



HUD Great Plains Region VII News



Bi-Monthly Newsletter

November 2013

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR



It gives me great pleasure to let you know that our new Regional Administrator for Region VII is now on board! **Jennifer Tidwell** comes to us from the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) with a wealth of experience and we're excited to have her lead our Region. Ms. Tidwell looks forward to meeting and working with all of you!

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your perseverance and patience as we've worked through the many challenges encountered in fiscal year 2013. Some of these hardships included the across the board budget cuts with Sequestration, which continues to impact many of you, the furloughing of HUD staff so we were not available to serve you, and the government shutdown, which brought the Department's ability to process grants, monitor compliance, and provide customer service to a standstill.

The Department announced in April a series of restructuring changes which includes the consolidation of Multifamily offices nationwide and closing 16 smaller field offices across the country. Although no offices in Region VII are closing, these changes directly impact more than 900 of the Department's 8,700 employees nationwide. Despite these changes, the Kansas City Regional HUD Office will do our best to continue to provide you with excellent support. We will be contacting each of you in the near future to hear your ideas on how we can improve our customer service and communications in order to keep you informed about programs and issues that impact your communities. Thank you for everything you do to help HUD achieve its mission to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.

Sincerely,

Terri Porter

NEW RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY and NEW RESIDENTIAL SALES

Each month, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau jointly announce the new residential construction statistics and sales of new single-family houses. Read the most current new residential construction data available at <http://www.census.gov/construction/nrc/>. For the most current monthly report for sales of new single-family homes, please visit <http://www.census.gov/construction/nrs/>.

HUD ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO MANAGE RISK IN FHA'S REVERSE MORTGAGE PROGRAM

On September 3, 2013, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is today publishing new guidance to manage risk associated with the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) reverse mortgage or *Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) Program*. This is part of the Department's continuing effort to reform, strengthen, and protect FHA's Mutual Mortgage Insurance (MMI) Fund. **Read FHA's mortgagee letters.**

Housing Scorecard

Each month, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of the Treasury produce a monthly scorecard on the health of the nation's housing market. The scorecard incorporates key housing market indicators and highlights the impact of the Administration's unprecedented housing recovery efforts, including assistance to homeowners through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP). [Monthly Scorecards](#)

HUD in Kansas



The Heights at Delaware Ridge

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on September 6, 2013 for the first apartment complex to be built in Wyandotte County in 27 years. Several dignitaries including Mayor Mark Holland of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, KS and Theresa Porter, HUD Region VII Deputy Regional Administrator were on hand to cut the ceremonial ribbon.

The Heights at Delaware Ridge is backed by a \$24.3 million loan insured by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Leasing for first available units began in July 2013 and construction of the 228-unit apartment complex is expected to be completed by December 2013. Units include 9-foot ceilings and large balconies and patios. Other amenities include a clubhouse and pool.



DRA Theresa Porter

Johnson County Ribbon Cutting



Dana Buckner, Director, CPD



Merriam, KS – On September 23, 2013, Dana Buckner, Director of Community Planning and Development in the Kansas City HUD Regional Field Office joined Congressman Kevin Yoder and Johnson County Board of Commissioners Chair, Ed Eilert, for a ribbon cutting event in Johnson County. The project, funded under Johnson County Housing Services' (JCHS) HOME Investment Partnerships program, was an extensive rehab inside and out including: Brand New Energy Efficient HVAC, Energy Star Windows, Extra Caulking & Insulation, & Brand New Energy Efficient Appliances. JCHS partnered with Builders Development Corporation (BDC), and is among many projects undertaken by the agency to ensure that affordable housing options are available in Johnson County.

In her comments, Buckner thanked Johnson County and BDC for their commitment, not only in this development effort, but also for their ongoing commitment to partner with HUD, now and in the future.

Apple Awards Honor Efforts

On Friday, September 6, 2013, the Housing Authority of Girard, KS was honored with the Apple Award for the establishment of a community garden on their property. The Apple Award is given by Live Well Crawford County to groups working to promote health. Stacy Sullivan, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, said the idea of the community garden began several years ago but was tabled due to questions about the overall interest by the residents. A couple of years ago another group had a community garden and shared their produce with the entire community. Following that, a group of residents once again approached Ms. Sullivan about the idea of the community garden.



It was agreed that the Housing Authority would provide a section of land to get it started. The next day, residents started clearing the land and began planning. Residents had been dreaming of a totally organic garden with natural pest control. Dwarf plants have been used to utilize the space efficiently and cause less waste overall. Many people in Girard are surprised to learn that this is the first year for the garden.

The residents, who are physically able, do the work in the garden and share the produce with their neighbors. The project has been so successful that an expansion has been proposed and the Housing Authority is applying for grants through the Girard Area Community Foundation. Many ideas are now under consideration for the proposed expansion including raising beds for those who cannot kneel down. Daycare centers have visited the garden on field trips giving different generations the opportunity to learn from and interact with each other.

"It really has been community collaboration," Sullivan said.

Upcoming Events in Kansas

December 9-13, 2013 - NeighborWorks America Training Institute Kicks Off in Kansas City - Register online at www.nw.org/onlinereg, or download and submit by fax the hard copy registration form



HUD in Western Missouri



Community Briefing for Elected Officials in Missouri



DRA Theresa Porter

Kansas City, KS – On September 13, 2013, the Kansas City Regional Field Office hosted a community briefing for congressional staffs and elected officials of cities and counties, in western Missouri, who receive HUD funds. The briefing provided an overview of HUD programs and policies, an update on information about Secretarial initiatives, and promoted collaboration between HUD and elected officials/staffs to better serve their communities and constituents.

Region VII Deputy Regional Administrator (DRA), Theresa Porter, welcomed attendees who heard presentations from the offices of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Multifamily Housing, Public and Indian Housing, Community Planning and Development, Labor Relations, and Inspector General. The briefing concluded with a question and answer session.



St. Michaels Veterans Center Groundbreaking

September 25, 2013 – St. Michael's Veterans, Inc. held a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase I of their almost \$40 million proposed veterans campus. The project will provide much needed permanent and transitional supportive housing, including case management and counseling for at-risk military veterans. The campus is located close to the Kansas City VA Medical Center where veterans can



receive health care as well. The project will include approximately 180 one-bedroom units, with accessible units for disabled or wounded veterans. St. Michael's Veterans Center is sure to become the model for veterans' housing and services.

Upcoming Events in Western Missouri

December 6, 2013 - Creating Sustainable Places – Wrap-up Luncheon – No Cost; Limited Seating – Register [online](#) or call 816/701-8234.



HUD in Nebraska



Region VII's Largest Permanent Support Housing for Homeless Veterans is Unveiled

On September 5, 2013, HUD Region VII Deputy Regional Administrator (DRA) Terri Porter attended the Victory Apartments Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in Omaha, NE. Also in attendance was U.S. Senator Deb Fischer who spoke at the event.

With a total cost over \$17 million, Victory Apartments are the region's largest and newest permanent support housing for homeless veterans. The facility features 90 apartment units, comprised of 65 one bedroom and 25 studio apartments. All 90 units are supported with HUD funding - 45 with VASH vouchers and 45 through project-based Section 8, and \$350 thousand in HOME funds was awarded by the City of Omaha.

Victory Apartments are located in the former St. Joseph Hospital on 8th and Dorcas Streets. Incorporated into the building's second floor is a Department of Veterans Affairs office boasting 50 staff for on-site veterans' services, including counseling, mental health and life management services to the residents and local veterans within the community. Additionally, the building contains: an extension of Grace University's Mental Health Department on the ground floor; laundry use space throughout; a computer and technology center; and an enormous recreational space including a movie room, pool hall/lounge and a 7,000 square feet gymnasium/fitness center. Finishing a month ahead of schedule and with an additional 10 apartments over the planned number of units, Victory Apartments represent a phenomenal example of collaborative partnerships within the Omaha community.



Pictured left to right: Lisa Roskens (Chief Executive Officer, Burlington Capital Group), Dr. Marci Mylan (PhD, Director, VA NWIHCS), Teri Porter (Deputy Regional Administrator, HUD, Region VII), Ted Simpson (Director of Development, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority), Charles Pittman (Victory Apartment Resident), Gary Gernandt (Omaha City Councilman), Dr. David Barnes (President, Grace University), Senator Deb Fischer, Joan Bertolini (Executive Director, Douglas County Housing Authority).

NEBRASKA NAHRO FALL CONFERENCE

On September 24-26, 2013, FOD Earl Redrick and PIH Coordinator Deb Lingwall from the Omaha Field Office, Marcella Starck, St. Louis Office, and Brett English from the Kansas City Regional Office, participated in the 2013 Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) Fall Conference in Kearney, NE. During the conference, FOD Redrick provided feedback to conference attendees regarding HUD's Energy Efficient Mortgage and Loan Program and other HUD programs, services and tools that will serve communities in a rapidly changing environment. Deb Lingwall provided an Omaha HUD Office update, while Ms. Starck participated in the Section 8 Round Table 1 & 2 sessions, and Mr. English participated in the Green Physical Needs Assessments & Energy Audits session. NAHRO is a professional membership organization comprised of housing and community development agencies and officials, who administer a variety of affordable housing and community development programs throughout Nebraska and the United States. Approximately 350 participants attended the 3-day conference.

Omaha HUD Multifamily Program Center and Office of Counsel Team Up

Sheltering Tree

On September 26, the Omaha Multifamily Program Center and the Legal Division closed a \$1,604,300 Capital Advance for Sheltering Tree, a Section 811, Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities, in Bellevue, NE.

Sheltering Tree will provide safe, affordable housing for persons with mild and moderate developmental disabilities and help them find employment and inclusion in the community through activities and a work environment of their choice.

New construction for this project began October 3, 2013. The project will provide 10 units for disabled persons and one unit will be constructed and serve as a two-bedroom managers unit.

To learn more about HUD's 811 Program, click on this [link](#).

Project Homeless Connect – Grand Island, NE

On October 24, HUD Omaha Field Office's Andrew Burgin-Anton and Reggie Robinson attended Grand Island's Project Homeless Connect at the Evangelical Free Church. Project Homeless Connect is a free event which focuses on linking people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness to essential services. Services at the event included: health and



Andrew Burgin-Anton, HUD; Cheryl Holcomb, Executive Director, Central Nebraska Community Services, Inc.

dental care, mental health treatment, housing resources, employment and education services, legal services, social services/benefits and more. Also available at the event were free lunches and snacks, child safety seats, winter warming gear, backpacks and more.

HUD provided assistance and references for housing, homeownership issues, and public services. For more information, please contact (308) 385-5190 or visit www.phcgrandisland.org.

WHAT'S NEW

Continuum of Care Program Launches CoC 2.0 with Online Training Materials - [click here](#).

SNAPS Weekly Focus –SNAPS will issue a new "weekly focus," a series of messages and related materials about policy priorities and key information to help CoCs and project applicants prepare for the FY2013 CoC Program Competition - [Read more](#)

Announcing the Partnership for Freedom Reimagine: Opportunity Challenge - <http://www.partnershipforfreedom.org/>

PROPOSED Fair Market Rents (FMR) for 2014 – *Find the [FMR](#) for your area.*

Read PD&R's e-newsletter, [THE EDGE](#), to keep current on policy development and research breaking news.

HUD Launches NSP Disposition Toolkit – *View the [Toolkit](#).*

HUD Launches 2013 HOME Final Rule Webcasts - View the [Webcasts](#).

HUD Launches Affordable Care Act Resource Library Page - <https://www.onecpd.info/aca/>

New Affordable Care Act Web Portal Designed for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS - [Read More](#).

Schedule for the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report - [Homeless Data Exchange website](#)

From Our Federal Partners

[The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) Veterans Employment Toolkit](#) - *resources for employers and veterans focused on transitioning from military service, finding employment and supporting veteran employees.*

Small Business Administration and Small Business Majority are excited to announce the next set of [Affordable Care Act 101 weekly webinar](#) dates.

Applications now being accepted for Smart Growth America's 2014 free technical assistance workshops - [Learn More](#).

Affordable Care Act/Health Insurance Marketplace - <https://www.healthcare.gov/>

QUICK RESOURCES

QUICK LINKS - Use our quick links directory to access HUD information from one location

CENSUS TRACTS: Find out which Census tracts are for Low Income Housing Tax Credits in 2013 by visiting <http://www.huduser.org/portal/pdredge/pdr edge research 042412.html>

FIND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES - [Funds available](#)

Stay Connected

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HUD Contacts in Missouri – Click [here](#)

HUD Contacts in Nebraska -Click [here](#)

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We welcome your comments and feedback and invite you to share your stories and/or news with Agatha (Aggie) Gutierrez at Agatha.R.Gutierrez@hud.gov.