

Housing Plan

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice
Five-year Consolidated Plan

Healthy Housing and Healthy Neighborhoods

Stakeholder Workshop

September 4

9:00 – 11:00 AM



A Collaborative Process

- **Housing Plan:** identify current and future housing needs for a variety of household types and income levels
- **Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice:** identify barriers that restrict housing choice for members of protected classes and recommendations to resolve the barriers
- **Consolidated Plan:** describe community development priorities and goals based on assessment of affordable housing and community development needs, market conditions and available resources



A Collaborative Process

These documents enable the State agencies to continue receiving annual allocations from the following sources:

Program	
Community Development Block Grant	\$5,414,189
HOME Investment Partnerships	\$ 3,475,044
Emergency Solutions Grant	\$ 699,115
National Housing Trust Fund	\$3,000,000
Low Income Housing Tax Credit	\$ 3,136,050
Total	\$ 15,724,398



Public Outreach

- RIHousing and OHCD recognize that successful plans require input from a broad array of stakeholders
- The planning processes for these documents require a qualitative analysis in which extensive public outreach is conducted to identify affordable housing, fair housing and community development needs
- The qualitative analysis (the public outreach) will be used to enhance the quantitative profile (the hard data) with the opinions, experiences, perspectives and ideas of Rhode Island stakeholders and residents



Methods of Public Outreach

- Early Stakeholder Interviews to identify key topics
- Stakeholder Workshops – seven this week and three later in the process to vet recommendations
- Public Meetings – three during the week of Sep 23 and three later in the process to vet recommendations
- Municipal Meetings
- Pop-up Events
- Project webpage



Methods of Public Outreach (cont'd)

- Meeting-in-a-Box
- Online Surveys for all Rhode Islanders and Municipal Officials
- FAQ Sheets explaining the projects, how to get involved, whom to contact for more info
- Draft documents to be made available for public review and comment in early 2020



The Value of Stakeholder Input

- You are practitioners in your areas of expertise
- You encounter the challenges to housing and community development on a regular basis
- You are familiar with State regulations, policies and laws that impact the work you do – whether these help you in your work or create difficulties
- You are the individuals and organizations that we need to hear from to expand affordable housing, fair housing choice and improve the quality of life for Rhode Islanders



Small Group Activity: 1-2-4-ALL



Q: What is the biggest barrier to creating healthy housing and healthy neighborhoods in Rhode Island today?

- Housing as a health determinant
- Housing quality—age, condition, presence of lead paint, accessibility, flooding potential
- Access to medical care—physical and mental
- Safe housing—free from drugs, alcohol, physical abuse, mental abuse
- Quality of neighborhood—walkability, proximity to amenities, street safety
- Disproportionate environmental impact on low-income neighborhoods



Responses

- Lack of coordination among public sector for healthy housing
- Lack of political will/ state involvement for healthy housing
 - Everyone needs to believe that healthy housing is important
- 80% of RI housing stock built before 1978 – lead paint
- Lack of funding; CDBG is not enough, especially for home repairs
- Mental health and substance abuse – harder for folks who live in substandard housing to advocate for themselves
- Need for one system/place to improve accessibility to services and support systems
- Lack of information found in one place
- Lack of accessibility – transit, elderly, persons with disabilities, variety of housing options for all



Responses

- Racism and discrimination – redlining
- Inability to hold landlords accountable
- Rhode Island has the highest rate of evictions in New England, which adversely impacts childhood outcomes and future generations of the same family
- Eviction records create a barrier for tenants to find housing, especially single parent households
- Income discrimination
- Inadequate funding for housing maintenance
- Low rate of minority homeowners
- High costs for housing – new and rehab



Responses

- Insufficient data
- Lack of knowledge about mediation services associated with Housing Court
- Lack of access to proper healthcare, especially for those looking into recovery
- Lack of access to recreational activities, especially for children
- Poor public transit



Small Group Activity: 15-to-3



Q: What is the best solution to eliminate this barrier?

- Housing as a health determinant
- Housing quality—age, condition, presence of lead paint, accessibility, flooding potential
- Access to medical care—physical and mental
- Safe housing—free from drugs, alcohol, physical abuse, mental abuse
- Quality of neighborhood—walkability, proximity to amenities, street safety
- Disproportionate environmental impact on low-income neighborhoods



Responses

- Holding landlords accountable for discrimination – point/rating system for landlords “Better Landlord Bureau”
- Political and exploitative power of landlords – holding landlords accountable for substandard conditions, bolstering inspection processes, educating landlords on health, economic and social conditions of substandard housing
- Lack of political will – pass legislation that creates a centralized, interagency coordinator to organize statewide policies and implement its parts as goal-based outcomes – e-referral, integrating accessibility, data collection, and service provision
- Lack of coordination between public and private – statewide referral system, possibly through 211 or other existing avenue, to connect people to housing and support services



Responses

- Lack of housing near transit – increase frequency of bus service near affordable housing communities and recreational areas
- Inadequate accessible housing on bus routes – plan more accessible affordable housing on bus routes with better service on weekends
- Public transit – need robust and sustainable investment in RIPTA while incentivizing ridership



Responses

- Lack of data collected – need state database to track housing resources available for families with young children under 6
 - RI Parent Information Network – for families with children, providing a huge range of services
- While most LMI have ACA coverage, there exists limited access to and utilization of healthcare and facilities for under-privileged populations
- Lack of access to proper health care – “universal primary care” funded by a surcharge on rental units, which is tax-deductible for property owner
- Transportation is lacking overall, creating access issues (jobs, greenspace, healthcare, etc.)



Responses

- Need for housing close to health food sources – work with RIPTA to identify food deserts and create routes around those areas
 - Hunger Elimination Taskforce exists – may need to be made more well-known to the public
- No consolidated knowledge base or services - create state office to collect data on available services to map and share information
- Political will – Homes RI advocacy group to build political will
 - Homes RI film screening for evicted family around the state to raise awareness – Providence Lost



Responses

- Why are eviction rates so high? What happens to the evicted unit and owner? – need better data
- Website on eviction from Brown University students – capturing data, stories, policy recommendations
- Center for Justice – randomized case study on eviction court cases, many cases have no legal representation for tenants
- Housing Network of RI – already did focus group on perception



For more information:

Project webpage:

<https://www.rihousing.com/statewide-housing-plan/>

Online survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RhodeIslandHousing2019>

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