

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF JOLIET MOVING TO WORK PLAN

MTW PLAN – VISION FOR THE PHA LOCAL MTW PROGRAM

The vision that the Housing Authority of Joliet has set for MTW is that “HAJ will maximize the opportunities and flexibility of MTW to achieve resident self-sufficiency potential and quality of life that includes housing choice options, rent reform measures, cost-effective approaches and community partnerships to better meet the unique needs of Joliet and Will County”.

The Housing Authority of Joliet has historically placed a strong emphasis on the three statutory objectives of the MTW Program of self-sufficiency, housing choice and cost-effectiveness. In the later narrative some of the HAJ earlier and current initiatives to address these three statutory objectives are outlined. This historical emphasis provides a strong indication that the agency will perform at very high levels with the greater flexibility provided through MTW. HAJ is extremely interested in participating in MTW to continue to be more creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial.

In the strategic goals that HAJ has established, the term “opportunity” consistently comes up as a key factor in all aspects of resident engagement and empowerment. This includes, but is not limited to, the opportunity: (1) to have a high quality of life, (2) for working families to achieve self-sufficiency, (3) to access high-quality employment in local industries (4) for working families to transition out of assisted housing, and (5) for the elderly and persons with disabilities to live independently and to age in place. HAJ believes that it needs to do more than just provide quality affordable housing but also provide for assistance to residents in achieving their life goals.

MTW will provide multiple options and approaches to further resident self-sufficiency and these are briefly highlighted below and expanded on in the later narrative. HAJ plans to add funding to

the FSS program to increase significantly the number of participants and to provide more case management services to residents. The agency will also build bridges with the Chamber, many industries, job training providers and economic development partners that will open up high quality employment opportunities for residents. More collaborative partnerships with support services providers will be formulated through Memoranda of Agreement that will provide more and better access to these services. The agency will also be proceeding with eleven FSS action plans that are outlined later.

HAI has also demonstrated very significant progress in expanding housing choice for public housing residents and housing choice voucher residents. These significant initiatives are highlighted below under Operating and Inventory Information. The agency will utilize the MTW funding flexibility regulatory waivers and landlord incentives to market and promote the HCV program to high-performing landlords in areas of the city and county that have not utilized the voucher program or have underutilized the program. The MTW designation will be an asset in continuing to be highly successful in competing for additional special purpose housing vouchers. Waivers provided through MTW will reduce administrative burdens on the staff and allow them to stay focused on desired outcomes including housing choice.

The Operating and Inventory Information section also highlights the very significant progress that HAI has made in providing housing choice for public housing residents. The agency will utilize the MTW funding flexibility to provide funding and program options that are highly attractive to investors and funding partners striving to complete mixed-income developments in all parts of the city and county. The MTW designation will be an asset in continuing to be highly successful in competing for development funds and LIHTC assistance. The MTW flexibility will also allow the staff development expertise to be marketed to other affordable housing providers as a fee for

service. This agency role will continue to expand its role as a recognized contributor and expert in expanding owned housing units throughout the region.

The best indicator of agency progress in cost-effectiveness may be indicated through the agency's rapid rise in HUD performance scores over the last five years as HAJ has transitioned from a troubled agency to a high performer. The agency believes that MTW will continue this trend of being highly cost-effective and financially healthy. The recent assumption of the Maywood Housing Authority and the recent agreements with other housing authorities to build business partnerships will continue to improve the cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency of all these agencies. The waivers afforded through MTW will reduce administrative burdens and staff hours. The new MTW-compatible software system will synchronize workflows in the office and provide greater options for off-site uploading of information. A greater emphasis on performance metrics and performance evaluation systems under MTW will greatly enhance the agency capacity to measure cost-effectiveness. The MTW fungibility process for formulating a budget will substantially improve the capacity to prioritize funding to meet local needs and opportunities.

Tina Pourroy will be the lead staff person for the MTW Program. Tina is the HCV Program Manager and has been on the HAJ staff since 1999. Under her management, the program has grown to 2396 vouchers, 550 ported vouchers and 476 project-based vouchers. HAJ is an HCV high-performer and Tina has had key roles in the nonprofit formation and new developments application preparation.

HAJ has been a major participant, funder, and data contributor to two Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice studies completed by Joliet and Will County. Four of the impediments are being addressed in a major way by HAJ as noted below. To ensure that the Spanish-speaking population and new immigrant populations can better access programs and services, HAJ is

expanding its marketing and outreach to reach these underserved residents. To increase minority homeownership rates, HAJ is partnering with multiple stakeholders to structure a lease-to-own program in its tax credit developments. To increase the supply of affordable housing for persons with disabilities, HAJ has Memoranda of Agreement with Cornerstone Services and the Disability Resource Center to provide one hundred two (102) Mainstream Non-Elderly Disabled HCVs. To improve housing choice and reduced racially concentrated family assisted housing in impacted areas, HAJ is demolishing high-density properties and relocating residents to lower density mixed income developments. HAJ is also continuing to expand its HCV units throughout Will County. In the Appendix, a county map is provided that profiles assisted housing by race and ethnicity.

HAJ has had no fair housing complaints filed in the last four years. The agency collaborates with many area agencies that provide for fair housing education, training, and litigation including the Will County Center for Community Concerns, Cornerstone Services, South Suburban Housing Center, the HOPE Fair Housing Center and the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance.

MTW PLAN – PLAN FOR FUTURE COMMUNITY / RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT:

The Housing Authority of Joliet has had an exemplary record in building community and resident engagement in its design and implementation of programs and services. While the emphasis in this proposal will be on current and future engagement in the MTW initiative, HAJ has extensively engaged both community and resident stakeholders in the earlier preparation of a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative application and in the design and its repositioning / relocation program. The agency has also engaged residents extensively through its Resident Advisory Board.

As the agency has conducted its initial planning for Moving to Work, multiple engagement processes have been implemented to provide early contributions for agency consideration. The

HAJ Board of Commissioners includes a strong representation of community leaders from many backgrounds and disciplines. A Board Retreat was conducted to design the agency vision and strategic goals to provide a sense of direction for both agency operations and MTW implementation. The MTW consultant and staff also met with approximately 15 community stakeholders from the political, economic, support services and housing sectors to solicit their early input at the macro-level of community support for affordable housing and resident services as well as at the micro-level of how MTW initiatives might be supported and assisted by the community.

The other major early contribution was in the form of Customer Satisfaction Surveys. The consultant surveyed approximately 25% of HAJ residents on fifty different rating factors relating to staff customer service, maintenance, safety / security, design of units, support services, and social interaction. These scores were compared by each AMP as well as compared to national score averages that are maintained by the consultant. The scores from this survey will be very valuable as the agency considers fungibility priorities, portfolio investments and rent reform.

All of the above engagement options included individuals or representatives of individuals who are racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and families with children. While the future engagement will also include such representation, a special effort will be made to expand participation of individuals or groups representing persons with limited English proficiency. HAJ plans to further expand its community and resident engagement as a designated MTW agency. Summarized below are some key initiatives that will be critical to the implementation of MTW: Community Stakeholder Forum – Subsequent to being designated as an MTW agency, but prior to MTW implementation, HAJ will conduct a Community Stakeholder Forum with approximately 65 community stakeholders representing all interests in the region. After an initial briefing stakeholder will be divided into small working groups to focus on implementation ideas as well as

how the community can support MTW through local resources. These recommendations will become key consideration in the implementation plans and commitment of resources.

Industry Focus Groups – Multiple industry focus groups representing interests such as landlords, fair housing advocates, support services providers and economic development agencies will be convened to contribute to the refining of issues related to the three statutory objectives of family self-sufficiency, housing choice and cost effectiveness. Their commitment to providing resources for implementation will also be solicited at these events

Family Self-Sufficiency – As discussed earlier, there are some excellent opportunities to better link family self-sufficiency residents with quality, high-paying positions in the Joliet workforce that will allow for transition out of assisted housing. Working with the Program Coordinating Committee, the Chamber, the City Economic Development Department, job service providers and major businesses / industries, a model program is very possible in Joliet and Will County.

Resident Board – While a Resident Advisory Board has been instituted at the Housing Authority of Joliet, there is a need to expand their participation and focus more on contributions to governance and agency operations.

Customer Satisfaction Monitoring – The Customer Satisfaction Surveys completed this last year are providing valuable information on how to maximize the satisfaction levels with residents. HAJ will update these surveys to determine how the agency is trending in all the performance areas.

MTW PLAN – PHA OPERATING AND INVENTORY INFORMATION

The Housing Authority of Joliet currently assists 1655 non-elderly and non-disabled households in its Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs. This exceeds the 1000 aggregate threshold established by HUD for participation in the MTW Cohort 2 expansion. HAJ has also

calculated that 91.8% of households assisted by both programs are either very-low income or extremely low income. This substantially exceeds the 75% threshold set for MTW participants. HAJ does not anticipate any major changes in the demographics of the households that it serves.

The housing stock of HAJ has undergone significant changes in recent years and there will not be any major plans for further repositioning or restructuring of the current portfolio under MTW. The agency currently provides 710 public housing rental units for low-income households, 687 rental units for elderly, near elderly and disabled individuals, and 23 family housing rental units. HAJ has demolished 396 obsolete public housing family units. The relocation of residents resulted in greater housing choice and lower density housing. The agency has successfully relocated nearly five hundred (500) households in full compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act.

HAJ also plans to rehabilitate the 177-unit high-rise building known as Adlai Stevenson Building, dispose of it to its non-profit instrumentality, and convert it to a project-based voucher LIHTC property. This will also require the relocation of all residents from the building. All residents will be relocated to a similar subsidized unit, assisted with relocation expenses, documented as to their desire to return subject to income qualification and adherence to the tenant selection plan. Residents will either be housed in a similar HAJ-owned unit or issued a housing choice voucher.

HAJ has constructed 226 rent to own replacement housing units in four developments that provide greater housing choice in mixed-income properties. Funding for these developments included LIHTC, IAHTC, Home funds, Federal Home Loan Bank, and permanent private financing loans.

HAJ has a total of 2916 vouchers, of which 874 are elderly and 387 are persons with disabilities. The agency has an extensive range of special purpose vouchers that total 666 vouchers.

HAJ has a major new housing initiative that is linked to the funding flexibility and family self-sufficiency under MTW. The agency's nonprofit, Hope Bound Development Corporation, will make available the 226 tax credit homes referenced above under a lease-to-own homeownership program. Upon completion of the 15-year compliance period, these homes will be available for purchase to qualifying low-income households with a first right of refusal extended to existing residents. Long-term homeownership financing will be provided through the Hope Bound Development Corporation, the City of Joliet and the IHDA.

HAJ has been challenged by many of the same issues that face most housing authorities in providing assisted housing. Summarized below are some of those issues and some perspectives on how HAJ has addressed those issues currently and in the future with MTW.

The "not in my backyard" syndrome does exist in the community. However, as the agency has built four new developments that are some of the best housing in those neighborhoods, the public perception tends to be less negative. MTW funding flexibility will also provide a funding option to assist with the marketing and promotion of existing developments and new developments.

Some landlord reluctance to participation in the HCV program is also present. However, as the agency has worked with highly regarded landlords and has experienced a wider geographic distribution of its vouchers, this issue may have lessened. The landlord waivers and incentives provided with MTW will be a major plus in attracting landlords to participate.

Other than the HUD performance metrics in PHAD and SEMAP, HAJ has not defined many performance metrics to measure other outcomes and outputs related to its programs and services. MTW participation would provide for many new performance metrics and evaluation processes to measure performance and compare those results with other MTW participants nationally.

HAJ has had very limited success in transitioning families out of assisted housing in six to seven years. The agency has also not been tracking the transition success through performance metrics. The MTW participation will provide for performance metrics and evaluation systems to ensure that this outcome is evaluated. MTW funding increases in the FSS program will also provide for more case management and residents participants which should increase the success rates. The prioritization of linkages with the Chamber, major industries, economic development agencies and job trainers will also provide greater opportunities for accessing high-paying employment.

Resident apprehension about changes that may occur with MTW is always a potential challenge. However, the resident / public hearings have indicated strong support for the flexibility provided by MTW to better meet local issues and opportunities. Some of this comfort level may be attributed to HAJ's strong track record in building resident trust and being innovative as noted below.

HAJ has been a recognized leader in launching regional initiatives that result in win-win business partnerships with other housing authorities. The Maywood Housing Authority is now consolidated with HAJ. The agency has provided LIHTC technical expertise to the following IL cities: Aurora, Elgin, Grundy, Macoupin, Rock Island, and the following IN cities: Kankakee and Muncie. HAJ has used the services of housing authorities to improve its performance in areas such as marketing.

HAJ has also been very creative and innovative in competing for grants and LIHTC awards. In recent years, the agency has received 374 Tenant Protection Vouchers, 37 VASH Vouchers, and 102 Mainstream Vouchers. In addition, the agency has been successful in constructing seven LIHTC developments that total 404 units.

Last year the agency utilized a consultant to complete a very comprehensive Customer Satisfaction / Service Survey that involved 25% of its residents in assessing forty different factors including

staff services, maintenance, safety and security, design of units, social interaction, and support services. The results of the survey provided an excellent evaluation of these factors and offered many new innovative approaches to increasing customer satisfaction.

MTW PLAN – PLAN FOR LOCAL MTW PROGRAM

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program will experience an increase in funding, staffing, and participants under the HAJ MTW Program. FSS will be emphasized and prioritized for those residents in the HUD-funded program but will also be expanded to provide case management services to other residents. These goals will be implemented based on an eleven-point action plan that includes redefining outcomes / expectations, bridging job opportunities and resident employment, formulating memoranda of agreement with stakeholders, providing training, new job descriptions and evaluations for all staff, and setting staff / resident performance metrics

HAJ will implement a very high-profile, highly structured bridge relationship with the Chamber, major industries, economic development agencies and job trainers to link residents with high quality employment opportunities that have been difficult to fill in the community.

The agency will set an expectation that all non-elderly and non-disabled households will establish goals and plans to transition out of assisted housing over a 6 to 8-year timeline. While this is not a firm contract stipulation, the agency will set a high priority to assist residents to achieve this goal.

HAJ will establish a one-stop center that will be a focal point resources facility to provide training and life skills preparedness space, resources and interagency collaboration.

Building on the agency's strong record of accomplishments in furthering housing choice, HAJ will utilize MTW flexibility to continue its initiatives in modernizing its remaining public housing

stock as it also continues its relocation of families into voucher or new developments that will be provided at many varied locations that offer housing choice and mixed-income housing.

The lease-to-own homeownership program will offer many new opportunities for residents to pursue homeownership. The locations of the properties offered under this program are the four tax credit developments that offer many housing choice options to residents. The emphasis found in all three of the MTW statutory objectives will ensure that this initiative has a high visibility and high priority. MTW flexible funding will also be a key consideration in gap financing.

The HAJ strong presence as a regional expert in housing development will continue to result in more quality affordable housing developments being built in other housing authority jurisdictions that have utilized their services. The impact of this will be a much greater portfolio of affordable housing choice options in the Chicago metropolitan area.

HAJ will also continue to market its Housing Choice Voucher Program to non-participating landlords to ensure that residents have the most housing choice options with quality landlords in areas of Joliet and Will County that best meet their needs.

The MTW priority on housing choice will increase the importance of close cooperation and collaboration between HAJ and its fair housing partners. This includes sharing information on performance metrics, performance results and planning to maximize housing choice outcomes.

The MTW rent reform measures, regulatory waivers, and funding flexibility will all contribute to greater cost-effectiveness and improved prioritization of funding to meet the unique needs and opportunities that exist in Joliet and Will County.

The HAJ commitment to building regional partnership with other housing authorities and other housing providers will ensure that the agency is making smart, cost-effective business decisions

that provide for win-win partnerships. This may include, but not be limited to, providing fee-for-service consulting to other housing providers, sharing staff resources, benefitting from other agency expertise, and regional consolidation or consortia opportunities.

The MTW prioritization of transitioning families out of assisted housing on a timely basis and thus opening up new opportunities for those on the waiting means that the agency will be able to serve more families for the costs expended.

HAJ will continue to review the repositioning of Asset Management Projects (AMPS) to combine HUD subsidies and tenant rents collected to create more financially stable properties. Two repositioning initiatives have been completed to this date.

HAJ will also continue to move toward conversion to full asset management and to make each AMP stand on its own regarding management, maintenance and finances. The elimination of a centralized waiting list will improve efficiency of the applicant selection process by allowing applicants to select their AMP preference. This will eliminate a leasing position and each AMP will have a “ready pool” applicant list which should decrease vacant rent unit turnaround times.

HAJ will also utilize its MTW funding flexibility to ensure that annual training plans are formulated to improve staff efficiencies and decrease program errors or omissions. HAJ will fully utilize its new YARDI software systems instituted for MTW to provide more synchronized workflows and to more efficiently serve our residents, applicants and stakeholders. The comprehensive approach to performance metrics and performance evaluations under MTW will provide for a much improved approach to quantifying cost savings and cost effectiveness.

MTW PLAN – PROPOSED USE OF MTW FUNDS

Section 5(a) of the Moving to Work Operations Notice provides MTW agencies with funding flexibility in utilizing public housing funding sources. HAJ is requesting authority to utilize this flexibility option. The transition to a block grant approach will better allow HAJ to allocate funds for priorities that best meet the unique needs and opportunities in Joliet and Will County.

Many previously approved MTW agencies have opted to delay any major budgetary changes in their first year of participation. HAJ would propose to take this same approach and limit its funding flexibility in year one to minor budget adjustments.

HAJ will utilize a budget prioritization process that will be instituted as the agency moves forward with MTW participation. The process will call for every business unit in HAJ to make their budget pitch based on a series of fungibility questions that are outlined below.

In understanding the waiver options in MTW, and based on HAJ's new vision, mission and goals, what would become of the key changes or initiatives that should be adapted in the major functions that are provided by your business unit?

For each of the major functions in your business unit, project the budget increases or decreases that you believe would be needed to administer such functions as defined above.

Based on current funding levels, what would be your business unit preliminary budget request for the next MTW fiscal year based on the implementation of the changing business unit functions?

How will the proposed budget adjustments in your business unit impact on the overall cost-effectiveness of the agency?

Do you have budget increase or decrease recommendations for other business units within HAJ?

How will the proposed revisions in initiatives and budget impact on your business unit in terms of staff numbers, professional development / training needs, position classifications, etc.?

With the waiver options being considered, what are some of the best options for leveraging public or private dollars to stretch or expand agency resources?

MTW PLAN – EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIPS

HAJ has had a very good track record in building and maintaining city and county partnerships with key stakeholders in the political, governmental, affordable housing, homeless / special needs providers and support services sectors. Many of these stakeholders have been critical to leveraging financial resources and technical expertise in supporting the mission of the agency for many years. Many of these partnerships have been documented with Memoranda of Agreement that provide much clarity on shared missions, clients and mutually beneficial services. The MOAs are particularly beneficial with special needs providers that provide support services to housing provided by HAJ. The recent collaboration with these partners on a Choice Neighborhood Initiative proposal and asset repositioning initiatives also brought a new sense of community building to our respective missions. Many of these key partners are listed in the Appendix.

All of the above stakeholders will be critical in implementing the visions and plans for MTW. In going beyond building quality housing to building quality communities, the full funding resources, expertise and in-kind services of all of the above stakeholders will be essential. Their community support will be critical in marketing and promoting assisted housing in previously underserved neighborhoods that will further housing choice. HAJ also cannot experience success with its special needs populations without the full support and services contributions of providers specialized in working with such clients. The perspectives of these stakeholders will be a very

important contribution to the community stakeholder forums and industry group convened by HAJ to best determine local needs, priorities, and opportunities and to translate that into action plans.

HAJ has had a much more limited range of stakeholders in the business, employment and real estate sectors. However, as the agency transitions into MTW there are many challenges and opportunities that will greatly benefit from these new partnerships. Linking residents with high quality jobs currently available in the community will require building bridges with the Chamber, major industries, economic development agencies and job training providers. Similarly, if the agency is going to grow its Section 3, MBE, and WBE business the expertise and resources of these agencies will be essential. Gearing up for homeownership initiatives will also require quality business expertise and financial resources from lenders and the real estate community. HAJ will also convene industry group business resources as focus groups as it continues to build business models that will meet the cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency expectations under MTW. Ongoing collaboration will be needed with the landlord community to implement the rent reforms, waivers and other flexibility options available through MTW.

The Housing Authority of Joliet has also recently completed a Landlord Incentives Forum that attracted approximately 25 landlords. This Forum provided the opportunity to get their input on the landlord context considerations requested in the Landlord Needs Assessment as outline in the MTW PIH Notice. The forum also provided for their voting contribution on which landlord incentives and landlord waivers would be most valued by the participating landlords. The results are included in the Landlord Incentives Activities that are outline later in the narrative below. If selected for MTW participation, the agency will continue to utilize similar Landlord Forums to best design and implement the incentives and waivers.

LANDLORD NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Summarized below is an assessment of the local context related to the HCV Program and landlord participation. The assessment addresses local rental housing market conditions, the types of landlords active in the local market, the reasons why some landlords do not accept HCVs, and the PHA's assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the HCV Program. The assessment reflects the input of both the HAJ HCV staff and the 15 landlords that participated in the first Landlord Forum.

In our discussion with landlords during our forum, a wealth of information was received. Subsequently, the narrative is reflective of the comments received from HCV staff and landlords. In bold, are the comments received from landlords during our forum.

a. Rental Market Conditions:

The rental market conditions are both good and bad.

The conditions are good because we are consistent with the Fair Market Value in the areas we serve. Rental market conditions are bad because we need more units.

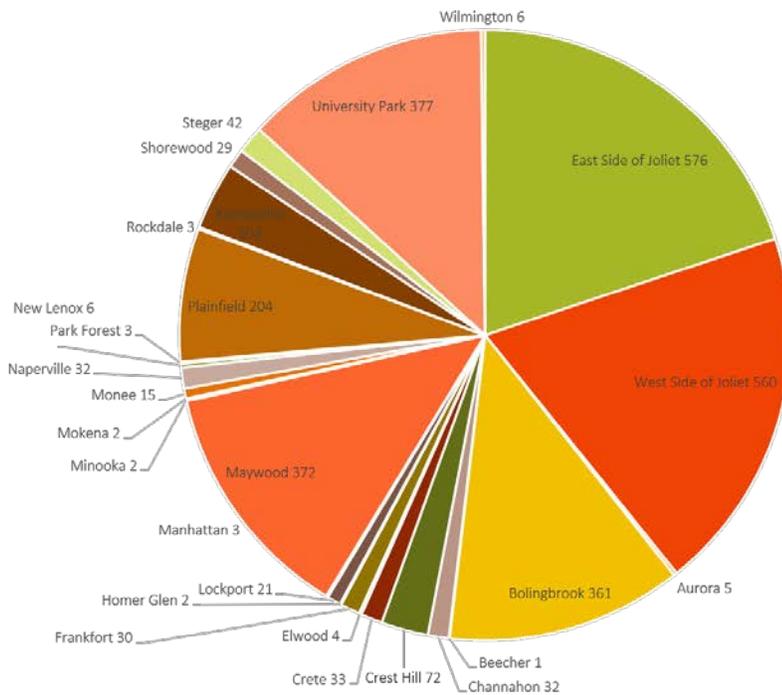
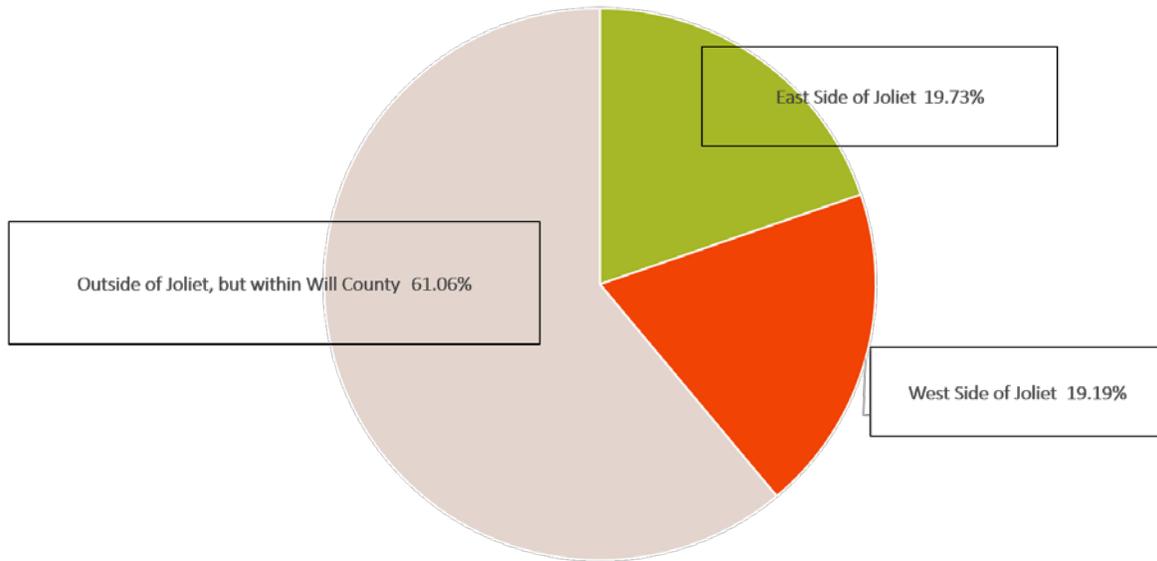
Many of our tenants are being displaced due to it being a sellers' market. Tenants are being asked to move from their unit because many of our landlords are selling their properties.

b. Landlord Activity in HCV-

60% of HAJ's units in the HCV program are outside of the Joliet Area. This provides tenants with the ability to locate and reside in homes in "Opportunity Areas." Opportunity areas have been

determined to be areas that have more access to jobs, better schools, and a seemingly better place to raise a family. In the Joliet area, there is a 50/50 split. Please review the attached pie charts.

Housing Choice Vouchers(De-Concentration Efforts)
2,918 (380 Maywood)



Owners commented about showing how there are opportunity areas in Joliet.

That comment was followed up with education on how Opportunity Areas provide a seemingly better lifestyle for families. Also, it was stated, the program was not designed for longevity and the goal is for all participants to become self-sufficient, as opposed to generational program participation. This is not to say participants cannot gain self-sufficiency while living in Joliet, it was just noted better opportunity is in other areas we serve.

c. Issues with Landlord Participation-

It has been discovered through many conversations with landlords, many of the issues are surrounded by a lack of knowledge on how our program works. We also understand damages to the unit caused by the tenant are one of the major issues with our landlords. It is suggested landlords do quarterly inspections on their property to avoid surprises and a lengthy list of tenant damages once the tenant vacates the unit. HAJ wants all of our owners to understand we are not the Property Managers for the HCV units and we do not choose the tenants for the owners.

It is the owner's responsibility to screen tenants and ensure to uphold and treat market rate and HCV participants equally. We hope to convey there is a list of HAJ responsibilities and there is a list of owner responsibilities as it relates to the HCV program.

One landlord asked, "how do landlords get their money when a tenant moves and they still owe back rent?"

The landlord was reminded to adhere to the lease that is legally binding between the landlord and the tenant(s) and it is the landlord's responsibility to pursue all legal actions against the tenant(s) for back-rent.

Another landlord stated, he believes it is unfair for a tenant to vacate the unit owing money or owing for damages, and the tenant is still able to move to another unit and the landlord is left with the financial burdens.

Here again, it is the responsibility of the landlord to pursue legal action against the tenant(s) to recover any tenant's damages. Documentation of legal actions against the tenant(s) as well as legal judgement can then be use against the tenant(s) to evict them from the program.

Another recommendation from a landlord is to have an on-going video conferences where information can be recorded and shared among landlords to further educate all parties on policies and procedures.

d. Strengths / Weakness of HCV-

HAJ noted a few strengths that are relative to landlord participation. Payment remittance is guaranteed monthly to our landlords once all of the necessary paperwork is received and processed. HAJ offers competitive rents to our owners. The rent offer is consistent with the fair market value in the areas we serve. All initial inspections are conducted within 24 hours of the Request for Tenancy Approval being received. Our HAJ staff work diligently to complete the leasing process within 3-5 business days. All of our owners are allowed to decline the rent amount once it is

offered. We do not force our landlords to accept a rental amount that is not acceptable for their property.

Weaknesses:

HAJ understands landlords needed to be supplied with updated information regarding changes to policies and protocols

HAJ understands landlord forums are needed to provide healthy and informative discussions with our landlords. By doing so, it will allow HAJ to obtain innovative ideas and address issues more frequently. Since HAJ has realized this as a weakness, staff will provide quarterly or annual meetings/forums to educate our owners on our process. However, while working to correct this weakness, COVID-19 happened and halted the facilitation of the landlord meetings. At this time, we are working on innovative ideas to ensure we have a platform to keep our landlords informed and educated on the program rules.

A landlord stated he does not like to wait to the end to find out how much a tenant can afford for his unit.

HAJ explained all tenants are provided with a Rent Burden Worksheet to determine how much they can afford for a unit.

Another landlord stated they agree landlords need more education on how the program works.

MTW COHORT #4 ACTIVITIES

The Housing Authority of Joliet will include at least two or more HAJ landlord incentives that will be effective given the context discussed above. While the decision on which incentives to be implemented will be decided by HAJ, the agency utilized the Landlord Forum to also gain input from landlords on their incentive priorities. For a briefing of each incentive, please refer the Landlord Incentive Activities and Waiver document. The landlord priorities scoring was as follows:

Damage Claims – 15 votes

Vacancy Losses – 14 votes

SAFMR Payments – 10 votes

Signing Bonus – 2 votes

Alternative Inspections – 1 vote

FMR Payments – 1 vote

Pre-Inspections – 0 votes

The Landlord Forum participants were also asked to vote for one of the two following MTW waivers:

Waiver of Inspections – 6 votes

Waiver for Vacancy Loss – 5 votes

OTHER LANDLORD INCENTIVES AND INITIATIVES

If selected for MTW participation, HAJ may opt to pursue some Agency-Specific Waivers as outlined in the MTW Operations Notice.

Also, HAJ will continue to discuss with landlords some other landlord incentives that could be implemented without MTW designation. While many of the non-MTW incentives outlined in the PIH Notice have already been implemented by HAJ, there are other incentives that will be considered.

HAJ greatly appreciates the input received from staff and landlords. The information received will be discussed with our Board of Directors to determine which incentive and waivers will best work for our agency.

APPENDIX 1: MOVING TO WORK CERTIFICATIONS OF COMPLIANCE

(To be added later)

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

(To be added later)

APPENDIX 3: REQUIRED STANDARD FORMS

(To be added later)

APPENDIX 4: OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

(To be added later)

LANDLORD INCENTIVE ACTIVITIES AND WAIVERS

MTW LANDLORD INCENTIVES (PHA will select a minimum of two incentives):

SAFMR Payment Standards – The PHA may establish payment standards between 80% and 150% of the Small Area Fair Market Rents rather than being limited to the current standards between 90% and 110%

FMR Payment Standards – The PHA may establish payment standards between 80% and 120% of the Fair Market Rents rather than being limited to the current standards between 90% and 120%.

Vacancy Losses – The PHA may pay a landlord up to one month of contract rent as reimbursement for time the unit spent vacant in between HCV participants. If vacant for less than one month, the PHA may pay for the actual number of days the unit was vacant.

Damage Claims – The PHA may pay a landlord reimbursement for tenant-caused damages after accounting the any security deposit, but may not exceed the lesser of the cost of damages or two months of contract rent.

Signing Bonus – The PHA may provide incentive payments up to one month of contract rent to incentivize landlords to join the HCV program.

Pre-Qualifying Unit Inspections – The PHA may allow units to be pre-inspected for HQS approval to accelerate the lease-up process and to minimize lost revenue during a period of vacancy. The pre-inspection must happen within 90 days before the occupancy of the unit.

Alternative Inspection Schedule – The PHA may implement an alternative schedule for conducting HQS inspections that would reduce the frequency of inspection from annually up to an inspection at least once every three years.

ADDITIONAL MTW LANDLORD INCENTIVES WAIVERS (PHA may select all or none of these waivers):

Waiver of the Mandatory Initial Inspection – The PHA may eliminate the requirement for an initial inspection under one of the following circumstances: (1) the unit is less than five years old; (2) the unit passed an HQS inspection within the previous three years; or (3) the unit is located in a census tract with a poverty rate below ten percent.

Provision for a Front-end Vacancy Loss Payment – The PHA is authorized to make additional payments to a landlord in circumstances where the previous tenant was not an HCV participant. Payments must be equal or lesser than one month of the contract rent, and the payment is provided when the next HAP contract is executed.

OTHER AGENCY-SPECIFIC LANDLORD INCENTIVE

The PHA may also identify other local incentives such as, but not limited to, improving timely payments, offering direct deposit options, improving inspections timeliness, addressing improved customer service, and expanding landlord liaison services.