
FINAL EVALUATION

**The Municipal Housing Authority
of the
City of Utica, New York
HOPE VI Grant Number NY06URD006 1102
Washington Courts Development
2003-2008**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOPE VI in Utica began with a successful grant proposal in 2003 with an award of \$11.5 million dollars to the Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA). Four evaluation studies were completed for each year of the project and are available at www.hamilton.edu/cache. The HOPE VI Project became a learning experience and a work in progress for the college, UMHA staff, and community members. The impact on the community was positive and will reap benefits in years to come with newly constructed homes, renovated and rehabilitated properties, and new homeowners supported by the grant funds.

There were unintended consequences, too, as there often are with policy interventions. Expectations on the part of Washington Court residents for a better life were not met for some. Hopes in the neighborhood of Cornhill for increases in employment and other opportunities for life enhancement became disappointments. Did the grant promise too much? Did the staff not deliver? Did the residents expect too much? The final assessment becomes a matter of perspective a matter of understanding the initial premise, barriers that were encountered, and the communication challenges among the many stakeholder groups in the project.

This final evaluation study summarizes the results of HOPE VI, focusing on the fifth year of the project as well as its economic impact on the City of Utica. The program evaluation supported program goals and activities by providing feedback and recommendations to project staff. In addition, tracking of performance measures ensured that the UMHA met commitments made in the grant proposal and achieved goals as stated.

The fifth year of evaluation returned to the original residents of Washington Courts to document the history of individual residents and the history of the neighborhood surrounding the housing complex. Interviews of residents, staff and key informants formed the foundation for a documentary and website that actively tell the story of Washington Courts as a changing neighborhood from the time of its inception in 1945 in a multiethnic but largely Jewish neighborhood to its demise and relocation of the residents in 2003-04 (www.hamilton.edu/cache).

INTRODUCTION

In 2003, the Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA) received 11.5 million dollars in funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD) to demolish Washington Courts housing complex, one of the earliest public housing developments in Utica, New York. With the grant funding, the UMHA was given a charge to build scattered-site housing in Cornhill, an inner-city neighborhood, as a part of revitalizing the neighborhood. Other aspects of the revitalization plan included increased community services for both the displaced residents and residents of the revitalized community to increase employment, decrease segregation, and to create more mixed-income neighborhoods. The Hope VI program is a competitive grant program, federally administered through local public housing authorities (PHA.) Most cities receiving HOPE VI funds were much larger cities, and Utica, with a population of about 62,000, was the smallest city funded.

The partnership between Hamilton College and the UMHA was established at the beginning of the project in 2003. The Authority offered a signed contract for five years of work for \$25,000 in total. It was agreed at the outset that this would be fulfilled primarily through student work; students in the Govt. 342 Seminar in Program Evaluation worked on a discrete project in the spring semester each year, and a 10-week summer internship was offered each year (\$3500). Additional funds of \$1500 per year paid for additional student help throughout the year or special projects added in the summer months. For instance, in Year 3, a student who was a double major in Public Policy and Art created a photo essay of residents and key institutions around Washington Courts that has become a professionally framed and permanent exhibit in the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College. The Associate Director for Community Research in the Levitt Center generated the five year plan, provided partnership with the UMHA and oversight to the project and edited the student reports. This report summarizes the results of the first four years and presents the results of the last year of the program evaluation.

There is substantial background now from well-funded national research studies to suggest that HOPE VI, overall, has met with some success and some failures, depending on both the targeted goals and particular communities in which it was implemented. Utica, the smallest project nationally, had particular circumstances that made the project difficult to implement successfully. This final report documents highlights of the project

that were achieved and which represent substantial success. It also includes aspects of the project that were not met as targeted and which represented significant disappointment and regret for residents of Washington Courts and residents of Cornhill. What was expected or hoped for compared to what was received was often a large gap. Even for the officials of the City of Utica and the Utica Municipal Housing Project, the city as a whole and for the region, opportunities lost in the HOPE VI Project are regrets that are widely shared, just as the accomplishments and improvements are celebrated and appreciated.

The following report provides background that has been included in previous reports as a context again for this one. Results from several aspects of this final year are detailed, after a capsule summary of the first four years. In this final year, first results are presented from archival searches that provide an early history of the neighborhood that Washington Courts was built within; themes and findings from the first-hand interviews with residents and key informants; and final quantitative data of neighborhood indicators of impact for a view of the overall impact of the project.

BACKGROUND: SUCCESS OF HOPE VI PROGRAMS

Created by Congress in 1992, the HOPE VI program targets the nation's problems in severely distressed public housing communities, while also addressing the social and economic needs of the residents and the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods. HOPE VI is a competitive grant program, under which public housing authorities (PHAs), local entities that administer federal housing programs, apply to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding to redevelop or demolish distressed public housing sites—seeking to transform them by improving the physical quality of public housing units and expanding the opportunities for residents. HOPE VI was a response to an investigation made by The National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing, which concluded that 86,000 of the 1.3 million public housing units across the nation are severely distressed. Over the course of 10 years, 446 HOPE VI grants were awarded to 166 cities, 63,000 distressed units have been demolished and 20,300 units have been redeveloped (Popkin et al., 2004). Although the program has progressed in the past decade, HOPE VI has faced many challenges with its implementation in various cities.

One of the goals of the HOPE VI program is to de-concentrate very low-income households and to contribute to the improvement of the original public housing neighborhood. Buron and colleagues (2002) find that HOPE VI

families who are in private housing, which includes voucher users, unsubsidized renters, or homeowners, are not clustered in a few communities, but are dispersed across a range of neighborhoods. At the same time, the majority of original residents now live in areas with substantially lower poverty rates in contrast to the neighborhoods where they used to live. Approximately 40 percent of families who have not returned to the original HOPE VI site after redevelopment now live in census tracts with poverty rates of less than 20 percent—low-poverty areas. The movement to low-poverty areas from the original public housing development is a net improvement. Yet, another 40 percent of the original residents still live in high-poverty neighborhoods, where over 30 percent of the residents are poor (Buron et al. 2002).

Buron and colleagues point to neighborhood “social cohesion” and “social control” as effective measures of “collective efficacy,” an indicator of neighborhood vitality, which has a correlation with lower crime rates and better health outcomes for residents. Original residents from eight public housing developments, which were awarded HOPE VI grants between 1993 and 1998, exhibited variations in their perceptions of social cohesion and social control along subsidy types. Respondents who relocated to unsubsidized households reported higher levels of neighborhood social cohesion and social control. This group also reported fewer incidences of crime and disorder in their neighborhood, indicating a correlation between better neighborhoods where home ownership and collective efficacy are more prevalent. Therefore, one would expect low levels of collective efficacy for residents in relatively high poverty neighborhoods with reports of problems with crime. This is the case with San Francisco’s Hayes Valley and Edwin Corning, which report the lowest levels of social cohesion and social control. However, while residents in Newark’s Archbishop Walsh reported very high levels of problems with drug trafficking and violent crime, they also reported high levels of social cohesion and social control. There appears to be a correlation between the presence of older residents who have lived in a community for many years, with strong social relationships, and the degree of community involvement. When residents are actively involved, communities stand a better chance at becoming self-sufficient and sustainable (Naparstek et al., 2000).

In some communities, the isolation residents felt was a price they were willing to pay for the improved housing conditions and safer neighborhood. In others few relocatees, whether they chose another public housing site or Section 8 units, made new friends in their new neighborhoods, suggesting that many families relocating to other public housing developments lost their

support networks. There are many barriers to building new social networks, such as personality, children's age, duration of residency in new neighborhood, and patterns of daily routines (Buron et al., 2002).

According to the National Housing Law Project (2002), "While it was intended to be a solution to severely distressed public housing, HOPE VI has been the source of new problems as serious as those it was created to address" (p. i). The National Housing Law Project's report, entitled *False HOPE*, finds that HOPE VI is ineffective at improving the lives of the majority of public housing families it affects; few displaced residents return to HOPE VI sites post-redevelopment. In fact, HOPE VI redevelopment results in a net loss of public housing units. The NHLP estimates that the 2002 round of grants will replace a mere 4,869 of the 7,961 units affected, yielding a net loss of 3,092 public housing units (-38.8 percent). Public housing families will be "priced out" of housing at HOPE VI sites because they can only afford public housing units. At the same time, vague, unreasonable screening policies further exacerbate the difficulties for families seeking to return to HOPE VI sites. The criteria for applicants to HOPE VI sites are more stringent than conventional public housing occupancy policies, and many prospective returnees, who have complied prior to redevelopment, will be denied.

The National Housing Law Project contends that HUD's promise of Section 8 vouchers, as the main means for the relocation of displaced families, is misleading. Relocation data from 1993 to 1998 indicate that only 30.8 percent of families were relocated with vouchers; the majority of families (49 percent) ended up at other public housing sites. However, as mentioned by Clampet-Lundquist (2004), not every relocatee wants to use the voucher subsidy, because some are skeptical of the longevity of the Section 8 program, and some are unwilling to take on the extra cost of utilities. The NHLP also alleges that in the process of displacement and relocation, public housing authorities administering HOPE VI have "lost" many original residents in which some 20.2 percent of displaced families lost federal housing assistance through "harassment, neglect, and exclusionary screening policies." According to the report, "HUD does not have an adequate picture of HOPE VI relocation outcomes" (p. 27).

Another common trend that the HOPE VI Project has tried to attain over the past few years has been to rebuild the public housing projects in these poor urban areas in a way that attracts mixed-income housing. However, many scholars of the Hope VI program have already pointed out that mixed-income housing is inherently much more difficult to accomplish in the cities

where the real estate markets aren't as strong in the nearby surrounding areas. (Salama, 1999, p.134) In these cities, middle-class families have a much easier time finding affordable homes/apartments in safer and cleaner surrounding neighborhoods and are thus less likely to be attracted to mixed-income housing in the poor urban areas that Hope VI is attempting to rebuild. This problem presents an additional obstacle to many local Hope VI programs because these poor urban areas are then ultimately still inhabited by mostly low-income residents even after the buildings have been fixed up. Having mostly low-income residents living in the same area makes it much more difficult to prevent the occurrence of things such as drug-trafficking, criminal activity, as well as many other things which have a negative effect on the community as a whole. In turn, this process of communal deterioration also harms the ability for economic growth to take place within the area.

IMPACT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Urban Institute conducted an extensive study on HOPE VI in 2001 by surveying 887 heads of households from five HOPE VI program sites: New Jersey, Illinois, North Carolina, California, and Washington D.C. The study found that many people possessed numerous problems with their living situation as a large number of the people surveyed had troubles with the conditions of their housing. For example, about one out of three reported two or three housing problems while one in five reported more than three problems. About 75 percent of the respondents said that their neighborhood had difficulties with drug trafficking, criminal activity, and violence (Popkin et al., 2002, p. 5-6). Also, people said that there were low levels of collective efficacy, which is a part of neighborhood safety and community unity. Surprisingly, less than half of the respondents said that they have friends in their own community. Perhaps it is this lack of friendship that led to their disapproval and dissatisfaction with their neighborhood and community.

In addition to the responses about housing and neighborhood situations, a common theme in the survey report was the poor condition of the economic status and physical and mental health of adult residents. Many of the HOPE VI families from the survey sample were living below the poverty line for families of three and four. An astonishing 80 percent said they had a yearly household income of \$15,000 or less and about 30 percent of the working-age respondents received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits in the past six months from when the survey was taken. The struggles HOPE VI families endure are apparent when half of the people surveyed

claimed that they worry about running out of food because of money issues (Popkin et al., 2002, p. 8). Furthermore, most of the families studied by the Urban Institute were in poor health with many experiencing several health complications. Adults from the sample had much lower overall health status than the national average and “more than one-third of adult respondents reported having a chronic illness or health condition such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or arthritis. Poor mental health among adults is [also] a widespread problem. Nearly one-third of respondents (29 %) reported poor mental health, a level that is almost 5 percent higher than the national average” (Popkin et al., 2002, p.6). The literature illustrates that there may be a positive correlation between economic status, ability, and health problems due to the fact that a great number of HOPE VI families are struggling with financial problems which can lead to more health-related difficulties.

Children are the most vulnerable residents of distressed public housing and particularly likely to suffer from stress of relocation. The involuntary relocation of children of HOPE VI sites is potentially disruptive to academic achievement and increase behavior problems. According to Cove and colleagues (2005), “the period when a family is relocating from public housing presents an opportunity to offer interventions ... that can help families cope with the challenges of poverty as well as the disruption of relocation” (p. 13). High-quality programs in the community such as after-school programs are effective means of reducing children’s exposure to the negative influences in their everyday lives, so that they may become successful adults.

Most HOPE VI families nationally have children under the age 18. The common trend from the children sampled by the Urban Institute for their HOPE VI sample survey in 2001 suggested that children were in similar circumstances as their parents. The children sampled were in the same negative situations as their parents. Children living in poverty are usually exposed to crime and violence in their neighborhoods; growing up in these areas can have harmful influences on children later in life. The study shows that “living amidst violence severely affects children’s cognitive and emotional development. Further, parents in poor, dangerous neighborhoods are more likely to use the harsh parenting styles that have negative consequences on children’s development” (Popkin et al., 2002, p. 85).

Children are also isolated in terms of race and ethnicity. Typically HOPE VI children attend schools that are primarily African American, with a significant percentage of Latino students; an average of 83 percent of HOPE VI children

qualify for free school lunches (Popkin et al., 2002). Many elementary, middle, and high schools have a higher percentage of minorities than other non-HOPE VI schools as well as a higher number of students qualifying for free school lunches.

Children noted that they experienced gang fights and shootings at school and that they were fearful even when studying in a classroom with a teacher present. Also, amongst the five sites surveyed for the study, “11 percent of parents report that their children are receiving services for learning problems, and 9 percent say they are receiving services for behavior problems. Not surprisingly, the proportion of older children (ages 6 to 14) who are in special education classes is considerably higher: 23 percent are in special education for learning problems and 12 percent are in classes for behavior problems” (Popkin et al., 2002, p. 97). Children from HOPE VI also experienced more health problems than children in the national sample and asthma was one of the main problems. There are several barriers for children growing up in poverty and even though children are very resilient, more emphasis should be placed on the improvement of the lives of HOPE VI children.

Community and supported services (CSS) from HOPE VI funds are intended to promote the sustainability of the redeveloped communities. CSS includes programs for the well-being of residents, such as education, child care, and health services. The scope of these services were intended by HUD to be available to all families residing in a development when the HOPE VI project begins, including displaced families (National Housing Law Project, 2002). In reality, CSS resources have been devoted mainly to families living on-site, essentially excluding the displaced families who, for the most part, relocate an average of 3.9 miles away from their original homes. The on-site construction of new infrastructure for services, and the distance which most original residents move, limits accessibility to the much-needed services, which for dislocated families are even more crucial. Furthermore, the effectiveness of CSS is limited in the face of budget cuts. In the years since the establishment of HOPE VI, the percent public housing authorities allocate to CSS have been steadily decreasing. Moreover, the size of HOPE VI grants themselves has been reduced.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ON FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Macro based investigation into the economic conditions of HOPE VI residents shows that there are several financial hardships that trouble the communities. According to Levy and Kaye, in their article *How are HOPE VI*

Families Fairing? Income and Employment, two-thirds of HOPE VI respondents reported a household income of less than \$10,000, with two-fifths of the respondents reporting income of less than \$5,000. However, the income levels of employed respondents did increase, as did the percentage of respondents with an income above \$15,000. Similarly, the percentage of people with incomes less than \$15,000 declined by ten percent. However, for the HOPE VI residents who were unemployed, the number of reported incomes less than \$15,000 increased by 6 percent.¹

The Urban Institute describes one study conducted by the Housing Research Foundation which examined the economic impact of HOPE VI on eight sites from around the country. To analyze economic revitalization in these communities the study compared trends in the HOPE VI neighborhoods from 1990 and 2000, with city averages of non-HOPE VI neighborhoods, using census data.² HRF discovered that within those eight "HOPE VI neighborhoods (a) average per capita incomes of neighborhood residents rose 57 percent faster than in neighborhoods citywide; (b) unemployment fell by an average of 10 percentage points, compared with no significant net change at city levels; and (c) concentrated poverty fell from 81 percent of households being low income in 1989 to 69 percent in 1999."³

Micro evaluations of economic conditions in HOPE VI communities are somewhat more positive than the macro-composite studies. A program evaluation of the HOPE VI community in Newport, Kentucky used a survey of 103 residents to look at how their HOPE VI project affected life over a three-year period. In looking at employment over the three years, the percentage of employed residents increased from 64% in year 1 to 81% in year 2 and 86% in year 3. The study links these increased numbers to a new center that HOPE VI helped establish that sponsored community projects and awareness about education and employment, as well as other community based issues. Further, it appeared as if more people were actively seeking higher education or General Education Development, as well as an increase in business startups. Although income is not shared in this evaluation, the employment numbers hint at a rising level of employment and

¹ Levy & Kaye. *How are HOPE VI Families Fairing? Income and Employment.*

² Popkin, Susan J., and Bruce Katz. 2004. *A Decade of Hope VI: Research Findings and Policy Challenges*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press. (p. 43).

³ Ibid. (p. 43).

entrepreneurial activity, which would in turn lead to higher incomes in the neighborhood.

The Caroline Street project in New Bedford, Massachusetts, which is similar to the Utica study area in that it is mainly an elderly housing area with an average age in the 70's, showed that most people were gaining their income from social security and pension. Only 8.5% participated in active employment at the baseline. In the follow-up however, the employment number jumped up to 15.2%. Family income over \$25,000 also increased from 17% of the people in the baseline to 28.1% in the follow-up.

A report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides some insight into how HOPE VI programs foster economic revitalization. Certainly the arrival of middle-income residents is fruitful, as is the creation of education and job-training programs for current residents. It is also important, however, for housing and city officials to collaborate with the business community. In other words, HOPE VI funds can also be used as a way to *leverage* community wide development. For example, in Columbus, Ohio the HOPE VI housing authority "placed its new headquarters in the near-by dilapidated and underused Four Corners business district."⁴ This persuaded the city to build a new transit center in Four Corners as well as new police and fire stations. These actions in turn convinced the Akzo/Nobel coating factory to stay in the neighborhood where it invested \$32 million in company renovations.

CAPSULE SUMMARY OF YEARS ONE THROUGH FOUR

The Program Evaluation took place over a five year period with a bound report issued each year (http://www.hamilton.edu/Levitt/comm_based_research.html). Students approached the evaluation with a different set of questions each year, prepared in advance by Dr. Owens-Manley in partnership with the UMHA.

YEAR ONE

In the first year, students in the class divided into four groups. One group interviewed residents who had already relocated from Washington Courts, and the second group interviewed residents who had not yet moved.

⁴ *Hope VI: Community Building Makes a Difference*. February 2000. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban and Development. (p. 37).

Residents were asked questions related to the process of relocation and their level of satisfaction on a number of variables. A third group looked at the progress being made on housing development and home ownership and the fourth group explored the development of community services in the area of Cornhill that was targeted as the neighborhood for revitalization. Findings were:

- 1. Relocation occurred much more quickly than staff expected.** In Spring of 2004, 36 residents had moved since July, 2004 and 26 units remained occupied at Washington Courts. HOPE VI staff were busy trying to accommodate the service needs and hardships of non-senior disabled residents. **Most of the relocated residents are satisfied** with the process of moving and with their new homes and neighborhoods. They all had received their Relocation Allowances, were informed of their options for comparable housing, and were provided with transportation to view their options. However, despite the efficiency and care of HOPE VI staff, the infrastructure of public housing, as well as available social **services, were sometimes inconsistent, inflexible, and inadequate** in providing for its majority residents, the disabled and/or elderly.
- 2. The residents remaining at Washington Courts described a number of obstacles to their moving**, including needing a place without stairs, more bedrooms, or adjacent apartments for family members. A few residents complained that **staff did not properly describe the changes** that would take place when the program started or that there was no reason to move the housing project and to lose their homes. Staff explain that they are **attempting to meet all of the remaining resident needs**, and that the obstacles to placing the elderly, disabled, and family members who want to be near each other are creating some delays.
- 3. The majority of the Washington Courts residents moved to either Gilmore Village, in South Utica or Humphrey Gardens, in North Utica, both public housing projects. These residents are now in neighborhoods that are less racially segregated and that have a higher median income** for residents than their previous neighborhood around Washington Courts. Many relocated residents had moved with family and friends, thus transferring some of their support networks from Washington Courts and facilitating their transitions. Many residents did not know their neighbors well, often because they had recently relocated. Still, **most felt safe in their new neighborhoods and trusted their neighbors.** Most residents

who were utilizing support services had been doing so since before the inception of HOPE VI. Most of the residents were either retired or disabled.

4. Phase 1 of the housing development process, the **Kembleton Phase has been completed with 27 new and renovated units of housing**. In addition, 11 new homes will be constructed and be for sale this summer. Although this is a small portion of the target community, the **impact of the new homes is clearly evident in the Cornhill neighborhood**. Several nearby residents expressed their approval of the new houses during interviews, noting that the houses are some of the most aesthetically pleasing in the area.

YEAR TWO

In Year 2, students in the class divided into three groups. One group assessed the employment and disability status of the residents of Washington Courts, given the goal or outcome being sought of increased self-sufficiency; the second group surveyed new residents moving into the new housing being developed; and the third assessed the extent of structural improvements in the revitalization of the target community of Cornhill.ⁱ Findings were:

1. The HOPE VI housing has done a **great job improving the appearance** of the neighborhoods, but at the expense of continuity. Now streets feature beautiful, model homes next to boarded up collapsing homes. In order for the HOPE VI project to be successful in improving the appearance of the neighborhood all the houses in the community need to improve.
2. Another important question still to be answered is, "What effect will the **infrastructure improvements** have on the community both in appearance and in encouraging residents to improve their homes?" At the time of this year's rankings, **no improvements had begun** in these two particular areas, so the promised improvements could not be taken into account. Also no parks or green spaces have begun construction or been designated so they could not be factored in accordingly.
3. The **orchestrated effort of HOPE VI and Weed and Seed is having a positive effect on the Cornhill Community**. There has been a marked increase in the number of arrests within the community. However, we believe that HOPE VI **could do more to**

address the crime and drug activity within the target community. While there have been an increase in the amount of arrests, this may not correlate with decreased crime and drug activity. We are also unsure of the new programs effect on residents' perception of safety.

4. The road to self-sufficiency with the Washington Courts residents is difficult to determine, due to so **many of the residents being elderly and disabled. Few are employed, and disabilities have not been fully defined as permanent or temporary.** It is unclear how much progress can hope to be made with the residents as a group toward employability or self-sufficiency and how the end goal with each resident will be defined.
5. **Kembleton residents are satisfied in the main** and hopeful that the community will continue to move in the right direction. They have concerns, though, about crime and drugs in the neighborhood and unresponsiveness of their landlords, and communication could be improved.

YEAR THREE

For the Year 3 report, students learned to do GIS mapping to answer a series of questions about the targeted revitalization. They mapped income status, employment, racial distribution, and other variables and explored census data for the neighborhood, the city, and the state. The report also compared state educational data for school-aged children in the target neighborhood to the city as a whole. Findings were:

1. **Washington Courts families are relocated now**, most to other public housing projects. Their **new neighborhoods have higher median incomes and are less racially segregated.** HOPE VI successfully moved families to areas of less concentrated poverty
2. **Key services are more accessible**; the removal of barriers such as the four-lane highway that cut Washington Courts off from the rest of the City may make access easier still.
3. **Performance has risen substantially in the last two years in all state testing at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School**, and behavioral reports have decreased at the same time.
4. Students at MLK, similar to other HOPE VI schools, have more **barriers to success**; the student population is about 70 percent

minority, and nearly 90 percent of the students are eligible for free lunch (87% in 2004-2005- www.nysed.gov).

5. A **Neighborhood Network Center (computer center) opened in MLK in Fall 2005**, funded by a grant with the HOPE VI Project and a step toward a Community School as the center of the community.
6. The population in the target **area of Cornhill is 43 percent African-American** and 43 percent White, compared to 13 percent and 79 percent for the city as a whole.
7. **Income levels are low in the targeted area for Cornhill, and over one-quarter of households have incomes under \$10,000 (27.6%).**
8. Employment and job-training need to be targeted to support residents; although females in both the study area and the city as a whole have high rates of employment, only 59 percent of black males in the labor force who live in the target area are employed. This contrasts with 43 percent in the city as a whole. **Far fewer black men in the labor force are employed when compared to White men or Hispanic men.**

YEAR FOUR

In Year 4, students conducted 8 focus groups; 7 were comprised of the targeted neighborhood residents, and one was a key leaders group, responding to questions about progress with HOPE VI, neighborhood improvements, their level of satisfaction with progress, and suggestions for the time remaining. Findings were:

1. Residents are **satisfied with the neighborhood** they live in but less satisfied with entertainment and recreational facilities and service programs. **Initial high hopes with the project dissipated or waned** over time as the project dragged on. Major themes highlighted in the interviews concerned community revitalization; **meeting the needs of the community for capacity-building and building social capital**; a community that is **safe and aesthetically pleasing**; and **resident engagement in the planning process**.
2. Residents expressed **disappointment that services to build people were not emphasized**, stating that building houses was insufficient for what was needed. The **failure to build a Community School** as a part of the Project was another disappointment but was not attributed solely to UMHA. The **lack of job creation** and failure to

move the futures of residents to a new economic level was a third area of disappointment.

3. Some participants agreed that HOPE VI homes have made a **perceptible difference in the tone of the neighborhood** and in some cases have even inspired neighbors to take better care of their properties. Others however believed the **improvements to be insufficient**, cited structural problems with the homes or the fact that homes were vacant as critiques of the program. They also voiced **displeasure with the neighborhood infrastructure** and condition of their surroundings, such as roads, lighting, and sidewalks that the City of Utica would be responsible for.
4. **Communication about HOPE VI was criticized as misleading and insufficient**, and some participants presented a general distrust toward the government and leadership, which were used as interchangeable terms. There was a perceived disconnect between the neighborhood residents and the HOPE VI Project staff in the planning and decision-making process.
5. Residents of the HOPE VI target area had **mixed responses about the safety of their neighborhood**. Some cited Cornhill as a very desirable place to live, and others believed that no one would enter the housing market in Cornhill due to safety issues. Respondents spoke of how highly they valued recreational activities for the children and cited a lack of opportunities for them.
6. Despite good intentions, indicators of community dissatisfaction with the project remain strong. **HOPE VI has fallen short of the original hopes and expectations**, and the community remains very distressed economically. Residents are frustrated that they have not felt a personal or community impact or benefit from a multi-million dollar project. The home ownership program is assessed as lacking for the people originally from the neighborhood to better their lot, and that was true of the hopes for job creation as well.

THE YEAR FIVE REPORT

The HOPE VI project that was approved for Utica intended to demolish Washington Courts, which had been determined to be a distressed public housing site, and to build scattered-site housing in Cornhill, an inner-city neighborhood in the City of Utica, New York. This is the “tale of two projects,” in that the objectives and concerns of displacing and resettling residents of Washington Courts took place in a different timeframe and in an entirely different neighborhood than the targeted revitalization for Cornhill.

Students returned to the residents of Washington Courts for a final review of how they had fared in their displacement and relocation. Interviews, both audio and video of residents and key leaders in the process, were integrated with historical background. A final summer fellowship student helped to create a website featuring the stories that give us a picture of the HOPE VI project from many different perspectives (www.hamilton.edu/CACHE).

The project for this fifth year of the HOPE VI grant focused on an in-depth review of how Washington Courts residents were faring. We were committed also to producing a visual remembrance of Washington Courts as a place that had been home to many for a long period of time and to documenting a history that would then not be forgotten. Since the housing complex had by this time been demolished, there is literally empty space where the housing complex stood. The instructor worked with the UMHA prior to the start of the spring semester to establish the focus of the project and to begin to communicate with the former residents.

METHODS

We established the Seminar in Program Evaluation for the Spring 2008 semester as an inter-disciplinary course (taught in the Government Dept.) and actively recruited students from diverse academic majors – history, arts, government, and environmental studies. Students participated in the interviews of residents and key leaders, learned to “run the cameras” and other multi-media software, completed annotated logs of audio and video tapes, generated emerging themes from the visual and audio material, and wrote short assignments for background. As a final assignment, each student composed a narrative of the tale of the Washington Courts residents illustrated by digital storytelling methods.

As a second field of inquiry, students employed for the summer explored original documents and photographs available through archives in the Utica Public Library and the Oneida County Historical Society. These were used to fill in the pieces of the story about Washington Courts, especially the beginning. We were curious about where the complex evolved from and why it was built on this site.

A community-based research website is launched to showcase the work on the HOPE VI Project and other projects that involve community-college partnerships at www.hamilton.edu/CACHE, and a summary of the findings is included here. And as a third prong of this final year of the project, a student worked to find the data to substantiate the physical improvements that were made in the last several years in the Cornhill neighborhood and the data that would suggest what economic impact was made through HOPE VI.

FINDINGS

Highlights of the findings in this year's evaluation had two foci: 1) honoring the residents of Washington Courts and their memories, and 2) researching and documenting the history of Washington Courts as an early innovation in the provision of public housing and as the establishment of a community that was valued and celebrated. Residents of Washington Courts, in the Second Ward of the city, had an established community that evolved from the original construction of the complex in 1945. Although UMHA was lauded for their relocation process, many of the resettled residents still miss their homes and would have wished to stay in those familiar surroundings. The neighborhood of Cornhill that was targeted for revitalization received infrastructure improvements, new housing units, and home development for home ownership. These improvements began later than scheduled, fell short of the mark, and did not appeal, for the most part, to the Washington Courts residents.

FINDINGS FROM ARCHIVAL DATA

Original documents from the Utica Public Library and the Oneida County Historical Society in addition to other sources provided a view back through time to the layers of neighborhood and community that evolved through the years, beginning with the original settlement of what became the city of Utica. In addition, the changes in public policy brought by the Roosevelt administration during the 1930s marked a dramatic turn in government's

relationship to its citizens, and early documents attested to the city council's wrestling with the concept of subsidized housing.

THE ORIGINS OF PUBLIC HOUSING

In 1937, Congress passed The United States Housing Act with a renewed commitment on the part of the federal government to provide "decent, affordable housing for America's urban poor" (Lusignan, p. 37). The Housing Act, also known as the Wagner-Steagle Act created the federally-funded, locally-operated public housing program that exists today. It created the United States Housing Authority (USHA) to provide direction, financial support and technical and design assistance with local housing authorities having some decision-making ability for local community conditions.

The passage of The Housing Act of 1940, known as the Lanham Act, gave housing authorities permission to use federal funds to build housing for defense industry workers. Housing was needed for lower income rural residents who migrated to the cities for wartime factory jobs. It became a part of the war effort to expedite war worker housing that was administered by the local housing authorities. Between 1940 and 1944, the federal government built approximately 625,000 housing units under the Lanham Act and its amendments (The past: public housing in Texas. Accessed at <http://www.texashousing.org/phdebate/past9.html>, 7/21/08.)

The Lanham Act of 1940 was an important influence for African Americans too. The Emergency Defense Housing program established under The Act provided shelter for war workers and "harbored more than a million American families by 1945, among which more than 90,000 were African Americans. With the inclusion of black veterans in the program after the war, this total rose to more than 150,000 black families by 1950. Coupled with federally subsidized public housing for low-income black families, the emergency war housing program was the largest source of new housing for African Americans in cities and suburbs during the 1940s" (Wiese, A., 2004, p.135).

PUBLIC HOUSING IN UTICA

The Utica Daily Press noted the opening of headquarters for the Municipal Housing Authority of Utica on April 1, 1938 in the First Bank Building with W. Gerard Hughes, civil engineer, in command. A few weeks later, the

Observer-Dispatch noted “certain definite considerations” about the MHA’s plan to erect public housing – a plan that would bring one million dollars into the city, give employment to many, and give “wholesome housing at low rent to some 200 families in the low income brackets” (Rev. May, Observer-Dispatch, May 31, 1938).

The discussion continued for some time in 1938 in the local news, with the Common Council deciding whether they would accept the million dollars of federal funding to build a housing project – and whether providing housing for people was the right thing to do – perhaps it just encouraged dependency. The Rev. Joseph May, who was vice-chairman of the MHA surveyed the poor in the City, “1,000 workingmen’s families” to show the substandard conditions and the need for improved housing. The Daily Press reported in June 1938 that:

Approximately 300 families had no bathing facilities. Several families of more than 10 persons had no toilet, no bath, and only two bedrooms. There are homes where boys and girls from 13 to 15 years are sleeping promiscuously (The Daily Press, June 1, 1938).

The Observer Dispatch in September of 1938 reported that after consideration of 30 different sites, the one at Armory Dr. and the Parkway was chosen due to a reasonable purchase price of \$29,000 for the 27-acre plot and the fact that buildings had already been torn down “to permit the building of the new homes without any added expense for razing operations” (The Observer Dispatch, Sept. 11, 1938).

Adrean Terrace, the first housing project in Utica, was built and occupied by 213 families in 1939, with the cornerstone laid and marked by a community observance (Observer Dispatch, July 2, 1939). In the first part of the year, discussions focused on an intention to extend the project to the families themselves, to “lift the social standards of the families benefited by the new living quarters” (Observer Dispatch, January 18, 1939). Plans for this first housing project included a clinic for physicians and dentists, 100 garden plots for vegetables, laundries, and a “cool vegetable cellar” for families to store their vegetables (Observer-Dispatch, Sept. 11, 1938).

A report from the MHA in 1949-50 gives a sense of the early public housing project history:

The past year has been one of increasing residential construction in Utica and its environs but the needs of many of its deserving families still remains acute. Applications for help . . . totaled more than 1500

for the year and eviction cases, in addition, were numerous. Of the families appealing for aid, many were separated from their children and many more were living in a doubled up status with parents or relatives . . . Utica prides itself upon having completed the first State-aided housing project outside of the metropolitan area, Washington Courts. This project houses 146 families. The project was constructed in 1944 as a war defense housing development, but in 1948 was turned into a low income unit" (MHA, 1949-50ⁱⁱ)

Washington Courts, built outside of the "metropolitan area" was located in the Second Ward. During the Depression and World War II, few homes were built, and the influx of workers for new munitions plants, plus the return of soldiers from overseas caused an increased shortage of housing. Washington Courts was built by clearing what were by then slums between Seneca and Hoyt Streets, and "As this is occupied largely by colored people, who had been forced to live in the most unsanitary surroundings, it has given this neglected part of our population homes such as they had never seen" (Clarke, 1952, p. 164).

AN EVOLVING NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE SECOND WARD

The area bordered by Liberty and Whitesboro Streets was known as Bagg Square West when Utica was first incorporated as a city. Homes on Whitesboro St. were owned by important men such as Judge Nathan Williams, who owned a home on Whitesboro at the foot of Hotel St. Judge Williams was also the first District Attorney, the first Congressman from Oneida County, and the first President when the village was incorporated as a city of Utica. (Observer-Dispatch, December 9, 1945). In the mid-1800s, Whitesboro St. was one of the best residential streets in Utica. Later Whitesboro St. became "the heart of Utica's Jewish colony" (Draheim, 1972), but it wasn't until nearly 1870 that a Jew could even rent rooms on the street (Utica's Ghetto, 1911).

The early Jewish settlers in Utica were peddlers, small store owners, and farmers. The first permanent Jewish settlement was about 1845 and was comprised of mainly Russian and German Jews. Rabbi Kohn noted that peddlers were attracted to Utica as the geographic center of New York State and located on the Erie Canal, a focal point for commerce (Kohn, 2002). The settlement was largely Russian Jews and grew rapidly (Draheim, 1972).

The Saturday Globe wrote in 1911, "Slowly, steadily, the Jews acquired property. Family after family bought homes until to-day Whitesboro St. from

Hotel to the canal is almost solidly Jewish – a notable record in 30 years" (Utica's Ghetto: Transformation wrought by Jews.) Almost every house on Whitesboro St. at that time had a store connected with it. Beginning as peddlers, as customers increased, owners found it necessary to have a store and fitted small stores into their homes. The stores increased over time in size and importance.

By 1948, at a time when Washington Courts housing project changed from defense housing to traditional low-income housing, Jewish families in Utica numbered 1,028 (3,024 individuals). Just over half owned their own homes, and more than 1/3 (36%) had lived in Utica for more than 25 years. They had shared their neighborhood with Black families and acted as landlords for many years, and many still had businesses in the Second Ward.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MIGRATION TO UTICA

The number of Black Uticans was very small until about 1950. Occupational choices were limited in Utica as was true throughout the Northeast. Manual labor remained common, though some Black men were in skilled trades or professions, such as barbering or worked as shopkeepers. The 1920 Census tells us that Black households were usually headed by a man and often included extended family or boarders. Some of the earliest social institutions were Hope Chapel, established soon after the Civil War ended, the Colored Free Masons Hiram Lodge No. 25 in 1867, and St. Paul's Baptist Church in 1922 (DeAmicis, 2002, p. 19).

Post Avenue was thought of as the place where most Blacks lived by the late 1800s, but Black Uticans lived throughout the city up until 1880. The Second Ward emerged as the neighborhood for Black people after about 1910. Most of the county's Black people, by this time, lived in Utica, and largely in the second ward- 263 people.

An article in the Observer-Dispatch tells us that many Utica blacks trace their ancestry back to Belle Glade, Florida, as migrant workers began to come north. In 1940, Utica's black population was 514; 10 years later, it had risen to 1640! (Dudaek & Farrell, 1991). By 1960, the population had doubled again to more than 3,000, and that by 1970, there were 5,207 African Americans in Utica (DeAmicis, p. 27). World War II made a difference, as recruiters went south to secure labor when workers were in short supply. But the Southerners did not initially move to the city; they came to Oneida County in May to harvest green beans, and by October, most returned to Florida to harvest sugar cane. By the early 1950s, DeAmicis tells us, "as many as 6,000 Southerners could be found each

summer in dozens of camps scattered across the county" (p. 27). Some found work year round and stayed in Utica, and other Blacks came north not as migrant workers, but to escape the restrictions in the south.

MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT IMPORTANT IN WASHINGTON COURTS

The 1940 Census lists 10 male and 4 female musicians, and Black musicians made their way through Utica as a central thoroughfare for the state. Club George, located at Liberty and Seneca Streets, opened just before Christmas in 1945 with live music. Often big name entertainers dropped by after performing at the downtown hotels and sang or played for residents of Washington Courts and surrounding neighborhoods in the after-hours clubs (personal communication, Richard Franks, 2008). From 1945 to 1955, jazz musicians from throughout Central New York gathered nearly every night. After 1955, a jukebox replaced live music. Club George is said to be the oldest business continuously operated by a black person in Utica. Club George hosted Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, and Nat King Cole among other entertainers, and "people went there because it was a friendly place where black and white, rich and poor, came together in a common love of music." There was a slogan for the business: "Club George...where atmosphere prevails and hospitality will meet you at the door" (Williams, 1989, p. 3A).

RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION: A SHORTAGE OF HOUSING

Public housing provided an important and affordable source of housing for an increasing African-American population. Racist attitudes and exclusion were widespread in Utica too, as we see in a tongue-in-cheek article written for Upstate Ministry in the early 1940s:

If you think you see more Negroes on Utica streets than formerly, you are, of course, right. There are more – probably 800 or 900 more than there were a year ago, possibly 1,500 more than there were two years ago.

There are three Negro churches now instead of two and there is a community center going full blast with Community Chest support. But otherwise probably the increase hasn't been significant unless you happened to be a Negro arriving in Utica and looking for a room.

There are four Negro lodging houses in Utica, and a handful of scattered families who can occasionally rent one room. All of these rooms have been filled for months now and for a time one bed served six men—three at a time in two shifts.

The plight of an arriving Negro looking for a room is not a pleasant one. If he arrives by train, he probably inquires of one of the red caps. If – almost miraculously these days – he drives, he probably asks some fellow Negro he sees on the street. In either case, he is usually referred to one of the lodging houses, which in turn refers him to another and so on. . . not infrequently the room-seeker makes a one or two night forced landing at the rectory of Hope Chapel, where the Rev. E.A.U. Brook's heart is bigger than his house.

Efforts to convert an ex-Utica knitting mill into an apartment house for Negroes fell through when the government ruled that 'no industrial plants could be converted to anything else' during the war. . . While most of the arriving Negroes have—or soon get—defense factory or Rome Airport jobs, Utica's colored population has been on the upgrade ever since 1940 pea-farm owners south of the city started to bring truckloads of southern Negroes up for the canning season. . .

Utica is now adding Negroes at a rate of about one a day, and, of course, the task of housing them would not be so serious if it were not for a certain race prejudice that happily is not as bad here as it is in many other places. In Canada, Mr. Brooks points out, it is practically non-existent (Negroes, Upstate Ministry, 1942-43).

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH RESIDENTS AND KEY INFORMANTS

In an attempt to reach and interview as many former residents of Washington Courts as possible, we worked with the UMHA to set community meeting times at each of the two housing complexes in which most of the Washington Courts residents resided and provided refreshments. Although the Case Manager contacted residents and a letter was sent to each, very few residents responded to that invitation. Subsequently, efforts were made to reach residents individually, especially the older residents, with varying success. We also conducted three interviews with residents who had moved to the Cornhill area. The interview data was drawn from a relatively small set of interviews with former residents (n=11) and additional interviews with key informants about the neighborhood (n=4).

MEMORIES OF EARLY DAYS

The first residents of Washington Courts remember fondly the early years at the housing project. Vivian Duncan, who moved into Washington Courts on

January 1, 1945, recalled that the newly built housing project was "beautiful." Duncan also remembered that "everybody was neighborly; everybody knew each other." Often, there were picnics, at which many residents of Washington Courts would gather together. In addition, people could sit outside at night and there was no need for the residents to lock their doors. Duncan also spoke fondly about the Potter School, which she attended for several years, as well as her after school activities. The Potter School was diverse, with African-American, Italian and Polish students. Duncan described the students at the school as "wonderful people," and she was very sad when the school closed. After school, the children at Washington Courts would attend religion education. Duncan also described going to dances with live music right at Washington Courts. It is notable that Duncan described much of the early years at Washington Courts with terms like "we," "everyone," and "together," because it shows that strong sense of community that the residents miss.



Vivyan Duncan, early resident of Washington Courts. Photo courtesy of Alexis Mann.

EVERYTHING THAT A PERSON NEEDED!

Another aspect of the neighborhood that built such strong community ties was the number of businesses in the area. These businesses included bakeries, churches, stores, a barbershop and nightclubs. Duncan remembered that along one of the streets there was Goldman's bakery, an ice cream parlor and a delicatessen. There was also a synagogue and a grocery store. Duncan remarked that, "she could not [remember] everything because there was so much" and the neighborhood "had everything you

could think of." Richard Frank, a former resident of Washington Courts, echoed this sentiment. He recalled that there were a lot of businesses in the neighborhood, including three bakeries, a doctor and a dentist. Frank also noted that there was no need to leave the neighborhood, because everything a person needed was available in store around Washington Courts. The nightclubs and bars in the neighborhood included Fitzgerald's Bar and Club George, as well as many others along Liberty Street. Jack Tobin, now a local hairdresser, remembered when Count Basie and Billie Holiday performed at Club George, which he described as a "happening" place with great music.

The Freeman Barbershop is perhaps the most distinctive business in the neighborhood. The barbershop has been there since 1978 and Mr. Freeman has been cutting hair in Utica for forty-six years. The shop played a particularly interesting role in the neighborhood, as Mr. Freeman got to know many people from Washington Courts very well. Many of the residents were his customers. One interesting aspect of the store is that it symbolized the trusting nature of the people in the neighborhood. For many years, the Freeman Barbershop served as a babysitter of sorts. Parents would drop off their children, or the children would come by themselves, and Freeman would watch over them until the parents came to pick them up. He would always let the children come in and cut their hair, because he knew he could trust the parents to pay him when they arrived. As Freeman put it, "their word was their bond."



Mr. Freeman in his barbershop on Liberty St. in Utica. Photo courtesy of Alexis Mann.

SAFETY AND SECURITY AT WASHINGTON COURTS

Most former Washington Courts residents express a similar sentiment about the old neighborhood. Leona Pollard said that she could not even describe the bond that residents of Washington Courts had between each other. According to Pollard, everyone looked out for and cared about the other residents. She also emphasized the safety of Washington Courts and the secure feeling that she had there. For many of the residents, however, it is the little things that they miss the most. Pollard misses the trains that used to pass by Washington Courts. She recalled when she used to lie by the trains, and even though she wasn't traveling anywhere, she still felt like she was "going somewhere."

Vivyan Duncan remembered sitting outside with Catherine Moore, whom she referred to as her "sitting buddy." Despite the fact that the two women live in the same housing project now, they no longer sit outside like they used to. As Pollard points out, since people have moved away from Washington Courts, "everyone is scattered" and they "don't keep in touch." In addition, many of the older people passed away after Washington Courts was demolished. Pollard believed that these people died of a lonely heart, because their home was gone.



Ms. Catherine Moore (left) with a friend. Photo courtesy of Alexis Mann.

NOTHING COULD REPLACE COMMUNITY.

The story of Washington Courts, its demolition and the relocation of its residents highlight the importance of a sense of community. Although both the government and, at times, the residents themselves recognized certain

problems or shortcomings with the neighborhood, Washington Courts was a community of people who knew and cared about each other to a great extent. While many of the residents may be better off now, in terms of the diversity and location of their new residences, nothing could replace the sense of community at Washington Courts. The lesson to be learned from Washington Courts is that a sense of community may outweigh other factors in determining the overall quality of one's life.



Washington Courts Housing Complex prior to demolition. Photo courtesy of Alexis Mann.

PUBLIC POLICY AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

And finally, there were juxtapositions in statements that were made by key officials with the HOPE VI Project that important, because they highlight the complexity of public policy implementation and interventions that impact people's lives.

For instance, the official position of the UMHA is that the housing complex at Washington Courts wasn't safe or in any way ideal – that it was in the resident's interests as well as the public interest for it to be demolished. For the residents, it was not only safe, "it was home." For HOPE VI officials, the report of the relocation process was that it was "very successful – a model for the rest of the country." For the residents themselves, there was

a theme of not doing so well – that “when Washington Courts went down, we went with it.” There was an emphasis for officials on both a federal and local level that the physical structures of Washington Courts were no longer suitable for public housing. However, to the residents, it was the sense of community provided by the complex that was uppermost in their minds.

These juxtapositions, or unintended consequences of interventions that are intended to be benign, are not easy to resolve, and we have not detailed the outcomes for every resident here. Some residents moved out, moved on, and have even moved to other communities. It is the oldest and most disabled that were left at the time of the project. This is not a population that, for the most part, would be easily employable. The closeout report written by HOPE VI staff notes that “based upon the demographics of the resident population, the ability to promote self-sufficiency among those who are disabled is limited” (UMHA, 2008). Even with residents who were moved to the same housing complex, the fact that they were now blocks apart in a larger complex, rather than next door or around the corner, has often made visiting impossible with their health condition or physical impairments.

The students and instructor were struck in the visits to residents’ homes, with the number of health problems, though these are well-documented in previous studies (for instance, see Popkins, 2004). Physical impairments included kidney disease, heart and back problems, asthma, cancer, and there were serious health issues in nearly every household that we visited.

FINDINGS FROM NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATOR DATA FOR OUTCOMES

As the deadline for the grant quickly approached, the summer of 2008 was devoted to assessing the impact of the HOPE VI project on the target neighborhood of Cornhill. By examining the prominent indicators of neighborhood change, this report will attempt to isolate the affects of the HOPE VI project. With the assistance from city and independent agencies and past research, this report consists of data that ranges from the beginning of the project in 2003 to the most recent available data in August of 2008.

THE FOUR PHASES OF BUILDING FOR HOPE VI

Phase I - Kembleton consisted of 27 non-ACC rental units which were primarily financed by Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) equity through the HOPE VI rental developer, Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. All units are on Kemble Street within the HOPE VI targeted area. Construction began in August 2003 and was completed in January 2004. Initial occupancy of these units was in March 2004. Full occupancy was attained in November 2004. This development involved seven buildings (6 rehabilitated buildings and 1 new) and was financed through LIHTC equity, Key Bank Development Corporation, City of Utica HOME funds, and NYS Housing Trust funds.

Phase II - Steuben Village consisted of 49 units of residential rental housing which was developed on scattered in-fill sites in the Cornhill neighborhood. Steuben Village involved both new construction of 15 multifamily homes on vacant lots as well as substantial rehabilitation of 4 existing vacant buildings. All 49 units are LIHTC and 25 are public housing (ACC). All 19 buildings are multi-family buildings. Construction began in August 2004. The project was completed in December 2004. Initial occupancy was July 2005. Leasing was completed in November 2006. Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. was the developer. Steuben Village is managed by the UMHA.

Phase III - Rutger Manor involved both the new construction of multifamily homes on vacant lots as well as rehabilitation of an existing building. A total of 27 lots were developed into 12 buildings and 33 units. Eleven buildings were newly constructed and one existing structure was substantially rehabbed. Of the 33 units developed, 21 are to be public housing (ACC) units and 8 HOME units. All units will have Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Construction began in December 2005 and was completed in December 2006. Initial occupancy was in February 2007. Leasing was completed by December 2007. The project developer was Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. The property manager is the UMHA.

Phase IV - Oneida Homes was targeted to consist of 40 single-family homeownership units constructed within the HOPE VI development area. All the units are intended for fee-simple sale. To date, 19 homes have been developed, with an extended plan now to complete up to 21 additional units by June 30, 2009 (Closeout Report, UMHA, December, 2008). Financing for Phase IV is provided by the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, the City of Utica HOME Program, New York State Division of Housing and Community

Renewal, private bank mortgages and construction loans, homeowner equity, and HOPE VI funds (UMHA HOPE VI Fact Sheet)

HOPE VI HOMEOWNERSHIP PROJECT

Oneida Homes is the homeownership development component of the HOPE VI project. It is conceived as a multi-year initiative of the City of Utica and the UMHA to develop homeownership opportunities for residents of public housing, the Cornhill neighborhood, and the City of Utica. Oneida Homes involves the construction and sale of single-family homes to low-income first-time homebuyers on scattered sites in the HOPE VI Revitalization Area. It was marketed to current neighborhood residents, tenants of the former Washington Courts public housing development and Utica's large immigrant population. In order to concentrate redevelopment activity for maximum community impact, the proposed project was primarily built on model blocks in Utica's Cornhill neighborhood. In addition, eight home ownership units were built in West Utica in a cluster.

Major redevelopment efforts occurred in the Cornhill area. Through the HOPE VI project, UMHA built 109 new units of rental and 19 units of homeownership housing. The neighborhood is in close proximity to retail stores, social service agencies, entertainment, cultural institutions, government offices, and other amenities in the Downtown area. A Head Start facility, youth center, and elementary school are located in the project target area. Through the HOPE VI initiative, the UMHA, City of Utica, and Oneida County developed a long-range strategy for Cornhill which included the development of single family owner-occupied homes, affordable rental housing, housing rehabilitation programs, streetscape improvements, and a playground. (UMHA HOPE VI Fact Sheet).

OVERVIEW OF HOPE VI BUILDING

Chart 1 illustrates the four phases of construction for HOPE VI in Utica. The table shows that Phases I, II, and III are Rental units while Phase IV are homeownership units. All phases but Oneida Homes 4C and 4d were completed by September of 2008. Oneida Homes 4C and 4D are expected to be completed by the end of the year 2008.

Phase Name of Project	Type of Housing	Type of Building	Status	Occupation	Number of Units	Number of Proposed Units in Grant
Phase I Kembleton Apartments	Rental	New/Rehab	Completed	Full (as of Nov. 2004)	27 units	27 units
Phase II Steuben Village	Rental	New/Rehab	Completed	Leasing completed Nov.2006	19 buildings, 49 units	49 units
Phase III Rutger Manor	Rental	New/Rehab	Completed	Leasing completed Dec. 2007	12 buildings, 33 units	33 units
Phase IV Oneida Homes	Ownership	New	4A Completed, 4B Completed, 4C & D Under Construction	Ownership for 4A and 4B Completed	A- 11 Homes B- 8 Homes C- 12 Homes(inc.) D- 9 Homes(inc.)	40 homes

Chart 1. Phases of construction for HOPE VI Project in Utica with projected units.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND MARKET INDICATORS OF CHANGE

The specific indicators chosen to examine in this report include both Socio-Economic Indicators and Market Indicators. Sean Zielenbach, senior consultant for the Chicago-based Woodstock Institute has evaluated several public housing redevelopment endeavors, including HOPE VI projects, using both sets of indicators.⁵

⁵ Local data is not available for the entire set of indicators recommended by Zielenbach. For fuller discussion, see Zielenbach, 2002.

Socio-Economic indicators with community-level data available include:

- Ethnic and racial composition
- Percentage of children
- Levels of educational achievement
- Per capita income
- Rate of unemployment
- Public assistance income.
- Income mix (Zielenbach, 2002, p. 15)

Market indicators used to document neighborhood change are:

- Residential lending rates
- Property values
- Housing vacancy rate
- Available housing units
- Crime rates
- Small business lending rates
- Public Assistance income (Zielenbach, 2002, p. 16)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR HOPE VI IN UTICA

Ethnic and racial composition

The target area for the HOPE VI Project has a much larger population of African-Americans than the City of Utica as a whole or than any other neighborhood. Map 1 highlights the distribution of the Black population, which is clearly in the center, or core of the city. Thirteen percent of Utica is comprised of African Americans, and in the study area, that number jumps to forty-three percent (2000 Census, www.census.gov). In addition, the target area of Cornhill is home to large numbers of recently arrived refugees from Bosnia, Somalia, Vietnam and Myan Mar. Neighborhoods with growing numbers of ethnic and racial minorities tend to be less well off than those with an expanding white population.

Percentage of children

In new households in Steuben Village and Rutger Manor, children under the age of 18 make up 57.21 percent of the household population, compared to households in Utica which are composed of 27.25 percent children.

In addition, more than 40 percent of households in the study area are female-headed households with no husband present compared to 39 percent

within the city of Utica as a whole. Zielenbach (2002) indicates that a high percent of children represents a neighborhood that is more distressed economically. For instance, “a community’s overall income level and buying power suffer from having a significant proportion of non-wage earners.” (p.15) On the other hand, Utica as a city and the entire upstate region are losing youth and becoming an aging population. A high percentage of children could be viewed as a potential for growth and development both for the neighborhood and the city.

<i>Study Area</i>	43%
<i>Utica</i>	39%

Table 1 Female Householder, No Husband Present (Source: 2000 Census and SF3 Employment Data)

Levels of educational achievement

When evaluating the needs of the residents within the HOPE VI housing area, it is critical to find out the skills they already possess. A strong indication of marketable skills is educational attainment. Educational attainment correlates with job opportunities, and thus income levels. We used census population data to find the educational levels of Utica’s three dominant ethnic groups: Hispanic, African American, and white. The data field of interest was called “Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population Over 25.” By using Summary File 3 (SF3) data, we not only looked at racial differences, but also compared the education levels between males and females. We then found the percentage of residents without a high school diploma by normalizing with the total number (of males or females) within each ethnic group.

Among the male population, Hispanics had the largest range of individuals without a high school diploma. Within the census block that contained Hispanic males, 35.4 percent to 100 percent did not have a high school diploma, with a mean of 62.8 percent (See Map 9.) Within the entire study area, 46.4 percent of the black male population did not have a high school diploma (See Map 10.) Furthermore, there are census block groups that consist only of black males who overwhelmingly have not graduated from high school. For the census block groups with white male populations, an average of 25.4 percent did not have high school diplomas (See Map 11.) For all three ethnic groups, the percentages reflect the education levels for the city of Utica as whole.

Within the female population, Hispanic females had the highest percentage without a high school diploma, with an average of 35.4 percent (See Map 12.) Black females had 31.6 percent of their population without a high school diploma (See Map 13.) For white females, the census block groups ranged from 6.4 percent to 67.1 percent of the population without a high school diploma, with an average of 23.8 percent (See Map 14.)

We found the study area reflected the City of Utica as a whole. We chose to study high school graduation rates because of the large disparities between races. The findings indicate that both Hispanic males and females have the highest percentages of their population without a high school diploma. Hispanic males, however, have the greatest percentage, and therefore, the greatest need for educational incentives. Lastly, males are in greater need than females.

Ethnic Background	Male	Female
Hispanic	62.8%	35.4%
Black	46.4%	31.6%
White Alone	25.4%	23.8%

Table 2. Residents Over Age 25 Without a High School Diploma or its Equivalency in the Target Area (Data Source: Census 2000 Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

Ethnic Background	Male	Female
Hispanic	56.3%	43.6%
Black	41.8%	31.7%
White Alone	23.4%	27.0%

Table 3. City of Utica

Residents Over Age 25 Without a High School Diploma or its Equivalency (Data Source: Census 2000 Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

Rate of employment

One of the ways in which the HOPE VI project can foster economic revitalization is through the creation of employment and job-training programs. The rate of employment is one indicator of what opportunities residents of a community have access to. Zielenbach states, "The economic viability of a neighborhood depends on its ability to give residents access to jobs, not necessarily on its ability to have job opportunities itself." (p. 15) Within the target community of Cornhill, the percentage of males who are employed is significantly less than the percentage of females who are employed but similar to the city as a whole (Table 4).

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
<i>Study Area</i>	84%	94%
<i>Utica</i>	89%	93%

Table 4 Percentage of Persons age 16 and over in the labor Force who are Employed (Source: 2000 Census and SF3 Employment Data)

We next looked at employment rates among various racial groups. We discovered that black males have considerably lower rates of employment than black females in both the study area and in the city of Utica as a whole. These results are displayed below in *Table 5*.

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
<i>Study Area</i>	59%	91%
<i>Utica</i>	43%	88%

Table 5 Percentage of Blacks Age 16 and over in the Labor Force who are Employed (Source: 2000 Census and SF3 Employment Data)

Employment rates among black females are comparable, however, to those among Whites, and Hispanics (Table 6). The faction that seems to be having the most trouble finding work is black males. The percentage of black males who are employed in both the study area and the city of Utica is significantly less than percentage of White and Hispanic males who are employed (Table 7).

	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<i>Study Area</i>	91%	96%	91%
<i>Utica</i>	88%	94%	87%

Table 6 Percentage of Females Age 16 and over in the Labor Force who are Employed (Source: 2000 Census and SF3 Employment Data)

	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<i>Study Area</i>	59%	94%	100%
<i>Utica</i>	56%	91%	81%

Table 7 Percentage of Males Age 16 and over in the Labor Force who are Employed (Source: 2000 Census and SF3 Employment Data)

Sources of Income

As it has been shown, the economic conditions of the HOPE VI study area are substantially worse than Utica as a whole. The lower than average employment levels, and the sub-par educational attainment has a dramatic effect on the on these statistics, and therefore influences the sources of income that these residents receive.

When evaluating the sex by occupation for the employed civilian population 16 years and over, there are some glaring statistical differences between which sectors of the labor force provides employment for the HOPE VI study area residents and Utica residents as a whole. When looking at the percentages of Management, Professional, and related occupations, we can see that there is a tremendous disparity between the study area, and all of Utica:

Sex:	% of Study Area residents employed in sector	% of Utica residents employed in sector
Male	11%	23%
Female	15%	30%

Table 8 Management, Professional and related occupations (Source: Census 2000 Population Data- SF3 and Block Group)

The disparity between these numbers shows that there are very few residents of the study area that are employed in managerial positions, or positions of leadership within their company/ industry.

Sex:	% of Study Area residents employed in sector	% of Utica residents employed in sector
Male	10%	13%
Female	11%	23%

Table 9 Professional and Related Occupations (needing specific schooling for employment (Source: Census 2000 Population Data- SF3 and Block Group)

These statistics show that in regards to the male labor force, there is not a large statistical disparity between the percent of males who work in professional occupations. However, when evaluating the female labor force we can see that the percentage of women who work in professional or related fields is much lower in the study area than in Utica as a whole.

Sex:	% of Study Area residents employed in sector	% of Utica residents employed in sector
Male	24%	20%
Female	32%	21%

Table 10 Service Occupations (Source: Census 2000 Population Data- SF3 and Block Group)

These statistics show that within our study area there is a large percentage of the male and female labor force that is employed within the service sector. These jobs are typically low paying, and require very little educational attainment in order to be qualified. It is not surprising that our study area would have high numbers of the employed population within this sector of the labor force, considering the low educational attainment of the area and its depressed level of house hold incomes.

Public assistance income

There were considerably higher rates of government assistance given to residents of the HOPE VI target area. Eighteen percent of the residents in the study area received Supplemental Security Income (SSI), compared to

only 9 percent of Utica as a whole. Similarly, the percentage of residents receiving Public Assistance within the study area is substantially higher than in Utica as a whole. Eighteen percent of the residents in the HOPE VI study area receive Public Assistance, compared to only 8.5 percent of Utica as a whole (Census 2000 data).

Since 40 opportunities for home ownership were added to the target area, one could surmise that the income mix has been altered, however minimally.

Income mix

Neighborhoods with varied incomes tend to be indicative of areas that will have greater potential for attracting investors. We looked at median household income numbers in 1999 of all Utica households and compared them to the median household income numbers within the HOPE VI study area. As should be expected, the median household income of the Study area was significantly lower than that of Utica as a whole. The median income of the study area was \$17,911 and Utica was \$25,113. That means that the median household income of residents within the HOPE VI study area is more than 70 percent lower than that of Utica as a whole.

In addition, more than 27 percent of households in the target area had incomes under \$10,000 annually compared to the city as a whole, and the disparity between the study area and Utica as a whole was even more striking in the higher income brackets.

	% of Households
Study Area	27.6%
Utica	20.3%

Table 11 Household Income under \$10,000 (Source = 2000 Census Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

For instance, in the \$10,000 - \$25,000 range, there were more than 40 percent of households compared to less than 30 percent in the entire city. As income rose to the \$25,000 to \$50,000 income bracket, there were significantly fewer households with income over \$25,000 annually (21.6% vs. 28.5%).

	% of Households
Study Area	40.3%
Utica	29.8%

Table 12 Household Income \$10,000-\$25,000 (Source = 2000 Census Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

	% of Households
Study Area	21.6%
Utica	28.5%

Table 13 Household Income \$25,000 - \$50,000 (Source = 2000 Census Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

The disparity increases once again as one moves past the \$50,000 household income bracket; only one in 10 households in the study area fall into the \$50,000+ category, versus one in 5 in the city as a whole.

	% of Households
Study Area	10.5%
Utica	21.4%

Table 14 Household Income over \$50,000 (Source = 2000 Census Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

Figure 1 illustrates the difference in household income between the study area and Utica as a whole.

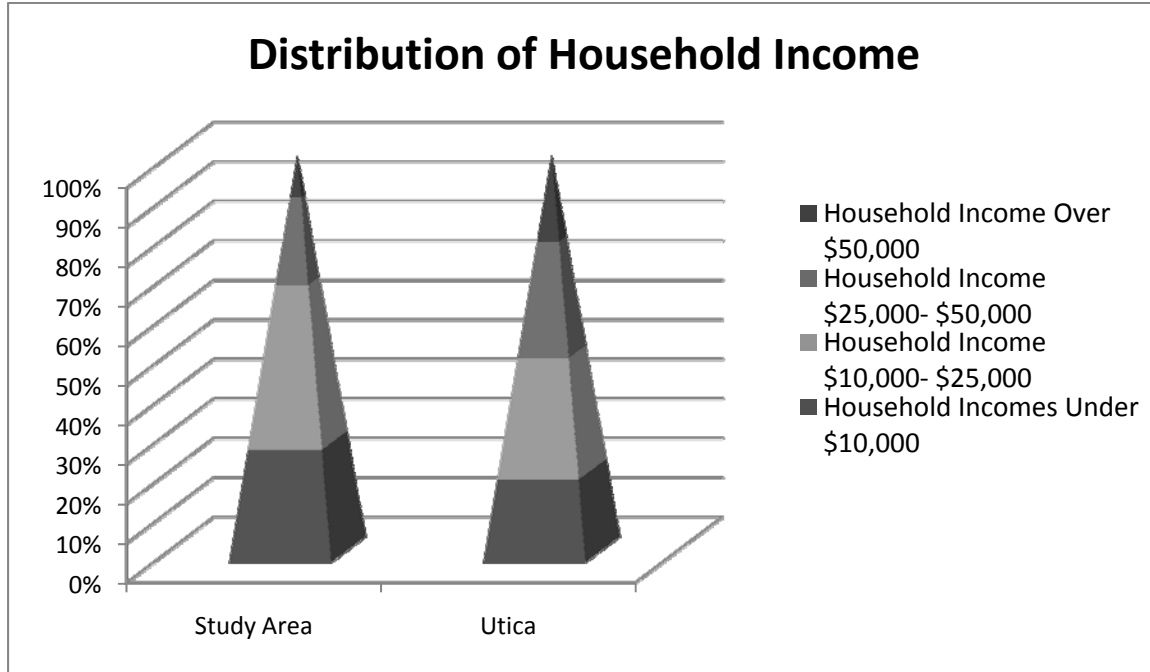


Figure 1. *Distribution of Household Income* (Source = 2000 Census Population Data – SF3 and Block Groups)

The families who have moved into the new home ownership houses built in Cornhill list an average household income of \$22,848 and \$26,608⁶. Since the homes replaced houses that were demolished or were already empty lots, the families at least contribute to raising the income levels overall for the Cornhill area.

⁶ Demographic composition of new HOPE VI residents is provided by the Utica Municipal Housing Authority and shown in Appendix B. This is the demographic composition of the current residents living in homes that were built on empty lots and sold through the HOPE VI Project.⁶ The demographic information consists of the gender of the head of the household, their race, age, number of children, household income, and movement patterns of the residents.

MARKET INDICATORS FOR HOPE VI IN UTICA

In testimony given to the New York State Division of Budget in 2008, Joan Roby-Davidson spoke of the long-term benefits to a community of providing housing for low-income populations stating, "Housing development has benefits beyond the obvious need to provide basic shelter for low-income residents. Housing provides jobs, generates tax revenue through property tax and real estate transfer taxes, and spurs other investment by home owners. Stable, well managed rental housing helps to stabilize challenged neighborhoods and also provides construction jobs" (Testimony presented to the NYS Division of Budget, October 22, 2008, by Joan Roby-Davidson, Coordinator Empire State Housing Alliance: Upstate-Downstate, Planning Together)

A report from NeighborWorks presents data clearly showing that increasing housing rehabilitation and construction creates living wage jobs for many local residents, with additional economic benefits. (NeighborWorks USA, Habitat for Humanity NYC -Atlantic Avenue: Economic and Fiscal Impact Study) The implication is that new homes built will add to the tax rolls, creating revenue for the city, county, and state as well as school districts. Further, new home owners or renters can be expected to invest in other goods and services, supporting local businesses.

The National Association of Home Builders, in fact, projects that "over a 10-year period, the local economic impact of building 100 single family homes in a typical community is \$41 million in local income. The construction of 100 multifamily homes generates \$28 million in local income. The production of 100 single-family homes, on average, raises local tax revenues by \$6.6 million over the following 10 years, while construction of 100 multifamily units adds \$4.7 million in 10-year local tax collections" (American Bankers Association, America's Community Bankers, Mortgage Bankers Association, National Association of Home Builders, and National Association of Realtors. *Housing Policy for the 21 Century*, September 2004.)

In 2008, NAHB estimated that the impacts include the following:

- 3.05 jobs and \$89,216 in taxes (from building an average new single family home).
- 1.16 jobs and \$33,494 in taxes (from building an average new multifamily rental unit).
- 1.11 jobs and \$30,217 in taxes (from \$100,000 spent on residential remodeling).

Roby-Davison, in her testimony to the NYS Division of Budget, spoke in favor of housing development from the standpoint of healthy communities and good economic planning for the future:

- Housing development makes economic sense -with the added advantage of helping to stabilize neighborhoods, provide equity for new homeowners, and support local contractors and businesses.
- While market rate and mixed income housing is highly desirable for a healthy community, neighborhood stabilization requires decent housing and living wage employment for all residents (Roby-Davison, 2008).

The testimony also stressed the fact that local construction projects provide jobs for neighborhood contractors and construction workers. This study did not document how many local jobs were created. However, Roby-Davison suggests that in Rochester, New York,

If only one third of the . . . buildings can be returned to the tax rolls, they could generate in excess of \$2 million in local tax revenues, not including transfer fees, mortgages generated, and the other known benefits of housing development (2008).

Residential lending rates

Residential lending rates can measure how well a neighborhood is integrated with the overall economy of the community. For instance, "banks and other lenders make loans to people and in areas where they believe that they will be repaid and will generate a reasonable return in their investment. Although many financial institutions have a regulatory obligation (through the Community Reinvestment Act) to lend generally in low- and moderate-income communities, they do not have to lend in every single neighborhood. Whether they lend in a given neighborhood depends on their sense of the economic viability of that community and the projects within it." (Zielenbach 2002, p16)

Property values

Property values give us a sense of how the economic future of a community is viewed by potential residents and investors. Property values in the target area changed considerably from 2003 when the HOPE VI Project began through 2008. By identifying trends within these change variables and comparing these trends to those affecting the City of Utica as a whole, it is possible to isolate any positive change resulting from the infusion of HOPE VI

dollars into the community in the form of new housing. In Utica, a number of parcels were returned to the tax rolls through HOPE VI, bringing about a substantial increase in tax revenues. David Williams, Assessor for the City of Utica, stated that based upon his records, he determined the total assessed value of the projects built through HOPE VI to be approximately \$5,909,404.⁷ The total assessed value of properties added by the HOPE VI Project, as determined by Mr. Williams, is shown in Table 15.

Project	Total Assessed Value
Steuben Manor	\$1,877,900
Kembleton	\$866,000
Rutger Manor	\$1,427,500
Oneida Homes 4A	\$597,500
Oneida Homes 4B	\$401,400
RHF#1	\$142,300
RHF#2	\$596,800
Total	\$5,909,400

Table 15. Total assessed value of HOPE VI Building Phases in Utica.

(data provided by City Assessor’s Office.)

The data in the tables to follow provide additional information about property values in the city of Utica. Table 16 shows that since the HOPE VI project began, the number of housing sales has fluctuated. Sales increased between 2003 and 2005 and then decreased from 2005 onward. The Utica area as a whole has seen a decrease in the numbers of houses sold. Most

⁷ Williams wrote further to UMHA staff: “You and your staff can be proud of your efforts in the economic and community development revitalization of the HOPE VI area. To see families live in these homes and realize the dream of home ownership and to provide safe affordable rental housing in an area that was once blighted, speaks to your achievements. There is no greater success” (email communication to John Furman, November, 2008).

importantly, despite the poor market conditions, sales in Cornhill have stayed relatively stable and were slightly higher in 2007 than five years ago in 2003.

Total Sales	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 (as of 08/08)
South Utica	159	162	185	162	152	71
West Utica	115	126	135	105	101	42
North Utica	90	97	104	108	91	46
East Utica	194	223	235	183	175	84
Cornhill	15	10	21	15	17	

Table 16 Home sales in sections of Utica in units of sales 2003-2008.

(data provided by Carol Longo from the Utica-Rome Board of Realtors)

Table 17 shows the total amount of home sales each year in the various parts of Utica. Despite the overall trends in decreasing sales of homes, the total amount of revenue has increased in all areas of Utica. East Utica, where Cornhill is located has shown a significant increase in total sales revenue since 2003.

Total \$	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 (as of 08/08)
South Utica	\$11,867,841.00	\$12,855,552	\$15,710,742	\$14,586,537	\$15,981,794	\$6,732,545
West Utica	\$4,128,558.00	\$5,098,701	\$5,846,640	\$5,058,080	\$4,869,449	\$1,882,525
North Utica	\$6,306,756.00	\$7,677,097	\$9,004,053	\$9,627,911	\$8,790,369	\$1,882,525
East Utica (incl. Cornhill)	\$9,334,959	\$11,327,727	\$13,404,574	\$12,164,030	\$13,075,703	\$4,526,795

Table 17. Home sales in sections of Utica in total dollar amounts 2003-2008.

Table 18 shows the average price of homes sold in each area of Utica. The average price of homes in an area is a good indicator of how well communities are progressing over time. The average price of homes in Cornhill has increased significantly since 2003 and the start of the HOPE VI project. However, East Utica and Utica as a whole have seen significant increases in the average prices of homes sold. This change is reflected nationally until very recently, bringing into question whether the change is due to HOPE VI or to the Utica area as a whole being viewed as a more desirable place to live.

Average Price	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 (as of 08/08)
South Utica	\$74,641	\$79,355	\$84,923	\$90,040	\$105,143	\$94,825
West Utica	\$35,901	\$40,466	\$43,308	\$48,172	\$48,212	\$44,822
North Utica	\$70,075	\$79,145	\$86,577	\$89,147	\$96,597	\$98,409
East Utica	\$48,118	\$50,797	\$57,041	\$66,470	\$74,718	\$67,170
Cornhill	\$42,473	\$34,500	\$36,057	\$44,005	\$51,846	

Table 18. Home sales in sections of Utica by average sale price 2003-2008. (data provided by Carol Longo from the Utica-Rome Board of Realtors)

The assessed property values of the various properties that make up Steuben Village, Rutger Manor, and Oneida Homes – phases of the HOPE VI

Project – are listed in Appendix A.⁸ In some cases, there are missing property values or properties that have been combined. This is because a typical lot in Cornhill was about 30 to 40 feet wide, which by today's standards is too small. In those cases, two lots were combined in order to create lots that were of sufficient size and would meet the standard to build a home. The assessed values of Oneida Homes 4C and 4D have not yet changed because at the time of this research those homes were not completed and ready to be assessed. The total assessed value given by the assessor includes the value of the land in addition to the value of the house. In some cases, the assessed value for some properties is very low because there is no house that exists there, just the lot.

As shown in Appendix A, in almost all cases that homes were renovated or rebuilt, the assessed value has significantly increased. Some home values actually reach values of more than \$100,000 which is significantly above the norm for the Cornhill neighborhood.

SUMMARY

Pursuant to the original HOPE VI grant application, the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College was retained to perform evaluation services in connection with the five year duration of the project. The Director for Community Research of the Levitt Center planned and directed the program evaluation on an annual basis to be completed by Hamilton College students and research assistants. HOPE VI funds were used for salaries and stipends for the college research assistants.

Four evaluation studies were completed for each year of the project. This final evaluation study summarizes the results of the entire project, focusing on the fifth year of the project as well as its economic impact on the City of Utica. The program evaluation supported program goals and activities by providing feedback and recommendations to project staff. In addition, tracking of performance measures ensured that the UMHA met commitments made in the grant proposal and achieved goals as stated. The purposes of the evaluation were:

- To monitor and provide feedback and recommendations regarding the implementation of project goals, objectives, and activities.

⁸ Provided by the Utica City Assessor's Office.

- To identify strengths and limitations of components of the program.
 - To make recommendations about future program activities.
 - To describe key characteristics of the participants.
- (CSS Work plan submitted to HUD by HOPE VI Project Staff, Utica, NY, 2003) .

In this fifth year of program evaluation, students returned to the original residents of Washington Courts. The completed product for the semester was four "storylines" documenting the history of Washington Courts and the HOPE VI Project, complete with excerpted videoclips. The intended use of these and other materials developed for the project (video footage of Washington Courts before, during, and after demolition) was to produce a documentary and a website that actively tells the story of Washington Courts as a changing neighborhood from the time of its inception in 1945 in a multiethnic, largely Jewish neighborhood to its demise and relocation of the residents in 2003-04.

The HOPE VI Project was successful in meeting many of its goals, but there were consequences of using this particular model of creating two projects within the whole; moving and resettling residents of the demolished housing complex and attempting neighborhood revitalization in another neighborhood across town. They beg to be addressed as two separate projects, as there was little to link the two. Few residents of the demolished Washington Courts chose to live in Cornhill, and alterations to the neighborhood of Cornhill had little to no effect on those Washington Courts residents.

There is visible change in Cornhill with the new houses, renovated properties, and decrease in vacant lots. Social and economic indicators of neighborhood change, primarily in Cornhill, as the thrust of neighborhood revitalization in the HOPE VI grant, are inconclusive for long-term change but perhaps pointed in the right direction. The next Census in 2010 will provide additional data to assess the intended changes. There were human consequences to the displacement and resettlement of residents, particularly older residents who had lived there for decades. Most residents acknowledged that their housing was adequate, but they were disappointed overall in their expectations for the grant, and their social networks were disrupted.

Hamilton College sponsored a luncheon for the former residents of Washington Courts on September 13, 2009 at the Radisson Hotel in Utica as the culmination of the HOPE VI evaluation initiative. Funds for this event were provided by non-federal sources through the college. A video was presented which chronicled the history and personal stories of the former residents. More than thirty-five residents attended this event, and each family received a copy of the video. The video presentation can be seen at www.hamilton.edu/cache (Remembering Washington Courts and Honoring the Residents of Washington Courts.)⁹

Program evaluation work in this last year created video and audio interviews of several of the former residents of Washington Courts, video interviews of staff of the Utica Municipal Housing Authority and video interviews with Mr. Freeman, owner of the neighborhood barbershop, Mr. Richard Frank, who grew up in Washington Courts and later owned a nightclub in the neighborhood, and Dr. Jan DeAmicis, a professor at Utica College, whose research area is Black migration to the Utica area and more recently, the Underground Railroad in upstate New York. It is our hope, in this final phase of the project, that work on the scope and the impact of the HOPE VI Project has been documented and that archived material will be available for others in years to come.

⁹ In January 2007, the Levitt Center hosted a photography exhibit that featured sixteen portraits of Washington Courts residents or key services for the housing complex such as the barber shop and the American Legion. The exhibit was held at the Utica Public Library, together with an exhibit of the ACCESS Project, a photo essay of a very successful college program for low income residents of the region. Two receptions were held; one for the residents themselves on a Saturday afternoon and one on a weekday evening for the general public. Hamilton College has distributed portraits to the residents who are featured in this exhibit, which is now on permanent display in the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at the college.

CODA

Impact on Children

Past reports of HOPE VI projects have shown that students in HOPE VI schools are in a worse situation than their counterparts. There are nine elementary schools in the Utica school district: Martin Luther King, Jr., Watson Williams, Kernan Elementary, Thomas Jefferson, John F. Hughes, General Herkimer, Albany Elementary, Christopher Columbus, and Hugh R. Jones. Martin Luther King, Jr. is the elementary school located in the target area. Watson Williams, which is in close proximity, and Hugh R. Jones, which provides a similar contrast to both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Watson Williams are included in much of the analysis.

This report focuses on the aspects of racial and ethnic makeup, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), free lunch enrollment, student suspensions, and test scores. School data was compiled from school report cards through the New York State Education website (www.nysed.gov) and the New York State Testing and Accountability Reporting Tool (www.nystart.gov). Comprehensive information reports were examined for the years 2001-2007 to obtain the proper data.

Number of Students

Table 1.1 below shows the number of students enrolled in grades K-6 at each of the nine schools. Martin Luther King, Jr. has consistently had the least number of students enrolled.

Student Enrollment in Grades K-6	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
M.L. King Jr. Elementary		270	266	208	226	237
Watson Williams		517	544	448	409	464

Elementary						
Kernan Elementary		747	714	605	626	623
Thomas Jefferson Elementary		606	588	492	505	487
John F. Hughes Elementary		456	512	441	439	434
General Herkimer Elementary		658	650	554	550	543
Albany Elementary School		541	527	468	469	479
Christopher Columbus Elementary		802	816	730	745	689
Hugh R. Jones Elementary		530	548	433	409	404

Table 2.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

Racial and ethnic makeup

In terms of race and ethnicity among the elementary schools blacks, whites and Hispanics were focused on. Blacks, whites and Hispanics make up the vast majority ethnicities within the elementary schools of the Utica City School District.

Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary and Watson Williams Elementary both consistently had the largest percentage of black students. However, the percentage of black students has slightly decreased in Martin Luther King Jr. from 64% in 01-02 to 52% in 06-07. Watson Williams Elementary saw a decrease from 57% in 01-02 to 48% in 06-07. Hugh R. Jones Elementary had the lowest percentage of blacks every year (Table 2.1).

Black (Not	2001-	2002-	2003-	2004-	2005-	2006-
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Hispanic)	02	03	04	05	06	07
M.L.King Jr. Elementary	64%	55%	55%	53%	55%	52%
Watson Williams Elementary	57%	57%	57%	56%	54%	48%
Kernan Elementary	31%	30%	27%	30%	32%	37%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	24%	23%	24%	24%	26%	26%
John F. Hughes Elementary	28%	29%	28%	30%	36%	38%
General Herkimer Elementary	20%	25%	23%	22%	25%	25%
Albany Elementary	22%	23%	22%	23%	22%	23%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	29%	29%	30%	30%	28%	26%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary	15%	13%	13%	10%	13%	13%

Table 2.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

In regards to whites within the elementary schools, MLK and Watson Williams both had the lowest percentage of whites and they also saw slight decreases in the numbers of white students throughout the years of our study. In contrast, Hugh R. Jones consistently had the highest percentage of white students ranging from 75-81% (Table 2.2).

White (Not Hispanic)	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07

M.L. King Jr. Elementary	28%	25%	27%	23%	21%	17%
Watson Williams Elementary	26%	25%	23%	23%	21%	17%
Kernan Elementary	57%	5%	58%	53%	48%	44%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	62%	63%	60%	57%	54%	55%
John F. Hughes Elementary	59%	54%	52%	51%	42%	36%
General Herkimer Elementary	60%	56%	46%	55%	55%	56%
Albany Elementary	63%	63%	63%	62%	60%	59%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	54%	53%	50%	48%	47%	51%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary	75%	79%	78%	81%	79%	75%

Table 2.2 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

In regards to the percentage of Hispanics, there is a relative consistency among each of the districts however, Hugh R Jones has the lowest percentage of Hispanics each year and is the only school that varies from the rest of the schools. Also, MLK's Hispanic population jumped from 11% in 2004-05 to 24% in 2006-07. This may indicate that more Hispanic families are moving near MLK in the target area, which corresponds to anecdotal information supplied by City of Utica workers in the early years of HOPE VI (personal communication with John Mills, 2004).

Hispanic or	2001-	2002-	2003-	2004-	2005-	2006-
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Latino	02	03	04	05	06	07
M.L. King Jr. Elementary	5%	13%	13%	11%	17%	24%
Watson Williams Elementary	13%	15%	15%	14%	18%	18%
Kernan Elementary	10%	13%	13%	15%	17%	16%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	11%	10%	11%	12%	12%	12%
John F. Hughes Elementary	11%	11%	15%	15%	16%	14%
General Herkimer Elementary	14%	13%	15%	17%	15%	14%
Albany Elementary	14%	13%	14%	14%	16%	16%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	12%	10%	11%	12%	13%	12%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary	8%	7%	6%	7%	5%	6%

Table 2.3 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

According to this data, there seems to be racial disparity between MLK and Hugh R. Jones Elementary Schools. In addition, because the percentage of black continues to decrease as the percentage of whites increase a racial gap continues to exist.

Limited English Proficiency

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students are those who speak English as a second language. Students are considered LEP if they speak another language besides English because of foreign birth or ancestry, understand or speak little or no English, or scored at or below the 40th percentile on an English language assessment exam. Starting from 2003-04 New York State designed an exam that would be used state-wide to determine whether or not a student was considered a LEP student instead of allowing schools to have their own assessment exam.

Limited English Proficiency	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
M.L. King Jr. Elementary	17%	6%	18%	29%	19%	16%
Watson Williams Elementary	11%	9%	10%	11%	11%	11%
Kernan Elementary	7%	9%	10%	9%	11%	8%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	21%	8%	20%	20%	24%	18%
John F. Hughes Elementary	13%	14%	17%	27%	20%	21%
General Herkimer Elementary	8%	6%	7%	11%	13%	11%
Albany Elementary	13%	13%	14%	15%	11%	11%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	21%	22%	22%	24%	25%	27%

Hugh R. Jones Elementary	6%	5%	6%	6%	8%	6%
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Table 3.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

According to the school report cards, Christopher Columbus showed the highest percentage for every year but 2004-05 however, many other schools were closely following Christopher Columbus. Our target area school, MLK, ranges in percentages from 6 to 29 between 2001-07. The Limited English Proficiency data is relevant because it shows the amount of students who need extra help in learning English, which can have an effect on the outcome of test scores for each school.

Free Lunch

The amount of students eligible for free lunch is dependent upon the poverty level of families in a certain school district. Logically, a school in an area with a high concentration of poverty would observe greater numbers of children who are enrolled for free lunch whereas a school in an area of low poverty would have less children enrolled in the free lunch program. School districts such as MLK and Watson Williams have an overall higher concentration of people below the poverty line. These high concentrations of people below the poverty line correlate respectively to the schools with the highest percentages of children eligible for free lunch.

As expected, MLK possessed the highest percentages of students eligible for free lunch in every year studied. Despite the presence of the HOPE VI Project, the percentages of students eligible for free lunch in the target area remain high.

Eligible for Free Lunch	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
M.L. King Jr.	90%	87%	92%	87%	94%	92%

Elementary						
Watson Williams Elementary	76%	82%	78%	81%	87%	87%
Kernan Elementary	83%	80%	75%	73%	81%	83%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	62%	61%	54%	59%	63%	60%
John F. Hughes Elementary	59%	69%	63%	74%	76%	79%
General Herkimer Elementary	52%	55%	65%	53%	56%	59%
Albany Elementary	57%	56%	52%	57%	58%	58%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	77%	77%	76%	74%	73%	71%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary	33%	32%	47%	27%	30%	33%

Table 4.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

Student Suspensions

A student suspension refers to the number of students who were suspended due to misconduct. As shown in Table 5.1, MLK had the highest number of suspensions up until 2004-05 (24% in 2004-05). After the 2004-05 school years we see a tremendous drop to 8% in 2005-06 and 4% in 2006-07. This drop could be partly due to the changes being made in the local area due to the HOPE VI Project.

Student Suspensions	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
M.L. King Jr. Elementary	23%	25%	28%	24%	8%	4%
Watson Williams Elementary	8%	11%	15%	24%	15%	10%
Kernan Elementary	7%	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%
John F. Hughes Elementary	5%	4%	12%	8%	9%	10%
General Herkimer Elementary	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Albany Elementary	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	2%
Christopher Columbus Elementary	6%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%

Table 5.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

Test Scores

Test scores are one of the most important measures of school performance because test scores are comprehensive exams that demonstrate a child's ability. We looked at the percentages of students who scored at the 3-4 level. Level 3 indicates that the students meet the standards and should pass the Regents exam in High School while Level 4 indicates that students

exceed standards. In the English Language Arts category, MLK students performed significantly lower than the other schools however; there have been increases since the 2004-05 school years.

English Language Arts (4th graders)	2002- 03	2003- 04	2004- 05	2005- 06	2006- 07
Measuring level 3-4					
M.L. KingJr. Elementary School	38%	37%	41%	59%	50%
Watson Williams Elementary School	63%	49%	96%	76%	89%
Kernan Elementary School	72%	67%	74%	41%	40%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School	71%	57%	62%	71%	59%
John F. Hughes Elementary School	60%	69%	55%	36%	38%
General Herkimer Elementary School	79%	80%	77%	76%	67%
Albany Elementary School	65%	56%	81%	66%	52%
Christopher Columbus Elementary School	48%	58%	60%	60%	55%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary School	88%	85%	80%	75%	75%

Table 6.1 (Source: www.nysed.gov)

In the mathematics category, MLK test scores have increased significantly between 2004-05 and 2006-07 from 86% to 92% respectively. In 2006-07, MLK had the second highest mathematics test scores for the 3-4 level.

Mathematics (4th graders)		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Measuring level 3-4						
M.L. King Jr. Elementary School		76%	59%	86%	75%	92%
Watson Williams Elementary School		85%	84%	100%	97%	96%
Kernan Elementary School		82%	86%	71%	62%	60%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School		88%	78%	83%	79%	70%
John F. Hughes Elementary School		76%	85%	61%	53%	57%
General Herkimer Elementary School		98%	94%	96%	90%	90%
Albany Elementary School		82%	73%	92%	80%	82%
Christopher Columbus Elementary School		78%	72%	85%	71%	80%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary School		94%	96%	92%	86%	89%

Table 6.2(Source: www.nysed.gov)

For the science category, the percentage of students measuring at the 3-4 level for MLK between the school years 2003-04 and 2006-07 has steadily

increased from 79% in 2003-04 to 95% in 2006-07. In 2006-07 MLK ranked second among its comparable schools.

Science (4th graders)		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Measuring level 3-4					
M.L. King Jr. Elementary School		79%	89%	88%	95%
Watson Williams Elementary School		76%	93%	100%	99%
Kernan Elementary School		90%	73%	85%	69%
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School		79%	79%	86%	76%
John F. Hughes Elementary School		71%	68%	73%	48%
General Herkimer Elementary School		91%	92%	93%	93%
Albany Elementary School		75%	92%	91%	82%
Christopher Columbus Elementary School		81%	76%	89%	93%
Hugh R. Jones Elementary School		99%	83%	95%	94%

Table 6.3(Source: www.nysed.gov)

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APPENDIX A. ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUES

Properties	Assessment Value 2002	Assessment Value 2007	Change in Value 2002- 2007
Steuben Village	2002	2007	
104-106 Addington Place	\$33,800	\$88,400	\$54,600
141 Addington Place	\$36,100	\$60,000	\$23,900
154-154A Eagle Street	\$29,000	\$29,000	0
1526-1528 Elm Street	\$9,100	\$94,000	\$84,900
1537-1539 Elm Street	\$6,500	\$69,000	\$62,500
1496 High Street			
1498 High Street			
141-143 Hobart Street	\$3,100	\$85,000	\$81,900
145-147 Hobart Street	\$35,000	\$76,000	\$41,000
1104-1106 Howard Ave	\$1,100	\$52,000	\$50,900
1108-1110 Howard Ave	\$400	\$60,000	\$59,600
1112-1114 Howard Ave	\$400	\$60,000	\$59,600
1116 Howard Ave		\$42,500	N/A
1118 Howard Ave	\$400	\$400	0
1120 Howard Ave	\$1,400	\$42,500	\$41,100

1122 Howard Ave	\$1,300	\$57,000	\$55,700
1124-1126 Howard Ave	\$25,000	\$61,000	\$36,000
1125 Howard Ave	\$400	\$400	0
1127 Howard Ave	\$4,300	\$76,000	\$71,700
1128 A- 1128 C Howard Ave	\$20,000	\$61,000	\$41,000
1208 Howard Ave	\$400	\$90,000	\$89,600
1210 Howard Ave	\$500	\$500	0
7 A-7 B Johnson Park	\$33,500	\$45,000	\$11,500
1552-1554 Kemble Street	\$4,700	\$69,000	\$64,300
102-104 Lexington Place	\$36,800	\$67,000	\$30,200
1404 Steuben Street	\$300	\$300	0
1406 Steuben Street			
1408 Steuben Street			
1410 Steuben Street	\$400	\$56,000	\$55,600
1526-1528 Steuben Street	\$32,400	\$81,000	\$48,600
1539 Steuben Street	\$400	\$64,000	\$63,600
1541-1543 Steuben Street	\$500	\$500	0
1545 Steuben Street	\$400	\$90,000	\$89,600

Rutger Manor	2002	2007	
109-111 Gold Street	\$20,000	\$98,000	\$78,000
129 Gold Street	\$400	\$47,00	\$4,300
131 Gold Street	\$400	\$54600	\$54,200
133 Gold Street	\$21,000	\$61,000	\$40,000
128-130 Grove Place	\$400	\$91,000	\$90,600
102-104 Harding Place	\$400	\$89,500	\$89,100
106-108 Harding Place	\$400	\$96,500	\$96,100
126-128 Harding Place	\$400	\$104,000	\$103,600
1407 A, B, C, D Oneida Street	\$43,200	\$100,000	\$56,800
1502-1504 West Street	\$31,400	\$82,000	\$50,600
1505 A West Street	\$24,500	\$52,000	\$27,500
1505 B West Street	\$1,000	\$39,000	\$38,000
1505 C West Street	\$31,300	\$49,000	\$17,700
1512 West Street	\$400	\$49,000	\$48,600
1514 West Street	\$1,100	\$29,500	\$28,400
1516 West Street	\$1,100	\$33,500	\$32,400
1518 West Street	\$400	\$54,000	\$53,600
1522 West Street	\$29,000	\$43000	\$14000
1524 West Street	\$1,000	\$50,400	\$49,400

1526 West Street	\$400	\$43,000	\$42,600
1535 A West Street	\$29,700	\$49,000	\$19,300
1535 B West Street	\$1,000	\$37,000	\$36,000
1525 C West Street	\$1,000	\$37,000	\$36,000
1525 D West Street	\$400	\$54,000	\$53,600
Oneida Homes 4A	2002	2007	
108 Leah Street	\$500	\$58,000	\$57,500
109 Leah Street	\$26,200	\$60,000	\$33,800
112 Leah Street	\$400	\$59,000	\$58,600
113 Leah Street	\$300	\$56,000	\$55,700
124 Leah Street	\$400	\$56,000	\$55,600
128 Leah Street	\$7,300	\$56,000	\$48,700
135 Leah Street	\$400	\$44,000	\$43,600
139 Leah Street	\$400	\$44,000	\$43,600
1232 Steuben Street	\$400	\$47,000	\$46,600
1236 Steuben Street	\$400	\$57,500	\$57,100
1304 Steuben Street	\$400	\$60,000	\$59,600
Oneida Homes 4B	2002	2007	
140 Hobart Street	\$300	\$54,000	\$53,700
144 Hobart Street	\$15,700	\$58,800	\$43,100
1127 Steuben Street	\$400	\$58,800	\$58,400
1131 Steuben Street	\$300	\$54,600	\$54,300

1135 Steuben Street	\$400	\$58,800	\$58,400
1128 West Street	\$400	\$58,800	\$58,400
1132 West Street	\$800	\$54,600	\$53,800
1215 Oak Street	\$5,100	\$56,800	\$51,700
Oneida Homes 4C	2002	2007	
204 Eagle Street	\$400	\$400	0
206 Eagle Street	\$400	\$400	0
117 Leah Street	\$15,000	\$41,000	\$26,000
121 Leah Street	\$400	\$400	0
1206 Miller Street	\$4,100	\$4,100	0
1418 Neilson Street	\$4,100	\$4,100	0
1420 Neilson Street	400	\$400	0
1500 Neilson Street	\$400	\$400	0
1506 Neilson Street	\$400	\$400	0
1108 Steuben Street	\$400	\$400	0
1206 Steuben Street	\$500	\$500	0
1215 Steuben Street	\$1,300	\$1,300	0
1219 Steuben Street	\$400	\$400	0
1223 Steuben Street	\$400	\$400	0

1301 Steuben Street	\$200	\$200	0
1305 Steuben Street	\$400	\$400	0
1216 West Street		\$37,000	
Oneida Homes 4D	2002	2007	
1501 Elm Street	\$500	\$500	
155 Hobart Street	\$900	\$900	
1021 Miller Street	\$300	\$300	
1023 Miller Street	\$300	\$300	
1216 Miller Street	\$400	\$400	
1220 Miller Street	\$1,000	\$1,000	
1207 West Street	\$500	\$500	
1209 West Street	\$400	\$400	
1211 West Street	\$400	\$400	
1215 West Street	\$400	\$400	
1217 West Street	\$400	\$400	
1219 West Street	\$400	\$400	
Total			\$3,396,000

APPENDIX B. HOPE VI RESIDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender (Head of Household)	Female: 2 Male: 9	Female: 1 Male: 7	Female: Male:	Female: Male:	Female: Male:
Race/Ethnicity (Head of Household)	White: 1 Black: 4 Hispanic: 3 Asian: 3 Other: N/A:	White: Black: Hispanic: 1 Asian: 1 Other: 6 N/A:	White: Black: Hispanic: Asian: Other: N/A:	White: Black: Hispanic: Asian: Other: N/A:	White: Black: Hispanic: Asian: Other: N/A:
Age (Head of Household)	Min: 26 Max: 51 Median: 39 Mean: 39.7	Min: 23 Max: 44 Median: 32 Mean: 31.2	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:
Total # of People	27	38			
# of Members in Household	Min: 1 Max: 5 Median: 3 Mean: 2.8	Min: 1 Max: 6 Median: 5 Mean: 4.4	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:
# of Children	13	19			
Age Distribution of Children	<5: 4 5-10: 8 11-13: 14-18: 1	<5: 8 5-10: 9 11-13: 3 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18: 69

Household Income (Annual)	Min: 16,800 Max: 35,000 Median: 20,000 Mean: 22,848	Min: 19,760 Max: 36,840 Median: 27,040 Mean: 26,608	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:	Min: Max: Median: Mean:
Movement Patterns	From Outside Target Area: Outside Cornhill: 3 Outside City of Utica: 6 Country: 2	From Outside Target Area: 4 Outside Cornhill: 2 Outside City of Utica: Country:	From Outside Target Area: Outside Cornhill: Outside City of Utica: Country:	From Outside Target Area: Outside Cornhill: Outside City of Utica: Country:	From Outside Target Area: Outside Cornhill: Outside City of Utica: Country:
# of Children Who Moved from Outside Target Area	6	8			
Ages of Children Who Moved from Outside Target Area	<5: 1 5-10: 4 11-13: 14-18: 1	<5: 4 5-10: 4 11-13: 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18:	<5: 5-10: 11-13: 14-18:

APPENDIX C. HOPE VI FACT SHEET

The Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA) is the major provider of subsidized housing in the City of Utica, New York and operates public housing units as well as a Housing Choice rental assistance program. It has successfully administered youth, human and community service, job training, and educational programs for residents. Currently, the UMHA owns and operates 1,041 public housing units and is the administrative agent for 690 units of Section 8 rental assistance.

In April 2003, HUD approved a FY 2002 HOPE VI Revitalization Grant in the amount of \$11,501,039 to the Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA) to demolish the Washington Courts public housing development and develop replacement housing for existing residents in the Cornhill neighborhood of Utica. UMHA's vision for the HOPE VI Revitalization Area is to create a vibrant, attractive, mixed-income community, where people of all economic strata, races, and cultures will live, learn, work, play, and raise their families. The project has developed 109 mixed finance units and 19 homeownership units. By the end of 2008, the UMHA expects to complete up to 21 additional homeownership units.

To date, the program has successfully completed the following: developed 128 homeownership and rental units in the Cornhill neighborhood of Utica; relocated 59 former Washington Courts residents to better housing opportunities; demolished the Washington Courts complex and transferred the property to the City of Utica for a use as an industrial site; leveraged \$36,110,773 in collateral housing and in-kind community service investments; developed a computer training center and playground at Martin Luther King School; entered into 22 construction contracts with Section 3 to include minority and female business enterprises; and increased the neighborhood's tax base and property values.

The following are the accomplishments of our HOPE VI grant:

1. The City of Utica has provided a total of \$5,485,841 in housing development, infrastructure improvements, codes enforcement, planning, community policing, and economic development funding to the project.

2. The HOPE VI Project is in the process of completing the planned number of housing units by the end of the grant term. To date, 109 tax credit rental replacement housing units have been completed in conjunction with the UMHA and a not-for-profit developer – Housing Visions Consultants, Inc.

3. The UMHA has developed 19 units of homeownership housing. We will complete up to 21 units by the end of the HOPE VI grant term.

4. Fifty-nine families residing in the Washington Courts complex were successfully relocated to new and renovated UMHA and HOPE VI housing as well as provided other housing opportunities. HUD has used our relocation program as a model for other HOPE VI programs and recommended other housing authorities contact the UMHA for technical assistance. In fact, the independent evaluation of our HOPE VI grant by Hamilton College published in June 2006 states that the project: "... has met major goals. All Washington Courts families have been moved, most to other public housing projects in neighborhoods that are of higher median income and less racially segregated."

5. The UMHA secured \$1,140,000 in funding from the County of Oneida, the State of New York Empire State Development, and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal HOME program to finance a home improvement program targeted to the HOPE VI Revitalization Area. The Home Preservation Program will involve the moderate rehabilitation of up to 40 owner occupied housing units in the Cornhill neighborhood of the City of Utica. This Program is integral to our comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment strategy and will ensure the success of the entire HOPE VI project through the rehabilitation of existing homes, and will protect the investment and marketability of other HOPE VI housing development.

6. The HOPE VI Community Supportive Services Program has enabled our residents to become self-sufficient, maintain stable housing, secure employment, and access support services. The UMHA Youthbuild Program enrolled 21 Cornhill residents and four public housing residents and helped 15 low-income neighborhood youth to obtain employment (of which 6 are construction-related jobs). The Youthbuild participants assisted in the construction and landscaping of the HOPE VI homeownership units and were provided on-the-job training opportunities in construction.

7. The HOPE VI program has entered into 22 separate contracts with minority and women business and Section 3 enterprises and 21 Section 3 eligible and minority/female residents have been hired in connection with HOPE VI construction activities. The HOPE VI project has held community meetings to recruit Section 3 as well as MBE/WBE eligible firms to bid on projects. In addition, the UMHA has held outreach events to identify neighborhood residents interested in HOPE VI construction employment.

8. The City of Utica has provided a total of \$ 5,485,841 in housing development, infrastructure improvements, codes enforcement, planning, community policing, and economic development funding to the project. The City of Utica has been an invaluable partner in HOPE VI revitalization efforts by providing technical assistance, furnishing parcels for development, making available partial tax abatements and Payment in Lieu of Tax arrangements, and offering planning, Geographical Information System, environmental review, and zoning assistance. As part of its commitment to increased codes enforcement in the Target Area, the City recently enacted a local ordinance requiring periodic inspections of rental property.

9. With the ongoing support provided from the City of Utica to UMHA, the Utica City School District has also been a recipient in our HOPE VI revitalization efforts. In conjunction with the School District and Oneida County Workforce Development, UMHA developed a Neighborhood Networks Center at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School in Cornhill. This initiative of UMHA, funded by a HUD \$300,000 Neighborhood Networks grant, has been providing services to the students of MLK and the Cornhill community through its educational programs of job skills development and remedial education. Also, as the first step in the Cornhill Commons Project, a

new playground was installed on the grounds of the Martin Luther King, Jr. School. The playground was constructed in June 2006 with the assistance of over 70 volunteers and a partnership between UMHA, RMV and the Utica City School District. A total of \$96,270 in non-HUD funds were contributed to this project. Through a Governor Member Item, the State of New York provided a grant of \$30,000 for the development of the playground.

Our HOPE VI Project consists of four phases:

Phase I - Kembleton consists of 27 non-ACC rental units which were primarily financed by Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) equity through our HOPE VI rental developer, Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. All units are on Kemble Street within our HOPE VI targeted area. Construction began in August 2003 and was completed in January 2004. Initial occupancy of these units was in March 2004. Full occupancy was attained in November 2004. This development involved seven buildings (6 rehabilitated buildings and 1 new) and was financed through LIHTC equity, Key Bank Development Corporation, City of Utica HOME funds, and NYS Housing Trust funds.

Phase II - Steuben Village consists of 49 units of residential rental housing which was developed on scattered in-fill sites in the Cornhill neighborhood. Steuben Village involved both new construction of 15 multifamily homes on vacant lots as well as substantial rehabilitation of 4 existing vacant buildings. All 49 units are LIHTC and 25 are public housing (ACC). All 19 buildings are multi-family buildings. Construction began in August 2004. The project was completed in December 2004. Initial occupancy was July 2005. Leasing was completed in November 2006. Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. was the developer. Steuben Village is managed by the UMHA.

Phase III - Rutger Manor involves both the new construction of multifamily homes on vacant lots as well as rehabilitation of an existing building. A total of 27 lots were developed into 12 buildings and 33 units. Eleven buildings were newly constructed and one existing structure was substantially rehabbed. Of the 33 units developed, 21 are to be public housing (ACC) units and 8 HOME units. All units will have Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

Construction began in December 2005 and was completed in December 2006. Initial occupancy was in February 2007. Leasing was completed by December 2007. The project developer was Housing Visions Consultants, Inc. The property manager is the UMHA.

Phase IV - Oneida Homes will consist of 40 single-family homeownership units constructed within the HOPE VI development area. All the units will be intended for fee-simple sale. To date, 18 homes have been developed. Financing for Phase IV is provided by the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, the City of Utica HOME Program, New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, private bank mortgages and construction loans, homeowner equity, and HOPE VI funds. Oneida Homes consists of four subphases: A – 11 units (completed); B – 8 units (completed); C – 12 units (to be developed); and D- 9 units (to be developed).

HOPE VI Homeownership Project

Oneida Homes is the homeownership development component of the HOPE VI project. It is conceived as a multi-year initiative of the City of Utica and the UMHA to develop homeownership opportunities for residents of public housing, the Cornhill neighborhood, and the City of Utica. Oneida Homes involves the construction and sale of single-family homes to low-income first-time homebuyers on scattered sites in the HOPE VI Revitalization Area. It will be marketed to current neighborhood residents, tenants of the former Washington Courts public housing development and Utica's large immigrant population. In order to concentrate redevelopment activity for maximum community impact, the proposed project will be built on model blocks in Utica's Cornhill neighborhood.

Major redevelopment efforts are occurring in the Cornhill area. Through the HOPE VI project, UMHA has built 109 new units of rental and 19 units of homeownership housing. According to recent market studies, sufficient demand exists for the proposed units. The neighborhood is in close proximity retail stores, social service agencies, entertainment, cultural institutions, government offices, and other amenities in the Downtown area. A Head Start facility, youth center, and elementary school are located in the project target area.

Through the HOPE VI initiative, the UMHA, City of Utica, and Oneida County have developed a long-range strategy for Cornhill which includes the development of single family owner-occupied homes, affordable rental housing, housing rehabilitation programs, streetscape improvements, and playgrounds.

Of the twenty-one units to be developed, there will be two 3 bedroom accessible units and nineteen 4 bedroom units. The units will have low-maintenance exteriors, new appliances, and will be designed to be energy efficient. All homes will be constructed according to HUD and New York State energy conservation guidelines.

The total development cost of the project will be approximately \$4,305,291. Average total development costs for these homes will be \$205,013. Financing sources include:

- 1) \$1,155,000 in deferred loans to homebuyers from the City of Utica HOME Program (does not include closing cost assistance);
- 2) \$1,236,900 in mortgage financing from HSBC USA, N.A. and other financial institutions;
- 3) \$476,928 in deferred loans to homebuyers from the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal HOME Program;
- 4) \$1,203,363 in Utica Municipal Housing Authority's HOPE VI funds structured as a developer subsidy and subordinate loans;
- 5) Owner equity in the amount of \$23,100 will complete the permanent financing.
- 6) A construction line of credit will be provided by a local lender in the amount of \$1,826,573.
- 7) Construction financing in the amount of \$1,826,573 will be provided by the HOPE VI grant
- 8) \$6,500 direct interest rate subsidy for each unit from the Federal Home Loan Bank for a total of \$136,500.

The City of Utica will provide closing assistance in the amount of \$73,5000 for the entire project. It will also provide funding for public infrastructure improvements. The sales price will average \$60,000 per unit. The actual price of a unit may vary based upon the particular model selected and final construction costs.

HUD has conditionally approved the Oneida Homes IV C and 4D projects consisting of 21 new single-family homeownership units which will be constructed by September 30, 2008. HUD is in the process of providing final approval of the project environmental review as well as term sheets. We anticipate the closing to be completed by the end of February 2008.

Financing for Phase IV C & D is complete and will be provided by HOPE VI funds as well as the City of Utica HOME Program, New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal HOME Program, Federal Home Loan Bank of New York private bank mortgages, and homeowner equity. A local financial institution will make available construction financing.

ⁱ For an update on demographics of both the Washington Court residents and incoming Cornhill residents, see the HOPE VI Community and Supportive Services Closeout Report, UMHA, December, 2008).

ⁱⁱ A document from the MHA listing its members and detailing the early expansion of public housing was located in the Oneida County Historical Society Archives. Although undated, it appears to have been written between July, 1949 and June of 1950.