



2010 County Housing Plan: County Boards and Housing Corporations Analysis and Summary September 2010

Prepared by Disability Housing Network

PART ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2010 Housing Plan, the first effort to assess County Boards and Housing Corporations' process for housing planning, was completed in 27 counties between October 2009 and August 2010. The Model County Housing Plan was distributed to Housing Corporations and County Boards in August 2009 with the request that the plans be completed by January 31, 2010.

Disability Housing Network received completed Housing Plans from 27 County Boards by August 2010. The deadline to complete the plans was extended several times after an initial poor response. While the response rate was lower than expected, the analysis does provide insights that may prove useful to state officials and DHN staff, at least in regards to the structure of the 2011 Housing Plan.

CONTEXT

The purpose of the Model Housing Plan is to provide a framework by which County Board staff and Housing Corporation staff can discuss current specialized housing operations, needs and options for future housing. It is intended to also aid the development of future operational plans and budgets.

DHN developed this tool in collaboration with the Department of Developmental Disabilities and DHN members, representing both housing corporations and County Boards.

ANALYSIS

Based on the 27 plans submitted, DHN has developed a series of conclusions listed below. The conclusions are limited, in part, because the response rate was low, and because the responses to the open-ended questions were varied. The questions in this initial housing plan were deliberately open-ended because the extent to which counties engaged in planning was unknown and we did not want to limit the respondents' ability to detail their work.

Likewise, some of the findings below were not anticipated. Because there were many options on how to interpret the questions, some findings resulted from a quantitative analysis of the data.

INITIAL CONCLUSIONS

- **Priorities for development** – The housing plans submitted identified two priority development areas:
 - Smaller units, either two-person condos, single-unit apartments, or single-story accessible duplexes.
 - Units that can accommodate multiple needs, such as aging individuals, multiple-diagnosed individuals, residents aging out of the children service system, or leaving the criminal justice system.
- **Priorities for repair** – Housing plans identified typical repair and maintenance priorities, such as flooring, roofs, windows, and HVAC systems. These four items were identified as priorities for both the current and future years.
- **Energy efficiency priorities** – Energy efficiency and other capital improvements were ranked as relatively high priorities for counties. For example, the rationale (when given) for new windows (55 projects for current and 32 projects in future years) and appliances (6 in current and 16 in the future) was most often for energy efficiency purposes. “Energy conservation projects” and “insulation” were mentioned as separate projects a few times as well.
- **Smaller counties look shorter term** – It appeared from the plans submitted that smaller counties were less likely to plan for longer-term repair or development priorities. While this might have been a function of the time spent on the reports, or the staff available to work on the reports, it appears that larger counties planned for longer-term priorities.
- **Cash subsidies by County Boards** – There are significant differences among the county subsidies provided to housing corporations. For example, multiple County Boards give no rent or subsidy support, while some are comparatively generous, such as one County Board that subsidizes a housing corporation with almost \$1400 per month per property.
- **Other subsidies by County Boards** – There are also significant non-cash subsidies from County Boards in support of housing corporations’ operations. For example, many County Boards provide in-kind

administrative or maintenance staff, or in-kind office space. Unfortunately, there was not enough consistent reporting on this topic from the respondents to allow any substantive analysis.

Additionally, there is not enough data to determine any relationship (inverse or otherwise) between cash and other subsidies by County Boards.

- **Tenant satisfaction** – While almost all counties reported that they have a process to gauge tenant satisfaction, many reported that they primarily rely upon SSA or other staff inspections/walk-throughs to get input from the tenants. Only a few housing corporations have a formal feedback process (ie. survey) directly from the tenants or family members/guardians.
- **Value of local conversations** – In addition to the future policy implications of aggregated data, multiple County Housing plans referred to the value of the conversations among their peers and partners locally. For example, one County Board had a collaborative conversation with the multiple housing corporation partners, service providers, and staff. Other housing plans identified the usefulness of the data, that the data will help them plan more regularly throughout the year, and that the collection of the data will be much easier in the future.

As stated above, other conclusions were difficult to make based on the low count of responses from County Boards, such as the rent charged by housing corporations, and IIF data. This data needs to be standardized for future analysis. (See “Next Steps” below.)

NEXT STEPS

Besides the policy implications of some of the data included in this report, there are additional next steps that DHN is recommending for the future implementation of this research and analysis process.

1. DHN will ensure that the next County Board Housing Plan is more quantitative with fewer open-ended questions, making it easier to complete locally and quantify analytically.
2. To help facilitate future County-level planning, DHN recommends that the Ohio Department of DD provide counties the following data:
 - IIF data aggregated statewide and county-specific. This data will not only help County Boards develop policies at the local level, but it will also provide DODD a valuable tool for further analysis.

- A county-by-county overview of all properties in which DODD has a stake, including the amount of CCA investment remaining in the property.

PART TWO: SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

1. Who completed the plan?

As mentioned in the introduction, 27 County Boards completed the Housing Plan. Their responses are included in the analysis below.

The county plans incorporated into this analysis include:

• Ashland	• Belmont
• Butler	• Champaign
• Clermont	• Coshocton
• Crawford	• Cuyahoga
• Delaware	• Franklin
• Greene	• Guernsey
• Hancock	• Hamilton
• Harrison	• Huron
• Lawrence	• Lorain
• Marion	• Mercer
• Noble	• Pike
• Richland	• Ross
• Seneca	• Shelby
• Wood	

2. Who participated in the planning process?

The participants in the planning process were:

- SSA/SSA Director = 17
- Superintendent = 16
- Housing Corporation executive director = 12
- Housing Corporation Board members = 8 (Three board presidents)
- Other Housing Corporation staff = 14 (COO, CFO, Treasurer, Development Planner, Development Manager, Maintenance Supervisor, Program Director, General Counsel)
- Other County Board staff = 20 (Residential Project Coordinator; Residential Facilities Program Supervisor; Director of Operations; Business Manager; Provider Service Coordinator; Administrative Coordinator, Quality Assurance, Team Supervisor, Contract Manager, Medicaid Services Manager)

3. What are the Housing Corporations' relationships with County Boards?

All reporting Housing Corporations (n=22) stated that they are independent nonprofit organizations. Nevertheless, at least two Housing Corporations identify themselves either being co-staffed or fully staffed by County Board.

Other characteristics they identified is that they are in contractual relationships with their Housing Corporations.

Additionally, at least one county that has contractual relationships with multiple Housing Corporations stated that they completed their planning with all housing corporations together. Another county incorporated a broad community conversation into this planning process.

4. *What are the Housing Corporations' missions?*

Of those who answered (n=22), they all mentioned safe, affordable, accessible homes for the DD population. Other populations mentioned were "mental health and other disabilities".

5. *What are the Housing Corporations' other functions?*

Three Housing Corporations stated that they provide options for adaptive equipment or home modifications. Also, two Housing Corporations stated that they manage the rent subsidies for County Boards, and another provides property management for families who own homes. Another Housing Corporation identified itself as a multi-service human service agency, and another is a public housing authority.

6. *What is the county's current IIF data?*

While all counties were asked the question the same way, not all responded similarly. Some did not provide any data at all. The information collected is not in a format that is useful to report out or present conclusions on.

7. How many properties do you manage? How many residents live in those properties?

While 22 Housing Corporations reported on the number of properties managed by their organization, this information is too limited to perform any type of analysis that would be useful to this research project. It is probably more appropriately analyzed in the context of the annual special needs housing census.

Nevertheless, the responses reflect that the Housing Corporations manage between seven and 404 properties, and have between eight and 1019 residents in their properties.

	<i>Number of homes</i>	<i>Number of residents</i>
County One	13	25
County Two	101	376
County Three	21	84
County Four	7	15
County Five	Not reported	8
County Six	7	26
County Seven	14	30
County Eight	10	22
County Nine	Not reported	14
County Ten	2	5
County Eleven	48	137
County Twelve	10	32
County Thirteen	Not reported	145
County Fourteen	404	1019
County Fifteen	10	27
County Sixteen	18	39
County Seventeen	13	25
County Eighteen	2	6
County Nineteen	7	18
County Twenty	27	Not reported
County Twenty-one	10	Not reported
County Twenty-two	404	Not reported

8. What are the eligibility criteria for residents in your Housing Corporation?

The eligibility criteria for specialized housing is consistent among the 21 respondents:

- Current county resident;
- At least 18 years old; and

- Eligible for services from County Board

A few Housing Corporations also identify a criteria related to having enough income to meet rent and living expenses.

9. Do you have any homes for sale? Why are they for sale?

Of the nine Housing Corporations reporting a response to this question, only five stated that they currently have homes for sale.

- a. One is being sold because it cannot easily be made accessible
- b. Another is being sold because of safety concerns in the neighborhood
- c. Two are being sold due to age, and
- d. One because it is too expensive to renovate and make accessible

10. How do you determine rent in your homes?

The process for determining the rent for most Housing Corporations was to charge between 30% and 40% of income. One respondent stated that they are in the process of coming up with a process that will reflect fair market value, and another stated that they follow HUD standards. A third stated that they use a formula based on square footage, mortgage payments, replacement reserve, management fees, maintenance fees, taxes and utilities.

11. What is the rent in your homes?

Housing Corporations reported that their monthly rents range from \$211 to \$464 per person. One Housing Corporation stated that the monthly costs for providing their housing is greater than the rent they receive by \$25 (\$489 compared to \$464). Another said that rent covers about 46% of the operating costs of property, with 34% from County Board, and the remainder from Section 8 or HUD 811.

Despite these responses, there is not enough data from enough housing corporations to analyze this data any further and come to any firm conclusions.

12. What costs are covered by the County Board through either direct or indirect subsidies?

Options for subsidies for Housing Corporations by County Boards vary. Some of the examples of what other costs are paid by the County Board of DD include:

- Light maintenance staff support (lawn maintenance, snow removal)
- Rent subsidies to individuals with limited income
- \$50 per month per property for maintenance
- Office space for Housing Corporation staff
- Staff support

- Paying for vacancies, ranging from \$200-\$400 per month for each vacancy
- County Board paying-off a Housing Corporations' mortgage if the rent from the tenant does not cover the expenses
- Administrative/Executive staff person on CB payroll
- Annual cash subsidy between \$10,000 and \$190,000. (The latter subsidy is a monthly subsidy based on the number of properties operated by the housing corporation.)

13. What are your Housing Corporations' repair priorities for 2010?

Below is the count of repair projects identified by 20 Housing Corporations as priority for 2010. While only 20 counties reported, there is considerable diversity of counties reporting which suggests that these numbers can be considered representative of the field statewide.

(NOTE: The count below reflects the number of projects, not the number of properties with projects. Properties can have more than one project.)

Windows	55
Floors/carpet	50
Roof	49
HVAC	40
Bathrooms	31
Siding	15
Doors	13
Walkways	13
Appliances	6
Basement (vapor barrier)	6
Kitchens	6
Stairs	4
Deck	3
Fire alarm/suppression	3
Foundation/Plumbing	3
Gutters	3
Porch	3
Energy conservation	2
Bathtub	1
Chimney	1
Electrical	1
Garage	1
Paint	1
Sump pump	1

14. What are your Housing Corporations' repair priorities for the future?

Below is the count of repair projects identified by 12 Housing Corporations as priority in the future.

(NOTE: The count below reflects the number of projects, not the number of properties with projects. Properties can have more than one project.)

Flooring	59
Roof	33
Windows	32
HVAC	30
Walk/drive/ramp	20
Appliances	16
Paint	11
Siding	8
Doors	7
Kitchens	6
Sump pump	5
Bathrooms	3
Stairs	3
Basement	2
Fire alarm	2
Garage	2
GFCI	2
Duct work	1
Foundation	1
Insulation	1
Porch	1

NOTE: In comparing the repair priorities for the short term and long term, counties were more easily able to identify needs for the near term. Smaller County Boards were less likely to address longer-term repair priorities.

15. What are your Housing Corporations' development priorities for 2010?

Below are the types of development projects and the key populations targeted as priorities for development projects in the next year.

- Two-person condo
- Single unit apartments, including possibly a four unit apartment complex of one-bedroom units

- Single-story accessible duplexes
- Homes for person with autism and need for 24-hour support
- Homes for person with multiple diagnosis
- People leaving the criminal justice system
- Aging out of Children Services
- Acute behavior issues, medically fragile
- People leaving the Developmental Centers
- Respite homes
- Individuals living with aging caregivers
- Include fire suppression systems

16. *What are your Housing Corporations' development priorities for the future?*

Below are the types of development projects and the key populations targeted as priorities for development projects in the future.

- Single-story ranch homes
- Hard-wired alarm systems
- Serving multi-diagnosis residents, potentially in more rural settings
- Purchase/construct properties to replace older properties

17. *How does your Housing Corporation gauge tenant satisfaction?*

Housing Corporations reported that they primarily rely upon SSA or their own regular (quarterly or annual) inspections to evaluate tenant satisfaction. One Housing Corporation mentioned that they have an annual meeting in the home among the tenant, family, Housing Corporation, and the SSA.

Five Housing Corporations stated that they do an annual survey of all recipients and their families.

18. *Are there any Service Provider issues that your Housing Corporation needs to address?*

The provider relationship issues (n=4) identified were:

- Matching roommates due to choice of providers: "Many individuals have relationships with providers and are not willing to switch to accommodate roommates."
- High turnover among staff
- Service provider suspension resulted in a temporary vacancy at the Housing Corporation until the service provider was reinstated.
- Provider needs to make County Board staff who do the maintenance more aware of repairs that need to be made sooner. They could do a better job keeping homes clean (cleaning spills on carpet)
- Providers should be equipped to do some minor maintenance

19. What are the future challenges facing the special needs housing industry?

Five Housing Corporations identified future challenges for the industry from their point of view:

- Vacancies resulting from other affordable housing options in the area, specifically housing subsidized by Metropolitan Housing.
- Investigate options regarding high cost individuals, including provider choice
- Provider choice needs to be structured differently in consideration of cost
- Mentioned by two Housing Corporations, ask DODD to remove remaining provisions that add unnecessary costs to projects that may limit use of CCA funds in for new construction projects (eg. architect, environmental review).
- Partnerships with PHAs should be encouraged and expanded.
- Expanded accessibility of existing properties for aging populations
- Other information that respondents identified as worthwhile to ask includes:
 1. How many CB individuals are living with aging caregivers?
 2. How many HCBS eligible individuals are living with aging caregivers?
 3. How many families of people supported by the Board are in danger of losing their homes due to foreclosure?
 4. How many individuals required extended stay and/or emergency respite in the past year? At what cost?
 5. How much was expended on extermination services during the past year?
 6. What will it take to maintain the existing provider-operated 811 Housing as a resource?
 7. What is the status of the other community 811 housing stock?

20. What are the training needs for Housing Corporations?

One Housing Corporation reported the following as a training need for the field:

- As housing options continue to expand, we are beginning to see a need for additional support, training, and expertise. There are many new housing initiatives finding success in Ohio. We need to continue finding ways of growing and meeting the housing needs of individuals with disabilities.

21. How long did it take your organizations to complete the Housing Plan?

Housing Corporations reported that completing the Housing Plan took between two hours and 24 hours. However those at the higher end stated that they anticipate completing the plan in future years would be easier to complete now that the overall structure of the plan is laid out.

22. Other data collected from the Housing Plans

- Two Housing Corporations stated that have had homes donated to them for use by people with developmental disabilities.
- Funding sources for repairs and development identified by housing corporations included:
 - HUD CHIP funding;
 - Federal stimulus dollars for energy-related projects; and
 - Energy grants through a tri-county housing program
- Rent in one county has covered about 46% of operating costs of the property over the past several years. The source of the remaining 54% has changed, however. Initially, the County Board's subsidy comprised the entire remaining 54%. However, with the successful addition of funding from Section 8 and HUD 811 grants to the housing corporation, the County subsidy is now 34%.
- Average per person rent in one county is \$310/month. The high rent is \$421 and the low is \$211. As an example in one county, on average, 71% of rent goes to mortgages and 23% on home repairs, leaving a reserve of 6%.
- In another example, a County Board subsidizes the Housing Corporation \$1398 per month per property.
- Since 1992, one local County Board has funded 79% of all new development. As the housing corporation has pursued additional funding sources, however, the source of funding in more recent years is now County Board: 45%, HUD: 38% and DODD: 17%.