HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Transforming Lives & Communities

2023 Annual Report

"What's Our Next"

Affordability, Policy, Opportunity & Collaboration

Our Mission

To improve lives by providing quality, affordable housing options and promoting education and economic self-sufficiency.

"Through navigating the complex landscape of affordable housing, we are embracing innovation wholeheartedly, forging ahead with unwavering determination to build homes and communities, as we remain steadfast in our commitment to addressing the critical need for accessible affordable housing solutions."

~ David A. Northern, Sr.
President & CEO

From the President & CEO...

As we reflect on the past year, it is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I address you in this annual report. Our journey in the realm of affordable housing has been marked by both triumphs and challenges, and it is in these moments of reflection that we find the inspiration to propel us forward.

The pursuit of affordable housing is not merely a mission for us; it is a commitment to the very fabric of our communities. In the face of rising challenges, we stood firm, fueled by the belief that everyone deserves a safe and dignified place to call home. The challenges we encountered were formidable, from economic uncertainties to the evolving landscape of community needs. However, it is during such times that true innovation is born.

We recognize that the road ahead is not without obstacles, and it is our duty to transform these challenges into opportunities for positive change. In the spirit of progress, we are embracing new ideas and innovations that will redefine how we approach affordable housing. We understand that the landscape is ever-changing, and to make a meaningful impact we must be at the forefront of innovation.

Our commitment to affordable housing extends beyond brick and mortar. It encompasses a vision for sustainable communities, where individuals and families thrive. This year, we are not only building homes; we are constructing a future where every person, regardless of their circumstances, has the chance to build a better life.

In the coming months, we look forward to the grand opening of Columbia Senior at 2100 Memorial, a long-awaited initiative that will boast 197 modernized affordable units and amenities for our senior residents. We continue to see great progress in our developments in the East End: The Pointe at Bayou Bend and The Bend. Both projects aim to keep our residents within the communities in which they have resided for generations. In all the work we do, it is clear that leveraging cutting-edge technologies and relying on community-driven solutions should set the precedent for how affordable housing can be a catalyst for broader positive change. None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our community, partners, and dedicated team.

Together, we are not just addressing a need; we are shaping the future of our communities. As we navigate the challenges ahead. Let us be guided by our shared vision and the belief that through innovation, determination, and collaboration, we can overcome any obstacle.

Sincerely,

DAVID A. NORTHERN, SR.

From the Chairman...

As the Chair of the Board for the Houston Housing Authority, I am honored to share with you the remarkable strides our organization has made in supporting affordable housing initiatives and addressing homelessness in our community.

At HHA, we are committed to fostering a vibrant and inclusive community where every individual and family has access to safe and affordable housing. Over the past year, our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to develop innovative programs that not only provide shelter for the homeless but also empower families to achieve self-sufficiency and embark on the path to homeownership.

Our Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) has successfully housed individuals and families, providing them with not just a roof over their heads but also the necessary support to rebuild their lives. The program's comprehensive approach addresses immediate housing needs and also includes job training, financial literacy education, and counseling services to help individuals and families regain their independence.

In addition to our efforts in combating homelessness, the HHA is dedicated to helping families become more self-sufficient through a range of programs designed to enhance financial stability and promote sustainable homeownership.

Our programs offer resources such as down payment assistance, homebuyer education, and counseling services to guide families on their journey to becoming homeowners.

We understand that achieving affordable housing and ending homelessness requires collaboration and partnerships with various stakeholders. To this end, the Houston Housing Authority has actively engaged with local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies to leverage resources and maximize the impact of our programs. We believe that by working together, we can create lasting change and build a community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

We are immensely grateful for the ongoing support of individuals and organizations like yours who share our vision for a more just and equitable society. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact on the lives of those in need and contribute to the betterment of our community.

Respectfully,

LaRence Snowden

LARENCE SNOWDEN

Table of Contents

HHA Board of Commissioners.....7
HHA Executive Team.....8
Our Strategy.....9
Budget.....11
Client Income.....13
Properties.....14
Public Housing.....17
Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP).....18
Sustainability.....19
Projects Under Construction.....20
Projects Recently Completed.....21
Pending Acquisitions.....21
Economic Impact.....22
Affordable Housing Houston Units.....24
Affordable Housing: Current & Future.....26
Housing & Client Initiatives.....27
Choice Neighborhood Initiative.....30
Client Services.....32
Government Engagement.....37
Partnerships.....42
Staff Engagement.....49
Future Growth & Look Ahead.....51

HHA Board of Commissioners

The Houston Housing Authority is governed by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the City of Houston

The Board of Commissioners helps guide the HHA by setting policy and providing leadership and oversight that enables the agency to reach our goals and advance our mission.

The Board's collective efforts in guiding the organization and demonstrating astute leadership plays an instrumental role in steering the agency toward success.

KRISTY KIRKENDOLL
VICE CHAIR

STEPHANIE BALLARD

ANDREA COOKSEY

DR. MAX MILLER

KRIS THOMAS

HHA Executive Team

KHADIJA DARR
SENIOR VP
ADMINISTRATION

JENNINE HOVELL-COX
SENIOR VP &
GENERAL COUNSEL

GEORGE GRIFFIN III
VP OF HOUSING
OPERATIONS

MIKE ROGERS
VP OF FISCAL &
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

KENNETH COLES
VP OF VOUCHER PROGRAMS

ROY SPIVEY
DIRECTOR OF
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

DONNA DIXON
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
& CUSTOMER SERVICES

GILDA JACKSON
DIRECTOR OF
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

JAY MASON
DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE
INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT

JENNIFER JENSEN
COMMUNICATIONS &
SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

COREY FRANKLIN
SPECIAL ASSISTANT
TO THE PRESIDENT & CEO

NA'SHON EDWARDS, SR.
POLICY ADVISOR
TO THE PRESIDENT & CEO

ANNA HAWKINS
SENIOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
TO THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Our Strategy

HHA's 5 Pillars

Have a client-centered process by improving customer service and client wait times

Instill a business-centric mindset to streamline processes and services

Create a positive and uplifting culture both internally and externally

Enhance and maintain vendor and landlord relationships by building strong partnerships and working together cohesively

Be a better partner with stakeholders and clients to encourage communication and support positive outcomes for our clients

Bringing Hope Home:
Houston Housing Authority's Impact on Affordable Living

The Houston Housing Authority provides affordable homes and services to more than **60,000** low-income Houstonians, including more than **19,000** families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program, **5,212** living in **24** public housing and tax credit developments.

Our agency does more than just provide safe, affordable homes. We also offer a host of programs to help public housing residents and voucher holders:

- **Increase their education**
- **Live healthier lives**
- **Reach their economic goals**

Whether through an HHA funded service like the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) or our affiliate nonprofit Houston Housing Resources Inc., our agency strives to provide the low-income Houstonians we serve with a full range of opportunities to help them achieve their goals.

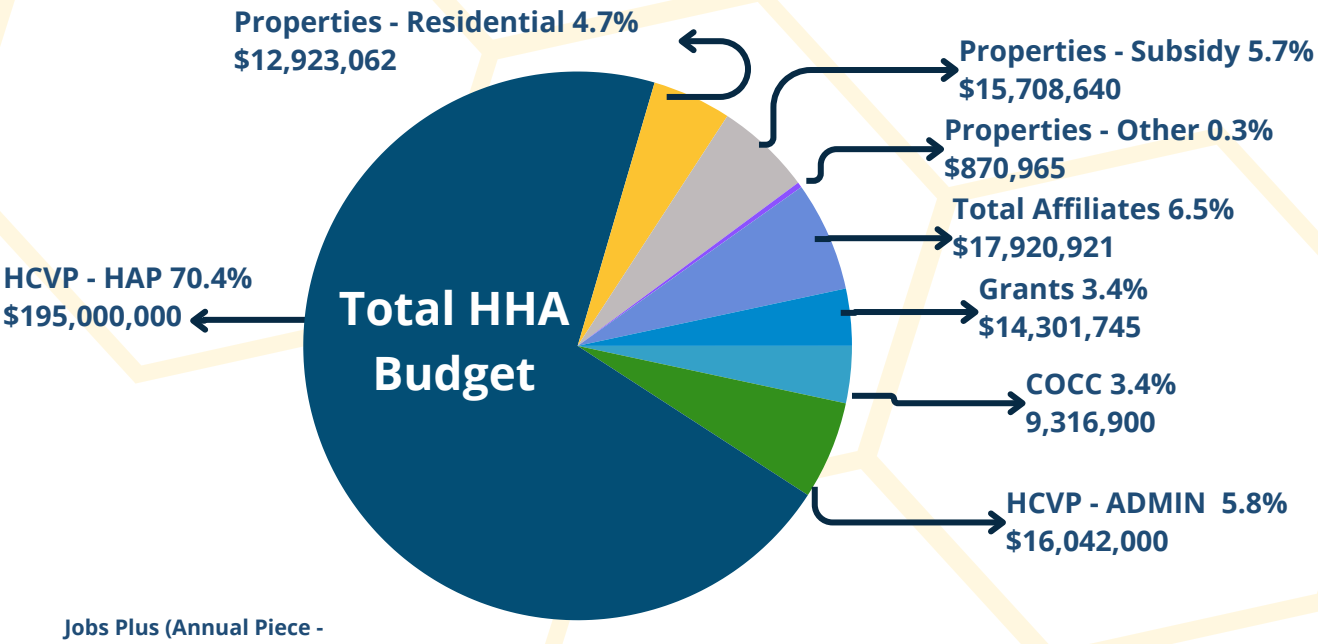
Serving:

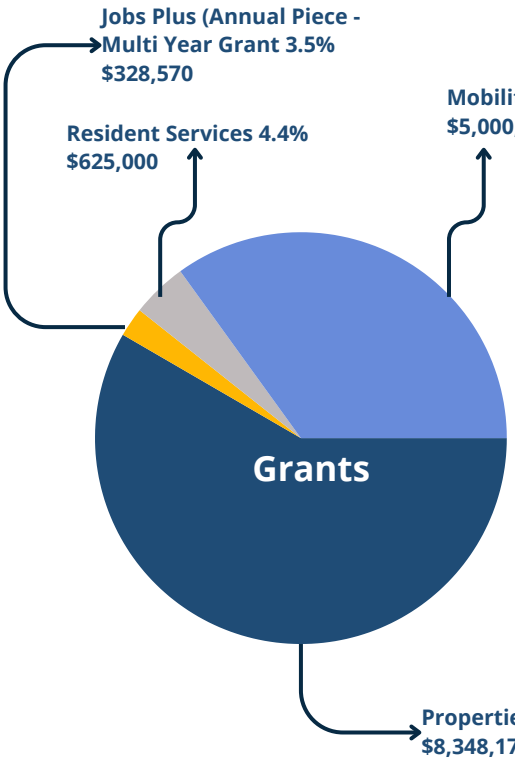
- **Low to moderate-income working families**
- **Seniors**
- **Veterans**
- **Individuals with disabilities**
- **Those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness**

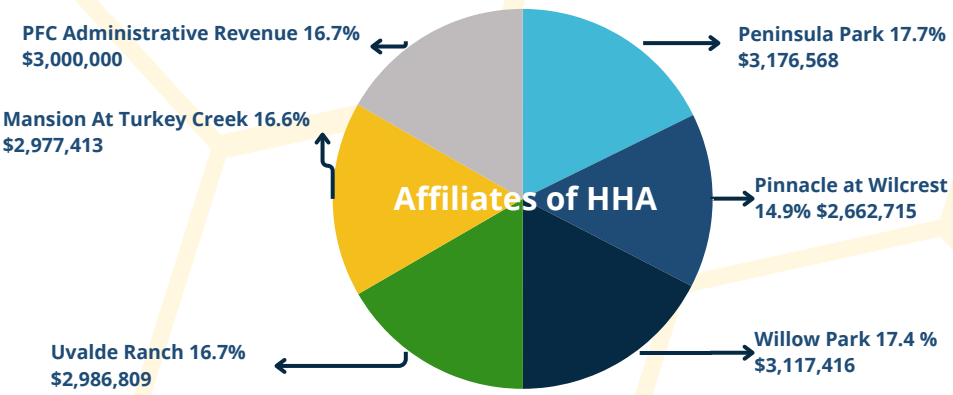
HHA provides stable housing to uplift the well-being of our low-income families in Houston and support their future with economic self-sufficiency programs and services.

Budget

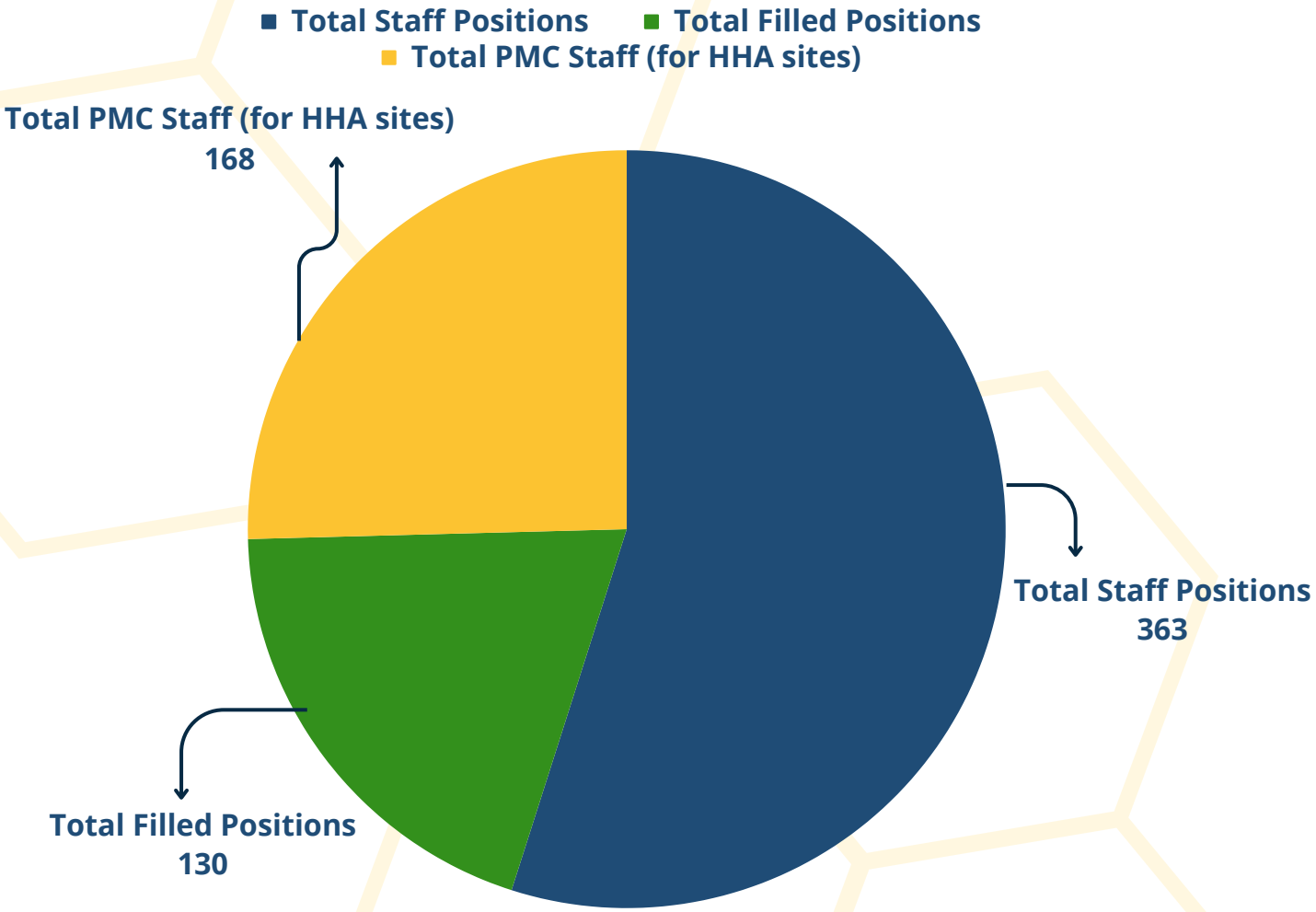
Revenue/Expenses	
HHA Total Budget	$264,163,312
Total Affiliates	$17,920,921
	$282,084,233





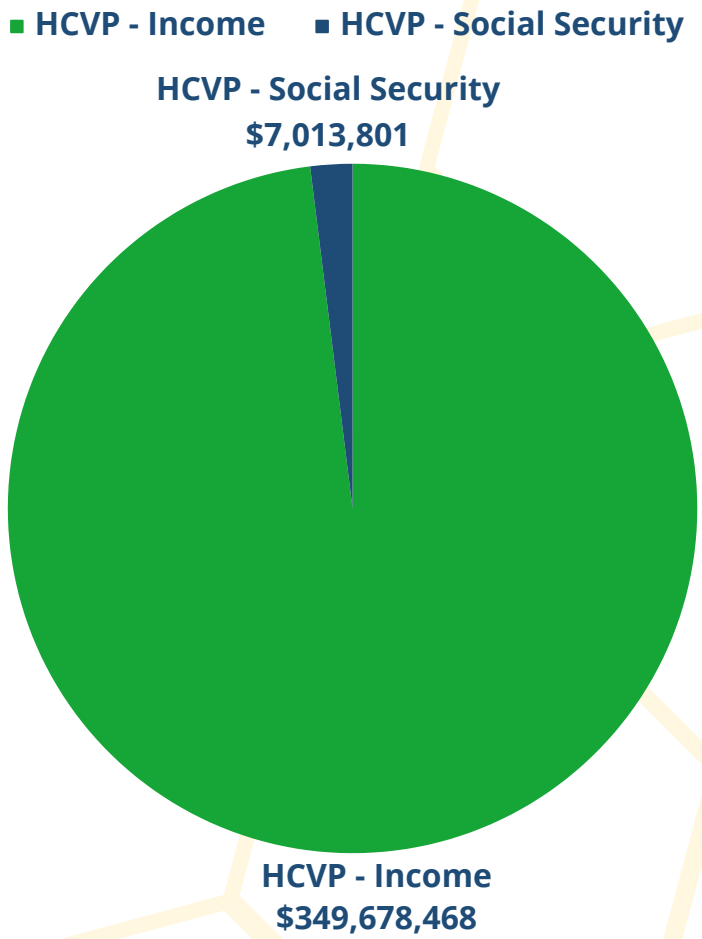


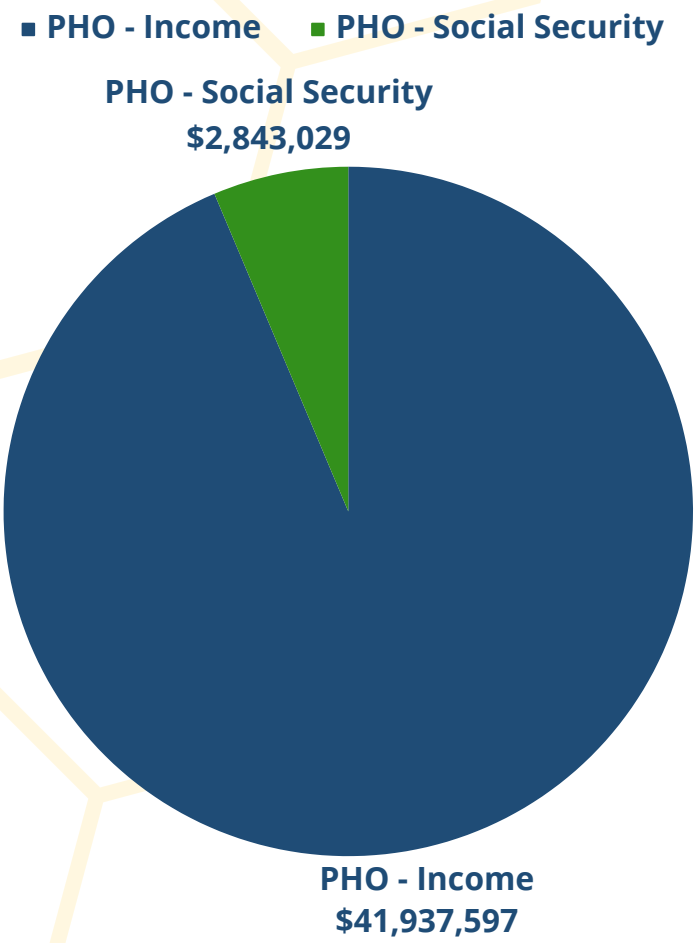
2023 HHA Total Staff, Filled Staff, and PMC Staff



Client Income

2023 HHA Annual Client Income and Social Security





Total income of all other clients aside from HCVP and PHO: $54,747,420

Property Types/ Unit Counts

Affordable Houston Housing Units (PFCs)
16,105

281 Units at 30% AMI

708 Units at 50% AMI

4,814 Units at 60% AMI

10,302 Units at 80% AMI

Total Public Housing Units
2,315

Families Served 2,396

Individuals Served 4,812

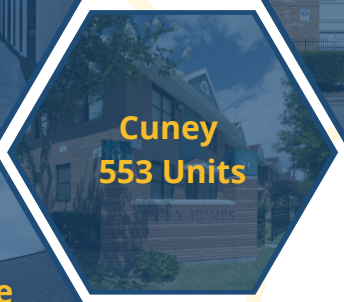
Average Monthly Tenant Rent $287

Public Housing Waitlist 31,666

Average Tenant Income $12,056

Traditional Public Housing Sites

1,688 Units



Mixed Income & Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)

1,238 Units

Tax Credit & Project-Based Section 8

2,186 Units

Public Housing

Strategies for Enhancing Public Housing Access

In January 2023 the Houston Housing Authority reopened the Public Housing Waitlist. The agency had temporarily closed the waitlist in 2018 in response to Houston's growing affordable housing shortage. We currently have 31,666 people on the waitlist.

All eligible low-income households, seniors, veterans, and persons with disabilities were encouraged to apply online at housingforhouston.com or in person at HHA's administrative office.

"Many families are either struggling to find affordable housing or remain housed with the highly-competitive state of our current housing market. Reopening the waitlist enabled us to provide more support and solutions to those in need." - HHA Board Chairman LaRence Snowden

The newly-enhanced waitlist application and online portal was designed to help streamline the process for applicants, providing greater accessibility and efficient access for those in need. The waitlist and portal also included the ability to apply to multiple HHA properties using a single application. Applicants could choose from the following HHA properties: Cuney Homes, Ewing, Kennedy Place, Independence Heights, Heatherbrook, Lincoln Park, Bellerive, Irvington Village, Kelly Village, and Lyerly. For the first time, applications were available in an expanded range of languages including English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Swahili, and Korean.

"Houston is experiencing one of the nation's worst affordable housing shortages right now. The last thing people in crisis needed was the added stress of navigating a complicated application process. At the end of the day, our priority is transforming the lives of those in need." - HHA President and CEO David A. Northern, Sr.

Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP)

Exploring the Impact of Housing Voucher Programs on Lives and Communities

Program Dispersion	Total Households per Program
Totals	19,664
HOME COVID-19 Rental Assistance	426
Emergency Housing Voucher	771
Rapid Re-Housing	173
HCVP	18,294

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as Section 8) provides tenant-based assistance, in the form of a voucher, to low-income families for rental units of their choice in the private market. Program applicants choose from a variety of housing options, including apartments, duplexes, single-family homes and townhomes. Vouchers can also be used to help families buy homes.

Program participants issued a housing voucher are responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of their choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. **The unit may include the participant's present residence.** Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by HUD standards.

A housing subsidy is paid to the property owner directly by the HHA on behalf of the participant. The participant then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the property owner and the amount subsidized by the program. **A participant's rent is usually about 30% of their monthly income.**

In 2023, HHA had **5,008 active landlords participate in HCVP.** The total Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) paid to landlords for the HCVP program was **$193,130,839.**

Sustainability

Leading the Way to a Greener Tomorrow

The Houston Housing Authority incorporates energy efficiency and sustainable practices into our work. On June 23, 2004, the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) matched the City of Houston Green by adopting the Green Building Resolution, which set a target of Silver level LEED certification for new construction, replacement facilities, and major renovations of the Houston Housing Authority buildings and facilities with more than 10,000 square feet of occupied space.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System) provides a complete framework for assessing building performance and meeting sustainability goals. Based on well-founded scientific standards, LEED emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies for:

- **Sustainable site development**
- **Water savings**
- **Energy efficiency**
- **Materials selection**
- **Indoor environmental quality**

Energy Performance - Retrofits, ESCO contracts & Partnerships with Siemens

The HHA has partnered with Energy Service Company, Siemens, to employ various cost-effective measures to achieve energy savings. These measures often include the following: high-efficiency lighting, high-efficiency heating and air conditioning, efficient motors and variable speed drives, and centralized energy management systems. During the contract's life, the HHA receives the benefit of reduced maintenance costs and energy costs.

Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) develop, install, and fund projects to improve energy efficiency and reduce operation and maintenance costs for their customers' facilities. ESCOs offer energy efficiency improvements by performance-based contracting.

(U.S. Department of Energy, 2011)

Projects Under Construction

2100 Memorial	
Total Units	196
Project Type	Replacement New Construction
Estimated TDC	$39.2 M
Developer	Columbia Residential
Completion	March 2024

Pointe at Bayou Bend (Clayton Homes)	
Total Units	398
Project Type	Replacement New Construction
Estimated TDC	$101 M
Developer	NRP
Completion	August 2024 to February 2025

The Bend (Clayton Homes)	
Total Units	431
Project Type	Replacement New Construction
Estimated TDC	$106 M
Developer	Ojala
Completion	December 2024

Allen Parkway Village (APV)	
Total Units	278
Project Type	RAD/Section 18 Blend Rehab
Estimated TDC	$99.2 M
Developer	Franklin
Completion	March 2025

Historic Oaks of APV (HOAPV)	
Total Units	222
Project Type	RAD/Section 18 Blend Rehab
Estimated TDC	$65.6 M
Developer	Franklin
Completion	September 2024

Projects Recently Completed

Telephone Road	
Status	Lease-Up > 90%
Total Units	200
Project Type	Exsiting Rehab
Estimated TDC	$44.7 M
Developer	HHA
Completion	Building was completed in May 2023

Pending Acquisitions

Lofts at the Ball Park (Kelly Village)	
Status	Negotiations underway
Total Units	TBD
Project Type	Land Swap with TxDot
Estimated TDC	TBD
Developer	Post Investment Group
Completion	TBD

Economic Impact

How Housing Initiatives Drive Economic Growth

Under current market conditions, developers have partnered with the HHA to assist in development of creating and preserving affordable housing. During 2022 and 2023, **62 developments have closed**, adding **19,000 plus units,** of which over **10,000 are affordable.**

- Our work creates the preservation of affordable units for families of lower-income housing
- It allows families to live within their desired area of the city – including access to better schools, proximity to work, and other amenities. The HHA creates affordable housing/ workforce housing to meet the needs of the City of Houston
- Through the use of Section 8 / PBV Programs, the HHA provides families with a means of secure home ownership

The HHA addresses Houston's housing needs through development partnerships. With rising interest rates and material cost escalation, through partnerships with the HHA, development can obtain tax breaks or supplemental financing through the PBV/ Section 8 Program to allow developments to fill the financial gaps.

HHA & Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Partnerships

HHA and MWBEs Forge a Trailblazing Partnership for Economic Advancement

In the spirit of fostering economic growth and promoting inclusivity, the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) proudly presents its commitment to enhancing opportunities for Minority and Women Business Enterprises (MWBE) throughout the community. Our annual report reflects our unwavering dedication to prioritizing and incorporating MWBEs into our various projects and developments.

MWBE & Local Spend	
Grand Total	**$39,260,983**

The HHA's proactive approach is evident in our intentional efforts to cultivate partnerships with minority-owned and women-owned businesses. Our initiatives go beyond conventional support; they are tailored to empower these businesses towards self-sufficiency. Through strategic collaborations, we provide valuable training and experiences, equipping MWBEs with the expertise and resumes necessary to pursue more significant projects in the future.

HHA has and will continue to support local MWBEs. Companies with whom we've conducted recent business:

- A-Rocket Moving & Storage (**$372,628**)
- J. Allen Property Management (**$300,921**)

Additionally, HHA employed the services of WMBEs to complete projects and attain resources for the Choice Initiative minority contractors (**$813,935**). Moreover, we've contracted with 19 MWBE companies and 22 resident employees to deploy and install 1,615 A/Cs at our public housing communities, and spent **$2,177,620** on those contracts.

We firmly believe that supporting MWBEs is not just a business strategy but a pathway to contribute meaningfully to the economic empowerment of minority and women entrepreneurs. By fostering these partnerships, we aim to drive economic growth in diverse communities, ensuring that our projects have a positive and lasting impact on the social fabric of Houston.

Affordable Housing Houston Units

Creating Greater Housing Access and Affordability

The Houston Housing Authority is diligently working to acquire or to build more affordable housing in the greater Houston area. This is part of a committed agency effort to address the economic hardship facing many low-income renters in Houston. Even before the Coronavirus pandemic, the city ranked 5th in the nation and first in Texas for having the most severe shortage. There are only 19 affordable housing units for every 100 households in need, or about an 80% deficit, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

The demand for public housing, affordable housing, and housing vouchers is so high that it exceeds the current available housing stock. In a concerted effort to meet the intense level of affordable housing demand, HHA began using the PFC model.

HHA introduced the Public Facility Corporations (PFC) model of affordable housing as a solution to the severe housing shortage in and around the city, subsequently providing more affordable housing options to low-income Houstonians. This model ensures that low and middle-income workers can find affordable apartments in the communities they want to live in.

The HHA created **"Affordable Housing Houston"** to represent the aggregation of PFC units in our portfolio. A property acquired by Affordable Housing Houston (AHH) does not have to pay property tax which allows the development company to offer decreased rent. HB 2071 calls for, "at least 50 percent of the units in the multifamily residential development are reserved for occupancy by individuals and families earning less than 80 percent of the area median income". **The HHA strives for 51% affordability.** This process incentivizes these companies to provide low-income housing within their development. As a result, the benefits of these partnerships extend to all Houstonians because they are provided with more affordable housing options in Houston and surrounding areas.

Benefits to Houstonians

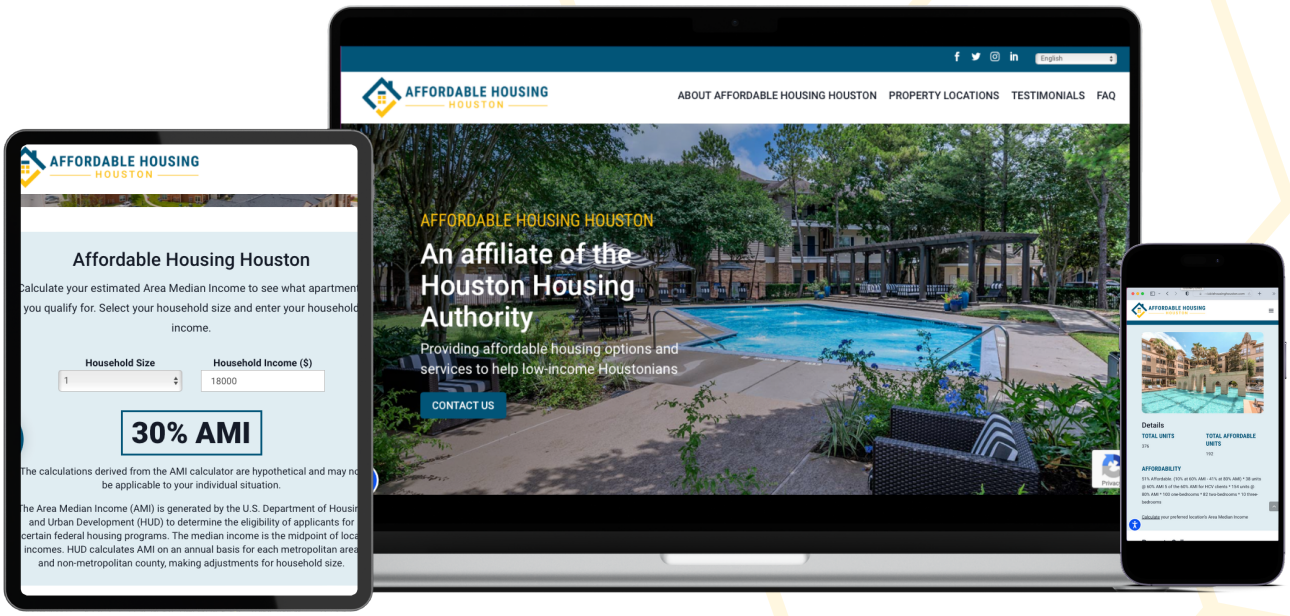
The Houston area is known for its high cost of living, which can be challenging for low-income families. **Affordable Housing Houston** helps to alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with housing costs.

These units can also help to reduce overcrowding in Houston-area communities. The diverse, affordable housing options throughout greater Houston help to relieve pressure on the existing housing stock. Additionally, **29.1% of the PFC units are located in high-opportunity areas** (places with low poverty, high median household income, ease of access to public facilities, services and good schools as defined by TDHCA).

The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) created the **AffordableHousingHouston.com** website that provides detailed information on the following:

- Available affordable housing options
- The application process
- Property locations
- Frequently asked questions
- Testimonials
- Area Median Income (AMI) calculator to check eligibility for housing programs

Since the website was created in March 2023, AffordableHousingHouston.com has been **viewed 253,000+ times**, with an average **76% user engagement rate** and **46,000 active users** to date.

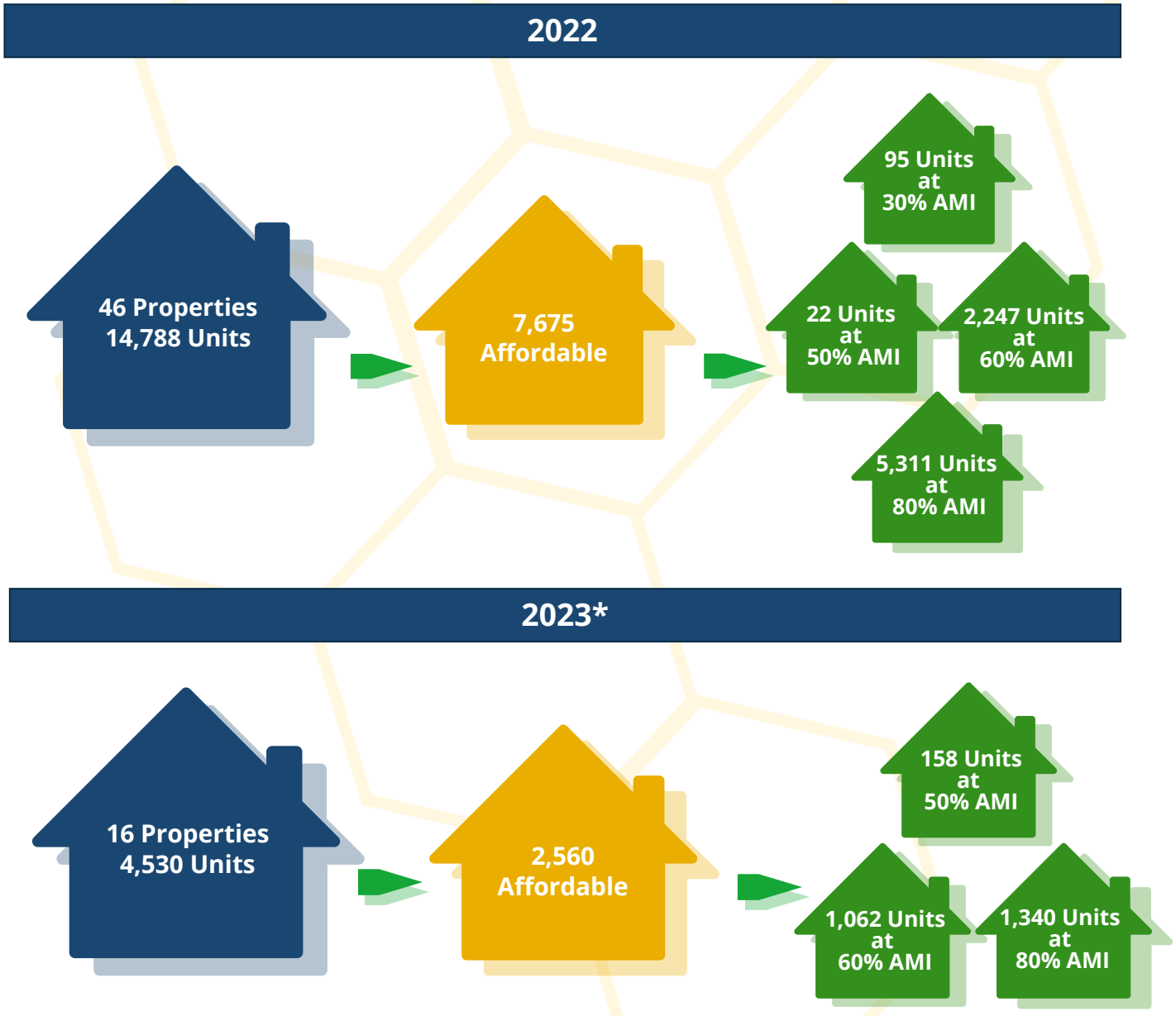


www.affordablehousinghouston.com

Affordable Housing: Current & Future

Goals & Opportunities

The Houston Housing Authority's goal for 2024 is to exceed our 2022 goals by 10% -- equivalent to investing in 51 properties with 16,267 units, of which 8,297 would be affordable. The goal is to ensure deeper affordability, with 20% of the units at 60% AMI or below.



***NOTE:** The drop-in unit count in 2023 was due to a state-wide hold on PFC transactions while the Texas Legislature revised laws to better regulate requirements for multifamily housing developments to qualify for the PFC exemption.

Housing & Client Initiatives

"Heat Relief Initiative"
Air Conditioning Installations

During the summer of 2023, HHA took a historic step forward by introducing the "Heat Relief Initiative" for our public housing communities. This unprecedented program provided air conditioning for every resident living in HHA public housing properties.

Despite no current mandate for air conditioning provisions in housing agreements from The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the absence of any state or city laws requiring public housing to have AC, HHA recognized the problem and secured over $2 million in crucial funding for the Heat Relief initiative.

"While HUD has not mandated it, we fought tirelessly to secure funding, and our persistence has paid off. Our commitment to our clients means they should never have to endure such intolerable conditions and I'm grateful to our local leaders who have supported our work and helped to make this happen," said David A. Northern, Sr., CEO & President of HHA.

HHA began installations of 1,615 AC units at three public housing properties: Cuney Homes, Irvington Village, and Kelly Village.

The Heat Relief Initiative is a transformative program that marks a significant stride towards creating safer and healthier living environments for some of the city's most vulnerable communities. **"With record-high heat indexes becoming the new reality in Houston, the work we do today will bring relief to current and future residents alike. Our hope is that we have set a new standard, becoming a model for other housing authorities to pursue the well-being of their residents."** - HHA Chairman LaRence Snowden.

Flock Security System

HHA proudly announced its collaboration with Flock Safety, a leading provider of License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology, aimed at bolstering the safety and security of affordable housing residents. Through this partnership, HHA and Flock Safety worked together to implement the Flock security systems across all HHA properties, reinforcing their commitment to proactive crime prevention and community well-being.

Flock Security systems prioritize privacy and respect civil liberties by not capturing images of people or faces. License plates and vehicle characteristics are the sole focus, ensuring data privacy is protected. Flock Safety employs robust encryption measures and implements an automatic data deletion policy after 30 days, ensuring the security and privacy of the collected data. It is important to note that HHA and its residents retain complete ownership of the data collected by Flock Safety devices, with stringent control over access.

Transparency and accountability are paramount to Flock Safety. They have developed the LPR Transparency Portal, a platform that provides law enforcement, city leaders, and government officials with access to policies, usage guidelines, and public safety outcomes related to LPR technology.

Additionally, Flock Safety ensures responsible use of their platform through comprehensive training for users and ethical guidelines that prohibit the use of collected data for third-party repossession, traffic enforcement, revenue collection, or collaboration with federal government agencies for immigration enforcement.

We gathered recent data that indicates the benefits of this. Since the initial installation in summer 2023, the Flock Security System generated a total of **1,750 hits** encompassing **stolen vehicles, stolen plates, protection orders, missing persons, and more.** These insights demonstrate the benefits of the new security measures.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in Public Housing

The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) and Cardiac Solutions have partnered to achieve a groundbreaking milestone by becoming **the first housing agency in North America** to install Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) with LUCAS compression devices and AED Sentinel camera remote monitoring for all AEDs in all of its public housing complexes. This strategic initiative aims to enhance emergency response capabilities, specifically targeting Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) incidents, the leading cause of death in the United States.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest is a silent and swift killer, and our commitment to the safety and well-being of our residents led us to take this proactive step. By installing AEDs in all our public housing complexes, we are empowering our communities and enhancing our emergency response capabilities to save lives.

The partnership also addresses the HHA's experience with two significant incidents since March 2023, where the lack of immediate medical assistance devices and training hindered the response to medical emergencies. The HHA recognizes the critical importance of swift and effective intervention in such situations, and this initiative is a direct response to bridge this gap.

In addition to installing AEDs, the HHA emphasizes the importance of ongoing training for staff and residents. This training ensures that individuals are well-equipped to provide immediate assistance during a cardiac emergency, aligning with industry standards and recommendations.

Choice Neighborhood Initiative

The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) and the City of Houston submitted a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation (CNI) grant application requesting $50M from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in December 2023 to implement the Third Ward Cuney Homes Choice Neighborhoods initiatives. The CNI initiatives include public and private funding in the amount of $671.2M in both social and physical investments that HHA and the City leveraged in collaboration with local and regional partners. This **$50M CNI grant** will leverage over $610.8M in housing and neighborhood investments and over $60.4M in people investments. This award would be the largest Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant awarded in the state of Texas. HUD will announce awardees in Summer 2024.

The timing of the transformation of the Third Ward and Cuney Homes is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to align CNI with the following key public/private Houston initiatives:

- **$341.4M for 1,115 family and senior mixed-income/mixed-use, transit-oriented, climate-resilient apartments, including first floor spaces for both community and commercial uses.**
- University Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and infrastructure in 2025, METRO will begin construction on the longest dedicated BRT in the United States, a 25.3-mile route, which will serve as the backbone of the METRO's BRT system.
- **$15.3M Houston's Innovation Corridor includes new incubators, accelerators, and a collaborative life sciences research campus, anchored on the south by the world's largest medical complex, Texas Medical Center and Rice University**, and on the north by the central business district's corporate headquarters and financial institutions.
- **$37.2M Third Ward Workforce Initiative includes the development of a new environmental career working training facility with programs for Cuney Homes and Third Ward residents**, community solar and microgrid technologies in the Third Ward and developing an affordable housing equity dashboard.
- $60.4M committed for Cuney Homes resident wrap-around services from partners including TSU Bullard Center, UH, Sankofa Research Institute, Emancipation Economic Development Council Project Rowhouses, We are the Ones, Family Scholar House, FIT Houston, LEVERAGE, YMCA, Houston Public Library, S.H.A.P.E, Search Homeless, The Children's Collaborative, Yellowstone Schools, TAPS, Civic Heart, Urban League, United Way, BLOCK Companies, and Waterman Steele.

The Third Ward is one of Houston's most historic African American neighborhoods, located within one mile southeast of downtown and adjacent to the city's four-mile Innovation Corridor. Since 2018, the city has worked with stakeholders to develop and implement the Third Ward Complete Communities Action Plan to build on opportunities, such as active civic engagement, strong community-based organizations, historic landmarks, major universities, proximity to the Texas Medical Center and the central business district, and quality transportation, while also working to address challenges that lead to displacement and a loss of history in one of Houston's most important neighborhoods.

To preserve the legacy of the Third Ward and its historic figures, Houston applied to the State in 2020 to officially designate the Third Ward as an Arts and Culture District. Also in 2020, Emancipation Avenue was recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation through its Texas Main Street Program. In that same year, HHA and the City were awarded a Choice Neighborhoods (CN) Planning grant to develop a transformation plan to revitalize Cuney Homes, develop a coordinated supportive services plan, and align investments in the Third Ward.

HHA and the City have hosted dozens of resident and stakeholder input sessions, interviews, and focus groups in intentional efforts for community engagement through both Complete Communities and the CN Planning process. In early 2022, Sankofa Research Institute conducted a Needs Assessment of 353 Cuney Homes public housing residents. The city continuously updates the goals, policies, and strategies in the Third Ward Complete Communities Action Plan to align with the Third Ward-Cuney Homes CNI strategies.

The following are implementation pillars that are part of the CNI:

Housing - Integral Properties/Rule Enterprises will lead the implementation of the Third Ward-Cuney Homes Housing Plan. The Housing Plan includes a total of 1,115 mixed-income apartments (740 for families and 375 for seniors), all of which are transit-oriented developments.

Neighborhood - The City has focused on the Third Ward as a Complete Community revitalization area since 2018. The City and CNI partners are deeply invested, with future projects that include over $258M in Third Ward investments.

People - Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI) serves as the People Implementation Lead. As the People Lead, USI will provide supportive services and case management in coordination with 20 local and regional partners. These partnerships have leveraged over $60.4M in services for Cuney Homes residents.

Client Services

Home Ownership Program

The HHA provides a valuable resource to our Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) clients through the Homeownership Program. Low-income families can use federal housing assistance to purchase and build equity in a home of their own.

The program currently serves **111 clients**. It provides a supervisor, an assistant supervisor, and a homeownership coordinator. Current voucher program participants who are eligible to end their leases can participate in this program, as long as the families qualify as first-time home buyers, meet income, employment, and other eligibility standards, and complete a homeownership counseling program.

Families who wish to participate in the HCV Homeownership Program must first complete a pre-assistance homeownership and housing counseling program required by HHA. Then there is a voucher issuance briefing conducted when the program and the process is explained in detail to the family. Once the family has closed on their home, HHA's inspections department conducts an inspection on the home. As the last step, the family closes on the home and the homeownership coordinator leases the family as a homeowner.

Client Testimonial

Earl Hughes
(Homeownership Program)

Earl Hughes was in the military for 19 years. However, he experienced homelessness and was living out of his car. The VA connected him with HHA services and he became an HHA Voucher client. After living in an apartment for 9 years, Earl qualified to purchase a home through HHA's program.

~"If I had not been in this program, I would not be in this house...I'm sure of that. This home is the best thing that's happened to me...I love it. There's nothing like having your own home."~

Resident Councils

Each of HHA's public housing communities has a Resident Council, comprised of residents within their respective communities. They organize by holding elections for officers and adopting by-laws that serve as a roadmap for how the council will conduct its business. The council's democratically elected board must consist of five board members who have been elected by the voting membership. Their role is to aid in improving the quality of life and resident satisfaction, and participate in self-help initiatives to engage residents to create a positive living environment for families living in public housing. **Resident Councils actively participate through working partnerships with the HHA to advise and assist in all aspects of public housing operations.**

Resident Council boards have an important and impactful role in improving the quality of life in their public housing communities and bring a wide variety of issues to the attention of their respective sites and within the program.

In addition, the Resident Council boards are effective in collaborating with community partners and organizations to provide education, enrichment, and awareness not limited to sponsoring and planning activities, tenant rights, social economic education, providing links to resources and services, increasing tenant involvement, and working to resolve tenant disputes and concerns.

Leasing Fairs & Landlord Engagement

During the last year, our agency has amplified efforts to provide leasing fairs for our clients by providing direct assistance for them to understand how to use their Housing Choice Vouchers and connect them with landlords for potential housing options.

By hosting these leasing fairs, we are able to connect HCVP clients, including veterans, with affordable housing that meets their needs. Our agency works alongside the Department of Housing and Urban Development to enhance access to a range of available homes and apartments throughout Houston.

In 2023 HHA had **5,008 active landlords** participate in HCVP. Landlords are a vital partner to the Houston Housing Authority, and we're working to strengthen these relationships to create greater housing affordability in Houston. Our Housing Choice Voucher clients can choose where they want to live and we step in to help pay the majority of their rent. We appreciate landlords who partner with the HHA to provide these homes and options.

Jobs Plus

The Jobs Plus program develops locally based, job-driven approaches that increase earnings and advance employment outcomes through work readiness, employer linkages, job placement, educational advancement, technology skills, and financial literacy for residents of public housing.

Three core components:

- Employment-Related Services
- Financial/Rent Incentive – Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID)
- Community Support for Work Applicants are encouraged to develop key partnerships to connect participants with any other needed services to remove barriers to work. An Individualized Training and Services Plan (ITSP) should be developed for each participant to establish goals and employment strategies, and to track progress.

The Houston Housing Authority received a $ 2.3 million dollar grant to assist the clients at Oxford Place Apartments in their journey to self-sufficiency.

- Oxford Place was chosen as the site for JOBS PLUS in efforts to address the 82% unemployment rate at the Public Housing Community.
- To incentivize the clients to join the workforce, the client's earned income is locked in throughout the duration of the program.
- The agency brought together a coalition of partners to assist our clients in their journey to self-sufficiency, including: Workforce Solutions, The Alliance, HCC, TSU, Green to Grow, The Chauncy Glover Project, Wesley Community, The Houston Food Bank, & Harris County Dept of Education.

Client Testimonial

Jessica Vinson started her commercial cleaning business more than a year ago. She was hired by HHA as one of her clients to clean the agency's facilities. The program provided guidance, answers to questions about entrepreneurship, and has continued to receive mentorship to this day.

~"My jobs career coach helped a lot....we looked up a lot of information and I filed for my LLC. I have three kids and now I'm always available for their games and I have employees that love me. I like it because I get to call it mine and I'm working for myself."~

Jessica Vinson (Jobs Plus)

Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program

HHA's FSS program seeks to help families make progress toward economic security by supporting the family's efforts to increase their earned income, build financial capability, achieve their employment, financial and educational goals.

The program has a supervisor, an assistant supervisor, a housing specialist, and seven coordinators. HHA and an adult member of each participating family execute a Contract of Participation, generally for five years, with a possible two-year extension for good cause, incorporating the specific training and services plan for the family.

More than **400 clients** are served through the FSS program. Participating families are provided with an interest-bearing escrow account made up of the difference of the rent the family pays when entering the program and the increased rent that would be charged as the family's earned income increased. Upon completion of the FSS contract, a family may claim its escrow account (if the person who signs the contract is employed, no family member is receiving welfare assistance, and the family has met their other individual goals).

Financial assistance to clients is provided through referrals to community agencies that assist the clients. The escrow account accrues based on increases in a family's earned income that is disbursed upon successfully graduating from the FSS program and **the escrow disbursement is tax-free.**

Currently, **140 clients** have signed up for the program and **74 clients** have been assisted to find jobs.

Government Engagement

HHA's Collaborative Approach to Government Partnerships in Housing

Housing 101

In August of 2023, HHA hosted the inaugural Housing Houston 101 Training for City of Houston Council and At-Large Offices. This was the first time that this type of learning engagement had been developed and executed between the Houston Housing Authority and the City of Houston Council Office. Attendees roles ranged from Chief of Staff to Director of Constituent Services. For many attendees this was their first time at the Houston Housing Authority interacting with the agency in such a collaborative way. The purpose of this training was to equip councilmember staff with information about the HHA including the mission of our agency, what we do, and how we can support their housing related constituent concerns. Participants received a Certificate of Completion from the HHA at the conclusion of the training.

Meetings with Elected Officials:

During 2023, HHA coordinated several meetings and site visits with government officials to build relationships and inform them of the work that HHA does and how legislation and collaboration can address misinformation surrounding affordable housing. We were able to share our agency's progressive and open leadership, opportunities to partner and engage constituents around housing, and invitations to large community events such as job fairs and public safety forums.

HHA's Advocacy and Collaboration in Government Initiatives

TDHCA Meetings

HHA President & CEO David A. Northern, Sr. attended two TDHCA Meetings to discuss PFCs and LITHC Developments and their impact on the Houston Community.

Legislative Session 2023

During the 88th Legislative Session there were a total of (8) Bills that could impact the way that we provide affordable housing on the local level (HB 9, HB 1556, HB 2071, HB 2964, HB 3568, HB 4833, SB 199, SB 1984).

Of these bills, HB 2071 tremendously modified how the HHA handles PFC transactions in the City of Houston. The HHA made it a point to communicate publicly to elected officials and taxing authorities, and worked collaboratively with the City of Houston Mayors Office to craft methods and best practices in terms of local guidelines pertaining to HB 2071.

Houston Hispanic Congressional Caucus

The Houston Housing Authority had the honor of attending Vice President Kamala Harris' "On the Road" event series. Hosted by Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chairwoman Nanette Diaz Barragan, U.S. Representative Sylvia Garcia, and Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, the Vice President engaged in a moderated conversation, demonstrating **commitment to addressing critical issues affecting Latino communities across the nation**.

The event served as a platform for the Vice President to discuss the tools and resources made available by the Biden-Harris Administration, emphasizing the administration's dedication to supporting communities in their pursuit of success. As part of this engagement, the Houston Housing Authority had the unique opportunity to collaborate on crucial matters related to affordable housing, an area of paramount importance for the city's development.

The collaboration between Vice President Harris and key local leaders signaled a **unified effort to address housing challenges in the city**, with a specific focus on ending homelessness. The Houston Housing Authority is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this dialogue and looks forward to leveraging the support of the current administration to further Houston's efforts in creating sustainable solutions for affordable housing.

District D Public Safety Forum

HHA took a proactive step in fostering community engagement by leading a District D Public Safety Forum. **Attendees were provided with valuable insights into the core mission of the HHA**, its extensive contributions to the community, and the specific impact within District D. The event served as an interactive platform where participants gained a comprehensive understanding of the organization's initiatives, particularly its efforts to enhance public safety through strategic housing interventions.

During the forum, attendees received a detailed overview of the HHA's role, its footprint in District D, and a comprehensive update on the ongoing 2023 Legislative Session. The presentation not only illuminated the HHA's commitment to shaping the urban landscape but also highlighted the organization's dedication to transparency and community involvement.

A key focus of the forum was shedding light on the HHA's day-to-day efforts in improving housing conditions across the city. HHA Policy Advisor Na'Shon Edwards, Sr., outlined how, through a series of targeted initiatives, we are actively contributing to the betterment of housing in Houston, addressing the immediate needs of residents and striving for long-term sustainable solutions.

HHA's Dialogue and Influence in Government Decision-Making

Texas Housing Conference 2023

The Houston Housing Authority was well represented at the 2023 Texas Housing Conference in Austin, TX. HHA President & CEO Mr. Northern was accompanied by senior-level staff members, as many of the topics pertained to Public Housing in Urban Metro Areas across the state of Texas. Mr. Northern represented the HHA during the panel titled “The ABCs of PFCs”, where he voiced his concerns about the misconception of PHAs and PFC transactions and how it has become the fastest vehicle to create affordable housing.

Texas Housing Association Conference 2023

The Houston Housing Authority leadership attended the 2023 Texas Housing Association Conference in Houston, where President & CEO Mr. Northern served as a speaker and introduced Houston City Councilmember and Chair of the Housing and Community Affairs Committee Tiffany D. Thomas. The event featured more than 400 PHA’s across the state of Texas.

Congressional Black Caucus 2023

During the Summer of 2023 the HHA leadership staff attended the Annual Congressional Black Caucus where African American Legislators hosted panels that covered an array of policy issues from child care, housing, quality of life, social justice, and food insecurity. The week-long event resulted in the HHA generating more visibility within the realm of civic engagement and housing.

Partnerships

New Hope Housing Partnerships

New Hope Gray

More housing affordability is coming to Third Ward. We celebrated the groundbreaking of a partnership with New Hope Housing, Inc.: the NHH Gray apartment development. This will be a senior living community with 135 one and two-bedroom floor plans with modern and accessible high-quality affordable housing.

The Houston Housing Authority is providing **67 Project Based Vouchers** at this location. That equates to a **projected 15-year value of $19,075,860**.

This is one more step toward progressing toward our mutual goal of creating opportunity and growth for the people we serve.

New Hope Berry

The Houston Housing Authority and New Hope Housing, Inc. broke ground on property that will be built into a beautiful 180 apartment complex in the Northside community, an area surrounded by highly rated public schools, parks, a library, and in close proximity to grocery stores and public transportation.

HHA provided **27 Project Based Vouchers** to this property, increasing affordability in an area that gives families the opportunity to achieve success and flourish in their community. That equates to a **projected 15-year value of $3,993,300**.

Knowles-Rowland Center Partnership

Beyoncé made a special appearance at the celebration of a partnership that will provide stable permanent housing to 31 Houstonians without homes.

The Houston Housing Authority is grateful to collaborate on the project that is making this possible. Our agency is working with Bread Of Life, Inc. to repurpose the "Knowles-Rowland Center for Youth" and transform it into housing for our unsheltered friends in the HTX community.

So many organizations contributed to this effort, including HHA which provided **31 housing vouchers** for the residents. Our nearly **$7 million dollar investment** will sustain the funding for these people to remain housed in a safe and uplifting environment.

We commemorated the endeavor of rebuilding the Knowles-Rowland House at the unveiling event. HHA's President & CEO shared our agency's steadfast commitment to providing affordable housing for our most vulnerable communities and the critical purpose of our mission. We look forward to this renovation and turning this dream into a reality for the people who will soon call this place home.

Cuney Homes Food Pantry

This is what community looks like. In 2023 we opened HHA's first community food pantry at Cuney Homes which will provide fresh produce, canned/boxed goods, and protein sources to **more than 500 Cuney households** each month. HHA staff, volunteers, and residents worked many months leading up to this moment, painting the walls, spending nights cleaning and organizing, and preparing for the grand opening. And what a joyous celebration it was.

Tears were shed, cheers were abundant, and food was distributed to a long line of families.

A recent Cuney Homes resident survey revealed that **36% of the people who live here experience hunger every week**. Nobody should have to know what it feels like to go without a meal. We're working to reduce and eliminate food insecurity one impactful step at a time!

The success of this endeavor is a testament to the collaborative efforts of HHA staff, dedicated volunteers, and the residents of Cuney Homes. This collaborative spirit not only strengthens community bonds but also sets the stage for future initiatives that empower residents to actively contribute to the betterment of their neighborhood.

Thank you to our sponsors and partners for helping to fund this food pantry and maintain this ongoing mission.

Mission of Yahweh

The Mission of Yahweh, a dedicated homeless shelter in Houston for over three decades, has been a beacon of hope through its multifaceted programs aimed at ending the cycle of homelessness and dependency. The organization offers a range of life-changing initiatives, including emergency shelter, transitional living programs, and specialized efforts for seniors, responsible residents, and those in need of aftercare.

Recently, The Mission of Yahweh hosted David A. Northern, Sr., and Na'Shon Edwards, Sr., from the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) for a comprehensive tour. **This collaborative meeting showcased the potential for synergy between the two organizations**, highlighting opportunities for mutual support and shared objectives as they navigate the challenges of homelessness.

The Mission of Yahweh's diverse programs, from emergency shelter to educational and vocational support, **aligns with HHA's mission of ending homelessness, fostering independence, and providing a holistic support system**.

The Houston Housing Authority and The Mission of Yahweh are committed to complementing each other's efforts in meaningful ways. By exchanging insights and perspectives, both entities seek to enhance their impact on the community, striving to create a more comprehensive and effective approach to addressing homelessness in Houston.

Golf Tournament Fundraiser

With the generous contributions of our event sponsors, we raised **nearly $90,000** to fund scholarships for our clients to continue their higher education. **Six recipients** were awarded the Carmen V. Orta scholarship and the Robert C. Weaver scholarship.

Education is a cornerstone of progress, and we are honored to play a role in empowering individuals to achieve their full potential.

We're grateful to support our clients in their education endeavors and we're thankful for our partners who donated to this incredible cause!

Their generosity is a beacon of empowerment and serves as a reminder that there are caring people who believe in the potential of every person, regardless of their circumstances.

This endeavor reaffirms the belief that every person, regardless of their circumstances, has untapped potential waiting to be unleashed. It sends a strong message of inclusivity and underscores the notion that education is a powerful equalizer, capable of opening doors to a brighter and more equitable future.

Back-to-School Events

Hundreds of people came to our 2023 Backpack Extravaganza at HHA's Kelly Village Community Center to pick up brand-new gear for the school year. We're getting families prepped to go back to the classrooms and, by the end of the day, we gave out **271 backpacks** filled with hygiene kits and school supplies.

We had a room filled with community organizations to share health and wellness resources, and a parking lot full of fun activities including a DJ, **BrainBuzzed** STEAM education, Extreme Gaming Truck, face painting, and lots of food and snow cones.

HHA collaborated with the "**Blessed to Be a Blessing**" organization and **Cargill/Temco** to host this event, along with a roster of incredible community partners helping to make this day possible. We're so happy to share these resources with the community.

Public Housing: Kids Game Day

We're always up for a good time and down to go to a baseball game! We brought **63+ kids** and families from all of HHA's public housing communities to a Houston Astros game.

Everybody got a championship ring replica and gift cards for stadium snacks. It was such a joy to see the smiles on all the kids' faces. This day was more than just a field trip to see the pros play ball.

We're encouraging the kids who live in our communities to embrace the possibilities that are open to them in life and teaching them that all things are possible if they put their energy into working toward whatever path they want in life.

Staff Engagement

HHA Training Center

The unveiling of the Training Center on June 14, 2023, marked a significant milestone in HHA's dedication to advancing the affordable housing sector. Developed in collaboration with Nan McKay & Associates (NMA), a distinguished organization renowned for its innovative community solutions, the Training Center has since played a pivotal role in equipping housing authorities, property management companies, and municipalities with invaluable training courses both locally and nationwide.

The Training Center's influence extends far beyond local boundaries. Leveraging virtual training courses, HHA and NMA are committed to fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among professionals in the affordable housing industry nationwide. This strategic approach aligns with HHA's overarching goal to drive positive change in communities across the nation.

As we reflect on the past six months, the Training Center stands as a testament to HHA's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and the advancement of affordable housing solutions.

Total Revenue: $242,800

Grand Total Trained: 656

Total External Trained: 338

Total HHA Staff Trained: 318

President's Round Tables

HHA's President and CEO David A. Northern, Sr. created an opportunity for staff to meet with him in small groups of President's Round Table sessions to get to know staff and hear their thoughts and ideas on how to improve as an agency, together. The goal is to create unity and an intentional understanding of workflows and how we can engage each of our departments to work cohesively together on behalf of the clients we serve.

These sessions provide weekly opportunities to come together and brainstorm ways to support staff so we can effectively carry out our agency's mission. The goal is to listen, learn from each other, and empower staff to have an impact on improving the agency.

From its inception in 2022, we have hosted 30+ round table sessions and look forward to more as we welcome new and existing employees. These round table sessions have been met with enthusiastic participation by dozens of staff members in the last year filled with meaningful conversations that led to a deeper understanding of each other as coworkers and appreciation for how we can work together and encourage one another in our work.

CEO Staff Briefings

The Houston Housing Authority is advancing toward a transformative and impactful enhancement in the way we operate internally as an agency. Part of this transformation includes ensuring out staff is well informed and encouraged in the accomplishments and progress of the agency's initiatives. HHA Executive leadership keeps staff informed of developing strategies and the progress we are making to accomplish our goals through our monthly CEO Staff Briefings, hosted by the HHA President & CEO. This is a time for staff to come together collectively to provide information on high level HUD notices and deliverables, report on our internal Key Performance Indicators so we can monitor and report our successes, and share departmental and agency wide updates as we work together as a united team.

During the last year, these briefings have provided a fantastic opportunity to promote transparency and communication within the organization.

Future Growth & 2024 Look Ahead

Shaping a Sustainable Future through Affordable Housing Advocacy

As we reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges, it is with great excitement and a profound sense of responsibility that we present our vision for the future—a future where affordable housing stands at the crux of our commitment to social responsibility. Our journey is built on the principles of transparency, education, engagement, involvement, partnership, and ultimately, integration.

Transparency: Open & Frequent Dialogue

In an era where trust is paramount, we remain steadfast in our commitment to transparent communication. Open and frequent dialogue with our stakeholders including investors, community members and employees is the cornerstone of our approach. As we navigate the complexities of our industry, we understand that a culture of transparency not only fosters trust but empowers informed decision-making.

Education: Human Storytelling Over Industry Speak

Our commitment to education extends beyond the confines of industry jargon. We aim to evolve from mere industry speak to engaging in human storytelling. By weaving narratives that resonate with the experiences of individuals impacted by the affordable housing crisis, we can bridge the gap between statistics and lived realities. Through storytelling, we strive to create empathy, understanding, and a collective call to action.

Engagement: Collaborative Actions

In the pursuit of our goals, we recognize that true impact arises from collaborative actions rather than siloed efforts. In so doing, we plan to work closely with present and future developers to ensure our projects are completed in a timely manner, through collaboration and with transparency. The partnership with Columbia Residential for our 2100 Memorial senior living apartments is one of our prized achievements we expect to open in 2024. We have worked hard to collaborate with our residents and stakeholders to ensure a seamless transition. We look forward to ushering in new beginnings.

Involvement: Taking Initiative to Serve Others

Active involvement transcends the mere allocation of resources—it requires genuine participation in the communities we serve. For instance, we have been involved with the 3rd Ward community by gathering their opinions, ideas, and input as we plan and prepare to receive the Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant. This process ensures we are providing what people need from their perspectives. By embracing collaborative actions, we seek to be active contributors to the well-being of these communities.

Partnership: Giving Back by Working Together

We are dedicated to forging partnerships that activate the community, recognizing that sustainable change is only possible through collective action. By placing the community at the forefront of our partnerships, we hope to catalyze transformative solutions that address the root causes of affordable housing challenges.

HOUSTON
HOUSING AUTHORITY

CONTACT

HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
2640 FOUNTAIN VIEW DR.
HOUSTON, TX 77057
713-260-0500

HOUSINGFORHOUSTON.COM

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

For accessible information, please contact the 504/ADA Administrator at 713-260-0353 - 711 TTY , or 504ADA@housingforhouston.com