Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency (DMMHA) mission is to:

*Provide quality affordable housing opportunities within Des Moines and Polk County, and to facilitate, where possible, home ownership and self-sufficiency for its customers.*

This is accomplished through the evaluation of all programs, grants, policies and procedures to identify all available financial resources and modify, if necessary, all aspects of program and grant development and implementation.

The Agency has identified the following Goals:

I. Manage DMMHA’s Programs in an efficient and effective manner
II. Development of Affordable Housing
III. Increase Assisted Housing Choices
IV. Promote Self-Sufficiency
V. Serve the needs of Child and Adult Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

In order to meet the above established goals, the DMMHA is working with other community housing and service providers to develop new housing programs and enhance current services to our clients. We actively work with the Polk County Housing Continuum (PCHC); Homeless Coordinating Council (COCB); IMPACT Community Action Partnership, Refugee Alliance of Central Iowa and the City of Des Moines’ Community Development Department and the Economic Development Department and with local developers who will be submitting tax credit applications for the development of affordable housing

I. Manage DMMHA’s Program in an efficient and effective manner:

The Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency (DMMHA) is actively pursuing various options to both decrease expenses and increase revenues.

The Agency relocated its administrative office from 100 E. Euclid; Suite 101 to Polk County River Place at 2309 Euclid Ave. The relocation will improve access to our program participants to our services and to other service providers located at River Place. There will also be some cost savings to our program budgets.

New integrated software continues to be purchased and is being implemented which should result in greater efficiencies and cost savings. DMMHA is also pursuing moving to a paperless case management system and has been working with the City’s IT department and City legal department to implement.
Applications for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program and the Public Housing program are being taken through an on-line, web-based software program, which has decreased staff time and expenses associated with this.

The Section 8 Management Assessment program (SEMAP) and the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) have reflected some improvements. Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency was designated as a high performer for the last fiscal years for the Section 8 program. Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency received a standard performer rating for its PHAS score in FY17. Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency is monitoring activity on a quarterly basis and has incorporated the standards established by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development into employee performance evaluations.

In regards to operations, division management staff has worked to streamline and reduce procedural issues to increase the efficiency within their respective area of operations while updating the procedures to reflect the changes with the software upgrades. This includes the Agency transitioning from a Leasing/Occupancy Division structure to a Public Housing/Housing Voucher Division structure.

The field office staff from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development provided technical assistance to DMMHA staff to assist with continued improvements for increased efficiencies, SEMAP and PHAS scores.

II. Development of Affordable Housing:

Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency has finalized activity in the Public Housing 5h Homeownership program. Since its inception, the DMMHA has sold over 92 homes through this program. The remaining 5H occupied units were approved by HUD’s Special Applications Center (SAC) for rescission from the program and have been added to the DMMHA public housing program as rental units. Future consideration for submittal of a homeownership program under HUD Section 32 regulations will be evaluated.

Replacement Housing Factor (RHF) funding will be used to acquire additional Public Housing units to diversify the Agency’s inventory to meet the various housing needs within the community, to include handicapped accessible units.

III. Increase Assisted Housing Choices:

Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency is actively working to maintain our lease-up rates in the Section 8 program between 98% and 102% utilization; and Public Housing between 98% and 100%. At the end of fiscal year 2017, the Section 8 program was utilizing 103% of the funding, while leasing 87% of our vouchers.

To continue to increase both the utilization rate and lease up percentage, the DMMHA continues to focus on increasing the number of vouchers under lease by reviewing and implementing internal processes for increased efficiencies. The DMMHA increased
marketing to new property owners in an effort to provide additional housing options to voucher holders searching for a unit to rent.

The Public Housing program at the end of fiscal year 2016–2017 was at 98.5% occupancy, however, occupancy rates have shown an increase in occupancy beginning in August 2017. The Public Housing program continues to be focused on the leasing of vacant units. Internal procedures and processes will continue to be monitored, reviewed and revised to increase turn-around times. Hiring of a Public Housing Administrator has occurred who will be responsible for the coordination of activities.

The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program (VASH) program combines HUD housing vouchers for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Veterans Affairs (VA). The VA will provide ongoing case management, health and other supportive services to all participants. The VA will refer all eligible HUD-VASH families to DMMHA. DMMHA initially received 35 housing vouchers for this program. Since its inception, DMMHA has received an additional 130 HUD-VASH vouchers through 2015 bringing this program up to 165 HUD-VASH vouchers available for homeless veterans. The DMMHA holds bi-weekly meetings with the VA Lead Case Manager and quarterly meetings with the entire VA Case Management team and DMMHA staff involved with processing applicants for the VASH program in an effort to identify any barriers to lease up, processing issues and ways to increase efficiencies. The average lease up of the 165 VASH Vouchers is 83.90%.

In September 2010, the DMMHA received 100 Family Unification Program Vouchers (FUP). This effort, in cooperation with the Department of Human Services, provides rental assistance to family’s facing separation due to housing issues and also supports youth exiting the foster care system between the ages of 18 and 24 (have not reached their 25th birthday) years of age. The DMMHA holds quarterly/bi-annual meetings with the DHS and DMMHA staff involved with processing applicants for the FUP program in an effort to identify any processing issues and ways to increase efficiencies. The average lease up rate of the 100 FUP vouchers is 93.84%.

Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency has designated twenty-five (25) Housing Choice Vouchers for utilization in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program. Since 2012 seven-nine (79) participants purchased homes with a HCV Homeownership Voucher. Currently there are two households with HCV vouchers searching for a home, twenty-one–fifteen households taking homeownership education with partnering agency Evelyn Kay Davis CenterHome Inc. and four-six households working on meeting eligibility requirements in order to utilize the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program.

The DMMHA implemented a Project Based Voucher Program (PBV) in 2011. The 50 project based vouchers were awarded to two developers. The DMMHA holds quarterly meetings with the PBV and DMMHA staff involved with processing applicants for the PBV program in an effort to identify any processing issues and ways to increase efficiencies. The DMMHA will explore the expansion of the PBV Program number of project based vouchers by issuing a RFP for 50 additional PBV units. The average lease up rate of the 50 PBV Voucher is 92.96%.
On July 1, 2017, a HUD Multifamily Housing Program opted out of their Section 8 HUD Multifamily Housing Program contract and Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers were requested for the eligible residents residing at the multifamily property. The DMMHA received 117 additional Housing Choice Vouchers to continue to assist those residents under the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

The DMMHA worked closely with the local HUD field office, the owners of the property to assist families affected by the opt out in either remaining at the property under the housing Choice Voucher Program or relocating to different units throughout Polk County or other Counties/States through the portability process. As of July 1, 2017, fifty-nine (59) vouchers were used by residents residing in the property affected by the opt out. The additional fifty-eight (58) vouchers were used by residents affected by the opt out at other locations or issued to applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list.

For families with Limited English proficiency, the DMMHA held several briefing sessions using interpreters from a local translation company and the Language Line Interpretation Services. The DMMHA also made a presentation with assistance of the Des Moines Public Schools bilingual family liaisons to ensure the families fully understood their options.

IV. Promote Self-Sufficiency:

The Family Self-sufficiency program has three program coordinators funded from grants from HUD. While providing employment resources and service referrals, the FSS program coordinators have also worked closely with Homeownership staff to assist with obtaining credit reports for FSS participants and to provide educational opportunities and workshops. Over the past year, the FSS program has averaged 124150 participants each month and fifteen FSS participants graduated.

Additionally, in 2011, 2014, and 2017, the DMMHA received a Resident Opportunity Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) grant to fund Family Service Coordinator position to work exclusively with the Agency’s non-elderly Public Housing clients. The ROSS Service Coordinator has provided 6,094-923 services to 296140 residents since the FY 2017 grant began April 15, 2018 in year one and two of the FY2014 grant. A grant application for FY2017 has been submitted to HUD.

The RISE Center (Reaching It Successfully Every time) a computer lab was designed and opened in the Royal View Manor building for use by the Agency’s FSS participants and tenants of that building which is supported by volunteers.

V. Serve the needs of Child and Adult Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking:

In support of the Violence against Women Authorization Act the Des Moines Municipal Housing Agency has implemented the following activities:
1. Educational flyers have been sent to all Section 8 and Public Housing participants and to all Section 8 property owners notifying them of the requirements of the Act and their rights and responsibilities.

2. Information flyers have been included in the Section 8 briefing packets and the Public Housing Leasing packets notifying new participants of the requirements of the Act and their rights and responsibilities.

3. Victims of Domestic violence may qualify for a waiting list preference for the Public Housing Program.

4. Both the Section 8 and Public Housing Programs have developed Family break-up policies that give special consideration to victims of domestic violence.

5. Staff received training from the local community service provider to enhance awareness and increase knowledge of local resources for individuals covered under the Act.