

HUD's Open Government and Customer Service Plan 2012-2014



The fundamental framework for achieving both a more effective government
and stronger democracy. *-Shaun Donovan, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development*

Table of Contents

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY	I
1. INTRODUCTION TO HUD, OPEN GOVERNMENT, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE	1
1.1 Introduction to HUD.....	1
1.2 Evolving Open Government at HUD to Improve Mission Delivery.....	3
1.2.1 HUD’s Open Government Framework.....	3
1.2.2 Open Government Stakeholder Engagement	5
1.3 Customer Service at HUD	7
1.4 Open Government Plan Version 2.0.....	9
2. OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES	11
2.1 HUD’s New Open Government Initiatives	11
2.1.1 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Data and Mapping Tool (Flagship)	11
2.1.2 CPD Maps and Consolidated Plan Template for CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA (Flagship)	13
2.1.3 Partner.HUD.gov: Visualizing and Aligning Investments	14
2.1.4 Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) Research Agenda Planning	15
2.2 Updates on HUD Open Government Achievements	19
2.2.1 Bureaucracy Busting Flagship Initiatives	19
2.2.2 Transparency Initiatives.....	25
2.2.3 Engagement Initiatives	34
2.2.4 Collaboration Initiatives	36
3. CUSTOMER SERVICE INITIATIVES.....	41
3.1 Flagship Initiative: HUD Ideas in Action	41
3.2 Helping PHAs Help People	42
3.3 Getting Money to Communities Faster	44

Letter from the Secretary



It is my pleasure to present the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) updated Open Government and Customer Service Plan. For all of us at HUD, working to serve our customers more effectively while ensuring that citizens have access to the information they need isn't just part of what we do as an agency – it's at the core of our mission.

Indeed, delivering top quality customer service is critical to our work to transform the way HUD does business and achieve our agency's strategic goals. And the values of open government—transparency, participation, and collaboration—make up the fundamental framework for achieving both a more effective government and a stronger democracy.

Since our first plan was published, we have made significant progress on all three open government principles.

- **Engagement:** HUD unveiled a multimedia channel that allows website visitors easy access to informational videos and other social media sites. In addition, we launched [HUD Ideas in Action](#), a crowd sourcing tool that encourages the public to offer policy and program suggestions, which then get commented on and reviewed for potential implementation. We also launched the [HUDDle](#), a bilingual, bi-directional blog.
- **Transparency:** In February, HUD hosted its first-ever “Twitter Town Hall,” in which interested citizens were able to learn how a silo-busting, cross-agency priority like the “Strong Cities, Strong Communities” initiative was building local capacity on the ground, in real time. In addition to this pioneering use of social media, HUD is consistently publishing “high-value” data to [Data.gov](#) based on feedback from stakeholders, and has enhanced [HUD User](#) to make data and visualization tools available to meet the unique needs of HUD stakeholders.
- **Collaboration:** HUD, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, State Department, the American Planning Association, and the Government of Brazil, hosted a global collaborative competition called “[Sustainable Urban Housing: Collaborating for Livable and Inclusive Cities.](#)” The competition identified innovative solutions for providing sustainable, energy efficient housing in a way that unleashes economic opportunities for the urban poor, and builds smarter, cleaner cities around the world. And in March, we partnered with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs and the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation to announce a competitive challenge for Project REACH – a new “app” that will allow the providers of services for homeless veterans quickly and easily access critical information to help the people they serve.

To build on that progress in the coming years, we will deploy Geographic Information System (GIS) technology that will:

- Help HUD grantees and public housing authorities complete an Assessment of Fair Housing for their communities. Not only will this help grantees identify longstanding demographic and development challenges to fair housing in their communities -- but it can also help them with new development strategies and targeted technical assistance.
- Help community development grantees make smarter, more strategic funding decisions. Under a new, reformed Consolidated Plan, recipients of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG),

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds will be able to use a mapping tool and planning template to help them assess their needs in the context of other HUD investments.

Ultimately, open government allows us to serve our customers better. That is why I am committed to not only ensuring that this Open Government and Customer Service Plan is implemented, but to using the plan to re-engage both senior HUD leadership and frontline HUD employees – and reaffirm the central role that openness and customer service plays in helping us achieve our mission.

Through this plan, we will improve the everyday lives of those we serve—more economically, more inclusively, and more effectively.

Sincerely,

Secretary Shaun Donovan

1. Introduction to HUD, Open Government, and Customer Service

When it was initiated in 2010, the President's open government initiative represented a major change in the way Federal agencies interact with the public. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognized from the beginning that open government is about finding new ways for the Department to serve its customers and seek new avenues for getting its customers and other citizens more engaged in the business of HUD. As part of its commitment to open government, HUD has created unique partnerships with other agencies, disseminated high-value data to stakeholders in timely and accessible ways, and used social media to provide the means for the public to offer ideas on how HUD might respond innovatively to its civic challenges. In all these efforts and more, the Department has found ways to utilize the principles of transparency, engagement, and collaboration to increase HUD mission efficiency and effectiveness.

HUD's experience with these initiatives has taught those involved that open government is an evolving idea. The more experience HUD gains with transparency, engagement, and collaboration the more it evolves toward truly new forms of citizen-HUD involvement and interaction. To respond to this corporate learning, HUD is introducing five new open government initiatives that incorporate lessons learned from first generation projects. The intent is to move HUD into the next level of open government accomplishments. These new initiatives are described in Section 2.1 of this consolidated Open Government and Customer Service Plan.

In this document, HUD is also reporting on progress made during the first years of its open government program. Several of the Department's initial open government initiatives have been woven into the fabric of the way HUD conducts business every day. Many other have been completed with satisfactory results, and still others are in the later stages of their lifecycle. Section 2.2 of this report documents the status of these first generation open government efforts.

In 2011, the President asked that executive agencies focus specifically on improving customer service¹. HUD recognizes that customer service is enhanced when open government goals of transparency, engagement, and collaboration are achieved, and has opted to consolidate the Customer Service and Open Government Plans to reflect this synergy. Section 3 of this document describes HUD's three customer service initiatives.

1.1 Introduction to HUD

HUD and its roughly 9,600 employees are committed to creating places throughout the nation that effectively connect people to jobs, transportation, quality public schools, and other amenities, which HUD refers to as "geographies of opportunity".

HUD's five main strategic goals are:

1. Strengthen the Nation's housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers
2. Meet the need for quality affordable rental homes
3. Utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life
4. Build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination
5. Transform the way HUD does business

¹ Executive Order 13571, *Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service*

Since the first day of operation in 1965, HUD's programs have evolved to meet the changing needs of the nation. Today, the Department is comprised of the following major program areas:

Office of Community Planning and Development – The Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) seeks to develop viable communities by promoting integrated approaches that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for low and moderate income persons. To accomplish these goals, CPD develops partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations.

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity – The Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) administers Federal laws and establishes national policies that ensure all Americans have equal access to the housing of their choice. FHEO accomplishes this by implementing and enforcing civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and by proactively working with private industry, fair-housing, and community advocates.

Office of Field Policy and Management – The Office of Field Policy and Management (FPM) provides direction and oversight for HUD's Regional and Field Office Directors, where the majority of HUD's employees are located. It communicates the priorities and policies of the Secretary to these managers and ensures the effective pursuit of the Department's broader initiatives. In addition, FPM ensures that program impacts and customer service at the local level are assessed, and also provides operational feedback to HUD's central leadership.

Ginnie Mae – Ginnie Mae provides guarantees on mortgage-backed securities backed by federally insured or guaranteed loans, mainly loans issued by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Housing Service, and HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH). Ginnie Mae securities are the only mortgage-backed securities that are guaranteed by the United States government. Ginnie Mae plays a vital role in channeling capital into the nation's housing markets.

Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control – The Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control (OHHLHC) works to eliminate childhood lead poisoning caused by lead-based paint hazards in older housing and to address other housing-related health and safety risks. The OHHLHC provides funding to state and local governments to control lead-based paint hazards in older housing and grants to state and local governments, universities, and private-sector entities to protect children and their families from health and safety hazards in the home. In addition, the office provides public outreach and technical assistance and conducts technical studies to develop and assess cost-effective ways of reducing residential health and safety problems.

Office of Housing – The Office of Housing provides vital public services through its nationally administered programs and the control it exerts over the housing industry. One of the office's primary responsibilities is overseeing the FHA, the largest mortgage insurer in the world. The office also provides mortgage insurance to facilitate the construction of single and multifamily housing.

Office of Policy Development and Research – The Office of Policy Development and Research's (PD&R) primary function is to support HUD's mission and the policy agenda of the Secretary. PD&R performs policy analysis, research, surveys, and evaluations to help stakeholders make informed decisions on the Department's policies, programs, and proposals. PD&R also provides data support for HUD's ongoing operations and builds partnerships with universities and other private institutions.

Office of Public and Indian Housing – The Office of Public and Indian Housing's (PIH) role is to ensure safe, decent, and affordable housing, create opportunities for resident's self-sufficiency and economic independence, and assure fiscal integrity by all program participants. PIH also strives to improve Public

Housing Authority (PHA) management, and the service delivery efforts of Indian housing authorities and tribally designated housing entities through oversight, assistance, and selective intervention by dedicated field personnel.

Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities – The Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (OSHC) mission is to create sustainable communities by connecting housing to jobs, fostering local innovation, and helping to build a more energy efficient economy. The office continues to coordinate Federal housing and transportation investments in order to reduce transportation costs, improve housing affordability, and increase access to employment opportunities. In addition, OSHC works with Federal agencies, states, local communities, and industry partners to catalyze innovation and reduce energy consumption in the residential sector.

HUD Stakeholders – HUD’s mission puts it in direct contact with a significant portion of the population. Its customers are a diverse group of individuals and families that all have unique needs, tastes, and preferences. Its partners and stakeholders include:

- Private non-profits
- Corporate partners
- Elected officials
- Community-based non-profits
- Housing providers
- Good governance groups

This Open Government Plan was developed not only for HUD’s direct stakeholders, but also for an extended collection of stakeholders that include academic researchers, private businesses, and citizens that may not currently utilize HUD’s services. The Department recognizes that each group has its own needs for transparency, engagement, and collaboration.

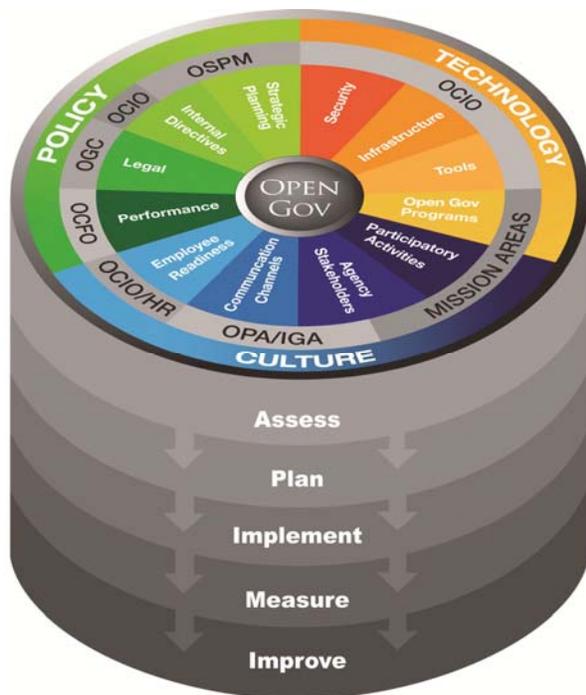
1.2 Evolving Open Government at HUD to Improve Mission Delivery

HUD responded enthusiastically when the President introduced the open government program. At the core of HUD’s open government approach is the alignment of open government activities to HUD’s strategic goals. The Department realized that all of its resources must be aligned in order for HUD to fully achieve its strategic goals. Performance improvements from open government efforts and sustained commitment to increasing transparency, engagement, and collaboration are additional mechanisms for increasing HUD’s ability to achieve its goals.

The Department’s initial Open Government Plan, which contained the input of HUD’s senior policy, legal, and technology leadership, as well as input from the general public, was a roadmap that described how the Department would utilize open government as one of its many tools to enable the implementation of its strategic plan. The achievements in open government initiatives since the initial plan was developed have furthered HUD’s transparency, engagement, and collaboration objectives and resulted in a cultural shift at HUD to embrace open government practices where possible. The next stage for HUD’s open government program is to codify the three principles in mission activities in a way that improves customer service.

1.2.1 HUD’s Open Government Framework

From the beginning, HUD adopted a comprehensive lifecycle management approach to help identify and plan for its open government initiatives. HUD’s open government framework, shown below in **Figure 1** includes the program lifecycle phases, crucial areas of assessment, and key players involved in planning and execution.



Lifecycle Phases:

1. **Assess:** Understand the current state
2. **Plan:** Determine direction and tie strategies to outcomes
3. **Implement:** Make change
4. **Measure:** Monitor changes using performance metrics
5. **Improve:** Iterate on the plan and approaches to improve performance

LEGEND

OCIO: Office of the Chief Information Officer	HR: Human Resources
OSPM: Office of Strategic Planning and Management	OPA: Office of Public Affairs
OGC: Office of General Counsel	IGA: Intergovernmental Affairs
	OCFO: Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Figure 1: HUD’s Open Government Framework

Each lifecycle phase includes activities that span across HUD organizations. The gray ring on top in Figure 1 illustrates the HUD organizations that own portions of the policy, technology, and cultural components of the open government discipline. The success of open government at HUD is dependent on the organization actively contributing to the planning and management of the initiatives.

The lifecycle is simple and straightforward: In phase 1 (**Assess**) HUD assesses its operational environments and determines the most appropriate ways open government can be leveraged. During phases 2 and 3 (**Plan** and **Implement**) HUD completely plans and prioritizes the piloting and implementation of its open government initiatives. In Phases 4 and 5 (**Measure** and **Improve**) HUD measures the benefits it is receiving from the implemented open government initiatives and seeks ways to improve on them until the end of their productive life. The Department will retire or modify an initiative or solution if its utility decreases below a threshold set by HUD’s open government leadership group.

The five new initiatives described in Section 2.1 have finished the Assess phase and are now in the Planning and Implementation phases of the lifecycle. Section 2.2 of this document describes the progress of HUD’s original open government initiatives. These first generation efforts are either in the mid-to-late phases of their lifecycle or have been completed.

1.2.2 Open Government Stakeholder Engagement

A key element of open government is engagement, with HUD customers, the general public, and HUD internal staff. As part of the 2010 Open Government Plan, HUD implemented numerous mechanisms to increase engagement through communications. Such social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, HUD-wide emails, and a YouTube channel became important ways for HUD to reach the public and for the public to reach HUD. To encourage the continuing evolution of good, clear, and timely communication, both internally with its managers and staff and externally with its stakeholders and partners, HUD updates and maintains these various outlets according to its Open Government Communication Plan. The communication plan provides a framework for coordinating all communications that take place as part of HUD’s open government and customer service improvement activities.

The focus of the internal communications plan component continues to be on simple and cost effective strategies to internalize the idea of transparency, engagement, and collaboration. The key objectives of this communication plan are:

- To raise internal awareness of the open government program and its implementation
- To build internal support for the implementation of the open government program
- To create a culture of openness at HUD

Since the inception of the open government program, HUD has used a number of mechanisms to convey the open government story and core values to its employees. **Table 1** shows the types of communication strategies that have been used to convey the message in the last few years.

Strategy	Since Open Government Inception
Town hall meetings hosted by HUD leadership to discuss open government	The Secretary holds quarterly town hall meetings and open government is a frequent topic. The CIO holds quarterly all-hands meetings where transparency, public engagement, and collaboration are frequent topics. HUD has also hosted a Twitter Town Hall to promote public engagement and collaboration.
HUD-wide e-mail distributions	The Department circulates weekly internal newsletter “HUD Happenings”; open government adds a column on a periodic basis. In addition, open government contributes content for the monthly “In-House” newsletter.
Publicize milestones	HUD publishes Open Government Progress Reports on www.hud.gov/open . In addition, HUD uses social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, Blog (HUDDle), YouTube, and Flickr to publicize milestones and other open government news.
Internal webcast explaining responsibility/accountability	To celebrate the first anniversary of open government, HUD produced a video featuring Estelle Richman, Acting Deputy Secretary, and Stan Buch, Director of Innovation and Open Government. The video provides a progress report of HUD’s accomplishments as well as a look ahead at next steps.

Strategy	Since Open Government Inception
Using HUD’s intranet to keep people informed	HUD publishes an “In-House” monthly publication on HUD@Work, HUD’s Intranet site. In addition, OCIO Learning Sessions are held periodically and all materials and blogs are posted on HUD@Work.
Providing a comprehensive HUD web index	HUD developed a site map to index all of the web pages on HUD.gov. The index is available at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/resources

Table 1: Open Government Internal Engagement Strategies

In the future, workshops conducted with Field Policy and Management leadership are planned as a more personal means of engagement within HUD.

The external communications plan component is designed with HUD’s civilian stakeholders in mind and is executed to inform and educate them on the scope of open government, provide feedback mechanisms, and open new channels for public engagement. For public understanding it is important to:

- Explain the principles of open government
- Increase awareness of the value of open government
- Continually educate the public on how to access the information they want
- Improve ways for the public to provide feedback to HUD about the Department and open government

Strategy	Since Open Government Inception
Incorporate open government messaging into HUD speeches by senior leadership	Estelle Richman, Chief Operating Officer, introduces the Department’s open government anniversary video address. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=2Ec-MYy3mvs
Publicize open government website via social media including blogs, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook and encouraging feedback	HUD has promoted transparency and encouraged engagement through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, HUDdle, Flickr, and other social media mechanisms. See section 2.2.2 for more detail on HUD’s accomplishments.
Post open government URL on all Department websites	HUD posts all open government news and updates at www.hud.gov/open . In addition, the open government site is featured on the HUD.gov home page.
Use earned media events to get the message out	Twitter Town Hall dedicated to open government. Also, OCIO Learning Session (March 2012) dedicated to open government and social media.

Table 2: Open Government External Engagement

Contributing to the Open Government Communications Plan will continue to assist HUD in driving an internal cultural shift through an educational and media campaign to promote the new information the Department publishes. It will also provide HUD employees with the information and strategies for effective communication about open and transparent government that leads to increased engagement.

HUD's Public Feedback Mechanisms

Public feedback is a vital part of open government. As one of its open government initiatives, HUD will utilize public feedback mechanisms that will allow the public, stakeholders, and customers to provide direct feedback to mission owners and personnel. HUD will utilize a variety of tools including the website, e-mail, and social media. The diagram below illustrates the feedback review process in more detail.

HUD makes every effort to direct substantive public comments and feedback to the appropriate personnel, including the Office of Public Affairs and the communications offices embedded within to the Department's various program areas. In cases where a personalized response is necessary, HUD ensures that it complies with Federal and Departmental communications procedures. HUD is committed to active and effective public communication, and aims to achieve a maximum response time of 6 working weeks from the submission of a comment to its final adjudication.

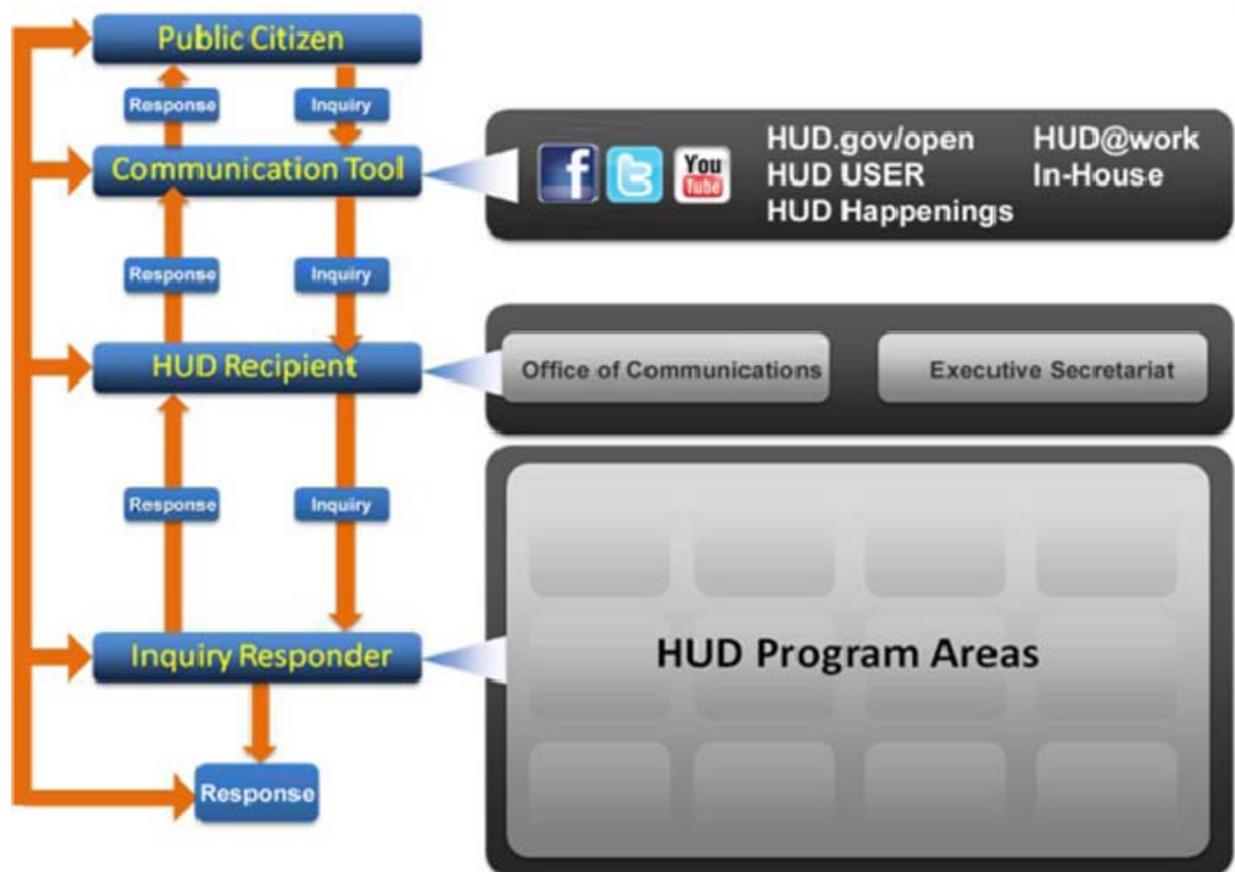


Figure 2: The Public Feedback Process and Implemented Communication Tools

1.3 Customer Service at HUD

In 2011, President Obama mandated that all Federal agencies develop a focused Customer Service Plan. The plan was to identify key initiatives to improve each Agency's customer service delivery. One of the identified activities was to be the agency's customer service signature initiative.

Private sector organizations regularly monitor customer satisfaction and improve service delivery to stay competitive. Customers demand new ways to access products, services, and support; innovative companies anticipate these demands and improve their customer-facing operations accordingly. From online check-in for a flight to instant messaging with a sales representative about a product, many methods that improve customer service also lower costs. New advancements can deliver products and services both more efficiently and more effectively. By studying and adapting many of these private sector models, HUD can foster new ideas and leverage technology and innovation to improve customer service delivery.

HUD published its Customer Service Plan on October 21, 2011. Because it is so closely aligned to the open government program, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has requested that the Open Government and Customer Service Plans be consolidated, with each maintaining its unique point of focus but also looking for synergies between them.

Those synergies are best illustrated through the cycle of engagement:

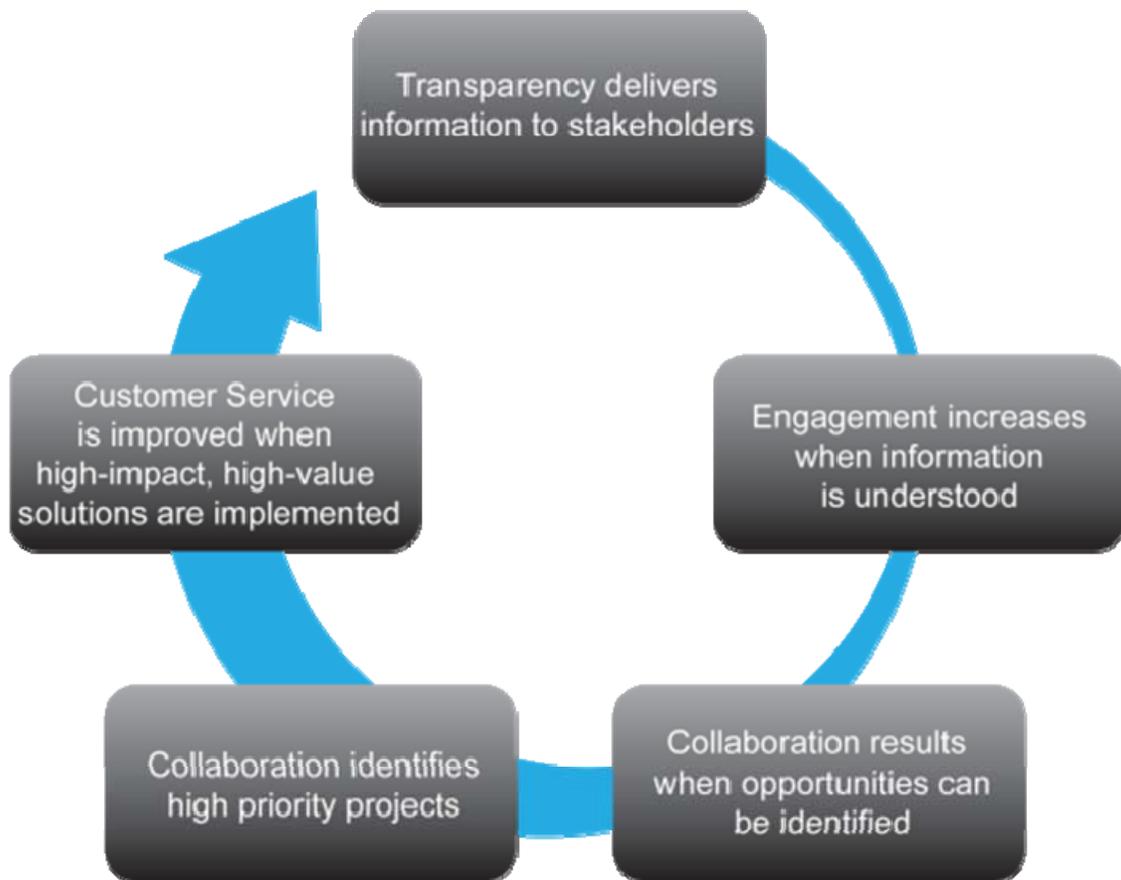


Figure 3: The Cycle of Engagement

HUD's approach to customer service planning focuses on four major components: strategy, process, technology, and people. Without any one of the components, the solution cannot be completely successful, and each component has a dependency on a robust open government program.

The Customer Service Plan is constructed to increase the amount of feedback and exchange with HUD customers. Based on the belief that if HUD customers can voice their concerns and ideas and have them

heard by HUD, then customer satisfaction will increase and customer service delivery will improve in response.

Process

Several business processes touch customers and provide the means for customers to touch HUD. These processes include multichannel communication, case management, and field service.

Multichannel Communication - Customers should be able to communicate with HUD in multiple ways. It is not unusual for a private organization's customer service agents to communicate across traditional channels like phone, e-mail, chat, and web self-service, as well as newer social channels like forums, Facebook, and Twitter. To be effective, organizations have to provide consistent customer service experiences across these channels. They also have to allow customers to start an interaction in one communication channel and continue it in another.

Case Management - Customer satisfaction often comes down to the agency's ability to gather, respond to, and resolve customer interactions. This is a standard case management process through which customer cases are routed, logged, and resolved. Good customer service also means that agency analysts have access to the latest knowledge about the area of the request, putting a premium on effective knowledge management.

Field Service - The field is where HUD most closely interacts with its customers. Field services include training, technical assistance, and day-to-day assistance with all aspects of standardized service delivery.

Technology

Part of the stated goal of the Customer Service Plan is to advance customer service by applying innovative technology. HUD knows that customer data management and technology infrastructure management are essential for innovative use of technology.

Customer Data Management - A key element of effective customer service is effective data management. Two critical aspects of effective data management are protection and security of individual privacy, and the development of a single view into data from the enterprise. Protecting customer identity is critical to maintaining customer loyalty and trust. A single view of the data is an important precondition of being able to respond quickly and effectively to emerging customer needs.

Technology Infrastructure - Best practices include managing customer service applications, maintaining system availability and reliability, and using sound project management practices.

People

People Management - Employee management and motivation is the most overlooked category of a business practice that can negatively affect the Department's customer service initiative. Attention must be paid to the culture within HUD and its leadership practices, collaboration methods, training programs, and performance measurement approaches.

Section 3 describes the customer service initiatives that HUD is underway at HUD.

1.4 Open Government Plan Version 2.0

Given the progress made on previous initiatives and the integration of customer service with open government, the theme of the next set of initiatives is in improving access to information. This includes tools to assist in decision making by HUD or its partners, process and tool improvements to include online workflow management, overall reductions in timeframes, and continuing engagement to solicit

innovative ideas from stakeholders. Figure 4 below illustrates all open government and customer service initiatives.

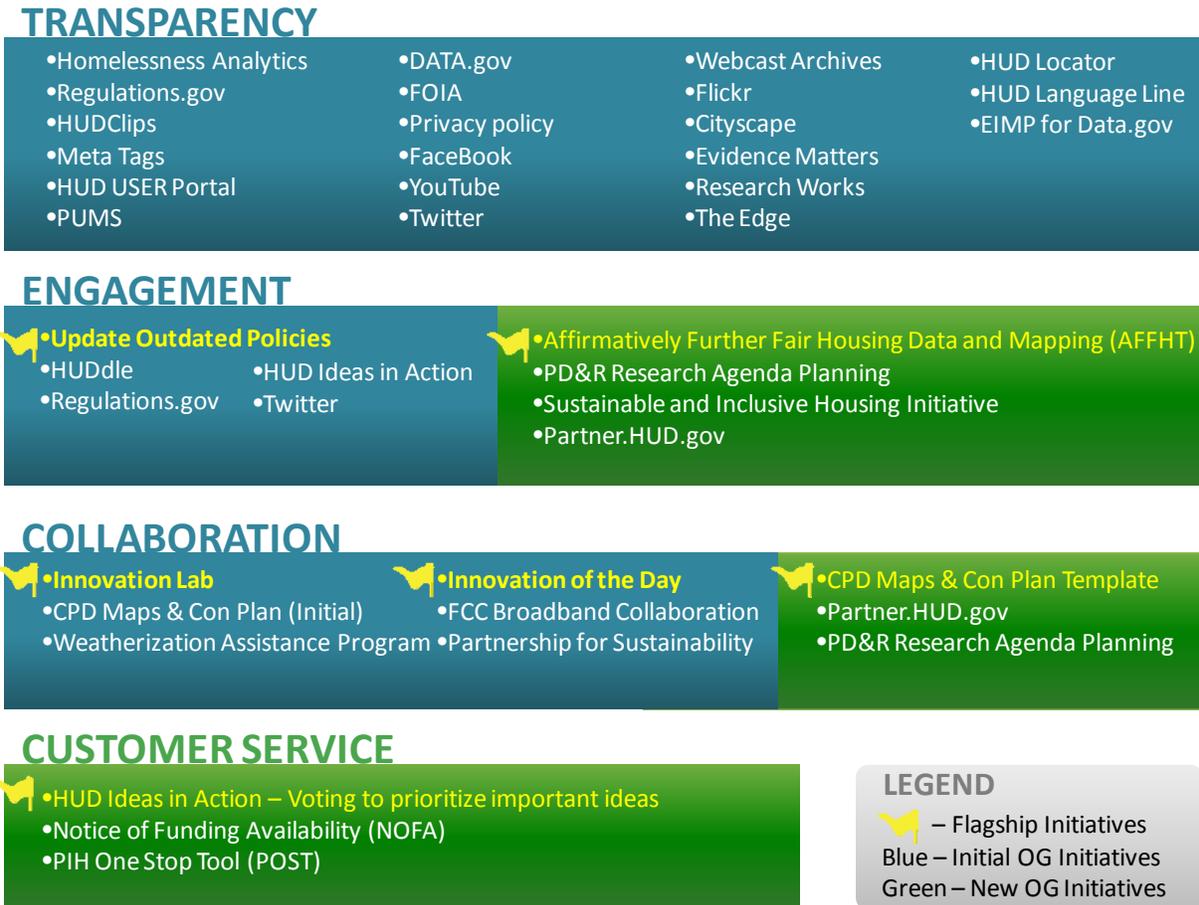


Figure 4: Open Government Initiatives

2. Open Government Initiatives

2.1 HUD's New Open Government Initiatives

2.1.1 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Data and Mapping Tool (Flagship)

HUD has played a leading role in administering the Fair Housing Act, enacted to prevent and prohibit discriminatory practices in the sale and rental of housing, since its adoption in 1968. While HUD's specific role has evolved over time, citizens most often associate HUD with the role it plays to facilitate the process of discrimination complaints. While this is certainly an important role, HUD seeks to do more to promote equal opportunity for fair housing by providing effective training, assistance, and oversight in addition to enforcement.

HUD makes certain funds available to individuals and organizations who seek to combat housing discrimination in local communities each year. In HUD's fiscal year 2010 Notice of Funding Availability and General Section (General Section), the Department renewed its commitment to the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) mission. This was done, by strengthening and clarifying aspects of the existing rule to require those who apply for funding to demonstrate how proposed activities will help overcome impediments to fair housing choice that are identified in the "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice" (AI) produced by state and/or local government(s). HUD is dedicated to further the cause through the issuance of a [proposed](#) new AFFH rule that will improve the public's ability to actively participate in meeting the challenge of identifying and solving fair housing problems.

HUD is developing an AFFH Tool (AFFHT) to help grantees rise to the challenge of finding innovative ways to go beyond the bare minimum for fair housing practices. In order to meet the objectives of the proposed new rule, applicants must be able to know where racial, ethnical, and socioeconomic diversity is lacking within local communities. They must be able to isolate relevant historical data and demographics from a national dataset and overlay it onto maps to effectively target their efforts in promoting fair housing where it is needed most.

Expected Outcomes:

The capabilities of the AFFHT allow communities to create a more comprehensive Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

The AFFHT is a Geographic Information System (GIS) application built specifically to aid HUD grantees and public housing authorities in completing an Assessment of Fair Housing for their communities. The AFFHT makes discriminatory housing practices transparent by providing the first-ever nationally uniform data on segregation and integration, racial and ethnic concentrations of poverty, and disparities in access to opportunity. Applicants will use the tool to sort data, mash it with GIS functionalities, and generate simplified reports that foster innovative fair housing solutions and reduce the burden associated with applying for grants.

The AFFHT was developed rapidly by leveraging existing hardware, software, and data implementations already in place at HUD, and serves as a model of best practices for future GIS application development. The tool was first premiered at the 2012 National Low Income Housing Coalition Housing Policy Conference & Lobby Day (March 25-28). Because the tool plays such a critical role in empowering applicants to meet the objectives of the proposed new rule, it is critical that a more refined beta version of the AFFHT be available by May 2012 to support the public comment process.

In the first phase of the AFFHT development, a prototype web tool will be created to meet the initial requirements to support HUD's new AFFH rule, including:

- A functional geospatial mapping tool, which will increase the transparency of housing discrimination by providing a range of HUD-provided geospatial data for fair housing analysis and planning
- A “mash-up” dashboard reporting system that will promote participation and collaboration by providing a set of standardized tables and charts to support fair housing analysis and planning
- A functional map and table export tool that will allow for the extraction of user-generated maps and tables that reduces burdens associated with grant applications and thus enables more individuals and organizations to participate in solving fair housing challenges

The beta tool will provide the public with something tangible to evaluate. The feedback generated will help HUD understand how to make the tool an even more effective means to increase the quality of public participation in combating discriminatory housing practices.

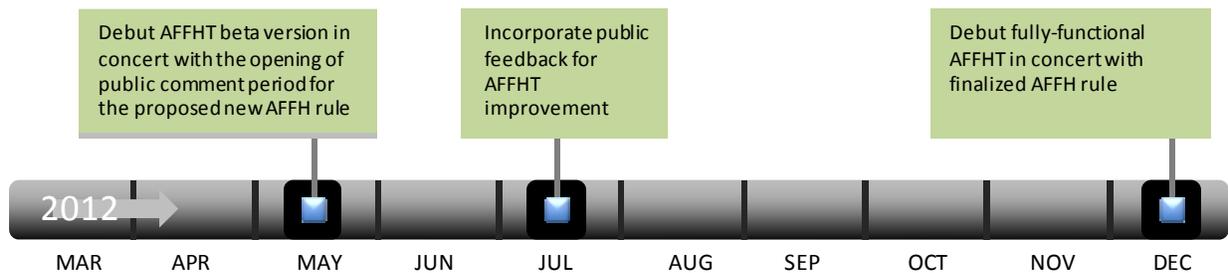
After collecting this feedback, HUD will engage in a second phase of development to add additional functionality and incorporate feedback received from the public. The AFFHT will be matured to a fully-functional fair housing analysis and planning tool with:

- A wizard-driven assessment interface that allows grantees to interact with data to develop Assessments of Fair Housing (AFH)
- An integrated system that allows users to upload additional geospatial demographic data to enhance mash-ups with HUD-provided data and a design data export tool for tabular data

These phases will proceed according to an iterative release schedule that culminates in a full production release by **2013** when the new regulation takes effect. The data and the mapping capabilities of the AFFHT will allow communities to create a more comprehensive Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) and enable HUD to better assess whether communities are complying with their AFFH obligations. Releasing the solution iteratively gives the public an opportunity to participate in the development of the tool, which increases the likelihood that it will be more quickly adopted and useful.

Initiative Milestones and Proposed Timeline

The timeline below presents a set of milestones and a proposed timeline for the AFFHT Flagship Initiative.



2.1.2 CPD Maps and Consolidated Plan Template for CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA (Flagship)

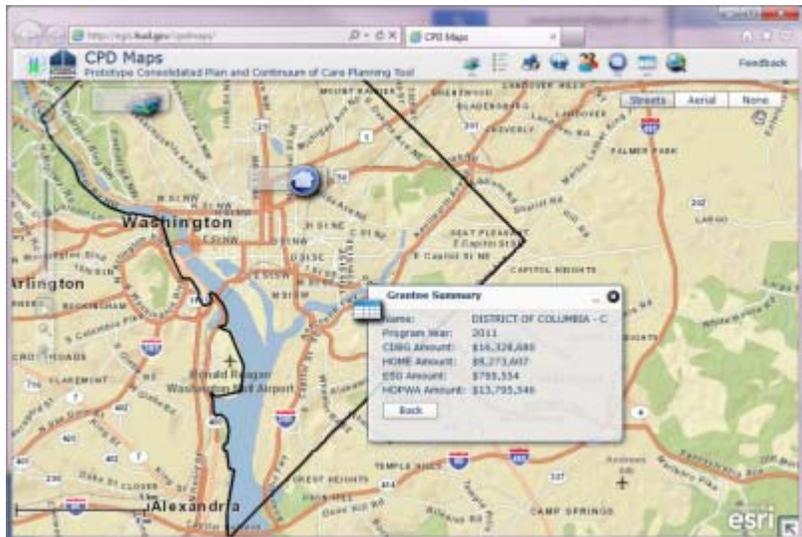
Expected Outcomes:

As a public-facing website, CPD Maps will promote more informed and constructive public participation in the Con Plan process by making the same planning data accessible to community members as well as grantees.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as Amended by S.896, The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, overhauls how the HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) provides housing and supportive services for homeless and other vulnerable populations through several key grant programs. The CPD Maps and the Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) template applications are being developed to help

recipients of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds use data and GIS technology to assess their affordable housing and community development needs and make strategic funding decisions in response to these needs. These tools use state-of-the-art technology to improve data sharing capabilities and enable rapid development of web "applets" for the display of geospatial data.

The CPD Maps and Con Plan template increases government transparency by combining demographic and market data from Census and investment data from CPD, PIH, and Multifamily Housing (MFH) divisions at HUD. This is to allow grant applicants to map grant awards and grant performance data in real time. HUD requires cities, counties, and states to develop a Con Plan to comprehensively identify place-based community needs and propose specific grant activities to address those needs. CPD is revising regulations on the Con Plan to streamline the process and make it more effective and efficient for grantees. Historically, Continuum of Care (CoC) participation in the Con Plan has been inconsistent, leaving many communities unable to effectively help homeless individuals and families find stable, permanent housing. The HEARTH Act directs CoC and ESG grantees to participate more closely in the Con Plan and more strategically align their grant activities with HOPWA, HOME, and CDBG activities in their region. The CPD Maps tool fosters greater participation by making the process more simple and intuitive.



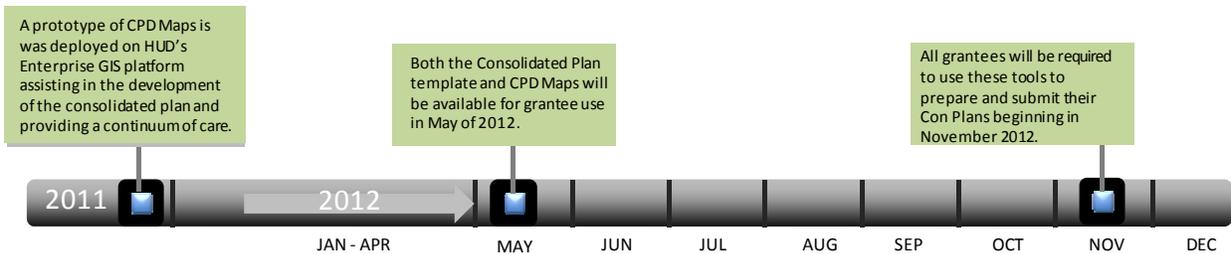
The electronic Con Plan submission template is an automated and data-driven module built within the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS), CPD's grant management and reporting system. CPD Maps and the Con Plan template are connected to each other, allowing data and maps to be imported from CPD Maps into Con Plans in IDIS and IDIS data can be displayed on CPD Maps. The integration of these tools improves data accuracy and availability and reduces the burden on grant applicants by bringing place-based data together into a single, interactive source. The wizard-driven interface allows even the most novice users to perform queries that help them define innovative

solutions to homelessness challenges. When completely deployed, the streamlined CPD Maps and Con Plan template will provide near real-time, web-based, graphical mapping of HUD grant data for both HUD and public consumption and reduce grantee data entry burden by an estimated 98,000 hours. Additionally, the tools promote real-time transparency of grant awards, planned activities, and accomplishments and provide unprecedented visibility. The public will be able to see projects “in the pipeline”, watch as they are being worked on, and see the results after completion.

A prototype of CPD Maps is available now on HUD’s Enterprise GIS platform at <http://egis.hud.gov/cpdmaps>. More data and enhanced features will be added in the coming months, including functionality to allow CPD Maps to display open source data from outside HUD’s GIS database and to provide users the ability to display CPD Maps data in their own GIS applications.

Initiative Milestones and Proposed Timeline

The timeline below presents a set of milestones and a proposed timeline for the CPD Maps and Con Plan Initiative.



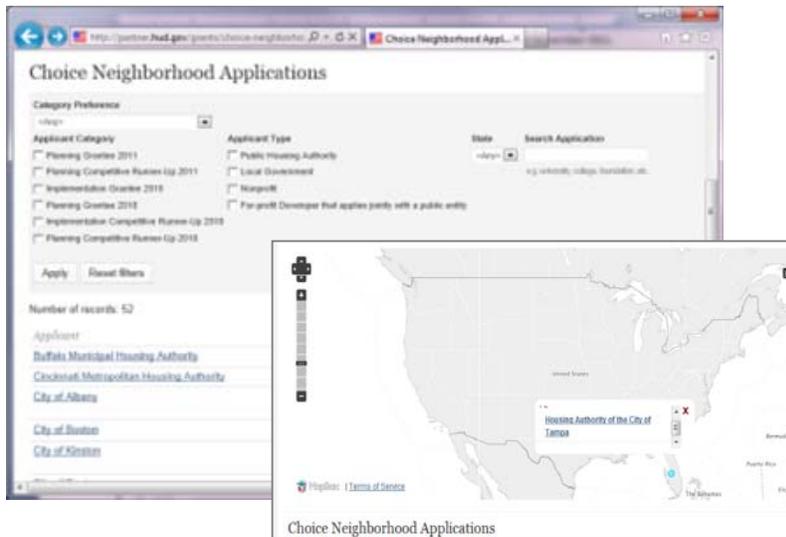
2.1.3 Partner.HUD.gov: Visualizing and Aligning Investments

In an effort to dramatically boost public/private partnerships and philanthropic support for strong community development plans across the country, HUD piloted a new web platform in November 2011. The platform, Partner.HUD.gov is an open source site that displays contact information, partnerships, geographic areas, and funding amounts and allows users to easily find and support local transformation efforts. Furthermore, Partner.HUD.gov was developed through an inter-agency agreement with the U.S. Department of Education and modeled after Data.ED.gov. The platform was piloted with the agency’s first round of Choice Neighborhood investments.

Partner.HUD.gov is changing the culture of grant making, by moving towards openness in practice. “Open Grantmaking” fosters collaboration among applicants, improves accountability, and provides transparency of all work products funded with grants.

“Openness in grantmaking is not simply transparency for its own sake. Rather, openness is a means to the end of fostering greater collaboration among potential applicants; improved accountability and grants management during the process; and greater ability for the public to access work products produced with grants.”
 - Beth Noveck, Former White House Deputy CTO for Open Government

For example, in 2011, HUD awarded over \$129 million in Choice Neighborhoods funding to 22 communities. To date, the grantees have obtained a combined \$7.3 million dollars in leveraged funding; nearly double their total grant award. In addition, HUD’s first Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants received a combined \$122 million in August 2011. Those grantees have leveraged an additional \$1.6 billion; more than 13 times their total grant award, including refocused and streamlined funds from private investors, cities, universities, and a range of local partners. However, strong demand has outpaced available funding. HUD received over 150 applications from public, private, and nonprofit

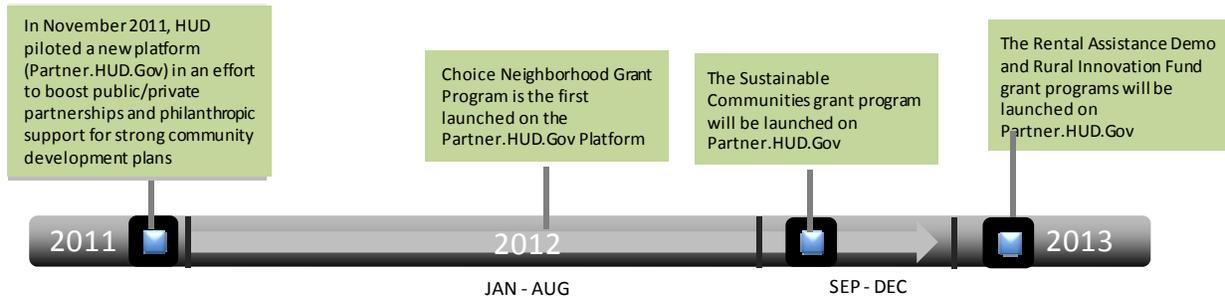


sponsors in 31 states and the District of Columbia. The magnitude of demand is equally large for HUD’s other competitive grant programs.

The magnitude of demand is equally large for HUD’s other competitive grant programs. Therefore as Partner.HUD.gov moves from pilot with Choice to full implementation, the agency stands to benefit from billions of dollars in aligned investments, substantially increased transparency, and positive public engagement.

Initiative Milestones and Proposed Timeline

Partner.hud.gov is planned to expand beyond the Choice Neighborhoods grant to support the following programs:



2.1.4 Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) Research Agenda Planning

In 2008, the National Research Council of the National Academies published a report on *Rebuilding the Research Capacity at HUD*. In this report they stated, “With limited financial and human resources, PD&R cannot be misinformed – about . . . critical policy questions achieve its potential, leaving policy makers and the public uninformed. . . PD&R’s engagement with the broader housing and urban policy and research communities falls disappointingly short.”

In order to more effectively engage the public in the development of its research agenda, PD&R has initiated a process for collecting and assessing research topics from researchers and other housing policy analysts. In 2010, they started an online vehicle for gathering public input for the short-run research agenda. Currently, PD&R is developing a long-term research agenda. This process began several months ago, when input was solicited from the public on the HUD USER website to create a transparent method for public engagement. HUD received approximately 150 comments on various topics, including suggestions for research and issues that should be examined more closely.

On November 17, PD&R held its first ever Research Agenda Conference to reach out to various partners to identify research needs and gaps. The event brought together academics, researchers, practitioners, non-profit workers, advocates, and federal government employees to discuss PD&R’s research agenda

for the next five to ten years. It also focused on generating engagement and feedback from partners about PD&R's comparative advantage in relation to important research and knowledge-building activities that are being discussed in other venues and by other thought leaders.

The program objectives were to connect public stakeholders in the development of PD&R public engagement forums going forward. Discussion topics included:

- What Works Collaborative (WWC)
- How housing matters conference
- Web portal for public outreach
- Research agenda conference
- Future engagement with stakeholders

The conference marked a new level of engagement and transparency for PD&R. It was the first time they brought a diverse representation of stakeholders together to give input on the future of research, and in this way the conference reflects HUD's new commitment to democratizing the agenda-setting process.

The online public input and the Research Agenda Conference were just the beginning of this agenda-setting process. PD&R anticipates 2012 to be a year of continued discussion, stakeholder analysis, and refinement of the agenda as HUD continues the research mapping process, which will ultimately result in substantial research projects, demonstrations, surveys, and papers that will inform the next generation of policy.

Research Agenda Conference Outcomes:

Several ideas arising from the conference have led to the initiation of data products to be developed and posted on Data.gov. For example, conference attendees recommended that HUD produce unique building identifiers that cut across programs.

The unique identifiers for buildings may be used by researchers to better measure the availability and quality of affordable housing in communities. Similar data optimization or standardization can result in the ability to create national datasets from community-based data collection projects, resulting in better agency-level information to support decision making.

The development of these identifiers is underway with the dataset expected to be made available to the public in FY 2012.

2.1.5 Sustainable and Inclusive Housing Initiative

The Sustainable and Inclusive Housing initiative seeks to engage governments, entrepreneurs, social institutions, financiers, communities, private industry, and other organizations to develop and foster innovations to generate affordable, inclusive, and sustainable urban housing. The partners are investing in a multi-year strategy to source ideas at work in communities around the world—and then mobilize the skills and resources to scale-up models that can sustain support the housing demands of an 80% urbanized population. The partners are committed to building a global community, and are developing a platform to propel networks of innovation and investment.

The initial phase of the strategy was launched in April 2010 with an open competition for innovative ideas to address global housing challenges. Held on the Ashoka Changemakers platform, nearly 300 global competitors submitted product, policy, or process ideas from regions across the world. A panel of judges narrowed the field to 11 finalists for further exploration, with the public voting on three overall winners. In July 2011, the partners, finalists, and winners committed to further strategies for putting their ideas into action during an award and learning event at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.



In September 2011, the U.S. Departments of State and HUD agreed to a substantial expansion of the initiative through three primary means. First HUD will prototype some of the most promising housing ideas from the competition: testing working models in different countries for scalability, sustainability, livability, and adaptability. The site analysis and project research, conducted by the American Planning Association, will run through much of 2012.

The second is the development of a global platform. The comprehensive online and off-line network will become a global community of housing best practices and innovations and provide an active forum for exchanging resources and knowledge. The platform will be primed with the lessons from the initial competition and outcomes from the prototype studies. The platform is expected to be launched in late 2012.

The last means of expansion will be through the creation of a second major challenge intended to be a magnet for large scale transformation in housing. With the network of global stakeholders already engaged on the platform, a major incentive program will be introduced to attract resources and investments to scale innovations. Competitors will be challenged to leverage partnerships, public and private resources, best practices available on the platform and elsewhere, and teams of social entrepreneurs to solve the problem of how to substantially scale-up proven housing innovations.

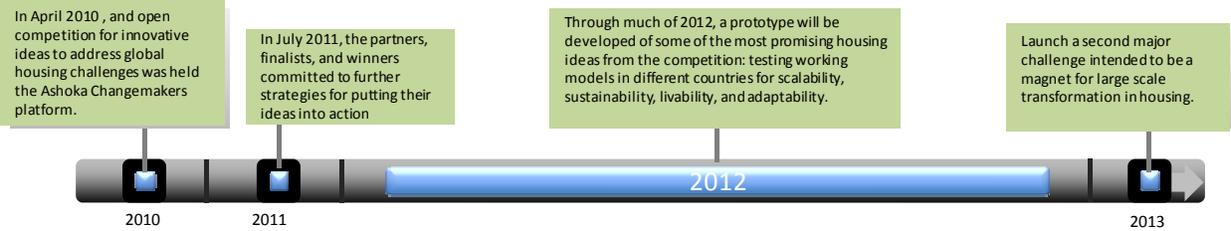
Collaborating for Innovation:

The initiative is designed to rapidly increase domestic and international sustainable HUD solutions. Further, it is intended to unite traditional housing practitioners with enterprising new partners across sectors, professions, and geographic boundaries, ultimately amplifying capacity and investment in housing. Through the platform, the initiative enables agencies to institutionalize best practices so that policy and process innovation can be embedded in government. Finally, the competition will generate sustainable and inclusive housing solutions that are implemented, measurably transformative at a national or multi-national level, and have the potential to be replicated for broader public good.

The U.S. Department of State is supporting the expansion of the initiative through its Energy Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) program; HUD is a central pillar in the ECPA strategy. HUD provides technical expertise, project management, and research resources. Both agencies solidified their intention to expand the initiative in a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action announced in September 2011. Both HUD and State seek private resources to leverage this major public investment.

Initiative Milestones and Proposed Timeline

The timeline below presents a set of milestones and a for Sustainable and Inclusive Housing initiative.



2.2 Updates on HUD Open Government Achievements

HUD undertook multiple open government initiatives with the overarching theme of improving openness while reducing the number of unnecessary, time-consuming, and redundant processes that currently exist within the Department. These initiatives have reduced bureaucratic inefficiencies, fostered more streamlined interaction with stakeholders, and improved the Department's ability to be open and responsive.

2.2.1 Bureaucracy Busting Flagship Initiatives

HUD defined four flagship initiatives in its original HUD Open Government Plan. The Department committed to prioritize and support these initiatives and provide administrative resources in order to propagate a culture of efficiency and responsiveness throughout. Each of these initiatives aligns with the Department's broader strategic goals while also enhancing transparency, engagement, and collaboration with the public, other agencies, and stakeholders. Figure 5 below illustrates HUD's Flagship initiatives:

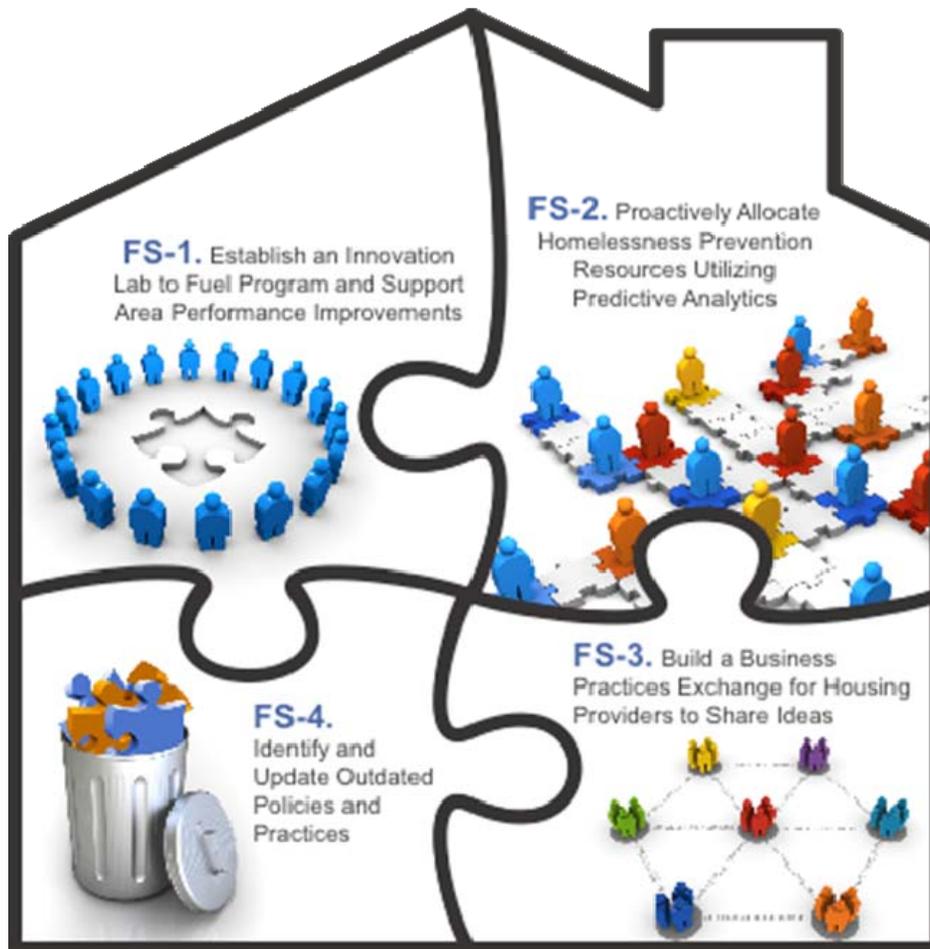


Figure 5: HUD's Flagship Initiatives

Establish an Innovation Lab to Enhance Program and Support Area Performance



The Challenge:

HUD's first open government flagship initiative was to establish an Innovation Lab which is intended to benefit HUD through the incubation of novel and unique ideas that improve its interactions with customers, increase mission efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce duplication of effort.

HUD understood that setting up such a lab would require significant consultation with stakeholders, the development of an appropriate governance structure, modification of relevant policies, and the procurement of a dedicated source of funding. At the same time, the Department recognizes the lab's importance in producing and disseminating new methods that complement HUD's efforts towards transparency, engagement, and collaboration.

HUD's Approach:

HUD researched leading practices for innovation throughout public, private, and academic sectors to produce an innovative framework and secure physical space within HUD to design ideas into specifications and incubate prototype solutions.

The goal of the Innovation Lab is to accelerate the formulation of transformational ideas into solutions which are implemented more efficiently. The Innovation Lab independently resources and with established innovation discipline, increases the chance that ideas that support HUD's Strategic Plan and open government goals can grow, be tested, and begin to provide essential value to HUD communities. HUD's Innovation Lab integrates dedicated resources, tools, and techniques to efficiently accelerate the development of solutions.

The Innovation Lab framework consists of a multidisciplinary process for evolving well-defined and compelling ideas to the point where a tangible solution is created or a decision is made that the idea is not currently viable. The framework guides ideation, application to the Innovation Lab, design of ideas, incubation (i.e. prototyping), and idea launch. Figure 6 illustrates the Innovation Lab process.



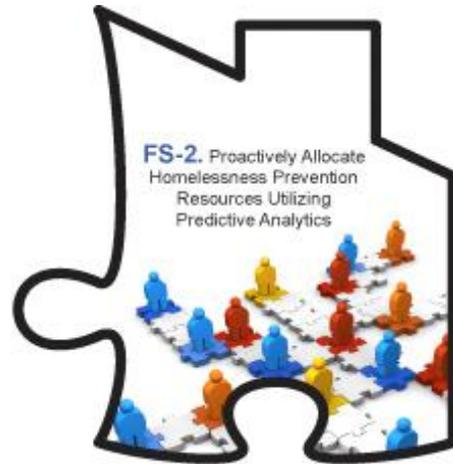
Figure 6: Innovation Lab

HUD has made great strides in developing the Innovation Lab framework, defining the appropriate governance structure, and securing physical space. HUD also began a comprehensive readiness commitment campaign that will engage all levels of the organization to build awareness of the Lab and garner support for innovative practices. In May 2012, HUD appointed a new Chief Technology and Innovation Officer whose priority is to move the Innovation Lab from concept to reality.

Empower Communities to Combat Homelessness Utilizing Predictive Analytics

The Challenge:

Since 2001, HUD has worked with communities to implement and use local Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) to collect client-level data to discover the number and characteristics of homeless persons. HUD reports local and national data on homelessness to Congress and the public through the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report. The information garnered from HMIS helps determine whether homelessness is increasing or decreasing and the sub-populations that are most affected. As a result of these efforts, community leaders and the public know more about the nature and size of the challenge and are better able to target limited resources to maximize effectiveness.



HUD planned to assume a proactive leadership role in the administration's efforts to combat homelessness by endeavoring to develop a new and innovative set of tools and processes. The Department's effort is unique because it seeks to predict the future course of homelessness in a community, and allow HUD to proactively allocate homelessness resources. Similar to the Department of the Interior's efforts to predict the occurrences of wildfires using relevant data on precipitation, wind, and temperature, HUD and its partners are attempting to predict which geographic areas have the greatest risk of homelessness using data from the government, private sector, and third party sources.

As part of this research effort, HUD intends to proactively explore partnerships with relevant non-profits, the US Census Bureau, Health and Human Services, the Departments of Labor, Commerce, Defense, the VA, and other agencies or groups to identify collaborative ways in which each organization can contribute to the fight against homelessness.

The first phase of this effort is to collect data that can be used in a predictive model, and the second phase is to develop an interactive model and make it available to the public. This tool will not only address homelessness, but also yield substantial cost savings. The costs of sheltering families in transitional housing are substantially greater than those associated with programs such as the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). *Predicting when and where homelessness will strike will allow HUD and its local partners to use more affordable and sustainable long-term programs instead of short-term, expensive, and patchwork solutions.*

HUD's Approach:

HUD partnered with the National Center on Homelessness among Veterans (NCHAV) within the VA to engage in a multi-stage Homelessness Analytics Initiative (HAI) to create an interactive website to forecast impacts of changes in homelessness, allow users to explore predictive impacts, and provide users with customizable information. Figure 7 below, illustrates the objectives of the HAI program.

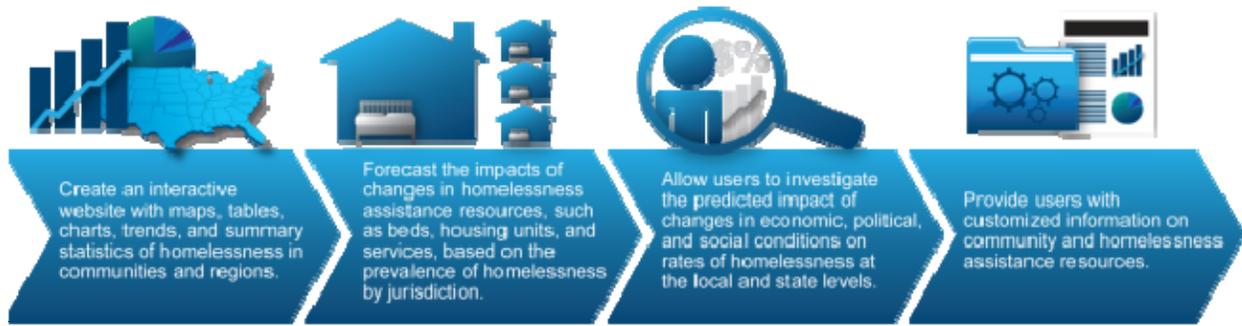


Figure 7: Homelessness Analytics Initiative Objectives

While the VA’s NCHAV is leading the project, the analytics application is a collaboration between the VA, Dr. Dennis Culhane, renowned expert in homelessness from the University of Pennsylvania and HUD. HAI will consist of a database of socio-economic indicators related to homelessness which will be available to researchers, public officials and the general public.

The HAI allows users to access national, state, and local information about homelessness among the general population veterans, risk, and protective factors for homelessness, services, and resources. Users will include researchers, service providers, policy makers, and those seeking services. The HAI empowers communities, organizations, and individuals with critical information on homelessness trends, factors related to homelessness, and services in place to prevent and intervene in situations of homelessness, which enables the VA and HUD to plan and allocate resources and effectively coordinate efforts to address homelessness.

Below is a summary of key project activities and their status to date:

Stage	Status
<p>Stage 1: Data Identification, Acquisition, & Cleaning</p> <p>Compare current data on homelessness prevalence at the community level with the quantity and geographic distribution of homelessness assistance resources to identify gaps between supply and demand and to forecast how homelessness rates would be affected by changes in available resources</p>	Complete
<p>Stage 2: Data Analysis – Predictive Model</p> <p>Introduce an econometric model of geographic variation in rates of homelessness to allow forecasting of homelessness rates based on macroeconomic and housing factors, demography, social services, community expenditures, public health outcomes, and criminal justice indicators</p>	Complete
<p>Stage 3: Application Development</p> <p>Assemble the data from the first two stages to create an online, interactive application. The application will allow the use of data on homelessness, on available homeless assistance services, and on exogenous economic, social and political factors affecting homelessness</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Beta release scheduled for September 2012</p>

Build a Business Practices Exchange for Assisted Housing Providers to Share Ideas

The Challenge:

HUD not only wants to ‘bust bureaucracy’ within its own corridors, but also act as a catalyst for change among the various state, local, and tribal assisted housing providers with which it collaborates. The Department aims to create a best practices repository where housing providers can upload programs they consider to be successful for review by other interested parties. Much as visitors to Amazon.com can vote on the usefulness and relevance of user-submitted reviews, viewers of the best practices stored in the repository will be able to vote on those they find most helpful.



The repository should be a community in which housing provider personnel, their customers, and the general public can collaborate and communicate with each other without the direct involvement of HUD. The Department planned to also utilize this tool to help local housing providers, especially those with limited resources to find and utilize previously developed plans, which will allow them to focus on delivering value to their customers.

HUD’s Approach:

The Office for International and Philanthropic Innovation (IPI) is located within the PD&R and supports HUD by working across public, private, and civil sectors to find new solutions to old problems and align ideas and resources. IPI supports HUD in its mission to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. IPI conducts research, develops networks, and facilitates collaboration among key partners and resources.

Key Features of Innovation of the Day:

- The submission process to IOD is designed to be easy and quick with straightforward criteria
- Anyone can submit: HUD staff, local governments, multi-lateral organizations, non-profits, citizen activists
- The submission must be an actual innovation, not just an idea: a policy, practice, and/or product that was implemented and had a positive, advancing impact
- Innovations will be featured on HUD.gov and social media outlets with brief descriptions and multimedia submitted

IPI, in collaboration with teams across PD&R and HUD, is working to establish an online Innovation of the Day (IOD) platform. Facilitated by IPI, the site is an online platform for submissions and a best practices repository. Best models, practices, and systems concerning housing and community development from inside and outside of HUD will be collected and shared with the public across the world.

This simple and intuitive platform is designed to elevate the best models, practices, and systems in the area of housing and community development, from both inside and outside HUD. This data will be exposed to the public through continuous updates to the Innovation of the Day website. The submissions will be available to HUD and non-HUD employees to encourage a synergy on these types of innovations. HUD employees connect with the work as they begin to notice, search for, and submit

innovations from the field and from within HUD. This creates a sense of ownership, awareness, and connection with the work in the field and gives HUD staff the chance to engage as they may not have previously. Citizens and stakeholders individuals will also develop a greater connection with HUD and its work in housing and community development. It will indirectly give some exposure to their own work as they prepare and post their submissions.

The “Innovations” broken down into various categories can be commented on, discussed, *liked*, and shared further through a wide variety of social media networks already available (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.). The public is therefore able to collaborate and communicate with each other without the direct involvement of HUD.

The team supporting IOD is aiming for an initial launch of the IOD platform in July 2012. The first set of features will include:

- A **web form** submission process that allows individuals to submit their innovations for consideration. It allows for a variety of inputs with required fields from the submitter. It is important that the form be designed so that the information feeds directly into a database that can be queried and analyzed for internal and external users
- A **database** will serve both as an internal PD&R research tool as well as a query interface system for external users online. It will also be used to gather information for populating the dashboard. The nine general areas above and their subsets require individual and aggregate functionality
- A **Microsite** to archive all Innovation submissions and to provide a search and query tool that generates results from the archive. It will also serve as a homepage where a top quality “IOD” is featured prominently
- An **IOD banner/slideshow** is being developed to capture a snapshot of innovations that will rotate on a weekly basis. They will be widget-type banners that can exist on the HUD homepage and/or the HUD open government page and/or the IOD microsite. These are the submissions that HUD will feature as daily innovations

Identify and Update Outdated Policies and Practices



The Challenge:

HUD has historically had difficulty updating outdated policies, regulations, and practices that no longer bring mission value and that are needlessly hindering the Department’s performance. These barriers to progress exist at the federal, state, and local levels, and require that HUD adopt a targeted and balanced effort to address them. Modifying outdated rules and regulations will not only increase HUD’s efficiency, but also help in changing the Department’s culture to one that is more proactive in identifying mission impediments and results in more flexibility in serving its customers.

This initiative is in line with HUD’s strategic plan and involves all functional areas within the Department. External stakeholders, public participants, and HUD employees who adhere to outdated policies will aid in their identification. This requires HUD to engage with relevant stakeholder groups and publish its current policies, processes, and regulations for public comment to identify inefficient documents that can be updated.

HUD’s Approach:

In order to identify policies and procedures that needed to be developed, HUD’s OSPM formed Tiger Teams that engaged HUD’s regional offices to solicit employee input. The offices that participated were

in Washington, DC, Denver, and Kansas City. HUD also engaged the public and its employees on the development of its strategic plan and social media strategy, both of which were implemented utilizing this input. Finally, OSPM drafted an internal Editorial Calendar to further the agency's policy improvement program by engaging stakeholders on a variety of mission topics focused around issues of transparency, engagement, and collaboration. The calendar will determine the schedule of conversations around uniform topics.

In order to ensure web content is updated, HUD implemented a Web Recertification Policy requiring each organization head to certify, in writing, each quarter that the web content for their organization is responsible for is both current and accurate. At least one month prior to the end of each quarter, the web managers prepare an email reminding content owners that certifications are due. A deadline is established for the content owners to submit their certifications.

Reforming HUD's Hiring Practice:

The Federal hiring process needed to be reformed and HUD was a model for this transformation. The former hiring process was lengthy, slowed down by burdensome requirements, bureaucratic processes, and outdated technology systems. The Office of Personnel Management developed an End-to-End Hiring Roadmap in concert with the Chief Human Capital Officers. The Roadmap focuses on reducing the time it takes to hire and makes the application process easier and more easily understood by potential applicants.

Once implementing the new hiring practice, HUD reduced the time and steps it takes to hire a new employee significantly. It is one of the few agencies that quickly met President Obama's goal of 80 days to bring in a new employee.

"Our new process is 14 steps, the old one was 39 steps, and we have not just redesigned the process, but we've provided workshops for managers and improved accountability across the agency. We got our hiring process down to 76 days. We are transitioning to a resume-based system and using registries to find candidates."

- Shaun Donovan, HUD Secretary

2.2.2 Transparency Initiatives

The Open Government Directive describes transparency as promoting "accountability by providing the public with information about what the government is doing." In order to further this goal, HUD has increased its efforts to publish information in open formats that can be utilized by a wide variety of users. The following sub-sections provide an update on transparency related projects HUD is currently undertaking.

Ensure HUD Regulations Are More Easily Available and Usable Online

The Challenge:

One of HUD's major mission areas is the administration and enforcement of laws. For example, fair housing laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or family status. In many cases, these laws and statutes are not known to the public and are not always easily accessible.

In order to enhance the transparency of these laws and statutes, HUD needed to publish its regulations in machine-readable formats for direct access to the public, HUD employees from other mission areas, other government personnel, and private-sector developers. This initiative results in broader dissemination, awareness, and understanding of these regulations. Third parties, such as community-

based non-for-profits, then are able to readily disseminate information to their constituents and more proactively inform citizens of their rights.

HUD's Approach:

HUD has taken several critical steps to publish regulations and make them easily accessible to all.

- HUD developed [HUD Client Information and Policy System](#) (HUDClips), which is an online resource for forms, handbooks, policies, and other related information. All HUD regulations are required to be posted within HUDClips.
- HUD has instituted the requirement of "meta tags" for all internet and intranet pages. Meta tags, for example, can tell a browser what "character set" to use or whether a web page has self-rated itself in terms of adult content. All pages with regulations or directives will contain meta tags so that when users search the HUD site for specific regulations, those tagged sites get top ranking in the search and appear at the top of the results list.
- Regulations.gov is a source for information on the development of Federal regulations and other related documents. Through this site, the public can find, read, and comment on regulatory issues of interest. HUD actively participates on Regulations.gov, which contains current and proposed Departmental regulations, giving citizens the opportunity to comment on proposed and future laws and regulations before they become official.

Publish HUD-Assisted Housing Locations and Related Information

The Challenge:

HUD strives to ensure that America's citizens have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing. The Department does this through the outright ownership of housing stock, and also through various subsidies and rental voucher programs.

Detailed information about HUD's housing portfolio, such as the availability of units and where they are located, has traditionally been inaccessible to the public. HUD aims to gather this information and put it online in an easily-searchable and machine-readable format that will allow for greater ease of use for citizens requiring HUD's services. Moreover, it would enable researchers, developers, and other consumers of data outside of the Department to better utilize the information that is being collected.

In addition to aiding citizens participating in HUD's numerous assisted housing programs, the greater flexibility, accountability, and transparency that results from this program is of great assistance to the Department in monitoring the state of its assets and the use of its funds.

HUD's Approach:

PD&R developed the [HUD USER](#) portal to publish research initiatives, publications, and data sets in housing, sustainable communities, community development, and more. PD&R is responsible for maintaining current information on housing needs, market conditions, and existing programs, as well as conducting research on priority housing and community development issues. HUD USER provides interested researchers access to the original data sets generated by PD&R-sponsored data collection efforts, including the American Housing Survey, HUD median family income limits, and microdata from research initiatives on topics such as housing discrimination, HUD-insured multifamily housing stock, and public housing population. To help users identify which data are useful to them, two matrices are provided; one for PD&R data sets and a second that lists other available data from HUD. Each data set is rated by its relevance and usefulness for research in the designated categories.

HUD USER makes available printed and electronic copies of published HUD research. Primarily sponsored by PD&R, these reports, executive summaries, case studies, and guidebooks span the fields of

housing and urban development and are available as free downloads. Most reports can also be ordered in hard copy from the HUD USER Web Store.

Within HUD USER, a Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) database and tool was launched to help the research community better understand the characteristics of households receiving assistance under the Department's main rental programs. This database provides valuable household-level data for five percent of households assisted through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), Public Housing, Section 8 Project-based Rental, and the Section 202/811 programs. Updated annually, this database includes data on family type, household income, race, gender, as well as other household characteristics.

With this household-level dataset, researchers can calculate results and statistical relationships at levels of demographic or geographic detail not available in HUD's tabular reports. For example, the PUMS database contains data on the amount of adjusted income each family pays towards rent and utilities. The new public data reveals that 10.4 percent of HUD-assisted families living in rural areas pay at least 40 percent of their adjusted income for rent and utilities, compared to 8.8 percent of their urban counterparts.

HUD takes the protection of tenant privacy seriously. Therefore, no personally identifiable information (PII) will be released, such as social security numbers, names, birthdates, or addresses to assure that it will not be possible to identify any individual or household. HUD intends to limit the sample to just five percent of available data and will mask data for variables with a high identification risk. The sample size is large enough to be statistically valid and representative of states and the nation as a whole while small enough to preserve privacy.

"This public database [PUMS] helps to provide a much clearer picture of how our programs work. Better information makes for better public policy. We're offering the research community and, by extension, the American public, a more transparent window into our programs and the people we serve."

- Raphael Bostic, HUD's Asst Secretary PD&R

Make Housing Related Laws More Accessible to the Public

The Challenge:

HUD's Office of Hearings and Appeals is an independent adjudicatory office within the Department whose administrative law judges conduct hearings and make determinations in accordance with existing statutes, regulations, and procedures. These administrative law judges have jurisdiction to hear and decide cases involving certain sections of the US Code, as well as cases involving interstate land sales, HUD sanctions, and community block grants. The Department's current website allows citizens to read substantive decisions issued by administrative law judges, but does not contain subsequent determinations that might have been made by either the HUD Secretary or a Federal court.

This means citizens cannot necessarily discover the final outcome of a case. Additionally, the available cases are organized in simple chronological and alphabetical order, which makes conducting effective searches difficult. Uploading these cases in an easily-searchable, machine-readable format would improve both the access and transparency of such decisions.

HUD will utilize this initiative to publish housing related laws using one centralized site that is easily accessible. Similar to the Public Resource's notion of a Law.gov site, or the Federal Communications Commission's calls for transparency in expanding broadband access, HUD's site will be a central location that its customers can use to view and comment on laws affecting their housing rights.

HUD's Approach:

HUD proactively submits datasets to [Data.gov Law Data Community](#). This community gives users access to legal data from across the Executive Branch in the form of administrative decisions, case filings, legal

interpretations, and agency directives. The community provides a wealth of HUD related legal datasets to the general public. In addition, advisory opinions and interpretations by HUD general counsels provide insight into agencies' current positions on the statutes and regulations they enforce.

In addition to the Law Data Community, HUD publishes proposed regulations and laws and obtains feedback from citizens using the Regulations.gov. Users can find, read, and comment on regulatory issues which promote participation and feedback from citizens. They can also comment on other user's comments resulting in a valuable dialog which may affect the content of a proposed regulation or law. Users can sign up for email alerts, Rich Site Summary (Really Simple Syndication) feeds, and submit petitions. All of these features keep the citizens engaged in the process and helps HUD develop regulations in a transparent and collaborative manner, which meet the citizen's needs.

Utilize Web 2.0 and Social Media Tools to Inform and Educate the Public and HUD Personnel

The Challenge:

Since HUD performs a diverse set of functions, citizens seeking its services must often procure different forms from several different program areas. The resulting process can be confusing and time-consuming.

The utilization of Web 2.0 or social media tools and applications empowers citizens by making complicated processes more transparent. For example, YouTube could be a potential venue for training the public on how to apply for Section 8 housing. Numerous opportunities exist across the Department including innovative solutions that are not only directed at the public and customers, but internal HUD employees as well. Field personnel have often stated the need for services that currently exist within HUD, but that they are simply unaware that they have access. Web 2.0 and social media delivery mediums could notify HUD field personnel of specific capabilities that can address their unique needs.

HUD's Approach:

In an effort to better serve the American people, HUD has embraced social media and streamlined its website contact tools to facilitate open communication and total transparency. HUD embraced the popular social networking sites Facebook and Twitter, created its own YouTube channel, developed a mobile version of its website, and established Wiki and RSS feeds. HUD expects these tools will help it stay connected with a broader base of internet users.



Twitter has become a primary channel for HUD to disseminate news, updates, and hold discussions. A Twitter news stream widget is published on the HUD.gov homepage for up-to-the-minute news and information. In March 2012, HUD hosted for the first time ever, a Twitter Town Hall meeting to launch the Strong Communities, Strong Cities (SC2) Fellowship program. To launch this program, HUD opened its twitterverse doors to the public to tweet their questions, responses, and ideas using the hashtag #AskSOHUD. In addition, HUD has used Twitter for outreach and community interaction by holding twitter chats during HUD learning sessions, publishing job opportunities, and reporting updates.

HUD has also launched a HUD YouTube channel and a HUD [Webcast Archive](http://HUD Webcast Archive). HUD's videos are easily accessible and provide many services to the public, including helping consumers navigate through the process of shopping for a home or even a mortgage.

In an effort to encourage appropriate use of social media, HUD developed Department Policies and Procedures for Use of Social Media Site by HUD offices and staff.

Create an Enterprise Wide Data Inventory and Storage Service

The Challenge:

HUD currently manages over 52 programs that rely upon the collection and analysis of data. This data covers a broad range of information about housing inventory, customer demographics, performance of public housing authorities, and various other kinds of information. Some of this is stored in open formats and published on specific program area websites. HUD seeks to make this data more accessible by continuing its work to create an enterprise wide data inventory to properly log the location, purpose, and other relevant criteria of each data asset. This will include standardizing metadata, providing data context and usability guidance to consumers of the information, and distributing data through modern channels (including Data.gov).

The Department will also investigate the utility of an enterprise data storage service. Either through utilizing Data.gov's proposed shared data storage service or its own repository, HUD will identify data that exists within its program and support areas, aggregate it, store it in one centralized service, and then publish it on Data.gov, provided that the data in question is not sensitive in nature.

HUD's Office OCIO will conduct a feasibility study that compares Data.gov's shared data storage service and any other options that may support this initiative. Implementation of this initiative will be performed in a phased approach that will identify goals that can be realistically achieved in 6, 12, and 24 months.

HUD's Approach:

HUD USER serves as a clearinghouse for research data, publications, and datasets for Housing, Sustainable Communities, and Community Development Research and data. HUD USER publishes a series of three periodicals that support PD&R's mission to provide reliable information to researchers, practitioners, advocates, industry groups, foundations, and the general public. In addition, PD&R delivers all of its latest electronic news, research summaries, and report links in a weekly email.

Data sets generated and displayed by PD&R-sponsored efforts include the American Housing Survey, HUD Median Family Income Limits, Fair Market Rents, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Data, GIS Maps, and Info-graphics. All data sets are available as free downloads on HUD USER. Some data is distributed in the form of periodicals, provided on the HUD USER site. For example:

- **Cityscape**: is PD&R's journal of policy development and research published three times a year.
- **Evidence Matters**: is a periodical available in print and online, presents objective, unbiased views, based on research findings on key housing and urban development topics to inform advocates, state and local policymakers, Congress, and researchers on future policy directions.
- **ResearchWorks**: is the official newsletter of PD&R. In January 2012, ResearchWorks became part of *The Edge*, PD&R's biweekly online magazine. *The Edge* provides a concise view of PD&R research, periodicals, events, and publications in a convenient "all-the-news-at-a-glance" format.
- **U.S. Housing Market Conditions**: is a quarterly report that provides the latest nationwide housing statistics.

The HUD USER Bibliographic Database contains annotated citations to research reports, articles, books, and data sources in housing policy, building technology, economic development, urban planning, and other related fields.

HUD also publishes datasets on [Data.gov](https://data.gov) in the areas of law and construction and housing.

Create an Online Directory of Major Points of Contact within HUD

The Challenge:

In addition to its call centers, HUD lacked an easily accessible online directory of its vital points of contact. The creation of such a directory would be a simple, quick, and a low-cost way of making HUD more transparent and accountable to the public.

HUD's Approach:

HUD took on this initiative by developing an external, easily accessible online directory of HUD personnel. The [HUD Locator](#) allows all stakeholders to search HUD employees by last name and provides the following information for each:

- Full Name
- Corr. Code
- Room Number
- Phone Number
- Extension
- Location



In addition, HUD Locator provides background information on key principle staff (Secretary, Deputy, and Assistance Secretaries), displays headquarter and local offices as well as contact information for staff within each office, and HUD's toll-free numbers. HUD Locator was a quick and easy way to increase transparency and make the staff and offices more available to stakeholders.

Create Foreign Language Resources at HUD's Field and Headquarters Offices

The Challenge:

The Department recognized that it needed to increase its capacity to provide services to non-English speakers. HUD planned to build on its previous achievements and create new phone and web-based services at its headquarters, regional field offices, and call centers that are specifically tailored to citizens from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The primary emphasis is to make HUD's field offices more receptive and open to speakers of foreign languages and strive to be as flexible as possible in allocating resources based on the various backgrounds of customers in each field office's geographic area.

HUD's Approach:

In December 2011, HUD launched the HUD Language Line, a live pilot telephone interpretation service that is helping HUD employees communicate with the public in more than 175 languages.

"Access to government should not be determined by how well a person speaks English. The HUD Language Line is another example of HUD's efforts to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency have equal access to HUD programs and services."

- John Trasviña, HUD Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

The service operates 24 hours a day and it provides HUD with the ability to better inform Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals and families about HUD housing programs, services, and activities. This pilot program will run through September 2012. HUD staff across the nation is able to use the HUD Language Line to provide non-English speaking individuals and families with information about fair housing, homeownership, lead abatement, housing assistance, and other HUD programs and services. When a person with LEP contacts the Department, the HUD staff personnel taking the call contacts the Language Line and speaks with a live operator who connects the caller and HUD staff personnel with an interpreter who speaks the caller's language.

HUD also offers an [LEP Website](#) to promote equal access to housing programs by providing important HUD documents in 12 different languages. HUD's expanded LEP website features factsheets, housing brochures, and other HUD forms. The site offers brochures on fair housing, model lease agreements, information about HUD's Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8), and Resident Rights and Responsibilities. The larger LEP initiative is in response to Executive Order 13166, which requires all federal, local, and state agencies that receive federal Funding to ensure that people with limited language skills have meaningful access to government programs and services.

Participation in Federal Transparency Initiatives

The Challenge:

Throughout the Federal government, there are many initiatives focused around transparency. HUD undertook many them through the open government program. HUD planned to continue to publish datasets onto Data.gov, report spending on USASpending.gov, and publish investment metrics on the IT Federal IT Dashboard. In addition, HUD was to continue its work on FOIA, records management, and privacy to ensure compliance with Federal directives and guidelines.

HUD's Approach:

HUD has proactively participated in a number of Federal initiatives which support the open government goal of transparency.

Data.gov, Recovery.gov, USASpending.gov, and the Federal IT Dashboard

Since the inception of Data.gov, HUD's Enterprise Information Management (EIMP) has been actively engaged in the Federal Data.gov community by participating in meetings and providing input on initial guidance and tools. For the kick-off of the Open Government Directive, OMB requested that each Federal agency post three high value datasets to Data.gov. HUD's EIMP Team rapidly responded and exceeded OMB's goal by delivering five (5) datasets. The program continues to meet HUD's Data.gov reporting goal of one high-value dataset each month that is compliant with privacy requirements and approved by the steward organization. Additional accomplishments include:

- Developing a process to identify and assure the quality of candidate datasets. This process uses the EIMP's extensive repository of Data Quality and Data Management Maturity Assessments of HUD's mission-critical systems to identify datasets that are suitable for publishing on Data.gov
- Engaging HUD's Data Steward Advisory Group (DSAG), composed of all of HUD program areas and regional offices, to get involved in the Data.gov community and recommend additional high-value datasets
- Standing up a "Nominate a dataset" website for HUD employees and contractors to recommend high-value datasets (<http://hudweb.hud.gov/po/i/edm/news.cfm>) and developing communications about Data.gov and the process to nominate a dataset



The EIMP, in collaboration with HUD’s Innovation Lab, is taking the next steps to make appropriate data assets more accessible, understandable, and reliable. The next steps include:

- Gaining a better understanding of HUD’s current data assets by collecting key metadata about them as part of an initiative to refresh the system inventory
- Using HUD’s enterprise architecture repository to create a data inventory that is linked to the other layers (e.g. business, system) of HUD’s architecture enabling decision support
- Initiating an Information Sharing Segment Architecture to identify opportunities to improve performance, establish and adopt target standards for data management, and provide the plan and requirements to drive the development of enterprise data services
- Formalizing the Data.gov identification, prioritization, and validation processes to continue to make high-value data that conforms to HUD’s quality and privacy standards that is visible and accessible to our partners and stakeholders

As HUD continues to identify high quality and value data within each program area, it immediately begins the publication and review process for submitting data to Data.gov. The Department also is leveraging the tool as a repository enabling the public to easily discover and utilize the data. Data.gov increases the ability of the public to find, understand, and utilize information that is owned by the Federal government. Since the last Open Government Plan, HUD has increased the number of high-value datasets from 5 to 14 and the number of tools from 8 to 15. HUD’s datasets and tools are comprised of everything from physical inspection scores and housing surveys to public housing rent estimates. HUD continues to follow a standard process (Figure 8 below) for identifying and publishing datasets.

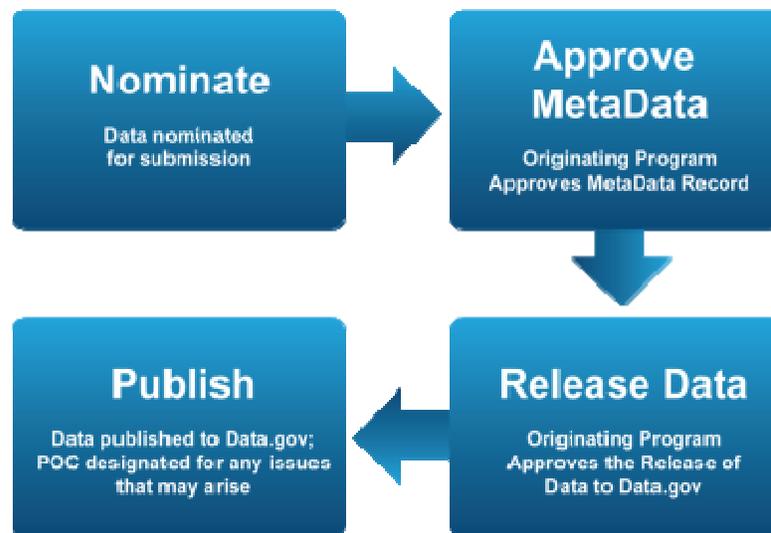


Figure 8: HUD’s Data.gov Submission Process

HUD’s ability to publish its data is dependent upon the completion of its data inventory. HUD is committed to improving data quality and availability throughout the department, and has launched an agency-wide transformation initiative for Enterprise Data Management Services (EDMS). The EDMS initiative will:

- Conduct an **Enterprise Data Management Assessment** to understand the current state of HUD’s Data Management capabilities, existing issues, challenges, and best practices; and Define

transition strategy and planning, as well as identifying priorities to reach the desired data management environment

- Produce an **Analysis of Enterprise Master Data Management (MDM)** to understand and document HUD's use of highly reused data and the value of managing enterprise-wide single source, high-quality data. Once this effort is concluded it will support the following subtasks:
 - Establish a **Data Governance Council** to facilitate data stewardship and decision making on data issues and solutions. This council startup and support may entail the re-establishment of the DSAG
 - Define the scope of master reference data to be addressed as a priority and based on that prioritize, implement a **pilot project** that covers all relevant MDM activities but on a very limited data scope
 - **Implement data management services** covering the entire scope of reference data at HUD. This effort should only be undertaken after successful implementation and acceptance of the pilot

HUD complies with the USASpending.gov initiative and actively provides award data to the site.

HUD also participates in the Regulations.gov initiative which posts HUD-related regulations and laws for public review and provide users the opportunity to weigh in on the merits of regulations.

HUD also makes regular updates to the Federal IT dashboard as a means to increase transparency. The Federal IT Dashboard is a website which enables Federal agencies, industry, the general public, and other stakeholders to view details of Federal information technology investments. As of this date, out of the 48 investments HUD submitted data for, 100% are within budgeted cost, and 82% are within schedule.

Records Management Program

HUD utilizes a robust records management process to properly preserve relevant documentation. The Department follows a three-stage lifecycle:

1. Create record of documentation
2. Enable the maintenance and ongoing use of documentation
3. Archive and/or dispose of unnecessary documentation

In 2012 HUD initiated a new enterprise transformation initiative to develop a HUD Electronic Records System (HERS) to comply with a November 28, 2011 White House memorandum instructing Federal agencies to move into a digital-based record keeping system. The solution will make official records available and accessible to the public, providing clear and accurate information about the decisions and actions of the Department. The solution will serve as the cornerstone for a future Enterprise Content Management/Enterprise Document Management (ECM/EDM) solution. This initiative will also result in cost savings, the enhancement of accountability, and an increase in government transparency.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program

HUD has been proactive in making documents available to the public and over the past several years has succeeded in reducing its FOIA backlog. At HUD, the median processing time for simple FOIA requests is 30 days; the mode is closer to 20, while the median is 45 days for more complex requests. At the end of HUD's 2009 fiscal year, there was a backlog of 192 FOIA requests. This was a 48% reduction from the previous year, and an 85% reduction from two years ago. HUD's current FOIA process is illustrated below:

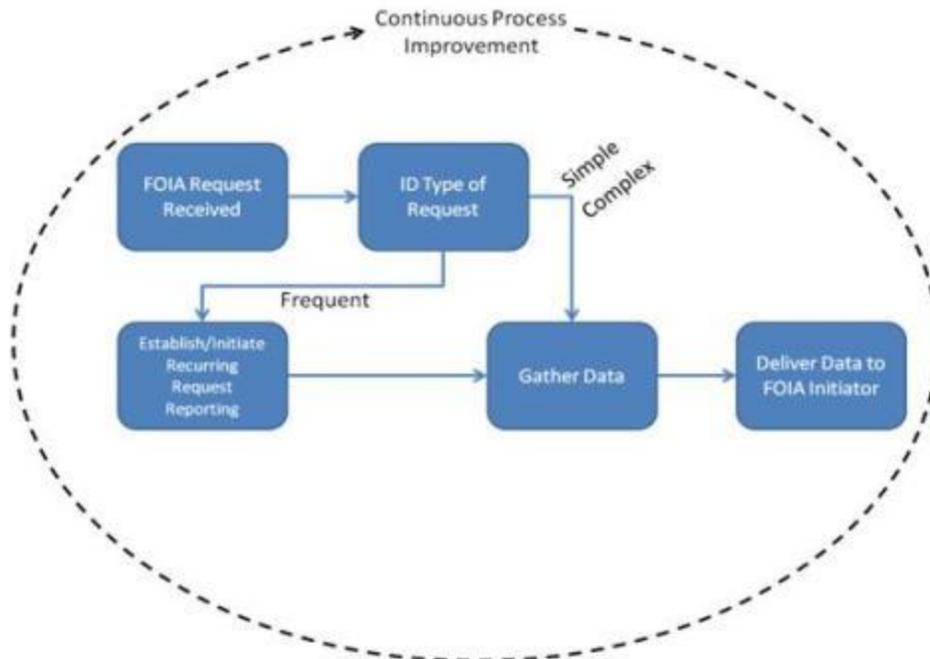


Figure 9: HUD's FOIA Process

More information can be found at:

http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/program_offices/administration/foia

Privacy Program

HUD continues its full commitment to protecting the privacy and security of customers. HUD only collects detailed personal information from eligible individuals who have affirmatively requested the Department's services. HUD maintains a variety of physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards to protect the personal information of visitors to its website.

In addition, HUD now uses social media and third party sites to provide HUD content in a different format that may be useful or interesting to all stakeholders. When HUD uses these sites, the information provided is consistent with the intended purpose of the HUD website. No PII may be requested or collected from social media sites. Stakeholders should be aware that the privacy protection provided on social media and third party sites is not a part of the HUD.gov domain and may not be the same as the privacy protection HUD requires.

More information can be found at: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/privacy_policy.

2.2.3 Engagement Initiatives

The Open Government Directive describes engagement as allowing "members of the public to contribute ideas and expertise so that their government can make policies with the benefit of information that is widely dispersed in society." In order to achieve this goal, HUD must create new ways for the public to share ideas with the Department. Additionally, HUD must create incentive structures that allow citizens to see the practical and positive results of their engagement and participation.

HUD's governance structure will play a vital role in prioritizing feedback from the public and determining what value-added comments or ideas are actionable. The Department must improve its customer-

centric focus, and identify ways to be more responsive to their needs. The following sub-sections introduce several engagement related projects HUD is currently or will be undertaking. The Department currently conducts many of these activities, but there is room for improvement in making the relevant processes and data more open to public engagement.

Provide Improved Online Feedback Capabilities for Customers

The Challenge:

HUD needs to allow the public to provide feedback through a variety of channels, aggregate and track the feedback, and provide responsive actions based on it. In the 2010 Open Government Plan this Engagement Initiative was identified to provide a framework for achieving these objectives. Success demands variety in delivery of information by HUD and a commitment to consolidate the feedback and demonstrate change as a result of participation by the public.



HUD's Approach:

The first step taken was to establish an outgoing communication that informed the public and collected basic feedback. As a result, in December 2010, the HUDdle was launched. This official bi-lingual blog provides regular posts by a variety of authors, and supports commenting and an ability to share posts via numerous social media outlets. Also supported are embedded snapshots to HUD's Twitter and

Facebook pages, expanding the information sources available to readers, and connecting members of the public not only with HUD but with one another. As of April 2, 2012, the HUD Facebook page is "liked" by 25,848 people and @HUDNews is "followed" by 25,531 Twitter accounts; links to The HUDdle are regularly provided through these channels to increase awareness of outgoing information and encourage additional conversations about the work HUD performs.

Provide Online Capabilities for Public Review of HUD Regulations Prior to Implementation

The Challenge:

When the 2010 Open Government Plan was prepared, HUD had already published its rules and regulations for public review before they were implemented. However, the public expressed confusion on how best to provide feedback to the Department. As a result, HUD embraced the deployment of a multi-agency crowdsourcing tool (regulations.gov). This tool would enable HUD and other public sector organizations to more effectively engage with citizens, and properly review and vet comments that raise significant issues. Additionally, this would enable HUD to assess how responsive organizations were in responding to concerns raised by the public.

HUD's Approach:

Regulations.gov is the resource used by HUD to publish proposed rules (or changes) and solicit comments. Because public feedback indicated that this process was not known, The HUDdle has been used to not only discuss the proposed new rules but also direct the public to submit comments at regulations.gov.

HUD Ideas in Action: A Strategic Planning and Open Government Tool

The Challenge:

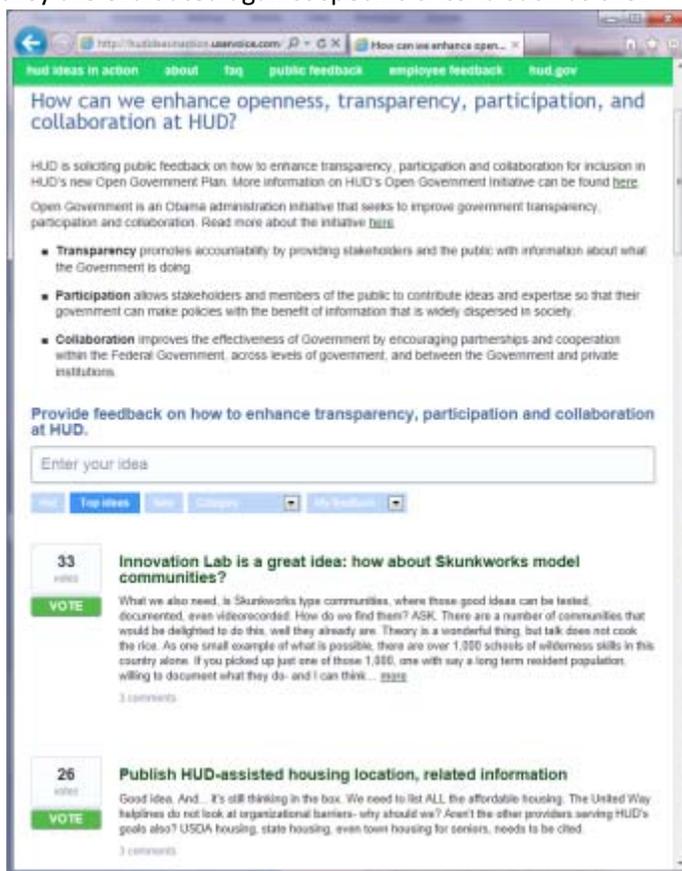
During the development of its current strategic plan, the Department launched a web portal called HUD Ideas in Action. This website, and the active engagement with citizens that resulted from its use, allowed HUD to better inform its strategic plan and the processes utilized to develop it by providing direct and substantive input into the strategic focus that the Department should take.

This tool, which also satisfies elements of the Open Government Directive’s definition of collaborative tools and processes, allows users to submit ideas and have these ideas voted on by other users. HUD personnel can tailor submissions to address specific Department initiatives or to broader questions about its strategic priorities. Ideas that will improve HUD’s mission performance are sent to the appropriate decision making authority, where they are evaluated against specific criteria such as their alignment with HUD’s strategic plan, their cost, and their ease of implementation. If an idea is approved, the relevant program or support area becomes the ‘owner’ and is tasked with realization.

The challenge at the time of the 2010 open government planning was to continue the development of the site and strengthen the relationship between open government and Departmental strategic planning through engagement with the public.

HUD’s Approach:

The use of HUD Ideas in Action to solicit suggestions from the public for a diverse set of forums has resulted in thousands of ideas and nearly 100,000 votes being cast for those ideas by the public and HUD staff. Most recently, HUD posed the question “How can we enhance openness, transparency, participation, and collaboration at HUD?” as a means to inform the public of the development of HUD’s future open government and customer service initiatives. Additional information on Ideas in Action can be found in Section 3 (Customer Service Initiatives) of this plan.



2.2.4 Collaboration Initiatives

The Open Government Directive describes collaboration as improving “the effectiveness of Government by encouraging partnerships and cooperation within the Federal Government, across levels of government, and between the government and private institutions.” In order to achieve this goal, HUD

has institutionalized and expanded on its existing partnerships with organizations throughout government and the private sector. HUD also proactively adopts and disseminates best practices that enable improved efficiency and greater cooperation with the public.

Provide Tools to Community-Based Non-Profits to Act as Force Multipliers

The Challenge:

Community-based non-profits (CBNPs) act as front-line partners to HUD's mission delivery programs, empowering and supporting their entrepreneurial capabilities is a vital tactic in HUD's strategy for achieving its missions. The Department aimed to make a suite of tools, guidance, and practices available that can help existing and emerging CBNPs incubate, become established, sustain their operations, and improve their overall efficiency and effectiveness. HUD will assess best practices from the venture capital, non-profit development, and association communities to identify the most effective ways that the Department can support the CNBP community. HUD will help incubate existing and emerging CBNPs in order to establish them as force multipliers in their communities, to increase HUD's ability to achieve its mission and reach its customers through these proxy CNBP groups. As a result, HUD's customers should increasingly receive support from this wider "ecosystem".

HUD's Approach:

In April 2011, HUD launched CPD Maps, a new GIS-based web Mapping Tool. Historically, HUD collected CPD grantee information in silos. Through collecting the data in a centralized repository, and publishing it via a GIS mapping applications, CBNPs and the general public will have a holistic view of all the CPD funds spent in any region.

Visual, map-based presentation of grant, grantee, and community data to the public and to grantees is a major success and transforms the way CPD shows progress in local communities and the way grantees work together towards common community development goals. Additional information on the CPD Maps initiative is available in Section 2.1.2 of this document.

Utilize the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program as a Catalyst for Additional Collaboration to Aid HUD's Customers

The Challenge:

In May of 2009, HUD and the Department of Energy (DOE) entered into an important partnership that streamlined the application process for the DOE's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) for the residents of HUD-assisted housing. This partnership allowed the two departments to collaborate closely and reduce duplicative and unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, support energy efficiency, and more effectively assist the American public. As part of the open government initiative, HUD will seek to broaden and expand on this important relationship and find other opportunities for collaboration with the DOE.



"Because of the steps we took, there are about two million Americans working right now who would otherwise be unemployed...The plan that has made all of this possible, from the tax cuts to the jobs, is the Recovery Act."

- President Barack Obama

HUD's Approach:

The WAP enables low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. Funds are used to improve the energy performance of the dwellings of needy families using the most advanced technologies and testing protocols available in the housing industry. During the past 33 years, WAP has provided weatherization services to more than 6.4 million low-income households. Families receiving weatherization services see their energy bills reduced by an average of about \$437 annually, depending on fuel prices. Because the energy

improvements that make up weatherization services are long lived, the savings add up over time to substantial benefits for weatherization clients and their communities, and the nation as a whole.

In 2010, the DOE implemented a new rule for its WAP. Under the new rule, if a public housing assisted multifamily or Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) building is identified by HUD and included on a list published by DOE, that building meets DOE's weatherization program income requirements without the need for further evaluation or verification, and may meet certain other program requirements.

The data provided by HUD to DOE represents the currently-available data for HUD Public Housing and Qualified Assisted Housing properties. These lists were updated in March 2010 to include data through December 31, 2009. To facilitate searches for supplemental property postings, updated property lists are posted on the [Weatherization & Intergovernmental Program site](#) monthly.

Continue Collaboration with the Federal Communications Commission on Broadband

The Challenge:

HUD began collaborating with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on issues relating to the expansion of broadband access to lower-income areas and HUD-assisted housing. This collaborative initiative is a testament to the public partnerships that HUD is creating with numerous Federal agencies in order to address the needs of a 21st century economy. HUD hoped that its current relationship with the FCC would grow stronger and that the Department's customers can continue to receive assistance in gaining access to vital broadband services.

HUD's Approach:

In recent years HUD has continued to work with FCC to ensure every American has access to free, age-appropriate content that imparts digital skills. HUD and FCC have completed several initiatives and have others underway, such as:

Creating an Online Digital Literacy Portal: Every American should have access to free, age-appropriate content that imparts digital skills. This content should be available in a user's native language and should meet the accessibility requirements applicable to federal agencies under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. The collaboration between the agencies and non-government partners should be similar to the efforts that have produced the online safety resources available through [OnGuardOnline.gov](#). This collaborative model has been successful in HUD's Community Outreach Partnerships Program, which brings institutions of higher education and community partners together to revitalize communities. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions Assisting Communities (HSIACs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) serve critical roles educating members of racial and minority communities in the United States. In addition to their educational missions through the Community Outreach Partnerships Program, these organizations provide links to community employment assistance, child care, health care information, fair housing assistance, job training, youth programs, and other services. As crucial community institutions and trusted sources of information, HBCUs, HSIACs, and TCUs could also serve as offline ambassadors to promote digital literacy and other national digital priorities.

"The connection between broadband and housing policy is not only a natural fit, it's essential to building the economy of the 21st century."

- Shaun Donovan, HUD Secretary

To support local community benchmarking, the HUD and USDA plan to integrate technology assessments into the Empowerment Zone (EZ), Enterprise Community (EC), and Renewal Community (RC) programs. These programs encourage the revitalization of impoverished urban and rural communities through economic, physical, and social investments. As part of their administration of EC,

EZ, RC, and HOPE VI developments, HUD and USDA will incorporate technology as a critical input into the communities that they support. These programs will include a community technology assessment that measures availability, price, and adoption of broadband services. HUD and USDA will also require that community plans have set goals for increasing adoption and use of broadband for local development.

Continue Transportation Related Collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency



The Challenge:

In June 2009, HUD, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Transportation

(DOT) initiated an unprecedented partnership to help American families gain better access to affordable housing, more numerous and energy efficient transportation options, and lower overall transportation costs. The partnership takes the form of a high-level interagency task force that seeks to enhance integrated planning and investment, provide a vision for sustainable growth, align HUD, DOT, and EPA programs, and undertake joint research, data collection, and outreach. HUD is confident it can continue to work with its partners to make this relationship even more beneficial to the public.

HUD's Approach:

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities established six livability principles that will act as a foundation for interagency coordination:

1. **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
2. **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
3. **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
4. **Support existing communities.** Target Federal funding toward existing communities through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
5. **Coordinate policies and leverage investment.** Align Federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
6. **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods, whether rural, urban, or suburban.

Since the instantiation of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, the group has accomplished many critical initiatives to support each of the six livability principles. Below is a summary of just a few of the key initiatives and their outcomes.

HUD Sustainable Communities Regional

Planning Grants In June 2010, HUD opened the application process for the \$100-million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program. This program supports metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments.

With strong, comprehensive, long-range regional plans, communities can better address the interdependent challenges of economic competitiveness and revitalization, social equity and access to opportunity, public health, energy efficiency, environmental protection, and climate change.

Mixed-Income, Transit-Oriented Development Action Guide

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and HUD have developed an action guide to help planners implement mixed-income, transit-oriented development. This interactive Web guide, www.mitod.org, helps local planners and community groups find effective strategies and tools to encourage mixed-income development around transit.

HUD Adoption of Sustainability Criteria in Grant Scoring

Secretary Donovan announced in 2010 that HUD will adopt the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) system to evaluate applications for its \$3.25 billion in discretionary funding. Funded by EPA and developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Congress for the New Urbanism, LEED-ND is a system for rating and certifying neighborhoods that integrate housing with jobs and services, offer a range of transportation choices, and incorporate green building and green infrastructure. With this change, grant applications that emphasize sustainable communities can be awarded additional points.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities Code-a-Thon

On January 22, 2012, the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy are hosting a code-a-thon at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) to bring together citizens, web developers, and agency staff to work on solutions that bring sustainability to the forefront of peoples' everyday lives. The code-a-thon provided citizens and government agencies with innovative uses of existing data and information to make informed choices.

Figure 10: Partnership for Sustainability Key Accomplishments

3. Customer Service Initiatives

3.1 Flagship Initiative: HUD Ideas in Action

HUD's mission furthers national objectives through service to individual communities. Solutions need to be tailored to achieve the desired outcome while adhering to the social norms of the community. Efficiency in generating ideas to approach a problem and assessing the impact of implementing those ideas will lead to increased effectiveness in serving the overall mission of HUD.

HUD recognized that the best resources to identify ideas to improve communities were members of the communities themselves, whether they are HUD employees, advocates, or residents. Using crowd-sourcing technology, specific questions are posed by HUD and ideas can be posted, discussed, and voted on by any site visitor.

In November 2009, the Department launched HUD Ideas in Action, powered by a tool called UserVoice, it allows people to come together, share ideas in response to a question, discuss those ideas, and vote on the best ones for consideration by HUD. The tool was initially used to get ideas that further HUD's FY 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and as a forum for HUD employees and stakeholders to share their ideas for improving HUD. As HUD embarked on the FY 2010 – 2015 Strategic Planning process, it became clear that employees and stakeholders had countless ideas on ways to transform the organization. HUD Ideas in Action can be accessed online at: www.hud.gov/ideasinaction.

HUD Ideas in Action is designed to:

- Engage employees and stakeholders through an open and transparent process to ensure every employee has a voice in the way the agency and its operations evolve
- Collect constant, fresh input and perspectives on enhancements that will improve HUD's ability to achieve our mission
- Disseminate information about new and existing programs, initiatives, and policies

The result will be an improved HUD that reflects the insight and creativity of our employees at all levels.

From inception through December 2011, total of 23 forums generated 2,927 ideas. Visitors have cast 94,668 votes to the site and a total of 296 of these ideas are (or have been) under review, with 32 ideas currently being implemented.

Figure 11: Quarterly Executive Dashboard - 1st Quarter FY12

HUD Ideas in Action continues to serve HUD in generating ideas on a variety of subjects from both the staff at HUD and the public.

3.2 Helping PHAs Help People

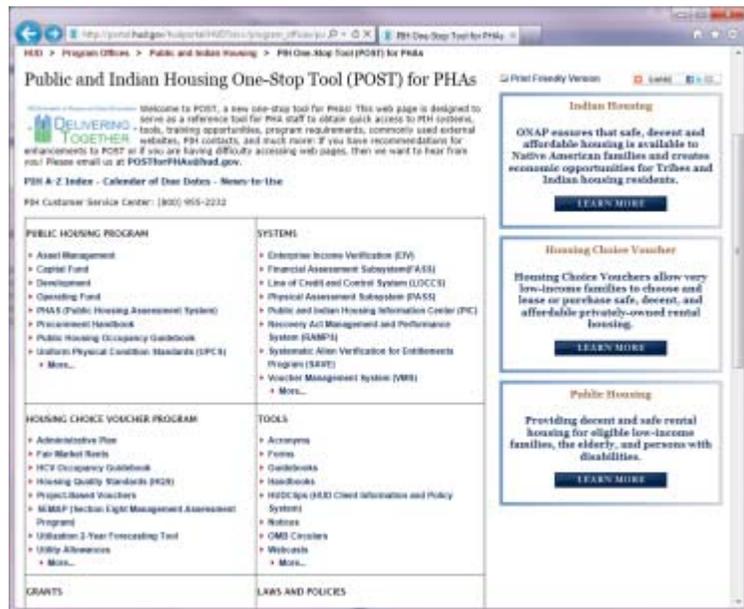
PHAs have a direct impact on their local communities, from providing support to residents, to improving the quality and availability of housing. To monitor this impact and understand the continuing needs of the community, HUD requires regular recertification of the PHAs and the reporting of various metrics about the services offered. Policies and tools will continue to be implemented through this initiative to reduce the reporting burden and increase the resources available to focus on mission delivery.

The primary resource for this initiative is PIH One Stop Tool (POST), which allows PHAs to more easily and intuitively access information on HUD's website. The development of POST was based on customer feedback solicited by the Delivering Together team through a "card-sorting" exercise on-site at several PHAs. This helped determine how PHAs looked for information on HUD's website. Clarifications of income verification hierarchy and excluded income verifications, promotion of tools to streamline the development of utility allowances, and the POST were published in **January 2012**.

In POST, the centralization of links enables quick access to the numerous systems, tools and supporting information, resulting in efficient navigation of services available to PHAs. The links are organized according to eight categories: Public Housing Program, Systems, Housing Choice Voucher Program, Tools, Grants, Laws and Policies, Other Programs, and Directories.

PHA's reporting burden will be reduced by:

- Creation of an online recertification system for PHAs
- Clarification of income verification hierarchy
- Elimination of unnecessary verification of excluded income
- Promotion of tools to streamline the development of utility allowance schedules using the HUD Utility Schedule Model (HUSM)
- Reducing system downtimes and posting scheduled downtimes on HUD's website
- Improving HUD's website through a user-friendly PHA portal
- Exploring the feasibility of simplifying the inspection process of rental units by adopting a single inspection protocol.



These changes will be phased in over a multi-year period, steadily reducing the time and resources needed by PHAs to manage time-consuming functions so that they can focus on providing resident support, reducing fraud, and improving the quality assurance function.

While the initial tool has been deployed, POST will continue to evolve through:

- **System Enhancements.** HUD has several new features for POST under development that will make useful web content even more accessible, including a Calendar of Due Dates for PHAs, an e-mail box for PHAs to suggest improvements to POST, and a list of PIH Forms. The POST mailbox will also serve as a platform for continued customer feedback regarding the features of POST itself. Metrics will be developed in collaboration with the OCIO to assist in monitoring customer service delivered through POST as well as monitoring and publishing system down times

Rather than spend considerable time searching for information and resources, PHAs will be able to access all the material they need on POST. Monitoring and announcing system down times means that PHAs know when the system is unavailable and HUD has a measurable baseline to track improvements to availability

- **Recertification Improvements.** PHAs are responsible for recertifying both rental units and the qualifications of clients. This process can be time consuming for all parties, and families undergoing recertification can often incur expenses due to lost wages, child care, or transportation. HUD plans to introduce online recertification to make the end-to-end process more efficient. HUD will develop an online recertification prototype to obtain maximum feedback from PHAs of different sizes, types, and programs. This prototype will be released for testing and user input in preparation for system development at the **end of calendar year 2012**

Families will be empowered to recertify their qualifications online, allowing for more flexibility of when information is provided and eliminating incurred expenses. Additionally, the PHA staff

responsible for recertifying rental units is able to centrally manage information in the online system, and could employ mobile applications to collect information when inspecting units

- **Income Verification Changes.** As part of the recertification of clients, income verification plays a significant role. As part of this initiative, two elements of income verification have been identified for improvement. First, a clarification of the income verification hierarchy and second, the elimination of unnecessary verification of excluded income

These two changes will result in an estimated 50% reduction in time to complete income verification by PHA.

- **Promotion of HUD Utility Schedule Model (HUSM) Tools.** Tools are available to PHAs to streamline the development of utility allowance schedules according to the HUSM, but PHAs are not always aware of their existence. A campaign to promote these tools will be launched using resources like POST, the HUDDle, and other communication devices

The promotion of easy-to-use utility allowance schedules will provide PHAs with consistent schedule development methodology

- **Single Inspection Protocol.** Rental unit inspection is conducted by PHAs, but is not necessarily subject to a common protocol. This makes aggregating data across multiple PHAs more challenging and multiple protocols require multiple maintenance support. HUD plans to explore the feasibility of simplifying the inspection process by adopting a single inspection protocol

A single protocol can be managed by HUD and deployed to the PHAs with local tailoring guidance. This reduces the burden on PHAs and improves the uniformity by which rental unit inspections are conducted

Metrics will be developed in collaboration with the OCIO to assist in monitoring customer service delivered through POST as well as monitoring and publishing system down times.

3.3 Getting Money to Communities Faster

The OSPM is leading the effort to ensure that HUD gets money to communities faster. To achieve this goal, OSPM is conducting an agency-wide business process reengineering (BPR) effort to improve HUD's Notice of Funding Available (NOFA) process. There will be specific focus on the areas in the process that are known to cause delays. The NOFA BPR project will ensure obligation of NOFA funds no later than 180 calendar days from budget passage.

The NOFA BPR kicked-off August 2011 and is scheduled to be completed, including implementation of select recommendations, by March 2012. Prior to undertaking the BPR, OSPM established 23 critical path milestones throughout the NOFA lifecycle to begin standardizing processes across program offices. OSPM also instituted standardized time intervals to reach critical milestones to accelerate progression through the NOFA lifecycle. They also developed criteria to categorize all NOFAs based on the level of change to the NOFA from the previous year and the anticipated complexity of the review process. To track the progression of each NOFA through its lifecycle, OSPM developed and implemented the Grants Processing System (GPS).

It is assumed there are commonalities in processing of NOFAs across the program offices; however, it is also assumed there are moderate to substantial variations. The BPR will yield business intelligence for each program office related to:

- Detailed description of process activities, including estimated cycle times
- Systems used to track grants

- Descriptions of current standard operating procedures (SOPs) and performance measures
- Communication within the program office and with other business units
- Other relevant information that impacts or interfaces with the NOFA process

To improve the customer experience, proposed future-state recommendations will incorporate internal and leading NOFA grants management practices of similar federal agencies (benchmarking). Potential customer experience solutions may include leveraging technology to facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of the NOFA grants management process and streamlining NOFA application documentation to reduce applicant burden, thereby improving the overall customer experience.

A communication strategy that identifies the key messages and communication channels in support of the NOFA improvement process will be developed and executed to publish the customer-focused targets and progress toward their achievement.

Additional improvement opportunities will be reviewed and possibly implemented to standardize the NOFA process agency-wide. The project will survey internal NOFA stakeholders to obtain feedback on the NOFA process both prior to and after the implementation of future-state recommendations. As workshops and interviews are conducted with stakeholder groups, the findings will be documented and incorporated into future-state recommendations.

Impact and Benefits: The full benefits and impacts will be realized during FY13 NOFA processing. HUD anticipates receiving the following benefits from NOFA:

- The overall NOFA processing cycle time will be reduced; the goal is 180 days from budget passage to obligation of funds. This is also one of the FY12 Agency Priority Goals. With the entire process taking less time from end to end, appropriated funds will be disbursed faster, resulting in funds being used for the intended purpose
- Process inefficiencies across program offices will be identified and non-value added work activities will be eliminated
- A future-state operating model that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the NOFA process will be defined
- Leveraging technology to automate work flows, reduce cycle time, and eliminate redundant work will result in quantifiable cost savings to the agency at-large
- HUD stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide feedback in the NOFA process
- A set of clear and consistent agency-wide NOFA process performance measures
- High level business requirements and /needs which can be used as a road map for developing more detailed functional requirements for an enterprise NOFA management system.

HUD has continued to further progress toward the goal of improving the NOFA process by:

Developing current-state process maps and functional maps by performing current-state analysis – October & November 2011

- A set of clear and consistent agency-wide NOFA process performance measures were defined to determine the baseline state and quantify progress while implementing improvements
- HUD stakeholders were asked to provide feedback in the NOFA process

Identify improvement opportunities by conducting process analysis – October-December 2011

- Process inefficiencies across program offices were identified and non-value added work activities will be eliminated

Define future-state process and develop future-state operating model that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the NOFA process – November 2011-February 2012

Develop future-state improvement recommendations – January-March 2012

- Technology to automate work flows, reduce cycle time, and eliminate redundant work are being identified, the adoption of which will result in quantifiable cost savings to the agency at-large.
- High level business requirements and needs, which can be used as a road map for developing more detailed functional requirements for an enterprise NOFA management system are being defined and documented, beginning in March 2012

Implement select future-state recommendations – Ongoing beginning March 2012

Considering that the initiative is in the early stages, there have not been any material implementation challenges identified. However, there are an initial set of potential risks:

- Budget constraints, cuts, and lack of funding which could place the project in jeopardy of non-completion or could extend the project timeline and delay expected benefits
- Resistance to change or lack of management buy-in could impact full realization of proposed recommendations
- Availability of staff resources and subject matter experts (SMEs) could impact project deliverable timelines