



THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

of the City of Columbia, South Carolina
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March 7, 2018

Dear Citizens of the Midlands:

For almost eighteen years, the Columbia Housing Authority (CHA) has been required to prepare an Annual and Five Year Plan to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in a specific format. What you are looking at today is the Five Year Plan for 2015-2020 and the Annual Plan for 2018-2019. These documents are a reflection of what we have accomplished in the last year and what we intend to accomplish in the remaining two years of this five year plan.

2017 was a very historic year for the Authority. Our biggest project of the year was demolishing the 280 apartments at Gonzales Gardens. The new development will include two and three bedroom apartments, a senior building, single-family homes and two and three bedroom townhomes. To fund the development, the CHA applied for a Choice Neighborhood Grant for \$29,905,676 and is applying for a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. The objective is to start construction later this year. I believe I speak for many when I say that revitalization of Gonzales Gardens has been highly anticipated in the Columbia area.

In reviewing 2017, a few other things cannot be forgotten: our first two Project Based Voucher complexes are at 100% occupancy, the development of a new library at the old Dollar General Store, the start of Lorick Place, and the purchase of Yorktown, Springtree and Bentley Apartments.

Our Family Self Sufficiency Department continues to offer quality programs to further educate our residents in Career Development, Life Skills and Homeownership. We are not only committed to providing affordable housing but also helping our residents succeed. I am extremely proud of our Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 Department for scoring a 100 on the SEMAP (Section 8 Management Assessment Program) in 2017 which is recognized as a High Performing Authority by HUD. The CHA's Procurement Department has transitioned to conducting all transactions using a paperless method. Our Homeless Programs Department has now increased to 75 apartments with its own grand funding.

We continue to be a leader in providing opportunities for our program participants. In partnership with Honor Capital, the Save-a-lot grocery store in the Celia Saxon community has almost been open for three years. It has been well received by our public housing residents, but also by the entire community. Another healthy initiative is our MOBI-REC program. The Mobile Recreation Truck is filled with sports and play equipment and is used by the children, adults and elderly in our public housing and Housing Choice Voucher neighborhoods. In 2017, the MOBI-REC has served over 2,000 participants.

Our vision is to be the Leading Provider of Affordable Housing in the Midlands. One of the greatest signs of a vibrant city is to provide housing for all segments of the population. This plan illustrates what the

agency is doing on many levels to be the best in our business. We already are a major player in housing in Richland County with an inventory of 1,855 public housing units, 4,000 various Housing Choice Vouchers, and over 500 units in our private market housing program. The CHA was the first Authority in the country to receive approval on its Fair Housing Plan that was done in partnership with Richland County. In the next five years, the objective of the Plan is to build more affordable housing and improve fair housing.

The Public Hearing and Presentation of this Plan will be on April 12, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at the Cecil Tillis Center, 211 Simpkins Lane. We depend on feedback from the community. Let us hear from you.

Sincerely,

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

Gilbert Walker
Executive Director