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Federal Works Agency - John M. Carmody, Administrator

Vol. 2, No. 3 - July 16, 1940

U. S. Housing Authority - Nathan Straus, Administrator

Elyton Village Project Opens In Birmingham

Elyton Village, USHA-aided project scheduled to open this month in Birmingham, Ala., will provide new, comfortable homes for 860 families whose incomes are too low to purchase decent housing without assistance.

Elyton Village (for white tenants) is the second public housing project to open in Birmingham. The first, Smithfield Court, 540-unit Negro project, was built by the PWA Housing Division and is now operated under lease agreement with the USHA.

Plans of the Housing Authority of the

*Housing Exhibits
At The
New York World's Fair
Are Featured
On Pages 2 and 3
Of This Issue*

Birmingham District call for the construction of two additional projects: Central City, to house 906 white families, and Southtown, to house 480 Negro families.

Birmingham, the largest city in Alabama, has grown from "a cotton field crossed by two railways" in 1870, to a thriving industrial center of about 300,000 population. The city has extensive slum areas housing a large percentage of the population. According to the 1939 report of the Birmingham authority, 25 percent of the city's population live in slums. White families living in substandard housing in Birmingham have an average annual income of \$925, and they pay an average shelter rental of \$13 a month.

At Elyton Village, family incomes will average about \$746, and average shelter rents, \$11.24 per month, for dwellings ranging in size from 2 to 6 rooms. Overcrowding will be impossible, since only one family will be permitted in a dwelling and the size of dwelling will relate directly to size of family.

Businessmen in Birmingham are favorably impressed by the use in the construction of the project of locally produced materials. More than 1,500,000 board-feet of Birmingham lumber, selling for \$45,000, is being used in the village, the Birmingham *News-Age-Herald* reports. Other items are: 5,600,000 bricks at \$73,000; 2,000 tons of Birmingham steel at \$80,000; 2,500 yards of concrete at \$150,000; 930,000 pieces of tile at \$93,000; and 40,000 square tile shingles at \$52,000.

Defense Housing Projects Sought By Communities All Over Country

From Portland, Maine, to San Diego, Calif., and from Butte, Mont., to New Orleans, La., by wire, telephone, and postal service, more than 150 requests for assistance in the construction of defense housing projects have been received by the United States Housing Authority in the past 2 weeks. All indicate immediate need for defense housing facilities.

Projects requested vary in size from a few units to 3,000 units for a project in the State of Washington. Outside the United States, requests have come from Hawaii and the Virgin Islands.

Generally, the proposed projects may be separated into three divisions: Industrial, Army, and Navy.

Typical of the requests is the following from a housing authority in the South: "We have for a long time and do now suffer from a lack of housing facilities to take care both of our resident population and the influx of enlisted men with families. We therefore request that you give this authority an earmarking of \$1,500,000 to be expended under the defense housing program. Inasmuch as

there is great need here at this time due to the fact that additional military units have just recently been stationed here, we shall appreciate it if you will give this request your early consideration."

A New England housing authority wires: "Immediate need of housing. National defense causing substantial local increase employment. Housing shortage acute and urge earmarking of \$1,000,000. City cooperation assures expedition on application. Approximately 240 dwelling units advisable first project in long-range program."

In addition to the two defense housing projects in Montgomery, Ala., and Pensacola, Fla., for which loan contracts already have been signed, other or additional earmarkings totaling \$13,500,000 have been made for projects in eight cities, and several additional applications on defense housing are now being studied by USHA. USHA funds, however, are now practically exhausted, and further loans await allocation of additional money for carrying on this part of the USHA program.



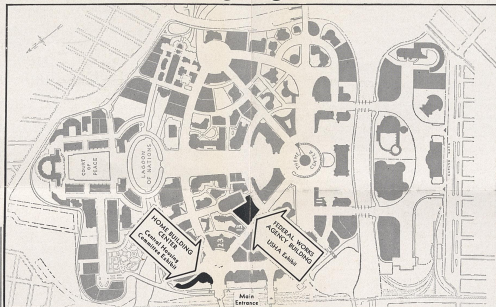
Elyton Village (860 units) is the first of Birmingham's three USHA-aided projects to open. It follows Smithfield Court (built by PWA Housing Division) as the second project for the city.

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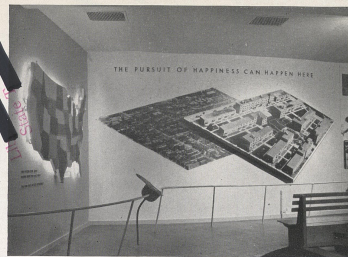
Housing Exhibit at World's Fair



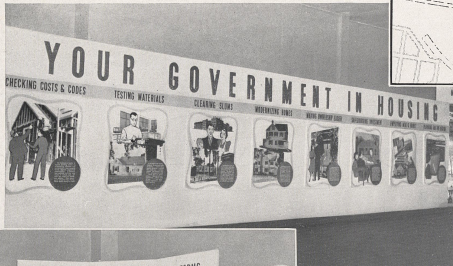
Exterior of Home Building Center (above), where Central Housing Committee Exhibit, "Your Government in Housing," is located.



Map of New York World's Fair (Showing location of housing exhibits illustrated on these pages)



Animated map (above) shows progress of public housing program by States. Aerial views of housing project and slum site on rear wall.



Top. Various functions of the Federal Government in housing are explained by Central Housing Committee's panel display.



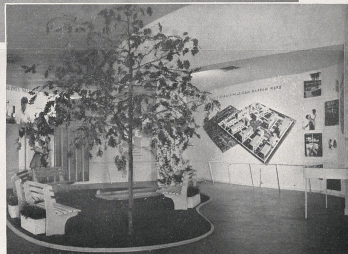
Left. Information booth, Central Housing Committee, Home Building Center. Literature of all Federal housing agencies is available here.



Above. The Dance of the Dams Fountain at Bowling Green in the World's Fair of 1940, in New York, with Home Building Center in background.



Top. Panel boys at USHA Exhibit. Qualities of good housing are dramatized effectively.



Right. A housing project "sitting-out area" is suggested by this section of the USHA Exhibit.

Dedication Ceremony Crowds Of Applicants In Memphis At Huntington, W. Va. Besiege Tenant Selection Office

Dedication ceremonies for three housing projects in Huntington, W. Va., were held at the Administration Building of the Northcott Court project on the afternoon of July 9.

The ceremonies were featured by a presentation of National Colors and raising of the flag by the American Legion Color Guard, under the direction of Post Commander Marion Thackston.

John G. Hudson, Chairman of the Huntington, W. Va., Housing Authority, had charge of the ceremonies. Langdon Post, of USHA, the chief speaker, declared that "The thought uppermost in our minds today is the national defense program . . . but the principal defense is the building of an America worth defending." Mr. Post's address was broadcast from station WSAZ over a State-wide hook-up.

Other guests of honor were Mayor Seamonds, Colonel Long (whom Mr. Hudson introduced as "Mr. Huntington"), Ernest L. Bailey, State Coordinator for Federal Projects, and W. S. Rosenheim, Managing Director of the Chamber of Commerce.

The program opened with the playing of The Star-Spangled Banner, followed by an invocation by the Rev. James W. Meeks. Mr. Hudson gave a brief history of the HHA, and introduced the members, A. H. Frankel, Charles W. Hutchinson, Harry Wright, R. E. Morgan, and former member George G. Varnum.

Approximately 500 persons, prospective tenants and other interested townsmen, participated in the ceremonies.

The Huntington Housing Authority has three projects under construction. Two of these, Northcott Court and Marcum Terrace, were scheduled to open this month. Washington Square will probably open about a month later.

Marcum Terrace is a community of homes for 284 families, who will pay monthly rentals (including the cost of water, gas, electricity, and heat) of from \$19.50 to \$20.75. Maximum family incomes will range from \$912 per year for a two-person family to \$1,137 for a family of six or more persons.

At Northcott Court, rentals of the 136 dwellings will be slightly lower, ranging from \$15.75 to \$17 a month. Maximum incomes will range from \$746 to \$927 a year.

Rents and incomes at Washington Square will be identical with Northcott Court.

Unprecedented interest in low-cost public housing was displayed in Memphis, Tenn., as applications began to be received for the William H. Foote Homes, 900-apartment project for Negro families.

More than 200 prospective tenants were anxiously waiting when the Tenant Selection Office opened at 9 o'clock on July 1. On the first day 252 applications were taken, and more than 200 were received on the second and third days. The response indicates that more than 5,000 applications will be on file when the first group of 352 apartments are ready for occupancy about September 1.

"An examination of the applications reveals that only about one out of four will be eligible on the basis of income alone," J. A. Fowler, Executive Director of the Memphis Housing Authority, explained. "A certain percentage will naturally be eliminated when other admission requirements are checked, but we are confident that there will be a great many more eligible families than apartments when occupancy is completed," Mr. Fowler added.

Two important factors contributed to the enthusiastic out-pouring of prospective tenants at William H. Foote Homes:

1. A long-range program has "sold" public housing to the people of Memphis. All opposition has been met with a frank, above-board discussion of the expectations and practices of the Memphis Housing Authority in the field of public housing.

Consequently, people in the income brackets far and above the public housing range are definitely in favor of the program and know that it is contributing "More Than Housing" to a great many families that would, under other conditions, be unable to afford decent, safe, and sanitary homes.

2. A concentrated program of public education timed to obtain the greatest benefit and to stimulate a generous out-pouring of prospective tenants. The program was divided into several phases: Newspaper publicity, individual and group contacts, distribution of explanatory material on public housing, and displays of motion pictures.

Timing of this program was so effective that practically every eligible family knew a great deal about William H. Foote Homes long before the opening of the Tenant Selection Office on July 1.

Workers Urge Defense Housing For 5 Cities

Housing Committees of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America in a recent statement urge the immediate construction under the defense housing program of 7,500 homes for shipyard workers in five cities: Camden and Kearny, N. J.; Quincy, Mass.; Chester, Pa.; and Bath, Maine.

In the five cities are located, respectively, the New York Shipbuilding Corp., employing now approximately 8,000 men; the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Corp., with 7,000; the Fore River Shipyard of Bethlehem Steel, with 8,000; the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Corp., with 7,000; and the Bath Iron Works, with 2,600.

"In Camden, N. J.," the report states, "the housing situation is almost desperate. Scarcely a dozen houses are for rent in the city. It can safely be said that if a dozen

families were to rent homes in the city of Camden today, tomorrow there would not be one home available within the city limits. And within the next 5 months, the New York Shipyard is required to employ some 4,000 additional employees.

"The few new homes that are being built in the community and in the suburbs are for the upper middle income group and out of the reach of shipyard workers."

According to the report, the new homes should be distributed as follows: Camden, N. J., 2,000; Kearny, N. J., 2,000; Quincy, Mass., 2,000; Chester, Pa., 1,000; Bath, Maine, 500.

Schedule of Bid Opening Dates¹

Local authority and project number	Number of units	Date of bid opening
Athens (Ga.-3-1-A).....	100	8- 1-40
Beverly (N. J.-18-1)....	71	7-25-40
Detroit (Mich.-1-4).....	2, 150	7-30-40
Hammond (Ind.-10-1-R).....	400	8-12-40
Harrisburg (Pa.-8-1, Addition).....	24	7-19-40
Montgomery (Ala.-6-4, Defense).....	424	7-26-40
New York City (N. Y.-5-6).....	1, 166	7-31-40
Pawtucket (R. I.-2-1)...	226	7-25-40
Pensacola (Fla.-6-3)....	200	7-25-40
Phoenix (Ariz.-1-2)....	150	8- 1-40
Ponce (P. R.-1-3).....	116	7-23-40
San Antonio (Tex.-6-3)...	796	8-22-40
Waco (Tex.-10-1).....	103	8- 7-40
Washington (D. C.-1-4)...	310	8- 6-40
Wheeling (W. Va.-3-2)...	302	7-24-40

¹ There is usually a 30-day period between bid advertising and bid opening.

Weekly Construction Report

Item	Week ended July 5, 1940	Week ended June 28, 1940	Week ended July 7, 1939
Number of projects under construction ¹	225	222	55
Number of dwellings under construction ¹	84,927	84,494	24,600
Total estimated over-all cost ² of new housing.....	\$375,013,000	\$373,280,000	\$116,313,000
Average over-all cost ² of new housing per unit.....	\$4,416	\$4,418	\$4,728
Average net construction cost ³ per unit.....	\$2,762	\$2,764	\$2,941

¹ Includes projects which have been completed.

² Includes: (a) Building the house, including structural costs and plumbing, heating, and electrical installation; (b) dwelling equipment, architects' fees, local administrative expenses, financial charges during construction, and contingency expenses; (c) land for present development; (d) nondwelling facilities.

³ The cost of building the house, including structural, plumbing, heating, and electrical costs.

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