developers who are constructing new affordable housing units to recapture the incremental property taxes following development for up to 15 years.

"The need for multi-family housing rental units that are affordable is necessary for our community," she said in a letter to the commission. "The RHID is created to allow developers to use money that they would otherwise pay in increased property taxes and apply it toward the cost of their infrastructure projects, whether the project is a new duplex, four-plex or an apartment building."

LaFreniere said in order to take advantage of the incentive, a property must be within a redevelopment district, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis by city officials and representatives from other taxing authorities, including USD No. 480, Seward County Community College and Seward County.

City will look at incentives for housing builders

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A resolution determining that the city is considering establishing a RHID within the city limits is scheduled to be voted on at the meeting, which begins at 6:30 p.m. in the city commission chambers at 325 N. Washington.