



**United States Department of Agriculture  
Rural Development**

April 15, 2004  
**Colorado AN 1922(1944-I)**

**SUBJECT: House Plans for Section 523 Mutual Self-Help  
Housing - Colorado**

**To: USDA/Rural Development Staff  
Single Family Housing Program  
Colorado**

**PURPOSE/INTENDED OUTCOME:**

The purpose of this Administrative Notice (AN) is to give guidance to agency personnel on the selection of house plans for homes built under the Section 523 Mutual Self-Help Housing Program.

**COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS AN:**

This AN replaces Colorado AN 1861, which is now expired.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Providing affordable housing to low and very-low income applicants is a key goal of Rural Development's Section 523 Mutual Self-Help Housing Program. The rising cost of housing is gradually eliminating some of our customers from qualifying for a new home. The mutual self-help Sponsor is responsible for providing an array of house plans that are affordable. The houses must be modest in size, design and cost. Features, which are not typical in modest housing, should not be incorporated in house plans used under the mutual self-help program. The homes built should not be larger than other modest homes in the area. The house plans developed by the Sponsor will be submitted to the local RD office for review and approval.

**EXPIRATION DATE:**  
April 30, 2005

**FILING INSTRUCTIONS:**  
Following RD Inst. 1944-I

655 Parfet Street Room E-100 • Lakewood, CO 80215 • 720-544-2920 • 720-544-2970 FAX  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/co/index.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/co/index.html)

The following guidelines are recommended for Sponsors building under the mutual self-help program in Colorado:

- Have a selection of at least 2 sets of 2 bedroom house plans under 1000 square feet.
- Have a selection of 2 to 3 sets of 3 bedroom house plans in the 1000-1100 square foot range.
- Have a selection of 2 to 3 sets of 3 bedroom house plans under 1250 square foot
- Have a selection of at least 2 sets of 4-bedroom home plans under 1370 square feet.

The homeowner should not change the house plans provided by the Sponsor unless there is a structural, safety or code issue. House plans should be reviewed annually for updates or design changes, but should remain constant during the year. In order to reach the very low income it may be necessary to reduce the size of the home or eliminate the garage. It may also be necessary to reduce the number of bathrooms in the home. Every effort should be made to continually research methods and means of reducing the cost of housing in order to provide affordable homes for our very low and low income customers.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your Area Director or Don Pierce, Dir-RH at (720) 544-2918.

Ginette Dennis  
State Director