NEXTGENERATION NYCHA TRANSPARENCY REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

TRANSPARENCY AND NYCHA

"NYCHA is committed to transparency. The Authority will remain accountable to its many partners by publishing quarterly progress reports on each NextGeneration NYCHA goal, beginning with outcomes from the fall of 2015."
- NextGen NYCHA, May 2015, Page 107

In May 2015, when Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYCHA Chair & CEO Shola Olatoye announced *NextGeneration NYCHA* (*NextGen*), the Authority's 10-year strategic plan, it committed to increasing the transparency of its reporting on strategies, projects, progress, and outcomes to NYCHA stakeholders – residents, staff, and the broader community.

Over the last three years, the Authority has focused the bulk of its technology investment on new tools and programs that are improving not just information access but also resident engagement and customer service. This report summarizes transparency efforts under *NextGen* to date.

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF TRANSPARENCY

<u>ADMINISTRATIVE</u>

Annual Plan and Board Meetings

All NYCHA board meetings are open to the public, streamed live, and available on the NYCHA YouTube site. Video of the most recent board meeting, as well as board resolutions and minutes are posted for public review on NYCHA's website.

NYCHA is required by law to publicly report its <u>Annual Public Housing Administration Plan</u> and Significant Amendments. These executive summaries are provided in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian. Public hearings for the Annual Plan and amendments are broadcast live on NYCHA's website and featured on NYCHA's YouTube Channel.

NYCHA Information and Data

NYCHA's vast portfolio includes 325 developments and over 175,000 apartments. The <u>Property Directory</u> provides information on all buildings divided into four sections: Address, Development, Political Districts, and the Block and Lot guides. The <u>Development Data Book</u> lists developments alphabetically and includes information on the development identification numbers, current construction programs, number of apartments and rental rooms, population, number of buildings and stories, street boundaries, and political districts.

Maps and mapping applications offered on the <u>Developments</u> webpage provide location information about developments, the Section 8 program, and services available to residents.

- ☐ ***Developments of the New York City Housing Authority 2017 Map*** presents a comprehensive overview of all developments throughout the five boroughs of New York City. It is color-coded to denote developments by program type.
- ☐ Information on NYCHA buildings, developments, development management offices, hurricane zones, and boundaries for elected officials are contained in the ***Interactive Map and Address Search*** engine.
- ☐ ***Development Maps*** displays residential and non-residential structures with NYCHA building and stair hall numbers, NYC Department of Building Identification Numbers (BIN), tax block and lot numbers, and AMP (Asset Management Project) numbers, and indicates facilities located at each address.
- ☐ ***MyNYCHA Developments*** allows the public to find facts about each NYCHA development, including activities related to property maintenance, services available at specific developments, and more.
- ☐ ***Interactive Artwork Map*** identifies NYCHA's 80+ artworks dating from the 1930s to the present.
- ☐ ***Community Engagement & Partnerships (CEP) Map*** provides information about available CEP Partner services for residents.

- *Housing Opportunities Map*, located on the NYCHA Resident Self-Service Portal, provides information to Section 8 applicants and tenants about job opportunities, schools, transportation, and other services in low-poverty neighborhoods.

Also available on the NYCHA website is the NYCHA Fact Sheet, an overview of the Authority as a whole; the Resident Data Summary, which provides a real-time report of the household and population demographics in public housing; NYCHA Metrics, which reports on the agency's performance; the Demographics Report of Housing Choice Voucher Program, which summarizes general information about households who receive Section 8 assistance through the New York City Housing Authority; and Health of Older Adults in New York City Public Housing, Effects of Neighborhood Change on NYCHA Residents, and NYCHA's Economic Impact and Cost to Rehabilitate vs. Replace Public Housing.

Procurement

All bidding contracts are posted on NYCHA's procurement webpage. NYCHA also provides contract award data to the Mayor's Office of Contract Services as part of the OneNYC Plan's $16B M/WBE goal.

Resident Hiring and Human Resources

NYCHA publicly reports resident hires to the Mayor's Management Report; senior staff demographics, worker's compensation cases, job openings, and labor turnover to Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; and overall employees' headcount, including active & only female headcount – to Department of Labor.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The NYCHA Capital Projects Department currently has more than a billion dollars in ongoing contracts across the City (excluding those contracts under the Sandy Recovery and Resilience projects). These awards are posted and updated regularly on the NYCHA website.

To increase accountability, the new Capital Projects map will allow any resident or member of the public to find out information and the status of current and planned capital projects across NYCHA's portfolio.

Also newly added to the NYCHA's website, the Energy & Sustainability map provides detailed information on several programs under the NextGeneration NYCHA Sustainability Agenda, including energy performance contracts, weatherization projects, and the DEP/NYCHA Green Infrastructure Program.

The website also contains the Authority's five-year capital plan and the Interactive Sandy Transparency Map, a public online map updated monthly with information about construction projects at NYCHA's 33 Superstorm Sandy-impacted developments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

NYCHA believes that, to achieve its vision of safe, clean, and connected communities, it must effectively engage NYCHA residents and the broader NYCHA community. Community Engagement & Partnerships (CEP) has led the effort to promote active resident participation in development events and launch various initiatives to build positive living environments.

In 2016, NYCHA launched the **Community Development Department** to increase face-to-face communication with residents as the Authority moves its real estate development portfolio forward, helping residents understand what NYCHA intends to achieve and ensuring their concerns are addressed as part of the process. In less than two years, Community Development staff engaged nearly 10,000 residents at new development sites through individual meetings, community forums, and visioning sessions.

In 2017, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a new rule requiring that all Public Housing Authorities have smoke-free policies in place by July 2018. To meet this mandate, in partnership with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Authority launched **Smoke-Free NYCHA.** The program aims to create healthier homes for residents and healthier working environments for employees by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke and providing support to residents and employees who smoke and want to quit. In addition to collaborating with the Department of Health and residents, advocates, and stakeholders, CEP's Health Initiatives department is working closely with NYCHA colleagues in Law, Operations, and Communications to develop and execute an implementation plan. Key Smoke-Free NYCHA communications include Annual Plan excerpts, fact sheets, public notices, and links to relevant external resource documents on the <u>Smoke-Free NYCHA web page.</u>

Funding for **Tenant Participation Activity** (TPA) is provided by HUD to NYCHA to support specific resident engagement and self-sufficiency activities. The funds may be used at the citywide, district or local levels in collaboration with residents and NYCHA. Approved activities include skills training programs, Family Days, and procurement of office supplies for Resident Association needs. Key documents including the TPA Guide, the TPA Funding Agreement Template and TPA Spending Plan, and proposal documents are available on the <u>Tenant Participation Activity webpage.</u>

EXECUTIVE

The *NextGen* strategic plan set four ambitious goals for the Authority to accomplish in 10 years. Quarterly progress reports on each goal are published by The Chair & CEO's Office.

FINANCE

NYCHA's Five-Year Board Adopted Operating and Capital Plan, Budget Book and Budget Narrative are posted on its website. These documents offer detailed accounts of NYCHA's proposed budget and financial plan for the current year as well as the next four years.

LAW DEPARTMENT

To improve safety and quality of life for residents, NYCHA has simplified access to tenant policies and procedures, now available on its website, including <u>occupancy and succession</u> procedures, <u>permanent exclusion and applying to lift exclusions,</u> and <u>reasonable accommodation</u>.

NYCHA employs a permanent exclusion policy to promote resident safety by taking administrative action against tenants who endanger themselves or others. This policy seeks permanent exclusion of dangerous individuals living in NYCHA while allowing the head of household and the rest of the family to remain. Residents who have been excluded but believe the exclusion policy was improperly applied or can demonstrate rehabilitation can apply to have the exclusion lifted. NYCHA made several key improvements to its permanent exclusion guidelines, published online, including the publication of an <u>annual report</u> that provides statistics on the permanent exclusion program.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

NYCHA's MyNYCHA app, available in English and Spanish, allows residents to create, view and schedule work tickets; view inspection appointments; subscribe to alerts for outages; maintain contact information; and pay rent. NYCHA is continuously improving the app, adding new resident self-service options.

NYCHA residents can also now receive email notifications on work ticket creation, scheduling, closure and cancellation; major outages; and job opportunities and new resident programs.

NYCHA's Public Housing & Section 8 Self-Service Portal enables residents to apply for public housing and check the status of their applications; complete their annual re-certifications; request informal hearings; request transfers; and obtain access to NYCHA's Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability's Opportunity Connect portal.

More than 190,000 New Yorkers receive subsidized rental assistance for apartments located in private buildings through the NYCHA-administered Section 8 Leased Housing Program, the largest Section 8 program in the nation. They can use the portal to access their tenancy information and inspection status, (re)schedule inspections and make special inspection requests, and complete their annual recertification. Section 8 landlords can submit lease renewals and inspection repair certifications, apply for direct deposit payments, post vacant rental apartments, and review rent-related tenant information and service requests.

OPERATIONS

NYCHA has long had an "**Outages Dashboard**" which tracks heat, hot water, elevator, and gas outages. To provide more accurate and reliable data to the public, NYCHA recently launched and enhanced heat and hot water <u>dashboard</u> that is updated at regular intervals throughout the day, providing accurate and expanded information, including the number of apartments and residents affected by an outage and the duration of the outage.

REAL ESTATE

All planned real estate projects are approved by the NYCHA board. Board minutes are posted on the website and meetings are open to the public. Real estate projects are also included in the Annual Plan and presented to the Resident Advisory Board (RAB), prior to Section 18 submission.

Resident real estate development meetings are advertised through flyers distributed to the development. Community Development staff knocks on doors to further inform and engage residents. NYCHA staff meets with resident committees to discuss many of the Authority's projects. For NextGen Neighborhood projects, staff works with residents to create a Community Vision document that is attached to the RFP. Proposals that align with the Community Visioning documents are evaluated favorably.