



Standing at the Corner of Community and Inclusion



Standing at the corner
seeking housing justice is hard work

It hasn't gotten easier as the years roll by
No defeat dampens our resolve

Yes, we are shouting for equity in affordable housing

Everyday at this corner of the world
Over-the-Rhine Community Housing is putting all that we have:
Our hands, our feet, our skills,
and our love for our neighbors
into sustaining and making
homes for those most in need

Stand with us at this vulnerable corner
We need you
Your support feeds our spirit

It takes all of us to muster the courage
To keep the vision alive
and moving it forward
At this corner we say
HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

By Bonnie Neumeier

Dear Friends,

This morning, early on January 12th of 2024, there was a rainbow as storm clouds moved in from the west and the sun shined through puffy red-gold clouds in the east. It was absolutely beautiful. It sparked a sense of joy and awe. There were many posts on social media from a variety of friends experiencing the same excitement from different perspectives across the city. All of us became part of a community of people who experienced the beauty of nature. We shared in each other's joy.

Community. It's that indescribable feeling of being part of something bigger than oneself. That deep down sense of connection.

In this 2023 Annual Report we'll share both our experiences with the joys and the sorrows of being in community. There was plenty to celebrate in 2023. Construction at **Slater Hall** in the West End (62 units) and **The Barrister** on 9th Street downtown (44 units) gained momentum with some units finished by year's end. Ribbon cuttings are planned for early 2024. We celebrated the groundbreaking at **Vandalia Point**, our 52-unit development in the welcoming neighborhood of Northside!

We struggled through the lingering effects of Covid supply chain issues, but we were overjoyed to sign leases and hand over keys to people moving into their new homes. Some for the first time in their lives. We await the day we can move forward with **Gloria's Place**. It is being held up in litigation

by some who can't see how this project has the power to broaden our sense of community. Our kids went to **Summer Camp at Camp Ernst**, swam at **Ziegler Pool**, ran through sprinklers at our block party, and roasted hot dogs at the annual fall campfire. Neighbors continued on their path of recovery and pursued their hopes and dreams. We celebrated our Beloved Community at our annual fall event. And held each other as we mourned the loss of neighbors and dear friends.

You've been with us through it all. Thank you for making so many of the joyful moments possible, by providing support in the many different ways that you do. When we hit bumps in the road you provide us with encouragement that keeps us moving forward. Community, like the rainbow, is a beautiful thing to behold, especially in the midst of the storm.



Nick DiNardo
Board President



Mary Burke Rivers
Executive Director

2024 - 2026 Strategic Plan

- Expand organizational capacity by adding key staff and resources to support the mission, which includes development of a comprehensive leadership transition and succession plan.
- Develop and document a more diversified revenue model.
- Create and implement an advocacy plan to support the mission and Grand Strategy.
- Implement our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, and Justice strategy.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of our properties and activities through a combination of energy efficiency measures, and sustainable practices across all operations.



Mike Bootes 11/17/47 – 8/31/23

On August 31, 2023, Over-the-Rhine lost a devoted supporter and true friend. So, too, did OTR Community Housing when Mike Bootes, our Treasurer and long time volunteer board member, died. Mike was a neighbor who showed up again and again to mow grass, pick up trash, support children, orchestrate fun, feed the hungry, care for people without homes, and do the unglamorous work required to create more quality housing for people who are otherwise priced out of a safe, stable place to live.

Mike was a college educated union carpenter and construction manager who worked all his life with his hands. He was a motorcycle mechanic who read the New York Times. He was a student of structure and of religion who was impatient with grand theories in both fields. Mike built things. He built large buildings and small boats, racing bikes, soapbox derby cars, and a home for himself in a 19th century warehouse. Mike also built community and that's what brought him to OTR Community Housing. He believed we all have a responsibility to one another and he knew some of his neighbors were hungry and homeless.

Mike brought a builder's perspective to every endeavor, including community building. He was engaged and hard working. He was relentlessly practical. He was focused on solutions. He was committed to structural soundness. He understood that big undertakings take time and require

many hands. He knew that the best teams engage diverse people with multiple talents. He was a listener and a learner. These qualities made him an outstanding board member and, eventually, Treasurer. Mike was doggedly determined to stabilize, strengthen, and preserve OTR Community Housing assets, both physical and financial.

Mike also generously shared his professional skills on several complicated OTR Community Housing building projects. He worked with our staff and with architects and builders to assure the successful renovation and expansion of our service center on 14th Street. He functioned as chief diplomat and construction supervisor on the restoration of a tall retaining wall on East Clifton Avenue that threatened properties below, working with engineers, skilled tradespeople, and aggrieved neighbors to resolve a potentially catastrophic situation. Most recently, Mike worked with engineers, city inspectors, and heavy machine operators to restore yet another collapsing wall on a hillside property donated to OTR Community Housing, creating in the process a new development-ready building site for future housing.



Mike always stepped up for OTR Community Housing. He also stepped up for his community in countless ways. Mike was an active member of Christ Church Cathedral and led its 5000 Club, a food ministry that prepares and serves more than 100 sit down meals each Tuesday for hungry and homeless members of our community. He was active in the OTR Community Council, where he advocated for neighborhood diversity, affordable housing, and measures

to resist gentrification. He volunteered with Interfaith Hospitality Network's family shelter program. These and other acts of service were expressions of Mike's care for others and his personal humility.

Mike Bootes left our community and all of us who knew him better than when he met us. He lived simply and deliberately. He was no hand-wringer or bleeding heart; rather, Mike daily practiced a pragmatic, non-judgmental compassion for every person he encountered. He shared his time and talents generously. He enjoyed the natural world and spending time in it as a devoted kayaker and camper. He loved his neighborhood and his neighbors. Mike's purposeful, well lived life is an inspiration for all who spent time or made common cause with him and he is greatly missed. Thank you, Mike – you will not be forgotten.

Welcome to Northside



A while back we were invited to bring our community based affordable housing model to neighborhoods outside of Over-the-Rhine. We were hesitant to assume that our deep roots in OTR would translate to success in other corners of our city. With the strength of our **blended management model** and the support of incredibly engaged community partners in other neighborhoods we've seen much success. The need for our neighbors across our city is so great we must continue to answer this call.

The Northside neighborhood has experienced the greatest increase in housing costs in the entire city of Cincinnati, according to 2020 census data. After a year of pre-development planning for **Vandalia Point in Northside**, and thanks to support from their Community Council, residents, and funders we closed the philanthropic investment gap on this 52-unit low-income housing tax credit project. We were ecstatic to celebrate alongside the neighborhood with our partners **New Republic Architecture** and **Urban Sites** by walking in Northside's 4th of July Parade.

Nestled on the Hamilton Ave throughway, the triangle of land that runs along Blue Rock St. is across from Hoffner Park and takes advantage of the new Metro Hub service just two blocks away. The project has evolved through numerous **community meetings and input sessions** to meet the neighborhood's objectives of preserving their built environment while also prioritizing accessibility. Two vacant existing office buildings will be renovated; one is the former office space for Powel Crosley. New construction along the south will be served by an elevator providing additional visibility. Vandalia Point is targeted to serve low-income, working-class neighbors who fall within 30%-60% of the Area Median Income.

"Northside's been the place to be for a significant amount of time now. Unfortunately, over at least the last decade, the people who made Northside so desirable, have also been getting incrementally priced out. This development **is a great step towards rebuilding opportunities**, making room for our creative members who couldn't afford to be creative here anymore, and to proudly regain the diversity we've been losing." said Bree Moss, Northside Community Council President at the Vandalia groundbreaking.

In late 2023, we marked the groundbreaking at Vandalia Point. With our development partner Urban Sites we are planning for an early 2025 completion date. Thank you to our partners Cincinnati Development Fund, City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio Housing Finance Agency, and U.S. Bank.



538
homes

980
residents



34%
children
66%
adults



We operate **9** supportive housing programs for individuals and families who have experienced homelessness. We utilize a range of models from recovery oriented to housing first.



216

residents of permanent supportive housing

224
adults

32
children

51% achieved income



42%

experienced chronic homelessness

51% from streets

33% from shelter



65%

left PSH for other permanent destinations

4 years average length of stay



36

youth attended Children's Creative Corner

12 children attended summer camp



Change is something with which we and our residents are quite familiar. For example, **Children's Creative Corner (CCC)** has undergone many alterations over the years but persists as a constant and has been since it moved to E. Clifton Ave. from buddy's Place in 2010. Welcoming young residents every Tuesday and Thursday night for social emotional skill building through artmaking, CCC is a reminder to our many families that **support truly is right around the corner.**

Toward the end of the summer this past year, program attendance increased, along with our need for more volunteers—more support with this newest chapter at CCC. After seeing a social media post seeking volunteers, Christie Goetz **answered the call.** Most CCC volunteers are local college students looking to fulfill service requirements. Christie's lived in the neighborhood for nearly ten years and filled out an application to volunteer with us simply because she wanted to connect with her community in a new way. "The kids surprise me every week," Christie says. "I love seeing the world through their eyes and art projects."



Watching Christie put in the work of getting to know the kids, helping them through their frustration with homework or explaining how to best use art supplies—these are simple moments. They create **community building on the most direct level,** person-to-person. A steady reminder of CCC's importance. Of the value to be placed on Over-the-Rhine Community Housing's commitment to not only provide quality housing but to facilitate spaces where all residents are able to cultivate their own sense of belonging.

Overcoming Obstacles in Creating Housing



2023 provided many opportunities to test our commitment as well as test our ability to create solutions for the affordable housing crisis. Additional **philanthropy is playing a larger role every year**. With financial support from the city, county, state, and foundations, and our mission focused team, we continue to **create new affordable housing**.



We were thrilled to be working with our longtime allies at Tender Mercies on two projects this year. **Slater Hall** will provide 62 homes for people who have experienced homelessness and mental illness. Tender Mercies will own, manage and provide support for the residents there. The project was completed in December with residents moving in after the first of the year!

In 2023 we secured an allocation of low-income housing tax credits for **Spaeth and Kelly Hall**. The project will renovate two properties at 27 -29 W. 12th Street that **Tender Mercies** currently owns and operates as Single-Room-Occupancy Permanent Supportive Housing. The buildings, currently 55 units at the end of their useful

life, will be gutted and rehabilitated into 30 efficiency apartments, providing the tenants with greater independence.

The Barrister which is the first affordable housing to come to Downtown in decades moved forward too! 18 units of the 44 were completed by year's end and 2 people moved into their new homes in time to ring in the new year. Lingering supply chain issues and **skyrocketing interest rates** impacted a few of our projects, most significantly Lower Price Hill Thrives. We are grateful for **American Rescue Plan Act** funds to get this project of 47 units across the finish line.

Regretfully, we haven't been able to start construction on Gloria's Place on Dunlap. It will provide **44 units of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** for people who are experiencing chronic homelessness. A few people have sued to stop the project. While we've got real examples of how market rate housing and upscale housing can flourish with PSH as their neighbor (like Jimmy Heath House), people cling to their fears and biases. However case law supports our position. Sadly, the delays will increase costs and 44 people will continue to experience the trauma of homelessness.

You have already read about Vandalia Point (pg. 4), our first affordable housing development in **Northside**. As we look ahead, we have several projects in pre-development. We look forward to successfully securing financing for more **community-based affordable housing in 2024!**

THANK YOU TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS

THE BARRISTER

Anonymous / Christ Church Cathedral / Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation / City of Cincinnati / City Studios / First Financial Bank / Greater Cincinnati Foundation / Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr. Foundation / Hubert Family Foundation / Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trust, Fifth-Third Bank Trustee / LISC / National Equity Fund / The George and Margaret McLane Foundation / Ohio Department of Development / Ohio Housing Finance Agency / The Port / Marge & Charles J. Schott Foundation

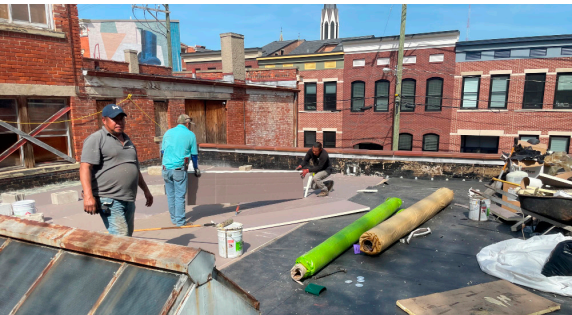
SLATER HALL

Cincinnati Development Fund / City of Cincinnati / Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati / Fifth-Third Bank / Federal Home Loan Bank / HGC Construction / The James Wasserman Memorial Fund / New Republic Architecture / Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing / Ohio Housing Finance Agency / Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services / Tender Mercies / Strategies to End Homelessness

Keeping Housing Affordable Dignified and High Quality



Over the past year we have grown our asset management team with the addition of a Director of Asset Management. This department oversees the safety and quality of homes for our residents, meeting the financial and compliance requirements of our many investors, and supporting the mission of our organization. We have spent the past year creating an organizational system for tracking the many inspections at our properties and creating efficiency and cost savings. There were over 110 third party inspections to complete and track in 2023!



This team also oversees implementing capital improvements to our properties that are outside of full redevelopments. Four larger scale 2023 capital improvement projects included **warehouse renovations, East Clifton Safety improvements, Fulda electrical improvements, and the EPA Star grant.** Thanks to generous donors, the warehouse which houses our maintenance department and is so vital to the health of our properties, received some critical emergency repairs which included a **new roof, new garage doors, and tuckpointing.** We are working to secure additional funding to continue with tuckpointing, exterior painting, window replacement and a new bathroom and locker room for the maintenance staff.

Keep Cincinnati Beautiful supported efforts to make safety and beautification improvements to our housing along East Clifton and Peete Streets. We have installed

security cameras, improved the function of some of our gates and fencing, installed additional energy efficient and very bright lighting, trimmed some of the vegetation and trees, and added flower boxes to beautify the area. Several of our residents have called to share their excitement about the new lighting and safety measures.

Ensuring that our properties remain quality, dignified housing often means not just preserving but improving sustainability and modernizing properties to meet today's living standards. Often this brings complications including increasing electricity capacity to the properties. One of our largest buildings, the Fulda at 1514-1516 Elm had new increased electrical service run to the property this year in preparation for the installation of **central air conditioning** throughout the building in 2024.

We are also excited to announce that Over-the-Rhine Community Housing is part of a team including **Green Umbrella, the City of Cincinnati,** and a cohort of research institutions to be awarded a \$1.1 million **US Environmental Protection Agency grant.** The grant's purpose is to monitor and study the impacts to our residents both financially and physically through air quality from electrification and weatherization. As part of this grant fifty of our units will receive weatherization and in some cases the installation of new electric heat pumps and stoves. We know that the challenge of providing affordable housing has always been about more than just providing affordable rents. This project will provide us with the opportunity to make meaningful energy upgrades as well as understanding the value of these improvements to residents so that we can make similar improvements to all our housing in the future. This grant is one of 11 awarded across the country for community-based research to determine the impacts of transitioning away from fossil-based energy sources on underserved communities.

CREATING HOMES AND BUILDING COMMUNITY



66
units
completed

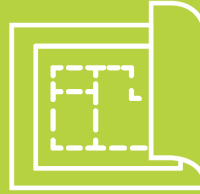


140 units under
construction

58 units
improved



174 units in
predevelopment



74
units in
development

124 residents
lives enhanced



STAND WITH US AT THE CORNER OF COMMUNITY AND HOUSING



Your contribution fuels the evolution of communities, creating vibrant neighborhoods that foster a sense of belonging and pride. With your help, we construct affordable housing that provide not just shelter but a stepping stone to a brighter future.



OTRCH
COMMUNITY HOUSING

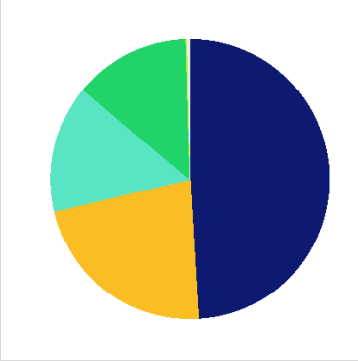
2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

NET ASSETS

\$14,695,266

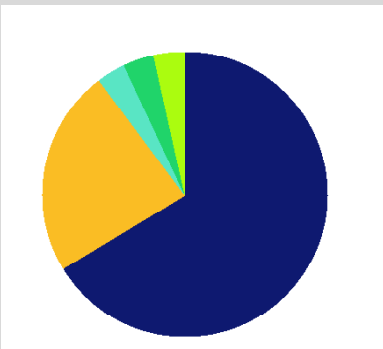
*numbers are based on unaudited financials

INCOME



- RENTAL INCOME \$3,581,936
- SUPPORTIVE HOUSING..... \$1,623,722
- FUNDRAISING & GRANTS..... \$1,084,938
- FEES EARNED \$977,800
- MISCELLANEOUS INCOME.... \$12,679
- OTHER GAINS & LOSSES \$23,173

EXPENSE



- PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.....\$5,481,146
- RESIDENT SERVICES\$1,939,632
- MANAGEMENT SERVICES.....\$269,262
- FUNDRAISING.....\$287,556
- HOUSING DEVELOPMENT\$291,454

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Nick DiNardo - *President*
Georgia Keith - *Vice-President*
Bob Pickford - *Treasurer*
Bonnie Neumeier - *Secretary*
Roger Auer - *Trustee*
Bridgette Burbanks - *Trustee*
Kelly Clements - *Trustee*

Patrick Daffin - *Trustee*
Jackie Dean - *Trustee*
Bob Pickford - *Trustee*
Fanni Johnson - *Trustee*
Robie Suggs - *Trustee*
Meredith Whitehead - *Trustee*
Stacy Wiley - *Trustee*



Thank you to Jonathan Diskin for over 20 years of service to our community!

Warm welcome to Patrick Daffin, Jackie Dean,
and Meredith Whitehead, board members elected in 2024.

ACCREDITATIONS



Department of
Development



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**New website coming soon... Be on the lookout for our
revamped with site updated information about all that we do!**