

MEMO

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Carol Ventura
Date: February 17, 2022
Subject: Monthly Update

PROGRAM NEWS

HOMEOWNERSHIP

Product	2021 Actual (units)	2022 Goals (units)	2022 Units (as of 1/31/22)	2022 Funded (as of 1/31/22)
	Closed/Funded			
<i>First Mortgage</i>	1,711	1,550	126	\$37.9 million
<i>FirstHomes Tax Credit</i>	136	125	16	-

The Homeownership division closed and funded 126 units on volume of \$37.9 million in January. Production fell 17% in units and 3% in volume as compared to January 2021. Affordability continues to be an issue with increasing mortgage rates accompanied by higher listing prices reducing consumers' purchasing power.

LOAN SERVICING/ASSET MANAGEMENT

Program	As of 12/31/21	2021 Portfolio value	As of 01/31/22	Portfolio value as of 01/31/22
RIH Single-Family Portfolio	20,479 loans	\$2.07 billion	20,425 loans	\$2.08 billion *
Multi-Family Portfolio	677 loans	\$940.99 million	677 loans	\$929.18 million *
MSS Single-Family Portfolio	6,540 Loans	\$584.05 million	6513 Loans	\$582.70 million
Madeline Walker Portfolio	253 liens	\$1.71 million	251 liens	\$1.68 million
REO Portfolio	17 homes	\$1.39 million	17 homes	\$1.46 million

*Includes loans serviced for others i.e., loans sold TBA, Federal Program loans, Conduit loans

Delinquency Update: In January 2022, we saw a decrease in overall delinquency of 405 delinquent loans for a total of 1,459 delinquent loans out of our active portfolio of 11,033 loans. This is a delinquency rate of 13.22%. In January 2021, the active portfolio was 12,034 loans of which 1864 loans were delinquent. This is a delinquency rate of 15.49%. The **number of seriously delinquent loans** (90+ days) was 726 (6.58%) in January 2022, compared to 1237 (10.28%) in January 2021.

Covid Impact: Since March 18, 2020, 2,435 RIHousing borrowers have reached out to our Loan Servicing Division to request forbearance assistance due to financial hardship related to COVID-19. Of those borrowers, 1601 have decided they no longer need assistance due to stimulus relief or have resumed their payments using a loss mitigation option resulting in 834 active forbearance agreements as of January 31, 2022.

Approximately 67.1% of borrowers who have requested forbearance assistance have FHA insured mortgages. On April 1, 2020, FHA announced a new post forbearance home retention option for borrowers facing financial hardship resulting from COVID-19. Under the COVID-19 National Emergency Standalone Partial Claim (NESPC), HUD will advance deferred payments of principal, interest, taxes and insurance to reinstate borrowers at the end of their financial hardship. Most of the borrowers with FHA insured mortgages will qualify for this post forbearance home retention option. As of January 31st, 861 RIHousing borrowers have reinstated their mortgage using the NESPC.

Homeowner Assistance Fund:

Demand continues to be high for the US Treasury-funded HAF-RI program. Through approximately five weeks of operation, the team has received more than two thousand applications from Rhode Islanders who are looking to avoid foreclosure as a result of a COVID-related financial hardship.

DEVELOPMENT

Program	2021 Actual (Firm Commitment)	2022 Goals	2022 YTD as of 1/31/2022 (Firm Commitment)
9% LIHTC (Rental Production)	170 units (3 deals)	168 units (3 deals)	0 units (0 deals)
4% LIHTC (Rental Production & Preservation)	270 units 4 deals	630 units (9 deals)	45 units 1 deal
Preservation Deals w/o LIHTCs	463 units (5 deals)	800 units (7 deals)	0 units (0 deals)
Workforce Housing Innovation Challenge Loan Program	74 WFH units (301 total units) 4 deals	TBD	TBD
Preservation Revitalization Loan Fund (\$3 million)	0	Rolling Application until funds are spent	0
Preservation Loan Fund (\$10 million)	241 units (4 deals)	Rolling Application until funds are spent	0

2020 Capital Magnet Fund * (\$5.225 million over three years)	Awarded April 2021	Rolling Application until funds are spent	0
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**CMF 2020- Effective Date, April 15, 2021; RIH has 2-year commitment of 599 units, 3 years to disburse funds, 5 years to complete projects*

HOME/ARP Allocation Plan: The HOME/ARP Allocation Plan was submitted to HUD on December 23rd and was approved early this month. Staff is developing program guidelines for the new program. The plan proposes the following uses (i) \$9.1MM for development activities, (ii) \$3MM for supportive services, \$300K for capacity building for homeless service providers and \$1MM for administration and planning.

LEASED HOUSING AND RENTAL SERVICES

RentReliefRI Update: Following the approval of additional RentReliefRI outreach and application assistance partners at our January Board meeting, RentReliefRI program staff and members of our communications team are providing training to partners on application assistance, outreach and engagement efforts. We will be working closely with partners to provide a range of on-site application assistance events at locations across the state.

We continue our outreach efforts to National Grid customers who meet certain income thresholds. In 2021, we provided a bulk payment to National Grid for utility arrearages of tenants who are customers in their low-income program. Under that process, the State disbursed \$16 million in ERA funds to National Grid for utility arrearages owed by over 13,000 low-income renters who have been confirmed as income qualified for the program. RIHousing staff, in conjunction with National Grid, are following up with these customers who must complete an online streamlined attestation form to have their arrearages paid through the program. The effort to secure individual attestations from each of those customers is substantial. That challenge is aggravated by the fact that a statutorily required utility shut-off moratorium has gone into effect and will remain in effect through the Spring, reducing the sense of urgency for customers with those arrears. We continue our outreach efforts utilizing a range of communications including direct mail, eblasts and outbound calls.

NEAHMA: Mike DiChiaro, Assistant Director Dev/Asset Mgmt & Compliance, was installed as a Board member of the New England Affordable Housing Management Association (NEAHMA).

Special Voucher Utilization (since Program Inception)

Emergency Housing Vouchers	
Vouchers Awarded by HUD	Vouchers Issued
117	115
Leased Up	Pending Lease Up
39	15
Foster Youth Initiative	
Vouchers Awarded by HUD	Vouchers Issued
25	15
Leased Up	Pending Lease Up
10	0

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA COVERAGE

- **WPRI (Feb 3):** [Nearly 2,000 applications sent in for the Homeowner Assistance Fund RI so far](#)
- **Targeted News Service (Feb 3):** [R.I. Gov. McKee, State Leaders Announce Availability of Funds to Support Creation of Affordable Housing](#)
- **Providence Business News (Feb 2):** [BLVD Communities breaks ground on \\$25.3M renovation of Providence apartments](#)
- **Yahoo News (Feb 2):** [RI Gov. Announces \\$12M Program For Affordable Housing](#)
- **Providence Business News (Feb 2):** [McKee, state leadership announce \\$12M in ARPA funds for housing grants](#)
- **Providence Journal (Jan 30):** [White House praises Roger Williams University law school for rent-relief work](#)
- **Boston Real Estate Times (Jan 25):** [Dakota Partners Completes Phase 1 of Brookside Terrace in Rhode Island](#)
- **Yahoo News (Jan 18):** [RI Surpasses \\$100M In Rental Assistance Program](#)
- **ABC 6 News (Jan 14):** [Concerned about paying your heating bill? Assistance is available.](#)
- **Providence Business News (Jan 14):** [RentReliefRI assistance program reaches \\$100M distribution milestone](#)
- **WLNE (Jan 14):** [RentReliefRI Program hits \\$100 million mark in assistance](#)
- **Targeted News Service (Jan 11):** [R.I. Gov. McKee Announces Launch of \\$50M Homeowner Assistance Fund](#)
- **Yahoo News (Jan 10):** [RI Receives \\$50M In Federal Funding For Mortgage Assistance](#)
- **WLNE (Jan 10):** [Gov McKee announces \\$50 million Homeowner Assistance Fund](#)
- **Providence Journal (Jan 10):** [RI just launched a \\$50-million homeowner assistance fund. Here's who qualifies](#)
- **Providence Business News (Jan 10):** [R.I. launches \\$50M homeowner assistance program](#)
- **The Boston Globe (Jan 10):** [R.I. launches \\$50 million homeowner assistance fund](#)
- **Targeted News Service (Jan 7):** [R.I. Gov. McKee, R.I. Office of Energy Resources, RIHousing Announce Zero-Energy Housing Awards](#)

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

RECENT EVENTS

FirstGenHomeRI Program Launch (February 16): RIHousing joined with state and local partners to launch a new pilot program, FirstGenHomeRI, aimed at helping to open the doors to homeownership for first-generation homebuyers. The program targets first-generation buyers by addressing inequities and barriers to homeownership while boosting the long-term, economic outlook for families who have historically not pursued homeownership. Available to Rhode Island residents currently living in specific areas of the state, the pilot program offers \$25,000 for down payment and closing costs. Homeownership is the primary way families build financial security and home equity is generally their largest source of wealth. For many homeowners, home equity is transformative and generational. This program aims to help current homebuyers while also supporting the next generation of buyers, who may find it easier to achieve their dreams of owning a home.

RentReliefRI: We continue to participate in onsite informational and application assistance efforts across the state:

- **Central Falls Food Pantry Onsite Assistance (ongoing):** We continue our onsite application assistance efforts with weekly representation at the Central Falls Food Pantry in partnership with Family Service of Rhode Island and Progreso Latino. The Food Pantry has over 200 families it services each week and RentReliefRI outreach information, in multiple languages, is handed out to families and the Food Pantry's clients are able to meet with a program representative onsite to complete an application for assistance.
- **Central Falls City Hall Onsite Assistance (ongoing):** We continue to partner with the Central Falls Mayor Rivera and Family Service of RI to offer onsite application assistance at Central Falls City Hall for residents.
- **District Courthouse Onsite Application Assistance (ongoing):** RentReliefRI partner agencies continue to provide onsite application assistance at all district courthouses where evictions are heard within the state. The onsite assistance at courthouses has been one of the most effective aspects of the program as representatives are able to meet one-on-one and in-person with tenants and their landlords to provide assistance and information on the RentReliefRI program.

State Acquisition Plan (SAP) Announcement Event (February 2): RIHousing joined with Governor Dan McKee, state leaders and community partners to announce the availability of new funding to support the creation of affordable and supportive housing. Funded via the state's allocation of federal Fiscal Recovery Funds, the Site Acquisition Program will provide grants to municipalities, for-profit and non-profit developers for the acquisition of properties that will be redeveloped as affordable and supportive housing. \$12 million in funding from the Governor's "Rhode Island Rebounds" package is available for this statewide effort, which will be administered by RIHousing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

RentReliefRI Onsite Assistance: We are working closely with RentReliefRI partner agencies to develop and support a series of onsite application assistance events at communities across the state. More details will follow as dates are announced.

- **RentReliefRI Onsite Application Assistance in Warwick (March 5):** We are partnering with House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi to host an onsite application assistance event at the Warwick Public Library. Renters will be able to meet with RentReliefRI staff or a partner agency to get help to complete their applications.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

FEDERAL

FY22 Continuing Resolution: On February 8th, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep the Federal Government operating through March 11th. Congress must either approve a final FY 2022 appropriations bills or pass another CR by then to avoid a government shutdown.

2022 NCSHA Legislative Conference: RIHousing staff will be attending the 2022 NCSHA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. from March 14th – 16th. The conference will provide an opportunity to meet with all members of the Rhode Island delegation to discuss federal legislative priorities.

STATE

Governor McKee's Budget Proposal: On January 20th, Governor McKee unveiled his Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which included the allocation of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF). The proposed budget allocates \$250 million through SFRF to housing related investments, of which \$220 million would be administered by RIHousing:

- \$90 million for the development of affordable housing (*includes \$15 million already appropriated*)
- \$25 million for site acquisition (*includes \$12 million already appropriated*)
- \$50 million for down payment assistance
- \$20 million for workforce housing
- \$10 million for a predevelopment program
- \$25 million for community revitalization

Other SFRF funded housing investments to be administered by OHCD or other agencies include:

- \$1.5 million for capacity building (*of which \$500,000 is already appropriated*)
- \$21.5 million for a homelessness assistance program (*of which \$1.5 million is already appropriated*)
- \$5 million for homelessness infrastructure
- \$2 million for a statewide housing plan

State of Emergency Executive Orders Extended: On February 10th, the General Assembly voted on legislation to extend Governor McKee's executive orders until March 31, 2022. This includes the executive order allowing for remote participation in public meetings. The bill passed both chambers, and will now be transmitted to the governor for signature.

EXECUTIVE

Marilena recently emailed each commissioner a copy of RIHousing's Ethics Policy and corresponding Ethics Certification Form to fulfill RIHousing's annual requirement. If you have not yet returned your form, please do so as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Marilena.

HUMAN RESOURCES

RIHousing welcomed Melanie Cluley to RIHousing as the new Director of Human Resources earlier this month. Melanie brings over 20 years of experience working in the Human Resources field, most recently as Assistant Director, Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Bryant University.