

# HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW ORLEANS

## 25 Agency Accomplishments of the Past Eight Years

January 2002

1. Implemented ongoing modernization projects throughout HANO developments:
  - Iberville and Lafitte: Completed site utilities and building envelope restoration.
  - St. Bernard: Completed site upgrades and exterior improvements and started underground site utilities.
  - Guste High Rise: Modernized approximately 385 units, and completed installation of a new elevator tower and elevator upgrades at Guste High Rise.
  - B.W. Cooper: Completed roof replacement, rear stair and window replacement, crawlspace access door replacement, and modernization of 57 units.
  - Fischer: Completed comprehensive modernization of 60 units and began construction of a new 100-unit Elderly Complex.
  - Florida: Initiated construction of 139 units, a new Maintenance Facility, and comprehensive modernization of the Day Care and Community Center at Florida.
  - Conducted ongoing Lead Abatement at all HANO properties and implemented modernization of scattered sites throughout the inventory.
  
2. Received funding and began implementation of the Desire Housing Development Revitalization Plan to transform the site into a mixed-income community consisting of 425 multi-family units and 150 single-family homes. Funding sources include: HOPE VI Grant awards (\$44 M); Comprehensive Grant Program funds (\$17 M); Louisiana Housing Finance Agency tax credits (\$5 M gross value); and City of New Orleans Capital Bond Referendum (\$6 M).

Other project accomplishments include:

- Construction for this HOPE VI has begun under three developer contracts: demolition and infrastructure; construction of multi-family housing units; and construction of single family housing units.
  
- Demolition of all residential, management, and maintenance/warehouse buildings in Phases I and II has been completed and all families have been relocated. In addition, demolition and relocation complete for Phase III, except for 8 buildings and 14 families.
  
- Received HUD approval of the Community and Supportive Services Program through which 69% of the Desire families have been enrolled in interim case management services.
  
- Developed a Homeownership Plan that allows residents to take advantage of below market interest rates for home loans, participate in the City-sponsored Soft Second Mortgage Program and have their savings matched four to one (4:1) as part of the Greater New Orleans Individual Development Account (IDA) Collaborative.

- Desire schematic drawings are 95% complete for multi-family units.
  - Received Sewerage and Water Board approval of infrastructure drawings to commence infrastructure work..
  - Construction documents for Desire Community Center Renovation are 90% complete.
  - Providing interim Case Management Service for approximately 70 families remaining on site as of September 10, 2001.
  - Obtained HANO Board approval of award of CSSP contract.
  - Executed Transfer of Title of property on Desire land swap.
3. Received funding for and began implementation of the St. Thomas Revitalization Plan to transform the site into a mixed-income community which will be comprised of 690 mixed-income family rental units, including affordable and market rate housing for rent and sale, a continuing care facility, light commercial buildings, and a commercial/retail complex. Funding sources include: HOPE VI grant award (\$25 M); Comprehensive Grant Program funds (\$6 M); City of New Orleans Capital Bond Referendum (\$6 M); Louisiana Capital Outlay (\$8 M); Industrial Development Board tax exempt bonds (\$46 M); FHA private sector financing (\$37 M), and Low-Income-Housing Tax Credits (\$21 M) gross value.

Other project accomplishments include:

- Secured a commitment from Wal-Mart to serve as a retail partner.
- Began \$13 million infrastructure construction work.
- All residents have been relocated and the entire site has been demolished.
- Seventy-three percent (73%) of the former St. Thomas residents have completed case management assessments and are participating in the HUD-approved Community and Supportive Services Program.
- Seven (7) St. Thomas residents have opted out of Public Housing and purchased homes.
- A Homeownership Plan has been developed that allows St. Thomas residents to take advantage of below market interest rates for home loans, participate in the City-sponsored Soft Second Mortgage Program and have their savings matched four (4) to one (1) as part of the Greater New Orleans Individual Development Account (IDA) Collaborative. Infrastructure construction began in December 2001.

4. In April 1998, implemented an 18-month Continuous Improvement Plan, which entailed the completion of 240 deliverables in areas of revitalization and neighborhood improvement, program management, safety and security, resident opportunities, public awareness, and agency performance.
5. In Spring 2000, established the HANO Resident Advisory Board (RAB) in accordance with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA). The RAB, comprised of public housing and Section 8 resident leaders, has forged a positive and productive working relationship with the HANO staff. Since its inception, the RAB has assisted in preparing the agency's QHWRA Five-Year and Annual Plans and in addressing various other planning and policy issues.
6. In September 2000, initiated a Vacancy Reduction Program through which 805 units were rehabilitated and brought back on-line for occupancy. The Vacancy Reduction Program has provided several hundred much-needed units for HANO residents relocating due to redevelopment initiatives.
7. In February 2001, converted successfully from Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection to Uniform Physical Condition Standards Inspections (UPCS). All inspectors were trained by Nan McKay and Associates. Specialized computer hardware and software was procured and is presently being used to conduct UPCS inspections and reporting.
8. Revised both the HANO Admissions and Occupancy Policy and the Residential Lease to comply with the March 2000 HUD regulations issued pursuant to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA). Revisions were drafted and after an extensive review and public comment period, the work was completed in 2001.
9. Entered into management contracts with Resident Management Corporations at the B.W. Cooper (September 1998) and Guste Homes Developments (December 1999). The agency's emphasis on resident empowerment resulted in its formal recognition of the leadership capabilities of residents at these two developments.
10. Developed partnerships and programs to facilitate homeownership opportunities for residents.
  - Established a Lender Consortium in November 2000 that enables Public Housing families to qualify for a mortgage using one conventional mortgage product with flexible underwriting criteria. HANO's Lender Consortium partners are: Fannie Mae, Hibernia Bank, Dryades Bank, Whitney Bank, AmSouth Bank, Bourgeois and Associates Mortgage Co., United Bank and Trust, and the City of New Orleans Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development.
  - Instituted a Section 8 Homeownership Program in May of 2001 to assist Section 8 families with the opportunity to purchase their own homes. The homeownership option enables first-time homeowners to use their Section 8 voucher subsidy to meet monthly homeownership expenses. HANO has secured HOME Funds from the City of New Orleans and formed a partnership with Fannie Mae and Hibernia to underwrite the program.
11. In the year 2000, initiated a Section 8 "Housing Choice Voucher" Program audit resulting in a total revamping of the department — hiring of several new employees; procuring outside contractors; and instituting new procedures. These combined initiatives led to a Section 8 Program utilization increase from 68% to a present 77%, a trend that is expected to continue.

12. Implemented a mandatory Tenant Readiness Training Program for all new participants in the Section 8 program. Landlord recruitment has been expanded through an aggressive marketing campaign with membership drives and participation in the various real estate associations in the Greater New Orleans Area. These efforts, combined with ongoing collaboration with the HANO Landlord Advisory Committee, established in 1998, have resulted in increases exceeding 500 new landlords.
13. In January 1995, the Housing Authority and the New Orleans Police Department opened three Community Oriented Policing Squad (COPS) stations. With a \$3.4 million Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant, COPS subsequently reduced the murder and high crime rates afflicting the residents of Desire, Florida, and C.J. Peete. Additional COPS stations in the Iberville, B.W. Cooper, Lafitte, St. Bernard, and Guste Homes development have served to continue the crime reduction measures.
14. In January 1996, HANO began implementation of the “One Strike and You’re Out” policy consistent with Federal regulations. The policy, as outlined in the Residential Lease Agreement, states that “the tenant, any member of the household, a guest, or another person under tenant’s control” shall not engage in any activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of HANO’s public housing premises or in any drug-related criminal activity on or near the premises. As a result, HANO has completed over 300 evictions.
15. Implemented the Louisiana Child Health Insurance Program (LaChip) within public housing. The program provides no cost health insurance program for children 18 and under. Since March 2000, over 1,000 residents have been enrolled in the program.
16. In August 1992, established the HANO Resident Loan Corporation (HRLC) to provide resident-clients with the seed capital needed to start their own businesses — twenty-two (22) of which have been funded to date. HRLC funds are available to residents who have knowledge and experience in a particular area but who, because of the prevailing criteria of traditional lending institutions, would not qualify for a small business loan. In addition to funding, the HRLC provides on-going entrepreneurial training, technical assistance and incubator services.
17. Developed a standardized project based reporting system to manage budget versus actual financial activity in accordance with HUD and HANO requirements. Diligent management has resulted in a public housing profit for fiscal year 2000 of approximately \$4,000,000 and for the fiscal year 2001 of approximately \$8,000,000.
18. Completed budget fungibility for Comprehensive Grant Program (CGP) years 1992-1998, resulting in all CGP programs, 1999 and prior, to be fully obligated. The Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program (CIAP) and CGP years 1992, 1993 and 1994 are fully expended and will be officially audited and closed out with the issuance of the fiscal year 2001 independent audit.
19. Generated approximately \$15,000,000 of operating reserves over the last three years. The expendable fund balances were as follows: fiscal year 1999 (\$18,072,085), fiscal year 2000 (\$12,995,564) and fiscal year 2001 (\$3,390,857).

20. In FY 2001, the Risk Management Department was re-organized to ensure greater accountability and more stringent monitoring of claims. Risk Tool Box Training for staff was implemented and written Claims Procedures were developed to provide guidance and instruction to claims adjusters and managers. The agency also instituted the practice of trending in order to detect trouble spots by tracking the defect by the development and by the type of claim. HANO realized a 37% reduction in property damage and personal injury claims through the implementation of this host of strategies.
21. Established in 1996, the Housing Authority of New Orleans Scholarship Fund. Through this initiative, 37 scholarships totaling \$89,400 have been awarded to assist high school students of public housing in their pursuit of college education.
22. In March 1999, designed and implemented the Housing Authority of New Orleans website "[www.hano.org](http://www.hano.org)" as an additional source of contact and information for the public. The HANO website provides a detailed overview which describes the agency's organizational structure, highlights recovery and revitalization initiatives, and provides data and demographics relative to the public housing and Section 8 programs.
23. Worked with a National Advisory Council over an 18-month period beginning June 2000 and concluding in December 2001. The National Advisory Council was established solely for the Housing Authority of New Orleans pursuant to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act. Its role was to establish standards and guidelines for assessing the Authority's performance; provide advise, expertise, and recommendations regarding management, operation, repair, redevelopment, revitalization, demolition, and disposition of HANO's public housing; report to Congress regarding the Authority's progress; and make a final finding to Congress regarding the future of HANO.
24. In fiscal year 2001, HANO obtained dismissals of 360 lawsuits pending against the agency. This proactive measure eliminated any further legal liability and resulted in a conservative projection of \$3.6 million in savings. (This estimate does not take into account the aggregate cost of defending the aforementioned lawsuits.)
25. In fiscal year 2001, the agency developed a "Retention Record Policy" that established guidelines and timetables for the discarding and purging of old documents and/or records. This policy substantially reduced HANO's off-site storage cost.