Meeting Date: 12/09/08

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
☐ Approved Recommendation	☐ Info/Consent
☐ Ord. No(s). _____	☐ Report
☐ Res. No(s). _____	■ Public Hearing (Info/consent)
☐ Other _____	☐ Other _____

Prepared By: Karl Lawson Agenda Item No. L-2

Reviewed By: City Manager City Attorney Finance Other *(Specify)*

DATE: December 2, 2008

TO: Housing Authority Commission

FROM: Karl Lawson, Interim Housing Programs Manager
Housing

SUBJECT: **Amendments to Housing Authority Agency Administrative Plan**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Housing Authority Commission:

1. Hold a public hearing to receive comments concerning the proposed amendment to the Agency Plan;

2. Adopt a resolution (a) approving the Amendments to the Agency Plan related to Conflict of Interest policy and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing; and (b) authorizing and directing the Housing Director to execute and submit all reports and documents required to comply with the policies and procedures of the Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding the Amendments to the Agency Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Agency Plan is comprised of a Five-Year Plan and an Annual Plan. The Five-Year Plan describes the mission of the Oxnard Housing Authority (OHA) and the long-range goals and objectives for achieving the mission over the five-year period. The OHA is nearly at the mid-point of the fourth year of the current Five-Year Plan, which began on July 1, 2005.

Regulations promulgated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) permit the OHA to amend the Annual or Five-Year plans at any time, subject to the approval of the Los Angeles HUD Field Office. The proposed amendments that are the subject of this report were developed pursuant to HUD recommendations, and involve two changes to the OHA's Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan, more commonly known as the Section 8 program.

The two proposed amendments to the HCV administrative plan (set forth in the Attachment No. 1 to this staff report) are as follows:

A. Adoption of Code of Conduct: HUD has recommended that the Plan include a code of conduct relating to conflict of interest and prohibitions on acceptance by housing authority agents of gifts or gratuities from individuals with whom the agency does business. This is set forth in proposed Addendum "A" to the Plan, found in the Notice dated October 15, 2008.

B. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: In June HUD recently issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), pursuant to which the OHA submitted a grant application for continued funding for our HCV Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator position. Subsequent to the deadline for receipt of those grant applications, HUD notified all agencies which had submitted applications that their Agency Plans would be need to be amended to include specific language setting forth (a) the commitment to market the HCV program, and hire for the coordinator position, in accordance with affirmatively furthering fair housing principles, and (b) a detailed explanation of local efforts undertaken to affirmatively further fair housing. That language is set forth in proposed Addendum "B" of the Notice of October 15, 2008.

Staff posted the Notice of the Proposed Addendum on October 15, 2008, initiating a public comment period under which written comments on the proposed amendments can be submitted. As of the date of this report, no written comments have been received. Staff recommends that the Commission conduct a public hearing to allow members of the public to comment, prior to consideration of the Resolution.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

KL/kl

Attachment #1 - Proposed Addendum to Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan, dated October 15, 2008
#2 - Resolution Approving Amendments to the Housing Choice Voucher Agency Plan related to Conflict of Interest policy and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing;

Oxnard Housing Authority (OHA)
Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Administrative Plan
Proposed Addendum to HCV Administrative Plan
October 15, 2008

The OHA proposes the following addendum to the existing HCV Administrative Plan:

A. Conducting Business in Accordance with Core Values and Ethical Standards

1) The OHA will comply with the conflict-of-interest requirements of the HCV program at 24CFR982.161; and

2) Prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of gifts or gratuities, in excess of a nominal value, by any officer or employee of the OHA, or any contractor, subcontractor, or agent of the OHA. The OHA's administrative plan shall state OHA policies concerning OHA administrative and disciplinary remedies for violation of the OHA code of conduct. The OHA shall inform all officers, employees, and agents of its organization of the OHA's code of conduct.

B. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The OHA affirmatively furthers Fair Housing by:

1) Advertising widely in the community for the coordinator position or positions.

2) Marketing the program to all eligible persons, including persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency.

3) Making buildings and communications that facilitate applications and service delivery accessible to persons with disabilities.

4) Providing fair housing counseling services. Housing Rights Center under contract.

Statement on Local efforts to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

The Housing Authority of the City of Oxnard is fully committed to affirmatively furthering Fair Housing. To accomplish this locally, we have polices and practices in place that include specific steps to overcome the effects of impediments to fair housing choice that are identified in our jurisdiction's Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice. We promote processes to remedy discrimination in housing and promote fair

housing rights and fair housing choice. Some of the specific ways in which we accomplish these things are listed below.

(1) Overcome the effects of impediments to fair housing choice that were identified in the jurisdiction's Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice;

An Analysis of Impediments. An Analysis of Impediments (AI) is updated regularly locally and the identified needs and remedies are incorporated into the City of Oxnard's Annual Action Plan, which comprises part of the local Consolidated Plan. The current Fair Housing Analysis of Impediments was prepared by the Empirical Research Group, UCLA, November 2002, and was adopted by the Oxnard City Council in May 2003. The City is currently in the process of updating the AI, which is scheduled to be completed in Fiscal Year 2008-2009. Key findings of the 2003 AI are listed below. (A copy of the complete study is available upon request).

- *Overall Status of Fair Housing.* The Analysis of Impediments found that, while Oxnard is more integrated than most American cities of comparable size, its four major ethnic/racial groups are moderately integrated, and housing discrimination exists, though rates appear to be somewhat lower than the national average. It also found that zoning and land use regulations are progressive and comply with the latest federal and state standards.

- *Empirical Indices of Housing Segregation.* The AI found that African-Americans in Oxnard have a relatively low level of residential segregation, including lower than that of Ventura or Los Angeles counties. Hispanics were found to be moderately segregated, comparable to the national level. Asian Americans were found to have a slightly higher level of segregation than Ventura County, particularly relative in the Filipino community.

- *Homeownership.* Homeownership rates among all racial groups were found to be impressive. While the rate of mortgage loan rejections was found to be higher for African-Americans and Hispanics than for Anglos and Asian-Americans, no evidence was found that this difference is due to discrimination, although this area will be studied further in the future. Women were found to do as well as men in mortgage applications in Oxnard.

- *Rents and Housing Affordability.* Based on 2000 census data, when adjusted for inflation, it was found that rents in 2000 were actually 16% lower than in 1990, and that home prices were slightly lower, and that overall housing affordability was also better than in 1990.

- *Fair Housing Services.* The AI found that the City of Oxnard has a strong record of providing fair housing services to residents. No substantive changes to City policies were recommended. It was recommended that the City's fair

housing service provider focus additional outreach efforts on the Filipino community, the mortgage lending sector, and the homebuyer's market.

To address the impediments to fair housing choice that were identified, six priority goals and objectives were arrived at locally. Those goals are incorporated into the City of Oxnard's Annual Action Plan 2008-2009.

TABLE VI
SUMMARY OF FAIR HOUSING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS		OBJECTIVES
Priority #1:	Provide housing counseling to home seekers and residents.	400 households by July 2009
Priority #2:	Investigation and resolution of fair housing complaints.	30 households by July 2009
Priority #3:	Outreach, education, and training of housing professionals and real estate professionals.	Training sessions for five organizations by July 2009
Priority #4:	Continue implementation of Section 214 provisions for Oxnard Housing Authority.	2,300 households (ongoing enforcement)
Priority #5:	Ensure continued compliance by Oxnard Housing Authority with Section 504 provisions	780 households (ongoing enforcement)
Priority #6:	Oxnard Housing Authority will continue with the community participation program to develop a plan for the redesign and modernization of Colonia Village Projects CA 31-1. Improvements to these public housing units will improve the fair housing opportunities for low-income families, including disabled families, served by the Oxnard Housing Authority.	

(2) **Remedy Discrimination in housing;** Specific goals, including numbers, are identified under Priority #2 listed above. A strong resource and partner for addressing this area is the Housing Rights Center, which has a service contract with the City of Oxnard.

(3) **Promote fair housing rights and fair housing rights and fair housing choice.** *Service Contract with Housing Rights Center.* The Housing Authority contracts with the Los Angeles-based Housing Rights Center. The Housing Rights Center utilizes a toll-free number and provides services at no cost to the public. Services consist of counseling, referrals, and advocacy services for home seekers who encounter discrimination or other obstacles to housing choice which may have fair housing implications. The Housing Rights Center also provides training in English and Spanish to Oxnard residents and housing providers. The latest training consisted of a Housing Rights Workshop on June 10, 2008, at the City of Oxnard public library. The training themes were Fair Housing, Evictions, Security Deposits, Repairs, and Rent Increases.

Housing Authority Agency Plan. The Housing Authority's Agency Plan incorporates the Analysis of Impediments and remedies. Some of the specific measures contained in the Agency Plan are, expanding the supply of assisted housing by applying for additional housing vouchers; promotion of housing choice by maintaining a vacancy rate of less than 2% in public housing and turnaround time of less than 20 calendar days on average for vacant units; counseling of Section 8 tenants as to location of units outside of areas of poverty or minority concentration and assistance to them to locate those units; and marketing the section 8 program to owners outside of areas of poverty/minority concentrations.

Affordable Housing Development. The OHA regularly participates with local efforts to increase housing choice through the development of affordable housing. As part of the redesign and modernization effort for Colonia Village (Priority #6 listed above), the Housing Authority will increase choice and fair housing opportunities by completely rebuilding 260 public housing units and adding new affordable housing units, including units for homeownership. The 260 units are anticipated to be converted from Public Housing to the Section 8 Program under project or tenant based voucher.

Notice of Proposed Addendum posted by: K C Jensen 10/15/08
Interim Housing Programs Manager

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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF OXNARD

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION APPROVING AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENCY PLAN AND AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN TO EXECUTE AND SUBMIT THE AMENDMENTS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the City of Oxnard ("OHA") is required by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") to approve and submit the Agency Plan for the OHA for HUD's review and approval, including any amendments to said Agency Plan; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2008, the OHA provided public notice of intent to amend the Agency Plan with respect to adoption of policies related to (A) Conflict of Interest and (B) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments are set forth in the Attachment to this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2008, the Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing to receive written and oral comments on the proposed amendments;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Oxnard resolves as follows:

1. The Commission approves the amendment to the Agency Plan as set forth in the Attachment appended hereto;

2. The Commission authorizes and directs the Chairman to execute and submit to the required documents to HUD for review and approval of the Amendments.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 8th day of December 2008, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:

_____
Dr. Thomas E. Holden, Chairman

Attachment #2

ATTEST:

_____

Daniel Martinez, Secretary-Designate

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____

Alan Holmberg, General Counsel

Attachment #2