

- 6) Coordinating efforts to provide permanent housing opportunities with the local Public Housing Authorities.
- 7) Coordinating efforts with the Public Health Department to use their services for lead-risk assessments and clearance testing.
- 8) Coordination with major stakeholders in focus areas in the sharing of resources.
- 9) Partner with the Local Housing Authorities in the demolition and redevelopment of affordable housing in the community.
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Homeless programs, emergency payment of rent and utilities, weatherization, rehab programs and lead hazard reduction programs are administered by the Human Services Department and, when possible, are coordinated with the City's Community Development Department. Additionally, low-income housing tax credit deals and state trust fund developments must be reviewed and signed off on by the City.

PUBLIC HOUSING

A summary of the Rockford Housing Authority's FY 2006 Annual Plan is included as Appendices B.

The Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) has been designated as a Standard Performer by HUD under the Public Housing Assessment System for Fiscal Year 2005 with an overall score of 85 out of a possible 100 points. This represents significant progress and continual improvement in recent years, particularly in the financial scoring area of this system. The RHA is currently undergoing a major reorganization in its delivery of services as it moves to a HUD mandated project-based management system that more closely reflects the property management practices of the private sector. The results of this reorganization are expected to improve efficiency and reduce costs by de-centralizing services and focusing on the "best interest of the properties."

The following narrative statements describe how the actions of the City of Rockford will foster public housing improvements and resident initiatives and help meet the needs of public housing.

The Rockford Housing Authority has a strong commitment to customer service and promotes resident input through regularly scheduled meetings with the Executive Director. Together, the City of Rockford and the Rockford Housing Authority will continue to work together more to help public housing residents access community

resources that can be used to address needs and improve the overall quality of life for all residents.

The City of Rockford will continue to work with resident councils to encourage growth and formal structure within councils. RHA encourages resident councils to become more involved in activities that foster leadership and have supported fair housing training in the past.

The City's Human Services Department has provided assistance to public housing residents through several of its programs. The Head Start program teaches income-eligible pre-school children skills that stimulate their intellectual, emotional and social growth. The parents of these pre-schoolers are provided access to employment and training opportunities and social services as well. The Head Start program is not made up entirely of public housing residents; however, large portions of the participants are from public housing. This is due primarily to the focus of recruitment efforts that have a priority of improving the quality of life of public housing residents through program participation. Plans are to continue to focus recruitment in public housing developments during the Action Plan year. The City also works to improve resident initiatives by administering a summer feeding program throughout the city but concentrated in many public housing developments. The program provides free nutritious lunches to over 2000 children annually. Plans are to continue this program. Lastly, the City will continue to work with the Housing Authority to take steps to reduce the hazards of lead based paint in family housing developments, scattered sites, community facilities and day cares within developments. The City administers state funded lead abatement program that requires a ten percent match provided with CDBG funds. Priority is given to housing authority units where a child or children with elevated blood levels reside.

Additionally, the City of Rockford is working in conjunction with the RHA on the demolition of the Jane Addams family development as well as the redevelopment of Concord Commons, another multi-family housing complex. During the upcoming year HUD is expected to approve the demolition application for Jane Addams to allow demolition activities to commence. Additionally, this area has been identified as a focus area by the city of Rockford and as a result will receive dedicated resources for redevelopment to improve it. One of the improvements slated for this area is the Morgan Street Bridge replacement project that is under development by the city. It is also expected that the city and RHA will form a collective partnership and hire a developer in the upcoming year to demolish Concord Commons as well. Concord Commons is located on the west side of the city in a blighted area adjacent to an on-going HOPE VI project under the supervision of the Winnebago County Housing Authority. With both projects underway, the likelihood of enhancing these areas is moving closer to reality each and every day.