

CINCINNATI METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY

2011 Report To The Community



www.cintimha.com

BUILDING **STRONG** COMMUNITIES

Changing Lives & Strengthening
Communities Through
Quality Affordable Housing



CMHA is Here for You.

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Closed Friday

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(513) 421-CMHA (2642)

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The Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority would like to recognize the following individuals, who contributed to this report:

CMHA Board of Commissioners

Laura Brunner *Commissioner*

William Myles *Commissioner*

Marisa Spears *Commissioner*

Lamont Taylor *Chairperson*

Pete Witte *Vice Chairperson*

CMHA Executive Staff

Ted Bergh *Interim Executive Director*

Reema Ruberg *Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Director*

Lisa Isham *Interim Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Program*

Cecil McNeary *Director of Public Housing*

Charles Murray *Director of Modernization*

Joy Gazaway *Senior Legal Counsel*

Kelly Kramer *Senior Communications Coordinator*



Ted Bergh



Lamont Taylor

A Letter from Ted Bergh and Lamont Taylor

2011 ushered in a level of change not previously experienced by the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority. The agency experienced both highs and lows, but one thing is certain, the agency is taking change in stride. CMHA is moving forward, unencumbered, and refocusing efforts on what matters most: providing quality, affordable housing to those who need it.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the turmoil CMHA experienced in the last year. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) completed its investigation stemming from a complaint alleging that CMHA violated the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. HUD investigated seven alleged issues, and determined non-compliance in three of the allegations. Those issues were resolved with the approval of a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) that will ensure non-discriminatory practices with regard to the placement of public housing units in Green Township, fair practices for hiring an executive director and de-concentration efforts for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

While we must acknowledge the actions of the past year, they should not overshadow the positive initiatives taking place. Rather than dwelling on the past, we are learning from it.

With this in mind, CMHA presents its 2011 Report to the Community. In it you will find:

- Key information about CMHA – financials, facts and figures;
- A recap of achievements – advances in the Section 3 program, going digital and several personal and professional recognitions;
- Program updates – public housing, housing choice voucher and CMHA's evolving role as a developer of affordable housing solutions; and
- A look to the future – opportunities for 2012.

In short, this report reflects on some of the agency's achievements throughout the course of the last year, and will provide a glimpse into programs that will help CMHA retain its status as a nationally-recognized, high-performing housing authority in the future.

Ted Bergh

Ted Bergh *Interim Executive Director*

Lamont Taylor

Lamont Taylor *2011 Board Chairperson*

Understanding the Business of CMHA

CMHA is...

An Affordable Housing Developer

CMHA has enhanced its focus on becoming a community developer, responsible for providing a variety of affordable housing opportunities in Hamilton County. Mixed financing allows the agency to create a sustainable economic impact, infusing millions of dollars into Hamilton County communities, an accomplishment that would be impossible to reach on HUD public housing funding alone.

The blend of private and public dollars used for development enables CMHA and its partners flexibility to meet community needs. These mixed-income developments contribute to the overall stability of the neighborhood and quality of life for CMHA residents.



What is CMHA?

CMHA is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio, funded by HUD for the administration of affordable housing programs in Hamilton County.

What is Affordable Housing?

Public Housing:

- CMHA owns and manages the properties and enforces the lease; and
- There are nearly 5,200 units of public housing in Hamilton County.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV):

- A voucher covers the gap between what a low-income family can afford and what the private market demands for rental housing;
- The private landlord is responsible for property management and lease enforcement; and
- There are approximately 11,200 vouchers in Hamilton County.

Mixed Finance Development:

- Tax credits, public-private partnerships and other funding sources are used to develop housing options that are affordable.

CMHA by the Numbers

There are approximately 9,900 individuals in public housing:

- Thirty-nine percent of residents are over the age of 50;
- Thirty-eight percent of households have disabled residents;
- Average annual income is \$10,383; and
- The median length of residency is four years.

There are approximately 29,000 individuals in the HCV program:

- Twenty-five percent of residents are over the age of 50;
- Thirty-four percent of HCV households have disabled residents; and
- Average annual income is \$12,885.

The major differences between public housing and the HCV programs:
In public housing, the subsidy is with the unit. In the HCV program, the subsidy is with the tenant.

What Makes CMHA Critical to the Community?

- Last year, CMHA infused more than \$121 million into the local economy.
- Approximately one-third of CMHA's modernization contracts were awarded to Minority-Owned Businesses (MBEs).
- CMHA represents 4.7 percent of the housing units in Hamilton County.

CMHA is also a valued partner with the community and other agencies – 3CDC, Talbert House, Saint Vincent de Paul, the City of Mt. Healthy, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, the Affordable Housing Advocates, the Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care for the Homeless, the Community Action Agency & the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.

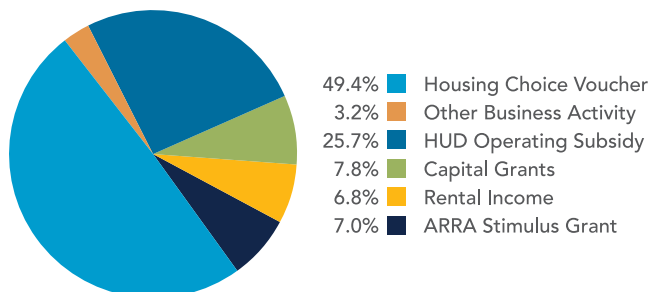


CMHA's Financial Forecast

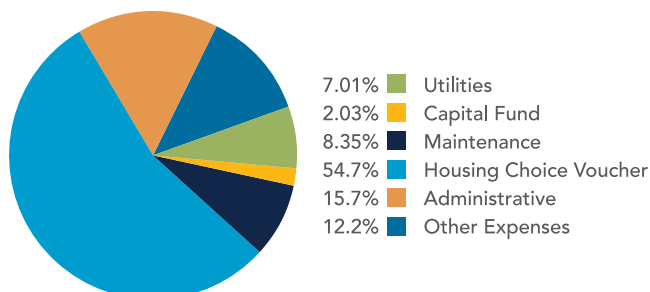
Like much of the housing industry, CMHA is facing financial uncertainty in 2012. The majority of the agency's funding comes from HUD and is subject to the Congressional Appropriations process. Despite a shrinking budget in 2011, CMHA was able to create a balanced operating plan that led to a budget surplus.

Because of this fiscal responsibility, CMHA is prepared to face 2012. Although the demand for affordable housing continues to rise, CMHA is slated to lose some of the funding that is critical to ensuring one of the most basic human needs – the need for decent housing – is met. Going forward, CMHA will continue to adjust to the ever-changing landscape to the best of its ability and prepare for the future success of the agency.

REVENUES | \$147,451,306 (FY 2011)



EXPENSES | \$121,325,976 (FY 2011)



CMHA Achievements in 2011



CMHA is...

Helping the Homeless

With 25 percent of City of Cincinnati residents living at or below the poverty line, CMHA is well aware of the number of individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless.

That's why the agency is committed to serving on three committees within the Family Homelessness Task Force organized by the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.

The task force is working to identify and remedy impediments to finding affordable housing.

Section 3 Makes A Difference in the Lives of Residents

CMHA experienced phenomenal success with its Section 3 program in 2011.

Section 3 is a federal initiative that requires recipients of certain HUD financial assistance – like CMHA – provide job training, employment and contracting opportunities for low- or very-low-income residents in connection with projects and activities in their neighborhoods to the greatest extent feasible.

Minimum goals set by HUD require that 30 percent of new hires qualify as Section 3; ten percent of construction contracts be awarded to Section 3 businesses; and three percent of non-construction contracts be awarded to Section 3 businesses.

In the first three quarters of 2011, CMHA far exceeded those minimum goals:

- Seventy percent of new hires are Section 3;
- Twenty-four percent of construction contracts are Section 3 businesses; and
- Twenty percent of non-construction contracts are Section 3 businesses.



green conscious

CMHA Goes Digital

CMHA's organization-wide approach to "living green," has gone digital in several areas of the agency:

- The CMHA Briefing monthly newsletter debuted its new digital format in July;
- Resident records have switched to a digital format, significantly reducing the physical space needed for document storage; and
- The leasing process has been streamlined by having the ability to pre-populate forms with pertinent resident information.



CMHA Wins Ohio Crime Prevention Award

In April, CMHA was awarded the 2011 Ohio Crime Prevention Special Project award from the Ohio Crime Prevention Association (OCPA).

The award recognized the work of the Compliance and Safety Operations Department (CSO), which executed an eight-month pilot program at Millvale.

The pilot program was developed using crime analysis data, resident perceptions and CMHA property management and maintenance staff concerns. CMHA partnered with Cincinnati Police, the Hamilton County Sheriff, Hamilton County Adult Probation office and other local law enforcement.

The Results:

- Thirty-seven percent decrease in reported crime;
- Forty-two percent decrease in domestic violence offenses;
- Sixty percent decrease in aggravated robbery offenses; and
- Seventy percent decrease in aggravated menacing offenses.



CMHA Employees Honored

Ed Hix, an exterminator and five-year veteran of CMHA, was recognized by the Ohio Housing Authorities Conference (OHAC) as Maintenance Person of the Year for his active role in developing the CMHA Integrated Pest Management System.

Assistant Property Manager Marquicia Jones was named a 2011 Difference Maker Honoree, an award presented by the Cincinnati Museum Center to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to their communities. She also received a Congressional Commendation Award from Congressman Steve Chabot. Both awards recognized Marquicia's work with the Q-Kidz, a dance and drill team she formed more than 20 years ago to provide a productive outlet for children living in public housing in the West End.

Ed Hix & Cecil McNeary (Top)

Marquicia Jones, Congressman Steve Chabot & the Q-Kidz (Bottom)



An Overview of the Housing Choice Voucher Program



CMHA is...

Angela Robinson

As a woman in the electrical field, Angela Robinson knows that her success depends on perseverance and education. In 2010, the 22-year-old resident of Stanley Rowe Towers earned her Electrical Technician Diploma while also completing a pre-apprenticeship program with Constructing Futures (a joint program of the Community Action Agency and CMHA).

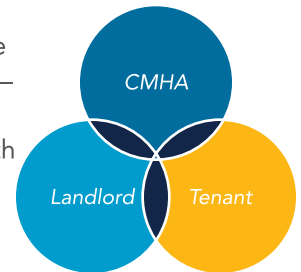
Now she's busy working for Servall Electric Company. The future looks bright for Robinson, whose next steps include paying off student loans and moving out of public housing. She credits Kaplan College, Constructing Futures and CMHA's Section 3 Compliance Coordinator for preparing her for her current role.

"I was able to put my training into action on the very first day."

- Angela Robinson

What is the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

A voucher covers the gap between what a low-income family can afford and what the private market demands for rental housing. The subsidy – which is funded by the federal government and administered locally through CMHA – remains with the individual and allows low-income families to choose where they want to live from rentals available on the private market.



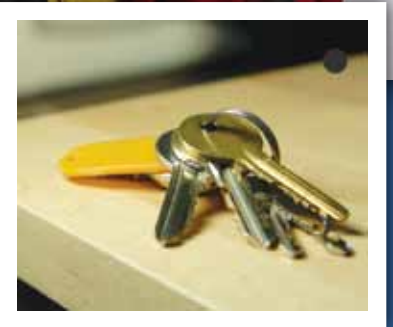
CMHA Gets a Gold Star

In late October, HUD awarded CMHA's HCV program a "gold star" for achieving a perfect score of 100 percent on its most recent Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) review. This 100 percent score rates CMHA as a high-performing agency.



I am CMHA

Congratulations to the Sills family, who recently received keys to their new home. Ms. Sills realized her American dream as a result of CMHA's FSS program, Habitat for Humanity and Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds from Colerain Township.



"Thank you CMHA for making our dreams come true!"

- The Sills Family

CMHA Opens the HCV Waiting List

In April, CMHA opened the waiting list for its HCV program for the first time in four years. Approximately 19,300 people submitted a pre-application during a five day period – an increase of more than 25 percent since the list was last opened. This year, the application process took place entirely online.

To ensure success, CMHA:

- Partnered with several social service providers and the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County to provide free computer space;
- Engaged social service providers in the process; and
- Conducted outreach to more agencies than ever before.



Family Self-Sufficiency Helps American Dreams Come True

“A hand up not a hand out” is a shared motto of both Habitat for Humanity and CMHA’s Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program – which helps HCV program participants build a foundation for permanent self-sufficiency. The program assists voucher holders through a savings plan that helps the participant grow an escrow account that can eventually be used to buy a car or put a down payment on a home. In 2011, there were nine home closings, bringing the total number of closings to 50 since the program began in 2002.

Noteworthy FSS Numbers:

- In 2011, FSS participants earned \$358,000 in escrow accounts
- Forty-two people graduated from the FSS program in 2011
- The average income of an HCV participant when they join FSS is \$13,255
- The average income increased by \$15,735 for FSS graduates

HUD Awards CMHA with Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers

CMHA was awarded 25 additional Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers in August, bringing the total number of VASH vouchers the agency administers to 145. The program allows homeless veterans to receive vouchers for housing with case management provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). To apply for one of these vouchers, veterans must contact the local VA.

CMHA Partners with Ohio Jobs & Family Services

CMHA received an award of 100 vouchers for non-elderly disabled persons, after partnering with Ohio Jobs and Family Services and the Center for Independent Living Options (CILO) to identify potential residents of the Home Choice program. Home Choice enables disabled persons to transition out of long-term care or nursing homes into private, independent-living apartments.

An Overview of the Public Housing Program



CMHA is...

JRAB

Public housing residents are represented by individual community resident councils and the Jurisdiction-wide Resident Advisory Board (JRAB).

Delorise Calhoun serves as the JRAB president and also represents the Cincinnati area on a national level by serving on the National Low Income Housing Coalition Resident Board and as the vice-president for the National Public Housing Resident Coalition.

"Public Housing is my passion and I will continue to represent those who rely on this housing option."

- Delorise Calhoun

Public housing is an important tool to address the special housing needs of Hamilton County residents, including the working poor, the homeless, single parent households and persons with disabilities.

Upgrading CMHA's Portfolio

More than 70 modernization projects are underway at CMHA, ranging from furnace replacements and new roofs, to new appliances and interior renovations. CMHA's Beacon Glen family community is undergoing extensive and complete renovations of its units. This \$7.9 million investment in CMHA's public housing portfolio ensures residents have safe and comfortable places to call home.



Findlater Gardens Goes Geothermal

CMHA took steps toward long-term environmental sustainability this year by installing a geothermal heating system at Findlater Gardens. Pipes installed below ground transfer heat from the earth's crust to water that circulates through the pipes and is used in heat pumps and hot water heaters, making the heating process more efficient. Early results show an estimated annual utility savings of \$3,409.

Expanding Housing Opportunities

In 2011, CMHA acquired nearly 80 units of public housing throughout the City of Cincinnati using its Replacement Housing Factor (RHF) funds. RHF funds are provided by HUD to replace public housing units lost through demolition or disposition.

Resident Councils

Most CMHA communities are represented by a resident council that is staffed entirely by volunteers. The role of each resident council is to serve as a liaison between the residents and CMHA staff, as well as to foster a sense of community among the residents. It's a job one resident council president, Nadine Watson of Marquette Manor, takes seriously. She and her fellow volunteers work closely with CMHA employees to offer social events, community forums and build bridges between neighbors.



CMHA... the Developer

CMHA, the City of Mt. Healthy, HUD and a representative of Governor John Kasich broke ground on the Reserve on South Martin in September. The \$12 million senior community will offer 60 one- and two-bedroom apartments for low-income seniors.

Funds to build the retirement community will come from a Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) grant awarded to the Cincinnati-Hamilton County NSP2 Consortium (CHCNC), a non-profit partnership among CMHA, Hamilton County, the city of Cincinnati and several developers. The consortium was awarded one of just 56 NSP2 grants nationwide.



Looking Ahead to 2012



CMHA is...

Shirley Brown Kennedy

In 2011 CMHA partnered with the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA) to provide computer training to residents living in CMHA's Millvale community. The free classes are designed to teach or enhance computer literacy so that participants may improve their career opportunities.

Shirley Kennedy is a Millvale resident who successfully completed the first two courses. She hopes the training will prepare her for new career opportunities.

"Knowing how to use the computer is one thing, but having one in your home is even better. I plan to use it to keep up with my new skills and look for jobs."

- Shirley Brown Kennedy

Taking an OATH to Empower Residents

This fall, CMHA established Opportunity Access Through Housing (OATH), a 501(c)3 that will benefit individuals and families living in affordable housing. The mission of OATH is to provide access to skills training and advancement opportunities in life management, employment and job readiness, homeownership preparedness, community-building and academic achievement.

OATH will allow CMHA to further its own vision of self-sufficiency and family stability by dovetailing with the services and programs already offered by the agency, and filling the gaps where needed. This is an exciting step for the future of affordable housing and its residents, and CMHA is proud to be a part of it.

CMHA Connects with the Community

CMHA regularly hosts and/or attends education fairs, health fairs and community events that are designed to identify those individuals who may be in need of CMHA's services. CMHA representatives also frequently attend community meetings to share information about the agency and the programs it offers to the residents of Hamilton County.

Did you Know?

A CMHA representative will give a presentation to your business or group. To book a speaker, please contact Kelly Kramer at: (513) 977-5610 or kelly.kramer@cintimha.com.



Innovating to Assist Low-Income College Students

CMHA is working with the University of Cincinnati and HUD to investigate unique solutions to the challenges faced by low-income, first-generation college students. Together, the organizations will determine whether it is possible to provide housing choice vouchers to help offset high housing costs for first-generation students.

Strategically Speaking...

In 2011, CMHA kicked off a comprehensive strategic planning process involving 30 members of CMHA's 300 full-time employees. Together, the team identified four areas of focus – Sustainability, Quality Service, Communications and Affordable Housing – to help improve the business of CMHA, the self-sufficiency of its residents and the impact the agency will make on the community over the next five years. These plans began to evolve in 2011 and will be implemented well into 2012.

Adopt a Class

CMHA employees are investing in the local community by participating in the Adopt-a-Class program. Volunteers have committed to providing school supplies, volunteer work and other services throughout the year. CMHA employees have adopted two classes at Ethel M. Taylor Academy, an elementary school for preschool through eighth-grade students in close proximity to CMHA's Millvale community.

Talk to Us

Stay in touch with CMHA throughout 2012. After all, we are accountable for both our successes and our shortcomings. Let us know how we're doing by calling us at (513) 721-2642. Or, stay up-to-date on the latest happenings at CMHA by checking our website at www.cintimha.com or by following our short, timely updates on Twitter @cintimha.





Vision

To be nationally recognized as the leader in providing innovative, affordable services and solutions

Mission

To provide quality affordable housing solutions by building partnerships with Hamilton County communities while strengthening and expanding housing opportunities for families to achieve self-sufficiency

Guiding Principles

We support our employees and their families so we can support the communities we serve

We are committed to treating everyone with respect

We will not compromise our shared ethical standards and dedication to quality

Values

Integrity
Respect
Initiative
Accountability
Excellence



**BUILDING STRONG
COMMUNITIES**

CMHA *is...*

Changing Lives Every Day

CMHA exists so that low- to moderate-income families will have a place to call "home." The agency provides safe, quality, affordable housing to those who need it most. Most residents served by CMHA are elderly, disabled or the working poor.

CMHA has a strong record of accomplishment, and is consistently recognized as a national leader in public housing. The agency is a good steward of the \$147 million in public funds it receives to administer its housing programs. CMHA is critical to the community at-large, by protecting existing housing stock, investing in communities, assisting Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBEs) and funneling more than \$121 million into the local economy.



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