



HOUSING CHOICE IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

An analysis of options for
individuals with disabilities



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A report prepared by ACTION-Housing and
Regional Housing Legal Services for the United
Way of Allegheny County.

Information conveyed, data gathered and
analyzed, and recommendations made within this
report are intended to provide insight in regard
to the subject matter covered. The content
presented and conclusions reached are, on the
date presented, believed to be an accurate
representation of facts and conditions.

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INTRODUCTION

Housing Resources Study for 21 and Able

Overview:

ACTION-Housing, with support from Regional Housing Legal Services of Pennsylvania, agreed to provide an analysis of current housing resources for United Way of Allegheny County's 21 and Able initiative and identify options to respond to the perceived demand for more independent housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities. This study includes a brief summary of need and demand factors and then looks at housing and service resources. While many individuals with disabilities can access housing on their own accord, there are challenges for those people who need both housing and some supports to live independently. In these cases, the single most difficult issue in providing housing options analysis is the almost complete separation of the housing and social service systems. They are separately funded, governed, and operated, and, except for notable efforts of Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) to instrumentally link them, there is no structural connection between them. It is mostly left to individuals with disabilities and their families, individual housing developers, or service providers to forge a link. In addition, there is a need for accessible housing throughout the county, especially affordable options that are not limited to "disability/senior" housing.

Other key observations that frame this study:

There is a significant gap between the demand for independent supportive housing for people with disabilities and the supply that exists in Allegheny County. This involves almost all groups seeking housing.

Housing options depend upon linking supportive housing to the individual with a disability and the bundle of services that are appropriate for the individual to live as independently as possible and desired.

An approach to supportive housing should provide a range of choices for the individual as there is no one model of housing that is appropriate for all.

Housing choices for people with disabilities (like housing choices for the population at large) are deeply tied to geography, neighborhoods, and long-term relationships that these individuals have in their communities. Thus, supply and demand have to match on a spatial basis to be effective. And like other individuals, people with disabilities should choose the roommates, family members and friends with whom they want to live.

For those people with disabilities, there is a continuum of support service that usually changes throughout one's life. There is a need to customize the supportive service component so that it is linked to cost and ability to pay, location, access to services, and family/care providers and other natural support systems.

Solutions lie in 1) better use of existing resources, 2) adding new options to increase the supply and range of resources, and 3) creating a longer-term initiative for system change to be effective.

The United Way Housing Survey of Individuals with Disabilities in Allegheny County

In 2014, the United Way prepared and delivered a survey to identify housing preferences for individuals with disabilities. More than 300 people in Allegheny County responded to the survey, describing these preferences. The following are some prominent points found in their responses:

- People aged 18-21 comprised about 1/3 of the surveyed group, the largest age group represented
- 86% responded that they would like or need to move to a new home someday
- 57% reported needing to live in the same area
- 41% of all respondents described needing more than 30 hours of support per week
- 41% of all respondents reported that they receive waiver funding

Current Housing

The majority of respondents currently live in houses, as opposed to apartments or condominiums, and report liking where they live now. There is not an identifiable trend of this being dependent upon having a particular disability. However, 86% reported that they would like or need to move in the future. Their preferences for a new home were: an apartment (35%), a house (45%), a group home (19%).

What future housing might look like:

ROOMMATES

When asked about roommate preferences, respondents returned mixed results. An equal amount, 38%, said “yes” or “maybe” when answering whether they would be open to roommates. As the question was stated, answering “yes” does not affirm that a roommate is a respondent’s choice. Because of this, it can only be inferred that a specific situation(s) exists for a roommate to be a good fit, and without it, not having a roommate could be the preference. For these reasons, more can be inferred from the 23% who said “no.” In this case, it is clear that no situation exists where the respondent would prefer a roommate.

Individuals who reported having an intellectual disability were the most open to a roommate. These respondents answered “yes” at a 50% rate. Only 8% of individuals reporting a traumatic brain injury answered “yes,” but 75% said “maybe.” Answering “no” was at the highest rate, 42%, for individuals with a hearing impairment. Across the board, living with a roommate of a similar age was the most popular choice, with 76% of respondents answering this way.

LOCATION

Location, as anticipated, was a significant factor. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of all respondents reported that future housing had to be in the same area as they live now. This sentiment was consistent across almost every reported disability. Only individuals reporting a visual impairment were more open to trying new places than living in the same area, at 52%.

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

Support is a significant factor for planning housing options. Eighty-three percent (83%) reported that they require support to live in their own homes. This was a consistent majority across all disabilities. Individuals with autism reported this answer at the highest rate of 95%. The lowest rate, 65%, was reported by individuals with a hearing impairment.

For all surveyed, support is a significant part of their week. Each was given a choice to report how many hours of support were needed in a given week. The choices were “less than 10 hours,” “less than 30 hours,” or “more than 30 hours.” “More than 30 hours” was the most prevalent choice, with 41% of respondents answering this way. For “less than 10” and “less than 30,” 27% and 31% answered this way, respectively.

For most disabilities, as the survey answer choice increased in weekly hours of support needed, so did the number of people answering that way. Individuals reporting mental health issues or hearing impairments reported needing “less than 10 hours” of support per week at the highest rates of 39% and 36%, respectively. Individuals with traumatic brain injuries reported needing “less than 30 hours” of support per week at the highest rate, 56%. Other than those groups of individuals, a response that had a higher number of hours needed was always the more common choice.

The group of all survey respondents has described a clear need for services. Therefore, financing this support is a clear challenge and necessity for providing independent living options. However, only 41% responded that they receive Medicaid waivers to fund their support. Individuals with mental health issues, traumatic brain injury, and autism all answered at a rate less than 41%, and these rates varied in a range of 31-37%. Individuals with hearing impairments and intellectual disabilities responded at the highest rates of 61% and 54%, respectively.

ACTIVITIES

For most, life takes place at home, work, or school, and while getting from one to another. Out of 300 respondents, 90 reported attending school and 118 reported working as one of their activities. Many other activities were also reported at lower rates. More than 100 respondents reported relying on public transportation currently, and this could potentially increase in an independent living environment. Of those already reporting reliance on public transportation, 59% reported using ACCESS paratransit, while 41% reported relying on Port Authority Transit (PAT) buses or trolleys. Individuals with an intellectual disability, autism, visual impairment, and physical disability reported relying on ACCESS at a rate of 67%, 59%, 65%, and 72%, respectively. This evidence suggests that a housing option for individuals with certain disabilities may be dictated by the type of transportation available.

What does this say about housing choice?

- With 86% of respondents wanting or needing to move in the future, the demand for housing options is clear.
- Some individuals may be comfortable with a specific roommate option, but it is not clear. Answering “no” to the option of a roommate was a clearer descriptor of housing choice. Twenty-four percent (24%) responded that they did not want a roommate as opposed to “yes” or “maybe.”
- Geography is important to more than half on the point that housing options need to be in the same area as where the individual lives now. This is nearly consistent across all disabilities. Only individuals reporting a visual impairment held a majority for trying new places.
- Services must be addressed for all housing options. Eighty-three percent (83%) need support to live in their homes and 41% require more than 30 hours of support per week.
- Individuals reporting certain disabilities rely on ACCESS at a greater rate than others who rely more on PAT buses or trolleys. This will be another important determinant of geographic location.

Need and Demand Statistics for Allegheny County

Individuals with a disability in Allegheny County

According to U.S. Census data¹, the total civilian, non-institutionalized population of persons with a disability in Allegheny County is 160,973, which is about 13.2% of the population. Disabilities are most prevalent in the 65-and-older age group, at a rate of 34.1%. The second largest percentage is of individuals aged 18-64, where 10.3% of this age group has a disability. Those aged 5-17 and those younger than 5 have the two smallest rates of individuals with a disability at 6.6% and 0.6%, respectively.

Individuals in Allegheny County Aged 18-64 with a disability

The 18-64 age group is the largest of individuals with a disability at 79,900 and is roughly 7% of the total population. Generally speaking, it is common for any individual in this age group to have a demand for housing of his or her own, as opposed to living with a family member or other arrangement. It is assumed that demand will be similar for individuals with a disability. The Census has six different categories for disabilities. Although specific, the categories do not account for overlap of those with multiple disabilities. The six categories are as follows:

- With a cognitive difficulty
- With a hearing difficulty
- With a vision difficulty
- With an ambulatory difficulty
- With a self-care difficulty
- With an independent living difficulty

COGNITIVE DIFFICULTY

According to the Census, this is defined as having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions (DREM) due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem. In Allegheny County, 33,787 residents have a cognitive difficulty in the 18-64 age group. Individuals with a cognitive disability represent 2.8% of all residents and 42.2% of the residents with a disability in the 18-64 age group.

¹All data was collected from the American Fact Finder Estimates for 2013, created by the United States Census Bureau: <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>.

HEARING DIFFICULTY

The Census defines an individual with a hearing difficulty as being deaf or having serious difficulty hearing. In Allegheny County, 14,880 residents have a hearing difficulty in the 18-64 age group. Individuals with a hearing disability represent 1.2% of all residents and 18.6% of the residents with a disability in the 18-64 age group.

VISION DIFFICULTY

According to the Census, a vision difficulty is defined as being blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when the individual is wearing glasses. In Allegheny County, 11,664 residents have a vision difficulty in the 18-64 age group. Individuals with a vision difficulty represent 1.0% of the total population and 14.6% of the residents with a disability aged 18-64.

AMBULATORY DIFFICULTY

According to the Census, an ambulatory difficulty is defined as having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. In Allegheny County, 38,721 residents have an ambulatory difficulty in the 18-64 age group. Individuals with an ambulatory difficulty represent 3.1% of all residents and 48.5% of the residents with a disability aged 18-64.

SELF-CARE DIFFICULTY

According to the Census, a self-care difficulty is defined as having difficulty bathing or dressing. In Allegheny County, 12,629 residents have a self-care disability in the 18-64 age group. This is 1.0% of the total residents in Allegheny County aged 18-64 and 15.8% of the residents with a disability aged 18-64.

INDEPENDENT LIVING DIFFICULTY

According to the Census, an independent living difficulty is defined as having difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping (DOUT), because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem. In Allegheny County, 28,454 residents have an independent living difficulty in the 18-64 age group. This is 2.3% of the total residents in Allegheny County aged 18-64 and 35.6% of the residents with a disability aged 18-64.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits can measure the number of individuals in Allegheny County with a disability. In order to qualify for this benefit, an individual must be aged 65 or older, blind, or have a disability. Although the Census reports that 160,973 individuals in Allegheny County have a disability, SSI eligibility confirms a level of disability that warrants an income benefit. Therefore, this data helps capture the total number of individuals in Allegheny County with a disability who are likely to need support in their current or future homes.

SSI Data for Allegheny County: 2008-2013²

Year	Total	CATEGORY		AGE		
		Aged	Blind and disabled	Under 18	18-64	65 or older
2013	36,537	2,027	34,510	7,345	23,466	5,726
2012	36,450	2,067	34,383	7,303	23,467	5,680
2011	35,806	2,112	33,694	7,067	23,189	5,550
2010	34,928	2,193	32,735	6,782	22,595	5,551
2009	34,087	2,287	31,800	6,526	21,964	5,597
2008	33,483	2,422	31,061	6,344	21,438	5,701

Per the chart above, in 2013, 36,537 residents of Allegheny County qualified for this benefit. For each category in which the Social Security Administration describes the data, there are trends. **The total number receiving this benefit in Allegheny County has increased each year since 2008.** Interestingly, the total number receiving this benefit strictly due to age has decreased every year since 2008. Therefore, it follows logically that the number of individuals receiving this benefit who are blind or disabled has increased every year. This is shown in the fourth column of the table.

When considering the data only by age (the last three columns), both the under 18 and 18-64 categories increased almost every year. The only time either of these two categories didn't see an annual increase was for individuals aged 18-64 in 2013, but the annual change was only one less person than in 2012. This is still 2,028 more than the number receiving this benefit in 2008. For the 65 or older group (who can qualify for age or disability), there was a mix of increases and decreases on a year-to-year basis.

Many factors may have contributed to these changes in the number eligible and receiving this benefit in Allegheny County. One may immediately assume that the recession played a part in attracting individuals to public benefits. An increase in the frequency required for recertification over the past couple of years may have caused decreases. In any case, this data shows that the number of individuals determined to be eligible and receiving this benefit has increased. Considering that this benefit has similar eligibility to Medicaid waivers, it follows logically that the demand for those services could also increase. **Because Medicaid waiver supply has and will remain relatively constant, and housing arrangements for individuals with complex needs often require this level of support, it can be inferred that the affordable housing and service package demand is increasing faster than the supply.**

² Collected from the Social Security Administration, Office of Research Statistics and Policy Analysis: <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>

Autism Spectrum Disorder and Intellectual Disabilities

According to the United Way survey, more than 80% of all respondents reported having an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder. Furthermore, these individuals were the most likely to also have another disability.

The Census information showed that 33,787 residents in Allegheny County have a cognitive difficulty. Individuals with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder likely fall into this category, but do not make up the whole group. Although it is difficult to find an exact number for Allegheny County, there are several sources that can provide a relatively accurate assessment of these individuals.

Medicaid Waivers: Assessing Supply and Demand of Services

Medicaid waiver data provides some insight into the number of individuals with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder. The tables below potentially show the population for individuals in Allegheny County with an intellectual disability, as defined by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services. To establish this data as being the real population of individuals with an intellectual disability, it would have to be assumed that all individuals with an intellectual disability either receive or are on a waitlist for these waivers. Although it would be difficult to definitively say this is the case, it is likely that it is close.

Intellectual Disability Waivers in Pennsylvania

Starting in state fiscal year 2012-13, there were 17,637 Consolidated Waivers available in Pennsylvania, and that number will rise to 18,097 in fiscal year 2016-17. During the same period, the range of Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) Waivers ranged from 11,900 to 12,600. The table below shows the annual trends of these two waivers.

Consolidated and P/FDS Waivers for the State of PA³⁻⁴

Year	CONSOLIDATED		P/FDS	
	Max Waiver	Increase	Max Waiver	Increase
FY2016-17	18,097	115	12,600	0
FY2015-16	17,982	115	12,600	0
FY2014-15	17,867	60	12,600	0
FY2013-14	17,807	170	12,600	700
FY2012-13	17,637		11,900	

³ http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_130267.pdf
⁴ http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/document/c_130257.pdf

A closer look at Allegheny County⁵

Waiver Status	FY2014-15	FY2009-10	Waiver Status	FY2014-15	FY2009-10
Enrolled in ID system	5,407	5,331	Count of PUNS	1,273	2,524
Consolidated	2,009	1,963	Emergency	331	184
P/FDS	1,298	1,210	Critical	554	1,380
Base	2,100	2,158	Planning	388	960

In Allegheny County, there are 5,407 individuals enrolled in the Intellectual Disability (ID) system, meaning that each receives a waiver. During the past five years, this number has slightly increased by 76 individuals (1%). The Priority of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) is essentially the waiting list. In fiscal year 2014-15, there were 1,273 individuals on the waiting list. This is about half as many as were on the list in fiscal year 2009-10. This list sets a priority for individuals as a waiver becomes available. It is done in three categories: Emergency, Critical, or Planning. This designation is the respective order for when a waiver will be given to an individual as one becomes available, and this status can be updated while an individual is waiting on the list.

As categorized in the chart above, there are two different waivers for individuals with an intellectual disability in Allegheny County: The Consolidated Waiver and the Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) Waiver. The primary difference between these two waivers is the dollar amount provided by each. For the Consolidated Waiver, the dollar amount is essentially unlimited for qualifying services. The P/FDS Waiver has an annual cap of \$30,000 for qualifying services.

Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support Waiver Eligibility and Services

The following are the eligibility requirements and services available for the Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support Waivers, as published by the Pennsylvania DHS.

To qualify for these waivers, individuals must:

- Be age three and older
- Have a diagnosis of intellectual disability
- Require active treatment
- Be recommended for an intermediate care facility level of care based on a medical evaluation
- Be determined as eligible for Medical Assistance (MA)

Limitations include: \$2,000 resource limit (does not apply to dependent children under age 21); Income limit (300% of the Federal Benefit Rate)

⁵ Data received from the Allegheny County Office of Intellectual Disabilities

Once an individual receives this waiver, he or she is able to have Medicaid cover the following services:

- Assistive Technology
- Behavior Support
- Companion
- Education support
- Home Accessibility Adaptations
- Home and Community Habilitation (unlicensed)
- Homemaker/chore
- Licensed Day Habilitation
- Nursing
- Prevocational
- Licensed or Unlicensed Residential habilitation (eligible for Consolidated Waiver only)
- Respite
- Specialized Supplies
- Supported Employment
- Supports Broker
- Supports Coordination
- Therapy (physical, occupational, visual/mobility, behavioral, and speech and language)
- Transitional Work
- Transportation
- Vehicle Accessibility Adaptation

Autism Spectrum Disorder in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania has authorized 518 Medicaid waivers specifically for adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder.⁶ The western region of Pennsylvania utilizes 142 of these waivers, which is 27% of the total available.

Allegheny County

Allegheny County utilizes 42 of the Adult Autism Waivers. This is 30% of those available to the western region of Pennsylvania and 8% of the total available in all of Pennsylvania. Similar to the PUNS list for intellectual disability waivers, the Adult Autism Waiver has a two-tiered waiting list. The two tiers are referred to as Priority 1 or 2. Following are the definitions for each waiting list.

Priority 1: Those who are not receiving state-funded or state- and federally funded home- and community-based services.

Priority 2: Those who are receiving state-funded or state- and federally funded services (e.g., state center, another waiver, state hospital, nursing home, Intermediate Care Facility).

During the past four years, there has been a fairly consistent trend of a similar amount of individuals enrolled in the waiver program as the total for both priority lists combined. For example, in fiscal year 2014-15, there were 42 individuals enrolled and 50 individuals combined on the priority lists (25 on Priority 1 and 25 on Priority 2). The table below shows this trend.

Adult Autism Waiver in Allegheny County: Priority and Enrollees FY2011-12 to FY2014-15

	Current FY2014-15	FY2013-14	FY2012-13	FY2011-12
Interest list P1	25	20	20	12
Interest list P2	25	24	13	10
Enrolled	42	40	30	31

According to the Pennsylvania DHS, once an individual receives this coverage, the following services are available, including coordination:

- Assistive Technology
- Behavioral Specialist
- Community Inclusion
- Community Transition
- Counseling
- Day Habilitation
- Environmental Modifications
- Family Counseling
- Family Training
- Job Assessment
- Job Finding
- Nutritional Consultation
- Residential Habilitation
- Respite
- Supported Employment
- Temporary Crisis
- Therapies (Occupational, Speech and Language, Counseling)
- Transitional Work

⁶ All information pertaining to the Adult Autism Waiver was collected from Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Home and Community Service Information System, via a *Right to Know Law* information request by ACTION-Housing.

Supply of Housing Options

Our review of the existing supply of privately owned affordable housing will examine both affordable housing and affordable supportive housing. We distinguish between the two types of affordable housing by a number of characteristics. The supply of affordable supportive housing is much more limited than in the universe of affordable housing.

We define affordable supportive housing as that which has either reduced rent or project-based rental assistance so that individuals with disabilities pay about 30% of their income for housing expenses. This economic structure is true for all affordable housing, but supportive housing has other characteristics that are important as well. First, it has been designed and built to accommodate persons with disabilities. Second, supportive housing has a component of service that is either resident-based or development-based to ensure individuals have the services required to live independently.

According to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's inventory, there are 12,866 units of affordable, independent housing in Allegheny County that are designated for the non-elderly population (under 55).⁷ The map on page 18 shows how these units are concentrated according to zip code. **One of the more prominent visualizations from this map is the number of zip codes in the North and South that have zero units or less than 100 units.** Conversely, the most densely concentrated areas are downtown and in the East. **Considering the geographic preferences discussed in the United Way survey results in Section 1, many respondents will have preferences that do not match the available options.**

All of these units have been developed by several different funding sources from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The following discussion will be of funding streams that contribute to and supplement this supply.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program represents more than one-fifth of all HUD program units, in an often mixed-income, apartment building-styled environment.⁸ This type of development has had a clear presence in Allegheny County, with data back to the program's inception in 1987. Most of the projects are sponsored by the private sector. This was the case for 123 of the 157 (78%) total developments from 1987 to 2012. The remaining 34 are sponsored by nonprofit organizations.

⁷ http://www.phfa.org/forms/multifamily_inventory/dv_allegheeny.pdf

⁸ Data related to LIHTC properties collected from HUD database queries: <http://lihtc.huduser.org/>

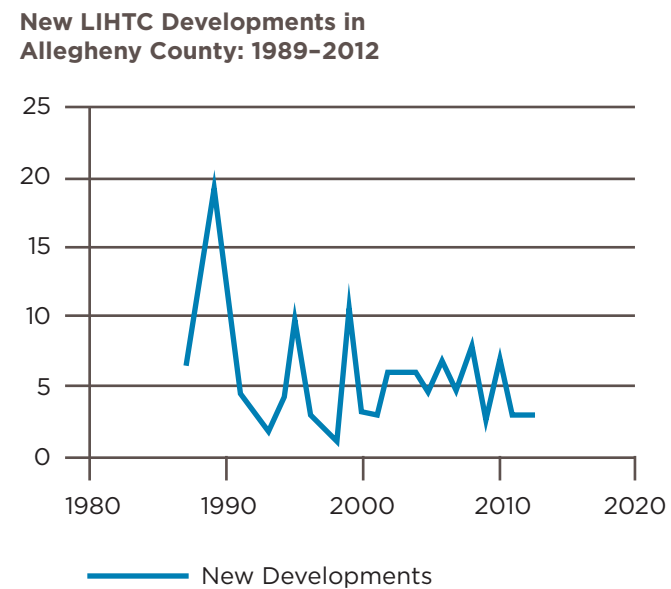


BAUSMAN STREET
INDEPENDENT LIVING

ACTION-Housing development of 12 units for individuals with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities

There are currently 6,366 LIHTC units in Allegheny County. Overall, 5-10% of these units must be built to accommodate individuals with disabilities, and about 80% of these units are ultimately occupied by individuals with disabilities. Therefore, roughly 300-500 are occupied by individuals with disabilities.

During the past ten years in Allegheny County, the number of LIHTC developments has decreased when compared to the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. From 1987-1999, there was an average of seven new developments per year. Four years saw at least ten new developments, and the highest year had twenty (1989). From 2000-2012, the average number of new developments per year was five.



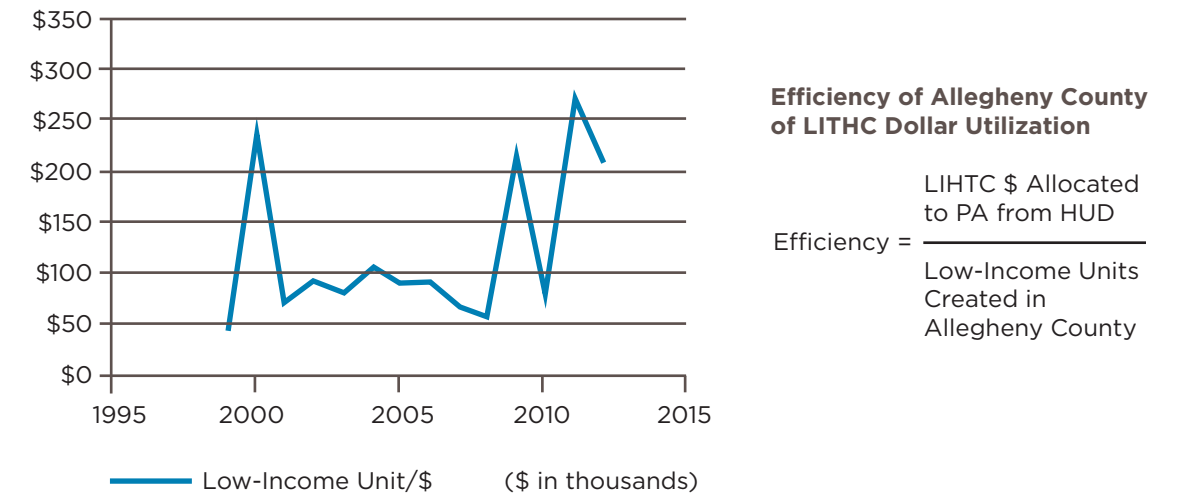
Although the number of new developments has decreased in Allegheny County, this does not appear to directly correlate with available funding. When all allocations from 1999-2012 are converted to 2010 dollars, the annual allocations are similar. By this conversion, 2012 saw \$26,505,000 allocated to Pennsylvania for LIHTC. The average for the entire period is \$23,780,796 and the median is \$24,995,112. This data suggests that funding of the LIHTC Program is fairly consistent and currently higher than average, and that these credits are going more to other parts of Pennsylvania than they have in the past.

An efficiency ratio, defined by the number of HUD dollars allocated to Pennsylvania per low-income unit created in Allegheny County, can measure the efficiency with which the supply of funds meets the demand for affordable housing.

Lower outputs of this formula suggest a stronger efficiency. Using this ratio, in 2012, Allegheny County created one low-income unit for every \$215,487 of funding allocated to Pennsylvania, the 11th least-efficient outcome out of a fourteen-year sample. The two

most efficient years were 1999, at one low-income unit per \$39,943.85 of funding to Pennsylvania, and 2008, at one low-income unit created for every \$49,570.55 allocated to Pennsylvania. The graph below shows the efficiency over this time period in Allegheny County and supports the theory that other areas of Pennsylvania recently have been receiving more of these funds.

Low-Income Units Developed in Allegheny County per LITHC Dollar Awarded to PA: 1999-2012



811 Properties

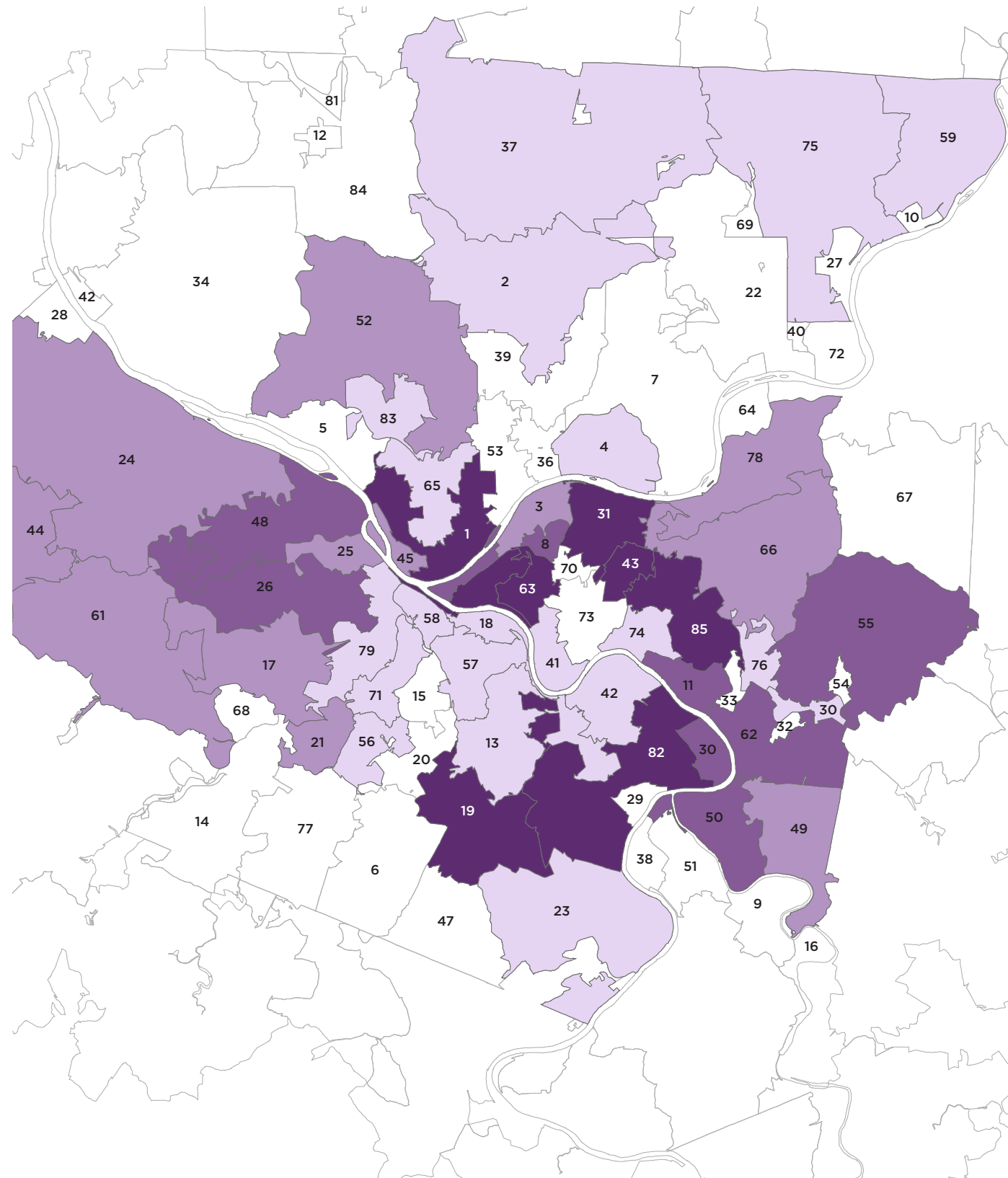
There are twenty-three 811 properties in Allegheny County, with a total of 289 units. The original 811 properties were built exclusively for non-elderly individuals with disabilities. These properties were built around the support needs for tenants with disabilities, and tenants pay 30% of their income as rent. Similar to the other units from the PHFA inventory, these units have a concentration in the eastern and central part of the City of Pittsburgh. More details about this program are available in Section 4.

Housing Choice Vouchers Data as an Indicator of Supply

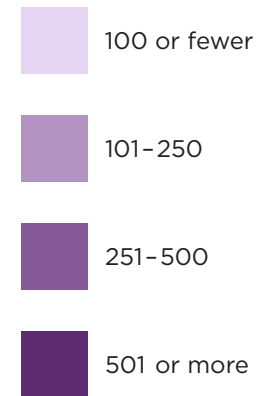
Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) are part of the Section 8 program. These vouchers can be used as a rent subsidy to federally contracted landlords. Every two years, an application period is open to the public to apply for the vouchers. Because of the terms, these vouchers are in very high demand, with applications in the thousands. Only a limited number are available for a given area, determined by HUD. However, within these allotments, a number of vouchers are set aside or are made a priority for individuals with disabilities.

Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) also provide an opportunity to create homeownership. This could be an important program to individuals with disabilities. The Housing Authority can provide a HCV that allows the individual to purchase the home and use the rent payment to pay a mortgage and other ownership-related costs. The units purchased are typically of modest cost and usually require improvements to be safe and affordable.

PHFA Inventory of Non-Elderly, Independent, Affordable Housing Units.



Total Units by Zip Code



CITY

1 Allegheny, 15212	35 Elizabeth, 15037	62 North Versailles, 15137
2 Allison Park, 15101	5 Emsworth, 15202	63 Oakdale, 15071
3 Arsenal, 15201	36 Etna, 15223	64 Oakland, 15213
4 Aspinwall, 15215	23 Floreffe, 15025	65 Oakmont, 15139
5 Avalon, 15202	37 Gibsonia, 15044	66 Observatory, 15214
5 Bellevue, 15202	38 Glassport, 15045	67 Penn Hills, 15235
5 Ben Avon, 15202	39 Glenshaw, 15116	54 Pitcairn, 15140
6 Bethel Park, 15102	28 Glenwillard, 15046	19 Pleasant Hills, 15236
7 Blawnox, 15238	40 Harwick, 15049	67 Plum, 15239
8 Bloomfield, 15224	41 Hazelwood, 15207	68 Presto, 15142
9 Boston, 15135	17 Heidelberg, 15106	11 Rankin, 15104
10 Brackenridge, 15014	42 Homestead, 15120	69 Russellton, 15076
11 Braddock, 15104	43 Homewood, 15208	34 Sewickley, 15143
12 Bradford Woods, 15015	23 Jefferson Hills 15025	70 Shadyside, 15232
13 Brentwood, 15227	45 Kilbuck, 15233	4 Sharpsburg, 05215
14 Bridgeville, 15017	23 Large, 15025	71 South Hills, 15216
15 Brookline, 15226	46 Leetsdale, 15056	47 South Park, 15129
16 Buena Vista, 15018	47 Library, 15129	72 Springdale, 15144
17 Carnegie, 15106	48 McKees Rocks, 15136	73 Squirrel Hill, 15217
18 Carson, 15203	49 McKeesport, 15131	74 Swissvale, 15218
19 Caste Village, 15236	50 McKeesport, 15132	75 Tarentum, 15084
20 Castle Shannon, 15234	51 McKeesport, 15133	76 Turtle Creek, 15145
21 Cedarhurst, 15243	9 McKeesport, 15135	77 Upper Saint Clair, 15241
22 Cheswick, 15024	52 Mcknight, 15237	78 Verona, 15147
23 Clairton, 15025	53 Millvale, 15209	79 Wabash, 15220
24 Coraopolis, 15108	54 Monroeville, 15140	80 Wall, 15148
25 Corliss, 15204	55 Monroeville, 15146	81 Warrendale, 15086
26 Crafton, 15205	24 Moon Township, 15108	42 West Homestead, 15120
27 Creighton, 15030	56 Mount Lebanon, 15228	82 West Mifflin, 15122
28 Crescent, 15046	57 Mount Oliver, 15210	18 West Mifflin, 15236
29 Dravosburg, 15034	58 Mount Washington, 15211	83 West View, 15229
30 Duquesne, 15110	42 Munhall, 15120	84 Wexford, 15090
31 East Liberty, 15206	59 Natrona, 15065	42 Whitaker, 15120
32 East McKeesport, 15035	60 Neville Island, 15225	49 White Oak, 15131
33 East Pittsburgh, 15112	61 Noblestown, 15071	85 Wilkinsburg, 15221
34 Edgeworth, 15143		80 Wilmerding, 15148

Local housing authorities have operated some modest programs. What makes this a more viable option is if it is combined with strong budget counseling, a preferred mortgage program, and careful analysis of the property to determine the costs of improving and maintaining a home.

In the more common rental arrangement, becoming an accepting landlord requires a contract with HUD. After this arrangement is made, and a tenant and landlord have agreed on lease terms, the tenant will be required to pay the landlord 30% of his or her income (depending on other factors like family size) and often only a portion of utilities. The landlord then collects the difference between the income-based payment and the federally formulated payment standard, a number calculated and paid by the local Public Housing Authority (PHA).

In Allegheny County, there are three PHAs that administer the HCV program: The Allegheny County Housing Authority (for the whole county), the City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority, and the McKeesport Housing Authority. Often times, the area that an individual receives the voucher from will dictate where they find housing. However, these vouchers are eligible to be transferred to any area in the county that has a participating housing authority. This includes neighboring areas like Pittsburgh and McKeesport. The following table shows statistics for HCVs in these three areas.

“Subsidized units available” refers to the total number of contracts signed with landlords, making them eligible to accept the voucher. While it might seem that McKeesport has a low rate of occupancy (79%) compared to the other two areas, it doesn’t mean that they do not employ all of their allotted vouchers. It is probably more likely that there are simply more contracted landlords than there are vouchers.

Housing Choice Voucher Statistics for All Overlapping Areas in Allegheny County: 2013⁹

	Allegheny County	City of Pittsburgh	McKeesport
Subsidized units available	13,286	7,017	518
% Occupied	98	100	79
% moved in past year	6	7	3
% \$1 – \$4,999	16	17	18
% \$5,000 – \$9,999	35	36	35
% \$10,000 – \$14,999	20	19	16
% \$15,000 – \$19,999	13	13	13
% \$20,000 or more	15	15	17
% of all persons with a disability	26	26	17
Average utility allowance \$	176	182	260

⁹Data related to Housing Choice Vouchers obtained from HUD database queries, Picture of Subsidized Households: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/picture/yearlydata.html>

A key statistic is the “% moved in past year.” This essentially is the turnover for housing choice vouchers during the non-application year of 2013. Application years (every two years) and other less significant factors can affect this turnover. Using Allegheny County data from 2010 to the present, turnover was as high as 11%.

Within these three areas, there is a total of about 12,000 vouchers. It is estimated that Allegheny County has 5,500, the City of Pittsburgh has 6,200, and McKeesport has 400. Considering the “% moved in past year” and the voucher estimates, this means that in 2013, about 300 vouchers were available from the Allegheny County Housing Authority, about 400 available from the City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority, and around 12 available from the McKeesport Housing Authority.

Assessing the Gap between Supply and Demand

Identifying the gap between supply and demand is difficult based on available data and, therefore, requires an assumptive process. According to current data from HUD and PHFA, there are almost twice as many people in Allegheny County who have a disability than there is non-elderly, affordable/supportive housing. This is found by the 23,466 individuals, aged 18-64¹⁰, in Allegheny County who receive SSI and roughly 13,000 units. It is not clear that all of these individuals have a demand for this housing, but it is also the case that the units available are predominately occupied, and waitlists exist for many units. Ultimately, the effective demand falls uncertainly between these two figures.

Under the assumption that demand exceeds the supply, this demand may also be increasing. From 2008 to 2013, the average annual increase of individuals aged 18-64 receiving SSI in Allegheny County is 406. These individuals have been federally certified as having a disability, SSI may be their primary source of income, and they are of an age commonly associated with housing demand across the entire population. These factors would place them in competition for many of these units as they are available.

Looking again at individuals with either an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder can provide a more specific case from the support side. From the data previously discussed, there are 5,407 individuals in Allegheny County enrolled in the ID system and 1,273 on the PUNS list. Of those receiving a waiver, only half of the housing-plus-support equation is solved. If waitlisted individuals cannot live independently without this level of service (which is often the case), this means about 20% of all individuals with intellectual disabilities in Allegheny County in demand of housing either need a publicly created housing option that offers support services, housing and service resources created by friends and family, or have to pay cash at a market rate for both. When considered under the same conditions, 54% of adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder face this dilemma.

¹⁰Individuals in this group older than 55 may qualify for “elderly” housing.

4

Existing Structure to Provide Supportive Housing and Services

The systems developed for supportive housing are largely separated in terms of real estate support and service support. The HUD-based supportive housing funding has, at times, provided financial support for both real estate costs and service costs, but its level of funding has been modest and funding formulas have changed over time and moved mostly to support the housing and real estate costs. **The system that has evolved in 2014 is one that is divided and requires a provider to assemble resources from both systems to achieve the provision of affordable supportive housing with services.**

1. **SERVICE FUNDING AND WAIVER FUNDING:** The primary funding mechanism for services includes components that can support housing costs for some of the eligible people with disabilities. There are two significant barriers to use of the “service” dollars to support additional supportive housing beyond the categories that specifically exclude use for housing. The first is that the level of funding for each person is limited, and the use of funds for housing requires substitution for service costs that are essential for independent living. The second is that overall program funding levels are such that there are long lists of eligible but unserved people with disabilities who are waiting for funding. The shortage of resources is such that appropriation of more resources, should it occur, must be linked to those on the lists with urgent or emergent needs. Given these funding shortages, it’s unlikely that a portion of this funding will be allocated to supporting housing outside of individual service plans.

ACTION - Housing Inc. does not see this as a likely source of funding for creating supportive housing, though a custom analysis of funding for individuals with disabilities will identify some people with disabilities who can dedicate some funds for housing costs.

2. **FINANCING INDEPENDENT HOUSING THROUGH HUD 811 RESOURCES:** The primary resource to develop affordable independent apartments from 1986 to 2012 was the HUD 811 Capital Development Program, which permitted nonprofit sponsors to develop small-scale affordable housing for people with disabilities to enable them to live independently. This program provided both capital to develop the housing and project-based rental assistance to support the costs while maintaining rents affordable to people with disabilities. Almost all properties were limited to one type of disability and involved a service provider that was key to independent living.



DARLINGTON ROAD APARTMENTS

ACTION-Housing development of 10 units.
Eligibility only for individuals with developmental disabilities.



McKEESPORT DOWNTOWN HOUSING

ACTION-Housing development of 84 units
with various levels of support

This program was suspended by HUD in 2011 and is under transformation to become the 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) program, which is discussed in Section 5. HUD had two reasons to transform the program: One was that the program produced a very modest 15-20 units per year across Pennsylvania, whereas rental assistance has the potential to create 200 units per year; The other was that the program mandated segregated housing for people with disabilities, which was counter to Federal Policy mandating integrated housing.

3. **EXISTING HUD-FINANCED PRIVATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** There is a significant inventory of HUD-financed affordable housing that was developed between 1968 and 1985 for both families and seniors. Most of this housing is in good condition and is supported by various levels of rental assistance. Most was developed with some units given preference for persons with qualifying disabilities. Most of the senior apartments have seniors with disabilities occupying those dedicated units. There is no comprehensive program to link persons with disabilities to these units, and each project is rented separately under separate marketing plans mostly by management agents with strong HUD knowledge. The only linkage to service providers is what has been developed by individual management agents who link to service providers in response to tenant needs.
4. **EXISTING PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECTION 8:** Public housing and Section 8 rental assistance are the other major resources for affordable housing, which was discussed in Section 3. Both public housing developments, and particularly those that have been transformed through private partnerships in the HOPE 6 Program, represent a real estate resource. The linkages to service providers are dependent on both the authority (the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and McKeesport have PHAs) and the private partner provider (in the case of HOPE 6 and similar options).

Given the inventory size and growing transformation of public housing into a blend of public and private, this represents a resource that can be further developed. The PHAs carry a public service mission and are likely supporters of this effort.

The PHAs also operate the Section 8 rental assistance program, which provides affordable housing through privately owned housing. The private owners are mostly for-profit owners, but some nonprofit owners also are included. The rental assistance programs include set-asides for people with disabilities, but there is also significant turnover in the general program.

The Section 8 rental assistance program represents an important resource (as identified in Section 3) and can be used for supportive housing if a service provider can be linked to the individual with a disability.



AIRMOUNT WOODS

The Airmount Woods project is just one of several spearheaded by the Bergen County United Way. As of February 17, 2014, the Bergen County United Way had, with its partner Madeline Corp., "completed 13 projects and [had] another 15 in process. They vary from a 64-unit, low-income senior housing project to renovation of a three-bedroom ranch home into a group home."

MACKEY LOFTS

ACTION-Housing development of 43 units. Eighteen of the units have special accessibility features, and eight are specifically designed for the deaf, deaf/blind, and/or hard-of-hearing community.

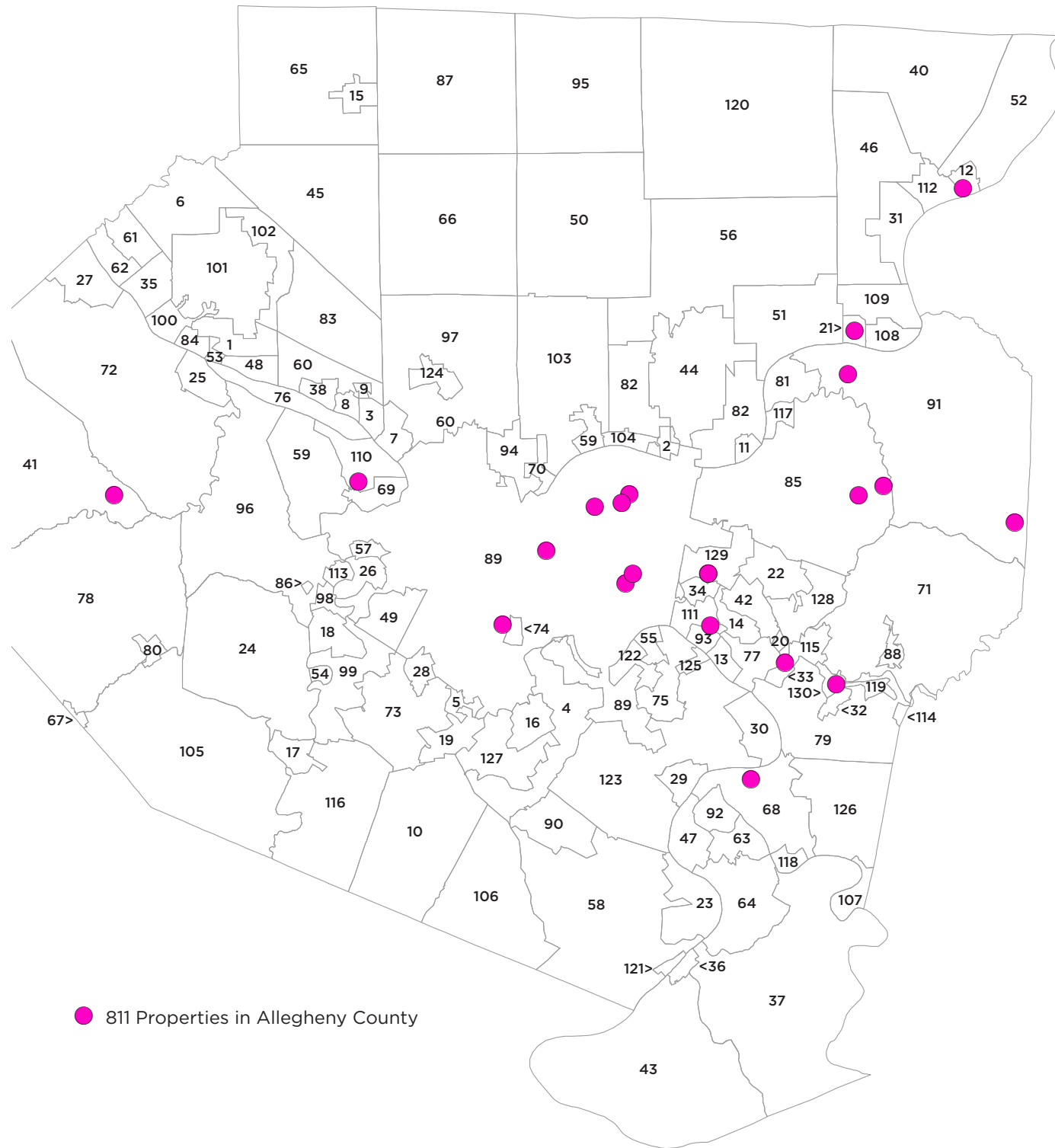


Conventional public housing, HOPE 6 partnerships and Section 8 rental assistance are linked to service providers at the project level and largely depend upon staff at that level to make the linkage.

5. **LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT:** Since 1986, LIHTC has represented the primary resource to develop additional affordable housing, and today it represents about 95% of all annual production of affordable housing in the U.S. This is true for Allegheny County as well. LIHTC developments require set-asides of 5-10% of all units for persons with disabilities, and PHFA is an aggressive funder in promoting the proper use of these units.

LIHTC is a core real estate funding mechanism that has to be linked to service providers at the project level. The funding process does require such a linkage, but it is somewhat dependent in the longer term on the owner/management agent and lead local agency service provider to continue the services.

811 Property Map by Municipality



- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Aleppo Township | 33 Borough of East Pittsburgh | 66 Town of McCandless | 102 Borough of Sewickley Hills |
| 2 Borough of Aspinwall | 34 Borough of Edgewood | 67 Borough of McDonald | 103 Shaler Township |
| 3 Borough of Avalon | 35 Borough of Edgeworth | 68 City of McKeesport | 104 Borough of Sharpsburg |
| 4 Borough of Baldwin | 36 Borough of Elizabeth | 69 Borough of McKees Rocks | 105 South Fayette Township |
| 5 Baldwin Township | 37 Elizabeth Township | 70 Borough of Millvale | 106 South Park Township |
| 6 Borough of Bell Acres | 38 Borough of Emsworth | 71 Municipality of Monroeville | 107 South Versailles Township |
| 7 Borough of Bellevue | 39 Borough of Etna | 72 Moon Township | 108 Borough of Springdale |
| 8 Borough of Ben Avon | 40 Fawn Township | 73 Municipality of Mt. Lebanon | 109 Springdale Township |
| 9 Borough of Ben Avon Hts. | 41 Findlay Township | 74 Borough of Mt. Oliver | 110 Stowe Township |
| 10 Municipality of Bethel Park | 42 Borough of Forest Hills | 75 Borough of Munhall | 111 Borough of Swissvale |
| 11 Borough of Blawnox | 43 Forward Township | 76 Neville Township | 112 Borough of Tarentum |
| 12 Borough of Brackenridge | 44 Borough of Fox Chapel | 77 North Braddock Borough | 113 Borough of Thornburg |
| 13 Borough of Braddock | 45 Borough of Franklin Park | 78 North Fayette Township | 114 Borough of Trafford |
| 14 Borough of Braddock Hills | 46 Frazer Township | 79 North Versailles Township | 115 Borough of Turtle Creek |
| 15 Borough of Bradford Woods | 47 Borough of Glassport | 80 Borough of Oakdale | 116 Upper St. Clair Township |
| 16 Borough of Brentwood | 48 Borough of Glen Osborne (formerly Osborne) | 81 Borough of Oakmont | 117 Borough of Verona |
| 17 Borough of Bridgeville | 49 Borough of Glenfield | 82 O'Hara Township | 118 Borough of Versailles |
| 18 Borough of Carnegie | 50 Borough of Green Tree | 83 Ohio Township | 119 Borough of Wall |
| 19 Borough of Castle Shannon | 51 Hampton Township | 84 Pennsbury Village | 120 West Deer Township |
| 20 Borough of Chalfant | 52 Harmar Township | 85 Borough of Pitcairn | 121 Borough of West Elizabeth |
| 21 Borough of Cheswick | 53 Borough of Haysville | 86 City of Pittsburgh | 122 Borough of West Homestead |
| 22 Borough of Churchill | 54 Borough of Heidelberg | 87 Borough of Pleasant Hills | 123 Borough of West Mifflin |
| 23 City of Clairton | 55 Borough of Homestead | 88 Borough of Plum | 124 Borough of West View |
| 24 Collier Township | 56 Indiana Township | 89 Borough of Port Vue | 125 Borough of Whitaker |
| 25 Borough of Coraopolis | 57 Borough of Ingram | 90 Borough of Rankin | 126 Borough of White Oak |
| 26 Borough of Crafton | 58 Borough of Jefferson Hills | 91 Reserve Township | 127 Borough of Whitehall |
| 27 Crescent Township | 59 Borough of Kennedy Township | 92 Richland Township | 128 Wilkins Township |
| 28 Borough of Dormont | 60 Kilbuck Township | 93 Robinson Township | 129 Borough of Wilkesburg |
| 29 Borough of Dravosburg | 61 Leet Township | 94 Ross Township | 130 Borough of Wilmerding |
| 30 City of Duquesne | 62 Borough of Leetsdale | 95 Borough of Rosslyn Farms | |
| 31 East Deer Township | 63 Borough of Liberty | 96 Scott Township | |
| 32 Borough of East McKeesport | 64 Borough of Lincoln | 97 Borough of Sewickley | |
| | 65 Marshall Township | 98 Borough of Sewickley Hts. | |

Options to Create Additional Affordable Supportive Housing

Given the very strong and growing demand for supportive housing to enable people with disabilities to live independently, ACTION-Housing sees use of the existing supply of affordable housing, preservation opportunities, conversion of market-rate housing, and new production as important elements to reaching a scaled response to demand. Given the limitation on housing resources, we will look at low-, medium- and high-cost alternatives separately. Supportive housing must compete for resources with affordable housing for families and seniors, which also have strong demand components. There is little likelihood that the overall resource base to provide for affordable housing will increase in the near term.

Low-Cost Alternatives: Using Existing Resources and with Limited Additional Funding

1. **UTILIZE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS (HCVS).** Allegheny County has three Public Housing Authorities that operate Housing Choice Voucher programs, the total inventory of which is almost 12,000 vouchers that can be used to provide affordable housing. The HCV provides for a rent supplement that supports the cost of rental housing. The resident pays 30% of income for housing costs, and the balance is paid by the voucher. The program depends upon a lease between the resident and a private (for-profit or nonprofit) owner that is based upon typical terms and conditions. Housing units must meet standard housing quality conditions. There is a maximum rent that can be paid, which is determined by the size of the rented unit, and a Fair Market Rent (FMR) is established for the unit. In some cases, residents can pay more than FMR to rent a unit and increase their portion of the housing costs.

Housing Choice Vouchers also provide an opportunity to create homeownership. This could be an important program to individuals with disabilities. The housing authority can provide a HCV that allows the individual to purchase the home and use the rent payment to pay a mortgage and other ownership-related costs. The units purchased are typically of modest cost and they do usually require improvements to be safe and affordable. Local housing authorities have operated some modest programs. This becomes a more viable option if it is combined with strong budget counseling, a preferred mortgage program, and careful analysis of the property to determine the costs of improving and maintaining the home.

There are two opportunities under the HCV program to expand the housing for persons with disabilities and supportive housing. The housing authorities typically have set-asides of units that are allocated to people with disabilities. When a qualified person applies, he or she has an opportunity to receive a priority for such a unit when it becomes available. This effectively moves that person ahead on the waiting list.

The other opportunity is to apply for the general list. The lists are periodically opened for applications (varies by PHA, but for Allegheny County it is about every two years). During general enrollment, applications are taken and then a lottery is used to determine position on a waiting list. Given the turnover, it will take some 2.5 years for an individual to receive a voucher. But for persons with the ability to wait, the resources to identify private units, and a service provider to support, this is a reasonable option. There are significant turnovers of HCVs in a given year, and applicant success is not high in finding units to rent, which increases the opportunities for persons with a housing plan and a support agency.

We believe that a strong program to link applications from persons with disabilities to the City, County and McKeesport Housing Authorities could result in an increase of 75 to 100 HCVs being awarded to and put in place for people with disabilities.

2. **FULLY UTILIZE THE “SET-ASIDES” IN PHFA AND HUD INVENTORY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY.** Existing PHFA and HUD inventory in Allegheny County includes set-asides for people with disabilities. The percentage of units varies from 5% to 10% in senior and general occupancy developments depending upon the initial funding requirements and subsequent rental assistance-related rules.

Owners/managers, however, have discretion to rent units to persons without disabilities if there is no expressed demand for the units. The regulations vary between the various HUD programs and LIHTC. In particular, LIHTC has significant rent-up pressure since there is little rental assistance in most of these developments and a need to qualify the rental units for the tax credits by having income-qualified people in place. Initial occupancy of the building (rent up) is typically completed in 60 days in order to put in place the qualified investment.

The best estimator is that some 75-80% of the PHFA inventory set aside for persons with disabilities is occupied by such residents. PHFA does track this issue from time to time. An initiative to better link owners/managers with service agencies and lead referral agencies will lead to increased utilization of these units by persons with disabilities. Most of the LIHTC developments are newer-generation housing, have better accessibility features, occur in stronger markets as well as economically challenged markets, and have some level of supportive housing services in place.

We estimate that an intensive effort to link available units to appropriate people with disabilities will result in an increase of 50–75 units serving people with disabilities. The effort must clearly link to owners/managers and provide referrals and follow-on services so that rental units are filled in a timely manner once they become available. Given the time pressure for filling units, it is probably necessary to have qualified, geographically interested and service-ready persons standing by once the unit becomes available.

The HUD-related inventory includes both HUD-assisted and HUD-insured multifamily housing. This inventory includes both family and senior housing, as well as a small inventory of HUD 811 units developed for people with disabilities. Almost the entire HUD inventory requires that persons apply to each property and that owners/managers rent off the property waiting list. HUD has very strong requirements related to occupancy and also requires uniform rent-up procedures that are in place to prevent discrimination. We do not have an estimator of the number of set-aside units in this inventory that are actually occupied by persons with disabilities, but given rent-up issues, it is likely similar to PHFA.

We believe that a concerted program to identify designated units—tracking their availability combined with an outreach to owners/managers—will allow another 50 units that are set aside to be occupied. The HUD properties tend to be older in that the inventory was created between 1970 and 1985 and thus may not have all the accessibility features of newer properties. Accessing the HUD inventory will require support from HUD Pittsburgh and building a strong working relationship with the managers of HUD affordable housing. The majority of the inventory is managed by 15–20 larger-scale firms that manage 500 to 2,500 units each, which makes development of such a system more practical.

3. MAXIMIZE THE USE OF CURRENT HUD 811 INVENTORY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY.

There are 23 HUD 811 developments in Allegheny County that provide independent living for people with disabilities. This represents some 289 units that are nonprofit owned and that have project-based assistance to make them affordable. Almost all of them are smaller scale and involve 15 units or less. The 811 inventory provides housing for people with physical, mental health and developmental disabilities.

This program provided capital and operating support to nonprofits to develop the real estate and to pay for real estate operating costs, but required a service provider to be linked to the housing to provide the services for people to live independently. We have assembled the inventory and suggest that, since this is an ongoing system to provide 289 units, all would benefit from an organized effort to better coordinate use of this housing and provision of services. **This initiative will not produce additional units, but would enrich the delivery of services to the existing housing and create new opportunities for independent living.**

4. **ACCESSIBILITY MODIFICATIONS TO SUPPORT THE CONTINUANCE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING.** There are a number of initiatives that are designed to allow people to live independently in their existing housing. The demands on family and other caregivers can reach a point where independent living is at risk. Modifications to homes or rental units can preserve independent living in many cases. This also preserves the natural support system of family, friends and neighbors that allows people to live independently.

The State of Pennsylvania, through PHFA, operates a home modification loan and grant program. A cooperative of five local nonprofits operates a modification program supported by the United Way and foundations with logistical support from the City of Pittsburgh Sustainable Home Improvement Partnership (SHIP). ACTION-Housing operates a small-scale home modification program using State Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) housing dollars through Allegheny County. Collectively, these programs assist some 100 persons per year. Expansion of these programs to serve roughly 200 units per year would preserve additional independent living opportunities.

5. **DEVELOP AND DISTRIBUTE A NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY FRIENDLY DATABASE AND RESOURCE SYSTEM.** The United Way survey and all of the information ACTION-Housing has suggest that location decisions of people seeking affordable supportive housing are bounded by the local geography. The availability of housing that is not located near the support systems of family, friends and care providers is not relevant in a large number of the cases, according to both the survey responses and caseworker input.

Allegheny County DHS maintains a strong database of affordable housing that is useful for placement. An enhanced system that can be accessed on a select geographic basis with identification of units reserved for persons with disabilities would be an important tool in the better utilization of the units available.

Medium-Cost Alternatives to Provide Additional Supportive Housing

1. **HUD 811 PILOT AND LONG-TERM ROLLOUT OF THE REVISED HUD 811 PROGRAM.** Pennsylvania is a pilot state for the revised HUD 811 program. HUD has modified this capital and operating grant program that was dedicated to nonprofits into an operating support program for units made available from both for-profit and nonprofit developers. The impact on scale is that instead of funding 20–30 units per year statewide, HUD will provide rental assistance contracts through PHFA and be linked to lead social service agencies with a concentration on the new affordable housing being provided by the LIHTC program.

The pilot program was in the process of being rolled out in the fall of 2014 and became operational in January of 2015. PHFA intends to link up to five units to new developments with a plan that provides rental assistance contracts of five years,

with renewal up to 15 years. Developers will be solicited by PHFA and the local lead agency for participation. Local lead agencies will also contact service providers for referrals and link to the developers. There is a priority for persons exiting institutions or who are at risk of being institutionalized. PHFA will permit no more than 25% of the units in any development to be occupied by 811 contract holders.

In addition, the Housing Authorities have pledged additional HCVs to expand this program.

The contracts can be attractive to developers as they will receive stable rental assistance for a five-year period averaging some \$5,500 per year. The five-year contracts are likely to be renewed for up to 15 years, which is the length of the IRS-mandated compliance period on LIHTC developments.

The pilot does not involve additional funds for local lead agencies to provide the linkage or reach out to developers. This is a key issue, since developers are encouraged but not required to participate. Participation will occur upon rent up, which is a very intensive and time-sensitive process that is key to the tax credit units being placed in service in a timely manner. Developers face significant financial penalties if they do not rent up on a timely basis.

Developers likely will also be concerned that the supportive services necessary for persons to live independently are in place. Since developers can accept referrals, but are not obligated to accept a specific individual case, this becomes a critical function of the pilot.

The pilot program of 200 units will, if it is successful, be followed by a regular annual program of some 200 units per year statewide. Allegheny County can expect to add 20% of the 200 units in the County during the pilot and on a regular basis. As a baseline, 40 units per year can be added. Allegheny County could, however, add another 20-30 units beyond the baseline if it would provide the linkage and support to ensure the utilization of the 811 resources.

We believe that critical staff resources should be put in place in early 2015 with the intent to drive more resources into independent supportive housing in Allegheny County. The baseline of 40 units per year adds some \$220,000 in annual rental assistance, and, if increased to 70 units, would involve some \$385,000 per year.

This is a critical resource that can be used to develop a more expansive and comprehensive independent supportive housing system.

Given the lead agency role of Allegheny County DHS, this staffing support should be incorporated into its housing effort either directly or by a cooperative agreement with a provider who can help link the developers and eligible people with disabilities.

2. ONE-STOP REFERRAL AND RESPONSE CENTER. Navigating the affordable housing system is challenging, complex, and requires housing program knowledge to be successful. The housing system is largely disaggregated and requires knowledge of each housing development, the owner/manager, the funding requirements of each development, and the physical and geographic appropriateness of the housing. For individuals with disabilities (or caregivers), the chances of a successful navigation to find the best housing options are low.

Program options include one-stop centers like the Movin' Out Program of Madison, Wisconsin. One-stop centers provide a place to help acquire information and develop a feasible plan to link to appropriate and affordable housing. The significant advantage of this model is that one place houses the information necessary to match an individual with a disability to a potential housing option. This does require that service providers participate in developing plans that are supportable for independent living.

One-stop centers can be developed for everyone or within the provider community among the casework providers.

3. HOUSING CONNECTIONS AT THE SERVICE PROVIDER LEVEL. Since placement in affordable housing can be heavily dependent on a customized service plan of some people with disabilities, there is an option to develop and increase capacity at the provider level. Some of the agencies are developing this capacity as a component of their casework. In these cases, the provider works with people with disabilities to develop and implement a housing plan that is separate but linked to their service plans. This provides a strong connection from a trusted source. These activities can be linked to an independent one-stop center so that the information profile of available supportive housing can be better utilized.

4. SHALLOW RENT SUBSIDY PROGRAMS. Allegheny County DHS is piloting the use of shallow subsidies to provide incentives to encourage independent living. Shallow subsidies of \$200 per month will be offered to 20 persons in a pilot program to determine if this can help move people into independent housing. The program is currently under development and is intended to identify barriers to such independent living.

Shallow rent subsidies combine a lesser incentive with staff and case support to find opportunities for people to live independently. The shallow rent subsidy programs try to use these opportunities to work with people to solve the other problems and issues of independent living that are frequently the more substantial barriers.

High-Cost Alternatives to Produce Supportive Housing

The following options involve substantial costs for each unit created and play an important role in adding to the inventory of supportive housing, adding units in new markets and adding new types of opportunities to the system.

- 1. SUPPORTIVE HOUSING THROUGH THE LIHTC PROGRAM.** The primary vehicle to add new affordable housing is the LIHTC program, responsible for 110,000 of the 120,000 units created nationwide each year. The housing is developed by both for-profit and nonprofit organizations and relies substantially on private investments for tax credits as a capital source to develop housing. Larger-scale private, regulated lenders are the primary investors in the credit market today.

Pennsylvania as a state is a market leader in using its tax credit program to create supportive and independent housing. In Pennsylvania, there are set-asides and priorities for affordable housing. A percentage of the units must be made available for people with disabilities, and recent changes in the State allocation plan created incentives for supportive housing. As a result of those changes, the number of applications for supportive housing across the state rose from 1-2 per year to 10 per year.

Because LIHTC developments rely on market rents for the units that do not have rental assistance, they tend to be developed in stronger rental markets. The changes in the 2014 plan provide a priority for units developed in strong rental markets to create new opportunities.

In addition, PHFA recognizes the importance of local priorities in making its development decisions. Local civic, governmental and human service priorities are factored into development selection. This creates an incentive for developers to link to local human service and civic priorities.

Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh (separate entitlements or housing development functions) receive a combined 6-8 projects per year under the LIHTC program. **That allocation creates some 250-300 units per year, and there is a potential to add some 50-75 affordable supportive units each year.**

To the extent HCVs and HUD 811 pilot program rental assistance can be combined with these new projects, additional units can be added as well.

- 2. COOPERATIVE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.** Cooperative housing represents a special variant in the affordable housing schemes. Cooperatives create housing through special financing and then sell cooperative shares to people, entitling these people to live in a unit. Residents pay carrying charges (similar to condo fees) for all operating costs that are shared. The advantage of the cooperative is that, in some circumstances, the funding of the cooperative can be structured so that

borrowing is real estate secured to the property and can be accessed at high loan to value percentages. Cooperators have long-term control of their units and cooperative groups are assembled before the real estate is developed.

Several nonprofits in Pittsburgh are in the feasibility stage of considering cooperative housing that will be developed so that communities remain/become more inclusive by both income and disability group. Cooperative development enjoys a stronger national resource base to assist development since there are both national financing resources and technical support centers. It is possible to combine LIHTC units in a cooperative, and Regional Housing Legal Services supported a smaller-scale initiative in eastern Pennsylvania to provide supportive housing.

- 3. BONDS TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING.** There are multiple opportunities to use bonds to support housing alternatives, and three variants that have impacts that may contribute to the provision of affordable housing:

BONDS THAT PROVIDE THE 4% TAX CREDIT. Although the LIHTC 9% credit is the major vehicle to develop housing, the 4% bond program is also used. The level of subsidy is greatly reduced, and the 4% bond program requires either a deep GAP subsidy or a market component strong enough to carry additional costs. The 4% program has the advantage of not being strongly competitive, and most financially feasible projects can get an allocation from PHFA. The primary use of the 4% bond program has been to refinance projects that have underlying rental assistance in the Allegheny County market.

A 4% development that created new units in Lawrenceville (City of Pittsburgh) involved both market-rate units and affordable housing units. It utilized a strong GAP subsidy to assist the affordable units. The 4% bonds do have the potential to link financing if the development is able to attract rental assistance in some form from an established program.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS. Government entities can sell general obligation (GO) bonds and use the capital created to build housing. Bonds are repaid from general revenues of the unit of government. In Maryland, GO bonds are sold on a periodic basis by the state government, and the proceeds are used to develop critical priority housing that helps meet the need for housing alternatives that save the state funds on service provision. Pennsylvania sells GO bonds for capital projects from time to time, but largely excludes housing. Pennsylvania GO bonds have typically been used to finance economic development projects.

There is limited opportunity to use GO bonds given the relative budget constraints at the state and local level now and in the near future.

SOCIAL INVESTMENT BONDS. There has been some use of social investment bonds to create housing in the U.S. and other countries (notably the United Kingdom). The concept is that a program is developed to provide lower-cost independent housing and to allow people to choose non-institutional settings. To the extent that housing is created and lower costs are achieved, the unit of government responsible for the higher-cost housing agrees to reimburse (in part) those costs to the social investment bonds.

The background to create this financing and development vehicle requires an analysis that shows cost savings, identifies a strong linkage between the housing to be developed and the projected residents, and identifies a civic guarantor for the bonds. This model requires a cooperative venture of state government, local human service lead agencies, local government housing agencies and interested developers.

- 4. LARGE-SCALE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS.** There are a number of larger-scale mixed-use developments in planning and development in the Pittsburgh and Allegheny County markets. Most of them rely on some level of public support and incentive for the development to move forward. There is no program in place to link these developments to affordable housing or supportive housing for persons with disabilities.

CAPITALIZE ON LARGER-SCALE DEVELOPMENT IN KEY LOCATIONS. Developments of larger-scale residential and residential-mixed commercial properties can provide unique options for persons with disabilities. This opportunity to develop a portion of the larger site or integrate the units in the plan depends upon both a working relationship with the private developer and support from the public sector. A first step in the process would be to conduct a series of discussions with the developers pursuing and implementing these developments.

Examples of developments with this potential include the Bakery Square and transit site development in East Liberty. Each is at the scale where integration of some units is possible. In addition, there will likely be follow-up developments in that market. A very large-scale residential and commercial development is progressing at the Almono site in Hazelwood. The developer, RIDC, is working on behalf of Pittsburgh-area foundations. The overall plan calls for upscale residential, and a mix of affordable units is possible. A third example is the developments occurring in various tracts in the Strip District.

Each of the above simply represents some potential to add supportive housing units.

- 5. SMALLER-SCALE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS.** There is potential to foster smaller scale developments (50 units of housing and commercial) in some markets where a partner in the development has the creation of supportive independent housing units as an element of its plan. These developments depend upon a level of market strength to support both the commercial components and the market-rate housing portions. Community groups in Lawrenceville and Squirrel Hill are pursuing smaller-scale initiatives at this time and have an interest in providing mixed-income and mixed-use developments.

A key issue in these developments is integrating resources that provide for affordable supportive housing with those that are meant to encourage and support market-rate housing and commercial development. Case studies, if successful, can be helpful in furthering this option.

- 6. PRIVATE SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPMENTS.** There are a number of smaller-scale private developments in which interested parties have raised funds to provide supportive housing. In West Allegheny, a parent group has completed its first project and will soon provide housing for persons with disabilities. Although this requires extensive local fundraising, the developments are free of the regulatory issues that can make operations challenging in the integration of housing resources with service funding.

Developed by single-purpose nonprofits, these units provide maximum control and longer-term protections for residents. A strong case study on how this was organized and completed would be essential for its replication by other motivated groups. This does provide an important connection for parent- and caregiver-based groups who are seeking longer-term residential living options.

Section
6

National Scan for Supportive Housing Models for Youth with Disabilities: Prepared by Regional Housing Legal Services

The goal of the national scan is to help the United Way understand the range of models for creating new opportunities for permanent supportive housing for individuals with disabilities who are aging out of the educational, support, and care systems that they had been utilizing.

Supportive Housing Typology

Under current funding models, low-income persons with disabilities who need assistance with personal care and other activities of daily living have very few housing options outside the homes of their families, particularly for those who wish to remain non-institutionalized. One of the primary goals of advocates working on these issues is the creation of a range of workable options for individuals with disabilities. For this national scan of models, we group our findings based on the following typology: 1) supported; 2) supervised; 3) LIHTCs with Preferences; 4) group homes; and 5) campus/farmstead programs. The key characteristics of the typology focus on property ownership and services provided.

Key characteristics of the Supportive Housing Typology¹¹

Type	Ownership	Services
Supported	Self-owned or leased homes	Low; consumer directed
Supervised	Self-owned or leased homes or apartments	Moderate
LIHTCs with Preferences	Developer-owned	Varies
Group Homes	Agency/Parent group-owned homes	High (24-hour staffing)
Campus/Farmstead	Agency-owned	Usually housing + training/employment

¹¹ This typology draws upon the "Residential Program Options" detailed in *Housing from Autism Speaks Inc.*, available at <http://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/documents/transition/housing.pdf>.

The typology provides rough boundaries of housing types and the levels of services that may be provided. As with all typologies that attempt to capture and classify innovative solutions to problems, there will be examples that do not neatly fit into one of the listed categories. Nevertheless, we believe the typology outlines some significant variation in options for housing for individuals with disabilities. We provide model examples from around the country for each of the types below. We also include an additional section about the presence and potential for statewide networks focused on addressing specific housing needs.

SUPPORTED

Residents Co-Own a Home; Share Supportive Services

A model project called HomeWorks created a non-institutionalized living community shared by three high-functioning adults with disabilities in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The adults had lived with their aging parents and had a dream of living independently. Now, they share Medicaid-waiver-funded attendant care services 24 hours a day and live in a safe, supportive home environment that enables them to participate as citizens in the surrounding community.

The three adults purchased a house in Montgomery County financed with a single-family mortgage underwritten through the PHFA as well as several grants for closing cost assistance and access modification to make the property fully accessible. Their families and/or special needs trusts contributed resources to fund their down payment and to complete accessibility modifications. They moved in together in February 2008. They own the property as tenants-in-common and entered into a co-ownership agreement that both preserves affordability and sets the ground rules for entry and exit by other owners with disabilities who may replace them.

Rehab for an Existing Family Home

A public-private partnership between local government, a nonprofit and a community development financial institution allowed seven disabled children to avoid institutionalization after their parents died. Habitat for Humanity organized volunteers to make repairs. County government awarded HOME Funds to finance the repairs. The Disability Opportunity Fund (DOF) provided a line of credit for appliance and materials purchases. That team enabled the Clarkin family, which included seven related adults with developmental disabilities, to remain in their home. The rehabilitation of the home will allow the adults with developmental disabilities to age-in-place and includes Energy Star-rated improvements.

SUPERVISED

The Cottage in Darien, Connecticut

A group of families worked 10 years to create alternative housing for their adult children with disabilities. Confronted with the prohibitively long waiting list for housing placements through the state's department of mental health, these parents sought other options. Finding affordable land for The Cottage was the biggest cost barrier. After a parent-led community education campaign, the parents convinced the City to lease the land (\$1/year for 40 years plus two 10-year extensions) for the development. The Cottage provides six residents with a permanent home in an environment that allows them to engage in independent and group activities that enhance their lives. A professional staff assists the residents 24/7 in making choices, enjoying everyday life, achieving goals and living with dignity.

The DOF provided a five-year mini-perm loan of \$100,000 (amortized over 20 years) with a 5.75% interest rate and a 1% fee in partnership with the Leviticus Fund, a nonprofit financial intermediary that invests in affordable housing. Payments will be made using funding from the State of Connecticut's Department of Social Services.

The Disability Opportunity Fund (DOF) is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) created to bridge the gap created by the fact that one in five Americans live with a disability, but the financial needs of the market are largely unserved. DOF has made loans in nine states and is willing to work across the U.S. providing loans (bridge and term loans, gap financing, predevelopment, acquisition, and rehabilitation financing) and technical assistance. <http://thedof.org/>

Co-op Housing: Parent Group Controls Services

A parent group sought out assistance from the DOF to acquire a five-bedroom home for their adult children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The property that became Constellation Cooperative Housing was acquired using a co-op model, which accomplishes the following: "(1) their children will live in the community, (2) the parents will control the services being provided in the home, and (3) the model is a new way to create long-term affordable housing."

RENTAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WITH PREFERENCES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

LIHTC

Trinity House is a LIHTC project targeting adults with disabilities. It is comprised of eight two-bedroom units and three one-bedroom units. Trinity House is open for rental to the general public; however, the LIHTC program permits developments to give preferences in favor of certain vulnerable populations. Trinity House has established a preference for two specified populations: 1) persons with a severe chronic disability that is attributed to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments, is manifested before the person attains age 22, is likely to continue indefinitely, and results in substantial functional limitation in three or more areas of major activity; and 2) persons 18 years of age or older with one or more severe physical disabilities that are likely to

continue indefinitely and result in three or more substantial functional limitations in major life activities and have been determined by a physician or other assessor specified by the PA Office of Long Term Living to require services at the nursing facility level of care.

The Housing Authority financed the renovations with LIHTCs, local housing trust funds, and Section 8 project-based rental assistance.

Regional Housing Legal Services, a nonprofit law firm specializing in the development of affordable housing, joined the team to create Trinity House Cooperative so that Trinity House residents would not be tenants, but instead owners. Trinity House is not a state-licensed group home or nursing care facility. Members of Trinity Co-op bring their own support services to the Trinity Co-op community as required by their individual needs, which liberates housing from services and promotes freedom to choose from a broad range of options not available in a traditional institutional or family setting. Trinity House residents own shares in Trinity House Cooperative, which has a long-term lease from Trinity House Associates, LP, a limited partnership that owns the project. Trinity Co-op in turn subleases living space to Trinity Co-op members.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program

29 Palms Apartments, a 21-unit complex in Phoenix, Arizona, will be developed by the Foundation for Senior Living with First Place AZ and the Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC). This unique housing will include 15 units for seniors and six for adults with autism. The property is designed to be community-connected and transit-oriented, and will have a range of amenities and supportive services. Residents may choose to live by themselves, with a roommate or with an aide/mentor. The property will include a "specially designed communication system ... for the adults with ASD. The communication system will also be interfaced with a collection of passive sensors whose output will be used to help guide the independence of the adults with ASD and communicate with their family, friends, SARRC and First Place AZ."¹² Financing for the project included a \$259,509 Affordable Housing Program loan through the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco and \$868,742 from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

The Leviticus Fund is a nonprofit financial intermediary that offers "a socially responsive means to serve low-income neighborhoods." It provides financing for affordable housing and community facilities in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. <http://www.leviticusfund.org/>

GROUP HOMES

Family Forms LLC: Partners with Service Provider

Two families in Chester County, Pennsylvania, recently approached a healthcare service provider about another model for independent living for their 18-year-old children. The families formed a Pennsylvania limited liability company and contributed funds to the LLC to purchase a home in Malvern, Pennsylvania. The LLC leased the home to the

¹² <http://www.fsl.org/news/29-palms-grand-opening-a-one-of-a-kind-property/0006>

service provider, who in turn sought licensing of the house as a group home to house and provide attendant care services to the LLC member families' two children who reside in the property.

Bergen County United Way Partners to Create Housing for Autism

Airmount Woods in Ramsey, New Jersey, is designed specifically to address the shortage of residential housing opportunities for individuals with Autism. The two homes provide housing for eight young adults and include accessibility features and 24/7 staffing. Healthcare Financial Management Association (HMFA), an affiliate of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), provided approximately \$924,000 in construction and permanent financing through the Special Needs Housing Trust Fund (SNHTF). The Borough of Ramsey provided \$800,000 in Affordable Housing Trust Funds. Another \$200,000 came from the Bergen County United Way and \$350,000 from the DHS/DDD Capital Fund.”¹³

The Airmount Woods project is just one of several spearheaded by the Bergen County United Way. As of February 17, 2014, the Bergen County United Way had, with its partner Madeline Corp., “completed 13 projects and [had] another 15 in process. They vary from a 64-unit, low-income senior housing project to renovation of a three-bedroom ranch home into a group home.”¹⁴

CAMPUS/FARMSTEAD

Marbridge

Located in Austin, Texas, Marbridge provides residential care to more than 240 adults with intellectual disabilities. The large campus contains three communities with varying levels of care (ranging from skilled nursing/rehab to semi-independent care).

The Arc Village

The Arc Village will house about 120 adults, ages 18 and older, in 97 one- and two-bedroom apartments in Jacksonville, Florida. The Arc Village is a planned community of affordable apartment-style rental homes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It will be located near a busy commercial corridor offering employment opportunities, grocery stores, restaurants, medical facilities and public parks. Financing for the project includes \$4.5 million in state funds, including a \$1.5 million developmental disability grant, \$10.8 million in LIHTCs, and significant private donations.

Promise

The plans for this project in West Melbourne, Florida, include a large campus of housing, recreational and training facilities, and amenities that will attract non-residents. In addition, they plan to create a subdivision near the campus for family members.

¹³ <http://www.nj.gov/dca/hmfa/media/news/2013/approved/20131119.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.northjersey.com/story-archives/tenafly-project-another-advance-in-region-s-housing-for-special-needs-clients-seniors-1.664135?page=all>

OTHER

There are several models that are not necessarily specific to supportive housing for individuals with disabilities that may provide inspiration or instruction that could be helpful when addressing the needs of that population.

Agency Facilitates Homeownership

- Movin' Out in Madison, Wisconsin, provides housing counseling and support to help persons with disabilities create a plan for housing and to achieve their goals. It also operates a Housing Legacy Program that allows for property to be transferred to the agency as part of estate planning and ensures that a child with a disability can stay in the home even after the parents are deceased.

Agency Coordinates Funding/Services to a Large Number of Scattered Sites

- LifeLong Medical Care (LMC) provides support services to more than 600 tenants in seven subsidized housing sites. LMC does not own or operate any of the housing sites; it collaborates with several nonprofit housing developers.
- San Francisco's Department of Public Health's Direct Access to Housing program provides permanent supportive housing with on-site services for approximately 1,200 formerly homeless adults; high utilizers of the public health system. Partners include several nonprofit housing development and property management agencies, nonprofit behavioral health agencies, and other local government agencies.

Funding Streams Incentivize Development

King County in Washington state awards capital funds to nonprofit developers for affordable housing projects where the developer agrees to set aside units for persons with developmental disabilities (either adults with disabilities or families with children with disabilities).

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, at the urging of ACTION-Housing, Regional Housing Legal Services, Project HOME, the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation, The Connelly Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, the Middleton Partnership, and The Pittsburgh Foundation, made key changes to the way that it allocates LIHTCs, making it easier to develop supportive housing and adding a preference that had resulted in the tripling of funding for supportive housing developments in the two years since the change (over the base year, just before the change).

Statewide Networks

Several states have long-standing supportive housing networks or associations, including Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New York, and New Jersey. Similarly, the Disability Housing Network in Ohio advocates on housing-related issues for the disability community. These statewide networks would likely help to facilitate the spread of information and make it easier for individuals with disabilities and their families to identify and access partners that would allow them to identify or create housing responsive to their needs.

Impact on the Future of Independent Supportive Housing

- **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION (ILLINOIS):** Ninety-five member organizations, individuals, businesses and Continuums of Care across the state of Illinois collect information about new supportive housing projects each year and use that information to advocate for state and federal funding. Trainings are offered to service providers to help them better tell their success stories and improve applications for SSI/SSDI. An employment guide helps to increase job opportunities for persons who have experienced homelessness
- **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY:** Founded in 1988, its mission is to promote and maintain a strong supportive housing industry in New Jersey serving people with special needs. With more than 90 member organizations, the Association provides resources and services to members, including capacity strengthening. The Association also advocates for innovation and system change for more flexible funding, and educates policy makers, elected officials, and people living with disabilities and their families. <http://www.shanj.org/>
- **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING NETWORK OF NEW YORK:** Established in 1988, it represents more than 220 nonprofits that provide housing and services to vulnerable at-risk individuals and families. The Network provides public education, research and policy analysis, advocacy, and training and technical assistance. <http://shnny.org/>

Summits Convened by Government Agencies

The Missouri Department of Mental Health Housing Unit and the Community Initiatives staff of the Missouri Housing Development Commission hold an annual two-day summit with workshops and discussions “designed to help agencies seeking to connect with planning, development and management resources and knowledge needed to develop and operate bricks-and-mortar supportive housing for people with special needs and disabilities.” <http://dmh.mo.gov/housing/housingunit/missourihousingsummit.html>

Establishing an Overall Community-Based Goal.

The developers of affordable housing and the service providers who enable people to live independently have the capacity to add significant numbers of affordable and independent housing each year. Although the number and types of units depend heavily on the resources allocated to accomplish this goal, it is realistic to assume that 150-200 units can be added each year to the inventory by utilizing existing resources. This is unlikely to occur without a coordinated and purposeful attempt to guide the growth of this housing. The establishment of such a goal by the United Way, Allegheny County DHS and other community stakeholders is important in creating the support to increase the size of the inventory and the choices.

Design and Implement a Concerted Effort to Maximize the Use of Existing Independent Supportive Housing.

The inventory of allocated but unused units represents the first opportunity to increase the supply of affordable housing. A program that serves to link individuals with a disability to those units and works closely with owners/managers, PHFA, HUD, Allegheny County DHS and the service providers will increase utilization. Many of these units are filled on a time-sensitive basis, and it is critical that a program be developed with enough resources so that when units become available, they can be filled and utilized as independent supportive housing. Part of this activity is developing and making available a community (neighborhood-based) inventory system that tracks unit availability. All the survey results and professional practice information suggests that at least 57% of the persons seeking independent supportive housing want to remain in the communities where they currently live. This kind of placement is essential to preserving the organic and planned support systems that are key to independent living.

One-stop approaches imbedded within a service agency, DHS or independent agencies, will increase utilization if they are funded so that staff with knowledge of the inventory can work with individuals with disabilities, families and caseworkers to find the right fit.

Develop Additional Supportive Housing Utilizing Resources Currently Available.

The LIHTC Program and the HUD–PHFA 811 Pilot offer significant opportunities to add units of supportive housing. There is no local funding to aggressively link the developments to service providers and to assist in finding tenants to occupy on rent up. A strong linkage program can likely add some 50-75 units per year to what will normally occur and create a strong relationship between housing developers, services providers and Allegheny County DHS. This relationship is key for the long-term effort to build a larger-scale and service-connected system that provides community choices for individuals with disabilities. Both the regular LIHTC and the 811 Pilot provide strong guidance to developers, but implementation is largely left to management companies, and decisions on rent up are made on a very short timeline.

Create a Process to Facilitate the Development of Additional Resources.

There are a variety of additional resources that can be used to expand the inventory and create new choices. This is a longer-term agenda, but linkage to large-scale developments, impact bonds, and new opportunities to create private and cooperative ownership play a role in a healthy and growing system to provide independent supportive housing. A first step to developing these resources would be to fund a more detailed analysis and strategy-building activity that should include people with disabilities, advocacy groups, developers, public agencies and service providers.



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