



Plattsburgh Housing Authority

Strategic Plan



July 2014



Planning for the Future in Uncertain Times

About the Plattsburg Housing Authority

PHA was established to serve the City of Plattsburgh, NY on April 9, 1951. The first apartments were available for use after they were built in 1953. We serve income qualified families and individuals that are in need of stable and permanent housing with 601 units of public housing and 191 vouchers allocated to our Housing Choice Voucher Program. We have a total population of approximately 1400 residents which is roughly 7% of the population of the City of Plattsburgh based on 2010 census data. The PHA has 220 public housing units that are designated for seniors.

An independent public corporation, PHA was established by NYS Public Housing Law. Although historically housing authorities in the United States have relied on funding allocated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, funding levels and program allocations have been dramatically reduced. Housing authorities are in need of adapting to the funding levels and it is becoming increasingly necessary to create innovative methods of diversification. In 2014, PHA has a staff of 30 and a consolidated budget of approximately \$4.5 million.

Our Vision for the Future

This strategic plan is the culmination of the work of many people dedicated to the success of the PHA, its residents and the Plattsburgh community. It is bold as it sets the course we will strive to follow in meeting the growing need for low income housing in the City of Plattsburgh and supporting our residents in allowing them to move closer to greater stability, self-sufficiency and personal growth.

Much of this strategic plan reinforces our obligations to manage, maintain and improve our housing stock and remain with a high performer designation. It also reaffirms our commitment to provide our residents with opportunities and leverage the Ted K Center to provide education and social growth for PHA youth.

This plan identifies areas that demand new emphasis and focus. We will address the increased need for senior housing that provides the ability for residents to age in place; provide increased opportunities and programs for residents to achieve financial stability and independence; create and utilize an affiliate to expand our revenue base; and thoroughly investigate the use of PHA spaces to house community based organizations that can perform services for our residents.

Board of Commissioners

Shirley O'Connell, Chair
Clayton Morris, Vice-Chair
Alice Heckard
Eleanor Tart
Paul Grasso, Jr.
Lana Provost
Laura Mitchell

Executive Staff

Mark Hamilton, Executive Director
Tammy Langley, Housing Assistance Supervisor
Jennifer Lamberton-Bechtol, Housing Assistance Specialist
Bridgette Arthur, Housing Assistance Specialist
Gina Durocher, Accountant
Glen Lamoy, Force Account/Maintenance
Tom Neale
Educational Coordinator

MISSION STATEMENT

To go beyond ensuring quality, safe, and affordable housing by forming strategic community partnerships that will create an environment to promote opportunities for residents' self-sufficiency.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Individuals or families possess the life skills and have the economic independence to meet their basic needs without public subsidies or private assistance.

CORE COMPETENCY

To provide high quality, safe, and affordable housing to low income individuals or families.

CORE VALUES

- Accountability – we take ownership in our work, commitments, and relationships
- Agility – we are flexible and able to adapt rapidly to shifts in federal regulations and funding
- Collaboration – we work beyond organizational boundaries to build business partnerships and relationships
- Confidentiality – we abide by the strictest level of confidentiality in all our interactions with residents and agencies with whom we collaborate
- Fun – we celebrate both individual and collective success together.
- Innovation – we explore new ideas or take calculated risks that have the potential to change the organization
- Integrity – we earn trust and build internal and external relationships by being respectful, ethical, honest, confidential, sincere, and reliable
- Ownership – we have a shared responsibility to take the initiative to ensure the success of the organization and residents
- Teamwork – we work together, inspire each other

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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FINANCIAL

To meet HUD's financial reporting requirements in a timely and efficient manner

- Streamline monthly processes to ensure the efficiency of reporting
 - Accountant will continue to develop, combine, and/or eliminate previous spreadsheets or processes maintained on an ongoing basis.
 - Accountant will continue to identify tasks within the month end process that can be isolated and completed prior to the month end.
 - Accountant will develop clearly defined responsibilities and deadlines for Account Clerk by 07/01/2015

To stay current with financial reporting requirements

- Accountant will review all funding updates by HUD when received.
- Accountant will review all PIH Alerts daily.
- Accountant will review all Casterline monthly reports as received.
- Accountant will submit monthly VMS report for HCVP.
- Accountant will attend at least annually a training, seminar, or webinar offered by Casterline, BDO PHA Finance, Nan McKay, HAIG, PHADA, NYSPHADA, or NAHRO.

To ensure the housing authority is financially viable

- Analyze and review PHA's financial data thru monthly and annual comparisons of prior periods
 - Identify and review budget variances for discrepancies, budget revisions or required forecasting changes monthly.
- Create a method(s) to project the anticipated future financial position of the PHA
 - Accountant will develop and utilize forecasting tools that will assist management in their financial decisions by 01/01/2015.
 - Accountant will develop an effective manner in which to project cash flow needs of the PHA by 01/01/2015.
 - Accountant will continue utilization of forecasting tool for key financial indicators associated with public housing MASS/PHAS scoring.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV program)

To maximize the number of housing vouchers

- HCV staff will track the number of used vouchers monthly for program management and to meet the Voucher Management System (VMS) reporting requirement.
- HCV staff will monitor the HCV program waiting list quarterly to determine if the wait time is less than 24 months for most current applicants in which case the wait list will be reopened per the Administrative Plan.

- HCV staff will examine the number of ports monthly and determine the feasibility of absorbing specific ports rather than administering the ports.
- HCV staff will hold HCV program orientations for participants entering the program to provide a baseline understanding of program requirements.
- HCV staff will provide assistance to participants in their search for qualified apartments by offering newspaper ads, internet usage and obtaining rental information from landlords known to participate in the HCV program.
- HCV staff will ensure a minimum of a FY average of 95% lease up rate utilizing the VMS tracking and reporting system.
- HCV staff will disseminate a newsletter at least bi-annually for program participants to ensure their understanding of the HCV program and communicate program regulations.

To maximize the number of landlords participating

- HCV staff will provide opportunities for orientations of new landlords when they agree to participate in the HCV program.

To increase staff proficiency/efficiency of TenMast

- HCV staff will utilize the Rent Reasonableness module in TenMast on a continual basis.
- HCV staff will continually maintain and update the inspection modules in TenMast to provide an efficient and cohesive management of inspections (annuals, initials and re-inspections).
- HCV staff will utilize TenMast support on an as needed basis.
- HCV staff will monitor all training programs offered through TenMast and will participate on applicable trainings.

To stay current with regulations

- HCV staff will review Nan McKay PIH alerts daily and investigate further when updates or information is programmatically applicable.
- HCV staff will perform a bi-annual review of up-coming trainings (both on-site and on-line) offered by NAHRO, Nan McKay, and HAIG and will request approval to attend any applicable, needed offerings.
- HCV staff will perform an annual review of the HCV program Administrative Plan to ensure compliance with any changing or updated regulations.

Public Housing Program

To ensure defined vacancy parameters are met

- On a monthly basis, the Housing Assistance Supervisor will generate the occupancy report from the PIH Information Center (PIC) and compare the results with the vacancy list maintained by the Housing Assistance Specialist to ensure that there are no more than 7 vacancies in AMP 1, no more than 4 vacancies in AMP 2, and no more than 1 vacancy in AMP 3.

To improve collection of outstanding rent by 2.0%

- On a monthly basis, the Housing Assistance Supervisor will call tenants with outstanding rent balances in order to establish a commitment for payment or to determine those tenants that will be served written demands of payment prior to eviction proceedings.
- The Housing Assistance Supervisor will include information in at least one newsletter annually to explain the benefits for tenants to complete an authorization agreement for direct debit from their bank account for rent payments.
- On a monthly basis, the Housing Assistance Supervisor will generate the Rent Collection Performance Report from TenMast to assess improvement in the collection of outstanding rent.
- PHA staff will perform evictions monthly for residents with outstanding balances that have exhausted opportunities for repayment or assistance from community resources.

To develop a strategy for “aging in place” needs

- PHA staff will partner with other local agencies (i.e. Hasset Adult Day Services) and housing facilities (i.e. Champlain Valley Senior Community) to provide our residents with resources to either remain in their current apartment or transition to an assisted living facility.
- By July 1, 2015, PHA staff will assess the viability of converting designated senior units into low-income assisted living units by understanding community need and leveraging practical partnerships with service providers.

To continue to achieve high performer status

- PHA staff will perform annual inspections to ensure the sites, building exteriors, building systems, common areas, and units are well-maintained and are in compliance with health and safety guidelines.
- PHA staff will compile and maintain the public housing waiting list in compliance with the current policies to ensure proper placement of tenants into vacated units.
- PHA will perform mandated reporting from HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification software (either monthly or quarterly depending on the regulatory mandate).
- No less than bi-weekly, PHA staff will submit 50058 certifications (and recertifications) to PIC and will log-in to PIC to view the submissions and ensure successful transmissions.
- Quarterly, PHA staff will use a random sample of 5% of active resident files ensure each resident file includes all necessary information as required by both HUD and auditors.
- When creating repayment agreements with current and former residents, any repayment of fraud will be noted and highlighted on/within the repayment agreement to be tracked separately from non-fraud repayments.

- PHA staff will perform annual inspections to ensure current housing stock is well-maintained for future use.
- PHA staff will perform annual inspections and re-inspections to ensure residents are meeting lease requirements regarding housekeeping.

TENANT SERVICES

Ted K. Center

To maintain collaborative partnerships

- Ted K. Center staff will complete necessary applications, meet specific criteria and/or continue direct communication with the following agencies/community organizations to ensure future collaboration: United Way of the Adirondack Region Inc., Clinton County Youth Bureau, Clinton County Youth Court, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Clinton County Health Department, Clinton County Department of Social Services, OneWorkSource, Plattsburgh City Police Department and specific Plattsburgh State University Departments (Social Work, Human Development and Family Relations, and Public Relations).

To explore new collaborative partnership opportunities

- Ted K. Center Education Coordinator will cultivate future collaborative opportunities by annually inquiring directly with at least two new community agencies/organizations.

To increase awareness in the community of services offered at the center in order to attain additional resources/funding

- The Ted K. Center staff will implement the media campaign created in conjunction with Plattsburgh State. The use of new letterhead, display of “I’m A Ted Kid” posters, and interaction via Facebook will provide increased community awareness and exposure to new potential funding sources.
- Ted K. Center staff will collaborate with PSUNY Public Relations class during the Fall 2014 semester to design a campaign to raise money to purchase a new van.

To continue to develop programs

- Ted K. at Camp Tapawingo summer camp will be created and opened in the summer of 2014 and provide activities that include events that involve children in social, recreational, artistic, and science based settings to promote healthy youth development.
- Ted K. Center staff will work in collaboration with Master Gardeners and program youth to maintain and enhance the Community garden for the foreseeable future.
- Money will be sought yearly to support targeted programs such as Camp Tapawingo and the Community Garden above and beyond general programming.
- Ted K. Center staff will develop one new targeted program annually.

To serve as a resource for referrals of PHA residents to community programs/assistance

- Information will be provided annually in the PHA Family Newsletter, Section Eight Newsletter and by notes sent home with program youth to increase resident awareness of referral services available at the Ted K. Center.
- During the Fall 2014 a PSUNY Social Work Intern will be assigned to work with center staff to update the Ted K. Center parent reference guide and re-create our parent area to provide parents/family member easy access to information pertaining to community resources.
- Center staff will refer program youth ages 14 – 18 to the OneWorkSource Summer Youth Employment Program and host at least two PHA resident youth as summer employees providing the opportunity to earn money and gain work place experience.

To develop strategies for fund raising

- Through research and community collaboration the Ted K. Center Education Coordinator will identify and pursue at least one new funding resource yearly to provide additional funding and/or to replace expired funding sources.
- Center Education Coordinator will apply for funding annually through the United Way of the Adirondack Region Inc., Clinton County Youth Bureau, and Plattsburgh Breakfast Kiwanis.
- Center staff will conduct one yearly fund raising event per year such as a community yard sale, bottle drive or collaborative activity to raise funding for program materials.
- Center staff will create an annual fund raising event to be implemented in 2015.
- Center staff will identify three (3) foundations and/or grant funding opportunities by August 1, 2014 and submit at least one proposal during FY 2015.
- PHA will create a 501(c)(3) designation for the Ted K Center to assist in fundraising.
- PHA will convene a committee to meet by January 1, 2015 regarding possible annual fundraising opportunities for the Ted K Center.

To maintain current programs (Early Childhood Development, After-School Program and Summer Program)

- Center staff will work with PHA Executive Director and Board of Directors to develop a five year plan for funding and program development with the expectation of maintaining the current Early Childhood Development, After-School, and Summer Programs.

To identify needs to be met.

- Center staff will evaluate current programming costs, importance, impact, and effectiveness while updating our program model by January 2015, to increase efficiency and attainment of program objectives.
- Ted K. Center staff will conduct a survey of PHA families to receive input on specific programming residents may be interested in and how they perceive the activities at the center.

Senior Coordinator

To stay current with community programs and offerings for senior residents

- The Senior Coordinator will attend monthly community meetings (i.e. Community Care Partner meetings, Financial Exploitation Task Force meetings) to remain informed of available programs.
- The Senior Coordinator will ensure that information regarding transportation options and schedules are posted on the bulletin boards in senior housing and are included in one newsletter annually.
- The Senior Coordinator will meet with tenants, as needed, to inform them of the outside services available and to assist them with the completion of the application(s) for those services (i.e. Paratransit, Social Services).
- The Senior Coordinator will meet with the Director of RSVP on a monthly basis to stay informed of the services offered by that agency.
- The Senior Coordinator will meet annually with representatives from agencies such as NAMI and Alzheimer's Disease & Assistance Center to serve as a point of contact for the tenants.

To improve enrichment and Quality of Life

- The Senior Coordinator will arrange for outside speakers to address the residents on programs or services available to improve their quality of life (i.e. Fire Safety, Personal safety, financial exploitation, flu clinics, blood pressure clinics, nutrition program).
- PHA staff will arrange for outside entertainment to be brought in to senior housing facilities on a bi-annual basis (i.e. community plays, local musicians).
- The Senior Coordinator will assist the residents with participating in the current tenant gardening areas and will assess the need for additional plots/beds as resident interest in this activity grows.
- The Senior Coordinator will ensure the materials (books, puzzles, games, movies) in the community rooms are readily accessible to the residents and will rotate the materials among the three senior housing facilities on an annual basis.
- The Senior Coordinator will work with the Housing Assistance Supervisor to explore the feasibility to transition one floor at Russell Barnard Apartments to smoke-free by 4Q2014.
- PHA staff will hold annual summer gatherings at Lakeview Towers/Russell Barnard apartments and at Robert S Long apartments to promote resident interactions.

To increase intergenerational activities within PHA

- The Senior Coordinator will work with the staff at the Ted K Center to plan and execute at least one new activity per year (i.e. arts and crafts, story time, karaoke) to occur between the Ted K kids and the residents in Senior Housing.
- The Senior Coordinator will work with the staff at Momot School on an annual basis to coordinate holiday activities (i.e. caroling, crafts).

To develop a list of needs to provide to donors

- The Senior Coordinator will develop a list of needs each year to provide to PHA management/Grant writer for possible funding and acquisition and/or to provide to local agencies (i.e. JCEO, United Way) for their consideration.

Employment training and education

To serve as a resource for referrals to community programs/assistance

- The Senior Coordinator and Housing Assistance Supervisor will attend at least 3 training sessions per year that are offered through NY Connects to stay current on programs available to our tenants.
- PHA staff will continue to assist residents, as needed, with assistance programs available through the Department of Social Services (DSS), Evergreen Townhouse Community (ETC), and other community organizations.
- PHA staff will assist in the completion of the necessary paperwork/applications as needed.
- PHA staff will continuously update PHA website with information for residents regarding community programs and/or assistance.

To identify barriers to training/educational programs

- PHA staff will provide residents with information (on the PHA website and in PHA newsletters) about resources available in the area to help them to gain job skills.
- PHA staff will work with community organizations to explore an inclusive community calendar that can be linked to each organization's website by 12/31/2015.
- At the town-hall type meetings held twice per year for family housing, PHA staff will solicit input on what the residents feel are barriers that keep them from attending training/educational programs (i.e. transportation, time of day, day care needs) and will work to find options to remove these barriers.
- PHA staff will work with local organizations to provide training and educational seminars for PHA residents by 1/1/2015.

To remain current on available services

- PHA staff will review quarterly programs offered by local agencies such as Adirondack Region 2-1-1, JCEO, DSS, and ETC in order to assist our tenants.
- At least monthly, PHA staff will provide residents with either information or links on our website for services offered in the area (i.e. flu clinics, rabies clinics, blood pressure screenings).

Community Police Officer

To explore alternate funding sources

- PHA staff will work with the City of Plattsburgh, Clinton County and/or a Grant Writer to explore funding streams for a full-time Community Police Officer (CPO) at PHA or to supplement the current funding of this position to allow for off-hour activities (i.e. surveillance, weekend programs).

To be involved in programs at Ted K Center

- The CPO will work with the staff at Ted K Center to identify and promote two programs per year (i.e. internet safety, stranger danger, bicycle safety, using 911, drug abuse, anti-bullying).

To create programs at Senior Housing

- The CPO will work with the Senior Coordinator to identify and promote two targeted programs per year (i.e. financial exploitation, personal safety, dispute resolution, neighborhood watch).

To identify the roles needed within PHA

- The CPO will attend at least one town-hall meeting in Public Housing and in Senior Housing annually in order to foster an approachable relationship with the housing residents.
- The CPO will visit the Ted K Center on a regular basis (approximately weekly) to interact with the staff and children and to serve as a positive role model in the community.
- The CPO will work with PHA staff to address complaints from the residents and to seek resolutions for disputes among the residents.
- PHA staff and the CPO will continue to explore areas where PHA staff can assist the CPO with current job duties (i.e. morning surveillance of boarders, compiling of reports/records, scheduling of meetings, preparing materials for targeted programs).
- Annually, PHA staff and the CPO will review the job description/working agreement for the CPO and revise as needed.

Tenant Needs

To assess in an ongoing manner the general needs of PHA residents

- The Senior Coordinator will submit an annual survey to residents in senior housing to solicit input for desired improvements to properties or units and will explore the feasibility of adopting the recommendations.
- The Senior Coordinator will assess the individual needs of residents during the annual recertification process, during annual inspections, or as the need arises.
- The Senior Coordinator and Housing Assistance Supervisor will hold town-hall type meetings every other month at Lakeview Towers, Russell H Barnard and Robert S Long

to allow the residents to openly voice their needs and concerns and will explore options to resolve these issues.

- PHA staff will submit annual survey to family housing residents to solicit input for desired improvements to properties or units and will explore the feasibility of adopting recommendations.
- PHA staff will submit an annual survey to residents to obtain information on the areas of greatest needs to assist the residents with opportunities for greater self-sufficiency.
- The Housing Assistance Specialist and Housing Assistance Supervisor will schedule town-hall type meetings twice per year to address the needs and concerns of the tenants in family housing.

STAFFING

To further develop our customer service skills, especially when dealing with difficult situations.

- PHA staff will complete mandatory bi-annual surveys and have an annual mandatory training in conflict resolution held by a local agency to increase effectiveness in dealing with difficult situations.

To develop a performance plan for each management staff member

- PHA management will enter into an annual performance review to clearly state expectations /goals for the upcoming year along with tracking said expectations/goals throughout the year with a summative review upon completion of the year.
- PHA will annually analyze the management staff and training opportunities offered in the public housing industry in an effort to allow managers to maintain a complete and current understanding of all changes in policies and regulations.
- Management staff will submit to the Executive Director any new or updated training offerings along with costs and a “benefit rational.” The “benefit rational” will briefly highlight anticipated expectations and outcomes of the desired training.

To create a new hire checklist

- PHA Executive Director will review positions and meet with managers of all departments by the end of 2014 and at least annually to create and update a new hire checklist for each position at the PHA.
- If a new position is created at the PHA the Executive Director will meet with the manager of that department to create any necessary additions to the checklist.

To ensure cross-training of administrative staff is adequate in the event of an emergency

- PHA will evaluate duties assigned to each administrative staff member by FYE 2015.
- PHA will formulate plan for cross-training when applicable by CYE 2015.
- PHA will begin implementation of cross-training plan by FYE 2016.

To promote team building

- PHA will create an Employee Morale Committee by FYE 2014 that will organize opportunities for all PHA staff to be together and continue to build morale.

To ensure proper ratio of staff for housing needs

- PHA will report monthly on vacant unit turnaround time and work order completion time to ensure maintenance is adequately staffed.
- PHA will use HUD recommendation of 1 maintenance staff for every 50 units as a general guideline for staffing maintenance department.
- The PHA will assess staffing needs as any new programs are added.

FACILITIES

To continue to achieve a high performance status rating

- Regular Maintenance Work Orders
 - Monthly reports will be run to track work order data and ensure emergency work orders are being completed in a 24 hour period.
 - Monthly work order data will be monitored to provide baseline for average days a work order is active and will result in an evaluation of outliers.
- Regular Maintenance Unit Turn-Around Time
 - The PHA vacancy report in PIC/Secure Systems will be generated each month and reflect a strict adherence to the HUD allowed vacancies (AMP 1 – 7, AMP 2 – 4, AMP 3 – 1) for the purposes of PHAS scoring.
 - Unit turn-around time data will be created each month to evaluate any necessary changes in Maintenance staffing/personal.
 - Unit turn-around time data will be created each month to track the average turn-around time and illustrate the time an apartment is held by maintenance and the administrative office.
 - PHA will turn vacant units with an average of 10 days.
- Modernization
 - The PHA will use the 5 year plan to prioritize capital needs no less than annually and ensure the Capital Fund Program Grant is being utilized for the longevity of the PHA.
 - The PHA will utilize HUD Emergencies clauses when necessary to make repairs using the Capital Fund Program.
 - The PHA will continue to utilize the Force Account Crew and will annually examine the cost effectiveness and value of maintaining the Force Account Crew.
- Identify Opportunities for Rehabilitation
 - The PHA will have an Energy Audit performed by the end of CY 2014
 - The PHA will perform an Physical Needs Assessment by FYE 2015

- Inventory Control
 - PHA will perform a semi-annual pre-count of inventory.
 - PHA will do a complete inventory assessment annually.
 - PHA staff will sign out inventory moved/used for proper tracking.
 - The Dispatcher/Storekeeper will tally every work order/move out to maintain a running list to compare to sign out sheets and inventory to be used as quarterly ordering guide.

NON-TRADITIONAL REVENUE

The PHA will complete the Not-For Profit designation for the Ted K Center by CYE 2014.

The PHA will begin the creation of an affiliate (NFP) by CYE 2014.

The PHA will complete the affiliate (NFP) by CYE 2015.

The PHA will assess vacated space for any community need that would benefit our residents by CYE 2015.