

# 2019 CMHA PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

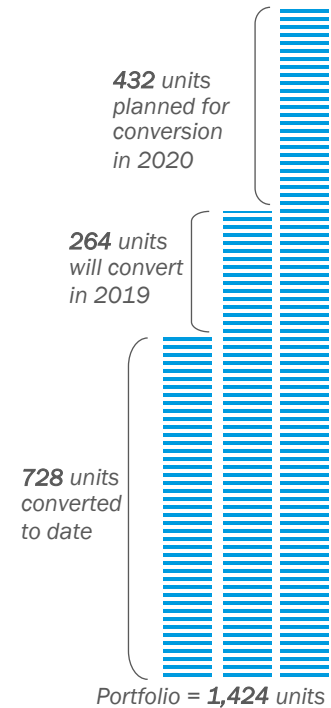
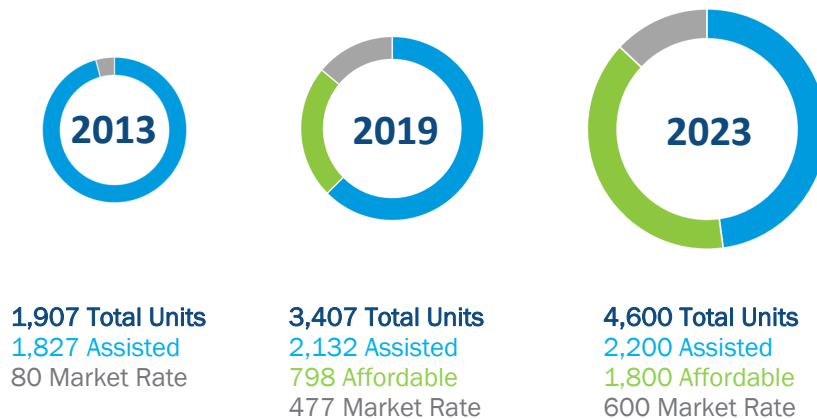


**COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
COMMUNITY. COMMITMENT. COLLABORATION.

# Who We Are

CMHA helps people access affordable housing through collaborative partnerships to develop, renovate, and maintain housing; promote neighborhood revitalization; and assist residents in accessing needed social services.

## 10-Year Portfolio Growth



## Public Housing Portfolio Conversion

## Voucher Utilization

One house = 100 vouchers



CMHA is authorized to provide 14,095 vouchers, but has only had enough funding to put about 13,385 Vouchers on the street. Our clients are using vouchers to rent in over 40 Franklin County zip codes.

## ***Key Community: Legacy Pointe at Poindexter***

CMHA is in the final phase of developing 450 new units of mixed-income multi-generational housing at the site of the former Poindexter Village public housing community.

This revitalization of a distressed public housing site was made possible by a \$30-million HUD Choice Neighborhoods grant as well as significant investment from the City of Columbus.

Legacy Pointe benefited greatly from private investment through both the 4% and 9% low-income housing tax credit programs and public investment through the HOME and CDBG programs.

With our development partner, McCormack Baron Salazar, we will complete the last phase of Legacy Pointe in 2020.





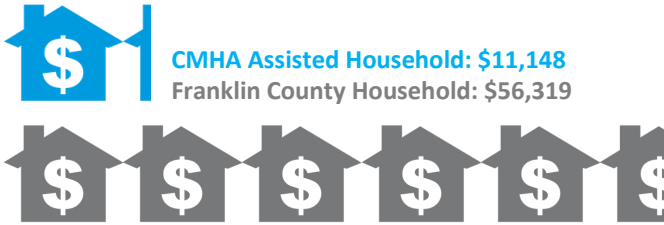
## ***CMHA's Commitment to Our Residents:***

CMHA's mission is to help connect our residents to the services they need. Throughout the year, CMHA hosts dozens of service providers at events across all our communities. These events offer our residents a great opportunity to connect to services including: health care, transportation, job training and recruitment, legal services, and many other services. We also find time for some fun through events like youth summer camps and senior picnics. These events help build a strong bond between our residents, employees, partners, and the entire Franklin County community.

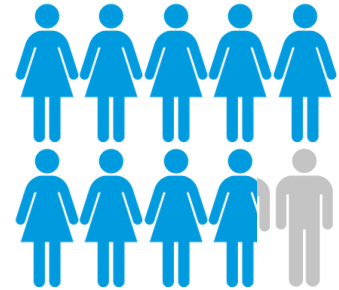
# Who We Serve

Over 13,000 of the households we serve receive federally-subsidized rental assistance. Below are some basic facts about these members of our community.

## Median Household Income



## Head of Household



**87%** of CMHA assisted households have a female head of household.

## Special Populations



**22%** of CMHA assisted households are headed by a person age 62 or older.

**51%** of CMHA assisted households are headed by a person with a disability.

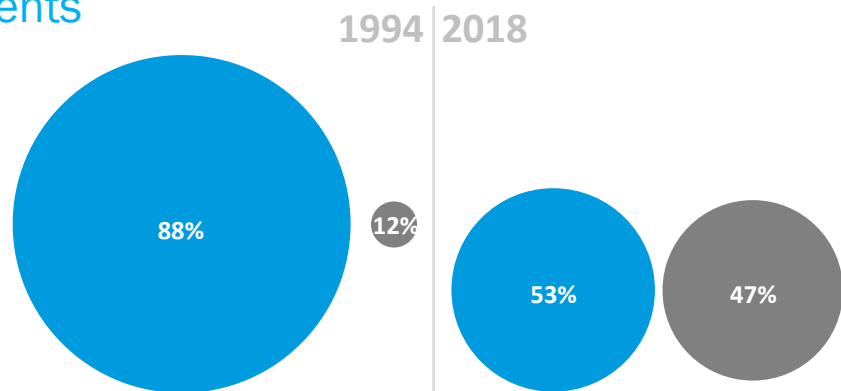


**22%** of Franklin County households have a female head of household.

## Dispersion of Residents

**Inside Urban Core**  
**Outside Urban Core**

In 1994, almost 9 out of 10 CMHA residents lived in Columbus' older, urban core, in predominantly high-poverty neighborhoods. As a result of CMHA policy changes, now almost half our residents live outside the urban core, in low-poverty neighborhoods with more access to opportunity.



# Successes in 2018

## *Thank You, Congress!*

### **Support for Affordable Housing in the Final 2019 Appropriations Act**

Congress provided a significant boost to both Housing Choice Vouchers and the Voucher Administrative Fee and included other needed increases to the Public Housing Capital and Operating funds in the 2019 T-HUD appropriations act. This strong support from Congress will help CMHA execute its strategic priorities and provide quality affordable housing to residents of Central Ohio.

## *Thank You, Ohio General Assembly!*

### **Budgetary Support for Affordable Housing**

The 132nd Ohio General Assembly, in its biennial operating budget (House Bill 49), eliminated several archaic restrictions on Metropolitan Housing Authorities that have been in place since the 1930s. In addition, the General Assembly funded the Health Policy Institute of Ohio's report, which emphasized the role that housing insecurity and homelessness plays in the infant mortality rate, with women with extremely or very low incomes most at risk.

## *Thank You, Local Partners!*

### **Capital Appropriations**

In January, Columbus City Council and Mayor Ginther announced that the City of Columbus will place a bond package on the May 2019 ballot that includes \$50 million for affordable housing for families in our region. Franklin County is exploring similar investments. We are hopeful that the voters approve this measure that will begin to address the affordable housing crisis in Central Ohio.

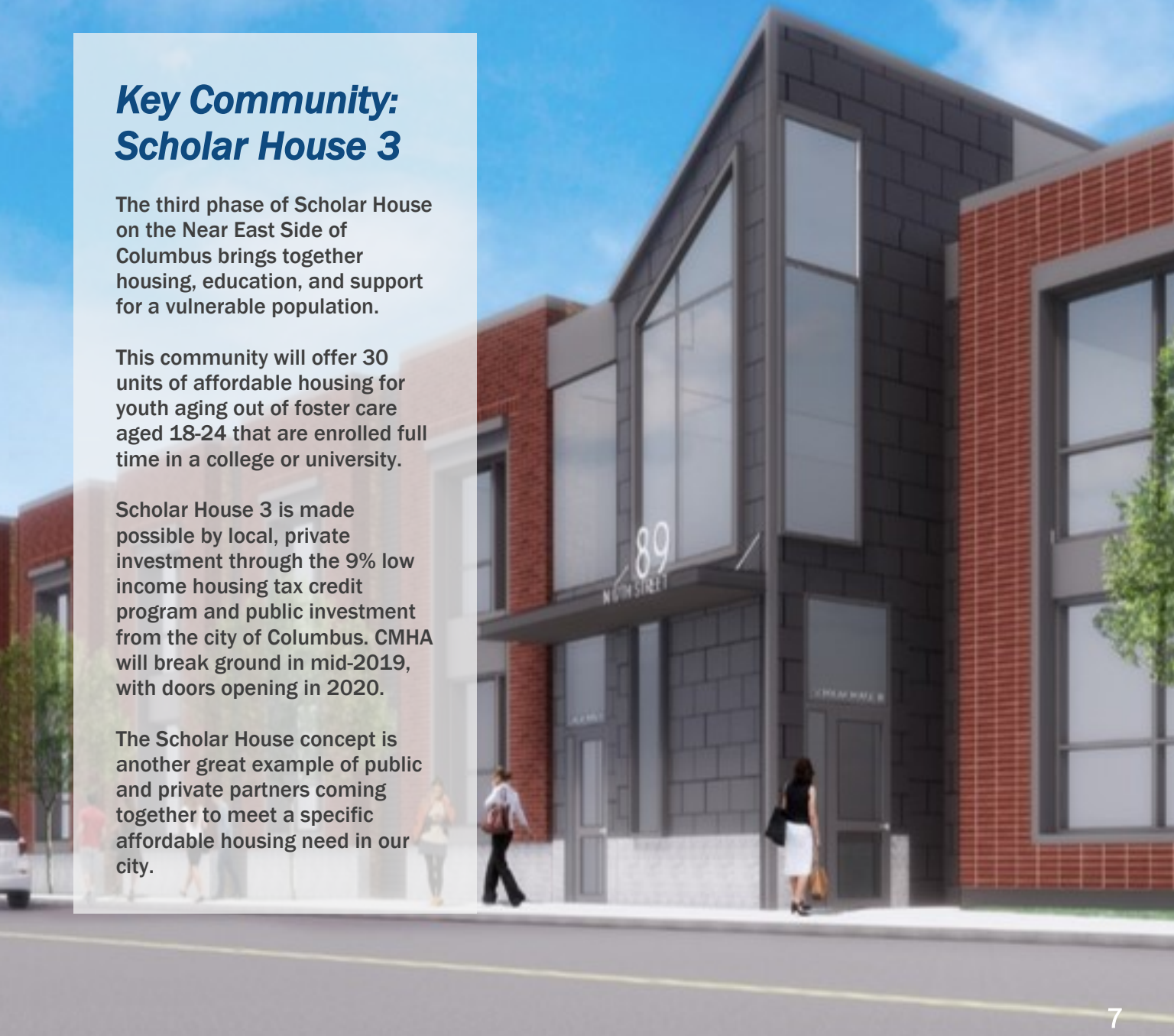
## ***Key Community: Scholar House 3***

The third phase of Scholar House on the Near East Side of Columbus brings together housing, education, and support for a vulnerable population.

This community will offer 30 units of affordable housing for youth aging out of foster care aged 18-24 that are enrolled full time in a college or university.

Scholar House 3 is made possible by local, private investment through the 9% low income housing tax credit program and public investment from the city of Columbus. CMHA will break ground in mid-2019, with doors opening in 2020.

The Scholar House concept is another great example of public and private partners coming together to meet a specific affordable housing need in our city.



## ***Key Community: River & Rich***

Rising from the site of a former distressed public housing property, River & Rich is the newest addition to the fast-growing East Franklinton neighborhood of Columbus.

CMHA has partnered with the City of Columbus and private developers to build this mixed-income, mixed-use project.

This first phase contains 230 apartments, 20% of which will be affordable/workforce housing; 25,000 square feet of commercial space, and a 290-space public parking garage. Leasing for both the residential and commercial spaces began in late 2018.

In 2019, CMHA and its partners will begin exploring options for phase 2 of River & Rich on the remainder of the site.





# Where We Stand

## *Our Top Priorities and Positions We Support*

*Over 100,000 of our neighbors in Central Ohio pay an unsustainable amount for housing costs, or worse are at risk of homelessness. As the largest affordable housing provider in the region, CMHA strongly supports federal, state, and local policies that help preserve the existing stock of affordable housing and increase the supply of new affordable housing.*

### Our Top Federal Priorities

#### **1. Fully Fund Section 8 Tenant-Based Rental Assistance**

The Tenant-Based Rental Assistance appropriations account provides funding for Section 8 Voucher renewals and the Section 8 Voucher Administrative Fee. Congress allocates funding for approximately 2.2 million Vouchers nationwide each year and over 14,000 Vouchers for CMHA residents. The Administrative Fee is a formula-based payment to public housing authorities (PHAs) to administer the Vouchers Congress funds. Housing and administrative costs continue to rise in Central Ohio, so CMHA supports, at a minimum, indexing Voucher and Administrative Fee funding to inflation in FY2020 and beyond.

#### **2. Expand and Stabilize the LIHTC Program**

CMHA supports commonsense reforms to the low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) program including establishing a permanent minimum 4% Housing Credit rate for tax-exempt bond financed LIHTC transactions. We also urge Congress to continue its support for Private Activity Bonds, which make the 4% LIHTC program possible. Congress preserved these through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 and should continue to preserve them.

We continue to support the work of the bipartisan group of legislators who came together on previous LIHTC reform bills such as S.548, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2017, also known as the Cantwell-Hatch Bill, and its companion, H.R.1661. And we encourage this work to continue in the 116th Congress so this important tool can be expanded and stabilized for the benefit of our constituents and our community.

### **3. Support Funding for the National Housing Trust Fund**

The National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) targets building, rehabilitating, preserving, and operating rental housing for extremely low-income families. Last year, \$267 million was available to states. Ohio participates in the NHTF program, with the funds received from the Trust being used to close the gap to finance the development of housing for very low and extremely low-income families.

CMHA supports Congressional proposals to preserve and expand the NHTF and we call on FHFA Director-designate Calabria to commit to continued funding of the Trust.

### **4. Ensure Objective Bidding for Performance-Based Contract Administrators**

Under the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance program, HUD provides monthly rental assistance payments on behalf of 1.2 million households throughout the United States. HUD currently engages 53 Performance-Based Contract Administrators (PBCAs) on a statewide basis to perform an array of services, including the PBCA monitoring and oversight of Section 8 as well as serving as a contract administrator for HUD with those projects' owners.

CMHA, through a subsidiary, is the PBCA for Section 8 projects in the State of Ohio and the District of Columbia. In the near future, HUD is expected to reconfigure the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance program and then rebid replacements for the PBCA contracts. CMHA believes that any bidding of contracts related to this program should be a fair process done through the General Services Administration. A recent concept from HUD, that was ultimately withdrawn, proposed to break up the array of services being directed to each facility and award multiple contracts. This approach would have created costly and unnecessary redundancies in the PBCA regulatory structure.



## **Key Community: RAD East**

CMHA's RAD East project is our most recent example of converting public housing to project-based vouchers (PBV) through HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD).

RAD East consists of 255 units at four separate properties on the eastern side of Columbus: Eastmore Square, Glenview Estates, Indian Meadows, and Ohio Townhouses.

Through the RAD program we will be able to continue serving extremely low income families at these properties, which is the most difficult market to serve.

This project came together thanks to a grant from the National Housing Trust Fund and equity investment via the LIHTC program. Work has already begun at the sites and will be complete by 2020.

## ***Key Community: Scioto Ridge***

CMHA acquired Scioto Ridge as part of our strategy to bring affordable and mixed-income housing options to neighborhoods of opportunity.

Scioto Ridge is located in the Dublin School District on the northwest edge of Columbus. The property is a short distance from several job centers in the northwest suburbs as well as other amenities such as grocery stores, healthcare centers, and recreation opportunities.

Using creative financing tools provided by Freddie Mac, CMHA will be able to preserve the 152 units at Scioto Ridge as mixed-income housing in Franklin County.

Through acquisitions like this, CMHA will continue to expand the amount of affordable housing in our community.

## 5. Promoting Regional Approaches

HUD should implement policies that promote regional collaboration and sharing of information and resources among PHAs. Many HUD initiatives such as the Rental Assistance Demonstration would be more beneficial for suburban and rural PHAs if collaborative arrangements could be made with more experienced, larger PHAs. These programs require a level of expertise that can be difficult to acquire for smaller PHAs that don't have sufficient economies of scale.

The Moving To Work (MTW) demonstration program at HUD could assist housing authorities seeking to implement a regional approach by reducing restrictions on sharing resources between accounts and between housing authorities. In fact, the legislation expanding MTW specifically called for more regional collaboration. It is hoped that when HUD releases its Request for Proposal for larger PHAs to be a part of MTW, relief from restrictions on cross-agency programing, will be a part of the flexibility afforded by MTW participation. If program is structured this way, CMHA will be interested in participating in it.

### Our Top State Priorities

#### 1. Modernize Ohio's Housing Authority Laws

Ohio's housing authority statutes were written in the 1930s and for that original conception of public housing. These laws need modernization to meet housing authority clients' needs and HUD's current program designs. Our state's laws need to reflect lessons learned over 85 years of public housing.

Other states have modernized their laws, and Ohio is falling behind. Commonly accepted development practices, such as mixed-income housing and mixed-use developments, need explicit reference in state law. While some work was done on this subject by the last General Assembly, more legislating needs to be done. Additionally, state law should permit Ohio's housing authorities to share services and to formally consult with each other concerning administrative functions and best practices.

## 2. Expand the Ohio Housing Trust Fund

CMHA supports the current Ohio Housing Trust Fund (HTF) operational structure, and oppose proposals that would alter the way HTF funds are collected and distributed. Importantly, we support efforts to supplement existing revenue from the HTF fee with \$20 million in each fiscal year to help bring the annual appropriation level to its original goal of \$50 million per year when the legislature created the fund in 2003. The HTF has remained flat-funded for the past 13 years and often falls short of the target due to a decline in fee revenue.

The HTF is a flexible state funding source that provides affordable housing opportunities, expands housing services, and improves housing conditions for low-income Ohioans and families. It is the state's primary source of funding for homelessness and affordable housing initiatives, and is administered by a state agency with assistance from a 7-member advisory board with a statutory cost limit of 5% for administration. This recommended appropriation increase will bolster Ohio's ability to respond to increasing family homelessness and forestall its impact on other social services, while creating jobs and bolstering communities throughout Ohio.

### Our Top Local Priority

#### 1. Support Local Initiatives to Combat the Affordable Housing Crisis

Local governments are an indispensable component of the strategies to meet the challenge of the affordable housing crisis in Central Ohio. CMHA supports the City of Columbus' plans to utilize bond proceeds to make capital investments in developments that will house low income families and we look forward to working with the leaders of Franklin County to explore ways to make similar investments in our community.

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