



GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION 2010-2014 FIVE-YEAR PLAN

MANAGEMENT

Goal: Manage the existing housing programs in an efficient and effective manner to achieve a “high performer” designation under U.S. Department of HUD performance criteria.

Objectives:

- Maintain a strong and solvent year-end financial position and positive cash flow.
- Operate the Section 8 Project-Based Program and Public Housing Program so that income exceeds expenses every year.
- Implement procedures that assure the timely submission of the yearly financial audit and all required financial reports.
- Sustain an occupancy rate of at least 95%.
- Maintain an average unit turnover time of 30 days or less.
- Develop an internal review protocol and periodically conduct an internal audit of Housing Commission programs and systems to ensure compliance with Housing Commission procedures, federal, state and local regulations, and partnership agreements.

Goal: Enhance the knowledge and efficiency of all Housing Commission staff, empowering staff to operate as customer friendly and fiscally prudent leaders in the affordable-housing industry.

Objectives:

- Continue to provide training that will enhance staff understanding of client needs and enable staff to communicate more effectively with internal and external audiences (cultural competence).
- Continue to provide training opportunities to management employees to assure a strong, long-term management team.
- Continue to provide training opportunities to management employees and to those who provide direct client services to familiarize staff with community resources that may supplement the services provided by the GRHC.
- Continue to provide training to update Housing Commissioners regarding GRHC programs and services.
- Provide ethics training to Housing Commissioners and GRHC staff.
- Provide all staff training to ensure compliance with Housing Commission procedures, federal state and local regulations, and partnership agreements.
- Ensure continuity of administration by developing a succession plan for key staff positions.
- Continue to augment staffing needs through partnerships with community agencies that are looking for Title V placements, internships, work study and other employment-related opportunities.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Goal: Expand the role of the GRHC in community planning, particularly planning related to affordable-housing opportunities.

Objectives:

- Conduct an organizational assessment, including an analysis of staffing needs, skill sets and training gaps, to ensure that staff function at a level that enables the Housing Commission to meet statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Continue to assume a leadership role in comprehensive community planning related to affordable-housing programs and services, working with the City of Grand Rapids and other local officials to meet not only current but emerging housing needs.
- Work with the Grand Rapids Area Housing Continuum of Care, Network 180 and Touchstone Innovaré to continue “Home at Last,” a program that provides affordable housing and supportive services to chronically homeless individuals. Implement the 3rd phase of the program for a total of 53 units.
- Continue to seek and develop new avenues for providing affordable housing opportunities to our community’s growing senior population, in particular programs and services that enhance senior citizens’ ability to live independently and maintain quality of life.
- Support the “Great Neighborhoods” component of the City’s five-year Neighborhood Investment Plan (2005-2010) by exploring the establishment of a housing trust fund to develop mixed-use, mixed-income housing facilities. Continue to support any new neighborhood investment initiatives identified in the City’s 2011-2016 Consolidated Plan.
- Serve the housing and supportive needs of child and adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking by continuing to offer services to homeless women and their children through Hope Community Transitional Housing Program.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Goal: Ensure full compliance with all applicable standards and regulations, including government generally accepted accounting practices.

Objectives:

- Continue to maintain an asset-management and project-based accounting system.
- Adhere to and implement all Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) statements and bulletins.

Goal: Manage GRHC programs and developments in an effective and efficient manner to achieve a score of at least 16 (out of 20 possible points) on the annual Public Housing Assessment System evaluation of key financial indicators.

Objectives:

- Achieve and sustain a quick ratio higher than 1.5 for all programs and developments.
- Achieve and maintain a months expendable net assets of higher than 1.5 for all programs and developments.

Goal: Address a community need cited in the Grand Rapids Consolidated Plan by making affordable housing opportunities more available to low-income and very low-income families.

Objectives:

- Apply for up to 500 additional rental vouchers if these become available through the Housing Choice Voucher Program or alternative voucher program.
- Build or acquire 50 units for conversion to Section 8 Homeownership units by June 30, 2014.
- Develop a Section 32 Homeownership Program.
- Use RHF funding to complete two homeownership units that will be made available to low-income families through the Section 32 Homeownership Program.
- Leverage private or public funds to create additional housing opportunities for very low-income or low-income families, including constructing one new affordable-housing development for those who have special needs.
- Apply for LIHTC funding to revitalize Creston Plaza housing development.
- Participate in City of Grand Rapids, Kent County and State of Michigan programs designed to revitalize foreclosed and abandoned properties. Acquire ten marketable properties for use by the GRHC in our affordable rental and home ownership programs.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Goal: Enhance the public image and marketability of the GRHC's housing units.

Objectives:

- Through staff training, regular facility/service evaluation and the development and implementation of resident services programs, achieve a level of customer satisfaction that earns the GRHC a "high performer" designation under U.S. Department of HUD performance criteria.
- Maintain proper curb appeal for all developments by improving landscaping, maintaining the grounds and maintaining properties litter free.
- Remove all graffiti within 24 hours of discovering it.
- Partner with the City police department, neighborhood associations, residents and community groups to ensure that all GRHC housing developments offer a safe and secure environment.
- Develop/regularly update client-friendly, client-driven brochures, fact sheets and other materials needed to effectively market the GRHC's housing developments.
- Continue to periodically conduct client and community partner surveys to assess the effectiveness of marketing efforts.
- Explore the feasibility of developing an e-newsletter that would keep senior service providers updated re GRHC senior/disabled housing sites and unit availability.

Goal: Increase public awareness and understanding of GRHC programs and services.

Objectives:

- Continue to analyze the situation within the Greater Grand Rapids affordable-housing marketplace and incorporate strategies and tactics designed to:
 - a. Maximize usage of GRHC programs and services

- b. Position the GRHC to compete effectively for available services and resources.
- Continue to market and promote the GRHC and its programs and services by developing and producing such publications as an annual report, quarterly newsletters and program/service brochures. Maintain a consistent graphic look and cohesive message to project a distinctive and positive image across sites and programs.
 - Develop and periodically update a PowerPoint or similar presentation that offers a general introduction to GRHC programs and services. Repurpose this presentation to make it available via the GRHC web site.
 - Foster public awareness and enhance access to programs and services by continuing to develop and promote the GRHC web site.
 - Continue to expand community partnerships to maximize delivery of services and programs.
 - Work with relevant community groups to enhance the GRHC's role in community planning and to improve access to programs and services among minority and non-English-speaking residents.
 - Keep the public apprised of newsworthy GRHC events, programs and services through the timely distribution of news releases to local media.
 - Continue to administer and promote the Jean McKee Resident Scholarship Program.

SECTION 8 TENANT-BASED PROGRAM

Goal: Manage the tenant-based program in an efficient and effective manner, qualifying as a “high performer” under SEMAP.

Objectives:

- Maintain a U.S. Department of HUD Section 8 Management Assessment Program score of 90% or above.
- Maintain a voucher utilization rate of between 98% and 100%.
- Perform annual certification and inspection of 100% of Section 8 participants.
- Perform initial inspections within 14 days of request for lease approval.

Goal: Expand the range and quality of housing choices available to participants in the tenant-based assistance program.

Objectives:

- Increase Section 8 Homeownership Program participation to achieve 12 new home owners each year.
- Expand the FSS program beyond the current 271 participants to support the self-sufficiency goals of 55 additional low-income families.
- In collaboration with HUD and other local housing agencies, continue to conduct outreach to landlords to encourage their participation in the Section 8 program.
- Continue to implement training regarding lead-based paint regulations, safe work practices and abatement testing.
- Continue to link voucher program participants with assistance available through GRHC Resident Services and other supportive services.
- Continue to meet the housing and supportive needs of child and adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

MAINTENANCE

Goal: Maintain the Housing Commission real estate in good condition.

Objectives:

- Use an \$854,000 Capital Fund Program grant awarded through the 2009 American Recovery & Reinvestment Act to complete improvements at Adams Park Apartments, including interior and exterior repairs and upgrades.
- Complete \$2 million in renovations to public housing developments under the Capital Fund Financing Program.
- Complete improvements under the Capital Fund Five-Year Plan, obligating and expending all Capital Fund Grants within the deadlines prescribed by HUD.
- Conduct an annual evaluation of all units to ensure continuing compliance with HUD Uniform Physical Condition Standards and the City of Grand Rapids housing code.
- Conduct physical needs assessments of Mount Mercy I, Leonard Terrace and Hope Community and develop a capital plan to make needed improvements.
- Maintain curb appeal of all housing developments through effective landscaping and grounds maintenance.
- Explore the feasibility of instituting a recycling program at GRHC housing sites and administrative offices.

Goal: Deliver timely and high-quality maintenance service to the residents of the GRHC.

Objectives:

- Continue to implement a preventive maintenance program.
- Respond to emergency work orders in less than 24 hours.
- Maintain an average response time of seven days when addressing routine work orders.
- Improve communication with residents regarding maintenance and construction activities.
- Improve maintenance staff skills through cross-training, seminars and vendor instruction.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Goal: Ensure that GRHC housing developments provide a safe and secure environment.

Objectives:

- Support local law enforcement activities that enhance the City's ability to keep GRHC developments and the surrounding neighborhoods safe and secure.
- Collaborate with the City's Recreation Department to serve young housing development residents and neighborhood youth through the Recreation Reaps Rewards Program.
- Support community policing through the GRHC's family site Community Centers.
- Continue aggressive screening procedures to reduce evictions due to violations of criminal laws.
- Continue to use Network 180 grant funds to provide on-site security guards at Adams Park Apartments. Seek alternate funding so that the GRHC can continue security services once this non-renewable grant is expended.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Goal: Improve GRHC housing residents' access to services that support economic opportunity and quality of life.

Objectives:

- Apply for funding for FSS coordinators to continue implementation of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. Continue to implement on-site self-sufficiency programs at Campau Commons and Creston Plaza family housing developments.
- Continue to provide case management and other supportive services to increase self-sufficiency for families, empower the disabled to live independently and enable the elderly to age in place.
- Seek alternate funding for Resident Services Specialists to assist the Network 180 clients at Adams Park Apartments.
- Leverage community partnerships to gain social work interns and supportive community volunteers, and to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of community resources available to participants in GRHC programs.
- Foster strong community partnerships by instituting a program to publicly recognize outstanding partner contributions to GRHC programs and services.
- Support the Resident Advisory Board to ensure commission-wide representation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Goal: Operate the GRHC in full compliance with Equal Opportunity laws and regulations, and affirmatively further fair housing.

Objective:

- Implement the Equal Opportunity Policy to ensure that the GRHC continues to utilize the services of highly qualified minority- and women-owned businesses.
- Implement policies and programs in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing. Strive to maximize ethnic, racial and economic diversity within public housing developments.
- Support the GRHC's Deconcentration Policy by encouraging recipients of tenant-based vouchers to seek housing opportunities beyond census areas that have high concentrations of low-income persons and minorities.
- Continue staff participation in annual fair housing activities sponsored by the City's EEO Department and the Fair Housing Center.