



Housing and Community Development



Annual Report 2020

Letter from the Director

My first full year as the Director of the City of Tucson Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) was a year like none other. As a department, a City government, and a community, we faced challenges that none of us could have anticipated nor have experienced in our lifetimes. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, we found new ways to interact, work, and serve. Amid this new reality, we adjusted to address new obstacles, as well as made strides towards our longer-term goals for the department. We showcase some of our 2020 accomplishments here. I am proud of the HCD staff, the leadership of the Tucson Mayor and Council, and for all the Tucsonans that worked tirelessly this past year to support our community. I am hopeful that we are on a better path to address Tucson's most acute challenges and am committed to meeting the goals laid out in the department's newly adopted People, Communities, and Homes Investment Plan (P-CHIP).



Liz Morales, *Director*



HCD at a Glance

Housing

As the local Public Housing Authority, **PHA**, HCD provides direct housing assistance to thousands of Tucsonans. This includes:

1,505 Public Housing units owned and operated by HCD

5,500+ Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) administered to residents renting from private landlords

451 additional units of below-market affordable housing

Community Development

HCD's Planning and Community Development, **PCD**, supports strong communities and safe and decent living environments by funding important projects and programs such as new and rehabilitated affordable housing, shelters and outreach for persons experiencing homelessness, food security programs, and additional services for low and moderate income persons.

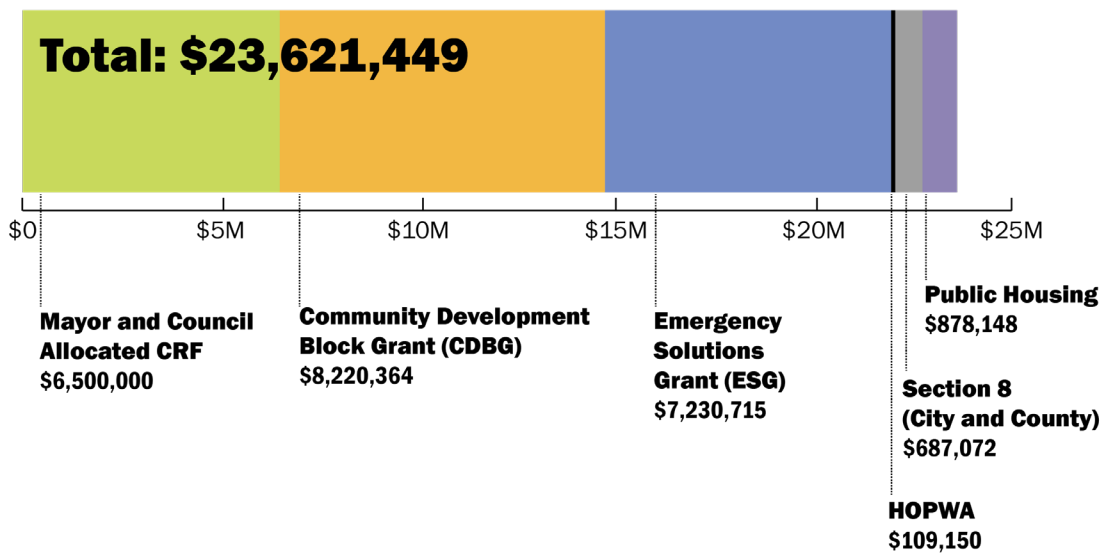
\$8M administered annually in HUD Community Planning and Development funds (CDBG, ESG, HOPWA, HOME)

20+ local agencies and nonprofits funded to provide human services throughout Tucson

COVID-19 Response

In 2020, Housing and Community Development received the following COVID-19 relief funds to assist Tucsonans affected by the pandemic.

\$23M⁺



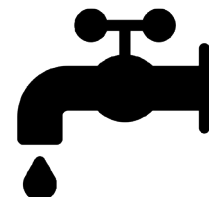
Rent and Utility Assistance Program

Through the coordination and efforts of our partnering service providers, we were able to give direct financial assistance for rent and utility payments to families impacted by the pandemic.

1,700
households served

\$3.5M
direct payment assistance provided

\$550K
in Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention



Partnerships to Support Residents

13,000+

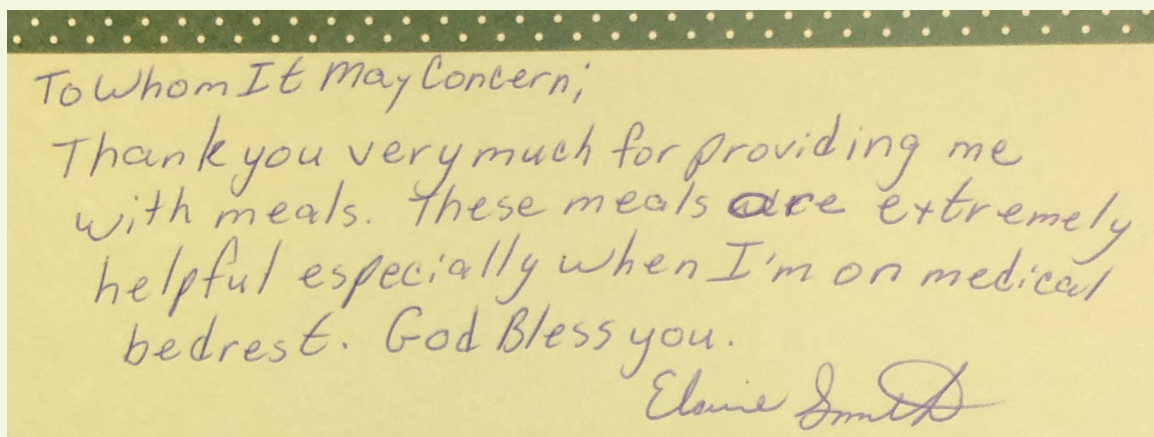
frozen meals delivered to older adults in four public housing apartment buildings, thanks to Pima Council on Aging and staff from HCD and Parks and Recreation

850

Helping Hands Care Bags with essential hygiene and cleaning products distributed to residents of Tucson House, thanks to CARES Act funds and the Arizona State University Office of Community Health, Engagement, and Resiliency (OCHER)



In Their Own Words...



Hotel Shelter Service

Early in the pandemic, HCD identified the risk COVID-19 posed to many community members experiencing homelessness due to age, underlying health conditions, and close quarters at many shelters. Partnering with local agencies, HCD launched a program to house at-risk and COVID-positive individuals at hotels within the city.

984

people sheltered

300+

connected to permanent housing

In Their Own Words...

“I was homeless for at least a couple of years, I didn’t have anywhere to go. I came to Viscount and stayed approximately four months, then moved into my own apartment. My stay at the hotel was absolutely great, I don’t know how to thank OPCS and all the other staff involved. I enjoyed it, I even sometimes miss it.

I got connected to a Section 8 voucher through Brian at OPCS. I feel like I am born again because I am able to get my meds on time and take them regularly. I can eat and cook when I need to. My health is my focus now whereas before. I was very stressed out from being homeless and I could not manage my health.

I have been in my own housing for about six months. I am grateful!!”



-Nagasi Zewaldi
Hotel Shelter Service Guest

Additional 2020 Highlights

Nothing about 2020 was “normal.” Yet despite the additional challenges brought on by the pandemic, HCD continued to provide and improve upon our core services. Here are just a few highlights of that work:

Community Development

South 12th Avenue

Using CDBG funds, HCD played an integral role in a long-planned project to reconfigure South 12th Avenue between Nebraska and Wyoming streets. With the goals of increasing and enhancing the mobility of residents, and transit clients’ throughout the area, the project included re-striping the roadway to include an 11 foot center lane, 10 ½ foot travel lanes, five foot wide bike lanes, on-street parking in selected locations, and six foot-wide sidewalks.



324

households provided with
Tenant Based Rental Assistance

30

households provided with
Down Payment Assistance

620

people experiencing homelessness
served through TPCH’s
summer heat relief program

~4,000

blankets and sleeping bags
distributed to people experiencing
homelessness this winter

655

persons served by HCD’s
Homeless Outreach Staff

229

served by HCD’s Homeless Outreach
Staff obtained permanent housing

New Affordable Housing Units

Esperanza En Escalante Phase II is 50 affordable units of transitional and permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans and veterans’ families. Gorman and Company developed this housing project with numerous funding and community partners, including HOME funding from the City of Tucson.



Housing

Section 8 Program Improvements

Direction was given from Mayor and Council to improve service level and effectiveness of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8), both for residents and participating landlords, with the goal of moving towards 100% utilization of existing vouchers. In 2020 we saw:

187

new landlords signed up for the Section 8 program

925+

families from waitlist offered housing

13 → 4

days inspection turnaround time

39 → 15

day average time of first housing assistance payment decreased

\$2M

Section 8 funding increase for 2021

Building a Stronger HCD

2020 was a year of growth and improvement for HCD internally as well. Liz Morales joined HCD as Director in late 2019 and brought two new Deputy Directors, Ann Chanecka and Terry Galligan, to the team in 2020. Meanwhile, HCD is almost fully staffed in the Housing divisions.

16

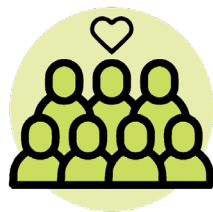
job vacancies filled

17

members selected for the Commission on Equitable Housing and Development

HCD's newly formed Strategic Planning and Community Engagement (SPACE) division worked on:

- 2020 update to the Poverty and Urban Stress Report
- Housing Market Study and accompanying Neighborhood Vulnerability Index (VNI)
- Formation of the new Commission on Equitable Housing and Development (CEHD)
- People, Communities, and Homes Investment Plan (P-CHIP)



Looking to 2021

Thanks to the direction and support from Mayor and Council, investments in staff, and long-standing and newly formed partnerships, HCD looks forward to embracing new opportunities in 2021. A few of our goals for the upcoming year include:

- Develop plan to reposition Public Housing assets to have a more sustainable funding stream, improving quality of units and ultimately increase number of affordable units
- Create housing development arm to expand El Portal and affordable housing portfolio
- Finalize Thrive in the 05 Transformation Plan and submit Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Application
- Better Utilize voucher for persons experiencing homelessness and for other specialty programs
- Expand effective interdepartmental coordination on homelessness through Housing First Director and Community Safety Pilot Program
- Increase Housing Choice Voucher utilization to 105% of funding
- Decrease Public Housing vacancy rate to under 1%
- Build a customer-centered website and digital media presence

