



## **Section II.**

# **Executive Summary**

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The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits housing-related discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin or disability. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the agencies that receive HUD funding to implement its programs - such as the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) - must not discriminate, and must also use those programs to affirmatively further fair housing.

To implement that charge, HUD adopted an Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule on July 16, 2015 and issued a Rule Guidebook on December 31, 2015. The AFFH rule requires fair housing planning, the first step of which is completing an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH).

Both the City and PHA are required to prepare the AFH, although on different schedules. However, to comprehensively assess fair housing conditions and needs in Philadelphia, the City and PHA agreed to prepare a joint AFH.

While PHA and the City have worked together on projects in the past, the AFH represents the first collaboration around fair housing planning. It is also an important step toward coordination of housing and community development programs and projects.

The City and PHA are pleased to submit their Assessment of Fair Housing to HUD for review.

The draft AFH was the result of significant research and data analysis, as well as a robust community engagement process that included:

- Upfront planning efforts to shape the community engagement strategy that, in addition to the City and PHA, included the regional HUD Office and a HUD-supported technical assistance team
- A survey, available online and on paper in both English and Spanish, that was completed by more than 5,000 residents, including more than 1,000 PHA residents
- Five community focus groups around the city, including one in Spanish and one geared toward people with disabilities
- Three “Resident Roundtables” for PHA residents that provided information on fair housing requirements and opportunities for resident input
- Three stakeholder meetings at which professionals working in fields that affect fair housing, affordable housing and equal opportunity offered information and recommendations

The final version is informed by additional public input, including:

- Three public hearings
- A second Spanish-language focus group
- Seven meetings with stakeholders to review and refine the AFH’s goals and strategies
- More than 120 unduplicated comments received through the public comment process

That public input has informed each of the 11 goals outlined in the final AFH.

The foundation of the AFH is a wealth of data on housing, employment, transportation, education and other issues. HUD provided data in maps and tables, local experts provided additional data and mapping, and City and PHA staff identified relevant external research

Armed with resident input and detailed data analysis, the City and PHA examined

- Segregation and Integration
- Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty
- Disparities in Access to Opportunities, such as
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Transportation
  - Poverty
  - Environment and Health
- Disproportionate Housing Needs
- Publicly Supported Housing
- Disability and Access
- Fair Housing Enforcement

As they examined these issues, the City and PHA considered contributing factors such as community opposition, displacement, public and private investment, discrimination, zoning and others.

Based on the feedback received through the public comment process, in particular from extensive meetings with stakeholders, the City and PHA identified 11 broad goals - along with 52 specific strategies - in this final AFH. The goals and strategies provide a framework for action to address fair housing issues in the coming years including efforts to be undertaken by the City, PHA and a wide range of community stakeholders. The AFH goals are:

Based on the feedback received through the public comment process, in particular from meeting with stakeholders, the City and PHA adjusted the goals and made significant revisions to the strategies. The final AFH includes 11 goals supported by 52 strategies. The goals are:

Enhance and expand resident mobility for voucher holders. This goal focuses on supporting PHA Housing Choice Voucher-holders who wish to find housing and other opportunities outside their current neighborhoods, particularly in high-opportunity areas.

Preserve existing affordable rental housing. This goal focuses on expanding programs and investments to prevent the loss of affordable rental units, especially in appreciating markets.

Develop new affordable rental housing opportunities. This goal focuses on expanding efforts to use public funds and policies and to leverage private investment to create new affordable rental housing opportunities.

Preserve existing affordable homeownership. This goal focuses on expanding efforts to invest in rehabilitation loans, foreclosure prevention and other efforts to prevent the loss of affordable homeownership.

Develop new affordable homeownership opportunities. This goal focuses on expanding efforts to create new affordable homeownership units.

Expand accessible and affordable housing for persons with disabilities. This goal focuses on expanding efforts to use public funds and leverage private investment to expand the supply of accessible, affordable housing and to remove barriers to accessibility in existing housing.

Expand permanent housing for homeless and special needs populations. This goal focuses on enhancing a broad array of efforts to provide permanent housing, including permanent supportive housing, for formerly homeless and special needs populations.

Ensure open access to all housing resources and programs. This goal focuses on expanding efforts to address the needs of people with Limited English Proficiency and people experiencing difficulty accessing affordable housing.

Expand fair housing outreach, education and enforcement. This goal focuses on engaging with fair housing advocates to better educate public agency staff, nonprofit partners and private landlords; providing support for tenants and homeowners facing fair housing issues; improving housing quality; and increasing capacity to enforce fair housing policies.

Use a coordinated approach to invest in struggling communities. This goal focuses on expanding place-based efforts to improve education, reduce vacancies, expand public amenities and address other challenges in neighborhoods currently not sharing in the City's growth.

Address the education, economic and income needs of people and neighborhoods. This goal focuses on investing in and supporting anti-poverty, economic development and educational programs that develop resident self-sufficiency and increase economic opportunity.

Achieving these goals will be a challenge in light of severe funding constraints. Both the City and PHA have experienced drastic reductions in federal funding over the past decade, and the new AFH requirements are not accompanied by any additional funding.

At the same time, however, there is a commitment to creatively use the limited funding that is available - including housing and other funds - to create opportunities in communities of choice. Both the City and PHA will also leverage private funds to create new opportunities.

The goals defined in the AFH represent a critical step toward increased fair housing opportunities. The AFH will inform the City's Consolidated Plan and PHA's Moving to Work plan. The goals will form the basis for the City's Annual Action Plan.

Throughout this process, the City and PHA remain committed to community participation. The AFFH rule envisions an ongoing dialogue between the public and recipients of HUD funds. The City and PHA look forward to continuing the AFFH conversation with Philadelphians over the next five years.