



Where
a vision
becomes
a reality.



2024 Progress Report



Vision
becomes
reality.



2024 Progress Report



Missions accomplished.

The ideas and planning of past years are now paying off. In 2024, new and improved infrastructure for living, working and playing helped improve the larger Chelsea community as it improved the lives of our residents – and showed what is possible with innovative partnerships.

Executive Director's message

Dear CHA Stakeholders:

As I wrap up my first 18 months as Executive Director, it is an exciting time to reflect on our achievements in 2024 and look ahead to the opportunities in 2025.



In 2024, the CHA team, in collaboration with our redevelopment partners, Joseph J. Corcoran, reached a major milestone with the \$155 million Innes redevelopment as we celebrated this achievement with a packed ribbon-cutting ceremony as we began moving the first wave of families back into their new homes.

During this impressive process, CHA staff were hard at work, completing over \$4 million in capital investments across our seven properties. Our Leased Housing Department transitioned to a completely paperless system, bringing us to 70% of our goal of full digitalization by the end of 2025. Our federal and state self-sufficiency programs flourished, graduating over 10 residents. We also strengthened public safety efforts by partnering with Alliance Security, fostering true community policing with residents, staff, and resident officers. With our resident councils thriving, we hosted many successful events that brought our community together to celebrate its diversity and pride.

Thanks to the strength of our 2024 accomplishments, we have laid a solid foundation for 2025, where we will continue to thrive together!

Our ongoing commitment to investing in both our residents and properties begins with plans to redevelop the 12.8 acres of land that currently house our Fitzpatrick and Prattville families. The CHA Board of Commissioners and staff are excited about the future as we collaborate with our residents to reimagine public housing and create more opportunities for self-sufficiency and success. Through teamwork, these dreams and investments will become reality, and I am incredibly proud of the CHA team and our residents!

Wishing you all the best,

Paul Nowicki

Paul Nowicki
Executive Director

Board of Commissioners

To the Chelsea Community:

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, I would like to again express our sincerest appreciation for the work of the authority's staff and leadership team. They carry out their important responsibilities with professionalism and great dedication. As we review and celebrate our accomplishments during 2024, the Board would also like to thank all CHA residents for their engagement and support which has helped us to ensure they receive the best and highest quality services.

We had another eventful year. The CHA achieved an exciting milestone in the Innes redevelopment project with the ribbon cutting event of the new DUO Apartments. More importantly, the CHA team was able to start moving back families into their new homes. In addition, the CHA implemented over \$4M worth of capital improvements throughout our seven properties and started the engagement with Alliance Security to improve safety at our developments.

Also in 2024, as required, the Board carried out its first performance evaluation of the new Executive Director. Paul Nowicki received top marks from the Board. He demonstrated excellent leadership abilities and continues to lead the organization with the utmost integrity and transparency. The Board has been inspired by Paul's diligent management of the authority's business, including his successful stewardship of the federal and state family self-sufficiency programs that this year resulted in 10 residents graduating and achieving their goals for financial stability.

As outlined in Paul's letter, the authority is moving forward on its planning for growth. The Board is particularly excited about CHA's efforts towards redeveloping the Fitzpatrick properties. We have a shared vision of utilizing innovative strategies to improve the concept of public housing for our families and providing them with increased opportunities to thrive and succeed. Thank you.

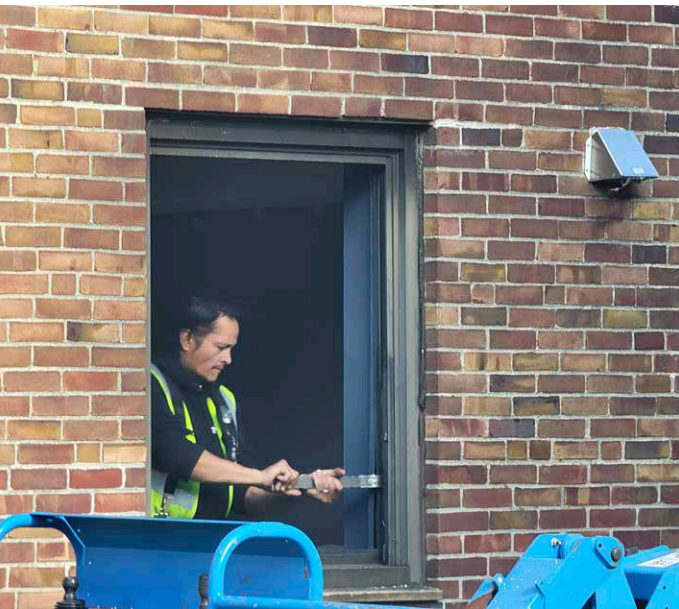
Sincerely,

Juan Vega
Chairperson

Stanley Troisi, Member; Sharon Caulfield, Vice Chairperson; Juan Vega, Chairperson; Betzaida Acevedo, Tenant Representative and Treasurer; Antonio Hernandez, Assistant Treasurer.



Community development



A worker seals a new window at a CHA residence.

Over the course of 2024, the CHA completed ambitious projects that will benefit our residents and make our properties more sustainable. Totalling almost \$4 million in capital expenses across our portfolio, the projects include:

- Window replacement across our federal portfolio comprised of 354 units with 18,000 windows
- Fire alarm replacements at our Buckley apartments
- Floodproofing at the Prattville and Fitzpatrick sites

We used multiple years of capital improvement funds while utilizing grants, CDBG funding and other sources to complete these and other major projects. Via creative funding, we continued to improve aging infrastructure for our residents despite the high costs.

The completed \$2.4 million window project replaced all windows at Scrivano, Mace, Margolis and our main offices and will help decrease heating/cooling costs while increasing resident comfort.

The \$1.6 million Buckley apartments fire alarm project was in its final stages last year, providing much needed safety and security upgrades. The comprehensive project involved rewiring all hallways and installing new alarms. While not highly visible, it is incredibly important.

The \$650,000 Prattville and Fitzpatrick floodproofing project in full swing last year, is part of a series being planned for sites situated along Mill Creek using capital improvement funds and in cooperation with the City of Chelsea. When completed, this forward-thinking initiative will protect our residents and the community at large.

Our maintenance and modernization team led by Jimmy Krasco coordinated multiple improvement projects with more to come in 2025. They aim to improve the lives of residents, increase the safety of our buildings and help us become more sustainable in an ever-changing world.



Greg Beatrice, our long-time Director of Maintenance and Procurement retired last year. We wish the avid ice fisherman who was known around the CHA as “Coach” all the best!



Tony Tiro profile

Like a star quarterback, Tony schedules and coordinates CHA construction/maintenance projects with private contractors. On staff for about 25 years, he’s also a liaison between residents and contractors. Overseeing the project process, he sets a game plan while keeping residents informed and handling any issues they may have.

As he says, “The construction part is easy for me because I have been doing it for over 40 years. The challenging part is dealing with the various personalities. I strive to make everyone involved as happy as can be. My guiding philosophy is that this is the residents’ home. I try to put myself in their shoes. How would I want to be treated if a contractor came into my home? From there, I know exactly what to do. I make sure that residents have a say.”

Whether it’s new walk-in showers, fire alarms or windows, the greatest job satisfaction for Tony is completing a job, however long it may seem to take, and seeing the smile on residents’ faces.



Diane Goodrich profile

Diane Goodrich is currently a Maintenance Coordinator who touches most residents’ lives with her broad responsibilities that run the gamut from placing repair work orders to setting up pest exterminations to posting notices for any upcoming residence work to issuing resident parking stickers to interacting with vendors. Empathy is at her core. She says, “One of my key strengths is that I’m also a lifelong resident. So, I can see things from the tenant view.”

Empathetically treating others the way she would like to be treated when responding to needs in English or Spanish, residents could not ask for a better Maintenance Coordinator.



Jimmy Krasco (middle) inspects a CHA roof.



Day in the life



A dream comes true: **Innes/DUO** apartments now open!

The Innes Apartment Complex, built in 1951, was an outdated housing development. Today, it has transformed into a state-of-the-art, multi-use complex and vibrant community that is the envy of the entire state.



A dream comes true: Innes/DOU apartments now open!



Residents began moving in last year, just in time for the holidays. Melissa Booth, President of the Innes Residents Association said, "We are so excited to move into this beautiful new community and our new home. It's a dream come true."



A man and his best friend are excited for their beautiful new apartment.

The new collaboratively developed complex received a Development Partner of the Year Award for its attention to detail and coordination with multiple parties – including the Innes Resident Council that gave residents a voice – one that will continue post-completion. Ed Augustus, Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities called it “a shining example of what we can do when public and private partners come together to build stronger communities.”

In securing the award recognition, the entire team of development collaborators comprised of the Joseph J. Corcoran Company, the John M. Corcoran Company, the CHA, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, the City of Chelsea, and the Innes Resident Association bested many other worthy projects across the state. What’s more, the innovative public-private partnership and its highly gratifying result are providing a model for government and private entities across the state.

Fast facts

- Innes Apartments was a 96-unit Chapter 200 state public housing development
- Partially opened while construction forges ahead
- The new complex is a mixed-income, fully amenitized community that includes all 96 state public housing units plus 194 market-rate units and 40 middle-income/workforce units
- A \$150+ million project funded by private and public investment

The revitalized Innes community will enable residents the opportunity to stabilize and improve their lives with decent housing, supportive services and self-sufficiency programs.

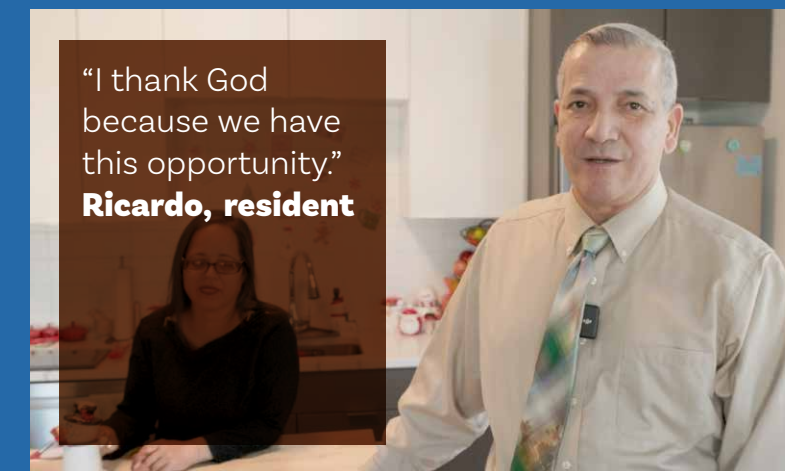
“This is, immediately, a renaissance for the neighborhood.”
Keith Houghton, Chelsea Police Chief



“Just picture hitting the lottery...All of a sudden you’re in a brand new house. That’s what it’s like for us.”
Marie, resident



“I thank God because we have this opportunity.”
Ricardo, resident



“It almost felt like I was walking into a resort.”
Alex, resident



The Innes story: Who wins?

City of Chelsea community – The project contributes to the downtown renaissance taking place.

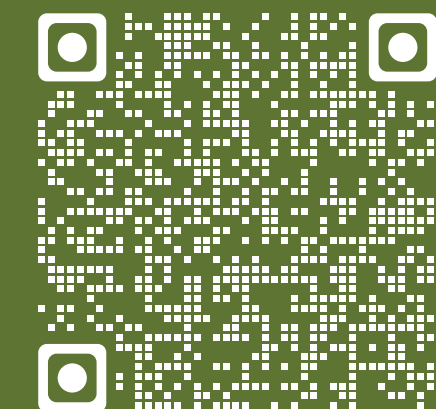
Residents – The project offers housing for a variety of income levels as well as businesses in a vibrant community that connects residents to the rest of the city.

Massachusetts – The state has an innovative public-private project model that can be applied to virtually any public endeavor.

Public housing – The Innes Development serves as a model that can be reproduced by other housing authorities and cities.

CHA staff – The project has given our talented team a chance to shine and gain experience on a major project.

Check out the Innes video!



Partner of the year: **City of Chelsea Information Technology Department**

The CHA appreciates all the partners we work with on a regular basis to bring programs and quality of life to our residents. In 2024, we recognized the City of Chelsea Information Technology Department headed by Ramon Garcia for their work with us on the Prattville Wifi initiative. With the full support of City Manager Fidel Maltez, Chelsea's IT Department offered the CHA guidance on best practices, helped research protocols, worked on guidelines, offered support and was a program cheerleader. They helped us break ground on an initiative that is being replicated statewide.

In addition to technical and tactical support, the City of Chelsea paid for the annual internet access fees and other critical structural expenses not covered by the initial MAPC/MBI grant. The City of Chelsea showed a great commitment to bringing digital equity to our residents and is already discussing next steps with the CHA on how to implement similar programs across our portfolio. Access to broadband internet is no longer just an option when it comes to bettering one's life, learning and growing. Programs like the one at Prattville aim to bridge the divide and ensure our residents have the tools they need to succeed in an ever-changing world. Learning from this program, the City aims to bring value and connectivity to the whole community.

See accompanying Prattville Wifi story on the next page.



Ramon Garcia (l), Chief Information Officer, with Fidel Maltez, Chelsea City Manager.



CHA Director of Operations Matt Frank and Executive Director Paul Nowicki accept the award from MassINC given for the project's first-in-the-state status.



Connections: **The Prattville wi-fi initiative**

Innovative project scores an award

Years ago, a report found that over 20 percent of Chelsea residents did not have high-speed internet. That was the impetus for improvement.

After installing high-speed internet to Prattville Apartment residents in 2023, we earned a Gateway Cities Innovator Award from MassINC in 2024. In fact, the CHA, with support from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and the City of Chelsea, was the first in Massachusetts to install a free wi-fi network for public housing residents. On top of that, we are working on providing digital skills training and support to help residents get up to speed, and are now planning with the City to bring wi-fi and programs to more residents.

Matt Frank, project manager for the initiative, said that high-speed internet “is a necessity to keep up in today's world...many of our residents were unable to access the internet for remote work and school, often congregating around the outside of McDonalds and Dunkin Donuts to use wi-fi to keep up with studies.”

Now, the Prattville initiative has provided a model and lessons for affordable housing operators across the Commonwealth.

Executive Director Paul Nowicki said, “Together we continue to work to give our residents the tools they need to succeed and show them support through this and other programs.”



Alexis Valdez (second from left), receives her FSS certificate of completion from CHA staff.

Resident of the Year, Alexis Valdez

A woman realizing the American dream

Federal Family
Self-Sufficiency
program graduates

Alexis Valdez

State Self-Sufficiency
Program graduates

Chantal Cuevas 10/18/24

Vilma Guerra 10/21/24

Hannah Tessier 10/21/24

Diana Ramirez 11/05/24

María Cuervo 11/05/24

Christina Hilke 11/25/24

Paula Munoz 11/25/24

Aisha Ellis 11/25/24

When Alexis Valdez received information on the CHA’s Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program, she replied immediately, expressing her desire to pursue her goals of employment and reducing her dependency on social assistance programs.

Her eagerness to move ahead in her life is revealed in a short timeline. After joining FSS in March 2020, she attended a job fair at the Western Front Marijuana Dispensary and was hired by the company in May 2020 (she is still an employee there). In June 2020, due to her hard work and dedication, Alexis was proud to request the termination of her benefits from the Department of Transitional Assistance!

Alexis kept rolling on. After learning that her credit score was low, she determinedly completed a Homebuying 101 Workshop. In March 2023, she bought a car. She enrolled in the AS Business Management Program at Roxbury Community College in April 2023... All of that has helped push her credit score up, and she vows to continue increasing it.

Employed, with an improving credit score, and a college degree on the horizon, Alexis graduated before her FSS Contract expired in March 2025.

She says, “I wanted to graduate from the program early and start searching to buy my own home within the next year or two. I am determined to pay off some debts like my car loan and build my credit high enough to get a good mortgage interest rate. This is very exciting. Hard work pays off. I can’t wait to have those keys to my first home in hand!”

For her determination and hard work, we are proud to name Alexis Valdez Resident of the Year.

Mace basketball court renovation

Last year, the Mace Resident Council, City of Chelsea and the CHA collaborated to renovate the Mace Basketball Court using Community Preservation Act open-space and ARPA grants. Maria Irola, the President of the Mace Resident Council and City Council President Norieliz DeJesus initiated the years-long project.

The ribbon cutting on a crisp December afternoon and attended by residents, officials, and CHA staff, was followed by a basketball clinic run by the city of Chelsea Sports Tourism Director Charlie Giuffrida – giving the new court a thorough test!

The renovated court puts on exclamation point on the CHA’s and City of Chelsea’s prioritization of community recreation.

Next up, renovation for the Scrivano basketball court!



Resident Councils in action

In 2024, the resident council of each CHA residence held events and activities throughout the year.



Staff by department

Executive Department

Paul Nowicki, *Executive Director*
Yolanda Velazquez, *Deputy Director*
Matt Frank, *Director of Operations*
Josue Velez-Soto, *Office Coordinator*

Property Management Department

Alexandra Jimenez, *Property Manager Margolis,
Buckley and Union Park*
Carmen Ortega, *Prattville and Fitzpatrick*
Jackie Matos, *Scrivano and Mace*
Chantal Cueves, *Recertification Specialist*

Occupancy Department

Ineudira Barbosa, *Director of Occupancy,
Admissions and Compliance*
Krystina Sunsinn, *Occupancy Coordinator*
Yahilin Rivera-Miranda, *Occupancy Specialist*

Leased Housing Department

Iris Perez-Feliciano, *Director of Leased Housing*
Chyneatha Perry, *Program Representative*
Celina Hernandez, *Program Representative*
Chimia Shepard, *Program Representative*

Finance Department

Leslie Esturban, *Accounting and Human
Resources Manager*
Raja Khallaayoun, *AP/AR Clerk*
Eda Cadenas, *AP/AR Clerk*

Supportive Services Department

Carmen Torres, *FSS Coordinator*
Gilda Cerna, *Supportive Services Coordinator*

Maintenance and Modernization Department

James Krasco, *Director of Maintenance and
Modernization*
Anthony Dichiara, *Maintenance Supervisor and
Training Officer*
Eric Montefusco, *Working Foreman/Mechanic*
Wayne Brooks, *Procurement Coordinator*
Diane Goodrich, *Maintenance Coordinator*
Tony Tiro, *Clerk of the Works/Inspections Coordinator*
Dennis Bankus, *Mechanic/Painter*
Keithan Mckoy, *Mechanic/Painter*
Song Soung, *Maintenance Mechanic*
George Travis, *Maintenance Mechanic*
Francis Jankowski, *Mechanic/Plumber*
Jim Granara, *Mechanic/Electrician*
Sean Landry, *Carpenter/Mechanic*
Ibro Omeragic, *Carpenter/Mechanic*
Ana Chirinos, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian*
Guillermo Romero, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian/
Mechanic*
David Fitzpatrick, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian*
Roberto Figueroa, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian/Mechanic*
Mark Thompson, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian/Mechanic*
John Martin, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian*
Vinicius De Sa, *Grounds Keeper/Custodian*

Capital projects

2024 Completed

- Margolis carport renovation
- Buckley security cameras
- Prattville security cameras
- Scrivano/Margolis/Mace window replacement project
- Prattville WIFI Project

In progress

- Buckley fire alarm system upgrade
- Prattville floodproofing
- Scrivano and Mace entry system replacement
- Margolis security camera upgrade/additions
- Union Park seating area
- Margolis roll-in shower conversion

Future projects

- Buckley electrical panel upgrade
- Buckley and Margolis community rooms HVAC installation/upgrade
- Margolis balcony doors replacement
- Margolis roof restoration
- Buckley unit HVAC replacement
- Buckley facade repairs
- Union Park roof/fascia/gutter replacement
- Buckley intercom system replacement
- Union Park fence renovation
- Scrivano/Margolis/Mace electrical upgrade
- Buckley valve replacement



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Special thanks to Matt Frank for his stellar photography.