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Federal Works Agency - John M. Carmody, Administrator Vol. 2, No. 9 - August 27, 1940 U. S. Housing Authority - Nathan Straus, Administrator

Project in New Orleans Replaces "Storyville," Famed Vice Center

When the New Orleans housing authority's Iberville project is completed, it will have replaced what was once America's most notorious vice district.

Known as "Storyville" to the people of New Orleans, this 38-block slum is credited with being the birthplace of Jazz—the name, it is claimed, deriving from one of the numerous dance bands in the area called the "Razzy Dazzy Jazzy Band."

Since 1917, when it was officially closed by Army and Navy regulations, Storyville has been just a clutter of decaying slum structures, but in the late nineteenth century it was the city's recognized "red light" district. An ordinance of 1897 protected it as such and prohibited other sections from competing.

In Storyville were the notorious "mansions" and the equally notorious "cribs." One of the mansions, now a warehouse and soon to be demolished, was Lulu White's Mahogany Hall, where patrons were welcomed amid elaborate furnishings with all the dignity of a first-class hotel. Margaret Bradford's, one of the best known bagnios, was torn down some time ago.

The more luxurious institutions in Storyville hired orchestras to entertain their guests. There were also bands that wandered about the streets playing for coins. These established and wandering dance bands, it is claimed, evolved the type of music which later became known throughout the country as jazz.

(Continued on page 4)

Garfield Court in Long Branch, N. J. Named for Martyred President of U. S.

Named for James A. Garfield, the twentieth President of the United States, Garfield Court, USHA-aided low-rent housing community in Long Branch, N. J., was officially opened early this month, with dedication ceremonies under the direction of John W. Flock, Chairman of the Long Branch housing authority.

Although the dedication of the project was not formally celebrated until August 3, families had been moving in since July 1. When completely occupied, the community will consist of 127 families formerly living in substandard dwellings. Their incomes will average about \$1,000 a year, and rent on their new homes, plus the cost of light, heat, cooking, refrigeration, and water, will average about \$23 a month.

Businessmen in Long Branch have profited considerably from the project. Pay rolls for construction work had totaled \$217,000 by July 15. Most of this was circulated in the community.

In addition, some \$5,000 in back taxes

was paid to the city when the project site was acquired.

Private capital totaling \$100,000 was invested in the project. This is considerably more than the \$67,000 required by the original USHA contract, but so great was the demand for the local authority's bonds that \$100,000 worth was sold at once.

With no labor disputes on the project, and excellent cooperation from local civic organizations, the Long Branch housing authority has been able to rush Garfield Courts to completion in less than a year. The groundbreaking ceremonies were held September 13, 1939, and the first tenants moved into finished dwellings July 1, 1940—less than 10 months later.

Impressive dedication ceremonies featured speeches by Congressman William H. Sutphin of New Jersey's third district, and Langdon Post, former New York City tenement house commissioner, now with USHA. Among the guests of honor was Louis B. Tim, president of the City Planning Board, and members of the Long Branch housing authority—Samuel Heimlich, Phillip Shaheen, Forest Green, and Daniel J. Maher,

President Garfield and many other celebrities frequented Long Branch during the 70's and 80's. Garfield died in a summer cottage there. The town was known chiefly in those days as a resort, but of late years it has acquired a number of garment mills and other manufacturing establishments. It is the second largest city on the Jersey coast.

Public housing in Philadelphia is receiving practical cooperation from local business institutions. The Philadelphia Transportation Company prints and displays free of charge cards advertising J. W. Johnson Homes and Tasker Street project in street cars and subways. Cards will be displayed for 10 days beginning August 17.



Street, tree, house, Garfield Court site, before demolition.



Same street, same tree, new house, after construction.

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California Counties Cite Present Housing Need

Health Officers, Chambers of Commerce, newspapers, mayors, city clerks, and housing authority officials from 16 California counties recently expressed themselves on the need for low-rent housing and slum clearance (both for defense and nondefense purposes) in their communities. The statements were received in response to a State-wide survey conducted by the California Housing Association within the last few weeks. Following are excerpts from the reports:

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Health Officer: "There are many industries in Contra Costa County which are essential to national defense . . . four large oil refineries . . . U. S. Steel Corporation, National Chemical Company, Great Western Electric Chemical, and Pioneer Rubber Mills. These industries will soon need more labor to operate them. . . . There will be a housing shortage in the near future."

MARIN COUNTY

Health Officer: "In Marin County there is a shortage of small rentable houses; the establishment of the Hamilton Field air base has helped create this demand."

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Housing Authority: "Substandard housing as found in the County is as follows: 'Hooverville' areas, shacktown settlements, suburban subdivisions for low-income families, auto courts, 'four-corners' shacks, farm and other isolated dwellings, small towns . . . the shacks are crowded together and constitute such a fire hazard that if a fire should start on a windy day, the entire settlement would probably burn with much loss of life. Last fall two small children burned to death in a galvanized-iron and scrap-lumber shack. . . . There are as many as 2,500 low-income families living in indecent, unsafe, and unsanitary dwellings."

IMPERIAL COUNTY

Survey covering Slum Sections of All Incorporated Cities: "Number of places unfit for human habitation 89.8 percent."

EL CENTRO

Chamber of Commerce: ". . . the need is sufficiently great here to warrant the appointment of a housing authority, which has been done."

PLUMAS COUNTY

Health Officer: ". . . present shortage of decent dwellings throughout the County is estimated as between 30 and 40 percent. . . . Newcomers to this area cannot find housing."

MONTEREY

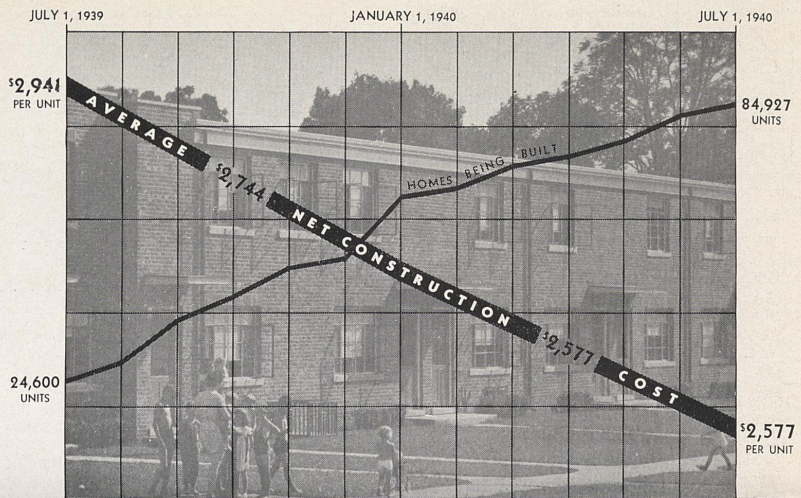
Monterey Herald, July 21, 1940: "Shortage in Housing is Acute Here."

SANTA BARBARA

Health Officer: "In one area in the lower part of the city, in which were located 82 percent of our unfit houses, two-thirds of all the tuberculosis cases reported occurred."

FRESNO

Real Property Survey of Mayor's Housing Committee: Survey covered almost 3,000 dwellings, 11,000 people. One-third of the structures either "needed major repairs,"



Costs go DOWN as building volume goes UP

During the 12-month period, July 1, 1939, to July 1, 1940, while the number of USHA homes under construction rose from 24,600 to 84,927, net construction cost per dwelling, based on approved bids for two 6-month periods, dropped from \$2,941 to \$2,744 to \$2,577. Standardization, successful labor relations, and increased experience in large-scale planning and building were significant factors in effecting the reduction.

had poor sanitation, or were otherwise "unfit for habitation. In the surveyed area . . . 517 families with incomes of \$75 per month or less."

PERRIS

Health Officer and City Clerk: ". . . approximate present shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling units in our city is 21 percent."

YOLO COUNTY

Sanitarian: "Long accumulating shortage of housing . . . the result of poor economic conditions found among certain classes of people in the community. It is doubtful if the mere building of sufficient housing would rectify the condition since they would be unable to pay the necessary rent. . . . I would estimate that perhaps 100 low-cost units of sufficient size to house a family of 5 or 6 would solve our housing problem."

BENECIA

Health Officer: ". . . extremely difficult to rent livable quarters of any class, but this applies particularly to those of low or medium wage class. This ordinary peacetime shortage is now aggravated by the influx of new emergency workers due to the defense program at Mare Island and Benecia Arsenal."

FIREBAUGH

Health Officer: "Most of the residents live in poorly constructed shacks and old houses which are really fire hazards . . . half a dozen renters applying for every new house. . . . Surely the housing here is in great need."

Serious shortages were reported also from Alameda, Fairfield, Orange, Suisun, San Bernardino, and Salinas Counties; and San Diego, San Jacinto, Susanville, Coalinga, Hanford, and Bishop.

Orlando Project Helps Private Construction Says Local Writer

According to Donald West, writing in the Orlando, Fla., *Evening Reporter Star*, July 30, USHA construction in Orlando is proving a stimulus to private construction in the low-cost housing field. Mr. West points out that although there were some fears in the early stages of the Orlando low-rent housing program that it would supplant private enterprise, these have rapidly been dissipated.

Mr. West says, "Although the South Division project has been in the process of construction for more than a year, there has been no slackening in erection of Negro homes either by the Negro himself or the white investor.

"As a matter of fact, the slum clearance deal seems to have stimulated the market."

The stimulation of the building market in the field of low-cost housing has been accompanied by raising standards, Mr. West points out. Houses erected since the first of the year are larger; they have better roofs; many more have bathrooms and electric lights than in previously constructed houses; and the interior finish shows considerable improvement. While the USHA homes have been going up, scores of Negro homes in Orlando have been altered and repaired. In some instances electric fans have been installed in the air chambers between roof and ceiling so that "a comfortable, liveable temperature can be maintained throughout the warm weather."

Most important improvement in new privately built Negro homes is that bedrooms have closets and some of the kitchens have cabinets.

9/25/40

HOUSING for DEFENSE

The Problem and The Answer



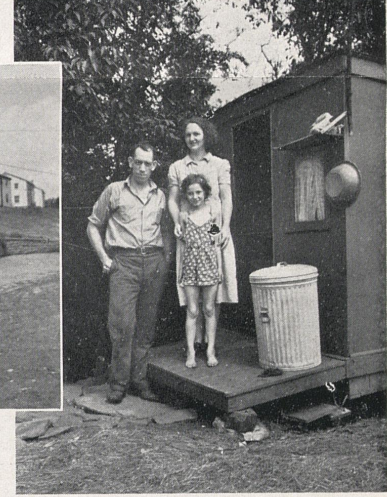
THE PROBLEM: Money can't buy decent homes for these defense workers (left) in Clairton, Pa., so they live in trailers. Upper right: Mrs. Frank Gillespie prepares the family home for a bit of rough weather. Center right: Mrs. Gillespie and family at their front door. "A short vacation in a trailer may be fun," says Mrs. Gillespie, "but I never thought I'd one day be forced to live in one." Frank Gillespie and Ralph J. Nealey (with family, lower right) work in Clairton steel mills (see pay-day line-up at left). Frank earns \$120 a month. But that isn't enough to pay \$40 a month for three cramped rooms in town, he says. So the Gillespies and the Nealeys and many of their friends have taken to makeshift trailers. It's all there is for their money. Their experience parallels that of thousands of defense workers. In Bremerton, navy yard city in the State of Washington, houses and apartments are filled, tent camps have sprung up, some workers have even applied for lodgings in the City Jail.



THE ANSWER: USHA homes such as these (below) for low-income workers, have been and are being built for both peace-time and defense needs at an average construc-



tion cost of only \$2,838 each. Construction time on defense projects is 120 days from ground breaking to occupancy.



Tenant Relations School Provided in Washington

Job training for newly employed Tenant Relations personnel was initiated by the USHA in Washington August 19. Trainees included Tenant Relations Advisers recently appointed in Regions III, VI, and VII, and three new members of the Tenant Relations Section in the Washington office.

Training sessions have been divided into three parts: I. Factors in Project Planning Related to Management; II. Steps Leading Up to Management During Construction; and III. The Project in Operation. One week will be devoted to each of the first two parts. The third part, including Tenant Selection, Renting and Leasing, and Community Activities, will cover a 2-week period.

Actual problem situations which have occurred in various localities are being used by the trainees for study and analysis, followed by discussion among themselves and with the advisers. No lectures are contemplated. During the first week each trainee was assigned a project now beyond the planning stage. All written materials on planning community space and related subjects were made available. The trainee was then introduced to USHA people familiar with the development of the project, and at the end of the week he was asked to report his findings.

It is expected that Tenant Relations Advisers for the other regions will join in the program should they be appointed in the very near future.

Schedule of Bid Opening Dates¹

Project location, number, and name (when available)	Number of units	Date of opening
Caguas (P. R.-3-4): Jose Mercado	152	8-29-40
Charleston (S. C.-1-7, Defense)	400	8-29-40
Columbus (Ga.-4-3, Defense)	614	8-29-40
Hopewell (Va.-5-1)	96	9-15-40
Jersey City (N. J.-9-2)	450	9-16-40
Marietta (Ga.-10-1): Clay Homes	108	9-3-40
Marietta (Ga.-10-2): Fort Hill Homes	120	9-3-40
New Orleans (La.-1-1, Pt. II): St. Thomas Street	36	9-11-40
Newport News (Va.- 3-1): Harbor Homes	252	9-5-40
Newport News (Va.- 3-2, Defense)	350	9-10-40
Pelly (Tex.-12-1)	30	9-12-40
Pelly (Tex.-12-2)	30	9-12-40
Philadelphia (Pa.-2-3)	1,250	9-17-40
Washington (D. C.- 1-7): Navy Yard	314	9-10-40
Williamson (W. Va.- 1-1)	72	8-30-40
Williamson (W. Va.- 1-2)	38	8-30-40

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

² Information not definite.

Structural Details Shown In Study of 243 Projects

Figures recently compiled on the 243 USHA projects under construction at the end of July provide an excellent statistician's-eyeview of the USHA program throughout the country.

The most popular construction type is the two-story row house. Of the 90,236 dwellings included in the tabulation, 47,721 are of this type, with three-story apartments next at 16,903. Altogether, there are 62,639 dwellings in row houses and flats, against 27,597 in apartment buildings. One of the facts these figures show is that the majority of the projects are in medium-sized communities where the apartment house is not necessary.

The most popular type of wall construction is brick and tile, used in 78 projects, with solid brick (34 projects), concrete block (27½ projects), and brick and concrete block (26½ projects) next in order. Other types of wall construction tabulated are: frame, poured concrete, brick veneer on wood studs, elgin (smooth face) tile, hollow tile, speed-brick, and various combinations.

Floor construction in 207 projects was concrete throughout. In 24 projects concrete is used for first floors, frame for second; and in only 12 projects is frame used throughout.

Frame construction is used for roofs in 139½ projects; concrete in 93½; concrete on bar joists in 6; and gypsum tile on bar joists in 4.

Coal and gas are equally in demand for heating fuel, each being used in 83 projects. Oil is used in 58, purchased steam in 5, coal and gas in 1. In 13 of the projects no heat is provided.

The majority of the projects (127½) are considered fireproof; 77½ semi-fireproof; 26½ ordinary brick construction; 10½ frame; and 1 fireproof on first story, frame above.

Project in New Orleans Replaces "Storyville"

(Continued from page 1)

The Iberville project, now under construction, will provide new homes for 858 low-income families. Net construction cost per dwelling is estimated to be \$3,000.

The New Orleans authority has USHA loans totaling \$25,311,000 for the construction of six low-rent housing communities to provide homes for 4,881 families.

Current Housing Literature

ENGINEERING NEWS-RECORD CONSTRUCTION COSTS, 1940 Edition. *Engineering News-Record*. June 20, 1940, pp. 87-212.

"Work data for engineering and contracting forces concerned with planning, estimating, bidding, appraisal and valuations." The data published by ENR cover such subjects as special building cost indexes, prices of construction materials, construction wage rates, compensation insurance rates, small house costs, costs of USHA housing, and many others. "The guiding objective (in the preparation of data) is to present figures in useful and useable form. No attempt is made at interpretation, the collected data constituting a reference manual rather than a series of discussions of costs."

A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERS THE MIGRATORY WORKER. *Business Week*, August 3, 1940, p. 17.

Business Week calls attention to the work of a Congressional committee which is at the present time studying the migrant problem, and whose report recommending Federal legislation will be issued in the fall.

ADMINISTRATION OF A SMALL PROJECT, by Abraham Goldfeld. Fred L. Lavanburg Foundation, 124-142 Goerck Street, New York City. 23 pp. Price, 50 cents.

This handbook presents the technical details of management, the administrative procedures, and the forms and schedules which have been developed in Lavanburg Homes.

SELECTED PROCEEDINGS EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING OFFICIALS INCLUDING THE FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT DIVISION. National Association of Housing Officials, 1313 East Sixtieth Street, Chicago, Ill. 49 pp. Processed. Price, 50 cents.

The Foreword to the volume states that "Financial and other limitations have forced us to be very selective in preparing the Proceedings. In deciding what should be included and what left out, the main criterion has been the availability of the same or similar material elsewhere. Some really first-class statements have been omitted because the substance of them has appeared elsewhere or is about to be published."

This careful selection of material has resulted in the production of a unique piece of housing literature that should prove a valuable reference work to all housers.

HOMES INSTEAD OF HOVELS, by Harry C. Bates. *American Federationist*, July 1940, pp. 22-23.

A discussion of the USHA program in terms of labor. Mr. Bates says: "The USHA is a double-barreled employment program. A recent check disclosed that the present program was providing 512,000 building trades jobs on project sites in 200 communities. These jobs accounted for \$225,000,000 in wages which went into the pay envelopes of building workers. In addition, employment of 750,000 workers in building material industries was being provided.

"Stoppage of the program would wipe out all these jobs and destroy the great aggregate buying power these jobs represent."

Weekly Construction Report

Item	Week ended August 16, 1940	Week ended August 9, 1940	Week ended August 18, 1939
Number of projects under construction ¹	246	245	88
Number of dwellings under construction ¹	90,866	90,636	37,494
Total estimated over-all cost ² of new housing	\$395,275,000	\$394,520,000	\$174,511,000
Average over-all cost ² of new housing per unit	\$4,350	\$4,353	\$4,654
Average net construction cost ³ per unit	\$2,730	\$2,731	\$2,914

¹ Includes projects which have been completed.

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

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

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