

Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority Strategic Plan 2021-2024



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The plan begins in Fiscal Year 2021 (July 2020) and goes through Fiscal Year 2023 (June 2024)

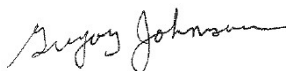
CEO & Chairperson Message

Dear Stakeholder,

We proudly present Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority's strategic plan that will guide our agency for the next three years as we continue on our bold journey to further preserve and develop quality, affordable housing for Hamilton County. This new strategic plan renews the organization's focus on being the industry leader in providing affordable housing and remains true to our motto of *"being an asset to Hamilton County"*. The strategic plan addresses the needs of local families and the community by creating opportunities for advancement which will be achieved by strengthening public-private partnerships, creating entrepreneurial opportunities for resident-owned businesses, section 3 businesses and section 3 residents.

The spirit of collaboration enriched the planning process for the engagement taken to develop this new and bolder strategic plan. We sought input from multiple partners including residents & voucher holders, CMHA employees, legislators (local, state and federal), community stakeholders (CILO, Cincinnati Police Department, LADD, GCNKAA, HOME, Cincinnati Realist and the Legal Aid Society) and property owners so that the plan presented here reflects the diverse group of people that we impact on a day to day basis. These outreach efforts express our desire for the Hamilton County Community to be involved in helping Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority develop policies and processes that will advance the quality of life for our residents, neighborhoods, and employees while further promoting diversity and prosperity for the entire Hamilton County Community. Staff input played a significant role, 45% of the actions included are their recommendations. The plan begins in Fiscal Year 2021 (July 2020) and goes through Fiscal Year 2023 (June 2024).

Sincerely,



Gregory D. Johnson, MS, PHM, EDEP
Chief Executive Officer



William Myles
Board of Commissioners Chairperson



Board of Commissioners

Mrs. Mayme LaVerne Mitchell
Vice Chairperson
Mr. Thomas J. Weidman
Mr. Kevin M. Moore
Ms. Jill R. McGrail
Ms. Teri Spears
Mr. Reginald J. Harris

Agency Overview

The Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority is an *Asset to Hamilton County*.

For more than 85 years, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority has provided quality, affordable rental housing opportunities for individuals and families throughout the county. The agency operates or administers three separate programs. Asset Management (public housing) consists of 4,718 units owned and managed by CMHA. The Housing Choice Voucher Program administers Housing Assistance Payments for up to 11,700 households. The agency also operates 591 units of other affordable rental housing scattered throughout Hamilton County. CMHA created a Gold Performance Standard to continue to strive to improve our customer service, move the agency towards sustainability and create a sense of home for our clients.



Photos of CMHA Properties

- ◆ Winton Terrace 1949
- ◆ Millvale 1974
- ◆ West Union Square 2018



Preservation & Sustainability

The Public Housing Program was created as part of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937. The Depression-era program was intended to create jobs, stimulate construction activity, clear slums, and provide low-rent transitional housing to poor families. In the early 1970's, the government placed a moratorium on the construction of new public housing units. Shortly thereafter, Congress authorized the Section 8 program, which provided subsidies to allow low-income families to live in private market housing. Over time, Section 8 became the largest housing program for the poor.



The 1999 HUD appropriations bill included a major public housing reform initiative – the Quality Housing and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (QHWRA). The main purposes of the legislation were to improve the living environment of public housing residents through demolition, rehabilitation, reconfiguration or replacement of obsolete housing. QHWRA also placed a focus on deconcentration of poverty and building sustainable communities.



Furthermore, in 2012 Congress authorized the *Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)* to test a new way of meeting the large and growing capital improvement needs of the nation's aging public housing stock while creating jobs. Properties “convert” their assistance to long-term, project-based Section 8 contracts. These new contracts provide a more reliable source of operating subsidy that allow PHAs and owners to safely leverage private capital – typically debt and equity – in order to finance the property rehabilitation or replacement. The contracts as well as underlying use restrictions must be renewed each time they expire, ensuring the long-term affordability of the improved properties. Residents are provided a robust set of rights and protections, including the consultation during the conversion process, relocation rights, the right to return to the property when repairs are completed, and a right to move with tenant-based assistance.

Featured Photos

- ◆ The West End
- ◆ Stanley Rowe Construction 1963
- ◆ Sutter View Preservation 2019



Preservation & Sustainability



The challenges facing housing authorities have never been greater. Reduced funding from the federal government, operational reforms from HUD, deteriorating capital, and increased demand for affordable housing are some of the challenges. According to HUD, public housing authorities across the country have a backlog estimated at more than \$35 billion for needed capital improvements. Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority in an effort to address the capital improvements needed, researched and explored options over several years and is now moving forward with a plan of action that preserves its affordable housing portfolio, secures a sustainable financial model, urges families to move toward self-sufficiency and builds even more public/private partnerships. The preservation of existing housing stock will also serve as a catalyst for wider economic growth in Hamilton County.



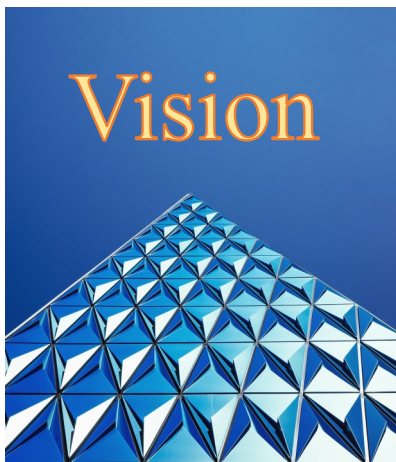
Featured Photos

- ◆ [San Marco](#)
- ◆ [Findlater Gardens](#)

Preservation and sustainability needs facilitated the creation of CMHA's comprehensive strategic plan. The plan required CMHA to answer three fundamental questions:

1. **Where are we now?**
2. **Where do we want to be?**
3. **How do we get there?**

The Strategic Plan is the road map for CMHA's transformation over the next three years. It contains specific measurable goals to which CMHA will hold itself accountable. It also sets forth CMHA's commitment to be a leader in the housing industry by maintaining a good environment for employees, by being good stewards of public resources, by promoting neighborhood stability, by creating job and entrepreneurial opportunities in those neighborhoods. Lastly it reaffirms CMHA's core commitment to develop, manage and maintain quality affordable housing for the families of Hamilton County.



To shape our future by utilizing sustainable funding models to develop quality, affordable housing solutions in partnership with our community stakeholders.

To be a leader in the housing industry by providing exceptional housing opportunities while achieving high levels of customer satisfaction, promoting self-sufficiency and neighborhood stability, and being a long-term asset to the community. We will achieve this by developing public/private partnerships, creating entrepreneurial opportunities and by employees and residents holding themselves to our Gold Standards of Excellence.



Winton Terrace



Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority



Setty Kuhn



The Redding



Sutter View



The Evanston

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

The CMHA Gold Performance Standard refers to the principles and values against which the agency performs.

It is how every CMHA employee will be measured, from the top down, as well as our partners, vendors, contractors, & consultants.



- We will conduct our work with integrity, professionalism, accuracy and exceptional quality.
- We will take the initiative to seek creative problem-solving and continuous improvement.
- We will hold ourselves and each other accountable.
- We will provide timely and accurate communication both internally and externally.
- And above all, we will treat one another with the respect and dignity that each of us deserves.

Planning Process

After successfully completing a 5-year Strategic Plan, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority's leadership team determined that more **and bolder** moves could be done to transform the agency. Therefore CMHA teams of two to three personnel engaged a cross section of the community in a series of dialogues to consider potential strategic directions for the future. The input sessions and questionnaires provided a wealth of ideas and suggestions for the future, and from these sessions a number of themes emerged. The Strategic Goals brought forth in this plan represent what the community wants Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority to do as a provider of housing solutions.

Community Meetings: The Input Sessions included elected and appointed town officials and community representatives.

- ◆ In the next 3-5 years, what would you like to see CMHA doing?
- ◆ What economic impact does CMHA have in the local community?

Resident Responses: The Input Sessions included participation from CMHA residents, resident groups and voucher holders.

- ◆ Are you satisfied with the customer service you receive from CMHA?
- ◆ What areas of housing are missing/lacking locally and how do you think CMHA might play a role in filling this need?

Staff Sessions: The Input Process included participation by over 70 staff members from all levels of the organization.

- ◆ Based on your experience at CMHA, what do you think we do well?
- ◆ What can CMHA do for you to assist you as we go through our transition?

Questionnaires: Diverse stakeholders from across the community participated in the surveys that were distributed by email, asked in-person and conducted by phone.

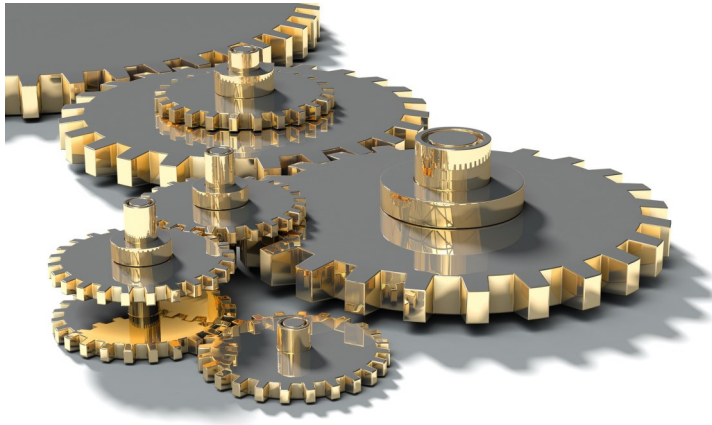
- ◆ What can we do to enhance good partnerships throughout the community?
- ◆ What are the best communications methods to contact each target audience?

Moving Forward

Five thematic goals emerged from the insights, recommendations and ideas of the stakeholder input process.



- ♦ **Goal 1 - Improve Processes and Efficiency:** Continue to move towards improving staff service delivery to our residents and the Hamilton County community.
- ♦ **Goal 2 - Preserve and Develop Affordable Housing in Hamilton County:** Preserve the current housing portfolio, develop new affordable housing, continue to create new partnerships that produce housing solutions to stabilize Hamilton County neighborhoods.
- ♦ **Goal 3 - Enhance Customer Service:** Strive to provide exceptional customer service to our residents, staff, partners and the Hamilton County community.
- ♦ **Goal 4 - Enrich Self-Sufficiency & Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Use housing as a platform to enhance health, support education, and promote self-sufficiency with residents so they can reach their full potential.
- ♦ **Goal 5 - Strengthen Communication:** Tell the story of CMHA by providing effective communication with staff, residents and the community at large.



Goal 1

Improve Processes and Efficiency

Actions

- ◆ Continue to review/update/create policies and procedures as it pertains to HUD checklist to ensure compliance
- ◆ Establish clear and precise internal controls to deter theft and to be good stewards of public funds
- ◆ **Implement Yardi portals for HCV landlords & residents and Asset Management residents***
- ◆ Identify risks to the agency
- ◆ **Update job descriptions**
- ◆ **Continue to provide clarity on job responsibilities**
- ◆ **Implement staff training for current and future programs**
- ◆ **Implement flex work schedule**
- ◆ **Implement a preventive maintenance schedule for all CMHA properties**
- ◆ **Identify document and storage location of internal SOPs, Development documents, Legal documents, and program day to day documents**
- ◆ **Develop an employee appreciation program**
- ◆ **Update the tuition assistance program**
- ◆ **Expand the compliance department to do physical inspections of maintenance work which includes all contractor work orders completed**

**Bolded actions are staff suggestions*

Goal 2

Preserve and Develop Affordable Housing in Hamilton County



Actions

- ◆ Update and utilize the development strategy
- ◆ Create more affordable housing for specific populations
- ◆ **Attract more quality landlords to the HCV Program**
- ◆ Install innovative features and amenities for new and rehabbed communities
- ◆ **Preserve the current housing stock and minimize the displacement of current residents**
- ◆ Partner with community organizations, such as local & national developers, and local & national non-profit groups to provide housing solutions
- ◆ **Purchase existing land and properties to expand CMHA portfolio**
- ◆ Expand knowledge footprint to create non-traditional affordable housing options such as assisted living opportunities
- ◆ Create an internal bond financing tool for the development and preservation of affordable housing
- ◆ Develop cross-county partnerships to expand affordable housing in the region
- ◆ Continue to apply for 4%, 9%, FHA, HOME, CDBG and philanthropic funds to help support the development and preservation of affordable housing
- ◆ Seek direct support from the City of Cincinnati with a pledge between \$250,000 and \$500,000/year for the next 10 years for the preservation and development of affordable housing
- ◆ Seek direct support from Hamilton County with a pledge between \$250,000 and \$500,000/year for the next 10 years for the preservation and development of affordable housing



Goal 3

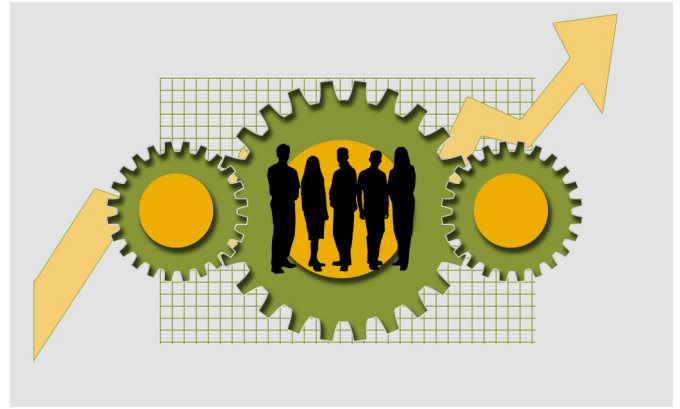
Enhance Customer Service

Actions

- ◆ Streamline processes
- ◆ **Use technology for internal and external customer interaction**
(upgrade staff handheld devices, implement new Landlord & Resident Portals, utilize web based meeting features to deliver services such as recertification and application submission)
- ◆ **Provide up-to-date training for staff on all new software, programs and equipment**
- ◆ Commitment to hiring qualified candidates
- ◆ Provide specialty customer training
- ◆ Develop internal customer service mantra
- ◆ Process rent changes timely and effectively by ensuring calculations are accurate to ensure the integrity of the program
- ◆ Utilize FaceTime for operations, use Skype for meetings
- ◆ Establish zero tolerance for non-compliance in customer service

Goal 4

Enrich Self-Sufficiency and Entrepreneurial Opportunities



Actions

- ◆ Ensure Economic Inclusion is part of the Procurement process
- ◆ **Increase community partnerships to enhance the day-to-day lives of our residents (Envision/ROC Centers)**
- ◆ Continue to enhance Section 3 Enterprise program for residents and the overall community with programs that support self-sufficiency through education & employment training
- ◆ Implement the *ConnectHome* Initiative to improve the technological divide and connect residents to mainstream opportunities
- ◆ Establish and implement the *Tools for the Trades* program for our residents
- ◆ Build alliances with appropriate community partners to increase access to job training, social services & economic opportunities such as Lowe's Heroes Program, City of Cincinnati Hands Up Initiative, J-RAB ROSS Grant, Mandates for development partners to hire & train residents during capital improvement transformations, hire & seek programs/funding to improve the day-to-day lives of our residents
- ◆ Continue to enhance the FSS Program
- ◆ **Timely updates to residents on policy and service delivery changes**
- ◆ Reduce evictions by using PRC & Project Lift funds to assist residents with rent payments
- ◆ **Work to create partnerships with organizations that provide mental illness services to enhance the day-to-day lives of our residents**



Goal 5

Strengthen Communication

Actions

- ◆ Share stories that highlight the good things residents/participants and CMHA are accomplishing
- ◆ **Publicly advocate for CMHA locally, nationally and regionally**
- ◆ **Development of internal RAD education information outlet**
- ◆ Heighten agency visibility (social media, partnerships)
- ◆ Engage the community in discussions on affordable housing solutions
- ◆ **Development of a Rehab/Capital improvement monthly newsletter**
- ◆ Continue the landlord outreach efforts
- ◆ **Implement an internal job posting only process**
- ◆ **Restructure and update the intranet to include current policies, directories, manuals, forms, open positions, agency announcements and staff changes**
- ◆ **Establish a routine celebration to be shared with media and on the intranet, when CMHA creates a new partnership with a community partner**
- ◆ **Establish a routine update to the CMHA website and intranet**
- ◆ Expand efforts towards educating residents on agency transformation towards RAD

SWOT Analysis

Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority through industry research, community input, the past five year planning experience and the ever-pressing demands from the shrinking budgets of Federal, State and Local resources has developed a 360 degree SWOT. The current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the agency are featured on these pages. Achieving the 5 goals set forth will increase strengths and opportunities and decrease weaknesses and threats.

Strengths

- ◆ Experienced Staff
- ◆ Industry Knowledge
- ◆ Organization
 - ◆ Longevity and affordable housing provider
- ◆ Leader in providing quality affordable housing in Hamilton County
- ◆ RAD
- ◆ Compliance
- ◆ Property Management
- ◆ Extensive waiting lists
- ◆ Good Stewards of Public Funds
- ◆ We partner with organizations that provide self-sufficiency programs
- ◆ Established a Gold Standard for providing services
- ◆ The Board dedication
- ◆ An Asset to Hamilton County
- ◆ Change agents
- ◆ Expansion of housing opportunities for special populations
- ◆ Economic Development and Community Investment
- ◆ We have great relationships with financial institutions
- ◆ Technology: Streamlining of processes
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ CMHA-owned assets
- ◆ Commitment of Board to Resident Rights
- ◆ Communication
 - ◆ Agency newsletters, Agency Accountability Updates, Event Outreach
- ◆ Leveraging RHF/DDTF and related funds
- ◆ Expanding real estate footprint

Weaknesses

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Public perception of client base
- ◆ Public perception of agency Dependence on HUD funding
- ◆ Distressed Units
- ◆ High employee turnover
- ◆ Focus on resident desires versus agency obligations
- ◆ Lack of follow-through on internal processes
- ◆ Inexperienced new staff
- ◆ Empowering staff

SWOT Analysis



Opportunities

- ◆ Change public perception of agency
- ◆ Employee Development
- ◆ Expand community partnerships
- ◆ Secure sustainable funding
- ◆ Expand client demographics **80-120% AMI**
- ◆ Partner with private sector firms
- ◆ Expand real estate footprint
- ◆ Develop affiliate organization (s)
- ◆ Rebrand the agency (Transformation)
- ◆ Create new affordable housing units
- ◆ Preserve existing housing units
- ◆ Develop housing for specialty populations (sustainability)
 - Mixed-income communities
 - Assisted Living facilities
- ◆ Expand homeownership opportunities
- ◆ RAD
- ◆ Communication
 - External/internal & resident communication
- ◆ More effective use of technology
- ◆ Provide internet access to residents
- ◆ Expand the voucher program through RAD
- ◆ Vouchers for targeted populations
- ◆ Change public perception of client base
- ◆ Partner with organizations that provide self-sufficiency programs
- ◆ Continue to strive toward agency Gold Standard model
- ◆ Provide consulting services for public housing conversions
- ◆ Expand retail opportunities to garner revenue
- ◆ Fee for service (Management, Inspections, Compliance)

Threats

- ◆ Existing client expectations above agency obligations
- ◆ Reliance on Federal funding
- ◆ Community perception to CMHA's relevance
- ◆ Lack of trust by CMHA residents
- ◆ Affordable housing encroachment
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Agency project overruns and delays caused by residents resistance to change
- ◆ Transformation insolvency
- ◆ Staff resistance to change
- ◆ HUD policy changes
- ◆ Administration changes (Federal, State, Local and Board)
- ◆ Shrinking talent pool
- ◆ Natural disasters

Improve Processes and Efficiency

Goal 1 Actions By Year

2021-2022

2022-2023

2023-2024

Continue to review/update/create policies and procedures as it pertains to HUD checklist to ensure compliance



Establish clear and concise internal controls to deter theft and to be good stewards of public funds



Implement YARDI portals for HCV landlords & residents and Asset Management residents



Identify risks to the agency



Update job descriptions



Continue to provide clarity on job responsibilities



Implement staff training for current and future programs



Implement flex work schedule



Implement a preventive maintenance schedule for all properties owned by CMHA



Identify document storage of internal SOPs, Development documents, Legal documents, and program day-to-day documents



Develop and implement an employee appreciation program



Update the tuition assistance program



Expand the compliance department to do physical inspections of maintenance work which includes all contractor work orders completed



Preserve and Develop Affordable Housing

Goal 2 Actions By Year

2021-2022

2022-2023

2023-2024

Update and utilize development strategy



Create more affordable housing for specific populations



Attract more quality landlords to the HCV Program



Install innovative features and amenities for new and rehabbed communities



Preserve current housing stock and minimize displacement of current residents



Partner with community organizations, such as local & national developers, and local & national non-profit groups to provide housing solutions



Purchase existing land and properties to expand CMHA portfolio



Expand knowledge footprint to create non-traditional affordable housing options such as assisted living opportunities



Create an internal bond financing tool for the development and preservation of affordable housing



Develop cross county partnerships to expand affordable housing in the region



Continue to apply for 9%, 4%, FHA, HOME, CDBG and philanthropic funds to help support the development and preservation of affordable housing



Seek direct support from the City of Cincinnati with a pledge between \$250,000 and \$500,000/year for the next ten years for the preservation and development of affordable housing



Seek direct support from Hamilton County with a pledge between \$250,000 and \$500,000/year for the next ten years for the preservation and development of affordable housing



Enhance Customer Service

Goal 3 Actions By Year

2021-2022

2022-2023

2023-2024

Streamline processes



Use technology for internal and external customer interaction



Provide up-to-date training for staff on all new software programs and equipment



Commitment to hiring qualified candidates



Provide specialty customer service training



Develop internal customer service mantra



Process rent changes timely and effectively to ensure the integrity of the program



Utilize FaceTime for operations, use of Skype for meetings



Establish zero tolerance for non-compliance in customer service



Enrich Self-Sufficiency & Improve Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Goal 4 Actions By Year

2021-2022

2022-2023

2023-2024

Ensure Economic Inclusion is part of the Procurement process



Increase community partnerships to enhance the day-to-day lives of our residents



Continue to enhance Section 3 Enterprise program for residents and the overall community with programs that support self-sufficiency through education & employment training



Implement the *ConnectHome* Initiative to improve the technological divide and connect residents to mainstream opportunities



Establish and implement the *Tools for the Trades* program for our residents



Build alliances with appropriate community partners to increase access to job training, social services & economic opportunities



Continue to enhance the FSS Program



Timely updates to residents on policy & service delivery changes



Reduce evictions by using PRC and Project Lift funds



Create partnerships with organizations that provide mental illness services to enhance the day-to-day lives of our residents



Strengthen Communication

Goal 5 Actions By Year

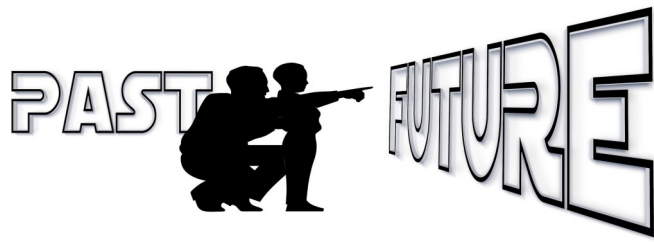
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Share stories that highlight the good things residents, participants and CMHA accomplish	◆	◆	◆
Publicly advocate for CMHA locally, nationally and regionally	◆	◆	◆
Develop internal RAD education information outlet	◆	◆	◆
Heighten agency visibility	◆	◆	◆
Engage the community in discussions on affordable housing solutions			◆
Develop a Rehab/Capital Improvement monthly newsletter	◆	◆	◆
Continue the landlord outreach efforts	◆	◆	◆
Implement an internal job posting only process	◆	◆	◆
Restructure and update CMHA's intranet to current policies, directories, manuals, positions, announcements and staff changes	◆	◆	◆
Establish a routine celebration to be shared on the intranet and with the media when a new community partnership is created	◆	◆	◆
Establish a routine update to the external website and the intranet	◆	◆	◆
Expand efforts towards educating residents on transformation to RAD	◆	◆	◆

Strategic Summary

Over the next three years, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority will be implementing this Strategic Plan and making changes to improve the affordable housing stock, address staff development, increase self-sufficiency for low income families and small businesses, streamline processes, improve communication, and guide CMHA toward our Gold Performance Standard.

This plan has several action items to be implemented over the next three years. This Strategic Plan will continue to transform the way we do business, the way we are expected to do business and how we provide quality affordable housing to the entire community.





Letter from the Future

Dear Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority,

I understand that during 2020 there were many challenges for organizations like yours as well as families in the area. They tell me there was a worldwide pandemic and a shortage of 40,000 affordable housing units in our community, much of what was available was old. It sounds like times were tough. However, your leadership team and staff began taking bold moves to keep the housing authority around for many more years. You set forth a plan that would preserve the housing you owned at the time and create more housing for families like mine plus provide job opportunities for business owners and job seekers.

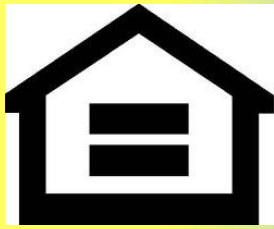
So often, companies do not know the influence of the lives they impact on a daily basis or the effect of one new initiative or the hope provided when a person has a nice place to call home. This letter is to let you know what you are doing now will create a better future for me and so many others. I look forward to seeing all that you have accomplished.

Signed a future resident of Hamilton County.





Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority
www.cintimha.com



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Talk2Us Hotline
(513) 721-CMHA

**HCV Program
Customer Service**
(513) 977-5800



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