# STRATEGIC PLAN 2008

**PHA**

PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY

# PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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# INTRODUCTION

*"Everybody has accepted by now that change is unavoidable. But that still implies that change is like death and taxes it should be postponed as long as possible and no change would be vastly preferable. But in a period of upheaval, such as the one we are living in, change is the norm."*
*Peter F. Drucker*

This strategic plan is the Providence Housing Authority's (PHA) third in the last fifteen years. This version actually started three years ago at the completion of our last strategic plan time span. The process was well underway when it was suspended due to the myriad changes coming from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at the time. It was during this period that HUD began promulgating rules to transition public housing from centralized management of properties to project-based management and accounting. The regulations, rules and procedures were changing so quickly, we decided to suspend our planning until it was clear where HUD was heading. Three years later the smoke has somewhat settled; although, the public housing industry and Congress are still debating certain elements of project-based management. We believe, however, that we have a much clearer idea where we need to take the PHA to achieve our mission, regardless of HUD's constantly changing regulations.
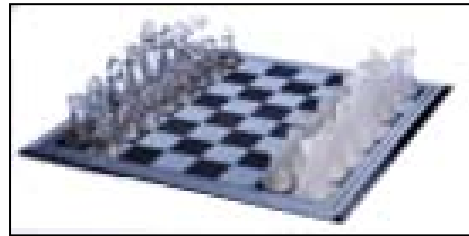
We proceed with another caveat in mind: the nation's general elections in November of 2008. At the time this is being written, most forecasters predict a dramatic increase in seats in the Congress for the Democrat Party. In any case, we know there will be a change in the presidency and the current administration will be leaving office.

Sadly, the websites of the two presidential candidates barely mention housing on their websites four months before the election.   In fact, public housing and Section 8 are not mentioned at all. This in a year with a severe sub-prime mortgage meltdown that has had significant ripple effects on the entire economy with most economists attributing the crisis to the near recession the economy is experiencing.

Any new administration and Congress will bring changes to public housing and Section 8.   New administrations favor new initiatives and putting their stamp on programs. Hopefully, the new administration and Congress will be more "public housing friendly." At this point, the public housing profession would be pleased to just return to 100% funding of our operating subsidy. Since 1990, housing authorities have received full eligible operating subsidy only five times.  While most of the cutbacks during those years were only a few percent, the last five years have seen a substantial reduction in subsidy to the point where service delivery has been affected.  In FY2007, housing authorities received only 83.9% of eligible operating subsidy. In FY2008, the most recent fiscal year, housing authorities received only 82% of eligible operating subsidy. And the administration has asked for only 82% for FY2009. This translates to a shortfall of more than $2.0 million annually. Unless this proposed budget is amended by the Congress –and the outlook does not look good- more cutback in services are inevitable.

All these reductions are taking place in an environment where double-digit cost increases are being experienced. Utility costs have exceeded all previous levels, insurance premiums have risen dramatically, and health care continues to tax our strained budget.

Other programs from HUD that we so heavily rely on have also been reduced, outright eliminated, or new unmatchable matching requirements introduced. The

Public Housing Drug Elimination Program, a mainstay for resident social services was eliminated three years ago and replaced with the Resident Opportunities Supportive Services (ROSS) grant. This new grant requires a local funding match and much less funding than the previous grants.

Section 8, too, has felt the impact of funding reductions, although not as severe as the public housing program. Reductions in Section 8 have been addressed by the moderate size reserve level in the local program. But here, too, HUD has placed punitive restrictions on the use of those reserves. In earlier years, this housing authority – along with many others throughout the country – was able to transfer surplus Section 8 fees earned by administering the program to the cash-strapped public housing program.  This is no longer allowed even while maintaining a multi-hundred thousand dollar surplus.

Strategic Plans look to the future.  We recognize the challenges we face.  By realizing the challenges we face we can plan to address those challenges and exploit new opportunities.

This strategic plan consists of three documents:



Part One contains all the field data gathered during the environmental scanning phase (or needs assessment phase) of the strategic planning process. In this section are the responses and analysis to all the surveys of our residents, Section 8 participants and landlords, elected officials and third-parties. Also in this document are the results of the focus groups with various resident groups, including the Resident Advisory Board. An organizational assessment completed by both the board of commissioners and staff are also included in this section.

Part Two consists of the actual new strategic plan itself. In previous iterations of the strategic plan, we combined the field work with the written strategic plan. This proved too cumbersome to distribute at a reasonable cost and intimidated persons who dreaded having to read several hundred pages of material.  This part of the strategic plan is more readable and contains the body of information required to understand the plan.

Part Three of the plan will contain the PHA's Goals Management Plan and Performance Monitoring and Accountability Report. The document will list all the goals, objectives and tasks developed by the strategic planning teams and include forms for monitoring its progress.

The challenges ahead are many, unless the significant and harmful funding reductions are reversed. In any case, this strategic plan has been prepared with our current situation in mind. It will address the key strategic issues facing the Providence Housing Authority over the next five years. With great skill and professionalism (and a little bit of luck), we will weather this difficult period in public housing's history.

# WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

*"The value of achievement lies in the achieving."*

*Albert Einstein*

Strategic planning is the Providence Housing Authority's (PHA) method of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy, including its capital and people. Developing a strategic plan ensures that the Authority is being proactive and is using a plan as guidance to define functional policies and procedures, including technology and public relations. Strategic planning has been defined as the "formal consideration of an organization's future course." All strategic planning deals with at least one of three key questions:

1. "What do we do?"
2. "For whom do we do it?"
3. "How do we excel?"

At the PHA, this strategic plan is viewed as a process for determining where the Authority is going over the next three to five years. In order to determine where it is going, the organization needs to know exactly where it stands, then determine where it wants to go and how it will get there. The first step to answering these questions is to conduct an analysis known as the SWOC analysis or **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **C**hallenges.

SWOC analyses are a strategic planning method used to evaluate the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **C**hallenges involved in the operations of an organization. It involves stating the purpose of the organization and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that purpose. The aim of any SWOC analysis is to identify the key internal and external factors that are important to achieving the vision. SWOC analysis groups key pieces of information into internal factors and external factors. The internal factors may be viewed as strengths or weaknesses depending upon their impact on the organization's objectives. What may represent strengths with respect to one objective may be weaknesses for another objective. The internal factors may include personnel, finance, technology and so on. The external factors may include macroeconomic matters, technological change, legislation and socio-cultural changes. The components of this analysis are defined below:

- **S**trengths – *internal* attributes of the organization that are helpful to achieving the purpose
- **W**eaknesses – *internal* attributes of the organization that are harmful to achieving the purpose
- **O**pportunities – *external* conditions that are helpful to achieving the purpose

- **C**hallenges - *external* conditions which could do damage to the organization's performance.

Identification of SWOCs is essential because latter steps in the process of strategic planning will draw from the SWOC analysis in order to assist in achieving the organization's stated purpose.

# PROCESS

*"It is no use saying "we are doing our best." You have to succeed in doing what is necessary."*
*Winston Churchill*

The Providence Housing Authority's Strategic Planning process is a hybrid model that has taken the best elements from numerous strategic planning models resulting in an eight-part process to create our plan.

The model we have used to develop our strategic plan consists of the following parts:

▪ **AGREE TO PLAN**

The first step in our strategic planning process involves the commitment of senior management, the Board of Commissioners and staff to undertake a strategic plan for the organization. It involves agreeing to commit the time and resources to develop the necessary surveys, undertake those surveys and analyze the findings.

As cited in the introduction to this document, this process began several years ago, but was suspended until HUD had nearly finalized all their new regulations for asset-based management and accounting. We resumed the process beginning in October of 2007 with a planned completion date for July 2008, the beginning our

new fiscal year. Due to staff reductions, the completion date was reschedule to September 2008.

We organized the development of our plan around department, office or functional Strategic Planning Teams. The size of the teams depended on the size and/or function of the department or office. For instance, Asset Management, a new department created by the merger of the Housing Management and Facilities Management Departments, had the largest team due to its size. Each team met regularly to complete the worksheets developed by the Executive Director to assist in the process. Each planning team submitted their responses by completing the worksheets and submitting them to the Executive Director and/or Special Assistants that compiled the responses. These responses will be addressed in other sections of this document.

▪ **MANDATES**

Mandates are the second step in our strategic planning process. Mandates are defined as *external expectations placed upon an organization.*

The purpose of this step is to clarify these external expectations. When identifying mandates, an organization considers both its formal

and informal mandates. Formal mandates are often stipulated through legislation, rules and regulations of the governing bodies overseeing, or funding, the organization. Informal mandates are usually expectations that an organization has developed for themselves to comply with the mission, goals and objectives of the organization.

- **MISSION, VALUES, VISION**

The mission statement of an organization is *a declaration of organizational purpose.* In other words, why does this organization exist? What unique function is it undertaking? What is the fundamental reason for its existence?

Values are *principles or standards considered inherently worthwhile or desirable.* An organization's values answers the question "What is important to us? Values are a source of strength because they give people and organizations the power to take action. Values are the essence of an organization's philosophy for achieving success.

The purpose of a vision is to develop a clear and succinct description of what the organization will look like as it successfully implements it strategic plan and achieves success.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING (SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS)**

Step four is the needs assessment and information gathering phase in the process. It is at this step that current operations and the environment that we work in are

examined in detail. There are two parts to environmental scanning: Internal and External.

Internal environmental scanning focuses on those factors such as: resources, present strategy, performance trends, share of market, stability, efficiency and flexibility of the organization.

External environmental scanning focuses on those factors external to the organization, which can influence funding and participation such as: forces and trends, collaborators and competitors.

It is during this step that a SWOC (strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, challenges) analysis is also conducted. A SWOC analysis examines the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization and the external opportunities and challenges affecting the organization.

It is also during this phase that stakeholders are identified, surveys conducted, focus groups held and interviews undertaken.

This phase affected all of our stakeholders. Approximately one-third of our public housing and Section 8 residents were surveyed, as well as one-third of the Section 8 landlords. Also surveyed were all elected officials in Providence and one hundred third parties that have some type of relationship with the PHA. Fifteen focus groups were also conducted with resident groups. Surveys of staff members and members of the Board

of Commissioners were also conducted.

- **IDENTIFY KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES**

This step identifies the fundamental policy choices facing the organization concerning its mandates, mission, service and product levels, clients/customers, users, cost, financing, organization or management. Externally, the strategic issues step looks from the outside in, concentrating on the organization's mandates and external environmental scan. Internally, the organization must develop issues based upon the mission, internal environmental scan and organizational values.

Strategic issues are different from a routine organizational issue. Strategic issues are defined by specific criteria, and are designed to be a major focus of attention for the Authority's decision makers.

From the beginning, this organization has developed a "hybrid" model of strategic planning and strategic issue identification in that we do consider some operational issues to be of such importance to the success of the organization that we consider them "strategic" and include them in our plan. The process identified thirteen strategic issues facing the organization.

- **DEVELOP ACTION PLAN AND STRATEGIES**

Strategies are defined as a pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, or resource allocations that define what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it.

This step involves creating a Goals Management Plan for the organization. Using the key strategic issues that have been identified, staff members create numerous goals and objectives to address each issue. Each objective is further defined through a series of tasks, which identifies, in sequential order, who is responsible for the task, when it's anticipated to be completed, and what a completed task is.

- **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Plan implementation involves publishing the plan and thoroughly briefing the entire staff of its contents. This involves the entire staff and not just strategic planning team members. The plan should be circulated and briefed to as many persons and groups that will be affected by its implementation.
In subsequent Annual Plans submitted to HUD, plan implementation will outline in that document what we have accomplished.

- **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The last step in our strategic planning model involves monitoring our progress on achieving our goals and objectives. A companion document to the *Goals Management Plan* is the *Performance Monitoring and Accountability Report*. This report, which will be on-line, monitors each goal and objective on a monthly or quarterly basis. Its purpose is not only to monitor the successful implementation of the Goals Management Plan, but to determine what obstacles may stand in the way of implementation.

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Every plan is a dynamic document subject to changes as our work environment changes. Accordingly, changes to the strategic plan may be necessary. A good monitoring system identifies these problems and allows for mid-course changes to be made to achieve the mission.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAMS

*"It is an immutable law in business that words are words, explanations are explanations, promises are promises — but only performance is reality."*
*Harold S. Geneen*

Many hours were dedicated to preparing this Strategic Plan. For more than a year, strategic planning teams in each department reviewed surveys, countless documents and assessments. They worked diligently completing numerous work sheets to determine what would be included in this plan.

Originally started more than two years ago, the process was placed on hold while we awaited the numerous regulatory changes promulgated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the shift to asset-based management and accounting.

The members of the Strategic Planning Teams are listed below:

**Table 1 Strategic Planning Teams FY2008**

| NAME | DEPARTMENT/OFFICE | POSITION TITLE |
|---|---|---|
| Stephen J. O'Rourke | Executive | Executive Director |
| Kim Dawley | Executive | Human Resource Manager |
| Tai VanDenBerghe | Executive | Resource Officer |
| Mark Ouellet | Executive | General Counsel |
| Elizabeth Herosy | Executive | Administrative Officer |
| Donna DeLaRosa | Leased Housing | Department Director |
| Terri Green | Leased Housing | Admin/Technical manager |
| Denise Healey | Leased Housing | Program Representative |
| Marv Carmody | Asset Management | Department Director |
| Jay Hall | Asset Management | Site Manager |
| Jim Troup | Asset Management | Modernization Planner |
| Monique Hazard | Asset Management | Site Manager |
| Sorrel Devine | Resident Services | Department Director |
| Kathleen Knight | Resident Services | Family Programs Manager |
| Bartolla Ovalles | Resident Service | High-Rise Program s Manager |
| Nancy Mattes | MIS | MIS Manager |
| Natisha Mitchell | MIS | Network Administrator |
| Lou Tomasso | Finance | Department Director |
| Robert Previte | Finance | Accounting Manager |
| Linda Poole | Finance | Budget Officer |
| James Meehan | Finance | Procurement Officer |
| Jack Costa | Security | Security Operations Manager |
| Paul O'Rourke | Security | Public Housing Officer |
| Scott McGregor | Security | Public Housing Officer |
| Regina Perreault | Security | Security Monitor |
| Michelle Rochio | Resident Selection | Resident Selection Manager |

# WHAT IS THE PHA'S MISSION?

*"Life without meaning cannot be borne. We find a mission to which we're sworn."*
*Unknown*

**The Providence Housing Authority exists to develop and maintain decent, safe and sanitary housing and to address the economic and social needs of residents.**

**The Providence Housing Authority is committed to high standards of public accountability and continuous improvement through management excellence, professional development and customer satisfaction.**

The Providence Housing Authority's mission statement was developed by examining the reason the housing authority exists, the types of programs we deliver and the mandates placed on us by the federal, state and local governments.
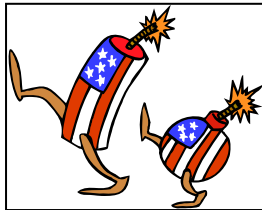
The PHA's first mission statement consisted of solely dealing with the bricks and mortar aspects of property management. It stated that "the PHA provides decent, safe and sanitary housing." This phase was taken directly from the Housing Act of 1937, the federal legislation that created the public housing program and provided a role for the federal government in housing.

In 1994, during the strategic planning process, the staff recognized that additional elements had to be added to the mission statement in order to adequately express our new role and responsibilities. No longer was property management and development our sole reason for existence. Addressing the economic and social needs of residents was added to reflect our holistic approach to working with our residents. In that same planning session the second paragraph was developed to recognize the organization's responsibilities as public servants and our stewardship of taxpayer funds. Further, it indicates an appreciation of our staff and our duty to serve our stakeholders.

# VISION

*"Great minds have purposes; others have wishes."*
*Washington Irving*

**The Providence Housing Authority envisions an organization that strives for and achieves management excellence, public accountability, fiscal responsibility, high levels of stakeholder satisfaction and positive changes in the lives of our clients and our employees.**

**W**e envision a future in which residents are empowered to take control of their own destinies through work experience and personal determination as they move towards a life apart from government dependency. We see public housing as a first step, not a last stop, in the lives of our family residents.

**W**e envision our elderly residents living their senior years in safety and comfort with a generous offering of services to assist them in their later years. We will continue to develop an inventory of programs that aide residents to live in their own apartments and postpone or avoid burdening their families or a life in a nursing home. Allowing such residents to remain in public housing not only positively impacts the residents' quality of life, but often does so at a fraction of the cost of nursing home care.

**W**e envision our disabled residents being accepted in the community and living in dignity. We will alter our properties to provide a barrier-free environment allowing access to all of our services. Where necessary, we envision offering the appropriate services to prepare disabled residents for a life in the general population.

**W**e envision our properties, both scattered site and conventional public housing developments, serving as key components of neighborhood stabilization by creating safe, attractive and well-managed housing that improves the quality of life for residents and neighbors alike.

**W**e envision good and respectful working relations with the Department of Housing and Urban Development that provides us with our operating subsidy and with other federal, state, city and private entities that provide us with financial resources.

**W**e envision a future where employees are empowered to do their jobs efficiently and effectively and in a manner in which they are able to grow

professionally. We envision every employee as being proud to represent and work for this organization.

**W**e envision being a leader in the public housing profession. In terms of administrative management excellence, the PHA will continue to implement our goals management approach to operations. We will track key performance indicators designed to measure the amount of work performed and the quality of our operations. We will measure stakeholder satisfaction and we will strive to maintain a high level of customer and stakeholder relations. We will also strive to ensure financial security for our agency by diversifying income sources and implementing cost saving financial management procedures. We will be vigilant in husbanding our resources through energy management and seeking new technology to be fiscally prudent. We will continue to strive to reach higher levels of productivity and ensure that the PHA is staffed with the highest qualified personnel. Staff will be given the training and resources required to do their jobs successfully. Compensation and benefit levels will continue to remain at competitive levels in the employment market.

The PHA will also work to ensure excellence in Public Housing management and the management of the Section 8 Rental Housing program. This will be done by meeting or exceeding industry standards in key areas such as rent collection, occupancy and unit turn around times and maintaining clear lines of communication with residents. The PHA will also continue our aggressive screening process for new residents and will enforce resident leases to ensure that troublesome residents are dealt with so that they don't destroy the positive communities that we are trying to maintain. We will also continue to employ aggressive security procedures including zero tolerance operations aimed at sending criminals a clear message that no illegal activity will go unpunished at our developments.

For the Section 8 program we will address issues of communication and the education of program participants about what is expected of them under the program. We will aggressively attack fraudulent behavior that drains crucial resources from those for whom they were intended and slowly erodes the public's confidence in the Section 8 program.

The Providence Housing Authority will continue to maintain and improve its inventory of physical assets. This means continuing aggressive maintenance operations and modernization efforts at improving all of our properties. Maintenance and modernization efforts are especially critical for some of our aging developments. Further, proper upkeep and improvements to our properties is essential to ensuring neighborhood stabilization for the communities in which our property is located. We will continue to do our

part to promote healthy and safe neighborhoods.

In terms of service provision the PHA will maintain its focus on resident self-sufficiency in our family developments and for Section 8 residents focusing on health-related issues in our elderly and elderly/disabled developments. Services will be designed to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population with increasingly specific needs. This will require new and innovative approaches to service delivery to ensure that as an outcome of our efforts, family development residents are able to gain employment at a level that allows them to become self-sufficient.

Our new Strategic Plan is being implemented to ensure that the Providence Housing Authority reaches its full potential as an organization and that both staff and residents are able to meet their potential as professionals and citizens. Through successful implementation of this plan we will realize and fulfill our mission statement and will have made the Providence Housing Authority a better place to have lived and work.

# ORGANIZATIONAL MANDATES

**M**andates are defined as the external expectations placed upon an organization. The Providence Housing Authority operates under the dictates of many mandates, both formal and informal. Below is a listing of some of these mandates followed by a more in depth description and commentary.

## Formal Mandates

Formal mandates are external expectations required by law and/or regulation. The Providence Housing Authority is governed by several legal (formal mandates) documents, including:

- R. I. General Laws (45:25 "City Housing Authorities")
- City of Providence Home Rule Charter (Article XI, Section 1107)
- Certificate of Incorporation (Providence Housing Authority)
- By-Laws of the Providence Housing Authority
- Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) with HUD
- Code of Federal Regulations
- Public Housing Management Assessment Program (PHMAP)
- Numerous HUD Handbooks, Notices and Memoranda
- Regulations required by various federal, state, city and private grants applied for and administered by the Housing Authority.

## Informal Mandates

Informal mandates are expectations created by the organization that are not necessarily created by regulation or law, but rather by the expectations of the organization's leadership and staff. The PHA is also governed by several informal (non-legal) mandates created by the policy making Board of Commissioners and management of the housing authority, including:

- 5-Year Goals Management Plan
- Quarterly Performance Indicators
- PHA Established Performance Goals
- Department Standard Operating Procedures

## FORMAL MANDATES

### Rhode Island General Laws (45:25)

Section 45, Part 25 of the R. I. General Laws, also known as the Housing Authorities' Law, establishes the procedure for creating a local housing authority.
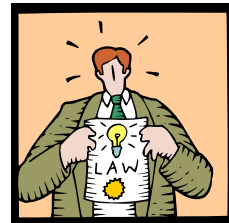
Originally passed in 1939 in response to the US Housing Act of 1937, this section sets forth the requirements a city must meet and maintain to create a local housing authority.

The Housing Authorities' Law also cites the corporate powers of the authority, selection and membership of the board, appointment and terms of commissioners, removal of commissioners, powers of the board, compensation for commissioners, and compliance with federal regulations. It also establishes procedures for cooperation between authorities, exemption from zoning requirements, payments in lieu of taxes, supplemental powers and tax exempt status.

Section 45-25-15, *Powers of authority enumerated*, lists the numerous powers exercised by the authority in undertaking its responsibilities. Some of the enumerated powers of the housing authority include:

> *...investigating living and housing conditions in the city; determine where unsafe and unsanitary housing exists; studying and making recommendations on housing; planning, constructing, improvement and repair of existing housing projects; management of housing projects; to change the city map, to plan, re-plan, zone, or rezone any part of the city or municipality; to lease or rent any of the dwelling or other accommodations or any of the land, buildings, structures or facilities embraced in any housing project and to establish and revise the rents charged.*

This section also states the powers of the housing authority to sell bonds, transfer property, and to borrow money for the purposes of providing housing to low-income residents of the city.

Many of the powers enumerated by this section are enhanced or diminished by federal law, particularly with regard to the establishment of rents. The requirement to maintain a reserve for the payment of outstanding bonds is also obsolete in that the federal government provides the funding to retire outstanding bonds.

Of particular importance to the contemporary housing authority is the ability to sell bonds for the purpose of providing housing for low- and moderate-income families and the exemption from local zoning requirements. These features of the law provide the housing authority with a substantial amount of latitude to develop new housing stock. Recent changes in federal regulations and the federal tax code also provide some impetus to provide more affordable housing in the city.

However, the expansion of housing in the city of Providence may be limited due to several reasons: (1) the city already possess a disproportionate share of assisted housing in the State of Rhode Island, (2) any additional public housing would have a negative impact on the city's tax base due to our tax exempt status, (3) the uncertainty of future federal policy on housing, and (4) the city is practically 'built-out', meaning there are very few new places to construct new, affordable housing.

All these mitigating factors will have to be examined closely before the authority considers future development of its own affordable housing stock.

Several provisions that remain in the Housing Authority law have been changed due to court decisions. For instance, state law gave Tenant Affairs Boards the authority to approve housing authority budgets. This was overturned many years ago, yet, remains in the law.

### R.I General Law 45:27 Housing Authority Bonds and Obligations

This chapter and section of the R.I, General Laws deal with bonding authority of housing authorities. It lists the types of bonds that are issuable, for what purposes and how they are secured.

### Residential Landlord and Tenant Act of 1987 (RIGL 34-18)

This Act affects the PHA in housing our residents. It

primarily affects rules for tenancy and eviction actions. Because the conflict between federal and state regulations on causes for eviction, we have attempted to have this Act amended in order for housing authorities to use federal regulations.

### City of Providence Home Rule Charter

The City of Providence Home Rule Charter, Article XI Boards and Commissions, Section 1107 Providence Housing Authority states:

> "...There shall be a Providence Housing Authority consisting of eleven commissioners, nine of whom shall be appointed by the mayor, and two of whom shall be elected by the city council from among its members. All commissioners shall be residents and domiciliaries of the city."

Section 1107 furthers goes on to enumerate the terms of office for the commissioners, method of filling vacancies, selection of chairman, what constitutes a quorum, compensation of commissioners, and the removal from office of sitting commissioners.

Of particular importance to the housing authority is subsection (c):

> "The Providence Housing Authority shall have all the powers,

*duties and responsibilities in connection with the provisions of adequate housing for the people of the city, and for all other purposes, as set forth in applicable laws of the state and of the federal government, and this Charter, now or hereafter in effect for housing authorities generally or the Providence Housing Authority in particular."*

The Providence Home Rule Charter was updated and adopted on 18 September 1980. The changes from the original charter are not substantial. While the Charter Commission did not grant exclusive powers to the housing authority, it perhaps envisioned a less complex environment. Since adoption of the original charter, several city departments and agencies have been created whose primary responsibilities include housing. Of particular importance is the city's Department of Planning and Development and the Providence Plan. The city has also been responsible for the creation of numerous city-wide and neighborhood-based nonprofit housing corporations that have been active in creating new affordable housing with assistance from the city, R.I. Housing and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

The charter provides very broad and exclusive powers to the housing authority ("...shall have all the powers, duties . . .in the connection with the provisions of adequate housing..."), which can be interpreted in many ways. Certainly it was not the intention of the members of the Providence Home Rule Charter Commission to grant exclusive rights to the housing authority to provide housing for the people of the city. The Charter Commission took place when the city had a Department of Planning and Development, as well as a Mayor's Office of Community Development, which was consolidated with the Planning and Development Department in 1984.

**PHA Certificate of Incorporation**

A City Council resolution authorizing the submittal of the PHA's *Application for Certificate of Incorporation*, dated 11 July 1939, includes a section which states:

> "*That the City Council of the City of Providence, Rhode Island, after having given due consideration to the physical condition and the age of certain buildings in the City, the degree of overcrowding, the light and air available to the inhabitants of such dwelling accommodations, the size and arrangements of the*

*rooms, the sanitary facilities, and the extent to which conditions exist in such dwellings which endanger life or property by fire or other causes, hereby determines, finds and declares in pursuance of the provisions of the Housing Authorities Law of the State of Rhode Island:*

A. *Unsanitary or unsafe inhabited dwelling accommodations exist in this city; and,*
B. *There is a lack of safe and sanitary dwelling accommodations in this City available for all inhabitants thereof.*
C. *There is a need for a housing authority in this City.*

The primary aim of establishing a housing authority in the city of Providence was to alleviate poor housing conditions in the city. The PHA was granted authority to undertake surveys of housing conditions and to make recommendations to the city fathers on how to ameliorate unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

The PHA was established in response to the provisions of the federal Housing Act of 1937. The responsibilities of the housing authority were written to meet the requirements of the Act, that is, they would conduct housing surveys, identify blighted areas, eliminate housing conditions that were detrimental to the health and safety of residents and apply for funding to construct new public housing developments.

The PHA has successfully met this formal mandate from its inception in 1939. Since that time, 14 public housing developments were created throughout the city. The PHA is the largest housing provider to low-income residents in the city and state with 2,606 units. The PHA also administers a rental housing program with approximately 2,500 units and is a partner in two tax credit developments (Lockwood Plaza and Williams-Woods). The mandate of the original Certificate of Incorporation continues to be met.

**By-Laws: PHA Board of Commissioners**
The by-laws of the PHA Board of Commissioners consists of seven articles which explain the structure of the board, the officers/officials of the board and their duties, when and where meetings will take place, finances, and an amendment process. Nothing in the by-laws affects the day-to-day operations of the housing authority. The by-laws of the Board of Commissioners do not pertain to the PHA's operations, nor does it mandate any programs. The by-laws deal exclusively with board operations.

**Annual Contributions Contract (Department of Housing and Urban Development)**
The Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) is an agreement between the housing authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development which guarantees

permanent financing of public housing and certain Section 8 projects. It also agrees to provide the difference between project revenues and debt service on bonded indebtedness through an annual contribution on subsidy paid to the housing authority. As its obligation in the contract, the authority guarantees that it will maintain the low-rent nature of the project.

The ACC consists of two parts. Part I determines the legally authorized amount of funds a housing authority will receive from HUD. Part II, currently, is a lengthy document that consists of five articles on operating a housing authority.

- **Article I** has twenty-six sections dealing with the development of public housing. It includes sections on Efficiency and Economy in Development and Administration and Performance and Payment Bonds.

- **Article II** and has twelve sections dealing with such topics as Leases, Low Rent Character of Projects, and Repair, Maintenance and Replacement.

- **Article III** covers the Provisions Common to Development and Operation and has thirteen sections including: Compliance with the Cooperation Agreement, Insurance Coverage, Books of Accounts and Records, and Financial and Operating Statements.

- **Article IV** deals with the Fiscal Provisions Governing Development and Operation. This section has twenty-three sections and covers such topics as: General Depository Agreement and General Fund, Development Cost, Temporary Notes, Operating Budgets, Debt Service Fund, etc.

- **Article V** consists of eighteen sections and is titled Defaults, Breaches, Remedies, and General Provisions. Topics covered in this section include Conveyance of Title, Continuance of Annual Contributions, Interest of Members and other topics.

The ACC is the "governing document" for operating a public housing authority. However, the ACC is very outdated and has been replaced by a newer, shorter version. Many of the provisions of the old ACC are no longer applicable. While many of the provisions cited in the original ACC are obsolete, the "spirit" of the regulations remains in effect and is monitored by HUD.

**Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)**
The Code of Federal Regulations consists of both statutory and regulatory requirements mandated by the Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The CFR consists of numerous sections dealing with the operation of public housing and Section 8 programs, as well as various other programs managed by the PHA. Most of HUD's regulations are contained in Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

The CFR contains all the existing rules and regulations governing housing authorities. Both the public housing and Section 8 regulations, as well as numerous grant programs are contained in the CFR. It is unclear at this time what effect deregulation will have on the CFR. If housing authorities are to be truly "deregulated", as HUD is always promising, then the CFR should not govern our every action. The CFR will probably contain the broad general guiding principles mentioned above. In the last year, HUD has established several committees comprised of industry professionals to make recommendations on deregulation. However, the truth of the matter is

that the more they speak about deregulation the more we seem to be regulated.

A good example of this was in calendar 2008. It seems HUD dusted off several regulatory items that they had not been monitoring and enforcing. Regulatory requirements such as Section 3 plans and reports, Section 504 reviews and environmental reviews of projects were old requirements that were now being enforced. Unfortunately, it came at a time of diminishing funds and staff to implement them.

A list of titles under 24 CFR relating to public housing and Section 8 operations and administration and governance follows:

Table 2 List of 24 CFR Titles

| Part | Title | Part | Title |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | General HUD Program Requirements; Waivers | 960 | Admission to and Occupancy of, Public Housing |
| 135 | Economic opportunities for low and very-low income persons | 963 | Public Housing – Contracting with Resident-Owned Businesses |
| 902 | Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) | 964 | Tenant Participation and Tenant Opportunities in Public Housing |
| 903 | Agency Plans | 965 | PHA Owned or Leased Projects – General Provisions |
| 904 | Low Rent Housing Homeownership Opportunities | 966 | Public Housing Lease and grievance Procedures |
| 905 | Public Housing Homeownership Programs | 968 | Public Housing Modernization |
| 908 | Electronic Transmission of Required Family Data | 969 | PHA-Owner Projects- Continued Operation as Low-Income Housing After Completion of Debt Service |
| 941 | Public Housing Development | 970 | Public Housing- Demolition and Disposition |
| 943 | Public Housing Agency Consortia and Joint Ventures | 971 | Assessment of Reasonable Revitalization of Certain Public Housing as required by Law |
| 945 | Designated Housing – Public Housing Designated for Occupancy by Disabled, Elderly, or Disabled and Elderly Persons. | 972 | Conversion of Public Housing to Tenant-Based Assistance |

| 984 | Section 8 and Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency Program | 990 | Public Housing Operating Fund |
|---|---|---|---|

## Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS)

PHAS replaced HUD's previous public housing performance management plan known as the Public Housing Management Assessment Plan (PHMAP). PHAS monitors the performance of housing authorities by assessing their performance in four categories: Finance, Management Operations, Housing Portfolio Appearance, and Resident Surveys. All but one of the categories are worth 30% of the total score. The resident surveys are worth 10%. Housing authorities that score below 60 points are considered "troubled." To receive a score of "high-performer" a housing authority has to score 90 points or higher. A score between 60 and 90 rates you as a "stand performer." This housing authority has fluctuated up and down the rating scale. Under the old system, we rated high performer most of the time. Under the newer, more stringent system we have been a standard performer.

Table 3 PHAS Scoring Categories

| High Performer | A score of at least 60% of the points available for each of the four indicators and an overall score of 90% or greater. | PHA will receive incentives such as bonus points in funding competitions, a Certificate of Commendation from HUD and relief from reporting requirements. |
|---|---|---|
| Standard Performer | An overall score of less than 90% but not less than 60%. | Must correct all deficiencies. If the PHA scored between 60% and 70% it will be referred to a HUD area HUB/Program Center and will be required to submit an improvement plan. A Standard Performer with a score above 70% may also be required to submit an improvement plan to correct deficiencies. |
| Troubled Performer | An overall score of less than 60% | PHA will be referred to the TARC for longer-term assistance. There is an appeal process. |

## HUD Required Annual & Five Year Plans

HUD now requires all housing authorities to prepare annual and five-year plans. These plans require housing authorities to have a mission, quantifiable goals and objectives, cite area housing needs, list financial resources, management and admissions policies, capital improvement needs programs and social services and a number of other required components. Annual plans are due 75 days prior to a start of a housing authority's fiscal year.

While this is a relatively new HUD requirement, it was long overdue. The Providence Housing Authority has conducted extensive planning

efforts for some time. The PHA's own strategic planning and needs assessment efforts are considerably more comprehensive than these news plans required by HUD.

## HUD Handbooks, Notices and Memoranda

The Department of Housing and Urban Development issues numerous handbooks, Public Housing Notices and memoranda on the operation of programs it funds. Though too numerous to mention in this space, there is a handbook, notice or memoranda for every program or operation HUD is involved with creating and financing. Several years ago HUD issued a memorandum terminating most of their handbooks. This was considered a first step in their much touted deregulation process. However, while rescinded, HUD suggests housing authorities continue to use them as "guides."

## Conversion to Project-Based Management and Accounting

By far the most recent, significant mandate imposed on housing authorities throughout the country has been the conversion to Project-Based Management and Accounting (PBM&A). PBM&A became a regulatory requirement for all housing authorities with 250 or more units. It was required after recommendations from a study commissioned by Congress to review the cost of operating public housing. It was supposed to recommend changes to the Performance Funding System (PFS), the method of determining a housing authority's subsidy amount. The study, however,

resulted in recommendations – primarily from one person – that HUD change the centralized system of management and accounting for housing authorities to a decentralized project-based method of operations. HUD agreed with the recommendations and housing authorities have been implementing the provisions called for in the regulations. Since the recommendations have been somewhat controversial, several of the changes have been challenged resulting in Congress' intervention to interpret certain provisions. Because of all the changes, this housing authority interrupted the completion of this strategic plan until it was clearer what the final outcome would be. But even at this late date there are changes taking place. In summary, the provisions of the new PBM&A mandates require housing authorities to track expenses by developments, rather than through one budget. While certain provisions have merit, it has proven a costly and burdensome process for very little value added.

## NON-HUD FEDERAL & STATE MANDATES

In addition to the many HUD mandates, the PHA is required to comply with numerous other federal, state and local mandates (rules, regulations, laws, ordinances). These are too numerous to mention in detail, but a list of mandates for two areas alone indicate the enormity of the impact on operating.

## Human Resources, Insurance & Risk Management
- Workers Compensation Insurance

- Housing Authority Insurance Company

- Occupational Safety Hazard Administration

- Federal and State Employment Laws
  - Occupational Safety Act of 1970
  - Family Medical Leave Act of 1993
  - Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974
  - Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - Executive Order 11246 (preventing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin.)
  - Title VII and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990
  - Age Discrimination In Employment Act of 1967
  - Equal Pay Act of 1963
  - Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970
  - Workers Compensation Act of 1910
  - HUD Drug Free Workplace Policy

- Federal Regulatory Agencies
  - United States Department of Labor
  - United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
  - The Federal Office of Contract Compliance Programs

- Employment Standards Administration
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Rhode Island State Laws and Regulations
  - Rhode Island Parental and Family Leave Medical Act
  - Fair Labor Standards Act (Minimum Wage)
  - Rhode Island Right to Know Law
  - Rhode Island General Law 28-32-1 (Workers Compensation)
  - Rhode Island Employment Security Act
  - Rhode Island Temporary Disability Insurance Act

- Rhode Island Regulatory Agencies
  - Rhode Island Human Rights Commission
  - State of Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

**INFORMAL MANDATES**

**Five-Year Goals Management Plan**
The PHA developed a five-year Goals Management Plan in 1995. The plan contained the goals and objectives of the PHA's then six departments, security program, and the executive/administrative office. The plan consisted of 103 goals, 246 objectives and over 1,000 tasks and is monitored on a quarterly basis. A subsequent Goals Management Plan was developed for our Strategic

Plan 2000. It too contained numerous goals, objectives and tasks that were monitored quarterly. The completion of this Strategic Plan will also result in an updated and revised Goals Management Plan.

## Quarterly Performance Indicators

The housing authority has institutionalized a quarterly report of performance indicators the PHA departments are supposed to attain. There were 189 performance indicators covering every area of operation at the PHA in the initial report. As part of this strategic plan, a new *Performance Management & Accountability Report* will be created and monitored quarterly. It will contain the key performance indicators for each department, office and function at the housing authority.

## Monthly Performance Goals and Objectives

Each department has certain performance goals which must be attained on a monthly basis. While many of these same goals and objectives are contained in the Performance Management & Accountability Report, they are vitally important to the successful operation of the PHA on a month-to-month basis. Indicators, such as rent collected, occupancy rates, unit turn-over, and work order completion need to be met on a continual basis. These monthly indicators are tracked through the PHA's Monthly Management Report.

## Departmental Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Each department/office or function at the PHA has an SOP describing their operations in detail. Staff are expected to follow their SOPs in the performance of their duties to achieve their mission.

## Organizational Mandates Summary

The Providence Housing Authority was created and continues to operate under numerous mandates from the federal, state and local levels of government. Each mandate, regardless of its source, directs the Providence Housing Authority to create, maintain, administer and operate affordable housing in the city. Other mandates are really secondary to the primary mandate which was a direct response to the federal Housing Act of 1937. Neither the state general laws nor the city charter has significantly changed our mandate since we were created in 1939. The only change at the state level that has taken place was in the 1970s when the number of commissioners serving on the board was increased from five to eleven.

The federal government has been the source of most of the significant changes as Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development have altered their level of effort and emphasizing different constituencies. Public housing, originally conceived for the short-term housing of the "working poor," now houses long-term, very-low income families with a plethora of social problems. Congress and HUD have responded to this change with a series of on-again, off-again programs to assist these families-usually too little to have a significant impact. Their funding has been insignificant or non-existent to deal

with the problems that have arisen as a result of their shortsightedness. Many of their policies have been blunders that have exacerbated managing public housing.

Housing for the elderly has been transformed from tranquil retirement homes to tense living spaces due to federal mandates requiring the mixing of young disabled with the elderly. Only recently has HUD-at Congress' direction-established a procedure for housing authorities to declare some buildings as elderly only. Congress' and HUD's previous admission preferences also resulted in housing authorities taxing their limited resources to deal with the problems it caused.

The federal authorities must become cognizant of the impact of their legislation and regulations on local housing authorities. With limited funding and more mandates, it is difficult for local housing authorities to meet the demand.

# ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

*"Set your expectations high; find men and women whose integrity and values you respect; get their agreement on a course of action; and give them your ultimate trust."*
*John Akers*

**Values: "A principle standard or quality considered inherently worthwhile or desirable."**

Values are the essence of an organization's philosophy for achieving success. Values provide employees with a sense of common direction and guidelines for day-to-day behavior. Shared mission, values and vision brings people together in a common cause to achieve something important.

The PHA conducted value card exercises with its staff and commissioners to attempt to arrive on a common set of values for the organization. After compiling the work sheets from each department and from the Board of Commissioners, several common values were identified.

**PHA VALUES:**

FAIRNESS

COMPETENCE

TEAMWORK

ACHIEVEMENT

INTEGRITY

QUALITY

SERVICE
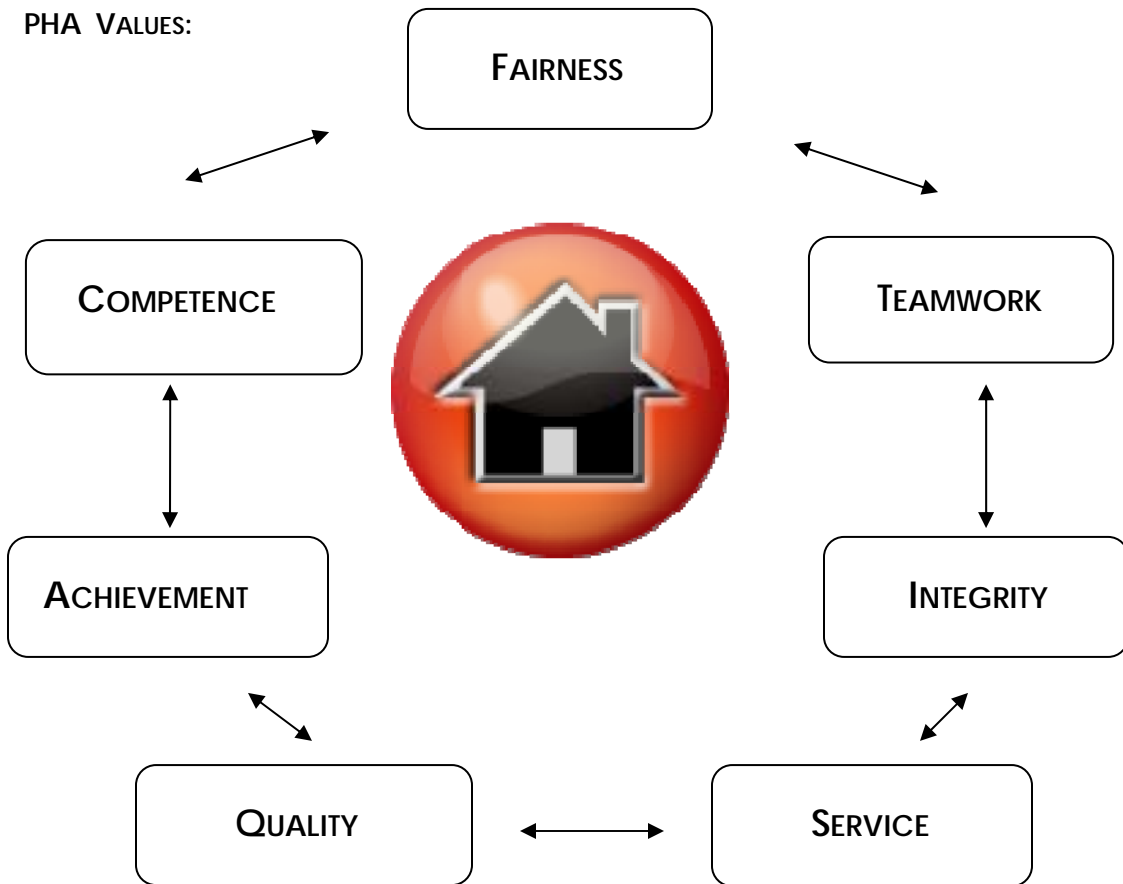
# INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

## BACKGROUND

The Providence Housing Authority (PHA) was created in 1939, two years after the passage of the federal Housing Act of 1937. The PHA was created by state enabling legislation at Rhode Island General Law 45:25, known as the "Housing Authorities Law." It is governed by the Providence Home Rule Charter at Section 1003. (See Mandates section of Plan)



The mission of the PHA at that time was taken straight from the federal act: "to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing." This was a direct result of housing conditions in the city at that period of time. Most of the housing was old, crowded and blighted. This led reformers at the national and local level to push for housing reform and national legislation to deal with the problem. Congress originally fought against "socializing" housing; they preferred the private sector approach. However, as the Great Depression continued and unemployment continued to be high, the nation's first housing bill became law more as a jobs creation bill than for housing.

Providence petitioned the U.S. Housing Authority to become a local housing authority immediately after incorporation. It then borrowed federal funds to hire an executive director and small staff. Their initial charge was to find suitable locations to build the first public housing in Providence. Two sites were selected. The first was in the north end of the city near the old railroad connector yard (the area where Route 146 begins). This would become known as Chad Brown named after the early Rhode Island Brown family, who were traders and merchants. The second site was 25 acres in the Southside of the city in St. Michael's parish. This site would become the Roger Williams Homes development named after the state's founder.

Construction was completed at the Chad Brown development in the early 1940s just as World War II was beginning and the national mobilization began. Shortly after Chad Brown was occupied, Roger Williams became available for occupancy. A third, proposed development – Codding Court – was placed on



hold because of the war. Both Chad Brown and Roger Williams became temporary housing for war

industry workers who worked at nearby plants and shipyards. After the war, both developments provided housing to returning veterans and their families.

Sixty-nine years later, the PHA is still in the business of providing decent, safe and sanitary housing, but it also provides for the social and economic well-being of its residents and staff. It has also experienced a significant shift in the composition of families being assisted.

An early profile of public housing would indicate large, mainly ethnic, extended families with the mother at home and the father working at a low-paying job. Their stay in public housing was short. Today's public housing family is much different from the earliest public housing families. Today's families are smaller and mostly headed by single parent female heads of household, whose primary source of income is a government assistance program.

This has been the resident characteristic since the mid-1960s when the Great Society began.

In the last five years, however, we have seen another slight shift take place. More and more heads of household in our family developments are receiving wages and salaries. This is attributed to welfare reform at the national and state level requiring able-bodied persons to work and limiting the amount of time they can receive government benefits.

The PHA has grown from a two development housing authority to a housing provider with 2,606 units located in 13 developments. Our units come in different shapes and sizes. We own and manage family developments, elderly-only developments, elderly/disabled developments and mixed family/elderly-disabled developments.

**Table 1 PHA Developments**

| Development | Number of Units | Initial Occupancy Date | Location | Building Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chad Brown | 198 | 1942 | Wanskuk | 2-story brick walkup Row houses Family Development |
| Roger Williams | 40 | 1943 | South Providence | 3-story brick walk-up Family Development |
| Codding Court | 120 | 1951 | West End | 3-story brick walk-up Family Development |
| Admiral Terrace | 153 | 1951 | Wanskuk | 2-story brick walk-up Row houses Family Development |
| Hartford Park | 508 | 1953 | Hartford | 11-story concrete high-rise 2-story wood row houses 3-story concrete walkups Mixed Elderly/Disabled & Family |
| Sunset Village | 24 | 1960 | Wanskuk | 2-story brick walkup Elderly Disabled |
| Dexter Manor-I | 200 | 1962 | Downtown | 10-Story brick elevator Elderly Disabled |

| Dominica Manor | 204 | 1966 | Federal Hill | 16-story concrete elevator Elderly-only |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carroll Tower | 194 | 1973 | Smith Hill | 16-story concrete Elderly-only |
| Kilmartin Plaza | 106 | 1973 | West End | 6-story brick Elderly/disabled |
| Parenti Villa | 194 | 1973 | Federal Hill | 16-story concrete Elder/Disabled |
| Dexter Manor-II | 91 | 1984 | Downtown | 9-story brick elevator Elderly/Disabled |
| Scattered Sites | 244 | 1990-1998 | Citywide | Single family & duplex units Family |

Fifty-seven percent (1,473) of the PHA's units are for families, while forty-three percent (1,133) of the units house the elderly and elderly/disabled residents.

In addition to the conventional public housing units, the PHA has 244 units of scattered site housing throughout city. The Scattered Site units consist of single-family and duplex-style detached homes. Taken together the PHA has 3,991 bedrooms housing approximately 6,000 persons.

The PHA has excellent working relationships with the local, state and federal government. They expect the Authority to provide shelter for low- and moderate-income families working within the budgets they prepare. The city doesn't expect to have to subsidize the housing authority with local taxpayer's dollars. They do, however, provide an occasional grant for security at the high-rise developments and recently to extend the hours of operation for youth programs. The federal government expects the PHA to operate within the subsidy provided by the subsidy system that was created in the early 1970s after HUD created rent control for all public housing units.

The PHA's good reputation is not necessarily shared with the residents of Providence. While there are not any empirical studies to point to, many city residents see public housing as crime prone and home for government assisted families. Clearly, there is an image problem with traditional public housing. This is fueled by sensational media coverage about negative events that take place on public housing properties. The image problem is an obstacle for most traditional public housing in the country, as well as here.

Our most recent efforts at expanding the supply of affordable housing has attempted to eliminate the stigma attached to large, dense public housing developments.

In the early 1990s, the PHA embarked on its so-called scattered site housing program. We constructed 252 units of public housing throughout the city. None of the units were larger than a duplex-approximately 28 were single families.

In 2004, we partnered with Winn Development Company of Boston to purchase and renovate Lockwood

Plaza, a 204-unit elderly and family development in the Southside.

In 2006, we partnered, again, with Winn Development to construct 65-units of family housing on the site of the former Roger Williams Homes using Low-Income Tax Credits and state and local assistance. These developments have less of a stigma attached to them due to their size and design.

In future years we will concentrate on eliminating the negative image of all of our housing. This strategic plan will assist us in accomplishing this.

## RESOURCES
### People
The PHA staff consists of 206 full- and part-time employees. There are 166 full-time, permanent employees and 40 part-time staff members, primarily working in Security and Resident Services. Fifty-three percent of the organization's full-time employees are male, while forty-seven percent are women.

The PHA staff is diverse. Fifty-four percent (112) of the staff is White, seventeen percent Black (35), twenty-four percent Hispanic (49), one percent Asia (2), and four percent mixed race.

The average age of the staff is 46 years of age: Male (48) Female (44) Fourteen employees are 60 years of age or older. Seventeen are in their 20s.

Seventeen current employees have worked at the PHA for twenty years

or more, while twenty-nine have worked for the organization for less than five years. Eighty-nine employees (43%) have been employed between eleven and 20 years. There is a great deal of longevity at the PHA. With longevity comes experience. The staff is trained in all aspects of property management and maintenance. The workforce is divided into seven classifications:

**Table 2 Workforce Classification**

| Classification | # Employees |
|---|---|
| Administrative Management | 13 |
| Administrative/Clerical | 71 |
| Professional | 23 |
| Protective Service | 23 |
| Service Maintenance | 41 |
| Skilled Craft | 32 |
| Technical | 3 |
| **TOTAL** | **206** |

The staff has been relatively stable with an average turnover rate for the last five years of 6.8 staff members leaving each year. The stability rate was even higher prior to HUD's shortfall in operating subsidy over the last five years. Due to subsidy shortfalls we have had to terminate employees each year, including this year when 15 staff members were released.

The senior management staff is experienced, stable and been employed at the PHA for significant period of time. The executive director has been in his role for 21 years and has 33-years of public management experience. The Leased Housing director has served in varying capacities at the PHA for

25 years. The Resident Services director has 17 years with the organization, all in that field. The Asset Management director has been at the PHA the shortest period (2-years), but brings more than 40-years experience in the private sector to that role. The Chef Financial Officer has twenty years of PHA experience and 30 years of federal government accounting experience before joining the staff. Each site manager has risen through the ranks-many with experience in other departments. All the foremen have years of experience. All our skilled tradesmen are licensed for their specialties.

**Table 4 PHA Trainings**

| General Category | Total Hours | % of Total |
|---|---|---|
| Computer Training | 74.50 | 3.6% |
| General Management | 1,539.00 | 73.4% |
| HUD / Regulatory | 0.00 | 0.0% |
| Safety Training | 414.00 | 19.7% |
| Technical / Maintenance | 70.00 | 3.3% |
| **Total Training** | **2,097.50** | **100.0%** |

The PHA ensures its workforce is prepared for their assignments by constantly conducting training to improve knowledge, increase skills and to assist them in performing their mission. Over the last ten years the PHA has averaged 4,000 hours of staff training each year. The current year just completed included 2,079.5 hours of instruction in various fields. The majority of the training is in the category of general management.

Training is conducted both in-house and by using third parties.

The PHA offers competitive salaries for our employees. This is confirmed by comparative wage surveys conducted by the Human Services Manager and occasionally by third party firms. Over the last twenty years, the Authority has provided wage increases equal to or greater than the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Information gathered from the Survey of Organizational Excellence, last conducted in January of 2008, indicates that employees are generally satisfied with Job Satisfaction (PHA average 385), Fair Pay (319), Fairness (366), Diversity (372), Benefits (376) and Employment Development (369).

The PHA is governed by an eleven member Board of Commissioners, nine of whom are appointed by the mayor and two by the City Council. All commissioners serve for five-year staggered terms. The Board of Commissioners appoints the Executive Director. The Board is the policy-making body of the housing authority, while the executive director is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the housing authority.

More than half the board has served for more than ten years. The current chairman has served on the board since 1991. The board is diverse with six men and five women. Each brings a different skill set for board success. The board has two lawyers, a Certified Public Accountant, three resident commissioners, a college

## ECONOMICS



For the past two years the national economy has been on a downward trend with some economists predicting a recession. In the fourth quarter of 2007, however, the economy continued to grow at 3.3%. This rate of growth is far from a recession. [Technically, a recession requires two consecutive quarters of no growth.] As has been the case in previous economic downturns, a lot has to do with where you are located. The State of Rhode Island is clearly in a recession.

There are many factors affecting the growth in the economy. The cost of energy has increased substantially with the price of oil passing the one hundred dollar per barrel mark for the first time in history. With the continuing growth of China and India placing pressure on the oil market, and with regulatory restrictions on new drilling in the United States, the outlook for oil prices remain grim. All the added cost for energy is passed on to the consumer and reduces the amount of disposable income available to consumers. Another factor affecting the economy has been the sub-prime mortgage market. Many of these mortgages have risen dramatically in response to the terms of their contract just at the time the economy is contracting and driving the value of housing down. Many of the holders of these mortgages are defaulting and having their mortgages foreclosed. The market has been affected because most of these sub-prime mortgages were "packaged" and sold in lots to financial institutions, who are now suffering the consequences. This has resulted in the temporary tightening of the mortgage and credit markets further slowing down the economy. The Federal Reserve Bank has intervened using fiscal policy to assist the credit markets, the results of which remain to be seen at the time this scan is being prepared. Further exacerbating the problem is that it's an election year. Many investors are reluctant to assume additional risk until they are aware who the next president will be and what his/her tax policies will be.

Substantial oil price increases and all the secondary price increases due to oil have had an affect on the housing authority. The cost of all utilities, material and purchased services have increased, in some cases, higher than the inflation rate placing more pressure on the PHA's Operating Budget.

The impact, so far, has been a reduction of our eligible operating subsidy to 83.4% for CY 2007 and 84.0% for CY 2008.

professor of sociology, an elementary school teacher, a retired public works employee.

On the positive side, HUD has increased funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The trend in increased HAP funding started only after several years of significant reductions (2003-2006). In 2007 HAP funding was increased 5.0% from $12.8 million to $13.5 million. In 2008 funding will increase 6.0% to $14.3 million.

The PHA receives funding from several other sources not listed below, though the amounts are not significant when compared to HUD's funding. Funding for the Authority is derived from the following sources:

**Federal**

The PHA receives the majority of its funds from the federal government, specifically the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Without its annual operating subsidy from HUD, the PHA would not be able to operate. Operating costs per unit month (PUM) are $577 yet, average resident rents are $254 per month. Over the past eleven years costs for every major category in the operating budget has exceeded inflation factor.

**Table 5 Income & Expenses 1997 – 2007 Per Unit Month (PUM)**

| Budget Category | FY2007 PUM | FY1997 PUM | Percent Change | Average Annual Increase/ Decrease |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Operating Income | $289.47 | $149.49 | 94% | 8.5% |
| Operating Expenses | $577.88 | $323.15 | 79% | 7.2% |
| Operating Subsidy | 274.46 | $168.18 | 63% | 5.7% |
| Administration | $87.82 | $48.76 | 80% | 7.3% |
| Utilities | $208.12 | $109.97 | 89% | 8.1% |
| Maintenance | $148.28 | $99.17 | 49.5% | 4.5% |
| General Expenses | $106.80 | $62.35 | 72.6% | 6.6% |

**Table 6 Income & Expenses 2006 - 2007 Per Unit Month (PUM)**

| Budget Category | FY2007 PUM | FY2006 PUM | Percent Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operating Income | $289.47 | $345.58 | - 57% |
| Operating Expenses | $577.88 | $572.24 | 1.0% |
| Operating Subsidy | 274.46 | $265.25 | 3.4% |
| Administration | $87.82 | $101.52 | - 13.8% |
| Utilities | $208.12 | $195.08 | 6.7% |
| Maintenance | $148.28 | $143.64 | 2.8% |
| General Expenses | $106.80 | $113.72 | - 6.2% |

The PHA also receives numerous grants from HUD for various programs, including Resident Opportunity and Supportive Services and other grants to assist our residents. These grants are competitive and require well-written grants with matching funds to compete.

Another large amount of funds from HUD is for our Section 8 Program,

which until recent years has been our single largest dollar amount program.

### State of Rhode Island
The PHA receives various, generally small grants from different departments of state government. These grants are awarded to perform specific duties, including security at high-rise developments, conduct substance abuse education, plus other activities. Over the last ten years these funds have fluctuated

### City of Providence
City government is also a minor source of funding to the Authority. It provides a small stipend to the PHA Board of Commissioners for their meeting expenses, as well as matching funds for the state and PHA-financed elderly high-rise security program. The city budgets $50,000 per annum for these costs. Occasionally, the PHA is awarded a small amount of Community Development Block Grant funds from the city for a specific activity, such as funding youth activities.

### Residents
Rents received from residents are a major source of funding for the Authority. Their rents are based on 30% of their gross income less adjustments. The following illustrates the year-to-year increases in total Dwelling Rent income:

Table 7 Dwelling Rent Income 2004- 2008

| FY | Amount | Pct Chg |
|---|---|---|
| FYE 2004 | $6,459,865 | |
| FYE 2005 | $6,835,010 | 5.9% |
| FYE 2006 | $6,984,053 | 2.2% |
| FYE2007 | $7,101,759 | 1.7% |
| FYE 2008 | $7,140,000 (Est) | < 1.0% |

### Other Funding Sources
This is an area that has increased over the last several years due to a revised HUD policy of not reducing subsidy dollar-for-dollar for other income earned by housing authorities. This has led to a more aggressive approach on the part of the PHA in pursuing new sources of income. Most of the "Other Income" is a result of HUD allowing housing authorities to use 20% of its annual Capital Fund Program (CFP) for operating purposes. The amount of "Other" income has fluctuated greatly from a high of $3.5 million in FY2006 to a low of $1.3 million this most recent year. "Other" Income comes from a variety of sources including income from vending machines, rooftop antennas and services.

The following illustrates the year-to-year increases in "Other Income":

Table 8 Other Income Increases 2004- 2008

| FY | Amount | Pct Chg |
|---|---|---|
| FYE 2004 | $3,178,217 | |
| FYE 2005 | $1,844,625 | - 42.0% |
| FYE 2006 | $3,572,692 | 93.6% |
| FYE 2007 | $1,744,114 | - 51.1% |
| FYE 2008 | $1,452,313 (Est) | 16.7% |

## INFORMATION

The PHA staff has numerous resources available to make informed decisions. The primary source of information for decision-makers is the *Monthly Management Report* (MMR), which is published by the 20th of each month. The MMR contains information about every function undertaken at the PHA along with hundreds of performance indicators. Key indicators such as: unit-turnaround times, rent collections, occupancy, work order completion rates, funds expended, project management status reports etc. are included in this monthly document.

At the end of each fiscal year, the staff prepares an *Annual Report on Operations*. This document aggregates the previous year's indicators and shows a ten-year trend analysis for the indicator.

The staff also prepares numerous documents that contain more detailed information about specific operations or functions at the PHA. A sampling of special reports compiled each year at the PHA includes:

- Unit Turnover Report
- Work Order Report
- Public Housing Resident Characteristics Report
- Section 8 Resident Characteristics Report
- Rent Reasonableness Study (twice/year)
- Energy Consumption & Costs
- Multi-Year Housing Trends Analysis

Most of the information cited above is available on the PHA's recently upgraded website.

The PHA has a common drive on our computer network that contains general information that is available to the PHA Staff. This drive contains information about the PHA's physical plant, unit composition, handicapped units, site maps/layouts, aerial photographs of the developments and much more. This site is particularly helpful in assisting staffs with grant writing responsibilities.

Upon completion of this Strategic Plan, the entire staff will have instant access to its contents through our computer system. Managers will be responsible for constantly updating the status of their goals and objectives on-line.

Also part of the monitoring process will be the creation of a new Performance Management and Accountability Report that will contain all key performance indicators for all PHA functions.

Twice a year, the PHA will publish an employee newsletter to keep the staff informed of changes in our operating environment, profile key personnel, and announce promotions and other information.

Through the use of our own computer email operating system, anyone can instantaneously communicate with colleagues.

The Internet and PHA internal software system has been constantly

upgraded and are an asset to the Authority. The following are functions affecting used by various department/offices at the PHA:

- Interdepartmental communication through Email and report sharing.
- Internet capabilities to access information.
- The eLOCCS system which allows department personnel to query and requisition HUD funding online and reconcile grant budgets.
- Processing financial reports on line to HUD
- Processing the Operating Subsidy on line to HUD
- BankRI online banking site which allows for account inquiries, stop-payment processing, wire transfer of funds and other website functions.
- Purchasing equipment and supplies through the various vendor online sites, saving time and improving efficiency.
- Internet research on new equipment, supplies and alternate vendors, which will save valuable time previously spent phoning, faxing or mailing requests.

The new IMS21 Scanning System makes it easier for personnel Authority-wide to view purchase orders, invoices and backup paperwork, further reducing paper volume.

Because Purchasing is located away from the main administrative offices, purchase orders had to be copied

and filed in order to have easy access to requisitions and packing slips in case of problems. The time spent copying and filing, as well as the space required to store these bulky files has now been completely eliminated. A packing slip or invoice can now be immediately retrieved and printed through the new system.

Later in FY2009 a direct deposit transfer system for the Section 8 Voucher Choice Program monthly housing assistance payments for landlords and tenants will greatly reduce the need for printed checks.

Physical inventories for both supplies and capital equipment have been improved with the addition of handheld computers, which scan attached barcodes and record the information on a data card, which is then downloaded to the AS400 system, eliminating the need for time-consuming data entry. This year the inventory will be decentralized and relocated to each project in accordance with project based management and accounting.

**COMPETENCIES**
The organization does many things well and some things not as well. The best way to measure how well an organization is doing is to ask its key stakeholders.

As part of this Strategic Plan, the PHA conducted fifteen focus groups, surveyed one-third of our public housing and Section 8 residents, one-third of our participating Section 8 landlords, all elected public officials in Providence and more than one hundred other parties that work with

us. We also survey most of our staff with the Survey of Organizational Excellence.

Overwhelmingly, each group surveyed found that the PHA performed well. Only a small minority felt the PHA was not functioning up to capacity. (See Performance section.)

Our identified core competencies and strengths are:

**Strengths:**
- Job knowledge
- Tenure in their current positions
- Clearly defined "career ladders" for most positions
- The amount of training that is made available. Over the last five years the PHA has annually averaged 4,000 hours of staff training
- Effective leadership in many key positions
- Good rapport with their fellow workers
- Good working relationships with outside agencies, particularly at the Office of Executive Director's Office and Resident Services level
- Good relationship with our residents across all departments and offices
- The availability to obtain technical resources to make performing our mission easier. Keeping current with the latest computer technology
- Teamwork and a sense of unity, particularly certain departments

- Longevity of PHA's senior staff many of whom have been here for 20 years or longer
- Good reputation in the community, with local public officials and a majority of our residents
- Excellent reputation with our professional associations
  Over the last fifteen years, the PHA has been the recipient of numerous Awards of excellence and Merit from the national Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the largest organization representing housing authorities and redevelopment agencies in the country. In FY2007, the PHA was awarded three Awards of Excellence and four Awards of Merit.
- Support from the Board of Commissioners
- High ratings from HUD and outside rating agencies, such as Moodys Investors Service. [Over the years, since HUD started their metrics rating system, the PHA has done well, including scoring "high performer" over several years. Over the last several years, the PHA's rating has dropped to the 80s mostly due to HUD's proration of our operating subsidy. This reduction affected several key financial performance indicators resulting in a lower score using HUD's flawed, but adequate rating system. A more important rating system is that used by Moody's

Investor's Services, which rates housing authorities before they issue bonds. They spend several days reviewing the organization's management practices, finances, planning processes and building portfolio.

In 2001, Moody's conducted their first management Quality Review of the PHA and awarded it its highest rating MQ-1 (Management Quality-1). In May of 2007, Moodys conducted a follow-up review of key metrics at the PHA and, again, awarded us an MQ-1 rating.

- The staff is generally satisfied working at the PHA. Each year, since 1999, the staff has been surveyed using the Survey of Organizational Excellence developed by the University of Texas. This survey of 86 questions provides a rating on employee perceptions of the workplace. The survey responses are broken down into five dimensions (Work group, Accommodations, Organizational Features, Information and Personal). Each dimension is further broken down to measure, what they call, constructs. The survey provides a numerical score for each of the twenty constructs. A score of 300 or higher indicates that the employee perceives that indicator as more positive than negative. A score less than 300 indicates a feature that is

perceived as more negative than positive.

The survey was last administered in January 2006 to 85% of our workforce. Everyone in each department was surveyed except for Facilities Management, which is our largest department. Approximately 85% of those working in that department were surveyed.

The report showed that Authority-wide the PHA had scores all exceeding 300 indicating all areas were considered more positive than negative. In fact, all but one score exceeded 350 with only one score, Fair Pay, scoring 307. This was expected since this was a year that our employees did not receive pay increases and co-payments for health care were initiated. [The Survey of Organizational Excellence is presented in greater detail elsewhere in this plan.]

- Production of quality reports and other work products
- Ability to plan strategically
- Ability to meet goals and objectives in a timely manner

At the closeout of the last strategic plan, the PHA had achieved a goals/objectives completion rate of 96%. Those objectives not achieved were due to changed circumstances, or there was no longer a need to accomplish them. No

unmet objectives were a major issue.
- Adequate resources
- Flexibility, adaptable to change

The PHA is not without weaknesses:
  o Unit turnaround could be faster
  o The housing portfolio is not at acceptable levels at all our developments
  o Our operating reserve needs to be replenished, which is difficult when HUD is not funding at full subsidy. In fact, had the PHA been funded at 100% of eligible operating subsidy, the PHA reserve level would be more than adequate.
  o Not serving as many residents we would like to serve through our Resident Services Department.
  o Poor fund raising
  o Not enough board involvement with oversight

## Present Strategies
**Overall:**
Our present strategy has been, and will continue to be, to follow our Strategic Plan and its associated documents. The plan contains all the formal mandates we are required to comply with, as well as informal mandates we have placed on ourselves.

The Strategic Plan is a long and arduous process, but, once completed, provides the organization with the blueprint to complete our mission. The Plan will contains hundreds of goals and objectives for the PHA staff and board to accomplish. To assist us in completing these efforts, a *Performance Monitoring Report* will indicate which goals and objectives are on schedule or where we have to reallocate resources. It will also assist us in determining where changes in our plan must take place to conform to our constantly changing work environment.

The PHA has had to deal with funding reductions from HUD over the last 12-years, with serious reductions over the past two years. These reductions of over four and one half million dollars over the past two years, has resulted in the PHA'S Operating Reserve being reduced to less than one month's operating costs (as determined by HUD's calculations) and notification of near Substandard Financial performer from HUD. A plan to cut costs has been developed, which is expected to improve our financial condition by more than $1.0 million.

Maximizing funding sources, reducing costs and employing creative methods of financing will be a priority in the next several years. Also, there is a continuous effort to minimize and physically relocate inventory to the development sites under control of the Project Managers. The decentralization is in accordance with Project-Based/Asset Management and is supposed to work better in controlling the inventory and make optimum use of our space. [We

believe otherwise.] During the past year inventories have been pared down by getting rid of many obsolete items and making a greater attempt to keep satellite warehouses at lower levels. With the restrictions placed on Purchasing, as a result of funding cuts, an even greater attempt has been made to control warehouse inventories. This has been extremely challenging as the demand for supplies has increased with HQS inspections.

## Performance
**Results:**
The PHA has been successful in accomplishing its mission and completing the many goals and objectives it set for itself in the last Strategic Plan.

The PHA staff successfully completed 96% of the 117 goals, 432 objectives and 2,677 tasks contained in the last strategic plan.

**Public Housing Assessment System:**
Performance is measured in many ways. The Department of Housing and Urban Development measures housing authorities through their *Public Housing Assessment System* (PHAS). This system measures housing authorities in four functional areas:

- Physical inspection of properties
- Financial measures
- Management operations
- Resident surveys

Each of these indicators is worth 30% of the aggregate score, except for the resident survey, which is worth 10%.

Since HUD has been providing scores for housing authorities, the PHA has performed well receiving High Performer or Standard Performer scores.

**Table 9 PHAS Scores FY1999-2007**

| FY | Total Score | Physical | Management | Financial | Resident Survey |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FY2007 | 77 | 21 | 29 | 18 | 9 |
| FY2006 | 81 | 22 | 28 | 22 | 9 |
| FY2005 | 81 | 24 | 28 | 20 | 9 |
| FY2004 | 88 | 24 | 29 | 29 | 6 |
| FY2003 | 93 | 26 | 28 | 30 | 9 |
| FY2002 | 92 | 26 | 28 | 29 | 9 |
| FY2001 | 86 | 22 | 29 | 26 | 9 |
| FY2000 | 79 | 14 | 28 | 28 | 9 |
| FY1999 | 88 | 20 | 30 | 29 | 10 |

The FY2007 score is the lowest we have received since 1999. There are several factors that can be attributed to the lower score in FY2007. [At the time this report was being written, HUD was collecting information to award the FY2008

score.] The relatively low score for "Finance" is due to our low operating reserve level, which is primarily due to HUD not funding the operating subsidy at 100%. As has been stated elsewhere in this report, the score would have been high

had we received our eligible subsidy at 100%.

Physical inspections depend on the whim of the inspector. Over the years we have seen different inspectors score the same properties at different levels. We are at the mercy of the inspector who are supposed to rate their inspections according to HUD standards and inspection protocol. Over the last two years, the PHA has contracted its annual inspections to a private firm, U.S. Inspection Group (USIG) from Pennsylvania. They, too, use HUD's inspection protocol and are trained on the same system HUD created. They have rated our properties higher than the HUD inspectors. The only difference between the two inspection groups is that the HUD inspectors review a representative sample of our units, while USIG inspects every unit, common area and system.

**Section 8 Management Assessment Plan (SEMAP):**
Another measuring tool used by HUD to measure PHA performance is the SEMAP. SEMAP is a performance measurement system for the housing authority's Section 8 Program. It consists of scores in 15 performance areas. The PHA received the maximum score available over the last five years. In one year, FY2005, we received more than the maximum score due to bonus points.

**Table 10 SEMAP Scores FY2003-2007**

| Fiscal Year | Score |
|---|---|
| 2007 | 100 |
| 2006 | 100 |
| 2005 | 104 |
| 2004 | 100 |
| 2003 | 100 |

The most important score a housing authority can receive is from its key stakeholders. Following are a series of tables indicating the responses from our public housing residents, Section 8 participants and Section 8 landlords. These tables indicate the responses from key questions asked in our survey of stakeholders.

**Table 11 Public Housing Residents: Survey Responses**

|  | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Satisfied/ Very Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied | Does Not Apply |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unit/home | 163 (31.2%) | 281 (53.7%) | 444 (84.9%) | 53 (10.1%) | 21 (4%) | 74 (14.1%) | 5 (1%) |
| Development / building | 98 (22.5%) | 217 (49.9%) | 315 (72.4%) | 74 (17%) | 27 (6.2%) | 101 (23.2%) | 19 (4.4%) |
| Neighbor-hood | 98 (22.6%) | 231 (53.2%) | 329 (75.8%) | 59 (13.6%) | 24 (5.5%) | 83 (19.1%) | 22 (5.1%) |

**Table 12 Section 8 Residents: Responses to Survey**

| Overall Section 8 Issues | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree Somewhat | Agree | Strongly Agree | Disagree / Strongly Disagree | Agree / Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with the way the PHA's Section 8 staff treats me. | 5 2.5% | 5 2.5% | 28 13.7% | 75 36.8% | 91 44.6% | 10 4.9% | 166 81% |
| I feel that the staff members are qualified to do their jobs. | 6 2.9% | 5 2.5% | 23 11.3% | 89 43.6% | 81 39.7% | 11 5.3% | 170 83.3% |
| The staff shows concern for my situation when I contact them. | 7 3.5% | 11 5.4% | 37 18.3% | 70 34.7% | 77 38.1% | 18 8.9% | 147 71.7% |
| I am satisfied with the speed that my questions are answered. | 6 2.9 | 15 7.4 | 38 18.6 | 85 41.7 | 60 29.4 | 21 10% | 145 70.7% |
| The Section 8 staff is courteous and polite. | 5 2.5% | 7 3.4% | 33 16.2% | 94 46.1% | 65 31.9% | 12 5.8% | 159 78% |
| The Section 8 staff is able to answer my questions. | 4 2% | 7 3.4% | 38 18.7% | 87 42.9% | 67 33% | 11 5.4 | 154 75.8% |
| I receive accurate responses to my questions. | 6 3% | 5 2.5% | 32 15.8% | 90 44.6% | 69 34.2% | 11 5.3% | 159 78% |

**Table 13 Section 8 Landlords: Response to Survey**

| Overall Satisfaction | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree Somewhat | Agree | Strongly Agree | Disagree / Strongly Disagree | Agree / Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with the way the PHA's Section 8 staff treats me. | 4 3.4% | 4 3.4% | 9 7.6% | 60 50.4% | 42 35.3% | 8 6.7% | 102 86% |
| I feel that the staff members are qualified to do their jobs. | 4 3.3% | 1 .8% | 14 11.8% | 67 56.3% | 33 27.7% | 5 4.2% | 100 84% |

| | | | | | | Disagree/ Strongly Disagree | Agree/ Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The staff shows concern for my situation when I contact them. | 7 5.8% | 5 4.2% | 15 12.5% | 59 49.2% | 34 28.3% | 12 10% | 93 78% |
| I am satisfied with the speed that my questions are answered. | 5 4.3% | 7 6% | 15 13% | 62 53.4% | 27 23.3% | 12 10% | 89 76.7% |
| The Section 8 staff is courteous and polite. | 4 3.4% | 0 0% | 18 15.5% | 65 56% | 29 25% | 4 3.4% | 94 81% |
| The Section 8 staff is able to answer my questions. | 6 5% | 0 0% | 14 11.8% | 68 42.9% | 31 26% | 6 5% | 99 83% |
| I receive accurate responses to my questions | 5 4.2% | 1 .8% | 19 16% | 65 54.6% | 29 24.4% | 6 5% | 94 78.9% |

**Table 14 Responses to Survey: Section 8 Landlords**

| Telephone Service | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree Somewhat | Agree | Strongly Agree | Disagree/ Strongly Disagree | Agree/ Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The telephone is always answered by the third ring. | 9 7.9% | 21 18.4% | 25 21.9% | 45 39.5% | 14 12.3% | 30 26.3% | 59 51.7% |
| I am generally connected to the appropriate staff member. | 6 5.2% | 8 6.9% | 26 22.4% | 58 50% | 18 15.5% | 14 12% | 76 65.5% |
| The phone often rings without connecting me to a staff member | 8 7.4% | 39 36.1% | 27 25% | 26 24.1% | 8 7.4% | 47 43.5% | 34 31.4% |
| Phone messages are returned within 24 hours. | 9 8% | 11 9.8% | 24 21.4% | 52 46.4% | 16 14.3% | 20 17.8% | 68 60.7% |

**Table 15 Response to Survey: Section 8 Landlords**

| Inspection and Follow-Ups | Poor | Fair | Neutral | Good | Excellent | Poor / Fair | Good / Excellent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How would you rate the overall performance of PHA Inspectors? | 4 3.4% | 4 3.4% | 16 13.4% | 61 51.3% | 34 28.6% | 8 6.7% | 95 79.8% |
| How would you rate courtesy of the staff? | 4 3.4% | 2 1.7% | 11 9.4% | 65 55.6% | 35 29.9% | 6 5% | 100 85.4% |
| Ability of staff members to answer your questions. | 4 3.4% | 2 3.3% | 11 9.3% | 61 51.7% | 40 33.9% | 6 5% | 101 85.5% |

**Moody's Investment Services Management Review:**

In 2002 and again in 2008 Moody's Investor's Service conducted a thorough review of the PHA's operations. Much like HUD's review they examined our financial statements, management operations and reviewed the housing portfolio.

In 2008, as they had in 2002, Moody's awarded the PHA its highest Management Quality rating, MQ-1.

**Independent Public Audit (IPA):**

The PHA was again did not have any findings when a financial audit was conducted by an Independent Public Audit (IPA). This was the 12the consecutive year the PHA has had a clean audit.

**TRENDS**

Funding for the Low Rent Public Housing Program has continued to

decrease, while funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program has increased over the past two years. The decrease in the Low Rent Program is not only a percentage decrease of eligible subsidy because of cuts in appropriated funds, but are also due to other factors such as eliminating funding for add-ons such as utilities rate increases. The PHA must now absorb these costs formerly funded by HUD at a year-end adjustment.

As stated elsewhere in this scan, the major trend has been toward Asset-Based Management, which has added time-consuming, burdensome work for little value added.

Another constant tend at the PHA over the last several years, and directly related to the shortfall in funding, has to due with the staff doing more with less. While fixed costs have continued to rise, operating subsidies have been

declining. This has already had an impact on operations. If it continues, it will severely impact direct operations and services to our residents.

## SHARE OF MARKET

The Providence Housing has 2,606 units of public housing and approximately 2,600 units of Section 8. This makes us the largest provider of public housing and Section 8 in the state. There are 25 public housing authorities in Rhode Island with a total of 9,553 public housing and 8,223 Section 8 units. This results in Providence having 27% of the public housing market in RI and 34% of the Section 8 market.

The affordable housing market is not only operated by housing authorities, however. There are thousands of Section 8 units owned and operated by private forms providing affordable housing. The state's Housing Plan, using 2004 figures, states there are 34,874 units of low- and moderate-income (LMI) units in the state provided through public housing, HUD Section 8, HUD 202 and 811 programs, group home beds and R.I. Housing. The R.I. Housing numbers represent the units they have financed and not operated by that organization. The 34,874 LMI units cited are 8.19% of the 425,610 total housing units in the state. However, the LMI units are much greater. Left out of the equation are Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) administered by local housing authorities. A report prepared by this housing authority in March 2008 indicates there are 8,223 units of Section 8 vouchers in the state. This

would increase the number of LMI units to 43,000, or 10% of all units. The state has a goal of having every community (city/town) having ten percent of their units as low- and moderate-income.

In order to maintain its competitive advantage in the affordable housing market, the PHA will need to continue to improve its "windshield" appeal of our properties and continue to provide services to our residents.

Competition has not been that demanding since the beginning of the affordable housing crisis starting in the early 2000s. With a shortage of affordable housing units, a growing low-income population and the crowding out by students at Providence's many colleges, the PHA does not have a shortfall in clients. The public housing wait list has more than 2,000 applicants on its pre-application and regular waiting lists. The Section 8 wait list also has more than 1,000 applicants.

## STABILITY

The PHA is a stable organization. The average age of the staff is 46 years of age: Male (48) Female (44) Fourteen employees are 60 years of age or older. Seventeen are in their 20s.

Seventeen current employees have worked at the PHA for twenty years or more, while twenty-nine have worked for the organization for less than five years. Eighty-nine employees (43%) have been employed between eleven and 20 years. There is a great deal of

longevity at the PHA. With longevity comes experience.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the senior staff has served at the PHA for a long period of time. Half the Board of Commissioners has served more than ten years.

## EFFICIENCY
In the past, the cost effectiveness of has not been as high as we would have liked. However, as funds have been reduced and restructuring has taken place, we have become more of a lean organization. In the upcoming Performance Management Plan, we will introduce efficiency measures to track our efficiency.

## FLEXIBILITY
The Authority is highly adaptable and willing to change with the work environment. Whether centrally-based or decentralized, the PHA staff has been able to perform its mission, with few exceptions. It has been extremely difficult at times due to the severe reductions in operating subsidies and the rising cost of conducting business. Reducing benefits to employees and not awarding raises, does not encourage the better employees to stay with the organization. We have been fortunate that we have not lost more staff members to the private market and other governmental agencies.

## POLITICAL
The PHA is under the political influence of government at all levels: federal, state and local. The impact of federal budgets has the greatest political influence on the housing authority. As stated elsewhere in this situational analysis, public housing competes for funds with every other federal program. Some programs are more popular than others. The PHA's charge is to prove to the politicians that their (our) money is being used effectively, efficiently and for a good purpose. If we fail to do this, we will be relegated to the bottom of the appropriations list with even fewer dollars to complete our mission.

The problem with this model is that public housing authorities are prisoners to the federal budget process since they instituted rent control in 1968. Funding decreases are felt locally and the lack of services at a high level will result in a deterioration of our properties. The blame for this inevitable deterioration, unless funding is restored, will be placed at the local level.

# EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

**FORCES/TRENDS**

**People**

The day-to-day business of the Authority is impacted by numerous persons and organizations. The President, Congress, HUD, state and local government, the judicial system, landlords, residents and vendors all affect Authority business in one way or another. Some have more of an impact than others due to their financial impact on the PHA. Regardless of their impact, all stakeholders have an influence on the organization and the programs we operate.

**President**

The impetus for HUD funding starts with the President and his Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The OMB works with each department of government to arrive at a budget that meets the broad parameters given to them by OMB at the start of the budget process. It provides guidance concerning new initiatives, if any, what the government's priorities are and what type and amount of reductions/increases the president is seeking. OMB works with each department to craft a final request that becomes the president's budget.

In February, the budget is forwarded to the Congress and the various committees conduct hearings on the proposed budget. There are twelve Appropriations subcommittees in the House and the Senate, which review their area of specialty. The HUD budget is reviewed by the subcommittees on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies. Many times the House and Senate Committees add to or subtract amounts the president is seeking. Many times, a bill is not reported out of committee and approved by both the House and Senate in time for a new fiscal year. When this takes place, a Continuing Resolution is passed allowing for spending to legally take place at the previous year's approved funding level.

The president and his Cabinet have many competing demands for federal dollars. With two simultaneous wars taking place and – at this time – a slowing of the economy, it is difficult to meet all the competing demands. Public housing has never been a "popular" program going back to its creation with the passage of the 1937 Housing Act. It's not popular now. That's why it is so easy to prorate our operating subsidy by 16% for two years in a row.

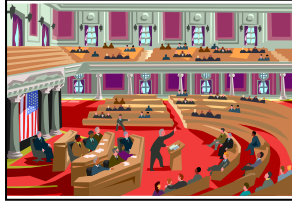In the most recent budget year, the Congress restored $200.0 million in

Operating Subsidy to the public housing budget. Had that not taken place, our operating subsidy would have been even less than the 84% we received.

### Congress

Congress has not been overly generous in funding public housing and its supporting programs any more than the president. But, due to the efforts of a few powerful committee chairs, funds have been added to budget.

Although Congress gained a slim Democratic majority in both the House and Senate in the last mid-election, they have had little, if any, impact on HUD's funding. Congress prefers to create new programs when parties change power in order to have their own imprimatur on a bill or new initiative.

With this being a presidential election year, all three of the remaining candidates have position papers on housing on their websites, but few are specific about details or public housing in particular.

The presumptive Republican candidate John McCain is unpredictable in many ways. He's considered a party "maverick" in that he has not always followed his party's line. He is, however, a compromiser, who will cross "party lines." This may prove helpful in the next Congress should he be successful in his bid for the presidency.

The two Democrat candidates Senators Clinton and Obama are traditional, big spending, liberals who favor increases in federal spending for social programs and housing. However, their concerns about public housing remain a mystery. They will probably spend their attention on the sub-prime mortgage mess that has created so much turmoil and problems. Senator Obama may be the most sympathetic to public housing in that he was an organizer in public housing developments in Chicago for a short time.

### Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The department is the principal advocate for housing in the federal government; although, some would think that statement is debatable. In any case, the department is the primary dispenser of more than $35 billion in housing or housing-related assistance in the country.

The Secretary of HUD works within the parameters established by OMB when preparing their budget. All new initiatives are considered based on the availability of funds and the potential impact of the program. HUD will be actively involved with the so-called sub-prime mortgage market and the financial problems it created. Since this is a high priority, it will receive the bulk of the department's attention at the highest levels.

HUD's budget competes with all the other departments of government

when it is forwarded to the Congress (see above).

HUD's major impact on housing authorities, besides funding, is its regulatory and oversight powers over us. They are the primary agency that deals with us on our budget, programs and residents. They set the rent and provide our operating subsidy. One of the most recent changes instituted by HUD is the mandated conversion to a project-based accounting system and asset management for public housing. This will have a significant effect on the way housing authorities do business.

### Local Government



The PHA works hand-in-hand with local government. The mayor of Providence appoints the Board of Commissioners and the Executive Director is appointed by the Board of Commissioners for a term appointment.

City officials have a strong stake in the public housing community. The condition of the housing authority's properties is a reflection on the city as a whole. Many complaints about public housing are directed to City Hall, not HUD. This is one of many reasons that city government is a strong partner with the PHA. If federal funding is reduced dramatically, where it affects the amount of maintenance that is performed or the service levels provided, it makes the local government look bad, not the federal government.

The PHA has many partnerships with local government through the Cooperation Agreement, an agreement required by HUD between the local government and the housing authority. The agreement plainly states and requires that the city provide the same level of services to public housing resident/developments as they do for the rest of the city. This housing authority is especially fortunate in that the Police Department actually goes above and beyond the Cooperation Agreement by assigning eight police officers to public housing. The city's public works department also provides salt and sand during snow storms for our vehicles when plowing.

The city provides meeting expense stipends to Commissioners appointed to the Board of Commissioners and provides a 25% matching grant for elderly security. The city budgets $50,000 annually for these two purposes with 95% of the funds going to the matching grant. Another source of occasional funding comes from the city's federal Community Development Block Grant funds for social programs.

The PHA has a good working relationship with the city. The executive director serves on several committees appointed by the mayor and two Providence City Council members are board members of the housing authority.

## Judicial

The judiciary primarily affects the PHA at the state level through the district court system where we file evictions for residents who have not paid rent or have violated their lease. Dealing with the district court, particularly certain judges has been problematic. With the state undergoing an affordable housing crisis, most of the judges are reluctant to evict a family or individual from housing. This may be well-meaning, but it has a financial impact on the housing authority's bottom line. Many of these families that are given a "second chance" revert back to their non-rent paying habits and when finally evicted, have a large outstanding rent (and usually damage and legal charges) that is not recoverable. In FY 2007, for instance, the PHA had to write-off more than $150,000 in uncollectible rent.

Other matters affecting us through the court are the occasional law suit brought against the PHA for some perceived injustice. These have been rare over the last ten years. However, in the early 1990s the PHA was in US Federal Court several times at great expense.

## Landlords

The PHA administers more than 2,400 units of Section 8 through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, Moderate Rehab program and 11-B program. All of these units are privately owned by individual landlords. In return for renting to low-income participants in the program, landlords receive a monthly housing assistance payment that pays the difference between what the resident pays (30% of their net income) and the contract rent.

Most of the landlords are responsible and good partners. The vast majority of them are pleased with the program. The PHA's latest survey (2008) indicated that 86% of those surveyed stated that they were *"satisfied with the way the PHA staff treats me."*

## Residents

Residents are the PHA's primary stakeholders. Residents are considered our customers. Our "customers" have high expectations. They expect us to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing in return for their rental payment. Rents are affordable. The average rent at the PHA is $252 a month, less than half of our monthly operating costs.

The composition of our resident population in public housing has changed dramatically over the last 60 years. Initially, public housing was short-term, with most residents moving out within a few years. Most households were extended families of working poor. In the early years, the families were almost exclusively White. Today it's much different. While only 5% of Providence Housing Authority residents remain for more

than 20-years, many families stay much longer than the original residents. Families are mostly female-head of household receiving some type of public assistance (TANF or SSDI). Approximately 95% are minorities.

### Vendors

Good, reputable vendors are invaluable to the PHA. The Procurement Officer seeks the lowest prices for supplies as well as cultivating a good working relationship with vendors, which usually results in better service. During times of poor cash flow, vendors may be more flexible with a steady, reliable customer on friendly terms. Our long-time record of prompt payment of invoices makes us a particularly attractive customer. Because of good PHA/vendor relationships these vendors have been extremely helpful in supplying additional information and research apart from purchasing. In particular, one appliance-parts vendor has been very helpful in buying back items in our inventory that are no longer useful.

### ECONOMICS

For the past two years the national economy has been on a downward
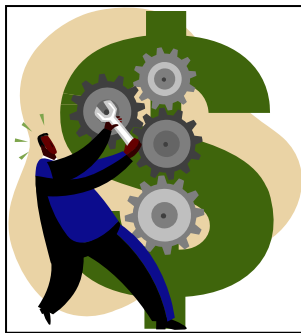


trend with some economists predicting a recession. In the first quarter of 2008, however, the economy continued to grow (3.3%) [Technically, a recession requires two consecutive quarters of no growth.] There are many factors affecting the growth in the economy. The cost of energy has increased substantially with the price of oil passing the one hundred dollar per barrel mark for the first time in history. With the continuing growth of China and India placing pressure on the oil market, and with regulatory restrictions on new drilling in the United States, the outlook for oil prices remain grim. All the added cost for energy is passed on to the consumer and reduces the amount of disposable income available to consumers. Another factor affecting the economy has been the sub-prime mortgage market. Many of these mortgages have risen dramatically in response to the terms of their contract just at the time the economy is contracting and driving the value of housing down. Many of the holders of these mortgages are defaulting and having their mortgages foreclosed. The market has been affected because most of these sub-prime mortgages were "packaged" and sold in lots to financial institutions, who are now suffering the consequences. This has resulted in the temporary tightening of the mortgage and credit markets further slowing down the economy. The Federal Reserve Bank has intervened using fiscal policy to assist the credit markets, the results of which remain to be seen at the time this scan is being prepared. Further exacerbating the problem is that it's an election year. Many investors are reluctant to assume additional risk

until they know who will be president and what their tax policies will be.

The Substantial oil price increases and all the secondary price increases due to oil have had an affect on the housing authority. The cost of all utilities, material and purchased services have increased, in some cases, higher than the inflation rate placing more pressure on the PHA's Operating Budget. The impact, so far, has been a reduction of our eligible operating subsidy to 83.4% for CY 2007 and 84.0% for CY 2008.

On the positive side, HUD has increased funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The trend in increased HAP funding has started only after several years of significant reductions (2003-2006). In 2007 HAP funding was increased 5.0% from $12.8 million to $13.5 million. In 2008 funding will increase 6.0% to $14.3 million.

The PHA receives funding from several other sources not listed below because the amounts are not significant compared to HUD's funding. Funding for the Authority is derived from the following sources:

**Federal**

The PHA receives the majority of its funds from the federal government, specifically the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Without its annual operating subsidy from HUD, the PHA would not be able to operate. Operating costs per unit month (PUM) are $577 yet, average resident rents are $254 per month. Over the past eleven years costs for every major category in the operating budget has exceeded inflation factor.

**Table 1 Income & Expenses FY1997–2007 Per Unit Month (PUM)**

| Budget Category | FY2007 PUM | FY1997 PUM | % Change | Average Increase/ Decrease |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Operating Income | $289.47 | $149.49 | 94% | 8.5% |
| Operating Expenses | $577.88 | $323.15 | 79% | 7.2% |
| Operating Subsidy | 274.46 | $168.18 | 63% | 5.7% |
| Administration | $87.82 | $48.76 | 80% | 7.3% |
| Utilities | $208.12 | $109.97 | 89% | 8.1% |
| Maintenance | $148.28 | $99.17 | 49.5% | 4.5% |
| General Expenses | $106.80 | $62.35 | 72.6% | 6.6% |

**Table 2 Income & Expenses FY2006-2007 Per Unit Month (PUM)**

| Budget Category | FY2007 PUM | FY2006 PUM | Percent Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operating Income | $289.47 | $345.58 | - 57% |
| Operating Expenses | $577.88 | $572.24 | 1.0% |
| Operating Subsidy | 274.46 | $265.25 | 3.4% |
| Administration | $87.82 | $101.52 | - 13.8% |
| Utilities | $208.12 | $195.08 | 6.7% |
| Maintenance | $148.28 | $143.64 | 2.8% |
| General Expenses | $106.80 | $113.72 | - 6.2% |

The PHA also receives numerous grants from HUD for various programs, including Resident Opportunity and Supportive Services and other grants to assist our residents. These grants are competitive and require well-written grants with matching funds to compete.

Another large amount of funds from HUD is for our Section 8 Program, which until recent years has been our single largest dollar amount program.

## State of Rhode Island

The PHA receives various, generally small grants from different departments of state government. These grants are awarded to perform specific duties, including security at high-rise developments, conduct substance abuse education, plus other activities. Over the last ten years these funds have fluctuated.

## City of Providence

City government is also a minor source of funding to the Authority. It provides a small stipend to the PHA Board of Commissioners for their meeting expenses, as well as matching funds for the state and PHA-financed elderly high-rise security program. The city budgets $50,000 per annum for these costs. Occasionally, the PHA is awarded a small amount of Community Development Block Grant funds from the city for a specific activity, such as funding youth activities.

## Residents

Rents received from residents are a major source of funding for the Authority. Their rents are based on 30% of their gross income less adjustments. The following illustrates the year-to-year increases in total Dwelling Rent income:

**Table 16 Resident Rent Trends**

| FY | Amount | % Change |
|----|--------|----------|
| FYE 2004 | $6,459,865 | |
| FYE 2005 | $6,835,010 | 5.9% |
| FYE 2006 | $6,984,053 | 2.2% |
| FYE2007 | $7,101,759 | 1.7% |
| FYE 2008 | $7,140,000 (Est) | < 1.0% |

## Other Funding Sources

This is an area that has increased over the last several years due to a revised HUD policy of not reducing subsidy dollar-for-dollar for other income earned by housing authorities. This has led to a more aggressive approach on the part of the PHA in pursuing new sources of income. Most of the "Other Income" is a result of HUD allowing housing authorities to use 20% of its annual Capital Fund Program (CFP) for operating purposes. The amount of "Other Income" has fluctuated greatly from a high of $3.5 million in FY2006 to a low of $1.3 million this most recent year. "Other Income" comes from a variety of sources including income from vending machines, rooftop antennas and services.

The following illustrates the year-to-year increases in "Other Income":

**Table 17 "Other Income" FY2004-2008**

| FY | Amount | % Change |
|---|---|---|
| FYE 2004 | $3,178,217 | |
| FYE 2005 | $1,844,625 | - 42.0% |
| FYE 2006 | $3,572,692 | 93.6% |
| FYE 2007 | $1,744,114 | - 51.1% |
| FYE 2008 | $1,452,313 (Est) | 16.7% |

## SOCIAL/CULTURAL



Numerous societal changes have affected the PHA and how it conducts business. One change that has a profound change on housing authorities – and society in general – is the growth in the number of single parent, female heads of household. More than eighty percent of the households in our family developments have females as heads of household.

Another societal change is the age at which residents are having children. Although the exact number is not known, there is ample evidence that a substantial number of teenage girls in our developments are having children in their teens.

Both these issues cause problems for the housing authority. Numerous studies indicate that fatherless households have more problems with children misbehaving, missing school and other issues than households with a father present.

Single parent households supervise their children less. This is evident at all of our family developments. While difficult to place a price tag on it, the cost to the PHA has been great.

Providence has become a popular home for many Hispanics. The population of the Providence Housing Authority has become increasingly Hispanic with approximately 70% of our family developments having Hispanic surnames. While a large number of them speak English, or have a family member that speaks English, it has been necessary to hire more and more staff members who are bilingual.

Another social trend has been the decline in the size of families. The average PHA household has slightly more than three people. The largest households in our housing stock are the scattered site homes. All of these units are 3-bedrooms or larger and house, on average, the largest families in the PHA inventory. However, the average size family in public housing is declining and reflects the changes in society as a whole. This is a positive impact because it lowers the density of people living in the developments. Since young people are responsible for much of the damage-malicious or unintentional-at our sites, any diminution of these age cohorts will reflect positively for the PHA. Another area where family size impacts our operations is the number of teenagers. With smaller families, the number of teenagers at each site is smaller. Teenagers tend to be the more troublesome of the age

cohorts responsible for most of the illegal activity in the community as a whole. While it is foolish to condemn all teenagers as a group, it is a proven fact that they are responsible for a substantial portion of the crime that takes place.

A negative cultural norm experienced by our security officers is the increasing acceptance of the so-called drug culture. This has hampered police investigations into drug dealing at some of our developments.

**TECHNOLOGY**



Like any other business, technology has had a major impact on the housing authority. The advent of the computer age transformed the manner in which we conduct business. Software packages allow us to retrieve information faster and to conduct complex calculations in a short period of time. In addition to performing certain tasks faster, computer programs allow information to be exchanged faster and to numerous users almost instantaneously.

The PHA currently employs a wide-area network, which links all our computers at the housing authority to an IBM mainframe computer and to each other. This network allows the sharing of vital information to key users immediately. Previously, information had to be printed from a central location and distributed by courier throughout the PHA. Asset Management Department site foreman are also linked, including internal e-mail. Each maintenance shop at each development has printers in order that work orders, which are generated centrally, may be printed at each site. Prior to this the site foremen were required to pick-up their work orders at Central Maintenance.

The PHA has installed more than a hundred cameras throughout the PHA's developments. All these cameras are monitored by PHA security personnel. Additionally, all PHA elderly/disabled developments have had their entrances converted to electronic access cards, which allows the PHA to activate/deactivate the card at any time. It also prevents duplication. Used with the camera system, we can determine who is using the cards for entry into our buildings.

Computer technology has impacted us in many other ways. For instance, there are now easy to use software programs that allow us to print fancy and colorful brochures, newsletters and reports that previously would require the services of an outside vendor. Maps can be generated with information informing the user of trends in demographics and locations of developments.

Websites are now common and the PHA's provides a wealth of information for our stakeholders to peruse. Our website also allows persons on our Section 8 and public housing wait lists to determine where they are on our wait list.

Another technological development used by the PHA is distant learning. Aided by computer and satellite technology, we conduct staff training in critical areas from our training room at 100 Broad Street. Through a contract with Housing Television Network, training sessions that are conducted in Cheshire, Connecticut are beamed through satellite to our location. All of the sessions are interactive allowing the participant to ask the instructor questions.

Communications technology is another area that has affected PHA operations. Cell phones, beepers, and cell phones with messages all assist us in providing better service by increasing communication. Currently, the PHA uses two-way radios for its facilities management foremen, site managers, security officers and senior staff. Many other staff members have beepers in order to stay in communication. The PHA will examine, in the near future, the feasibility of equipping all key personnel with cell phones that have a message screen. This will enhance our ability to stay in contact and to relay important information to our staff.

Basic word processing has made administrative duties infinitely easier and timelier. No longer is whiteout required when errors are made. Now all it takes is a pushing of a delete key. Word processing also allows for the creation of charts and tables. New technology ushered in a whole new era of office administrative management.

Technology has affected our business partners as well. In the last several years, documents that required printing and mailing to the Department of Housing and Urban Development are now prepared on-line and forwarded to their offices directly.

A sample of HUD on-line systems include:

- PHA Annual and Five-Year Plan
- Grant management
- Distribution of notices, regulations and letters
- Budget information for public housing and Section 8
- Entering information for PHAS and SEMAP scores

HUD also has an extensive website where numerous documents may be downloaded.

Another big step forward in the technology area has been the BankRI online banking system. Balance inquiries, funds transfers and stop-payment orders can all be facilitated through the Internet. Purchasing has also been greatly streamlined by accessing vendor websites to compare pricing, place orders and check delivery dates.

Many government sites can be accessed to seek better pricing and a new NAHRO procurement site serves a similar function. Research on new products and services is also much easier with a wealth of information only a few keystrokes away.

Management at the PHA has always been open to new technology and will continue to seek out improvements and upgrades. Funding is the only obstacle. A recent acquisition has been GoToMyPC.com, which is a private vender provided system that allows certain staff members to access their computer screen and files from any other computer. This has proven invaluable to the staff members selected to test pilot the program. [This section is being written from the home of the author while working from his office files.]

The PHA is currently preparing to switch to a new computer software system for all our functions. The system will be unique in that it is web-based. Once installed, this will allow PHA staff to access their work from any location and the information will be safe from fires or other disasters.

**CLIENTS/CUSTOMERS**



The clients and customers of a subsidized housing agency are primarily the residents, but also include outside landlords, the government and outside community service organizations. The low-income, elderly and disabled "customers" would find it extremely difficult to find affordable housing in the southern New England market in this economy. The current waiting list (combined for public housing and Section 8) is at an all-time high. Public and subsidized housing, originally created to provide a bridge to a more permanent arrangement, has in itself become a permanent stop from generation to generation, creating a permanent need that has not been adequately met.

The PHA currently provides shelter for more than 6,000 persons in our public housing program and another 6,500 in the Section 8 Program. Many of these residents also participate in the numerous and varied programs offered by the PHA.

Our clients are seeking unique services offered by the Housing Authority. The residents seek affordable housing. Section 8 participants seek rental subsidies for their private market rentals. Vendors seek our business when we purchase goods and services. Governmental agencies expect compliance with their mandates and expectations. Finally, the taxpayer is expecting a return on their multi-billion dollar investment in public housing. They expect us to conduct business in a business-like manner, being effective and efficient. They expect us to maintain our properties and assist our residents to prepare for jobs in the

marketplace. They expect us to assist the elderly and disabled live a life of dignity in safety.

By not meeting these expectations we could lose the respect and support of our "customers." There are other choices albeit limited. Dissatisfied taxpayers may express their concerns with their local, state and federal political leaders who in turn will reduce funds for future budgets.

## COLLABORATORS
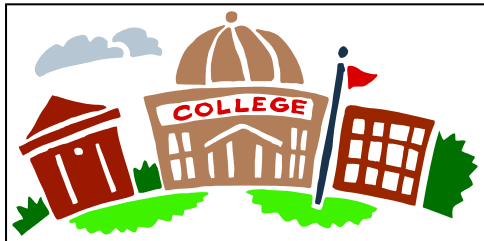


The PHA collaborates with a number of organizations to provide services to our residents. Most of those we collaborate with have already been mentioned. Other collaborators include third-parties that assist us in performing our mission. Many of those collaborators are other levels of state, local and federal government. However, there are non-governmental agencies that assist the PHA by working with us to assist our resident population. A few of those collaborators are:

- Chad Brown Health Center
- Providence After-School Alliance
- The Yoga Center
- Johnson & Wales University
- Brown University's Swearer Center for Public Service

- Providence College's Public Service Program
- University of RI Nursing Program
- Rhode Island Department of Education
- Rhode Island Department of Health
- Rhode Island Department of MHRH
- Rhode Island Justice Commission
- Rhode Island Housing
- Weed and Seed
- Providence Planning Department
- University of Rhode Island
- Hartford Park Community Center
- Rhode Island College
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- The Rhode Island Foundation
- Family Services of Rhode Island
- Homeownership Center of RI
- West Elmwood Neighborhood Housing
- Providence Black Rep
- Carriage House
- Women and Infants Hospital
- Providence Department of Recreation
- Providence/Cranston Workforce Solutions
- Providence Public Library
- Sojourner House

## COMPETITORS

Many people believe public housing does not have competition. This is not accurate. As a provider of affordable housing we have a lot of

competition. We are not a housing monopoly. There are 25 other public housing authorities in Rhode Island alone.

The affordable housing market is not only operated by housing authorities. There are thousands of Section 8 units owned and operated by private forms providing affordable housing. The state's Housing Plan, using 2004 figures, states there are 34,874 units of low- and moderate-income (LMI) units in the state provided through public housing, HUD Section 8, HUD 202 and 811 programs, group home beds and R.I. Housing. The R.I. Housing numbers represent the units they have financed and not operated by that organization. The 34,874 LMI units cited are 8.19% of the 425,610 total housing units in the state. However, the LMI units are much greater. Left out of the equation are Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) administered by local housing authorities. A report prepared by this housing authority in March 2008 indicates there are 8,223 units of Section 8 vouchers in the state. This would increase the number of LMI units to 43,000, or 10% of all units. The state has a goal of having every community (city/town) having ten percent of their units as low- and moderate-income.

## Private Subsidized Housing

Most affordable housing developments and apartment buildings in the area are privately owned, but federally subsidized. Prior to the so-called housing crisis these developments were our direct competitors. Many potential tenants may prefer living in these developments because they are located in better areas and don't carry the stigma of public housing.

## Out-Of-Town Housing Authority Developments

Potential tenants may prefer to live in Cranston, Warwick or other cities and towns. This is a strong incentive to make our buildings as attractive and livable as possible to optimize occupancy.

## Private Landlords

Unsubsidized rental property owners have the advantage of complete freedom in choosing occupants for their buildings, usually resulting in a better behaved tenant and hence, better living conditions. However, the market rents may be out of the reach of many low-income families and seniors.

## Other Community Service Providers

Competition for grant dollars is intense as the PHA is usually pitted against private providers (Big Brothers, private senior centers, etc.) when applying for these funds.
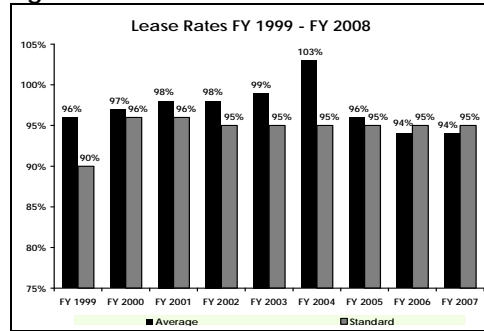
# 10-YEAR TREND ANALYSIS

The following charts depict the trends over a ten year period for the Providence Housing Authority's main functions. These charts are used in the PHA's Annual Reports and also as part of the strategic planning. The subjects in the charts are analyzed and tracked to monitor the PHA's year-to-year performance.

**Figure 1 Earned Section 8 Admin Fees**



Earned Administrative Fees (in millions) FY 1999 - FY 2008

**Figure 4 Section 8 Lease Rates**



Lease Rates FY 1999 - FY 2008

**Figure 2 Section 8 Waiting List**



Section 8 Wait List FY 1999 - FY 2008
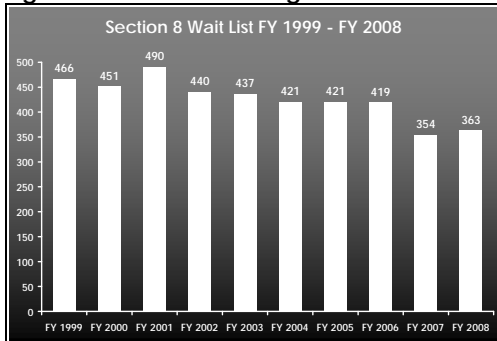
**Figure 5 Section 8 Re-Certifications**



Recertifications FY 1999 - FY 2008
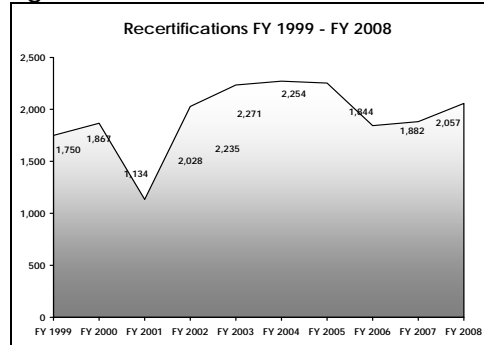
**Figure 3 Inventory of Section 8 Units**



Inventory of Units FY 1999 - FY 2008
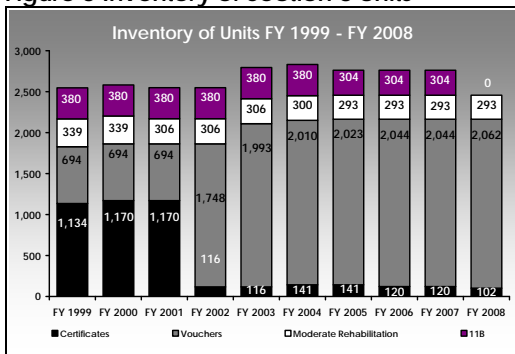
**Figure 6 Housing Assistance Payments**



Total Housing Assistance Payments (in millions) FY 1999 - FY 2008
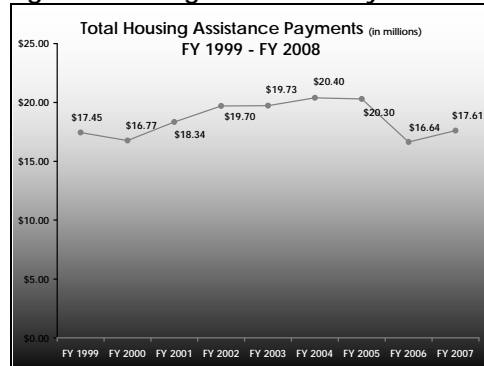
## Figure 7 Public Housing New Applications

**New Applications FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Value |
|----|-------|
| FY 1999 | 1,396 |
| FY 2000 | 1,222 |
| FY 2001 | 1,251 |
| FY 2002 | 1,385 |
| FY 2003 | 1,601 |
| FY 2004 | 1,783 |
| FY 2005 | 1,394 |
| FY 2006 | 1,303 |
| FY 2007 | 1,154 |
| FY 2008 | 1,259 |
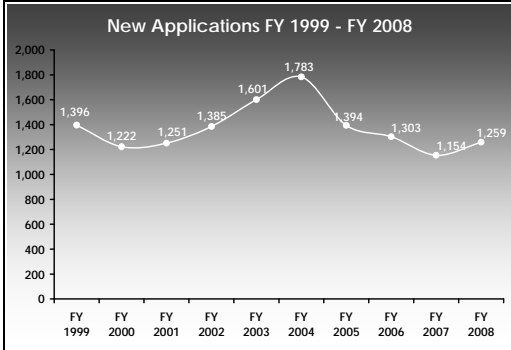
## Figure 10 Public Housing Unit Offers: Accepted & Refused

**Unit Offers Accepted and Refused**

| FY | Accepted | Refused |
|----|----------|---------|
| FY 1999 | 446 | 212 |
| FY 2000 | 360 | 189 |
| FY 2001 | 348 | 178 |
| FY 2002 | 446 | 181 |
| FY 2003 | 380 | 128 |
| FY 2004 | 408 | 106 |
| FY 2005 | 319 | 102 |
| FY 2006 | 346 | 117 |
| FY 2007 | 323 | 104 |
| FY 2008 | 314 | 87 |
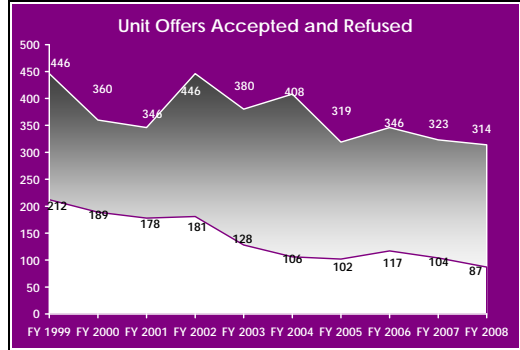
## Figure 8 Avg. Monthly Rent (Public Housing)

**Average Monthly Rent FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Rent |
|----|------|
| FY 1999 | $178 |
| FY 2000 | $184 |
| FY 2001 | $193 |
| FY 2002 | $201 |
| FY 2003 | $212 |
| FY 2004 | $215 |
| FY 2005 | $237 |
| FY 2006 | $253 |
| FY 2007 | $249 |
| FY 2008 | $244 |
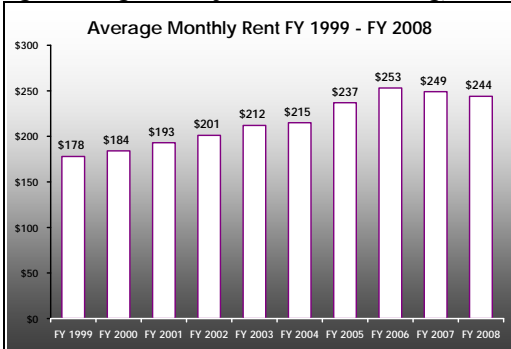
## Figure 11 Public Housing Occupancy

**Occupancy FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | PHA | HUD Approved Rate |
|----|-----|-------------------|
| FY 1999 | 93% | 92% |
| FY 2000 | 93% | 92% |
| FY 2001 | 92% | 93% |
| FY 2002 | 95% | 95% |
| FY 2003 | 97% | 95% |
| FY 2004 | 98% | 97% |
| FY 2005 | 98% | 97% |
| FY 2006 | 98% | 97% |
| FY 2007 | 99% | 97% |
| FY 2008 | 99% | 97% |
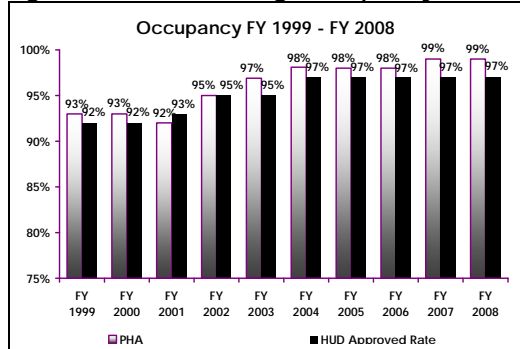
## Figure 9 Evictions – Public Housing

**Evictions FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Value |
|----|-------|
| FY 1999 | 73 |
| FY 2000 | 57 |
| FY 2001 | 64 |
| FY 2002 | 72 |
| FY 2003 | 79 |
| FY 2004 | 48 |
| FY 2005 | 65 |
| FY 2006 | 30 |
| FY 2007 | 29 |
| FY 2008 | 34 |
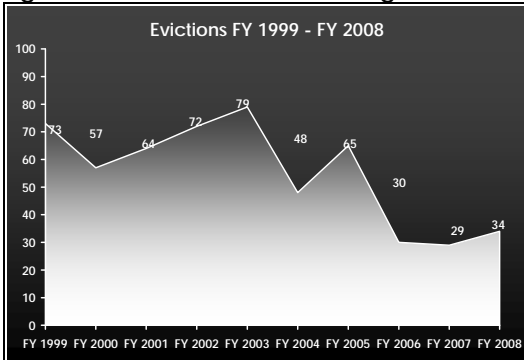
## Figure 12 Public Housing Rent Collections

**Rent Collections FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Value |
|----|-------|
| FY 1999 | 99% |
| FY 2000 | 98% |
| FY 2001 | 95% |
| FY 2002 | 98% |
| FY 2003 | 95% |
| FY 2004 | 95% |
| FY 2005 | 95% |
| FY 2006 | 95% |
| FY 2007 | 94% |
| FY 2008 | 94% |
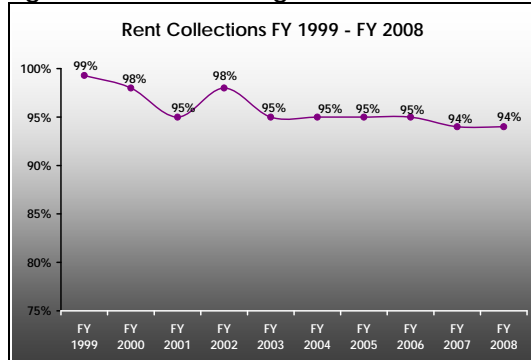
## Figure 13 Avg. Work Orders per Unit



Average Workorders Per Unit
FY 1999 - FY 2008

## Figure 14 Scheduled Maint. Work Orders



Scheduled Maintenance vs Total Workorders

## Figure 15 Total Unit Turn-Overs



Unit Turn-Overs FY 1999 - FY 2008

## Figure 16 Completed Work Orders



Completed Work Orders FY 1999 - FY 2008

## Figure 17 Total FSS Escrow Accounts



Total Escrow Accounts FY 2004 - FY 2008
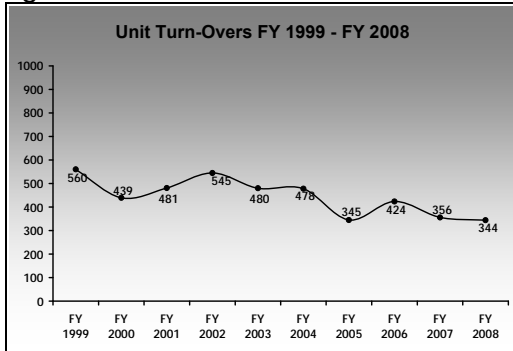
## Figure 18 Elderly/Disabled Units Serviced



Supportive Services Service Units
FY 2004 - FY 2008
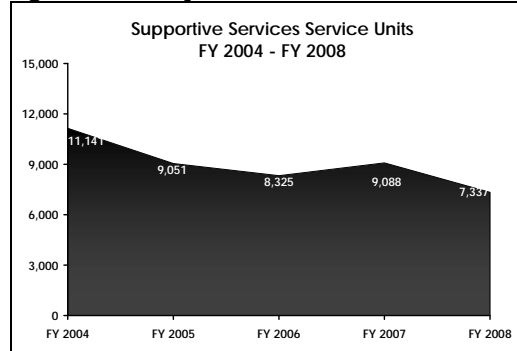
## Figure 19 Youth Participant Costs

**Cost Per Participant in Youth Program FY 2004 - FY 2008**

| FY | Cost |
|----|------|
| FY 2004 | $3,851 |
| FY 2005 | $3,724 |
| FY 2006 | $3,846 |
| FY 2007 | $3,823 |
| FY 2008 | $4,910 |

## Figure 20 Pension Costs

**Pension Costs FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Cost |
|----|------|
| FY 1999 | $682,818 |
| FY 2000 | $728,375 |
| FY 2001 | $766,401 |
| FY 2002 | $808,803 |
| FY 2003 | $874,644 |
| FY 2004 | $910,246 |
| FY 2005 | $944,677 |
| FY 2006 | $875,358 |
| FY 2007 | $856,458 |
| FY 2008 | $862,644 |

## Figure 21 Worker's Comp Premiums

**Workers' Compensation Premiums FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Premium |
|----|---------|
| FY 1999 | $100,046 |
| FY 2000 | $133,384 |
| FY 2001 | $207,000 |
| FY 2002 | $214,000 |
| FY 2003 | $237,447 |
| FY 2004 | $251,836 |
| FY 2005 | $154,312 |
| FY 2006 | $158,410 |
| FY 2007 | $191,120 |
| FY 2008 | $214,138 |

## Figure 22 Healthcare Costs

**Healthcare Costs FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Cost |
|----|------|
| FY 1999 | $711,480 |
| FY 2000 | $849,885 |
| FY 2001 | $1,046,358 |
| FY 2002 | $1,168,492 |
| FY 2003 | $1,283,004 |
| FY 2004 | $1,455,832 |
| FY 2005 | $1,716,727 |
| FY 2006 | $1,709,737 |
| FY 2007 | $1,606,530 |
| FY 2008 | $1,543,542 |
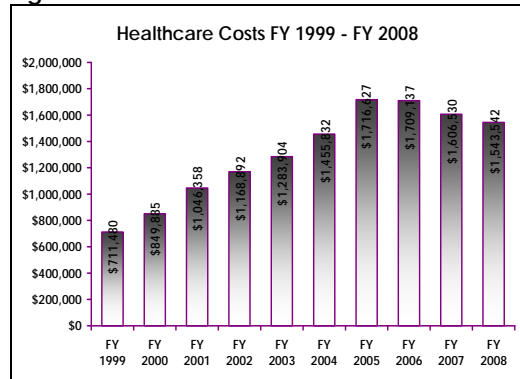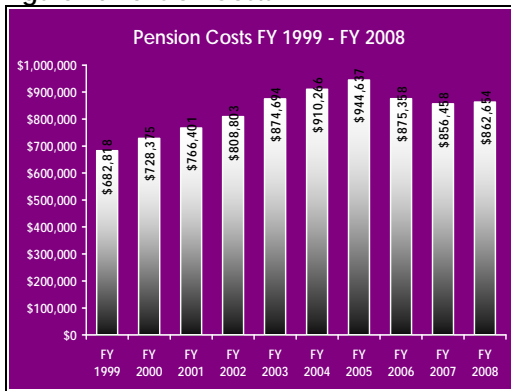
## Figure 23 Training Hours

**Total Training Hours FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | Hours |
|----|-------|
| FY 1999 | 3,643 |
| FY 2000 | 3,044 |
| FY 2001 | 3,489 |
| FY 2002 | 4,323 |
| FY 2003 | 3,817 |
| FY 2004 | 4,242 |
| FY 2005 | 3,706 |
| FY 2006 | 3,070 |
| FY 2007 | 3,441 |
| FY 2008 | 2,098 |

## Figure 24 Grievance Hearings

**Grievance Hearings FY 1999 - FY 2008**

| FY | In Favor of PHA | In Favor of Grievant |
|----|------|------|
| FY 1999 | 23 | 3 |
| FY 2000 | 24 | 1 |
| FY 2001 | 26 | 1 |
| FY 2002 | 25 | 1 |
| FY 2003 | 29 | 2 |
| FY 2004 | 22 | 2 |
| FY 2005 | 23 | 1 |
| FY 2006 | 4 | 2 |
| FY 2007 | 5 | 1 |
| FY 2008 | 7 | 5 |

■ In Favor of PHA   ■ In Favor of Grievant
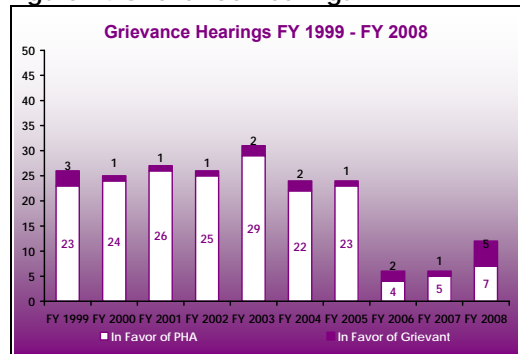
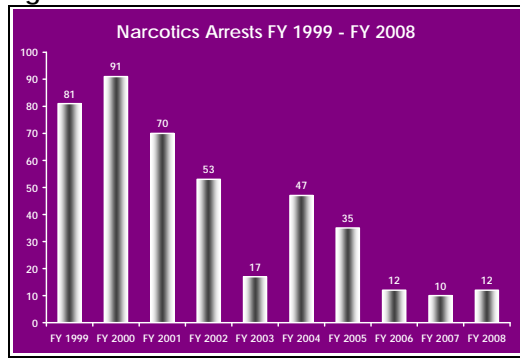## Figure 25 Operating Expenses



## Figure 26 Operating Income vs Expenses



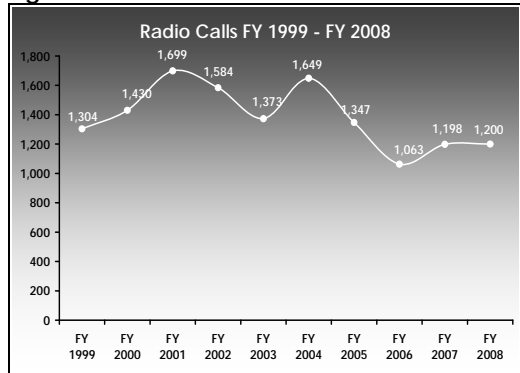## Figure 27 Operating Receipts & HUD Subsidy



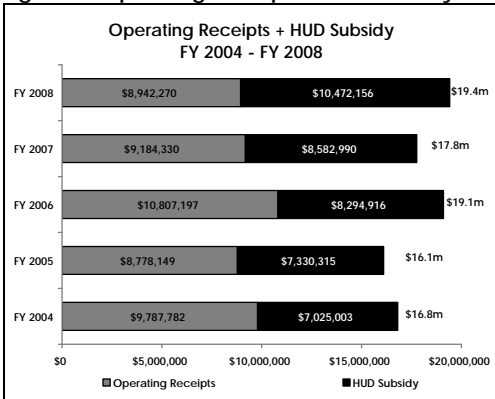## Figure 28 Narcotics Arrests



## Figure 29 Radio Calls



## Figure 30 Total Arrests
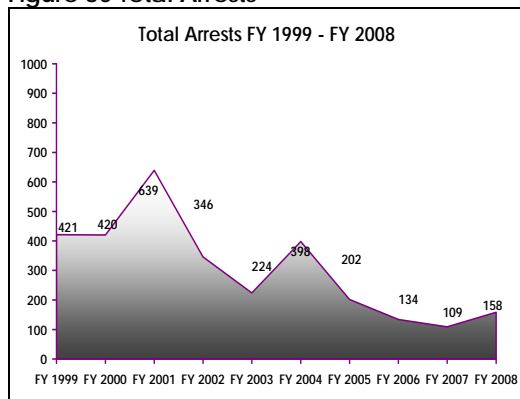
# KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

*A strategic issue is a fundamental challenge affecting an organization's mandates, mission, service level and mix, stakeholders, costs, financing, organization, or management.*

During the course of the strategic planning process, planning teams for each department and function were required to review their environmental scans, and other relevant planning documents, to determine the strategic issues facing the Providence Housing Authority over the next three to five years.

The key strategic issues identified are:

1. **Inadequate Supply of Affordable Housing**

2. **The Condition and Quality of Our Existing Housing Portfolio**

3. **Homeownership Opportunities for Public Housing and Section 8 Families**

4. **Inadequate Funding to Provide High Quality Services**

5. **General Management Operations and Business Practices**

6. **Resident Self-Sufficiency**

7. **Internal and External Communications to Stakeholders**

8. **Technology to Improve Efficiency and Productivity**

9. **Risk Management and Safety Costs**

10. **Energy and Utility Consumption and Costs**

11. **Secure and Safe Environment**

12. **Resident Relations and Programs**

13. **Employee Relations and Development**

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #1

## INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

*"I was a little lacking in vision as mayor - I failed to understand the significance that housing and the revitalization of housing means for a city."*
*Henry Cisneros*

The lack of affordable housing in the Providence area has been a serious problem since the early 2000s. While not as severe as the housing "crunch" in the Boston metro area, housing prices dramatically increased in the state during the early to mid-2000s. Only recently has the housing "bubble" burst and prices are decreasing. However, the housing "bubble burst" itself is having a catastrophic effect on the housing market. While housing costs have decreased, many people are losing their homes or experiencing negative equity in the value of their properties. With all this, the selling price of a home remains out of reach for many Rhode Islanders.

In the period 2000-2007, median selling prices for single family homes in Rhode Island increased 118%, or an average of 14.75% per annum. If adjusted for 2007, when prices decreased 2.65%, the appreciation for a single family home in RI increased 124%. Over the period 2000-2006, the median selling price for single family homes in Providence increased by 183%, or an average of 26% annually. In 2007, single family home prices decreased by 7.28% in Providence.

Multi-family homes appreciated by an even greater amount in Providence and the state as a whole. Between the years 2000-2007, median multi-family housing increased by 136% (17% annually) in Rhode Island and 111% (13.8% annually) in Providence. In 2006 prices for multi-families started to decrease. In 2007, the median price for a multi-family home in Rhode Island decreased by 10.5% and by 39% in Providence. Yet, unless persons bought late in the market, the still remain ahead in their investment. In 2003 and 2004, multi-family homes increased by more than 40% each year.

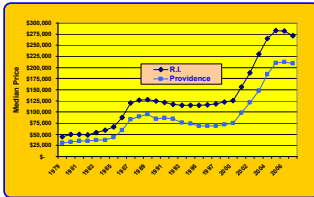The Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, which tracks housing price indexes, reported that the Providence/New Bedford/Fall River metropolitan area has seen a 0.55 decrease in their housing price index during the first quarter of 2008 and a 3.01 decrease over the last year. However, over the past five years, the index is still a positive 40.65.

Data available as of May 2008 indicates that single family homes in

Providence decreased 28.2% from the previous year, during the same period. The median price declined from $209,500 to $150,500. The one exception in Providence was the East Side where single family houses increased by 10% during the first quarter of 2008.The state's decline averaged 9.9% ($272,000 to $245,000).

Multi-family housing selling prices affects the cost for rentals, especially for lower-income families. The dramatic increase in multi-family housing in Rhode Island and the City of Providence increased rents and drove down vacancy rates. These price increases also drove many low-income renters from the market. Average rents in Providence for a two-bedroom apartment increased to $1,200 from average prices of $650-$700 in the early 2000s.



Now that the housing bubble has burst, many of these multi-family homes – and a significant number of single-family homes as well, have been foreclosed due to over leveraging. Although the number of foreclosed homes in Providence is less than one and a half percent of total homes, they are having a significant impact in certain neighborhoods with a substantial number of multi-family homes. This results in accelerated neighborhood deterioration.

Housing like any other commodity is affected by the laws of supply and demand. By increasing the number of housing units available, it contributes to price stabilization and the decrease in selling prices and, by extension, rents.

In the summer of 2008, we experienced a decrease in rents in our Section 8 Program. Section 8 landlords, who were demanding higher and higher rents in previous years, are now in a less advantageous bargaining position and accepting the rents offered by the PHA's Leased Housing Department, which administers the Section 8 Program. The Leased Housing Department's rents are established by a rent reasonableness survey conducted throughout the city for non-subsidized properties. Foreclosures on properties have had a substantial impact on the decreasing rents.

The so-called foreclosure crisis is having a significant impact on rental properties in Providence and surroundings communities. In a report prepared by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), an advocacy group which promotes affordable housing, rental properties are baring the brunt of the foreclosure problem. According to NLIHC, roughly one-third of households in the U.S. rent their homes and a significant number of both renters (23.4 million) and

owners (4.2 million) live in multi-family buildings. In fact, 26% of the homes in this country are located in multi-family buildings (U.S. Census Bureau). Conversely, nearly 39% of the unsubsidized rental homes and 17% of those that are subsidized are single-family units (Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard) Therefore, it is no surprise that more than just single-family homes are being foreclosed upon I the United States and many foreclosed single-family homes are occupied by renters.

In March 2008, a report based on data from RealtyTrac, which collects data from 2,500 counties in the country, stated that "38% of foreclosures now involve rental properties," affecting "at least 168,000 household nationwide.

The Mortgage Bankers Association's National Delinquency Survey indicated that one in five of all foreclosures in 2007 were one- to five-unit rentals.

When multi-family homes are foreclosed on, renters lose their homes. In Providence, lenders sought to evict more than 400 families from their homes in the first three months of 2008.

A March 12, 2008 press release from Mayor David Cicilline's Office stated that 745 foreclosures took place in the City of Providence in 2007. These foreclosures, on top of the information released from the LIHC indicate the impact the foreclosure problem has had on renters in the city. Foreclosure is not just an owner-occupant problem. Information from our Leased Housing Department indicates that fifty-six Section 8 families have been affected by foreclosures since January 2008.

**Table 18 Foreclosure Auction and REO Properties: Jan 2008 – Mar 2008**

|  | R.I. Properties | R.I. Units |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 2,312 | 4,483 |
| Single-Family | 1,356 | 1,356 |
| % of Total | 59% | 30% |
| Multi-Family | 956 | 3,127 |
| % of Total | 41% | 70% |

An article in the Providence Journal on August 21, 2008 described the impact of housing foreclosures on the city's neighborhoods. It stated that 1 in 41 mortgages in Rhode Island, on average were in foreclosure during the fourth quarter of 2007, the seventh highest in the nation, according to the 2008 State of the Housing Report released in June by the Joint Center for Housing at Harvard. It further stated that the state's share of "seriously delinquent" mortgages during the fourth quarter was 3.9%, the highest in New England. In Rhode Island, according to Moody's Economy.com, 7% of all first time mortgages during January, February and March were delinquent or in foreclosure. The R.I. Realtors Association reported that 61% of the 407 multi-family homes old during the quarter (247 properties) were bank-owned. The steepest decline in multi-family homes took place in Providence, where 168 multi-family houses sold and the median price fell 57.8% to

$105,400, according to the Realtor's Association.

The foreclosure problem will have a significant impact on the affordability problem. However, it won't be significant enough to deal with the outstanding need for more affordable housing. The pressure will remain once the foreclosure problem ends and prices start to increase once again.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #2

## THE CONDITION & QUALITY OF OUR EXISTING HOUSING PORTFOLIO

*"A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul."*
*Phillip Moffitt*
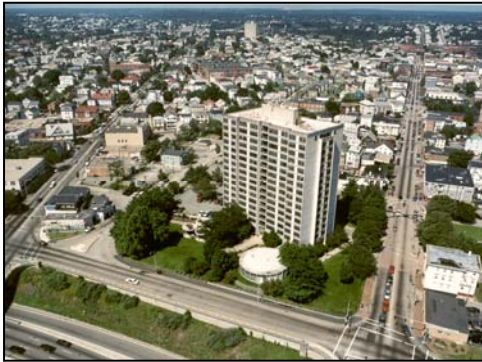


The Providence Housing Authority's mission states that we exist to provide decent, safe and affordable housing. Decent has always been interpreted to mean a clean and orderly environment that residents are pleased to call home. For years the PHA used HUD's Section 8 Housing Quality Standards (HQS) protocol as our yardstick to determine property standards. Since 2001, however, we have used the Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS).

Part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's four-part Real Estate Assessment Center Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) is physical inspections of a housing authority's properties. Each annual inspection period HUD's contractors inspect a representative sample of the PHA's 2,606 units, public space and common areas. These inspections commenced in 1999 when HUD came to the realization that they needed some type of system to measure housing authority performance.

In addition to HUD's annual physical inspection, housing authorities are required to inspect their properties, including all systems and common areas, annually. The Providence Housing Authority contracts with U.S. Inspection Group (USIG) to conduct these inspections.

**Aging Housing Stock**

The PHA's housing portfolio is relatively old and subject to great wear and tear. The Chad Brown development was completed in 1942; Roger Williams in 1943. Codding Court was completed in 1951; Manton Heights in 1953; and Hartford Park in the 1950s. The PHA high-rises were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition to age,

our family developments, and certain elderly/disabled developments, are subject to recurring vandalism. In FY2007, for instance, the PHA processed 92 vandalism-related work orders, which were 11% less than the previous year. Vandalism comprises less than one-percent of all PHA work orders.

Since FY2002, REAC inspection scores have averaged 76.5 out of a total score of 100 points. A score below 60 is considered a failure. Over the last four inspection periods, the PHA had an average of three developments that failed. In the most recent period-with a very strict inspector-the PHA averaged 74 points with four failures. Scores ranged from a high of 94 to a low of 54. While these scores are considered "normal" for a large urban housing authority, they are not scores we find acceptable for our

standards. Since the inception of the inspection protocol, the PHA has improved from average scores in the mid-50s in 1999 and 2000 to mid-70s range. The score correlates with the type of development and the number of work orders undertaken at the site. Elderly and elderly/disabled developments fare better than family development for instance. [Note: As this is being written, USIG has completed inspecting four elderly/disabled developments. Scores for all four are in the 90s.]

The REAC physical inspections are supposed to be objective, but over the years it has been clear that it depends on which inspector conducts the review. Some are stricter than others. Others are more commonsensical. We are not very confident in the physical inspection process.

**Table 19 Multi-Year REAC Physical Inspection Scores: Family Developments**

| Dev. No. | Development Name | Score FY1999 | Score FY2000 | Score FY2001 | Score FY2002 | Score FY2004 | Score FY2006 | Score 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Chad Brown | 48 | 48 | 68 | 71b | 71 | 70 | 48 |
| 1-A | Admiral Terrace | 59 | 57 | 62 | 76b | 84 | 83 | 50 |
| 2 | Roger Williams | 51 | 32 | 48 | 88b | 63 | 82 | 61 |
| 3 | Codding Court | 76 | 54 | 88 | 84c | 86 | 94 | 70 |
| 4 | Hartford Park | 78 | 44 | 52 | 88c | 88 | 57 | 77 |
| 6 | Harford Park "Ext" | 93 | 54 | 87 | 94b | 82 | 79 | 79 |
| 19 | Hartford Park (repl) | 55 | 24 | 63 | 64c | 84 | 78 | 62 |
| 5 | Manton Heights | 61 | 53 | 90 | 72c | 75 | 53 | 71 |
| 7 | Sunset Village | 66 | 28 | 60 | 96b | 94 | 97 | 94 |
| | Total | 587 | 394 | 618 | 733 | 727 | 693 | 612 |
| | Average Score | 65 | 44 | 69 | 81 | 80 | 77 | 68 |

Table 20 Multi-Year REAC Physical Inspection Scores: Elderly/Disabled Developments

| Dev. No. | Development Name | Score FY1999 | Score FY2000 | Score FY2001 | Score FY2002 | Score 2004 | Score 2006 | Score 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Dexter Manor-I | 61 | 48 | 74 | 97a | 82 | 91 | 77 |
| 9 | Dominica Manor | 78 | 36 | 77 | 99a | 90 | 95 | 74 |
| 11 | Carroll Tower | 61 | 51 | 74 | 95b | 79 | 84 | 67 |
| 12 | Kilmartin Plaza | 77 | 25 | 81 | 86b | 85 | 54 | 69 |
| 13 | Parenti Villa | 80 | 33 | 88 | 97b | 87 | 79 | 85 |
| 14 | Dexter Manor-II | 70 | 49 | 85 | 93b | 92 | 68 | 74 |
| | Total | 427 | 242 | 479 | 567 | 515 | 471 | 446 |
| | Average Score | 71 | 40 | 80 | 95 | 86 | 78 | 74 |

Another method to measure the quality of the existing housing portfolio is by asking residents. Part of the REAC assessment does this through its Resident Customer Service Survey. In the most recent year, FY2007, HUD failed to conduct the survey. However, as part of this strategic planning process, the PHA conducted the same survey with a larger survey sample than HUD uses. The strategic planning team mailed surveys to approximately one-third of the PHA's households. Survey responses varied by development, but all received a statistically valid number of responses.

**Eighty-five percent of the residents surveyed were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their unit/home.** Fourteen percent were "dissatisfied." Seventy-two percent stated they were very satisfied or satisfied with their development/building. Twenty-three percent claimed they were dissatisfied. Seventy-six percent are very satisfied or satisfied with their neighborhood, while nineteen percent stated they were dissatisfied. These figures have been fairly consistent over the last four reporting periods.

Table 21 Resident Responses to Survey (May-June 2008)

| | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Satisfied/ Very Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied | Does Not Apply |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unit/home | 163 (31.2%) | 281 (53.7%) | 444 (84.9%) | 53 (10.1%) | 21 (4%) | 74 (14.1%) | 5 (1%) |
| Development/ building | 98 (22.5%) | 217 (49.9%) | 315 (72.4%) | 74 (17%) | 27 (6.2%) | 101 (23.2%) | 19 (4.4%) |
| Neighborhood | 98 (22.6%) | 231 (53.2%) | 329 (75.8%) | 59 (13.6%) | 24 (5.5%) | 83 (19.1%) | 22 (5.1%) |

The PHA receives an annual grant from HUD for capital improvements. Under current regulations, a portion of the amount received (20%) may be used for operations. The PHA's average Capital Fund Program annual grant has been $3.8 million. In addition to this amount, the PHA

expends a substantial portion of its Operations budget for maintenance. Recently, the PHA completed a bond issue for Capital Improvements using the Capital Fund Financing Program, which allows housing authorities to borrow against future Capital Fund Program

allocations. While using these bond proceeds will reduce the amount of funds available annually from the CFP, it will allow us to accelerate our Capital Fund Plan. The PHA has also contracted to undertake an Energy Performance Contract, which will provide $12.0 million in capital improvements. [See more about this in Strategic Issue area on energy management.]

In 2007, the PHA commissioned Ameresco Company to conduct a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) of the PHA's entire portfolio and subsequently purchased a license to utilize their software program to constantly upgrade our PNA. The PNA determined the Providence Housing Authority had **$37.0 million in outstanding capital improvement and maintenance needs for its 267 buildings and 2,200,000 square feet of building area.**

Using this figure of $37.0 million, it would take the PHA 14.8 years to meet the outstanding physical improvement needs for this housing authority. [The PHA receives, on average, approximately $3.8 million annually from HUD in Capital Funds Program grants. Twenty percent of this is allocated to operations costs and another amount is set-aside for staff costs leaving $2.5 million available for physical improvements.]

The PHA will utilize two programs available to us to address the outstanding physical needs in a shorter period of time. The first program is HUD's Capital Fund Financing Program (CFFP), which



allows housing authorities to borrow against future allocations of Capital Funding Program funds (CFP). The PHA has used this program once before in 2001 to borrow future funds to construct the Thomas J. Anton Community Center and the PHA's Facilities Management headquarters and warehouse. At that time, the Authority borrowed $5.0 million to construct the two buildings. Each subsequent year, the PHA will have these amortized funds taken from each year's Capital Fund Program allocation.

The Authority will borrow $9.1 million to accelerate our Capital Improvements programs based on our physical needs assessment and the feedback from residents through our surveys and focus groups.

The second program we will use to "catch-up" on our outstanding capital needs is an Energy Performance Contract (EPC). An EPC is basically a loan from a commercial bank to fund energy conservation improvements that is repaid through utility consumption and savings.
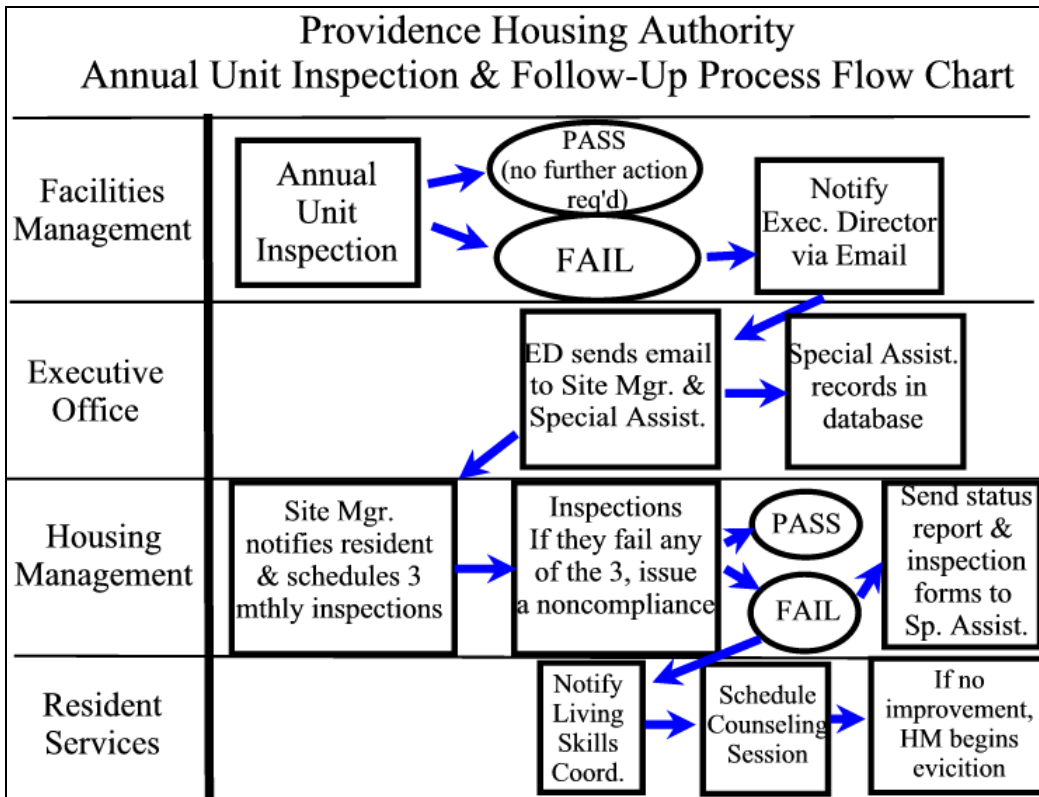
These two special forms of financing will eliminate 54% of our outstanding capital improvement needs at the Providence Housing Authority.

**Poor Housekeeping Citations**

Many residents are cited for "poor housekeeping" during the USIG inspections. The PHA has implemented a follow-up protocol for those cited by the inspector. This ensures that residents improve the condition of their units and, as a result, improves the PHA's REAC score. Site managers will conduct three consecutive monthly inspections of those cited. If, after three inspections, the unit has not been improved, the PHA will move to evict the residents for health and safety violations.

In the next two years, the PHA will undertake a concerted effort to improve the quality of the PHA's housing stock by undertaking a Capital Improvement Program that emphasizes the windshield appeal of our properties and a comprehensive effort to identify residents who vandalize or do not respect our property.

## Providence Housing Authority
## Annual Unit Inspection & Follow-Up Process Flow Chart

| Facilities Management | Annual Unit Inspection → PASS (no further action req'd) / FAIL → Notify Exec. Director via Email |
| --- | --- |
| Executive Office | ED sends email to Site Mgr. & Special Assist. → Special Assist. records in database |
| Housing Management | Site Mgr. notifies resident & schedules 3 mthly inspections → Inspections If they fail any of the 3, issue a noncompliance → PASS / FAIL → Send status report & inspection forms to Sp. Assist. |
| Resident Services | Notify Living Skills Coord. → Schedule Counseling Session → If no improvement, HM begins evicition |

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #3

## HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR
## PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECTION 8 RESIDENTS

*"A house is made of walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams."*
*Anonymous*

One of the key strategic goals In the Department of Housing and Urban Development's current strategic plan is to increase homeownership opportunities. The Providence Housing Authority has determined homeownership is a worthy goal for our residents.

With homeownership at all time high levels, promoting additional homeownership for qualified residents will be a strategic goal at the PHA.



The PHA has promoted homeownership with its residents since 1996 when we created our first 5(h) Homeownership Plan. [5(h) is that section of the Housing Act that allows for sales of public housing.] That plan identified ten single-family, scattered-site public housing units that would be sold to qualified residents residing in our developments. That initial program met with some success: eight of the ten units were sold to qualified, deserving residents who now own a piece of the American dream of homeownership. No other effort has been undertaken since that initial effort to sell-off our public housing portfolio.

In the upcoming years, the PHA will identify additional units to sell to our residents. In the past, all the 5(h) units were single-family units. In this strategic plan, we will identify approximately ten duplexes for homeownership. To promote the program and make the effort successful, we will attempt to sell the scattered duplexes to one of the residents with a project-based Section 8 assigned to the other unit. This will allow the purchaser to have cash-flow to maintain mortgage payments and the property, while keeping the units affordable. We will examine HUD's Section 32 Program to see if it's applicable for this program.

In 2003, HUD allowed housing authorities to create and participate in the Section 8 Homeownership Plan. The Section 8 Homeownership Program allows qualified Section 8 participants to use their housing

assistance payment for mortgage payments on single-family homes.

The program required housing authorities to create a plan for HUD review and approval. HUD had specific requirements for Section 8 participants to qualify. Our plan was approved and the staff immediately began outreach and pre-screening of applicants.

In 2007, one hundred and one Section 8 participants requested information about the program, forty-six attended informational sessions, forty-seven received certification letters, three pre-qualified for a mortgage and one closed on a home.

In FY2008, one hundred seven Section 8 participants requested

**Section 8 Homeownership Closings**
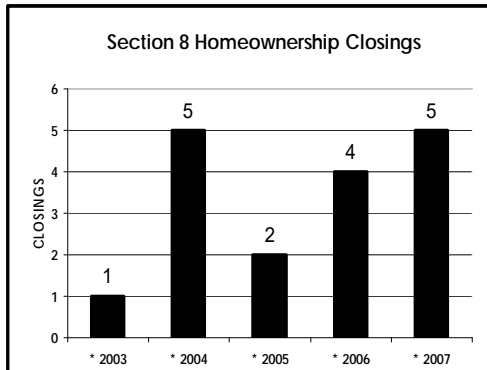
information on the Homeownership Program, sixty-three attended an informational session, thirty-five received certification letters, three purchase and sales agreements were executed and five closed on homes.

There are more than 100 individuals currently participating in our Family Self-Sufficiency Program(FSS). These individuals enter into a contract with the PHA to complete a series of self-

improvement activities over the term of their contract. In return for their participation, any rent increases during their participation in the program is held in an escrow account. Upon completion of the program, several of the participants have used their substantial escrow payouts to purchase a home. We will continue to encourage

**Section 5(h) Homeownership Program**
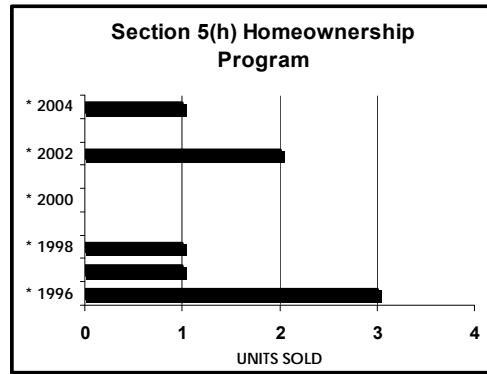
participants in the FSS Program to explore homeownership opportunities, including purchasing a PHA property.

Affordable homeownership remains a barrier to low-income households. While values have decreased on housing in the Rhode Island and Providence markets due to the subprime market crisis and the number of foreclosures taking place, it remains difficult for low-income families to purchase a home.

After years of double-digit appreciation of single and multi-family homes from 2001 until 2006, housing prices are returning to their more realistic price levels. The

difficulty now is the availability of credit for first time home buyers with little or poor credit experience.

The PHA will continue to provide home counseling and advisory services for those public housing and Section 8 residents considering purchasing a home. As in the past, the Resident Services Department will conduct several housing fairs to provide information to prospective homeowners.

The PHA will continue to collaborate with third-party organizations to promote homeownership. We will examine the opportunities offered through the recently passed housing bill by Congress to address the foreclosure problem and determine what, if any, role the PHA has in addressing that issue.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #4

## INADEQUATE FUNDING TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

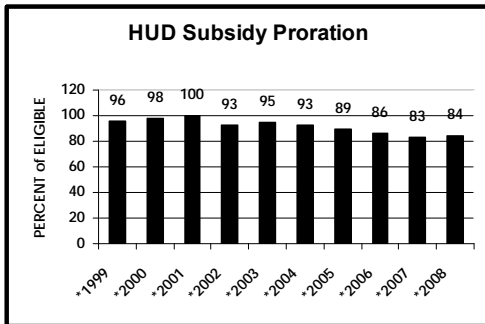*"For every talent that poverty has stimulated it has blighted a hundred."*
*John W. Gardner*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has reduced the amount of funds allocated to public housing making it increasingly difficult to provide the services necessary to have a high performing housing authority.

**Figure 1 Percentage of Eligible Operating Subsidy Received**



Since 1999, public housing operating subsidies have been funded at 100% of its eligible amount only once, twice since 1996. While the funding shortfall for several of those years was minor (5%-8%), recent years have seen shortfalls of 16% (FY2007 & FY2008). These reductions resulted in reductions in force at the PHA which have impaired our ability to deliver high quality services. HUD has asked and the Administration has approved a FY2009 budget with further reductions. Over the last two years, these reductions have left the PHA with a shortfall of $2.7 million in operating funds.

The operating subsidy is the principal source of funding for housing authorities since the Brooke Amendment to the Housing Act was passed in 1968. That amendment basically changed how housing authorities operated and established rents. The Brooke Amendment set rent controls on public housing at 25% of the resident's income. Most public housing costs are fixed. Budget items like insurance, workers compensation and utilities have been rising substantially, while operating subsidies have declined. The operating subsidy makes up the difference between our operating costs and what is collected in rents.

The operating subsidy is not the only funding program affecting PHA finances to be reduced. The Capital Fund Program, which provides housing authorities with funds to undertake modernization have also been reduced, starting in FY2001. Over the last three years the Capital Fund Program has been level funded resulting in a de facto reduction when inflation is considered. Even more damaging are the numerous "set-asides" HUD places on the

Capital Fund Program, further reducing the allocation of critical capital funds to housing authorities.

**Figure 2 Million $ Amounts of Capital Funds Received**

**Capital Fund Appropriations**
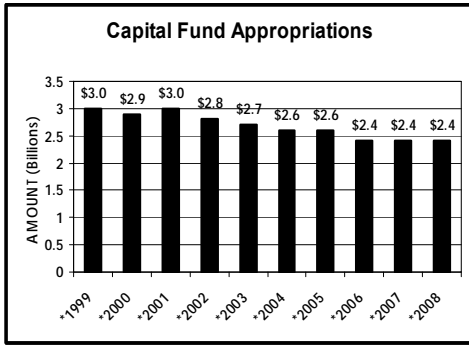


Two other regulatory changes further exacerbated housing authority finances. Starting in FY2004 HUD prohibited housing authorities from transferring Section 8 administrative fee surpluses for purposes other than the Section 8 Program. These housing authorities, as well as others throughout the country, transferred excess administrative fees to their public housing program to enhance shortfalls in that program. These are fees earned by housing authorities for administering the Section 8 program. These funds belonged to the administering housing authority. Over the years the PHA transferred hundreds of thousands of dollars to assist our public housing program without affecting the Section 8 Program. Once HUD implemented the prohibition, we were no longer allowed to use these funds.

Another regulatory change taking place in FY2005 was the year-end adjustments for utility expenses. Since it is almost impossible to predict the costs of utilities over a twelve month period, HUD required

housing authorities to use a three-year "rolling base," or average to determine prospective utility costs. At the end of a fiscal year, those housing authorities that exceeded or saved on the budgeted amount for utilities received a year-end adjustment. Those with shortfalls received the difference in the budgeted amount versus the actual amount. Those housing authorities that "saved" funds were able to keep 40% of the savings. This single change had a devastating affect on the PHA the first year it went into effect. That year saw a colder than normal winter, several rate increases to the utility companies, and retroactive invoicing by the local utilities for water and sewer. That one year the PHA experienced a $1.5 million shortfall in budgeted utilities that had to be taken from our reserves.

The PHA operates numerous social service programs for its residents.



Almost all of the costs for these programs have been by provided through grants from federal, state, local governmental agencies and private nonprofits organizations and foundations. The largest single amounts have always come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development through their Public Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP), Youth Sports Program, Resident Opportunity and Supportive Services Program and Neighborhood Network Program.

Both Youth Sports and PHDEP have been eliminated. PHDEP provided this housing authority with almost its entire social service budget for 14 years. HUD has also made it more difficult to apply for these funds by requiring difficult matching requirements and unnecessary collaborative requirements.  In one case one of our grants was not even considered because a page was not on PHA letterhead.

The continuous shortfall and/or termination of programs and regulatory changes have resulted in the housing authority expending its operating reserve to the point where it has damaged our financial indicators score on the REAC-PHAS. As a result of the low score, the PHA recently undertook a reduction-in-force and restructuring to build up our operating reserve.

The result of these reductions in operating subsidy, Capital Fund and social service grants has made it more difficult for the PHA to provide the same level of services the residents and the larger community have come to expect.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #5

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

*"The conventional definition of management is getting work done through people, but real management is developing people through work."*
*Agha Hasan Abedi*



Good management practices result in successful housing authorities. The Providence Housing Authority has witnessed a steady increase in the capabilities of its personnel each year due to several factors. A key factor is having a Performance Management and Accountability Plan, which sets goals and standards for each department. Other factors that lead to good management are continuous training, an employee evaluation system, strategic planning and a feedback system that provides information to management. Another important element in the mix is visionary leadership.

The Providence Housing Authority has all of these elements. Our Performance Management and Accountability Plan provide

benchmarks for employees to meet and creates expectations. Each year the PHA conducts an average of 4,000 hours of training to provide personal development opportunities for staff. Our strategic planning process involves contacting hundreds of stakeholders to determine our strengths, weakness, opportunities and challenges. The PHA's staff is surveyed through the Survey of Organizational Excellence, to determine what our employees thoughts and concerns are while working at the PHA. Most importantly, the organization has a vision for our future.

There are many methods to measure organizational success. The Department of Housing and Urban Development uses its Real Estate Assessment Center's Public Housing Assessment System, a four-part review that measures indicators in the following areas: Financial Operations



, Management Operations, Physical Inspections and Resident Surveys.

The first three elements are worth 30-points each; the resident survey is worth ten points. Each individual category has multiple sub-elements that comprise the overall score.

Since its inception, the PHA has received either High-Performer or Standard Performer ratings. In FY2007, the PHA received a score of 77, its lowest rating since the rating system began. [Over the last five years the PHA has averaged a PHAS score of 87.] While a long way from failing, a score of 77 is not acceptable for a housing authority of this quality. There are several reasons for the lower score that have been mentioned elsewhere. The primary reason for the decrease, however, is the loss of points under the financial indicators section. This was expected because HUD does not adjust its financial indicators for reductions in subsidy. Put another way, had the PHA been funded at full operating subsidy, the financial indicator would have been at an acceptable level.

Table 22 Multi-Year SEMAP Scores

| FY Year | Score |
|---------|-------|
| 2007 | 100 |
| 2006 | 100 |
| 2005 | 104 |
| 2004 | 100 |

Another rating system used by HUD to rate housing authorities is the so-called Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP). This system rates the performance of the Section 8 Program administered by the PHA. This rating system is comprised of fifteen key program performance indicators. The PHA's Leased Housing Department has

received the maximum score for the last five years. In fact, in two of those years-due to bonus points, the rating was 104%. Since the SEMAP's inception, the PHA has averaged 97% - High Performer – each year.

Table 2 Multi-Year PHAS Scores

| Indicator | FY 2007 | FY 2006 | FY 2005 | FY 2004 |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Physical | 21 | 22 | 24 | 24 |
| Financial | 18 | 22 | 20 | 29 |
| Management | 29 | 28 | 28 | 29 |
| Resident Survey | 9 | 9 | 9 | 6 |
| TOTAL | 77 | 81 | 81 | 88 |

Many industry professionals find fault with the manner in which HUD rates housing authorities. Many important elements of a successful organization are not measured in the PHAS or SEMAP rating systems. For instance, there is no measurement for board effectiveness, organizational features, whether policy and procedures are available and updated, or if the organization undertakes effective operational and strategic planning.

Recognizing these deficiencies, the PHA engaged a private sector rating agency to assess the PHA's performance. First in 2002 and again in 2007, the PHA engaged Moody's Investor's Service to undertake a management review of the PHA. Their review assessed finances, the PHA's portfolio overall, management practices, board and staff development, and numerous other performance indicators that determine a successful organization.

In both reviews Moody's awarded the PHA its highest management rating: MQ-1 (Management Quality 1).

The 2002 review team listed the following as the PHA's strengths:

- "Management has fostered a very strong and deep culture of performance management and accountability which has resulted in management's ability to extensively track the operations of its public housing and to effectively operate its public housing based on the analysis of the information collected."
- "The Authority undertakes an exceptionally strong strategic planning process . . . . . "
- "Management has a strong commitment to establishing and updating policy and procedure guidelines for virtually every aspect of its operations . . . "

The 2007 report stated:

- "Strong management team"

- "Experienced Board of Commissioners"

- "Continues to cultivate an environment with solid operations, sound financial management and good housing stock"

- "Comprehensive array of resident services in spite of budgetary cutbacks"

- "Favorable operations are evidenced by strong rent collections, and work order completions"

Each year the PHA recognizes an employee who has contributed above and beyond their regular duties at the housing authority. That person receives the Employee of the Year Award. Awards are given to two runners up as well. The Authority also has Employee of the Quarter



Awards and Employee Recognition lunches for time served at the PHA. These awards contribute to increased morale and recognition for good job performance. The organization will continue these types of programs to encourage our staff to perform their duties in an effective, efficient and professional manner.

Over the course of HUD's multi-year surveying of our residents, resident satisfaction with our maintenance services has been rated high. This has been validated through our own-much larger- resident surveys.

In that survey of more than one-third of the PHA's households:

- 82.1% stated they were very satisfied/satisfied with how easy it was to request repairs
- 81.4% were very satisfied/satisfied with how well the repairs were done
- 83.2% were very satisfied/satisfied with how well they were treated by the oerson you contacted for repairs
- 84.5% were very satisfied/satisfied with how well they were treated by the person doing the repairs
- 82.0% responded they strongly agree/agreed that management is responsive to their questions and concerns

These most recent scores validate what previous surveys have shown:

**Table 3 Multi-Year Resident Survey Results**

| Fiscal Year | Indicators | |
|---|---|---|
| | Maintenance/Repairs | Services |
| FY2006 | 88.0% | 93.8% |
| FY2005 | 85.6% | 90.0% |
| FY2004 | 82.3% | 90.0% |
| FY2003 | 90.0% | 94.0% |
| FY2002 | 86.0% | 90.0% |

Residents are satisfied with the level of services they are receiving from the housing authority.

In the forthcoming years, the PHA will concentrate on improving its Public Housing Assessment System rating, study best practices at other organizations, create efficiency performance management indicators and implement other general management improvements to become an even better managed organization.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #6

## RESIDENT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

*"Freedom means the opportunity to be what we never thought we would be."*
*Daniel J. Boorstin*

Promoting resident self-sufficiency is an extremely important priority at the Providence Housing Authority (PHA). This priority underlies the entire reason that public housing exists. Public housing was originally created to serve as a means to an end to the working middle class that required some assistance along the way. Here at the PHA, we still carry that same thought. Helping residents to gain self-sufficiency so that they may move up in their lives is a daily effort that is done through a variety of programs – Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Homeownership, Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, General Equivalency Diploma, Office Skills, Introduction to Computers, the Youth Program, and various job training programs such as the Home to Work Painter Program.

The PHA is very proud of its Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. The FSS program helps public housing and Section 8 residents to achieve economic independence through gainful employment. With the aid of an FSS Coordinator, program participants develop individualized five-year goals plans that will help them move to work and increase their earned income. One of the most attractive features of the FSS program is the escrow savings account. When a working participant's rent increases as the result of an increase in earned income, a percentage of that increase is set aside in an interest-bearing account. Upon successful contract completions, the PHA releases the funds to the client. Eighty-three percent of the FSS participants are employed either full or part-time. Five percent are not working but are attending school full-time and the remaining 12% are actively seeking employment. Almost 25% of employed participants are also enrolled in an education or training program.

According to the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, employment in Rhode Island is projected to grow at all education and skill levels. At the same time, only 20% of the PHA's public housing heads-of-household are employed full time. In another attempt to



provide better job opportunities, thus

leading to self-sufficiency, the PHA, in collaboration with the Sherwin-Williams Company introduced the Home/Work Painter Training Program to PHA residents first in FY 2007. Since the first program, 30 students have learned painting skills and health issues like safety, mold awareness, and lead-safe practices and eight graduates have successfully secured gainful employment in the painting industry.

In addition to the FSS program, the PHA offers Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Equivalency Diploma (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Participation in these programs is strong and steady. On average, the PHA outcomes for the students who completed the ABE program were 4% above the state's performance targets.

Introduction to Computers, Financial Fitness and the Office Skills Certificate Program are additional programs offered to PHA residents to assist them on the path to self-sufficiency. The primary aim of the Introduction to Computers course is to help adult PHA residents "break the ice" with today's computers, which for the inexperienced can be quite intimidating. Classes were so well attended in the first session that a continuation to a second level was created. The course is offered in English and Spanish. Computer skills are essential to most job positions today. The Office Skills Certificate Program includes lessons in Microsoft Windows and Word, customer service, telephone skills and business writing. The course plan is supplemented by a job search skills component that concentrates on resume development, writing cover letters and tips on job interviewing. The purpose of the Financial Fitness classes is to provide PHA residents with the information, skills and support necessary to achieve their financial goals. Money management and credit repair were identified as common financial issues among our residents. Therefore, this program aims to assist those transitioning from welfare to work as well as those who have the goal of homeownership.

Homeownership encourages personal responsibility and the values necessary for strong self-sufficient families.

Therefore, the PHA implemented the Section 8 Homeownership Program in FY 2004. The program allows qualifying Section 8 residents to use their voucher as a form of mortgage payment assistance and other homeownership expenses. One of the federal stipulations for this program mandates that participants must be employed full time for at least a year prior to receiving their homeownership assistance. Further, the PHA mandates that all Section 8 Homeownership participants must also be enrolled in the FSS program. Local interest in this program has grown increasingly over the past several years. The PHA hosts monthly orientations in both English and Spanish. The PHA refers qualifying participants to non-profit resources in the community which are committed to assisting low and moderate income families purchase homes of their own.

It is not difficult to compile the evidence of need for self-sufficiency support among the residents of the Providence Housing Authority. Nearly 70% of the residents who complete our FSS program, including full time employment and termination of public assistance (non-housing), are unable to afford to leave subsidized housing. Nearly all of the adults who take advantage of our educational programs enter at the adult basic education or beginning literacy levels. These are real barriers to self-sufficiency. At the same time, the PHA's federal funding source continues to cutback on monies for our Resident Services programs. While collaborations with other providers can increase our ability to do more with less, there is a minimum level of staffing and infrastructure the PHA has to maintain to initiate and sustain these partnerships.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #7

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS TO STAKEHOLDERS

*"Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind."*
*Rudyard Kipling*

A well informed staff member is a better worker who feels like an integral part of the organization. Communicating with people keeps them informed and part of the "loop." While not every employee can be part of the major decision-making process, it behooves an organization to communicate what the organization is doing, what its future plans are, and to get employees and other stakeholders to "buy-in."

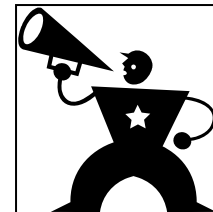The Providence Housing Authority needs to better communicate with its staff, board of commissioners and key stakeholders in the community. By doing so, it raises awareness of the important work that takes place in public housing, the challenges it faces and opportunities that may become available.

Public housing has never been a popular program with the general public going back to its inception in 1937. Polls indicate that there is a stigma attached to public housing.

Asked to provide a profile of the typical public housing resident will result in a stereotypical response. The news media bears most of the blame for the stigmatization of public housing. Through experience we know that they seldom attend a positive story about public housing. Instead, their emphasis is to highlight a shooting, stabbing or drug raid. The public gets the picture of public housing as a very dangerous place to live. While public housing does have its problems (most of which are do to poor public policy decisions made in Washington), most public housing residents are well behaved, appreciative individuals who look forward to someday moving out of the public housing system. Many, due to poor health, inadequate resources and skills, and age, will remain in public housing for a long period of time and are content to do so.

The PHA and other housing authorities operate many programs for the benefit of our residents. Our efforts are concentrated on assisting those who want to better their lives by providing counseling, skill training and basic

education. Youth are assisted to help them perform better in school and to break the cycle of poverty which guarantees a life of low-paying, unsatisfying jobs, or worse.

Public housing would have a better reputation if we were better able to communicate with the general public and key decision-makers in the community. The PHA has undertaken several initiatives to bring the real message about public housing and Section 8 to the public.

- Quarterly newsletters for residents are also forwarded to key political and business leaders in the community.

- Press advisories and press releases have been prepared and distributed to different media outlets with varied success.

- A brochure was prepared by this housing authority for distribution in Washington to Rhode Island's Congressional delegation. This brochure, prepared for the Public Housing Association of Rhode Island, outlines housing authority programs; the diminution of federal funding; the economic impact of public housing payrolls, purchases and rental program. Also included in the brochure was a section on the myths of public housing.

- During FY2008, the PHA also had published a book by author Paul Campbell on the history of the Providence Housing Authority.
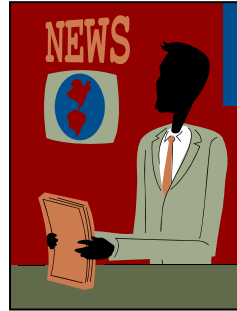
The PHA does many important and good things. These accomplishments have to receive more publicity. More press releases have to be written and distributed to media outlets. The PHA needs to appear on more public affairs programs, both public and cable programs. These programs receive wide circulation and the cable shows are repeated several times during a month.

Communication in any organization is important. We need to do a better job of communicating with our own staff and board. Employee newsletters, bulletin boards and employee forums are excellent methods of communicating with staff members.

In past years, the PHA has conducted "Employee Information Day" at a site away from our offices. At these four hour events the staff received a box lunch and had the opportunity to speak with representatives of their unions and health and pension providers. Later, they heard presentations from PHA senor staff about the PHA budget, costs of employment and trend

analysis of costs at the housing authority and how well )or poorly) we were performing. It gave staff a better awareness of where they budget is expended and provided them with an awareness of costs of operations.

Part of our current method of communicating with staff is through our bi-annual Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE). This is a multi-part survey completed by staff members to determine their concerns and attitudes about being an employee at the PHA.

One of the dimensions of the SOE survey is Communication. In the most recent survey, conducted in January of 2008, the PHA scored positive in the three constructs that are covered:
- Internal Communication
- Availability of Information
- External Communication

Any score above a 300 is considered more positive than negative. The higher the score beyond 300 points, the more positive it is perceived. While these scores from our own staff indicate there isn't a problem with communication at the PHA, the score could – should – be a little higher.

Table 23  PHA Average Score: SOE January 2008

| Communication | Score |
|---|---|
| Internal Communication | 350 |
| Availability | 377 |
| External Communication | 380 |

Feedback from employees is also sought through the use of suggestion boxes placed throughout the PHA and its developments. In its first two years of operation, numerous suggestions were placed in the boxes for senior management's consideration.

An additional method of mining information about how are employees perceive their employment at the PHA, is through quarterly meetings with union business agents and union stewards. Those employees who may be reticent about speaking to management directly, are more likely to speak about concerns with their union.  It should be noted, however, that there were only two union grievances filed in FY2008, the lowest number over the last ten years.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Resident Survey also has a section about communications. In the most recent survey conducted by the PHA Strategic Planning Team, our residents overwhelmingly agreed that management was communicating with them. In each of the three questions asked, the resident response rate of Agree/Strongly Agree was in the 80% range. (See below)

One area where staff, particularly those completing grants, found there could be an improvement was in the area about the availability of staff members to retrieve basic information about the PHA in a timely manner.  Information, such as, the history of the PHA; layouts and

aerial photos of our sites; and, basic site information was a common request. As a result of this request, a central file will be created for retrieval by any staff member.

The new strategic plan will have goals and objectives that address our communication needs. More information will become available to staff. Bi-annual employee newsletters will be published. Employee "briefings" will be conducted. Quarterly newsletters to our residents will be expanded with new features. Kiosks will be constructed at large family developments to help in the dissemination of information. We will examine how we can make more space on monthly rent mailers to communicate with our residents. The Leased Housing staff will communicate information to Section

8 participants with more briefings, continuation of the newsletter and the Internet. The PHA will add new features to our website to make it more user friendly and informative. More informational briefings will be added to the agendas of Board of Commissioners meetings and at the annual board training and development retreat.

Every effort will be expended to increase the information available to our residents, staff, board and other stakeholders.

Lee Lacoca once said *"You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can't get them across, your ideas won't get you anywhere."*

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #8

## TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY & PRODUCTIVITY

*"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."*
*Arthur C. Clarke*

Today, computer technology is a part of daily life at the Providence Housing Authority (PHA). Therefore, all file and e-mail servers have been replaced with new HP servers in order to stay up with the race for the most up-to-date technology. A goal of the PHA is to have no computer that is more than five years old. This is often a difficult goal to achieve with the PHA's current budget limitations.

A top priority at the PHA is managing all PHA operations more efficiently. To achieve that, PHA staff now has access to numerous HUD information sites on-line. Housing Managers and Management Aides now have the ability to monitor which tenants are delinquent with their income submissions, the change in family dynamics and missed reexamination dates. This easy access greatly reduces fraudulent activity among tenants and saves the PHA administrative time and money.

Identifying unreported income, calculating the excess subsidy spent, conducting hearings and collecting the repayment has become a huge part of the Leased Housing Department staff's daily workload. The detection of fraud has been made easier because of the access to income matching databases. Further, a recent addition of Remote Access Software to the Management Information Systems (MIS) Department saves the PHA a significant amount of time and allows for more efficient problem solving capabilities.

A significant advance in PHA technology is the use of Handheld Inspection Units. Now leased housing and public housing inspectors can upload their inspections for the day, enter their inspection data into the Handheld Inspection Units and then download the inspection information into the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) so that the necessary work orders are generated. All work orders are then printed at the corresponding foremen offices. These Handheld Inspection Units greatly reduce human error and more inspections can be completed per day.

Advances in technology also impact the way we do business. The internet provides instant access to unlimited resources on a variety of issues and topics. The development and implementation of the PHA web-site has allowed for an easy and convenient way for potential applicants to check their status on the waiting-lists, download housing applications, view job openings and apply for positions. The availability of on-line testing resources allows an affordable and user-friendly approach to pre-employment testing. Computer-based training allows for users to self-administer a variety of training programs at their own pace and level of expertise. Wireless networks allow instant availability, improving both accuracy of information and productivity. The PHA web-site is constantly evolving to support the efficiency and timeliness of the administrative staff's duties.

Another relatively new technology used here at the PHA is the Document Imaging System. This system allows all paper documents to be scanned and stored on the network, thus reducing the amount of paper storage. This will greatly benefit the Housing Management Department with resident transfers. The resident folders will no longer have to be transferred via inter-office mail. All resident information will be available from the network. A Snap Server was installed to process and store images for the Document Imaging System. This Snap Server allows for a quicker retrieval of archived images/documents and eliminates any MIS staff involvement.

Always planning for the future is a must in the technology world. The PHA is currently reviewing a software product from MITAS software. MITAS has been in the private housing industry for quite some time and is now developing software for public housing agencies. MITAS has a much more user-friendly software package than our current system. The software is web-based and will save the PHA big money on licensing and hardware costs.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #9

## RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY COSTS

*"The first step in the risk management process is to acknowledge the reality of risk. Denial is a common tactic that substitutes deliberate ignorance for thoughtful planning."*
*Charles Tremper*

The health and safety of our residents and staff are high priorities at the Providence Housing Authority. Each year the housing authority undertakes many hours of staff training on safety-related issues alone. In FY2007, the PHA conducted 543 hours of workplace safety training for our employees. In FY2008, the number of hours was 414, or 19% of the total training hours. These sessions are conducted using both in-house personnel and contracted third-parties. Many hours of training are provided at no cost through Beacon Mutual, our Workers Compensation provider.

The PHA has an in-house Safety Committee comprised of staff members from each department. Their role is to concentrate on reducing workplace risk and to recommend policies to make the PHA a safe place to live and work. The Safety Committee conducts quarterly meetings to examine accidents that have taken place and to determine how future accidents can be prevented. The committee is comprised of staff members from each department and will soon include residents as well.
The Safety Committee also coordinates the resident safety

program, which is conducted at all of the PHA's developments. In FY2007, the PHA conducted twenty-eight separate safety programs for our residents involving more than a thousand residents. Topics included: Smoking and Fire Safety, Cooking and Fire Safety, Candles and Fire Safety and Building Evacuation. Sessions were held at the PHA's high-rise elderly/disabled developments and at all of our largest family developments.

Even with a comprehensive safety program, workplace accidents and insurance claims against the PHA continue to occur. This fiscal year, through May, thirty Workers' Compensation claims have been filed, an increase over last year's twenty-two claims. Over the last three years, eighty workers' comp claims have been filed. Each injury no matter how minor is recorded and reported. A better way of looking at the data and its impact on the PHA is to look at the number of days lost on the job.



Worker's Comp Incidents

107
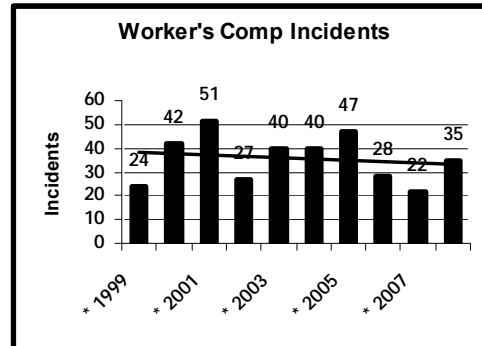
**Table 24 Workers Compensation Claims FY 2007-2008**

| Time Lost | FY 2008 | FY 2007 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| No Time Lost | 16 | 13 | 29 |
| < 1 Wk | 9 | 5 | 14 |
| > 1 Wk & < 6 Wks | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| > 6 Wks & < 8 Wks | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| > 8 Wks | 3 | 6 | 9 |

In FY2007, thirteen of the twenty claims resulted in no lost time for the injured worker and five others lost less than one week. In total, however, 234.5 days were lost. In FY2007, 16 reported incidents required no lost work time, while nine lost less than a week.

Workers' Compensation is a costly item in the PHA budget that can be mitigated through better training and supervision. In FY2007, the PHA paid out $191,120 in Workers' Compensation premiums, or $914 per employee. This is considerably higher from the previous year and is entirely due to work place injuries. The cost for FY2008 is $191,620.
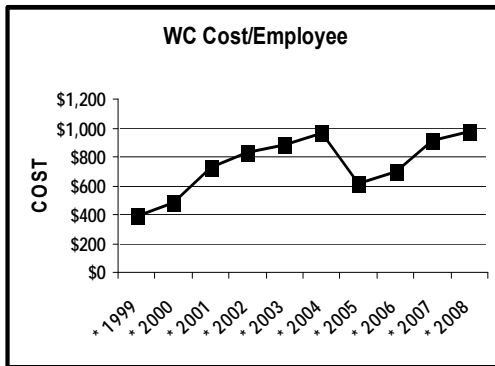


General liability, property and auto insurance premiums are also areas where the PHA can do better in managing risk and lowering costs. In policy year 2007, our General liability premium was $180,806, which was

15.1% less than he previous year as a result of a less than normal snowfall (fewer slips and falls), and property inspections to identify risks.
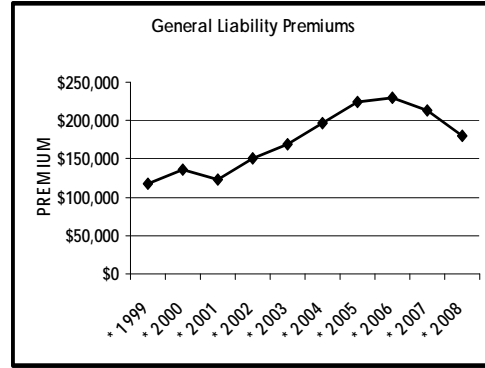


Property insurance premiums consumed $359,390 in FY2007, a decrease of 12.5% from the previous year. This is another insurance policy that can be influenced by the number of claims filed. The fewer claims, the less of a risk and the lower the premiums. The same is true for auto/truck insurance, which cost the PHA $80,000.
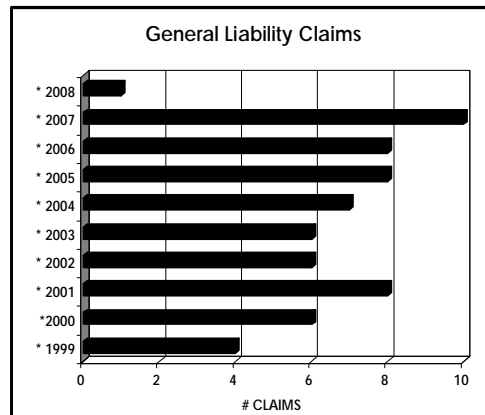


Since insurance costs are a budget item that can be controlled, the PHA will concentrate its efforts over the course of this strategic plan in identifying risks, eliminating or mitigating them, and lowering the costs to the Authority.

Each year the PHA submits a Risk Control Plan to Housing Authority Insurance (HAI) in order to receive a discount on its insurance premiums. The Risk Control Plan contains information about the activities the PHA will undertake to mitigate risk at its properties.

Housing Authority Insurance annually awards its "HARRI" Award to that housing authority that submits the best safety program. The PHA won this year's award for our Fie Safety Program. This program was developed by the PHA's Safety Committee and Special Projects Office. We also received an Award of Excellence from the New England Regional Council of NAHRO and an Award of Merit from national NAHRO.

Our goals and objectives for this strategic issue will involve:

- Reorganizing the PHA's Safety Committee
- Involving residents as members of the safety committee
- Creating a new workplan for the committee
- Increase the number of hours of safety-related training
- Take advantage of discounts offered by providers by completing an updated Risk Control Plan
- Identifying employees who are chronically accident prone and provide additional training or dismissal
- Identifying risks throughout the housing authority and mitigate or eliminate them
- Create and conduct a comprehensive safety training for residents

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #10

## ENERGY AND UTILITY CONSUMPTION AND COSTS

*"The greatest burden for us in the upcoming year are utility costs, and we are just now realizing the full impact of them."*
*Richard Rand*

Utility costs consumed 36% of the PHA's operating budget in FY2007. In FY1997 it was 34%. In FY 2007 the PHA expended $6.5 million for oil, gas, electricity, water and sewer. This was a107% increase over the aggregate utility cost in FY1997. Over the last ten years, utility costs per unit month have increased 100% going from $109.97 per unit month (PUM) to $208.12 PUM in FY2007.

While all utility costs increased during the period, some increased greater

Utility Costs FY1997-2007
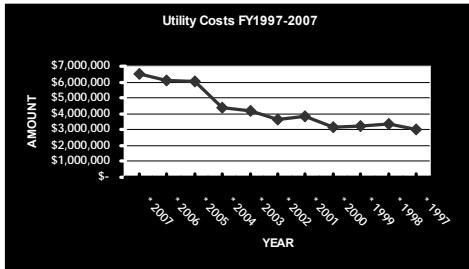
than others. For instance, over the ten year period 1997-2007, water increased in cost by 133% averaging annual increase of 13.3%. In one year alone, FY2004, water costs rose 28.6%. Sewer fees are another example of costs rising faster than inflation. In the ten year period sewer fees increased a substantial 150% actually increasing in one year, 2004-2005, by 105% from the previous year. The year 2004-2005 was an anomaly for water and sewer due to retroactive billing by the

Narragansett Bay Commission, which provides sewer service and the Providence Water Supply, which is the water provider. In that one year alone, the PHA exceeded its utility budget by $1.5 million-all of which was paid out of the housing authority's operating reserve. [That year HUD stopped providing utility adjustments to housing authorities, which in previous years the difference would have been paid by HUD.]

Utility Costs FY 1997 - FY 2007
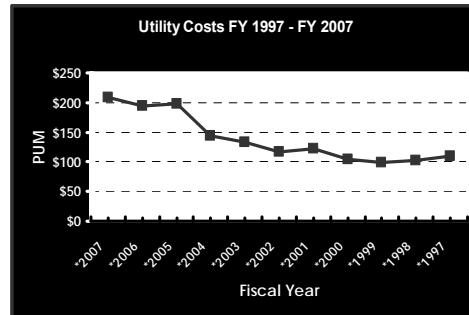
Other examples of rising utility costs are:

- **Electricity**: +70.2% over ten years (average annual increase of 7.0%) The 7 July 2008 Providence Journal carried a headline that said: *Electric utility seeks 21.7 percent hike.* A headline in the same newspaper stated on 11 July 2008: PUC OKs increased electricity, gas rates. The article confirmed that the Public Utilities Commission had approved the

utilities request for a 21.7% increase in electricity rates and 8% for natural gas.

- **Natural Gas:** +191% over ten years (Extraordinary increase due to conversion to gas from fuel oil)
- **Fuel Oil**: -5.4% over ten years (decrease due to conversion to natural gas)

Vehicle gasoline is not considered a utility per se, but it, too, has risen dramatically over the last two years. Compared to last years costs, fuel has increased by 16% over last year. The PHA expends an average of $4,100 per month on vehicle fuel costs.

**Table 25 10-Year Rates of Increase**

| Utility | 10-YR | Annual Average |
|---------|-------|----------------|
| Electricity | 71% | 7.1% |
| Natural Gas | 190% | 19% |
| Gasoline | 233% | 23.3% |
| Water | 132% | 13.2% |
| Sewer | 147% | 14.7% |

With so high a percentage of the budget dedicated to utilities, it behooves the organization to take steps to reduce the cost and consumption of utilities.

To address increasing energy costs, the PHA sought proposals from Energy Performance Management firms in 2006 and selected Ameresco, Company of Framingham, MA after a lengthy selection process. The firm's first responsibility was to conduct an Energy Needs Assessment, which identified problem areas and how to correct them. The next step was to create an Energy Plan describing in detail what had to be done to reduce energy/utility costs and consumption. As a result of this effort the PHA executed an Energy Performance management Contract with Ameresco to perform $12.0 million in energy savings. This contract will result in a 20% reduction in energy costs and save the PHA an estimated $1.2 million annually. These savings will pay for the energy lease used to pay for the work, pay fees to Ameresco, and the balance of the savings going to the PHA.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #11

## SECURE AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

*"Law and order are the medicine of the body politic and when the body politic gets sick, medicine must be administered."*
*B.R. Ambedkar*



An important element of the Providence Housing Authority's (PHA) mission is to provide safe housing for its residents. After conducting the focus groups at all of the PHA developments, it was clear that security was a top common theme throughout the entire authority.

The Providence Police Department's Public Housing Unit (PHU) and the PHA's security force make up the Police & Security Services Unit which serves to carry out this mission to provide a secure and safe environment. The unit provides security services to six family developments, seven elderly/disabled high-rises and 245 units of scattered site housing locations. Property destruction, gangs, violence and drugs are perceived as major problems by the PHA residents. With eight patrol officers assigned by the police department to the PHU serving just 100 hours a month and 13 security guards monitoring the high-rises at 425 hours a week, it is clear that security, overall, is understaffed and not providing around the clock security. This is primarily due to a lack of funding. Each year, the PHA receives a grant from the Department of Elderly Affairs which is used to pay our high-rise security guards. Each year, this grant is dramatically reduced, mainly due to cuts in state funding. In FY 2007, the PHA received $97,000 and in FY 2008, the PHA was awarded $90,000.

The city of Providence is responsible for the payment of the PHU officers' salaries, benefits and pension plan contributions. The PHA compensates the officers for the hours worked beyond the hours that are paid by the city. PHA extended coverage hours allow for an overall extension of police coverage in the PHA housing developments. However, towards the end of FY 2007 the extended hours were reduced significantly due to budget reductions in the PHA's operating subsidy.

Due to the foreboding challenge of funding cutbacks, the PHA strongly promotes resident crime watches among the PHA developments. However, for the FY 2008 just two of the high-rises had active crime watches. The primary reasons for the lack of resident crime watches among the high-rises and family developments continue to be the lack of interest on the part of the residents and the disagreement between the members of the crime watch. The PHA does plan to strengthen and promote resident crime watches in the developments that have expressed an interest.

Another attempt of maximizing the Security Department's affects with less manpower is through the Geographic Identification System (GIS). This procedure includes mapping or tracking the types of crimes that occur and the specific developments that they occur at. With the identification of types of crime, the security department can then deploy its police resources specific to address the specific crime. For example, the gun unit would address the developments known for its gang violence crimes while the narcotics unit would patrol the developments where drug crimes are committed.

A unique feature of the PHA Police & Security Services Unit is that the security personnel are in direct radio communication with sworn law enforcement officers. This provides for immediate assistance or advice for the security personnel. In many instances this coordination between the security personnel and the city

police has resulted in the identification and apprehension of criminal suspects. Additionally, many of the officers who are not directly assigned to the PHA have the PHA radio channel programmed in their portable radios resulting in an expansion of this communication feature. The table below shows all of the reported police activity for the last ten fiscal years. Arrests, dispersals and narcotic arrests have all decreased. Radio calls however have remained consistently in the thousands, demonstrating the continued need for police and security presence within the developments.

Table 26 Public Housing Unit Arrests & Activities FY 1999-FY 2008

| FY | Arrests | Radio Calls | Dis-persals | Narc. Arrests |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | 421 | 1,304 | 345 | 81 |
| 2000 | 420 | 1,430 | 303 | 91 |
| 2001 | 639 | 1,699 | 425 | 70 |
| 2002 | 346 | 1,584 | 251 | 53 |
| 2003 | 224 | 1,373 | 346 | 17 |
| 2004 | 398 | 1,649 | 565 | 47 |
| 2005 | 202 | 1,347 | 377 | 35 |
| 2006 | 134 | 1,063 | 189 | 12 |
| 2007 | 109 | 1,198 | 101 | 10 |
| 2008 | 158 | 1,200 | 132 | 12 |
| Totals | 3,051 | 13,847 | 3,034 | 428 |

Continuing the trend of everyone helping to promote safety here at the PHA, all PHA departments contribute to security and its operations. Facilities Management contributes to security and crime prevention by keeping the developments clean and by the removal of graffiti both of which, if unaddressed, have been proven to promote criminal activity. Housing Management and the Leased

Housing Departments aggressively conduct fraud investigations, coordinate with Security for criminal background checks and take action with unruly tenants when necessary. Security, as practiced in the PHA, continues to truly be a joint and cooperative effort involving all departments helping to add to the strength of the police force and security services.

The PHA has recently installed a security system in the six elderly high-rises. The security system consists of more than 100 external cameras and alarms on the ground floor doors, entrance/exit ways and elevators. In addition, the main lobby doors were changed to card access doors in FY 2001. The card access doors and external cameras on all high-rise entrances cuts down on tenants propping open the doors and letting in unwanted visitors. These security cameras and alarm systems have recently been expanded to some of the family developments as well. The security cameras are monitored by security dispatchers whom also dispatch the PHU officers to police service calls. The PHA has plans to continue expanding the security cameras and alarms to include more of the family developments. This plan, however, is contingent upon the ever shaky future funding.

Establishing and maintaining a positive relationship between the police and the residents is a major challenge. Interaction with resident youth is conducted, one on one, on a daily basis. This has been the practice for years and has proven to be successful. For instance, it is not uncommon for the officers to stop and "chat" with the resident youth in an informal setting while the officers are on their routine patrol. In a continued effort to establish a positive working relationship with the residents, the PHU continued with their annual hot-dog roasts in Chad Brown, Hartford Park, Manton Heights, Codding Court and Roger Williams for FY 2008. All of the hot-dogs were prepared and served by the officers at these events. These hot-dog roasts have proved to be



crucial in allowing the officers to interact in a relaxed setting with the residents of the developments, with emphasis on the resident youth.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE #12

# RESIDENT RELATIONS & PROGRAMS

*"Be everywhere, do everything, and never fail to astonish the customer."*
*Anonymous*

Improving resident relations encompasses a broad range of services that the PHA provides. The main factor that will always contribute to improving resident relations is improving the quality of the resident's lives while at the Providence Housing Authority. This includes self-sufficiency, gainful employment, clean and modern living environments, safety and quality communication between the residents and upper management.

The Department of Resident Services exists to address the issues of economic independence and self-sufficiency of our residents. Some programs provided by the Department of Resident Services are adult Education and Training, Supportive Services for the elderly and disabled, self-sufficiency programs and Youth Programs. In fiscal year 2007 the traditional funding from our federal source, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, for our Youth Programs disappeared. This lack of funding directly affected the PHA youth programs, both summer and after school. As a result of our unique partnering, the Boys and Girls Club of Rhode Island will be providing after-school programming

for our youths at three of our family developments.

The Supportive Services Division of the Resident Service Department is the entity that provides social services to elderly and disabled residents living in the PHA's high-rise buildings. Three Resident Services Coordinators (RSC), down from five just a few years ago, are now responsible for conducting outreach, intake, assessment and coordinating services to meet identified needs of nearly 1,300 residents. With new residents every year, many of whom live at the boundaries of homelessness, and a significant population of seriously mentally ill (30% of whom fall out of active treatment each year), the challenges and needs of our residents are constant. Last fiscal year, 100 new residents moved into PHA housing. With reduced staff to meet the demand for services, the division has had to maintain good surveillance of residents' needs and constantly prioritize work this year. Collaboration with other agencies and providers has become even more critical in responding to constant needs with fewer PHA resources and staff.

In FY 2004, 1,053 or 81%% elderly and disabled residents were reached by the Resident Services Coordinators (RSCs) out of a total of 1,300 residents. This number has continued to decrease over the last five years due to the skeleton crew and the rising demands of the population. In FY 2008, just 55% of the elderly and disabled population was reached with 720 residents.

**Table 1 Total Elderly/Disabled Residents Served FY 2004-2008**

| Fiscal Year | Elderly/Disabled Served |
|---|---|
| 2004 | 1,053 |
| 2005 | 1,067 |
| 2006 | 1,003 |
| 2007 | 973 |
| 2008 | 720 |

Another division of the Department of Resident Services is the Education and Training Division. This division is responsible for running such programs as the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, Section 8 Homeownership Program, Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), Office Skills and Introduction to Computers. All of these programs purpose is to provide opportunities for adult residents of public housing and Section 8 to develop the skills to advance economically and personally.

This year, 275 adult residents took advantage of our programs. We served a total of 119 residents in our adult education and training programs and an additional 156 participants in our FSS program.

**Table 2 Adult Ed. Programs Summary FY 2008**

| | # Students | Total Hours |
|---|---|---|
| ESL | 67 | 4,137 |
| ABE/GED | 52 | 5,718 |
| Intro to Computers | 29 | 176 |
| Office Skills | 5 | 183 |
| Total | 153 | 10,214 |

Monies to run these programs, teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies and course materials are contingent upon a grant from the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) due to shrinking federal grants. Although, the program is meeting its targets and performance indicators, again, the division is always looking for ways to create new partnerships.

As part of the strategic planning process, focus groups were conducted with residents in all of the developments. From these focus groups, it became evident that security is a very serious concern among residents. A key way to improve resident relations would be to provide around-the-clock security, seven days a week. However, due to our shrinking operating budget, security guards for the high-rises are paid out of a grant from the Department of Elderly Affairs. Each year this grant gets less and less due to state cutbacks. In FY 2007, the PHA received $97,000 from the DEA Elderly Security Grant. This year, 2008, we received $90,000 from the same grant. Further, hours for the Public Housing Unit (PHU) officers that are paid for by the PHA are being spent at a rate that will exhaust allocated funds well before the end of the fiscal year.

Although security cameras were installed in all of the high-rises and some of the family developments, calls to the police have not decreased significantly. In FY 2004, 1,649 radio calls were placed. In FY 2007, the same year that the security cameras were installed, 1,198 police calls were made which is a 27% decrease. In FY 2008, a 1% increase in police calls were made with 1,200 calls. This shows the need for even more security tactics and intense efforts.

**Figure 1 Total Radio Calls FY 1999-2008**
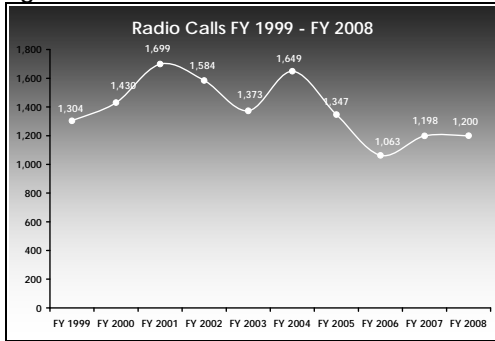


Another issue that plagues the PHA and its relationship with its residents is the modernization of its developments and buildings. Modernization is the upkeep of the physical PHA housing stock. Examples include roofing, windows, painting, floor tiling, appliances, etc. Natural wear and tear as well as mistreatment and abuse provoke the continuous physical improvements. Monies for the modernizations come from the PHA's Capital Fund Program which is dependent upon HUD funds.

Tied into modernization is how fast residents' work orders are received, processed and completed. We

know by tracking the PHA work orders that the number of completed work orders is slightly less than the total number of work orders placed. The table below shows an average work order completion rate of 97.1% over the last ten years. This is not a bad percentage considering the reduced manpower due to budget cuts. a PHA goal is to reach a 100% completion rate.

**Figure 2 Work Order Completion Rate FY 1999-2008**
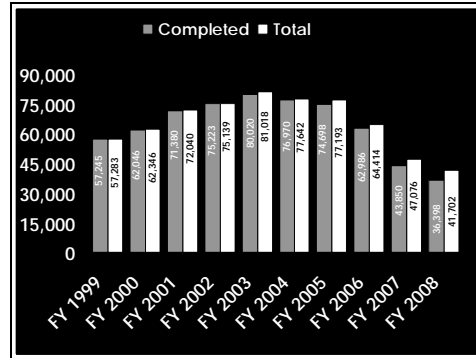


Our annual Public Housing Customer Service and Satisfaction Survey shows that the majority of its Public Housing residents are satisfied with how easy the process is of filing a work order as well as with how well the repair was completed. Please see the table below.

**Table 4 Work Order Survey Question FY 2008**

| | Satisfied/ Very Satisfied | Dissat./ Very Dissat. | Does Not Apply |
|---|---|---|---|
| How easy it was to request repairs? | 426 (82.1%) | 63 (12.2%) | 30 (5.8%) |
| How well the repairs were done? | 412 (81.4%) | 61 (12.1%) | 33 (6.5%) |
| How well you were treated by the person you contacted for repairs? | 424 (83.2%) | 46 (9%) | 40 (7.8%) |
| How well you were treated by the person doing the repairs? | 432 (84.5%) | 33 (6.4%) | 46 (9%) |

The majority of the residents with 82.1% are satisfied or very satisfied with the ease in requesting a work order. 81.4% of public housing residents are satisfied or very satisfied with how well the repair was completed compared to 12.1% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied residents.

To continue promoting the communication between residents and upper management the Board of Commissioners contains three resident commissioners. These commissioners are involved in the passing of all board resolutions and kept informed of all newly proposed policies and policy changes. Further, the PHA has a Resident Advisory Board (RAB). This RAB consists of the presidents and some vice-presidents of the Resident Associations. RAB meetings are held several times throughout the fiscal year and are used to extensively involve the RAB in the Annual Planning Process.

**Table 5 RAB Meeting Schedule FY 2008**

| Date | RAB Meeting | Tasks |
|---|---|---|
| 11/14/07 | 1 | Annual Planning (AP) Process |
| 11/28/07 | 2 | Admin Plans & SOPs |
| 12/12/07 | 3 | Admin Plans & SOPs |
| 1/9/08 | 4 | Review Draft of AP |
| 1/23/08 | 5 | Approval of AP |
| Total | 5 | |

In addition to the Resident Advisory Board, Resident Associations exist at almost all of the public housing sites. A resident liason, who is also an upper management staff member, is appointed to assist the Resident Associations in carrying out their functions. Monthly meetings are held at each active Resident Association in which the residents can voice concerns, questions and requests and the Resident Association leaders can then communicate these concerns, questions and requests to upper management. Each RA receives an annual budget based on the percentage of occupied units in their development. The PHA will continue to provide support and outreach to the developments that do not have active existing Resident Associations.
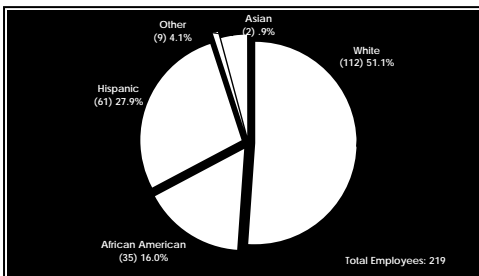
# STRATEGIC ISSUE #13

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

*"The magic formula that successful businesses have discovered is to treat customers like guests and employees like people."*
*Thomas J. Peters*

The Providence Housing Authority (PHA) continuously strives to provide a work environment rich in benefits and full of challenge and opportunity. Through constant reviewing of policies, procedures and trainings, the PHA recruits the most qualified individuals and works hard to retain those employees. The Providence Housing Authority employs a highly skilled, diversified workforce. It is our policy to promote from within the agency if possible, matching the knowledge, skills and abilities of our current staff, with the needs and objectives of the organization. We also ask for ideas and feedback from our employees through our employee committees. Maintaining satisfied and happy employees creates a productive and stress-free work atmosphere. The charts below demonstrate the diversity of the PHA staff as well as the percentage of resident employees.

**Figure 2 Resident Employment FY 2008**



**Figure 1 Racial Composition of PHA Staff FY 2008**
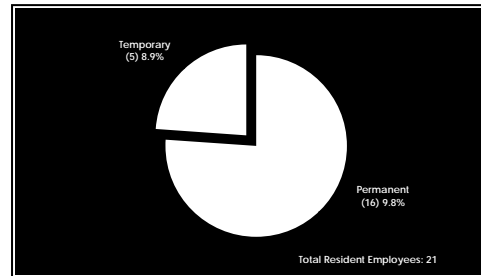


One such employee committee is the PHA Health Care Committee consisting of ten employees from all four unions and all of the PHA departments. The Health Care Committee is involved in all of the decision making that deals with revising, renewing and even changing the PHA health care plan. Recently, a new health plan design was selected in order to save more than $70,000 in premiums. Without the implementation of this new health care plan, increases in employee contributions and reductions in the workforce would have been necessary. By giving employees the opportunity to be actively involved in the decision making process of choosing their health care plan, the employees feel that they are being treated fairly and the employees can then look at the big picture and choose a plan that is best for both the PHA and the employees.

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP), provided through Life Watch, provides a range of programs to reduce stress, generate good mental health and nurture personal growth both on and off the job. This is accomplished through counseling, employee training and service programs.

One of the prime objectives of Human Resources is to provide effective, strategic and targeted training to the employees of the Providence Housing Authority on a continuous basis in order to enhance and develop necessary skills and certifications. Therefore, an Annual Training Needs Assessment is conducted. This assessment, conducted via survey, allows employees to describe the knowledge and skills they would like to acquire to improve their job performance and advancement within the agency. Part of this assessment is ascertaining what supervisors feel the needs of their staff are. The results of these assessments allow management to focus its training programs in the most needed areas. Training programs cover a broad range of topics. Some are geared towards specific departments, while others are useful to the entire staff with the goal to assist our staff in improving their performance and enhancing their career prospects.

In addition, the PHA provides web-based training in cooperation with the Housing Television Network (HTVN) and Prove-It Training, where employees are able to access various programs and software applications training directly from their workstation. In FY 2008, training was been conducted by organizations such as Beacon Mutual Insurance, Nan McKay, Ameresco, and Casterline Associates to name a few. A great example of in-house training is our Management Course. This course is designed to prepare future leaders among our current employees, again helping our desire to promote from within.

Table 27 Staff Training Hours by Category FY 2008

| General Category | Total Hours | % of Total |
|---|---|---|
| Computer Training | 74.50 | 3.6% |
| General Management | 1,539.00 | 73.4% |
| HUD / Regulatory | 0.00 | 0.0% |
| Safety Training | 414.00 | 19.7% |
| Technical / Maintenance | 70.00 | 3.3% |
| Total Training | 2,097.50 | 100.0% |

Workplace safety is of huge importance to the PHA Human Resource Department. The Risk Management Services program provides professional safety training, quality evaluation tools and other loss prevention/cost control programs that enable staff members to better facilitate safety programs. The main objective of Risk Management Services is to provide the highest level of quality attainable for these services. Some programs that are offered through Risk Management Services are Risk

Control Video Library, Risk Control Programs, Stretch for Safety, Training via HTVN Programming, Loss Reports (for analysis purposes), OHSA Training and PHA Achievement Awards. Another PHA employee committee, the Safety Committee is offered through the Risk Management Services program. The Safety Committee is made up of ten volunteer employees from different departments and work skills who oversee the safety programs and services. The purpose of this committee is to bring workers and managers together to achieve and maintain a safe, healthful workplace. The PHA has made a concentrated effort over the years to reduce the number of losses, which has had a positive impact on staff morale, productivity, quality and premium costs.

A Flex Day Policy was implemented over five years ago at the PHA. This policy, ot this day, is very popular with all employees. The Flex Day Policy offers flexible work schedules to employees that have everyday life conflicts such as picking up children from school, getting children to appointments, etc. Instead of working five-day work weeks, an employee is given the option of working the same amount of hours but doing it in four days.

One of the best measures that the PHA uses to evaluate its employee relations is through the Survey of Organizational Excellence. Employee response to this survey has been tremendous. Such response indicates the readiness and the eagerness of employees to engage

in meaningful work to improve the organization. This survey reinforces the vital role every employee has and the survey allows for employees to be candid about their thoughts and opinions on what they like and what they don't like. The PHA then uses this information to improve on its policies and procedures to address and try to meet the needs of every employee. This survey assesses employee attitudes about their overall work situation. It focuses on the job itself and the availability of resources to do the job. Over the past ten years, PHA scores in this category have ranged from 350 to 388, most recently achieving a score of 385. Keep in mind that any score over 300 is considered positive. Moderate levels of job satisfaction can result in good but not excellent work. There are many components to job satisfaction such as the actual work being performed, supervisory effectiveness, work group and the level of pay and benefits. Feedback is necessary to determine where improvement is needed.

In FY 2008, the lowest scoring construct on the Survey of Organization Excellence was "Fair Pay" with 319 points. The PHA has tried to remain consistent in giving raises based on pay steps and the cost of living. It is difficult to keep increasing pay when the operating subsidy continues to decrease. Below is a chart that shows the PHA wage increase versus the Consumer Price Index (CPI). As you can see, the PHA is higher than or equal to the CPI in most years.

**Figure 3 Avg. Wage Increase vs CPI FY 2003-2008**



PHA Wage Incease vs. Consumer Price Index

Another way for employees to communicate is through the suggestion boxes that are scattered throughout the Housing Authority. Each quarter the suggestions are picked up and delivered to the Human Resource Director. The suggestions can be done in a confidential manner. This option allows for employees that may shy away from having to speak directly to the HR director in order to have an issue addressed.

In the future, the Human Resource Department hopes to be more visible and accessible to the employees of the PHA. This can be done through monthly visits to all of the departments and sites to resolve minor concerns before they grow into major problems. Also, informal workshops will be conducted to inform and educate our employees about all the services offered. Lastly, the HR Director will be meeting with all four of the union representatives on an individual basis. This will be done quarterly in the hopes of keeping an open line of communication and to avoid minor grievances growing into timely and costly issues.

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

*"The most important thing about having goals is having one."*
*Albert F. Geoffrey*

## HUMAN RESOURCES

## I. PERSONNEL

**GOAL 1:**     **DEVELOP & IMPROVE GENERAL PERSONNEL FUNCTION**

Objective 1:     Promote/encourage employee use of suggestion boxes by January 2009

Objective 2:     Review and address personnel requirements of the PHA by November 2008

Objective 3:     Improve inter-departmental communication by December 2008

Objective 4:     Determine feasibility of non-traditional work hours (part-time, job sharing, work from home, etc.) by February 2009

Objective 5:     Develop electronic workplace policy by December 2008

Objective 6:     Develop new policies to reduce sick leave abuse/incentives to improve attendance by January 2009

Objective 7:     Review flex-time policy, redesign if necessary by January 2009

Objective 8:     Review/rewrite job descriptions combining titles to gain flexibility within position by February 2009

Objective 9:     Implement policies/procedures to protect employees from identity theft by March 2009

Objective 10:     Update Human Resource Manual by March 2009

Objective 11:     Update Employee Handbook by March 2009

Objective 12:     Conduct bi-annual Survey of Organizational Excellence by January 2010

**GOAL 2:** ENSURE EMPLOYEES ARE PROVIDED ADEQUATE TIME FOR REST AND RECREATION AT LEVELS AT LEAST COMPARABLE TO THE GENERAL WORKFORCE

Objective 1:   Review existing vacation, personal day and holiday policies by December 2008

Objective 2:   Review buy-out options/policy for employees with excessive accrued vacation by December 2008

**GOAL 3:** ENSURE PHA COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS RELATING TO FMLA

Objective 1:   Review changes to FMLA to assure PHA compliance; adjust policy accordingly by November 2008

Objective 2:   Review FMLA reporting procedures by October 2008

Objective 3:   Continuously track FMLA usage via database – ongoing

Objective 4:   Review/set policy - consequences of going beyond time allowed by December 2008

**GOAL 4:** IMPROVE AND DEVELOP BETTER MANAGEMENT/UNION RELATIONS

Objective 1:   Conduct monthly meetings with union stewards by October 2008

Objective 2:   Conduct quarterly meetings with union business agents by November 2008

Objective 3:   Produce annual report on salaries & benefits to provide to unions by February 2009-annually

**GOAL 5:** IMPROVE HUMAN RESOURCE VISIBILITY/ACCESSIBILITY TO ALL EMPLOYEES

Objective 1:   Perform monthly site visits to all departments/developments by October 2008

Objective 2:   Improve communication via bi-annually Employee Newsletter - January/June 2009

Objective 3:   Conduct informal workshops to inform/educate employees on available services, policies, etc. bi-annually January/June 2009

## II. SALARY & BENEFITS

GOAL 6:          PROVIDE COMPETITIVE WAGE & BENEFIT PACKAGE TO RETAIN QUALITY
                 PERSONNEL

Objective 1:     Conduct annual salary/benefit comparability study by May 2009

Objective 2:     Research options to implement a merit pay system by
                 September 2009

Objective 3:     Study cost savings/feasibility of changing to bi-weekly pay
                 period by December 2008

GOAL 7:          PROVIDE A COMPARABLE BUT AFFORDABLE BENEFIT PACKAGE TO RETAIN
                 QUALITY PERSONNEL

Objective 1:     Conduct study of current and future workforce demographics
                 by November 2008

Objective 2:     Conduct annual salary/benefit comparability study by
                 December 2008

Objective 3:     Review alternative healthcare plan options; cafeteria–style plans
                 to customize benefits packages by June 2009

Objective 4:     Review feasibility of Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) by January
                 2009

Objective 5:     Review feasibility of implementing Health Savings Account (HAS)
                 to offset healthcare costs by June 2009

Objective 6:     Provide individual summary of employee compensation
                 packages by March 2009

GOAL 8:          ENSURE EMPLOYEE LONG-TERM RETIREMENTS NEEDS ARE ADEQUATELY
                 MET

Objective 1:     Conduct a review of current pension and retirement system by
                 January 2009

Objective 2:     Conduct a review & issue a report forecasting retirements,
                 succession planning by February 2009

Objective 3:     Conduct a review to determine if there are better retirement
                 options for PHA employees by February 2009

Objective 4: Study feasibility of offering early retirement options by February 2009

**GOAL 9:** **ENSURE CONTINUED PARTICIPATION OF PHA HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE**

Objective 1: Conduct quarterly meetings with health insurance representative, reviewing claims experience, industry trends and premium rate projections by October 2008

Objective 2: Conduct bi-annual meeting of healthcare committee, reviewing claims experience, trends, rate projections and options to reduce costs without sacrificing benefits by January 2009

**GOAL 10:** **ENSURE THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF EMPLOYEES BY CONTINUING TO OFFER AND IMPROVE THE PHA WELLNESS PROGRAM**

Objective 1: Conduct Personal Health Assessments in conjunction with Wellness Clinic by January 2009

Objective 2: Identify key areas in which to focus 2009-2010 programs by February 2009

Objective 3: Review options of offering incentives to promote participation by February 2009

**GOAL 11:** **ENSURE CONTINUATION OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Objective 1: Identify and arrange training programs to nurture personal growth on and off the job by January 2009

## III. TRAINING

**GOAL 12:** **ASSESS TRAINING NEEDS AND ESTABLISH, ARRANGE AND CONDUCT PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE PHA OPERATIONS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES**

Objective 1: Schedule, utilize, and track HTVN training programs monthly by September 2008

Objective 2: Conduct Annual Training Needs Assessment bi-annually

Objective 3: Create Annual Training Plan by December annually

Objective 4:     Revamp method of employee training evaluation by December 2008

Objective 5:     Track monthly (via database) employee training hours

Objective 6:     Conduct Annual Training Cost-Effectiveness Analysis by December 2008

Objective 7:     Review options of partnering with other organizations to provide (free) training to employees by December 2008

Objective 8:     Revamp and offer PHA Management Course annually by January 2009

## IV. SAFETY

**GOAL 13:**      **ENSURE SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL EMPLOYEES**

Objective 1:     Review safety policies & procedures by October 2008

Objective 2:     Increase safety/security for employees by providing at least two personal safety training sessions on an annual basis January/June 2009

Objective 3:     Review workers compensation reporting procedures; improve reporting time to < 24-hours by October 2008

Objective 4:     Review and amend, if necessary, PHA *Back to Work/Light Duty* policy to expedite return to work time following an injury by October 2008

Objective 5:     Review options of establishing a safety incentive program by October 2008

Objective 6:     Review OSHA training requirements and establish annual training plan by December 2008

Objective 7:     Update Employee Safety Handbook by March 2009

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

### GOAL 1: EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Objective 1: Apply for additional Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers when, and if, available

Objective 2: Seek all available VASH vouchers offered by HUD to increase the number of affordable housing units for veterans by December 2008

Objective 3: Explore project-based assistance opportunities with nonprofit organizations seeking VASH vouchers to increase affordable veterans housing by October 2008

Objective 4: Seek opportunities with non-profit and/or for profit to partner with in creating new affordable housing by October 2008

Objective 5: Construct six to eight affordable housing units using LIHTC and HUD's Replacement Housing Funds (RHF) by December 2010

Objective 6: Reduce vacancy time by turning-around vacant PHA units in less than 30-days by January 2009

Objective 7: Seek and provide refinancing to private developers the opportunity to maintain expiring Section 8 units as affordable housing (on-going)

Objective 8: Explore opportunities with Fannie Mae to receive and provide affordable housing financing to developers by January 2009

Objective 9: Explore opportunities with the city's Planning Department to determine whether PHA can assist in obtaining foreclosed properties to expand affordable housing opportunities by January 2009

Objective 10: Seek membership in appropriate local organizations advocating for affordable housing by January 2009

# FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

## I. DEPARTMENT-WIDE

**GOAL 1:** **IMPLEMENT PROJECT-BASED ACCOUNTING (PBA) AND BUDGETING (PBB)**

Objective 1: Ensure compliance with PBA and PBB requirements with full fungibility between projects and COCC by 6/30/08

Objective 2: Ensure compliance with PBA and PBB with cost reasonable standards and with each project having positive excess cash for purpose of fungibility between projects only by 6/30/09

Objective 3: Ensure that each project has excess cash equal to one month of operating expenses for the purposes of fungibility between projects by 6/30/10

Objective 4: Update office Standard Operating Procedures Manual to comply with PBA & PBB requirements by December 2008

**GOAL 2:** **PROCURE A WEB-BASED SOFTWARE PACKAGE CAPABLE OF PROCESSING PBA AND HUD PROGRAMS**

Objective 1: Improve current Payroll and Timekeeping System to include tracking salaries and fringe benefit costs to budget by AMP and individual position number by 7/1/09

Objective 2: Improve payroll system to allocate and distribute payroll costs directly to AMP and position number by 7/1/09

Objective 3: Improve Tenants Account Receivable reports that will track vacancies, lost rent, and other budgeting data by 7/1/09

Objective 4: Improve Accounts Payable system to include payment data with vouchers and purchase orders by 7/1/09

Objective 5: Improve Accounts Payable system to track utility information (consumption and costs) by AMP by 7/1/09

**GOAL 3:** **ESTABLISH INTERNAL SYSTEMS FOR REPORTING MANAGEMENT AND OTHER UNIQUE REPORTS**

Objective 1: Develop system that automatically retrieves and interprets information into a required format by 7/1/09

Objective 2: Develop system and forms for budgeting and tracking actual costs

to budget for Project Managers by 12/31/08

Objective 3:    Develop system that tracks utility information (consumption and cost) by AMP within the Accounts Payable module by 12/31/08

Objective 4:    Develop system that tracks vacancies, lost rent, and other budgeting data within Tenants Accounts Receivable module by 12/31/08

Objective 5:    Develop system for allocating and distributing salaries and benefits from payroll and payment of benefits by 7/1/09

Objective 6:    Develop system to improve Grant Budgeting and Requisitioning by 7/1/09

GOAL 4:          EVALUATE STATUS AND UPDATE OFFICE CROSS-TRAINING

Objective 1:    Assess staff's cross-training capabilities by October 1, 2008.

Objective 2:    Assure that all office positions have at least two cross-trained co-workers in the  event of extended absence from the job by 12/31/08

Objective 3:    Computer Operators: Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Payroll shall cross train each other in their day-to-day functions by 12/31/08

Objective 4:    Fiscal Officer, Budget Officer and Accounting Manager shall cross train each other in their day to day functions by 12/31/08

Objective 5:    Procurement Officer and Purchasing Supervisor shall cross train each other in their day to day functions by 12/31/08

Objective 6:    CFO and Fiscal Officer shall cross-train in their day-to-day operations by 12/31/08

Objective 7:    Update Office Operations Manual reflecting procedure changes due to implementation of Project Based Accounting and position elimination and consolidation by 3/31/09

GOAL 6:          WORK WITH SITE MANAGERS TO USE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS IN THE AS400 SYSTEM

Objective 1:    Instruct all managers to review the closed work order report on a monthly basis and process resident charges before notifying the tenants by 10/31/08

Objective 2:    Instruct all managers to use the automatic billing module to efficiently make rental agreements and keep track of those agreements by 10/31/08

**GOAL 7:        CREATE A WRITE-OFF LIST IN THE AS400 SYSTEM**

Objective 1:    Develop system listing all tenant write-offs with the ability to make adjustments to the list as payments are received by 7/1/09

**GOAL 8:        SIMPLIFY CALCULATION OF MONTHLY UNITS OCCUPIED FOR HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

Objective 1:    Merge all components of the monthly Units Occupied count into one consolidated summary report in the new DP system by 7/1/09

**GOAL 9:        IMPROVE VOUCHER PORTABILITY BILLING AND PAYMENT SYSTEM**

Objective 1:    Fully automate Voucher Program portability billing system in order to generate monthly statements currently produced on Excel by 12/31/09

Objective 2:    Create detailed summary reports in order to better facilitate tracking of past-due balances by 12/31/09

**GOAL 10:       MONITOR SECTION 8 INCOME, EXPENSES AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES ON A MONTHLY BASIS**

Objective 1:    Create budget spreadsheet and update monthly with actual figures by 7/1/08 on going

Objective 2:    Periodically revise annual projections by 7/1/08 and on-going

**GOAL 11:       INTRODUCE DIRECT DEPOSIT FUNCTION FOR MONTHLY HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS**

Objective 1:    Determine cost justification to upgrade existing system by 9/30/08

Objective 2:    Prioritize direct deposit function when selecting new system by 12/31/08

**GOAL 12:       CREATE A SITE-BASED BUDGETING PROCESS**

Objective 1:    Create sit-based budgeting manual by December 2008

Objective 2:    Train site management staff on site-based budgeting by January 2009

Objective 3:    Commence site-based budgeting process for FY2010

**GOAL 13:        COMPLETE AND TRACK BUDGETS IN A TIMELY MANNER**

Objective 1:    Have a Public Housing Annual Operating Budget document prepared by June 1st, annually

Objective 2:    Have a Section 8 Operating Budget document prepared by June 1st, annually

Objective 3:    Track Annual Operating Budget (budgeted vs. actual) on a monthly basis

Objective 4:    Track Section 8 Operating Budget on a monthly basis

**GOAL 14:        MEET OR EXCEED PUBLIC HOUSING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM RATING FACTORS FOR FINANCIALS**

Objective 1:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Current Ratio" financial sub-indicator annually

Objective 2:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Number of Months Expendable Funds Balance" financial sub-indicator annually

Objective 3:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Tenant Receivable Outstanding" on financial sub-indicator annually

Objective 4:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Occupancy Loss" financial sub-indicator annually

Objective 5:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Net Income or Loss Divided By Expendable Funds Balance" financial sub-indicator

Objective 6:    Achieve or exceed passing score for "Expense Management/Utility Consumption" financial sub-indicator annually

**GOAL 15:        CONDUCT INCOME AND EXPENSE REVIEW**

Objective 1:    Conduct multi-year income and expense review by budget line item by February annually

**GOAL 16:**      HAVE AN INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDIT OF ALL PHA PROGRAMS

Objective 1:      Solicit bids to conduct an independent public audit of all PHA grants and programs by June every two years

Objective 2:      Complete and forward to HUD unaudited and audited financials within the timeline established by HUD

## II: PROCUREMENT

**GOAL 17:**      CONDUCT PROCUREMENT OPERATIONS IN AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANNER

Objective 1:      Update Procurement Manual to comply with changes to HUD policies by October 2008

Objective 2:      Develop blanket purchases for all major purchasing components (plumbing, electrical, carpentry, office supplies by July 1st annually

Objective 3:      Conduct annual inventory by July 1st annually

Objective 4:      Create a weekly purchasing report for distribution

Objective 5:      Conduct quality control research on products purchased for future purchasing decisions on an as needed basis

Objective 6:      Update asset list by July 1st annually

**GOAL 18:**      DOWNSIZE OR ELIMINATE CENTRAL WAREHOUSE

Objective 1:      Quantify remaining inventory at PHA's central warehouse and generate an inventory report by September, 2008

Objective 2:      Identify each items value and what AMP location to relocate to by October, 2008

Objective 3:      Relocate all inventory by December, 2008

**GOAL 19:**      REDUCE INVENTORY ITEMS LOCATED AT EACH AMP

Objective 1:      Forecast demand by generating a report that estimates usage by location by January, 2009

Objective 2:      Identify inventory items that have the largest impact on efficient and smooth operations and implement plan to ensure items are stocked by April 2009

Objective 3:     Calculate "safety stock levels", identify what is save and fits the operations strategy by June, 2009

Objective 4:     Implement a "just in time" strategy to purchasing by June 2009

**GOAL 20:**       **IMPROVE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM ON INVENTORY AND VIEW SUPPLY CHAIN AS SRATEGIC ASSET**

Objective 1:     Create an inventory general ledger account for all purchase orders (1206 account) by July 2009

Objective 2:     Have accounting adjustment involving inventory and expense or End-use accounts occur when inventory items are scanned to Work-orders by July 2010

Objective 3:     Score or rank suppliers and identify preferred vendors based on a strategic supply chain plan that considers operations strategies, outsourcing strategies and asset planning by  July 2009

Objective 4:     Verify that all control systems are made up of simple streamlined processes that minimize complexity, are clear and easy to understand by July 2009

Objective 5:     Phase out or retire certain products as they are replaced by newly introduced alternatives (green or save products) by January 2009

# LEGAL OFFICE

**GOAL 1:** **ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A SYSTEM FOR PROCUREMENT OF COMPETENT LEGAL SERVICES**

Objective 1: Procure legal services from attorneys that are well qualified, cost effective and work in the best interests of the housing authority bi-annually

**GOAL 2:** **ADMINISTER ALL LEGAL ACTIVITIES AT PHA**

Objective 1: Maintain a database of legal costs for legal services by firm monthly

Objective 2: Track performance of all eviction actions undertaken by contracted legal firms by AMP on a monthly basis

Objective 3: Review progress and costs of private firms conducting evictions for PHA to determine if would be better handled by hiring an in-house attorney annually

Objective 4: Meet with eviction attorneys to discuss issues and case selection quarterly

Objective 5: Review all legal opinions prepared by third-party law firms for the PHA

**GOAL 3:** **SERVE AS GENERAL COUNSEL TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Objective 1: Provide legal opinions to the executive Director and Board of Commissioners on all matters before them that have legal consequences

**GOAL 4:** **ADMINISTER GRIEVANCE SYSTEM FOR APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS**

Objective 1: Ensure grievances are heard within 45-days of filing

Objective 2: Ensure pool of qualified Grievance Panel is available on a monthly basis

Objective 3: Notify grievant panels decision by mail with 48-hours

**GOAL 5:** **PROTECT THE LEGAL RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF THE PHA**

Objective 1: Assure contract compliance by reviewing all contracts executed by the PHA

Objective 2: Maintain a database of all contracts executed by PHA on a monthly basis

Objective 3: Assure all internal PHA policies and procedures comply with all applicable federal, state and local law

## MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

**GOAL 1:**      **ENSURE PHA COMPUTER HARDWARE IS UPDATED TO PROVIDE MAXIMUM UTILIZATION AND STAFF EFFICIENCY WITHIN BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS**

Objective 1:    Conduct an annual assessment of computer hardware and printers inventory by June annually

Objective 2:    Purchase new personal computers to replace older PCs throughout Authority by September annually

Objective 3:    Purchase new printers to replace oldest printers throughout Authority by September annually

Objective 4:    Conduct annual assessment of computer servers located in MIS Office by September annually

**GOAL 2:**      **ENSURE ALL COMPUTER SOFTWARE IS REPLACED AND/OR UPDATED FOR MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY**

Objective 1:    Review all PHA software on the work stations to ensure correct licensing by July 30 annually

Objective 2:    Install Office 2007 in all work stations by June 30, 2008

**GOAL 3:**      **INCREASE AND/OR UPGRADE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE EXISTING NETWORK**

Objective 1:    Review service packs on servers and replace, if necessary, quarterly

Objective 2:    Review COX Cable Internet Access by January 2009

Objective 3:    Research and select software in order to allow remote access to PHA computers by September 2008

Objective 4:    Review Internet restricting/monitoring software to detect Internet abuse by staff monthly

Objective 5:    Update Network Configuration database by June 30th annually

Objective 6:    Test data lines for speed and connectivity problems quarterly

**GOAL 4:** **SUBMIT/PRODUCE REQUIRED COMPUTER-GENERATED REPORTS IN A TIMELY MANNER**

Objective 1: Certify Employment Income Verification (EIV) users on the HUD system quarterly

Objective 2: Submit PHA and Section 8 addresses electronically to R.I. Department of Health for cross-referencing addresses to elevated lead blood levels in children monthly

**GOAL 5:** **CONDUCT RESEARCH AND RECOMMEND COMPUTER-BASED PRODUCTS THAT WILL ASSIST STAFF IN COMPLETING THEIR DUTIES IN A MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT MANNER**

Objective 1: Institute direct deposit for all Section 8 landlords by January 2009

Objective 2: Institute direct deposit for vendors by January 2009

**GOAL 6:** **ENSURE THAT ALL PHA COMPUTERS OPERATE IN A SECURE ENVIRONMENT**

Objective 1: Update virus software on all PHA computers monthly

Objective 2: Ensure that PHA firewall is operational monthly

**GOAL 7:** **ENSURE WEBSITE DATA IS ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE**

Objective 1: Update Public Housing wait list ranking monthly

Objective 2: Update Section 8 wait list monthly

Objective 3: Upload all new public reports to website monthly

**GOAL 8:** **DEVELOP A GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**

Objective 1: Have two PHA staff members GIS-capable by June 2009

Objective 2: Have a GIS installed and operational by July 1, 2009

**GOAL 9:** **ENSURE CROSS-TRAINING CAPABILITIES OF MIS OFFICE WITH ELECTRONIC SECURITY SYSTEMS**

Objective 1: Have at least one MIS staff members cross-trained on electronic security systems by July 2009

**GOAL 10:**     SELECT A NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH HUD ASSET-BASED MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTING

Objective 1:    Research existing computer software packages and make recommendation to executive Director by April 2009

**GOAL 11:**     ASSIST STAFF MEMBERS WITH COMPUTERS PROBLEMS

Objective 1:    Maintain a help desk capability during normal office hours daily

Objective 2:    Conduct troubleshooting training on common PC/software problems on a quarterly basis

## RISK MANAGEMENT & INSURANCE

**GOAL 1:**    **CREATE AN IN-HOUSE COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS SAFETY**

Objective 1:    Select members of staff from each department to serve on the PHA's Safety Committee by October 2008

Objective 2:    Seek and appoint two residents to serve on the PHA's Safety Committee by October 2008

Objective 3:    Determine schedule for Safety Committee meetings by October 2008

Objective 4:    Create a Safety Committee Plan by January 2009

**GOAL 2:**    **CONTROL LOSSES AND INSURANCE COSTS**

Objective 1:    Review accident/claim experience to determine ways to avoid injury by October 2008

Objective 2:    Educate staff on safety concerns and importance of timely correction in areas of concern by October 2008

Objective 4:    Conduct in-house site safety inspections bi-annually

Objective 5:    Conduct safety training for all staff members annually

Objective 6:    Conduct all OSHA-mandated training for maintenance staff annually

Objective 7:    Prepare an annual report – by September - on all Worker's Compensation claims

Objective 8:    Prepare an annual report – by September - on all general Liability Claims and Auto Accident Claims

**GOAL 3:**    **ENSURE PHA HAS ADEQUATE INSURANCE PROTECTION AT THE MOST AFFORDABLE COST**

Objective 1:    Prepare and submit to Housing Authority Insurance a Risk Control Plan annually

Objective 2:    Conduct a property assessment and Building Value Estimation Report annually

Objective 3:   Conduct an assessment and vehicle Value estimation report annually

Objective 4:   Seek bids for quality, affordable insurance for all coverage lines required by HUD annually

Objective 5:   Submit Insurance register to HUD Regional Office 45-days prior to end of policy year

# SECURITY OPERATIONS OFFICE

**GOAL 1:     ASSESS STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PHU/PHA SECURITY FORCE**

Objective 1:    Conduct Public Housing Unit staffing needs review by December 2008

Objective 2:    Conduct PHA Security Guard staffing needs review by December 2008

Objective 3:    Seek additional funding to extend the daily tour of duty of the PHU officers

Objective 4:    Seek additional funding to extend the daily coverage of the PHA security officers

Objective 5:    Assist Special Projects Manager with security grant from R.I. Department of Elderly Affairs (July/annually)

Objective 6:    Determine potential implementation of foot patrols and/or bike patrols to augment vehicular patrols in the family developments by May 2009

Objective 7:    Evaluate the impact of the police reserve staff reduction by January 2009

**GOAL 2:     TRACK AND RECORD CRIME IN PUBLIC HOUSING**

Objective 1:    Identify and by track type and location of crime in the family developments (Annually-August)

Objective 2:    Identify and track by type and location of crime in the elderly/disabled developments (Annually-August)

Objective 3:    Identify and track by type and location of crime involving youth in the developments (Annually-August)

Objective 4:    Assess and determine threat level of gang activity in PHA developments (Annually - January)

Objective 5:    Assess and determine threat level of gun violence in PHA developments (Annually -January)

Objective 6:    Review existing method of conducting criminal background checks on all PHA prospective applicants, and recommend changes, if any, to Executive Director by April 2009

**GOAL 3:**     MAINTAIN POLICE VISIBILITY AND OPERATIONS IN A PROBLEM AREA/DEVELOPMENT

Objective 1:    Implement a "Zero Tolerance" operation in an identified problem development/area immediately

Objective 2:    Evaluate PHU patrol areas and practices by January 2009 and annually thereafter

Objective 3:    Redeploy police/security staff to address increase in crime in an identified problem development/area (As required)

Objective 4:    Determine feasibility/need for foot patrols at family developments by April 2009

**GOAL 4:**     PROVIDE INFORMATION RELATING TO CRIMINAL ACTIVITY TO KEY DECISION MAKERS

Objective 1:    Maintain open line of communication between the Executive Director the Security Operations Manager and the PHU officer in charge

Objective 2:    E-Mail arrests at PHA developments to site managers daily

Objective 3:    Provide police report copies of resident arrests and criminal incidents to management within 24-hours

Objective 4:    Review current method for all PHA staff to report crime-related activities or concerns to security by January 2009

Objective 5:    Provide a Security Operations Report/presentation to the Resident Advisory Board December – annually

Objective 6:    Provide a Security Operations Report/presentation to the Board of Commissioners October – annually

Objective 7:    A representative of the PHU or security to attend a minimum of six resident/management meetings per development commencing October 2008

Objective 8:    A representative of the PHU or security to attend a minimum of two Facilities Management staff meetings commencing January 2009

**GOAL 5:** **PRODUCE TIMELY REPORTS/STUDIES TO ASSIST IN ASSESSING CRIME AND PERFORMANCE**

Objective 1: Review and update current Security Operations Plan by January 2009

Objective 2: Produce a weekly police/security report

Objective 3: Produce a monthly police/security activity report for MMR

Objective 4: Produce an annual Security Operations Report section for the PHA Annual Report on Operations by August 15th annually

Objective 5: Identify primary and repeat offenders (monthly)

Objective 6: Identify problem locations "hot spots" in all developments (monthly)

Objective 7: Conduct an Equipment Needs Assessment by July annually

Objective 9: Conduct an annual Vehicle Needs Assessment by July annually

Objective 10: Conduct a security analysis including crime prevention through environmental design by July 2009

Objective 11: Seek HUD technical assistance funds to contract with a professional security analyst to conduct a security assessment of all developments

Objective 12: Conduct security/victimization survey of residents in relation to security issues by December 2009 and biannually thereafter

**GOAL 6:** **IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Objective 1: Sponsor Hot-Dog Roasts at all family developments annually

Objective 2: Conduct a meeting involving the PHU officers and resident youth of all family developments to discuss law enforcement issues/concerns commencing January 2009

Objective 3: Conduct a tour of Security Operations for the Resident Advisory Board in June 2009

Objective 4: Attend a minimum of six Resident-Management meetings at each PHA development annually

Objective 5:   Conduct two focus groups with residents/year concerning security issues commencing May 2009

Objective 6:   Conduct a minimum of one security workshop per development per year

Objective 7:   Create, publish and distribute a security brochure for residents by June 2009

**GOAL 7:        RESIDENT & STAFF SECURITY & CRIME PREVENTION EDUCATION**

Objective 1:   Conduct Personal Safety and Security training for site staff commencing March 2009 and annually thereafter

Objective 2:   Conduct Personal Safety and Security training for administrative staff annually beginning March 2009

Objective 3:   Conduct a crime prevention training session at each high-rise annually beginning March 2009

Objective 4:   Write a security related article for the PHA resident newsletter at least twice annually commencing January 2009

**GOAL 8:        SECURITY TECHNOLOGY**

Objective 1:   Review and recommend expansion and/or upgrade of the security camera system located in all of the high-rises by January 2008

Objective 2:   Review and recommend expansion of security camera system at family developments by April 2009

**GOAL 9:        EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Objective 1:   Review PHU/Security duties and responsibilities during emergency events as cited in the PHA Emergency Operations Manual by September 2008

Objective 2:   Determine capabilities of PHU personnel during an emergency event (long term and short term event) by September 2008

Objective 3:   Determine capabilities of security personnel during an emergency event (long term and short term event) by September 2008

# RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD

**GOAL 1:**      **INCREASE RESIDENT PARTICIPATION**

Objective 1:     Conduct elections for Resident Advisory Board by November 2008

Objective 2:     Determine feasibility of expanding Resident Advisory Board by December 2008

Objective 3:     Conduct a minimum of eight RAB meetings annually

Objective 4:     Engage RAB in the Annual and Five-Year Plans

Objective 5:     Ensure that all resident leadership is "linked" to the PHA by Internet by December 2009

**GOAL 2:**      **PROVIDE TRAINING FOR RESIDENT LEADERSHIP**

Objective 1:     Conduct a minimum of two training sessions for the RAB annually

Objective 2:     Apply to R.I. Foundation for capacity-building grant for RAB

Objective 3:     Conduct a board training and development retreat for RAB annually

Objective 4:     Conduct leadership training for RAB officers every two years

**GOAL 3:**      **ENSURE EACH DEVELOPMENT HAS RESIDENT REPRESENTATION**

Objective 1:     Increase the number of developments that have functioning Resident Associations to 100% by December 2009

Objective 2:     Update Resident Association Handbook by July 2009

**GOAL 4:**      **ENSURE RESIDENT ASSOCIATION HAS FUNDS TO OPERATE**

Objective 1:     Ensure the timely distribution of HUD-allocated funds to organized Resident Associations quarterly

Objective 2:     Redesign budget drawn down documents for ease of use by April 2009

Objective 3:     Seek grant funds for resident Association activities by June 2009

**GOAL 5:** **ENSURE THAT ALL RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS ARE PROPERLY ORGANIZED IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

Objective 1:   Ensure each Resident Association has held elections in compliance with federal regulations annually

Objective 2:   Ensure that each Resident Association has by-laws that comply with provisions in federal regulations annually

Objective 3:   Ensure that each Resident Association has executed a Memorandum of Agreement with the PHA annually

Objective 4:   Ensure each Resident Association has an annual budget prepared by July annually

Objective 5:   Ensure each Resident Association has an Activity Plan by July annually

Objective 6:   Monitor Resident Association funding quarterly

Objective 7:   Prepare a separate annual report on Resident Association and RAB activities

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS/OPERATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

**GOAL 1:** **ENSURE THAT BOARD OPERATES IN AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANNER**

Objective 1:   Review and revise Board by-laws by December 2008

Objective 2:   Review and revise Board policies by December 2008

Objective 3:   Restructure Board committees to better reflect operational elements of PHA by January 2009

Objective 4:   Write duties and responsibilities of Board committees by January 2009

Objective 5:   Prepare committee work plans for each board committee by January 2009

Objective 6:   Prepare a Board annual activity plan by July 2009

Objective 7:   Conduct a board training and development retreat annually

Objective 8:   Prepare a board annual training plan by June 2009

Objective 9:   Conduct a board assessment annually

Objective 10:  Conduct an annual assessment of the Executive Director

Objective 11:  Update Board Orientation Manual by June 2009

Objective 12:  Update Board Orientation slide show by June 2009

## DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENT SERVICES

**GOAL 1:** **RESTRUCTURE THE DEPARTMENT TO MEET FUNDING CHALLENGES**

Objective 1: Create a new table of organization to reflect planned service delivery by September 2008

Object 2: Write new job descriptions for restructured department by September 2008

**GOAL 2:** **CREATE NEW SERVICE PLAN REFLECTING CHANGED ENVIRONMENT**

Objective 1: Determine the department's mission by October 2008

Objective 2: Determine method of service delivery by October 2008

Objective 3: Update department's Service Plan by revising Family Programs and High-rise Programs sections by November 2008; revise annually

**GOAL 3:** **ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS NECESSARY TO DELIVER SERVICES TO OUR RESIDENTS**

Objective 1: Identify third-party service providers who will collaborate with the PHA to provide services to our residents beginning September 2008 - on going

Objective 2: Enter into formal Service Delivery Agreements with selected third-party service providers beginning September 2008 - on going

**GOAL 4:** **IMPROVE GRANT AND PROGRAM REVENUE**

Objective 1: Develop a department fundraising plan to sustain current and expanded resident services and programs by January 2009

Objective 2: Identify and secure a capacity building grant to contract for Comprehensive Resident Needs Assessment by September 2009

Objective 3: Work with current and potential partner agencies (such as PASA, FSRI, CCAP, etc.), to identify and secure joint grant funding for programming beginning September 2008 - on going

Objective 4: Identify and secure funds to refurbish the Hartford Park gymnasium by September 2010

Objective 5:   Work with PASA, RIASPA, the Providence School Department and the State to license Perry Middle School by FY 2010

**GOAL 5:       IMPROVE PROCESSING FOR RESIDENTS SEEKING SERVICES**

Objective 1:   Establish a formal adult education admissions process by September 2008

Objective 2:   Develop an FSS marketing plan targeted to parents of youth program participants by January 2009

Objective 3:   Increase meaningful FSS pre-enrollment requirements by creating and conducting work readiness assessments upon enrollment for 100% of FSS clients beginning January 2009

Objective 4:   Establish a formal in-take and assessment process for programs to serve whole families by September 2009

Objective 5:   Strengthen our intake and assessment system in the high-rise developments through monthly monitoring and evaluation of staff case loads beginning October 2008 - on going

**GOAL 6:       INCREASE AND IMPROVE SERVICES AVAILABLE AT PHA SITES**

Objective 1:   Partner with Providence Boys and Girls Club to establish and maintain after school program at Hartford Park to serve approximately 100 youth by September 2008

Objective 2:   Partner with Providence Boys and Girls Club to establish and maintain after-school program at Chad Brown to serve approximately 100 youth by January 2009

Objective 3:   Partner with Providence Boys and Girls Club to establish and maintain after-school program at Codding Court to serve approximately 40 youth by January 2009

Objective 4:   Partner with Providence Boys and Girls Club to establish and maintain after-school program at Manton Heights to serve approximately 75 youth by September 2009

Objective 6:   Partner with CCAP to establish a "mobile service site" at Hartford Park to offer on-site work readiness training for approximately 15 youth and young adults (14-24) annually beginning January 2009

Objective 7:   Expand to offer computer training for approximately 25 adults annually on site at Chad Brown beginning September 2009

Objective 8:    Partner with CCAP to establish a "mobile service site" at Hartford Park to offer on site job skills training for approximately 25 adults annually beginning September 2009

Objective 9:    Establish and maintain regular, on-going health education and/or support groups for approximately 25 elderly and/or disabled residents annually at each high-rise building beginning January 2009

Objective10:    Partner with Chad Brown Health Center (CBHC) to identify and secure grant funding to reestablish a Health and Wellness Clinic for direct health care services at Dexter Manor by September 2009

**GOAL 7:    IMPROVE OUTREACH FOR, AND PUBLIC AWARENESS OF, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY THE PHA AND/OR ITS THIRD-PARTY PARTNERS**

Objective 1:    Establish presence and increase staff participation in neighborhood based coalitions by January 2009

Objective 2:    Create informational brochures targeted to specific audiences (residents, current and/or future partner service providers, funders, etc.) for each of the department's two divisions by April 2009

Objective 3:    Create program bulletin (flyers) for each program offered by PHA or third-party providers beginning January 2009

Objective 4:    Submit material outlining department's activities for submission to PHA's website semi-annually beginning January 2009

Objective 5:    Create a media contact list by November 2008; update every 6 months

Objective 6:    Develop and nurture positive, on-gong relationships with media outlets by scheduling and facilitating an editorial meeting with identified media contacts semi-annually beginning January 2009

Objective 7:    Prepare and distribute a press release for each significant event undertaken by the department and/or its partners beginning November 2008 - on going

Objective 8:    Publish and distribute a resident newsletter to all PHA residents, partner agencies, current and potential funders, and key "leaders" in the Providence community three times annually beginning September 2008

Objective 9:   Work with Housing Managers to coordinate distribution of newsletter by residents required to complete community service three times annually beginning January 2009

GOAL 8:   PROMOTE HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECTION 8 RESIDENTS

Objective 1:   Update Section 8 Homeownership Program Plan by December 2008

Objective 2:   Conduct outreach to eligible Section 8 participants quarterly

Objective 3:   Conduct monthly informational briefings about eligibility and program requirements

Objective 4:   Conduct an annual housing faire for eligible residents interested in purchasing a home

Objective 5:   Research the feasibility of creating a Section 32 Homeownership Program for PHA residents by July 2009

GOAL 9:   IMPROVE AND DOCUMENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

Objective: 1   Establish and maintain system for eliciting, capturing and tracking individual adult education participant goals for 100% of students by January 2009

Objective: 2   Provide post purchase support through follow-up letter and survey to 100% of Home Ownership Program participants annually beginning January 2009

Objective: 4   Through professional staff development and program design revision, establish and document that Youth Asset Development theory is incorporated into all PHA-sponsored after-school youth programs at four sites by January 2010

Objective: 4   Establish formal system for tracking, monitoring and evaluating academic progress of 50 in-school youth at three family developments by September 2010

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

**GOAL 1:** **ENSURE PHA HAS ADEQUATE PLANS TO PROVIDE DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Objective 1: Complete a five-year Strategic Plan for the PHA by September 2008

Objective 2: Complete the HUD-required Annual Plan annually by April

Objective 3: Complete the HUD required Five Year Plan by April 2009

Objective 4: Ensure that each department and office update their standard operating procedures by September annually

**GOAL 2:** **ENSURE THE PHA HAS ADEQUATE SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO MONITOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Objective 1: Complete a Monthly Management report by the 20th of each month

Objective 2: Complete an Annual Report on Operations by October annually

Objective 3: Create a PowerPoint presentation indicating the PHA's achievements for the year for the annual meeting in October

Objective 4: Create a Performance Management and Accountability tracking system by November 2008

Objective 5: Publish the findings of the Performance Management and Accountability Report in January and July each year

**GOAL 3:** **RESTRUCTURE THE PHA TO BETTER MEET THE CHALLENGES AHEAD AND TO OPERATE MORE EFFECTIVELY**

Objective 1: Examine the structure of the PHA to determine if restructuring will allow for more effective and efficient operations by June 2009

**GOAL 4:** **RESEARCH METHODS FOR DELIVERING/PROVIDING SERVICES FOR LESS COST**

Objective 1: Conduct operations research to compare the costs of services provided by the PHA to costs in the private sector by December 2009

Objective 2: Determine whether specific activities that are not cost effective can be privatized by April 2010

**GOAL 3:** **ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ALL HUD DEADLINES**

Objective 1: Create a master list of all HUD-required deadlines for programs and operations undertaken by the PHA by June 2009

Objective 2: Distribute master list to each department and designate a staff member as quality control coordinator to ensure compliance

**GOAL 6:** **ENSURE THAT THE PHA INSTITUTES AND FOLLOWS GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICES**

Objective 1: Update the PHA's Record Retention Plan by December 2009

Objective 2: Upgrade archives room to comply with standards for storing documents safely by December 2009

Objective 3: Update master list of all office equipment (printers, copiers, postal machines, scanners, fax machines, etc.) by AMP and COCC location by December 2008

Objective 4: Update master list of all phones by location and use by December 2008

Objective 5: Negotiate with vendors to see the highest quality/lowest cost leases (or purchases) for all office equipment by July 2009

**GOAL 7:** **OFFER PRODUCTIVE INTERNSHIPS AT THE PHA**

Objective 1: Create a formal process for students seeking internships at the PHA to use to apply by April 2008

Objective 2: Create a work plan for interns selected for employment annually

## DEPARTMENT OF ASSET MANAGEMENT

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT DIVISION

**GOAL 1:**  **REORGANIZE AND IMPLEMENT PROJECT-BASED MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Objective 1:  Finalize Asset Management Project (AMP) selection by September 30, 2008

Objective 2:  Determine staff and equipment needs at each AMP by September 2008

Objective 3:  Create new table of organization and equipment (TO&E) by October 2008

**GOAL 2:**  **PROVIDE TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR PROJECT BASED MANAGEMENT**

Objective 1:  Conduct training on understanding the basics of project based management for management and maintenance personnel by December 2008

Objective 2:  Conduct training on understanding the basics of Asset Based Management financial and capital programs by December 2008

Objective 3:  Conduct training on understanding the basics of procurement and inventory management for management and maintenance personnel by January 2009

Objective 4:  Conduct training on understanding Marketing, Leasing and Waiting lists for management and maintenance personnel by January 2009

**GOAL 3:**  **PROVIDE TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR PROJECT BASED ACCOUNTING**

Objective 1:  Provide training on the preparation and understanding of site budgets January 2009

Objective 2:  Provide training on managing site assets. March 2009

Objective 3:  Proved training on procurement and controlling site inventories for management and maintenance personnel. March 2009

## GOAL 4: REDUCE UNIT TURNAROUND TIMES FOR NON-MODERNIZATION UNITS

Objective 1:   Reduce turnaround time to less than 5-days  (Lease-up by site management) by January 2009

## GOAL 5: ACHIEVE COLLECTION OBJECTIVES FOR ALL RESIDENT CHARGES

Objective 1:   Collect at least 95% of resident charged rent each month

Objective 2:   Establish a formal plan for the notification and collection of rents by March 2009

Objective 3:   Identify tenants that are habitual late payers and create a plan to improve payments by March 2009

## GOAL 6: MAINTAIN HUD RECOMMENDED OCCUPANCY LEVELS

Objective 1:   Maintain an occupancy level of at least 97% monthly

## GOAL 7: CREATE A STANDARDIZED REPORTING SYSTEM FOR ALL PROJECTS.

Objective 1:   Identify required reporting data and review the existing reporting form for update/revision June 2009

Objective 2:   Each AMP reports key performance data monthly

## GOAL 8: PROVIDE IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE BY ESTABLISHING NON-TRADITIONAL HOURS FOR THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT OFFICE.

Objective 1:   Conduct an analysis and determine if non-traditional hours would better serve our residents by June 2009

## GOAL 9: CONDUCT INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS WITH SITE STAFF

Objective 1:   Conduct monthly site-management staff meetings with key staff by January 2009

Objective 2:   Prepare site-management meeting minutes and submit to Executive Director and Asset Management Director within three days of the meeting commencing January 2009

**GOAL 10:** **PROVIDE A HIGH LEVEL OF CUSTOMER SERVICE AT EACH DEVELOPMENT**

Objective 1: Review/Revise customer complaint form by January 2009

Objective 2: Review/update customer complaint database by February 2009

Objective 3: Respond to customer complaints within three working days of receipt commencing March 2009

Objective 4: Conduct resident/management meetings monthly at each development

Objective 5: Prepare resident/management meeting minutes and forward to the Executive Director and Asset Management Director within three days of meeting

Objective 6: Receive an overall rating for the "Communications" section of HUD's annual Resident Satisfaction Survey (RSS) of at least 85% or higher

Objective 7: Receive a score of 85%, or higher, on the Resident Satisfaction Survey question: *Do you think management provides you with information about: maintenance and repairs, modernization activities?*

Objective 8: Receive a score of 85%, or higher, on the RSS question: *Do you think management provides you with information about your lease?*

Objective 9: Receive a score of 85%, or higher, on the RSS question: *Do you think management is courteous and professional with you?*

**GOAL 12:** **ENSURE ADEQUATE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF.**

Objective 1: Conduct in-house training session for all management and maintenance staff that solely relates to the department functions semi-annually commencing in December 2009

**GOAL 13:** **ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STAFF AND RESIDENTS.**

Objective 1: Working with the PHA's Safety committee and Housing Security, review and recommend methods to improve site/office security by June 2009

## MAINTENANCE DIVISION

**GOAL 14:**     **CONDUCT INSPECTIONS OF ALL PHA PROPERTIES ANNUALLY**

Objective 1:     Solicit bids every three years with a private firm to perform UPCS inspections annually

Objective 2:     Conduct inspections of all units, common areas and systems at each AMP annually

Objective 3:     Prepare a minimum of three binders with all inspection results annually

Objective 4:     Complete required work for all Health and safety violations within 24-hours

Objective 5:     Complete all non-H&S violations within ten days

Objective 6:      Refer all "Poor Housekeeping" violations to site managers within 24-hours

Objective 7:     Site manager conducts three consecutive monthly inspections for each household cited for "Poor Housekeeping"

**GOAL 15:**     **DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY PROGRAM, ADDRESSING ALL REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.**

Objective 1:     Provide blood borne pathogens training annually

Objective 2:     Provide respirator training annually

Objective 4:     Provide Hazard communication training annually

Objective 5:     Provide Lock Out/ Tag Out program training

Objective 6:     Conduct Fire extinguisher inspections annually

**GOAL 16:**     **ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT THAT EMPOWERS EMPLOYEES AND PROMOTES A TEAM ATMOSPHERE**

Objective 1:     Review job requirements for all non-skilled staff and develop a list of competencies for each position by June 2009

Objective 2:     Develop aptitude and general education standards, which all

employees must meet by June 2009

Objective 3:     Create employee training programs that address competency shortcomings, increase needed skills and improve productivity by December 2009

Objective 4:     Develop a skills-based, multi-station practical test for skilled position promotions by December 2009

GOAL 17:     INSTITUTE AN INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAM FOR SITE PERSONNEL.

Objective 1:     Update existing check list for site manager to use during unit and site reviews June 2009

Objective 2:     Create a quality review form for use by maintenance personnel to inspect quality of work performed by maintenance personnel June 2009

Objective 3:     Foremen will conduct quality control inspections on all work orders completed commencing October 2008

GOAL 18:     REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND COSTS

Objective 1:     Contract with an Energy Performance Contractor (EPC) to conduct an energy audit of the PHA's entire portfolio by September 2008

Objective 2:     Contract with a qualified EPC to undertake an energy performance plan to reduce energy/utility consumption and costs by September 2008

Objective 3:     Seek financing for energy performance contract by September 2008

Objective 4:     Track energy consumption and cost by utility monthly

Objective 5:     Reduce energy consumption and costs by 20% by December 2009

Objective 6:     Develop an internal Project Management Report for all Energy Performance Improvement projects by September 2008

Objective 7:     Submit Project Management Status Report on Energy Performance Contract projects to Executive director and Board of Commissioners monthly commencing September 2008

**GOAL 19:** **IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF ALL PHA PROPERTIES**

Objective 1: Conduct a 40- year Physical Needs Assessment by September 2008

Objective 2: Purchase a Physical Needs Assessment-Building Life Cycle software package to facilitate long-term Capital needs by September 2008

Objective 3: Update Physical needs Assessment by December annually

Objective 4: Apply for Capital Fund Financing Program from HUD to accelerate specific capital improvements by September 2008

Objective 5: Conduct capital improvement projects identified in Capital Improvement Plan commencing September 2008 through January 2010

Objective 6: Develop an internal Project Management Report for all Capital Improvement projects financed by CFFP and Capital Funds Program (CFP)

Objective 7: Submit Project Management Status Report to Executive director and Board of Commissioners monthly commencing October 2008

Objective 8: Prepare a one- and five-year Capital Improvement Plan to comply with HUD's requirements for the Annual Plan by December annually

**GOAL 20:** **PREPARE SPECIFIC REPORTS FOR OPERATIONS**

Objective 1: Prepare an Equipment Needs report by AMP by April annually

Objective 2: Prepare a Vehicle Inventory report by August annually

**GOAL 21:** **MEET ALL HUD MANDATED PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AS REQUIRED BY PHAS**

Objective 1: Score a minimum of 26-points on HUD's Physical Inspection annually

Objective 2: Score a minimum of 28–points on HUD's PHAS Management Operations Indicator annually

Objective 3: Score a minimum of 9-points on HUD's Resident Assessment Satisfaction Survey annually

**GOAL 22:** **MAINTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE AS REFLECTED IN SCORES ON HUD'S RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY FOR MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Objective 1: Achieve a score of 85%, or higher, on the "Maintenance Services" indicator on the Resident Satisfaction Survey (RSS) annually

Objective 2: Achieve a score of 85%, or higher, on the "Services" section of the RSS annually

Objective 3: Achieve a score of 80%, or higher, on the survey question: *How well were you treated by the person you contacted for repairs?*

Objective 4: Achieve a score of 80%, or higher, on the survey question: *How well were you treated by the person doing the repairs?*

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**GOAL 1:**  **ENSURE HIGH VISIBILITY FOR THE PHA**

Objective 1:  Have Executive Director appear at least three times annually on a television public affairs program to speak about public housing

Objective 2:  Have Executive Director appear on at least two radio talk shows annually to speak about public housing

Objective 3:  Have Executive Director & Chairman of the Board write one op-ed article in the Providence Journal annually about the public housing program or affordable housing

Objective 4:  Write and distribute press releases on significant PHA activities at least 12 times annually

Objective 5:  Prepare brochures for significant PHA programs annually

Objective 6:  Prepare a 4-page publication about the PHA for general distribution by June 2009

Objective 7:  Prepare a major public relations brochure for general distribution by September 2009

Objective 8:  Ensure the PHA's website is updated quarterly

Objective 9:  Ensure that reports prepared by the PHA about its operations are placed on the website quarterly

Objective 10: Conduct an operations briefing for Congressional delegation staff semi-annually

## RESIDENT SELECTION

**GOAL 1:** **MAINTAIN THE PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LIST AT AN ADEQUATE LEVEL TO ENSURE THAT HUD BUDGET APPROVED OCCUPACNY LEVELS ARE ACHIEVED**

Objective 1: Determine the number of applicants by bedroom size needed in the ready to lease pool to cover the anticipated vacancies for all AMPS by October 2008

Objective 2: Maintain a separate waiting list for our two "Elderly Only" developments by October 2008

Objective 3: Develop a more efficient method to organize the pending application pool and the third party verification process by January 2009

Objective 4: Increase the folder-to-unit ratio for each vacancy to three-to-one by June 2009

**GOAL 2:** **ENSURE THAT ALL HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE UNITS ARE OCCUPIED BY PERSONS WITH A NEED FOR THE ACCESSIBILITY**

Objective 1: Develop and maintain a separate waiting list for applicants with a need for a handicap accessible unit by December 2008

Objective 2: Begin to track the need for a handicap accessible unit for all pre-applicants by June 2009

Objective 3: Create a report to track the availability of handicap accessible units at each AMP by March 2009

Objective 4: Develop and implement an outreach plan to market the availability of handicap accessible units to appropriate social service agencies throughout R.I. by January 2009

Objective 5: Generate a method to notify applicants of the process to request a reasonable accommodation and the availability of our handicap accessible units by January 2009

**GOAL 3:** **ENSURE THAT ALL APPLICANTS ARE CONSISTENTLY SCREENED FOR PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

Objective 1:    Develop an internal audit to review all ready-to-lease folders for accuracy by December 2008

Objective 2:    Develop a comprehensive rental history background check for all public housing applicants by January 2009

Objective 3:    Review the current screening process to determine what changes can be made to strengthen the screening criteria by April 2009

Objective 4:    Evaluate the home visit process to determine if changes can be made to   make it more efficient by April 2009

Objective 5:    Revise and implement updated screening process by June 2009

**GOAL 4:** **MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSFER LIST BY NEED FOR ALL AMPS**

Objective 1:    Write an emergency transfer policy by October 2008

Objective 2:    Establish a quarterly purge process for pending transfer requests by January 2009

Objective 3:    Review and revise the current transfer policy by June 2009

**GOAL 5:** **ESTABLISH A STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM**

Objective 1:    Conduct quarterly meetings with team members to review goals beginning October 2008

Objective 2:    Determine tasks needed to achieve goals by October 2008

Objective 3:    Update and adjust goals on an on-going basis

**GOAL 6:** **ENSURE THAT THE ADMISSIONS SECTION OF THE ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY PLAN IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH HUD REGULATIONS**

Objective 1:    Review all chapters of the administrative plan related to admissions and revise, if required, by June 2009

Objective 2:    Review all pertinent PIH notices for policy changes on an on-going basis

Objective 3:    Revise admissions policies in accordance with HUD directives annually (January)

Objective 4:    Implement training sessions for Resident Selection staff to review changes and updates made to administrative plan by July 2009

Objective 5:    Develop a training/meeting schedule for Resident Selection staff by July 2009

**GOAL 7:        STREAMLINE THE DENIAL/GRIEVANCE PROCESS**

Objective 1:    Review HUD regulations and current PHA denial procedures to determine if changes can be made to expedite the denial /grievance process by January 2009

Objective 2:    Review and revise all applicant denial letters by December 2008

**GOAL 8:        MANAGE WAIT LIST**

Objective 1:    Implement a semi-monthly schedule for removing ineligible applicants from the waiting list by January 2009

Objective 2:    Conduct "purge" of waiting list annually (January)

Objective 3:    Update and post wait list monthly (on-going)

## DEPARTMENT OF LEASED HOUSING

**GOAL 1:**    **REVIEW ALL PLANS AND MANUALS**

Objective 1:    Review and update department Administrative Plan annually (April)

Objective 2:    Review and update Owner Guidebook annually (May)

Objective 3:    Review and update Participant Handbook annually (September)

**GOAL 2:**    **MAINTAIN A HIGH UTILIZATION RATE TO MAXIMIZE PROGRAM IMPACT AND TO EARN MAXIMUM ADMINISTRATIVE FEES**

Objective 1:    Maintain a lease rate of 97% or higher each month

Objective 2:    Review the number of available subsidies and conduct applicant briefings, if necessary, monthly

Objective 3:    Identify incoming transfers to absorb monthly if lease rate is below 97%

Objective 4:    Track the number of days needed to locate a unit quarterly

Objective 5:    Review Accounting's summary of HAP dollars spent monthly

Objective 6:    Review and determine Payment Standards annually

Objective 7:    Review and adjust (if necessary) Utility Allowance Schedule annually

**GOAL 3:**    **PROVIDE TIMELY COMPLETION OF ANNUAL RECERTIFICATIONS**

Objective 1:    Initiate 100% of re-certifications 120 days prior to lease expiration and complete process no later than 30 days prior to lease expiration

Objective 2:    Initiate 100% of annual inspections 120 days prior to lease expiration and conduct the re-inspections within 30 days.

**GOAL 4:**    **ESTABLISH QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES TO MONITOR NEW LEASES, RECERTIFICATIONS, AND (RE)INSPECTIONS**

Objective 1:   Review 10% of the previous month's leasing, and re-certifications to ensure satisfactory compliance with administrative procedures monthly

Objective 2:   Review 5% of the previous month's inspections to ensure compliance with administrative procedures monthly

**GOAL 5:**        **LESSEN THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN DUE TO PORTABILITY**

Objective 1:   Review listings of portables quarterly

Objective 2:   Identify any participants that can be swapped/absorbed (to alleviate billing) with other housing authorities quarterly

Objective 3:   Absorb all participants whose housing authority pays a fee less than the PHA's monthly

**GOAL 6:**        **ASSURE THAT ALL CONTRACT RENTS MEET RENT REASONABLENESS STANDARD**

Objective 1:   Conduct a rental survey of non-assisted rental units in the city of Providence at least annually (more often if market is turbulent)

Objective 2:   Request supervisor's approval for 100% of new leasings to ensure the rent reasonableness standard is utilized monthly

Objective 3    Review all rents for reasonableness at annual recertification if the FMRs decrease 5% or more monthly

**GOAL 7:**        **TRACK LOCATION OF ALL SECTION 8 RECIPIENTS IN THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE**

Objective 1:   Track the location of all Section 8 recipients in the city of Providence monthly

Objective 2:   Determine mobility patterns of Section 8 recipients annually

Objective 3:   Track the number of foreclosures affecting displacements monthly

**GOAL 8:**        **DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Objective 1:   Prepare a newsletter for tenants concerning regulation changes and common questions/problems bi-annually

Objective 2:    Translate and provide the newsletter in Spanish bi-annually

Objective 3:    Translate the HCV Program's Tenant Handbook into Spanish by June 2009

Objective 4:    Prepare a Powerpoint presentation which emphasizes program responsibilities and frequently asked questions by June 2010

Objective 5:    Purchase and install a television in the lobby to present educational materials to participants waiting in the lobby by September 2010

Objective 6:    Develop a presentation (Powerpoint) to be used for orientation for new applicants by February 2009

**GOAL 9:**      **PREVENT OR MINIMIZE FRAUD IN THE SECTION 8 PROGRAM**

Objective 1:    Hire a fraud investigator by January 1, 2009

Objective 2:    Review and select an investigative online database site by March 2009

Objective 3:    Print and review EIV statements for each family interview monthly

Objective 4:    Investigate the feasibility of collecting money owed due to fraud and/or prosecuting those who have *already* been terminated from the program by February 2010

Objective 4:    Conduct a review as to the feasibility of establishing a fraud hotline number by June 2010

**GOAL 10:**     **DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR PROPERTY OWNERS AND AGENTS**

Objective 1:    Publish a newsletter for landlords concerning regulation changes and common problems bi-annually

Objective 2:    Publish a version of the newsletter in Spanish bi-annually

Objective 3:    Translate HCV Program's Owners Guide into Spanish by October 2009

Objective 4:    Prepare an orientation presentation (PowerPoint) for new owners to be put on the PHA website by December 2010

Objective 5:    Translate the presentation into Spanish by March 2011

Objective 6:    Research and add links to the website with information for owners including housing law, lead laws, and available funding by October 2010

**GOAL 11:    UPDATE AND ENFORCE POLICY FOR BARRING PARTICIPATION OF PROPERTY OWNERS THAT FAIL TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 8 REQUIREMENTS**

Objective 1:    Assign committee including both Program Representatives and Inspectors by April 2009

Objective 2:    Review regulations and list common problematic practices by July 2, 2009

Objective 3:    Prepare and submit updated policy and criteria recommendations to department director by October 2009

Objective 4:    Prepare initial list of barred owners by November 2009

Objective 5:    Notify all owners of committee's criteria for disbarment in a newsletter by December 2009

Objective 6:    Review Problematic Owner Referral Forms from Representatives monthly

**GOAL 12:    UPDATE THE DE-CONCENTRATION POLICY**

Objective 1:    Review regulations and update the de-concentration policy, if necessary, by June 2010

Objective 2:    Prepare flyer to attract new owners in non-concentrated areas of poverty by October 2010

Objective 3:    Prepare materials which identify areas with a low concentration of poverty and surrounding attractions/amenities by December 2010

**GOAL 13:    DEVELOP AN INNOVATIVE METHOD TO REOPEN THE WAITING LIST AND ASSIST APPLICANTS**

Objective 1:    Determine a method to reopen waiting list without requiring long lines and special events by March 2012

Objective 2: Allow applicants to view their waiting list placement on the PHA website by January 2009

Objective 3: Investigate the feasibility of placing a computer in the lobby to check placement on the waiting list for those without internet access

**GOAL 14:** **MAINTAIN A MTCS SUBMISSION RATE OF AT LEAST 97%**

Objective 1: Transmit all changes to the calculations monthly

Objective 2: Review Delinquency Reports monthly

Objective 3: Review Late Re-certifications, Late Inspections, Incorrect Calculation Reports quarterly

**GOAL 15:** **MAINTAIN THE DESIGNATION OF HIGH PERFORMER IN SEMAP ANNUALLY**

Objective 1: Pull sample according to HUD requirements and complete all logs annually (July)

Objective 2: Submit certification in PIC within 45-days of the end of the fiscal year

**GOAL 16:** **IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE PHYSICAL SPACE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT**

Objective 1: Create innovative means of diminishing the amount of file retention by April 2009

Objective 2: Investigate methods to dispose of and/or store inactive files by April 2009

Objective 3: Reorganizing work area to improve tenant confidentiality and overall security by November 2009

Objective 4: Study the effects of moving to a new location and assess the potentially positive benefits it may have on the rest of the agency by December 2009

**GOAL 17:** **STUDY SECTION 8 HOUSING PATTERNS**

Objective 1: Commission a study concerning: distribution and employment patterns of Section 8 participants by July 2009

# PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

*"You can give an order around here, and if you can figure out what happens to it after that, you're a better person than I."*
*Harry S. Truman*

The purpose of the implementation phase is to complete a transition from strategic planning to strategic management incorporating adopted goals and objectives throughout the relevant system. Creating a strategic plan is not enough. Developing effective programs, projects, action plans, budgets and implementation processes will bring life to the strategies and create real value to the organization and its stakeholders.

The implementation process itself should allow for adaptive learning as new information becomes available and circumstances change. Such learning will lead to more effective implementation – to better strategies across purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions, and resource allocations – and to the cognitive and practical basis for emergent strategies and new rounds of strategizing. Realized strategies are a blend of what is intended with what emerges in practice.

The most important outcome that managers should aim for is real value added through goal achievement and increased stakeholder satisfaction. This will be accomplished by achieving a series of more instrumental outcomes. The first of these subordinate outcomes is the reasonably smooth and rapid introduction of the strategies throughout the Housing Authority.

Implementation will take place throughout the housing authority through a series of meetings with the department strategic planning teams. Briefings will take place throughout the PHA to inform the staff of the goals and objectives that has been developed and their individual and collective role in achieving them in the time allotted.

The second subordinate outcome is the development of a clear understanding by implementers of what needs to be done and when, why, and by whom. Statements of goals and objectives listed in this part of the plan are expanded upon in the accompanying Goals Management Plan. It serves as the guide as to what will be accomplished and in what period of time.
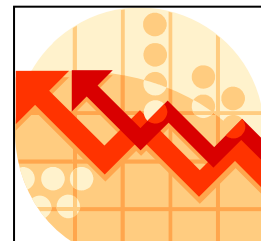
It holds specific persons accountable for completing their assignments. Performance will be tracked on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual basis depending on the specific goals and objectives. The Goals Management Plan is also useful in conducting personal performance evaluations of staff members. It holds persons

A third subordinate outcome is the use of the "debugging" process to identify and fix difficulties that arise during the course of the plan. Housing authorities work in a constantly changing environment that will affect specific outcomes. These are addressed in the Monitoring and Evaluation, and final phase, of this plan.

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# MONITORING & EVALUATION

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*"Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information on it."*

*Samuel Johnson*

The Monitoring and Evaluation phase ensures that critical objectives are being met within the specified time period. This is an critical phase of the process because it follows the progress being made on implementation of the Strategic Plan.

It allows management to determine where obstacles exist in achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the plan. Housing authorities work in a constantly changing environment with budgets fluctuating from year-to-year. It is difficult to plan for the long-term when our principal funding source is consistently changing the amount of funds we administer. Management can deal with the known, even if it brings bad news like funding reductions. However, not knowing what a budget is until six or seven months into the fiscal year leads to uncertainty. It is difficult, if not impossible, to plan for future operations.

All plans are dynamic instruments subject to change. This is more prevalent with public housing authorities that deal with a funding agency like the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which cannot predict operating budgets for housing authorities until the last housing authority submits its budget.

Our plan has to remain flexible to take into account the fickle funding allocations from HUD and other funding sources. This is the primary reason we monitor and evaluate our plan on a constant basis. The PHA will monitor our plan on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual basis to determine our progress. We will create a monitoring system that mirrors the goals, objective and timelines established in the plan. This will allow management to observe progress on the plan and to identify obstacles that have to be addressed. Not all of our goals and objectives may be achievable. Funding sources may be affected, conditions may change, and our mission may change. Many conditions may alter the plan. The monitoring and evaluation phase will alert us to these changes and permit us to alter the plan.

The formal monitoring instrument will
be on-line and a formal report
published twice a year.

Sample Monitoring & Evaluation Matrix

| DEPARTMENT OF LEASED HOUSING | Original Completion Date | Current Estimated Completion Date | Time Bound | | | | | | Ongoing | | | Obsolete | Resolved | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | On Target | | | Problem | | | On Target | Problem | | | | |
| | | | Completed | Not Begun | In Progress | Not Begun | In Progress | Barrier | Ongoing | Ongoing | Barrier | | | |
| **GOAL1:** **REVIEW ALL PLANS AND MANUALS** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.1 — Review and update department Admin Plan annually | Annually – April | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.2 — Review and update Owner Guidebook annually | Annually – May | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.3 — Review and update Participant Handbook annually | Annually - September | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OBJ.11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SAMPLE