

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



Open Government Report 2014

To institutionalize a culture of transparent and open government, accountability, and to expand opportunities for resident participation and collaboration, this Report describes how the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has and will continue to develop and enhance transparency, public participation, and collaboration. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2014-170, this report addresses the following topics:

1) Transparency

Describe the steps your agency has taken or plans to take to be more transparent. Please include a description of:

- *How and to what extent your agency shares information with the public, e.g. publication of information in the District register and on the agency website, press releases, and documents in the agency's FOIApress reading room.*
- DHCD has revised its website homepage to make it a more user-friendly tool for District residents including:
 - "DHCD Live Reports" features daily tweeter updates
 - The "What's New" section offers highlights on media advisories, press releases, reports, Solicitation for Offers, Request for Proposals, public meeting notices and program announcements
 - "Featured News" offers the latest in DHCD press releases, newsletters, testimonies and advisories
 - The "DHCD Project Pipeline Report" provides stakeholders with real time dates on the status of affordable housing development
 - Viewing our "Upcoming Events" section affords residents a short listing of DHCD meetings, workshops and outreach events
- DHCD releases an annual report each fiscal year (October 1st to September 30th) highlighting the Department's accomplishments, policy and procedure revisions, financials and overall performance. This publication is produced and published under the guidance of the DHCD Office of Communications and Community Outreach. To view the annual reports please see the below listing:
 - [FY 2013 Annual Report](http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/dc-department-housing-and-community-development-fy-2013-annual-report) (see link: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/dc-department-housing-and-community-development-fy-2013-annual-report>)
 - [FY 2012 Annual Report](http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/dc-department-housing-and-community-development-fy-2012-annual-report) (see link: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/publication/dc-department-housing-and-community-development-fy-2012-annual-report>)

- The DHCD website is a wealth of information for all stakeholders from media, to residents, to development partners. In addition to renaming the tabs, “Communities”, “Development” and “Residents” to better speak to stakeholders there are several locations on the site that has resourceful information.
 - Press releases can be found here: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/newsroom/press-releases>
 - Media advisories can be found here: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/newsroom/advisories>
 - Agency publications can be found here: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/publications>
 - Solicitations can be found here: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/node/19152>

- *How the agency meets its obligations pursuant to the District’s Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act.*
 - The DHCD makes records and reports available online to the public, if the records exist. In cases where these records exist but are not yet available online, DHCD is working to provide them as soon as possible. The current available FOIA information is listed below:
 - Employee Salary Information (Please note that this is the complete listing of District employees. Agency designation is located in column two.)
 - Administrative Staff Manuals and Instructions
 - Final Opinions Made in the Adjudication of Cases
 - Statements of Policy
 - P Card Purchases
 - Awarded Contracts
 - DHCD’s FY14 Budget
 - Minutes of Public Meetings
 - Housing Regulations
 - DHCD Performance Plans
 - District-wide FOIA Reports
 - DHCD Organizational Chart
 - Submit Feedback

- *Steps your agency will take to increase public access to information.*
 - We are further revamping the DHCD homepage and subsidiary online platforms by:
 - Revising DCHousingSearch.org, and our programs/divisions to include Residential and Community Service Division, and the Inclusionary Zoning Program
 - Continuing updates of Community Interest projects such as:
 - Big-K Site Development
 - Build Green DC

- Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) Developments
 - Neighborhood Revitalization Program
 - Rent/Income Limits
 - Implementing a formalized process to handle marketing/communication requests to insure an accurate, consistent message is reaching the public
 - DHCD Stakeholder Reports are distributed to ANC, CBO, sister agencies, partners, community leaders and stakeholders
 - All public media activity is posted
 - Continuous social media updates via the DHCD Twitter and Facebook feeds
- *Steps your agency will take, including an implementation timeline, to webcast live and archive on the internet board or commission meetings. (This question only applies to agencies that are overseen or advised by a board or commission that is subject to the Open Meetings Act.)*
 - All of the DHCD meeting spaces have been equipped with video teleconferencing hardware that will enable public meetings at the agency to be viewed online as well as recorded and posted on various medians as podcasts.
 - *How your agency has taken or plans to take steps to make more of its data available to the public.*

The Department of Housing and Community Development is working closely with the Office of the City Administrator (OCA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to identify a significant number of datasets that OCA and OCTO expect to publish online later this year. If no dataset from DHCD is selected to be included in this 2014 release, we will continue to work with OCA and OCTO to identify datasets appropriate to publish in 2015. In the future, requirements for open data reporting will be provided by the Chief Data Officer.

2) **Public Engagement and Participation**

Describe the steps your agency has taken or plans to take to enhance or expand opportunities for the public to participate in agency decision-making. Please include a description of:

- *How your agency provides online access to proposed rules and regulations and secures public input on them. Please list links to specific websites.*
 - The DHCD provides online access to rules and regulations at the following websites:
 - Administrative Staff Manuals and Instructions

- Final Opinions Made in the Adjudication of Cases
 - Statements of Policy
 - DHCD's FY14 Budget
 - Minutes of Public Meetings
 - Housing Regulations
 - District-wide FOIA Reports
 - Submit Feedback
- *How your agency shares information and resources to keep the public properly informed, e.g. community meetings, public hearings, FAQs, and ways the public can provide input such as Twitter, grade.dc.gov, email contacts.*
 - DHCD shares information and resources to inform the public through various mediums and also asks for feedback from District residents and businesses through:
 - Community Meetings
 - Housing Production Trust Fund public meetings
 - Events and Outreach activities
 - Community Based Non Profit Organizations
 - Newspaper Ads
 - Social Media – Blogs, Twitter and Facebook
 - Ask the Director
 - Frequently Asked Questions can be found in various locations:
 - DHCD FAQs: <http://dhcd.dc.gov/page/dhcd-frequently-asked-questions>
 - *How your agency identifies stakeholders and invites their participation.*
 - Stakeholders are identified through attendance at DHCD events and meetings, CBOs and our partnerships with sister agencies, developers, landlords, property managers, realty agents, bankers, general contractors.
 - *Steps your agency will take to improve public engagement and participation including any new feedback tools or mechanisms the agency is considering.*
 - The DHCD is using the “DHCD Project Pipeline Report” to connect with stakeholders on the real time status of affordable housing in the District.
 - Twitter, Facebook and the WordPress Blog are providing new opportunities for public engagement and gathering feedback from stakeholders.

3) **Collaboration**

Describe the steps your agency has taken or plans to take to enhance or expand cooperation among departments, other governmental agencies, the public, and non-profit and private entities in fulfilling its obligations. Please include a description of:

- *How your agency currently collaborates with the above parties. Please list links to specific websites if appropriate.*
 - The Architectural Research Institute (ARI) was founded through collaboration between the University of the District of Columbia and the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Homestead Preservation Program. The Homestead Preservation Program is now the Property Acquisition Disposition Division (PADD) and Single Family Residential Rehabilitation Program (SFRRP). DHCD has been ARI's primary client for the past twenty plus years. This collaboration provides comprehensive architectural services allowing for the reclamation of the city's vacant, boarded and run down housing, rehabilitating them for low- and middle- income residents, thus giving them the opportunity to become homeowners. Since its inception in 1987, ARI has provided architectural services on the renovation and rehabilitation of more than 606 homes and apartments at a cost of more than \$90 million, positively impacting thousands of District residents in all eight wards of D.C.

The Architectural Research Institute (ARI) provides cross-disciplinary research and service to support livable, sustainable, global cities. As the clinical arm of UDC's Department of Architecture and Community Development, ARI is tasked with the community service component as part of the College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences, home of the District's land grant programs. http://www.udc.edu/college_of_urban_agriculture_and_environmental_studies/architectural_research_institute

- Multiple District agencies have programs mitigating health risks posed by environmental contaminants such as lead, mold, and carbon monoxide. DHCD worked with DDOE, DCHA, FEMS, and other agencies to catalog and provide status on environmental health hazards in the District's affordable housing stock.
- As part of National Home-Ownership Month, DHCD worked with community partners to host a housing expo in June 2014. The Expo provides resources for all residents of the District, including information for renters, homeowners, potential homeowners, landlords and residents facing foreclosure. This is a partnership with local CBOs, realtors, financial institutions, local vendors, service providers and many more. Activities include hands on demonstrations, classes on financial and homeownership issues, presentations about DHCD programs and how to

access them, and an exhibitor hall with private, public and community based organizations offering an array of products, services, and programs for District residents.

- DHCD brought together housing development government and nongovernmental stakeholders to develop standards for site selection and urban design which met the standards of Healthy by Design. DHCD then implemented the Healthy by Design standards for evaluating and selecting projects for affordable housing.
- PAMD began an initiative to work with Community Based Organizations (CBO) to provide post-closing counseling as well as work with the Greater Washington Urban League (GWUL) to ensure client long-term success.
- PADD will work with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) to identify possible sites for business incubators as outlined in The 5 year Economic Development Plan.
- *Steps your agency will take to improve collaboration with the above parties including any new feedback tools or mechanisms the agency is considering, e.g. prizes, competitions, and other innovative methods.*
 - DHCD is consistently working with partner agencies, developers, community based organizations and residents to continue to proficiently gauge housing needs, attain innovative ideas and suggestions and further leverage resources that will allow for the continued development and preservation of affordable housing for low and moderate income residents for years to come. This will be done through various focus groups, community meetings, public hearings, consolidated Notice of Funding Availability, brain trusts with public and private entities and a host of other tactics.