

WICHITA HOUSING AUTHORITY
HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Semi-Annual Report
(July – November 2016)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wichita Housing Authority consists of Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher. Public Housing represents housing stock owned and managed by the City of Wichita. There are 578 housing units in the portfolio. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides both capital and operating subsidies to help with maintaining public housing. Approximately \$810,000 is received annually for the WHA to make capital improvements, and roughly \$3.9 million is received per annum for operations.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) received \$13 million from HUD to assist 2,770 families. The voucher program consists of private landlords entering into a Housing Assistance Payments contract with the WHA to provide affordable housing to program participants. Currently, there are more than 800 private landlords registered to provide said service for the WHA.

Both program areas continue to focus on performance challenges during this reporting period. Public Housing made inroads to increasing occupancy rates. The number of vacant public housing units was reduced from 39 in July to 14 at the end of November. This reduction resulted in an occupancy rate of 97.57 percent.

The HCV division processed 2,374 household applications for assisted housing in 2016, resulting in the issuance of 570 vouchers to new program participants. This activity helps to increase its voucher utilization from 88 percent to 93 percent. The ultimate goal of 98 percent utilization is anticipated to be achieved in 2017.

The financial status of the WHA is fair. There is anticipated to be \$548,366 remaining in reserves on December 31, 2016. This amount is not ideal but would carry the WHA for another year if performance remained at its current state. However, the WHA's Public Housing has been working to increase occupancy. Once a 12-month average of 97 percent occupancy is maintained, the WHA will be eligible to receive more operating subsidy. Currently, the WHA is leaving \$109,000 on the table due to its sub-standard status with HUD.

Housing Choice Voucher Program

BACKGROUND

The Housing Choice Voucher program is a division of the Housing and Community Services Department and the City of Wichita Housing Authority (WHA). The program is federally funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The 2016 assistance level of \$13 million for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) will provide assistance to 2,770 families by contracting with more than 800 private landlords.

The HCV division administers the following programs in accordance with HUD rules and regulations and the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan.

- 1) The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides vouchers to low-income families who meet the income eligibility criteria. Families contribute the highest of 30% of their adjusted income or 10% of gross monthly income toward rent. The program pays the balance of rent due the landlord. The maximum rent allowable in this program is established by fair market rents set by HUD and payment standards of the Wichita Housing Authority.
- 2) The Mainstream Program provides Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly persons and families with disabilities, to assist them in renting affordable, accessible and accommodating private dwellings to fit their particular needs due to their disability.
- 3) The Designated Housing Program provides Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly persons and families with disabilities on the Public Housing waiting list, to assist tenants in renting affordable and accommodating private dwellings to fit their disability-related needs.
- 4) The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program is designed to help low-income HCV families become self-sufficient. This program helps families establish an escrow account that may be used as a down payment to purchase a home, further educational needs, or repair credit. Families graduating from this program have attained self-sufficiency.
- 5) The Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program allows HCV assistance to be used for mortgage payments. Recipients must participate in the FSS program, attend homeowner training and secure a mortgage loan. Participants receive a 15 year subsidy to offset mortgage payments. The participant is expected to be able to independently pay the remainder of the mortgage term.
- 6) The Veterans' Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program provides rental assistance through Housing Choice Vouchers for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Veterans' Administration staff located at the local VA Medical Center, and in collaboration with other services in the community.

Department Mission

... To provide housing and related services to benefit the citizens and neighborhoods of Wichita.

Housing Choice Voucher Mission

... To provide affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing choices for Wichita citizens who meet eligibility criteria through a variety of programs, while promoting self-sufficiency.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Department of Housing and Urban Development national initiative is to decrease reserves to a level that will sustain all HCV programs and provide additional rental assistance to families in need of affordable, safe and decent household. The Wichita's Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher program projects that reserves will decrease to 11.4 percent in 2016 and this effort will lead to reserves leveling off at 4-6 percent in 2017, fulfilling HUD's mandate.

To assist Housing Choice Voucher programs nationwide, HUD has developed a spreadsheet tool to assist in projecting HCV leasing, spending and funding over a two year period. The purpose of the tool is to facilitate decision making by Housing Authorities and to guide HUD oversight and technical assistance to achieve optimal use of the HCV funds while stabilizing the program.

The Wichita Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher management team utilizes this tool and in early 2016 to develop planning activities to ensure that appropriate leasing, spending and maximizing funding will lead the program into another successful "high performing" year.

Management determined that the Housing Choice Voucher program team would need to accomplish the following activities:

- Open HCV program waiting list as it closed on October, 2014 and all families who made application were contacted by December, 2015.
- Waiting list to remain open until 5,000 families complete on-line preliminary application
- Conduct formal applications meetings for 5,000 households on the waiting list
- Determine eligibility and issue 1,200 vouchers to provide rental assistance to 2,636 households. This goal would assist the Housing Choice Voucher program in decreasing rental assistance reserves to 11.4 percent from 13.7 percent.
- Overall goal is to provide at least 500 new families with rental assistance. The number of new families includes attrition that is projected to occur in 2016.

Activities for July – November, 2016 included:

- Determining Eligibilities for 2,000 households
- Issuing 500 Vouchers
- Leasing up 250 new households

The HCV program endeavors to increase its voucher utilization has processed nearly 5,000 applications to date. Issued over 1,100 vouchers to household in Wichita community. Achieving activities established in February led the program in meeting its goal of leasing 570 new households.

The following table provides month, type of meeting and number of households contacted throughout the year:

Month	Type of Meeting	Number of Households Contacted	Number of Households Attended or Rescheduled	Voucher Issuance	New Admission
Jan 2016	Formal Application	500	185	223	31
Feb 2016		0	0	46	26
Mar 2016	Formal Application	1,000	400	96	56
Apr 2016		0	0	34	58
May 2016	Formal Application	1,538	1,100	117	39
Jun 2016	Formal Application	1,700	789	420	67
Jul 2016	Voucher Issuance			331	80
Aug 2016	Voucher Issuance			80	73
Sep 2016	Voucher Issuance			8	84
Oct 2016	Voucher Issuance			139	56
Total		4,738	2,374	1494	570

2016 Accomplishments to Date

- On April 15, 2016 the HCV division was designated as a “High Performer” for Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2015 by HUD of its Section 8 Management Assessment Program. A 97 percent rating was achieved based upon 140 of 145 points on the Section 8 Management Assessment Program.
- Seventy-five new landlords were added to the WHA’s HCV program during the first eleven months in 2016.
- Completed 2016 Utility Allowances that is utilized for both programs of WHA; Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects; and other housing programs in Wichita community.
- HUD awarded HCV with 10 additional vouchers for veterans in its Veterans’ Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH). The additional rental assistance helps to fulfill the Mayor’s Challenge of Ending Homelessness among Veterans. One hundred percent of the additional vouchers were leased within 60 days of receipt. The HCV VASH program has funding to assist 208 veterans’ households.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development requested the Wichita Housing Authority to solicit cooperation in applying for and administering vouchers to assist families who have been participating in HUD’s Calvary Towers Multi-Family project based rental assistance program. The HCV program was awarded 49 vouchers totaling \$250,523 for active households. Thirty-seven families were leased within 60-days of first contact. Two families leased into Public Housing. The remaining 10 vouchers rolled into the general population of the Housing Choice Voucher program.
- HCV program was successful in reducing housing assistance reserve to 11.4 percent and accomplishing this rate in November the division will meet its target rate of 4-6 percent for 2017.
- HCV program is on target with City’s Performance Measures.

City of Wichita's Performance Measures

Average Dollar Value of Vouchers Redeemed Over the Course of the Reporting Period per Household

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	November, 2016	2016 Actual
TBD	\$5,127	\$5,100	\$5,100	

Households That Redeemed Rental Assistance Vouchers

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 November	2016 Actual
1,338	2,374	2,300	2,326	

Percentage of Budget and Vouchers Redeemed During the Reporting Period

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 November	2016 Actual
98% Budget	100%	98%	98%	
2636 Vouchers	2,374	2,300	2,326	

Household Participating in Family Self-Sufficiency

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 November	2016 Actual
125	155	150	148	

Households that Graduated from the Self-Sufficiency Program

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 November	2016 Actual
10	14	10	6	

Waiting List Numbers

Benchmark	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 November	2016 Actual
2,000	1,997	5,000	6,937	

**U. S. Department of Housing & Urban Development’s Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)
Performance Measures**

Number	Indicator	2015 Actual	Possible Points	2016 Semi Annual	2016 Actual
1	Selection from Waiting List	15	15/0	15	
2	Reasonable Rent	20	20/15/0	20	
3	Determination of Adjusted Income	15	20/15/0	15	
4	Utility Allowance Schedule	5	5/0	5	
5	Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Control	5	5/0	5	
6	HQS Enforcement	10	10/0	10	
7	Expanding Housing Opportunities	5	5/0	5	
8	Payment Standards	5	5/0	5	
9	Timely Annual Reexaminations	10	10/5/0	10	
10	Correct Tenant Rent Calculations	5	5/0	5	
11	Pre-Contract HQS Inspections	5	5/0	5	
12	Annual HQS Inspections	10	10/5/0	10	
13	Lease-Up	20	20/15/0	20	
14	Family Self-Sufficiency	10	10/8/5/3/0	10	
Total			145 Max	140	97%

High Performance Rating
Standard Rating
Troubled Rating

90% & Above
60% to 89%
59% & Below

PUBLIC HOUSING

The City of Wichita, Housing and Community Services Department, recently implemented a comprehensive marketing campaign in an effort to better inform the public as to the availability of the City’s public housing stock. This was a multi-faceted marketing campaign consisting of both print and social media advertisement, an online GIS (geographic information system) public housing tool housed on the City’s website, and the placement of traditional real estate yard signs in the yards of public housing units. This three pronged approach to marketing public housing to the residents of Wichita, has made a substantial difference in the amount of online applications that have been filed with the City.

One significant piece of advertisement conducted by the City consisted of a comprehensive social media campaign. The first post in the campaign focused on the promotion of the City’s 5 and 6 bedroom units and reached 43,415 people. The second post, which promoted 3 and 4 bedroom homes, was smaller in scope yet still generated 1,600 likes and was shared 1,377 times. Both advertisements provided links to the City’s online public housing mapping system, and together drove significant traffic to both the mapping system and the Housing and Community Services website.

The City of Wichita's GIS based Public Housing Mapping Tool utilizes a GIS mapping system similar to the well-known Google Maps platform. This system allows the viewer to geo-locate the house in which they are interested in, while also providing detailed photographs of each particular housing unit. This tool had been in a beta test format for several months prior to the implementation of the public housing marketing campaign, and went live when the campaign began. The system is housed on the City's website and has been heavily utilized since late July, 2016.

In addition to the online presence, there was also an on-site effort to market public housing units in the form of traditional yard signs. These signs are placed in the yards of each public housing unit and provide both the phone number to the Housing and Community Services intake office, as well as the number of bedrooms and bathrooms that each housing unit contains. These signs have proven to be a significant marketing tool for informing the public as to housing availability. This is likely due to the fact that clientele are able to inquire about units that are available in areas that they find themselves in daily, as opposed to being directed to a unit via the internet that may not be in an area they find desirable.

These combined marketing approaches, coupled with advertisements in selected print media, contributed to the completion of approximately 1,327 online public housing applications. This activity occurred in slightly less than one month's time and has contributed to the Department's current 97.57 percent occupancy rate. The marketing plan has been developed in a way that can be repeated as needed and the mapping system tool is regularly updated to reflect current housing stock.

In regards to marketing the City's public housing in the future, it is recommended that the GIS mapping tool be fully stocked with descriptions of all City housing properties. As properties become vacant and available for photographing, they should be continuously added to the site, so that there will eventually be a seamless transition from vacancy to availability on the marketing tool. It is also recommended that capacity to serve the City's Spanish speaking population be developed, and future print and social media advertisements be presented in a bi-lingual format. These advertisement campaigns should be repeated on a quarterly basis, in order to keep the idea of public housing availability on the forefront of citizen awareness.

Public Housing initiated new processes this reporting period with its waiting list. Historically, interested participants have registered electronically and was only contacted as a unit was available. The Department now conducts formal applications with prospective participants on a monthly basis and completes tenant screening. By completing this process, the Department has a pool of eligible clients that may be offered a unit immediately as vacancies occur. This new practice expedited the reduction of units from 39 to 14 in just three months.

RAVING FANS

Public Housing & Community Services – “LWYL” & “WHIM”

Another marketing strategy has been directed at increasing tenant satisfaction. Over the summer, the “Love Where You Live” campaign launched. Approximately 68 tenants participated. The Housing Director visited with each multifamily property twice to identify tenant concerns and make significant progress in resolving persistent problems. The objective is to create a living environment where tenants will never want to leave. This approach includes increasing response time on maintenance requests and achieving the Raving Fan customer service mentality.

The goal of “Love Where You Live” (LWYL) and “Wichita Housing Information Meeting” (WHIM) is to provide exceptional customer service to each and every one in order to create an atmosphere where ALL residents never want to leave. Attaining this goal will generate “Raving Fans”.

Residents want to know that their voices are heard and that city employees are responding to their needs. The Wichita Housing Authority (WHA) concentrates its efforts on improving customer service delivery. Work orders are one example of addressing the resident’s needs. There is a current backlog that will be eradicated by December 31, 2016, and thereafter, all work orders will be completed within ten working days.

IMPLEMENTATION

Departmental staff started posting LWYL and WHIM flyers throughout the four multifamily dwellings (Rosa Gragg, Bernice Hutcherson, McLean Manor, & Greenway Manor). Stated on the flyer is a date, time, and place (typically the unit’s community room) of a training or meeting WHA will conduct. WHIM’s main focus is to train. Trainings so far have been topics on health, hoarding, and active shooters.

At the end of July 2016, Director John Hall implemented the LWYL campaign. These meetings will be held bi-monthly. One of the issues that has come to the forefront has been work orders not being handled in a timely manner. After looking back at reports there has been several work orders that have not been addressed within over a year, which is highly UNACCEPTABLE. The WHA goal has been to inform residents that Public Housing will get a handle on work orders and in the near future be sure that work order requests are responded to and fixed within ten working days.

RESULTS TO DATE

WHIM initially started in June 2015, and attendance has nearly doubled. Thus far in 2016, the WHA has held three WHIM meetings. At the “Active Shooter” training attendance was 26 percent.

Since July 2016, the WHA has held eight LWYL meetings. In September 2016 attendance averaged between 20-25 percent for each property. Progress has been made with work order issues and residents are starting to “Love Where They Live”. Over the past month, Public Housing staff has reviewed contracts with vendors to be sure common areas are clean, as well as making sure the outsides of the properties are being well maintained. Maintenance staff has also stepped up their efforts as well in order to make sure of backlog work orders are being addressed. Residents at the September meeting have not had nearly as many complaints and issues as were stated at the initial meetings. Residents see the efforts the Public Housing staff exerts daily and are starting to believe they are being heard.

Public Housing has also addressed a new program with the residents that the WHA may possibly be rolling out in the near future called Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). RAD is a voluntary program at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and seeks to preserve public housing by proving public housing agencies with access to more stable funding to make needed improvements to properties. Reports indicate that across the United States public housing units are in need of more than \$26 billion in repairs. RAD provides public housing agencies a way to rehabilitate units without depending on congress for additional monies. Public Housing staff will continue to update residents on plans to apply for RAD and make sure residents are “Loving Where They Live”. By doing so, residents will become the City’s “Raving Fans”.

FINANCIALS

The financial status of the WHA is fair. There is anticipated to be \$548,366 remaining in reserves on December 31, 2016. This amount is not ideal but would carry the WHA for another year if performance remained at its current state. However, the WHA's Public Housing has been working to increase occupancy. Once a 12-month average of 97 percent occupancy is maintained, the WHA will be eligible to receive more operating subsidy. Currently, the WHA is leaving \$109,000 on the table due to its low occupancy status. The enclosed table depicts the financial condition of the WHA.

WICHITA HOUSING AUTHORITY
2016 PROJECTION - AMPS AND COCC

Created for discussion with Director/Asst Director Only.						
Allocated Units	176	50	193	159	578	
Grant Number	876001	876002	876003	876004	877001	CF
Acct. Number	AMP 1	AMP 2	AMP 3	AMP 4	COCC	Transfer
						Total
Net Income (Loss) - Performance - Grant Wide Projections	(\$115,966)	(\$42,385)	(\$21,881)	(\$26,394)	(\$330,961)	
PILOT						
Trsf COCC Services to AMPS (A.D. & Clerk II; Waitlist) Est. (\$90,924 & \$38,841)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	
Warehouse Transfers to AMPS from COCC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Estimated Expense after JVs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Est. Net Income after 13th Month JVs	(\$115,966)	(\$42,385)	(\$21,881)	(\$26,394)	(\$330,961)	
Transfers:						
CF16 Transfer Operations**	202,543.50	\$42,385.00	\$21,881.00	\$26,394.00	\$0.00	
(A) Net Income (Loss)	(\$4,083.00)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$330,961.00)	
12/31/2015 Operating Reserve Balances	(B)	140,528	98,682	76,186	94,670	473,344
Estimated Remaining Operating Reser	(A+B)	136,445	98,682	76,186	94,670	142,383