



# 2019 ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The employees of the Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities assist residents, communities, businesses and partners across the county via a wide variety of continually growing initiatives, programs, projects and services. We are pleased to share some of the organization's 2019 highlights and look forward to working together for added success—**better places, better lives.**

## Community Development

- modified an earlier \$500,000 HOME grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) changing the activity from rehabilitation to the new construction of two affordable housing units in Carlisle Borough
- closed out the \$200,000 Carlisle Works U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency workforce development grant training 38 students in the environmental technician trades curriculum—for employment in brownfield remediation and clean-up, stormwater management, handling hazardous materials, asbestos and lead-based paint removal, and working in confined spaces; the Authority partnered with Carlisle Borough, Harrisburg Area Community College, the Employment Skills Center and Gaito Associates to provide the training; 25 program graduates have secured full-time employment, 17 are working in the environmental field and four are enrolled in secondary education
- completed an analysis of the impediments to fair housing choices for Cumberland County and Carlisle Borough
- developed the fiscal year 2020-2024 consolidated plan for Cumberland County
- finalized and submitted the fiscal year 2020 Cumberland County annual action plan
- for Carlisle Borough, completed the fiscal year 2019 annual action plan
- completed fiscal year 2018 consolidated annual performance and evaluation reports for Cumberland County and Carlisle Borough



## Downtown Program Services

- completed reconstruction at 137 N. Hanover St. for Carlisle’s Hook & Flask Still Works’ new distillery, tasting room and indoor/outdoor restaurant; redirected the prospective owners to this site—not on the market—utilizing a Carlisle Streetview grant to transform the storefront of what had been a print shop; the business opened in July
- approved a record eight Downtown Mechanicsburg About Face! projects transforming storefronts and buildings alike—four of them, new businesses; the projects including at Cristiano Winery, Eckels Ice Cream Fountain and Union Church total over \$450,000 in exterior improvements
- directly assisted the opening of 18 new businesses—like Mechanicsburg’s Smoke & Pickles



Artisan Butcher Shop, Kanagawa and Buhrig’s Gathering Place—and the expansion of five others including the \$750,000 relocation of Lemoyne’s new Arthur Murray Dance Studio; provided “space exploration,” lease or purchase negotiations, zoning and codes assistance, grant opportunities, financing and other services

- initiated development of Frankenberger Gardens at 203 E. Main St. adjacent the 1801 tavern on what had been the site of a condemned property; prepared an easement of the Frankenberger Tavern “patch,” where

the historic building sits, from its owner to the Mechanicsburg Museum Association; landed grant funding to replace and add to the organization’s wayfinding signage

- packaged financing including that through Cumberland County to open new businesses soon relocating Midtown Harrisburg’s Dalicia to Downtown Mechanicsburg in what was a vacant Church building; Carlisle’s Sunrise Café, a \$120,000 project, converted an apartment in the historic John Hays house to an eatery stretching recent N. Hanover St. success toward the new development area; Carlisle Borough also financed cake shop Nothing Sweeter—a delicious addition on W. Pomfret St. that brought a popular in-home business downtown



- launched development of an overlay design district in Lemoyne inventorying all properties and existing conditions along Third St.; a similar initiative is underway in Mount Holly Springs—these, to improve properties and corridor aesthetics utilizing existing and proposing new resources or incentives to better the streetview

## Housing Choice Voucher Program

- executed the housing assistance program contract for the newly-constructed Townhomes at Factory Square in Carlisle with all units, including eight utilizing vouchers, leased in spring 2019

- with construction underway, signed the housing assistance program agreement to provide housing choice vouchers for eight units at the phase II Flats at Factory Square in Carlisle
- leased 160 units to new families or tenants utilizing the Housing Choice Voucher Program
- awarded a \$20,000 HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) family self-sufficiency grant funding a program that allows housing choice voucher participants to escrow a portion of their monthly rental payments for five years saving toward future investments such as a home or higher education
- while many housing authorities in the region have closed their tenant waiting lists and are not accepting new voucher applications, kept the Authority's housing choice voucher program waiting list open and continued to pull from the list leasing units
- represented the Authority and voucher program participating and speaking at different meetings and conferences
- joined the Healthy Shippensburg Coalition to help with systems changes in the Shippensburg area



## Housing Management

- completed all annual reviews for the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) assuring timely and thorough submissions



- entered into a one-year contract with Community Action to provide support services for residents living in the Newport Hotel, Newport Square and Sherman's Valley buildings in Perry County
- completed fair housing training as well as professional boundary training sessions with staff members from all facilities
- onboarded several new resident managers, and two new members of the support services staff
- completed reviews for the new Flats at Factory Square lease-up in Carlisle Borough
- entered into 15-year, project-based, contracts with housing choice vouchers for the East Gate, Carlisle and Enola Chapel properties

## Homeless and Special Needs Housing

- through reorganization, Homeless and Special Needs Housing became a separate division reporting directly to the executive director
- secured additional funding to support the Local Housing Options Team (LHOT) and Housing Systems Change Collaborative Impact with a full-time employee
- conducted a successful point-in-time count identifying 74 homeless households including 92 persons living in Cumberland County
- provided housing for 25 homeless households including 47 adults and children; provided financial rental assistance to 124 formerly-homeless households including 215 adults and children
- via the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, secured funding to sustain the streamlined, “one point of contact,” coordinated-entry program and process throughout 11 counties including Cumberland
- realized additional Emergency Solutions Grant funding through DCED for case management related to providing emergency shelter services at the Carlisle area’s Safe Harbour and Community CARES
- through the Forensic Program—a bridge subsidy program funded by HealthChoices Reinvestment funds for formerly homeless individuals exiting the prison system—assisted seven once-incarcerated persons with mental health disabilities secure housing
- received \$5,000 from the Partnership for Better Health to develop grants to encourage additional landlords to participate in subsidized-rent programs across the county offering landlord-engagement grants
- awarded \$1,022,388 from HUD for fiscal year 2019-2020 to administer rental-assistance programs throughout Cumberland and Perry Counties to assist homeless households
- through PHFA and additional HUD Rapid Rehousing appropriations, realized funds to pilot a homelessness prevention program
- secured an administration agreement with Cumberland County to allow the Authority to administer the Emergency Solutions Grant funded through DCED for another three-year period
- secured additional funding from Cumberland/Perry Mental Health for continued support to house homeless households including individuals with a mental health disability



## Facilities Construction and Maintenance

- implemented a program to address and improve building exteriors and curb appeal by updating signage, painting, landscaping, providing parking area enhancements, better lighting and more
- implemented a web-based preventive maintenance and work order request program to improve staff response time to address housing and facility issues; utilized the same program to assure routine maintenance and readiness of equipment
- completed phase I and II repairs at Newport Square, Perry County, painting the exterior doors and windows of the building
- removed and replaced tan bark at the Carpenter Children’s Memorial Garden in Carlisle; erected a new sign at the site in Memorial Park to honor the three neighborhood children who perished in a 1999 fire
- purchased a 2020 Chevrolet Colorado for hauling equipment and plowing snow at various properties
- managed capital fund expenditures in accordance with procurement regulations; realized the timely expenditure of funds as related to payment and utilization schedules



## Finance and Human Resources



- worked with a broker to provide quotes for medical, dental and vision insurance options; researched and renewed another one-year contract with CIGNA for employee health insurance, a third one-year contract with United Concordia for dental coverage and Capital Blue Cross for vision insurance for calendar year 2020; the CIGNA plan included a modest rate increase
- scheduled carrier or broker representatives for employee benefits—the 457 plan, disability insurance provider UNUM and health care options—to speak at staff meetings to ensure employees had a thorough understanding of benefits offered by the Authority; provided employees with information and documentation to complete seamless and timely open enrollment periods for all benefits
- assisted in reviewing and pre-screening applicants by phone for open positions participating in initial interviews; with a 36-percent staff turnover during the year, this assistance to supervisors and managers significantly shortened the amount of time positions were vacant

- prepared and presented the Redevelopment Authority administrative budget for board approval for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the operating budgets for 18 properties managed by the Redevelopment Authority; received approvals from property owners, and submitted the operating budgets to respective governing agencies—HUD and PHFA—for final approvals
- earned unmodified opinions (best possible results) on all audited financial statements issued in 2019 for fiscal year 2018 reporting periods for the Housing Authority, Redevelopment Authority, One West Penn, American House, Crossroads, East Gate, Enola Commons and Sherman’s Valley; received positive results (no auditor opinion required) on reviewed and compiled CPA-prepared financial statements for all other properties managed by the Redevelopment Authority
- in April 2019, earned a PHAS (Public Housing Assessment Subsystem) score of 89 with designation status of standard performer for the fiscal year 2017-2018 as determined by HUD’s REAC (Real Estate Assessment Center); the PHAS score consists of four measurable components—physical, financial, management and capital fund; the preliminary PHAS score of 88 with a designation status of “small PHA deregulation” for the period ending June 30 was issued by REAC in October 2019; in both 2018 and 2019, the financial indicator scoring was 25 out of a possible 25 points



## Executive Office

- finalized a pre-development agreement with PIRHL for phase II of the former Carlisle Tire & Wheel site between College and B Sts., Carlisle, to build 40, one-bedroom, apartments including 10 units for veterans; the project will also provide 20,000 square-feet of commercial space and welcome green space



- working with Cumberland Senior Housing Associates, submitted an application as co-developer for a low-income housing tax credit project in Lemoyne in cooperation with Monarch Development; the new construction would realize 40 units of senior housing, with the Redevelopment Authority providing supportive services to residents
- assisted in the preparation of an application for a low-income housing tax credit project in Hampden Township for a 39-unit family housing development in cooperation with Monarch Development; the project received a tax credit award with construction to begin in mid-2020; the Redevelopment Authority will provide supportive services
- the Authorities instituted a cloud-based new phone and computer system that will significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management information

system; the system allows for improved access to network files and resources across the entire enterprise

- working cooperatively with the Cumberland County Planning Department and Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation, the Authorities assisted in the development of a comprehensive inventory of blighted properties in Cumberland County; nearly 100 properties have been identified throughout the county
- following a review of the Authorities organization chart, Homeless and special Needs Housing was established as its own division; the reorganization will strengthen the division's ability to respond rapidly to emerging community needs and the acquisition of needed resources
- the Authorities' executive director served on the Dickinson College Clarke Forum panel— "Unveiling America: Addressing Issues of Contemporary Homelessness"

