

## **Housing Rehabilitation - Evaluation**

A 2004 assessment of LAHD's rehabilitation loan programs identified a number of needed changes, which have been undertaken. New programs linking LAHD's code enforcement arm with the lending side of the Department started implementation in August 2005, nearly six months into the 31<sup>st</sup> Program Year and later than anticipated. Thus, the rehabilitation loan goals proposed for the 31<sup>st</sup> PY were not met. It takes time for new programs to build to high volume, for the 'word of mouth' to get out, even though LAHD undertook many marketing efforts.

However, even though not many loan documents were formally signed in the year, there are currently 175 loan applications 'in the pipeline' for the various rehabilitation programs, ensuring that the 32<sup>nd</sup> Program Year will see higher production.

The Handyworker Program provides free minor home repairs to low-income senior or disabled homeowners or homeowners with disabled relatives residing with them. Needed emergency repairs that directly affect the health and safety of occupants are also provided to other homeowners if they are low-income. During the 31<sup>st</sup> Program Year, there were performance problems with three Handyworker contractors. Three contractors had problems obtaining lead certification from the State of California Department of Health Services (DHS). They have now obtained the necessary certification and resumed work; their contracts have been extended for an additional three months to meet their client goals and fully expend their contract funding. LAHD anticipates that all of the 2005/2006 Handyworker funding will be expended and the client service goal will be reached by June 30, 2006.

## **Homeownership Programs – Evaluation**

Homeownership goals proposed for the 31<sup>st</sup> Program Year were not met primarily due to the continuing escalation of for-sale home prices, which have dramatically diminished affordability and purchasing power for low and moderate-income potential homebuyers, even with LAHD's Purchase Assistance Programs. LAHD's 2004 assessment led to a number of changes in the programs, which were described in the CAPER for the 30<sup>th</sup> program year.

Changes in the 31<sup>st</sup> Program Year include the following:

- Introduction of Moderate Income Purchase Assistance for households up to 150% of area median income (AMI) (\$50,000 maximum) and Purchase Assistance with Rehabilitation (\$80,000 maximum) Loan Programs.
- An increase in the loan limit for households up to 120% of AMI in the Moderate Income Purchase Assistance Loan Program from a maximum limit of \$50,000 to \$75,000, and the Moderate Income Purchase Assistance with Rehabilitation Loan Program from a maximum limit of \$80,000 to \$105,000.
- An increase in the single-family purchase price limit for the Low Income Purchase Assistance Loan Program from \$436,525 to \$530,100; the purchase price limit for condominiums was increased to \$399,000.
- Increase in the purchase price and income limits for Mortgage Credit Certificates and Mortgage Revenue Bonds.

(3) HACLA works to support and implement reasonable accommodations for participants in its programs, and users of its facilities and housing. HACLA policy is responsive to individual needs for physical modifications, and works on broader physical modifications. Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973) staff coordinates staff training, and provides guidance and assistance to staff and customers.

To affirmatively further fair housing, a "504 hotline" is provided for individuals with disabilities to report difficulty in accessing staff or program benefits due to disability. In 2005, HACLA and disability advocates collaborated on developing a presentation to explain Section 8 department

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program rights and responsibilities for participants with disabilities. HACLA also provides a resource brochure, posts rental listings with modifications for individuals with disabilities on its website, and provides four ombudspersons to assist individuals with difficulty accessing the program. An individual may file a formal written grievance, based on disability, to be investigated by a Section 504/ADA Coordinator.

The Housing Authority recently acted to further fair housing access to its public housing by including in its 2005 Agency Plan a proposal to consolidate its previous two-level preference for working families into a single preference. Changes in application preferences must be considered through the HACLA Agency Plan process prior to implementation. The change was based on results of a study begun in 2003 on the impact of the 32 hour per week level versus the 20-hour per week level of preference for working families.

Study results indicated that each level appeared to provide advantages to a different group. Consolidating the two-level preference into a single-level preference equalized the benefit of working across the groups. The new single-level preference for families working at least 20-hours per week was implemented in January 2005. Elderly and disabled families receive the same preference as working families. HACLA also plans to develop and implement new tools to insure the housing offer process complies with policy and procedures.

HACLA's efforts in the fair housing area also focus on increasing Section 8 use and acceptance by landlords to insure the success of its Section 8 home-ownership program. These efforts include:

- Working to improve customer service so that landlords want to rent to Section 8 clients.
- Outreach to landlord associations.
- Housing search assistance to help voucher holders succeed in finding a unit or buying a home.