



U.S. Department of Housing and Development, 600 Harrison St, San Francisco, CA 94107 (415) 489-6401

Dear Public Housing Authorities:

*This is a special edition of our newsletter. This is a great opportunity to celebrate our successful partnership.*

*These pages contain ARRA success stories – **your** success stories.*

*You have put to good use ARRA funds in creating an improved environment for those you serve.*

*Your PHA's residents and the community in general have benefitted from your hard work.*

## From the Director's Desk

By Stephen Schneller, San Francisco Office of Public Housing

**Congratulations!** On March 17<sup>th</sup>, HUD saw the obligation of 100 percent of \$74 million in our Region and \$3 billion in ARRA funds nationwide. This is an amazing achievement. Thank you for all your hard work and cooperation. As we move into Year 2 of the Recovery Act, you can expect to hear from us to ask about your expenditures and jobs creation. We know you will want to share your success stories and tell us the good things you're doing to create jobs and help Public Housing families. Keep up the good work.

## From the Assistant Secretary of Public and Indian Housing

Wednesday, March 17, 2010 marked a significant milestone in our ongoing effort to chart a new course for public housing.

When President Obama signed the Recovery Act into law last year, there were some who believed that allocating \$3 billion in formula funding to public housing agencies to create jobs, rehabilitate housing units and promote energy efficiency, while giving housing authorities only one year to obligate those funds, was an impossible endeavor.

Having been an Executive Director in Boston for 13 years before coming to HUD, I knew they were wrong.

Thanks to the herculean efforts of more than 800 HUD Staff working with over 3,100 housing authorities across the country, thousands of jobs are being created and thousands of public housing units are being rehabbed.

In real terms, these are thousands of families who without you would have nowhere to turn; no paycheck to put food on the table, or a safe place to call home.

I know it has not been easy, putting in long hours and working on short deadlines. However, all of the PHAs I spoke with told me that they heard from their local field offices on a daily basis, and that the assistance and support HUD provided was a critical part of their success. For that I want to thank you and congratulate you on a job well done. You truly brought your "A" game!

In my more than 30 years in affordable housing, I have never been more proud of my public housing family than I am today. Thank you.

Most sincerely,

U.S. Depart. Of Housing & Urban Development

San Francisco Office of Public Housing

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**3,100 PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES MEET CRITICAL RECOVERY ACT DEADLINE, CREATE NEARLY 9,000 JOBS AND REHAB 150,000 HOMES FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

*Just over one year after Recovery Act is signed, funds already putting Americans to work, making homes healthier for thousands of families across the U.S.*

WASHINGTON - U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan today announced that over 3,100 public housing authorities across the U.S. successfully met a critical funding deadline outlined in the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). As a result, the nearly \$3 billion in Public Housing Capital Fund grants awarded through the Recovery Act one year ago are being used to make significant improvements to tens of thousands of public housing units nationwide; creating jobs and growing the economy.

All public housing authorities were able to meet that deadline by either obligating 100 percent of their funds or voluntarily returning all or a portion of their funds by the deadline. Of the \$2.985 billion that was awarded to 3,134 public housing authorities, \$2.981 billion has been obligated and \$3.246 million was voluntarily returned. HUD is currently determining the redistribution process for the funding returned. The 172 'troubled' housing authorities that received funding all met the deadline as well, with only two troubled agencies returning all or a portion of their funds by March 17th.

The Recovery Act included \$13.61 billion for projects and programs administered by HUD, nearly 75 percent of which was allocated to state and local recipients only eight days after President Obama signed the Act into law, including public housing capital funding. The remaining 25 percent is being awarded through competitive grant programs. To date, 98 percent of HUD's Recovery Act funds are in the hands of local communities, being used to improve housing and neighborhoods, while creating jobs. HUD is committed to implementing Recovery Act investments swiftly and effectively as they generate tens of thousands of jobs, modernize homes to make them energy efficient, and help the families and communities hardest hit by the economic crisis.

In addition, Secretary Donovan and the Department are committed to providing the highest level of transparency possible as Recovery Act funds are administered. It is vitally important that the American people are fully aware of how their tax dollars are being spent and can hold their federal leaders accountable. Every dollar of Recovery Act funds HUD spends can be reviewed and tracked at [HUD's Recovery Act website](#). The full text of HUD's funding notices and tracking of future performance of these grants is also available at [HUD's Recovery Act website](#).

# Reno

## Stimulus funds used for rehabilitation and jobs.

Submitted by Reno Housing Authority

SPARKS — an old home with a new look received several dozen visitors from U.S. Housing and Urban Development came to get an up-close look at how some federal grant money is being spent. **Ron Sims, deputy secretary for HUD**, lauded local officials for working together to get more than \$25 million in federal grant money to buy, fix up and rent or sell foreclosed homes in the Truckee Meadows. Contractors had just completed more than \$30,000 in work to put the house in top form to go up for sale.



*“While the funds are attempting to stabilize neighborhoods, another purpose is to create jobs.”*

Twelve homes in Sparks have been targeted by the Reno Housing Authority for the program, which under agreement also works with Sparks and Washoe County. The authority received an initial \$4.2 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program grants under the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 and is expected to finalize another \$20 million in the next month.

A total of 52 homes are so far identified to be purchased throughout Sparks, Sun Valley, Stead and the Oliver/Montello area of Reno. The funds will eventually go toward the purchase and rehabilitation of 200 homes.

The homes being rehabilitated in Sparks are in a variety of neighborhoods, though many cluster in the areas around Rock Boulevard north of Victorian Avenue. The home on Oppio Street was purchased by the housing authority for \$111,000, according to **executive director David Morton**. Under the law, he said, the home cannot be sold for more than the total cost to buy and fix up the home, so the Oppio residence must sell for about \$141,000. If the market demands, he added, the house can sell for less.



*Tribune/Debra Reid - David Morton, Reno Housing Authority Executive Director, toured a renovated Sparks home. The formerly foreclosed home will be placed back on the real estate*



*Tribune/Debra Reid - U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Deputy Secretary Ron Sims toured a renovated Sparks home along with Reno Mayor Bob Cashell and Sparks Mayor Geno Martini.*

The home next door, at 1760 Oppio St., is listed for sale at \$169,000. The rehabilitated house at 1730 could be on the market within a few weeks, Morton said.

Under the program, homes that are put up for sale must go to “median income” buyers. Morton said that median group is defined as a buyer with no more than 120 percent of the median income for Washoe County and no less than 50 percent. Lower than that qualifies as “low income,” which qualifies for homes that are rented under the HUD program. Buyers for these houses must be first-time home buyers and can receive up to \$20,000 in assistance, \$15,000 of which will be forgiven if they stay in the home for 15 years. Buyers will be required to attend credit counseling to help ensure continued stability in ownership.

Maintaining the quality of the neighborhood is a concern not just for government officials but also for residents. Morton said there is always a concern when neighbors hear that HUD is moving into an area because it is often associated with low income and the possible crime and other problems that come with it.

**Dana Provenzano** has lived two houses down from the HUD house for more than 30 years and said the overall quality of the neighborhood is still good enough that she would like her grown sons to be able to buy the houses near her eventually.

“It’s still maintaining its own,” she said.



**Sparks Mayor Geno Martini** observed that the Oppio Street neighborhood is in generally good condition and said it is common to see such areas where there are just pockets of properties that are in bad condition.

“It’s just a sign of the economic times,” he said before entering the house to see the work done to the inside. “There are people really struggling and there are going to be people who need help in every part of the city.”

While the funds are attempting to stabilize neighborhoods, another purpose is to create jobs. Two local contractors at Friday’s event said they have been helped by the work created by the federal grant money.

**Dana McEvers**, owner of Thunder Roofing in Sparks, said his company has done 10 jobs through the housing authority. His staff has been cut in half over the last two years because business is down by about 60 percent. These jobs aren’t growing his business, he said, but it is providing work.

**Roque Olivas**, owner of I.T. Heating and Air in Reno, installed the swamp cooler on 1730 Oppio and has worked on about 20 other jobs through the housing authority. ...Things are looking up, he said, partly because of the work created by the housing grants. He hopes he can bring back his other workers soon.

“Things are real hopeful,” he said. “Things are definitely looking up.”

