

THE CHICAGO REGIONAL HOUSING CHOICE INITIATIVE

HCP of Illinois, Inc....Testing Strategies to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

*Stuck in Place?
Maybe Not.*

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	Pages 2-7
Main Findings	
Background of the CRHCI	
Program Activities and Goals	
Organizing and Implementation Tasks	
2. Mobility strategies and goals	Pages 7-16
Mobility Results-Move Rates	
Improved Demographics	
Portability clients made mobility moves	
Access to Improved Education	
Program Factors Affecting Outcomes	
Suggestions for Future Mobility Efforts	
3. Portability strategies and goals	Pages 17-20
Administration	
Advocate	
Suggestions for Future Portability Efforts	
4. Regional Housing Initiative Wait list	Pages 21-23
RHI Strategies and Goals	
Suggestions for Future RHI/Wait List Efforts	
5. Conclusion	Pages 23-24
Replicate	
Continue Portability Administration with Mobility Counseling	
6. Appendix	Pages 25-36
HUD's opportunity index	
Chicago Regional Opportunity Map	
Original Addresses in Traditional Areas (map)	
Relocated Addresses in Opportunity Areas (map)	
Chart 6. PHA Participant Activity Results (RAND Study)	
PowerPoint for PHA Education of Participants	
Brochure--Illinois Tax Abatement Program	
Chart 7. RHI Developments and Results	
Brochure--HCP of Illinois, Inc.	

Stuck in Place? Maybe not.

HCP's experience with implementation of regional mobility, portability and a project-based waiting list: The Chicago Regional Housing Choice Initiative (CRHCI)

1. Introduction.

The title of this report refers to a book by Patrick Sharkey called, *Stuck in Place*. The book discusses “how segregation, by concentrating disadvantage in black neighborhoods, continues to divide US society into divergent black and white social worlds that remain truly separate and unequal...”. Sharkey suggests that continued investment in low income neighborhoods, and a strategy to encourage moves to opportunity areas called “mobility”, may change those patterns.

To learn more about mobility and other strategies to “affirmatively further fair housing”, HUD invested in the Chicago Regional Housing Choice Initiative (CRHCI) that touched nearly 5500 voucher holders over a two-three year period.

As you read over this somewhat complicated demonstration project and its results, you'll find some interesting stories, statistics and challenges discussed. Three regional strategies were tested around both, tenant based mobility and portability, and project based activities in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. All activities were designed to inform HUD public policy decisions around how to increase low income household moves to opportunity areas, where education, employment and health outcomes are better.

Main Findings:

1. The CRHCI used a HUD index, modified in some cases for local considerations, to determine where opportunity areas are located. All Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) can do the same, based on Chicago's experience (see appendix for more information).
2. The project created a model PowerPoint and handouts that can be replicated by PHAs and adjusted to local conditions. The materials help to educate participants on the benefits of opportunity areas (see page 31 attached).
3. Mobility programs in the past have relied on advocate agencies to recruit participants but this initiative relied on the PHAs, using materials supplied by advocates, to recruit participants and that strategy worked very well.

4. Of the strategies tested, mobility counseling produced the best locational outcomes in terms of total moves, reduction in poverty concentration, and access to significantly better schools. **Counseled participants moved at four times the rate of those who received an incentive only and no counseling.**
5. Mobility moves could be increased by using more exception rents, longer search times, intervening in the move process earlier, and providing adequate funding to include more landlord outreach.
6. Portability administered on a regional basis, rather than by PHAs individually, can enhance mobility outcomes and save dollars, which could be used to pay for regional mobility programs going forward. The project's sample was small but it was a very promising strategy.
7. A regional wait list for project-based housing can also reduce administration for individual PHAs, saving time and money.
8. Regional structures, like standardized materials, centralized procedures, and single point of contact services, increased PHA cooperation and capacity. The Chicago model is also something that could be replicated in other regions around the country.

Finally, to get a sense of what these programs can accomplish, go to the following link: <http://www.marketplace.org/topics/wealth-poverty/changing-neighborhoods-can-change-your-life>. The name of the story is "*Changing Neighborhoods Can Change Your Life*", and it was part of a series on "Making it in America" on National Public Radio. It begins with a mobility orientation at HCP and ends with a story about a resident who moved in 2005 to an opportunity area and now her daughter is graduating from college with a double major.

Background of the CRHCI.

Beginning in 2011 and running through 2014, many of the Chicago area's PHAs partnered with HUD and two non-profits to test several strategies to expand housing choice for low income households who participate in the HCV program.

Eight public housing authorities in total participated including the County Housing Authorities of Joliet/Will, Cook, Lake, McHenry and DuPage, plus the city housing authorities of Chicago, Waukegan and Oak Park. Participant housing authorities run from very small (about 500 vouchers) to very large (41,000 vouchers). The area covered by the program is about 2,300 square miles involving urban, suburban and rural areas, with different racial and ethnic groups, hyper-segregation and large pockets of both wealth, and highly concentrated poverty.

David A. Northern Sr., Executive Director and CEO of the Lake County Housing Authority says, “We participated in this demonstration project because it allowed us to increase the number of clients living in opportunity areas. We know that we can make a big difference in the lives of families by providing relocation assistance and counseling to help them get to these areas where they will have access to better schools and employment opportunities.”

Non-profits, Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) and Housing Choice Partners (HCP), also participated. MPC is a regional planning and advocacy organization. HCP’s mission is to reduce generational poverty through the promotion of economic and racial diversity in housing. HCP has been doing mobility programs for 20 years (see pages 35 and 36). MPC was the organizer of the regional effort and involved in the project-based part of the project. HCP was involved in program planning, organizing and in providing direct services to resident participants along with the PHAs for both the project-based and tenant-based activities.

Chicago is an excellent place to test strategies around housing choice since the area is so diverse, has a large housing/jobs mismatch and a history of active housing organizations and innovative strategies including the Gautreaux Assisted Housing Program. The Gautreaux Program, started in the mid-1970s, created the concept that “place matters” and taught us all that there are interventions that can disrupt the formation of generational poverty.

Over 7,500 low income families participated in the Gautreaux Program during a 25 year period and many of them moved from the City of Chicago to the suburbs. The results of the program were discussed in the book, *Crossing the Class and Color Lines*, by Leonard Rubinowitz and James Rosenbaum (University of Chicago Press). The authors found that more children graduated from high school; more children went on to college; and more children were working and had higher income and benefits than those who stayed in the City. They also found that that 75% of the families still lived in these mostly white and middle-income suburban areas twenty years later.

As a result of the Gautreaux experiment, the term “opportunity area” became synonymous with areas that are more racially and economically diverse and have better schools, lower crime and greater labor market access.

To build on the success of Gautreaux, HUD further tested a mobility strategy through a program called Moving to Opportunity (MTO). Though there is much controversy over the structure and findings overall of MTO, the program generally found that there were significant gains in health outcomes for low income families who moved to lower poverty neighborhoods.

Newer research by Margery Turner at the Urban Institute, shows that MTO families that lived longer in areas of lower poverty achieved better outcomes in work and school as well.

- ❖ Adults had higher household earnings, less anxiety/depression and better mental health, less diabetes and obesity;
- ❖ Boys had less obesity, asthma and depression and higher rates of college enrollment and higher math and English scores and the difference in boys predicted English and math scores equated to nearly a year of instruction (Nichols/Ozek 2010).
- ❖ Girls had higher English and math scores and higher rates of college enrollment plus less depression and anxiety as well as less risky behavior.

And while research shows benefits for low income households in living in lower poverty areas, research also shows the negative effects of highly distressed neighborhoods on families and especially on the development of children. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study and other similar studies tell us that violence in particular, impairs brain development and cognitive learning ability. Nearly 90% of brain development occurs before the age of 5, so adverse childhood experiences can last a lifetime and can lead to continued poverty, poor health outcomes and even early death.

Program activities and goals.

The dramatic findings from the Gautreaux and MTO experiments along with recent findings related to child development, interested HUD policy makers. To help inform public policy decisions around these issues, HUD invested \$1 million in a new Chicago demonstration, which was designed to test a number of strategies to expand regional housing choice. Private foundations including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Chicago Community Trust also participated in a significant way along with the County of Cook CDBG program.

Two tenant-based strategies were tested including a regional mobility program and a portability effort to streamline moves from one PHA jurisdiction to another. A project-based strategy was included to encourage regional housing development in opportunity areas called the Regional Housing Initiative (RHI) that has been in operation for over ten years.

Within the three demonstration components, several new strategies were tried. For the **mobility** component, two treatment groups were developed including one group that received **counseling and an incentive** when a household moved to an opportunity area; and one group that received an **incentive only**. HUD wanted the demonstration to test a less expensive method of encouraging moves to opportunity areas (incentive only) than traditional counseling

and to compare both treatments against a control group to ascertain the effectiveness of both. This report focuses on the treatment groups and the RAND Corporation will provide information on the control group later this year.

Portability involved two strategies: a **port advocate** and **portability administration**. Moving from one jurisdiction to another is called “portability” or “porting”. The participant with his/her voucher is ported from Chicago to Joliet, or Dallas to DuPage County, for example. Voucher holders can move anywhere there is a participating housing authority.

The port advocate was tested to facilitate communication and timeliness during the port process between two PHAs and the participant; and the port administration involved a third party (HCP) taking on some of the PHA administrative responsibilities, (e.g. conducting the briefings, issuing the vouchers and transferring the client files between PHAS), to simplify the process overall. HUD wanted to know if either method produced better results.

Under the **project-based** component, a regional wait list was created to pull together the eight PHA **wait lists** so that referrals could be made more easily and quickly from one centralized, integrated list, rather than each PHA searching their own list when new units came on line. The project asked would a centralized wait list result in efficiencies?

The following chart lays out the various activities for the entire project including goals for each activity:

Chart 1. Program activities and goals.

	Tenant based/2 years				Project based/3 years
Demonstration Activities	Mobility Goals		Portability Goals		RHI Goals
	Counseling/ incentive	Incentive only	Port Admin	Port Advocate	Regional Wait list
PHA recruits	1200	1200			
Sign ups/Referrals	800	800	50	250	850
Counseling	400	NA	40	200	200
Opportunity moves	100	100	10	40	125

Organizing and Implementation Tasks.

Organizing took about one year and involved defining opportunity areas, developing materials and forms, training PHA staff to recruit for the mobility program and to set up procedures to implement all aspects of the program. A regional database was created to track all participant activity including demographics, services utilized and outcomes.

The project grew over its organizing phase and the result was that it was enlarged to test five different strategies under the tenant based and project based activities and involved about 5500 low income household participants. The RAND Corporation was funded by the MacArthur Foundation to do a randomized evaluation of the results with the hope that all of those interested in minority housing issues (reducing intergenerational poverty, fair housing, educational improvement, health outcomes, etc) could learn a great deal from the CRHCI.

As the project stretched however to include such a wide variety of activity, the service numbers had to remain somewhat small since the geography to cover was large, including over 280 municipalities and 2300 square miles in metropolitan Chicago with a limited staff of six. For example, one counselor handled the entire northern two counties of Lake and McHenry including Waukegan (over 1 million population and over 1000 square miles).

Each of the three main activities is discussed starting with mobility, the main part of the project.

2. Mobility-Strategies and goals.

Implementation occurred over approximately two years, November, 2012 through December, 2014 (though some activities of some PHAs started late). This part of the project involved tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) households and three randomized groups. All the PHAs participated in this portion of the project except for Joliet.

As households indicated an interest in moving, they were scheduled to come into their PHA for a briefing where they would receive their moving papers and instructions as to how to proceed with their move (program participants were second movers and thus had a voucher already). This is a fairly standard practice amongst PHAs around the country.

For the demonstration, the PHA added a mobility PowerPoint presentation, created by HCP, on the benefits of opportunity areas and maps as to where those areas are located (HCP trained PHA staff on how to use the materials). The map of opportunity areas used for the project is on page 27. Handouts including the maps were also given to participants. If the participant was interested in the mobility program, they could sign up and the PHA would refer the household to HCP.

If it was a “green” day (according to scheduled RAND emails), the PHA would offer the voucher group the counseling and incentive treatment. The PowerPoint and handouts were geared to this group and the particulars of their treatment. They could either sign up or not depending on their circumstances. This group received the assistance of a family advisor to move to an opportunity area. The family advisor provided an orientation and workshop sessions, individual search assistance, problem solving, and encouragement and follow up post move support. The mover was also eligible for an incentive of \$500 after the move was made and the funds could be used for security deposit, moving fees or furniture. This group is the counseling group.

If it was a “red” day, the PHA offered participation in the incentive only program (\$500 if a move to an opportunity area was made) but no counseling. The PowerPoint and handouts included additional search information since this treatment group wouldn’t have the assistance of a family advisor (except for checking addresses to be sure they were eligible for the incentive). This is the incentive only group and once again they could sign up or not and get a referral to HCP.

All participants agreed to participate in the RAND evaluation and the study was approved and monitored through an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The idea is to test which treatment produces more moves to opportunity areas compared to the control group.

Numerical goals for mobility were to offer the program to 2400 households through housing authority voucher briefings including 1200 in the counseling group, 1200 in the incentive only group and 1200 in the control group. The project hoped to enroll 400 each in the counseling and incentive only groups; and to move at least 200 households to opportunity areas, 100 who receive counseling and 100 who receive the incentive only (refer back to Chart 1, page 6).

Mobility Results.

The mobility component of the project exceeded its goals. In total, 225 moves were made (see maps attached for original and move addresses, pages 28 and 29). The results are based on those who were motivated by the incentive or those who engaged in counseling. The vast majority of all movers in the CRHCI were African American (86%) with 7% Hispanic, 6% white and 1% other race.

The original addresses of all movers were located generally in Chicago and south on the map in traditional areas. The relocated addresses post move, indicates a shift to the west and north, to opportunity areas. For example, DuPage County on the west edge of the region, has a significant portion of new movers and is one of the wealthiest counties in the country.

The counseling group achieved 115 moves at the end of about two years, with another 23 moves that didn’t qualify for the study for a total of 138 (goal was 100). The incentive only

group was presumed at the outset to perform in the same manner as the counseling group but the results were significantly less for this group coming in at 83 moves during the same period, with another 4 moves that didn't qualify for the study for a total of 87 (goal was 100) for a grand total between the two test groups of 225 moves. Some moves didn't count for the RAND study because of randomization errors but the participants still moved and should be counted in the overall totals.

The chart on page 30 shows all the PHA activity including numbers from those offered the program, to those who chose to participate to those who got the counseling to the moves to opportunity areas. A short summary is listed below.

Chart 2. Recruitment and service numbers by group type.

Group Type	Offered program by PHA	Signed up and referred to HCP	Attended orientation (counseling)	Moves to opportunity areas
Counseling	1600	971	416	115
Incentive Only	1978	1114	NA	83

Move rates. This demonstration shows that mobility counseling including search assistance can produce more moves to opportunity areas, in fact 39% more moves (83 vs 115 moves in the randomized total) were made by the counseling group participants in the study. If we consider all the moves made (87 vs 138), the counseling group produced 59% more moves than the incentive only group.

More importantly though, the move rate shows that participants in the counseling group moved at **four times** the rate of those who received an incentive only and no counseling. The number of those who signed up for the counseling group and received the counseling is 416 and of that number, 115 moved or **28%**. Counseling included attendance at a mandatory orientation at a later date that included the benefits of opportunity areas and several workshop topics as well as search assistance and follow up support. This group also received the promise of a \$500 incentive to assist with security deposit and other costs upon a move to an opportunity area.

This move rate also compares favorably to that of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) mobility program that has run for many years (and administered by HCP). The CHA program results in about a 23% move rate of those who receive the counseling treatment.

For the incentive only group, 83 moves occurred or **7.5%** of those who signed up (1114.) This group was promised an incentive if they moved to an opportunity area, but they received no additional service except to check a potential move address to see if it qualified for the

incentive and then payment of the incentive was completed if the moved was to an opportunity area (payments generally were made directly to the landlord or vendor).

A note is probably important here to understand the difference in the counseling and incentive only participant pool (416 vs 1114 respectively). Since the sign ups occur at the PHA briefings and no additional participation is required of the incentive only group, there is no drop off. A mandatory orientation is required for the counseling group however, so there is fall off from that group. Nearly 43% of those who signed up for the counseling group attended the mandatory orientation and engaged in counseling services. The project goal was to test the effectiveness of counseling vs incentive only so whether a participant received the service or not is relevant to understanding the conclusions.

Chart 3. Comparing treatment groups-move rates.

Program activity	Counseling	Incentive Only
Participants	416	1114
Opportunity moves	115 (138)*	83 (87)*
Percentage of opportunity moves	27%	7.5%

*Only RAND study participants were used to determine the percentage of move rates here though additional moves were made (see numbers in parenthesis). Randomization issues caused some moves to be ineligible for the RAND study. The moves were made however and including total moves, the percentages would be 33% of those who received the counseling treatment moved to opportunity areas while 7.8% moved with the incentive only treatment.

Improved demographics. The census tract averages pre move for all movers indicated a 17% poverty rate and a 36% African American population. It’s important to note that the CRHCI is a mostly suburban program that required only that participants live in traditional areas (not in opportunity areas). No targeting of racially concentrated areas of poverty was included so the demographics reflect that context.

Post move, households went to census tracts that averaged 7% poverty and 10.5% African American. The region as a whole averages 14% poverty and 19% African American population though it varies widely by area. The poverty level was lowered by 59% and the African American concentration was reduced by 72%.

Broken down by the treatment groups and using census tract data again, the pre and post move statistics look similar but the counseling group lowered their poverty rate by more 11%.

Chart 4. Comparing treatment groups pre and post move--poverty and race.

Comparing counseling/incentive only-pre/ post move census tracts	Counseling	Incentive only
Pre move poverty rate	17.23	16.56
Post move poverty rate	6.37	8.09
% of change	63%	51%
Pre move African American population average	36.22	40.92
Post move African American population average	9.72	12.60
% of change	73%	69%

Portability clients made mobility moves. An important finding regarding all movers is the number who were portability households meaning they moved to a new PHA jurisdiction from either, one of the participating jurisdictions in the demonstration, or from outside the region. Those clients are called “port-ins”. Approximately 68% of opportunity movers in the demonstration are ports with 45% of them from outside the demonstration’s geography.

The portability number is inflated somewhat because DuPage County only referred port households for the demonstration while other PHAs referred second movers in general with a few who ported into the jurisdiction. DuPage has few traditional areas and since eligible households for the project had to live in traditional areas, the PHA felt that ports would be a better group to work with. The number of moves in DuPage County also dwarfed other jurisdictions as well. DuPage County had 89 moves to opportunity areas or 40% of the total moves for the project (see PHA activity chart, page 30).

Kenny Coles, the Executive Director of the DuPage County Housing Authority comments: “With basically every census track in DuPage County an opportunity area, access to housing for low to moderate income families is difficult to almost impossible to achieve. What immediately jumps out at you is that the availability of opportunity areas in the county does not necessarily translate into a proportional influx of movers that can take advantage of this fact...and even less so for many voucher families. While the 91 moves is a relatively low number, every move is a success both for the family and the program on so many levels.”

Additionally the number of portability moves to opportunity areas may signal a refinement of a previously observed point—that second movers are more likely to make an opportunity move—they’re more stable since they’ve received a rent subsidy and they understand the program and the search process since they moved previously.

Port households are second movers but are a sub-set of second movers and they are particularly suited to mobility counseling. They are new to an area (usually) and need search assistance. They aren't tied to particular local housing patterns and are thus more open to opportunity areas. It may be that focusing on this group, portability households, could produce significant mobility results in the future though this hypothesis would need further testing. Port households could essentially lead the way for local households in some areas, helping to change housing patterns.

Access to quality education. Finally, the project tracked access to better schools through a move to opportunity. The schools attended by the children of participant households were gathered and entered into the regional database pre move. The school rating as measured by Greatschools.org was researched. Greatschools.org ranks schools from 1-10 (1 indicates lower performance and 10 represents higher performance) depending on test scores and other factors related to educational achievement. The Illinois Report Card was also used as a resource.

When moves were made to opportunity areas, HCP tracked the new school information. The movers group included 110 households with 212 school-aged children. The project documented that children moved from areas with schools that averaged a Greatschools.org rank of 4.1 pre move to areas with schools ranked 6.84 post move. That's a 67% improvement going from below average to above average performance in terms of the schools attended. While such an improvement is intuitive, there haven't been real numbers to document such an increase in access to better quality education so this finding is significant we believe and should be further studied and supported.

Not all children changed schools however (46 from 27 families did not). Sometimes moves were made from a traditional area to an opportunity area within the same school attendance area. If we look just at those children that did change schools, we see an even bigger improvement in access to quality schools. The average school ranking pre move was 3.68 while the average post move was 7.2 or a 96% improved access score.

If we look more closely at those who changed schools, and received the counseling treatment or the incentive only treatment, we find those who received counseling did much better post move; schools had higher test scores, much higher school rankings overall, and more racial diversity. For example, the counseling group improved the school ranking by 128% from pre to post move and the average reading score went from 54% of kids meet or exceed the state standards to 73% or a 36% improvement in reading scores.

Chart 5. Comparing treatment groups pre and post move—school quality.

School Measures	Counseling group			Incentive Only		
	Pre move	Post move	% increase decrease	Pre move	Post move	% increase decrease
% children meet or exceed State standards-reading	53.59	72.89	36%	55.34	70.48	27%
School Ranking	3.28	7.49	128%	4.25	6.74	59%
% African American	46.94	14.24	-69%	43.35	18.22	-58%
% Caucasian	14.11	50.69	259%	27.15	49.58	83%
% Hispanic	33.66	22.19	-34%	27.44	19.56	-29%

Shown in the chart above, are the number of African American (14%), Caucasian (50%) and Hispanic students (23%) post move in the new schools. These numbers much more closely resemble the racial/ethnic averages for the region which are 19% African American, 52% Caucasian and 22% Hispanic. The new schools are much more racially representative of the regional population as a whole.

Policy Context

- ❖ The definition of opportunity area relied on 2005-2009 ACS data (generally) from a new HUD opportunity index. Factors included in the index were poverty, transit access, housing stability, labor market engagement, job access and school performance with some local adjustments.
- ❖ The program was organized with a relatively small amount of funding for direct service and to test five strategies involving approximately 5500 households.
- ❖ Organizing took one full year and was only open to those who lived in traditional areas.
- ❖ The geographic area, with three counseling staff assigned to very large areas, reduced the amount of time that could be spent on search assistance and with each client. Unit showings were not conducted often, but listings of available units were given, although most participants found units on their own.
- ❖ Little landlord outreach was done because of limitations on staff. Going forward, adequate staffing to allow for more landlord outreach could produce significantly more moves.
- ❖ This effort was obviously a new program. History and experience tells us that new programs need time to develop new trends and create word of mouth success amongst households.
- ❖ The program was designed to produce results for research requiring much staff time for client tracking and interim evaluations as well as a somewhat confusing randomized system

for PHAs. It was ultimately determined that the downside was outweighed by the upside—giving important policy insight into how to organize and start up a regional mobility program that has never been done before.

- ❖ PHAs exhibited differing capacity and participation. Some housing authorities participated in much greater numbers than others and in different ways, not necessarily related to their overall size (see Chart 5. PHA Activity on page 30). For example, Waukegan one of the smallest PHAs referred almost 25% of all the mobility participants. And DuPage, again another smaller PHA, had the largest number of opportunity moves, about 40%.
- ❖ Vouchers could be used anywhere in this program meaning that they weren't targeted to be used only in opportunity areas such as the vouchers in the Baltimore and Gautreaux programs were. HCP was able to educate, empower and encourage moves to opportunity areas, but ultimately people could move anywhere. In the case of Baltimore and Gautreaux however, if a participant (coming from a wait list as a "first" mover) doesn't find a unit in an opportunity area, they wouldn't receive the voucher at all. Presumably, these court-ordered programs have more motivated participants.
- ❖ The vacancy rate in the metropolitan housing market varies widely. Following the collapse of the housing market, the rental market saw a large increase in renters overall but the largest driving force was demand from low income renters for affordable housing. In 2011 when the project was organizing, the vacancy rate was 4.6% for Chicago metro area, significantly under the average for the nation of 5.2% and Chicago consistently has lower vacancy rates than the national averages.
- ❖ The State of Illinois has a tax abatement program for landlords who rent to voucher holders in areas with <10% poverty. While no study has been done to assess the effectiveness of this incentive, it may be a factor in terms of total moves (see Tax Savings Brochure on pages 32 and 33).
- ❖ Search times allowed for voucher holders varied as well--from a low of 90 days to a high of 180 days. More time is desirable to allow for a thorough exploration of new areas that many voucher holders are unaware of if moves are to be maximized.
- ❖ The PHAs generally don't use exception rents which could increase the number of moves to opportunity areas significantly in the future. Only the CHA used exception rents during the period of the demonstration.
- ❖ Mobility programs in the past have relied on advocate agencies to recruit participants but this initiative relied on the PHAs using materials supplied by advocates to recruit participants that generally worked very well.
- ❖ The drop off in those who "signed up" and were referred, those who ultimately participated, and then those that actually moved means the program must touch a large number of households to achieve moves. In the voucher program generally at least three

vouchers are issued for each lease up so some of the drop off is part of the voucher program, mobility or not.

Also with second movers, many participants who think they will move, actually don't and stay in place instead. CHA recently looked at mobility for one year and found that nearly half of those who signed up for mobility didn't move at all. Of 1470 total participants, 646 didn't move and of the 824 who did move, 38% moved to opportunity areas. These figures are useful to understand the effectiveness of mobility counseling and to put the demonstration's numbers in context. We also don't know the rate of non-moves within the regular voucher program which would also be a helpful comparison.

We also know from a survey done of clients who didn't move that many couldn't find a unit in an opportunity area which speaks to the lack of affordable housing in many opportunity areas and we had few exception rents to work with. It would be interesting to see if counseling, to promote more moves to opportunity areas, actually increases lease up rates over business as usual.

And since briefings are held for the most part when households indicate their desire to move, it's quite likely that many come to the briefings already knowing where they want to go and may even have a specific unit in mind or are ready to lease up.

Suggestions for future mobility efforts.

1. Four Steps that Would Improve Locational Outcomes.

- ❖ HUD should encourage exception rents targeted to higher rent opportunity areas and lower rents in traditional areas where the HCV program may artificially inflate rents.
- ❖ Longer search times are needed to encourage moves to opportunity areas.
- ❖ Intervention into the move process should occur before participants have decided where to go.
- ❖ More landlord outreach and education could be very helpful.

General Observations

- ❖ Mobility counseling produced more moves to opportunity areas with better overall reduction in poverty rates and access to much better schools than the incentive only group though the results must be verified and considered along with costs for each treatment group. Mobility counseling should be encouraged and provided by all PHAs.
- ❖ The Chicago model for mobility interventions should be shared with other PHAs around the country, especially those easily replicable without a large expense (defining opportunity areas, and educating participants about the benefits of opportunity areas at

the very least). HUD could sponsor area workshops and individual technical assistance to encourage more PHAs to begin to expand housing choice.

- ❖ The infrastructure created to deliver regional mobility services worked very well with good administrative procedures in place though the large geography is a challenge in delivering services.
- ❖ Portability clients were a good pool of participants to work with and in fact made up a large share of the moves in this project. They have fewer ties to local segregated markets and need more search assistance since they're often new to the area. More targeted outreach to capture this group, especially those with children, could be a good strategy to open new areas to the voucher program.
- ❖ Chicago has several individual mobility efforts on the part of PHAs so bringing it all together in one regional initiative may be a good strategy, again to save money and make all these efforts more efficient.

Program participant—Yolanda's story.

Yolanda and her three children, previously lived in west suburban Bellwood and the kids attended schools in the Proviso School District, rated a two (2) on [greatschools.org](https://www.greatschools.org) (very low performing).

Her eldest, Jada had issues with fights in school and failing grades. Yolanda worked full-time and between work and repeated issues at school, she just became overwhelmed. Yolanda decided that her family needed a fresh start in a higher achieving school and a community that offered more opportunities.

Yolanda, through the CRHCI, was successful in locating a three bedroom unit in Willowbrook, a community where schools rank a nine (9) on [greatschools.org](https://www.greatschools.org) (very high performing).

Yolanda says, "This is the best move that I ever made" when asked how she and the family were adjusting after the move. "The community has so much to offer for the kids and myself; I will be going to a financial clinic to learn how to save and budget. I love the schools out here."

Jada is now a senior attending Hinsdale South High School and has managed to make up all of her credits needed to graduate. She also works part time and has applied for college scholarships to attend College of DuPage in the fall.

Yolanda commented, "This experience has made them all better individuals and a stronger family unit."



Yolanda with two of three children

3. Portability Administration and Portability Advocate

Portability moves were discussed under the mobility strategy because port clients could move under the counseling or incentive test groups as a second mover. These were “port ins” meaning they moved from another jurisdiction into the participating PHA jurisdiction and HCP provided mobility services.

This part of the project, however, tested portability intervention in the port process itself to achieve the transfer of a client from one PHA to another. In this instance HCP worked with port outs—the participants were going from a participating PHA who referred the client to HCP for services. The test was to see if a dedicated third party administrator could simplify the process and decrease the time.

Porting is confusing to the voucher participant often involving writing letters, visiting two housing authorities, navigating different rules from one PHA area to another and the process takes time.

Portability is also burdensome to the housing authority financially and administratively, resulting in various communications issues and long transfer times. The new PHA must either absorb the voucher if they have the capacity to do so, or they must bill the original PHA for the administrative fees and rent subsidies to cover the costs (the dollar amount is split between the new and the originating PHA so the new PHA gets less money to administer the new voucher). There are a variety of HUD timelines and requirements PHAs have to fulfill as well.

The CRHCI tested two new strategies to improve administration: administration of portability by HCP for four of the smaller housing authorities; and use of a portability advocate with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). The housing authorities of DuPage, Joliet, and Cook County didn’t participate in this part of the project.

While CHA participated in the port advocate, it’s important to note that they and HACC (the larger PHAs) were concerned about different treatment of ports for the demonstration within their very large port programs. DuPage and Joliet had capacity issues at the time that are largely resolved now.

The goal was to see if time and financial savings could be achieved with either of these two interventions and also to see if inserting mobility strategies into the process could produce better locational outcomes.

Port administration. The Oak Park Housing Authority (OPHA) assistant director, Ken Southward, came up with an innovative idea to improve portability for the CRHCI. He suggested that HCP be the single point of contact for the port from one jurisdiction to the other. The

original PHA would send the port out client file to HCP, HCP would educate the client on the rules for the new PHA (they vary quite a bit) and issue the new voucher. HCP would also include mobility education and then once the client located a unit, HCP would send the file to the receiving PHA for inspection, rent negotiation and payment of the rent subsidy.

To make this model work, the project needed port referrals within the participating jurisdictions. Four small PHAs participated including McHenry, Lake, Waukegan and Oak Park. We hoped to work with 50 participants using this method but ultimately 36 participated.

While we don't have all the move data yet, including how many of these port participants moved to opportunity areas (it will be available with the RAND Corp evaluation later this year), we know from on the ground experience that the port administration is a more promising strategy than the port advocate.

Based on very preliminary results, we can see that those who participated in the port administration had their voucher issued in less than 13 days on average by HCP, while the port advocate group averaged almost 24 days (from referral when HCP was aware of the port, not necessarily the date the participant contacted the PHA).

We also saw a shorter search time to locate a unit and submit the paperwork on average with the port administration coming in at an average of 10.6 days. The port advocate saw the average number of search days at over 25.

While these numbers aren't scientific and are small numbers overall, it seems that dedicated staff to complete the port task might speed the process up significantly. Whether this would hold true if HCP did the volume of ports that the PHAs do, however, is a question that needs to be tested. A third party focused regionally on one task, seems to be a way to reduce time and expense. If mobility education is added, it seems that better locational outcomes are possible for larger groups as well.

With the port administration, HCP had the opportunity to interact one on one with the participants and develop a relationship and trust. Educating participants on the benefits of opportunity areas and where those areas are located was more effective than the work with the port advocate group where less interaction occurred. The project also provided a real service to the PHAs.

Ken Southward from the Oak Park Housing Authority said, "The (Portability) Regional Demonstration worked very well for the OPHA and our clients because it allowed our clients (and staff) the ability to complete the Port-Out process faster by sending documents to one central office."

This result is a bright spot and also coincides with the good results experienced in the mobility portion of the project where a large number of total moves were made by households porting into the region or the PHA jurisdiction (68%).

As HUD thinks about where to go with the results of this project, possibly streamlining portability to save time and money and using the savings to include mobility counseling for this very receptive sub-group of voucher holders, is a road that should be traveled.

The RAND Corp will do a case study evaluation method for this part of the CRHCI so further information will be available soon.

Port advocate. The port advocate involved just the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). They referred 230 households to HCP, who were porting to one of the other participant jurisdictions over several months. HCP would help facilitate the timeliness of the port process by monitoring the activity and facilitating communication if needed. Mobility materials were provided to educate participants on the benefits of opportunity areas (as opposed to individual pre and post move housing counseling).

The RAND Corp will do an evaluation for this part of the CRHCI as well, comparing HCP port advocate participants to those who ported during the same time period without HCP intervention (a control group). Until the analysis is done, we don't know how many moves either group made to opportunity areas.

From an on the ground perspective, however, HCP felt the port advocate was less successful than the port administration, but the evaluation will tell us definitively. The relationship with households was weak, often with no face to face conversation; the port administration had a much stronger connection with the household and thus provided more service and promoted more trust between the advisor and the household. CHA staff liked the port advocate though.

Nicole Smith-Peterson, from the CHA port staff stated that she liked the process because it made her life easier—HCP helped her get all the documents together that she needed from the PHA and the participants.

Suggestions for future portability efforts.

Use the regional portability administration model and bring it to scale. If significant time and money can be saved as this demonstration suggested it might, any savings could fund future mobility counseling efforts. A third party would do regional portability processing and mobility counseling would be provided to all port participants whether porting from outside the area or within participating jurisdictions. Port participants are an especially receptive group for mobility

counseling since they have few local ties to segregated housing markets and need help in finding a new home in an unfamiliar place.

Participant Stories.

Shamonica Williams ported from San Antonio, Texas to Carol Stream, Illinois. Ms. Williams really had to start all over in Carol Stream with very few resources. She located assistance in DuPage County though, resources that she says are “amazing.” Shamonica is extremely happy with the schools and also thinks the incentive she received through the program provided the “breakthrough” she needed for her family to make a successful move.



Lisa Henderson and her three sons, who moved from Waukegan.

“I am happy with my move because I have a bigger home and live in a very quiet neighborhood. My son has a place to play and he loves his new yard. I have better access to stores and many businesses. I am thankful for all of the help.”

Diane McDonald and her family ported from south suburban Dolton to Oak Park. In Dolton, the area was 14% poverty and 91% African American with the elementary and high schools averaging a 1 on greatschools.org and the middle school averaging a 5.

The new area in Oak Park is 4% poverty and 12% African American with elementary and high schools averaging a 9 and the middle school an 8 on greatschools.org.

Ms. McDonald is very happy with her move and the new community. She is especially pleased with the schools in Oak Park. Ms. McDonald has an extended family of five which includes her daughter and three grandchildren ages 6, 13, and 14 including a girl and two boys. While Ms. McDonald feels that education is extremely important and valuable for success, the kids all attended low achieving schools in the south suburbs (Dolton) so she is very grateful to have received the assistance from the CRHCI to assist her to successfully make a life changing move.

4. Project-based strategy—Regional Housing Initiative.

The Regional Housing Initiative (RHI) was started in 2002. All eight housing authorities worked with the nonprofit Metropolitan Planning Council to contribute project-based vouchers into a regional “virtual” pool that could be used to provide subsidized housing in newly constructed or rehabbed housing anywhere in the region. Additional points are given to developers who apply for LIHTC funds by the State of Illinois when they include RHI vouchers in their development plans providing more housing for voucher holders. Projects are also encouraged in opportunity areas.

RHI Strategies and Goals. In the past, each PHA searched its own wait list for those who would be interested in a project-based unit each time units became available. This was a long and repetitive process, often delaying referrals to developers who needed tenants right away to fill vacancies.

To improve RHI lease up times and the process itself, one regional wait list was created, combining an interested portion of people on the wait lists of the eight PHAs. Each PHA solicited up to 500 people for the centralized list and it was administered by HCP. The first solicitation by the PHAs produced a list of 750 eligible low income households.

Wait list participants were encouraged to identify a regional preference or interest in particular supportive housing (for disabled etc). As referrals for units were requested, the wait list was searched for appropriate names and 10 names were forwarded for each available unit.

HCP attempted to engage RHI clients in workshops, even offering webinars on home maintenance, financial management and tenant rights and responsibilities but very few participated. HCP provided some help to participants on improving credit and running credit reports, answering questions about the various developments and the program, and informing people of their wait list status.

Mailings were sent out to wait list participants when referrals were requested by developers. Referrals were requested when vacancies arose in previously constructed buildings or for those leasing up for the first time. Information was tracked on referrals but the outcomes of the referrals often weren't known. The mechanism in place to track referrals and placements relied on developers updating information on an excel form and the project struggled to get the forms back in a timely fashion.

The number of moves under the program fell short of its goal which was 125. In spite of many referrals for each available unit, only 71 units were rented during the three years of the

program, with 35 of those in opportunity areas since units can also be in revitalizing areas (see Chart 7, page 34, RHI developments).

The most successful development lease-up was Grove Apartments in Oak Park which was an opportunity area. All available units were rented by RHI wait list clients. The location of the development was central in the region with good transportation that contributed to a very fast lease up.

One of the more difficult developments was the Country Club Hills Wellness Center (not an opportunity area) which was supportive housing set aside for the homeless. Homeless people generally aren't on wait lists and in the end neither the PHA nor the RHI wait list could fill the available units so the development created its own wait list and rented all the units serving the local need.

RHI has been in operation since 2002 and has nearly 2000 units to its credit overall. It also enjoys the support of the PHAs, MPC, the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus and others so it has great potential and is relatively low in cost to operate.

A single wait list has potential too in this context and others. For example one PHA wait list for the region could be tried, or one list for all HUD subsidized developments could be developed. A single list could avoid duplication, fill units faster, and again save money. Some activities administered on a regional level make sense and more of these efforts should be tested.

Suggestions for future efforts:

- ❖ Landlords should consider reducing their screening criteria around credit checks. The PHA often pays the vast majority of the rent so the landlord isn't relying on a low income person who is just receiving a new rent subsidy and may have had a hard time paying bills in the past. We believe this is one of the reasons for the lower than expected placement rate.
- ❖ It was very difficult to engage participants. No orientation to the program was included as a part of the program, which may have aided in developing relationships. Such an orientation, including topics such as regional housing choice, home maintenance, financial management and landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities would make the potential household a better tenant as well. An initial meeting and workshop could help the program to be more successful in the future.
- ❖ The wait list was updated once from its original inception. The first time the list contained 750 names that were randomized by computer. The list lost about half its

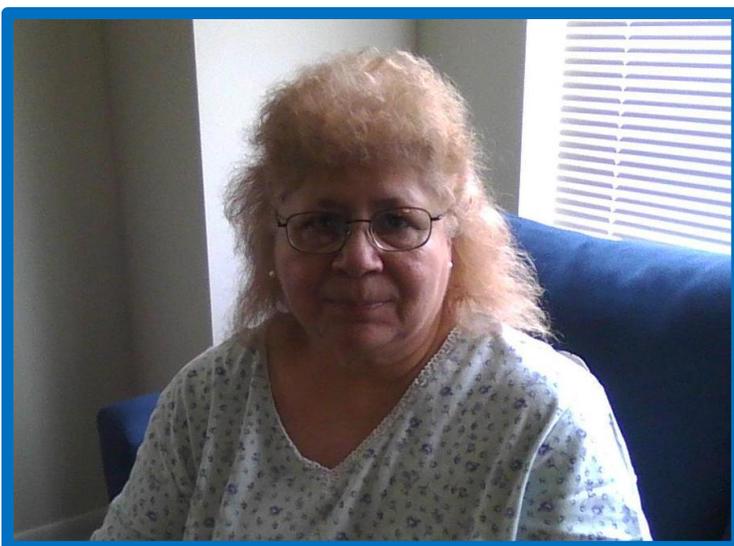
participants in just one year and it was replenished containing 850 names in year two. Wait lists become outdated quickly though so going forward, updating the list yearly is important.

- ❖ The communication between the program and HCP was lacking in some respects since it was so difficult to keep up with placements and the outcomes of the referrals. The program should consider various ways to engage participants and track referrals in a more timely and systematic way.

Delfina's Story.

RHI client who moved to Myers Place in Mount Prospect.

This client moved from Arlington Heights to be closer to her family and friends. She loves it and is very proud of her new unit. She says she has just enough space in the unit for her needs. She says that everything is accessible for her and she feels that this was a very successful move for her at this time in her life.



5. Conclusion.

Replicate what we know will work. The CRHCI is an important contribution to the knowledge base around the largest housing subsidy program in the country, quickly replacing public housing, the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Mobility programs can work, portability can be simplified and can if implemented regionally, has the potential to save money. If money can be saved through regional portability, then mobility programs can be funded with the savings and each region with a voucher program anywhere in the country can achieve better locational outcomes for its participants.

The RAND Corporation evaluation will be completed October 31, 2015, but in the meantime, HUD should consider funding workshops and technical assistance from the experiences of the CRHCI. Outreach to PHAs could help replicate lessons learned especially around defining opportunity areas and educating voucher participants about the benefits of opportunity areas,

two activities that could easily be incorporated into every PHA program in the country. Such an effort would be a start to changing housing patterns, long entrenched, separate and unequal for African Americans in particular.

Other sub-regions have indicated interest--calls have been received seeking assistance with mobility programs from Minnesota, Washington DC and Washington State, Toledo Ohio, Houston, Texas, and Springfield, Il. to name a few. HCP also provided mobility assistance for Rockford Il, Port Arthur, TX, and now Joliet, Il, to help with relocation projects required as public housing is torn down.

Fund a “Chapter 2” in Chicago combining mobility and portability. HUD should also fund a “Chapter 2” of the CRHCI that further tests regional mobility and portability, not on two separate tracks as done previously, but on one track; portability clients experience a single point of contact and receive mobility counseling. The costs associated with portability, administered by an individual PHA, or administered regionally, can be measured along with outcomes so it’s clear whether this interesting new tool can save time and money.

An infrastructure has been created with this demonstration that can be used to test a number of strategies and HUD should take advantage of the progressive and cooperative spirit alive in Chicago and move forward on “Chapter 2”.

Executive Director of the Housing Authority of Cook County, Richard Monocchio said, “I am convinced that regional cooperation is critical to enhancing the quality of life for voucher holders. The benefits of better educational opportunities for kids and employment opportunities for parents cannot be *overstated*. *We look forward to working with our partners on the next phase of this initiative.*”

Thank you. HUD provided HCP \$742,000 over three years to organize and implement six strategies and provide findings that can inform public policy. To leverage HUD’s support, HCP sought and received two grants from the Chicago Community Trust for program support totaling \$200,000. The Cook County CDBG program contributed \$188,000 to help fund work in suburban Cook County. Finally, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation provided \$256,000 to HCP for data collection, data entry and analysis along with additional funds to MPC and the RAND Corp to allow for randomization and evaluation of results.

The housing authorities are to be commended for the work and cooperative spirit they contributed to the success of the CRHCI. The project couldn’t have been completed without the partnerships it created and we are eternally grateful to all.

Appendix

Page 26. HUD's index to determine opportunity areas

Page 27. Chicago regional opportunity map

Page 28. Map of original addresses for participants in the mobility program

Page 29. Map of relocated addresses for participants in the mobility program

Page 30. Chart 6. PHA participant activity results for mobility

Pages 31. PowerPoint used by PHAs to educate/recruit participants for mobility
(click to see all slides)

Pages 32-33. Tax Abatement brochure

Page 34. Chart 7. RHI developments, referrals and placements

Pages 35 and 36. HCP brochure

HUD's Opportunity Index

With HUD asking its grantees to take a more serious look at their fair housing context, its Office of Policy Development & Research (PD&R) compiled a set of neighborhood data and analysis that was initially made available to grantees to support local planning efforts. By providing more data and analytical tools to help quantify and interpret particular fair housing dynamics, HUD hoped to address three high priority goals with regard to affirmatively furthering fair housing: 1) eliminating racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty, 2) reducing segregation, and 3) increasing access to areas of high opportunity.

Instead of asking each jurisdiction to undertake this task on its own, HUD decided to provide a baseline effort to assemble consistent, nationally available data from a variety of sources in a single location and provide examples of possible analytical strategies to examine racially-concentrated areas of poverty, segregation and integration, and access to neighborhood opportunity.

HUD researched and compiled the data for jurisdictions around the country. The data included information by census tract for six factors that can be used to measure opportunity in a community including labor market engagement, job access, transportation access, housing stability, poverty and school performance. HUD urged local jurisdictions to review and evaluate the factors and to add other factors like crime, food deserts, health, etc if appropriate.

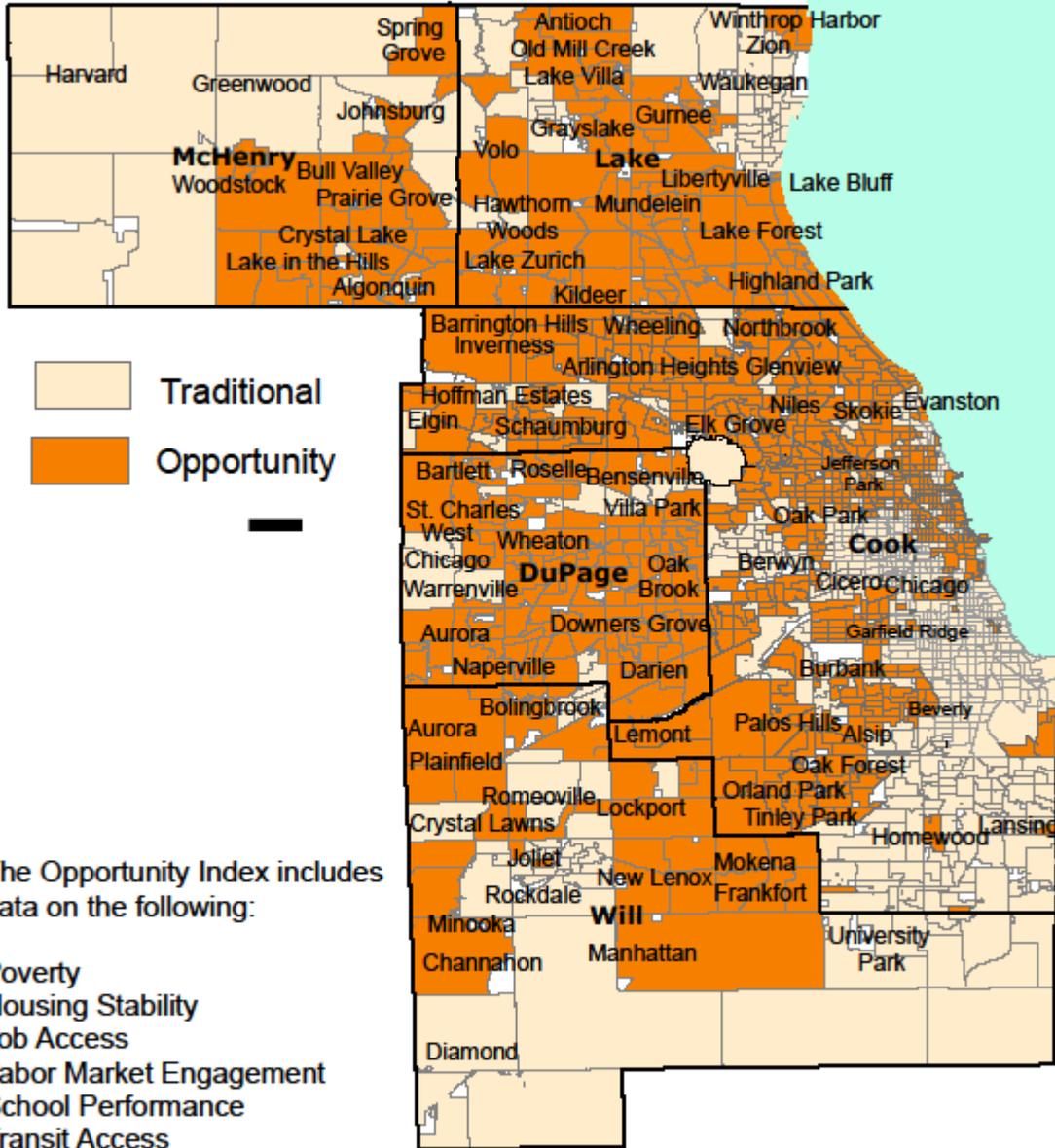
Each factor was analyzed and given an index number that was then combined to give a census tract an opportunity rank of 1-10. Those tracts with a combined score of 1 were low opportunity areas and those with a combined score of 10 were high opportunity areas.

This information was extremely valuable to the CRHCI in 2011 since it was just beginning to organize a large geographic area and it was looking for a way to standardize the definition of opportunity. While there were a variety of technical issues to work through, the project determined that any tract ranked 1-5 would be considered a traditional area and those ranked 6-10 would be considered an opportunity area. In some cases (primarily suburban Cook County), a race and poverty filter was also used to be sure that the definition worked for a mobility program with a majority of very low income, African American participants.

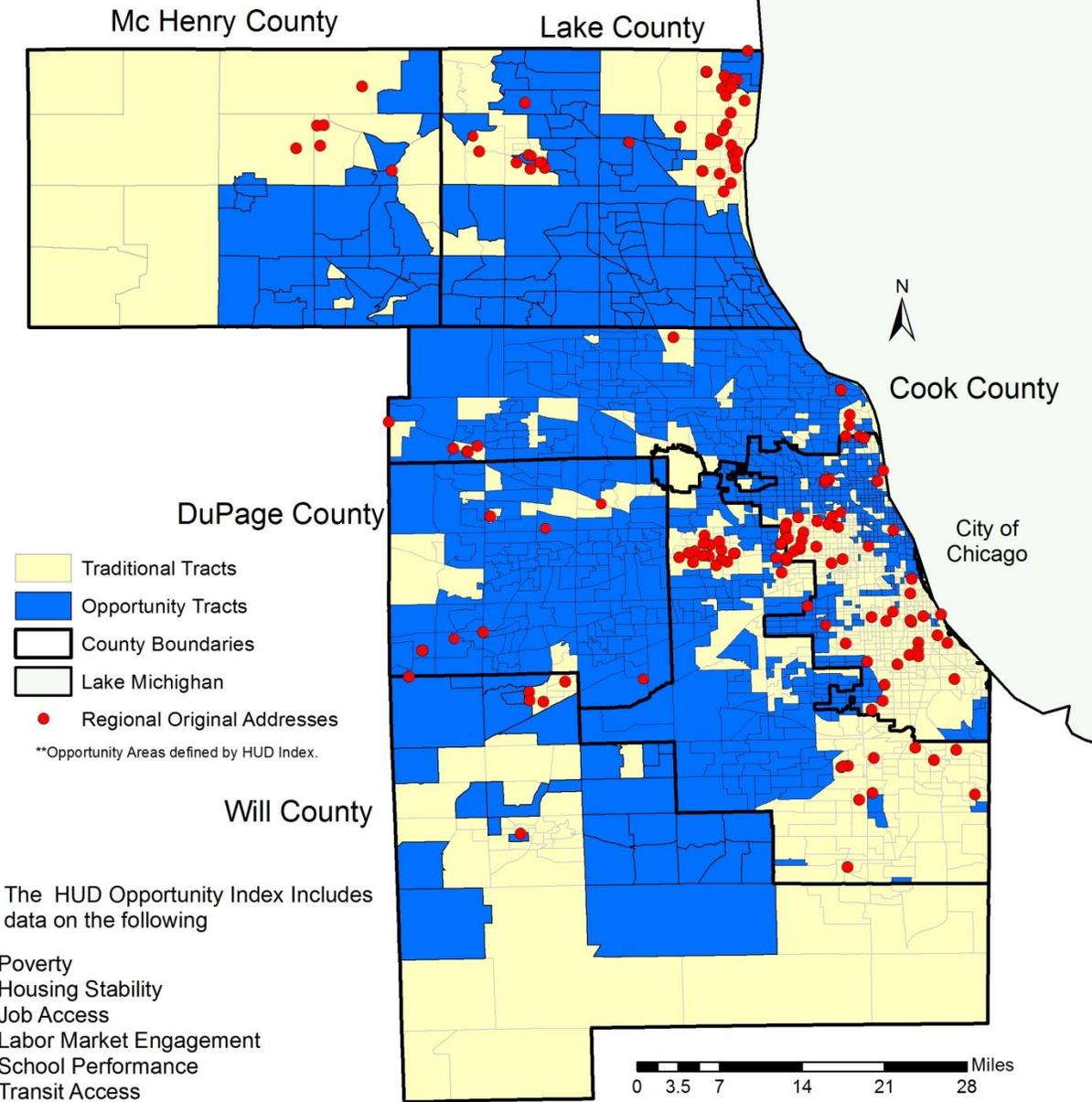
A list of opportunity tracts was developed and the following map was the result of the effort.

Since 2011, HUD has refined its methods and expanded use of the data especially with regard to its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule. Every jurisdiction should be able to get this information and use it to identify areas of poverty concentration and racial segregation as well as those opportunity areas where strategies to promote more racial and economic diversity are necessary.

Chicago Regional Opportunity Map



Chicago Regional Housing Choice Initiative Original Addresses in Traditional Areas



The HUD Opportunity Index Includes data on the following

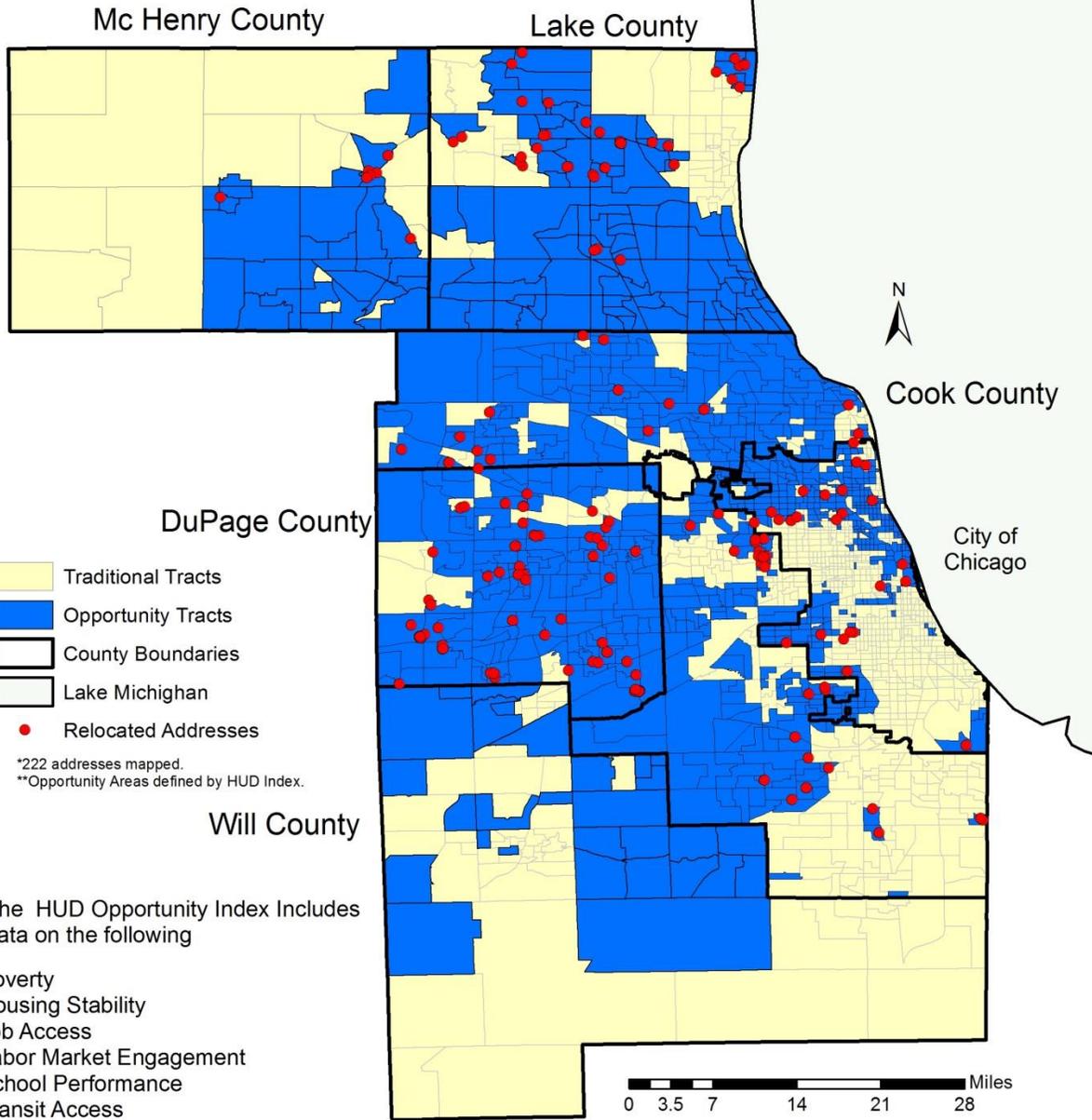
- Poverty
- Housing Stability
- Job Access
- Labor Market Engagement
- School Performance
- Transit Access

Subsidized housing and racial concentration considered in some cases

Housing Choice Partners Of Illinois
401 S La Salle Suite 1101
Chicago IL, 60606
ph 312-386-1019

Prepared by Housing Choice Partners
2/14/2014
Sources: TIGER/Line® State Boundaries,
County Boundaries, Census Tracts;
ArcGIS Online U.S. and Canada
Detailed Streets, 2013;
Natural Earth North American Lakes, 2009

Chicago Regional Housing Choice Initiative Participant Relocated Addresses in Opportunity Areas



Subsidized housing and racial concentration considered in some cases

Housing Choice Partners Of Illinois
401 S La Salle Suite 1101
Chicago IL, 60606
ph 312-386-1019

Prepared by Housing Choice Partners
2/14/2014
Sources: TIGER/Line® State Boundaries,
County Boundaries, Census Tracts;
ArcGIS Online U.S. and Canada
Detailed Streets, 2013;
Natural Earth North American Lakes, 2009

Chart 6. PHA activity (RAND Corp study participants)

Activity	CHA+	DuPage	HACC+	Oak Park	Lake	McHenry	Waukegan (has no opportunity areas)	Totals
# PHA Briefings	59	95	49	44	127	35	45	454
# Counseling group	24	52	20	25	57	25	18	221
# Incentive group	35	43	29	19	70	10	27	233
# Attendees	1328	172	885	132	169	47	845	3578
# Counseling group	570	99	357	72	74	31	397	1600
# Incentive group	758	73	528	60	95	16	448	1978
# Referred	776	162	393	97	170	12	475	2085
# Counseling group	333	90	167	61	79	8	233	971
# Incentive group	443	72	226	36	91	4	242	1114
# Attended HCP orientation (counseling group eligible)	102	68	64	37	48	3	95	416
# Opportunity moves	19	89	36	17	18	6	13	198*
# Counseling group	11	51	24	8	13	3	5	115*
# Incentive group	8	38	12	9	5	3	8	83*
% Attended PHA briefing referred for mobility	58%	94%	44%	73%	101%	26%	56%	58%
% Referrals moved opportunity	2%	55%	9%	18%	11%	50%	3%	9%
% Counseling referrals moved	3%	56%	14%	13%	16%	38%	2%	12%
% of incentive referrals moved	2%	54%	5%	25%	5%	75%	3%	8%
% Orientation attendees moved	11%	74%	38%	22%	27%	100%	5%	27%

+Have their own internal mobility programs too

*225 moves were made to opportunity areas in total though some will not be counted for the study for randomization reasons (138 counseling group and 87 incentive only group).



[PowerPoint used by all PHAs to educate participants about opportunity areas and to recruit those who are interested for the mobility program. Click to see all the slides.](#)



the local tax rate. Up to 20% of the units in the building may qualify if rented to Section 8 tenants. For buildings under 10 units, the limit is 2 units.

What is the tax savings program?

The Housing Opportunity Tax Savings program is a tax abatement for landlords who rent to Section 8 tenants in certain census tracts in the six-county Chicago region. The program is limited to areas with low-poverty and access to jobs. Check out www.section8savings.org for a map of qualified areas in the metro region.

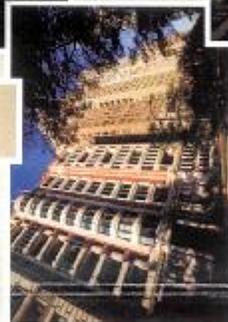
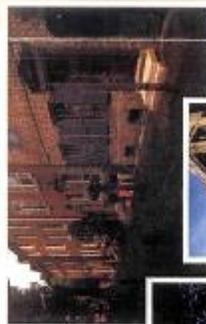
How does the program benefit landlords?

The program is designed to rebate up to 19% of the property tax on the qualified unit. The actual amount will vary depending on the assessed value of the property and



How do I apply?

The program is administered by the local housing authority in your city or county. For a list of housing authorities, and for other information, go to www.section8savings.org



Examples of tax savings:

A 2-Flat in Naperville where both units are leased to Section 8 Voucher tenants, the property tax bill would be reduced by 19%.

A 10-unit apartment building in Round Lake where 4 units are leased to Section 8 voucher tenants, the property tax bill would be reduced by over 7%.

An 8-unit building in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago where 2 units are leased to Section 8 voucher tenants, the property tax bill would be reduced by nearly 4%.

How can I find out more information?

Go to www.section8savings.org or contact your local housing authority for more information.

www.section8savings.org



A Simple Way to Save!



SECTION

8

Housing Choice Voucher
Tax Savings Program



www.section8savings.org

What Is It?

... a Simple Way to Save Property Taxes on Apartment Buildings That Accept Section 8 Tenants in the Metropolitan Chicago Area

- If you are a landlord in the six-county Chicago area
- If you rent an apartment to a Section 8 family
- If your apartment is in certain low-poverty communities
- You may save up to 19% off your property tax bill



www.section8savings.org

www.section8savings.org

Chart 7. Regional Housing Initiative Development Results

Development	Area Type	Location	Total Units	RHI Units	HCP Referrals	Moves
A Safe Place II		Zion, Lake	20	20	59	0
Casa Kirk		Chicago	26	5	0	0
Casa Moreles	Opportunity	Chicago	45	9	20	2
Colonial Park Apartments		Park City, Lake	240	60	109	0
Congress Parkway Apartments		Crystal Lake, McHenry	70	13	249	5
Conrad Apts		Skokie, Cook	23	5	20	
Country Club Hills Wellness Center		Country Club Hills, Cook	77	20	34	3
East Park Apartments	Opportunity	Rolling Meadows, Cook	262	30	0	0
Emerson Square	Opportunity	Evanston, Cook	40	8	78	8
Equestrian Trials		Hawthorn Woods, Lake	47	12	0	0
G & A Residences at Spaulding		Chicago	36	9	0	0
Greenleaf Manor	Opportunity	Glenview, Cook	20	5	10	2
Grove Apartments	Opportunity	Oak Park, Cook	51	11	59	10
Landings on Villa		Villa Park, DuPage	16	6	127	0
Leland Apts.	Opportunity	Uptown, Chicago	133	14	31	2
Myers Place		Mt Prospect, Cook	39	9	66	3
North Avenue Redevelopment (I & III)		Chicago	57	14	158	12
Nuestro Hogar		Chicago	31	6	0	0
PhilHaven		Wheeling, Cook	50	9	0	0
Village Park Apartments		Waukegan, Lake	132	26	89	7
Villas of Lake in the Hills		Lake in the Hills, McHenry	60	15	0	0
Wentworth Commons		Chicago	51	10	20	1
Whistler Crossing		Riverdale, Cook	130	26	120	5
Woodstock Commons I	Opportunity	Woodstock, McHenry	170	30	204	11
Totals			1826	372	1453	71

Some of the RHI developments aren't constructed yet, some are older with just a few vacancies coming up occasionally, and some were newly constructed, leasing up for the first time.

Mission

Housing Choice Partners (HCP) of Illinois, Inc. was founded in 1995 by Chicago metropolitan area fair housing organizations with a mission of promoting racial and economic diversity in housing.

Over the past nearly 20 years, HCP has grown into one of the country's leading agencies providing housing mobility counseling and fair housing compliance assistance to families, communities, Public Housing Authorities and other housing organizations.

Current Initiatives

Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Mobility Program
HCP provides workshops and one-on-one mobility counseling to CHA families interested in using their voucher to move into Opportunity Areas within the City of Chicago. Follow-up services ensure families successfully assimilate into their new communities.

Chicago Regional Housing Choice Initiative (CRHCI)
HCP collaborates with eight Chicago-area Housing Authorities and other organizations in this HUD-funded Regional Demonstration Program. CRHCI tests strategies around tenant based and project based housing vouchers and coordinating portability between regional Housing Authorities.

Rental Housing Support Program (RHSP)
HCP serves as a Local Administering Agency for 70 subsidized units in the suburban Cook County RHSP, housing nearly 200 individuals. As a result of HCP's outreach these units are located in over 40 different communities.

Partners and Funders

The Chicago Community Trust

Chicago Housing Authority

Cook County CDBG Program

The Field Foundation

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Illinois Housing Development Authority

The Pierce Family Foundation

RAND Corporation

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

HOUSING CHOICE PARTNERS

401 S. LaSalle Street
Suite 1101
Chicago, IL 60605

312 386-1009

www.hcp-chicago.org

HOUSING CHOICE PARTNERS

Successful
Housing Mobility
Strategies

Supporting Fair
Housing Initiatives



Promoting Racial and
Economic Diversity in Housing

Our Successes

- Assisted 800 Housing Authority of Cook County families move into Opportunity Areas in over 85 different communities.
- Assisted in the development of the Illinois Tax Abatement program that gives landlords who rent to voucher holders in Opportunity Areas a tax break equal to about one month's rent.
- Assisted over 1,000 Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Families through Public Housing Relocation as part of the CHA's Plan for Transformation; half of these families moved into Opportunity or Low-Poverty Areas.
- Assisted over 1,000 CHA families move into Opportunity/Low-Poverty Areas through the CHA's Mobility Counseling Program (2011 — present).
- Established new mobility programs in Port Arthur, Texas and Rockford, Illinois; consulted on the development of mobility programs in Washington, Pennsylvania, and Nevada.
- HCP assisted in the development of the Illinois Rental Housing Support Program (RHSP)—a state-funded rent subsidy program similar to the federal voucher program.



Our Services

Relocation and Mobility/Opportunity Counseling
HCP works with families experiencing relocation from their public housing unit, providing support throughout the relocation process via workshops and one-on-one counseling. Relocating families are educated about moving into

Opportunity Areas — communities that generally have better educational and economic opportunities.

HCP also provides mobility services to Housing Choice Voucher families in standalone mobility/Opportunity Area initiatives, providing housing choices so that families can use their voucher not just to pay the rent but to improve their lives.



"HCP helped my family move to a safer place and my kids are doing great in school."

*- Robin Curry
Moved from Blue Island to Elgin*

Real Estate Outreach and Education
HCP educates landlords and Real Estate Brokers about the Housing Choice Voucher Program and fair housing laws. HCP actively searches for rental units in Opportunity Areas for clients and staff speaks to groups of housing providers about the benefits of participating in the HCY program.



"HCP has referred many great tenants for my vacant units."

*- Joe Cascone
Oak Forest, IL landlord*

Mobility Program Consulting

Through its *Mobility in a Box* initiative, HCP offers consulting services to Housing Authorities and other Housing Organizations interested in developing mobility counseling programs, including providing guidance in developing partnerships, processes, and identifying Opportunity Areas.

HCP has assisted Housing Authorities across the country to implement mobility programs, including those in Washington State, Texas, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Nevada



Fair Housing Compliance

HCP engages in activities related to assessment and compliance with fair housing requirements (e.g. affirmatively furthering fair housing plans, civil rights compliance reviews). HCP also conducts Fair Housing Plan reviews related to affirmatively furthering fair housing through expanded choice and mobility.

Impact on Public Policy

HCP works with other organizations to improve affordable housing programs and their availability throughout the country and the Chicago metropolitan region. HCP also actively seeks to participate in initiatives that have the potential to influence and inform housing policies.

