



NEW YORK MULTIFAMILY HOUSING HUB NEWS



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Strategic Plan

After a year of hard work, discussion, shared learning, goal setting, and consensus-building, HUD's FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan is now complete.



The Plan links HUD's fiscal year goals to the budget process and is a useful, priority-setting tool that will create real results for individuals, families, and neighborhoods across the country.

The new Plan continues and builds on the five strategic goals of the last Plan, in the form of four policy-oriented strategic goals and a set of eight specific management objectives. The goals are:

- Strategic Goal 1: Strengthen the Nation's Housing Market to Bolster the Economy and Protect Consumers.
- Strategic Goal 2: Meet the Need for Quality Affordable Rental Homes.
- Strategic Goal 3: Use Housing as a Platform to Improve Quality of Life.
- Strategic Goal 4: Build Strong, Resilient, and Inclusive Communities.
- An additional 8 management

objectives establishing strategies and metrics for acquisitions, departmental clearance, equal employment opportunity, financial management, grants management, human capital, information management and organizational structure.

In speaking about the Plan, Secretary Donovan remarked, "While the Strategic Plan outlines multiple goals, behind them all is a single promise: that together we will build ladders of opportunity that reach all Americans. From children born into poverty, to veterans sleeping on the street, to seniors struggling to retire with comfort and dignity, we are committed to giving every person a fair chance to lift themselves up and better their lives. Let's get to work on making this opportunity agenda a reality for generations to come."

In regard to affordable housing, he further stated, "According to the latest *Worst Case Housing Needs* study, nearly 8.5 million families with very low incomes pay more than half their monthly income for rent, lived in sub-standard housing, or both. The demand for action is growing, which is why we'll continue to look for innovative ways, working with partners, to both preserve and produce affordable rental housing for families. In addition, we will continue to help the most vulnerable communities, including those experiencing homelessness and trapped in poverty. Stable housing is an important tool in helping households achieve other life outcomes and we are working every day to give families access to these opportunities."

The Plan can be viewed in its entirety at:

<http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=hudstrategicplan2014-2018.pdf>

BBC Update

In the April issue of *Philadelphia Multifamily Hub News*, we discussed the Climate Action Plan's Better Buildings Challenge (BBC).



The Federal government is leading the way by example. President Obama has set a new goal to install 100 megawatts of on-site renewable energy in federally assisted housing by 2020- roughly tripling the current number.

To date, nationally, HUD and DOE have recruited over 42 leading affordable and market-rate multifamily owners to the BBC who have committed to a 20% portfolio-wide energy reduction within a decade.

Real progress is being made to ensure that every American household has a chance to benefit from a low carbon future. Join the BBC Challenge today!

APPS User Guide

The *Active Partners Performance System (APPS) Guide* has been updated into a user-friendly format.

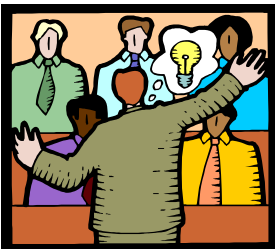


Among the topics covered in the *Guide* are: establishing/editing previous participation, creating/canceling/printing a submission package, organization changes and tier structures, modified TPAs, certification, queries/reports, and limited denials of participation.

Here is the link to the *Guide*:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/mfh/apps/appsindustryug

Bed Bug Lawsuits



Tenant bed bug lawsuits are becoming more commonplace and they are expected to grow rapidly over the next decade.

An Anne Arundel County jury awarded a 69-year-old woman \$800,000 in May 2014, against Cornelius J. Barrett and West Street Partnership- an amount that lawyers familiar with such cases said was the highest they have seen. About \$650,000 was in punitive damages- more

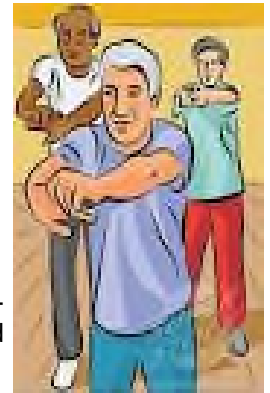
than the tenant had sought. The case highlights the growth in bedbug lawsuits nationwide and it demonstrates the ire of jurors, not only over the insects, but also over landlords who they feel didn't deal with a known infestation. In another case, in 2002, a jury awarded \$382,000 to a brother and sister who said they were besieged by bedbugs at a Motel 6 in Chicago when they stayed in a room that management knew was infested.

The verdict has landlords taking notice. A landlord doesn't put bedbugs in a unit, yet "the landlord is being faced with the burden of fixing this problem," said Ben Frederick, president of the Property Owners Association of Greater Baltimore.

Physical Activity & Aging

As people age, their bodies undergo physiological changes, as metabolism and even some thought processes begin to slow down. Too often, that can lead to a more sedentary lifestyle.

Rather than slowing down, seniors should focus on finding more time to be physically active. Such activity will strengthen both the mind and body.



In a 5-year study of 1,000 individuals, with an average age of 71, the American Heart Association found that adults who walked more and faster, and who were more active during their leisure time had a significantly lower risk of heart attack or sudden cardiac death. Regular physical activity can help reduce excess weight, lower blood pressure and blood sugar levels and slow the natural loss of muscle mass that accompanies aging. Engaging in a regular exercise can also enhance the ability to sleep at night and can improve an individual's strength and balance to help protect against falls.

An excellent aerobic and low-impact physical exercise is the martial art of Tai Chi. It has been shown to help with coordination, muscle conditioning, reduction of stiffness and pain, general wellness and quality of sleep.

If you own or manage a project for the elderly, consider implementing such an exercise program to promote the health and quality of life of your tenants.

Targeting Strategies for Neighborhoods

Determining how best to allocate limited funds in neighborhoods with different distress levels and investment



needs is a critical component of efforts to combat vacancy and redevelop cities. Strategies are emerging for evaluating degrees of neighborhood distress and targeting responses that reflect a community's unique market conditions.

A critical component of efforts to combat vacancy and redevelop cities is determining how best to allocate limited funds. Many managers and researchers agree that simply distributing dollars evenly among a city's neighborhoods, or focusing only on its very worst neighborhoods, will usually yield only small improvements that do not spur enough private investment to improve overall conditions. Some form of targeting is necessary, ranging from custom-tailored solutions at the neighborhood (or even block) level to extensive assistance focused on just a few neighborhoods.

The Reinvestment Fund (TRF), a Philadelphia-based community development financial institution, has developed a tool that some major cities have used to help match neighborhood needs to investment strategies. TRF's Market Value Analysis (MVA) system combines available local administrative data with relevant proprietary data to generate a typology of neighborhoods at the census-block-group level. Although the data used in each city's MVA may vary, indicators consistently used include the following:

- Median and variability of housing sale prices.
- Housing and land vacancy.
- Mortgage foreclosures as a percentage of units (or sales).
- Rate of owner occupancy.
- Presence of commercial land uses.
- Share of the rental stock that receives a subsidy.
- Density.

In addition to Philadelphia, TRF has generated MVAs for Pittsburgh, Newark, Baltimore, Washington, San Antonio, Detroit, and many other cities, often funded by a combination of government and philanthropic funds.

Additional information concerning neighborhood development strategies can be found at: www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/em/winter14/highlight2.html

Ductless Air Conditioning

Ductless, mini split-system air conditioners have numerous potential applications in residential, commercial, and institutional buildings. The most common applications are in multifamily housing or as retro-fit add-ons to houses with "non-ducted" heating systems, such as hot water heat, radiant panels and space heaters. They can also be a good choice for room additions and small apartments where extending or installing distribution ductwork (for a central air conditioner or heating systems) is not feasible.



Like central systems, mini splits have two major components: an air-handler unit mounted on an inside wall that delivers cool air to the room and an outdoor compressor/condenser. A conduit, which houses the power cable, refrigerant tubing, suction tubing and a condensate drain, links the outdoor and indoor units. The system also has thermostatic control and a variable quiet blower.

The main advantages of mini splits are their small size and flexibility for zoning or heating and cooling individual rooms. Many models have as many as four indoor air handling units (for four zones or rooms) connecting to one outdoor unit. The number depends on how much heating or cooling is required for the building or each zone, as well as the level of insulation. For comfort and energy efficiency, each of the zones has its own thermostat.

Ductless systems are also easier to install than other types of space air conditioning systems. They require only an 8 cm hole for the conduit and the outdoor unit can be located up to 50 feet away from the building. This makes it possible to cool rooms on the front side of a building with the compressor in a more advantageous or inconspicuous place on the outside. Also, they do not provide an entry point for intruders, like window air conditioners.

Since mini splits have no ducts, they avoid the energy loss associated with ductwork of central forced air systems. Duct losses can account for more than 30% of energy consumption for space conditioning, especially if the ducts are in an unconditioned space, such as an attic. Compared with other add-on systems, mini splits offer more flexibility in interior design options. They can be suspended from a ceiling, mounted flush into a drop ceiling, or hung from a wall. Most indoor units have low 7" profiles and sleek, high-tech-looking jackets. Many also offer a remote control to make it easier to turn the system on and off.

Clothes Dryer Fires

For many households and other establishments, the clothes dryer is an indispensable convenience and necessity. However, damaging fires can occur if clothes dryers are not properly installed and maintained. An estimated 2,900 clothes dryer fires in residential buildings are reported to U.S. fire departments each year and cause an estimated 5 deaths, 100 injuries, and \$35 million in property loss. Eighty-four percent of these fires occurred in residential buildings (17.4% in multifamily projects).



Failure to clean accumulated lint was the leading factor contributing to the ignition of clothes dryer fires in 34% of all fires in residential buildings. Lint, consisting mostly of small fibers from the clothes and debris, in or on the clothes, is created as they tumble in the drum. While much of the lint is trapped by the dryer's filter, lint is also carried through the vent system along with moist air. Lint is a highly combustible material that can accumulate both in the dryer and in the dryer vent. Accumulated lint leads to reduced airflow and can pose a potential fire hazard. In addition to the accumulation of lint, blockage in dryer exhaust vents also can occur from the nests of small birds or other animals, or from damages to the venting system itself. A compromised vent will not exhaust properly to the outside. As a result, overheating may occur and a fire can ensue.

Over the past 30 years, technologies to detect and extinguish fires have been a major contributor in the drop in fire fatalities and injuries. Smoke alarms are now present in the majority of residential buildings. In addition, the use of residential sprinklers is widely supported by the fire service and is gaining support within residential communities.

In order to prevent possible fire hazards, building codes require that clothes dryers be exhausted directly to the outdoors. Venting a dryer into attics, soffits, ridge vents, or crawl spaces is expressly prohibited. The codes require that dryer vents be made of metal with smooth interior finishes, sections of vent duct be securely supported and firmly sealed together and the total length of the vent duct not exceed 35 feet (shorter if there are turns or bends). Flexible transition ducts, used to connect the dryer to the exhaust duct system, are required to be not longer than eight feet, not concealed within-construction, and listed and labeled in accordance with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 2158A.20 New construction trends often situate washers and dryers in non-

traditional areas of the house, such as upstairs bedrooms, hallways, bathrooms, kitchens, and closets. These new sites may require longer dryer vent ducts in order to reach an outside wall. If a dryer vent is too long or has many bends and turns, moisture in the warm air passing through it condenses on the vent surfaces, attracting lint. Eventually, the lint accumulates and creates resistance. Thus, it is crucial for homeowners to regularly inspect and clean out the dryer vent.

All manufacturers now state in their manuals not to use plastic, flexible dryer ducts between the vent and the clothes dryer. Many buildings, however, continue to use plastic, flexible ducts. The plastic itself can provide additional fuel for a fire. Even flexible foil vents are not a good choice for venting clothes dryers. Flexible vents can twist, allowing lint to build up and catch on fire if it comes in contact with a sufficient amount of heat. If a fire starts beneath the dryer when the motor overheats, then the drafts from the dryer can pull the fire up into the duct, allowing a house fire to develop. Only flexible transition ducts that are listed by UL, or another approved product safety testing agency, should be used. Serious hazards occur when dryer vents do not exhaust directly to the outside. Faulty installations can vent dryer exhaust into the attic, crawl space, chimney, or interior walls, which can cause indoor air deterioration and mold buildup. Small birds and animals that nest in dryer vents or other debris can obstruct air flow and prevent proper venting to the outside.

For additional information, including "Clothes Dryer Dos and Don'ts" safety tips, see:

www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/statistics/v13i7.pdf

Fast Housing Facts

- In the United States, there are 90 cities where the median rent- not including utilities- was more than 30% of the median gross income. (Source: Zillow.com).
- Between 2007 and 2013, the United States added, on net, about 6.2 million tenants, compared to 208,000 homeowners (Source: Zillow.com).
- In a survey last year by the National Pest Management Association, 95% of the pest management companies stated that they have treated bedbug infestations in at least one apartment/condominium and one single-family home.



High Efficiency (HE) Clothes Washers

In recent years, sales of HE washers have grown and today, they're making a significant impact on the washing machine marketplace. With current energy and water legislation affecting design for future washers, this trend is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.



As of 2005, sales of HE washers have grown from less than 1% to more than 15% of the market in only 10 years. HE washers use less water than traditional washers- in fact, they only use from 20% to 66% of the water used by traditional agitator washers. Energy use can be as little as 20 to 50% of the energy used by traditional agitator washers because there's much less water to heat. These savings translate directly to long-term cost savings for consumers- as well as significant long-term environmental benefits.

Unlike traditional agitator washers, most HE washers use a "tumbler" system with no agitator. Because the new systems are designed to be so efficient, HE washers can use low-water wash and rinse cycles. In many models the laundry is washed in a shallow pool of water. In fact, in some models, the water level is so low you may never even see a pool of water. Despite their reduced water levels, however, HE washers can wash the same amount of laundry per load as traditional washers- in fact, many can clean even larger loads.

There are two types of HE washers- front loading and top loading. Although each works via a different mechanical method, they both use considerably less water than traditional agitator washers. In front-loading washers, the laundry tumbles back and forth through the water, as the tub rotates clockwise and then counterclockwise, moving the water and detergent through the laundry and removing soils. This repetitive tumbling motion is intended to do an efficient cleaning and rinsing job and is gentle on fabrics. All front loading washing machines use low-water levels in the wash and rinse process.

Other HE washers load from the top. These washers offer gentle motion to do the laundry, using spinning, rotating, and/or "wobbling" wheels, plates, or disks to achieve the gentle wash action. As with some front-loading HE washers, some top-loaders also spray or lightly shower clothes using re-circulated water from wash and/or rinse solutions. Top-loading washers also use low-water volume wash cycles. They have either no center post or a smaller-sized center post (or impeller) instead of a traditional

agitator.

HE detergents must work differently from traditional laundry detergents in order to be effective. They must be low-sudsing and quick-dispersing to get the best cleaning performance with HE washers. Detergents formulated for HE washers work with energy-saving technology to provide the best possible cleaning in only 20% to 66% the amount of water used in traditional washers.

As an added energy-saving bonus, most HE washers remove more water from your laundry than traditional washers do. Thus, since the load may be less wet when removed from the washer, there can be additional energy savings with your dryer.

As an added bonus, many utility companies are offering energy saver rebates- typically \$50 per washer.

HE washers are a smart choice!

Database for State Affordable Housing Preservation



The National Housing Trust in partnership with Novogradac & Company, certified public accountants, has developed a database of state policies and programs that promote the preservation of affordable housing.

This comprehensive database can be accessed at:

<http://prezcat.org/>

Financing Energy Efficiency Measures

The San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank, in last month's *Community Development Investment Review*, published an article on how to develop new and creative cross-sector partnerships with utilities, regulators, and influential energy efficiency allies to finance energy efficiency retrofits in affordable housing buildings. This article nicely supplements HUD's efforts to make low-income rental housing more energy efficient, as part of the Better Buildings Challenge.



The article can be read at:

<http://www.frbsf.org/community-development/publications/community-development-investment-review/2014/march/green-environment-energy/>

Dim Lights?



If your building's interior lights seem a little less bright, the problem may be caused by dirty light fixtures.

If it has been a few years since they were cleaned, accumulated dust and grime may have significantly reduced their lumen output.

So, break out the cleaning supplies. It may make a perceptible difference and not cost you a cent to improve your illumination.

Controlling Outdoor Pests

Outdoor pest activity can be controlled by proper landscaping. Here are six tips to keep pests away from your building:



1. Know the signs of pest activity and report sightings.
2. Keep shrubs and tree branches away from buildings to deter ants and rodents.
3. Apply pesticides at the proper times.
4. Minimize the use of mulch which can serve as a habitat for pests.
5. Sweep up standing water to deter the breeding of mosquitos.
6. Keep good records of your pest management program.

Stormwater Billing

In more than 400 cities, utility companies are using parcel-based stormwater billing practices based on a property's impervious area. This fee could potentially increase hundreds or thousands of dollars compared to the previous system that based stormwater fees on potable water usage measured by a meter.



If the climate allows, the only option to avoid this increased cost is to use porous pavements for low traffic and non-load bearing areas. These permeable materials can be concrete, asphalt or brick pavers with patterns to allow water to infiltrate. The water is then captured by another porous rock layer or an underground pool beneath the system that allows it to collect before it passes into the soil.

Affected owners should work with their local municipalities for suggestions on how to keep stormwater out of

their sewer system.

Neighborhood Networks Micro-Enterprises

A number of HUD Neighborhood Network Centers have developed micro-enterprises.



Now, this unique type of e-commerce has gone international. In the Wantou Village in China, many of its 4,700 residents now engage in e-commerce, such as the selling of willow straw cushions and rattan products on Taobao, the Asian version of E-Bay.

One villager, Wei Haiying, saw her monthly income rise to \$1,600 per month, far above the local average. As an added benefit, she enjoys the freedom of working for herself and running her own business.

Measuring Housing Affordability

HUD's periodical, Cityscape, discusses how HUD measures housing affordability and presents an analysis of custom tabulations of the 2006–2010 American Community Survey (ACS), known as the "Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data."



The CHAS data combine ACS micro-data with HUD-adjusted Median Family Incomes to create estimates of the number of households that would qualify for HUD assistance. Using these data, the number of rental units and ownership units that would be affordable to prototypical households, at specified income levels, can be estimated.

The article can be read at:

www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/cityscape/vol16num1/article17.html

Healthiest State



According to a report issued by the United Health Foundation, a Minnesota non-profit organization, the State of Delaware, in the Philadelphia Hub, was determined to be the 9th healthiest state for seniors over 65 years old.

The non-profit analyzed publicly available health data across the USA and ranked states by their support for healthy aging. Other top states, located in the Boston Hub, were New Hampshire (3rd) and Vermont (4th).

“Around the Hubs”

Editor’s Note- In anticipation of the future merger of the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston Hubs into the New York Hub, as part of Multifamily Housing’s Transformation, *Philadelphia Multifamily Hub News* has been renamed, *New York Multifamily Hub News*, and will now include expanded coverage of housing news from the New England and Mid-Atlantic areas.

Philadelphia**Project Dedication**

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on May 19, 2014 for the Camden County Freeholders Veterans Memorial Cottages at Lakeland, NJ. The homeless veterans transitional housing was dedicated to honor former Newark Program Center Director Water E. Kreher.

Promise Zone

Federal Housing Administration Commissioner Carol Galante and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter toured the Mantua neighborhood on March 7, 2014- one of the first five communities to be designated a Promise Zone.

Commissioner Galante remarked, “As Secretary Donovan says, the Promise Zones effort represents a partnership for progress...they create jobs, boost public safety, improve public education and stimulate better housing opportunities.”

One of the tour highlights was Mt. Vernon Manor, a 125-unit low-income garden apartment complex built in the late 1970s with the assistance of federal subsidies. By the 2000s, Mt. Vernon Manor was severely distressed. With the assistance of Diamond & Associates, the Mt. Vernon board obtained a HUD Choice Planning Grant in 2011. With the plan in place, they were able to renovate 75 units in 2012 and 2013 with funding from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

Mt. Vernon plans to renovate the remaining 50 units in 2015 using Low Income Housing Tax Credits and funds from the City of Philadelphia.

Revival of N. Broad Street

Philadelphia city officials hope to extend the success on The South Broad Street side portion of the “Avenue of

the Arts” to North Broad Street.

A nonprofit group, “Avenue North Renaissance” has been tasked with bringing some of the successful restaurants and cultural centers to the other side of City Hall.

Incentives will include low-interest loans, tax incentives, and a 10-year property tax abatement for new commercial construction.

High Rents in Clarksburg, WV

Over the past few years, oil and gas workers, working in the Marcellus shale industry, have offered higher rental rates to local landlords, according to Louis Aragona II, executive director of the Clarksburg-Harrison, WV Regional Housing Authority. The higher rates are putting rental units out of reach for many residents.

Allegheny County Rental Gap

Across the nation, the gap is growing between what the lowest-income households can afford and what is affordable and available to rent.

But among the largest 100 U.S. counties, Allegheny County, PA has the 12th smallest gap between the number of extremely low-income renters and the supply of housing that is affordable and available for this group, according to a recent study by the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C.

The study found that although low-income households are less vulnerable than in other places, many people in Pittsburgh are still challenged to find a decent place to live.

The Urban Institute tracked 3,143 counties or county-equivalent jurisdictions in the U.S. Like HUD, the Urban Institute defines low income as an income that is 30% or less than an area’s median income. The figure changes with geography. Depending on the area of the country, for a family of four that translates into incomes ranging from less than \$7,450 to \$33,300. For Allegheny County, the threshold for a very low-income household for a family of four is below \$31,500.

The bottom line is that there’s a growing need for more affordable housing because the number of low-income housing families is growing.

Lehigh Regional Housing Plan

The Lehigh Planning Commission will shortly be releasing a regional housing plan that will lead to development of housing that better fits the needs of today’s Lehigh Valley

residents and the tens of thousands who are expected to move there over the next three decades.

A new plan is necessary because much of the region's affordable housing is concentrated in urban areas, especially Bethlehem and Allentown. Together, the two cities are home to 54% of households earning less than \$17,610 a year. Unfortunately, since housing isn't always near where people work, they wind up spending a disproportionate share of their income for cars and gasoline, if they cannot access public transportation.

Also, there's still a lot of in-migration from New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia, with homeowners drawn by affordable housing prices and the Lehigh Valley's lower cost of living. That has contributed to a low vacancy rate of about 5.9%, compared with 9.9% for the state as a whole.

New York



Mayor's Housing Plan

Mayor Bill de Blasio has released an aggressive \$8 billion housing plan for the City of New York, *Housing New York, Ten-Year Plan*, that projects the construction of 80,000 affordable-housing units and the preservation of 120,000 units, on city-owned public housing land, over the next decade. Under De Blasio's plan, 50% of the units would be sold at below market rate prices- 30% for moderate-income households and 20 percent for lower-income residents. He calls it "literally the largest and most ambitious affordable-housing program initiated by any city in this country in the history of the United States."

As part of the Plan, the mayor called for the repeal of the "Urstadt Law." But the former state housing official for whom the law is named, argued that giving control to a progressive and tenant-friendly council, with the support of the mayor, would only result in rent hike roll-backs or freezes even as costs for building owners rise.

Lack of Low-Income Housing

In Tioga County, NY, residents are still dealing with the consequences of the 2011 flood. It destroyed thousands of homes along the Susquehanna River, increasing the gap between the number of affordable homes available and people needing a place to live. For the past few years, Tioga County's been struggling with a shortage of affordable housing. The shortage began with oil and gas workers coming across the border

from Pennsylvania in search of apartments. The problem was compounded in 2011, when flooding from the Susquehanna River and its tributaries destroyed about 1,300 houses in Tioga County.

Tioga Opportunities offers Section 8 housing vouchers, but Horner says there's a two-year waiting list. In 2008, there were 170 families waiting for housing. Now, it's closer to 320 families. Rent in government-subsidized housing is income-based, so families wouldn't have to worry if rent goes up. Right now, Tioga Opportunities is putting together a county needs assessment so they'll be ready to build if they can get funding.

NY Rent Regulations

The New York State Assembly has passed a comprehensive package of bills strengthening rent regulations and expanding access to affordable housing.

The package includes legislation increasing eviction and rent protection for tenants living in buildings that were formerly Section 8 housing; requiring housing offered through the Mitchell-Lama program become rent-stabilized to ensure affordability; restricting a building owner's ability to evict tenants from rent regulated apartments for the owner's personal use; repeal of vacancy decontrol laws that allow owners to increase rent above \$2,500; and reducing the monetary amount landlords may increase rent on vacated apartments from 20% to 7.5%.

Boston



NEAHMA Green Training

On May 14, the Boston Multifamily Hub staff attended the New England Affordable Housing Management Association's (NEAHMA) Green Training event held at Gillette Stadium. The event was attended by over 550 participants, ranging from owners and agents to on-site managers and maintenance staff. HUD was invited to the event after Joe McNealy, Director Program Management, organized a task force comprised of NEAHMA leadership to explore ways of obtaining owner buy-ins to the Better Buildings Challenge (BBC).

The event was a big success. Several large multifamily owners and management companies were responsive to the outreach effort and expressed an interest in taking the BBC pledge to reduce their projects' energy consumption by 20% over the next 10 years.

Excellence in Government Awards

In a ceremony, on May 7, 2014, at the JFK Library, Multifamily and FHEO staff were nominated as 2014 Excellence in Government Awards finalists.

Peter Boucher and Laurene Bowers were nominated for an Outstanding Innovation in the Workplace (SAVE) Award. They teamed up to carefully reconcile Section 8 payments on traditional contract administrated (TCA) contracts and were able to recover \$3.7 million in overpayments for the Section 8 program.

Maurice Barry, Merryl Gibbs and Joe Crisafulli, Hub Director, comprised the Multifamily and Fair Housing Team that were nominated for Outstanding Innovation in the Workplace (Initiative). They worked to combine a state homeless initiative with HUD homeless preference requirements. As a result, up to 400 extremely low income families residing in the state of Massachusetts shelter system will gain admission preference to assisted housing.

Overall, HUD staff received finalist awards from over 140 nominees.



Baltimore

Dedication Ceremony

On May 19, Mary Ann Henderson, Hub Director, spoke at the dedication ceremony for Village Crossroads I & II. Village Crossroads II is an 86 unit Section 202 project, that received a capital advance of \$10,520,600. Village Crossroads I is the first mixed finance project in Maryland, with 47 Section 202 units, 47 LIHTC units and a capital advance of \$5,980,900.

The sponsor of both projects is the Associated Catholic Charities and these two properties represent the 21st and 22nd Section 202 properties completed in Maryland. The dedication included a blessing from the Archbishop of Baltimore and greetings and proclamations from local elected officials and representatives of the Congressional delegation.

Lack of Affordable Housing in D.C.

Mayor Vincent C. Gray has proposed spending almost \$200 million to build and preserve affordable housing units in D.C., where more than 50% of the city's population are tenants.

Affordable Housing in Howard County

In response to community concerns about concentration of affordable housing in some areas of Howard County, and citing a desire to "improve residential properties in mature neighborhoods," the County Council has introduced new legislation that takes a three-pronged approach to addressing affordable housing issues.

First, the bill would limit where new affordable housing projects can be located by requiring the county's Department of Housing and the Housing Commission to plan and build projects in areas of the county where the poverty rate is less than 10%, according to census data.

Secondly, in those pockets of the county, the bill would also require that fees paid by developers in lieu of providing a required quota of moderate income housing units for new residential projects, could be used only to fund the county's settlement down payment and rehabilitation loan programs.

Lastly, the bill would expand the parameters of the county's Housing and Community Development Rehabilitation Loan Fund so that loans could be used not only for essential repairs to infrastructure, but also for home expansions and renovations.

Asset Management Workshop

The Richmond Program Center conducted an Asset Management Workshop, on May 20, 2014, in Richmond, VA. The workshop provided an opportunity for its partners, who own and/or manage FHA-insured on HUD-subsidized properties in Virginia, to interact with HUD staff.

Several topics were covered during the training including monthly accounting reports, reserve for replacements, Sustaining Our Investments, action plans, management and occupancy reviews, budget-based rent increases, Section 8 contract renewals, loan restructuring and the Better Buildings Challenge (BBC).

Over seventy of HUD's partners and more than thirty HUD employees attended the workshop. Additionally, approximately fifty-five groups or persons participated by conference call. The Baltimore Multifamily Hub Director, Mary Ann Henderson and Operations Officer, Brenda Brown participated in the workshop. Carrie Schmidt, the Richmond Field Office Director was also there to welcome the guests. Additionally, Sylvia Berry, HUD's FHEO Director gave a presentation on Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plans.

35th Anniversary Celebration

On May 16, Bob Iber, Director of Project Management, attended the 35th Anniversary Celebration of Frostburg Heights, a 110 unit Section 8 property in Frostburg Maryland. The celebration was attended by officials from the sponsor, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, local officials and many residents, including two who were original to the building in 1979.