

05 L.A. Office of Public Housing

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Retirement Community Fills Gap in Continuum of Care

Low and moderate income seniors in Kern County who can live independently but would benefit from meal and housekeeping services are now in luck. In December, the Housing Authority of the County of Kern acquired the 100-unit Castlewood Retirement Community. The property was only half full and suffered from significant deferred maintenance.

Utilizing Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds, the Authority purchased the foreclosed property and is completing approximately \$2.5M in modernization. While hesitant to enter into the food service business, the Authority recognized the unique opportunity to fill a gap in the continuum of care of affordable housing between independent apartments and assisted living.

Existing and new residents now benefit from affordable rents, three meals cooked and served on site each day, weekly housekeeping and an active resident services program. When the rehabilitation is completed this summer, the facility will be renamed the Pinewood Glen Retirement Community and will provide a quality, affordable option for seniors.



From Left: Andy Manzanera, Mark Hall, and Luis Cardenas install a double-pane patio window at Whispering Oaks Apartments in Ojai.

Ventura County Completes First ARRA Project

The Area Housing Authority (HA) of the County of Ventura's stimulus money is staying local and helping low income residents spend less on heating and cooling bills. Over 900 old windows were replaced with energy efficient, dual pane windows as part of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This completes the agency's on-going effort to upgrade windows in all of its 355 public housing units.

"ARRA guidelines required that monies be allocated in a timely manner," stated Douglas Taping, Executive Director. "Because this project was already identified in our 5-Year Capital Fund Plan, we were able to move quickly. Installation started November 2009 and was completed in early January 2010," said George McGehee, Housing Assets Director.

Local business owner Barbara Kiwitt of Kiwitt General Building successfully won the \$595,000 contract to replace the old, single pane windows. Kiwitt said that getting the contract enabled the company to retain its three employees. The contract also means continued employment for a four-to-six member crew from Hallmark & Associates, the installer Kiwitt hired to handle some of the work, along with workers at supplier Classic Windows of Newbury Park and manufacturer Amsco Windows of Salt Lake City. ARRA guidelines state that products must be made in the U.S.

"For these families, any increase in utility costs means making a choice between staying warm this winter and buying food or medicines, Taping stated. "The dual pane windows will help lower energy costs and reduce consumption for some of the county's poorest households."

The windows project is one of the first locally to be paid for with money from the \$787 billion economic stimulus package proposed by President Barack Obama and enacted in February as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. On average, five vinyl-frame, dual-pane windows are being installed in each of the 300 apartments at two complexes in Ojai, two in Thousand Oaks and one in Moorpark. These Southern California communities all experience some of the area's hottest and coldest temperatures where summer temps average in the 90s and winter lows are in the mid-30s.

Currently, there are 100 units of public housing in Ojai, 27 units in Camarillo, 30 units in Moorpark, 163 units in Thousand Oaks, and 34 units in the unincorporated areas. The AHA is a joint powers authority and non-profit housing provider representing the cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks and the unincorporated areas of the county.

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Important Notice to All PHAs

All tenant complaints or requests should be addressed by the Public Housing Agency (PHA) or directed to the Public & Indian Housing Information and Resource Center (PIH IRC) at (800) 955-2232. Please inform staff not to tell tenants to call the Los Angeles Hub Office.



Pictures provided by Maria Razo, Deputy Executive Director, San Bernardino County Housing Authority

Housing in Action: San Bernardino HA Completes Senior Project

The Vista del Sol senior housing development is located at 1320 Webster Street in the City of Redlands and is currently under construction. It will feature 71 spacious apartments for seniors 62 years of age or older. The housing complex consists of 58 one-bedrooms and 13 two-bedroom apartments, plus a 2,886 square foot community building. About 75% of the units (53 units) will be leased to seniors at or below 50% and 80% of the area median income (AMI).

Vista del Sol is owned by Housing Partners I, Inc. (HPI), which is an affiliate of the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB). To support the construction of this \$12.9 million project, HPI received the following monetary support:

- \$4,000,000 from the City of Redlands' Redevelopment Agency
- \$1,703,000 in HUD HOME Funds for the construction of 11 two bedroom units for tenants at 50% AMI
- \$1,078,000 in Neighborhood Initiative Program Funds
- \$6,190,000 loan from HACSB

The senior development is located in a quiet community in North Redlands. Seniors living in the community will have the opportunity to take advantage of new and essential amenities such as: BBQ area with gazebo, central air and heat, exterior storage room, gas ranges, laundry facilities, on-site professional management, private patios and balconies, refrigerators, recreation room, smoke free community, and washer/dryer hookups.

The anticipated completion date for the development is late March 2010. The property will be managed by Beacon Property Management. Applications are now being accepted, for more information please contact Beacon staff via phone at (909) 793-4535.

EYE ON IT: Recovery Act Deadlines Approach

Please be advised that, in addition to obligating your Recovery Act formula grant funds, it is absolutely imperative that you prioritize **expending** these funds. It is fair to assume that the recent directives encouraging the expedited obligation of ARRA formula grant funds will become the norm. It is therefore highly recommended that you move to expend funds well before their 60% deadline in March, 2011.

There will be no extension to expend these funds. Please take the necessary actions to ensure you fully expend funds as soon as possible and contact our office with any updates or questions pertaining to this matter.

Any success stories resulting from expending funds (new jobs, reduced utility costs, etc.) should be shared with our office so that you can receive recognition by HUD.

Your immediate attention and action are vital to the successful recovery of our nation's economy.

Update: SAGIS Deadline Extended

HUD has extended the deadline for Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) submitting calendar year 2010 operating subsidy requirements in the Subsidy and Grants Information System (SAGIS) to April 16, 2010. Additionally, PHAs that have recently reported an incident with access to SAGIS may request a further extension. The approval of any additional extensions is subject to the discretion of HUD Field Offices.

The SAGIS operating fund user guides are posted at:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/reac/products/sagis/training.cfm>

The following data fields are automatically populated in SAGIS: project number, Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) number, 2009 Project Expense Level (PEL), and 2010 Transition Funding per Unit Month (PUM). This data can be accessed at:
<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?/offices/pih/programs/ph/am/of/2010prepop-data.pdf>

Initial Obligation of Calendar Year 2010 Operating Subsidy

PHAs have been funded on an initial estimate from January through May based on the methodology posted at:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/am/of/2010expln-initial-oblig.pdf>

Funding based on this estimate of project eligibility will be extended through July 31, 2010.

To avoid overfunding projects, PHAs should notify their Field Office if changes have occurred between CY2009 and CY2010 that will significantly impact CY2010 eligibility. Significant impact (decrease of 25% or more) to a PHA's project eligibility may result from changes in number of projects, unit months, or other funding elements not adjusted for in the estimate.

Appeals Guidance

HUD has published guidance on appeals for CY2010 operating subsidy in Notice PIH-2010-2. It states that there are five types of appeals: (1) streamlined appeal, (2) appeal of formula income for economic hardship, (3) appeal for specific local conditions, (4) appeal for changing market conditions, and (5) appeal to substitute actual project cost data. This guidance can be found at:

<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?offices/pih/publications/notices/10/pih2010-2.pdf>

More information about the CY2010 operating subsidy is available at:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/am/of/opfnd2010.cfm>

Guidance for PHAs on HUD Form SF-424

HUD has provided guidance on completing form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, available at:

<http://www.hud.gov/utilities/intercept.cfm?offices/pih/programs/ph/am/of/sf424.pdf>



From the Desk of the Director

K.J. Brockington,
Director

Los Angeles Hub
Office of Public Housing

This past year was marked most significantly by the implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). All of our 22 Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) with public housing units received needed funds under the Recovery Act Formula Grant and were given one year within which to obligate these funds. Grant amounts ranged from thousands to millions of dollars per PHA, totaling \$53.5 million across the Southern California region. These funds were intended to provide support for a variety of capital activities that would not have been possible without this massive influx of dollars.

It has been the goal of this administration to put the ARRA funds to the greatest and most expedient uses in order to aid our faltering national economy, and this task has been especially important in order to provide for the members of our society at greatest economic risk. The efforts of our PHAs to provide safe and affordable housing options for our residents has perhaps never been more relevant than it is today. The urgency with which this message was reflected by our administration was clearly communicated to us as a doctrine of moving funds as quickly as possible.

Upon reaching the winter months of 2009, it came to my attention that an aggressive and supportive strategy needed to be undertaken to encourage our PHAs to obligate their funds well before the deadline of March 17, 2010. Although our campaign to push obligations was an intense process for our Office as well as our PHAs, I can now attest to its resounding success. **It is with great pleasure that I announce that the LAOPH Hub was the first nationally to have its PHAs fully obligate their funds for the Recovery Act Formula Grant. Together, we make a great team!**

I personally want to thank all of our constituents who helped to make this happen. This is an accomplishment that reflects everyone's hard work and fortitude, particularly during a time of increased workloads and continuous changes in policies. Working with and for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is challenging, but I hope that everyone can revel in this proud moment and recognize the crucial support that our work provides to those in need.

Now, let's move forward and be the first jurisdiction to fully expend our ARRA formula grants (five PHAs are already fully expended!) and fully obligate ARRA competitive grant funds (for PHAs that received these).



From Left: An old HVAC unit compared to a new unit installed at Needles public housing

Needles Replaces 42 HVAC Units with Recovery Act Funds

The Housing Authority of the City of Needles received \$100,109.00 in Capital Fund Recovery Grant funding. The Needles Housing Authority conducted a review of the physical needs assessments and chose to replace 42 old HVAC units with new, energy efficient units. The Housing Authority awarded the project to River Valley Air Conditioning from Needles, California, meeting their goal to keep the work local. The project was started on February 24th and completed on March 12, 2010. The work was actually completed in 11 days, and the tenants all seemed pleased with their new HVAC units. This is a great example of how to use relatively small grant amounts to benefit local residents, the economy, and the environment.

Issues with Reporting in HUD's Secure Systems

System performance issues have been identified with Secure Systems. Accordingly, PHAs, including Section 8 only PHAs, with fiscal years ending on 6/30/2009, 9/30/2009, or 12/31/2009 that have experienced or are experiencing significant system delays during the unaudited and audited submission process will not be penalized or receive a Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) penalty.

The revised due date for financial submissions originally due on 2/28/2010 is now 3/31/2010. The Public & Indian Housing Real Estate Assessment Center (PIH-REAC) apologizes for this inconvenience.

HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center

Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) grantees needing to extend the term of their 2008 or 2009 grant in order to fully accomplish their goals must do so in writing 90 calendar days prior to the grant termination date. The request must be submitted to the Field Office for review and approval. The grantee must also:

- a. Have current and acceptable Financial Status Reports (SF 425)
- b. Submit a narrative justification explaining why the extension is needed, how much additional time will be required, the circumstances that require the proposed extension, and the effect of a denial of the request.
- c. Have satisfied all special conditions of the grant agreement except those that must be fulfilled in the remaining period of the grant. This includes the performance and resolution of audit findings in a timely manner.

Grantees should be aware that anything beyond a six-month extension must be approved by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Office of Public Housing Investments and any extensions may result in a negative impact on the Past Performance review in future grants applications.

Please contact Ms. May Miso at the Los Angeles Office of Public Housing (LAOPH) for any questions concerning grants.



Left, from Left: HACSB FSS Coordinator Ms. Melinda Comeau with FSS graduate Kristina Baird
Right, from Left: Ms. Melinda Comeau with FSS graduate Karin Krist

San Buenaventura Graduates Two Residents from FSS Program

Kristina Baird was the Head of Household (HoH) of a family in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program of the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura. When Kristina enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, her income was Cal-Works cash aid, food stamps and Medi-Cal. She also had poor credit, no auto insurance, and no bank accounts (she relied on check cashing businesses). During her participation in the FSS and Cal-Works employment programs she worked hard and steadfastly to change her life. She obtained her high school diploma, certification in Medical Billing, became welfare free, employed full-time with a full benefits package, obtained car insurance, has paid down existing debt and improved her credit score, and now only uses established bank accounts.

Kristina received an FSS escrow check of \$7,712.95 upon graduation, which represents more than her annual income at the time of enrollment. Kristina has voluntarily given up her HCV assistance effective March 1, 2010.

Karin Krist is also an HOH of a family in the HCV program of the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura who worked diligently to improve her life circumstances for the sake of her daughter. After graduating from Tender Life maternity home, she obtained part-time employment as an assistant there, while attending school to obtain Certification as an Administrative Assistant. She then worked her way up welfare assistance and obtained full-time employment with a full benefits package. She has also increased her credit score by 40 points.

Karin received an escrow check of an impressive \$16,188.57 and now sets her sights, as her next personal goal, on being a homeowner through the HCV Homeownership Program.

Congratulations to the graduates! Viva FSS!

PIC Updates: Release of PIH Notice 2010-6

On March 8, 2010, HUD's Office of Public & Indian Housing (PIH) published PIH Notice 2010-6 entitled *Changes to Unit Reporting in Public Housing Information Center (PIC)*. The purpose of the notice is to inform the public that with the May 2008, October 2008, and September 2009 PIC releases, several changes were made affecting unit status reporting. The May 2008 PIC release made the following three changes:

- It modified the vacant unit status sub-categories in the Development Sub-module of PIC;
- It introduced some processing and definitional changes; and
- It introduced the automatic default of units to *vacant* status once a PHA submitted an *End of Participation* for a particular household.

The October 2008 release refined the non-dwelling exception unit status sub-categories. The September 2009 release changed the status of any units that still were listed as *Not Reported* to *Vacant*, and eliminated *Not Reported* as a unit tenant status.

The September release also moved any units that still were in the temporary *Conversion Unit* sub-category established in 2005 into an *Other Uses-Unauthorized* category.

The notice is available at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/10/pih2010-6.pdf>



From Left: Outside view of one of 12 new senior housing units completed as part of the McNeill Manor Improvement Project, an example of a new water heater, and vinyl flooring that was used in all units.

Baldwin Park Completes Senior Housing Complex with Recovery Funds

The Baldwin Park Housing Authority received \$19,174 in ARRA Grant funds. This grant in conjunction with other Capital fund monies was used to complete the McNeill Manor Improvement Project which is a 12-unit Senior Housing complex in the City of Baldwin Park. The McNeill Manor Improvement Project was completed on January 20, 2010.

The Senior housing complex improvements included a complete re-roofing, (roofing material made of 60% recyclable materials), privacy walls were replaced with new wood posts, rails, and fiber cement plank siding. The outdated sliding glass doors were replaced with new energy efficient French doors. The complex also received installation of new water efficient (1.5 gallon per flush) toilets, single pane windows were also replaced with dual pane high performance energy efficient rated vinyl windows.

The complex replaced 8 old water heaters with new 40 gallon gas energy efficient water heaters with heavy duty earthquake straps. The complex also received new carpet and padding (made with 75% recycled material), and complete interior painting and vinyl flooring throughout all 12 units including the laundry room was installed. Finally, new security screen doors with easy handle accessibility, and ADA accessible concrete walkway were installed to complete the renovation.

As always, we support the hard work and diligence that everyone at Baldwin Park Housing Authority has contributed to creating this fantastic project and applaud the speed with which their Recovery Act funds were put to use!