



# THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

of the City of Columbia, South Carolina  
1917 HARDEN STREET \* COLUMBIA, S.C. 29204-1015  
TELEPHONE (803) 254-3886  
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February 21, 2019

Dear Citizens of the Midlands:

The Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, SC (CHA) is required prepare and submit an Annual Plan and Five Year Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) outlining the proposed outputs for the upcoming fiscal year and previous year's goals and objectives accomplished. CHA's uses the Plan as a tool to guide us in our operational strategies and evaluate our areas of weakness and strength. We are fortunate to say that in 2018, the CHA has been stable and continue to be the leader in producing affordable housing for citizens of the City of Columbia and Richland County.

As we look back over the year, the challenge of creating affordable housing was a major goal of the CHA. Our team worked hard to secure opportunities and continues to seek resources to address one of the most prevailing needs for human security. We have sought to create opportunities that would demolish and revitalized our public housing stock thereby providing safe, modern, and energy efficient housing. Redevelopment of Gonzales Gardens, Allen Benedict Court, and Lorick Place have been on the forefront as we strive to bring back communities that are economically thriving, accessible to all persons, and valued as the top places to live in the City of Columbia.

The CHA has placed much value on helping to reduce the number of homeless families and individuals in the local area. We have taken on several initiatives through various partnerships such as the City of Columbia, United Way of the Midlands, USC School of Medicine Supportive Housing Division, and U.S. Department of Veterans Administration to combat the issue and provide housing for persons who are homeless, Veterans, diagnosed with AIDS or an AIDS related illness, or a disability. The CHA creates housing for those who have barriers and/or challenges that may prevent them from obtaining a home. Our teams of professionals continuously pursue opportunities to support those with the greatest needs.

Throughout the year, we provided housing for over 6000 families through our subsidy based programs and served approximately another 400 through our non-subsidized affordable housing. We have created opportunities for 10 of our residents in 2018 to use their Housing Choice Voucher (formerly Section 8) to purchase homes and others through the resources obtained from our Family Self Sufficiency Program have moved on to housing and economic self-sufficiency. During the course of the year, we provided free homeownership education to over 300 prospective home buyers, most of whom were low to moderate income families with the aspiration to fulfill the "American Dream." The CHA knows that education is the key to getting out of poverty and values the quality of education by promoting reading, parents as first teachers, providing scholarships, and mentoring our youth so that they will be future leaders of tomorrow.

In wake of the recent tragic deaths in our Allen Benedict Court Community and displacement of our families, we are trying to move forward with our mission, "To meet the emerging affordable housing needs of low to moderate income individuals and families in Columbia and Richland County while promoting self-reliance and improving the quality of life," while addressing the challenges that are before us. The CHA expeditiously responded to the need to secure housing for



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our families displaced and created strategies to transition them to permanent safe housing. Although the loss of one of our largest public housing developments will tremendously impact the number of families we will be able to serve, loss of our residents' lives has brought so much sorrow and greatly affects us. We are moving forward with strategies to rebuild the Allen Benedict Court Community and the greater community's trust in us as the leading provider of affordable housing for citizens of Columbia and Richland County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Walker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gilbert Walker  
Executive Director