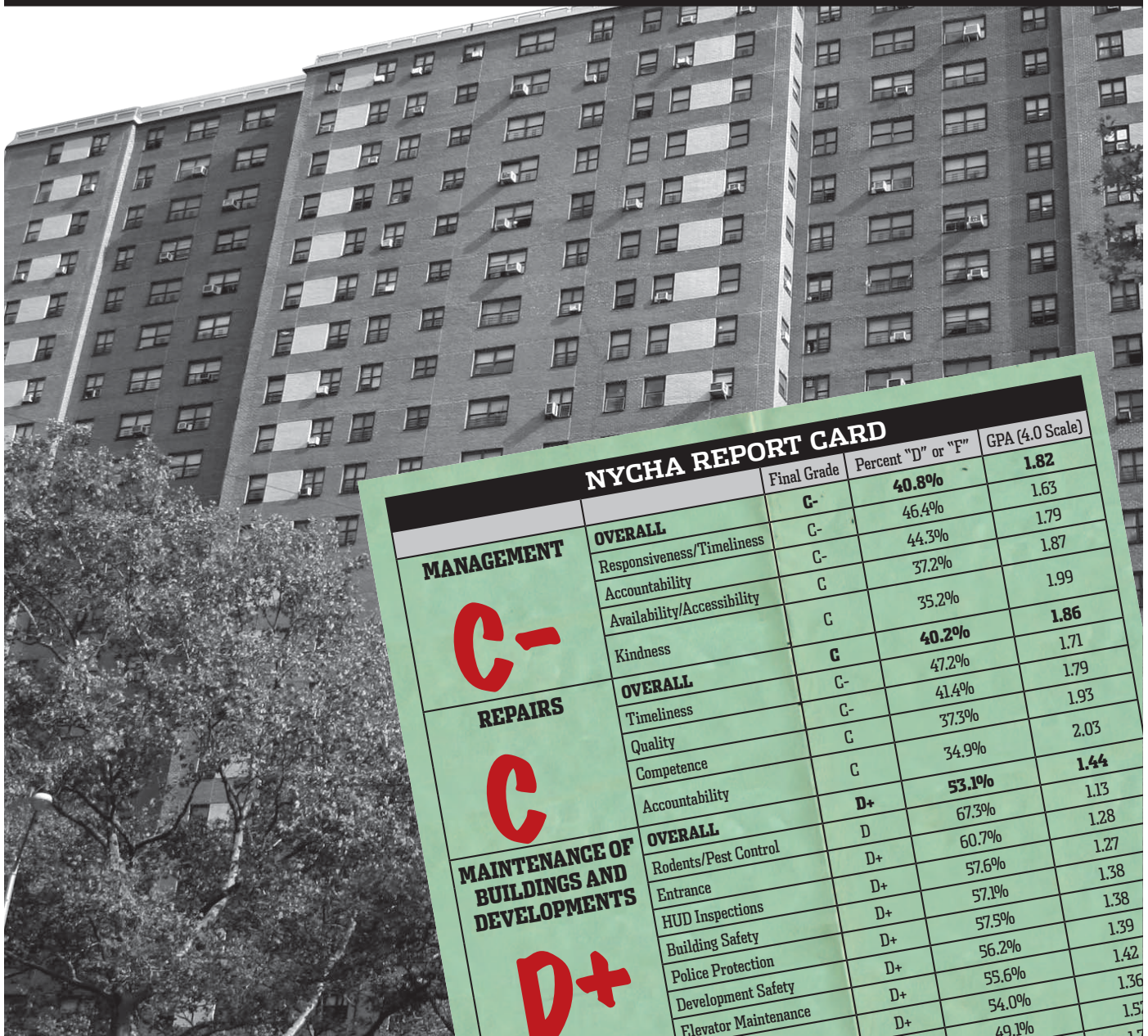


A REPORT CARD FOR THE NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)

Residents' Evaluation of NYCHA and Recommendations for Improvement · AUGUST 2011



NYCHA REPORT CARD				
		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)
MANAGEMENT	OVERALL	C-	40.8%	1.82
	Responsiveness/Timeliness	C-	46.4%	1.63
	Accountability	C-	44.3%	1.79
	Availability/Accessibility	C	37.2%	1.87
	Kindness	C	35.2%	1.99
REPAIRS	OVERALL	C	40.2%	1.86
	Timeliness	C-	47.2%	1.71
	Quality	C-	41.4%	1.79
	Competence	C	37.3%	1.93
	Accountability	C	34.9%	2.03
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	OVERALL	D+	53.1%	1.44
	Rodents/Pest Control	D	67.3%	1.13
	Entrance	D+	60.7%	1.28
	HUD Inspections	D+	57.6%	1.27
	Building Safety	D+	57.1%	1.38
	Police Protection	D+	57.5%	1.38
	Development Safety	D+	56.2%	1.39
	Elevator Maintenance	D+	55.6%	1.39
		D+	54.0%	1.42
		D+	49.1%	1.51



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Finally thanks to the many members and public housing residents that participated in all phases of this research, and without whom this project would not have happened.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Community Organizations:

CAA AV: Organizing Asian Communities works to build grassroots community power across diverse poor and working-class Asian immigrant and refugee communities in NYC.



Community Voices Heard (CVH) organizes low-income people of color in New York City, Yonkers and the Mid-Hudson Valley. CVH focuses on welfare reform, workforce development, job creation, public and affordable housing, and community governance.



Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE) is a Brooklyn-based, member-led organization made up almost exclusively of women of color. FUREE organizes low-income families to build power and enact systemic change to promote racial, economic, and gender equality.



Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES) is a neighborhood housing and preservation organization that has served the Lower East Side of Manhattan since 1977 and is dedicated to tenants' rights, homelessness prevention, economic development, and community revitalization.



Mothers on the Move (MOM) is based in the South Bronx and organizes low-income people, working on issues of economic justice, education, and environmental justice. Youth on the Move (YOM) works on education and safety issues.



Research Partner:

Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center (CDP) strengthens the impact of grassroots organizations in New York City's low-income and other excluded communities. CDP partners with community organizations to win legal cases, publish community-driven research reports, assist with the formation of new organizations and cooperatives, and provide technical and transactional assistance in support of their work towards social justice.



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NYCHA REPORT CARD: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From May 2010 through April 2011, members of five community organizations, CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities, Community Voices Heard (CVH), Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE), Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES), and Mothers on the Move (MOM), with support from the Community Development Project (CDP) of the Urban Justice Center, collected 1,446 report cards that asked public housing residents to “grade” the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA).

Report Card Research By the Numbers	
Report Cards Collected	1,446
Number of Developments Surveyed	71 (21% of all developments)
Average Percent of Households Surveyed in Targeted Developments	4.6%

Residents graded NYCHA—using a traditional letter grading scale—on management, the centralized calling center, repairs, and maintenance of buildings and developments. Public housing residents were involved in every stage of the research and participated in the development of report card questions, research findings, and policy recommendations. NYCHA received failing grades in 10 of the 26 categories.¹

Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents			
		Percentage of Report Card Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents
Race/ Ethnicity	African-American/Black	41%	48%
	Asian	8%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	46%	43%
	White/Other	5%	6%
Gender	Male	28%	23%
	Female	72%	77%

GRADES, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW TO READ THE REPORT CARD

Pass/Fail: Pass = A, B, or C, Fail= D or F.

Final Grade: Final letter grade, based on GPA calculations.

Percent “D” or “F”: Percent of respondents that gave NYCHA a “D” or “F” for a given category.

GPA: Grade Point Average, calculated using the traditional grading system (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0).

Overall: The calculated average of all the grades for a given category.

1. REPAIRS

NYCHA fails to provide timely, quality repairs in residents' apartments. Residents gave NYCHA poor grades for the repair system, highlighting problems with the timeliness and quality of repairs.

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 scale)
CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER C	OVERALL	C	33.9%	2.13
	Timeliness	D+	55.9%	1.42
	Competence	C	36.3%	2.04
	Accountability	C+	30.9%	2.19
	311	C+	31.0%	2.22
	Kindness	C+	26.8%	2.28
	Language Access	B	22.7%	2.64
REPAIRS C	OVERALL	C	40.2%	1.86
	Timeliness	C-	47.2%	1.71
	Quality	C-	41.4%	1.79
	Competence	C	37.3%	1.94
	Accountability	C	34.9%	2.02

To address residents' concerns about the timeliness and quality of repairs, NYCHA should:

- Advocate for Congress and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase funding for repairs and maintenance to address the \$6 billion backlog of repair needs.
- Hire enough staff to have at least one maintenance worker per 100 units of housing.
- Hire an outside consultant to complete a comprehensive annual audit of the Centralized Calling Center (CCC) System to identify and address structural issues that impact the timeliness of repairs.
- Create and distribute materials in residents' primary language explaining how to call the CCC and how to follow up to ensure repairs are completed.
- Train CCC operators annually in basic repair techniques to ensure they are able to aid residents in determining the type of repair needed.
- Allocate money for the expansion of the pilot repair program at Rutgers Houses that consolidates and combines repair jobs.

2. MAINTENANCE

NYCHA fails to properly maintain public spaces. In particular, residents reported broken elevators, broken intercoms, unclean public spaces, and massive pest infestations.

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 scale)
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS D+	OVERALL²	D+	57.1%	1.39
	Rodents/Pest Control	D	67.3%	1.13
	Entrance	D+	60.7%	1.28
	Elevator Maintenance	D+	55.6%	1.42
	Cleanliness	C-	44.9%	1.73


➤ **44% of report card respondents reported that their elevators break on a weekly basis.**

To address the concerns of residents and maintain and improve public spaces, NYCHA should:

- Increase grounds and maintenance staff and renovate common areas to create functional, efficient, and versatile spaces.
- Canvass every building annually to identify the extent of pest infestations and provide funds for extermination and prevention measures.
- Work with HUD to finalize and expand NYCHA's participation in the Energy Performance Contracting Program. This program will retrofit all NYCHA buildings using green energy techniques; reduce NYCHA's carbon footprint, utility bills, and repair and maintenance costs; and, most importantly, improve and invest in the current housing stock.

3. CRIMINALIZATION

NYCHA, in its collaboration with the NYPD, criminalizes instead of protecting public housing residents. Residents reported that they had been unjustly stopped in their developments and gave NYCHA and NYPD low grades for building and development safety.

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 scale)
	OVERALL³	D+	56.9%	1.38
	Building Safety	D+	57.1%	1.38
	Police Protection	D+	57.5%	1.38
	Development Safety	D+	56.2%	1.39

➤ **One in three report card respondents or one of their family members have been stopped by police in their own building or development.**

To end the criminalization of residents and refocus on resident safety, NYCHA should:

- Immediately stop paying NYPD for police services, which in 2010 totaled \$73 million.
- Use funds saved by ceasing payments to NYPD to develop a pilot community policing program, including training for police officers on community policing practices and interacting with residents. Community policing programs have been proven to increase community safety through problem-solving and prevention, community engagement, organizational development, and community partnerships.⁴
- Direct police services to end vertical sweeps that unnecessarily target and harass residents in their own buildings.

4. JOBS

NYCHA fails to implement critical jobs programs, like the Section 3 program and the Resident Employment Program, despite the high need for employment opportunities.

- **22.1% of report card respondents lost their job in the past year;**
- **74.3% have NOT heard of job opportunities at NYCHA;**
- **30.5% are skilled in construction and interested in working for NYCHA and/or its contractors.**


To address the need for employment opportunities, NYCHA should:

- Require contractors to hire public housing residents for 30% of total hours worked on all capital projects (rather than 30% of new hires), per the Earnings and Livings Opportunities Act introduced by U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez.

- Allocate \$5 million to develop and implement a pilot green jobs training program, which would offer specialized training for residents to learn how to retrofit existing public housing buildings and property. This would help NYCHA meet its Section 3 and Resident Employment Program requirements.
- Establish a Transitional Jobs Program, congruent with the standards of the New York State program by the same name, to provide training and work experience for public housing residents with the intent of moving them to unsubsidized jobs.⁵ This could be financed in several ways: through a partnership with the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA); using a Community Development Block Grant; through Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) funds; through national grants put out by the U.S. Department of Labor; or with other HRA or OTDA funds.
- Create a Workforce Development Center to provide a central place for public housing residents to receive job training and career and work placement services, particularly Section 3 opportunities. A center built by the Philadelphia Housing Authority could serve as a model for this program.

5. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

The lack of accountability measures makes it difficult for residents to hold NYCHA staff accountable for mismanagement. Residents reported unresponsive managers, coupled with a lack of accountability and insufficient oversight by HUD.

MANAGEMENT		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 scale)
		OVERALL	C-	40.8%
Responsiveness/Timeliness		C-	46.4%	1.63
Accountability		C-	44.3%	1.79
Availability/Accessibility		C	37.2%	1.87
Kindness		C	35.2%	1.99

➤ **39.7% of report card respondents have had NYCHA lose their paperwork (Of those, 30.3% have faced eviction).**

To increase management accountability, transparency, and availability, NYCHA should:

- Improve access to management staff by:
 - o Creating open/walk-in hours at management offices during evenings and weekends when residents are more likely to be home.
 - o Hiring enough management staff to ensure there is at least one staff person for every 200 units of housing.
 - o Requiring management to proactively check-in with residents individually once a year.
 - o Increasing management involvement with Residents Associations, with the consent of residents.
 - o Train all management staff yearly in customer relations and proper housing management.
- Improve language access in all written communications, making forms, letters and policies available in residents' primary languages. In particular, NYCHA should:
 - o Ensure that at least one staff member in each development is fluent in the two most common languages spoken by residents in that development.
 - o Expand access to language-line to provide services in all languages, and provide sufficient oversight and quality control to ensure Centralized Calling Center operators actually use language line.
- Hold quarterly public hearings, outside of the Annual Plan process, wherein residents can express their general concerns about NYCHA operations and provide suggestions for enhanced NYCHA performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

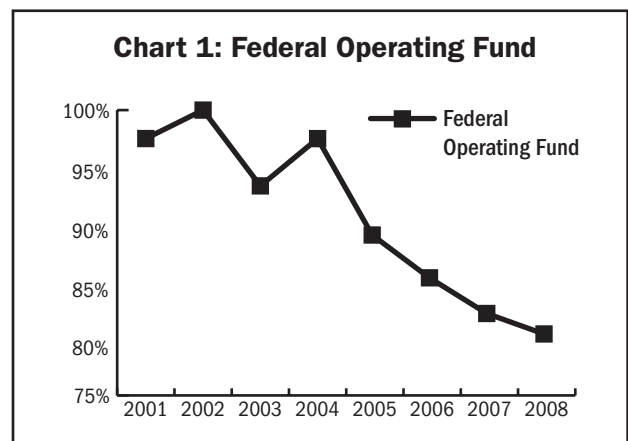
The need for affordable housing in New York City is greater than ever. In the past year, 113,553 New Yorkers slept in homeless shelters, a 37% increase from 2002.⁶ A review of census data shows that 27.5% of New Yorkers spend more than half their income on rent, a 13% increase from 2002.⁷ The ongoing housing and foreclosure crisis further endangers current sources of affordable housing and disproportionately impacts low-income communities. Compounding the problem, unemployment in New York City is still staggeringly high at 8.7%,⁸ a rate that doubles among communities of color.⁹

Public housing represents one of the last sources of affordable housing in New York City, providing housing for a half a million New Yorkers. The 176,273 families living in NYCHA are primarily low-income people of color (see Table 2 for detailed demographic information).¹⁰ Ten thousand NYCHA apartments are designated for seniors, and over 7,000 are for persons with disabilities.¹¹

Public housing/section 8 residents	633,177
Developments	334
Public Housing Units	178,882
Average monthly rent	\$424
Percent of Developments that are more than 30 years old	72%
Median Household Income	\$20,700¹³

New York boasted the first units of public housing in the country and is currently the largest public housing authority in North America.¹⁴ Over the years, The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) has played a crucial role in the lives of countless people, ensuring that low-income families have decent affordable housing. Public housing developments are important communities where people raise families, build social networks, and provide support to their neighbors.

Despite its importance, public housing is in danger in New York City and across the nation. Construction of public housing boomed in the 1960s and 70s but halted abruptly in 1973, when Nixon declared a moratorium on public housing construction.¹⁵ The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act further limited public housing authorities by prohibiting the use of federal subsidies to build new affordable housing units.¹⁶ At the same time, Congress began to consistently underfund both capital and operating subsidies for public housing, causing intense financial strain for NYCHA.¹⁷ Federal disinvestment has increased over the years, perpetuating the deterioration of the public housing stock and the shrinking of services and programs for residents. The final federal budget for fiscal year 2011 continued this trend, cutting \$100 million from NYCHA alone.¹⁸



Government disinvestment has led to a public housing crisis. Repairs take years to complete; residents are unjustly evicted; and elevators are broken for days at a time, stranding many elderly residents in their apartments. These are not isolated events, but have become widespread systemic problems across boroughs and developments. Though residents have organized to demand better conditions, these problems persist and must be addressed before the last bastion of affordable housing in New York City is lost forever.

To address the current public housing crisis, a coalition of organizations across the city formed to document

the current conditions in New York City public housing and offer recommendations for change. CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities, Community Voices Heard (CVH), Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE), Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES), and Mothers on the Move (MOM) worked collaboratively to develop and collect “report cards” asking residents to grade the housing authority on a number of factors. Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center (CDP) provided research support for this project. Overall, the research found that NYCHA fails to conduct timely repairs, sufficiently maintain public spaces, effectively implement employment programs, and adequately manage developments.

II. METHODOLOGY

From May 2010 through April 2011, members of the five organizations surveyed residents in 71 NYCHA developments (21% of all NYCHA developments) and collected 1,446 report cards, mostly through door-to-door outreach. The report card asked public housing residents to “grade” NYCHA on topics such as management staff, the centralized calling center, repairs, and the maintenance of buildings and developments.ⁱ

The report cards were designed and administered by NYCHA residents who are also members of the coalition organizations, utilizing a participatory action research model. Organizations met four times to design the research tools and create an outreach plan. For report card collection, each organization targeted housing developments in the neighborhoods where they work.ⁱⁱ Organizations then trained members to collect report cards and enter data into a database. On average, researchers collected report cards from 4.6% households in the targeted developments.

This report summarizes the findings of the citywide report card, aggregating the data from all participating organizations. Following each finding are several corresponding recommendations. The report also includes report cards summarizing the grades collected by each separate community organization. Public housing residents were involved in every stage of the research process and helped develop research findings and recommendations based on the results of the report card.

Table 2: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents

Demographics		Percentage of Report Card Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents ¹⁹
Borough	Bronx	11%	24.91%
	Brooklyn	19%	32.85%
	Manhattan	69%	30.16%
	Queens	1%	9.57%
Race/ Ethnicity	African-American/Black	41%	48%
	Asian	8%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	46%	43%
	White/Other	5%	6%
Gender	Male	28%	23%
	Female	72%	77%

ⁱ See the appendix for the full version of the report card.

ⁱⁱ See the appendix for a full list of developments surveyed.

Table 3: Additional Respondent Demographics		
Demographics		Percent
Primary Language	Chinese	9.4%
	English	69.0%
	Spanish	21.6%
Years Living In Public Housing	0-2	6.7%
	3-5	11.6%
	6-10	14.9%
	11-15	13.0%
	16+	53.8%
Voters		86.2%
Participate in their Tenant Assoc.		44.9%
Median Age		50
Median Adults per Household		2
Median Children per Household		1

Resident-Led Organizing to Improve Public Housing

Throughout the years, community-based organizations and public housing residents have organized campaigns to win better management, increase city, state, and federal funding for public housing, and increase decision-making power for residents. While the fight to improve public housing continues, there have been some notable victories.

In 2000, NYCHA residents led the fight for increased resident participation in the management of developments. That campaign forced NYCHA to establish the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) and to create a process for residents to review and comment on NYCHA's Annual Plan through additional public hearings not required by federal regulations.²⁰ In 2011, NYCHA created a position for a resident member of the NYCHA Board of Directors.²¹

On the state level, community organizations have been successful in advocacy efforts to restore a portion of state subsidies to public housing developments that were built by the state but neglected for over a decade. Organizations have also been successful in removing managers that neglect and ignore their responsibilities. These actions have led to improved housing conditions and quality of life for local residents.²²

Despite the ongoing organizing efforts of NYCHA residents and community-based organizations, trends of disinvestment and mismanagement continue to permeate the system, making resident-led efforts to improve public housing even more critical.

III. CITYWIDE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“NYCHA should have been graded a long time ago.” – Respondent #907

The report cards provide compelling information about residents’ perspectives on the housing authority, highlighting their unique insight into NYCHA policies and practices. Several trends emerged as expected. Long waits for repairs, lack of building upkeep, and poor management were common concerns for residents. Each of the findings in the section is followed by a section of pertinent policy recommendations.

HOW TO READ REPORT CARD RESULTS

COLUMNS	ROWS
<p>Pass/Fail: Pass = A, B, or C, Fail= D or F.</p> <p>Final Grade: Final letter grade, based on GPA calculations.²³</p> <p>Percent “D” or “F”: Percent of respondents that gave NYCHA a “D” or “F” for that category.</p> <p>GPA: Grade Point Average, calculated using the traditional grading system (A=4, B=3, C=3, D=1, F=0).</p>	<p>Management refers to all workers in management offices, including office assistants, assistant managers, and managers.</p> <p>Centralized Calling Number is the new number and system that residents use to request repairs.</p> <p>Repairs refers to all maintenance requests, including issues related to plumbing, electrical systems, painting, and appliance repairs.</p> <p>Maintenance of Buildings/Developments refers to maintenance and condition of NYCHA properties including the grounds, buildings and developments.</p> <p>Overall: The calculated average of all the grades for a given category.</p>

Table 4: Developments with the Worst Management²⁵

Development	Borough	Final Grade	Percent “D” or “F”	GPA (4.0 Scale)
Meltzer	Manhattan	D+	82.9%	1.22
Douglass	Manhattan	D+	83.8%	1.23
Patterson	Bronx	D+	67.9%	1.30
Riis	Manhattan	D+	75.5%	1.39
UPACA-6	Manhattan	D+	73.5%	1.40
Average of All Developments	N/A	C-	61.5%	1.73

NYCHA CITYWIDE REPORT CARD²⁴

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)
MANAGEMENT C-	OVERALL	C-	40.8%	1.82
	Responsiveness/Timeliness	C-	46.4%	1.63
	Accountability	C-	44.3%	1.79
	Availability/Accessibility	C	37.2%	1.87
	Kindness	C	35.2%	1.99
CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER C	OVERALL	C	33.9%	2.13
	Timeliness	D+	55.9%	1.42
	Competence	C	36.3%	2.04
	Accountability	C	30.9%	2.19
	311	C+	31.0%	2.22
	Kindness	C+	26.8%	2.28
	Language Access	B	22.7%	2.64
REPAIRS C	OVERALL	C	40.2%	1.86
	Timeliness	C-	47.2%	1.71
	Quality	C-	41.4%	1.79
	Competence	C	37.3%	1.93
	Accountability	C	34.9%	2.03
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS D+	OVERALL	D+	53.1%	1.44
	Rodents/Pest Control	D	67.3%	1.13
	Entrance	D+	60.7%	1.28
	HUD Inspections	D+	57.6%	1.27
	Building Safety	D+	57.1%	1.38
	Police Protection	D+	57.5%	1.38
	Development Safety	D+	56.2%	1.39
	Elevator Maintenance	D+	55.6%	1.42
	Recycling	D+	54.0%	1.36
	Cleaning Staff	C-	49.1%	1.52
	Cleanliness	C-	44.9%	1.73
	Green Spaces	C-	42.9%	1.65
	Handicap Access	C-	41.9%	1.82

1. REPAIRS

NYCHA fails to provide timely, quality repairs in residents' apartments.

"I've had mold in the apartment for three years now and NYCHA hasn't fixed it. I am concerned for my mother's health." – Respondent #162

Residents often wait years to have repairs completed. This is due in large part to the new Centralized Calling Center (CCC). Before 2005, residents were able to go directly to the management office in their building to get a repair completed.²⁶ Each development had their own general maintenance staff to fix most problems, and outside staff were brought in to complete specialized repairs. Usually, someone came within a few days to complete the necessary work. This history of timely repairs stands in stark contrast to today's system.

"The old system worked much better. Repairs were either the same day or the next." – Respondent #177

Under the new system, residents must call the Centralized Calling Center (CCC) when a repair is needed. When residents call, they talk to an operator who schedules the appointments for them. Emergency repairs, including repairs related to heat and water, are supposed to be completed within 24 hours; regular repairs are supposed to be completed within two weeks.²⁷ Appointments requiring skilled-trade work are only scheduled when there are enough similar types of repairs at a building (e.g. when there are enough painting jobs for a full day's work).²⁸

"The paint and plaster has been falling in my bathtub for four years. They repaired once and in six months the problem reappeared." – Respondent #585

There are several problems with the CCC repairs system. Often residents need assistance in deciding what type of repair they need, but CCC operators sometimes don't have the knowledge to support residents in deciding whether they need an electrician, carpenter or handyman. If residents need multiple repairs, operators are unable to give advice regarding the order of repairs.

Since 2005, NYCHA has cut 11% of its maintenance workers, leading to a long wait-time for repairs.²⁹ Residents reported that appointments are scheduled months or years in advance, forcing residents to wait a long time for even the simplest repair. Once the repair appointment time finally arrives, residents take precious time off work –often without pay – but sometimes no one shows up for the appointment. If a repairman does come, oftentimes repairs are poorly done or the underlying cause of the problem is not addressed, and the problem recurs soon after. Many of these problems can be traced back to a lack of funding for repairs and a subsequent drop in the number of maintenance staff.

"My kitchen ceiling is broken, damaged. We cannot cook..... Rainy days are the worst." – Respondent #543

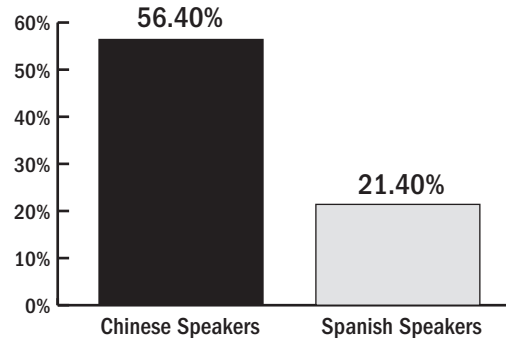
Residents overwhelmingly gave NYCHA failing grades for repairs overall, and for the timeliness of repairs in particular. Delayed repairs mean that residents are living in apartments with mold or rodent infestations, directly impacting their health and well-being. When repairmen are scheduled to come but don't show up, residents lose a much-needed day of work and earnings. One resident explained:

"Appointments for repairs are rarely timely. I've had to take a day off from work to be at home. I find that they did not come to the apartment. And then I had to take another day off work." – Respondent #753

Language Access

For many NYCHA residents, language barriers make it challenging to understand and interact with management and access services. While some translation services are officially available on the CCC through Language Line Services, basic information about how to ask for a repair is often not distributed in residents' primary language. The report card results clearly indicate that current measures are insufficient to ensure that residents have access to language services that allow them to request repairs.

Chart 2: Percent of Respondents that gave NYCHA an "F" for Language Access



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NYCHA

The deterioration of the public housing stock affects residents on a daily basis, as many residents struggle to get simple repairs in their apartment. Residents' health often suffers when repairs aren't completed in a timely manner. Report card results clearly show that NYCHA's repair system fails to keep up with the demand for repairs and that serious reforms are needed to ensure that residents have access to timely repairs. To address resident concerns about the timeliness and quality of repairs, NYCHA should:

- Advocate for Congress and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase funding for repairs and maintenance to address the \$6 billion backlog of repair needs. ³⁰
- Hire enough staff to have at least one maintenance worker per 100 units of housing. New staff should be public housing and other low-income residents, in accordance with Section 3 regulations.
- Hire an outside consultant to complete a comprehensive annual audit of the Centralized Calling Center (CCC) System to identify and address structural issues that impact the timeliness of repairs.
- Create and distribute materials in residents' primary language explaining how to call the CCC and how to follow up to ensure repairs are completed.
- Train CCC operators annually in basic repair techniques to ensure they are able to aid residents in determining the type of repair needed.
- Create an independent review board with resident and community members to oversee and enforce repairs. Independent inspectors will canvass apartments for repair needs. The review board will oversee the repairs system to ensure repairs are completed in a timely manner.
- Allocate money for the expansion of the pilot repair program at Rutgers Houses that consolidates and combines repair jobs.

2. MAINTENANCE

NYCHA fails to properly maintain public spaces.

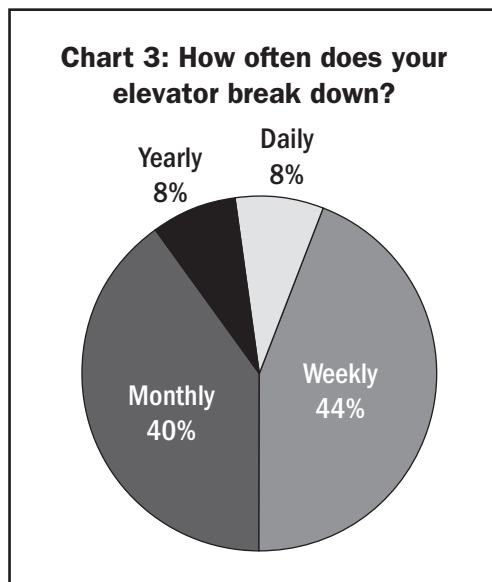
“The elevator smells like garbage. The hallway is also dirty and it smells of garbage.”
– Respondent #277

Overall, residents gave NYCHA failing grades for the conditions of public spaces, including indoor lobbies, community rooms, and outdoor spaces. In fact, residents gave NYCHA failing grades for buildings and developments at higher rates than every other category of the report card. These conditions are a direct result of government disinvestment and are evidence of the crisis facing public housing residents.

Entrances: According to report card respondents, NYCHA fails to ensure entrances are secure and that intercoms work properly. In fact, NYCHA’s own safety and security taskforce found that about half of the intercoms are broken.³¹ In addition to being a nuisance for residents, broken intercoms can also jeopardize the security of buildings.

“The housing project where I live, the front door is broken... so I do not feel safe.”
– Respondent #56

Elevators: The failure of NYCHA to adequately maintain its elevators has drastically impacted the quality of life for public housing residents. Senior citizens unable to navigate the stairs are often marooned in their apartments till the problem is fixed. In rare cases, broken and faulty elevators endanger residents’ lives. Residents report that elevators are left unfixed for long periods of time, and when elevators are repaired, they often break down again soon after.



“Our elevators are broken every day.”
– Respondent #5

In 2010, the New York City Comptroller completed an audit of elevators that reflects the experiences of residents. The audit found that 40% of preventative maintenance tasks were not completed and that one-fifth of the elevators had not been inspected.³² The report also stated that the average time for repairs to be completed was 13.8 hours and that at least one-third of broken elevators were not fixed within 10 hours.³³

Cleanliness: Residents gave failing grades for NYCHA cleaning staff and for cleanliness of buildings and developments, reporting trash left out for days at time, holes in walls, improperly maintained outdoor spaces, and stairwells ignored by cleaning staff. Unsanitary conditions in public and private spaces are not only unsightly but can also impact the health of residents, with mold, dust, rodents, and cockroaches exacerbating allergies and asthma.³⁴ Pest control is also an increasing problem, with 6% of Manhattan

public housing units reporting the presence of bedbugs.³⁵ Rat and rodent infestations have completely taken over some buildings, aided by maintenance staff that do not routinely clean up trash.

“Housing has cut so much staff our development is going down. It even takes weeks to get glass swept or floors mopped.” – Respondent #32

While some of these problems are due to inattentiveness of cleaning staff, central causes are lack of funding and lack of NYCHA oversight on policies and practices implemented on the development level. NYCHA often does not use its limited resources in the most efficient or effective manner or to address the issues of most concern to residents, like the cleanliness of public spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NYCHA

Report card respondents prioritized the maintenance and upkeep of common areas. However in recent years, NYCHA has not committed sufficient resources to maintain buildings. While this is due in large part to federal disinvestment, NYCHA can and should do more with its resources to maintain the current housing stock. To address the concerns of residents and maintain and improve public spaces, NYCHA should:

- Increase grounds and maintenance staff and renovate common areas to create functional, efficient, and versatile spaces.
- Canvass every building annually to identify the extent of pest infestations and provide funds for extermination and prevention measures.
- Work with HUD to finalize and expand NYCHA’s participation in the Energy Performance Contracting Program. This program will retrofit all NYCHA buildings using green energy techniques; reduce NYCHA’s carbon footprint, utility bills, and repair and maintenance costs; and, most importantly, improve and invest in the current housing stock.

3. CRIMINALIZATION

NYCHA, in its collaboration with the NYPD, criminalizes instead of protecting public housing residents.

“Police harass young males ages 16-35 who were born and raised in these projects. You can’t even visit a friend without police harassment.” – Respondent #125

► One in three report card respondents or one of their family members has been stopped by police in his/her own building or development.

While many residents have real concerns about safety and security in their buildings, these problems are often wrongly blamed on residents rather than on the root causes: disinvestment, government neglect and biased police practices. Current police practices criminalize public housing residents in their own communities instead of protecting them and their families.

“The police officers make it very hard for a comfortable life in the projects - we are looked at as criminals.” – Respondent #986

Since 1995, when the Housing Police merged with NYPD, NYCHA has paid an annual fee to NYPD for police services, which in 2010 totaled \$73 million.³⁶ NYCHA also pays approximately \$27 million to the city in lieu of taxes for public services.³⁷ Residents have long pointed out the inconsistency of paying double for these services, particularly when they feel NYPD and NYCHA are failing to keep them safe. Instead, NYPD regularly stops residents for trespassing, even in their own buildings and developments. Approximately one in three of the report card respondents reported that the police had stopped them or someone in their household for trespassing in their own development, with higher rates among people of color. Only 18% of white respondents reported being stopped in their own developments, compared to approximately a third of people of color.

“Police on the premises does not make it safer. They do more harassing than policing.” – Respondent #1137

Residents overwhelmingly gave NYCHA failing grades for providing safety and security in their buildings and developments. Senior NYCHA officials are aware of police harassment and safety issues in many developments and recently created the Safety and Security Taskforce to address these concerns. The taskforce findings reflect a failing effort and echo the concerns of many of the report card respondents. NYPD policies and practices are partially to blame for the lack of security and the harassment of residents, but ultimately NYCHA, as the public housing operator, needs to ensure that NYPD policies focus on keeping public housing residents safe instead of criminalizing them.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NYCHA

Like all New Yorkers, public housing residents need safe and secure homes, free of harassment by police. NYCHA's Safety and Security Taskforce is an important step in reconsidering current policies and practices, but public housing residents need to be at the forefront of the discussion for improved NYPD and NYCHA policies. To end the criminalization of residents and refocus on resident safety, NYCHA should:

- Immediately stop paying NYPD for police services, which in 2010 totaled \$73 million.³⁸
- Use funds saved by ceasing payments to NYPD to develop a pilot community policing program, including training for police officers on community policing practices and interacting with residents. Community policing programs have been proven to increase community safety through problem-solving and prevention, community engagement, organizational development, and community partnerships.³⁹
- Direct police services to end vertical sweeps that unnecessarily target and harass residents in their own buildings.

4. JOBS

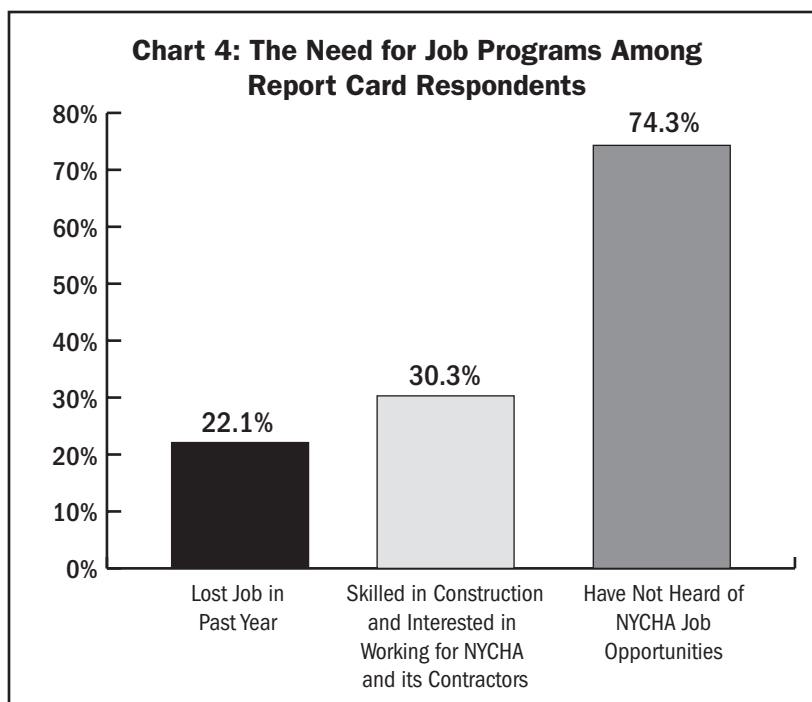
NYCHA fails to implement critical jobs programs, like the Section 3 program and the Resident Employment Program, despite the high need for employment opportunities.

“I would love a job with housing. I know I can do the job to the best of my ability and be dedicated. I really just need the chance.” – Respondent #765

Approximately 80,000 NYCHA public housing residents are unemployed.⁴⁰ These residents desperately need economic and employment opportunities, and NYCHA is uniquely positioned to create some of these opportunities. Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 states that “to the greatest extent feasible, opportunities for training and employment arising in connection with the planning, construction, rehabilitation and operation of housing... should be given to lower income persons residing in the area of such housing.”⁴¹ Current federal regulations require 30% of new jobs created from federal capital funds to go to low-income community residents working for NYCHA contractors.⁴² While this is a very low threshold for employing residents, Section 3 could help authorities invest in the employment future of their residents and improve the existing housing stock while also increasing rent revenue rolls, since residents pay 30% of their income towards rent.

“I would really like to learn more about job opportunities with NYCHA.” – Respondent #507

For the past several years, NYCHA has often failed to meet Section 3 requirements. Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not typically enforce the regulation.⁴³ A recent report by Community Voices Heard found that only 6.7% of new jobs created through NYCHA’s portion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds went to low-income community residents,⁴⁴ despite the high demand among public housing residents for these jobs.



NYCHA has its own employment program, called the Resident Employment Program, which requires 15% of all labor costs to go to low-income community residents.⁴⁵ This program has also failed to hire the minimum number of residents or significantly impact the economic opportunities available to them.⁴⁶ Given

the enduring economic and unemployment crisis in New York City, these programs are needed now more than ever. Sadly, report cards results show that NYCHA is neither prioritizing these programs nor sufficiently informing residents of existing opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NYCHA

With 80,000 unemployed public housing residents, there is a great need for job training and employment opportunities.⁴⁷ NYCHA needs to leverage its limited resources to create as many sustainable employment opportunities for residents as possible. To address the need for employment opportunities, NYCHA should:

- Require contractors to hire public housing residents for 30% of total hours worked on all capital projects (rather than 30% of new hires), per the Earnings and Livings Opportunities Act introduced by U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez.⁴⁸
- Allocate \$5 million to develop and implement a pilot green jobs training program, which would offer specialized training for residents to learn how to retrofit existing public housing buildings and property. This program would help NYCHA meet its Section 3 and Resident Employment Program requirements.⁴⁹ The program could be funded by combining Energy Performance Contracting Program funds already allocated for the greening of NYCHA with workforce development training funds through the U.S. Department of Labor or the local Human Resources Administration (HRA).
- Establish a Transitional Jobs Program, congruent with the standards of the New York State program by the same name, to provide training and work experience for public housing residents with the intent of moving them to unsubsidized jobs.⁵⁰ This could be financed in several ways: through a partnership with the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA); using a Community Development Block Grant; through Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) funds; through national grants put out by the U.S. Department of Labor; or with other HRA or OTDA funds.
- Create a Workforce Development Center to provide a central place for public housing residents to receive job training and career and work placement services, particularly Section 3 opportunities. A center built by the Philadelphia Housing Authority could serve as a model for this program.
- Increase outreach and public education efforts to ensure that more residents are aware of training and employment opportunities through NYCHA and its contractors. To do so, NYCHA should increase use of its website, electronic communication tools and mailings, and increase collaboration with community based-organizations and non-official resident leaders.
- Include Section 3 information with rent receipts that are already sent to residents on a monthly basis.
- Create a Section 3 website that explains the program and includes a searchable database of Section 3 employment and training opportunities.

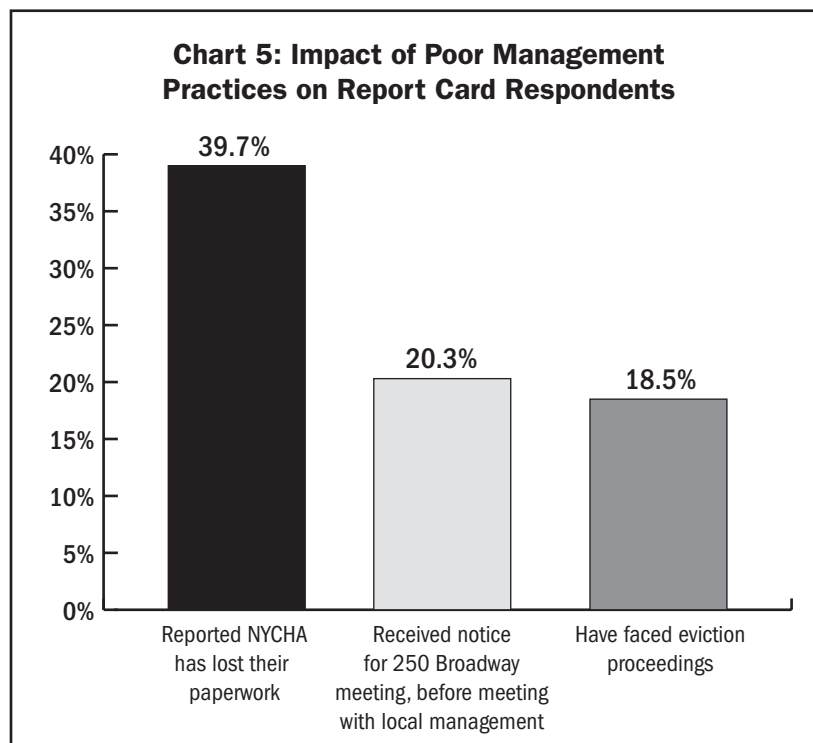
5. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

The lack of accountability measures makes it difficult for residents to hold staff responsible for mismanagement.

“Management needs to be proactive in tenant matters instead of treating us like garbage. They also need to respect our comments and suggestions.” – Respondent #127

Residents’ relations with management staff at their development can be difficult. In most developments, managers are hard to contact and residents interact primarily with administrative staff. Residents sometimes never hear back from the management, or only hear back after repeated visits to management offices. In some cases, management staff lose residents’ paperwork, leading to unjust repercussions such as the denial of succession requests or the unwarranted removal of a resident’s “good-standing” status with NYCHA. In worst-case scenarios, lost paperwork has resulted in unjust evictions. Residents also reported receiving notices for a meeting at NYCHA headquarters before meeting with the manager at their development. By current procedure, residents should meet with local management before going to NYCHA headquarters.

“Housing is poorly run. [They] constantly lose or say they did not receive paperwork....and rent is not entered when received.” – Respondent #488



Report card findings clearly demonstrate that management staff are unresponsive to residents’ needs; however, residents are severely limited in their ability to hold management accountable for their actions, particularly for unjust evictions and improper maintenance of buildings. Oversight measures, such as HUD inspections, rarely happen. When they do, residents doubt their effectiveness in enforcing proper maintenance of buildings and apartments. There has been some success in advocating for new and better management, but only after sustained pressure from public housing residents and community organizations.⁵¹ Increased oversight measures at the local and federal level are needed to ensure residents have access to quality housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NYCHA

Report card results show that management staff are largely unresponsive to resident requests and needs. Current oversight and accountability measures are insufficient to ensure that developments are being properly managed. To increase management accountability, transparency, and availability NYCHA should:

- Improve access to management staff by:
 - o Creating open/walk-in hours at management offices during evenings and weekends when residents are more likely to be home.
 - o Hiring enough management staff to ensure there is at least one staff person for every 200 units of housing.
 - o Requiring management to proactively check-in with residents individually once a year.
 - o Increasing management involvement with Residents Associations, with the consent of residents.
 - o Training all management staff yearly in customer relations and proper housing management.
- Improve language access in all written communications, making forms, letters and policies available in residents' primary languages. In particular, NYCHA should:
 - o Ensure that at least one staff member in each development is fluent in the two most common languages spoken by residents in that development.
 - o Expand access to language-line to provide services in all languages, and provide sufficient oversight and quality control to ensure Centralized Calling Center operators actually use language line.
- Hold quarterly public hearings, outside of the Annual Plan process, wherein residents can express their general concerns about NYCHA operations and provide suggestions for enhanced NYCHA performance.
- Require local NYCHA management to hold monthly meetings in each development, in addition to the current Resident Association meetings, for residents to update them on happenings in the building and provide feedback and suggestions for improvements.
- Create a new pilot certification system for residents to verify when management receives paperwork and when new paperwork is due. Currently management staff only provide copies of paperwork when requested by residents. A new system should provide a central location for residents to check the status of current paperwork and access past documents.
- Minimize evictions that disrupt families and communities. NYCHA should increase oversight to ensure eviction policies are not abused and residents are given due process.

IV. NYCHA REPORT CARD, BY ORGANIZATION

CAA AV: ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES

NYCHA Developments Surveyed: *Gompers, LaGuardia, Rutgers, Smith, Vladeck*



For years, Chinatown has offered its residents an affordable place to live and work in a close-knit community. In 2007, 40.5% of the neighborhood’s residents were foreign-born.⁵² However, over the last several years the neighborhood has been gentrifying at an alarming rate. New upscale hotels, condominiums, stores, and restaurants have caused rents to skyrocket. Chinatown’s many public housing developments are one of the central forces neutralizing this over-development and providing affordable housing to longtime Chinatown residents.

Community groups like CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities have been on the forefront of advocating for the preservation of affordable housing and tenants’ rights. Since 2005, CAAAV’s Chinatown Tenants Union (CTU) has been working to build the power of low-income tenants by developing their leadership and engaging in strategic organizing campaigns.

Table 5: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of All NYCHA Residents			
		Percentage of CAAAV Sample	Percentage of all NYCHA properties ⁵³
Race/Ethnicity	African-American/Black	20%	48%
	Asian	47%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	31%	43%
	White/Other	2%	6%
Gender	Male	34%	23%
	Female	66%	77%



Courtesy of CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities

NYCHA REPORT CARD: CAAAV DEVELOPMENTS

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)
MANAGEMENT C+	OVERALL	G+	24.1%	2.18
	Responsiveness/Timeliness	C	31.9%	1.89
	Accountability	C+	23.3%	2.33
	Availability/Accessibility	C+	20.0%	2.22
	Kindness	C+	21.3%	2.28
CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER C+	OVERALL	G+	24.0%	2.33
	Timeliness	C-	49.0%	1.62
	Competence	C	33.4%	2.00
	Accountability	B-	18.2%	2.57
	311	B-	10.3%	2.62
	Kindness	B-	17.1%	2.53
REPAIRS C+	OVERALL	G+	27.6%	2.17
	Timeliness	C	39.6%	1.98
	Quality	C	25.0%	2.08
	Competence	C+	20.8%	2.27
	Accountability	C+	25.0%	2.33
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS C	OVERALL	C	32.3%	2.09
	Rodents/Pest Control	C	40.9%	1.86
	Entrance	C	29.8%	2.11
	HUD Inspections	C+	26.4%	2.18
	Building Safety	C	32.6%	1.90
	Police Protection	C-	44.4%	1.78
	Development Safety	C	35.5%	2.02
	Elevator Maintenance	C	39.6%	1.94
	Recycling	C+	22.3%	2.26
	Number of Cleaning Staff	C	31.9%	2.11
	Cleanliness	C	42.0%	1.94
	Green Spaces	B-	18.6%	2.51
Handicap Access	B-	23.0%	2.46	

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

"[The] manager of the buildings is a nightmare, very rude, unprofessional and seems to be in a bad mood all of the time." – Respondent #273

"Repair appointments are usually a year away." – Respondent #722

COMMUNITIES VOICES HEARD (CVH)

NYCHA Developments Surveyed: Amsterdam, Bronx River, Clason Point Gardens, Clinton, Douglass, Grant, Gravesend, Jefferson, King Towers, Morris, Queensbridge, Taft, UPACA-6



East and Central Harlem have long been residential, cultural, and business centers for African-American and Latino communities. The area also contains the highest concentration of public housing in the country,⁵⁴ making it an important hub for affordable housing in the increasingly unaffordable neighborhood. However, over the past decade, gentrification has pushed out low-income residents while disinvestment in public housing has put the neighborhood’s affordable housing stock at risk.

Community residents have been fighting for the preservation of public housing in order to push back against gentrification. Community Voices Heard (CVH), a community organization of low-income people, has been organizing public housing residents since 2006 to advocate for increased funding as well as better management of buildings and developments. In 2010, CVH members, many of whom are public housing residents, conducted extensive research on the effectiveness of resident participation structures, and recommended that NYCHA create meaningful opportunities for resident participation by reforming the current resident participation structure.

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting, a process in which community members democratically decide how to spend a portion of public funds, started in Brazil and has spread to many cities and countries worldwide. Community Voices Heard, along with other partners, has been working to initiate participatory budgeting in New York City. The work has paid off as four New York City Council Members have agreed to pilot participatory budgeting in their districts. Between October 2011 and March 2012, council members will invite residents to directly decide how to spend at least \$1 million of council member discretionary funds in each of the four districts. The New York City pilot will be the largest participatory budget in the U.S., and will serve as a model for further budgeting reforms. Community Voices Heard has also been working to create a participatory budgeting process within NYCHA. This could allow residents to have a voice in deciding how funds are spent. Participatory budgeting has already proved successful at the Toronto Housing Authority, where CVH staff and members visited to learn more about the process. CVH is building momentum around participatory budgeting through organizing and outreach and has already received positive feedback from NYCHA on a possible pilot project, though more commitment will be needed on both sides to bring this project to fruition.

Table 6: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents			
		Percentage of CVH Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents ⁵⁵
Race/Ethnicity	African-American/Black	65.4%	48%
	Asian	2.0%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	29.8%	43%
	White/Other	2.9%	6%
Gender	Male	25.4%	23%
	Female	74.6%	77%

NYCHA REPORT CARD: CVH DEVELOPMENTS

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)	
C-	MANAGEMENT	OVERALL	C-	49.7%	1.56
		Responsiveness/Timeliness	D+	54.8%	1.41
		Accountability	D+	58.2%	1.40
		Availability/Accessibility	C-	45.1%	1.68
		Kindness	C-	40.6%	1.74
C	CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER	OVERALL	C	38.6%	1.90
		Timeliness	D+	61.4%	1.20
		Competence	C-	39.4%	1.84
		Accountability	C	30.2%	2.09
		311	C-	44.8%	1.78
		Kindness	C+	27.4%	2.18
		Language Access	C+	28.2%	2.31
C-	REPAIRS	OVERALL	C-	46.8%	1.67
		Timeliness	C-	53.1%	1.52
		Quality	C-	53.0%	1.53
		Competence	C-	43.8%	1.77
		Accountability	C	37.2%	1.87
D+	MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	OVERALL	D+	62.3%	1.25
		Rodents/Pest Control	D-	77.6%	0.84
		Entrance	D	69.7%	1.02
		HUD Inspections	D+	64.3%	1.17
		Building Safety	D+	60.6%	1.34
		Police Protection	D+	60.8%	1.38
		Development Safety	D+	62.6%	1.31
		Elevator Maintenance	D	66.8%	1.03
		Recycling	D+	61.8%	1.24
		Number of Cleaning Staff	D	69.6%	1.08
		Cleanliness	D+	54.9%	1.34
		Green Spaces	C-	52.8%	1.47
		Handicap Access	C-	46.1%	1.79

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

"I would like NYCHA to do more for the tenants that live in housing and listen to the people."
 – Respondent #1,240

"They do a very poor job in the projects; the buildings need a lot of repairs." – Respondent #1,343

FAMILIES UNITED FOR RACIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY (FUREE)



NYCHA Developments Surveyed: Albany, Atlantic Terminal, Armstrong, Borinquen Plaza, Brevoort, Brownsville, Bushwick, Farragut, Glenmore, Gowanus, Gravesend, Howard, Ingersoll, Kingsborough, Lafayette, Langston Hughes, Lenox Road, Marcy, Millbrook, Red Hook, Sheepshead Bay, Sumner, Tompkins, Van Dyke, Whitman, Williamsburg, Wyckoff Gardens

Downtown Brooklyn has historically been home to a diverse population with varying socioeconomic backgrounds. However, a 2004 rezoning paved the way for the construction boom of luxury condominiums, threatening the community’s longtime residents and its public housing. Downtown Brooklyn has several large public housing communities, including Ingersoll, Farragut, and Whitman.⁵⁶ Due to higher rents and cost of living, many local residents have been displaced, increasing the need for permanently affordable housing.⁵⁷

Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE) is a Brooklyn based multi-racial organization made up almost exclusively of women of color. Since 2001, FUREE has been organizing low-income families to change the system so that all people’s work is valued and everyone has the right and economic means to decide and live out their own destinies. FUREE members have also been fighting against the forces of gentrification and for better NYCHA management in public housing developments in Downtown Brooklyn.

Vacancies

“I got about 9 empty apartments in my building. Total there are about 30 apartments. It’s sad when you look up and see no one living there. There are so many people in shelters and could live here. These apartments should have been fixed up and filled a long time ago.”

– Whitman Resident of 31 years

Vacant apartments have posed a problem for NYCHA, particularly at the Whitman and Ingersoll developments in Downtown Brooklyn. At the end of 2009, the New York Times reported that nearly 1,000 of the approximately 3,500 units were vacant, though advocates often cite a much higher vacancy rate.⁵⁸ In testimony before the New York City Council, NYCHA’s Deputy General Manager for Operations Carlos G. Laboy-Diaz stated that there are currently approximately 400 vacancies, down from a high of 1,500 vacancies.⁵⁹ With 144,000 families on the public housing waiting list, such vacancies are unacceptable.⁶⁰ Not only are these apartments desperately needed for New York City’s low-income families, concentrated vacancies also impact the quality of life for the residents that remain. Vacancies contribute to a feeling of neglect and make residents feel that they are living in a “ghost-town.”⁶¹

Table 7: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents

		Percentage of FUREE Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents ⁶²
Race/Ethnicity	African-American/Black	86%	48%
	Asian	1%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	11%	43%
	White/Other	2%	6%
Gender	Male	24%	23%
	Female	76%	77%

NYCHA REPORT CARD: FUREE DEVELOPMENTS

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)	
C-	MANAGEMENT	OVERALL	C-	42.5%	1.77
		Responsiveness/Timeliness	C-	46.0%	1.59
		Accountability	C-	47.1%	1.74
		Availability/Accessibility	C	37.7%	1.85
		Kindness	C	39.3%	1.90
C	CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER	OVERALL	C	35.8%	2.07
		Timeliness	D+	55.4%	1.43
		Competence	C	35.3%	2.06
		Accountability	C	39.7%	1.92
		311	C+	30.4%	2.22
		Kindness	C	35.2%	2.11
		Language Access	B-	18.8%	2.73
C-	REPAIRS	OVERALL	C-	44.1%	1.80
		Timeliness	C-	52.7%	1.67
		Quality	C-	40.4%	1.79
		Competence	C-	43.0%	1.78
		Accountability	C	40.2%	1.94
D+	MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	OVERALL	D+	57.1%	1.41
		Rodents/Pest Control	D+	68.9%	1.17
		Entrance	D+	64.9%	1.17
		HUD Inspections	D+	65.6%	1.24
		Building Safety	D+	63.8%	1.27
		Police Protection	D+	62.7%	1.26
		Development Safety	D+	64.2%	1.18
		Elevator Maintenance	C-	53.4%	1.54
		Recycling	C-	56.7%	1.45
		Number of Cleaning Staff	C-	50.3%	1.48
		Cleanliness	C-	43.9%	1.72
		Green Spaces	C-	48.6%	1.59
	Handicap Access	C-	42.7%	1.82	

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

"NYCHA management does whatever they want to. They are not accountable to no one. Not even NYCHA higher up."-Respondent #945

"Repairs have not been made in my bathroom; it's been 4 years now." - Respondent #992

GOOD OLD LOWER EAST SIDE (GOLES)

NYCHA Developments Surveyed: 45 Allen, Armstrong, Baruch, Campos, Douglass, First, Gompers, Hernandez, Johnson, LaGuardia, LES II, LES Infil, LES Rehab, Meltzer, Millbrook, Riis, Robbins, Rutgers, Seward, Smith, Stanton St, Straus, Two Bridges, Vladeck, Wald



The Lower East Side contains the nation’s first public housing complex as well as one of the most concentrated areas of public housing in the city. Many of the developments have relatively easy access to the waterfront and the area has historically had a diverse community. In recent years, rezoning and gentrification have led to higher and higher rents that are unaffordable to most longtime residents.⁶³ Public housing has provided some respite against this gentrification, providing a safe haven for low-income community residents.

Gentrification has made the Lower East Side a citywide destination, but skyrocketing rents resulted in the displacement of many longtime residents and small businesses. GOLES began with a simple idea: that tenants could organize to exercise their legal rights, and defend their homes and their neighborhood. It was also an expansive idea: that people together could organize building to block; block to neighborhood; neighborhood to city. For more than three decades, GOLES has fought for good housing, good jobs, fresh air, public space, and services. Since 1998, GOLES has also been at the forefront of public housing organizing: standing up against the criminalization of public housing residents and helping thousands of residents to organize to preserve and protect their homes.

Table 8: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents

		Percentage of GOLES Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents ⁶⁴
Race/Ethnicity	African-American/Black	24%	48%
	Asian	11%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	58%	43%
	White/Other	7%	6%
Gender	Male	29%	23%
	Female	71%	77%



Courtesy of Good Old Lower East Side

NYCHA REPORT CARD: GOLES DEVELOPMENTS

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)
MANAGEMENT C	OVERALL	C	40.1%	1.85
	Responsiveness/Timeliness	C-	46.3%	1.67
	Accountability	C-	42.2%	1.80
	Availability/Accessibility	C	37.6%	1.88
	Kindness	C	34.3%	2.05
CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER C	OVERALL	C	34.6%	2.13
	Timeliness	C-	56.2%	1.45
	Competence	C	38.2%	2.02
	Accountability	C+	30.6%	2.25
	311	C+	30.2%	2.26
	Kindness	C+	26.5%	2.26
	Language Access	B-	26.1%	2.56
REPAIRS C	OVERALL	C	36.6%	1.88
	Timeliness	C-	45.1%	1.74
	Quality	C-	30.9%	1.79
	Competence	C	36.2%	1.95
	Accountability	C	34.0%	2.02
MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS C-	OVERALL	C-	50.7%	1.57
	Rodents/Pest Control	D+	62.0%	1.22
	Entrance	D+	59.7%	1.32
	HUD Inspections	C-	53.5%	1.46
	Building Safety	D+	55.8%	1.42
	Police Protection	D+	54.9%	1.44
	Development Safety	C-	51.1%	1.50
	Elevator Maintenance	D+	54.9%	1.43
	Recycling	C-	48.8%	1.58
	Number of Cleaning Staff	C-	44.3%	1.78
	Cleanliness	C	41.4%	1.87
	Green Spaces	C	38.0%	1.90
Handicap Access	C	43.5%	1.87	

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

"When you ask for repairs it goes on deaf ears and blind eyes." – Respondent #309

"I would really like to learn more about job opportunities at NYCHA." – Respondent #507

MOTHERS ON THE MOVE (MOM)

NYCHA Developments Surveyed: Baychester, Betances, Bronxdale, Claremont, Forest, Lincoln, Mitchel, Mott Haven, Patterson, Soundview



There are over 90 public housing developments in the Bronx, serving some of the poorest New Yorkers. Ongoing government disinvestment has taken its toll on the quality of the public housing stock in the South Bronx, and on the health of public housing residents. Many buildings now face a serious infestation of cockroaches, rodents, and mold, all of which are known to exacerbate asthma symptoms. Inattentive managers have failed to address these conditions, so public housing residents have begun to organize for better management.

Mothers on the Move, a social justice organization, ran a long campaign at the St. Mary's Development to improve management. The campaign ultimately succeeded in replacing the manager and improving conditions for residents.⁶⁵ MOM has a long history of successful fights to improve housing conditions in public and private housing.

Table 9: Respondent Demographics Compared to Demographics of all NYCHA Residents

		Percentage of MOM Sample	Percentage of NYCHA Residents ⁶⁶
Race/Ethnicity	African-American/Black	43%	48%
	Asian	0%	3%
	Latino/Hispanic	55%	43%
	White/Other	2%	6%
Gender	Male	29%	23%
	Female	71%	77%



Courtesy of Mothers on the Move

NYCHA REPORT CARD: MOM DEVELOPMENTS

		Final Grade	Percent "D" or "F"	GPA (4.0 Scale)	
C	MANAGEMENT	OVERALL	C	32.7%	2.07
		Responsiveness/Timeliness	C-	40.5%	1.81
		Accountability	C+	33.9%	2.22
		Availability/Accessibility	C	30.2%	2.02
		Kindness	C+	26.2%	2.23
B-	CENTRALIZED CALLING NUMBER	OVERALL	B-	22.0%	2.55
		Timeliness	C-	49.2%	1.56
		Competence	B-	21.6%	2.54
		Accountability	B-	18.9%	2.55
		311	B-	22.6%	2.51
		Kindness	B	10.7%	2.87
		Language Access	B+	9.1%	3.24
C+	REPAIRS	OVERALL	C+	31.1%	2.18
		Timeliness	C	39.7%	1.90
		Quality	C	32.8%	2.14
		Competence	C+	25.4%	2.27
		Accountability	C+	26.4%	2.41
D+	MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	OVERALL	D+	54.7%	1.40
		Rodents/Pest Control	D-	84.7%	0.70
		Entrance	D+	53.6%	1.43
		HUD Inspections	D+	58.6%	1.28
		Building Safety	D+	41.2%	1.31
		Police Protection	D+	57.7%	1.28
		Development Safety	D+	60.8%	1.18
		Elevator Maintenance	C-	52.0%	1.49
		Recycling	D	73.3%	0.92
		Number of Cleaning Staff	C-	44.8%	1.75
		Cleanliness	C-	50.8%	1.56
		Green Spaces	C-	47.4%	1.49
		Handicap Access	C+	31.3%	2.43

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

"I don't like the fact that I've been here for 3 years now and my heaters still don't work. My son and I keep getting sick. Meanwhile I have a disability, but still no heat." – Respondent #793

"They don't clean like they're supposed to and an hour later it's dirty again." – Respondent #777

V. CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

Several clear themes emerge when looking at how public housing residents across New York City graded NYCHA. Widespread disinvestment and mismanagement of the public housing stock is negatively impacting residents' quality of life. Repairs take too long to be completed and public spaces are crumbling. Policing practices criminalize public housing residents and create a hostile living environment while failing to provide safety and security. Building managers are allowed to operate unchecked and are not held responsible for the errors and disrespect that impact residents' daily lives. The report card clearly shows that there is a real crisis facing New York City public housing.

The report card and its results lift up the voices of public housing residents for inclusion in the larger debate on public housing policy reform. Findings and recommendations developed by residents offer a clear alternative to NYCHA's failing policies that are leading to the deterioration of the New York public housing stock. Residents need to lead the push for change and work with advocates and public housing officials to pull New York City public housing out of its ongoing crisis.



Courtesy of FUREE



Courtesy of Community Voices Heard

VI. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Report Card

PERSONAL – (CONFIDENTIAL)					
Number of Years Living in Public Housing (Circle)	0-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	16+
Are you registered to vote?	Yes			No	
Do you attend Tenant Association Meetings?	Yes			No	
Age: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
Identify As: <input type="checkbox"/> African American or Black <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/a or Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Native American <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
Primary Language: <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Other					
Number of Adults in Household: _____			Number of Children in Household: _____		

OPTIONAL (Confidential) -Would you like more information about this report?	
Name: _____	
Phone: _____	Email: _____
Address: _____	Apt: _____
City, State, Zip: _____	
Would you like to become a member of XXXXX? Yes No	

COMMENTS

Glossary of Terms

Management Staff refers to all workers in management office including office assistants, assistant managers, managers, etc.

Centralized Calling Center is the new number and system to which residents request repairs.

Repairs refer to all needed maintenance requests including issues related to plumbing, electrical systems, painting, appliance repairs, etc.

Building/Development refers to your primary residence.



It's YOUR Turn to Grade NYCHA!

REPORT CARD

This is a **CONFIDENTIAL, INDEPENDENT** survey coordinated by a coalition of organizations working for better conditions in NYCHA housing. We are completely independent of NYCHA and will not share your specific information or answers with anyone. **HELP US HOLD NYCHA ACCOUNTABLE TO RESIDENTS!!**

TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR
Development Name: _____
Development Address: _____
Survey Number: _____
Surveyor Name: _____
Date: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY (please initial when completed)
Survey Entered into Database: _____
Contact Info Entered into Database: _____
Counted in Survey Tracking: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Please answer ALL questions referring to the last 4 YEARS
2. Please refer to the following Performance Scale when grading.
PERFORMANCE SCALE:
A - Excellent B - Satisfactory C - Fair D - Poor F - Unsatisfactory/Fail
N/A - Not Applicable at this time
3. This report card is CONFIDENTIAL and for statistical purposes only.
4. It is very important that you answer honestly.

Excellent Average Poor

MANAGEMENT STAFF	A	B	C	D	F	N/A
Availability/Accessibility						
Responsiveness/Timeliness						
Kindness (<i>Are they willing to work with you?</i>)						
Accountability (<i>ie if they lost your paperwork</i>)						
OVERALL GRADE FOR MANAGEMENT						

CENTRALIZED CALLING CENTER (CCC) Phone Number: 718-707-7771	A	B	C	D	F	N/A
Competence (<i>Are they knowledgeable of repair issues?</i>)						
Language Access (<i>Can you reach someone who speaks your language?</i>)						
Timeliness of Appointments (<i>base your grade on how long it takes to get a repair</i>)						
Kindness/Courteousness						
Accountability (<i>ie did you receive ticket?</i>)						
311 for Emergencies (<i>How did they respond?</i>)						
OVERALL GRADE FOR THE CCC						

REPAIRS	A	B	C	D	F	N/A
Work Quality						
Competence (<i>Do they seem qualified to do work?</i>)						
Timeliness (<i>Did the repairman come when they were supposed to?</i>)						
Accountability (<i>Did they follow procedure/bring the correct forms, etc.?</i>)						
OVERALL GRADE FOR REPAIRS						

BUILDING/DEVELOPMENT	A	B	C	D	F	N/A
Cleanliness						
Number of Cleaning Staff						
Entrance (<i>Does the door/intercom work?</i>)						
Police Protection						
Building Safety						
Development Safety						
Elevator Maintenance (<i>Do they usually work?</i>)						
Handicap Access						
Recycling						
Green Spaces (<i>Grass/Parks</i>)						
Rodent/pests extermination						
HUD Inspections (<i>Are they useful?</i>)						
OVERALL GRADE FOR DEVELOPMENTS						

EVICITION	YES	NO	N/A
Have you ever faced termination of lease? (Circle)			
If so, why? (Circle One)			
Noise			
Rent			
Recent death			
Drugs			
Pet(s)			
Failing to submit annual paper work			
Other			

JOBS-SECTION 3	YES	NO	N/A
Have you/family member over 18 years of age recently lost a job?			
If so, has NYCHA informed you of jobs opportunities at the Housing Authority?			
Are you or any other adult household member skilled in construction and interested in a job at the Housing Authority?			

GENERAL QUESTIONS	YES	NO	N/A
Has management staff ever lost paperwork or forms you have submitted?			
Did you ever get a notice for a hearing at 250 Broadway or 111 Center St. before having a meeting with management staff?			
Have/do you feel safer with cameras at your development?			
Have you/adult household member/visitor been stopped for trespassing at your development?			
How often does your elevator break? (circle)			
Daily			
Weekly			
Monthly			
Yearly			

Appendix B: Developments Surveyed

Development	Borough	Zip code
45 Allen	Manhattan	10002
Albany	Brooklyn	11213
Amsterdam	Manhattan	10023
Atlantic Terminal	Brooklyn	11238
Baruch	Manhattan	10002
Baychester	Bronx	10466
Betances	Bronx	10454
Borinquen	Brooklyn	11206
Brevoort	Brooklyn	11233
Bronx River	Bronx	10472
Bronxdale/Sotomayor	Bronx	10472
Brownsville	Brooklyn	11212
Bushwick	Brooklyn	11206
Campos	Manhattan	10009
Claremont Consolidated	Bronx	10456
Clason Point Gardens	Bronx	10473
Clinton	Manhattan	10029
Douglass	Manhattan	10025
Farragut	Brooklyn	11201
First	Manhattan	10009
Forest	Bronx	10456
Glenmore Plaza	Brooklyn	11212
Gompers	Manhattan	10002
Gowanus	Brooklyn	11217
Grant	Manhattan	10027
Gravesend	Brooklyn	11224
Hernandez	Manhattan	10002
Howard	Brooklyn	11212
Ingersoll	Brooklyn	11205
Ira Robbins Plaza	Manhattan	10021
Jefferson	Manhattan	10029
Johnson	Manhattan	10029
Kingsborough	Brooklyn	11233
Lafayette	Brooklyn	11205
LaGuardia	Manhattan	10002
Langston Hughes	Brooklyn	11212
Lenox Road	Brooklyn	11212
LES II	Manhattan	10009
LES Infil	Manhattan	10002
LES Rehab	Manhattan	10009
Lincoln	Manhattan	10037

Louis Armstrong	Brooklyn	11216
Marcy	Brooklyn	11206
Martin Luther King	Manhattan	10026
Meltzer	Manhattan	10009
Millbrook	Bronx	10454
Mitchel	Bronx	10454
Morris	Bronx	10456
Mott Haven	Bronx	10454
Patterson	Bronx	10451
Queensbridge	Queens	11101
Red Hook	Brooklyn	11231
Riis	Manhattan	10009
Rutgers	Manhattan	10002
Seward Park	Manhattan	10002
Sheepshead Bay	Brooklyn	11235
Smith	Manhattan	10038
Soundview	Bronx	10473
Stanton	Manhattan	10002
Straus	Manhattan	10016
Sumner	Brooklyn	11206
Taft	Manhattan	10029
Tompkins	Brooklyn	11206
Two Bridges	Manhattan	10002
UPACA- 6	Manhattan	10035
Van Dyke	Brooklyn	11212
Vladeck	Manhattan	10002
Wald	Manhattan	10009
Whitman	Brooklyn	11205
Williamsburg	Brooklyn	11206
Wyckoff Gardens	Brooklyn	11217

Appendix C

List of Acronyms

CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities

CCC: Centralized Calling Center

CVH: Community Voices Heard

FUREE: Families United for Racial and Economic Equality

GOLES: Good Old Lower East Side

U.S. HUD: United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

MOM: Mothers on the Move

NYCHA: New York City Housing Authority

NYPD: New York Police Department

CDP: The Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center

VII. END NOTES

- ¹ NYCHA failed for Timeliness of the Centralized Calling Center, Rodents/Pest Control, Entrances, HUD Inspections, Building Safety, Police Protection, Development Safety, Elevator Maintenance, Recycling and the Overall Maintenance of Buildings and Developments.
- ² As with other overall grades, this is the calculated overall based on the grades in just this chart.
- ³ As with other overall grades, this is the calculated overall based on the grades in just this chart.
- ⁴ C. Fields. "Award-Winning Community Policing Strategies; A Report for the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Committee Policing Committee." *Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice*.
- ⁵ Key components of the New York State Transitional Jobs Program include a maximum of 28 hours per week of paid employment, at least 7 hours of paid education and/or training activities per week, a minimum hourly wage of \$8 per hour and a subsidy length of no more than 12 months.
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- ¹⁶ J. Murphy, "Last Stand: The Fight to Save NYC's Public Housing." *City Limits Investigates*. Winter 2009. Vol. 34, No. 04.
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- ¹⁸ B. Hennelly. "\$100M Cut From NYCHA And Housing Programs in DC Deal." *WYNC*. April 15th, 2011.
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- ²⁰ V. Villano, et al. "Democracy (In)Action: How HUD, NYCHA and Official Structures Undermine Resident Participation in New York City Public Housing." *Community Voices Heard*. 2010.
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- ²² Mothers on the Move, "Congratulations NYCHA Tenants on Winning a New Manager," accessed June 30th, 2011. <http://www.mothersonthemove.org/tom.html>
- ²³ Based on traditional grading practices. Generally, 0.0-0.4=F, 0.5-1.4=D, 1.5-2.4=C, 2.5-3.4=B, 3.5-4.0=A.
- ²⁴ Note: all "overall" grades are not the overall reported by report card respondents, because the response rate was significantly lower. This number simply represents the unweighted average of all answers in that category.
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- 38 V. Bach Testimony at New York City Housing Authority Board Meeting. October 13th, 2010. Testimony available online at: <http://www.cssny.org/userimages/downloads/Testimony%20Victor%20Bach%20-%20NYCHA%20Funding%20for%20NYPD%20Vehicles%2010.13.10.pdf>
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- ⁶⁵ Mothers on the Move, "Congratulations NYCHA Tenants on Winning a New Manager," accessed June 30th, 2011. <http://www.mothersonthemove.org/tom.html>
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Community Organizations:

CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities works to build grassroots community power across diverse poor and working-class Asian immigrant and refugee communities in NYC.

www.caaav.org



Community Voices Heard (CVH) organizes low-income people of color in New York City, Yonkers and the Mid-Hudson Valley. CVH focuses on welfare reform, workforce development, job creation, public and affordable housing, and community governance.

www.cvhaction.org



Families United for Racial and Economic Equality (FUREE) is a Brooklyn-based, member-led organization made up almost exclusively of women of color. FUREE organizes low-income families to build power and enact systemic change to promote racial, economic, and gender equality.

www.furee.org



Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES) is a neighborhood housing and preservation organization that has served the Lower East Side of Manhattan since 1977 and is dedicated to tenants' rights, homelessness prevention, economic development, and community revitalization.

www.goles.org



Mothers on the Move (MOM) is based in the South Bronx and organizes low-income people, working on issues of economic justice, education, and environmental justice. Youth on the Move (YOM) works on education and safety issues.

www.mothersonthemove.org



Research Partner:

Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center (CDP) strengthens the impact of grassroots organizations in New York City's low-income and other excluded communities. CDP partners with community organizations to win legal cases, publish community-driven research reports, assist with the formation of new organizations and cooperatives, and provide technical and transactional assistance in support of their work towards social justice.

<http://cdp-ny.org/>

