

2020

**THE
VERNON
HOUSING
AUTHORITY
ANNUAL
REPORT**

21 COURT STREET
VERNON, CT 06066



VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY

21 Court Street, Vernon, CT 06066

Annual Report 2020

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Housing Authority of the Town of Vernon for Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2020. This past year has been a huge success due to the hard work and commitment by the commissioners and staff of the Housing Authority of the Town of Vernon (VHA). The CoVID19 Pandemic presented many challenges, but we are proud to say that agency remained open through the pandemic and kept its doors open to the public, residents, clients, and employees.

Throughout the previous year the VHA commissioners and staff have centered endeavors toward finishing our objective of keeping up our elevated expectations in the renting of our housing stock, increasing the number of families onto the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The execution of 54 Project Base Vouchers to our Grove Court.

The Vernon Housing Authority was successful in averaging a 99.9% occupancy rate at our properties throughout the year. Our Local Housing Choice Voucher Program continued to assist as many families as possible considering the continued underfunding of the program. The number of families assisted this year was 327 an increase of 15 additional families onto the program.

Additionally, we were able to serve 1160 families in our State of Connecticut Department of Housing Program HCV and RAP Programs. An increase of 16 new additional families. The housing programs represent what the Vernon Housing Authority continues to do for our residents, program participants and the community.

Windermere Court - VMS (Cameras)-This project was publicly bid. Bids were received on January 31, 2020. The lower bidder, Intellibeam, LLC was awarded the contract in the amount of \$89,995.00. Project commenced on November 9, 2020. The anticipated completion date is May 31, 2021.

Windermere Court - Exterior & Site Improvements-This project was publicly bid. Bids were received on June 4, 2020. The lower bidder BRD, LLC was awarded the contract in the amount of \$388,480.00. Project commenced July 13, 2020. The anticipated completion date is May 31, 2021.

6 Becker Place – Substantial Rehabilitation-The project was under design February 2019 and is being publicly bid. Bids will be received on May 13, 2021. The project will commence in or around June 2021. The anticipated completion date is in or around January 2022.

Francis J. Pitkat Congregate – Major Renovation-The \$4.181.673 million-dollar redevelopment of the Francis J. Pitkat Congregate Living Center began in May 2017. Project completion date is December 2020.

The Vernon Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and staff remain committed to providing quality affordable housing opportunities despite the challenges that lay ahead. The Vernon Housing Authority will continue to work in 2021 with a focus on preserving these vital assets.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy R. Soto

Betsy R. Soto,
Executive Director, PHM, VEM

ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY

Board of Commissioners

Ms. Karen Roy-Guglielmi, Chairperson
Mr. Glenn Tarro, Vice-Chairperson
Susan Bannon, Commissioner
Ellen Eybel, Commissioner
Ms. Judith Hany, Resident Commissioner

Housing Authority Staff

Administration

Betsy R. Soto, Executive Director
Wendy Ng, Finance Manager
Michael Patrick, Facility Manager
Michael Gentile, Housing Programs Manager
Rocky Shemanskis, Maintenance Manager

Public Housing

Robert Marco, Leasing Coordinator
Lisa Molochnick, Leasing Coordinator
Rosa Bailey, Resident Services Coordinator

Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)

Debra Hedger, HCV Housing Coordinator
Janel Rios, P/T Housing Coordinator

Francis J. Pitkat Congregate

Diane Torza, Assistant Resident Service Coordinator
Rosa Bailey, Resident Service Coordinator

State of CT DOH HCV & Rental Assistance Program

Ashley Baird, Assistant Lead Coordinator
Charlene Charette, Housing Coordinator
Janel Rios, Part Time Housing Coordinator
Linda Austin-Small, Housing Coordinator
Abby Bellock, Part Time Assistant

Maintenance

Michael Patrick, Facility Manager
Rocky Shemanskis, Maintenance Manager
Greg Gauthier, Maintenance Laborer
Nicole Nadeau, Maintenance Laborer
Cuong Truong, Maintenance Laborer

VHA MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Windermere Court VMS (Cameras)

This project was publicly bid. Bids were received on January 31, 2020. The lower bidder, Intellibeam, LLC was awarded the contract in the amount of \$89,995.00. Project commenced on November 9, 2020. The anticipated completion date is May 31, 2021. The project commenced along with the Windermere Court Exterior & Site Improvement project. Cameras were installed throughout interior and exterior of all buildings. The cameras provide security 24-7 throughout Windermere Court Property.

The VHA redeveloping the Francis J. Pitkat Congregate Living Center

The \$4.181.673 million project was 100% completed December 31, 2020. The project was publicly bid. Bids were received on December 2, 2016. The lower bidder BRD, LLC was awarded the contract in the amount of \$3,416,380.00. The redevelopment of the Francis J. Pitkat Congregate Living Center began in May 2017 and closed December 2020. The Executive Director, Betsy R. Soto worked diligently to repurpose all awarded funds to complete the awarded grant funds for the betterment of the property. This included the design and installation of new furniture and artwork throughout the entire facility. Due to the CoVID19 Pandemic the closing of this project was extended.

Windermere Court Exterior & Site Improvements

Walk through of the property has been conducted and Proposals accepted 8/14/2019. The design drawings phase begun September 2019. This project was publicly bid. Bids were received on June 4, 2020. The lower bidder BRD, LLC was awarded the contract in the amount of \$388,480.00. Project commenced July 13, 2020. The anticipated completion date is May 31, 2021. Improvements included removal of old parking lot, redesigned new parking lot adding 5 new parking spaces, removal of black tar sidewalk, new cement sidewalks, new vinyl fencing, lighting, gutters, building numbers, siding and a redesign of the property landscape.

6 Becker Place-Substantial Rehabilitation

The project was under design February 2019. Architectural and Engineering walk through pre-proposal accepted on April 12, 2020 and is being publicly bid. The project has been delayed due to approval of minor modifications approval from the State of Connecticut Historical Society.

Bids will be received on May 13, 2021. The project will commence in or around June 2021. The anticipated completion date is in or around January 2022.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Susan Bannon was appointed to finish a five-year term by the Vernon Town Council in June of 2020.

Ellen Eybel was appointed to finish a five-year term by the Vernon Town Council in June of 2020.

HOUSING ADVOCACY & ASSOCIATIONS

The Vernon Housing Authority continues to be committed to advocating for public housing. The Vernon Housing Authority Executive Director Betsy R. Soto is an active Executive Board Member for numerous of Housing Associations and Member to numerous of housing committees though the **Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing (CONN-NAHRO)**, **New England Regional Counsel of NAHRO (NERC-NAHRO)** and **National NAHRO**. Her devotion and enthusiasm for Housing has carried her to these administrative roles all through various Housing Associations. She will continue to refine her mastery in the always consistent changes housing brings. This will allow the Vernon Housing Authority to continue accommodating our families, customers, and public with the best client assistance conceivable while furnishing our occupants with safe, sanitary, and affordable housing.

2020 RESIDENT SERVICES

The Vernon Housing Authority enriches its ability to deliver a positive living environment through a commitment to resident services. March of 2020, we were all faced with the CoVID19 pandemic. The impact was felt worldwide, and the aftermath is still being felt today. Though it all, our mission continues. Staff members continued serving residents with questions, needs, and concerns. Home visits and phone calls were made to all residents. Every single staff member stepped in to assist with residents to full capacity. This past year, the VHA has assisted approximately 360 residents with different services. The list of services includes Food Pantries, Community Meals, Protective Services, Homemaking Service, Home Health Aides, Transportation Services, Public Assistance Programs, Mental Health Services, Medicare/Health Insurance, Visiting Nurses Service, and Home Bound Reading Programs. We also teamed up with the Town of Vernon Department of Social Services to sign up our residents for the rental rebate program. Over two hundred of our residents took advantage of this offer allowing them to supplement their limited budgets. In addition to services we have provided community relations through health clinics, entertainment, and community functions. Clinics & functions at all our senior and disabled housing sites included Blood Pressure Clinics, Foot Care Clinics, Summer Picnics, Holiday Parties, Ice Cream Socials, Musical Entertainment, Bingo, Pizza Parties, Dinners, and other miscellaneous game playing functions. At Court Towers we continued the operation of the Gift and Coffee Shops as a service for our residents. These can continue operation thanks to our resident volunteers including Evelyn Robbins & Michael Koval. Due to the pandemic some of the services were limited due to the companies taking precautionary measures with their employees. While the pandemic restricted activities and social gatherings per the governor's executive orders and CDC, residents continued to receive services one on one basis. Those who needed more assistance other measures were taken. Memos were sent to the residents informing them that the office remained open and staff would be available via phone, text messages, email, fax, and mail. Notices were posted outside the offices. Revised Resident Handbooks were distributed to all residents.

Resident meals at the Congregate Facility were delivered to their units and CRT meals were made available to residents on grab and go basis. Families were notified of changes. Procedures implemented were for the safety of the residents and VHA employees and their families.

Monthly newsletters were established to stay in communication with residents. Text Messaging Service implemented to allow management to send residents immediate messages via text, email, and voice message. Security enforced at the Court Towers facility. Staff assisted with groceries delivery and mail delivery.

Flowers were delivered to all residents informing them that we were thinking of them.

For the safety of our residents and employees, facial mask and gloves were delivered to all residents. All properties were sanitized 2 times daily 7 days a week from March 2020 through the end of the year and continued into 2021.

CoVID19 testing began at the Congregate Facility July 2020. Mobile Ice Cream Sundae Cart began to service residents at their doors. Congregate residents received small gifts for all holidays.

170 grab and go Thanksgiving Dinners were delivered to those home bound and or served VHA residents. An increase of 90 dinners from the previous year! Thank you notes were received from residents in appreciation of everything the Vernon Housing Authority has done to keep them safe.

***HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT
CONDUCTED BY HUD***

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT (HUD)

The VHA has maintained the status of being a High Performing Agency with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the management of the Section 8 Program. The VHA was assessed for the year ending 2020 and received 100 of 100 possible points. **HIGH PERFORMER** status.

PUBLIC HOUSING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (HUD)

U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Public and Indian Housing Real Estate Assessment Center. Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) Score Report. This system is used by HUD to score Housing Authorities. Indicators used are PHYSICAL, FINANCIAL, MANAGEMENT, CAPITAL and LATE PENALTY POINTS. VHA was scored on the HUD PHAS system for 2019 and scored 93 out of 100 points. **HIGH PERFORMER** status.

PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT)

The Housing Authority was proud to present the Town of Vernon with a PILOT payment in the amount of **\$85,658**. An increase of **\$4,360** from the previous year.

PILOT payments made to the Town of Vernon in 2017, 2018 & 2019 are listed below.

Property Designation	2019 Pilot Payment	2018 Pilot Payment	2017 Pilot Payment
Court Towers, Franklin Park West & Scattered Sites	\$45,905	45,214	\$47,283
Franklin Park East	9,189	\$10,880	\$11,847
Windermere Court	11,358	\$ 8,932	\$10,158
Francis Pitkat Congregate	19,206	<u>\$16,272</u>	<u>\$15,643</u>
Total Payment	\$85,658	\$81,298	\$84,931

The Vernon Housing Authority is consistently increasing the value of its properties by keeping up what we have created in the Town of Vernon. Hence, through offering affordable housing to our occupants and by keeping an expanded measure of cash we can give the Town of Vernon in our yearly PILOT installment.

FACILITIES

WORK ORDERS

Through December 31, 2020, the VHA maintenance staff completed 2,229 work orders for maintenance services.

UNIT TURNOVER

The VHA maintenance staff renovated 34 apartments in preparation for new and/or transferred residents.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

		<u>Project Total</u>	<u>HCV</u>	<u>State/Local</u>	<u>Business Activities</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>Total</u>
Assets	Current Assets Cash						
111	Cash-unrestricted	819,254	254,829	1,875,095	377,270	3,326,448	\$3,326,448
112	Cash-restricted-Modernization and Development	244,000				244,000	244,000
113	Other Restricted		177,439			177,439	177,439
114	Cash-Tenant Security Deposits	12,222		1,500	1,401	15,123	15,123
100	Total Cash	1,075,476	432,268	1,876,595	378,671	3,763,010	3,763,010
122	Account Receivable - HUD Other Projects	4,245				4,245	4,245
124	Account Receivable - Other government			14,000	3,507	17,507	17,507
125	Account Receivable - Misc.	140		561	69,226	69,927	69,927
126	A/R - tenants	15,920		39,066	300	55,286	55,286
126.1	Allowance for doubtful accounts - tenants	(2,636)		(4,866)		-7,502	(7,502)
120	Total Receivable, Net of Allowances of Doubtful Accts	17,669	0	48,761	73,033	139,464	139,464
142	Prepaid expenses and other assets	102,433	6,709	46,901	3,693	159,736	159,736
143	Inventories						
150	total current Assets	1,195,578	438,977	1,972,257	455,397	4,062,210	4,062,210
161	Land	364,941		11,607	65,076	441,624	441,624
162	Buildings	12,294,105		102,742	8,202,554	20,599,401	20,599,401
163	Furniture equipment and machinery - dwellings	534,566		320,866		855,432	855,432
164	Furniture equipment and machinery - administration	676,956	18,571	68,357	48,524	812,408	812,408
165	Leasehold Improvements	1,049,361				1,049,361	1,049,361
166	Accumulated depreciation	(10,679,512)	(60,578)	(3,627,177)	(45,668)	(14,412,935)	(14,412,935)
167	Construction in progress	42,683				42,683	42,683
160	Total Capital Assets, Net of Accumulated Depreciation	4,283,100	-42,007	-3,123,605	8,270,486	9,387,974	9,387,974
171	Notes, Loans, & Mortgages Receivable- Non-Current				150,726	150,726	150,726
174	Other Assets	13,492				13,492	13,492
180	Total Non-Current Assets	4,296,592	-42,007	-3,123,605	8,421,212	9,552,192	9,552,192
200	Deferred Outflow of Resources	335,629	81,356	160,265	155,771	733,021	733,021
290	Total Assets and Deferred outflow of Resources	5,827,799	478,326	-991,083	9,032,380	14,347,423	14,347,423
312	A/P <= 90 days	20,757	25,098	21,881	1,691	69,427	69,427
321	Accrued wage/payroll taxes payable	1,798	698	795	1,562	4,853	4,853
325	Accrued interest payable	32,483				32,483	32,483
333	A/P - other government	71,844		11,171		83,015	83,015
341	Tenant security deposits	12,222		1,500	1,401	15,123	15,123
342	Unearned Revenue			98,284		98,284	98,284
343	Capital Projects/ Mortgage Revenue	61,493		233,506		294,999	294,999
346	Accrued liabilities - other	41,637		21,312	943	63,892	63,892
310	Total Current Liabilities	242,234	25,796	388,449	5,597	662,076	662,076
351	L/T Debt, Net of Current- Capital Projects/Mortgage Revenue	1,346,618				1,346,618	1,346,618
353	Non-current liabilities - other					0	0
357	Accrued Pension and OPEB Liab.	664,491	157,338	331,673	274,248	1,427,750	1,427,750
350	Total Non-Current Liabilities	2,011,109	157,338	331,673	274,248	2,774,368	2,774,368
300	Total Liabilities	2,253,343	183,134	720,122	279,845	3,436,444	3,436,444
400	Deferred Inflow of Resources	81,308	13,432	42,324	29,546	166,610	166,610
508.4	Net Investment in capital assets	3,118,989	2,856	5,029,676	72,342	8,223,863	8,223,863
511.4	Restricted Net Positions		177,439			177,439	177,439
512.4	Unrestricted Net Positions	374,159	149,835	1,370,076	448,997	2,343,067	2,343,067
513	Total Equity-Net Assets/Position	3,493,148	330,130	6,399,752	521,339	10,744,369	10,744,369
600	Total Liabilities, Deferred Inflow of Resources & Equity-Net	5,827,799	526,696	7,162,198	830,730	14,347,423	14,347,423

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT

The Fiscal Year 2019 Audit Report was completed and filed as required. There were no findings. A full copy of the audited financial statements is available upon request at the VHA Office.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Congregate Housing Management and Services Plans and the Elderly Rental Plan was submitted and approved as required.

BASE RENT STRUCTURE

State Elderly Congregate – A base rent increase of \$20 per efficiency and \$20 per one-bedroom unit went into effect July 1, 2020. This increased the base rents to \$510 and \$580, respectively.

PROJECT BASED VOUCHER PROGRAM

This program is one part of the HCV program. It helps pay for rent in privately owned rental housing, but only in specific entity-owned buildings or units. That means that if you get a project-based voucher, you do not get to choose the unit you live in because the subsidy is within the property and its units. 54 Project Based Vouchers were implemented October 1, 2018 at our Grove Court Property. There are currently 39 studios and 15-one bedrooms. The studios rent amounts are \$830 and the one bedroom are \$862. Residents rent is based on 30% of their adjusted gross income.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8)

The HVC (section 8) program offer rental assistance to low income families. During 2020, the Vernon Housing Authority continue to work with increasing funding, administering new families on to the program while maintaining a high level of services for our clients. The program finished the year with 327 HCV (Section 8) participants. An increment of 15 new families on to the program.

5 YEAR & ANNUAL AGENCY PLANS

The required Agency Plan for FY 2020 has been submitted and approved by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. A copy of the plan is available for viewing at the Central Office during regular business hours.

HOUSING PROPERTY & PROGRAMS SUMMARY

FEDERAL HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Program participants utilize the voucher in the private rental market. Program participants pay 30% to 40% of their adjusted gross monthly income to pay towards the rent. A Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is made straightforwardly to the owner for the balance of the lease within specific impediments dependent on Federal guidelines. As of December 31, 2020, the spending authority rate was 90% and voucher use was at 327. An increase of 15 new families were administered on to the program and assisted with monthly rental payment.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV-SECTION 8) AND RENTAL ASSITANCE PROGRAM (RAP CERTIFICATES)

Program participants utilize the voucher or RAP certificate in the private rental market. Program participants pay 30% to 40% of their adjusted gross monthly income to pay toward the rent. A Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is made straightforwardly to the owner for the balance of the lease inside specific constraints dependent on Federal and State guidelines. In 2020 the HCV (Section 8) and Rental Assistance Program Certificate utilization usage were at 1,160. An increase of 16 new families were administered on to the program and assisted with monthly rental payment.

FEDERALLY FUNDED ELDERLY AND DISABLED DEVELOPMENT

Residents pay rents based on 30% of their adjusted gross income. All utilities except phone and cable are included in the rent at these sites. The flat or maximum rents are based on a minimum of 80% of the fair market rents as published by HUD annually. In 2020 the flat rents were \$730 for an efficiency and \$906 for a one bedroom.

Franklin Park West, 114 Franklin Park West, Built 1964 - 64 Elderly & Disabled Units

Court Towers, 21 Court Street, Built 1970 - 72 Elderly Units & Disabled Units

Franklin Park East, Franklin Street, Built 1963 - 40 Elderly Units & Disabled Units

Windermere Court, 29 Windermere Avenue, Built 1970 - 40 Elderly Units & Disabled Units

FEDERALLY FUNDED LOW-INCOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Residents pay rents based on 30% of their adjusted gross income and they pay all utilities except water at these sites. The flat or maximum rents are based on a minimum of 80% of the fair market rents as published by HUD annually. In 2020 the flat rents were \$1,118 for a two bedroom, \$1,390 for a three bedroom and \$1,593 for a four bedroom.

Scattered Sites, Seven Properties - 9 Family Units

STATE FUNDED DEVELOPMENT

Residents pay rents based on 30% of their adjusted gross income. This includes all utilities besides the telephone and cable. In 2020 the rent amounts were \$830 for an efficiency and \$862 for a one bedroom per month. 54 Project Based Voucher were implemented October 1, 2018.

Grove Court, 55 Grove Street, Built 1968 - 24 Elderly Units & Disabled Units

Grove Street Extension, 55 Grove Street, Built 1977 - 30 Elderly Units & Disabled Units

STATE FUNDED CONGREGATE FACILITY

The Congregate program incorporates a blend of rent and services in the month to month cost. The base rents in 2020 were \$510 for an efficiency and \$580 for a one room which incorporates all utilities with the exception of telephone. There is a monthly service fee of \$850 which covers the cost of the congregate program related assistance. The services include 24-hour front desk attendants, one daily meal, light housekeeping, service coordination, entertainment, and some transportation services. Residents who would be paying in excess of 30% of their adjusted monthly income are eligible to participate in the State of Connecticut's Rental Assistance and Congregate Subsidy Programs if funding is made available.

Francis J. Pitkat Congregate Center, 80 Franklin Street - 44 Frail Elderly Units

Contact & Meeting Information

For more information regarding the Housing Authority of the Town of Vernon, please feel free to contact us at:

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P.O. Box 963
Vernon, CT 06066
Phone: 860-871-0886 **Fax:** 860-870-5970
www.vernonhousing.org

The Regular Meeting of VHA Board Commissioner's is held the second Thursday of each month at 1 PM in the Conference Room located at 21 Court Street, Vernon, CT (unless otherwise posted).

