

**Topic:** Media  
**Subject:** Herald Tribune: Rethinking public housing  
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The Venice Housing Authority faces a difficult decision on what to do about Grove Terrace, a dilapidated and poorly run public housing project.

All options should be explored publicly before the authority and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development make a decision.

Whatever that decision is, those officials should make it clear that public housing is still a community need and will be available, in some form, for the foreseeable future. That housing should be clean, safe and close to public transportation, shopping and schools.

Housing authority members, who met last Saturday to discuss the problem, say Grove Terrace's 50 units are in such poor condition that it is unlikely that they will be rehabilitated.

If demolition is deemed necessary, so be it. Grove Terrace residents should then be provided with federal vouchers that will enable them to rent housing in the Venice area.

That decision, however, should not necessarily spell the end of stand-alone public housing in Venice.

It is possible, with a lot of hard and smart work, to create an alternative to the traditional public housing project, which tends to segregate poor people.

One attainable goal could be construction of a complex that includes a mix of housing. Subsidized rentals could be mixed with subsidized owner-occupied units and entry-level owner-occupied units.

The Sarasota Housing Authority, after several failed attempts, devised such a plan and hired a private developer to replace traditional projects with a mix of housing.

The Venice Housing Authority and HUD should consider that model when weighing the options for Grove Terrace.