

BEFORE



New Orleans, La.
View of St. Andrew Street slums before demolition.



Louisville, Ky.
In 1939, Walnut Street section looked like this.



Fort Worth, Tex.
Taken from the same spot as the view opposite in 1939.



Boston, Mass.
Nearly a thousand slum dwellings were demolished on this site to make way for the Charlestown project.

AFTER



New Orleans, La.
St. Andrew Street today, showing St. Thomas Homes.



Louisville, Ky.
Today, Clarkdale Homes has completely transformed the neighborhood.



Fort Worth, Tex.
Ripley Arnold Place replaced all of the insanitary, crowded slums shown opposite.



Boston, Mass.
Charlestown project provides healthful homes and safe play areas.



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WHAT AND WHY IS THE USHA?



Three-quarters of a million people, or 193,000 families, will be rehoused in homes like these under the USHA slum-clearance program, which is providing new homes and eliminating slum conditions in 444 localities in 39 States and Territories.

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Q. What is public housing?

A. Public housing is housing planned, owned, built, and managed by a public agency, usually a local housing authority. There are today more than 600 local housing authorities, composed of citizens appointed by the mayor or similar official and serving without pay. The United States Government through the USHA lends part of the capital funds, supervises construction, and provides annual grants to keep rents low.

Q. Why is there a need for public housing?

A. Because private enterprise does not clear slums or provide homes within the means of people who live in the slums. One-half of the families in this country have incomes of less than \$1,400 a year and, except for a few shacks put up in communities without adequate building codes, practically no new homes that they can afford are being built by private enterprise.

Q. Who lives in public housing?

A. The families are carefully selected by the local authority. Only families living in slums or insanitary houses and unable to afford the rent charged for decent housing are eligible as tenants. The average income of families living in public housing projects erected under the USHA program is about \$2.25 a day.

Q. How is the USHA helping in national defense?

A. In addition to its slum-clearance program, the USHA, in collaboration with local authorities, is providing homes for the families of workers, whose labors in shipyard, mill, and factory are producing the sinews of national defense. Since the incomes of two out of three defense workers are too low for them to be able to pay the rents which must be charged for new housing built by private enterprise, public housing for defense workers is an essential part of the National Defense program. At present, the USHA is assisting more than 110 defense housing projects in 28 States which will provide homes for about 31,000 defense workers and their families.

Q. Does the USHA clear slums?

A. Yes. The United States Housing Act requires that for every new dwelling provided under the slum-clearance program, one substandard dwelling must be eliminated. This provision guarantees that, whether local authorities build their projects directly in the slums or on vacant land, slums are cleared.

Q. Why are the new homes grouped together as housing projects rather than scattered and separated?

A. Because public housing projects reclaim and reestablish entire neighborhoods, as individual scattered houses cannot. Because neighborhood facilities such as playgrounds and community rooms can best be provided when the houses are built in groups. Because electricity, gas, and water cost less when bought and delivered at one place in wholesale quantities.

Q. What do the homes cost?

A. Homes built under the USHA program show an average net construction cost of \$2,720. This figure does not include equipment, land, or overhead charges. All of the construction is done by labor paid prevailing wages and the type of construction is such that the buildings will have a life of at least 60 years.

Q. How much rent is charged?

A. Rents average \$14.73 per month in the North and \$10.48 per month in the South. The average for the country is \$12.79. These are bare shelter rents. There is an added charge for heat, light, cooking fuel, and other utilities.

Q. How much income have families living in homes built under the USHA slum-clearance program?

A. The average annual income of tenants is \$929 in the North, \$700 in the South, and \$824 for the entire country.

Q. Does private business have a part in public housing?

A. Public housing is carried out almost entirely through the channels of private business. Land is purchased from owners at

fair market prices. Private architects and engineers are employed. The buildings are erected by private contractors employing labor paid prevailing wages. Experience shows that public housing also benefits private business by increasing neighborhood property values and encouraging private building.

Q. What about rural housing?

A. The USHA recognizes that, contrary to popular belief, housing conditions in rural areas are generally worse than in the cities. One-half of all farm families have incomes of less than \$1,000 a year. By close cooperation between the Department of Agriculture and the USHA, the public housing program is being extended to provide decent homes for farm families and agricultural workers.

Q. How much does the USHA program cost?

A. The USHA program costs the Federal Government the amount of the annual contributions made to reduce rents. This net cost today is about \$75 a year for each family, or a total of about \$15,000,000 a year for the 193,000 families who will be rehoused under the present USHA program. The cost to the locality is the amount which it contributes by exempting the projects from local taxation.

Q. What is the difference between the FHA and the USHA?

A. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guarantees mortgages to provide funds for private home construction. It does not clear slums. The USHA makes loans and grants to local housing authorities solely for the purpose of clearing slums and providing new homes within the means of families from the slums.

Q. What must a community do to start a program of slum clearance?

A. A local housing authority must be appointed in accordance with State law. This local authority, aided by interested citizens, then makes a preliminary survey of local housing conditions and formulates a general slum-clearance plan. The USHA will provide technical assistance and advice.