

City of Columbus
Department of Finance and Management
Grants Management Section

Final Application

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing)
FR-6700-N-98

November 3, 2023

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**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

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**EXHIBIT A
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

The City of Columbus, Ohio (City of Columbus) is pleased to submit this Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) grant application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Each of the proposed activities builds on work already underway in the City of Columbus to address the acute demand for affordable housing, reduce and remove barriers to creating and preserving affordable housing, and affirmatively further fair housing.

Central Ohio is at a critical inflection point. The past decade has been one of historic growth for Central Ohio, and that growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Over the past 20 years, the Columbus Region's population increased by a third, adding more than 500,000 people and becoming the fastest-growing metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in the Midwest.

This growth has come at a cost—specifically by outpacing the region's supply of available housing. In the past ten years, Columbus housing prices have increased at roughly double the rate of its median household income. Columbus is projected to have a shortage of as much as 110,000 housing units by 2032. Meeting this need will require more than doubling the construction rate, from around 8,300 units per year to as many as 19,300 per year.

The City of Columbus is proposing to utilize this PRO Housing grant opportunity to fund the following activities that address this need:

1. **Unlocking Grayfield Sites** incentivizes development of affordable housing on complex, underdeveloped sites along high-capacity transit corridors by completing extensive pre-development site preparation work.
2. **CHDO and CDC Capacity Building** expands the capacity of community-based non-profit organizations to create and preserve more affordable housing in opportunity neighborhoods.
3. **Navigating the Permitting Process** provides resources to streamline City permitting processes and demystify those processes, especially for small-to-medium sized developers.

The City of Columbus Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section will oversee the administration of this grant. The Grants Management Team has extensive experience with HUD grants of similar size and scope. Implementation will be led by the City's Departments of Development and Building & Zoning Services, which are already leading the charge in addressing the city's housing crisis.

The City of Columbus pledges \$6 million in leveraged local funding to increase the effectiveness of the proposed PRO Housing activities.

The City of Columbus is committed to building new housing, preserving existing affordability, and prioritizing housing stability programs that prevent homelessness in order to ensure that our city and region will continue to grow and thrive in ways that are truly equitable and sustainable.

EXHIBIT B
THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION

Threshold Eligibility Requirements

1. **Resolution of Civil Rights Matters:** The City of Columbus does not have any outstanding charges, cause determinations, lawsuits, or letters of findings for civil rights matters listed in the PRO Housing NOFO.
2. **Timely Submission of Applications:** The City of Columbus' application will be submitted timely.
3. **Eligible Applicant:** The City of Columbus, as a unit of local government (02 City Government), is an eligible applicant.
4. **Number of Applications:** The City of Columbus is submitting only one application.

Other Submission Requirements

The following items will be addressed in the narrative exhibits (where noted) and required forms will be uploaded to grants.gov. and posted publicly with the final application package.

1. Standard Application, Assurances, Certifications and Disclosures

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Application for Federal Assistance: See Attachments
- Assurances (HUD 424-B): See Attachments
- Applicant Disclosure Report Form 2880 (HUD 2880): See Attachments
- Code of Conduct: The City of Columbus has previously submitted written standards of conduct and they are on file with HUD.
- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing: See Exhibit D, Soundness of Approach

2. Other Program-Specific Requirements

- a. **Limited English Proficiency (LEP).** The City of Columbus' PRO Housing draft application was posted to the City's website, which provides translation capabilities to French, Nepali, Spanish, Somali, and Arabic. In addition, the public notice of the grant application that was published in newspapers and sent via email included information on how to request accommodations for the grant application and public meeting.
- b. **Physical Accessibility.** In effort to accommodate all persons, the public meeting regarding the City's PRO Housing grant application included both virtual and in-person options. The in-person meeting was held in a physically accessible space. All materials posted on the City's website are ADA compliant.

- c. **Environmental review.** As a CDBG entitlement community and HOME participating jurisdiction, the City of Columbus understands and will comply with 24 CFR part 58 for all activities funded by the PRO Housing Grant.
- d. **Federal Assistance Assurances.** See Attachments
- e. **424-CBW budget form.** See Attachments
- f. **Certification Regarding Lobbying.** See Attachments
- g. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL).** See Attachments

**EXHIBIT C
NEED**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Efforts So Far

Central Ohio is at a critical inflection point. The past decade has been one of historic growth for Central Ohio, and that growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. And not only is the region growing, but it is also changing. Increases in both the young adult and 65 and older populations are shifting housing preferences. Furthermore, the highly competitive real estate market and a persistently high poverty rate have led to more vulnerable groups struggling to find housing in neighborhoods of their choice. In response to these trends, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the City of Columbus, and Franklin County partnered in 2020 to develop the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS).

The RHS began with a thorough investigation of existing and projected housing needs in the region, grounded by both quantitative and qualitative assessments to understand housing supply and demand throughout the region, barriers to development, and the regional housing finance landscape. From there, potential investment strategies and housing interventions were identified, based on national best practices. These strategies were vetted with regional stakeholders to better understand their regional relevance and viability, resulting in region-specific recommendations for future action. Each strategy was then aligned with the various housing submarket conditions throughout the region to help decision-makers choose among the potential interventions for implementation.

The RHA identified the following key barriers to development:

- **Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) attitudes** and negative perceptions about housing density and affordability, resulting in a lack of public and political support that affects development feasibility in Central Ohio.
- **Uncertainty associated with local land use processes and standards**, driven by significant variations in local policies, processes and standards with little centralized information to help navigate the process. This increases the time and cost of development.
- **Increasing costs of residential development**, including land costs, site selection, and regulatory costs. This can decrease production, particularly of housing at lower price points. The increased cost of construction materials and labor were identified as key drivers in the economics of residential development in Central Ohio.
- **Need for more assistance than available resources**, across multiple fronts. From rental assistance to support for home repairs, demand dwarfs available programs. This need plays out in the region's housing finance landscape as well, where limited gap financing has created an over-dependence on Low-Income Housing Tax Credits to produce affordable housing in the region.

In response to the RHS, over the past three years, the City of Columbus has made significant progress in addressing these barriers.

Zoning Code Update: In 2021, the City of Columbus embarked on a major effort to assess its zoning code. This assessment found that the code is a barrier to Columbus being the vibrant, equitable community it aspires to be. Built around outdated ideas of what people and businesses want, the code is inhibiting creating of much-needed housing and transit-supportive development. It is also difficult to use – a product of 70 years of piecemeal amendments – creating a heavy reliance on project-by-project negotiations, variances, and rezoning to accommodate even simple projects. This is not only burdensome and inefficient for the City to administer, but it creates barriers to investment by property owners large and small. The City has now moved on from assessment to the hard work of overhauling and modernizing the zoning code to unlock development potential and better address our housing, mobility and affordability challenges. The first phase of major zoning code updates are expected to be enacted in early 2024.

Columbus Housing Strategy: In 2022, Mayor Andrew J. Ginther announced the Columbus Housing Strategy, which will tackle Columbus’ housing shortage to ensure housing affordability for current and future residents. The strategy recognizes how the regional shortage of market-rate, workforce, subsidized and affordable housing has particularly harmed low-income families and people of color, and threatens to cripple economic growth. At the core of the Columbus Housing Strategy is the impetus to build more housing at all price points region-wide. It calls for collaboration and investment from regional civic leadership, developers and the people who live and work in Central Ohio to double the number of housing units built over the next 15 years. Through the strategy, the City of Columbus commits to leading in this charge by reforming codes, policies and processes so that units can be built faster.

The strategy also focuses dollars and city resources to ensure more equitable outcomes in housing through three strategies:

- **Preserve** existing housing affordability to minimize displacement in growing neighborhoods. Through robust tenant protections, strategic acquisitions and home repair programs for low-income homeowners, the city will work to preserve existing affordable housing and protect residents from evictions and displacement.
- **Invest** in housing the market won’t provide. Mayor Ginther outlined his request for voters to approve a new bond package that would unleash an unprecedented \$200 million to build housing that is affordable for those earning less than \$50,000 per year.
- **Include** everyone by addressing racial and economic disparities and fostering economically diverse neighborhoods. This will be achieved through inclusive housing policies, direct investment in Black homeownership and alignment of housing with transportation plans to ensure long-term connectivity. This also includes updates to the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) residential tax abatement introduced to Columbus City Council, which will require developers to build additional affordable units in high-rent neighborhoods in order to qualify for an abatement.

Affordable Housing Bond Package: Building on the success of the 2019 \$50 million affordable housing bond that leveraged another \$276 million in public and private sector funds helped to build more than 1,300 affordable housing units, in 2022 Columbus voters approved another \$200 million bond package for affordable housing. These funds are proposed to be invested in four priorities:

- \$80 million for the construction of affordable rental units;
- \$50 million for affordable homeownership;
- \$40 million to preserve existing housing affordability; and
- \$30 million for programs and permanent housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

With these funds, the City will continue to work with the Central Ohio Community Land Trust and other regional partners to increase affordable homeownership opportunities for middle-class families and people of color. This investment will result in permanent homeownership opportunities for individuals and families priced out of market-rate opportunities as for-sale housing prices rise. These resources will also provide investment in permanent supportive housing and other resources to stabilize families at risk of falling into homelessness.

Streamlining the Permitting Process: While the zoning code overhaul will take time to develop, in the meantime the City is making immediate changes to expedite the review process that multi-family housing projects go through. The Department of Building and Zoning Services (BZS) is working to cut in half the time it takes for more complex projects to move through the review process, which can take as long as 200 days on average. BZS has hired a new team of Project Coordinators to oversee project reviews and usher those priority housing projects through more efficiently and quickly. The City has also implemented a pilot program to waive or reimburse permit fees for small and medium-size developers, such as graduates of the Affordable Housing Trust for Columbus and Franklin County (AHT) Emerging Developers Accelerator Program (EDAP). The EDAP program is AHT's minority developer cultivation and training program designed to create pathways to development careers for groups who have historically faced barriers. Created to address the lack of affordable housing and the challenges faced by minorities entering the real estate development ecosystem, the program prepares participants to develop affordable housing by providing learning sessions, technical assistance, consulting and ultimately access to capital.

Community Reinvestment Area Tax Incentives: Under Ohio law, the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program provides real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. The CRA Program allows municipalities to grant tax abatements of up to 100% for a term of up to 15 years. The Columbus CRA policy designates specific geographies within the city as reinvestment areas, based on six distress criteria (population growth, median household income growth, poverty rate, growth in median rent, housing vacancy rate, mortgage foreclosure rate). In 2022, Columbus updated its CRA policy to foster greater economic diversity in our neighborhoods. The new policy provides

incentives that serve to accelerate housing creation while promoting inclusive, mixed-income communities. Developers seeking an incentive are required to include significant affordable housing projects utilizing the residential tax abatement program. The updated policy asks developers to either go “deeper” in affordability by setting aside housing units for lower-income residents, or to go “wider” in creating affordability by setting aside a higher percentage of units for moderate-income residents.

Affordable Housing Preservation: In 2022, City of Columbus housing assistance programs had the following impacts:

- \$1,487,633 in gap funding was awarded through forgivable loans and capital grants to developers for qualifying homebuyers through the Homeownership Development Program.
- \$108,740 in Down-Payment Assistance was offered to qualified homebuyers through grants of up to \$7,500.
- The Rental Housing Preservation and Protection Program awarded \$2,225,000 in loans and \$13,400,000 in capital grants to help housing organizations and developers buy, rehabilitate or build affordable rental housing.
- \$1,321,619 in home repairs and safety improvements were conducted through the Healthy Homes, Critical Home Repair, Emergency Home Repair, Lead-Safe Columbus and Chores programs.

City Council Legislative Protections: In addition to the initiatives described above, Columbus City Council has set forth a suite of policies to address affordable housing and resident protections:

- **Homeowner Assistance Programs.** This program will expand home repair grants to homeowners to include roof repairs. Home repairs, especially roof repairs pose significant hurdles for seniors to be able to age in place. (Adopted July 2023)
- **Pay to Stay.** This legislation will allow residents time to secure rental assistance dollars up until a court judgment. (Adopted July 2023)
- **Legal Representation at Eviction Court. This initiative will** create a more robust legal representation team at Franklin County eviction court. Currently the demand for representation exceeds the supply of legal aid attorneys. (Adopted July 2023)
- **Third Party Payments.** This legislation will require landlords to accept a third party payment on behalf of a tenant if that tenant is not in breach of their rental agreement. (Adopted July 2023)
- **Retaliatory Action Protection.** This legislation aims to protect renters by empowering them to stand up for their rental rights without having to fear retaliation from landlords. This ordinance strengthened and clarified language from the legislation which was passed in 2018. (Adopted April 2023)

- **Source of Income Discrimination.** Operators are prohibited from denying prospective tenants based upon their lawful source of income, including but not limited to, income derived from wages, social security, supplemental security income, public or private sources, all forms of federal, state or local assistance payments or subsidies, including rent vouchers, child support, spousal support, and public assistance. (Adopted March 2021)
- **Renter’s Choice.** If an operator requires a tenant to pay a security deposit, they must provide two alternatives to paying the deposit in full, including the payment of the security deposit over a series of 3 monthly installments, or the payment of the security deposit in 6 monthly installments. (Adopted March 2021)
- **Rental Receipt.** Operators must provide tenants with a written receipt upon payment of rent or a security deposit. (Adopted March 2021)

Acute Demand for Affordable Housing

Franklin County, Ohio is listed as a Priority Geography for the PRO Housing grant under the Housing Problems and Offpace Factors. The City of Columbus is the county seat of Franklin County and composes approximately 68% of the county population, and 79% of the LMI population of the county. With a citywide focus, this application primarily serves a priority geography.

Over the past two decades, the Columbus region has enjoyed outsize population and economic growth compared with leading peer cities and the US average. Yet growth has come at a cost—specifically by outpacing the region’s supply of available housing.

From 2000 to 2021, the Columbus Region’s population increased by a third, adding more than 500,000 people and becoming the fastest-growing metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in the Midwest. This growth was precipitated by, and continues to benefit from, the region’s mounting economic strength: from 2008 through 2021, Columbus outpaced national GDP growth by almost ten percentage points. Growth has also been bolstered by more-recent major commercial investments from a range of industries, including semiconductors, financial services, and biopharmaceuticals.

This population influx has measurably strained Columbus’s residential real estate and rental markets, particularly for people of color.

Although the region remains relatively affordable compared with leading peers, home prices have skyrocketed in relation to incomes. In the past ten years, Columbus housing prices have increased at roughly double the rate of its median household income.

New housing construction has not kept pace with population growth. From 2004 to 2022, annual construction of new single-family homes in Columbus fell by 34 percent, and it has yet to return

to pre-2004 levels. In fact, for every 100 net new jobs in the region, only 65 new housing permits were issued. Columbus is projected to have a shortage of as much as 110,000 housing units by 2032. Meeting this need would require more than doubling the construction rate, from around 8,300 units per year to as many as 19,300 per year.

Renters in Columbus have also seen a price surge. Rent prices in Columbus increased by about 35 percent from 2016 to 2021, exceeding median household income growth in that period by 11 percentage points. As a result, by 2021, approximately 40 percent of renters in Columbus were spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent, meeting HUD's definition of "rent burdened."

Columbus outpaced its US peers in the growth of its Persons Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) population from 2008 through 2022, and reports indicate homelessness was up 22 percent in January 2023 compared with January 2022.

The racial disparities that plague many leading US regions are also starkly apparent in Columbus. One-third of the region's Black households own their homes, compared with more than two-thirds of White households. Black household incomes in the region are also about 42 percent lower than those of White households. In addition, Black residents account for 16 percent of Columbus's general population, but 60 percent of the homeless population. Black households are almost five times more likely to be overcrowded (more than one occupant per room) than White households.

Remaining Barriers

Barrier 1: Complexity of Redevelopment Opportunities for Infill Housing:

Within the City of Columbus there are 91 shopping centers totaling more than 13 million square feet of gross leasable area. The centers occupy nearly 7 square miles (4,215 acres). That is four and a half times as much land as Downtown Columbus (960 acres) where 11,650 residents live and there are 89,410 jobs.

The power of redeveloping even some of the aging retail centers into housing would be to unlock well-located sites on existing infrastructure and add the critical housing our growing region needs.

There are barriers to the redevelopment of the sites. There is often fractured ownership with multiple parcels, leasing and contractual obligations on the sites, aging and/or insufficient infrastructure, inefficient site plans and circulation, and buildings that need to be demolished. Most of these sites are located along the corridors that are targeted for the first phase of modernized zoning. However, zoning alone cannot overcome all of these challenges. In order to realize the repurposing of these aging retail sites into housing funding is needed on the front end to create a viable site for investment.

Barrier 2: Capacity of Local Nonprofit Affordable Housing Developers

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) serve a critical role in developing and preserving affordable housing in high-need communities. However, typically CHDOs are smaller-scale organizations with limited capacity. Although CHDOs in Columbus receive annual support in the form of HOME funds for the purposes of affordable housing development and organizational operations, it is not enough to make an impact that can keep up with demand. A lack of sufficient staff and specialized skills continue to hold these organizations back from doing more to meet the needs of our community.

In addition, there are currently only four CHDOs in Columbus, collectively covering a limited geography, leaving some of the city's highest-need neighborhoods without a dedicated CHDO. There are many more Community Development Corporations (CDCs), many of which focus on affordable housing as one of, if not their primary, strategic priorities. Unfortunately, due to capacity and other limitations, these organizations are unable to meet the HUD requirements to achieve status as a CHDO, which would make them eligible for additional funding and other support.

Barrier 3: Lengthy and Complicated Permitting Processes

Under Columbus's permit approval system, new-construction permits can take six to nine months. In fast-growing metro areas elsewhere in the United States, permits can take as little as a few weeks.

While the City of Columbus is currently undertaking efforts to streamline the permitting process, this process remains a significant hurdle, especially for smaller-scale developers with less experience in navigating it. These pre-development challenges present substantial risks that can prevent projects from coming to fruition, or even outright discourage small- to mid-size developers from even pursuing them. These kinds of developers have expressed a need for additional assistance in navigating the City permitting process.

In addition, City staff serving in project manager roles do not have the tools they need to best assist housing developers in the current effort to facilitate the expedited review process. The project management systems currently being used are antiquated and are not integrated with other systems and software associated with the permitting process. Improving these systems and tools would "unlock" additional capacity and efficiency within these processes.

**EXHIBIT D
SOUNDNESS OF APPROACH**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Vision & Proposed Activities

The Columbus Housing Strategy aims to provide affordable housing options throughout the region. The goal is ambitious: To ensure that every family has access to affordable housing. With this goal top of mind, the following activities are proposed which build on current efforts, address remaining barriers, are consistent with extensive public and stakeholder engagement, meet CDBG LMI national objectives, and affirmatively further fair housing.

Activity 1: Unlocking Grayfield Sites

In order to address Barrier 1 - Complexity of Redevelopment Opportunities for Infill Housing, the City of Columbus proposes to utilize PRO Housing grant funding to develop a grayfield pilot program to identify redevelopment opportunities and undertake foundational pre-development work to encourage and incentivize development of affordable housing on these sites.

The following activities would make the sites viable for redevelopment into new affordable housing:

- **Redevelopment Planning:** First, the City plans to procure a consultant team to evaluate grayfield redevelopment opportunity sites and determine how each site could be repurposed for housing. This planning process will build upon the City's Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) initiative, which will identify the opportunity sites and conduct market and feasibility studies for each site. This planning process will include extensive community engagement to set a redevelopment vision for each site that is also responsive to the market.

- **Acquisition and assembly:** The City is currently designing an acquisition program within our Land Redevelopment Division (Land Bank). That program, once underway, would utilize PRO Housing grant funds to acquire and assemble parcels within grayfield opportunity sites. The City has already earmarked \$6 million from the Affordable Housing Bond for acquisition, which will be used to leverage PRO Housing grant funds.

- **Due Diligence:** Once grayfield opportunity sites are acquired and assembled, the Land Bank will conduct pre-development site evaluations including, but not limited to:
 - Environmental assessments
 - Surveys
 - Geotechnical assessments
 - Zoning and entitlement assessments

- **Demolition:** Existing buildings on grayfield opportunity sites are unlikely to be able to be adapted for reuse for housing. The building shapes, materials, HVAC systems, water,

sanitary and power are not suited to be divided into individual housing units without great expense. It is expected that demolition of the buildings will be necessary to allow for the most efficient redesign of the sites for redevelopment.

- **Enabling Investments:** In most cases, it is expected that there will need to be additional pre-development investments in order to make the sites viable for redevelopment and desirable to developers. Given the rising cost of new construction, it will be necessary to remove the cost of the site preparation from the project in order to successfully “unlock” the site and address affordability and financing gaps. These investments could include water, sewer, stormwater, and other infrastructure; internal transportation networks and streetscapes; and/or open space and other amenities.

Activity 2: CHDO & CDC Capacity Building

In order to address Barrier 2 - Capacity of Local Nonprofit Affordable Housing Developers, the City of Columbus proposes to use PRO Housing grant funding to establish an organizational capacity building program for local CHDO and CDC staff.

- **Sponsoring a local National Development Council (NDC) training series.** NDC is the leading provider of community and economic development training in the United States and builds development finance capacity in professionals working at every level and for every sector of the economic, housing and community development profession. These training opportunities enhance the economic, housing and community development skills of City staff and development partners and provides high-quality training that is tailored to local and organizational needs. In these trainings, development practitioners are able to enhance their financial analysis and problem-solving skills in the same classroom with their colleagues and to collectively discuss and address local development challenges and opportunities. As a result, the community will benefit from the increased capacity of affordable housing organizations to move critical projects from planning to completion.

The sponsored training would focus on those courses included in NDC’s Housing Development Finance Professional (HDFP) Certification:

- HD410 – Home Ownership Finance
- HD420 – Rental Housing Development Finance
- HD422 – Computer Spread Sheet Analysis for Housing
- HD430 – Housing Development Finance: Problem Solving and Deal Structuring

Additional scholarships may also be offered for other relevant NDC online training opportunities such as:

- CD101 Economic & Community Development Finance
- PD112 Asset Management for Affordable Housing

- PD 502 Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- PD 512 Mixed Use Real Estate Finance
- Cash Reigns Supreme: Tracking the Financial Results of Your Business
- **Organizational Development Consulting for CHDOs and CDCs.** Building on the knowledge gained from the NDC trainings, the City of Columbus proposes to retain a consultant to provide further assistance to CHDOs and CDC such as:
 - Needs assessment
 - Partnership development
 - State, local, and federal regulatory compliance
 - Layering funding streams
 - Effective program design and implementation
 - Policy and regulatory support
 - Process facilitation
 - Staff augmentation
 - Performance measurement and data analysis
 - Policies and procedures

Activity 3: Navigating the Permitting Process

In response to Barrier 3 - Lengthy and Complicated Permitting Processes, the City of Columbus proposes multiple activities to assist small- to mid-sized housing developers with navigating the City's permitting processes and to assist City staff in improving efficiency in expediting the review process.

- **Educational Campaign.** The City of Columbus is undertaking several efforts to streamline the permitting process to the extent possible. However, this process remains daunting for developers and design professionals. In order to demystify the process, the Department of Building and Zoning Services (BZS) will utilize PRO Housing funds to procure a consultant to develop a suite of educational materials, including videos and a user-friendly step-by-step manual. In addition to providing a comprehensive understanding of the permitting process, these materials will also cover common mistakes and provide templates and other resources to assist permit seekers. Finally, BZS is also considering a brown-bag lunch or similar educational event series so that developers and design professionals can build relationships with BZS staff and receive more informal assistance.
- **Expanding project management pilot program.** The City of Columbus proposes to build on the success of the current pilot program which created a team of project managers to usher multi-family housing projects through the approval process. BZS

proposes to use PRO Housing funds to hire two (2) additional project managers to shepherd multi-unit residential projects through the system. These project managers would not only make sure that City department reviewers are conducting timely reviews of projects, but also connect with applicants and their design professionals, ensuring timely submission of required documents and facilitating communication between applicants and City staff.

- **Project management software.** Currently, the BZS project managers referenced above are using Excel to track development projects through the review process, which is not as effective or efficient as desired. BZS proposes to use PRO Housing funds to procure either a new project management software platform that integrates with other City systems, or the building-out of a custom module within Accela, which is the software platform that BZS currently uses for permitting.

Activity 4: Grant Administration

The City of Columbus Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section will administer the PRO Housing grant, if awarded by HUD. This includes grant management, monitoring, and reporting, as well as environmental reviews and procurement as needed.

Alignment with Existing Initiatives

This proposal was intentionally designed to align with - and build upon - existing planning initiatives in Columbus and Central Ohio. This includes the following:

- **Insight2050** is a collaborative initiative designed to help communities proactively plan for development and population growth over the next 30+ years that is expected to be dramatically different from the past. The initiative has produced two regional analyses and data-rich reports that enable local and regional policy makers, business leaders, developers, and public stakeholders to evaluate the effect of future land use decisions on specific factors that influence our communities' quality of life. These factors include land consumption, mobility, and the fiscal, environmental, and public health impacts of development and investment choices. Insight2050 provides guidance, planning resources, and community engagement tools to enable residents and their governments, as well as the real estate and business communities, to evaluate local development opportunities and make informed decisions.
- **LinkUS** is Central Ohio's comprehensive transportation and growth initiative. It is our region's proactive plan to bring rapid transit solutions and transportation options to accommodate major population growth. It includes faster, more reliable public transportation; safe and expanded bike and pedestrian paths; and walkable communities with more affordable access to work, home and entertainment.

- As part of the LinkUS initiative, the City of Columbus is creating an **Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) Action Plan**, which seeks to ensure that the planned LinkUS transit improvements are coupled with equitable development policies. The ETOD Action Plan will also identify TOD Opportunity Sites and conduct site specific analyses that will include economic and market analysis, proposed land uses, affordability analysis, zoning and development standards, infrastructure and capital investment requirements, value capture and funding tools, historic preservation, anti-displacement strategies, gap analysis and cost benefit analysis. The results of these studies will inform necessary policy changes and program and funding needs to create ETOD at the Opportunity Sites. Activity 1 - Unlocking Grayfield Sites will pick up where these studies leave off.

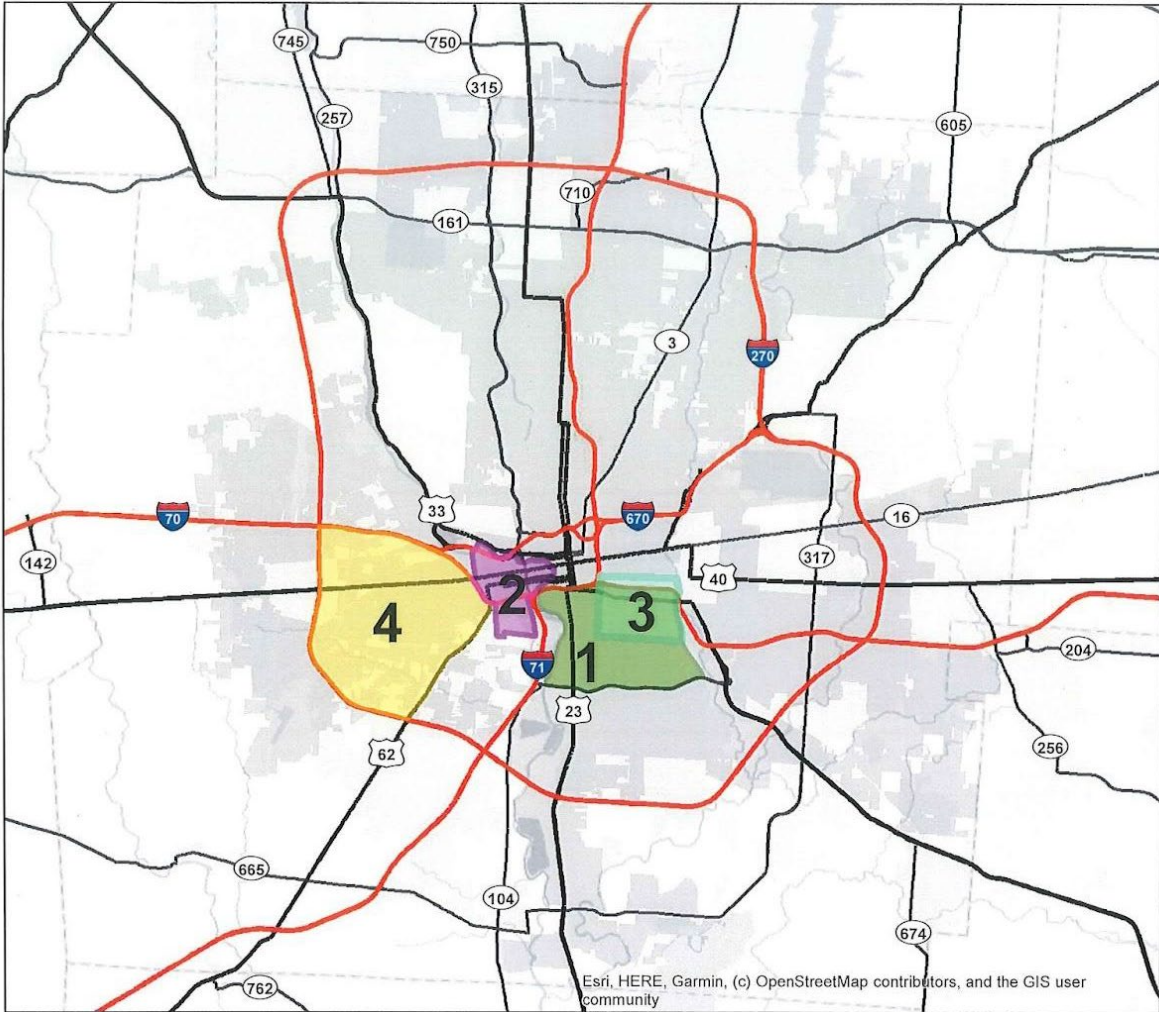
Geographic Scope

The geographic scope of this proposal is the entire City of Columbus. The Unlocking Grayfield Sites activity will prioritize locations in the areas surrounding corridors proposed by the LinkUS initiative for high-capacity transit service (see map below). The CHDO & CDC Capacity Building activity will have a focus on areas currently served by these organizations (see additional map below). In addition, this activity will also focus on other under-resourced communities such as Linden, Near East and Far East Columbus, which are not currently served but are in great need of these resources. The Navigating the Permitting Process activity will have a citywide focus.



*LinkUS
Corridors
Surrounding Areas*

and



Current CHDO Coverage in Columbus, OH

Stakeholder Engagement

As discussed previously, this proposal was intentionally designed to align with - and build upon - existing planning initiatives in Columbus and Central Ohio. As such, it includes strategies that were recommended as part of those planning initiatives as a result of the extensive outreach that was conducted for them.

- The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) was guided and informed by stakeholders with experience addressing housing issues in Central Ohio. Stakeholder engagement activities were conducted throughout the project to build an actionable housing strategy that is representative of Central Ohio. Engagement activities included:
 - **Stakeholder convenings.** Engagement of the RHS Project Sponsors (representatives from among 26 partners who provided financial support for the development of the RHS) and RHS Advisory Board (subject-matter experts

representing over 50 organizations with direct and indirect experience with housing and related issues in Central Ohio) across all tasks completed for the RHS. The stakeholders provided ongoing feedback to MORPC about the overall direction of the RHS, including data analysis related to existing and future housing needs and potential actions to address regional housing needs.

- **Regional strategy workshops.** In June and July 2020, the RHS project team convened four regional workshops with community leaders to gather feedback and input on proposed housing actions.
- **Targeted surveys and focus groups.** Targeted engagement of representatives of the residential real estate development community in Central Ohio included a real estate developer survey, focus group, and interviews with developers representing for-profit and non-profit organizations building single-family and multi-family housing. In addition, representatives from financial institutions and organizations and governments in Central Ohio that administer local and regional funding sources were engaged to seek input on considerations for actions related to funding and investments proposed in the RHS.
- **Informant Interviews.** The project team facilitated discussions with key individuals representing specific housing-related perspectives. Throughout the project, the RHS project team interviewed individuals whose work includes providing services to persons experiencing unique housing-related challenges, including housing providers, K-12 educators, human trafficking survivors, and staff of a housing mobility pilot program.
- **Online community survey.** An online survey about current housing conditions in Central Ohio was distributed to various organizational mailing lists, and recipients were encouraged to share the survey with their networks, including those who access housing services and supports. The survey, which used a skip logic model to differentiate responses among community members and housing providers, received 902 responses. Information from this survey helped identify and refine the five core regional housing issues which guide the RHS.
- Zone In Columbus, the City’s comprehensive zoning code update process, has done extensive outreach that has also informed the activities in this application.
 - **Community Conversations.** The Zone In project team has hosted several community conversations around a number of zoning topics throughout the project. These conversations provided an opportunity to learn, discuss and ideate around many different aspects of zoning.
 - Zone In Columbus hosted two community conversations on Housing, to discuss how the zoning code update can support the housing needs of Columbus residents. These events were held at the Reeb Avenue Community Center (May 2, 2023) and Whetstone Recreation Center (May 10, 2023).
 - Zone In Columbus hosted two community conversations on Main Streets, to discuss how the zoning code update can impact the “main streets” in

each of our neighborhoods where we live, work, shop, and play. These events were held at the City of Grace Church (May 16) and Schiller Community Center (June 1).

- Zone In Columbus hosted a panel entitled Building up My Block: How Decisions Get Made moderated by Council President Shannon Hardin with panelists: Otto Beatty III, Beatrice Nokuri, Al Edmondson, and Shannon Pine. This panel included both industry and community voices as they discussed how the development process works, the rules that govern how things get built, and the opportunities and barriers that drive equitable development in our neighborhoods.
- **Rise Up! CBUS Events.** In addition to the Community Conversations, the Zone In Columbus team attended all 12 of the Rise Up! CBUS community events which were held in neighborhoods throughout the city in 2023.
- **Advisory Committee.** The Zone In Advisory Committee was formed to provide input into the strategies and development of a comprehensive zoning code update that is responsive to community needs and furthers equitable opportunity for all Columbus residents. Advisory Committee participants were selected representing diverse backgrounds who have knowledge of community issues, zoning and development, equity disparities, and broader content expertise.
- The City of Columbus Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) residential tax abatement program conducted extensive outreach in 2021 and 2022 during the policy update process. This included several conversations with the development community to ensure that the proposed policy changes would successfully incentivize residential construction and inclusion of below market-rate units in higher rent neighborhoods, as well as community conversations to ensure that the policy would address neighborhood concerns.

In addition to that extensive previous outreach, the following outreach was conducted specifically in the process of developing this proposal:

- The draft application was emailed to a contact list maintained by the Grants Management Section, which includes civic organizations, public agencies, non-profit and for-profit housing developers and advocates, and other interested organizations.
- Grants Management staff sent surveys to assess organizational needs to CHDOs and CDCs which would benefit from the Capacity Building activity.
- Grants Management staff sent surveys to the Emerging Developers Accelerator Program and the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio to assess the perceptions of affordable housing developers on navigating the current City of Columbus permitting process, educational needs and areas for improvement.
- Several consultation meetings were held with individual organizations to discuss and prioritize proposed activities.

- The public notice announcing the draft application and public meeting was published on October 8, 2023 in the *Columbus Dispatch*, the most widely distributed newspaper in Central Ohio.
- The draft application was posted for public review on the City of Columbus website.
- A hybrid virtual and in-person public meeting was held on October 12, 2023 at 5:30pm in the City’s 141 N. Front St. conference room, which is attached to a parking garage and provides free parking for attendees as well as transit- and handicapped-accessible.
- Members of the public were provided the opportunity to submit comments in writing by email, mail or hand delivery from October 8, 2023 through October 24, 2023.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The City of Columbus and Franklin County have jointly prepared a fair housing study known as an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. This study discusses patterns of race, housing, and poverty; access to opportunity; and housing barriers in the region. It also outlines strategies the City and County may take to improve housing choices for their residents.

Based on the data and public input collected for that analysis, the following fair housing impediments were identified:

1. Affordable Housing Options Lack Access to Opportunity Features
2. Neighborhoods with Low Access to Opportunity
3. Households of Color Have Reduced Access to Homeownership
4. Protected Class Face Greater Housing Instability
5. Continued Need for Fair Housing Outreach, Education, and Enforcement
6. Inadequate Compliance with Housing Accessibility Requirements
7. Zoning Code Provisions Limit Housing Choice

Racial Composition of Expected Beneficiaries

The activities that compose this proposal will have a cumulative impact that will be city-wide to all of Columbus. The racial composition of the persons expected to benefit from these activities, therefore, reflect that of the city as a whole:

White alone	56.2%
Black or African American alone	29.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.2%
Asian alone	5.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.0%

Two or More Races	5.9%
Hispanic or Latino	6.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	53.8%

Access to Opportunities and Desegregation

This proposal will remove barriers to the development of affordable housing in well-resourced areas of opportunity, particularly through Activity 1 - Unlocking Grayfield Sites. By focusing this activity along corridors expected to see unprecedented transit investments in the coming years, it will increase access for underserved groups to live and work in these areas. These are areas where there are existing employment, educational opportunities, transportation options, and other resources that allow residents to access most of their daily needs, all without requiring them to own and maintain their own vehicle to do it.

In addition, pairing the Unlocking Grayfield Sites activity with the existing Community Reinvestment Areas (CRAs) program could allow the City to offer property tax abatements to developers in these high opportunity areas in exchange for additional affordable housing commitments.

According to Columbus and Franklin County’s most recent Joint Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, segregation has consistently declined in the past few decades in the City of Columbus and the region for all groups except the Hispanic/White pairing, which has slightly increased. Segregation levels calculated by census tract in Columbus and the region were low or moderate for all group pairings.

This proposal will not cause affordable housing to be further concentrated in low-opportunity areas or in areas that already have ample affordable housing. Activity 2 - CHDO and CDC Capacity Building, will seek to improve physical resources and build human capital in low opportunity and high poverty areas. As previously discussed, Columbus housing prices are rising at an historic rate. Neighborhoods once considered affordable are no longer. By increasing the capacity of CHDOs and CDCs to build affordable and market-rate housing in currently under-resourced neighborhoods, this proposal seeks to provide those neighborhoods with the resilience needed to withstand the impacts of gentrification when they inevitably arrive.

Unique Housing Needs of Protected Class Groups

The disproportionate representation of several protected class groups in low and middle income levels can lead to unequal access to housing options and neighborhood opportunity in high-cost housing markets. Black and Hispanic residents, immigrants, people with disabilities, and seniors often experience additional fair housing barriers when affordable housing is scarce. As described above, the proposed activities will address the needs of protected class groups by increasing access to affordable housing in high-opportunities areas, enhancing the resources dedicated to

improving opportunities in currently low-opportunity areas, as well as reducing barriers to overall housing production to reduce the regional housing supply shortage.

Displacement Considerations

All of the proposed activities have considered the risk of displacement associated with this proposal and ensure that the planned activities do not lead to the displacement of vulnerable residents in communities of color. In particular, Activity 1 - Unlocking Grayfield Sites will build on the ongoing work of the Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) Action Plan, which seeks to ensure that the planned LinkUS transit improvements are coupled with equitable development policies.

Columbus City Council's "Housing For All" agenda has adopted, and plans to adopt several more, legislative strategies to support residents at risk of displacement such as stronger protections for renters and eviction prevention.

In addition, the City of Columbus has adopted a Residential Antidisplacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, which outlines the City's responsibility to minimize the displacement of and provide relocation assistance to individuals impacted by activities supported through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding. This plan was passed by Columbus City Council on January 9, 2023.

Housing Needs of Persons with Disabilities

According to the most recent Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, an estimated 13% of persons 5-years-old or older in Columbus have a disability, and people aged 18-64 have both the largest number of people with disabilities and the highest disability rate. Searches using HUD's Affordable Apartment Search Tool and apartmentguide.com for apartments with accessibility features currently for rent in the Columbus area were conducted and returned limited results, particularly for units priced at \$900 or less per month.

People with disabilities are dispersed throughout the city and county and there is no evident clustering or other inequitable geographic distribution of residents with disabilities within the city of Columbus or Franklin County.

Through our proposed activities, we will implement policies and practices to create accessible units in areas that support independent living with access to supportive services and transportation. All projects funded through this grant will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessibility requirements under the Fair Housing Act.

Budget and Timeline

Activity 1 - Unlocking Grayfield Sites

- PRO Housing Funds Requested: \$7,050,000
- Leveraged Funds: \$6,000,000
- Total Activity Budget: \$13,050,000

Industry standards and consultant rates on similar projects informed the budget for this activity. There are many unknown budget factors at play within this activity, such as land acquisition and infrastructure costs, so approximations and estimates were used based on past and current experience.

The first six months of this activity will focus on procuring a redevelopment planning consultant that will be selected through a competitive process, followed by one year of redevelopment planning activities for the grayfield opportunity sites. The remainder of the grant period will see multiple opportunity sites progress at different rates through the various stages of pre-development site preparation: acquisition and assembly, due diligence, demolition, and enabling investments.

The leveraged funds for this activity come from the City of Columbus Affordable Housing Bond Fund, which has pledged \$6,000,000 to support land acquisition costs for this activity.

Activity 2 - CHDO & CDC Capacity Building

- PRO Housing Funds Requested: \$1,085,000
- Total Activity Budget: \$1,085,000

Industry standards and consultant rates on similar projects informed the budget for this activity. The first six months of this activity will focus on procuring a capacity building and organizational development consultant that will be selected through a competitive process, followed by five years of ongoing capacity building support to participating CHDOs and CDCs, including both planned programming and on-demand services. A sponsored National Development Council training is planned for the second year of the grant period, estimated at approximately \$85,000. Direct funding for CHDO and CDC operating support is expected for each year of the grant period, based on need and opportunity.

Activity 3 - Navigating the Permitting Process

- PRO Housing Funds Requested: \$1,265,000
- Total Activity Budget: \$1,265,000

Industry standards and consultant rates on similar projects informed the budget for this activity. The first six months of this activity will focus on procuring a communications consultant that will be selected through a competitive process, followed by one year of educational material development and implementation. The first six months will also include hiring and onboarding of the additional project managers, followed by ongoing training and project management through the end of the grant period, repeating the process as necessary due to potential for staff turnover. In addition, the first six months will include the competitive procurement of new project management software, followed by one year of development and implementation, and continued use of the software through the end of the grant period.

Activity 4 - Grant Administration

- PRO Housing Funds Requested: \$600,000
- Total Activity Budget: \$600,000

The City of Columbus is budgeting \$600,000 for grant administration. This includes costs related to performing environmental reviews and other costs related to grant administration and oversight.

Total Project Budget

Total PRO Housing Funds Requested: \$10,000,000

Total Leveraged Funds: \$6,000,000

Grand Total: \$16,000,000

**EXHIBIT E
CAPACITY**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Capacity and Staffing Plan

Applicant Capacity

The City of Columbus, Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section prepared this application. The activities proposed in this application were developed in collaboration with multiple internal City of Columbus departments and divisions, including:

- Department of Development, Housing Division
- Department of Development, Planning Division
- Department of Development, Land Redevelopment Division
- Department of Building & Zoning Services

The Grants Management Section coordinates financial and regulatory aspects of the following grants: CDBG, HOME, ESG, HOPWA, NSP, and HOME-ARP. The Grants Management Section is responsible for federal grant compliance; monitoring executions; data collection and reporting on federal grant accomplishments, outcomes, and expenditures; Annual Action Plan development; Citizen Participation Plan execution; and supporting City internal departments and external partners through trainings and meetings to ensure compliant and timely programming execution. Highlights of the Grants Management Section's work includes:

- Directly managing subrecipient agreements for the City's annual CDBG entitlement award (on average \$7,500,000);
- Administration of IDIS, HUD Consolidated and Annual Action Plans;
- Directly conducting and managing HUD Environmental Review Records for the City of Columbus and Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority;
- Receiving approval from HUD on a HOME-ARP Allocation Plan for \$16,433,138; and
- Applying for and receiving \$500,000 in CDBG-CV funding from the State of Ohio;

The Grants Management Section is led by the Grants Management Coordinator and is supported by four Management Analysts. The team possesses the necessary project management, quality assurance, financial and procurement, and internal control capacity to successfully manage the implementation of activities requested for funding in this application. In collaboration with City departments designated to lead implementation of each proposed activity, Grants Management will oversee and ensure the timely and compliant expenditure of PRO Housing funds.

The City's Land Bank, within the Department of Development, Land Redevelopment Division, will lead implementation of the "Unlocking" Grayfield Sites activity. Created in 1994, the City's Land Bank is one of the oldest land bank programs in the country, and actively pursues vacant and abandoned real estate primarily through tax foreclosure. In 2009, the program became an essential part of the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (I, II, and III) Plan to address the

foreclosure crisis. Since NSP, the Land Bank collocated with the County Land Bank and partnered to acquire over 3,500 vacant and abandoned properties within Columbus – an inventory that serves as a basis for most affordable housing projects in the City. The PRO Housing grant will better equip the Land Bank to acquire larger commercial sites and provide the City with an inventory to increase the number of affordable multi-family and mixed-use developments. The Land Bank is led by an Administrator, who has worked with the City Land Bank since 2007. He brings 25 years of experience in real estate and development, including experience working for a community development corporation and as a city planner. He has extensive experience working with HUD grants and other federally-funded programs, and is supported by a qualified team of professionals, including development program coordinators, real estate asset managers, and office assistants.

The City's Department of Development, Housing Division, will lead implementation of the CHDO & CDC Capacity Building activity. The City's Housing Division serves Columbus through the preservation and production of housing that builds strong and vibrant neighborhoods, and collaborates with federal, state, and local government housing agencies to strategically target its resources for neighborhood investment. The Housing Division has extensive experience working with and coordinating partners in large-scale projects, such as through the "Zone In Columbus" initiative (a comprehensive effort to modernize Columbus' zoning code for the first time in more than 70 years), and on a micro-level through technical assistance, trainings, and communications with contractors, funders, subrecipients, community stakeholders, and other government agencies.

This activity will be led by the Housing Division Assistant Administrator, who has served the City since 2015. In her previous role, she served 11 years with Habitat for Humanity Mid-Ohio, specializing in grant writing, compliance and program management, and community development, as the affiliate shifted its focus to a neighborhood development and revitalization model. She currently works closely with Housing Program Managers who deploy local and federal funds to rehabilitate and develop affordable housing, provide down-payment assistance, administer the HOPWA program, and administer the City's Residential Tax Incentives program. In this activity, the Assistant Administrator will be supported by a Management Analyst II, who has 20 years of experience in data tracking and monitoring. She oversees invoicing, monitoring, and compliance for service contracts funded through the City's General Fund, CDBG, and HOME funds. The City's Housing Division has substantial experience working with HUD grants and other federally-funded programs, and is well-equipped to successfully implement the proposed activity for PRO Housing funding.

The City's Department of Building & Zoning Services (BZS) will lead implementation of the Navigating the Permitting Process activity. BZS is responsible for processing plan reviews, permitting, inspections, zoning, and engineering in order to ensure proper land development and promote high-quality design standards through the enforcement of state and local building and zoning codes. BZS was recently honored to receive the 2022 David A. Smith, Jr. Award for Building Department and Excellence from the Ohio Board of Building Standards. This activity

will be led by the Deputy Director, who is supported by a staff of qualified project managers responsible for managing the permitting process.

The City of Columbus possesses the leadership capacity and legal authority to effectively implement the proposed activities. The City is administered by a Mayor, a Council, an Auditor, and an Attorney. The Mayor leads the administrative branch of the City, which includes the City Departments that will lead implementation of PRO Housing activities. City Council acts as the legislative branch of the City, and enacts legislation necessary for the operation of the City. The Mayor's administration and City Council collaborate regularly to ensure City priorities are being met. Additionally, Ohio cities have Home Rule authority. Section 3 of Article XVIII of the Ohio Constitution states: "Municipalities shall have authority to exercise all powers of local self-government and to adopt and enforce within their limits such local police, sanitary, and other similar regulations, as are not in conflict with general laws."

Fair Housing and Civil Rights Experience

The City of Columbus is dedicated to affirmatively furthering fair housing. Columbus City Council passed the "Housing for All" legislative package in 2021, which amended Chapters 4501 and 4551 of Columbus City Code, to focus on dismantling the systems that have perpetuated racism and inequality within housing work in order to advance fair, affordable housing. The City believes that housing is a human right, and is committed to ensuring every resident in Columbus has a safe, decent, affordable place to call home.

The City of Columbus and Franklin County jointly prepared an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, which addresses patterns of race, housing, and poverty, access to opportunity, and housing barriers in the region. This effort included working with data to analyze racial and economic disparities.

The Grants Management Section continues to manage a Fair Housing subrecipient agreement with a local non-profit in Columbus to provide fair housing testing, investigation, education, and outreach to low-to-moderate income residents of the City of Columbus.

Organizational Charts

Department of Finance & Management, Grants Management Section:

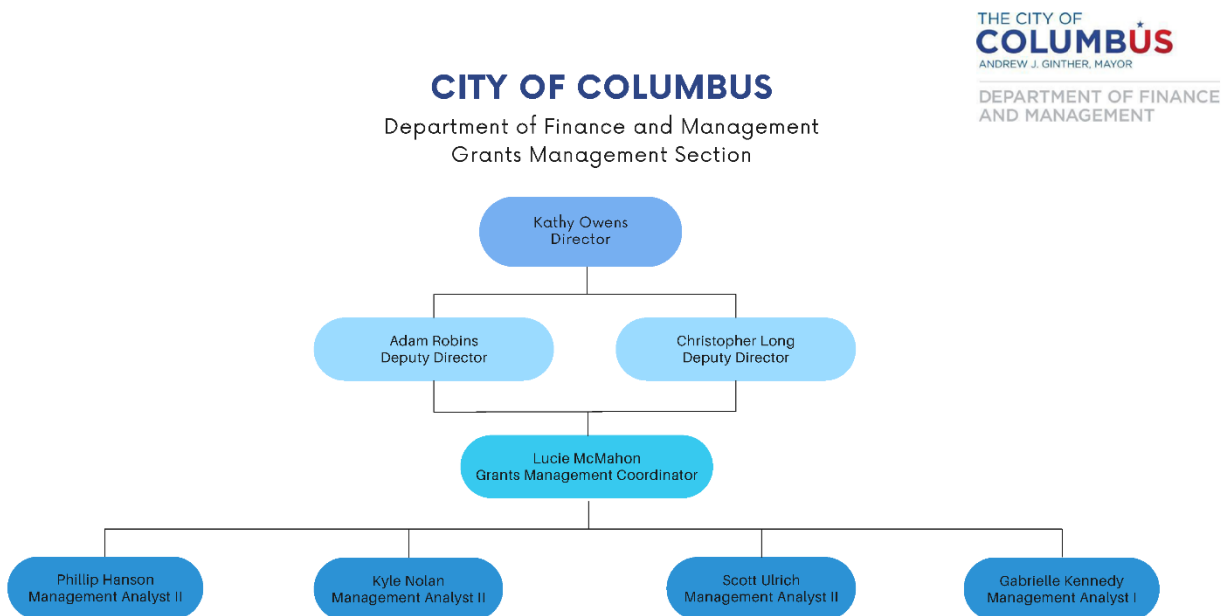
Lucie McMahon, Scott Ulrich, Kyle Nolan, and Gabrielle Kennedy will be responsible for compliance and oversight of all proposed PRO Housing activities.

Key Management – Lucie McMahon, Grants Management Coordinator

Full-time Staff –

- Scott Ulrich, Management Analyst II
- Kyle Nolan, Management Analyst II
- Gabrielle Kennedy, Management Analyst I

There are no vacancies or positions contingent on award in the Grants Management Section.



Department of Development, Housing Division:

The Housing Division will be responsible for implementing the CHDO & CDC Capacity Building activity.

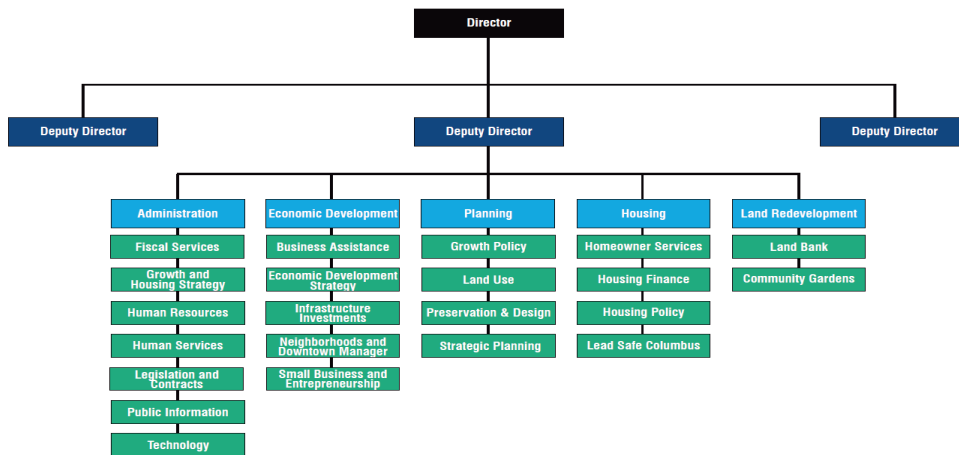
Key Management – Michelle Castrogiovanni, Assistant Administrator

Full-time Staff – Stacey James, Management Analyst II

There are no vacancies or positions contingent on award in the Housing Division.

Development

Development



Department of Development, Land Redevelopment Division:

The Land Redevelopment Division will be responsible for implementing the “Unlocking” Grayfield Sites activity.

Key Management – John Turner, Administrator
Full-time Staff –

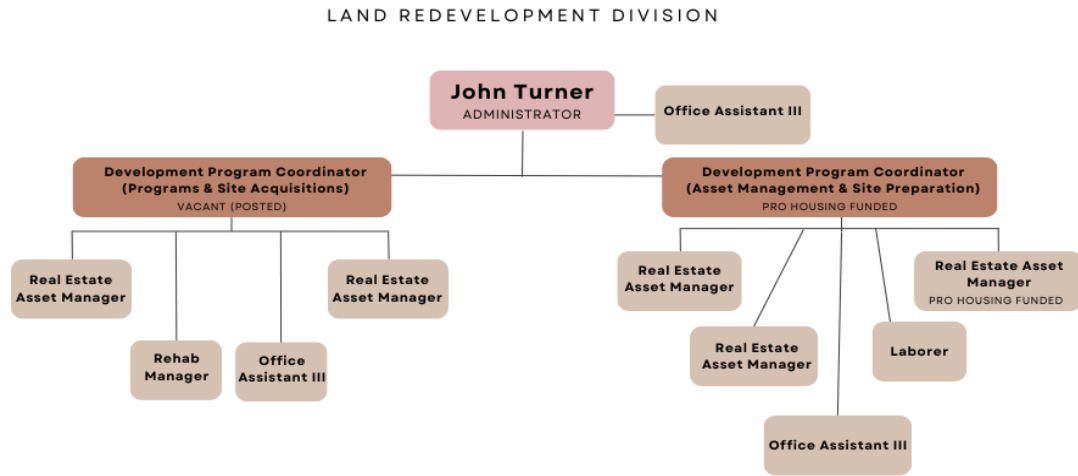
There is currently an active posting for a Development Program Coordinator role that manages Land Bank acquisitions, coordinates with developers for redevelopment applications, manages various Land Bank initiatives for affordable housing, and oversees funding for the Community Land Trust program.

This application requests funding for an additional Development Program Coordinator to oversee site preparation activities, including site clearance, environmental remediation, and infrastructure suitability, maintenance of land bank holdings, and coordination with City departments on initiatives to address vacant and abandoned property. This would be a split-funded position between PRO Housing and City General Fund resources. This application also requests funding

for a Real Estate Asset Manager to manage PRO Housing grant funding, including compliance, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Department of Building & Zoning Services:

The Department of Building & Zoning Services is responsible for implementing the “Navigating the Permitting Process” activity.

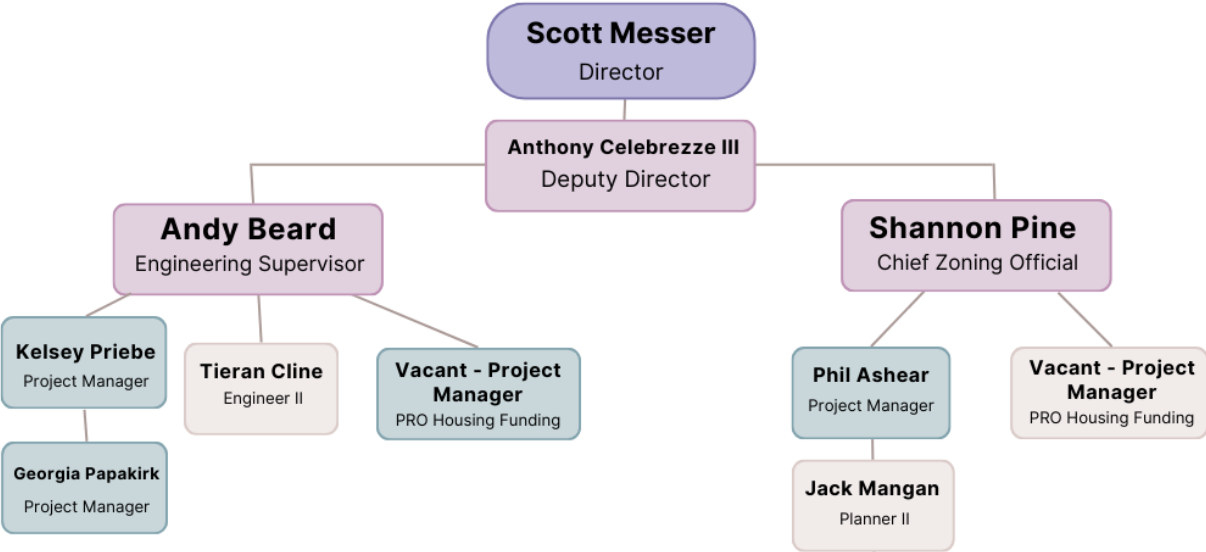


Key Management – Anthony Celebrezze III, Deputy Director

Full-time Staff –

This application requests funding for a Project Manager to oversee the site engineering process and a Project Manager to oversee the zoning process. These Project Managers will be responsible for supervising the individual reviewers assigned to multi-unit residential projects.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING & ZONING SERVICES
SITE ENGINEERING & ZONING PROCESS



**EXHIBIT F
LEVERAGE**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Leverage

Total leveraged funds from the City of Columbus to support PRO Housing activities total \$6,000,000 from the City of Columbus Affordable Housing Bond Fund to support land acquisition costs for Activity 1 - Unlocking Grayfield Sites.

This amounts to a leverage commitment as a percent of grant funds requested of **60 percent**.

A Leverage Support Letter is included as an Attachment. Leveraged funds are also discussed in the Budget and Timeline section of Exhibit D, Soundness of Approach.

**EXHIBIT G
LONG-TERM EFFECT**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Long-Term Effects

PRO Housing grant funds will better equip the City to address affordable housing challenges by decreasing barriers to affordable housing development on grayfield sites, strengthening and growing Columbus' CHDOs and CDCs, and providing additional resources to help developers and City staff effectively navigate and manage the City's permitting process for affordable housing development. All activities will primarily benefit low-to-moderate income households.

Unlocking Grayfield Sites

Columbus' growing region is in critical need of housing. Grayfield sites present an opportunity for redevelopment of nearly 7 square miles of currently aging retail centers into affordable housing. PRO Housing funding will allow the City to achieve at least one new multi-family affordable housing development, with the opportunity for this development to be permanent supportive housing. By partnering with the Land Bank on acquisition, the City ensures that any roadblocks do not cause loss of City ownership of the property, which would in turn cause the loss of a site that would be dedicated as the home for future affordable housing units.

The Unlocking Grayfield Sites activity represents a model for other communities as a pilot program that can be adapted on a site-by-site basis. This activity will demonstrate how communities can reduce barriers for affordable housing development on challenging sites through coordination with various partners and leveraging of resources to allow these sites to be viable for residential use. The City has developed a plan for implementing this activity that could be used by varying communities at different scales. For example, sites could range from regional shopping centers to strip retail centers to suburban style single use sites. City staff may give presentations on the pilot program at conferences across the country, as well as be available for collaborative conversations with any communities interested in the program.

CHDO & CDC Capacity Building

Only four CHDOs operate within the City of Columbus. PRO Housing funding will support the creation of additional CHDOs to represent each quadrant of the City. Funding will also support the CDCs and four existing CHDOs in Columbus through targeted technical assistance and organizational training to increase their capacity for affordable housing development work.

Although the National Development Council currently offers only online independent training sessions, the City's Housing Division has initiated planning efforts for in-person sessions to be hosted by the City of Columbus for CHDOs and CDCs, or cohort sessions if remote sessions are the only option. Housing Division staff may also provide a cohort experience for trainees local to the Columbus area.

The CHDO & CDC Capacity Building activity represents a model for other communities to promote sophisticated community development partners in all neighborhoods with the capacity

to undertake expanded efforts in the production and preservation of affordable housing. City staff may give a presentation on the activity at the Ohio Housing Conference, National Community Development Association conference, and other such events, as an opportunity to connect with other communities who are striving to create more CHDOs or grow their existing CHDOs and CDCs. The tools that the City plans to use are accessible to any municipality. Through this activity, the City intends to model a concentrated commitment of efforts and resources to work with local agencies committed to addressing housing issues across the city.

Navigating the Permitting Process

According to the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio, permitting activity needs to double from last decade's trends to meet the projected housing demand. With central Ohio anticipated to be home to over 3 million people by 2040, housing construction must keep pace with the region's growing population in order to preserve affordability and housing security in our city. From 2010 to 2021, Central Ohio averaged 8,327 building permits per year. At the current pace, there will be about 1.15 million housing units and an estimated 2.6 million people in the region by 2040. Therefore, permitting activity needs to double in order to keep pace with housing demand. The activities proposed in this application will support the City's effort to increase our supply of affordable housing units, while also strengthening the City's current work on streamlining the permitting process to reduce barriers to developing affordable housing. The Department of Building & Zoning Services expects to receive around 60 permit applications for residential housing per year, totaling over 10,000 units. Currently, it takes on average 8 months for a multi-family residential permit to get through the City's review process. City staff serving as project managers overseeing these permit reviews require additional tools and resources in order to accelerate completion of the reviews.

While the City is currently working internally on streamlining the permitting process, small and emerging developers have expressed a need for additional resources to assist them in successfully navigating the process. Some delays in the permitting process arise as the City waits for responses from developers to correction letters. With PRO Housing funding, the City will provide the resources and increased technical assistance needed by developers to contribute to expediting the timeframe for a completed review. Additionally, expanding the developers who are able to build in the corridors will increase the City's capacity for production of affordable housing and diversify the affordable housing developer space in Columbus.

The Navigating the Permitting Process activity represents a model for other communities to support small and emerging developers to overcome the common barrier permitting poses on affordable housing development. Communities can replicate the City's model by adapting educational components to fit their respective processes. All resources will be available for other communities to utilize.

Reducing Housing Cost Burden

Housing costs in central Ohio are increasing at the fastest pace in the region's history. According to the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio, the Columbus Metropolitan area has a 49,000 deficit of affordable and available homes for extremely low-income households as of March 2023. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, 54,000 of our families spent more than half their income on housing. With major investments from companies like Intel, Honda, and Amazon, Columbus is experiencing increasing pressure for housing to keep pace with job growth.

Activities proposed for funding in this application will consider the value of developing affordable housing near amenities, public services, jobs, transit, schools, and other community assets and locations. Sites selected in the Unlocking Grayfield Sites activity will be located along corridors identified in the City's "Zone In" Columbus initiative, which are targeted for modernized zoning, where there is potential to add housing along existing and planned transit corridors. This activity also presents an opportunity for the development of permanent supportive housing on a selected site, which the City recognizes as essential for addressing homelessness among Columbus residents.

Community Resilience

In 2021, the City of Columbus released its first-ever Climate Action Plan, a community roadmap to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and a 45% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to promote equity and environmental justice while pursuing a carbon-neutral Columbus. The Climate Action Plan was developed with input from residents, environmental advocates, and the business community, and outlines mitigation strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation strategies to equitably promote greater community resilience against climate change. The plan will be updated on a five-year basis to ensure optimal accountability, transparency, and alignment with the latest circumstances and climate science. PRO Housing funded activities will utilize mitigation and adaptation strategies developed in the City's Climate Action Plan in order to support a healthy, resilient, and sustainable community.

Long-Term Effects

PRO Housing funding will not only assist the City of Columbus with the production of new affordable housing units, but also establish long-term processes and partnerships that strengthen the City's capacity to continue taking innovative approaches to removing barriers to affordable housing production. This funding will create a roadmap for a program that will unlock previously inaccessible sites for affordable housing development; establish new CHDOs and strengthen existing CHDOs and CDCs with a broader geographic scope to increase the impact these organizations have on the neighborhoods they serve; assist City staff to complete permitting reviews more efficiently; and support small and emerging developers through new tools and resources to become more effective, robust leaders of the affordable housing

development space in Columbus. The City will ensure that the proposed activities for PRO Housing funding will continue to expand access to housing opportunities for protected class groups, vulnerable populations, and low-to-moderate income households long after the period of performance ends.

**ATTACHMENT A
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

Public Comment Period

The City of Columbus started a fifteen (15) day public comment period on October 8, 2023 when a notice was published in the *Columbus Dispatch* and a draft PRO Housing grant application was made available on the City's Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management webpage. The Grants Management Section accepted comments through October 24, 2023.

During this comment period, the City did not receive any written comments from members of the public regarding the draft grant application.

Public Meeting

The Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section hosted a public meeting on October 12, 2023 at 5:30PM. The Grants Management Section made paper copies of the draft application available to attendees and provided a presentation outlining the proposed PRO Housing grant activities.

The public meeting was attended in-person by four (4) members of the public, and virtually by another one (1) person. One question was asked regarding whether the priority of Activity 2 - CHDO Capacity Building was to support existing CHDOs or to create new CHDOs. The Grants Management Section responded that the activity was intended to achieve both goals stated. One other question was asked about whether ex-offenders were considered a "protected class" according to federal Fair Housing rules, and the Grants Management Section responded that it is not one of the federally protected classes.

No changes were made to the City of Columbus PRO Housing grant application as a result of public comments received.

**ATTACHMENT B
LEVERAGE DOCUMENTATION**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS, OH
HUD PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION**

MICHAEL H. STEVENS
Director



DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

To Whom It May Concern:

Office of the Director
111 North Front Street, 8th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 645.7795
(614) 645.6675 [FAX]

Please accept this letter as a firm commitment of leveraged funds in support of the City of Columbus' application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) grant opportunity.

Division of Economic Development
111 North Front Street, 8th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 645.8616
(614) 645.6675 [FAX]

On July 10, 2023, Columbus City Council passed Ordinance # 1711-2023 adopting the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) for 2023. The CIB included \$6 million from the City's Affordable Housing Bond Fund for the purpose of strategic land acquisition to advance the Columbus Housing Strategy.

Division of Housing
111 North Front Street, 3rd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 645.8526
(614) 645.6675 [FAX]

This \$6 million is available and committed to support land acquisition costs related to the Unlocking Grayfield Sites activity as proposed in the City's PRO Housing grant application.

Division of Planning
111 North Front Street, 3rd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 724.4437
(614) 645.6675 [FAX]

Thank you for your consideration of the City's PRO Housing grant application.

Division of Land Redevelopment
845 Parsons Avenue
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