District of Columbia
Department of Housing and Community Development

Citizen Participation Plan
For
The Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans,
Substantial Plan Amendments
and
Performance Reports

Background

The Community Development Block Grant program is authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The primary objective of this Act is the development of viable urban communities. The District of Columbia has been a participant in the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program since its inception. A Citizen Participation Plan is part of the Consolidated Planning requirements contained in 24 CFR 91.

In 1994, federal regulations were revised to require the consolidated submission of plans and applications for three other programs in addition to the CDBG plan and application. The following four entitlement grant programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were consolidated into a single planning and application process:

- **Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)**
- **HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**
- **Emergency Shelter Grants Program (ESG)**
- **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA)**

The Citizen Participation Plan Requirement

The associated revised regulations stipulate that participating jurisdictions must develop and implement Citizen Participation Plans that specify how citizens can provide input to the planning and implementation process.

This document constitutes the Citizen Participation Plan for the District of Columbia's Consolidated Plan. It was prepared by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the District's grantee agency for administration of the Consolidated Plan.

DHCD's Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) describes how citizens will participate in three programmatic areas:

1. Development of the Consolidated Plan,
2. Substantial amendments made to the Consolidated Plan, and
3. Development of the annual performance report.

The plan is designed to especially encourage participation by low- and moderate-income persons, minority and non-English speaking persons, residents of public and assisted housing developments, and, in particular, persons living in areas where the federal grant funds are proposed to be used. In addition, the CPP requires DHCD to minimize displacement and inform citizens of available assistance with relocation for all federally-funded projects. DHCD includes relocation requirements compliant with the Uniform Relocation Act (URA) in its guidelines to prospective developers during the development funding process. These guidelines are also

available to the public and other government agencies. Participating jurisdictions are required to follow their Citizen Participation Plans after adoption.

Plan Development Process:

The District's Consolidated Plan process begins with DHCD's preparation of the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), which describes the Plan Development Process. The CPP informs the public about processes and procedures for public access and influence on the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans, and the proposed scheduling for development and submission of the plan. Copies of the CPP are made available at least 2 weeks prior to the first public hearing at public libraries, all Advisory Neighborhood Commission offices, selected community based organization offices, at DHCD offices and on DHCD's website: www.dhcd.dc.gov. The CPP is also made available during the review of the Consolidated Plan.

The CPP includes a vigorous effort to notify the District of Columbia Housing Authority and other government agencies as well as the affected public about the Plan Development Process and to provide ample opportunity for citizen input at all stages. In the course of developing the Consolidated Plan, there are at least three public hearings held (two by DHCD and one by the Council of the District of Columbia), and there are two 30-day, open comment periods during the drafting stages before the document is finalized and submitted to HUD. The Consolidated Plan development process consists of the following steps:

- Preparing and issuing the Citizen Participation Plan with Notice of the "Needs Assessment" Public Hearings,
- Conducting a series of "Needs Assessment" Public Hearings early in the fiscal year to develop public priorities and receive feedback on prior year performance,
- Preparing and issuing a draft proposed Five-Year Plan (if a new 5-Year Plan must be developed), or a draft proposed Action Plan for the current fiscal year,
- Conducting (at a different point in the program year) a "Budget" Public Hearing on the draft proposed Consolidated Plan and its proposed budget,
- Submitting the final proposed Consolidated Plan to the Mayor for approval and transmittal to the Council of the District of Columbia,
- Conducting a Public Hearing on the proposed Consolidated Plan by the Council's Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs,
- Voting an Approval Resolution on the proposed Consolidated Plan by the full City Council,
- Finalizing the Consolidated Annual Action Plan, and
- Submitting the Consolidated Annual Action Plan to HUD prior to the August 15th annual deadline.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE*

EVENT	DATE
Issuance of Citizen Participation Plan with Notice of "Needs" Hearings	October
DHCD Public Hearings on "Housing and Community Development Needs in the District of Columbia"	November
Publication of proposed Action Plan	February
DHCD Public Hearing on proposed Action Plan & Budget	March
Mayor's submission of proposed FY 2004 Action Plan to the Council of the District of Columbia	April

Council committee public hearing on proposed Action Plan	April-May
DHCD finalization of Action Plan	May-June
Council Action Plan approval resolution adopted	July
Submission of Action Plan application to HUD	Mid-August
Grant funds become available for start of new Fiscal Year.	October 1

*Specific dates and locations are provided in published Notices, through direct mailings, in publicly-accessible locations and on the DHCD web-site.

Public Access and Accommodation

DHCD facilitates broad-based participation in its planning process by providing:

- No less than two-week advance publication of a Notice of Public Hearings,
- No less than 30 days to review the draft documents,
- Two-week periods following hearings for the submission of additional comments,
- Direct mailings of Notices to a wide range of interested groups,
- Easy access to draft documents (hard copies and on-line) and hearing transcripts,
- Accommodation of special needs participation through sign-language interpreters and interpreters for Spanish-speaking constituents, and
- Holding hearings at convenient times and in barrier-free facilities that are easily accessible by public transportation.

The Director and senior DHCD staff members are present at public hearings to take the direct testimony, answer questions on the District's housing and community development needs, and receive comments on DHCD's program performance for prior periods as well as for the current year. The submission of written testimony for the record is encouraged, and Public Hearing records are kept open for at least 2 weeks after the hearing for the receipt of post-hearing written testimony. A court reporter provides written transcripts within 2 weeks of the date of the Public Hearing, and a record of the Public Hearing, including the written transcript, is made available for public viewing at DHCD. When preparing the final Consolidated Plan, DHCD will include a summary of the comments and views received from citizens orally and in writing at the Public Hearing, as well as a response to any comments not accepted.

Moreover, DHCD will provide citizens, public agencies and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the District's Consolidated Plan and its use of assistance under the programs covered under the Consolidated Plan during the preceding five years. Requests may be made to the DHCD Public Information Specialist at (202) 442-7200.

Hearing Notification

DHCD promotes attendance at the hearings, particularly for low- and moderate-income citizens and citizen groups located in blighted areas of the city in which DHCD entitlement grant program funds are directed. The Public Hearings are announced through the publication of a Public Hearing Notice, containing the date, time, location, and subject matter of the Public Hearing.

Advertisement of the Public Notice is placed at least 2 weeks prior to the hearings in the D.C. Register, and in various media outlets that reach different population and interest groups. These media outlets include a daily newspaper in general circulation (such as The Washington Post) and other publications that reach different language groups, neighborhoods, minority populations and other special interest populations. (Examples in 2006 of such publications would include: the Afro-American, El Tiempo and The Blade.) No fewer than 500 copies of the Public Hearing Notices are distributed by direct mail to various constituent

groups and individuals, including all Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, public housing resident councils, civic associations, nonprofit developers, organizations supporting special needs populations, church groups, and community based organizations. Additionally, DHCD has contractual relationships with specific community based organizations (CBOs) that have a responsibility to distribute information regarding DHCD's entitlement grant programs and to review the information with citizens.

"Needs Assessment" Public Hearing

In the first quarter of each fiscal year, DHCD conducts a series of public hearings on "Housing and Community Development Needs in the District of Columbia." Testimony is solicited from the public on a variety of issues, including community development, commercial revitalization, job creation through DHCD-funded projects, home ownership, housing rehabilitation, housing production, fair housing, lead paint hazards, and displacement issues resulting from DHCD development activities. Citizens are also invited to express their views on DHCD's administration of the Consolidated Plan entitlement grant programs and its performance in achieving the Consolidated Plan's goals and objectives as stated in the annual performance report, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

Draft Proposed Consolidated Plan

After conducting the "Needs Assessment" hearings, DHCD prepares a draft Consolidated Plan for the upcoming Fiscal Year.

The draft Consolidated Plan includes estimated federal entitlement grant amounts, community development objectives, projected budgets and performance measures for implementing programs, a description of the processes DHCD utilizes to receive proposals for funding, certification of the District's plan to minimize displacement and assist in relocation in compliance with the federal and local regulations, and descriptions of other proposed District housing and/or community development activities. DHCD also includes estimates of appropriated, local funds, and the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) in its draft document to provide the public with a complete picture of its potential sources and uses of funds. In preparing the draft Consolidated Plan, DHCD considers all statements, testimony, and proposals regarding expenditure of federal entitlement grant funds that have been provided up to that point in the development process. A summary of the comments from the public at the Needs Hearings are included in the Draft Consolidated Plan along with a discussion of any comments not incorporated into the Plan. The public is given 30 days to provide written comments on the Plan to DHCD.

"Budget" Public Hearing

DHCD conducts a "Budget" Public Hearing on the proposed Consolidated Plan when the District's budget process has clarified local funding, usually in the months of March-April of a given fiscal year. Copies of the draft proposed Consolidated Plan are made available no less than two weeks prior to the "Budget" Public Hearing in accordance with the Notification and outreach processes outlined previously in this CPP. At the "Budget" Public Hearing, citizens are given the opportunity to present oral and written testimony on the programmatic and budgetary provisions of the published draft proposed Consolidated Plan. Senior DHCD staff responds to comments and make referrals as needed. There is a court reporter present and a transcript of the proceedings is prepared and made available at DHCD. All public and special needs' access provisions cited for the "Needs Assessment" hearing apply equally to the "Budget" Public Hearing. The submission of written testimony for the record is encouraged, and the Public Hearing record is kept open for at least 2 weeks after the hearing for the receipt of post-hearing written testimony. The total comment period on the draft proposed Consolidated Plan at this phase is no less than 30 days.

City Council Review of Consolidated Plan

After conducting the "Budget" Public Hearing, DHCD incorporates into a proposed final Consolidated Plan for the upcoming fiscal year any revisions resulting from testimony received at or subsequent to the Budget Hearing, as well as a summary of the testimony received. The proposed final Consolidated Plan and an Approval Resolution are transmitted by the Mayor to the Council of the District of Columbia, where they are referred to the Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs

The Council Committee schedules a public hearing on the proposed final Consolidated Plan. DHCD circulates the Notice of the Council Public Hearing to its stakeholders no less than two weeks prior to the hearing to encourage additional comments. Following its hearing, the Committee votes on the Consolidated Plan and may propose amendments, if any, for consideration of the full Council. Once the Council passes an Approval Resolution, it is incorporated as an appendix to the Consolidated Plan.

Submitting the Consolidated Plan to HUD

After approval of the proposed Consolidated Plan by the Council, any final adjustments mandated by the Council are made. Hard copies of the approved final Consolidated Action Plan, incorporating the Council's Approval Resolution, are provided to Council and the Mayor prior to DHCD's submission of the Plan to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Washington Field Office by the August 15th deadline. Copies of the approved plan are distributed to stakeholders.

Technical Assistance

The Department makes federal and local funds available for new and rehabilitated housing proposals and community-development projects and services through a public Notice of Funding (NOFA). DHCD's Development Finance Division (DFD) issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) for development proposals serving low-moderate-income residents, and the Residential and Community Services Division (RCS) issues a Request for Applications (RFA) for neighborhood-based services. Both Divisions can provide technical assistance to organizations that request it.

During the RFP process for development proposals, the Development Finance Division (DFD) conducts a Pre-Proposal Conference and at least two community outreach meetings to give organizations opportunities to ask questions and obtain assistance in preparing RFP project submissions. In addition, DFD maintains an RFP telephone hotline and an RFP e-mail address to allow organizations to continue to ask questions and receive assistance on an ongoing basis throughout the RFP process. The RFP requires that development proposals for existing and occupied buildings minimize displacement and provide a strategy and funding to meet temporary or permanent relocation needs in compliance with the types and levels of assistance in the URA (for federally-funded projects) or in Title 10 of the DC Code (for HPTF-funded projects).

During the RFA process for funding neighborhood services activities, the Residential and Community Services Division (RCS) conducts a Pre-Application Conference, usually within the first two weeks of the application cycle. At the Conference, RCS staff members provide a walk-thru of the entire application process, and also answer any specific questions from prospective applicants. RCS keeps a record of all those who receive the RFA throughout the application cycle, in order than any amendments to the application process can be quickly communicated to all potential applicants.

DHCD also supports direct technical assistance for low-and-moderate-income residents and groups through neighborhood-based housing counseling agencies and community development organizations. The purpose of the assistance is to make DHCD programs and funds accessible to low-moderate-income residents.

These services include:

- Assisting renters to understand their options under the "first right to purchase" program when a building is being sold so they can access seed loans and rehabilitation loans to exercise their rights to purchase their units;
- Providing program intake and technical assistance for applicants for first-time home owner loans, including assistance to organize financial and other required program documentation;
- Assisting tenants in expiring Section 8 properties to understand their rights and to offer relocation assistance as needed;
- Assisting new home owners to remain owners by assistance in home management, budgeting, credit, and mortgage payments; and
- Assisting small, neighborhood-serving businesses with technical assistance in areas such as: business start-up, maintaining an existing business, or improving the business and its environment.

Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

The federal Consolidated Plan regulations require the inclusion of specific criteria in the Citizen Participation Plan for determining what constitutes a change in programmatic activity significant enough to be classified as a "Substantial Amendment" to the Consolidated Plan. A change in federal rules or regulations that mandates an alteration in current programmatic operations would not be considered a substantive amendment, but rather a conforming regulatory requirement. Changes deemed "Substantial Amendments" must be subjected to citizen review and comment before implementation.

The following criteria are used to determine whether a programmatic change constitutes a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan:

- A change that results in a major alteration of the purpose, location, or beneficiaries of a DHCD operational program; or

- A change in the allocation of the distribution of program funds greater than 25 percent of the federal entitlement grants included in DHCD's fiscal year budget (CDBG, HOME, and ESG).

District law (D.C. Code § 5-902) requires that DHCD "provide citizens a full and meaningful opportunity to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of the annual Community Development Program and any amendments or modifications thereto." (Emphasis added.) District law further requires that the public must be notified of a Substantial Amendment, and at least two public hearings must be held to obtain the views of citizens on the proposed change.

The procedures cited for notice and access during the Consolidated Plan development process are applied in the case of any Substantial Amendment to the Plan.

Notice of a Proposed Substantial Amendment, including a description of the nature and the actual language of the amendment, is published in the D.C Register and in various citywide media sources, including, but not limited to, a daily newspaper in general circulation (such as The Washington Post) and other publications that reach different language groups, neighborhoods, minority populations and other special interest populations. (Examples in 2006 of such publications would include: the Afro-American, El Tiempo and The Blade.) A solicitation of public comment, including information on the two public hearings that will be held, is included in the notice. A period of not less than 30 days is allowed to receive responses from the public on a proposed Substantial Amendment. A period of at least 2 weeks notice is given for the two public hearings.

The proposed final Consolidated Plan Substantial Amendment (incorporating any revisions or discussions resulting from the public comment process), along with an Approval Resolution are transmitted by the Mayor to the Council of the District of Columbia, where they will be referred to the Committee on Housing

and Urban Affairs. The Committee will hold a public hearing on the proposed Consolidated Plan amendment. The Committee will vote on the Consolidated Plan amendment and propose amendments, if any, for consideration of the full Council. Once the Council enacts the Approval Resolution, the amendment to the Consolidated Plan becomes officially adopted.

Minor Amendments:

District law (D.C. Code § 5-902) allows DHCD to make "minor" amendments to the Consolidated Plan. A minor amendment is an amendment that is of less magnitude than a "substantial" amendment, but of greater significance than a "technical" amendment, which can be undertaken at the discretion of the agency.

A minor amendment would NOT result in:

- A major alteration of the purpose, location, or beneficiaries of a DHCD operational program; or
- A change in the allocation of the distribution of program funds greater than 25 percent of the federal entitlement grants included in DHCD's fiscal year budget (CDBG, HOME, and ESG).

A minor amendment to the Consolidated Plan, consistent with the intent of the approved program, must be submitted by the Mayor to the City Council for approval. The minor amendment is deemed approved if either the Council does not disapprove the amendment within 30 days (not including Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, or days that pass during a Council recess) or the Council affirmatively approves the amendment within the 30 day period.

Annual Performance Report (CAPER)

Within 90 days after the close of DHCD's Fiscal Year (September 30th), HUD regulations require the Department to submit a performance report, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The CAPER provides HUD with necessary information to assess whether DHCD carried out its programs in compliance with applicable regulations and requirements, and as stated in that year's Consolidated Plan. The CAPER also provides a vehicle for DHCD to describe its program achievements to District citizens.

At least 2 weeks prior to submission to HUD, the CAPER is made available to the public for review and comment, following the Notice and distribution procedures cited earlier. Notice of the availability of the CAPER for comment and review is published in the D.C. Register and in a daily newspaper in general circulation (such as The Washington Post) and other publications that reach different language groups, neighborhoods, minority populations and other special interest populations. (Examples in 2006 of such publications would include: the Afro-American, El Tiempo and The Blade.) No less than a 15-day review period is provided for the draft CAPER. DHCD also accepts comments on the prior-year's performance at the annual Consolidated Action Plan "Needs Assessments" Hearings.

The final CAPER is submitted to HUD by December 31st, with an addendum that summarizes any public comments received and the agency's response to the public comments in adopting its final CAPER report. Copies of the report submitted to HUD are made available by DHCD for review by the public upon request.

Complaints and Grievances

DHCD will provide written responses to written complaints and grievances received regarding any aspect of the annual Consolidated Plan federal entitlement grant program within 15 working days, where practicable, of receiving the complaint or grievance.

Comments, complaints, and grievances concerning the Consolidated Plan should be addressed to the Director, Department of Housing and Community Development, 801 North Capitol Street, NE, 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20002, to the attention of the Public Information Specialist.

Amendment of the Citizen Participation Plan

Notice of a proposed amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), including a description of the nature, as well as the actual language, of the proposed amendment, is published in the D.C. Register and in a daily newspaper in general circulation (such as The Washington Post) and other publications that reach different language groups, neighborhoods, minority populations and other special interest populations. (Examples in 2006 of such publications would include: the Afro-American, El Tiempo and The Blade.) A solicitation of public comment is included in the Notice, and a period of not less than 30 days is allowed to receive responses from the public on a proposed amendment before such amendment is implemented by DHCD. The final Citizen Participation Plan amendment, as adopted by DHCD after due consideration of public comments, is published in the D.C. Register. The D.C. Register notice will also provide an addendum that summarizes the public comments received and the agency's response to the thrust of the public comments in adopting its final amendment. The final Citizen Participation Plan amendment will be deemed adopted upon publication in the D.C. Register.

Appendix G Public Notice

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Notice of Public Hearing
on the
"Draft Fiscal Year 2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan for the District of Columbia"
Wednesday, March 19, 2008
6:30 p.m.
Department of Housing and Community Development
801 North Capitol Street, N.E., 9th Floor Board Room
Washington, D.C. 20002

The Department of Housing and Community Development (Department), announces a Public Hearing on the "Draft Fiscal Year 2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan for the District of Columbia" ("the Plan"). The hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m., on Wednesday, March 19, 2008, at 801 North Capitol Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., 9th Floor Board Room. The purpose of the hearing is to provide the public with an opportunity to express its views on the Plan and budgets to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the following federal entitlement programs:

- **Community Development Block Grant Program**
- **HOME Investment Partnerships Program**
- **Emergency Shelter Grant Program**
- **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA)**

The Department will utilize this input from the public, consistent with the District's economic development strategy, citywide strategic plan, and identified strategic target areas, to finalize the Plan for submission to the Council of the District of Columbia and HUD. Also available is DHCD's **Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for FY2009.** The CPP outlines the Department's processes for ensuring that residents are a part of the planning process in the development of the Annual Action Plan.

Both documents will be available for review after Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at the Department (8th Floor), all public library branches, Advisory Neighborhood Commission offices, and the following community-based organizations:

Housing Counseling Services, Inc. 2410 17th Street, NW Suite 100 (202) 667-7006	Lydia's House 3939 South Capitol St., SW (202) 373-1050	Central American Resources Center 1460 Columbia Road, NW (202) 328-9799	Latino Economic Dev. Corp 2316 18th Street, NW. (202) 588-5102
University Legal Services 220 I Street, NE, Suite 130 (202) 547-4747	University Legal Services 3220 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Suite 4 (202) 645-7175	Marshall Heights CDO 3939 Benning Road, NE 2nd Floor (202) 396-1200	

If you wish to present oral testimony, contact **Mrs. Pamela Hillsman-Johnson**, Community Development Resource Specialist, at (202) 442-7250, or by email at DHCDEVENTS@DC.GOV, not later than close of business Monday, March 17, 2008. Please provide your name, address, telephone number, and organizational affiliation, if any. For Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) relay service, call (800) 201-7165. A sign language interpreter and Spanish translation services will be provided. Written statements may be submitted for the record at the hearing or until close of business, Friday, March 21, 2008. Written statements may be mailed to: Lelia Finucane Edmonds, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development, Attention: Office of Strategy and Communications, 801 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor
Neil O. Albert, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
Leila Finucane Edmonds, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development
www.dhcd.dc.gov

Appendix H Summary of Public Comments

Public "NEEDS" Hearing for the FY2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan for the District of Columbia

The following are excerpts of testimony from the seven (7) public "NEEDS" hearings conducted by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), in the development of its Fiscal Year 2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan. The number of hearings and witnesses are too voluminous to detail; these excerpts highlight testimony from some of the witnesses. ***Copies of complete transcripts are available, via e-mail, at DHCDEvents@dc.gov.***

DHCD's mission, a brief overview of its funding sources, the purpose of the hearings was explained at the beginning of each session (see summary below):

The mission of the Department is to provide opportunities to create and preserve affordable housing and economic development and to revitalize under-served communities in the District of Columbia. This is achieved it is achieved through the use of federal and local dollars. DHCD receives four (4) entitlement grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): 1) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program; 2) HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program; 3) the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program; and 4) Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA). These funding sources are used for a variety of activities and initiatives including: single-family and multi-family housing development; neighborhood improvements; and comprehensive housing counseling (i.e., home ownership, credit, how to establish and use a budget, and eviction and foreclosure prevention). The funds also provide assistance to prevent homelessness in the District and help to provide housing for people living with HIV/AIDS. Each year, the Department, as mandated by HUD, must prepare a Consolidated Annual Action Plan to detail how the District's entitlement funds will be spent.

DHCD's local funding source, the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF), is funded through the District's recordation and transfer taxes. These funds provide assistance for the production and preservation of affordable housing in the District.

The District must provide an opportunity for community participation in helping to develop the city's housing and community development needs. Today's session "kicks off" the Department's public "NEEDS" hearings, which provide District residents and other stakeholders with several opportunities to voice their recommendations and concerns regarding the District's housing and community development priorities for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, which begins October 1, 2008. The feedback from these hearings will help DHCD in developing its *Draft* Consolidated Action Plan for FY '09 and assess DHCD's overall activities in meeting the needs of District neighborhoods and communities.

Clarisse Wilkins, Program Director, National Association of Former Foster Care Children of America, Inc., 5505 5th Street, N.W., D.C.

- Ms. Wilkins has been a social worker for over 30 years. Her expertise is foster care children, including helping mothers to reunite with their children through substance abuse treatment.
- The real crisis for these youth occurs when they emancipate or, as often called, "age out" of the system. Without permanent housing, this population faces higher risks of homelessness, early pregnancy, dropping out of school, lack of employment, and criminal activity.
- Community collaboratives provide immediate assistance upon emancipation, if the client is employed and pays a portion of their rent for up to one year (approximately $4,000 per youth). This arrangement is inadequate for many, in that, they have not been able to save funds to sustain the transition of the lease for total accountability at the end of the year. They are unable to reunite with their biological families for housing. And in many instances, not even emotional support.
- It is imperative that we, as professionals working with this population and those having the authority within the District government, begin developing strategies to

address this issue with the goal of creating long term plans of implementation, follow-up and continued community support. These young people are the future but they have been victims in the child welfare system at no fault of their own.

Lakeisha Harper, former foster client.

- The District needs to focus on young people who are aging out of the foster care system into homelessness.
- Many are purposely becoming pregnant in order to qualify for housing assistance.
- By assisting this population with affordable housing, the District will also help to curb the rate of early pregnancy.

Joshua Burch, former foster care client.

- The District's foster care system does not prepare its clients to become contributing members of society. He entered the military to serve his country, but also to have a place to live—it was his only real choice at the time.
- The National Association of Former Foster Care Children of America, Inc. (NAFFCCA) was definitely instrumental in assisting him and the organization is progressing. NAFFCCA is a great resource and provided very good skills training. Mr. Burch now works for U. S. Airways and flew in today to testify about a situation that he has great passion for.
- He does not have a detailed plan to rectify this particular need; however, he is aware that something needs to be done about this particular situation.

Kevin Rhodes, former foster care client.

- Entered the system due to abuse and neglect, yet life in the foster care system was not too much different. At age twenty-one, he aged out of the system and began taking the necessary steps to become self-sufficient and a productive member of society.
- He believes that those in positions of power sometimes forget about the struggles and sacrifices they encountered in attaining their goals and fail to reach back and help the next one.
- Now, at twenty-seven, he is unable to afford to live in the city of his birth, and the following generations will encounter the same situation. The District is in desperate need of affordable housing and this should be DHCD's major focus.

DHCD's Response:

The Department is taking action to address some of these issues. A pilot program has been developed to create housing for emancipated youths, especially those with children. In the coming years, the DHCD hopes to step up production of this type of housing.

Nancy Liebermann, president of Cornerstone, a community development financial institution (CDFI)

- Cornerstone, established in 1991, was created because concerned government officials and other experts in mental health and housing understood that private sector entities are effective government partners and bring significant benefit to what government can provide.
- Private financial institutions and foundations recognize that intermediaries have local expertise and experience. In Cornerstone's case, they are experts on funding supportive housing; as such, lenders will leverage their dollars with intermediaries' knowledge of the local market as a way to give back to the community, consistent with their missions and in furtherance of community reinvestment. Bank of America, City First Bank, Wachovia, Calvert Foundation, and a list of others are all Cornerstone investors.
- There is an urgent need to allocate a portion of FY '09 funds for renovating properties with current, long-term restrictions and not just on new construction, along with developing a consolidated Request for Proposals (RFP) that leverages both government and private sector resources.
- Cornerstone was recently designated a CDFI and received $860,000.00 in CDFI funding through a competitive bidding process. It was able to compete for these funds because it could leverage their retained earnings over the last three years.
- Many projects that benefit special needs housing (handicapped, transitional, etc.) are not financially feasible without significant government investment. Cornerstone has

been successful as an intermediary because it has successfully leveraged capital from the city's Department of Mental Health's investment in housing.

- Non-profits like Cornerstone can act more efficiently than government—the processes can be streamlined easier; decisions can be made more quickly and funding guidelines can be more flexible (i.e., Cornerstone can convene its loan committee on a fast track to approve funding for a down payment or a bridge loan). It can easily distribute small grants for pre-development fees, inspections, closing costs, etc., with less paperwork and less levels of approvals. Documents can be circulated in advance of a transaction. Paperwork can be recorded expeditiously. Cornerstone can take risks that government cannot due to its ability to easily and more quickly monitor projects and be in constant communication. In its 12-year history, Cornerstone's loan loss is less than .01 percent of its portfolio.

DHCD's Response:

The Department has enjoyed its working relationship with Cornerstone and looks forward to a continuing partnership.

Jean-Michael Giraud, executive director, Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place (CCHFP).

- CCHFP serves nearly 500 clients a year in upper Northwest through street outreach, case management, medical and psychiatric services, transitional housing provided by our congressional partners, and permanent housing in group homes and efficiency apartments for 38 people. Their network also includes two hypothermia shelters.
- Over seventy percent (70%) of their clients psychiatric diagnoses (nearly three times the regional average quoted in the 2007 Point-In-Time Study). Thirty-five percent (35%) have substance abuse or co-occurring disorders that are slightly higher than the regional average. With more than 5,700 homeless persons in the District each night and growing concerns about the housing market makes solutions to these issues a priority.
- Homeless services organizations offering a full array of services from street outreach to permanent housing attract people who, due to their own level of readiness, often do not mainstream into the other systems that well. These providers represent low-barrier entry points into the system for a majority of clients who otherwise may not accept services from traditional providers. Successful engagement is achieved through flexible techniques that help meet each individual at his or her own level of readiness.
- Homeless services providers lower the need for services in publicly funded care systems since they provide effective and individually tailored services to people who are often eligible for these in the other systems. The need to fund these services within an alternative and parallel system of care, offering comprehensive supported services without funding from traditional sources like medical assistance, constitutes a significant challenge for CCHFP and other homeless services providers.
- CCHFP is requesting that the District establish a reliable and sustainable system of funding for supportive services provided by homeless service organizations.

Andy Silver, law clerk< The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless.

- The clinic is very supportive of the Mayor's plan to transform homeless services from a system that focuses almost exclusively on emergency shelter to one that embraces a "housing first" philosophy and develops the necessary affordable housing to meet the needs of District's homeless population. This group has straight forward needs; affordable, permanent housing—some with and some without support services, along with quality emergency shelter while awaiting permanent housing.
- The District's emergency shelter system is failing—the shelters for individuals are warehouse-like facilities located in old buildings without adequate heat, a/c, proper lighting, and functioning plumbing. The buildings are usually infested with bugs and rodents and clients are crammed into bunk beds spaced a few feet apart that resemble storage facilities rather than sleeping quarters.
- These shelters are not conducive to a quick transition to housing, nor are they conducive to attaining employment. Furthermore, they are inhuman. Yet, despite these conditions, shelters remain over-capacity during winter months, and sometimes—even during the warmer months as well.
- The closure of D. C. Village means that the District must create additional family shelter units to meet that void. The remaining ninety-three (93) units in the family shelter system is grossly inadequate to meet the current demand, particularly during hypothermia. The District's emergency shelters must be transformed if the city is to transition its entire continuum of care into a housing first system.

Recommendations:

1. The District needs to create additional permanent, affordable housing units.

2. The District should begin to develop emergency shelters that can be transformed into permanent housing when the need for emergency shelter diminishes. The City should build efficiency-style shelters that men and women can access in an emergency and where they can receive services until permanent resolution of their homelessness situation is addressed.
3. In 2009, the clinic requests the creation of one hundred units of efficiency-style shelter for individuals and one hundred units of apartment-style shelter for families. These units should be in small buildings scattered throughout the District and the facilities should be either new or rehabilitated to the point where the condition of the buildings do not pose health or safety risks to the D.C. residents within.

Marcy Dunlap, staff attorney, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless.

- Thanked DHCD for including permanent supportive housing in its last Request for Proposals (RFP). It was consistent with Mayor Fenty's promise to provide 2500 units of permanent supportive housing and implement the ***"Homeless No More Initiataive."*** Two thousand of the 2,500 units will be for individuals and 500 units will be for families.
- Recommends that DHCD produce 500 units of permanent housing per year beginning with FY '09, in order to achieve the goal of 2500 units the end of the 10-year Plan.
- Implementation of the ***"Homeless No More Initiative"*** should ensure the availability of quality housing for everyone--whether it is improving the current shelter system so that people better transition into permanent housing, creating additional affordable housing, or providing low-barrier, supportive housing for those who have been chronically homeless.
- The Clinic advocates a "Housing First" approach to permanent supportive housing, which is embraced by Mayor Fenty. The goal of Housing First in the District is to provide housing to chronically homeless individuals and families, along with support services to address their substance abuse and/or mental health issues on a voluntary basis.
- Recommends that DHCD use a consolidated RFP to create the policy for permanent supportive housing, preferably a "housing first" policy. Also recommends that DHCD create standards for the program, a system to monitor the program to ensure that participants are well served.
- Encourages DHCD to advocate for "housing first" and permanent supportive housing programs with an inter- agency council. Several agencies will be involved in creating permanent supportive housing and DHCD is in the position to ensure that there is consistency throughout the various agencies.

DHCD's Response:

The DHCD is definitely focused on coordinating with other District agencies and is already considering a consolidated RFP for August 2008.

Marva Williams, resident, vice-president of Wingate Garden Apartments' Senior Association, 4660 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SW.

- Units are supposed to be affordable, yet the benefit to tenants cannot be determined; they are paying 10 percent increase across the board each year for rent. Is it possible to waive the ten percent increase for senior and/or disabled tenants?
- Affordable housing units and programs units are sorely needed in Far SE/SW because nothing exists in these areas for seniors. There is abundant vacant property across from The Wingate, but affordable housing creation does not appear to be included in that area's development plan.
- Seniors did not have the opportunity to sign up for housing vouchers; however, they did sign documents for Section 42A to continue living at their current residence.

DHCD's Response:

The use of housing vouchers fall under the administration of the D. C. Housing Authority and DHCD will be happy to speak with the executive director, as well as the executive director of the D.C. Housing Finance Agency, with respect to the tax credit situation.

Bernice Liverpool, resident, Wingate Towers and Garden Apartments.

- The most pressing needs are affordable housing, help with homelessness, and community services. There is money available for new stadiums, new retail ventures, development of waterfront properties and the like, yet, funding is difficult to obtain for the creation and/or retention of affordable housing.

- There does not appear to be a coordinated effort with regard to assisting the homelessness. Many agencies are involved, however, each one appears to operate independently of each other. Hearings, meetings, and agendas on the issue never seem to move forward.
- The Department should have a process in place to monitor the recipient(s) of these funds to ensure compliance with established contracts, scope of services, etc.
- With baby boomers about to retire, the District should also ensure that the growing senior population will have affordable housing in which to maintain a safe and secure quality of life.

DHCD's Response:
The Fenty Administration is taking a very proactive stance on homelessness, particularly with respect to the D. C. Village closing. The Department recently formed a portfolio management division that will monitor property owners that receive DHCD funding to ensure that rent levels are consistent with the levels that were promised, as well as ensure that the quality of the units provided comply with the required standards under the program.

Frances Mellon, resident, Wingate Towers and Apartments.
- What is the definition of "affordable" housing?
- There are numerous problems at The Wingate, especially the number of evictions. The Landlord/Tenant Court is backlogged with Wingate cases and the frustrating part is that the management office does not have detailed records regarding the payments of rent, or lack thereof. There are also issues with vermin and rodents. Given the amount of money the complex received from the government for rehabilitation, someone should investigate how those funds are, or were, used and how tenants' payment records are maintained.

DHCD's Response:
The Department will certainly be looking into these complaints.

Lucius Mangrum, co-president of Project Action.
- Project Action is a coalition of persons who are mentally and/or physically disabled. The organization serves the District, Maryland, and some parts of Virginia.
- Apartment buildings with accessible entrances located in the rear often do not comply with local laws. Those entrances sometimes cannot accommodate wheelchairs, ramps are not always free of trash and debris, and at times, lighting is inadequate, which makes the areas unsafe for those most vulnerable. Additionally, when entering or leaving through the rear of a building, there will be trashcans or dumpsters in the way and most times, you may have to fight a rodent or two. Additionally, most of these rear entrances are locked. How can it be accessible if disabled persons are unable to enter or leave, especially in an emergency?
- New housing units are usually non-accessible (townhouses, duplexes, etc.), as well as most apartment units. Additional affordable housing units must also include handicap accessibility.
- All government buildings should also be accessible.

DHCD's Response:
The DHCD will certainly reach out to the Department of Public Works on some of those challenges you mentioned.

Projects funded by DHCD require that five percent of the total units be fully accessible. DHCD's standards for accessibility require access entrances must be as near to the main entrance as possible, thereby affording the same courtesies and opportunities to all property residents. The same holds true for older buildings and those with difficult terrain; we try to incorporate access as near to the front entrance as possible. In addition to the 5 percent of accessible units, DHCD also requires that an additional 2 percent (apart from the 5 percent), be accessible for the hearing-impaired. Many of our developers are exceeding that and going to a higher number of accessible units. Actually, there's a developing school of design called, "Universal Design", where, units that normally would not be intended for mobility-impaired people, would be designed with the

universal standard that would have wider doors and allow conversion of bathrooms and kitchens to serve handicapped, mobility-impaired residents, should the need arise. The Department does not have any influence with private developers in the District; we can only speak to projects funded by DHCD.

The Department also administers two rehabilitation programs: 1) the Single-Family Residential Rehabilitation (SFR); and 2) the Handicap Accessibility (HAP). The SFR program assists homeowners in bringing their property into compliance with the District's housing codes and the HAP assists homeowners in making modifications to their residence to permit barrier-free accessibility. This fiscal year, the DHCD is looking to make the HAP available for rental properties, which is somewhat more complicated because the property owner must initiate the application. It is done in other jurisdictions and DHCD is confident that it will work in the District also. The Department will also increase its outreach efforts to ensure that information regarding these programs is distributed not only to homeowners, but also to property owners and managers of tenant properties.

Lori White, project manager, Inclusion Research Institute.

- District of Columbia residents with mobility related disabilities face formidable barriers in low-income housing that is wheel chair accessible. It is extremely difficult to locate accessible housing in the District. The DHCD needs to work with its multi-unit housing developers to ensure that they comply with the Fair Housing Act, as amended, in 1988. Unfortunately, many housing providers fail to understand their obligations under this legislation. In fact, in 2005, a Housing and Urban Development Study on housing discrimination against persons with disabilities found that only slightly more than half of Americans know that it is illegal for landlords to refuse to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or to prevent reasonable modification to a housing unit. Many housing providers and tenants fail to realize that there are federal laws that govern these matters.
- Housing options are limited due to the age of the city's housing stock. Persons with physical disabilities are often forced into nursing homes because affordable, accessible housing is not available in our communities. The Department of Health's Medical Assistance Administration is facing the imminent closure of two nursing homes totaling 651 beds—a twenty-two percent reduction in the District's nursing home beds. Many of these displaced residents could be better served at home or in a lease restrictive setting. Providing housing that is both affordable and accessible will be key to ensuring that some of these District residents do not become homeless.
- DHCD should also expand and publicize its programs that offer loans to low-income households to accommodate the needs of family members with disabilities.

DHCD's Response:

If you are aware of any circumstances where reasonable accommodations (ramps, railings, etc.) have been denied, the tenant can file a complaint at HUD's Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office and see justice served. Once a developer receives DHCD funds for a project, they are informed that the housing is subject to the Fair Housing and Section 504 requirements, and that they must make reasonable accommodations for the tenants who need them, so, the Department does educate the developers up front.

Anthony Gray, Parent Watch.

- Residents are still waiting for the twenty percent of affordable housing for low-to-moderate income individuals and families, as promised with the development of the District's Downtown area. From what Mr. Gray has been able to determine, low- and moderate-income persons cannot afford to occupy the housing created in the downtown area. And those that may be able to qualify are unaware of the available programs.
- DHCD should consider some of its target audiences' reading and comprehension abilities and adjust their outreach campaigns accordingly and/or consider a partnership with organizations that deal with literacy, etc. The Department needs to make a concerted effort to ensure that information on its programs is distributed throughout the District so that residents can take advantage of these services.

DHCD's Response:

DHCD is developing additional strategies to increase its outreach efforts; for example, we have increased the number of these "NEEDS" hearings and are conducting them throughout the District of Columbia to afford all residents the opportunity to voice their concerns and recommendations to improve housing and community development that

help to stabilize their neighborhoods and communities. Pamela Hillsman-Johnson, DHCD's community development resource specialist is here and will gladly provide a schedule of upcoming hearings.

Robert Pohlman, executive director of the Coalition for Non-Profit Housing and Economic Development.

- Producing or preserving affordable housing of any kind in the District today is a challenge. But to produce housing affordable to extremely low-income households operated on the rents that those households can pay, and provide needed supportive services is rarely possible without government assistance in all three areas: production, operation, and supportive services.
- The District government is facing a growing crisis in housing its low-income population, especially, if they require additional services. The D.C. Housing Authority has over 40,000 households on wait lists for public and assisted housing, excluding many other households not on those lists that have special needs.
- This is the time for government agencies, with responsibility for housing persons with special needs, to come together to offer a streamlined, consolidated funding approach for this kind of housing. The funding stream should include development subsidies in the form of prioritized grants and loans from DHCD, nine percent tax credits from DHCD, bond financing, four percent tax credits from DHCD, discounted or donated land from the city, and capital grants from the city's capital budget and from social service agencies. Operating subsidies are needed to match production subsidies so that as new units are created, the rent from extremely low-income residents can be supplemented to provide sufficient income to operate the project.
- Closer coordination of our local rent supplement programs, project-based and sponsor-based component, is needed with DHCD's development financing to ensure that the requirements of each program work together seamlessly. There needs to be some kind of assurance that recipients of development financing will receive rent supplement when needed and vice versa.
- Supportive service funding from social services agencies is the third element that needs to be coordinated. To do this requires an inventory of available resources and a process for connecting those resources to production and operating funding for projects.
- A coherent and comprehensive strategy and plan committing specific amounts of each of these resources to addressing these challenges is needed.
- The Coalition is pleased to hear that DHCD is moving toward a more coordinated approach to funding supportive and special needs housing and expects to have a consolidated RFP by next year. As DHCD and other District agencies move in the direction of a coordinated approach, the Coalition requests that primary emphasis be placed on the importance of consumer choice to meet a variety of consumer needs.
- One size does not fit all in housing types, length of stay, and service models that are available. The District needs to address a range of special needs using a combination of approaches. Those that have proven successful in the past, as well as, new approaches that show promise.
- The Coalition encourages DHCD to include its in upcoming RFPs, ample funding for permanent housing for the chronically homeless, as well as, for other special needs allowing for a variety of approaches that will meet the varied needs of our residents.
- CNHED looks forward to working with the Department and other city agencies to develop an efficient and effective system for providing special needs housing and urges the Mayor and city council to significantly increase the resources devoted to this purpose so that the effort does not drain funding from other affordable housing initiatives including tenant purchase, home ownership, and the preservation of rental housing. Requests DHCD's partnership to ensure that future Department RFPs include adequate funding for special needs that allows for a variety of approaches to meeting the need.

Bobby Coward, deputy director of Direct Action and Chairman of Capitol Area ADAPT.

- Both organizations promote independent living options for people with disabilities and alternative service to alternative settings to institutional living.
- Seeking more integrated, wheelchair accessible, subsidized housing for low-income D.C. residents with disabilities. When a nursing home closes, many District residents are sent to out-of-State facilities despite their desire to live in a District community with the support services they are entitled to receive.
- D.C. recently received a major five-year federal grant titled, "Money Follows A Person," an incredible opportunity to receive a higher Medicaid reimbursement—an eighty-five percent federal match for every nursing home and ICF-MR. Before benefits from the program are realized, the District must adopt a housing option for people to transition back into the community.
- Seeking the use of HOME funds to help subsidize these types of units.

Dan Hall, director, Housing Development for Catholic Community Services of the Archdiocese or Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington.

- Catholic Charities is engaged in one of it's most significant initiatives to date--the development of permanent supportive housing. Through this ambitious initiative we seek to become an integral player in the fight against chronic homelessness in the District of Columbia. It is our desire to create permanent supportive housing for the hundreds of men and women who currently use our shelter system as permanent housing.
- The reduction of sheltered beds can only come through the collaboration with the Department of Housing Community Development to provide the capital dollars needed to create the housing; the DC Housing Authority to provide the rent subsidies and other project based and unit based vouchers; and agencies like the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Human Services to provide the ongoing support necessary to end this cycle of homelessness.
- It is our desire to create large scale developments of 40 to 70 units of supportive housing. However, we honor and recognize that other models such as the scattered site approach, as well as, those that seek to tie individual tenancy to the services and programs have value for some of this population. We need to have a multitude of approaches to building and providing housing resources to end the cycle of homelessness.
- With the release of the November RFP, we firmly believe that the ongoing supportive service components of this RFP must be designed to help clients maintain a physical and emotional health. The RFP needs to include capital funding, rent subsidies, and service funding. As DHCD considers funding, attention must be given to the chronically homeless individuals, families, and those with dual diagnosis as well as homeless youth.
- Higher scoring should be paid to those who specifically target the chronically homeless. With DHCD's release of the RFP this fall, we believe that there should be a definition of supportive housing. At its most basic, supportive housing means tenants have individual or shared apartment units. Tenants hold leases for lengths of stay as up to the individual or family. There is no limitation, as long as, the tenant is in lease compliance. Housing affordability is ensured through a rent subsidy or rents are set at levels affordable to the target population. The tenant has access to flexible array of comprehensive services including medical services and wellness support, mental health, substance abuse management and recovery, vocational employment services, money management, coordinated support, life skills, household establishment, and tenant advocacy. There's a working partnership that includes ongoing communication between the supportive service providers, property owners, and property management entities.
- Parties may include both individuals and families with special needs and individuals and families without such needs. Where tenancy is mixed in a single site, project sponsors may allow all tenants access to onsite services regardless of whether or not they have identified special needs.

Robert Milsom, District resident.

- Resides at Freedom House, an organization run by So Others Might Eat (SOME). Is currently in a substance abuse recovery program and wanted to comment on how affordable housing is an integral component of a substance abuser's recovery.
- Mr. Milsom is very appreciative of the assistance provided by SOME and DHCD in helping substance abusers reclaim their lives and become productive members of the community.

David Pirtle, "Until We're Home".

- An organization of current and formerly homeless men and women from various shelters and transitional housing facilities throughout the city.
- Advocates for improvements in emergency shelter facilities; however, could not add much to what was already supplied by Andy Silver of the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless.
- The two and one-half years that he spent on the streets and in District shelters was an eye-opening experience. His assumptions about shelters had nothing to do with the realities that he discovered.
- The experience of someone who is mentally ill in a shelter is a nightmare. You don't have the ability to get yourself out of that situation and you cannot advocate for yourself, which puts you at the mercy of the system.
- The government did nothing to keep drug dealers out of District shelters until a resident was stabbed, then the Franklin Shelter began locking its gate.
- Two weeks after a new soup kitchen opened not far from One Judiciary Square, drug dealers were out front selling to the people and hopes that something can be done to

help those that are unable to help themselves.

Charmane Falls, shelter resident.

- Ms. Falls is disabled, has been living in a shelter for approximately eight months, and is disappointed it is taking so long for her to get housing.
- There should be some guidelines or regulations implemented regarding shelters, especially as it related to school.
- Something must be done to improve the facilities and ensure one's safety.

Gladys Banks, current shelter resident.

- Has been attacked and threatened several times at her current shelter residence.
- Has been unable to meet with the Mayor since May (?) although she indicated that the Mayor told her to contact him.
- Regulations need to be implemented and enforced to ensure the safety of shelter residents.

Connie Cameron, homeless resident, with a fifteen (15) year-old daughter.

- Would like to find housing for herself and her daughter. Has some difficulty completing residency forms given that she does not have a permanent address. She ad her daughter have been homeless approximately 4 years. During that time, they have lived in hotels, motels, shelters, family members and others, but never anything permanent. Is still waiting to hear from the D. C. Housing Authority regarding housing.
- Both mother and daughter have medical challenges that are exacerbated by their living conditions.
- Would really like to find housing in order to have a stable environment for her daughter to be able to attend school, etc.

Hannah M. Hawkins, native Washingtonian, director of Children of Mine Center, and DC Monitor.

- Remembers a gentler time in the District of Columbia when: 1) public housing was for the working class, the military, civil servants, teachers, firemen, and police officers; 2) goods and services were all located within walking distance of your home; 3) sleeping in the park was loitering and loitering was against the law; and 4) there was standing room only on the streetcars because everyone was on their way to work.
- The District government needs to take responsibility for the money that is being given to the landlords; it needs to be more involved in the screening of the tenants; it needs to respond and take action when residents in Section 8 properties make complaints. Section 8 should be a program for people who want a better life, who want to rehabilitate themselves. It should not be for people who want to destroy an entire neighborhood and move on to the next like a bunch of locusts. We need to stop talking, meeting, planning, and studying, and just do the job that has got to be done. Stop tearing down forty units of public housing and replacing them with two unaffordable houses. Let's get down to the basics, let's stop looking at what may or may not work for other states and go back to what we had that did work for Washington, DC.

Robert James, Chairman of the Ward 8 Business Council

- There are many community resident facilities (CRF) quietly tucked away in Ward 8 and there will always be a need for this special housing. However, he believes that there is a need to pay the CRF operators to match the other areas under the same level of care in Maryland and Virginia. The special need housing dollars should include more facilities for adult daycare as well. These kind of programs are desperately needed to keep residents engaged and also to train some of the more functional ones to enter the workforce. Secondly, there is a need for more shelters throughout the city for the homeless. In light of all the gentrification in the District of Columbia, the incidence of homelessness is likely to increase due to the displacement of families.
- Homeless facilities should be designed to provide shelter and service so that the family moves toward self-sufficiency rather than ceremonial temporary housing. These families are caught up in a vicious cycle that unintentionally perpetuates homelessness.
- The DHCD has an opportunity to create a national model under the Fenty administration that embraces permanent re-entry into the community. Families, as well as the system must be held accountable; we have to look beyond the bricks and mortar and determine a way to help these families to transform into solid working

citizens who can become homeowners and good neighbors.

- It would be helpful to create and implement a policy that mandates quality standards and principles of living in shelters. For example, all adults and parents should be required to leave the shelter five days a week to go to school, training, or to work. This will ultimately help to change the mind-set of entitlement and promote a sense of permanent independence from government.

DHCD's Response:

The Department will be certain to discuss your recommendations with the departments of Health and Mental Health. Thank you for taking the time to come out and share your comments.

James Bunn, executive director, Ward 8 Business Council.

- There is grave concern, especially in Ward 8, about the shrinking availability of affordable housing.
- It is incumbent that DHCD does everything possible to ensure that affordable housing is preserved. While the Ward 8 Business Council is a strong proponent of economic development, it does not want to see it happen at the expense of displacing longtime Ward 8 residents.
- Ward 8 is beginning an oasis for the elite, who seldom live in harmony with the disadvantaged. It is our responsibility to figure out how to insure that those citizens who have survived all the drugs and violence are afforded an opportunity to enjoy the peace and quiet, as well as the new retail restaurants that are coming. Something has to be done to encourage residents to be good neighbors; some move in quiet, settled neighborhoods and create havoc, without any accountability for living responsibly

DHCD's Response:

The Department is aware of the community's concerns regarding affordable housing and economic development. The DHCD is looking at ways to ensure that Ward 8 residents are aware of the jobs and others opportunities that these projects bring into the community.

Candace Reynolds, senior business development specialist, Anacostia Economic Development Center (AEDC)

- The AEDC supports DHCD's use of the CDBG program.
- Over the past two years, AEDC has engaged over twenty-five structures in the DHCD facade improvement program, and during this current year, AEDC's Small Business Development Center has been able to provide training and technical assistance to over 200 small businesses located in the District of Columbia.
- AEDC believes that CDBG funds are an important resource in the revitalization of our neighborhoods and that DHCD is a most capable District of Columbia agency.

Michael Watts, Jr., President and Chief Executive Officer, Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO)

- Marshall Heights is a nonprofit community development organization that has undertaken comprehensive community development activities in the Ward since 1979. Our mission is to help grow Ward 7 into the District of Columbia's most welcoming, prospering and livable community for everyone. To accomplish this goal, we engage in housing and economic development activities, and provide a variety of education, training, and assistance programs.
- Its 28-year legacy of service has been realized through strong support received over the years from collaborative partners such as DHCD. A community-building visionary such as its founder, Lloyd D. Smith, and Chairman Emeritus, Richard Hamilton, forged this long-standing relationship between the city and Marshall Heights and the organization looks forward to continuing a winning partnership with DHCD.
- In Fiscal Year '07, Marshall Heights executed a variety of projects involving nearly 800,000 grants made available through DHCD, which includes their our land intake program to provide land intake services to 125 residents to address issues related to the use of land and residential environment.
- ***Housing counseling services*** -- Marshall Heights was charged to provide housing counseling services to 1400 residents. They are proud to have exceeded that target goal, with services provided pertaining to pre-purchasing counseling, credit counseling and home ownership workshops. More than 140 persons were registered for the

Home Buyers Club and more than 385 applications were processed. As a result of these diligent efforts, 34 persons received foreclosure prevention services, and 70 people became first-time home buyers via services offered by Marshall Heights, our capable staff of housing counselors.

- ***Crime prevention*** -- Residents of Lincoln Heights and Richardson Dwellings (both Ward 7 public housing communities are slated for re-development under the city's ***New Communities Initiative)*** participated in crime prevention leadership academy. In advance of implementation of these programs, residents were engaged in planning sessions and instruction courses using the Restorative Justice Model to build the capacity to relate to the environment and skills and to advocate for themselves and become better neighbors.
- In small business development, technical assistance provided through Ward 7 and Ward 8 businesses, this much anticipated directory, Soul of the City, is due to published in November 2007. Marshall Heights provided education training to 20 Ward 7 and Ward 8 LSDBE-certified businesses and contractors.
- With over 200 years of housing and development, Marshall Heights is the largest developer of affordable housing of any kind in Ward 7. Projects include Mayfair Mansion -- which is as you know an historic opportunity for our residents here, which we're quite proud of and worked very hard with you and our other partners to make that happen -- Hilltop Terrace II, and Phase II of the development property located at Hannah Place, S.E., in Fort Dupont, where about 14 units of housing in Hamilton's Landing, which is being located in the historic Deanwood community.
- MHCDO appreciates DHCD's support and anticipate even greater heights of achievement through our continued partnerships.

Rebecca Lee. I'm a youth at Covenant House Washington.

- There is a great need for affordable housing the D.C. area. One cannot afford housing earning minimum wage; the minimum rent for most apartments in the region is $740 per month for an efficiency or one-bedroom unit, excluding utilities.
- Affordable housing will provide a better opportunity for single parent, low-income households and afford young people somewhere to call home. If you cannot afford to pay rent, you have to stay with family or friends, or you end up homeless on the street or in the shelter.
- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homes and Communities website, the basic definition of affordability is where a household pays no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost-burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.
- The lack of affordable housing is a significant hardship for low-income households preventing them from meeting their basic needs such as nutrition and health care or saving for their future and that of their family.
- Ms. Lee is current homeless and living in a shelter, therefore, homelessness is a big issue for her. The District's current shelter system and process is inadequate to provide any real assist to persons trying to become stable. In closing, homelessness and affordable housing goes hand in hand—if cannot afford to live somewhere, you may end up homeless.

Julian Taylor, real estate agent, Fairfax Realty, Georgetown office.

- Is heartened and saddened that most District residents are unaware of DHCD's home ownership opportunities.
- He is trying to market these programs to clients and has met some resistance, especially from apartment owners selling their buildings. It appears that some owners and /or agents do not want tenants to know that they have a right to first refusal when an apartment building is put on the market.
- Mr. Taylor is very enthusiastic about DHCD's home ownership programs and wants to work with the Department to help get the word out.

DHCD's RESPONSE:

Anita Visser, DHCD Housing Regulation Administrator noted that the agency is developing special training for real estate professionals, to which Mr. Taylor was extremely please. Ms. Visser indicated that as soon as the training materials are completed and dates confirmed, Mr. Taylor would be notified. Mr. Taylor also asked for and received contact information for Charles Lindsay and Alan Bray. Mr. Trent thanked Mr. Taylor for his comments and referred him to Janice Blassingame, manager of DHCD's Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP).

Burnetta Coles, District resident.

Ms. Coles is a native Washingtonian and raised several concerns regarding DHCD's legal authority and its performance, or lack thereof.

- In 1934, the housing monies came from the District of Columbia Act. Those funds were for the residents of the District of Columbia prior to residents becoming rightful subjects of the legislation under Public Law 9298, Section 302, which is the Home Rule Act.
- Ms. Coles' research over the years indicates that none of the funds directed under the Home Rule Act of 1934, `37, and `58 through today were used in required compliance:
  1. There were no new housing for the poor, as required, except those particular housing projects created for those which DHCD granted money to demolish, in violation of the Housing Act of the United States(?). The Department's non-compliance in the use of these funds is affecting the city's communities.
  2. Ms. Coles indicated that unless she received adequate responses, she will request investigations into what she believes are "atrocities" that have been and are being committed in District of Columbia communities (i.e., lack of affordable housing, etc.).
- Ms. Coles indicated that these issues transcend race and shows a lack of respect for District communities.
- She was also concerned that there appeared to be different notices regarding the hearings and how confusing the information was. The Department should ensure that the same information is distributed to District residents to ensure everyone is knowledgeable regarding these hearings.

DHCD's RESPONSE:

Mr. Trent thanked Ms. Coles for her testimony and Alan Bray explained to Ms. Coles that she was referring to separate hearings, which is why the notices are different.

Stephanie Rones, executive director, Premier Community Development Corporation located in Ward 5.

- Cited a study by the Urban Institute that the demographics in Ward 5 are changing drastically and that many of its low- and middle-income residents are being displaced. The DHCD should note this study because Ward 5 is one of the last areas of affordable housing in the District. The study also cited that the number of low-income families obtaining mortgages in the District has plummeted during the past decade as property values have soared and the city has attracted younger and more affluent residents.
- Ten years ago, seventeen percent of District homebuyers were low-income (defined as a family of four with an income of $45,000 or less). In 2005, the most recent year for which data was available, the rate had slipped to just over four percent—a very drastic decline, especially in neighborhoods like Eckington, Brookland, and Woodridge. With the soaring home prices, she is saddened to know that when her son graduates from college, he will not be able to afford a house in the community, given that the average price for a three-bedroom, two-bath house is $400,000; and condominiums are selling for not less than $300,000.00. Even if lower priced units are available, a mortgage, along with condominium fees could still amount to more than $2,000 per month.
- The racial demographics in Ward 5 has changed dramatically—Blacks accounted for nearly eighty five percent of the mortgages to buy homes between 1997 and 2000. However, in 2005, the rate dropped to fifty-three percent. The number of loans granted to whites, however, rose from nine percent to thirty-three percent. The problem stems from gentrification and displacement and, she believes, that unless there is a calculated and cohesive response from the city, middle-income African-Americans will be unable to afford to buy, or remain in the District of Columbia.

Cynthia Hill, resident of Ward 5; community outreach specialist with the DC Housing Finance Agency (HFA).

- Ms. Hill presented testimony personally, as a resident, and professionally as representing the FHA. She provided information on loan products offered through HFA, including the DC Bond Program, which has an infusion of $50 million dollars for affordable housing for individuals and families that desire to purchase a house in the District of Columbia. Eighty percent of the of the District of Columbia includes targeted areas—including Ward 5, and she wants to ensure that as many residents as possible are aware of the program.
- The DC Bond Program also works with DHCD's HPAP and Employer-Assisted Housing programs (EAHP). Loans that are available through HPAP and EAHP are zero percent interest rate, and loans through the DC bond program are below market rate.

Ms. Hill was questioned by the audience on several aspects of the DC Bond Program:

1. **Is the Bond Program for low-income applicants**? NO, the income for a single person may be as high as $108,000 per year. Many times, applicants disqualify themselves based on their income. She recommends that applicants consider using the DC Bond Program. Also, if an applicant purchases a unit in a targeted area, the income guidelines may be waived.
2. **Are District residents given a preference?** No, the program is open to anyone who desires to purchase in the District. Workshops are available at HFA's office, 815 Florida Avenue, NW. Contact HFA at 202.777.1600.

The audience continued to question Ms. Hill regarding the Bond program until Mr. Charles Lindsay, DHCD's Legislative Affairs Specialist, interceded and requested that those persons with questions regarding HFA's programs should speak with Ms. Hill separate from the hearing.

Crystal L. Bradley-Lee. Native Washingtonian, resident of Ward 5.

- Recognizes that demographic and economic changes are occurring in her community; she is unable to afford her mother's home, now valued at more than $500, 000.
- Is aware that some property owners have forced tenants from their units and converted the buildings into condominiums, and believes her landlord may be contemplating the same move.
- Currently pays $900 in rent for a one-bedroom, with den. She and her husband would like to purchase a home and while they are aware of the programs, many residents are not. DHCD has to be more aggressive in marketing these programs to District residents.
- Several years ago, Walter Fauntroy hosted a community meeting where residents—some, who had owned their homes for more than forty (40) years, were forced out for various reasons, and others who were unable afford costly home repairs. Better marketing of DHCD's home repair program would be beneficial to many residents. That is the key to maintaining communities and neighborhoods.

DHCD's Response:

Anita Visser, DHCD's Housing Regulation Administrator addressed the issue of property owners converting rental units to condominiums and stated that there are very specific rules that must be followed, and that District tenants have some of the strongest rights in the country on the first right to purchase when their building goes on the market for sell. She encouraged Ms. Bradley-Lee to contact the District's Housing Service Center, at 202.44204610 to speak with one of the contact representatives, especially regarding the situation she mentioned about tenants being forced out and rental units being converted to condominiums.

The agency has several programs to assist District residents with rehabilitating their properties, along with programs to repairs roofs and remove lead-based paint. Ms. Bradley-Lee was referred to the manager of DHCD's First Right Purchase Assistance program, who was present at the hearing, for additional information and assistance.

Mary Pratt, District resident.

Ms. Pratt is a senior citizen and complained about the process and the amount of paperwork involved with the residential rehabilitation program. DHCD puts an applicant through so much, it becomes like, "Why bother?" She has used a community-based organization; however, it was not helpful.

DHCD's RESPONSE;

The Department assists as many residents as possible with the limited amount of funds available for the single-family rehabilitation program. We ask that applicants apply for financing through conventional means (banks, etc.) first and if you are denied, then come to DHCD and we will assist you. We are working to reduce the amount of paperwork, however, these are federal dollars, and the Department is required to meet reporting specific criteria, which requires documentation. The agency does contract with several community-based organizations (CBOs) that will assist residents with completing their application. Regarding the lack of assistance, she indicated she received at one CBO; Ms. Pratt was referred to one of DHCD's program managers in the audience. She was also asked to complete a comment card and to share her experience with the CBO

that she contacted.

Public Hearing for the FY2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan for the District of Columbia

The following are excerpts of testimony from the public hearings held on March 19th, 2008 conducted by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), in the development of its Fiscal Year 2009 Consolidated Annual Action Plan. The amount of testimony is too voluminous to detail; these excerpts highlight testimony from some of the witnesses. ***Copies of complete transcripts are available, via e-mail, at DHCDEvents@dc.gov.***

Hazel Broadnax, executive director, Emory Beacon of Light

- Emory Beacon of Light is a faith-based, nonprofit organization created in 1996, under Emory United Methodist Church. The organization is also a participating member of the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN). Thanks to grants from DHCD, EBL has made great strides in crime and drug prevention initiatives, homeless outreach and housing, and small business and economic development along the corridors of Georgia Avenue and Kennedy Street, N.W. Over the past 18 months, EBL has served several hundred persons through these and other program. They also have a free immigration clinic, transitional housing for families, after-school tutoring and a food pantry.
- The group is currently working on a mixed-use project jointly with their church that will provide housing for seniors, persons with HIV/AIDS, and other transitional families. EBL is also working, through the Neighborhood Investment Fund, to do the project in conjunction with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) to leverage all of their grants for this initiative.
- They have also created ***Beacon Brightwood Business Alliance*** to give Brightwood businesses a consistent and united voice of advocacy. These are just a brief overview of the initiatives the EBL has created and is working on and a lot of these programs and projects would not have come to fruition had it not been for the funding granted to them by DHCD.
- Over the past twenty-four (24) months, EBL has served more than one hundred (100) individuals in its Transitional Housing Program; provided technical assistance to more than 72 businesses; sponsored a youth retreat last year; and took forty-three (43) inner-city youth through its Crime and Drug Prevention Program. They have interfaced with more than 150 Brightwood residents through their Crime and Drug Prevention Program and Crime Awareness Seminars and Symposiums. Additionally, the organization conducts bi-weekly meetings with youth under the Crime and Drug Prevention Program. More than 200 families have benefited from its food pantry.
- The EBL supports DHCD's FY 2009 Annual Action Plan to HUD. The group believes that home ownership and the other initiatives proposed in the action plan are critical not only to the Brightwood community, but to the District of Columbia as well. The EBL and the members of Emory United Methodist Church are ready and willing to assist DHCD.

Doris Sarumi, senior developer, Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO).

- Presenting testimony on behalf of MHCDO's president and chief executive officer, Michael Watts, and Floyd Myers, Chairman of the Board of Directors
- Marshall Heights is a nonprofit community development corporation that has undertaken comprehensive community development activities in Ward 7 since 1979. Its mission is the help grow and enhance Ward 7 into the District of Columbia's most welcoming, prospering, livable community to be enjoyed by everyone. To accomplish this MHCDO engages in housing and economic and neighborhood activities and provides a variety of education, training, and assistance programs. A large part of its success is due to the great relationship the organization has maintained with the Office of the Deputy of the Mayor of Economic Development (DMPED) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

- The MHCDO supports DHCD's *Draft* FY 2009 Annual Action Plan; the priorities identified are consistent with the needs of District residents seeking affordable rental and purchasing opportunities through Marshall Heights. This is also an opportunity for DHCD to consider some adjustments to the Plan that may lead to more effective and meaningful service delivery.
    - The draft Plan poses the appropriate range of activities and types and kind of housing and commercial production; however, MHDCO believes that the critical challenge is to increase the production of affordable, rental housing, especially for large families in need of 3- and 4-bedroom units.
    - The three (3) main areas for reconsideration in DHCD's FY 2009 Action Plan are homebuyer counseling, emergency assistance, and neighborhood economic revitalization. MHCDO provides a variety of housing counseling services to a broad spectrum of residents East of the River; however, more and more residents are seeking assistance with homebuying challenges and the loss of housing through eviction or foreclosure. Last year MHCDO counseled ten (10) residents facing foreclosure; to date, they have already counseled twenty-two (22) and feel this is due, in part, to the current foreclosure crisis and the tightening of credit. The demand for technical assistance and general counseling for local business owners is also on the increase; MHCDO counseling staff must refer twenty-five percent (25%) of those requiring services to other agencies due to the workload.
    - There is an overwhelming need to add a financial literacy component to job training in the District. As residents complete job training and increase their earning potential, they should also acquire the skill set necessary to better manage incomes and prepare for the dreams of purchasing. In summary, in order to make sure that the stock of affordable housing is fully accessible, we must fully prepare them for the task of purchasing.
    - The FY 2009 *Draft* Action Plan can be an impetus for improvement. Strategic recruitment of beneficial neighborhood and community servicing business and retailers should include health facilities, bookstores, office suppliers, general merchandising, and hardware since we have a huge number of homeowners.
- With more than 20 years of housing and community development, Marshall Heights is the largest developer of affordable housing in Ward 7. Their projects include 160-condominium conversion units at Mayfair Mansions, fourteen (14) new home ownership units at Hilltop located at Hannah Place, S.E., in Fort DuPont, and fourteen (14) units at Hamilton's Landing located in the historic Deanwood community, all of which has been supported by DHCD.
- Requested additional funding to enhance housing counseling staff and for neighborhood revitalization.

Brian Juskus, Advocacy Coordinator for Manna, Inc.

- MANNA is a non-profit, affordable home ownership housing and community development organization in the District. MANNA supports the overall objectives of DHCD's FY 2009 Action Plan, however, outlined the following details based on their experience:
    - Shares the Department's anti-poverty strategy as outlined on the report.
    - DHCD's commitment to increase funding for tenant purchase is commendable and crucial, especially given the newspaper articles on District slumlords and Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs' (DCRA) loopholes that have left many low-income tenants displaced.
    - Manna applauds DHCD's use of CDBG and the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) funds to support the Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP), especially in light of lenders tightening their standards. HPAP funding needs to be maintained, at least equal to the FY 2008 levels.
    - HPAP funding needs to remain dedicated to its traditional use as loans that are recaptured at refinance or sale and recycled through the repayment fund into new HPAP loans. This is an effective and efficient use of HPAP funds to ensure a long-term revolving fund to support low- and moderate-income home ownership in the future.
    - The $4.6 million in CDBG funds allocated to affordable housing programs within the Office of the Deputy Major for Planning and Economic Development appear to duplicate the HPAP program and ***Home Again Initiative.*** Additional clarification on how these programs differ is needed.
- The Action Plan also references the Site Acquisition Funding Initiative (SAFI) as a fund to help nonprofit organizations to be competitive in the District's real estate market. Unfortunately, this innovative and successful program also automatically triggers the resale restrictions that are contained in the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) legislation. SAFI is a short-term loan that is repaid within a few years; MANNA recommends that the Department work to exempt SAFI from the resale restrictions.

- Regarding HOME recapture and resale restrictions, Manna continues to support recaptured provisions that are reasonable and fair because they generate funds in the future for affordable housing and homebuyer assistances. MANNA also supports short-term resale restrictions on affordable single-family and multi-family ownership units, but nothing longer than what federal regulations already require.
- MANNA also supports shorter restrictions on smaller units, like one or two bedroom condominiums so that families have the flexibility that is essential to grow in number and in financial stability. Federal regulations state that the resale requirements must also insure that the price at resale provides the original homeowner a fair return on investment and MANNA agrees; however, there is concern that some of the resale requirements already in effect do not ensure a fair return but rather, puts the owner at risk due to instability of interest rate, insurance, and tax costs in today's volatile market.
- MANNA is concerned that sometimes, proposed resale restrictions have been somewhat arbitrary. Why are these restrictions incurred on the equity rather than tie affordable home values to changes in income levels or to inflation indexes, etc.? It would benefit the homeowner and the city if low-income buyers were able to build equity and become financially self-sufficient.
- Otherwise, restrictions will create a stagnant class of homeowners who cannot move out or reach their dream of full home ownership. There is evidence from some other jurisdictions that indicate that the District government will soon confront the issues with the restrictions, such as, spending more money to manage every resale of restricted property, or providing new funds to spur home repairs due to the lack of traditional financial incentives (full property value). It is recommended that DHCD revisit this issue.
- MANNA looks forward to continuing its work with DHCD to strengthen families and stabilize neighborhoods by helping low-income residents build equity for the future.

Alex Froe, District resident, Ward 1.

- Spoke against the restrictions that limit an owner's ability to use a property's equity if purchase with a government grant or loan.
- It is unfair to penalize homeowners that used government funds to purchase a home. They have paid the mortgage, insurance, and maintained upkeep, only to have the city be in charge by limiting the amount of equity they may realize when selling or refinancing. It appears that the District may be attempting to ensure the continuity of low-income constituents.
- Taking away earned equity and profit puts additional "strings" on grants and loans that are not free to begin with. If the goal is to keep housing affordable, then focus on that; however the focus is diverted to keeping poverty in the loop.
- At the end of the day, the value of her property is her safety net for college, death, or even owning her own business. She has invested in her home, so why shouldn't her home work for her? The cycle of poverty will be maintained in the District or low-income residents will continue to be pushed out.
- When making decisions, please consider the children to come and what they will have. Think of your child or grandchild who wants to purchase their home or even pass it on; their opportunities will be restricted by these long-term policies.

Kimberly Henderson, representing Maudine Cooper and the Greater Washington Urban League.

- The Greater Washington Urban League administers two (2) programs that receive funding passed through DHCD from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. We administer the Home Purchase Assistance Program, Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, and the Short-Term Assistance Program for persons living with HIV/AIDS and are proud of their accomplishments with these programs. In fiscal year 2007, GWUL closed 513 loans, exceeding their performance goal. They are also on track to meet FY '08 goals with 254 loans closed to-date. These numbers include 216 HPAP loans, 13 Employer-Assistance Housing Program loans, and 25 EAHP/HPAP combo loans.
- Approximately $39,000 is disbursed each month to thirty-eight (38) Tenant-Based Rental Assistance HOPWA clients. Based on their excellent service record, the Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development engaged the Greater Washington Urban League to administer their HOPWA Program to serve up to 250 clients and additional Short-Term Assistance clients in Price George's, Calvert, and Charles counties.
- These two programs give us a unique perspective on the need for affordable housing options for those seeking to own and rent decent housing in the District. Residents seeking affordable rental housing share the same frustration as residents who seek to own affordable houses. Both groups find affordable options in short supply. Further, GWUL remains extremely concerned about the number of clients and residents in general who spend far more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

- DHCD's efforts to continue funding HPAP at a level that will produce 450+ homeowners in future years is commendable and applauded by the GWUL. Fostering attractive, affordable housing for our most vulnerable populations supports the City's objective to continue this economic expansion while serving to expand inclusion to even our poorest residents.
- The GWUL applauds and encourages Department's efforts and other initiatives such as the centralized database for residents, marketing of affordable units, and the exploration of an interest rate buy down program. The GWUL has worked closely with the DC Workforce Housing Land Trust and provided significant counsel to its creators as just one example. They strongly believe that these new initiatives will bring vitality to DHCD's programs and help to meet unmet needs.
- Lastly, as mentioned before, the GWUL has twenty-five (25) combination HPAP/EAHP loans. They have enjoyed watching this program grow as an indication that more DC government employees would really like to live in the city. The Department if encouraged to consider increasing the assistance levels from its current limit of $10,000 for the EAHP only program. They are certain that the EAHP program will grow substantially along with the City's tax base, if more is done in the workforce-housing arena.

Mike Dinka, program manager, DC Tenant Purchase Technical Assistance program, University Legal Services (ULS).

- The Tenant Purchase Technical Assistance program is an extremely important tool for the District and it has been very successful: over the past 27 years, ULS has helped to acquired well over one hundred (100) buildings and converted more than 4,000 rental units into tenant-owned and controlled affordable housing.
- DC has one of the smartest and farthest-reaching thinking programs in the U.S., and it is good that DHCD is looking at consolidating and bolstering this program. It is time for the District to come forward with "best practices" that other cities can use to further and further and I think it's time that when people are looking for best practices you know, these is one of those programs they can come here if we take care of this program.
- The requirements for tenant purchase increased ten-fold eight or nine years ago and the internal staff at DHCD has been pretty much one person during all that time. While new staff may be coming on board shortly, there is a great deal of corporate history in that position and losing it would be a shame.
- It would be helpful if the actual funding for projects worked more efficiently and he would appreciate another opportunity to discuss this with DHCD's leadership.

Robert Pohlman. Executive Director of the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED).

- Agrees that the District of Columbia needs a collaborative process to establish a unified (residents, government agencies, and other stakeholders) vision for housing and community development needs. This process would help to identify how much money is spent on various kinds of housing initiatives and devise smarter ways to use those resources. The Annual Action Plan should be the plan that determines what will be achieved and how.
- Presented several specific comments regarding the District's Annual Action Plan:
    - Commended DHCD for proposing to fund the HPAP program in FY '09 at the $35 million level and CNHED will certainly support what appears to be a $20 million request for appropriate funding;
    - Because detail breakout of projected funding was excluded from HPTF resources, it is impossible to determine the amount of funding DHCD plans to set-aside for tenants who wish to exercise their first right to purchase.
    - There appears to be duplicative programs contained in the FY '09 Annual Action Plan under the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. Specifically, Page 39 references an affordable/workforce housing plan; Page 40 references a Home Purchase Assistance Program, with guidelines that appear to differ from DHCD's HPAP program; and Page 41 references a housing rehab revolving loan fund. The Action Plan should be completely transparent regarding the purpose of these programs, how they differ from DHCD programs, and why they are administered separately.
- The Action Plan appears to be carefully prepared and CNHED commends DHCD for its good work on the Plan; however, the across the board planning, coordination, and strategizing required needed to carry out a truly effective affordable housing program for the District of Columbia is not fully reflected in the plan.

Cardell Shelton, ANC Commissioner, Ward 8.

Mr. Shelton voiced several concerns facing Ward 8:

- The community-based organizations (CBOs) in Ward 8 are not reaching out to neighborhoods and communities. There are more than 80,000 young people in Ward 8; however, there are no facilities in place to teach trade skills (carpentry, masonry, electrical, and mechanical) to help the youth become productive members of society; yet CBOs continue to receive funding to help Ward 8 youth to take advantage of employment opportunities in the Ward.
- Requested a copy of CBOs' contracts to determine their mission, contract requirements (amount of funds and what they are required to accomplish), and who are the benefactors of their services.
- African-American tradesmen (carpenters, bricklayers, etc.) rarely, if ever, receive opportunities to participate in government-funded projects, especially in Ward 8.
- Based on the amount of funds spent in Ward 8, is extremely dissatisfied with the lack of quality goods and services that are available in the Ward 8. The abundance of businesses is limited to barber shops, hair salons, and nail and pedicure shops. There are no "sit down" restaurants, hardware stores, very limited cleaners, nowhere to purchase a necktie or lingerie; these are basic services that all communities need.
- There is a lot a talent in Ward 8 to help spur its economic growth, but no mechanism or outlet is in place to nurture that growth. The old rules are not working and something new has to happen to ensure the continued revitalization and viability of Ward 8.
- There are companies and organizations willing to help the young people in Ward 8; but they are not willing to do all of the work. The Vocational Training Institution needs a facility that could be rehabbed to get started. Financial commitments have been made if the VTI can put a program together. But VTI needs DHCD's financial and technical assistance.
- Mr. Shelton stated that he is available to meet with DHCD's leadership at anytime to discuss the needs of Ward 8.

Appendix I HOPWA FY2009 Action Plan

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EMA

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA)

CONSOLIDATED PLAN

FY2009 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

PREPARED BY THE D.C. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HIV/AIDS ADMINISTRATION

On behalf of the
Washington, D.C. Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA):
District of Columbia, Suburban Maryland,
Suburban Virginia and Suburban West Virginia

PART I. INTRODUCTION

A. Lead Agency and EMA Jurisdictions

DHCD is the HOPWA Formula Grantee for the Washington, DC Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area (EMA). The District's, Department of Health, HIV-AIDS Administration (HAA) is the sub-recipient of the HOPWA funds received by the District. The regional HOPWA allocation is administered through and monitored by HAA.

HAA will enact memoranda of understanding with a governmental or quasi-governmental entity in northern Virginia and suburban Maryland to serve as the administrative agent for HOPWA funded services in the respective jurisdiction. HAA will provide sub-grants or other service agreements to Project Sponsors for direct services in the District of Columbia and Jefferson County, West Virginia. HAA sub-grant Project Sponsors include:

- **Prince George County Department of Housing and Community Development (suburban Maryland)**

The HOPWA Program in Suburban Maryland consists of two program, tenant-based rental assistance and short-term rental, mortgage and utility assistance, and provides services to residents of Prince George's County, Calvert County and Charles County. The Counties also provide clients access to health-care and other services offered through the Ryan White CARE Act and other programs. Prince George's County acts as the administrative agent, and the Greater Washington Urban League is the project sponsor for the two programs.

Suburban Maryland jurisdictions operate HOPWA programs in collaboration with the nonprofit organizations that help clients meet the daily needs for housing, mental health, substance abuse and other supportive services. Each HOPWA agency assists participants move toward self-sufficiency by providing referrals to job training and rehabilitation programs. The priorities and allocations of the Suburban Maryland region are coordinated with those of the Washington, D.C. Eligible Metropolitan Area.

- **Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)**

The Northern and Northwest Virginia portion of the EMSA will serve residents of seventeen counties and cities in rural and urban areas, and comprises two distinct service areas for HOPWA planning purposes. The Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) is the Administrative Agent on behalf of Northern and Northwest Virginia and will sub-grant HOPWA funds to county housing agencies and non-profit organizations throughout the Suburban Virginia region on behalf of the District of Columbia grantee.

The *Northern Virginia* service area of Suburban Virginia includes Arlington, Culpepper, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties, and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Fairfax. The *Northwest Virginia* service area includes the City of Fredericksburg, and Clarke, Fauquier, King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren counties. Over 2,300 persons are currently living with AIDS in Suburban Virginia.

The cities of Alexandria and Fredericksburg and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William are HUD Entitlement Jurisdictions, and as such engage in their own Consolidated Planning Process. Loudon County conducts its own Modified Consolidated Planning Process. All other jurisdictions in Suburban Virginia jurisdiction are included in the Consolidated Planning process for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- **West Virginia AIDS Network of the Tri-State Area**

The AIDS Network of the Tri-State Area (ANTS) serves as the administrative agent for the Ryan White Title I and HOPWA funding for the West Virginia jurisdiction of the Washington DC EMA, and provides direct services as well. ANTS are the project sponsor for HOPWA services for Jefferson County. In the West Virginia's Statewide Coordinated Statement of Need, current and emerging needs in housing were identified as increasing the availability of safe and affordable assisted living housing, permanent housing and public housing for all Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) and their families. The housing should offer support services to those PLWHAs who have been multiply diagnosed and have substance abuse or mental health issues. Barriers and gaps to these services were identified as situations unique to the geography of the state of West Virginia, such as a lack of transportation infrastructure, and the lack of housing with support services. Support services needed in the state of West Virginia were identified as better access to medical care, mental health care and entitlement programs. The barriers to access are the lack of a transportation infrastructure. West Virginia is presently experiencing a medical crisis, which includes rising medical malpractice insurance rates and qualified medical personnel leaving the state. This crisis has also prevented the state from attracting qualified medical personnel to care for those infected with HIV.

These three (3) sub-grant project sponsors are responsible for their counties and jurisdictions.

A critically important consideration is the extent to which services supported by either HOPWA or the CARE Act can be made more transportable among political subdivisions within the EMSA. The costs of living – and in particular, the cost of safe, affordable housing – vary widely among the political subdivisions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some clients would prefer to be housed in a neighboring jurisdiction, but do not seek that housing service because it might end their eligibility for services supported by the CARE Act. HAA has requested technical assistance on the difficulties associated with managing clients within a highly subdivided eligible area, and expects to have a thorough review during HOPWA Grant Year 16. The technical assistance will be designed to test the proposition that the boundaries among the political subdivisions can be lifted without a substantial threat to stability of the service delivery systems.

This review may lead to a thorough re-consideration of established relationships among HAA, the administrative agents and project sponsors.