

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Background

Beginning in early 2014, the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) engaged in a planning process involving PHA residents and employees, the PHA Board of Commissioners, social service and advocacy organizations, elected officials, property owners, funders, and other community stakeholders. The Strategic Directions process included numerous small and large group open discussion sessions, on-line surveys, structured interviews, and interactive working groups. The primary focus of these efforts has been to solicit candid feedback on PHA operations, to identify opportunities and challenges facing PHA, and to create a roadmap or framework to guide agency initiatives and resource allocation decisions over the upcoming five-year period.

PHA plans to publish its ***Strategic Directions Plan: 2015-2019*** in early 2015, following review and approval by the PHA Board of Commissioners. Prior to finalizing the Plan, PHA is providing this document – which includes background information on PHA, a revised Mission Statement and proposed Strategic Priorities and Initiatives - for public review and comment. PHA welcomes written comments on this draft, and requests that comments be submitted to the address below no later than Wednesday, December 17 at 12 noon:

Philadelphia Housing Authority
Attention: Executive Office
12 South 23rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

PHA will review and consider any and all comments received by the above deadline.

PHA Facts

The following is a summary of key facts that provide the context for PHA's Strategic Directions Plan priorities:

- Established in 1937, PHA is the fourth largest public housing authority in the United States and the largest provider of affordable housing in the City of Philadelphia. Currently, PHA has more than 14,400 public housing units available for occupancy by families, seniors and people with disabilities, who qualify as low-income. These affordable apartments are located throughout the City in thirty-five (35) conventional public housing developments, twenty-three (23) Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) developments, and eleven (11) developments operated by Alternate Management Entities (AME) under contract to PHA. Over 4000 of PHA's public housing units are "scattered sites," i.e. housing units located in single family homes or small buildings of up to 4 units. PHA operates one of the largest scattered site public housing programs in the country.

- In addition to its portfolio of owned housing, through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program PHA provides tenant-based, project-based rental subsidies and first time homebuyer assistance for over 17,000 low-income households who live in privately owned housing. A significant portion of project-based units subsidized by PHA are owned by local non-profit agencies that also provide supportive services for residents.
- Over 31,000 households, with more than 76,000 family members, live in apartments owned or assisted by PHA. PHA houses some of the poorest citizens of Philadelphia: Average household income is \$14,213 among public housing households and \$11,622 among HCV-assisted households. Only 26% of PHA households report any income from employment. Note, however, that the majority of PHA households are headed by seniors (35%) and/or or people with disabilities (48%). PHA developments also house over 15,500 children under the age of 18.
- PHA works closely with the City of Philadelphia and many local agencies towards the goal of reducing and ultimately eliminating homelessness, including providing 500 housing opportunities each year specifically for homeless citizens. Due to the lack of affordable housing in the City, virtually all PHA residents would be at risk of homelessness without the affordable rents provided through PHA programs.
- PHA is one of only thirty-nine (39) agencies nationwide that are designated to participate in the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program. MTW was established by Congress to foster locally determined, innovative strategies that promote expanded housing choice, family economic self sufficiency and/or administrative efficiency. Under MTW, PHA is able to waive certain statutes and regulations and to combine its major HUD funding sources into a single MTW Block Grant that can be used flexibly. PHA's current MTW Agreement runs until 2018. The flexibility afforded by MTW has been a critical ingredient in PHA's ongoing efforts to revitalize distressed public housing and transform Philadelphia's neighborhoods.
- The backlog of unmet and unfunded capital needs for PHA's public housing communities is estimated at greater than \$1 billion and growing, while the most recent Capital Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was \$45 million. PHA is able to address only a small fraction of its capital needs with existing funding. The oldest PHA developments were built more than 70 years ago, and a total of twenty-eight (28) sites are now more than 40 years old. Several sites are functionally obsolete from design, efficiency and operating cost perspectives; however, the availability of funding to support major redevelopment efforts has been extremely limited, a situation that appears unlikely to change in the near future, given federal budget constraints.
- PHA is currently implementing an ambitious development program with the goal of developing or preserving 6000 units of housing and helping to revitalize Philadelphia's neighborhoods.

Working closely with public housing and other neighborhood residents, the City and local non-profits, PHA is working to transform distressed public housing developments at Norris Homes, Blumberg, Queen Lane and scattered site locations. At Norris, PHA and the City are implementing a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant. At Blumberg/Sharswood, PHA is implementing a Choice Neighborhoods Planning grant. PHA is also partnering with and/or providing financial support for new housing developments designed to serve veterans, homeless families, seniors and other special populations.

- PHA is committed to promoting energy conservation and incorporating sustainable materials and practices in both new and existing housing developments and its administrative offices. In recognition of these efforts, PHA was recently awarded Full Green Organizational Accreditation by HUD and the Sustainable Performance Institute. As a member of the national Better Buildings Challenge, PHA has committed to a goal of reducing its portfolio-wide energy consumption by 20% over a ten-year period.
- Through innovative partnerships with educational, employment focused, youth-oriented, health care and other local institutions, PHA is working to improve the economic self-sufficiency and well-being of adult residents and to promote educational attainment and healthy development of PHA youth. Except for limited special grant funding, HUD does not provide funding to support effective resident service programs. PHA has utilized its MTW funding flexibility to help leverage other resources to support these critically needed objectives. Through new initiatives such as the PhillySEEDS non-profit, PHA is working to provide scholarships to PHA youth and other needed services to residents.
- The demand for affordable housing in the City is vastly greater than the supply. PHA currently has over 88,000 low-income households on its waiting lists, a figure that is artificially low due to the closing of the HCV wait list. While a limited number of families have priority on the waitlist due to being homeless, most families must expect to wait ten years or more for public housing assistance, with the wait time for seniors being three years or more. PHA is urgently working to address local housing needs through its housing development and preservation initiatives, as well as through ongoing efforts to maximize utilization of existing public housing and rental assistance resources.

Additional information on PHA programs and services can be obtained from PHA's website at www.pha.phila.gov.

Updated Mission Statement

PHA solicited input regarding its mission, vision and values as part of the Strategic Directions planning process. Based on the input received and a series of follow up discussions, the agency mission statement has been updated as follows:

The Philadelphia Housing Authority's mission is to open doors to affordable housing, economic opportunity and safe, sustainable communities to benefit Philadelphia residents with low incomes.

Proposed Strategic Priorities

Over the five-year period of the Strategic Directions Plan, PHA will focus on twelve (12) strategic priority areas. Taken together, these priorities provide the framework for PHA's major initiatives and resource allocation decisions over the period from 2015 through 2019:

- 1. Preserve and expand the supply of affordable housing available to Philadelphia's residents with low-incomes*
- 2. Achieve excellence in the provision of management and maintenance services to PHA residents*
- 3. Create safe communities in collaboration with neighborhood residents and law enforcement agencies*
- 4. Enhance resident well-being and independence through partnerships for employment, job training, education, health and other evidence-based supportive services*
- 5. Improve access to quality housing choices and opportunity neighborhoods through the Housing Choice Voucher program*
- 6. Incorporate energy conservation measures and sustainable practices throughout PHA operations*
- 7. Improve customer service, streamline operations and create a business model that is data-driven and high performing*
- 8. Conduct PHA business in an open and transparent manner that promotes accountability and access, ensures diversity and adheres to the highest ethical standards*
- 9. Strengthen existing relationships and forge new public, private and philanthropic partnerships to support PHA's strategic goals*
- 10. Make PHA an employer of choice with an accountable, diverse, trained and productive workforce*
- 11. Ensure that PHA is a good neighbor and reliable community partner*
- 12. Encourage innovation and promote PHA's financial health through ongoing participation in the Moving To Work Program*

For each of the strategic priority areas, PHA has identified five-year measures of success and a series of strategic initiatives and/or projects to be accomplished by 2019, as described below. A detailed annual work plan will be used internally to help organize work activities and ensure accountability.

It is important to note that many of the strategic initiatives and projects listed below depend on the availability of sufficient funding and/or other external factors in order to be fully realized. These factors are not entirely within PHA's control and may impact the agency's ability to fulfill its plans. Further, as conditions change and new opportunities and challenges arise in the future, PHA fully expects that the Strategic Directions Plan will evolve. Thus, while PHA is committed to implementation of the Plan, and will use best efforts to accomplish it in its entirety, it can reasonably be expected to change over time.

Strategic Priority #1: *Preserve and expand the supply of affordable housing available to Philadelphia's residents with low incomes*

This strategic priority encompasses PHA's goal to both increase the overall supply of affordable housing and to preserve and maintain its existing portfolio to the greatest extent feasible. PHA will continue its own development efforts and also work with public and private partners to significantly increase the leverage of PHA's limited resources. The focus of new development is to provide quality housing that supports neighborhood revitalization for high priority populations including veterans, people with disabilities, seniors, and homeless families.

PHA's "6 in 5" program, which has established the ambitious goal of developing or preserving 6,000 units over five years, is a key component of PHA's efforts under this strategic priority. There is an existing pipeline of planned projects scheduled for completion over the next several years including comprehensive revitalization plans for Norris Homes and Blumberg Apartments under the Choice Neighborhoods program, the development of new replacement housing at Queen Lane and construction of several new developments in collaboration with well-qualified local partners.

In addressing the needs of PHA's existing portfolio, PHA will work to secure capital grants and other funding to redevelop or replace developments which are functionally obsolete. PHA will utilize comprehensive physical needs assessments and other studies to identify priority capital improvement projects for inclusion in PHA's Capital Plan. As part of a strategy to ensure the long term financial viability and preservation of the existing portfolio, PHA has submitted an application for conversion of approximately 3000 public housing units to project-based assistance through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Subject to Congressional action and HUD approval, PHA intends to proceed with the RAD conversion effort over the five-year period of this Plan.

PHA will continue efforts to reposition the large scattered site portfolio and will implement a new Section 32 homeownership initiative.

Five Year Success Measures

- Preserve or develop 6,000 units of affordable housing
- Implement Transformation Plan for Norris Homes and North Central Neighborhood
- Implement Transformation Plan for Blumberg Apartments and the Blumberg/Sharswood Neighborhood
- Complete Queen Lane redevelopment
- Provide housing for at least 500 homeless families and individuals each year

Priority #1 Strategic Initiatives

- 1.1 Fully implement the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan for Norris Homes and the North Central Philadelphia neighborhood in partnership with the City and key stakeholders
- 1.2 Develop and implement a Transformation Plan for the Blumberg/Sharswood neighborhood in partnership with the City and key stakeholders
- 1.3 Complete the development of new replacement family housing at Queen Lane
- 1.4 Complete the development of new family housing at Strawberry Mansion/Oakdale, Markoe Street and Queens Row
- 1.5 Expand affordable housing options by providing capital funding and/or operating assistance for qualified non-profit and other development partners through PHA's "6 in 5" initiative including New Courtland Senior Apartments at Allegheny, Impact Veterans Services Family Housing, Project Home's Permanent Supportive Housing at 810 Arch Street, Liberty Resources Housing at Marine Club and others
- 1.6 Promote long-term preservation of existing public housing units through conversion to project-based assistance under the Rental Assistance Demonstration program
- 1.7 Implement scattered site asset repositioning plan to identify productive alternatives for vacant and/or demolished scattered site units
- 1.8 Evaluate capital needs, spending priorities and repair/replacement costs for all PHA sites through comprehensive Physical Needs Assessment
- 1.9 Aggressively pursue funding opportunities to address replacement of other obsolete public housing units
- 1.10 Continue collaboration with the City and local agencies to provide 500 housing opportunities annually to reduce and help prevent homelessness
- 1.11 Enhance operations of PHA's controlled entities to support community revitalization initiatives.
- 1.12 Expand first time homeownership opportunities through a new Section 32 initiative and ongoing HCV homeowner assistance
- 1.13 Implement strategies to preserve long-term affordability and, as appropriate, recapitalize LP and AME developments that are nearing the end of the LIHTC 15 Year Compliance period

Strategic Priority #2: *Achieve excellence in the provision of management and maintenance services to PHA residents*

This strategic priority focuses on the activities and initiatives that PHA undertakes to manage and maintain the existing owned portfolio of approximately 14,400 housing units at sixty-nine (69) housing developments and in scattered site locations throughout the City. PHA Operations staff provides these services for the conventional public housing developments and scattered site locations, while staff from PHA's PAPMC entity supports twenty-three (23) Low Income Housing Tax Credit sites. Private management entities manage and maintain eleven (11) developments under contract with PHA.

PHA's goal is to provide excellent management and maintenance services to all residents, an increasingly challenging task in light of ongoing reductions in federal operating funds and the age and physical conditions of many PHA housing developments. As part of the Strategic Directions initiative, PHA will re-focus and strengthen ongoing site-level comprehensive preventive maintenance activities, achieve continuous improvement in physical conditions as measured by inspection results, and work to improve efficiency and customer service provided through the service order intake and processing system.

PHA will work to achieve industry-recognized high performance levels on key performance indicators such as rent collections, recertifications and occupancy. Initiatives to ensure that all residents are housed in appropriately sized units will be implemented, and rent policies will be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure that PHA continues to house those residents of Philadelphia with the greatest need based on household income.

Working with resident leadership, PHA will develop and implement new resident orientation programs designed to help ensure that new residents succeed in meeting their lease obligations. To control costs and improve accountability, PHA will continue to consolidate and streamline operations consistent with generally accepted industry asset management principles.

Five Year Success Measures

- Meet or exceed service order completion benchmarks for 98% or greater of all service orders, i.e. 24 hours for emergencies and 30 days for routine service orders
- Achieve 98% or greater performance in rent collections, recertifications and occupancy
- All new residents successfully complete resident orientation program
- All housing units and developments meet or exceed Uniform Physical Conditions Standards

Priority #2 Strategic Initiatives

- 2.1 Complete implementation of asset management consolidation to strengthen accountability and oversight at property level
- 2.2 Achieve continuous improvement in average HUD Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) scores.
- 2.3 Review, update and implement site-level, comprehensive preventive maintenance plans
- 2.4 Achieve high performer benchmarks for rent collections, on-time service order completion, unit inspections, vacancy turnaround and recertifications.
- 2.5 Evaluate and update service order processes to improve customer service
- 2.6 Implement new resident orientation and housekeeping training program in collaboration with resident leadership
- 2.7 Improve compliance with public housing unit size occupancy standards
- 2.8 Conduct an analysis of current PHA resident incomes and propose options and alternatives as appropriate related to continued occupancy of higher income households

Strategic Priority #3: *Create safe communities in collaboration with neighborhood residents and law enforcement agencies*

This strategic priority focuses on PHA’s efforts to ensure that residents live in safe communities. PHA’s goal is to reduce crime rates at its public housing developments so that they are lower than the average Part I and II crime rates for their respective neighborhoods. PHA will continue to implement a series of activities designed to maximize the positive public safety impact of PHA’s limited funding through close collaboration with residents and local law enforcement agencies. PHA recognizes that law enforcement efforts alone cannot guarantee community safety, and that neighborhood residents need to be involved in public safety planning and implementation efforts in a meaningful way.

PHA does not receive any targeted grant funding for public safety initiatives. Funding to support PHA Police Department personnel and private security guard contractors comes from the same limited pool of dollars available to fund overall property management and maintenance operations. Similarly, capital improvements related to security, such as fencing, security cameras, etc., must compete with other needed physical improvements for PHA’s limited capital dollars.

PHA plans to continue to implement its policing efforts using a community policing model that ensures regular police presence and interaction with residents at targeted sites. In light of the substantial investments made in security cameras, PHA will continue to evaluate their effectiveness in preventing or reducing crime and, as needed, make adjustments to the current strategy.

Other ongoing initiatives under this strategic priority include collaborative efforts with PHA resident leadership and active engagement in the City’s Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan.

Five Year Success Measures

- Achieve Part I and Part II crime rates at each PHA development that are lower than their respective neighborhood crime rates

Priority #3 Strategic Initiatives

- 3.1 Work with residents and law enforcement to improve/increase the rate of reported crimes
- 3.2 Continue to incorporate community policing practices into the operations of the PHA Police Department
- 3.3 Implement regular planning meetings and communication/coordination protocols among PHA Police, City of Philadelphia Police and other law enforcement agencies
- 3.4 Engage law enforcement, management and residents in annual review of public safety needs and priorities at site level

- 3.5 Evaluate effectiveness of existing security camera monitoring systems and implement enhancements as needed
- 3.6 Support formation and ongoing engagement of the PHA SAFE Task Force
- 3.7 Collaborate with the City and a consortium of community agencies on the Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan
- 3.8 Strengthen training and oversight of security guard contractors

Strategic Priority #4: Enhance resident well-being and economic self-sufficiency through partnerships for employment, job training, education, health and other evidence-based supportive services

This strategic priority reflects PHA’s commitment to eliminating barriers to employment, encouraging economic self-sufficiency, promoting healthy lifestyles, and assisting all PHA residents to achieve their full potential. This is an enormous challenge: more than 95% of resident households earn less than 50% of Area Median Income; 35% of households are headed by low-income seniors; and, 48% are headed by persons with disabilities. More than 15,500 children reside in PHA developments. Recognizing the scope of resident needs and the complexity of intergenerational poverty, PHA will enhance its efforts to create and foster partnerships with agencies and institutions that have resources and expertise that can leverage PHA’s limited funding.

A major focus under this strategic priority will continue to involve linking work-able residents to training that leads to good paying jobs with benefits through initiatives such as the Pre-Apprenticeship program, the Philadelphia Works partnership, Community Partner programs and the Section 3 Resident Job Bank. Related initiatives to improve adult literacy and educational attainment will be expanded in partnership with local universities and colleges.

PHA’s efforts will also include after school programming and expansion of scholarship programs through the PhillySEEDS initiative.

Recognizing the unique needs of its large population of seniors and people with disabilities, PHA will continue the Nursing Home Transition program in partnership with the City and State, and work to identify adequate funding and support for Adult Day Care and other support services.

As part of PHA’s commitment to resident health, the entire housing portfolio will be designated as Smoke Free beginning in 2015.

Five Year Success Measures

- 75 residents complete job training programs annually
- 45 residents are provided with job placement assistance annually
- 25 residents complete GED or adult education courses annually
- 50 residents are provided with scholarships through Philly Seeds annually
- All PHA housing is Smoke Free

Priority #4 Strategic Initiatives

- 4.1 Connect residents to training and good paying jobs with benefits through the Pre-Apprenticeship Program, the partnership with Philadelphia Works, Community Partner programs, Section 3 Resident Job Bank and other employment and training initiatives

- 4.2 Expand adult literacy, educational and youth after school program services in collaboration with partners including Cheyney University, Drexel University, Temple University and the Community College of Philadelphia
- 4.3 Secure additional funds to award scholarships to PHA youth through PhillySEEDS
- 4.4 Evaluate options to expand services for seniors to promote independent living including options for continued operation of PHA's Adult Day Care program
- 4.5 Work with resident leadership, Philadelphia Health Department and others to implement a PHA housing smoke-free policy

Strategic Priority #5: *Improve access to quality housing choices and opportunity neighborhoods through the Housing Choice Voucher program*

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is PHA’s largest single housing program, providing rental vouchers and first time homebuyer assistance to over 17,000 households with low-incomes. PHA provides rental assistance through tenant-based vouchers and project-based contracts. There are currently over 1,900 housing units in project-based developments, many of which house formerly homeless, disabled and other special needs households.

This strategic priority incorporates ongoing and planned initiatives designed to maximize utilization of PHA’s limited HCV resources, streamline services to owners and participants and encourage voucher holders to live in areas with employment, educational and other opportunities. (Related HCV initiatives are also included as part of Strategic Priority 7). Major objectives include achieving and maintaining high performance on key benchmarks such as utilization, inspections and recertifications.

PHA will continue to implement the pilot HCV Mobility program in partnership with HUD, regional Housing Authorities and other stakeholders. The program provides extensive education and supports to voucher holders, helping them to locate and secure housing in neighborhoods that offer higher opportunities for family members.

A goal of increasing the number of vouchers available for veterans and their families through the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program has been established, building on PHA’s successful efforts to date.

Five Year Success Measures

- Achieve 100% utilization of MTW leasing target
- Achieve 98% or greater performance in recertifications, HQS inspections, HQS enforcement
- Increase VASH vouchers by 20% or greater
- Increase number of voucher holders leasing units in high opportunity neighborhoods by 25%

Priority # 5 Strategic Initiatives

- 5.1 Increase number of vouchers based on MTW funding availability
- 5.2 Achieve high performer benchmarks for inspections, recertifications, rent calculation and HQS enforcement
- 5.3 Assist voucher holders to identify housing and jobs in areas that provide greater economic, educational and social mobility opportunities through implementation of the pilot HCV Mobility Program

- 5.4 Expand the number of veterans and their families who are assisted under the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program
- 5.5 Improve services to property owners through enhanced landlord advisory committee and other program changes
- 5.6 Target HCV project/unit-based assistance to support Permanent Supportive Housing, services-enriched housing and other developments that combine housing and services for special populations

Strategic Priority #6: Incorporate energy conservation measures and sustainable practices throughout PHA operations

Conserving energy and implementing sustainable materials and practices throughout PHA is the focus of this strategic priority. PHA expends approximately 29% of its public housing operating budget on utilities, making it the single largest expense category outside of personnel costs. Thus, PHA's Strategic Directions initiatives in this area over the next five years have significant potential to help control or reduce PHA's operating costs while enhancing the quality of life for all.

PHA will continue and expand its commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability over the next five years, building on a substantial record of performance to date as evidenced by its full Green Organizational Accreditation status. The accreditation designation was awarded to PHA by the Sustainability Performance Institute and HUD as part of HUD's Affordable Green Initiative. It reflects PHA's commitment to implementing green building and operational practices, tracking and measuring energy performance over time and achieving substantial cost savings.

In addition to accreditation, PHA has committed to reducing portfolio-wide energy consumption by 20% by the year 2020 as part of the Better Buildings Challenge. To support this effort, PHA has developed a Green Action Plan and Green Operations Maintenance Manual, both of which will be fully implemented as part of the Strategic Directions Plan.

Five Year Success Measures

- Achieve 20% reduction in energy consumption portfolio-wide (by the year 2020)
- Energy conservation and sustainability initiatives implemented system-wide per the Green Action Plan
- Sustain accreditation status as full Green Organization

Priority #6 Strategic Initiatives

- 6.1 Achieve 20% portfolio-wide reduction in energy consumption by 2020 through implementation of Better Buildings Challenge initiative
- 6.2 Implement policy initiatives as per approved Green Action Plan and Green Operations and Maintenance Manual
- 6.3 Maintain PHA's Full Green Organizational Accreditation status

Strategic Priority #7: *Improve customer service, streamline operations and create a business model that is data-driven and high performing*

Under this strategic priority area, PHA will utilize technology, training and data-driven analysis to improve customer service and create a more efficient, streamlined organization. PHA recognizes that dealing with a large organization can be a complex and sometimes frustrating experience for residents, vendors and the general public. The agency is committed to improving this experience by, among other initiatives, improving its telephone systems, streamlining the call center and enhancing the website to increase self-service options.

An analysis of the call center is planned, to be followed by restructuring efforts designed to ensure that all calls are routed efficiently and responded to by qualified subject matter experts. It is anticipated that a dedicated call center for HCV participants and property owners will be created through this initiative.

PHA plans to assess several areas of its operations including warehouse and inventory systems, property management delivery and other functions to identify potential efficiencies and cost-savings measures.

Management reports and software applications will also be enhanced to support asset management and other initiatives and to ensure that PHA management have accurate and timely data available to monitor performance and inform the decision-making process.

Five Year Success Measures

- Improve call processing time and accuracy
- Increase utilization of self-service options through website and interactive voice response systems

Priority #7 Strategic Initiatives

- 7.1 Improve tracking of and responsiveness to calls by residents and the general public through evaluation and updating of PHA’s telecommunications systems including restructuring call center operations
- 7.2 Enhance website tools available to residents, HCV participants and property owners, PHA vendors, partners and others to streamline and expand access to relevant information and services
- 7.3 Reduce cost of operations where feasible based on cost/benefit analyses of alternative warehouse and cross-dock methods, property management and other systems

- 7.4 Upgrade management reporting tools as needed to ensure appropriate tracking and oversight of PHA finances and departmental activities
- 7.5 Upgrade PHA applications to support evolving technologies and user requirements

Strategic Priority #8: Conduct PHA business in an open and transparent manner that promotes accountability and access, ensures diversity and adheres to the highest ethical standards

This strategic priority reflects PHA’s values as a public organization and a commitment to openness and accountability in all agency matters. In addition to contracting for annual financial audits performed by independent experts, PHA will continue to implement a comprehensive internal audit, compliance and quality control program designed to improve operations, ensure regulatory and PHA policy compliance, and eliminate fraud, waste and abuse.

Ensuring open and equal access to PHA housing, services, employment and contracting opportunities by all groups regardless of language, race, ethnicity, gender or disability status continues to be an agency priority. With respect to employment and contracting, PHA will continue to monitor and achieve its Section 3 goals and its goals for participation by Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises. Full implementation and periodic updating of the Language Access Plan and other policy initiatives will occur throughout the Plan period.

Five Year Success Measures

- Implement annual audit and compliance plan and proactively address all findings
- Achieve 20% MBE, 10% WBE and Section 3 contracting goals

Priority #8 Strategic Initiatives

- 8.1 Implement comprehensive compliance and internal control program with required follow up corrective strategies to address deficiencies
- 8.2 Implement MBE/WBE and Section 3 contracting and compliance activities
- 8.3 Facilitate access to all PHA programs and services through full implementation of approved Language Access Plan, Reasonable Accommodations, Violence Against Women Act and other relevant policies
- 8.4 Review current waiting list policies and update as needed to promote broad dissemination of information to all racial and ethnic groups within the City
- 8.5 Partner with disability advocacy organizations to identify and implement methods to reduce barriers to full utilization of PHA programs and services
- 8.6 Ensure annual independent audit of PHA and subsidiary finances with Board review and oversight

Strategic Priority #9: *Strengthen existing relationships and forge new public, private and philanthropic partnerships to support PHA’s strategic goals*

To support full accomplishment of the Strategic Directions Plan, it is essential that PHA create new partnerships and sustain and grow existing relationships. This strategic priority focuses on the need to identify and secure partners and resources to address the “hard” costs associated with developing new housing and preserving the existing housing portfolio and the “soft” costs associated with supporting resident employment, education, health care, youth development and other supportive service needs.

Five Year Success Measures

- Leverage \$500,000 in new resources annually to support PHA’s strategic priorities

Priority #9 Strategic Initiatives

- 9.1 Develop and implement fundraising strategy to support expansion of resident programs and address other identified strategic objectives
- 9.2 Continue and strengthen collaboration with City agencies, non-profits, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders on neighborhood revitalization, public safety and other initiatives

Strategic Priority #10: *Make PHA an employer of choice with an accountable, diverse, trained and productive workforce*

PHA employs more than 1,300 employees throughout its operations. Ensuring that every employee has the necessary training, tools and other resources to do their jobs properly is the focus of this strategic priority. On an annual basis, PHA will establish and implement a training plan to build employee skills and capacity, and will conduct thorough performance evaluations designed to provide employees with meaningful feedback on their job performance.

PHA will also implement periodic employee surveys and other initiatives to encourage candid feedback on agency policies, procedures and working conditions. Ongoing efforts to recognize and reward exemplary performance among employees will be expanded.

A major initiative under the Strategic Directions Plan involves establishing agency-wide customer service standards and metrics, providing customer service training to employees and upgrading their customer service skills. The use of periodic surveys will be expanded to measure the satisfaction of PHA residents and others who utilize or provide services to PHA.

Five Year Success Measures

- Implement annual performance evaluations and follow up actions as needed for all employees
- Implement employee training per annual training plan
- Achieve 15% increase in customer satisfaction over 2015 baseline

Priority #10 Strategic Initiatives

- 10.1 Assess staff skill levels and training needs, and implement annual staff training plan
- 10.2 Develop and implement agency-wide customer service metrics and ongoing employee training initiative
- 10.3 Implement periodic employee surveys to identify employee concerns and conduct necessary follow up actions
- 10.4 Expand employee recognition initiatives
- 10.5 Complete annual employee performance evaluations and required follow up actions

Strategic Priority #11: *Ensure that PHA is a good neighbor and reliable community partner*

PHA is committed to being a good neighbor and reliable partner to the community at large and to neighborhood residents in and around PHA's current and planned housing developments. Toward this end, PHA plans to expand opportunities to solicit feedback, listen to and have constructive dialogues with diverse members of the community. As noted earlier, PHA plans to expand use of feedback surveys from residents, HCV participants and owners, employees, vendors and others to support these efforts.

PHA will also work to engage residents and neighborhood groups at the early stages of planned development initiatives so as to improve the information flow, share ideas and provide greater opportunity for input before plans are solidified.

Being a good neighbor is an ongoing priority for PHA that will be supported by a new rebranding initiative in 2015.

Five Year Success Measures

- Neighborhood meetings conducted at pre-development stage
- Achieve 15% increase in respondents who believe PHA is a good neighbor over 2015 baseline

Priority #11 Strategic Initiatives

11.1 Implement PHA rebranding initiative

11.2 Actively solicit feedback on PHA performance from residents, vendors, partners, HCV property owners and others through surveys, informational sessions and other means

11.3 Engage neighborhood organizations and other stakeholders as early as possible in the revitalization process to provide meaningful opportunities for community input into PHA development plans

Strategic Priority #12: Encourage innovation and promote PHA's financial health through ongoing participation in the Moving to Work Program

Participation in the Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program provides PHA with a set of tools and resources that are essential to addressing the needs of PHA's housing portfolio and residents. The regulatory and funding flexibility afforded by MTW has helped shape virtually all aspects of PHA's housing policies. It has been the single most important factor in PHA's ability to implement comprehensive redevelopment activities at distressed public housing developments, to help transform Philadelphia's neighborhoods and to provide employment training and other supportive services to residents.

PHA's current MTW Agreement is scheduled to expire in 2018. Without a long-term extension of the current Agreement, many of the plans and strategies described in the Strategic Directions Plan – including the development and preservation initiatives detailed in Strategic Priority #1 - will be in jeopardy.

Five Year Success Measures

- MTW Agreement extended beyond 2018

Priority #12 Strategic Initiatives

- 12.1 Continue to explore strategies to utilize MTW flexibility to support PHA's strategic goals while addressing one or more of the MTW Program's statutory objectives
- 12.2 Promote awareness locally and nationally of the benefits and outcomes attributable to the MTW program and of the importance of extending the program beyond 2018
- 12.3 Work with HUD and elected officials to secure a long-term extension of the MTW Agreement on substantially similar terms to the current Agreement