

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director

The PHA's Fiscal Year 2021 was like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound effect on everyday life at the PHA and in all our homes. As the COVID-19 operations report chronology reminds us, we went into action immediately. Like everyone, we first had to understand the extent of the crisis. We responded with incremental and common sense actions designed to protect the health and safety of residents, participants, employees and the general public. Fiscal Year 2021 also reminded many that the PHA is an essential agency.

We remained "open for business" and "mission strong" because this is a place filled with essential, hard-working, inventive and caring employees, guided by a supportive and mission-focused Board of Commissioners.

While we assisted residents and participants, we also made many adjustments to our work environment to keep staff safe during the pandemic. This included providing protective equipment for the front line maintenance staff who needed to remain on-site, as well as equipment and resources for the staff working from home. We utilized virtual solutions and video conferencing. We learned that some PHA business functions performed remotely are as efficient, and more client-friendly than the previous in-office experiences. Like many organizations, our "remote versus in-office" plans are evolving to this day.

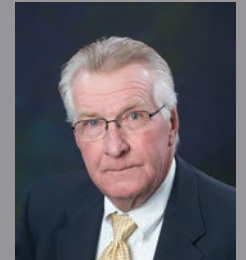
We are a place that believes in getting the job done day in and day out. Our direction, priorities, roles and responsibilities are clear. The wonderful staff of the PHA continued demonstrating calm, effective and nimble leadership in response to unforeseen events beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. These "regular crises" include power outages, fires, property destruction, violent crime, and other disturbances. We keep our focus on resident, participant and employee health and safety. We are perceived as a stable and responsible public agency by many in our community. We will continue working hard to keep our residents and remarkable employees safe while providing deeply affordable quality housing. Not only have we remained open for business during this pandemic year, we have and are adding more deeply affordable housing resources through our HCV program.



Missy Staples Thompson
Board Chair



Kevin Lindsey
Vice Chair



Tom Reding
Treasurer



Yer Chang
Secretary



Pete Verdeja
Asst. Secretary



John Cardoza
Commissioner

pending

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Jon Gutzmann
Executive Director



Louise Seeba
Deputy Executive Director/
General Counsel



Mai Moua
Executive Assistant/
Communications Manager



Tim Angaran
Maintenance Director



Lisa Feidler
Interim Housing Policy Director/
Rental Administrator



Holly Gray
Interim Finance Director



Al Hester
Housing Policy Director



Angie Holm
Budget Director



Alicia Huckleby
Human Resources/
Resident Initiatives Director



Dominic Mitchell
Housing Choice Voucher Director



Kim Nguyen
Resident Services Director



Ron Moen
Finance Director (Retired)

LEGAL COUNSEL



Meghan Kisch
Senior Assistant City Attorney



John Stechmann
Senior Assistant City Attorney



Sean Whatley
Assistant City Attorney

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."

COVID - 19 PREPARATION



March 10, 2020

Public Housing Agency of the City of Saint Paul
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information and Resources

The Public Housing Agency of the City of Saint Paul (PHA) has begun efforts in relation to the coronavirus (COVID-19). The health and safety of the approximately 21,000 individuals that the PHA houses and serves on a daily basis, as well as our 230 employees, is our highest priority. PHA staff are actively engaged with Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health (SPRCPH) and the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), as well as following guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); as part of the Agency's education, planning and response process.

COVID-19 Action Plan

Since March 2020, PHA has taken the following actions:

- 3/10/20 – Published the first PHA COVID 19 statement;
- 3/11/20 – Directed HR department to order hand sanitizer wall station dispensers, Maintenance staff assisted with site distribution;
- 3/11/20 – RI staff posted Coronavirus posters at W.A. Boss Building and PHA sites;
- 3/12/20 – Maintenance staff ordered 10,000 bars of anti-bacterial soap;
- 3/12-13/20 – PHA staff distributed care packages to all hi-rise residents. Care package included three bars of soap and a flyer on COVID-19;
- 3/16/20 – Published PHA COVID-19 Action Plan;
- 3/18-20 – Translated notice in 4 different languages and posted for door entry - “Do not enter if you are sick or have flu-like symptoms, call our office”;
- 3/20/20 – Published PHA COVID-19 Action Plan 2.0;
- 3/26/20 – Published PHA “Essential” Travel letter, sent to all employees;
- 4/2/20 – Published PHA Operations Report to the Board;
- 4/17/20 – Published PHA Operations Report to the Board;
- 5/8/20 – PHA staff distributed second round of care packages to all hi-rise residents;
- 5/15/20 – Published COVID-19 Operations Report to the Board on a monthly basis.



Above: Leadership team meeting on COVID-19, March 16, 2020.

Photo taken before social distancing orders issued.

Left to right: Corina Serrano, Jon Gutzmann, Louise Seeba, Meghan Kisch, and Kim Nguyen.



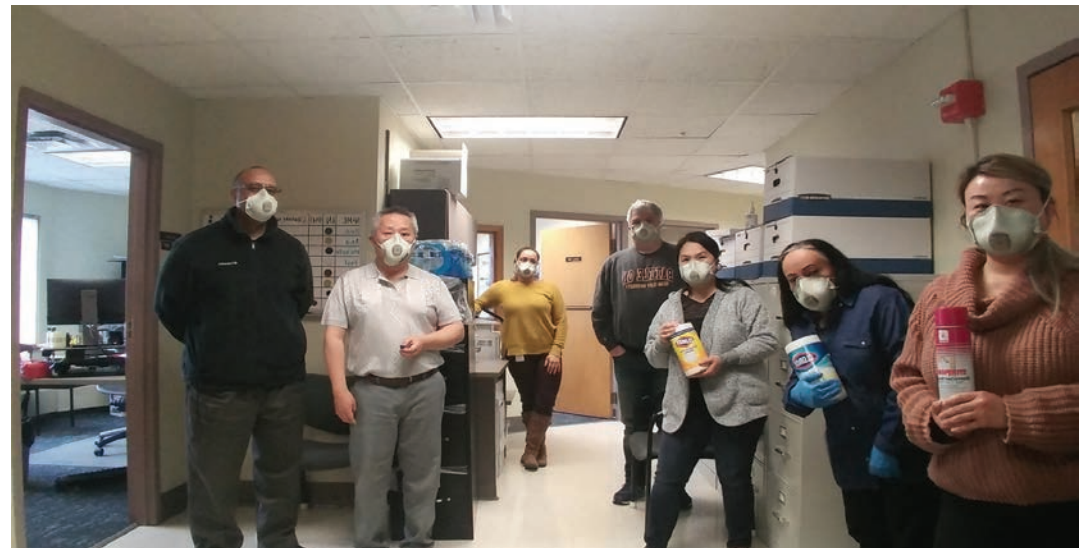
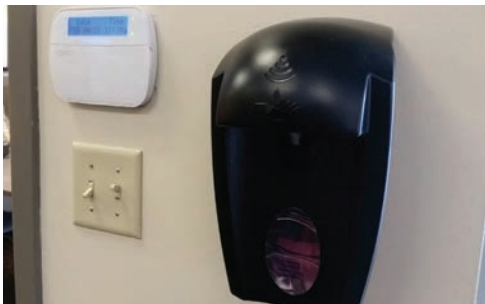
Above: Behind plexi-glass shield is Maintenance Contracts Administrative Support Technician (AST) Tricia Landers.



Left: PHA Assistant Housing Manager Angela Louricas and AST Maly Yang.

Personal Protective Equipment: The PHA purchased and distributed N95 masks all employees. Disposable gloves, disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizers were distributed throughout the Agency and made available to all staff.

PHA Maintenance staff constructed and provided plexi-glass shields for use at counters/desks where staff may interact with residents or guests at PHA office sites. Plexi-glass shields were also made available to community rooms and other public area computer stations.



Above: PHA Scattered Site management team masked up and ready to assist.

PHA Staff Take Action



Since April 2020 Maintenance staff began to perform additional cleaning measures including wiping down chairs and tables in the hi-rise community rooms, lobby common areas and elevators.



CHSP Meal Delivery

In light of COVID-19 and as part of PHA's plan to be proactive, CHSP and Maintenance staff worked together to deliver meals to vulnerable CHSP clients in their apartments.

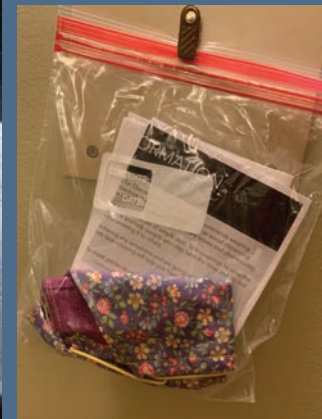
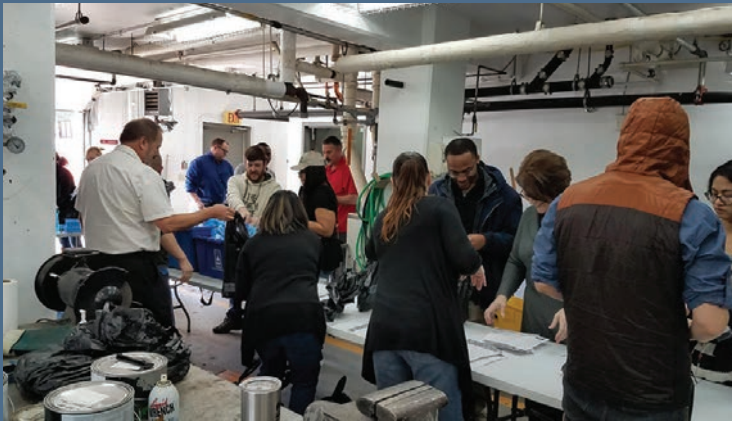
CHSP (Congregate Housing Services Program) currently serves residents in four PHA Hi-Rise apartment buildings (Edgerton, Iowa, Montreal and Ravoux Hi-Rises).

Care Packages Distribution

In March of 2020, staff assembled 2,553 “care packages” for all residents at the 16 hi-rises. The care packages consisted of three bars of anti-bacterial soap and a two-sided flyer, with information on the coronavirus. To avoid direct contact with residents, staff hand delivered the care package to each resident’s door and left it there.

In May of 2020, the PHA delivered an additional care package containing bar soap, toilet paper and a cloth mask to all hi-rise residents. Staff from multiple departments participated in the procurement, packing and distribution of the care packages delivered to each hi-rise apartment. To date, more than 9,400 masks have been donated to the PHA by community members, retired PHA staff and partner organizations.

Below are some pictures of staff diligently working together to assemble the care packages for distribution. These photos were taken prior to mask mandates and social distancing orders.

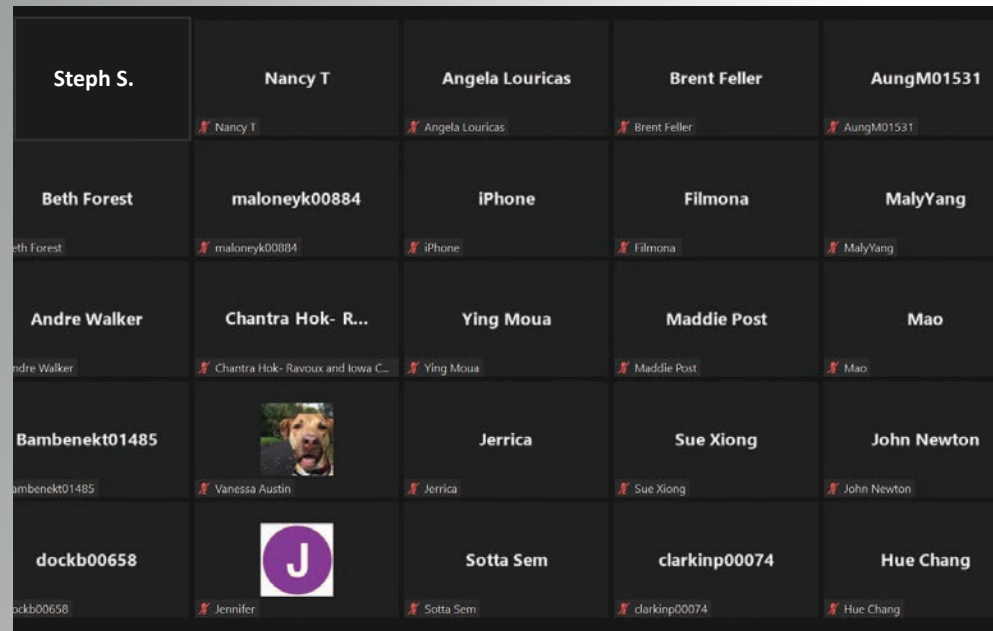
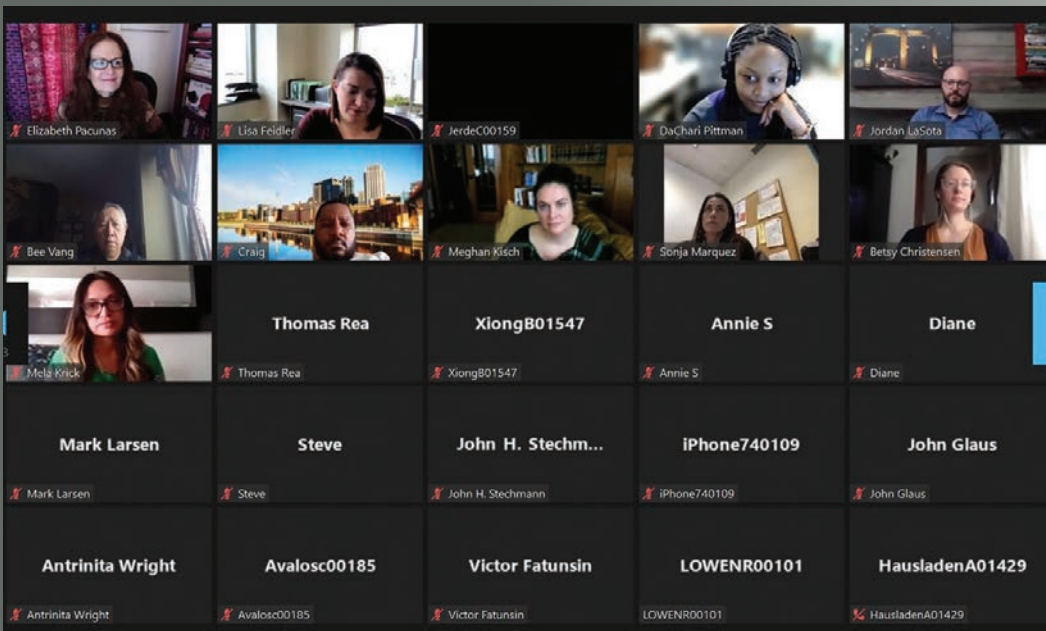


“THURSDAY LIVE” with PHA Executive Director



On August 27, 2020 PHA Executive Director Jon Gutzmann launched the first “Thursday Live” virtual meeting, to give all employees the opportunity each month to “meet” via Zoom and hear updates on PHA operations.

This also serves as a platform for staff members to prepare and present information about their work sites and teams, often including historical and current photos of the PHA’s properties and staff. Long-time employees and new members of the staff alike have responded enthusiastically to their colleagues’ presentations, since many staff do not regularly interact with others outside their own work locations.



RESIDENT SCHOLARSHIP

GEORGE AND NANCY LATIMER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ASSISTS RESIDENTS

The PHA's George and Nancy Latimer Public Housing Resident Scholarship Program* awarded six more \$1,000 scholarships to residents of PHA-owned housing and HCV (Section 8) participants (4 in 2020 and 2 in 2021). The scholarships help pay tuition and other school costs for post-secondary education. This is the twenty-sixth year that the Board of Commissioners has budgeted for such scholarships. The scholarships are paid from the PHA's entrepreneurial income, not from HUD funding. The PHA also received anonymous contributions totaling \$2,000 to help pay for these scholarships. With the current awards, the PHA has awarded 141 scholarships totaling \$119,500.

* The scholarship program honors former St. Paul Mayor George Latimer and his wife Nancy, who were great supporters of both education and affordable housing.

COMMISSIONERS SCHOLARSHIP FUND ASSISTS EMPLOYEES

In Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021, the PHA Commissioners Scholarship Fund awarded a total of \$1,725 to seven employees for educational purposes, bringing the total amount awarded during the fund's history to \$16,933. Human Resources notifies employees when scholarship funds are available.

In 1998 Commissioner Richard Willits started the scholarship fund by giving back his per diem payments for attending Board meetings, saying he wanted to help PHA employees pay education-related expenses that are not covered by the PHA's tuition reimbursement plan. The tradition was continued by his successors, former Commissioners John Wilking and Marty Strub (who contributed a total of \$8,800), and now by Commissioner Pete Verdeja (who has contributed \$3,300 to date).

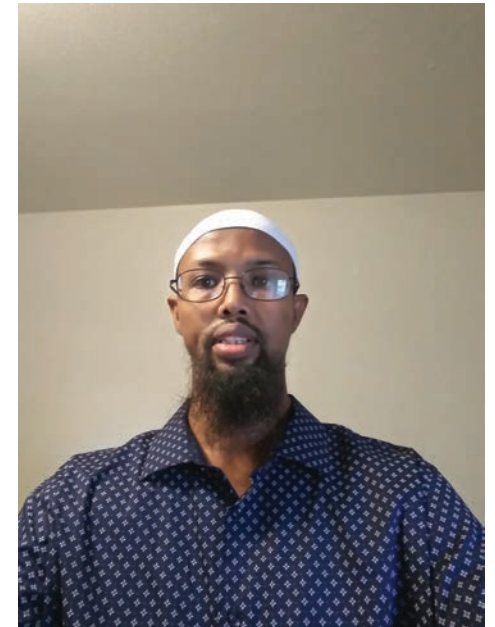


Photo Caption: A.F. - 2021 Resident scholarship recipient

H C V P B V A w a r d s

On January 27, 2021, the PHA's Board of Commissioners approved awarding a total of 115 Section 8 Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) in the following four developments in St. Paul:

1. Ford Highland Bridge - CommonBond: 60 PBV units for the development to be located approximately at 830 Cretin Avenue, on the site of the old Ford plant in Highland; Housing for the Elderly;
2. Crane Ordway - Aeon: 21 PBV units for the development located at 28 East 15th Street in St. Paul's Lowertown; Mixed-Income Housing;
3. Kimball Court - Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative: 24 PBV units for the development located approximately at 545 N. Snelling Avenue in the Midway area; Supportive Housing for the Homeless; and
4. Ain Dah Yung Center - Project for Pride in Living: 10 additional units for the development located at 769 West University Avenue in Frogtown; Supportive Housing for the Homeless.

The PHA's PBV program began in July 1999. As of January 27, 2021, the PHA Board approved 737 PBV units in 32 projects, which was approximately 15% of the PHA's Housing Choice Voucher allocation (4,929).

Project-Based Vouchers are a critical component of the State, County, and City plans to end Long-Term Homelessness; and they are leveraged to create additional affordable housing (beyond the voucher units themselves) for those who need it. The award of 115 PBVs will help create and preserve affordable housing for targeted populations (elderly and homeless), support mixed-income housing, and still reserve a large share of the PHA's Housing Choice Vouchers for the general waiting list and future affordable housing demands. The PHA is very happy to be using this limited resource to support a variety of community needs.

CommonBond Communities – Highland Bridge



Rendering of Highland Bridge is courtesy of CommonBond.

"The Highland neighborhood is not only a great place for families to live but it's a great place for seniors as well. It has incredible walkability, access to natural amenities along the river, restaurants, grocery stores, movie theaters, clinics and shops. Homelessness is increasing at the fastest rate so this is an incredible opportunity for seniors here. CommonBond looks forward to working together with the PHA in a long-term relationship to build these networks as it's a really exciting opportunity for everyone. PHA's willingness to make this rent subsidy available is really helping St. Paul manifest its values in making sure folks of any income level can have access to any neighborhood."
- Deidre Schmidt, CommonBond, President and CEO

PHA Executive Director

"The PHA is pleased to award 115 Section 8 project-based vouchers to assist four developments in the city of St. Paul. What's wonderful about this decision is that the PHA is able to award PBVs in a number of categories including elderly, mixed-income and supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness. It is very important to the PHA Board that the PHA use its precious resources to help produce or preserve a mixed portfolio of affordable housing throughout the City."

- Jon Gutzmann, Executive Director

PHA Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Programs Director

"We look forward to working with all of our PBV partners to continue to increase the supply of affordable housing throughout St. Paul. We could not do this important work alone." - Dominic Mitchell, HCV Programs Director



Photo of Crane Ordway is courtesy of Aeon.

"St. Paul PHA is one of the top PHAs in the country. Thank you, PHA, for designating 21 vouchers for the Crane Ordway building in downtown St. Paul. These vouchers are critical to serve the folks in the community who need them most. We need to preserve all of the affordable housing we can and we need to use every tool available to us. There's nothing more important that the kind of support represented by these project-based vouchers. There are many tools in our toolboxes locally, regionally, and nationally but this kind of rent support is most critical."

-Alan Arthur, Aeon, CEO



Rendering of Kimball Court is courtesy of Beacon Interfaith.

"Thank you PHA Board and staff for your leadership.

Kimball Court is an exciting development because it's one of the very first housing options for people coming out of homelessness in the Twin Cities. It is a "Housing First" model; people can literally move from a tent in an encampment into Kimball Court directly. Once there, they would be able work with AVIVO and other community partners to help them stabilize."

-Lee Blons, Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, CEO and President



Photo of Ain Dah Yung Center is courtesy of PPL-Inc.

"As a lifelong St. Paul resident and someone who has worked in the City and cared about the City for many, many years, I really appreciate the PHA for its creativity, follow through, and foresight over many years, not just for this project but really over the long haul. Ain Dah Yung is a 42 unit supportive housing project for Native American homeless youth. Homeless youths are actually one of our most critical populations in the homeless community. We have struggled for many years to create this kind of housing and stability for this population so it's a huge asset not only in St. Paul but in the State of Minnesota as well."

-Paul Williams, Project for Pride in Living (PPL), President and CEO

More PBV Awards

39 new Project-Based Voucher (PBV) units at Dorothy Day Residence!

On November 1, 2020, 39 new PBV units came online at Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis Dorothy Day Residence, with a 20-year subsidy contract (Housing Assistance Payments; HAP) from the PHA. Completed in the Fall of 2019, Dorothy Day Residence - along with the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation Saint Paul Opportunity Center - comprise the second building of Dorothy Day Place, a two-building campus of 370 units which replaced the former Dorothy Day Center shelter. The apartments were fully occupied from Day 1.

The PHA's Board of Commissioners awarded the 39 vouchers as PBVs to this development in January of 2020. It was the PHA's largest PBV award in 2020 and included 15 VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) vouchers, the PHA's very first PBV use of VASH. The PBV subsidies guarantee deep rental assistance for these 39 units, ensuring that all residents, including those with the lowest of incomes, will never pay more than 30% of their income toward their rent portion.

PHA Executive Director Jon Gutzmann said, "The PHA looks forward to this continuing partnership with Catholic Charities, in our ongoing mission to help families and individuals with low incomes to achieve greater stability and self reliance by providing safe, affordable, quality housing, and links to community services. Tim Marx has been a force in advancing the cause to end homelessness for over 25 years. We wish him continued success as President Emeritus of Catholic Charities."



Photo of Tim Marx is courtesy of Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis



Photo credit: Brandon Stengel, www.farmkidstudio.com

"We are so grateful for our partnership with the St. Paul PHA and the support provided for so long and in so many ways to advance our mission, Dorothy Day Place being a recent and significant example. I have had the privilege of a 25-plus year professional relationship with the St. Paul PHA in my roles with the City, the State, and Catholic Charities. The impact and leadership of the SPPHA, despite challenging times and the continued lack of adequate federal investment, is a testament to its leadership and ability to adapt and innovate."

-Tim Marx

Free Bikes 4 Kidz



The PHA partnered with Free Bikes 4 Kidz for the ninth year of youth bike giveaways in April and May 2021. During a typical year, bike events occur in early winter at each family site, but as we all know 2020 was not a typical year. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed back our usual timeline for bike events into the spring. This new timeline created some scheduling challenges for our expert bike moving partner, Two Men and a Truck, since spring is a busy moving season for their crews. PHA families, however, were thrilled about the shift in timeline because the youth were able to hop on their bikes and start pedaling right away with no snow in sight!

This year we matched 151 PHA youth and families with a fitted bicycle, helmet and, of course, face masks. PHA's overall total is now 1,971 bikes and helmets for PHA families since 2012.

Above: Roosevelt Homes resident. Above: Mt. Airy Homes resident.



Above: photo of bike event at McDonough Homes community center.



Left: Photo collage of "Free Bikes 4 Kidz" bike giveaway at family sites, 2012 - 2021.

A big "thank you" to Free Bikes 4 Kidz (bikes), Allina Health (helmets), Two Men and a Truck (moving services), City of St Paul (face masks) and PHA staff at Mt Airy, McDonough, Dunedin, Roosevelt and Scattered Sites for helping make PHA bike events a bright and shining success, even with all of our COVID-19 precautions in place!

Mt. Airy Exterior Modernization

The St. Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA) invested \$13.8 million over seven years to modernize the exteriors of 273 townhouse units (91 buildings) at Mt. Airy Homes family housing development, to preserve them for current and future generations of low-income residents of St. Paul. The construction project was funded by a combination of HUD Capital Fund Program grants and the RAD Conversion. Mt. Airy Homes maintained full occupancy throughout the modernization.



Master Plan

Planning for this Mt. Airy Exterior Modernization began after a contractor replacing some steel trim discovered there was rotting wood sheathing under the stucco covering the exterior walls. The PHA hired Braun Intertec in July 2014 to investigate and found that rotted sheathing was present throughout the townhouse development. PHA staff and the consultant then began to plan the phasing of the project to fit within yearly budget constraints. While budgeting was in process, the consultant began to prepare construction documents for the renovation. Staff also prepared bid documents for other necessary work that was outside the major scope of the renovation work.

Summary of Mt. Airy Homes Exterior Modernization

Located at the southwest corner of Interstate 35E and Pennsylvania Avenue, just north of downtown St. Paul, Mt. Airy Homes has 302 dwelling units, in two, three, four and five bedroom townhomes. Mt. Airy Homes was originally built in 1959 and previously modernized in 1994 through 1997. The stucco on the exterior walls of many buildings had reached its life expectancy; steel trim had faded and rusted; and windows and roofs needed to be replaced.



Communication with Residents

The PHA and the design team held open houses and community meetings with residents, with interpreters present. The designers provided samples of materials and drawings to help residents understand the planned improvements in their units and on the exterior of their buildings. PHA staff met with residents 2 to 4 weeks before each phase of the project began, to describe the effect the project would have on their units. Staff also notified the residents one week before the inside work in their units would begin, to make sure they were prepared for it.



Mt. Airy Homes
Before and after exterior modernization

Safety

Weekly construction meetings were held to discuss safety concerns. In the last phase of construction, COVID concerns were addressed at each construction meeting. Units that had residents who tested positive for COVID were re-scheduled until after the residents tested negative.

During the re-roofing of the buildings:

The grounds were cleaned frequently to prevent nails or other debris from causing injury to residents.

During the stucco removal:

The stucco was sawed into smaller pieces before it was dropped to the ground to prevent damage to the grounds, buildings and residents.

During window removal and installation of new windows:

The residents were notified three times before the work began to move their belongings away from the window walls and to be out of their units the day the work took place.



Financial

The average per-dwelling-unit cost for the exterior modernization of the 273 housing units was \$49,178. The construction work was performed in five phases over six years, as shown below.

Phase	No. Buildings	No. Units	Year
Phase I	12	40	2015
Phase II	12	40	2016
Phase III	11	34	2017
Phase IV	20	60	2018/2019
Phase V	36	109	2020

Construction was completed on December 18, 2020. The total project cost was \$13,812,380, including the construction cost of \$13,425,569, and the consultant cost of \$386,811.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics



Above: PHA staff left to right - Mike Silvan, Angela Garrity and Alicia Huckleby

Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health (Public Health) staff contacted the PHA in January 2021 about hosting COVID-19 vaccination clinics at all PHA sites where there are state-licensed assisted living programs (Valley, Ravoux and Hamline Hi-Rises). Staff worked closely with Public Health to finalize the logistics of educating residents and staff on the vaccine, distributing registration information in multiple languages, conducting resident and staff sign-ups, doing site preparation, and deciding how to effectively move individuals through the vaccination process in a manner that complied with Stay Safe Minnesota's social distancing and event capacity requirements.

On Friday, February 12, 2021, the PHA hosted its first COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic at Valley Hi Rise. Public Health staff were on hand to administer the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, with first priority going to all residents living at Valley Hi-Rise, and second priority going to essential PHA employees.

On Thursday, March 5, 2021, the PHA hosted a second COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic; this time at Hamline Hi-Rise. At this event, first priority went Hamline Hi-Rise residents and assisted living caregivers, and second priority went to essential PHA employees. Staff worked actively with Public Health staff to bring clinics to the remaining thirteen PHA hi-rises and four family sites.



Above and to the right are photos of residents at the COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic at Valley Hi-Rise



HEALTH FAIR



Above: 2020 flu shot station - PHA staff left to right - Alicia Huckleby, KatelynQuast, Angela Garrity and nurse.

In the fall of 2020 and 2021, the PHA's Human Resources staff coordinated and made available flu shots to all PHA employees by appointments only. Above is a photo of HR staff and a nurse on standby and ready to assist employees as they come get their flu shots.

Pre-pandemic the PHA hosted an annual health fair for all employees, bringing onsite different vendors, health activities and information for all.



Above: 2021 flu shot station; PHA staff Mike Silvan and Brent Feller.



Above: PHA staff left to right: Glenn Hobbins, John Glaus, Les Unklesbay, Matt Borndale and Tim Nelson.

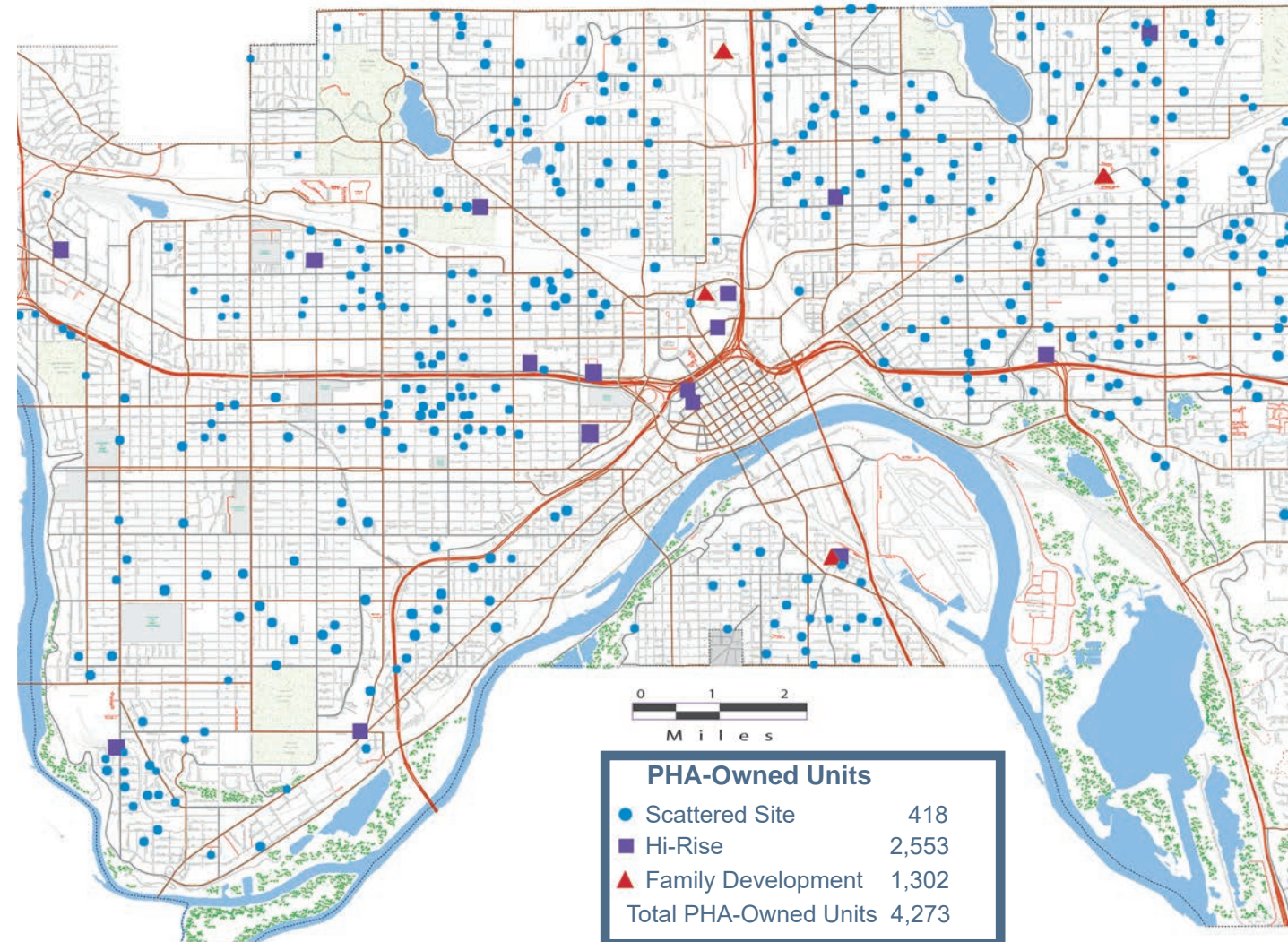
PHA Site Map

PHA Hi-Rise Apartments

	<u>Units</u>
Central Hi-Rise	144
Cleveland Hi-Rise	144
Dunedin Hi-Rise	143
Edgerton Hi-Rise	221
Exchange Hi-Rise	194
Front Hi-Rise	151
Hamline Hi-Rise	186
Iowa Hi-Rise	148
Montreal Hi-Rise	185
Mt. Airy Hi-Rise	153
Neill Hi-Rise	104
Ravoux Hi-Rise	220
Seal Hi-Rise	144
Valley Hi-Rise	158
Wabasha Hi-Rise	71
Wilson Hi-Rise	<u>187</u>
Total Hi-Rise Units	2,553

Family Housing Developments

	<u>Units</u>
Dunedin Terrace	88
McDonough Homes	592
Mt. Airy Homes	302
Roosevelt Homes	<u>320</u>
Total Housing Development	1,302
Family Scattered Site	418



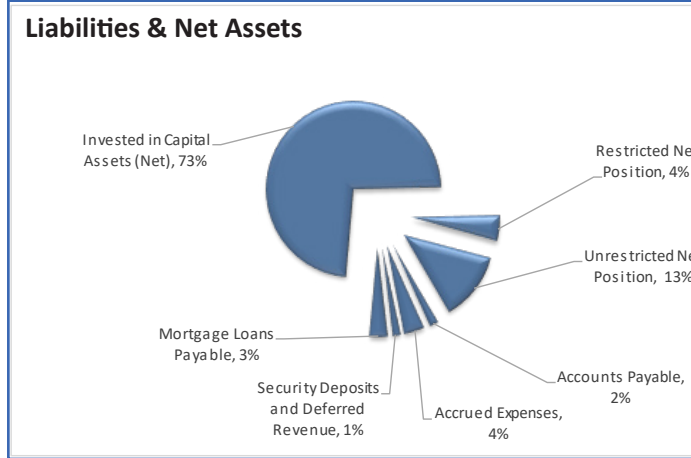
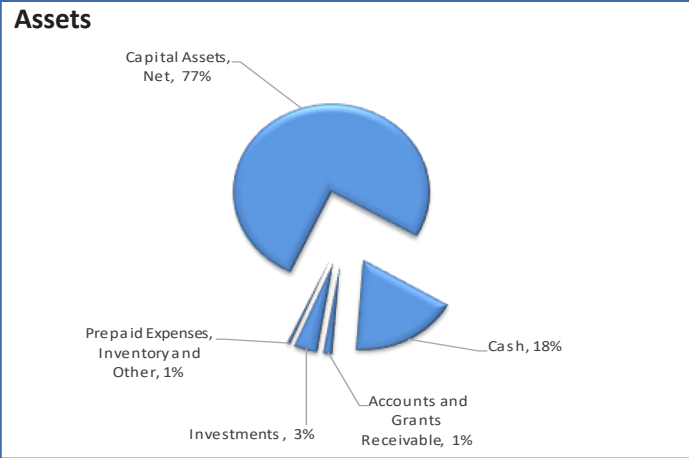
Insured Value \$756 million

Total PHA-Owned Units 4,273

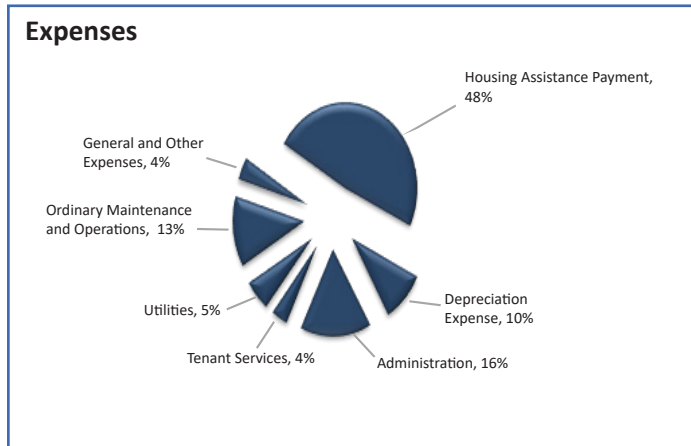
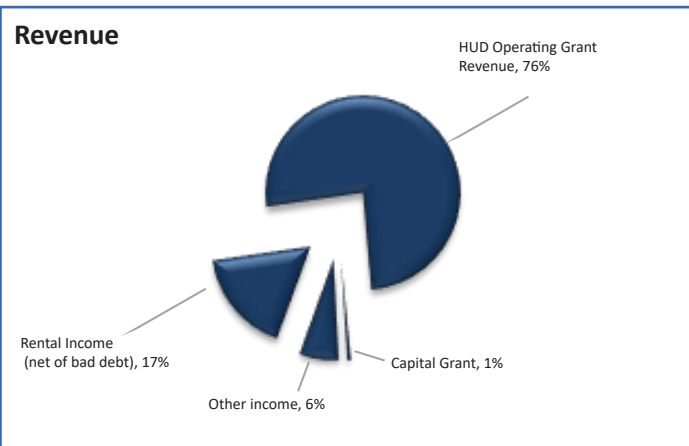
Total Housing Choice Voucher Units 5,086

Total PHA-Owned and HCV Units = 9,359

PHA FINANCIALS



The annual agency-wide financial and compliance audit of FY 2021 was completed with no adverse findings.



GFOA Certificate of Achievement

The PHA was awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Certification of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 16th consecutive year in 2021 (for the PHA's FY 2020). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the management and staff of a governmental unit or agency.

Note: Financial statements are prepared using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as applied to governmental entities. For more complete information, please see audited Comprehensive Annual Financial report, March 31, 2020.

