



2023 Annual Plan and Five-Year Capital Fund Action Plan
Response to Comments Received
(C = Comment and R = Response)

Below, please find the written comments received by the Newport Residents Council in regards to the agency's 2023 Annual Plan and Five-Year Capital Fund Plan in addition to one verbal comment received at the Public Hearing. Below each comment you will find the Housing Authority's response.

C1 – HACN Open Buildings – The NRC , as well as numerous individual residents have previously commented, and have made several requests to HACN of the importance and need to have all HACN buildings opened in regard to providing a greater service for residents. The NRC also believes transparency will reflect a showing to residents of HACN's good practices, a high level of respect in its truest form of good faith, as well as a better implications of communication. The NRC and the residents believes that a true explanation has not yet been revealed to the residents, nor have we given any verbal or written forms as to why HACN continues to keep its buildings closed, especially the Management Offices where viable re-certifications paperwork, rents are regularly received and calculated. The NRC would like to additionally think, that HACN should've first considered the concerns of the residents before this tremendous step was taken. The NRC hopes HACN take into consideration to reopening all it buildings.

R1 - The Housing Authority appreciates the comments of the NRC. As a result of the pandemic, it became evident that certain operations can be performed remotely, primarily for health and safety reasons, but for operational efficiencies as well. Given the COVID pandemic and now the triple-demic too, our offices remain open by appointment only, as needed. For examples, in-person appointments may be scheduled to sign paperwork, however, for other matters, generally a phone call or scheduled phone appointment will do.

C2 – Lease/Admission & Other Policy Changes –The NRC note in its comments that it would like to continue to be a part of the process and appreciated the HACN's consideration in this regard. The NRC wishes to reiterate the importance of having resident participation in this process. As stated in the above paragraph our working relationship is important as both agencies are vested in the lives of om residents.

R2 – The Housing Authority's Annual Plan states the importance of a resident participation process and will continue to work with the NRC on any proposed lease or other policy changes. We value our relationship with the NRC and our residents and appreciate their partnership.

C3 – Rent Receipts –The NRC is concerned during these already difficult times, that HACN's choice to eliminate the, "rent receipt" one of its best practices regarding the residents. The HACN stop-age of resident's rent payment calculations receipts does not have the best interest of the resident in mind. The importance of a timely received computerized receipt print-out

that have showings of all the resident's payments associated with their account make it easy to see current balance as well dispute an incorrect ending balance, therefore allowing residents also staff to make corrections. The NRC is requesting that HACN sees and reconsider this hardship for residents finding other time consuming resource proofs regarding payment made directly to HACN.

R3 – The Housing Authority appreciates the comments of the NRC. It's important to note that the Housing Authority does provide account statements to residents upon request as opposed to sending out monthly rent receipts to nearly 600 households who have not requested them. Residents have personal payment receipts, such as their check registers, money order receipts, credit card records and debit card records. We ask that any resident in need of an account statement to review charges and payments, please contact the management office and one will be provided.

C4 – Rent Configurations/30 Day Notice/Subsidies –The NRC continues to receive request from the residents regarding their needing more knowledge of rent configurations during and after their recertification, along with a timely written rent increase 30 day notice justification, residents are still unsure of which payment subsidy their household is alignment with.

R4 – The Housing Authority is happy to work with the NRC and residents to share information about rent configurations/subsidy types, for example, apartments that are tax credit only, or tax credit apartments with other forms of subsidy such as Public Housing, Project-based Section 8, HOME, and Housing Trust Funds. Residents can contact their Property Management Team at any time for clarification on this. Residents may also refer to their lease and the lease addendums they signed which includes this information. We are happy to provide additional information and would welcome the input of the NRC as to what may work best to continue to highlight this information. In terms of providing a 30-day notice of a rent increase, this is provided unless the resident delays the completion of their recert then they would not be entitled to a 30-day notice.

C5 – Rent Payments Only Drop Box –The NRC has received requests that a drop box is needed and be adhered at the management office buildings just for "rent payments only". As previously stated, a receipt is of a very great importance to residents, and the NRC have severity concerns that residents have paid their rent on time but due the several type of paper works in the drop boxes, somehow rent payments have been misplaced and then found later on an in office staff members desk. The NRC that HACN considers this request.

R5 – The Housing Authority appreciates the comment and is pleased to share that staff was already working on this. We are considering a free-standing mailbox which would be large enough to secure rents and all other information, but if that is not the case, then a rent-only drop box will utilized. The Donovan Manor currently has both an exterior and interior mail box and receives less mail, therefore we don't believe another box is needed at this location at this time, but should that change, we would be happy to add one.

C6 – Homeowner Rent Freeze –The NRC note in its comments that it is in disagreement at this time to put a freeze on the homeowner rental payments. The NRC continue to understand times are difficult for us all, however across the board, other resident rental payment standard have and do rise up to made their payments. It is the suggestion of the NRC, that HACN be more creative in finding another funding source for the homeowner rental dilemma other than a rent freeze.

R6 – The Housing Authority appreciates the comments of the NRC. It's important to note that the lease-to-purchase homeownership program does not offer the choice of flat rent versus income-based rent which is the case for the public housing program. Therefore, the residents in the lease-to-purchase program are required to pay the flat rent, regardless of income, based on the current homeownership plan. The Housing Authority wants residents to be successful on their journey toward homeownership, recognizing, however, that not all current lease-to-purchasers will be able to purchase their homes. Given the comments of NRC and the fact that the current lease-to-purchasers have had more than a decade to purchase their homes, the Housing Authority will continue to apply the Flat Rent formula. Lease-to-purchasers are able to transfer to a more affordable apartment at another Housing Authority property if they choose, or it may be required if they remain unable to purchase the home, to provide other residents and applicants an opportunity to realize the dream of homeownership. The Housing Authority will continue to work with Church Community Housing to provide additional support to lease-to-purchasers.

C7 – Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) –The NRC at this time look forward to HACN having update and current work shop meetings with HACN and the residents for residents to gain clarity and better knowledge of the expansion usage of this conversion resource.

R7 – The Housing Authority appreciates the comments of the NRC and looks forward to working with the Council and other residents to further explore RAD, first at Newport Heights with Trinity Management, and at other HACN properties.

C8 - Moving to Work – The NRC repeats its comments from last year objections regarding the Moving to Work Program. The NRC have viewed information that would be harmful to the residents, should HACN “consider” to participate in the MTW program, or/if that means applying to the program without first determining what policy and practice changes it would be considering in light of the additional “flexibility” offered by MTW. In that way the NRC could provide comment on the potential pros and cons from the residents’ perspective of applying to participate in the program.

Of course, the HACN can consider applying for the program at any time during the 2021 fiscal year, but should not be applying to the program before the issues raised in the above paragraph are considered and shared with the residents. Some PHAs have used their MTW designation to raise minimum rents above the \$50 maximum, to establish time limits on assistance, to raise tenant rents in general, to establish work requirements and to divert funds from the Voucher program, resulting in fewer available vouchers. It is these types of actions that greatly concern the NRC.

It is our understanding that HUD gives no extra funds to participating jurisdictions and the PHA must serve substantially the same number of families. Therefore, unless there are regulations, etc. that significantly inhibit the HACN; we are unclear as to the value of this program for residents or the HACN. Also, your 2020 Annual Plan mentions possible savings that can be used possibly to help residents. The NRC is doubtful that significant savings can be realized without harming residents. Such matters are worthy of further discussion. Again, these are the NRC's list of concerns that proves harmful to the resident:

1. Evictions
2. Residents Displacement
3. Homelessness
4. HACN Raising Minimum Rent above \$50.00
5. General Rents Raising
6. Establishing Time Limits On Assistance (Living withing PHA Housing)
7. Work Requirements
8. Divert funds from voucher program
9. Fewer vouchers to resident usage
10. HACN receives no extra benefit funds

R8 – The HACN appreciates the NRC's feedback concerning the MTW Program. The HACN will continue to explore the MTW Program and will work with the NRC on any proposed policy changes prior to submitting an application.

C9 - Security Cameras - The NRC has received more request that security cameras be on at all times to allow retrieval for needed footage for unwanted behaviors and safety reasons.

R9 – The HACN appreciates the NRC's comments and is pleased to share that the security cameras presently run at all times, barring any malfunctions or weather-related malfunctions. In those instances, we contact our tech support to bring any offline cameras back online.

C10 – Tripod Storage Stairs - The NRC and residents continues to be delighted to see the outside storage units in some of Phase I renovated unit are in HACN FY 2023 Capital Improvement Budget this year.

R10 – The HACN appreciates the NRC's comments and will continue this work.

C11 – Parking- The NRC and residents look forward to the new development parking designs areas throughout HACN.

R11 – The HACN appreciates the NRC's comments and will continue to work to expand and improve parking options for our valued residents.

C12 – Maintenance Garage/Non-Dwelling Residents Service Offices- The NRC and residents look forward to hearing and seeing designs plans regarding HACN maintenance garage and other non-dwelling office spaces.

R12 – The HACN appreciates the NRC’s comments and will continue to explore opportunities to enhance non-dwelling space.

C13 – Mailbox Keys at Park Holm- The NRC verbally commented at the Public Hearing that residents pay \$35 to the US Post Office in order to get keys and lock changes to the cluster mailboxes owned by the Post Office and that the process took nearly 3 weeks recently for a resident. The NRC would appreciate the Housing Authority looking into this in order to help reduce the excessive wait time for keys.

R13 – The HACN appreciates the NRC’s comments and will look into this matter with the Post Office so that residents do not have to wait 3 weeks to receive keys to a mailbox.