Housing Our Future
STRATEGIES FOR CINCINNATI AND HAMILTON COUNTY

July 2020

Thanks to our sponsors:
Ellen Katz
President/CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Baker</td>
<td>Deputy Director, LISC Greater Cincinnati</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nia Baucke</td>
<td>Director of Communications, Cohear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Beam</td>
<td>Director of Development for Cincinnati, The Community Builders</td>
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<td>Liz Blume</td>
<td>Executive Director, Community Building Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harold Brown</td>
<td>Vice President of Strategy and Policy, Interact for Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Burke Rivers</td>
<td>Executive Director, Over-the-Rhine Community Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Finn</td>
<td>Founding President and Chief Executive, Strategies to End Homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanne Golliher</td>
<td>President and Chief Executive, Cincinnati Development Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dani Isaacsohn</td>
<td>Founder, Cohear</td>
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<td>Gregory Johnson</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cali Khakoo</td>
<td>Program Officer, LISC Greater Cincinnati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Killins, Jr.</td>
<td>Director of Special Initiatives, Greater Cincinnati Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joy Pierson</td>
<td>Community Development Administrator, Hamilton County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jessica Powell</td>
<td>Vice President, Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Schrider</td>
<td>Director, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Schwab</td>
<td>Executive Director, LISC Greater Cincinnati</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Smith</td>
<td>Principal, Model Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Wilson</td>
<td>Vice President of Housing, Talbert House</td>
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</tbody>
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Vincent Reina
Faculty Director, Housing Initiative at Penn (HIP), part of University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design
Our Vision

The guiding vision for this Strategy is that everyone in Cincinnati and Hamilton County will have access to quality affordable housing in the places they want to live.
Our Values
This Strategy is founded on seven core values:
• Putting people first
• Promoting choice
• Fostering diversity
• Advancing equity
• Cultivating collaboration
• Challenging the status quo
Our Goals
This Strategy puts forth policies and programs designed to:
• Protect our most vulnerable residents
• Preserve and develop long-term affordability
• Invest in housing that builds strong, inclusive communities
• Create equitable growth without displacement
• Build the capacity for development and innovative ownership structures
• Provide pathways to sustainable homeownership and generational wealth creation
Existing Conditions
Severe Cost Burdens

In 2017, **27,725** Cincinnati households (21%) reported being severely cost burdened. In the County, another **23,251** households (13%) reported severe cost burden.

The problems are **worst for the lowest-income households** (those earning <30% AMI).
Existing Conditions

Cost Burden by Tenure

Renters are more likely to be cost burdened.
Existing Conditions

**Owner Cost Burden by Race**

High burdens among Black owners

In the city, Black homeowners are more likely to be moderately and severely cost-burdened than Whites or Latinos.
Existing Conditions

Renter Cost Burden by Race

Even higher burdens among Black renters In both the city and county, Black renters are more likely to be moderately and severely cost-burdened than Whites or Latinos.
• The combination of rising housing costs and stagnating incomes is creating unprecedented housing affordability challenges in Hamilton County.

- 40,000 units
  Deficit of housing affordable & available to extremely low-income households

- +6 %
  Increase in median gross rent
  2012-2017
  (adjusting for inflation)
The combination of rising housing costs and stagnating incomes is creating unprecedented housing affordability challenges in Hamilton County.

12,240 people
Number of individuals served by the homeless system in 2018

8.7%
Eviction filing rate in 2014-2017 (one of the highest in Ohio)

11.2%
Risk of lead paint hazard in 2015 (compare to 9.3% statewide)
Nearly 1/3 of Hamilton County households live in unaffordable housing.

**MAXIMUM RENT BY INCOME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Band</th>
<th>Percent of AMI</th>
<th>Percent of All Households</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Gross Rent Required to Prevent Rent Burden*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely low income</td>
<td>0-30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>$9,217</td>
<td>$230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very low income</td>
<td>30-50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>$21,681</td>
<td>$542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>50-80%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>$35,862</td>
<td>$897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate income</td>
<td>80-120%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>$54,168</td>
<td>$1,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle &amp; upper income</td>
<td>&gt; 120%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>$113,116</td>
<td>$2,828</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median gross rent for a 2-bedroom unit: **$831**

*Gross rent includes utility costs. This value is calculated by dividing median household income by 12 to arrive at monthly income, then multiplying by 30%, since this is the accepted affordability threshold for the ratio of gross rent to income.
The State of Housing

The top 5 jobs in the Cincinnati region do not pay enough to afford housing.

Minimum income needed to afford the median home with a mortgage: $55,000

Minimum income needed to afford the median 2-bedroom rental: $33,200

<table>
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<th>Job</th>
<th>Income</th>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
<td>$50,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salesperson</td>
<td>$22,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer or Material Mover</td>
<td>$23,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service Worker</td>
<td>$16,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representative</td>
<td>$27,800</td>
</tr>
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</table>
COVID-19 is exacerbating economic instability.

- Since March, 50% Ohioans over the age of 18 experienced a loss of employment income, or had a household member who did.

- About 35% expected a loss of income in the next four weeks for themselves or a household member.

- Those with very low household incomes (<$50,000) and those with high incomes (> $200,000) were most likely to experience a loss of employment income.

- Whites were less likely than other groups to experience an employment income loss (32%, compared to 44%+ for Blacks, Asians, and Latino/as).

![Bar chart showing adults in Ohio who have experienced loss of employment income since March, by household income category.](Household Pulse Survey Data, US Census Bureau)
COVID-19 is exacerbating housing instability.

- 20% of adult renters in Ohio did not pay rent in July
- Black renters were more likely to miss rent (34%) compared to Whites (16%) or Latino/as (17%)
- Those with only a high school education were more likely to miss rent (32%) compared to those with some college (11%) or a college degree (17%)

![July 2020 Rent Status for Renting Adults in Ohio](chart.png)

Household Pulse Survey Data, US Census Bureau
COVID-19 is exacerbating housing instability.

- In mid-July, 20% of Ohio renters had **no confidence** that they would be able to pay rent in August, and another 25% had only **slight confidence**.

- Those with **children** in their household missed rent 26% of the time, compared to only 17% of those in households with no children.

- Generally, the lower a renter’s household income, the more likely they were to have missed rent.
Jennifer Foster
Avondale Community Council Board Member and participant in Cohear's community engagement efforts around this process
Kristen Baker
Executive Director of LISC Greater Cincinnati
The Strategy

‘Housing Our Future’ addresses these realities by:

• Recommending 34 key actions to produce and preserve affordable housing, protect the most vulnerable residents from housing insecurity, and alter underlying systems that affect housing access and the capacity to create change.

• Recommending new resources and financing mechanisms that can support these strategies.

• Providing over 100 detailed recommendations that local jurisdictions, public agencies, non-profit organizations, philanthropists, and lending institutions can adopt to address housing needs.

• Supporting these recommendations with existing conditions and best practice research.
This strategy is the result of a broad-based planning process which involved public, private, and non-profit stakeholders, as well as residents, over the course of 2019 and early 2020.

Stakeholders developed recommendations as part of five Working Groups. These recommendations were vetted by a Steering Committee of 19 housing experts.

Recommendations were also provided by the Eviction Task Force, the Homeless Clearinghouse, and the Property Tax Working Group.

In addition, input was gathered from hundreds of residents, neighborhood groups, advocates, and for- and non-profit developers through public meetings, outreach events, interviews, focus groups, and the engagement of over 50 Cohear Everyday Experts.
A Strategic Response

Produce new, affordable units

There is a gap of 40,000 units affordable and available to extremely low-income households

• Household incomes less than $14,678

• 55,600 households in Hamilton County

At least 20,000 additional affordable units need to be produced over the next ten years
A Strategic Response

Preserve existing units as liveable and affordable

Currently, at least 60,000 affordable subsidized and unsubsidized units are in need of preservation and reinvestment

• Includes CMHA housing

• Unsubsidized units are commonly known as naturally-occurring affordable housing
A Strategic Response

Protects the most vulnerable residents from housing insecurity

Nearly 49,000 households are severely cost-burdened

- Severely-cost burdened households pay more than home of their income on housing expenses

An average of 12,400 evictions are filed in Hamilton County every year

- One of the highest numbers of evictions cases filed by county in Ohio

In 2018, 12,240 people access emergency shelter or homelessness services
A Strategic Response

Alters the underlying systems that affect our residents ability to access quality housing and our region’s ability to effect meaningful change

Only 23% of residentially zoned land in Cincinnati allows for anything more than single family homes

• This share is lower in suburban jurisdictions

Real income for the median Hamilton County household has fallen by $8,000 since 2000

The share of families in poverty has increased by 20% since 2000

The Cincinnati metropolitan area remains one of the most racially segregated metropolitan areas in the country
Planning in a Time of Crisis
Jessica Powell
Vice President of the Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation
In order to meet housing needs, Cincinnati and Hamilton County must scale up the production of affordable homes.

- Explore or scale up innovative ownership models & housing types
- Fund new affordable and mixed-income projects in suburban communities
- Build capacity in housing trades
In order to meet housing needs, Cincinnati and Hamilton County must scale up the production of affordable homes.

- **Produce**
  - Create new incentives for affordable housing
  - Target housing to vulnerable groups
  - Set community benchmarks
In order to meet housing needs, Cincinnati and Hamilton County must scale up the production of affordable homes.

- **Produce**
  - Fund mission-driven CDCs and nonprofits
  - Increase access to lending products
Gregory Johnson
Chief Executive Officer of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority
Investment in maintenance and repairs are urgently needed to preserve our existing supply of affordable housing.

Preserve

- PROVIDE HOME REPAIR FUNDING TO LOW-INCOME HOMEOWNERS AND SMALL LANDLORDS
- STRENGTHEN THE CODE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK
- MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRESERVE EXISTING CMHA HOUSING
Investment in maintenance and repairs are urgently needed to preserve our existing supply of affordable housing.

- **Maximize Opportunities to Preserve Privately Subsidized Housing**
- **Create Rental Registration Programs**
- **Require Long-Term Affordability in Exchange for Renovation Assistance**
- **Increase Support to Address Tangled Title**
Jeniece Jones
Executive Director of Housing Opportunities Made Equal
As the region grows, we need to protect the housing stability of those who are most vulnerable to rising housing costs.

**Protect**

- **EXPAND TAX RELIEF FOR VULNERABLE HOMEOWNERS**
- **TARGET INTERVENTIONS TO RAPIDLY APPRECIATING NEIGHBORHOODS**
- **EXPAND HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND INCREASE EQUITABLE WEALTH CREATION**
As the region grows, we need to protect the housing stability of those who are most vulnerable to rising housing costs.

- CREATE A REGIONAL TENANT ASSOCIATION
- ENFORCE AND EXPAND TENANT PROTECTION
- COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENTS
As the region grows, we need to protect the housing stability of those who are most vulnerable to rising housing costs.

- Increase support for existing efforts
- Establish a county housing court
- Educate and incentivize landlords to accept vouchers
Mary Burke Rivers
Executive Director of Over-the-Rhine Community Housing
Many of the actions described require additional resources.

- Create a dedicated, recurring funding stream for the AHTF
- Provide long-term mezzanine debt to affordable rentals
- Create a low-interest acquisition and pre-development fund
Many of the actions described require additional resources.

- Increase subsidy to developers when they include more affordable units
- Create a revolving loan fund for repairs
- Advocate for new state and federal resources
Liz Blume
Executive Director of the Community Building Institute
Achieving equitable housing access and affordability throughout our community will require changing the systems that have left too many behind.

EXPAND THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND

MODIFY TAX INCENTIVES AND FUNDING PRIORITIES

MAXIMIZE COMPETITIVENESS FOR STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING
Achieving equitable housing access and affordability throughout our community will require changing the systems that have left too many behind.

- Amend zoning codes
- Conduct aggressive outreach and education
- Create a community challenge to pay a living wage
Achieving equitable housing access and affordability throughout our community will require changing the systems that have left too many behind.

- Address “Cliff Effect” Issues
- Improve Public Transportation
- Create a Coordinated Leadership Structure
- Adopt a Set of Metrics to Track Progress
Short-term Needs

Keep people in housing: County-wide Rental Assistance Program

CARES ACT
Long-term Strategy

We cannot go back to normal – we need to do better – much better
Greater Cincinnati Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) facilitated this process in collaboration with the Steering Committee. They would like to thank the Strategy’s generous sponsors:
THANK YOU

The full report is available online at:

https://www.lisc.org/greater-cincinnati/what-we-do/housing-our-future/

Please join us for the next session in this series:
Housing our Future: Housing Insecurity and Evictions in the Wake of the Covid-19 Crisis

10:00AM    Thursday, August 27th    Virtual: Webex