

PROGRESS REPORT: BHA FIVE-YEAR PLAN (FY 2020 – 2024)

The Boston Housing Authority created its 5 year plan covering the years 2020-2024 as part of the 2020 Annual Plan. Each year with the submission of the annual plan, the BHA will provide an update in the Progress Report. The goals and key initiatives from 2020 are listed below in the left hand column and those will remain the same for the five-year period. The updates and progress made on achieving those goals and key initiatives are described below in the right hand column and will be updated each year.

Background:

Boston Housing Authority owns and manages more than 10,000 units of public housing and administers housing subsidies for an additional 15,500 families in Boston and eastern Massachusetts through its Leased Housing programs. It is BHA's purpose to provide quality homes and strong communities for low-income Bostonians. BHA housing is truly affordable to Boston's most vulnerable families and individuals, and the Authority strives to ensure that its housing resources serve as a platform for opportunity for residents and a resource to the broader community.

BHA is a critical Boston institution that is an integral part of the vast majority of neighborhoods across the city. Employing nearly 800 workers, most of whom live in the city, BHA contributes significantly to the local economy. Each year we invest nearly \$140 million across the neighborhoods of Boston in the operation of our public housing communities, and we also invest \$270 million in private housing throughout the City through our Leased Housing program. We have generated an additional \$1.5 billion of investment in our neighborhoods through public-private partnerships like the redevelopments currently underway at Whittier, Orient Heights, and Charlestown.

One of the priorities laid out in BHA's previous five-year plan, 2015-2019, was to develop a framework to ensure the long-term viability of BHA's public housing communities in the face of persistent federal funding shortfalls. One important strategy has been public-private partnerships between BHA and other providers of affordable housing and supportive services. In November 2014, BHA issued an invitation to the affordable housing community in the form of a Request for Qualifications, asking organizations to propose innovative approaches to preserving BHA's housing for future generations with decreased reliance on federal public housing subsidies. The response was wide-ranging. BHA received ideas focused on over thirty separate public housing communities. In the years since, BHA has been taking up the most promising proposals one at a time, issuing a series of Requests for Proposals that have led to several new public-private partnerships. In the process, BHA has articulated a set of firm principles to guide its partnerships: Engage residents and community members in meaningful participatory planning; ensure tenant protections; fully preserve on a one-for-one basis all deeply subsidized housing units; and focus on sustaining BHA's assets to fulfill its mission to serve future generations.

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An equally critical strategy in addition to public-private partnerships is to provide for those BHA communities that will remain under BHA ownership—which is the majority of BHA’s housing (about 7000 units). Amassing the resources to upgrade and maintain BHA’s public housing portfolio remains a challenge given the nearly \$1 billion in capital backlog. BHA will continue to invest in the long term preservation of these communities using a variety of tools, including HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration program, project-based Section 8, comprehensive capital planning, and better use of technology to deliver our housing services. These BHA sites will continue to be a critical part of their surrounding neighborhoods and the community fabric of the City of Boston.

While we endeavor to preserve our public housing assets, BHA’s Leased Housing program has steadily grown to cover more than 15,500 homes, providing a critical tool for affordable housing preservation and development throughout Boston. BHA is continually implementing strategies to ensure that the Leased Housing program is effectively serving low-income families and individuals. As part of BHA’s commitment to affirmatively further fair housing, in July 2019, BHA implemented Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) as exception payment standards in those zip codes where they are necessary to make communities accessible and affordable for voucher holders. The goal of implementing SAFMR exception payment standards is multifold: expand choice for voucher holders and decrease the concentration of vouchers in high poverty areas; preserve people’s ability to remain where they live, preventing displacement and harmful gentrification; and minimize the risk of artificially inflating rents throughout the city.

Over the coming five years, as we continue to invest in public housing preservation and expand the reach of the Leased Housing program, BHA will adjust our business processes and expand our internal capacities. For this 2020-2024 Plan we identify six broad strategic priorities:

1. Achieve and maintain high performer status for the public and leased housing programs.
2. Strengthen and preserve the BHA portfolio of public housing.
3. Increase housing opportunities through the leased housing program.
4. Support resident capacity-building, self-sufficiency and quality of life initiatives that help residents meet their personal goals for themselves and their families.
5. Identify and plan for future staffing needs at BHA.
6. Continue to improve customer service in all areas so that the BHA is consistently experienced by residents, applicants, landlords and vendors as an efficient, pleasant and responsive organization.

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Within this context, the Authority proposes the following initiatives:

Goals	Updates and Progress Made
<p>1. Strategic Focus: Achieve and maintain high performer status as evaluated by HUD in their Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) for the public and leased housing programs:</p>	
<p>Maintain 97% or higher Occupancy Levels:</p>	<p>Currently in the midst redevelopment of the Charlestown, JJ Carroll, and Lenox and current resources are being utilized for the relocation efforts in those projects. Operations to continue to work on expediting unit turnover with the expectation that all vacant units be ready for move in 30 days or less, and new applicants housed in under 60 days. Work closely with the Admissions department to insure there is a sufficient pool of applicants to fill vacancies and improve tracking capabilities of expected future vacancies' to properly notify the Admissions Department of upcoming case need.</p> <p>Stress the importance of Quality Control initiated inspections to be carried out by Operations Senior staff on vacant unit turnover.</p> <p>BHA Operations Division continues to work towards returning to a 97% occupancy rate, though the efforts continue to be impacted by Covid-19 and by the necessary allocation of resources required to relocate resident households transferring due to redevelopment projects, including Charlestown and Anne Lynch Homes at Old Colony as well as other redevelopment projects impacting the increased number of vacancies due to household moving to redeveloped properties such as Old Colony Beacon and Whittier Street amongst others. At the end of September the occupancy rate was 95% and by the end of December 2021, the occupancy rate was 95.5%.</p> <p>BHA is moving to improve occupancy performance on multiple fronts, including increased scrutiny of standards for all turnover units, with inspections prior to showings, maximize marketing and curb appeal to</p>

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	<p>ensure we may minimize the rejection rates. BHA is also exploring ways to increase the number of offers to waiting list applicants, and implementing measures to centrally capture and share information on anticipated vacancies, so that the unit turnover and applicant screening processes can begin as quickly as possible.</p>
<p>Maintain 100% Utilization of Section 8 Resources:</p>	<p>. The BHA will expend all available funding in 2021 and utilizing y 100% of the unit months available under the HUD baseline number of vouchers restriction. The BHA expects to expend all available funding in 2022, utilizing approximately 98% of the unit months available under the HUD baseline of vouchers restriction.</p>
<p>Continually improve toward achievement of high-performer PHAS status.</p>	<p>Continue to focus on all key indicators including rent collection, recertifications, and vacancy reduction along with improved REAC scores. Staff training and implementing and setting clear productivity expectations on each indicator.</p> <p>BHA continues to focus on improving/maximizing performance on each of the PHAS components. As has been the case for many large housing authorities, and almost universally in the national rental housing industry, performance in rent collection has suffered due to the impact of Covid-19. BHA is assisting impacted households who choose to submit applications to the City of Boston, for federal rental assistance relief funds to pay eligible, Covid19-related rent balances. BHA continues to work with individual households to stabilize potentially at-risk tenancies by assisting clients with referrals to local non-profit organizations that assist with the payment of rent balances, and management encourages residents in arrears to utilize repayment agreements whenever feasible. The rent collection rate at the end of September was 97%.</p> <p>In addition to a continued focus on vacancy reduction and rent collection, BHA is also prioritizing improved maintenance delivery, which should result in better unit conditions and improved inspection scores when HUD REAC PASS inspections resume. BHA implemented a new work order system at</p>

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	<p>the beginning of the fiscal year, and has done significant testing and customization of new property inspection software that will make the annual unit inspections and the quarterly common area inspection processes more efficient for staff and residents. This should have positive impacts on deficiency tracking, the quality of repairs, and the physical condition of the properties, which should also contribute to optimal scoring on the Physical Inspection component of the PHAS assessment.</p> <p>BHA management and maintenance staff have received training on each component of the Management Assessment and Physical Inspection components of the PHAS assessment standards and scoring criteria.</p>
<p>2. Strategic Focus: Strengthen and preserve the BHA portfolio of public housing:</p>	
<p>Formalize asset management staffing and systems within BHA’s organizational structure.</p>	<p>BHA senior management have convened biweekly meetings to advance this goal. Much of the focus to date has been BHA’s increasing portfolio of Section 8 housing units and other affordable housing outside of the traditional public housing program. For example, staff are devising tools such as new budgeting templates that will be flexible enough to accommodate various subsidy platforms, while also delivering robust budget-to-actuals reporting to guide operational decisions.</p> <p>BHA senior management continues to meet biweekly, focusing on specific pieces of this effort, which has led to the development of better budgeting tools and enhanced financial reporting. This process is also leading to the development of a framework for reviewing the financial resources, needs, and performance of properties in order to best position BHA to make projections and structural decisions about which BHA communities may be most viable for continued operation as traditional public housing, or may be candidates for conversion to Project Based Section 8, or require another method of subsidy to best sustain as many units as possible as long-term affordable housing resources.</p>

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<p>In all redevelopment transactions, provide for BHA’s financial stability in order to preserve public housing character and associated tenant protections into the future.</p>	<p>While traditional public housing provides valuable, explicitly articulated protections for public housing tenants, the programs have been underfunded over the years. As BHA implements alternatives to traditional public housing—such as, for example, Project Based Voucher Section 8 subsidies that provide a more robust and reliable financing stream—we must also take care to put in place the same sorts of protections that public housing residents enjoy. This year BHA joined two advocacy agencies, Greater Boston Lease Services and City Life/Vida Urbana to secure a grant through the Innovative Stable Housing Initiative Upstream Fund (the “ISHI Grant”) that is supporting work among the organizations and in collaboration with public housing local tenants organizations at sites that are going through (or have recently gone through) subsidy conversions and, in some cases, ownership transitions. The goal of the ISHI work is to compile a toolkit of resources to inform such conversions. That includes explanatory materials to inform residents and managers about how conversions may affect basic operational processes such as rent calculations. It also includes model documents such as leases and House Rules that will ensure continuation of valuable public housing protections even under alternative subsidy platforms. The ISHI work wrapped up in summer 2021, and a “Toolkit” was drafted shortly thereafter. The Toolkit is currently under final review by the BHA and the other grant partners.</p>
<p>Complete a portfolio-wide capital needs assessment for all properties not currently slated for redevelopment. Devise a strategic plan to fund these capital needs over the long term.</p>	<p>Capital Needs Assessments (CNAs) are 95% complete for 35% of BHA properties with the remaining 65% of the properties to be procured by December 2021 and balance of BHA properties completed by December 2022. These CNAs assist in planning for immediate and future capital projects.</p>
<p>Add new deeply affordable units where possible during redevelopment.</p>	<p>In recent years BHA public housing redevelopment activity has successfully adhered to the principle of one-for-one replacement, meaning that all original public housing units have been replaced (or preserved) with comparable, equally deeply affordable housing units—either RAD or Section 8 Project Based Voucher (PBV) units.</p>

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At the same time, BHA is also creating net-new deeply affordable housing. “Net-new” means additional new deeply affordable housing units above the number needed to replace (or preserve) the number of original public housing units that previously existed at a given site.

The net-new deeply affordable housing units underway or completed in the past year are as follows:

- O’Connor Way, a new affordable elderly housing community completed in late 2020 and occupied in 2021 on vacant land at the periphery of BHA’s Mary Ellen McCormack, includes 22 new PBV Section 8 units (deeply affordable) plus 25 additional affordable units for a total of 47 net-new affordable units.
- 125 Amory, a BHA elderly/disabled property that completed renovations in early 2021, offers 12 new Section 8 PBV units (in addition to the 199 original public housing units that have converted to Section 8).
- The redevelopment of JJ Carroll scheduled to begin in the fourth quarter of 2021 will include 77 net-new PBV Section 8 units (in addition to 64 PBV Section 8 units to replace the original public housing units).
- Old Colony Phase 3, which is in construction and scheduled for completion in 2022, includes 55 net-new deeply affordable units as Phase 3C.
- The redevelopment of BHA’s Clippership Apartments, which was completed in early 2021, resulted in a total of 22 PBV Section 8 units, which is 2 more than the original 20 units that were demolished—in other words, 2 net-new rental units—as well as, 30 net-new homeownership units, 16 of which are affordable.
- Holtzer Park, a brand new building currently underconstruction on vacant land at BHA’s Amory Street site, will be 100% net-new affordable housing: 62 total net-new units, of which 8 will be deeply affordable PBV Section 8 units.

In furtherance of BHA’s commitment to sustainability,

BHA looks forward to establishing new goals to reduce carbon emissions

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<p>continue to reduce carbon emission toward 38% of 2008 level; and continue to explore climate resiliency, moving from identifying vulnerabilities toward implementing solutions.</p>	<p>to 50% of 2008 levels by 2030 and 0% by 2050.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced carbon emissions at numerous developments, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Codman – Heating and Hot Water Boiler Retrofit b. Frederick Douglass – Air Sealing c. Hampton House – Air Sealing d. Washington Manor – Air Sealing e. Monsignor Powers – Window and Patio Door Replacements f. JJ Malone – High Efficiency Hot Water Distribution Pilot g. Monsignor Powers – Hot Water Boiler Retrofit h. Ruth Barkley – Heating and Hot Water Boiler Retrofit i. St. Botolph – Add Insulation in Cavities Wall 2. Explore Climate Resiliency: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Working with MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on the Climate Hazard Adaption and Resilience Masterplan (CHARM) to better understand and assess risk and vulnerability as well as solutions through informed capital planning and project design b. Participated in the Urban Land Institute’s charrette “Living with Heat”, and monitoring their comprehensive research project examining the effects and solutions to increased heat on the Greater Boston Area c. Partnered with City of Boston’s Climate Ready team on strategies contained in the framework of the Heat Resilience Study; exploring pathways for implementation in the future
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Strategic Focus Area: Increase Housing Opportunities through the Leased Housing program:</p>	
<p>Apply for additional vouchers as opportunities arise.</p>	<p>The BHA applied for and received an additional award of 100 Mainstream Housing Vouchers, vouchers allocated for families with disabled non-elderly adult household members bringing the total to 410. These vouchers supplement the 500 vouchers BHA maintains for Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) households, bringing the total number of vouchers for non-elderly disabled families to 910, notwithstanding the units designated for</p>

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	<p>non-elderly disabled families in the project based voucher portfolio.</p> <p>The BHA also applied for Emergency Housing Vouchers and received an allocation of 480 which are currently being issued in cooperation with the CoC.</p> <p>The BHA also received additional funding for 20 additional VASH vouchers in January of 2021, bringing the BHA’s total VASH allocation to 651. The BHA also has a pending application for additional VASH vouchers which will be awarded based on HUD’s determination of local need.</p> <p>The BHA was able to increase utilization for the Family Unification Program (FUP) to near 100% increasing the chances of eligibility for any additional funding opportunities.</p> <p>BHA has also applied for 6 Foster Youth to Independence vouchers, 4 have thus far been received, supplementing the work BHA does with the MA Department of Children and Families.</p>
<p>Maintain high occupancy rates in the Project-Based Voucher (PBV) portfolio while decreasing turnover times.</p>	<p>The BHA closely monitors vacancy rates in the project based voucher program to maximize housing opportunities for Boston families. In order to further increase occupancy rates and a focus on reducing unit turnover, BHA is in the process of implementing an online Owner Portal that will enable the tracking of eligible applicant referrals from the BHA waiting lists to the respective owner for suitability screening.</p>
<p>Optimize the use of PBVs to preserve and create affordable housing in Boston.</p>	<p>The BHA has awarded project based vouchers to preserve tenancies at three expiring use developments that were previously subsidized by the state 13a mortgage program. The expiring use project at Mercantile Wharf is now under a long-term PBV contract, stabilizing eligible low-income families at the property for years to come.</p> <p>Additionally, the BHA awarded 156 vouchers to a project in Jamaica Plan that will include a mix of Project Based Vouchers and Mainstream Vouchers and another 15 vouchers a project at Quint Ave that will provide</p>

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	<p>support individuals in recovery. In 2021, the BHA awarded 210 Project Based Vouchers (a combination of Mainstream and traditional vouchers) to Beacon Development to preserve and create affordable housing at 140 Clarendon Street. The BHA will continue to solicit Project Based Vouchers, specifically soliciting opportunities to project base Mainstream vouchers.</p>
<p>Implement ECHO—Expanding Choice in Housing Opportunities pilot program—and Small Area Fair Market Rents to promote access for voucher holders to a wider array of neighborhoods.</p>	<p>The BHA launched Expanding Choice in Housing Opportunities (ECHO) pilot program. ECHO is a voluntary program aimed at affirmatively furthering fair housing by providing technical assistance and information to BHA voucher-holders. Under the Fair Housing Act our voucher-holders should be able to live in any part of Massachusetts they choose and the mission of the ECHO program is to provide them with all the information and technical assistance they will need to make their own decisions. Through ECHO, BHA has taken steps insure that our voucher-holders receive Fair Housing training, so they will know their rights and protections under the Fair Housing Act, and what steps to take if they encounter any discriminatory behavior.</p> <p>The BHA has also developed a software tool that assists families with identifying neighborhoods that might meet their family needs, providing information on neighborhood qualities including schools, transportation, and public safety and linking them to units that can be afforded under BHA’s payment standard structure.</p> <p>The BHA has also implemented Small Area Fair Market Rents as exception payment standards in many of the zip codes that fall within its administrative area, to increase options for voucher holders to find apartments in a wider variety of apartments.</p> <p>The BHA has also hired a Director of Housing Search and Landlord Recruitment with the goal of continuing to expand on housing choices for voucher families by recruiting new landlords to the program, improving on existing program marketing materials, streamlining administrative barriers,</p>

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	<p>and providing resources for housing search through internal tools and access to external partnerships.</p> <p>The ECHO team will continue to expand its housing search services to BHA families that are facing displacement due to failed inspections and a landlords failure to make repairs and victims of Domestic Violence that have been issued vouchers in order to permit relocation from public housing.</p>
<p>4. Strategic Focus: Strengthen resident capacity-building and quality of life initiatives that help residents meet their own personal goals and that help support vibrant communities:</p>	
<p>Rebuild resident capacity program to support resident empowerment and leadership; improve the efficacy and efficiency of Local Tenant Organizations (LTOs), Resident Empowerment Coalition (REC), and Section 8 Tenants Incorporated (S8TI).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop metrics to track levels of resident organization and engagement. o Revise LTO policy, election procedures, and by-laws; pursue strategies to maximize diversity of participants and their level of participation in LTOs. 	<p>The Resident Capacity Program provides regular board compliance and Tenant Participation Fund training to new and existing Family & Elderly/Disabled Board members in collaboration with Mel King Institute and Boston Resident Training Institute.</p> <p>Current metrics track LTO Compliance; TPF spending; participation in REC Meetings; LTO meetings and activities.</p> <p>Holding monthly Resident Empowerment Coalition meetings, now on a virtual basis. Registration for meetings captures first time participants. Meetings were formerly held every other month. BHA staff will continue to host virtual events, meetings, and activities and promote LTO events.</p> <p>From the REC Meetings, we have developed a Peer Learning Committee and Election Support Committee. The topics for both committees are developed with resident input and resident leaders co-host with RCP staff.</p> <p>Tenant Participation Fund reports and Laundry fund reports are tracked quarterly, with regular follow ups and technical assistance provided to LTOs.</p>

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	<p>Resident Capacity Program staff currently includes 2 Coordinators; 3 Full-Time interns; 4 Part-Time Interns. The additional staffing capacity allows us to better connect and work with Public Housing, Mixed Finance, and Section 8 residents.</p> <p>The CCECR section of the BHA website now features an LTO Resource Page - for LTO members and general residents. The information includes links to templates needed for their TPF reporting. LTO Members and general residents can also find links to LTO bylaws and Board contact information.</p> <p>Digital Equity: provided laptops and tablets to tenant leaders during the pandemic. Three boards received training from Mel King Institute as part of their public housing leadership training: Mildred Hailey, Commonwealth, and Charlestown. Launching 'Powered by the REC' on October 1st: an initiative to increase resident engagement with their LTOs.</p>
<p>Institutionalize resident protections and participation in all redevelopment projects; advance internal BHA systems to ensure long-term compliance by new owners.</p>	<p>BHA collaborated with Greater Boston Legal Services and City Life/Vida Urbana on a grant offered by three hospitals known as Innovative Stable Housing Initiative that was successful. The partners call it the Tenant Empowerment Project (TEP) and its focus is to develop tools and trainings and empower residents as they go through redevelopment. The grant work wrapped up in summer 2021, and the grant partners drafted a "Toolkit" for resident empowerment shortly thereafter. The Toolkit is currently under final review by the BHA and the other grant partners. Once finalized materials will be hosted on the BHA website.</p>
<p>Explore voter registration at re-certification.</p>	<p>No update for 2021. Staff will move forward with planning around this goal in 2022.</p>
<p>Increase Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Participation from 200 to 800 households.</p>	<p>BHA has increased FSS Participation to over 500 and continues to enroll families. We expected to enroll 800 families by the end of calendar year 2021, and over 1500 by the end of 2022.</p>

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<p>5. Strategic Focus: Identify and plan for future staffing needs and to support BHA staff:</p>	
<p>Proactively plan for future staffing in light of property repositioning and pending retirements; identify areas where BHA needs to hire for new capacities and functions.</p>	<p>Working with Human Resources and Finance to identify retirees and devise replacement needs in Operations among other departments. Identify career development opportunities for staff that could be promoted into new classifications for advancement. BHA continues to reach out to local colleges and universities and has partnered with YMCA to hire a series of interns who have an interest in pursuing careers in the field of affordable housing.</p>
<p>Institute additional mentoring and training for the current and the next generation of BHA staff.</p>	<p>Created and implemented intensive 3 month manager training program called Management at its Best since 2020.</p>
<p>Continue to promote diverse hiring and employment opportunities for BHA residents.</p>	<p>BHA has been able to provide additional stipends for residents interested in capacity building and engagement work (ie; Census, digital equity) as well as for COVID response related work (ie; food distribution). Hired BHA resident as Resident Capacity Program (RCP) Assistant.</p> <p>BHA continues to make efforts to recruit, hire, and promote public housing residents and voucher holders and is proactively seeking more creative, non-traditional means of candidate recruitment to reach a broader audience of potential applicants.</p>
<p>Continue to develop information systems, communications tools, and interactive forums to enhance collaboration, efficiency and productivity across departments.</p>	<p>BHA has purchased new software to provide automated texting, robocalling and emailing capabilities for more timely communication with residents. The MIS Dept is currently working on preparing the software for implementation so that departments can begin testing it.</p>
<p>6. Strategic Focus: Identify and plan for future staffing needs and to support BHA staff:</p>	
<p>Develop a Customer Service Policy to promote client-focused and consistent service delivery.</p>	<p>A Customer Service and Programs Compliance Manager position has been created. This position will develop and implement business process changes designed to improve the accessibility and clarity of information provided to individuals and families as they use the programs and services offered by BHA and ensuring the BHA Reasonable Accommodation policy</p>

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	<p>is adhered and tracked consistently. The Director of Operations and Director of Compliance are working closely with the Director of Human Resources and identifying staff’s skill development needs, as well as building the needed current and future staff capacity. Actively engaging with the YMCA and colleges providing internship opportunities in an effort to build needed temporary and potential future staff capacity ensuring improved, efficient, and consistent service delivery throughout the Operations Department.</p>
<p>Optimize technology to transform interaction with the agency—e.g., landlord and tenant portals, vendor tools, on-line rental payment and direct deposit.</p>	<p>BHA implemented on-line rental payment and automated demand debit rental payments for residents who opt in. Public Housing files are in the process of being digitally transferred. All resident records will be stored digitally allowing greater capacity to serve our residents both in person and virtually.</p> <p>BHA has implemented Virtual appointments with clients in order expedite processing, recertification’s, rent changes and other business that was strictly handled in person previously.</p> <p>Staff training on handheld tablets with introduction of work system (Elite).</p> <p>Resident portals are currently planned and will allow clients to update financial information in rent determination, and to initiate new work orders.</p> <p>The majority of Public Housing files have been scanned for digital access, with plans in place to scan the remaining files and to continue to revise manual business processes to paperless, digital processing for more efficiency for staff and convenience to residents.</p> <p>The planning of resident portals continues, with a goal of providing an interactive online avenue to conduct many frequent customer service transactions with BHA, including the annual certification process and requesting maintenance service.</p> <p>BHA Operations has implemented a new work order system, moving on</p>

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	<p>from the prior work order system, one of the last remaining components of the legacy property management software, utilized for several decades. The new work order software is a component of the same Elite property management software BHA uses for conducting core business functions such as annual recertifications and financial processing. This transition will allow BHA to more easily create reports that can incorporate data from other areas within Elite, including data pertaining to unit occupancy, certifications, etc.</p>
<p>Streamline and simplify the housing application process to maximize transparency for applicants and focus staff efforts on working with applicants who are most likely to be housed in the near future.</p>	<p>BHA has drafted policy revisions that align the application and verification policies across federally assisted programs, to simplify requirements for any applicant that applies to multiple BHA programs. The policy revisions also reduce the verification requirements for applicants as related to housing history, which can often be extremely difficult to piece together for homeless or otherwise unstably housed applicants and of little value for determining eligibility and suitability.</p> <p>The BHA is close to dramatically simplifying its online application process. The BHA plans to have a web-based portal for all federal housing programs by early 2022 and intends to use the state mandated online system (CHAMP) for all state funded housing programs at the same time. As these portals are brought online the BHA will move away from paper-based applications, unless necessary as a reasonable accommodation or other special circumstances.</p> <p>Update BHA website with virtual units that can be viewed 360 degree viewing to speed application decision-making process. Based on what we have learned with Pandemic our Technology is limited and in need up updating; this virtual aspect will assist with more rapid unit selection.</p>
<p>Simplify applicant and resident forms; improve program marketing materials and briefings.</p>	<p>The BHA has revised the Admissions and Continued Occupancy policy aimed at transparency. The BHA will continue working on policy documents in the coming years to be as succinct and precise as possible.</p>

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	<p>The BHA has created an online briefing session and worked to simplify many of the forms associated with voucher issuance, including the RFTA and the BHA Leasing Guidebook.</p> <p>The BHA will also work to simplify the Application form, which will ultimately mirror the online portals described above.</p> <p>BHA has updated and converted several frequently used applicant and resident forms, including the transfer application, the request forms to add household members, and the request form for approval of residual tenancy, to a new fillable pdf format with the resident/applicant information pre-filled to increase efficiency and convenience for staff and clients.</p>
<p>Improve landlord recruitment and retention strategies.</p>	<p>The BHA hired a Director of Housing Search and Landlord Recruitment to focus on this issue. The Director will focus on marketing to existing and new landlords, including designing informational sessions for interested landlords.</p> <p>The BHA has implemented an online owner portal that will allow BHA owners access to financial information, inspection results and scheduling information, and the ability to follow move ins and rent increases through statuses as they move from submission to completion.</p> <p>The BHA has also applied for MTW status under HUD Cohort 4, which requires certain landlord incentives.</p>
<p>Provide additional opportunities for customer feedback.</p>	<p>The BHA implemented a texting survey for voucher holders which has provided significant feedback regarding the housing search and move process. The BHA will look to develop other surveys for owners, applicants, and tenants, to drive procedural changes and improve customer service. New platforms will be created where clients can receive surveys in all media form, TEXT, EMAIL, PHONE, and reply confidentially. In early 2022, the BHA expects to implement a customer service tracking system that allows BHA to report and track customer service issues as they are resolved while monitoring responsiveness and consistency. The</p>

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	system will allow BHA clients to report issues by web, email, and phone and receive an issue number that will allow them to follow up on the inquiry no matter who they reach at the BHA.
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