

## **SUMMARY OF AGENCY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY 2023**

### **APRIL 1, 2022 - MARCH 31, 2023**

The performance of the Executive Director is measured against specific goals for the Agency. The Board of Commissioners approved eleven Agency Goals for FY 2023, April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 (attached). In this report the accomplishments relating to Agency Goals are listed first. All PHA staff, especially the Executive Director's leadership team, are responsible for meeting these goals. The leadership team currently includes Deputy Executive Director and PHA General Counsel, Louise Toscano Seeba; Housing Choice Voucher Programs Director Corina Serrano; Resident Services Director Kim Nguyen; Maintenance Director Tim Angaran; Chief Financial Officer William Wallo; Housing Policy Directors Al Hester and Lisa Feidler; Resident Initiatives and Human Resources Director Alicia Huckleby; IT Manager Joe Furst and Executive Assistant/Communications Manager Mai Moua. My deep appreciation for all that they do each and every day to help fulfill the PHA's mission.

### ***MISSION STATEMENT***

“The PHA helps families and individuals with low incomes achieve greater stability and self-reliance by providing safe, affordable, quality housing, and links to community services.”

**GOAL #1 – HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS (HCV):** 5,222 vouchers as of 1/1/2023; 5242 at Fiscal Year-end.

- a. Maintain high performer status under HUD's Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), including maintaining SEMAP 98.5% budget/unit utilization.
- b. Apply for additional vouchers as opportunities arise.
- c. Offer additional PBV through Minnesota Housing's Consolidated Request for Proposals (Super RFP) according to PHA policy.
- d. Continue advancing the PHA's mission with leadership positions or collaborations with Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care, the City of St. Paul, and other external stakeholders.
- e. Maximize client housing choice by continuing to recruit and retain property owners and managers as partners.
- f. Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA's fair share of voucher funding.

**SEMAP High Performer status: The PHA retained its High Performer status for FY 2023 (22<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year).**

The Agency's SEMAP score for FY 2023 was **93%**, well above the **90% threshold for the High Performer rating**. Staff accomplished this goal under the leadership of current Housing Choice Voucher Programs Director Corina Serrano and previous HCV Programs Director Dominic Mitchell.

**The PHA maintained 95% budget and unit utilization in the voucher program for FY 2023.**

- Due to additional awards from HUD of new allocations, as detailed below, the Agency ended the fiscal year administering 5,242 Housing Choice Vouchers (an increase of 79 from the 5,163 administered at the end of FY 2022).
- SEMAP scores are based on calendar year performance. The PHA ended calendar year 2022 with 97% budget utilization (Housing Assistance Payment/HAP, excluding EHV). Voucher unit utilization was 93.3% for CY 2022.

**The PHA continues to apply for additional vouchers as opportunities arise.**

- On August 24, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved staff's recommendation to receive and administer 30 additional Housing Choice Vouchers under the Mainstream (Section 811) Program for Persons with Disabilities.
- On September 15, 2022, staff submitted a Registration of Interest and Letter of Support from the Minneapolis VA Health Care System for additional VASH vouchers. The PHA was ultimately awarded 20 additional VASH vouchers. The Board of Commissioners approved staff's recommendation to receive and administer these vouchers on November 23, 2022.
- On September 28, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved staff's recommendation to receive and administer 29 more Housing Choice Vouchers. This award was the first incremental award in decades and awarded based on community need.

**The PHA offered additional PBVs for interested owner partners through Minnesota Housing's Consolidated Request for Proposals (Super RFP).**

- On May 25, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved a Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Offering of up to 40 HUD-VASH vouchers in Minnesota Housing's 2022 Consolidated Request for Proposals, exclusively for HUD-VASH (Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing) vouchers for homeless veterans. (There were no qualified applicants for that offering so no vouchers were awarded.)
- On January 25, 2023, the Board of Commissioners approved a Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Offering of up to 150 vouchers in Minnesota Housing's Consolidated Request for Proposals, with 25 offered exclusively for HUD-VASH vouchers. Action by Minnesota Housing is pending.
- Staff moved forward to obtain HUD's approval to project-base additional vouchers, and updated the agency's Program Guide. The offering was advertised by Minnesota Housing, and developers were able to apply for Project-Based Vouchers through Minnesota Housing's 2023 Consolidated RFP.

**Staff continued advancing the PHA's mission as they work with local community partners, including the Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care, the City of St. Paul, and other external stakeholders.**

- Staff continued the PHA’s partnership with Heading Home Ramsey (Ramsey County Continuum of Care) to administer the Emergency Housing Vouchers. The program serves clients who are currently homeless, recently homeless, at risk of homelessness, and victims of domestic violence. The program requires the use of Coordinated Entry (from the CoC) for referrals, and also involves the receipt and disbursement of service dollars by the PHA to supportive service partners. The collaboration has been successful, as demonstrated by the production accomplishments below.
  - The Executive Director continued his service on the Governing Board of Heading Home Ramsey. Also, the previous HCV Programs Director, through his election to the Ramsey County Heading Home Ramsey (HHR) Steering Committee, participated in two separate subcommittees: Prevention and Tenant Stabilization, and Coordinated Entry Workshop.
  - Staff continue to solicit applications from Heading Home Ramsey under a “Move-Up Preference” for up to 100 formerly homeless individuals and families. This preference allows eligible families and individuals to “move-up” into a Housing Choice Voucher from their current Permanent Supportive Housing, which frees up the supportive housing to assist other homeless individuals.
  - Staff continued to work with Ramsey County as a Mainstream partner, allowing them to use Mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers to assist in relocating homeless clients who were living in hotels during the pandemic.
  - On December 21, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved the renewal of the Families First contract with the City of St. Paul for a fourth year. As of that date, 65 families had been enrolled in the City-funded program, which provides a \$300/month subsidy to low-income families who attend certain schools. The target enrollment was 250 families but participation in the program was lower than expected, largely due a slow start during the COVID-19 pandemic. The PHA had paid out \$397,800 in rental assistance payments through the end of FY 2023.
  - Staff continued participating in meetings at the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA), working toward the goal of functionally ending veteran homelessness. Other partners included the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MAC-V), Minnesota Housing, the local Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC), and other housing agencies from the region. Staff represented the PHA on the effort of ending veteran homelessness, and continue to offer solutions for both VASH clients and for veterans who are ineligible for VASH.
  - Staff maintained and developed relationships with both the St. Paul Police Department & St. Paul Department of Safety & Inspections, and sought ways to collaborate to efficiently manage limited resources, share public information, and hold mutual clients accountable.
  - Staff participated in meetings of the Ramsey County Safety Net Committee, where several service providers advise County staff on policies for disbursing emergency funds, as well as networking about changes and issues in individual programs.
  - Staff worked generally with the Coordinated Access to Housing and Shelter (CAHS) and Coordinated Entry for Youth and Singles (CEYS) initiatives for homeless families, which allow one-stop referral sources for homeless families in need of shelter or housing.

Interfaced with them to continue the “Move-Up Preference” to target individuals and households served by Permanent Supportive Housing who are ready to graduate from services.

- Staff continued to evaluate any additional opportunities to partner both locally and statewide, either through education or exploration of voucher commitments and opportunities.

**Staff continued the important work of maximizing participant housing choice by continuing to recruit landlord and property manager partners.**

- On October 26, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved staff’s recommendation to increase the payment standards by amounts ranging from 7% to 9.8%, based both on the rental market and the current participant rent burden. Increasing the payments standards is an important way to ensure that HCV rents remain feasible within the tight rental market.
- Scheduled individual meetings and phone conversations to orient owners (landlords) to the Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Published owner newsletters throughout the year, marketing and educating on program changes and improvements. Staff have used these newsletters to notify landlords of important issues that may affect them (such as staffing changes, smoke detector recalls, Lead-Based-Paint information, etc.).
- Assisted in drafting e-blasts featuring Section 8/HCV, promoting the PHA’s project-based-vouchers, Mainstream efforts, VASH vouchers, and sharing efforts to reach and adequately serve homeless clients through new partnerships.
- Continued to market the PHA’s online portal to existing owners/landlords, where they have online access to their payment history; and continued to advocate with the PHA’s software provider for increased functionality.
- In our daily communication with landlords, staff advise and educate about the EPA’s Lead Safe practices and their responsibilities under these regulations.
- Responded to individual owner inquiries as they arose, holding the program to the highest standard of accountability for both tenants and owners to ensure consistent administration and maximum owner participation.
- Continued collaborating with HousingLink on efforts to increase landlord participation in HCV Programs.

**Staff continued to advocate for program reform and for the PHA’s fair share of voucher funding.**

- The HCV Programs Director, along with other PHA senior staff, participated in industry group efforts both on a national and statewide level, to ensure sufficient COVID funding and flexibility throughout the pandemic.
- The HCV Programs Director participated in industry group efforts at the state level to ensure adequate program development for state wide voucher initiatives.

### **Production Accomplishments:**

The Housing Choice Voucher Programs continued to grow, both in size and complexity. There were activity fluctuations in FY 2023 as we continue to recover from the coronavirus pandemic. Most notably, there were increased cancels and terminations, and a resulting increase in pulls from the waiting list.

### **Utilization**

*Ended the fiscal year with the following utilization rates (by voucher type; total 5,242):*

- HCV: 94.7% (3480/3687)
- PBV: 83.6% (526/629)
- Mainstream: 96.4% (313/318)
- VASH: 80.9% (207/276)
- FUP: 82.3% (144/175)
- EHV: 86.6% (136/157)

### **Owners**

- Issued 11,259 payments to approximately 937 participating landlords (6,552 checks mailed and 4,707 direct deposits), totaling approximately \$53,973,818.

### **Intake**

- 1,881 applications processed to determine applicants' eligibility for a voucher
  - Waitlist: 1,306 households drawn (over 30% increase from CY2021)
  - Ports: 440
  - PBV: 222
  - EHV: 66
  - FUP: 87
  - VASH: 49
  - Mainstream: 167
  - Move-Up: 21
- 580 New Admissions in FY 2023
  - 425 HCV
    - Special Programs (86)
    - Port-In New Admissions (139-excluding absorbed vouchers and almost doubled from FY 2022)
    - Waitlist
    - PBV to HCV transfers
  - 155 PBV
- 128 Port Out New Admissions (approximately 50% more than FY 2022)
- 244 Portability Move-Ins (approximately 50% more than FY 2022)
- As noted below, the PHA accepted online applications for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program from November 15, 2022 through November 21, 2022. During that period 6,492 applications were submitted.

**Occupancy**

- 3,504 Annual Reexaminations (3,081 HCV; 423 PBV)
- 3,340 Interim Reexaminations (2,780 HCV; 560 PBV)
- 166 Portability Move-Outs (excluding New Admission Port-Outs, indicated above)
- 405 Current Participant Moves (approximately 25% increase from FY 2022)
- 439 End of Participations (excludes PBV)

**Inspections**

- 5,775 Inspections
  - 4,465 Initial Inspections
    - 2,857 Annual Inspections (39% pass rate)
    - 1,531 Mover Inspections (63% pass rate)
    - 44 Deferment Inspections (83% increase from FY 2022; 73% pass rate)
    - 36 Special Inspections (17% pass rate)
  - 1,239 Re-inspections (39% decrease from FY 2022)
    - 628 Annual Inspections (80% pass rate)
    - 554 Mover Inspections (82% pass rate)
    - 15 Deferment Inspections (47% pass rate)
    - 46 Special Inspections (67% pass rate)
  
- 1,128 units passed their annual inspection upon the first physical inspection.

**Fraud Enforcement**

- Reviewed 64 unduplicated Reports of Tenant Fraud
  - 42 required no additional investigation and were discharged
  - 22 were investigated further by contacting property owners and/or the tenants
    - 15 are still under investigation
    - 7 had insufficient evidence to support a fraud claim

**Legal**

- Processed 55 Reasonable Accommodation Requests
  - 43 Granted (78%)
  - 12 Denied (22%)
  
- Scheduled 58 Informal Reviews for applicant denials
  - 17 overturned
  - 11 upheld
  - 30 pending further review/awaiting additional information from applicant
  
- 257 Hearing Requests Received
  - 137 cases resolved without a hearing
  - 68 cases still in process
  
- 52 Hearings Scheduled
  - 14 Terminations upheld
  - 13 Terminations upheld by default

- 1 Settlements reached
- 0 Terminations overturned
- 24 Hearings rescheduled
  
- 288 Program Terminations (End of Participation/EOP for cause)

**Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)**

- 14 Active Participants
- 2 Graduates
- No New Enrollees
- 374 available slots remain
- \$33,661 paid to FSS graduates from their Escrow accounts

**Details on Selected Program Improvements & Accomplishments:****General Program Improvements/Accomplishments:**

- On October 26, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved increasing the utility allowances by 4% to 14% to account for rising utility costs, lessen participant burden, with the goal of increasing shopping success rates and overall utilization.
  
- Staff continued Process Improvements that were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Continued to utilize limited Work-From-Home protocols. This included finding additional ways to obtain information and quality control without requiring appointments, and adjusting our inspection procedure to reduce risk to participating households and staff.
  - Continued allowing broad flexible scheduling with a supervisor's approval, as long as production was maintained.
  - Standardized webcams and headsets for all staff to facilitate virtual meetings.
  - Continued development of electronic processes for different areas of the program including, but not limited to: Requests for Tenancy Approvals, Rent Reasonableness determinations, Rent Increase approvals, Program Applications, etc.
  - Continued to investigate paperless electronic signing, file processing, and storage with our software vendor, and look forward to additional improvements in the coming fiscal years.
  - Continued using drop-box outside of building for clients who were unable to return documents or payments via mail.
  
- Implemented a new department organizational structure, changing the title of the HCV Programs Manager to HCV Programs Assistant Director, reclassifying Assistant HCV Programs Managers to HCV Programs Manager and fully utilizing five new Lead

Housing Choice Voucher Specialists to take responsibility for Quality Control, Coverage, and Special Programs, and hands on training, among other things.

- On March 15, 2023, the Board of Commissioners approved an additional 3.4 FTEs to respond to the continued growth of the HCV Programs.
- Hired or promoted 16 staff (out of 27 FTEs) to fill open positions.
- Engaged staff at all levels to assist in designing expanded HCV office space and amenities on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.
- Expanded HCV Department office space to use the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of CAO and incorporated collaboration space.
- Continued to work with IT and our software provider to prepare for portal solutions for owner and participant clients. Continued to advocate for additional solutions that would improve both efficiency and customer service. Continued to explore process and software improvements, including options outside of the software system, to benefit HCV Program participants, owners, and staff.
- Updated our Rent Reasonableness database with current rental market information and worked with IT to redesign our internal report generation to accurately reflect our policies.
- Continued meeting utilization targets for funding, and worked with department leadership in Finance, IT, and Housing Policy to track utilization, accuracy and reporting while receiving a number of additional voucher allocations. Staff continued to work with PHA software leaders and other management staff on Section 8 software issues, including responses/feedback/troubleshooting.
- Participated in IT Steering Committee Meetings, where directors met to discuss both hardware and software problems and their solutions.
- Completed annual VMS data review to ensure maximum yearly eligible funding was received.
- Monitored program reserves to ensure the Agency had reserve levels within HUD guidelines.

#### **Project-Based Voucher Accomplishments:**

- Staff ensured continued housing affordability through successful administration of current agreements for Project-Based Vouchers (PBV), including PBV in supportive housing projects, mixed income projects, and VASH projects, while renewing expiring PBV contracts as requested.
- Offered vouchers to a total of 180 households (approximately 34% of all leased PBV households) seeking to move from PBV units with a Housing Choice Voucher. Approximately 110 of these households (61% of 180) accepted the voucher.
- Entered into new PBV HAP contract with The Parkway (10 units; Mixed Income Housing) for a 20-year-period, effective June 1, 2022.

- Renewed PBV Contract at Liberty Plaza (93 units; Mixed-Income) for a 5-year-period, effective May 22, 2022.
- Renewed PBV Contract at Rivertown Apartments (19 units; 6 Supportive Housing, 13 Mixed-Income) for a 1-year-period, effective August 1, 2022.
- Renewed PBV Contract at YWCA I (36 units; Supportive Housing) for a 5 year period, effective January 1, 2023.
- Renewed Jackson Street Village (23 units; Supportive Housing) for a 5 year period, effective March 1, 2023.
- Renewed Families First I, II, and III (21 units; Supportive Housing) for a 5 year period, effective March 1, 2023.

### **Intake & Occupancy Accomplishments/Improvements:**

- **As noted above, staff opened the HCV Waiting List for first time in three years.**
  - Waiting List opened online from November 15 through November 21, 2022.
  - Coordinated outreach efforts with more community partners than in years past.
  - Deployed staff for assistance at Saint Paul Public Libraries.
  - **The PHA received 6,492 complete online applications and selected 2,000 from a random lottery.**
  - 95% of those selected in the lottery met a residency preference which included a redefined and more expansive homeless definition.
  - We began pulling from this list in February 2023.
- Formally adopted program efficiencies initially implemented with the COVID-19 pandemic including:
  - Conducted briefing appointments by mail, utilizing a video to assist in the understanding of program rules.
  - Implemented an additional shopping period of 60 days for all voucher issuances for a possible total of 180 day issuance prior to any reasonable accommodation extension (if applicable).
  - Extended the period of availability of assistance for FUP Vouchers for foster care youth aging out, under the Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities extending the initial 36-month time limit when eligible.
- Adopted policy updates to streamline operations and improve tenant stability including:
  - Raised the threshold for increasing tenant rent payments based on income increases to \$2,000 per month.
  - Extended the effective date for interim rent increases.
  - Updated medical expenses definitions to align with other federal programs.

- Updated the occupancy standard for efficiency/0-bedroom units to expand access.
- Updated the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program:
  - Updated the FSS Action Plan for the first time in over a decade.
  - Established a new relationship with a third-party vendor to provide program coordination of supportive services.
  - Dedicated new PHA staff to FSS program to streamline escrow calculations.
- Continued process improvements borne out of the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - Streamlined the application process for all programs, removing need for initial appointment.
  - Conducted briefings by mail, and created a closed-captioned video for applicants to access, to assist in the understanding of program rules.
  - Continued conducting all annual recertification appointments by mail. The annual recertification packet was revised to improve efficiencies in the mail out process.
  - Staff continued entering all file notes, including those pertaining to conversations with clients, directly into the software system rather than into paper files.
  - Staff continued all mover appointments by mail.
  - Staff continued reviewing and eliminating unnecessary forms.
  - Advertised the availability of the file-checkout process.
- Continued encouraging applicants to utilize the online portal to check their status on the waiting list.
- Continued refining the interim recertification process to ensure consistency among all staff and client/owner partners.
- Continued clarifying the difference between client delays in reporting income and false certification of income.
- Extended notice periods for all HCV terminations wherever possible.
- Continued updates, refinement, and review of the Housing Choice Voucher Specialist Guide to ensure maximum usefulness for staff.
- Clarified and streamlined rent increase requests, and allowed rent increases to be requested more often to both meet market-rate practices and address landlord concerns.
- Continued streamlining process for continuous collections of balances owed due to delayed reports of income changes.
- Continued to encourage the use of Language Line to effectively reach clients who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- Continued fine tuning PowerPoint briefings for all applicants, as well as the written materials included in the briefing, to ensure consistent message delivery and understanding by clients.

- Continued to offer work from home options to staff as needed, and worked to increase the tasks that can be accomplished from home.
- Issued guidance clarifying the requirements for disability (deduction) verification, both at intake and for ongoing clients.
- Issued guidance clarifying when to process an interim rent change.
- Issued guidance clarifying how to obtain annual recertification documents through the mail, and clarifying when a termination should be issued for failure to submit those documents.
- Updated guidance clarifying how balances owed should be treated with clients who are moving with HCV assistance.
- Continued requesting and updating participant email addresses to encourage electronic communication.
- Streamlined quality control checking of files and assigned as a Lead HCV Specialist responsibility.
- Continued to rebalance caseloads to balance ongoing workload for HCV Specialists.
- Created efficiencies related to verifying assets.
- Continued and encouraged HCV staff use of instant messaging system.
- Clarified owner responsibilities at lease up.
- Completed annual Enterprise Income Verification System training for all HCV staff.

#### **Inspection Accomplishments/Improvements:**

- **We formally adopted biennial inspection processes initially utilized during COVID-19 pandemic:**
  - To ensure safe administration of the program, formally authorized biennial inspections for all units, whether or not they passed the first inspection of the previous year, and authorized self-certifications as an alternative to a physical re-inspection in all failed inspections with non-life threatening deficiencies.
  - Offered expanded inspection hours and days beyond the standard PHA work hours to accommodate owner and participant needs.
- Continued to refine the inspector's use of handheld inspection devices to make processes more efficient, and to allow for electronic results to be stored in the software system for eventual communication with landlords.
- Worked with Ramsey County Department of Environmental Health to share appropriate information to ensure compliance with most recent HUD guidance regarding children with Elevated Blood Lead Levels.

**GOAL #2 – PROJECT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (PBRA):** 3,836 PHA-owned units

- a. Continue successful transition to HUD’s Multifamily regulatory environment for these PHA-owned units, including new administrative obligations such as issuing the first Choice Mobility vouchers.
- b. Continue providing PBRA training and informational sessions for staff and PHA Commissioners.
- c. Obtain a score of satisfactory or better on HUD’s Management and Occupancy Review (MOR).
- d. Promote interdepartmental efforts to maximize unit occupancy rates, including prompt and thorough applicant screening and the ongoing promotion of successful tenancies.
- e. Ensure that PHA-owned properties continue to be managed to the highest standards, including thorough and uniform applicant eligibility determinations, fair lease enforcement, regular preventative maintenance, prompt responses to maintenance work orders, timely turnover of vacant units, and timely and accurate reporting of financial data, especially the monthly Multifamily voucher submissions.
- f. Responsibly manage project reserves and cash flow to ensure sufficient funds are in place for needed capital improvements.
- g. Continue to actively involve residents, staff and community partners in planning capital improvements.
- h. Pursue outside (non-HUD) funding opportunities including but not limited to Minnesota Housing, FHLBDM, the City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County to complete necessary capital improvements. (See Goal #6, Preservation and Development)
- i. Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA’s fair share of PBRA funding.

**RAD Conversion and PBRA Operations:**

- Under the leadership of Kim Nguyen, Resident Services Director, staff completed in-person lease signings and unit showings for new applicants throughout the pandemic, but did so with reduced personal contact.
- Resident Services resumed New Resident Orientations in FY 2023. The Human Services Coordinators reached out to each new households after lease signing to offer group or individualized meetings to discuss resources and answer questions.
- During FY 2023, 23 resident households (individuals or families) moved out of PHA-owned housing because the PHA terminated their leases “for cause.” The total number increased from 18 terminations in FY 2022. Family lease terminations increased from four to eight and hi-rise lease terminations increased from 14 to 15. The 23 lease terminations for cause represent less than 1% (0.5%) of all households living in PHA-owned housing during the year.

**RAD-PBRA Training/Management and Occupancy Review (MOR):**

- Prior to the RAD conversion, PHA staff were provided with extensive training opportunities in order to learn the new RAD-PBRA program guidelines.

- During fiscal years 2022 and 2023 Resident Services contracted with RAD Multifamily portfolio consultant, Du & Associates to complete a “pre-MOR” audit of all RAD projects, including tenant file reviews, physical inspection follow up, and a “desk review” covering PHA policies, finances and operations.
  - This contract commenced on February 21, 2022 and the pre-MOR audit was finalized on August 10, 2022.
  - Upon completion of the pre-MOR audit, training was provided to Resident Services management staff and the Rental Office staff. This training ensured that staff understood the errors discovered during the pre-MOR and had the tools necessary in order to comply with RAD-PBRA program guidelines.
  - With Leasing and Occupancy, Management Practices and Tenant/Management Relations accounts for 45% of the MOR score, this investment was necessary to ensure that the PHA is well positioned to earn a satisfactory or better MOR score at our first review.
  - Staff continued to review HUD’s Management and Occupancy Review (MOR) requirements to prepare for a MOR of each PBRA project, the first of which occurred in FY 2023.
  - While the scores from this initial MOR have not been released, preliminary feedback from HUD was positive and staff anticipate receiving scores of satisfactory or better.

### **Ongoing Management:**

- Under the leadership of Director Kim Nguyen, staff from all work units within the Resident Services Department contributed to the effort to ensure prompt turnaround time and unit leasing despite challenging housing and job markets following the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff continued to refine existing procedures and implement new processes such as:
  - Resident Services Management and Rental Office, along with the Maintenance Department, continued to stress ongoing communication among PHA workgroups to streamline policies and procedures. A report to track occupancy, lease-signings and move-outs was used to ensure prompt cross-departmental communication.
  - Rental Office and special program staff, including CHSP, ALP and ASI continued to utilize tracking tools to monitor the status of special program applicant files.
  - Rental Office and Management staff communicated on a daily basis regarding the status of showings and the need for new applicant files following unit turn downs.
  - Rental Office and Management staff continued to utilize a software-based vacancy tracking system that ensures that there is an auditable processing trail from application to move-in. This was essential preparation for the waiting list

portion of the MOR, and is required in order to submit special claims for vacancy loss during the RAD-PBRA vouchering process. The Rental Office continued to use secured locking cases to ensure that new resident files were safely transported from the Rental Office to management offices.

- Rental Office staff sent Choice Mobility Voucher (CMV) notifications to all Multifamily Housing (RAD-PBRA) residents who had lived in the same project for at least two years (24 months) after January 1, 2020. The notices inform those residents that they are eligible to request a “Choice Mobility Voucher” to move into privately-owned housing. In FY 2023 112 residents requested a CMV and were added to the special waiting list for this program. One-third (33%) of annual voucher turnovers are available for this purpose.
- In FY 2023, the Rental Office referred 93 PBRA residents from the CMV waiting list to the HCV Program. All requests were added to the CMV waiting list, which now numbers over 850, including 108 that are in some stage of processing. The Rental Office continues to send CMV voucher request forms to newly eligible households on a monthly basis; those voucher requests are added to the waiting list in the order they are received.
- Maintenance staff worked with Finance and other departments to prepare a proposed list of capital improvements and associated cost estimates for the FY 2024 RAD PBRA Operating budget. During the fiscal year Maintenance staff assisted in the preparation of Board reports and detailed presentations to serve as informational sessions for PHA Commissioners to enhance their full understanding of the Agency’s immediate and future capital needs. The Board reports and presentations included narratives of the work to be accomplished.
- During the RAD conversion process, staff retained a consultant to draft Agency Operations and Maintenance plans for both asbestos and lead-based paint. A Construction Program Manager has completed certification and training courses for lead-based paint and asbestos hazard management, and been designated as the PHA’s Asbestos and Lead Program Manager. Staff will continue to seek formal and informal training on asbestos and lead hazard control.

### **REAC Inspections:**

- HUD postponed all REAC physical inspections during FY 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed REAC physical inspections during FY 2022. During FY 2023, HUD REAC contractors performed physical inspections at RAD Projects 1, 2, and 8. Scores for the FY 2023 REAC inspections are listed below:

<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Property</b>	<b>Score</b>
September 12, 2022	Project 8	Cleveland Hi-Rise,	90

		Montreal Hi-Rise, Dunedin Hi-Rise, Dunedin Terrace	
September 19, 2022	Project 2	Front Hi-Rise, Hamline HI-Rise, Seal Hi-Rise	89
October 25, 2022	Project 1	McDonough Homes	67

- During FY 2023, HUD’s notification period for REAC inspections was temporarily extended from 14 to 28 calendar days. While the notification window was increased, staff training and preparation for REAC inspections continued as follows:
  - Upon receiving 28 day notification of an inspection at a particular HUD Project, Maintenance staff facilitated a pre-REAC inspection meeting and training for relevant staff from Resident Services and Maintenance. During these sessions, staff were given an overview of the physical inspection process and preparation, as well as the correct protocol for handling the various levels of deficiencies. Prior to the most recent REAC physical inspections, Agency staff performed pre-REAC inspections at the selected hi-rises and family areas. During these inspections, a total of 315 work orders were initiated and completed prior to the start of the actual inspections. Maintenance staff served as the initial contact with the REAC inspectors, coordinated the required notices to residents and collected the requested property information. The Maintenance Department planned and implemented the pre-REAC inspections and training. Maintenance and Resident Services staff worked together on the actual inspections.
  - Maintenance staff update the PHA’s internal REAC inspection training materials and handouts annually to align with REAC’s revisions to inspection protocols, ensuring everyone who attends the inspections understands each deficiency cited by the REAC inspector. Training sessions are held with all staff involved in the pre-REAC inspection process, including staff from Maintenance and Resident Services. This practice remains beneficial to maintain high physical inspection scores. HUD continues to develop their new REAC inspection protocol, National Standards for the Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). Maintenance and Housing Policy staff monitor the ongoing development of NSPIRE and any potential timeline for its full implementation.
- During the REAC inspections completed in FY 2023, all Exigent Health and Safety (EHS) deficiencies cited were assigned a work order number and completed within 24 hours of the deficiency being noted. Documentation of the completion of EHS deficiencies was provided to HUD, as is required, within 72 hours. All non-emergency corrections noted during the REAC inspections were assigned a work order number and completed within established timeframes.
- Staff submitted appeals for questionable “deficiencies” cited during the REAC inspection.

### **Leasing and Occupancy:**

**After decades of maintaining close to 99% occupancy of all PHA-owned units, staff were challenged by changing conditions in FY 2023 that resulted in falling occupancy rates, continuing into FY 2024. The PHA completed FY 2023 with an overall occupancy rate of 95% in all PHA-owned housing.**

- PHA staff continued to emphasize thorough applicant screening, active marketing and the ongoing promotion of successful tenancies. However, the growing number of vacancies has demanded staff's full attention and creative solutions. **(Increasing occupancy rates is the number one task of the Executive Director and staff now and for the foreseeable future. The Executive Director is providing bi-weekly progress reports to the Finance Committee.)**
- In the data below, PHA-owned housing occupancy measures are aggregated between the RAD-PBRA and Public Housing programs.
  - **A total of 488 new leases were signed in FY 2023, up from 468 in FY 2022.** Of those leases, 410 (84%) were with new applicants from the waiting list. The remaining 78 (16%) were families and individuals who transferred within PHA-owned properties.
  - **On average, 211 units were vacant at the end of each month during FY 2023.** This compares to an average of 42 units during the previous year.
  - **A total of 4,937 applicant files were drawn off the waiting list in FY 2023.** This represents a substantial increase in files drawn compared to 3,203 drawn in FY 2022. 680 of those files were processed for a final housing eligibility determination (compared to 597 in FY 2022). Of those 680 fully processed PHA-owned housing applications, 77% (522) were recommended for approval, with 410 applicant households housed during FY 2023. The remaining 23% (158) were processed for denial. This is a slight change from the prior year, where the approval/denial ratio was 78% approved to 22% denied. Of the 4,937 applicants drawn, 4,257 (86%) either did not complete the applicant screening process or were still in process at the end of the fiscal year (compared to 2,583 or 81% in FY 2022).
  - **A total of 1,185 unit offers were made to new move-ins and transferring current residents in FY 2023, comparable to the 1,198 unit offers in FY 2022.** Of this number, 385 (32%) of the units offered were turned down. The most common reason for unit rejection was "Prefers another development/location", accounting for 38% of all turndowns. Newly approved applicants were permitted to reject the first unit offered and staff would offer them a second unit. Staff continued to follow the same unit offering procedure in FY 2023 to try to minimize the number of turndowns. Applicants' preferences for building location were considered when possible, and only one efficiency unit was offered to each applicant
- **The Rental Office scheduled 12 denial hearings in FY 2023.** This is an informal hearing process which allows applicants who are denied admission the opportunity to request a review before the PHA Admission Hearing Committee. During FY 2023, the

PHA Admission Hearing Committee continued to conduct hearings remotely. Of the 12 hearings requested, 11 hearings were held, while the remaining 1 applicants failed to respond to the hearing notice. The PHA's denial of the application was upheld in four (36%) of those hearings, four (36%) were overturned outright and three (27%) were overturned with stipulations.

#### **PHA-owned Housing Lease Enforcement:**

- Housing management staff continued to focus on working with residents to obtain lease compliance. Managers continued to review lease requirements with new applicants prior to signing the lease, utilizing a condensed model focused on preventing lease compliance issues. Safety measures were put in place so staff could continue to address any concerns with lease compliance during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **During FY 2023, 23 resident households (individuals or families) moved out of PHA-owned housing because the PHA terminated their leases “for cause”, up from 18 terminations in FY 2022.** (Lease terminations for nonpayment of rent are not in this category; they are reported below.) Family lease terminations for cause increased from four to eight. Hi-Rise terminations for cause increased from fourteen to fifteen. The 23 lease terminations for cause represent less than 1% of all households living in PHA-owned housing during the year.
- **During FY 2023, Legal reviewed and responded to a total of 197 transfer and pet requests from tenants in PHA-owned housing** (not including any requests for a reasonable accommodation (RA) that were associated with lease terminations). The number of requests decreased slightly from 212 requests in FY 2022 (a 7% decrease). Of these requests, 157 were approved (80%) and 40 were denied (20%).

#### **Fraud Reduction Initiative:**

- Executive Assistant/Communications Manager Mai Moua continued to oversee the Fraud Reduction Initiative that allows the public to report possible fraud in housing. This initiative includes a method to track and follow up on fraud complaints. Staff report to the Board annually on the number and disposition of fraud cases.
- **From April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, the PHA received 67 unduplicated reports alleging housing fraud or related misconduct, with three directed at PHA-owned housing and 64 at the Housing Choice Voucher program (Section 8).** Staff followed up on each report and found insufficient evidence to terminate assistance in any of the 52 cases where the investigations have concluded (15 cases are still being investigated).
- PHA-Owned Housing. Of the three reports relating to PHA-owned housing, one failed to provide sufficient information to conduct a thorough investigation. Staff investigated the remaining two cases and found insufficient evidence to support any fraud claim, and the matters were closed.

#### **Rent Collection in PHA-owned Housing:**

- **The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were seen in lower rent collections and higher collection loss write-offs during FY 2023.**

- **The PHA billed residents of PHA-owned housing \$19,721,923 in dwelling rental and other charges during FY 2023.** During the year, tenants moved out while still owing the PHA \$517,171. Collection actions produced \$56,511 in FY 2023, reducing write-offs to \$460,660 or 2.34% of the total dwelling and other charges billed to tenants.
- **In FY 2023, 4,493 lease terminations for non-payment of rent were issued.** Despite the high number of lease terminations notices issued, Finance prepared and filed only 143 eviction actions; and 41 residents ultimately vacated due to non-payment of rent. In each case, Resident Services staff had contacted the residents, connected them with services and resources and worked with them to resolve the issues underlying their failure to pay rent. As a result of those efforts most of the lease terminations were resolved without the PHA filing an eviction action in court. This represents a substantial increase in lease termination activity from FY 2022 when fewer lease terminations for non-payment of rent were issued due to the eviction moratoria in place. The PHA resumed issuing lease terminations for non-payment of rent as COVID-related eviction moratoria began to expire and phase out. Delinquent rent owed decreased from \$732,831 in April 2022 to \$412,898 in March 2023, with the expectation that delinquent rent will continue to decrease in FY 2024.
  - **The PHA received more than \$3 million in emergency rental assistance payments. The rental assistance received, coupled with diligent staff efforts to collect rent, decreased the amount of delinquent rent owed from a high of \$1,056,058 in October 2021 to \$326,727 at the beginning of April 2023.**
  - All COVID emergency rental assistance providers stopped accepting applications months ago and stopped issuing funds in November 2022, so staff attribute the ongoing decrease in the delinquent rent owed to an increase in tenant payments resulting from the uptick in lease enforcement actions.
  - Staff are cautiously optimistic that the total delinquent rent owed will continue to trend downward. The PHA cannot waive any rent due to it. HUD stated that rent was still due during the COVID-19 pandemic and would accumulate if unpaid, and that no PHA-sponsored debt forgiveness or amnesty programs would be authorized.
  - **PHA staff worked diligently throughout the pandemic to assist residents who were struggling to pay rent, with all COVID-related eviction protections expiring June 1, 2022. Staff collectively spent over 4,000 hours helping nearly 700 residents apply for assistance to avoid eviction, resulting in the PHA receiving \$3,075,834 in rental assistance.**
  - Staff reported these “Rent Recovery” efforts monthly to the Board of Commissioners and periodically on the PHA’s website.

### **Marketing:**

- **Marketing efforts in FY 2023 involved outreach regarding the ongoing opening of the Multifamily waiting list, which opened on March 1, 2023.** Prior to the opening of the waiting list, only applicants for special programs (CHSP, ALP and ASI) were

accepted. In order to fill these vacancies, staff continued to maintain informal relationships between the PHA and Ramsey County social service providers as well as staff from such organizations as Mental Health Resources, RADIAS Health, Guild, Catholic Charities, the Wilder Foundation, the Union Gospel Mission and Accessible Space.

- **The Multifamily waiting list had 3,529 active applicants at the end of FY 2023, compared to 8,202 applicants at the end of FY 2022. The waiting list remains open.**

#### **Vacant Unit Turnaround:**

- **During the fiscal year, the Maintenance Department prepared a total of 647 vacancies (hi-rise and family) for re-rental in an average of 9.91 days.**

#### **Preventive Maintenance (PM) and Housekeeping (HK) Inspections:**

- **Resident Services staff completed 3,836 Multifamily housekeeping inspections in FY 2023.**
- Resident Services staff continued to provide mold prevention and bed bug informational items to new residents at move-in. Staff also provided reminders and handouts in the management offices.
- The Maintenance Department, under the leadership of Tim Angaran, assumes the primary role for maintaining and upgrading the attractive appearance and safety of PHA properties. Maintenance works with Resident Services collaboratively to review and suggest opportunities for betterment of the PHA's properties.
- Maintenance Managers and Supervisors along with the associated Resident Services Managers/Assistant Managers, performed joint monthly inspections of all properties and provided written documentation and review of multiple aspects of each property. Hi-Rise properties receive a numerical score for each aspect of the property. Family Developments are rated "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" since there are fewer aspects to review compared to a Hi-Rise property. The written documentation provides corrective actions and identifies responsible parties for those actions. The responsible parties completed the corrective actions prior to the next month's inspection.
- The Maintenance Director, Assistant Maintenance Director and Resident Services Director and Resident Services Senior Management performed random inspections this past fiscal year. This included hi-rises and family developments within the RAD PBRA portfolio. Noted deficiencies were assigned to the appropriate staff for correction.
- **The Maintenance Department completed PM inspections in all 2,553 hi-rise units and all but one of the 1,301 family units in the PBRA portfolio.** PM inspections were performed throughout the fiscal year. The family unit not completed during the fiscal year had an ongoing eviction action and would not allow entry into the unit for inspection, despite multiple attempts by Maintenance and Resident Services staff.
- **Work orders** are initiated during PM inspections to repair any deficiencies noted which require contractors or Maintenance Specialists to complete. Priority 50 (resident activities) work orders are initiated when necessary for poor housekeeping, infestation,

improper electrical cords and items hung from fire sprinkler pipes. Supervisory staff re-inspect at least 10% of family and hi-rise unit preventative maintenance inspections to ensure the quality of the inspection work.

- **Maintenance staff working in the hi-rises painted 426 hi-rise units during the fiscal year.** In the family developments, maintenance staff continue to assist Resident Services staff with the painting of vacant units in an effort to maintain a high acceptance rate for rental of PBRA units. Maintenance staff paint one vacant unit per week in each family development area. Resident Services staff continue to contract for the balance of vacant unit painting within the family areas.
- **A total of 24,175 Priority 1 emergency and Priority 2 non-emergency work orders were completed in FY 2023.** During the fiscal year, the Maintenance Department completed all critical work orders in a timely manner. This total consisted of 6,417 Priority 1 work orders, completed in less than twenty-four hours, and 17,758 Priority 2 work orders completed in an average time of 6.25 days.
- **A total of 315 Priority 21 (pre-PHAS/REAC) work orders were completed in preparation for REAC inspections within the PBRA portfolio.** These inspections occurred at Project 1 (McDonough), Project 2 (Hamline-Front-Seal), and Project 8 (Dunedin-Montreal-Cleveland). A total of 232 work orders were entered and completed to address deficiencies noted during the REAC inspections.
- The Maintenance Department issued resident satisfaction surveys on a sample of 208 repairs during FY 2023. Based upon the respondents to the PHA's survey, 99.5% of the residents surveyed were satisfied with their service from Maintenance staff. One survey (of the 208) was returned dissatisfied due to the work not being fully completed when the work order was closed out. Customer feedback themes include "work completed quickly", "staff was polite when working with residents" and "work was completed correctly".
- Maintenance staff continued to maintain processes and open lines of communication that provide for successful outcomes related to pest control issues. Maintenance staff attended Resident Services Hi-Rise and Family area staff meetings. At these meetings, pest control information and updates were discussed to ensure all parties were fully aware of any and all ongoing pest control issues. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PHA's pest control contractor continued to inspect and treat all units reported to have pest control needs. Agency-wide the PHA maintained an average infestation rate of less than 2% for bed bugs and less than 8% for roaches and other insects up to February 2023 when the PHA's pest control contractor for more than 15 years ended service to the PHA's PBRA portfolio. A new pest control contractor has been retained and new infestation rate data will be available in FY 2024.
- All citations from the City of Saint Paul Department of Safety and Inspections are sent to the Maintenance Department for review. The Assistant Maintenance Director reviews each citation and ensures that the corrections (to be made by Maintenance) are either completed within the required amount of time given by the inspector, or that staff work with the inspector to extend the time period, if necessary. Resident Services staff assist with completing items related to resident activities within the complaint. Considerable

staff time is devoted to accompanying City inspectors on their inspections and correcting noted deficiencies.

- All testing and certification of life safety equipment was performed and test results are provided to the St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections by the contractor that performed the test. Fire Certificate of Occupancy documents are received and stored at the Mt. Airy Maintenance Administration Office. Staff complied with Saint Paul's Energy Benchmarking ordinance by submitting Hi-Rise and Central Administration Office water, electric and gas usage amounts to the Minnesota Cities Efficient Building Collaborative.
- Hi-Rise and Community Center life safety equipment testing was completed twice during the fiscal year.

### **Exterior Building Surfaces and Property Improvements:**

**Maintenance Contracts staff accomplished the asset preservation tasks listed below that are typical of the ongoing inspection, planning, and accomplishment of work needed to preserve PHA physical assets.**

- **Exterior Preservation:**
  - A contract to repair the exterior envelope of Wabasha Hi-Rise was awarded in February 2022. The project was funded by an award from Minnesota Housing from their Publicly Owned Housing Program (POHP). Work started in late-April 2022 and was completed in November 2022. Work included tuck-pointing all the mortar joints, removal and replacement of all existing control joint materials, removal and replacement of deteriorated bricks, patching to areas of spalled concrete, installation of through-wall flashing to lintels, and cleaning and application of an elastomeric coating on the concrete façade surfaces.
  - Multiple contracts were awarded in April 2022 to mill and over lay parking lots at the family area sites. Parking Lots #10, 11 and 16 at McDonough Homes were resurfaced and striped. Parking Lot #2 at Dunedin Terrace was resurfaced and striped. The lots at McDonough and Dunedin were completed in August 2022. Parking Lots #1, and 6 at Mt. Airy Homes were resurfaced and striped. Parking Lot #12 at Roosevelt Homes was resurfaced and striped. The lots at Mt. Airy and Roosevelt were completed in May 2022.
  - The contract for the final phase of sidewalk trip hazard removal at Mt. Airy Homes was awarded in September 2022 and completed in October 2022. Staff anticipates awarding a contract in FY 2024 to begin sidewalk trip hazard removal at a few PHA Hi-Rises and McDonough Homes.
  - Landscape clearing and grubbing was performed at eight Hi-Rise buildings, Dunedin Terrace and Roosevelt Homes. This work consist of pruning of existing trees and shrubs, lawn edging, weed control and replenishing garden mulch.

- **Interior Renovation:**

- The Hamline Hi-Rise kitchen renovation was started in FY 2023. The work includes upgrading several of the kitchen appliances and modernizing the entire kitchen space. Work is substantially complete and the kitchen is expected to be in-service in FY 2024.
- Entry lobby lounge furniture was replaced with new in March 2023.
- Telephone entry system control panels were upgraded at Exchange and Dunedin Hi-Rises in May 2022.
- New card access systems were installed at the McDonough Community Center and the Mt. Airy Maintenance Administration Office.

- **Hi-Rise Plumbing System Replacement**

- Front Hi-Rise plumbing and boiler modernization was substantially completed with the final vertical stacks of apartment plumbing work finished in April 2022. The work at Front Hi-Rise is the fourth PHA hi-rise plumbing modernization. Ravoux, Valley, and Montreal Hi-Rises were completed previously.

- **Mechanical Systems**

- Work on the replacement of the hot water storage tanks at Iowa Hi-Rise was completed and the tanks were put into service in June 2022. The original tanks were past their useful life and needed to be replaced before a tank failure occurred.

- **Life Safety Systems**

- Staff continued the administration of contractor work to test and correct deficiencies in PHA fire alarm, sprinkler and emergency generator systems on a regular basis.
- A new fire alarm control panel was installed at Seal Hi-Rise in January 2023. While the PHA's service contractor keeps an inventory of used parts, the existing fire alarm control panel at Seal Hi-Rise was obsolete, meaning the manufacturer no longer produced replacement parts. The new fire alarm control panel is fully supported by the manufacturer.

- **Elevators**

- Staff continued the administration of contractor work to perform preventive maintenance and repairs on PHA elevators.
- The Valley Hi-Rise elevators were modernized in FY 2023. Work started in October 2022 and the new elevators were put into service in March 2023.

- **Energy Management System**

- The Agency's Chief Operating Engineer, Maintenance Contracts staff, Maintenance staff and supporting contractors determine hi-rise and community center heating, cooling, ventilation, water supply needs and improvements. Large work items included: the installation of accessory unit heaters in areas vulnerable to extreme cold; the completion of the Iowa Hi-Rise hot water tank replacement; the completion of the Front Hi-Rise heating system modernization which included all new energy management system controls; partial energy management system upgrades at Ravoux, Seal and Iowa Hi-Rises; preparations for the Dunedin Family Center (now Headstart classrooms) air conditioning replacement; continuing preparation for energy management system upgrades; and Central Hi-Rise apartment air conditioning upgrades as needed.
- Existing HVAC service contracts were maintained or extended for routine work including Energy Management System (EMS) maintenance, journeyman pipefitter service, apprentice pipefitter service, boiler operations, boiler repairs, boiler chemical service and air filter replacements.
- Maintenance Managers and Maintenance Supervisors continue to be an integral part of each staff team responsible for the design and administration of each building improvement. This helps ensure standardization of construction materials and products across PHA-owned properties.
- Maintenance staff, along with other PHA departments, meet each fiscal year and as needed to discuss and identify current and future facility, procurement, modernization and other Agency needs. Maintenance staff worked to develop and implement solutions within current budget constraints to continue to improve and maintain our housing stock. During the fiscal year staff responded to the need to improve Agency cash flow by deferring several planned operational and capital improvements until future fiscal year(s).
- Maintenance staff continue to develop, maintain and update a comprehensive capital needs plan for the PHA-owned housing stock under RAD-PBRA. The capital needs are maintained within the Agency's 20-year PBRA Capital Needs Assessment that is reviewed annually with items added by Maintenance staff as needs arise. Maintenance staff prioritized capital projects based on need and budget, and defer capital improvement items as necessary, due to funding. Agency plans are updated annually, or as needed.
- Maintenance staff worked with Finance to coordinate and track the implementation, procurement and execution of approved capital improvements in the RAD PBRA portfolio. Staff prepared spreadsheets to track progress and expenditures for each capital improvement project.
- Maintenance and Finance staff worked closely with HUD's Multifamily personnel to obtain approval to use Reserves for Replacement (R4R) funding to perform capital improvements identified within Year 3 of our PBRA Capital Needs Assessment (CNA). This work included contracts to modernize the elevators at Valley Hi-Rise and to resurface parking lots at McDonough Homes, Mt. Airy Homes and Dunedin Terrace.

- Maintenance staff engage residents to gather input on needed capital improvements at all PHA properties. Staff attend each Hi-Rise President's Council meeting and periodically attend Resident Council meetings and the Resident Advisory Board meetings to present upcoming improvement projects and work, and solicit input on desired projects and/or repairs at their properties. Maintenance staff consider the desires of all stakeholders when developing and prioritizing budgets. Staff track capital budgets and project schedules to keep residents updated on status of capital improvements at their properties.
- Staff worked diligently to accomplish necessary maintenance and modernization work with minimum disruption and inconvenience to the residents. Maintenance contracting staff work closely with contractors, Maintenance and Resident Services staff and residents to make accommodations during construction that help ease the burden and disruption caused by the modernization work. Staff continued to look at ways to minimize construction impacts through reasonable construction work hours, noise restrictions and phasing work as to minimize disruptions to normal building and site operations.
- Maintenance staff bring all affected stakeholders and departments together to plan and discuss options to make the PHA's proposed modernization and construction work the most cost effective with the least amount of impact on the residents. This includes project planning meetings, resident engagement meetings and construction progress meetings all with resident comfort and safety in mind.
- Staff continued use of resident notices and newsletters to promote better communications between staff and residents when completing large modernizations and special projects. Staff gathered feedback from residents to help limit impacts on building operations during construction at their properties.
- Staff corresponded with the City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota Housing, Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines (FHLBDM) and other Agencies to stay abreast of upcoming grant opportunities, key dates and project requirements. Staff identified, listed and prioritized capital improvements suitable for potential grant and loan opportunities. Staff and consultants prepare detailed project estimates and scope of work for potential projects that may qualify. Projects are planned and scheduled in anticipation of grant opportunities to be fully prepared to apply.
- The PHA continued its trend of being a leader in green initiatives and a good steward of the environment. Staff continue to work on caring for and mitigating hazardous waste on the property previously acquired on Jackson Street near McDonough Homes. Community gardens are kept up with water and fencing to ensure residents can grow their own food. The storeroom operations continue to phase out any remaining non-LED lighting that could be sourced in an LED product and is continually looking for better quality, energy efficient products to serve our residents. Staff continue to include LED lighting upgrades in each request for capital improvement funding.
- Staff continue to work with contractors, vendors, outside agencies and governmental officials to attempt to meet and exceed minimum environmental and energy conservation standards and goals. Staff continued to be proactive in identifying ways to save and conserve water, energy and resources at all the Agency's properties, including working

with Resident Initiatives to aid residents in making better decisions to forward this mission. Staff were part of discussions on potential electric car sharing partnerships, tree planting with various St. Paul community partners, garden plot expansions, pollinator gardens, solar array installation and subscriptions and work with contractors and vendors to recycle mattresses and dispose of the waste collected each day.

- Staff continue to work with Finance staff and Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) personnel to identify property water consumption that is outside of the normal use and fluctuations for PHA properties. Work orders are generated to investigate the cause of the issue and make repairs to leaking plumbing fixtures. Resident Services staff may also provide training of residents on how to conserve energy and water. Staff was contacted by SPRWS about the possibility of mounting meter reading receivers on some of the PHA hi-rises to collect data from residence and businesses in the area. Staff is currently determining the feasibility of SPRWS using our rooftops and reviewing lease terms.
- Staff worked in conjunction with the PHA Resident Initiatives staff to maintain contracts for the University of Minnesota Master Gardeners program. Staff continue to partner with the Friends School near Hamline Hi-Rise for their donation of organic lawn care to the Agency for our site. Maintenance and Resident Initiatives staff partnered with Washington/Ramsey Recycling and Energy for the no-cost collection and recycling pilot program for discarded mattresses at McDonough Homes, Mt. Airy Homes and Roosevelt Homes. This short term pilot program led to a low-cost service contract for mattress and box-spring recycling at all PBRA properties.
- Maintenance Director, Assistant Maintenance Director and Construction Program Managers routinely review HUD's Multifamily rulebook, revisions and HUD Multifamily Notices for potential changes to Maintenance operations, procurement and reporting. All rules and new regulations are disseminated to staff to maintain compliance with HUD regulations.
- Maintenance, Budget and Finance staff correspond with HUD Multifamily staff as needed to discuss the details of the procurement of large capital improvements and regulatory requirements for the use of Reserves for Replacement. Maintenance staff have been in regular contact with our Legal team and HUD Multifamily staff to discuss the terms and conditions of our contracts for compliance with HUD Multifamily regulations.
- Finance assisted Resident Services with tracking of delinquent rent payments in PHA-owned housing. Housing Policy compiled and analyzed data regarding delinquent rent payments for the PHA's monthly "Rent Recovery" reporting.
- Finance assisted with tracking all reported positive COVID cases in PHA-owned housing and PHA employees.

**GOAL #3 – SCATTERED SITES;** Low Income Public Housing/LIPH (418 PHA-owned units)

- a. Maintain high scores under HUD’s Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). Successfully manage, maintain, and improve the PHA’s remaining Public Housing inventory. Effectively obligate and expend HUD’s Capital Fund Program (CFP).
- b. Promote interdepartmental efforts to maximize unit occupancy rates, including prompt and thorough applicant screening and the ongoing promotion of successful tenancies.
- c. Ensure that PHA-owned properties continue to be managed to the highest standards, including thorough and uniform applicant eligibility determinations, fair lease enforcement, regular preventative maintenance, prompt responses to maintenance work orders, timely turnover of vacant units, and timely and accurate reporting of financial data.
- d. Continue to actively involve residents, staff and community partners in planning capital improvements.
- e. Pursue outside (non-HUD) funding opportunities including but not limited to Minnesota Housing, FHLBDM, the City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County to complete necessary capital improvements.
- f. Continue operating these units as LIPH in the near term given their healthy financial position. Study asset repositioning (i.e., TPV, PBV, Section 18, Section 32 homeownership, etc.) as a longer term goal.
- g. Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA’s fair share of LIPH funding.

**Low Income Public Housing (LIPH):**

**The RAD conversion resulted in the separation of the scattered sites and duplexes (which remained Public Housing) from most of the PHA’s housing inventory.** As a result, late in FY 2020 the Scattered Site management team was established to manage the PHA’s remaining 418 units of Public Housing. This team is housed at Central Hi-Rise. Under the leadership of Resident Services Director Kim Nguyen, and Maintenance Director Tim Angaran, staff accomplished much in the fiscal year.

- During the fiscal year Resident Services and Maintenance staff worked closely with all departments to manage, maintain and improve the PHA’s 418 units of Public Housing. In-person collaboration and joint vacancy inspections returned to pre-pandemic norms.
- **Resident Services staff completed 417 scattered site housekeeping inspections in FY 2023.**
- As a result of the RAD conversion, scattered sites and duplexes are no longer filled by transfers from the PHA’s family developments following the completion of the Tenant Training Program (TTP), but by applicants off of the Public Housing waiting list. This list is managed by the Resident Services Rental Office.
- Staff worked closely with HUD labor relations to monitor contracts and provide required reporting.

- Staff continue to maintain the HUD-required 5-Year Action Plan. Staff contracted with a consultant to inspect and develop a 20-year Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) on the Agency's 418 public housing units. Staff continued to develop a master tracking list of completed and pending capital improvements at all 418 PIH units. These lists will be updated annually or as needed.

### **PHAS Physical Inspections:**

- **A REAC contractor conducted a physical inspection of the AMP 9 scattered sites in March of 2022 (FY 2022) and awarded a score of 96 (High Performer).**
  - As the Agency's FY 2022 LIPH AMP 9 (the 418 Scattered Site units which make up the PHA's entire LIPH portfolio) REAC inspection score was above 90, no REAC inspection was required at the LIPH properties during FY 2023. The next anticipated REAC inspection for LIPH AMP 9 is expected to occur during FY 2025.
  - Prior to the most recent REAC physical inspections in public housing, Agency staff performed pre-REAC inspections at the scattered site properties. During these inspections, a total of 17 work orders were initiated and completed before the start of the actual inspections.
  - Staff thoroughly documented any deficiencies cited during each REAC inspection and provide timely notification to HUD that each EHS deficiency was remedied.
  - Staff submitted appeals for questionable "deficiencies" cited during the REAC inspection.

### **Maintenance Operations:**

- Maintenance Support Services staff (5 staff members) provide all clerical support for the Maintenance Department. The work they perform includes the following: routine updates and distribution of operational procedures manuals, updates and distribution of departmental forms, support for the purchase order and contracting process, storeroom support activities, centralized recordkeeping, data management (physical and digital), record retention, initiation and processing of work orders, recording completion of work orders, processing of property inspection orders and mailing of preventive maintenance inspection letters. Departmental records are kept both digitally and physically. Staff regularly update digital files for contracts, documents and drawings to allow ease of access both internally and externally. The scope of digital recordkeeping continues to expand to allow for better retention and recall of important information.
- The Maintenance Department assumes the primary role for maintaining and upgrading the appearance of PHA properties. Maintenance works collaboratively with Resident Services to review and suggest opportunities for betterment of the PHA's properties.
- The Maintenance Director, Assistant Maintenance Director, Resident Services Director and Resident Services Senior Management performed periodic inspections of PHA properties this past fiscal year. These inspections were part of each monthly meeting between the Maintenance and Resident Services departments to share operational

activities, needs and concerns. The inspections included scattered sites and duplexes within the LIPH portfolio. Noted deficiencies were assigned to the appropriate staff for correction.

- **The Maintenance Department completed PM inspections in 418 scattered site units (out of 418) in FY 2023.** Staff returned to a normal approach to Preventative Maintenance (PM) inspections as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic waned.
- Work orders are initiated to repair any deficiencies noted in the properties that require contractors or Maintenance Specialists to complete. Priority 50 (resident activities) work orders are initiated when necessary for poor housekeeping, infestation, improper electrical cords and illegal dryer vents. Supervisory staff re-inspect at least 15% of scattered site preventative maintenance inspections to ensure the quality of the inspection work.
- Maintenance staff maintains a database with lead-based paint information on all PHA properties. Using that database, Maintenance staff are notified of a unit's lead-based paint status when they enter a unit for preventative maintenance and vacancy inspections. When a unit is identified as containing lead-based paint, the Maintenance staff present perform a visual inspection of the condition of the lead-based paint; staff are certified to perform these inspections. Any lead-based paint that is deteriorated and therefore needs immediate attention is brought to the staff member's supervisor and is addressed either by PHA Maintenance staff (if under HUD's de minimis threshold of 2 square feet) or by a contractor holding HUD and EPA Certified Renovator certification.
- **The Maintenance Department prepared 52 vacant scattered site homes in an average of 44.55 days.** The extended time preparing the units can be attributed to Maintenance staff using additional Capital Fund Program (CFP) grant funding allocated to the LIPH units for more extensive renovations upon vacancy. Examples of completed work that extended the average completion time include complete kitchen replacements, complete bathroom replacements, removal and replacement of obsolete galvanized piping, electrical system upgrades, furnace replacement and structural upgrades where needed. Items which do not affect occupancy were completed after tenant move-in including roofs, windows and siding replacement.
- **During the fiscal year, staff contracted the replacement of furnaces or boilers at 42 scattered site homes (10% of the 418 scattered site units in the LIPH portfolio).**
  - New furnaces were installed at XXXX W 7th St, XXX Banfil St, XXXX Bayard Ave, XXXX Bowdoin St, XXX Carroll Ave, XX Hoyt Ave, XXX Larpenteur Ave, XXX Laurel Ave, XXX Lexington Pkwy, XXXX Niles Ave, XXXX Thure Ave, XXXX Worcester Ave, XXX Birmingham St, XXXX Blair Ave, XXXX Chamber St, XXXX Clear Ave, XXX Desoto St, XXXX Flandrau St, XXX Hazelwood St, XXXX Hoyt Ave, XXXX Iowa Ave, XXXX Luella S, XXXX Luella St, XXXX Margaret St, XXXX Mechanic Ave, XXX Minnehaha Ave, XXXX Nokomis Ave, XXXX Pacific St, XXX Point Douglas Rd, XXXX Rose Ave, XXXX Sims Ave, XXXX Montreal Ave, XXX Van Buren Ave, XXX Jessie St, XXXX Worcester Ave, XXX Watson Ave, XXX Thomas Ave, XXXX Blair Ave, XXXX Park St, and X Maryland Ave.

- New boilers were installed at XXXX Forest St and XXX Lawson Ave. Maintenance staff inspect all HVAC equipment annually during preventative maintenance inspections and are trained to perform furnace and water heater repairs at the scattered sites.
- **The PHA has exceeded all of HUD's regular goals for timely obligation of the current open CFP grant funds (90% obligated within 24 months) and expenditure (grants fully expended within 48 months).** Staff expects to fully expend and close the 2020 and 2021 CFP grants in FY 2024.
  - CFP funding for the LIPH units has increased the past few fiscal years, allowing for an increase in capital improvements. Staff focused the majority of this new CFP funding on exterior improvements, while starting to modernize the interior of some units during their vacancy, including updating the kitchens and bathrooms. The following capital improvement work performed reflects the increase in CFP funding during FY 2023:
- **Mechanical Systems**
  - Staff contracted the replacement of 42 furnaces and boilers at scattered site homes as detailed in the section above.
- **Roof Replacements**
  - Roofs were replaced at 25 units. The units where roofs were replaced are XXXX Hartford Ave, XXXX Sherwood Ave, XXX Albemarle St, XXX Albemarle St, XXXX Sherwood Ave, XXXX Matilda St, X Maryland Ave, XXXX Idaho Ave, XXXX Westminster St, XXX Cook Ave, XXXX Rose Ave, XXX Front Ave, XXXX Ross Ave, XXXX Iowa Ave, XXXX Hoyt Ave, XXX Albemarle St, XXX Albemarle St, XXX Cottage Ave, XXX Maryland Ave, XXX Lawson Ave, XXX Ivy Ave, XXX Park St, XXXX Ford Pkwy, XXX Bidwell St, and XXX Isabel St.
- **Window Replacements**
  - Windows were replaced at 31 units. The units where windows were replaced are XXX Chippewa St, XXX Page St, XXXX Osceola Ave, XXXX Watson Ave, XXXX Juliet Ave, XXXX 7th St, XXXX Worcester St, XXXX Dorothea Ave, XXXX Eleanor Ave, XXX Cleveland Ave, XXXX Laurel Ave, XXX Dayton Ave, XXX Fuller Ave, XXXX Thomas Ave, XXXX Thomas Ave, XXXX Hewitt Ave, XXXX Wakefield Ave, XXX Hazelwood St, XXXX Case Ave, XXXX Bush Ave, XXXX Manitou Ave, XX Magnolia Ave, XXXX Arundel St, XXXX Woodbridge St, XXXX Danforth St, XXX California Ave, XXXX Blair Ave, XXX Albemarle St, XXX Albemarle St, XXX Bidwell St, and XXX Isabel St.
- **Unit Modernizations**
  - Staff completed two Central Duplex unit interior modernization prototypes – kitchen and bathroom updates, new doors and flooring, and HVAC upgrades at XXX Victoria Street and XXX Mackubin Street. Maintenance is planning to modernize the remainder of the Central Duplex unit interiors in the future dependent on available CFP funding. Staff will start planning, design and coordination of the work in FY 2024.

- The kitchens were updated in five scattered site and duplex units with new cabinets and finishes – XXXX St. Anthony Avenue, XXXX Ivy Avenue, XXXX Blair Avenue, XXXX Conway Avenue, and XXX Sherwood.
- The bathrooms were updated and modernized at seventeen scattered site and duplex units – XXXX Eleanor Avenue, XXXX St. Anthony Avenue, XXXX Laurel Avenue, XXXX Margaret Street, XXXX Ivy Avenue, XXX Lake Street, XXX Cottage Avenue, XXXX Idaho Avenue, XXXX Blair Avenue, XXXX Conway Avenue, XXX Watson Avenue, XXXX Bowdoin Street, XXX Isabel Street, XXXX Matilda Street, XXXX Jessie Street, XXX Sherwood Avenue, and XXXX Case Avenue.
- **Exterior Building Surfaces**
  - Exterior siding was replaced at the XXX Isabel/XXX Bidwell duplex, XXX/XXX Albemarle duplex and XXXX Sims garage.
  - Retaining walls were replaced at nine scattered sites in FY23 – XXX Warwick, XXXX Alameda Street, XXXX St. Albans Street, XXXX Thomas Avenue, XXXX Arlington Avenue, XXXX Bush Avenue, XXXX Case Avenue and XXXX Stillwater Avenue, and XXX Agate Street.
- **Life Safety Systems**
  - Maintenance staff replaced smoke and carbon monoxide detectors that are more than 10 years past their original installation date.
- **Scattered Site Family Lead Based Paint**
  - Lead paint was abated by encapsulating the window blind stops at XXXX Lafond Avenue and replacing the windows containing lead-based paint and abating paint in the bathroom at XXXX Blair Avenue. Lead paint was also abated while completing some of the windows replacements listed above.
  - Maintenance staff continues to maintain the Priority 90 Work Order System for deferred capital improvement within the scattered sites. Priority 90 work orders are added or updated following preventative maintenance inspections and during responses to emergency and non-emergency work orders. Work documented under this classification includes roof, window, and siding replacements, brick repair, driveway and sidewalk repair or replacement, stair replacement, landscaping repairs, and electrical upgrades. A total of 72 Priority 90 work orders were completed during the fiscal year. Planning for completion of the remaining 68 work orders is ongoing.
- **During the fiscal year, the Maintenance Department completed a total of 2,998 Priority 1 emergency and Priority 2 non-emergency work orders at scattered sites.** All work orders were completed in a timely manner. This total consisted of 468 Priority 1 work orders, completed in less than twenty-four hours, and 2,530 Priority 2 work orders completed in an average time of 9.58 days.
- The Maintenance Department issued resident satisfaction surveys on a sample of 25 repairs between April 2022 and March 2023. Based upon the respondents to the PHA's

survey, 100% of the residents surveyed were satisfied with their service from Maintenance staff. Customer feedback themes include “work completed quickly”, “staff was polite when working with residents” and “work was completed correctly”.

- All citations from the City of Saint Paul Department of Safety and Inspections are sent to the Maintenance Department for review. The Assistant Maintenance Director reviews each citation and assumes responsibility for ensuring the corrections (to be made by Maintenance) are completed within the required amount of time given by the inspector, or that staff work with the inspector to extend the time period if necessary. Resident Services staff assist with completing items related to resident activities within the complaint. Considerable staff time is devoted to accompanying City inspectors on their inspections and correcting noted deficiencies.
- All City-required testing and certifications were performed and provided to the City of St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections. All Fire Certificates of Occupancy are received and stored at the Mt. Airy Maintenance Administration Office.
- Staff continued to correspond with the City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota Housing, FHLBDM and other Agencies to stay abreast of upcoming grant opportunities, key dates and project requirements. Staff identified, listed and prioritized capital improvements suitable for potential grant and loan opportunities. In addition, staff prepared detailed project estimates and scopes of work for potential projects, and prepared grant and loan applications to seek funding through outside sources for capital improvements. Projects are planned, budgeted and scheduled in anticipation of upcoming funding opportunities to ensure staff are prepared to promptly apply when opportunities arise.
- Staff continue to work with Finance staff and Saint Paul Regional Water Services personnel to identify property water consumption that is outside of the normal use and fluctuations for PHA properties. Work orders are generated to investigate the cause of the issue and make repairs to leaking plumbing fixtures. Resident Services staff may also provide training of residents on how to conserve energy and water.
- The Maintenance Director assigns a Maintenance Manager to all large modernization projects to offer their expertise and guidance, which will continue to ensure standardization.
- Maintenance Managers and Maintenance Supervisors continue to be an integral part of each staff team responsible for the design and administration of each building improvement. This helps ensure standardization of construction materials and products across PHA-owned properties.
- Maintenance staff engage residents to gather input on needed capital improvements at all PHA properties.
  - Maintenance staff periodically attend Resident Advisory Board meetings to present upcoming PHA projects and work, and solicit resident input on needed projects and/or repairs at their properties.
  - Maintenance staff, along with input from residents and other Agency departments, coordinate efforts to develop and prioritize budgets. Staff tracks capital budgets

and project schedules to keep residents updated on status of capital improvements at their properties. Staff has worked diligently to accomplish necessary construction, maintenance and modernization work with minimal disruption and inconvenience to the resident(s).

- Maintenance contracting staff works closely with construction contractors, Maintenance and Resident Services staff and residents to make accommodations during construction to help ease the burden and disruption caused by needed maintenance, construction and modernization work. Staff continue to look at ways to minimize construction impacts through reasonable construction work hours, noise restrictions and phasing work as to minimize disruptions to the resident(s).
- Maintenance staff bring all affected stakeholders and departments together to plan and discuss options to make the PHA's proposed construction, maintenance and modernization work the most cost effective with the least amount of impact on the resident(s). This includes project planning meetings, resident engagement meetings and construction progress meetings all with resident comfort and safety in mind.
- Staff continued to use resident notices and newsletters on modernization and special projects to promote better communications between staff and residents. Staff gathered feedback from residents to assist with limiting impacts on site and building access during capital improvements and construction at their properties.
- Staff continue to work with state, local and industry partners and housing industry advocacy groups (NAHRO, PHADA and CLPHA) to seek positive reforms and additional funding.

#### **Charge Accounts and Contracts:**

- There are a total of 46 charge account agreements that serve the Agency; 43 directly serve the Maintenance Department. No additional charge accounts were added in FY 2023. There are 82 contracts that provide various services to the Agency. These contracts are administered or tracked by the Maintenance Department. There are 25 additional City and State joint purchasing contracts that allow the Agency to procure services without needing to enact our own contracts. New service contracts are added as needed.

#### **Housing Policy:**

Under the leadership of Al Hester and Lisa Feidler, Housing Policy Directors, Housing Policy assisted Legal, Resident Services and other Departments as follows:

- Monitored HUD notices in Federal Register, PIH and Housing and alerting staff to new requirements;
- Assisted Resident Services and Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher Departments with policy changes related to process improvements as well as the implementation of the Housing Opportunities Through Modernization Act (HOTMA); including drafting resident notices, revising Public Housing Admission and Occupancy Policies and drafting/editing the associated Board reports.

- Communicated with Congressional staff during the year via email and phone, directly and through PHADA, NAHRO and CLPHA, advising on PHA issues including proposed legislation and HUD rules.
- Agency Plan: Housing Policy assisted Resident Services with the Resident Advisory Board, Plan updates; and conducted the public hearing with a PowerPoint presentation (with Maintenance staff describing capital improvements). Housing Policy regularly assisted the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and departments with drafting and editing written communications to residents, the public, partner agencies, HUD, other government bodies (Mayor's office) and others.
- Drafted letters of support for grant requests being submitted by the City and partner agencies.
- Assisted the Finance and Maintenance departments in completing the PHA's submissions for Ramsey County's Inclusive Housing Development solicitation, including drafting narrative responses and reviewing financial data.
- Compiled and analyzed staff production data in order to produce monthly and quarterly management reports.
- Provided data and text to City PED staff for updating the City's Consolidated Plan and Annual Performance Report (CAPER).
- Housing Policy also worked with Legal to respond to Data Practices requests from residents, media, other agencies, etc.
- Identified grounds to appeal the PHA's PHAS score and corresponding designation for FY 2022. Drafted the appeal request and submitted supporting documentation to HUD.

**GOAL #4 – FINANCE:** Provide the Board all opportunities for governance of PHA finances and assets. Continue fiscally conservative budgeting, planning and evaluation of all programs and services. Strive for zero audit findings. Maintain fiscal discipline and meet fiduciary obligations in regular operations (i.e., managing cash flow, making prudent capital expenditures, realizing full PBRA contract rental income by making prompt and accurate voucher submissions, etc.). Overcome unforeseen financial challenges including COVID-19 related delinquent rent, the special funding challenges facing CHSP, and others.

**Finance and Accounting:** Under the leadership of Chief Financial Officer William Wallo, the Finance Department achieved the following results in FY 2023:

- Produced the FY 2022 "Comprehensive Annual Financial Report".
- **Successfully passed the annual agency-wide financial and compliance audit of FY 2022 with no findings.**
- **Successfully passed the PHA's FY 2022 annual unemployment compensation audit with no reportable issues.**

- **Successfully passed HUD's CARES Act Oversight Review and EHV Remote Review with no findings.**
- **The FY 2022 PILOT audit was completed with no adjustments necessary.**
- Successfully managed the PHA's Central Administrative Office building commercial space. As reported elsewhere, some PHA teams have relocated within the building; and the small remaining vacant commercial space is being actively marketed.
- Reported the PHA's financial position to the State of Minnesota via Special District Reporting. (Also report on the PHA's position of no Lobbying Expenditures.)
- Participated in "Positive Pay" and Automated Clearinghouse (ACH) filtering capabilities with our bank, preventing fraudulent access to federal dollars.
- Transitioned vendors to AC Payments to reduce reliance on physical checks, cutting down on bank errors, fraud, lost checks, and check reissuance.
- Continued Section 8 cost and unit trend analysis to allow staff to best utilize HUD funding and to maximize the number of vouchers available.
- Updated Section 8 payment standards cost projection to allow for the maximum payment standards to assist participants.
- Participated in the State of Minnesota's Unclaimed Property program, clearing outstanding stale-dated accounts payable checks and submitting the amount to the State.
- Renewed and initiated eight different PHA insurance policies (general liability, real & personal property, commercial automobile, Section 8 lead-based paint inspection liability, directors and officer's liability, boiler and machinery, fiduciary liability, and cyber).
- Continued participation in the construction sales tax rebate program, filing for and receiving related refunds.
- Generated and mailed 47,860 rent statements to LIPH/RAD tenants.
- Processed 16,105 online payments, 7,594 credit card payments, 19,148 lockbox payments and 2,039 physical payments received at CAO or McDonough.
- Researched, coordinated, and initiated credit and debit online payments for tenants, including training PHA staff on the new process.
- Generated and mailed out 6,199 Certificates of Rent Paid (CRPs).
- Collected \$181,359 from Minnesota Revenue Recapture for debts owed to the PHA by former residents of PHA-owned housing and Section 8 participants.
- Initiated 4,493 terminations for non-payment of rent, resulting in 143 court filings, 41 of which ended in writs being obtained and executed.
- Processed 12,210 accounts payable invoices for payment, issuing 7,056 checks to vendors and contractors.
- Scanned all accounts payable documentation into Laserfiche for record retention.
- Issued 11,259 payments to landlords (6,552 checks mailed and 4,707 direct deposits).

- Successfully submitted 12 monthly sales and use tax payments electronically to the State.
- Reviewed and approved 26 biweekly PHA payrolls with 6,579 payments to staff.
- Assisted Resident Services with tracking of delinquent rent payments.
- Completed monthly VMS (Voucher Management System) submissions and responded to HUD inquiries in a timely manner, which is required to receive HCV subsidies on time.
- Completed twice yearly CHSP SF-425 preparation and submission to HUD.
- Completed CHSP 90006 year end reporting to HUD.
- Completed FY 2022 RAD-PBRA Annual Financial Submissions for eight projects.
- Completed FY 2022 Financial Data Schedule submission for all Agency Programs.
- Prepared Agency budgets including RAD-PBRA, Low Income Public Housing, Section 8 Programs, Building Fund, Congregate Housing Services Program, Central Office Cost Center, and Central Management Office Business Activities.

**Financial Operations:** The Finance Department coordinated with staff in all departments to ensure sound financial practices are implemented agency-wide.

- HCV Programs staff continue to review notifications from HUD and ensure understanding and compliance, or ask questions of Finance staff.
- HCV Programs staff continue to spend administrative dollars in compliance with procurement requirements.
- HCV Programs staff continue to participate in all discussions related to reconciliation of monthly HAP payments, to ensure that the monthly rent roll is accurate and correctly reflected in the software system.
- The Contracting Officer reviewed all formal contract documents issued by the Agency during FY 2023. All purchase orders and contracts that ranged in price from \$10,000 to \$100,000 were checked for compliance approval by the Contracting Officer. Staff made sure that all formal contracts for construction, service and material procurement were sent to the PHA's Legal Counsel for review prior to issuing a Notice to Proceed.
- Purchasing training was administered to all staff with purchasing authority. Training was broken into eight staff groups: Maintenance Contracts, Maintenance, Hi-Rise Resident Service, Family Resident Service, Human Resources/Resident Initiatives, Finance/IT, Executive/Housing Policy and HCV/Section 8. After the annual Purchasing Training, a test was administered to all attendees. Once the tests were sent back to Contracting Officer, they were corrected and returned to trainees.
- Files for all formal and informal contracts were maintained within the Maintenance Contracts Office at Mt. Airy Hi-Rise. Maintenance Contracts' Administrative Support Technician (AST) followed up with other departments to provide necessary contract documents. Purchase orders were scanned and placed in electronic folders. Contract files prior to FY 2019 were boxed and delivered to the Ravoux Hi-Rise for long-term storage. Contracts were audited by staff and any missing documents were accounted for.

- There were no findings among the select group of Maintenance contracts audited by the PHA's independent auditors, Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP.

#### **Central Administrative Office (CAO) Maintenance and Operations:**

- The Maintenance Department, in conjunction with the Finance Department completed monthly full building walkthroughs to observe the condition of the W. Andrew Boss Building. Observed deficiencies were noted and work orders placed with the Maintenance Department for repairs. Larger or more costly items are contracted for repair or replacement. All items are kept on a running list to ensure they are acted upon in a timely manner.
- Staff continue to complete items noted in the 2020 W. Andrew Boss Building Facility Condition Assessment including exterior cornice repair on the south and west sides of the building, air handler unit motor replacement and heating pump replacement. General maintenance items including duct cleaning, paint touch-up, woodwork repair replacement of a parking ramp door, rust remediation in the parking ramp stairwell and LED upgrades to the exterior building lighting were also completed.
- Maintenance contracting staff maintain a contract for janitorial services for the building, which includes general cleaning of common area spaces each weeknight. Deficient cleaning is dealt with swiftly after notification.

#### **Lease Agreements at PHA Properties:**

- Maintenance staff, with assistance from the Legal Team, continue to facilitate leasing of PHA rooftop space to cell phone and other communication system providers. Maintenance works closely with the Legal and Finance Departments to research, evaluate and compare the financial earnings of the Agency contracts to industry norms. Staff review existing cellular contracts and identify opportunities to amend the lease terms at the appropriate intervals to maximize cellular rooftop lease earnings.
- The cell site leases generate approximately \$900,000 in revenue annually for the PHA.
- Staff executed four new leases with Dish Wireless at Cleveland, Edgerton, Iowa and Wilson Hi-Rises in June and July 2022 with a January 1, 2023 commencement date. Staff also executed a new lease with Dish Wireless at Dunedin Hi-Rise in January 2023 with an April 1, 2023 commencement date. Dish Wireless began to install their equipment at a few of the sites in early 2023 (FY23) and is expected to continue install throughout FY 2024.
- Staff executed four AT&T lease amendments with rent increases at Exchange, Iowa, Cleveland and Edgerton in August 2022 for them to upgrade their facilities and add additional antennas. Work is expected to start in FY 2024.
- Following the merger of T-Mobile and Sprint, nearly all of the Sprint cellular rooftop leases have been decommissioned, except for Hamline Hi-Rise. Staff is working with T-Mobile/Sprint's landlord services team to reconcile the outstanding terminated leases and recoup outstanding rent payments per the lease terms and refund all security deposits.

- Resident Services staff continue to work with service providers to defray costs of community centers' operations by establishing rental agreements.

**GOAL #5 – LEGAL:** Provide timely legal advice and support to all PHA Departments in matters that have legal implications. Continue to advise the Executive Director and all Department Directors regarding any issue, including but not limited to; contracts, human resources, employment law, real estate, litigation, data requests, fair housing and human rights, and PHA specific programs (RAD, LIPH, HCV). Represent the PHA in informal conferences, hearings, housing court, all state and federal courts. Advise the Board of Commissioners as requested to support the PHA mission.

- The specific accomplishments of the PHA's Legal Team appear throughout this report by Department as set forth in each Agency Goal.

**GOAL#6 – PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT:**

- a. Seek federal (HUD), state (MN Housing), local (City of St. Paul and Ramsey County) and other entity (FHLBDM) funding to preserve the PHA's \$906 million capital asset comprised of 3,836 PBRA units, 418 LIPH units, four community centers, and the W.A. Boss Central Administrative Office.
- b. Seek City of St. Paul and Ramsey County funding (ARP or otherwise) for the new construction of 11 Faircloth family dwelling units on PHA-owned land. Utilize the appropriate HUD regulatory framework to own and manage these units once produced (i.e., "Faircloth to RAD").

- Staff corresponded with the City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota Housing, Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines (FHLBDM) and other Agencies to stay abreast of upcoming grant opportunities, key dates and project requirements. Staff identified, listed and prioritized capital improvements suitable for potential grant and loan opportunities. Staff and consultants prepared detailed project estimates and scopes of work for potential projects that may qualify. Projects are planned and scheduled in anticipation of grant opportunities to be fully prepared to apply.
- During the fiscal year, staff prepared and submitted two Competitive Affordable Housing Program applications to FHLBDM totaling \$1,500,000 for elevator modernization at two Hi-Rises. In December 2022 FHLBDM staff notified the PHA that our applications were not selected. Staff continue to seek available FHLBDM funding on an annual basis.
- In February 2022, Ramsey County opened solicitations for Inclusive Housing Development funds. Staff prepared and submitted four applications for development of eleven new Faircloth housing units at McDonough Homes and Dunedin Terrace (\$3,950,000 total), along with applications for building improvements at Edgerton and Seal Hi-Rises (\$6,500,000 total). In June 2022 Ramsey County awarded the PHA \$5.5

million, fully funding the construction of the 11 new units and partially funding the proposed building improvements at Edgerton and Seal Hi-Rises.

- In February 2023, Ramsey County opened another round of solicitations for Housing Development. Staff prepared and submitted five application for building improvements at Dunedin, Edgerton, Hamline, Iowa and Ravoux Hi-Rises (\$14,700,000 total). Ramsey County awarded \$1.15M to the PHA for rehabilitation/preservation work at four PHA Hi-Rises.
- In March 2023, the PHA was awarded an \$800,000 Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Funding grant for the Neill Hi-Rise electrical system modernization.
- In March 2023, staff applied for a total of \$5.75 million dollars of FFY 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) through the office of U.S. Senator Tina Smith, U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar and U.S. Representative Betty McCollum. Three applications were submitted for the Central Hi-Rise Electrical System Modernization (\$1,500,000), Central Hi-Rise Plumbing Modernization (\$3,500,000) and Hamline Hi-Rise Elevator Modernization (\$750,000). Congress has not passed the appropriations bill that would have included funding for these projects, but in early August staff learned that they were not included in the legislation released by the Senate Appropriations Committee, so our applications are no longer in the running to receive FFY24 CDS funding.
- The Section 32 Homeownership plan, in which the Agency could sell scattered site units to qualified PHA residents, remains on hold while the Agency investigates asset repositioning of the 418 scattered site units. During this time, staff continues to maintain and modernize the 418 scattered site units as needed.
- Maintenance staff collaborated with other departments throughout the fiscal year to develop applications requesting outside funding from Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines, Minnesota Housing, Congressionally Directed Spending, Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul to modernize existing PHA properties and develop new low-income housing. Staff also sought additional income, rebates and reimbursements from HUD, HAI Group, Xcel Energy and other sources. Examples of efforts included:
  - Minnesota Housing: See discussion of Minnesota Housing POHP loans/grants.
  - Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines (FHLBDM): See discussion of FHLBDM applications. Staff worked with representatives of Bremer Bank, Bank Cherokee, and Sunrise Banks on the development and submission of grant applications.
  - Xcel Energy: Staff worked with Xcel Energy representatives to secure energy rebates. In FY 2023, the PHA ended participation in Xcel's natural gas curtailment program to reduce the cost of supplemental diesel fuel to sustain the PHA's heating system operations during Xcel's natural gas curtailment.
  - Center for Energy and Environment (CEE): Staff work with representatives of the Center for Energy and Environment to secure Xcel Energy rebates on improvements that reduce electrical and gas usage.

- Solar Community Garden Subscriptions: Staff continued to seek additional opportunities for Solar Community Garden subscriptions to provide clean energy to PHA properties.
- District Energy: Staff work with District Energy personnel to reduce heating utility usage and expenses at the PHA-owned properties served by District Energy.
- Saint Paul Regional Water Services: Staff work with SPRWS personnel to identify and eliminate causes of high water usage to reduce utility expenses.
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy Center: Staff participated in a no cost pilot program provided by Ramsey/Washington R&E to collect and recycle discarded mattresses and box-spring at McDonough Homes, Mt. Airy Homes and Roosevelt Homes.
- HAI Group: Staff received an HAI Group Safety Improvement Reimbursement in an amount of \$35,495 for completed fire alarm system improvements at Valley and Dunedin Hi-Rises.
- Cell Phone Providers: As noted elsewhere in this report, staff continue to work with representatives of Dish Wireless, AT&T, T-Mobile/Sprint, Verizon and others on lease agreements for PHA hi-rise rooftop leases.

**GOAL #7 – “ONE PHA” ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- a. Continue meeting the employment challenges of the times, including but not limited to recruiting, retaining, and rewarding qualified staff.
- b. Promote and enforce Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative action. Preserve the PHA’s strong commitment for diversity, equity and inclusion and the diverse voices that are imbedded throughout the organization.
- c. Promote education, growth, and advancement of employees through on-boarding, training, career planning, and other resources.
- d. Continue improving the physical work environment (redesign the CAO first and third floors for RS and HCV staff respectively) and otherwise refine our in-office and work-from-home business model.
- e. Strengthen and expand the “client office-visit-less” strategy while improving customer service.
- f. Continue advocating for MRI software improvements that increase access, efficiency and customer service for applicants, participants and staff, especially those that deliver on paperless operational objectives. Continue seeking other ways to utilize the Agency’s computer business systems to maximize efficiency, compliance, and customer service/resident-participant satisfaction.

**Human Resources**

**Staffing:** Under the leadership of Director of Human Resources Alicia Huckleby, the PHA continued to attract and retain a qualified workforce during FY 2023.

- Staffing activity was lower than last fiscal year due to a decrease in turnover (13.46%, down from 16.80% last fiscal year) and resulting vacancies (33 new hires and 24 promotions, lateral transfers and voluntary demotions). Recruiting activity continued including testing, reference checks, scheduling physical examinations, criminal background checks, new employee orientation, etc. Hiring, promoting, and all other personnel transactions resulted in the processing of 352 “Notification of Personnel Action” forms.
- **Of the 231 regular full and part-time staff members employed by the PHA at the end of FY 2023, 45% were women and 51% were people of color.** Both groups work in all levels of the organization. Of the 33 staff hired for regular positions, 64% were employees of color and 64% were women.
- Of the 24 staff members promoted, transferred, and voluntarily demoted, 58% were people of color and 42% were women.
- To aid in the workload because of turnover, 20 temporary employees were hired throughout the fiscal year. This included temporary employees for seasonal maintenance positions.
- Staff continued to identify and work with PHA residents whose skills match PHA temporary and on-going employment needs and assisted in developing resident economic development initiatives. Continued to administer a comprehensive applicant-testing program. Approximately 116 internal and external applicants were tested for various positions during the year. Continued to score tests using HR and staff from the hiring department.
- Staff reviewed and scored 97 internal employee applications and 719 external applications.
- Staff conducted exit interviews with 32 staff that terminated employment with the Agency.

#### **Employee Performance and Productivity:**

- Provided consultation and guidance to supervisors regarding individual and group employee performance and productivity issues.
- HR staff advised supervisors about how to proceed with various issues, covering topics such as organization and work design, employee coaching and counseling. In some cases it was appropriate to advise supervisors to take formal disciplinary action to help resolve and correct performance problems.
- HR staff worked with several supervisors to develop Work Improvement Plans for employees.
- Continued to publish quarterly Employee Activity Guide providing detailed information to department directors and the Executive Director covering human resources and staffing activity indicators. Indicators include: employees hired, promoted/transferred/demoted, terminated/laid-off; recruiting activity by department; employee turnover; employee population by ethnic group; age distribution of all employees; employees on leave; health insurance cost; list of temporary employees; full-

time equivalent employee count by department; and training programs attended by each employee.

- Reviewed job requirements and testing process to ensure that all job applicants have fair and equal opportunity to be considered for positions for which they are qualified.
- Coordinated and conducted three half-day orientation training sessions and three full day orientation training sessions, each for a total of 33 new employees.
- Conducted two New Supervisor Orientations for 12 employees.

#### **Affirmative Action Compliance:**

- Reviewed 352 Personnel Action Forms for EEO compliance: recruitment, hiring, transfers, promotions, demotions, terminations and other employment actions.

#### **Diversity Initiatives:**

- Provided opportunities for PHA staff to acknowledge and celebrate diversity and cultural heritage months. Maintained a monthly newsletter and calendar of diversity information and events for PHA staff and residents, including:
  - April email: Financial Capability Month
  - May email: Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and Mental Health Awareness
  - June email: Juneteenth and GLBT Pride Month
  - September email: Hispanic Heritage Month
  - October email: Disability in Employment Awareness Month
  - November email: Native American Heritage Month
  - February email: Black History Month
  - March email: Women's History Month
  - Submitted the PHA's Annual Informational Board Report on the PHA's FY 2022 Affirmative Action Accomplishments and FY 2023 Employment Goals.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Compliance:** Under the leadership of Human Resources Director Alicia Huckleby staff achieved the following:

- Reviewed job requirements and testing processes to ensure that all job applicants have fair and equal opportunity to be considered for positions for which they are qualified.

**Employee Relations and Conflict Resolution:** Enhanced communication and coordination efforts with other departments to effectively identify needs and implement strategies in areas related to EEO/AA, diversity, fair housing, safety and security, and conflict management.

- Conducted consultations with staff regarding issues with co-workers, supervisors, performance, discipline, conflict resolution techniques and other workplace concerns.

- Facilitated discussion with employees regarding work environment, performance and conflict resolution. Enhanced communication and coordination efforts with other departments to identify needs and implement strategies in areas related to EEO/AA, diversity, fair housing, safety and security, and conflict management
- Maintenance staff training is recorded in the work order system. The Assistant Maintenance Director monitors and maintains record of staff sign-in sheets for training and shares the data with Human Resources. Maintenance supervisory staff work to expand and update training opportunities and give access to career development opportunities as department budget allows.
- Maintenance supervisors continued to work with the Human Resources staff to recruit, retain and promote a work force that reflects the population of the Agency's recruitment area. At the end of the fiscal year, the department had 97 full-time employees, 31 staff members were people of color. (Note: This is 31.9% of the total which exceeds the percentage of minorities in the Agency's recruitment area who are trained and available to work.) Eight employees are women (8.2% of the total.) Three of the women work in male-dominated, non-traditional positions. Of the six new hires during the fiscal year, three were people of color. One Maintenance employee promoted was a person of color.
- Maintenance Managers and Maintenance Supervisors continue to discuss opportunities for advancement in staff careers on a regular basis, both inside the department and in the Agency as a whole. Employees interested in participating in a Career Development plan were referred to Human Resources for job shadowing opportunities and information on the requirements needed to achieve their career goals. Employees also worked directly with their peers to learn new skills to aid them in their development into more specialized work. One Maintenance staff was involved in career development in FY 2023.
- The Assistant Maintenance Director and Maintenance Support staff worked directly with other departments to troubleshoot work order entry. The Assistant Maintenance Director continues to create reports and adjust forms as necessary based on the data needs of the Agency. This data is used in conjunction with Housing Policy to create monthly reporting for executive and Board review. Maintenance Support staff work with Administrative Support Technicians at other sites to identify issues and find solutions to common problems, referring complicated issues back to Tenmast for solution. Staff continue to look for improvements within the work order system to provide detailed information to the field so work may be completed faster and more accurately.

### **Human Resources Technology/Cloud-based Program Accomplishments:**

#### **Automatic Data Processing, Inc. (ADP)**

- Processed 6,166 payroll checks via electronic direct deposit.
- Worked directly with supervisors to assist in training in the ADP payroll system.
  - Employees can now complete time cards and request time off electronically.
  - Employees have access to benefit systems and plan options electronically.
  - Converted all benefit enrollment to online paperless enrollment.

- Administered the following benefit plans through paperless administration:
  - Medical – HealthPartners (235 employees)
  - Dental – Health Partners (235 employees)
  - HRA/VEBA – TASC (57 employees)
  - Vision – Eye Med (170 employees)
  - Flex Medical and Dependent Care – Discovery Benefits (59 employees)
  - Life and Long Term Disability – CIGNA (125 employees)
  - Pension – Principal (all benefit eligible employees)
  - Minnesota Deferred Compensation – MSRS (47 employees)
  - LifeWorks/TELUS Health – Enhanced Employee Assistance Program available to all PHA employees

### **Training**

- HR coordinated mandatory Active Shooter preparedness training for all PHA employees.
- Coordinated Emotional Intelligence training for all supervisory staff.
- HR initiated a three-year contract with Kantola Training Solutions to provide cloud-based mandatory DEI and harassment prevention training to all employees.
- All new HR staff received cloud-based training in conducting ergonomic reviews.

### **Compensation Review:**

- We had two reclassifications and one new position created. These evaluations and new job creations were evaluated by Fox Lawson a division of Gallagher. They were then presented to the PHA's Board for approval, and then to the applicable union for their approval.

### **NEOGOV Recruitment**

- Assisted supervisors with NEOGOV recruiting system. Agency is now completely paperless for the entire recruiting process.

### **Maintenance:**

- The Maintenance Department continues to make improvements to the operation of the Storeroom. This fiscal year, inventory was completed quickly and accurately due to acting upon efficiencies noted from previous years. Staff continued to enhance procedures to better streamline the Storeroom purchasing and receiving process by using digital forms to aid in speed of transactions and legibility of documents. Through the Tenmast system, usage reports are created in real time to view where and when items were spent and review low stock items for reordering. By using this process, items can be ordered in more reasonable quantities and utilized within the manufacturer's warranty period. Supply chain issues continued to place a strain on Storeroom operations due to extended lead times and low or no availability of product, but gains in efficiency within

the product stocking process have allowed staff to see issues and act upon them early.

- During physical inventory of the Storeroom, the variance between the physical count and Tenmast system count was 0.04% (\$131). This is a large improvement over prior years and is evidence that the controls put in place over the preceding fiscal years are beginning to take hold and improve operations. Additional objectives for the next fiscal year are planned including faster turnaround times for paperwork, more frequent reviews of inventory levels and more frequent reviews of open and in progress orders to expedite work flow in the Tenmast system.
- Maintenance staff routinely explore technical innovations in maintenance and janitorial equipment to promote efficient maintenance operations. New chemical-free technologies to remove floor wax have been deployed to improve efficiency and employee safety.
- The PHA's consultants continue exploring new imaging technologies and drones to explore the exteriors of hi-rise buildings without the use of ladders or expensive swing stages.
- Cellular and other communication providers are taking advantage of changes in rooftop cellular equipment technologies to reduce the footprint of this equipment atop our Hi-Rises therefore reducing the maintenance and repair of our roofing materials. Staff work with the cellular providers to clear out their old and unused equipment to gain back space, access paths and reduce maintenance loads on the roofs of our buildings. Staff require the cellular providers to repair all damage from the removal of their equipment. As 5G wireless technology spreads and cellular companies grow or consolidate, staff have an opportunity to review each cellular site for physical needs as well as changes to the contract language to increase rent for each site. Staff were able to coordinate the installation of a stairway on the rooftop of Cleveland Hi-Rise, at the expense of the cellular provider, to allow safe access to portions of the roof that were difficult to access.

### **Information Technology (IT):**

- **Security Initiatives** – During FY 2023, staff continued activities to maintain system security and stability, and planned for the implementation of several initiatives to improve security that will be executed in FY 2024.
  - Planned and budgeted for the implementation and migration to the Microsoft Office 365 secure government cloud solution to host mail and application services in Microsoft's cloud-based environment.
  - Deployed security awareness training program through leading vendor KnowBe4 to help enhance user awareness on SPAM, Phishing and Vishing threats.
  - Replaced Backup appliance and software solution to manage disaster recovery and replication.
  - Performed ongoing maintenance of anti-virus, firewall, backup, and other security applications.
  - Conducted regular weekend patching schedules for all servers and major devices to enhance security of the network.

- Coordinated security of HUD REAC/PIC/WASS/EIV systems.
  - Setup new user accounts in WASS/EIV/PIC.
  - Recertified EIV accounts twice per year.
  - Checked for expired PIC logins, managed account expirations of active users.
- **Remote Work** – Continued to enable mobile workforce in response to the agency’s work-from-home requirements during the pandemic.
  - Purchased, configured and deployed numerous laptops for mobile use.
  - Purchased and deployed GoTo remote assistance program for remote monitoring and management (RMM) and user assistance for versatility.
  - Purchased and deployed laptop docks for easier movement between home office and work, and also between work locations.
  - Continued the use of SonicWall Virtual Private Network (VPN) clients (Global VPN and NetExtender SSL VPN) for secure external connections, with multi-factor authentication (MFA) enabled.
  - Managed softphone licenses with headsets for phone use by remote workers.
  - Continued to support and add cellular lines as needed to enable mobile communications.
  - Supported users through initial and ongoing tickets on work-from-home issues.
- **Continuous Infrastructure Improvements:**
  - Upgraded several key servers to the latest Windows Server to leverage new features and functionalities.
  - Purchased, upgraded and continued optimizing the vSphere environment to reduce risks associated with server downtime, including increasing failover (where standby equipment automatically takes over when the main system fails).
  - Purchased and upgraded network switches within PHA’s infrastructure to remove end-of-life equipment.
  - Updated certificates on all PHA web pages with the latest wildcard certificate.
- **Personnel:**
  - HR and leadership worked with Loffler consulting to hire a new IT Manager.
  - IT staff worked with HR and Loffler consulting to hire a new IT Network Administrator, a new IT Business Analyst and a new IT Generalist.
- **IT-Maintained Contracts and Systems:**
  - Managed virtual Chief Information Officer (vCIO) 3-year contract.
  - Managed 3-year printer maintenance contract.
  - Managed 5-year copy machines lease.

- Managed Allstream, CenturyLink and State of MN IT, Comcast contract accounts.
- Worked with St. Paul Police Department, PHA Legal and PHA RS department to upgrade to AT&T FirstNet (first responder) mobile service for PHA cell phones.
- **Supporting Agency initiatives and goals:**
  - Supported Finance in the Certificate of Rent Paid (CRP) process to account for payments made to the PHA from RentHelpMN, the Zero Balance Project and other outside resources on behalf of residents. These funds were excluded from the CRPs as rent paid by the resident in accordance with regulations.
  - Supported Legal with e-discovery of emails and documents related to lawsuits.
  - Started working with PHA Resident Initiatives towards engagement with PHA community by providing donation equipment and consultation to RI computer team.
  - Served as the Agency's primary contact with MRI/Tenmast, the vendor for PHA's business software.
    - Participated in bi-monthly meetings with MRI Account Executive.
    - Focused on quick ticket resolution, including the escalation of tickets where MRI is not meeting their commitment to resolve tickets promptly.
- **User Support and Technical Education:**
  - Participated in new hire orientation sessions with a 20-minute presentation on IT security topics for increased awareness.
  - IT driven initiative to provide first-hand customized training through MRI on all Tenmast/Happy/SecureSign products and services to all PHA departments and staff.
- **HCV and Resident Services:**
  - Resident Services and HCV Programs staff participate in IT Steering Committee and offer solutions and critical thinking to further agency objectives.
  - Resident Services and HCV Programs staff continue to engage deeply, at every staff level, to ensure that current and developing software systems and responsive to agency, participant customer, and owner customer needs, to ensure optimal customer service, program integrity, and efficiency.
  - Resident Services and HCV Programs staff continue to investigate paperless solutions within future software iteration. The coronavirus pandemic has given this work increased priority and weight, and we remain eager for improvements from our software provider.
  - HCV and Rental Office continued use of the MRI online application and waiting list portals. This allowed applicants to the HCV program and PHA-owned housing to apply for housing and report changes to their applications online. It

streamlined procedures, reduced the PHA's carbon footprint, and was an important step towards paperless applicant and resident files.

**GOAL #8 – FAIR HOUSING:** Ensure Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in program admissions and administration, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Work cooperatively with community representatives and other units of government to ensure non-discrimination in PHA programs.

- The PHA waiting lists (including HCV, PBRA, and LIPH) are representative of the overall population of the metropolitan area, reflecting the area's changing demographics in the applicant pool. Through interactions with the applicant population, staff continued to demonstrate their respect for cultural differences and make accommodations as needed.
- Staff from HCV and PHA-owned programs continue to review and approve Reasonable Accommodations, with assistance from Legal, and grant these policy exceptions as required.
- Staff work with the PHA's Legal team to track and refer claims of harassment received from participants and applicants regarding their participant landlords.
- Staff continue to work with HousingLink to ensure that all participants have access to housing that meets their disability-related needs.

**GOAL #9 – LINKS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES:** Primarily through the work of staff in the Resident Services and Resident Initiatives Departments, solidify community-based partnerships and resources that provide an array of support services to residents of PHA-owned properties. Work with community agencies to maintain and develop programs that enrich residents' lives, promote wellness, and increase economic self-sufficiency and community involvement. Stabilize and promote CHSP. Achieve Section 3 goals for resident economic opportunities to the greatest extent feasible.

**Services to Residents at Community Centers:** Resident Services Director Kim Nguyen, Senior Managers Charisse Brown and Tara Johnson, site Housing Managers and Human Services Coordinators worked hard to successfully manage four Community Centers in a manner that meets the needs of changing populations, maximizes the number of services that can be offered to family residents and prioritizes space for programs that work with residents.

- Staff successfully managed four community centers, which includes facility management, addressing security and upkeep issues, working with current service providers and actively seeking future service providers. The PHA provides space, utilities, receptionist services, maintenance and repair to non-profit agencies serving residents in PHA-owned housing.

- Resident Services staff continued to work with the Resident Initiatives Department regarding community center space usage and monitoring current Service Providers under contract with the PHA, as well as being vigilant in securing future partners.
- Free tax assistance resumed during this fiscal year only at McDonough community center. Previously, the PHA had collaborated with the Minnesota Department of Revenue's Community Outreach, Hiway Federal Credit Union, and the Resident Council and Management staff to provide free tax assistance at Mt. Airy and McDonough community centers for 21 years. About \$757,215 total Federal and State tax refunds were completed for the 2022 tax year at McDonough.
- Maintenance staff worked closely with Resident Services to secure an agreement with Headstart to convert the under-utilized Dunedin Family Center to a new child care facility with two classrooms to serve the Dunedin Family Development and surrounding area. Staff observed the construction work executed by others to prepare the Dunedin Family Center for a new Head Start program.
- HCV Programs staff continue to manage the FSS-Section 8 program in compliance with HUD requirements. Staff continue to successfully apply for FSS Coordinator grants when available. Effective January 1, 2023 staff sub-contracted with Neighborhood House to handle some of the Coordinator responsibilities. PHA staff still monitor the escrows and 50058 submissions/updates.

**Congregate Housing Services Program (CHSP):** Within the CHSP program, goals included attaining full census at all CHSP sites as supported by the grant budget, and maintaining improved communication, procedures, and computer reports to link CHSP with the Hi-Rise Management work unit.

- **During FY 2023, CHSP averaged 78 clients out of a possible 125.** As reported elsewhere during FY 2023, CHSP underwent a consolidation from four to two sites which greatly impacted the program census. This was completed to ensure the long-term viability of the program which had been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and staffing constraints. The CHSP Program Manager and the Resident Services Director continued to work with the Budget Director/Chief Financial Officer to maintain good interdepartmental coordination of billing and budgets.
- CHSP and Rental Office staff continued to assess the skills and needs of CHSP applicants on the waiting list with a spreadsheet that is updated monthly. There are also regular meetings between the CHSP Program Manager, CHSP Coordinators, and the Rental Office, which is intended to decrease the processing time on CHSP applications, increase client satisfaction and reduce the number of clients who cancel their application. The number of referrals and intakes completed by CHSP Coordinators continued to be high, which supports the growing awareness and need of the program.
- CHSP Coordinators continued to attend all kitchen inspections performed with the site Maintenance Manager and building Manager.
- The program resumed congregating dining services which had been paused during the COVID-19 pandemic for the health and safety of the clients. Additionally, wellness events returned to promote client well-being through socialization.

- **The partnership with Presbyterian Homes, Optage Senior Dining Choices, is entering its 14<sup>th</sup> year with the PHA**, with the initial contract having started January 2009. This partnership, along with the Wilder Foundation, continued to be very successful and valuable to residents.

**Accessible Space, Inc. (ASI)**: ASI is a nonprofit organization that has shared a partnership with the PHA since October 1, 1988. Over the past 34 years this program has housed hundreds of residents providing 24/7/365 of personal care services, which has allowed those residents to enjoy a basic form of independent living, and avoid premature placement to a care facility or nursing home. ASI continued to operate at Valley Hi-Rise in FY 2023.

**Resident Initiatives**: Under the leadership of Resident Initiatives Director Alicia Huckleby, staff met all established goals.

- **Resident Councils**: Worked with the Resident Services Department to continue to provide necessary staff support to all Hi-Rise Resident Councils. Provided direct support to the Presidents Council (PC) by attending Council meetings, drafting and reviewing by-laws and contracts for PC review and approval, encouraging resident participation and compliance with the Resident Council Guide and by-laws, providing new residents with information about Councils, providing Resident Councils with a virtual meeting platform option through Zoom and providing group and individual training in this area, and encouraging residents to take leadership roles in Councils. Provided guidance to all Hi-Rise Resident Councils and building management staff on appropriate use of funds. Assured proper controls are in place to adequately monitor all expenditures.
  - Presidents Council Website: Continued to work with the Presidents Council to maintain and upgrade their website: [www.stphapresidentscouncil.org](http://www.stphapresidentscouncil.org). The website provides information about the Councils, meeting schedules, officers, programs, services and resources for residents, and links to PHA and partner events.
  - Training opportunities: Planned and facilitated the annual officer training for Presidents Council individual Resident Council members. In addition, provided training for Council officers elected mid-term. Provided ongoing training for QuickBooks and nonprofit financial management.
    - Memorandum of Understanding: Worked with all Resident Councils to monitor and update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on an annual basis to comply with RAD requirements.
    - Maintained fiscal responsibility: Worked with Councils to maintain fiscal responsibility per HUD and PHA guidelines. Recruited, trained, and assigned QuickBooks Peers to work with Resident Councils and to complete a mini-audit each month of the Council's finances.
  - Zoom and In Person Meetings: Worked with the Presidents Council to purchase the needed equipment and offer ongoing trainings to provide different options to allow all officers and residents the opportunity to join Council meetings either in person or through Zoom in a manner that they feel is comfortable and safe for them.

- Engagement and Resident Council leadership involvement: Worked with the Presidents Council to form committees which allow officers and residents the opportunities to voice ideas or suggest changes that they would like to see occur in Council activities.
- Presidents Council Committee Newsletter: Worked with the Presidents Council to form a committee which is dedicated to gathering resources to add to the Newsletter. In addition, officers have the opportunity to share their stories and experience in the Newsletter. Officers were able to offer words of encouragement to their neighbors and share their COVID-19 pandemic stories in the 2022 Newsletter.
- Computer Peers: Recruited, trained, and supported residents with computer skills to act as Computer Peers. Computer Peers, upon assignment, work with individual Councils to update and fix computers that are owned and maintained by the Councils for residents to use.
- City Wide Resident Council By-Laws: Worked with the Council and Residents Services, Finance, and Legal staff to review and update Council by-laws and Resident Council Guide, clarifying and modifying financial processes and language about professional conduct. Updated MOU language.
- City Wide Resident Council Website: Staff worked with City Wide Resident Council to maintain their website and make it accessible to residents and the public. A list of City Wide officers, City Wide programs, resources for multi-family residents, links to PHA events and operational materials can be found at [www.citywideresidentcouncil.org](http://www.citywideresidentcouncil.org), the website is maintained by the RI Program Coordinator and City Wide Chair.
- Annual Officers Training: Officers from the family sites attended a virtual City Wide-Family Council officer training on August 3, 2022. The Dispute Resolution Center facilitated a discussion about social justice and conflict resolution. The RI Program Coordinator led the officers in team building activities and reviewed members roles and responsibilities. Attendees learned about running meetings, financial accountability and values. In addition, the new City Wide Chair was trained in running meetings and other responsibilities, and City Wide's accountant provided training to the chair on QuickBooks.
- City Wide Resident Council continued to meet and conduct business via Zoom, successfully maintaining operations and holding emergency meetings as needed. They also renewed their Quick Books subscription.
- Computer Lab Usage: The Computer Labs at McDonough and Mt. Airy family sites remained in working order and the RI Program Coordinator worked with service providers to set schedules for classes.
- City Wide Resident Council continued to provide annual financial support for the National Night Out activities held at McDonough Homes in FY 2023.
- City Wide Resident Council renewed their contract with their accountant and successfully completed their annual audit, maintaining fiscal responsibility. The

Board and Council successfully maintained operations by meeting and conducting business through Zoom every other month.

- New Council IT Support: Derrick Malone continued to provide IT services for the City Wide Residents Council; including the McDonough and Mt. Airy family site computer labs and all computers in the 16 hi-rises.
- The Computer Team continued to meet on a monthly basis through Zoom. Staff facilitated the meeting, obtaining updates on computer issues, assigning Help Desk issues to Computer Peers and recruiting additional residents to join the team. The team researched and set up a new ticketing system with Fresh Desk to manage Council computer technical issues, through which Computer Peers are assigned cases and cases are reviewed monthly.
- Finance staff conducted a Resident Participation Funds training for Human Services Coordinators and Housing Managers to review processes and guidelines for fund usage.
- **Youth Connections:**
  - Free Little Libraries/Saint Paul Public Libraries: During the summer of 2022 St. Paul Public Libraries resumed making book donations to libraries at Mt. Airy, McDonough and Dunedin Multifamily Housing sites.
  - Hosted book fairs at four family sites in July 2022. The books for all age groups came from St Paul Public Libraries and the Free Book Buggie. The intent was to promote literacy. The family sites currently have Little Free Libraries, and these additional book fairs provide more opportunities for youth to have access to books.
  - Launched a Youth Connections web page on the PHA website geared towards youth. A resource guide, survey, links to services and calendar are part of the program promotion.
  - Staff attended meetings held by Sprockets, by Zoom and in person, to learn about programs and services for youth living at PHA properties.
  - Began to implement items from a FY22 Youth Connections (YC) proposal future YC led activities. Activities included: art, reading, environmental science, and sports.
  - Kao Kalia Yang Book Reading Event: Collaborated with Mississippi Creative Arts School and Saint Paul Public Library Book Mobile to host a book reading by local award-winning author Kao Kalia Yang in May 2022.
- **Wellness Initiatives:**
  - Smoke Free Public Housing: PHA staff continued to distribute cessation resources from Minnesota Department of Health Quit Partner and My Life My Quit Teen Program at PHA sites and community events.
  - Pharmacy of Cub Foods Store #1694: Renewed agreement with Cub Foods for Human Services Coordinators to coordinate annual on-site flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine clinics for residents living in all 16 hi-rises and 4 family sites.

- Ramsey County Food Resource Map: Distributed Ramsey County's Food Resource Map to PHA staff, residents, service providers, partners, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and at community events.
- Twin Cities Mobile Market: Continued current partnership to increase access to healthy, affordable food with 10 PHA sites.
- 1593 Jackson Street Soil Remediation Project: Collaborated with PHA Maintenance Contracts and Ramsey County Master Gardeners to maintain plot for ongoing phytoremediation.
- University of Minnesota Extension Ramsey County Master Gardener Mentor Program: Partnered with Ramsey County Master Gardeners to facilitate the sixth annual PHA Garden Mentor Program. This year's training included on-site garden skill-building classes at each hi-rise facilitated by Ramsey County Master Gardeners volunteers. 54 residents participated in the Growing Vegetables & Herbs class offered in March 2023.
- University of Minnesota Extension Ramsey County Master Gardener Gardens for Good Pilot Program: Partnered with Ramsey County Master Gardener to pilot Gardens for Good weekly produce donation at Wilson Hi-Rise June 2022-September 2022.
- Concordia University Physical Therapy Department: Partnered with Doctoral Physical Therapy students from Concordia University to facilitate two fall prevention balance screening sessions at three hi-rises.
- Free Bikes 4 Kidz: Hosted two rounds of PHA Free Bikes 4 Kidz Week bike distribution events. In April 2022, PHA held the tenth annual Free Bikes 4 Kidz bike giveaway. In December 2022, PHA held a 'surprise' second round of bike giveaways as Free Bikes 4 Kidz transitions back to their pre-pandemic winter bike giveaway schedule. In 2022, PHA matched and distributed 371 bicycles and helmets to youth and families, bringing PHA's overall total to 2,342 youth who have received a bicycle and helmet since 2012.
- Allina Health Charitable Contributions: Collaborated with Presidents Council and City Wide Residents Council to successfully request \$10,000 Allina Health Charitable Funds to support access to healthy foods through raised bed accessible gardening.
- Wilder Foundation Living Well Workshops: Partnered with Wilder Foundation to offer in-person class options for PHA residents to participate in Living Well Workshops.
- Rethink Your Drink: Promoted Rethink Your Drink by distributing youth and adult water bottles at community events and wellness classes.
- The Sanneh Foundation Emergency Food Access: Partnered with The Sanneh Foundation to provide monthly meal kit distribution at two PHA Family Sites.
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Mattress Collection & Recycling Pilot: Facilitated partnership between PHA, Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy, and Second Chance Recycling/EMERGE to continue mattress collection and

recycling program at the Mt. Airy and Roosevelt Family Developments. This pilot program ended in December 31, 2022.

- Second Change Recycling/EMERGE: PHA contracted directly with Second Chance Recycling/EMERGE in January 2023 to build partnership and resume mattress recycling services that began from the Ramsey/Washington R&E Pilot.
- Friends School of Minnesota Organic Lawn Care: Renewed agreement with Friends School of Minnesota to continue providing organic lawn care services at Hamline Hi-Rise, in coordination with PHA Maintenance, at no cost to PHA.
- Metropolitan State University School of Nursing: Coordinated Holistic Community Clinical Nursing Projects at four PHA Hi-Rises and two Family Sites, in partnership with Metro State Nursing Professors Debra Eardley and Pat Schoon.
- PHA Arbor Day Celebration: Collaborated with Executive, Resident Services and Maintenance Departments to host an Arbor Day celebration in April 2022 at Cleveland Hi Rise. The Arbor Day event began with a brief program in the community room and culminated with the planting of several trees in the park area surrounding the Hi-Rise. It was a successful event with great participation from residents and staff.
- Cleveland Hi-Rise Community Art Project with COMPAS Art: Partnered with COMPAS Art and teaching artist Katrina Knutson to facilitate community art project at Cleveland Hi Rise. Resident participants created a painting to celebrate the nearby nature in Cleveland Hi Rise's backyard. The community art piece was unveiled during the PHA Arbor Day Celebration.
- Hi-Rise Apartment Recycling: Provided ongoing support for Hi-Rise resident Recycling Coordinators to successfully fulfill duties such as promote recycling in their buildings and prepare recycling bins for weekly collection. Distributed recycling resources, including apartment collection bins and materials, to PHA staff and New Resident Orienteers to distribute to new residents.
- Eureka Recycling: Coordinated with Eureka Recycling staff to provide PHA with quarterly recycling tonnage for each Hi-Rise. Hi-Rise Resident Councils receive \$20 per ton of collected recyclable materials on a quarterly basis, based on data provided by Eureka Recycling. Recycling income checks are issued quarterly from PHA. Collaborated with Eureka Recycling to offer virtual recycling facility tour for four Hi Rise Recycling Coordinators.
- City of Saint Paul Recycle SMART Multi-Unit Apartment Recycling Pilot: Two PHA Hi-Rises participated in the City's Recycle SMART Pilot program focused on targeted education campaign with multi-unit apartment buildings. Properties identified for this project received a series of informational "Recycle Smart" postcards mailed to each unit monthly (June 2022-November 2022). Properties also receive follow-up resources, including results of the Composition Study and education materials to address barriers or other issues affecting recycling services. A recycling Composition Study was performed in May 2022 and November 2022.

- Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota: Collaborated with Bike MN to provide on-site bicycle repair and bicycle skill-building opportunities for all 16 Hi-Rises and four Family Sites. Bike MN hosted free bicycle repair events at the Hi-Rises in August 2022-October 2022. At the family sites, Bike MN coordinated with the youth book fair events, Spring Fling events and National Night Out to provide free bike repair during these community events.
- Sounds of Hope: Coordinated with Sounds of Hope to host a music concert on-site at one Hi-Rise. Sounds of Hope is a six-week, overnight performing arts summer camp in Saint Paul, MN for kids age 10 and older from around the world. Sounds of Hope musicians have performed at PHA in the past, this was the first concert since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation I94/35E Downtown Commons Study Stakeholder Workshop: Coordinated with PHA representatives from Resident Initiatives, Resident Services, Maintenance and Maintenance Contracts to participate in the Stakeholder Workshop hosted by MnDOT. MnDOT recognizes the relationship between the transportation network, including the network under MnDOT ownership, and development, safety, equity, accessibility, health, livability and sustainability along the corridor. Insight shared during this workshop will inform future studies of the area.
- Allina Health Powered Kids Task Force: Participated on the Health Powered Kids Advisory Task Force to help shape Allina Health's strategic plan to expand and evolve their support for mental wellness and resilience for youth and their parents/adult caregivers and supporters. The Task Force included community and Allina Health affiliated representatives. The group convened four times from October 2022 – December 2022.
- Catalytic Converter Clinic (with Resident Services): Collaborated with Resident Services to promote Saint Paul Police Department ACOP's catalytic converter clinic for PHA residents. Due to the rise in catalytic converter thefts, this event provided a free opportunity for PHA residents to have their cars marked with spray paint to reduce theft. The event was held at the McDonough Community Center and open to all PHA residents.
- **Section 3 (Job Skills Training, Employment and Education Initiatives):**
  - Staff continued to represent the PHA as a community partner at the Ramsey County Workforce Innovation Board meetings and as an active member in the One-Stop-Partner program.
  - Micro Grants: Successfully assisted three residents in attaining a total of \$7,235 in Micro Grants (one for tuition reimbursement, one for a new business and one to reinstate a driver's license).
  - Offered two Small Business Development programs through long-time partner African Economic Development Solutions:
    - September 26 - November 7, 2022 in-person at Mt. Airy Community Center. Nine (9) residents graduated, one is continuing to pursue a cleaning business,

- and two (2) entered the St. Thomas Opus College of Business Community Business Boot camp on recommendation from the Section 3 Coordinator.
- January 23 - March 6, 2023 via Zoom. Six (6) residents graduated. One continues to actively pursue his goal of owning a transportation business.
  - Science Museum of Minnesota: Continued to provide Great Partner Discounts to the Museum for both in-person (when available) and virtual events. Promoted various virtual programs to residents. In addition, the Section 3 Coordinator accepted an invitation to represent the PHA on the Community advisory Panel for “Tools for Belonging Project”. Panelists contribute input from a lens of someone interested in advancing equity and/or organizational change work; connect constituents at their organizations to opportunities to contribute more deeply to data collections (listening sessions, interviews), and summer data collections; and, offer input into on how to make such opportunities culturally valid and inclusive.
  - Section 3 Coordinator in conjunction with Contracting Officer, Tim Braun, organized and hosted a contractor Meet and Greet on November 17, 2022 at McDonough Community Center. Twenty-one (21) contractors attended.
  - Section 3 Coordinator initiated a long-term project in partnership with Comcast/Xfinity to install permanent modems in all units thereby eliminating one of the many obstacles to digital literacy by providing immediate access to internet through Comcast should they so choose. Project expected to be completed by the end of FY 2024.
  - Step-Up Apprenticeship: Successfully continued one Step-Up apprentice placement with Schriber Mullaney Construction for the of the Front Hi-Rise Plumbing modernization work.
  - Job Skill Training: Partnered with Twin Cities Rise and presented a virtual Personal Empowerment Training with 24 hours of classroom time and access to the TCR skill-building learning management system. These sessions provided the resources, skills, and methods to successfully embark on a personal journey of transformation through the four building blocks of emotional intelligence with over forty emotional concepts. This facilitation provided skills within cognitive restructuring, and lessons related to self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. The training is designed to help residents regain their confidence in the new, post-pandemic employment market. Nine residents from throughout the system completed the course.
  - Case Management: Provided individual employment and training assistance to residents on a weekly basis in the areas of resume building, on-line applications, in-demand jobs, digital literacy, free skills training, and apprenticeships. Continued to build a resident database for employment and training updates.
  - Continued to support the Housing Choice Voucher FSS program by providing case management employment search services to FSS participants.
  - **The Section 3 Program Coordinator oversaw the completion of a 10 minute 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video that highlighted Section 3 accomplishments and included messages from Executive Director Jon Gutzmann, Board Chair**

**Missy Thompson, Council Member Jane Prince, Resident Services Director Kim Nguyen, Former Executive Director Marshall Anderson and more. In addition, the Section 3 program coordinator oversaw the production and completion of short videos for each of the aforementioned individuals for posting on the PHA website.**

- Maintenance staff emphasized the HUD requirements for Section 3 participation at all pre-bid meetings for applicable contracts under the LIPH portfolio.
- Where bidders on applicable contracts and purchase orders could not meet the PHA's requirement for Section 3 participation, the contractors agreed to contribute 2.5% of the contract amount to the Section 3 Training Fund. The PHA collected \$27,197 for the Section 3 Training Fund.
- In June 2022, staff requested Board approval of a revised Section 3 Policy compliant with the HUD Section 3 Final Rule (24 CFR Part 75). This revised policy replaced the old Section 3 model, based on 'hiring goals', with a new model based on 'labor hours worked'. The PHA's first reporting to HUD for both PHA employee hiring and hiring under construction contracts will be due in April 2023. However, HUD issued a notice that PHAs were not required to report on Section 3 labor hours or other Section 3 compliance efforts until further notice. HUD's Section 3 requirements for contractors are only applicable to the PHA's LIPH portfolio.
- Maintenance staff actively pursued contracting and employment opportunities for PHA residents, metro-area Section 3 participants and Section 3 businesses. Staff administer contracting requirements and objectives working with general contractors and their sub-contractors to obtain the greatest amount of involvement by low-income and other disadvantaged individuals and businesses. Staff held a "Meet & Greet" event in November 2022, inviting Section 3 contractors for an informational meeting regarding PHA hiring goals for labor contracts. There were 21 contractors in attendance.
- During the fiscal year, Section 3 data relating to each contract and purchase order for work within the LIPH portfolio was logged into the PHA's Access database. During FY 2023, the total labor hours recorded under LIPH contracting was 10,704 hours. Of these hours, Section 3 accounted for 2,481 hours or 23.2%. The 20% goal for Section 3 workers was met, but the 5% goal of Targeted Section 3 workers was not met. Recruitment events such as the PHA's "Meet and Greet" are another means to meet HUD's Section 3 requirements.
- Staff made a concerted effort to increase M/W/DBE participation in contracts by stressing the Agency's goals at pre-bid meetings, including requirements for documentation of general contractor efforts to meet M/W/DBE goals in all formal contract construction documents, and encouraging general contractors to utilize local directories for M/W/DBE contractors.
- Participation by Minority-owned business enterprises (MBE) in PHA purchases exceeded the Board of Commissioners' goal in both the Operating Fund budget (21.0%), and the Capital Fund budget (23.4%). Participation by Women and

Disabled-owned enterprises (W/DBE) in PHA purchases exceeded the Board of Commissioners' goal in the Operating Fund budget (22.0%) but not the Capital Fund budget (6.1%). Staff made a concerted effort to increase M/W/DBE participation in contracts by highlighting the Board's M/W/DBE goals at pre-bid meetings, including requirements for documentation of general contractor efforts to meet M/W/DBE goals in all formal contract construction documents, and encouraging general contractors to utilize the City of St. Paul CERT (or others) directory for M/W/DBE contractors.

- Contractors for janitorial and guard services at the W. Andrew Boss Building and the janitorial contracts for McDonough, Mt. Airy, Roosevelt and Dunedin community centers are encouraged to hire and train PHA residents. During the fiscal year, these contracts combined to account for approximately 360 hours of PHA resident employment and training.
- Contracts over \$500,000 and funded with Capital Fund Program dollars, include directions for contractors to interview and hire Step-Up participants.
- **Employee and Resident Scholarships:**
  - Commissioners Pete Verdeja along with Former Commissioners Richard Willits, John Wilking and Marty Strub donated a total of \$17,983 to the PHA for staff scholarships through FY 2023. These scholarships can be used to supplement education-related expenses not covered by the PHA's tuition reimbursement plan.
  - The PHA awarded three scholarships of \$1,000 each to residents through the PHA's George and Nancy Latimer Resident Scholarship Program. This program was created in 1996 to help PHA residents and HCV participants pursue post-secondary education. The scholarships are paid from the Building Fund, not from the PHA's HUD funding. This year the PHA received an anonymous contribution of \$1,000 to help pay for these scholarships. The PHA has awarded 143 scholarships totaling \$122,500 to residents since the inception of the program.

**GOAL #10 – SAFETY AND SECURITY:** Work with staff and external partners to maintain and promote safety and security at all PHA-owned housing. Continue safety efforts such as ACOP, Officer-in-Residence (OIR) and use of contracted security guard services. Promote non-discrimination, non-violence and respect in all aspects of the PHA's work.

**Discrimination/ Harassment/Workplace Violence Prevention:** Department Directors, especially Human Resources, implemented initiatives to prevent discrimination, harassment, and violence in the workplace. Staff continued to work together on strategies that support a safe, secure, productive and inclusive work environment.

- Reviewed and coordinated the investigation of one claim of discrimination; four claims of harassment; and ten incidents of workplace violence during this period. In each situation, the proper procedures were followed, along with the necessary steps to ensure resident and/or staff safety.

**Employee Health and Safety:**

- Staff monitored and updated the Agency's Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). Continued the contract with DeMarco Solutions to maintain a database for all material safety information. Issued name and picture ID badges to all new employees which lists the 1-800 phone number for 24 hour, 365-day emergency information availability regarding material safety sheet information.
- Continued to use HealthPartners Occupational Medicine Clinic to conduct 24 pre-employment physicals. Pre-employment physicals are specialized and tailored to the physical requirements of the job.
- Continued to use HealthPartners Occupational Medicine Clinic for medical examinations of injured employees, coordinated with the employee's department, the insurance carrier, and the workers' compensation management consultant. Light or alternative work continues to be assigned to employees to allow for a quick return to work and work within physical restrictions. This approach continues to minimize employee time lost due to injuries and, consequently, reduces premium costs.
- Conducted 32 Reasonable Accommodations (RA) meetings with employees and their supervisors in response to requests for an accommodation related to a disability.
- Continued to offer ergonomic review of workstations when requested, conducting 33 ergonomic reviews in FY 2023.
- Sent health and wellness information to all employees. Monthly employee wellness information from Gallagher Benefits Services was sent to all employees.
- Worked with Gallagher Benefit Services and Health Fair Committee members to administer employee's flu shots. Approximately 40 employees received flu shots.
- The Safety Committee met quarterly during FY 2023 via Zoom.

**Workers Compensation:**

- HR continued efforts to control workers compensation insurance premiums. On March 22, 2023, the Board approved the current policy and an annual premium of \$306,080. This was a decrease of from last year's rate. This was the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> year of purchasing a policy with a \$10,000 deductible per occurrence, which applies only to medical costs. By having a \$10,000 deductible, the Agency saved about \$30,288 versus the cost of a no deductible policy. The experience modification factor decreased from 0.72 to 0.65.
- Continued to aggressively manage workers compensation claims, work with physicians to determine employee job restrictions and quickly return employees to work in modified or light duty status.
- During FY 2023 there were a total of 12 employee injury claims, not including
- 19 injuries on the job that required no medical attention and entailed no lost time so they were not included in the "employee injury" report.
- Completed and posted the OSHA 300 Log which reports on-the-job injuries.

- Three workers' compensation claim was denied by the insurance carrier.
- Worked with two employees on reasonable accommodations relating to a work injury.

### **Maintenance:**

- Maintenance staff regularly work in conjunction with Human Resources to ensure that staff recovering from injuries are working safely in their daily duties and in compliance with their medical restrictions. These interactions include meetings with staff who have suffered injuries (at work and elsewhere) to create work plans which allow staff to return to work within their given restrictions. Maintenance Supervisors report staff injuries in a timely manner to be handled by Human Resources and make themselves available for follow-up questions as necessary.
- Maintenance, in conjunction with IT and Resident Services, continue to address security camera needs as they arise throughout PHA properties. Staff assist with reviewing potential camera locations, wire runs and installation feasibility due to building construction.
- Maintenance staff continue to work with Resident Services to upgrade exterior and interior lighting as budget allows. LED lamps were installed in the Hamline Hi-Rise parking lot lighting as part of general maintenance work. Conversion to LED lamps continued throughout the Agency as the need arises to provide a brighter, safer environment.
- Maintenance staff worked with Resident Services and ACOP to ensure that the PHA's buildings are secure for the residents throughout the day, even when PHA staff are not present. ACOP officers regularly work directly with residents to assist them in making their homes safer through awareness and vigilance.
- Staff continued to contract with Capital Security to provide security services, primarily at Edgerton and Exchange Hi-Rises, with the ability to send the security guard to any hi-rise as needed. In FY 23, we budgeted \$126,000.00 for armed security guard services. Staff assisted Resident Services with the preparation of a new security service contract and guided them through the Request for Proposal process. BelCom Security was recently awarded the contract to service primarily Edgerton Hi-Rise. Under this contract staff also have the ability to send the security guard to any hi-rise as needed.
- Staff contracted with GSSC Security into July, 2022, and Capital Security for security services at the W. Andrew Boss Central Administration Building through the remainder of FY 2023. Staff were also called upon to arrange for other security measures as needed.
- During large modernization projects, Maintenance staff hold progress meetings with contractors to ensure continued resident and staff safety and security.

### **HCV Programs:**

- HCV Programs staff continue to participate and fully engage in safety and security efforts at every staff level, offering suggestions and recommending improvements where necessary.

**Resident Services:**

- **In FY 2023, the Board approved entering Year 32 of community policing services under ACOP (A Community Outreach Program) beginning April 1, 2022 and continuing until March 31, 2023, for \$664.083.** This is a 1.2% increase from the previous fiscal year.
- The ACOP Sergeant met monthly with hi-rise and family managers to share information and plan special initiatives. The ACOP Sergeant also attends the monthly President's Council meeting to provide updates on safety and security to our Hi-Rise Resident Councils. ACOP officers visit management offices most days to share information, problem solve and strengthen working relationships. They also attend family Resident Council meetings when available.
- Management staff continued to receive monthly "Calls for Service" reports from the St. Paul Police Department under the ACOP contract. Receiving Calls for Service reports allows staff to react more efficiently, often providing assistance or referring residents for outside services before the issue becomes a lease violation.
- ACOP continues to participate in events such as National Night Out, Spring Flings, and other events initiated by PHA and the Resident Councils. This helps to promote continued positive relationships and outreach with residents, particularly the youth.
- Staff continued to contract for off-duty policing and focused on the busiest hi-rise and family sites as determined by building managers. In FY 2023, \$110,000 was allocated for off-duty police coverage.
- Currently, there are 16 "Officers in Residence" (OIRs) living in the hi-rises. Reports of vandalism and property damage in the buildings continue to decrease since the inception of this program. OIRs also attend monthly Hi-Rise Resident Council meetings, perform knock & talk requests submitted by building managers, and provide weekly office hours to meet with residents.
- In FY 2022, \$150,000 was allocated for armed security services. This temporary service was part of a larger safety and security plan made to address building concerns and improve the quality of life for residents. This ongoing contract for services is being coordinated by the Resident Services Senior Managers.

**GOAL #11 – LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Continue active participation and leadership in national and state affordable housing organizations advocating for program reform and our fair share of funding. Continue to lead by example with mission-focused, results driven performance. Tell the PHA's story with E-Blasts, research papers, website content, and other publications and efforts.

- Executive Director, General Counsel/Deputy Executive Director, HCV Programs Director, and several other PHA leaders met with St. Paul legislators to provide an explanation of the PHA's programs, and offer a tour of the sites.

- Housing Policy continued to represent the PHA on PHADA's Legislative Committee, participating in staff's and members' analysis and recommendations on issues facing public housing, Section 8 and other affordable housing programs.
- The Human Resources/Resident Initiatives Director represents the PHA on PHADA's Housing Committee.
- Housing Policy responded to inquiries from other Minnesota housing agencies about PHA policies and practices.
- HCV Programs staff work to assist Executive Director as requested to meet any national or state needs, whether in drafting or other participation and engagement.
- HCV Programs staff are working in national and state housing organizations, including advocating for program reform and our fair share of funding in all funding streams.
- HCV Programs Director served on the MN NAHRO Professional Development Committee, and aided in planning conferences and developing session tracks on the HCV Program and Emerging Leaders.
- HCV Programs staff attended two Section 8 metro-wide meetings with the nine other agencies in the Metro area that administer Section 8 programs, to collaborate and learn more efficient ways of administering the program.
- HCV Programs staff continue to promptly and positively respond to all local, state, and national PHAs with any request for technical assistance or education, while seeking out those same resources in other agencies as they may strengthen program administration. Staff responded to inquiries from various MN HRAs and PHAs as the year progressed.
- Through its e-blast feature, the PHA marketed our successful PBV awards, and the availability of additional PBV for new projects.
- Maintenance staff worked with other PHA staff throughout the year supplying requested information for efforts at securing State, Federal or City grants that became available for low income housing development or rehabilitation.
- Maintenance staff actively pursued contracting and employment opportunities for PHA residents, metro-area Section 3 participants and minority, women and disabled-owned businesses (MWDDBE). Staff administer contracting requirements and objectives working with general contractors and their sub-contractors to obtain the greatest amount of involvement by low-income and other disadvantaged individuals and businesses. This includes resident training opportunities for janitorial and security services and the Step-Up program for low-income persons that are interested in learning a building trade.
- Maintenance staff worked with other PHA staff throughout the year supplying requested information for Agency communications with other stakeholders and organizations.
- Maintenance staff participated in or evaluated a variety of local, state and national programs with partner organizations and provided feedback on behalf of the PHA. This work included outside organizations such as NCRC/Minnesota NAHRO, District Energy, National Fire Sprinkler Association, Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of

Architects, HUD's National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate and HUD's PHA Disaster Readiness, Response and Recovery Webinar Series.

- Maintenance staff assisted outside organizations such as AEON and Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative to help guide their approach to capital needs assessments and how to attract Minority, Women and Disabled-owned business enterprises. Staff responded to other PHA/HRA's request for assistance on topics such as procurement and preparing for REAC inspections. The Maintenance Director continued to advise Minnesota NAHRO members on the PHA's COVID-19 operations and practices.
- Maintenance staff provided various informational presentations to PHA staff during internal "Thursday Live" webinars.

**Summary:**

The PHA accomplished our Fiscal Year 2023 Agency Goals. Our collective work reminded the community the PHA is an essential agency providing affordable rental housing to over 22,000 individuals. We invented this process of establishing Agency goals and then reporting on them in this detailed fashion some 36 years ago. Not only is this report useful to evaluate the performance of the Executive Director, it has created an in-depth public record of this work. I am proud of our team and their dedication to the PHA's mission.

I cannot thank the Board of Commissioners and the PHA staff enough for your support and hard work this past year.

My special thanks to Mai Moua, Al Hester and Lisa Feidler for their help assembling the Agency Accomplishments Report and once again to all Directors and Louise Seeba for their reporting on departmental accomplishments (and of course "doing the work"). We will continue working hard to keep our residents and remarkable employees safe while providing deeply affordable quality housing. Thank you for your time and attention reviewing this report.

**Jon Gutzmann**

Executive Director

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Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023

# Agency Goals

*"The PHA helps families and individuals with low incomes achieve greater stability and self reliance by providing safe, affordable, quality housing, and links to community services."*

## Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV)

**5,163 vouchers as of January 1, 2022**

- Maintain high performer status under HUD's Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), including maintaining SEMAP 98.5% budget/unit utilization.
- Apply for additional vouchers as opportunities arise.
- Offer additional PBV through Minnesota Housing's Consolidated Request for Proposals (Super RFP) according to PHA policy.
- Continue advancing the PHA's mission with leadership positions or collaborations with Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care, the City of St. Paul, and other external stakeholders.
- Maximize client housing choice by continuing to recruit and retain property owners and managers as partners.
- Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA's fair share of voucher funding.



## Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)

**3,836 PHA-owned units**

- Continue successful transitions to HUD's Multifamily regulatory environment for these PHA-owned units, including new administrative obligations such as issuing the first Choice Mobility vouchers.
- Continue providing PBRA training and informational sessions for staff and PHA Commissioners.
- Obtain a score of satisfactory or better on HUD's Management and Occupancy Review (MOR).
- Promote interdepartmental efforts to maximize unit occupancy rates, including prompt and thorough applicant screening and the ongoing promotion of successful tenancies.
- Ensure that PHA-owned properties continue to be managed to the highest standards, including thorough and uniform applicant eligibility determinations, fair lease enforcement, regular preventative maintenance, prompt responses to maintenance work orders, timely turnover of vacant units, and timely and accurate reporting of financial data, especially the monthly Multifamily voucher submissions.
- Responsibly manage project reserves and cash flow to ensure sufficient funds are in place for needed capital improvements.
- Continue to actively involve residents, staff and community partners in planning capital improvements.
- Pursue outside (non-HUD) funding opportunities including but not limited to Minnesota Housing, FHLBDM, the City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County to complete necessary capital improvements.
- Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA's fair share of PBRA funding.

# Scattered Sites

## Low Income Public Housing (LIPH); 418 PHA-owned units

- Maintain high scores under HUD’s Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). Successfully manage, maintain, and improve the PHA’s remaining Public Housing inventory. Effectively obligate and expend HUD’s Capital Fund Program (CFP) grants.
- Promote interdepartmental efforts to maximize unit occupancy rates, including prompt and thorough applicant screening and the ongoing promotion of successful tenancies.
- Ensure that PHA-owned properties continue to be managed to the highest standards, including thorough and uniform applicant eligibility determinations, fair lease enforcement, regular preventative maintenance, prompt responses to maintenance work orders, timely turnover of vacant units, and timely and accurate reporting of financial data.
- Continue to actively involve residents, staff and community partners in planning capital improvements.
- Pursue outside (non-HUD) funding opportunities including but not limited to Minnesota Housing, FHLBDM, the City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County to complete necessary capital improvements.
- Continue operating these units as LIPH in the near term given their healthy financial position. Study asset repositioning (i.e., TPV, PBV, Section 18, Section 32 homeownership, etc.) as a longer term goal.
- Continue to advocate for program reform and for the PHA’s fair share of LIPH funding.

## Finance

Provide the Board all opportunities for governance of PHA finances and assets. Continue fiscally conservative budgeting, planning and evaluation of all programs and services. Strive for zero audit findings. Maintain fiscal discipline and meet fiduciary obligations in regular operations (i.e., managing cash flow, making prudent capital expenditures, realizing full PBRA contract rental income by making prompt and accurate voucher submissions, etc.). Overcome unforeseen financial challenges including COVID-19 related delinquent rent, the special funding challenges facing CHSP, and others.

## Legal

Provide timely legal advice and support to all PHA Departments in matters that have legal implications. Continue to advise the Executive Director and all Department Directors regarding any issue, including but not limited to; contracts, human resources, employment law, real estate, litigation, data requests, fair housing and human rights, and PHA specific programs (RAD, LIPH, HCV). Represent the PHA in informal conferences, hearings, housing court, all state and federal courts. Advise the Board of Commissioners as requested to support the PHA mission.

## Preservation and Development

- Seek federal (HUD), state (MN Housing), local (City of St. Paul and Ramsey County) and other entity (FHLBDM) funding to preserve the PHA’s \$756 million capital asset comprised of 3,836 PBRA units, 418 LIPH units, four community centers, and the W.A. Boss Central Administrative Office.
- Seek City of St. Paul and Ramsey County funding (ARP or otherwise) for the new construction of 11 Faircloth family dwelling units on PHA-owned land. Utilize the appropriate HUD regulatory framework to own and manage these units once produced (i.e., “Faircloth to RAD”).



## “One PHA” Organizational Development

- Continue meeting the employment challenges of the times, including but not limited to recruiting, retaining, and rewarding qualified staff.
- Promote and enforce Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative action. Preserve the PHA’s strong commitment for diversity, equity and inclusion and the diverse voices that are imbedded throughout the organization.
- Promote education, growth, and advancement of employees through on-boarding, training, career planning, and other resources.
- Continue improving the physical work environment (redesign the CAO first and third floors for RS and HCV staff respectively) and otherwise refine our in-office and work-from-home business model.
- Strengthen and expand the “client office-visit-less” strategy while improving customer service.
- Continue advocating for MRI software improvements that increase access, efficiency and customer service for applicants, participants and staff, especially those that deliver on paperless operational objectives. Continue seeking other ways to utilize the Agency’s computer business systems to maximize efficiency, compliance, and customer service/resident-participant satisfaction.

## Fair Housing

Ensure Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in program admissions and administration, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Work cooperatively with community representatives and other units of government to ensure non-discrimination in PHA programs.

# Links to Community Services

Primarily through the work of staff in the Resident Services and Resident Initiatives Departments, solidify community-based partnerships and resources that provide an array of support services to residents of PHA-owned properties. Work with community agencies to maintain and develop programs that enrich residents' lives, promote wellness, and increase economic self-sufficiency and community involvement. Stabilize and promote CHSP. Achieve Section 3 goals for resident economic opportunities to the greatest extent feasible.



## Safety and Security

Work with staff and external partners to maintain and promote safety and security at all PHA-owned housing. Continue safety efforts such as ACOP, Officer-in-Residence (OIR) and use of contracted security guard services. Promote non-discrimination, non-violence and respect in all aspects of the PHA's work.

## Local, State, and National Leadership Responsibilities

Continue active participation and leadership in national and state affordable housing organizations advocating for program reform and our fair share of funding. Continue to lead by example with mission-focused, results driven performance. Tell the PHA's story with E-Blasts, research papers, website content, and other publications and efforts.