
**OURAY COUNTY MULTIJURISDICTIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY:
2010 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2011 ACTION PLAN**

TO: OURAY COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, TOWN OF RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL, CITY OF OURAY CITY COUNCIL

FROM: OURAY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD (OCHA)

SUBJECT: 2010 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2011 PLAN HOUSING PLAN

DATE: JANUARY 25, 2011

CC: CONNIE HUNT, MARK CASTRODALE, PATRICK RONDINELLI

INTRODUCTION

The Ouray County Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Authority was formed on October 22, 2007 through an Intergovernmental Agreement between Ouray County, the City of Ouray, and the Town of Ridgway. The Authority commenced operations in late 2007, spearheading the 2008 county-wide Housing Needs Assessment completed by Economic and Planning Systems of Denver, and in 2009 the Regional Housing Action Plan completed by Rees Consulting of Crested Butte. Both studies were funded through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and administered by the Town of Ridgway and Ouray County, respectively.

Upon completion of the 2009 Housing Action Plan, the country had entered into a global economic recession. With fiscal concerns looming, the Housing Authority's Action Plan was not funded by any of the jurisdictions, and the 5-member volunteer Board ("Housing Board") proposed a revised, realistic action plan for 2010 that could be realized without paid administrative staff. Similarly, the 2009 Housing Action Plan has not been funded for 2011, and the OCHA Board is again proposing a revised action plan for this coming year.

With no budget to report, the Housing Authority Board would like to extend a summary of actions and activities completed and explored in 2010, and propose a course of action for 2011 that comports similarly to the objectives defined in the 2009 Action Plan, but that is realistic for an unfunded and un-staffed multi-jurisdictional, government entity.

With dramatic changes in the housing market over the last few years, the Housing Board is restructuring and reconsidering what the goals of affordable housing are for Ouray County. During the heavy construction and growth years of 2004 – 2007, it appeared to be generally agreed county-wide that affordable, workforce housing is necessary, and participation in the market would be required to facilitate the presence of this housing. Now, at the close of 2010, the housing market is quite different, with a number of foreclosed properties countywide, and a number of affordable rentals available to households needing affordable housing.

2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1.) *Homebuyer Education*

In 2010, the Housing Board continued to offer homebuyer education and outreach in partnership with the San Miguel County Regional Housing Authority (SMRHA). While 2 courses were offered, there was sufficient enrollment for only one series of the homebuyer education. The courses were instructed by Shirley Diaz, the Executive Director of the San Miguel Regional Housing Authority, and certified homebuyer education instructor. The Town of Ridgway and City of Ouray committed \$300 each toward the homebuyer education courses, and expended \$300 total with the cancellation of the second fall course.

2.) *Accessory Dwelling Units*

In addition, the Housing Board reviewed the accessory dwelling unit provisions for both the Town of Ridgway and Ouray County. The 2009 Action Plan calls for revisiting the local regulations in order to explore opportunities for encouraging the construction of these affordable workforce structures. The construction and marketing of accessory dwelling structures promotes affordable renter living, without the need for extensive subsidy, outside of potential fee and/or rate reduction incentives by local government. The Town of Ridgway implemented updates to their accessory dwelling unit ordinance in 2010 in response to these recommendations.

3.) *Regional Housing Assessment*

With the support of each of the jurisdictions, the Housing Board agreed to collaborate with the San Miguel Regional Housing Authority on a regional Housing Assessment, funded again through the Department of Local Affairs, and spearheaded by the San Miguel County Regional Housing Authority. This study was initiated at no cost to any jurisdictions within Ouray County. In late 2010, Rees Consulting and RRC Associates were selected as the contractor for the study, and efforts commenced in late 2010, with a target completion date of mid-2011.

4.) *Regional Participation and Education*

The Housing Board was represented throughout the region in 2010 through attendance at regional Housing Board meetings, and including a symposium in Mountain Village that included outreach efforts at the state and local level for housing legislation improvements that would benefit and facilitate affordable housing on the western slope. Housing Authorities from Grand Junction to Durango and Montezuma County were present.

2011 OBJECTIVES

1.) *Regional Housing Assessment*

The Housing Board will support and facilitate efforts in the development and completion of the regional housing assessment that is being coordinated by the San Miguel Regional Housing Authority and considers both Ouray and San Miguel Counties. The Housing Board will participate in the presentation of the data and findings to the governments and communities in Ouray County.

2.) *Homebuyer Education*

The Housing Board will continue to support and encourage homebuyer education and outreach classes in Ouray County with the assistance of the San Miguel Regional Housing Authority. The Housing Board will request financial support for these courses from each jurisdiction in Ouray County as part of the Multi-jurisdictional Housing Authority, and also work with the SMRHA to initiate and complete a regional housing assessment for both Ouray and San Miguel Counties.

3.) *Home Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)*

In 2011, the OCHA Board will continue to promote and support the federal Weatherization Assistance Program, which is administered by the State of Colorado Governor's Energy Office through our regional provider, Housing Resources of Western Colorado in Grand Junction, and the Mexican American Development Association in Montrose. In 2010, the GEO hired a regional coordinator for the Western Region of the state to provide resource information to eligible households in Western Colorado. This coordinator is working collaboratively with the Regional Energy Coordinators, and the Housing Board will work to encourage and maximize these efforts for Ouray County. In 2009, the Housing Board facilitated some weatherization activity county-wide with the enthusiastic efforts of Housing Resources and the Southwest Conservation Corps of Durango. To the extent efforts of this sort are feasible pursuant to some restructuring of the GEO's WAP, the Housing Board will work to return these efforts to the County.

4.) *Home Rehabilitation Program*

The Housing Board will again pursue options with the Home Rehabilitation Program offered for Ouray County by the Delta Housing Authority. Revolving loan funds are available to County residents through the Delta Housing Authority via the existing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) awarded by the Division of Housing. These funds were formerly administered through the Western Colorado Housing Development Organization. The Housing Board understands the jurisdictions may enter into an agreement or understanding for low-interest loan and home rehabilitation services available to Ouray County residents. An agreement with Ouray County should cover the municipalities for services as well. With the escalating utility and living costs in recent years, rehabilitation efforts may help relieve some of the financial burden experienced by owners of inefficient and aging homes.

2009 data from the County Assessor suggests 61% (1885) of the residential units in Ouray County are in the unincorporated area of the County. Of the 1885 residences in the unincorporated area, nearly half or 46% (863) were constructed before 1990 and before the 1995 Model Energy Code. The 2008 Housing Needs Assessment completed by Economic and Planning Systems reports a total of 466 owner households, or 25% of all households in Ouray County, earning equal to or less than 80% AMI, which is the income threshold for the CDBG home rehabilitation services offered by the Delta Housing Authority.

5.) *Accessory Dwelling Units*

The OCHA recommends addressing land use updates for Ouray County and the City of Ouray in 2011 to encourage the construction of ADUs as workforce housing. The Board made significant progress in reviewing the County regulations in 2010 and will wrap this up in 2011. When the BOCC embarks on Inclusionary Zoning policy development, ADUs may also be considered at that time as one means of meeting housing development requirements.

6.) *Regional Housing Issues Participation and Education*

The Housing Board will continue to participate in regional meetings and statewide legislation impacting affordable housing. In addition, the Housing Board will develop a centralized resource for Ouray County residents, and work with the Ouray County Social Services personnel on housing related issues.

7.) *Update and Expand Online Services*

Expand online information for the Housing Authority for all three jurisdictions, including resource information, contact information including phone numbers and web links, Board membership, education classes, etc.

8.) *Work with Regional Housing and Non-Profit Organizations*

Reach out and collaborate with other housing organizations to coordinate special events, expand services to Ouray County, and create awareness county-wide. This will include working with the regional Habitat for Humanity office, and exploring options to create a greater presence for Habitat in Ouray County for home construction and other services.

9.) *Develop Deed Restrictions and Guidelines*

Work with the San Miguel Regional Housing Authority to develop comprehensive deed restrictions and guidelines for housing units in Ouray County, Ouray, and Ridgway in order to streamline interpretation, compliance, and enforcement county-wide.