

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR WESTMORELAND COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY'S (WCHA) 5-YEAR PLAN**

Westmoreland County Housing Authority (WCHA) has identified quantifiable goals and objectives that will enable the Housing Authority to serve the needs of low-income and very low-income, and extremely low-income families for the next five years.

### **FY 2019 (10-1-2019) thru 2024 (9-30-2024)**

- Westmoreland County Housing Authority (WCHA) will attempt to expand the supply of assisted housing by applying for additional Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) and by awarding additional Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) including Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPVs), using HUD's Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA). Implementation will be based on availability, demand, eligibility to apply and the Authority's statutory limits. WCHA's goal will be to implement the HUD programs identified, if available during the 5-year period, to the benefit of the qualified residents of Westmoreland County that need housing assistance.
- WCHA will continue to implement a goal of reducing public housing vacancies and will work to maintain an occupancy rate of 97% or greater at all AMPs.
- WCHA will place special emphasis on reducing the vacancy rate at selected "non-performing" AMPs by 2%-3% annually.
- WCHA will increase and maintain average public housing rent collections at or above 93% of total rent charged/due.
- WCHA will continue to leverage private and other public funds to create additional housing opportunities by designating up to 20% (approx. 385 units) of its current ACC unit inventory count to project based voucher assistance and additional 10% thru HOTMA, by 2024.
- Using various federal and/or state financing programs, (principally PHFA) WCHA will explore the expansion of affordable housing into communities not currently served or which are underserved by the Authority. Said communities include but are not limited to: Unity Township, Penn Township, Murrysville, North Huntingdon Township, Sewickley Township, Borough of Sutersville, Borough of West Newton, Ligonier Township, and Washington Township.
- WCHA will complete and occupy Odin View; a 47-unit senior housing (62 or older) complex located on 5 acres within the WCHA – Campus property. The Phase II Development will be completed in May 2020. By December 2020 the Authority expects to have 100% occupancy.
- WCHA will continue to market for sale or lease the WCHA – Vacant Office Building and remaining campus property for development. Proceeds from a sale or lease will enable WCHA to expand its developmental reserve account to strategically provide funding assistance for future WCHA - Affordable Housing projects within Westmoreland County.
- In 2018, WCHA acquired the First Commonwealth Bank Building, located at 111 Main Street, Greensburg PA. WCHA's developmental goal, within the 5-year period, is to develop Floors 2-7 into housing or an associated, permitted use within the City of Greensburg. The development may consist of a joint venture between the Authority and a private developer, to be procured.

- WCHA acquired in 2017, 15.77 acres of land within North Huntingdon Township and Irwin Borough. WCHA's developmental goal, within the 5-year period, is to develop Phase I into affordable senior cottages, including the site infrastructure, to allow for Phase II to proceed thereafter. The development may consist of a joint venture between the Authority and a private developer, to be procured. The Authority may proceed as the sole developer as well.
- WCHA is currently designated a SEMAP (Section 8) "High Performer". The Authority goal will be to maintain a score/rating of 95 or greater.
- WCHA will continue to evaluate and implement management strategies designed to attain the high performer. WCHA's goal is to maintain a PHAS designation and score of 90 or above.
- WCHA believes demolition and disposition activities are useful and effective tools to reduce density and overcrowding in our public housing communities, eliminate dangerous and obsolescent conditions, put vacant buildings to a better use and reduce the overall vacancy rate. The Authority will evaluate demolition and disposition activities, when necessary and warranted.
- In 2019-2020, WCHA will complete Highland Manor - Phase II – Demolition Project. The demolition of 18-20 units of federally assisted public housing at Highland Manor – PA 18-08B, will occur to remove units impacted by years of water infiltration and rot from poorly designed roofs and overhangs. The Demolition application will be submitted to the HUD Special Application Center (SAC) for approval in 2019, with actual demolition to occur in late 2019 or early 2020.
- WCHA will perform and complete a structural and physical needs assessment on remaining units to determine the amount of capital required to rehabilitate and modernize the remaining 18-20 units. The remaining units will preserve affordable housing at Highland Manor for the next 5 years, as a minimum. Substantial renovations are required to preserve the remaining units.
- WCHA will implement a plan within the 5-year period to rehabilitate and modernize the remaining 18-20 units.
- WCHA will implement in 2019-2020, a plan to perform a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) for all of the units located within the Public Housing Inventory Footprint.
- WCHA will implement its option to demolish units at any public housing site under the de minimis exception (Maximum of 5 Units within the 5-year period).
- WCHA will submit a Disposition Application to the HUD – SAC in 2019 for the disposal of 1.3 acres and Four Buildings (20 Units) within Kensington Manor – PA 18-04 using as a justification based on ***Surrounding Area: 24 CFR 970.17(a)***. *Retention of units is not in the best interests of the residents or the PHA because the conditions in the area surrounding the project (e.g., density, industrial or commercial development) adversely affect the health or safety of the residents or the feasible operation of the project by the PHA.* The disposal is within a strategic City of New Kensington – Industrial Revitalization Zone. The buildings and units have experienced low occupancy rates and in 2019, they are all vacant.
- WCHA is committed to working with existing non-profit organizations and developers that have access to funding not available to WCHA, to further the Authority's goal of creating affordable housing in underserved communities within Westmoreland County.

- The concept of voluntarily conversion of public housing units to Project Based Voucher (PBV) or Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) units, through repositioning, will be reintroduced to public housing residents starting in 2019, starting with the Resident Advisory Board (RAB). During the 5-year Plan period, WCHA’s goal will be the conversion of its public housing inventory, using the HUD – Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD).
- In 2019, WCHA has initiated plans to reassess the benefits of voluntarily converting its public housing scattered site developments (174 units) to project-based voucher assistance, based upon PIH Notice 2018-04 (HA) (Demolition and/or Disposition of Public Housing property, eligibility for tenant protection vouchers and associated requirements) and PIH 2017–21 (HA) (Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) — Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Project-Based Voucher (PBV). The Authority goal is to receive HUD – SAC Approval in 2019 and to transition the 174 scattered units to a more efficient and effective operational and stable Section 8 funding platform.
- WCHA will dispose of the 174 Public Housing units based on rising management costs and will expand resources to renovate- modernize the housing units to a Project-Based Voucher subsidy platform. The following sites will be submitted to the HUD – SAC for disposition and conversion to PBV:

Development	Number of Units
18-17 Latrobe Townhouses	20
18-18 Arnold Townhouses	20
18-19 Greensburg Townhouses	20
18-20 Vandergrift Townhouses	20
18-23 Jeannette Townhouses	30
18-24 Lower Burrell Townhouses	30
18-43 Penn Manor	16
18-44 Derry Garden Apartments	18

Justification for conversion will be based on the following PIH Notice 18-04 categories:

1. **Improved Efficiency/Effectiveness Through On-Site Development of Low-income Housing:** 24 CFR 970.17(c). The requirements of Section 3) A.2 of this notice apply except the replacement, low-income housing units are located on-site. The replacement low-income housing units may be newly constructed or the same public housing units after modernization (rehabilitation).
2. **Scattered Site Units.** Due to distance between units and lack of uniformity of systems (e.g. HVAC, utilities), the PHA demonstrates an unsustainability to operate and/or maintain the units as public housing. For purposes of this notice, scattered site units generally mean units in non-contiguous buildings with four or fewer total units.

Tenant-Protection Vouchers (TPVs) will be applied for in accordance with HUD – PIH Notice 18-04 and 18-09. Units not approved for TPVs will be converted to PBVs.

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, requires at least 5% of all public housing units, within each development, are accessible to persons with mobility impairments. To meet this requirement, WCHA has committed at least 25% of its annual Capital Fund allocation to modify existing units and common areas to meet 504 requirements. A HUD September 2018 Section 504 Transition and Implementation Plan approval commits WCHA to complete all accessibility improvements by April 2020. The remaining site “East Ken Manor” will be developed in Phases, due to the scope and cost of the project that exceeds \$1.2 million dollars. Phase I will represent improvements to the Manager’s Office, Community Building and 2-3 units. Construction will occur in 2019-2020. Phase II will consist of 3-4 units and is estimated to be constructed in 2021-2022 or sooner if a need is identified by tenants seeking accessibility or reasonable accommodations.
- WCHA will continue its commitment to increase the number of employed residents. The Authority promotes self-sufficiency through the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program and other resident programs. The FSS Coordinator develops training and employment goals with Sec. 8 and Public Housing tenants and provides job search assistance or connects tenants with agencies that provide job search activities. The Authority plans to increase the number of employed tenants (annually assist 15 families obtain employment and help 30 families maintain/retain employment for at least 1 year) by continuing to offer FSS and other resident programs.
- WCHA is committed to maintaining compliance with the requirements of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005. To meet these requirements, the Authority has and will continue to adopt policies and explore activities to guarantee resident victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking: (1) will continue to have access to the housing opportunities available through the Housing Authority, (2) have a living environment that protects the safety of victims of these crimes. In addition, the Authority will continue to serve as a resource for victims in need of emergency housing and permanent, Section 8 housing due to actual or threatened abuse.
- WCHA and its Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program are committed to offering homeownership opportunities to public housing and Section 8 tenants who are interested and financially capable. The Authority will continue to explore homeownership options available through RAD, PHFA and other funding entities. The Housing Authority is planning to provide homeownership assistance for up to 5 to 7 families over the 5-year period.