

HOMEOWNERSHIP

The homeownership program offered by the Columbia Housing Authority (CHA) make available opportunities for persons to become homeowners through education, counseling and connecting with resources to assist with costs associated with home purchase. CHA provides prospective homeowners with education on financial literacy, home buying, and home maintenance. The program is designed to ensure that prospective home buyers are knowledgeable of the home buying process requirements for maintaining a home.

Homeownership Opportunities

The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides resources for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program tenants to purchase a home with the use of their voucher. The CHA has been implementing the program for 18 years with a total of 99 Housing Choice Voucher families purchasing homes through the program. Two of the families who previously purchased through the program sold their first homes and purchased a second one with the use of HCV Homeownership subsidies in 2017. Families who purchased through the program are eligible to continue to receive housing support and case management services after purchase. As of December 31, 2018, 60 HCV homeowners continue to receive assistance through the voucher homeownership program. Ten new homeowners were created through the program in 2018. A copy of the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Plan is available for review in the Section 8 Administrative Plan.

Other homeownership opportunities are available through the homes purchased by the authority through the Richland County Neighborhood Stabilization Program and HUD Real Estate Owned Property Programs. Currently there are four moderately priced and very affordable homes available for sale. Most of the homes are located in the Northeast Richland County area. For several years, the homes were rental properties for tenants who committed to purchasing them. To date, two of the homes are vacant and being prepared to be sold to eligible buyers. In 2017 the CHA began construction on three new homes in the Rosewood Hills. To date, all of the homes have been sold.

In partnership with our co-developer Mungo Construction and the City of Columbia, CHA constructed 12 houses in the Lyon Street area as part of the East Central Neighborhood development project. The houses are located on offsite parcels near the Gonzales Gardens community and were available for purchase at affordable market rate prices. As of the end of 2018, all of the homes built through the Lyon Street project have been sold. In November 2019, construction of the 8 single family homes located on the onsite parcels in Gonzales Gardens began. We are anticipating construction for all of the homes to become completed by summer 2019.

CHA continues to provide home ownership education to first time home buyers. We have extended our services to other community partners to allow them to refer non-CHA low to moderate income families for home ownership training. During the course of 2017,

CHA started an online registration for the homeownership classes. This process has made the program more organized and technologically accessible. The classes have attracted a host of professionals to volunteer their time to educate prospective home buyers. Our partners consist of attorneys, credit counselors, banks, realtors, and home inspectors. These individuals have committed their time and knowledge to help CHA families achieve homeownership. At this time 337 individuals have participated in home buying classes in 2018.

The following classes are part of the Home Ownership Program

- Home Buying Class
- Budget and Credit Class
- Home and Yard Maintenance Class

In 2019, CHA will continue to help residents and others in the community become homeowners by providing education, counseling, and assistance with purchasing programs. Although CHA has a thriving home buying education program, the agency we are not a HUD Certified Housing Counseling Agency. One of the home ownership objectives for 2019 is for CHA to become a HUD Certified Housing Counseling Agency.