

NCSHA 2015 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

Deadline: Wednesday, June 10, 2015

Visit ncsha.org/awards to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

Instructions: Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact Matt Cunningham at mcunningham@ncsha.org or 202-624-5424.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name: _____

HFA: _____

Submission Contact: (Must be HFA Staff Member) _____ **Email:** _____

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

HFA: _____

Entry Name: _____

Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
Annual Report	Empowering New Buyers	Federal Advocacy	Financial
Creative Media	Encouraging New Production	State Advocacy	Human Resources
Promotional Materials and Newsletters	Home Improvement and Rehabilitation		Operations
			Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness	Special Achievement	Yes
Multifamily Management	Housing for Persons with Special Needs		No
Preservation and Rehabilitation			

Innovative, Strategic and Replicable

Public housing is home to more than 20,000 Minnesota families, individuals with disabilities and seniors with extremely low incomes. It is a critical component of our housing continuum and a resource we cannot afford to lose to disrepair. As with much of the public housing stock across the country, most of our public housing stock was built in the 1970's with financing from the federal government. These aging buildings are owned and operated by cities and counties, many in rural areas with very small staff and limited capacity – both human and financial – to maintain them.

To safeguard our state's important public housing stock for decades to come, we developed the Publicly Owned Housing Program (POHP) to provide financing to replace original windows, boilers, elevators and other critical infrastructure items that have fallen into disrepair. The program initially started in 2012 and after demonstrating success and awareness about both the need and effectiveness of the program, we successfully obtained \$20 million in General Obligation (GO) bond proceeds from the Governor and Minnesota Legislature to expand the program (see map attached).

This massive expansion was part of the record \$100 million of funding for affordable housing approved by the Legislature and Governor Dayton in the 2014 bonding bill and was an important step in keeping thousands of residents secure in their homes.

Innovative

The program aligns with our mission and advances our preservation efforts. We made these resources available to Public Housing Authorities across the state as a deferred 20-year loan and forgivable after the loan term to improve health, safety and energy conservation. Bonds are issued and managed by the state's Minnesota Management and Budget office (MMB), so none of the complex 'bond' work needs to be done by the PHAs, which is a significant benefit given their limited exposure to these types of real estate transactions.

Our funding partner, the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, worked with the Minnesota NAHRO Chapter to contract processing agents to help prepare and submit applications and, more importantly, help close the loans once selected. This allowed small PHA's to successfully access critical resources without having to build capacity for what is a once in a lifetime project. This model assisted 38 PHAs in completing POHP applications.

We negotiated the legalities of how debt could be structured in a HUD financed deal, which is very atypical. This negotiation was done in a way that set the precedent for all future individual PHAs to submit a template letter request to HUD; and for HUD to recognize requests as previously negotiated by us and issue a letter of acknowledgement without additional red tape.

Strategic - Helping small agencies with limited capacity meet local needs

In addition to saving critical housing stock, another incredibly important element of the POHP program is the assistance it offered small public housing agencies in rural Minnesota. Many would not have even applied without the technical assistance provided and the economies of scale we created to make it possible for them to complete the applications. The beauty of this program is that it is targeted to small public housing agencies with limited exposure to traditional financing that are unlikely to be able to compete for other funding sources because of their location, size and limited staffing. We paid special attention to the needs and limitations of this important part of our state housing continuum, and we have received overwhelmingly positive responses.

Most of the PHAs either provided services or were the center/host for services in the community but they were not familiar with completing real estate transactions. Facing unfamiliar and complex criteria would have likely barred many applicants from accessing these resources. We're proud that we were able to minimize anxiety and increase the number of applicants.

Replicable

Preserving existing housing is the most cost effective way to ensure the already housed population of disabled, elderly and special needs populations are not displaced. It is our hope that other HFAs can build on the partnership we have struck with HUD and negotiate similar agreements. We are happy to provide more detail and consultation on how we created, gained resources for and managed the program. Helping to create economies of scale would be of great benefit to PHAs across the country.

Minnesota has found great success in supporting an advocacy network called Homes for All. This group is made up of more than 150 organizations across Minnesota that work together to create a unified effort to advocate for housing resources at the capitol. We believe this is key for other states to replicate our success and we encourage our HFA partners to support and partner with similar coalitions with a unified voice to replicate efforts to expand resources.

Reaching targeted audiences and benefitting communities across Minnesota

We were able to effectively reach our PHA audience through heavy reliance on the MN NAHRO chapter and key PHAs leaders. Utilizing these channels, we marketed the program and offered free, in-person technical assistance, through both one on one and group TA sessions. We marketed the success of our larger \$100 million investment in housing and made the case that a large number of applications were an important way to articulate the scope of the problem. We also gave workshops at appropriate conferences, sent eNews, and held housing and community dialogues in each region of the state.

In 2014, **2,438** units were updated to address many of the following health and safety issues to improve energy and water conservation:

- Tightening of building envelopes – caulking, windows, doors
- window replacements
- replacement or major repair of plumbing systems
- abatement or removal of mold or asbestos
- elevator code compliance / upgrades
- improve accessibility for the disabled – doors, plumbing, cabinets
- energy efficiency upgrades to mechanical systems –boilers, HVAC, water heater controls
- significant roof repair or replacement
- upgraded fire alarm and security system to accommodate hearing/sight impaired and elderly
- waterproofing, structural repairs

With the requirement of health, safety and/or energy conservation, it heavily encouraged PHAs to address old, inefficient systems that were wasting annual operating funds. The program gave **preference to applicants who leveraged other funds** and made necessary improvements that were otherwise financially out of reach. In addition, because we wanted to extend the funds to as many developments as possible, our architects were tasked with identifying and eliminating or reducing scopes that could be done gradually, including purchasing new appliances, sidewalk and parking pavement repairs, etc.

Meeting critical needs for residents

Based on the number and dollar amount of our total requests, this program clearly helps address critical needs for our residents. We had \$20 million available, yet Minnesota Housing received requests totaling more than \$54 million, three times the available funding, for 79 developments. We were able to fund 35 developments with a total of 2,438 units. See a complete list of funding awards and a map of 2012 and 2014 locations (***Funding Awards Summary – Attachment 1***).

Profile of Minnesota's 21,000 public housing units:

- Owned and operated by 124 local housing authorities across the state
- More than 65% of the households living in public housing have incomes under **\$15,000** per year.
- Minnesota's public housing units are full and most local agencies are maintaining waiting lists.
- More than 90% of Minnesota's public housing units are more than 20 years old and more than one-half of all of these units are in excess of 35 years old.
- 12,000 public housing residents are children

Partnerships

The Publicly Owned Housing Program could not have been possible without the commitment of our partners at **HUD** (both local and national offices) who were willing to look at new and innovative ways to leverage their initial investment in public housing and keep it from falling into disrepair and being lost forever. This was a huge benefit in expediting the process.

We also relied heavily on our **Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)** who worked with their membership to quantify the need throughout the state. In addition to advocating for the resources, NAHRO also kept their membership informed about the process every step of the way and made sure organizations could access the TA. They were instrumental in procuring the money that funded the technical assistance that proved to be so valuable.

Individual PHAs – They took on this task above and beyond their normal workload by 1) pulling data to demonstrate the need 2) Advocating for the resources through the Homes for All Alliance 3) Understanding and applying for the funding 4) Doing the work to facilitate and manage the construction to make the improvements to the public housing stock.

Homes For All Alliance – Homes for All is a coalition of more than 150 organizations that works to advance shared policy initiatives that lead to housing stability for all Minnesotans. They have been extremely successful in working to create one common message and agenda for housing and their message has resonated with legislators across the state and on a bi-partisan basis.

Processing agents – These processing agents were familiar with our programs and application materials and were incredibly helpful in their support for small PHA's with every step of the application. This was invaluable and has received a tremendous amount of acknowledgment. See ***What people are saying – Attachment 2*** for quotes from applicants. Without the expert work and experience of the processing agents, many small organizations would simply not have applied for this funding.



2014 PUBLICLY OWNED HOUSING PROGRAM (POHP)

Project Name	Total Units	Organization	City	Award
Viking Towers	106	Alexandria HRA	Alexandria	\$444,000
McKay Manor	16	Dakota County CDA	Apple Valley	\$466,000
Pleasant Drive	8		Hastings	
Twin Towers	205	Austin HRA	Austin	\$1,212,000
North Star Apartments	162	Brainerd HRA	Brainerd	\$405,000
Narodni Stanovi and Casa Tranquilla	32	Itasca County HRA	Calumet and Taconite	\$196,000
Woodland Pines	19	Carlton HRA	Carlton	\$386,000
Aspen Arms	76	Cloquet HRA	Cloquet	\$633,000
Scattered Sites	20	Crosby HRA	Crosby	\$391,000
Dassel Apartments	17	Meeker County HRA	Dassel	\$205,000
Crow River Villa	30	Delano EA	Delano	\$435,000
Scattered Sites	30	Douglas County HRA	Douglas County	\$173,000
Grandview Manor	48	HRA Of Duluth	Duluth	\$456,000
Sibley Manor	39	Ely HRA	Ely	\$447,000
Hilltop Homes	34	Eveleth HRA	Eveleth	\$147,000
Whispering Pines	40	Washington County HRA	Forest Lake	\$271,000
Centennial Apartments	17	Renville County HRA	Franklin	\$130,000
Elderbush	20	Greenbush HRA	Greenbush	\$62,000
Seventh Avenue	70	Hibbing HRA	Hibbing	\$199,000
Dow Towers	76	Hopkins HRA	Hopkins	\$517,000
Park Towers	101	Hutchinson HRA	Hutchinson	\$234,000
Lincoln Apartments	61	Litchfield HRA	Litchfield	\$289,000
620 Cedar	115	Minneapolis PHA	Minneapolis	\$1,200,000
Grandview Apartments	60	Morris HRA	Morris	\$898,000
Park Manor	73	Breckenridge HRA	Ortonville	\$196,000
Fairview Manor	23	Red Lake Falls HRA	Red Lake Falls	\$245,000
Jordan Tower I	100	Red Wing HRA	Red Wing	\$923,000
John Carroll	165	South St. Paul HRA	South St. Paul	\$684,000
Nan McKay	131			
Hamilton House	110	St. Louis Park HA	St. Louis Park	\$280,000
Dunedin Terrace	88	St. Paul PHA	St. Paul	\$1,200,000
Bayview Terrace	58	Two Harbors HRA	Two Harbors	\$1,056,000
Lakeview Highrise	126	Kandiyohi County HRA	Willmar	\$2,257,000
Riverview Apartments	58	Windom HRA	Windom	\$706,000
Worthington Atrium High Rise	104	Worthington HRA	Worthington	\$392,000
Total	2,438			\$17,735,000

What people are saying – Attachment 2

"Public housing ensures low-income seniors, families, and individuals have a safe and affordable place to call home. Public housing options are critical for communities across the state and these funds will make sure public housing, from Austin to Ely is maintained today and into future,"

Randal Hemmerlin, Executive Director of the Red Wing HRA and President of the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO).

"We greatly appreciated their input in determining what information should be included in the application, the budget items required, how to assemble the pages of information and their assistance with the electronic submission."

"They provided some help early in the process that helped us prepare for completing the application. Later in the process they reviewed the narrative and the budget. It was helpful to have a second set of eyes take a look at what I had prepared."

"It was important to bounce ideas off of the TA, plus get questions answered about some of the forms like the Sources and Uses of funds form."

"It was helpful to have someone to critique application drafts and provide input."

"They were a great help in organizing information along with completing the narrative to help tell our story. They also caught the fact that there was a glitch with our use of Box.com and our application had not been uploaded correctly. That alone was worth their assistance in applying for funds."

"Final review of the application was very helpful."

"Technical Assistance staff was SO helpful. She reviewed all of my documentation and tweaked it where it needed tweaking. Don't know if I would have been able to do this without her."

"Provided feedback on the entire application and helped in getting the pieces to fit in an organized way."

"They were extremely helpful, especially for a small agency that does not have the capacity. I would hope that this would be offered in future rounds."

"The feedback and direction they provided was extremely helpful."

"Good to get feedback about how to respond to specific application questions and to provide insight on what elements of the project would be most competitive."

"Ahead of the application, things were explained in workshops that helped with the scope of the funding available. At the time of the application, they were able to tell us what some of the items meant in the application package."

"I thought the TA sessions around the state were very beneficial. It was also very helpful to use the TA just to review my narrative and provide feedback."

"Review of my application was helpful and she had knowledge of the process, informing me of some potential strengths and weaknesses in the application. She also directed me to the architect."

**Minnesota Housing
Publicly Owned Housing Program**

“The Technical Assistance was very helpful in streamlining the application process and providing clarification on issues that needed to be answered. The information and execution of documents along with providing an insight on the factors that needed to be addressed, was very helpful and supportive.”

“Staff was wonderful.....I was a bit apprehensive as other Housing Authorities all said it was a complicated process. Thanks for the help!”

“VERY, VERY wonderful to have their assistance. They were super in reviewing and helping articulate what we were trying to accomplish. They helped us spell out what efforts were already completed and how to share the value of that pre-work.”