

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



CITY OF  
**TUCSON**

HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



**LETTER  
FROM THE  
DIRECTOR**

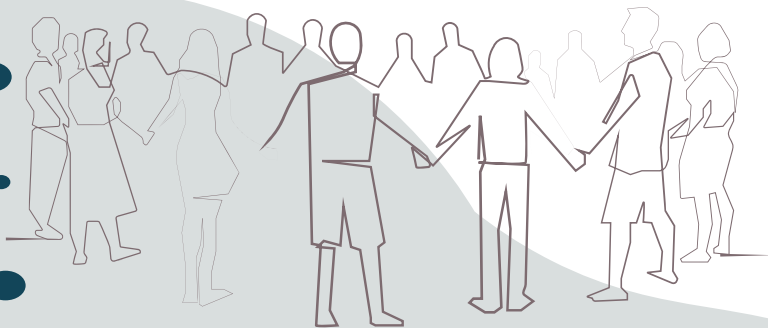


I am happy to share our 2021 Annual Report, which highlights the work and efforts of Tucson's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Our Department, which I affectionately refer to as the HCD Familia (Spanish for family), is comprised of dedicated professionals who care about our community and are committed to improving the quality of life for our residents. The challenges we all face cannot be met with the status quo. Instead, we aggressively find new and better ways to deliver programs and services.

One way we did that was through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). We partnered with Pima County and the Community Investment Corporation, a local non-profit agency, to provide a single, effective application portal. This helped nearly 11,000 households avoid eviction. HCD responded to our Mayor and Council when they said we needed to address this growing housing crisis and develop a plan to increase housing affordability. HCD created the Housing Affordability Strategy for Tucson (HAST). It outlines ten initiatives that set the groundwork to incentivize and increase new housing units for years to come. I am proud of the strong work we completed this past year, and I am excited for what is coming. I want to thank my HCD Familia for all their good work and big hearts. This report is not only a record of our accomplishments, but it is a call for all to join us as we work to create a strong, sustainable and inclusive Tucson that includes quality affordable housing for all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liz Morales". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Liz Morales, City of Tucson Housing & Community Development Director



# **PANDEMIC** **RESPONSE**

In 2021, COVID-19 relief and recovery became even more of a central focus of the Department's work. The City's hotel shelter service worked to transition residents experiencing homelessness into permanent and bridge housing in 2021. Staff continued to offer expanded services like meal delivery assistance to older public housing residents through a partnership with Pima Council on Aging and worked hard to keep residents safe while maintaining regular operations.

## **EMERGENCY RENTAL** **ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

HCD partnered with Pima County and the Community Investment Corporation (CIC) to establish a national model for the distribution of Emergency Rental Assistance to residents behind on rent and utilities due to the pandemic. In 2021, this included:

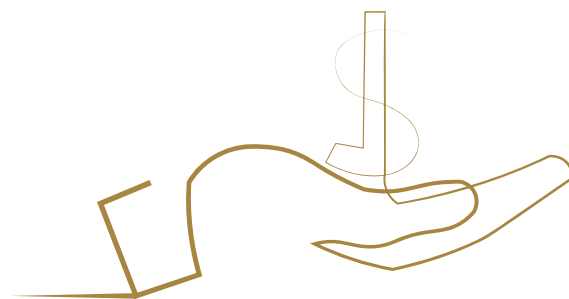
# **8,463**

**cases paid**



# **\$46.5M**

**direct payment  
assistance provided**



# PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT



The Tucson Mayor and Council provided direction to HCD in 2021 to chart a strong path forward for the Department as the City continues to address pandemic relief and recovery along with a growing housing affordability crisis. This included adopting two department-wide plans that will shape how HCD invests in housing, human services, and community projects over the next several years.

## **PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES, AND HOMES INVESTMENT PLAN (P-CHIP)**

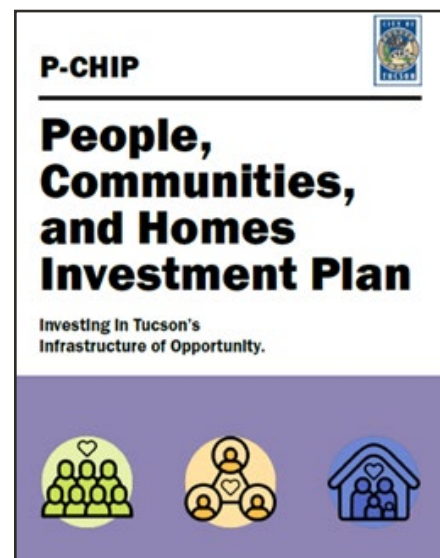
The People, Communities, and Homes Investment Plan (P-CHIP) was adopted by Mayor and Council on January 20, 2021. The plan creates a framework for investing in Tucson's most vulnerable populations. It will direct funding for homeless services, housing stability, neighborhood enhancements, and more.

Built on previous community plans, the most current data, and broad public outreach, the P-CHIP identifies priorities eligible for support from Tucson's federal and local funding sources, administered by HCD.

Learn more at [p-chip.tucsonaz.gov](https://p-chip.tucsonaz.gov).



*HAST Public Meeting Attendees, November 2021*

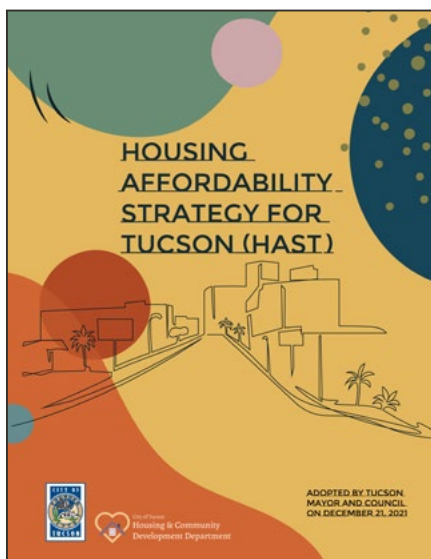




## **HOUSING AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY FOR TUCSON (HAST)**

Mayor and Council directed HCD to develop a comprehensive affordable housing strategic plan with an emphasis on actionable goals. The resulting Housing Affordability Strategy for Tucson (HAST) focuses on specific actions the City can take to support the preservation and construction of housing units. It was adopted by Mayor and Council on December 21, 2021. The HAST highlights current data about the need for housing affordability solutions in Tucson and identifies 10 policy initiatives to help increase the city's housing supply.

Learn more at: [housingaffordability.tucsonaz.gov](https://housingaffordability.tucsonaz.gov).



## **OTHER EFFORTS**

### **Commission on Equitable Housing and Development (CEHD)**

The newly formed Commission on Equitable Housing and Development held its first full meeting on February 3, 2021. For CEHD by the numbers in 2021, look on the next page.

Learn more at [tucsonaz.gov/hcd/cehd](https://tucsonaz.gov/hcd/cehd)



*Commission on Equitable Housing and Development members and City of Tucson staff outside the Downtown Motor Apartments.*



*Commission on Equitable Housing and Development group photo from a meeting*

## Thrive in the 05 / Choice Neighborhoods

Another initiative of the Strategic Planning And Community Engagement (SPACE) team at HCD is participation in the Thrive in the 05 effort through our current HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant. In 2021, HCD conducted a series of public engagement efforts to get feedback on the Thrive in the 05 Transformation Plan.



*Thrive in the 05 Action Activities Meeting held at Pima Community College Downtown Campus*



*Thrive in the 05 Action Activities Meeting at Esquer Park*

**10**

**voting members**



**11**

**ex-officio members**

**11**

**full commission meetings held virtually**



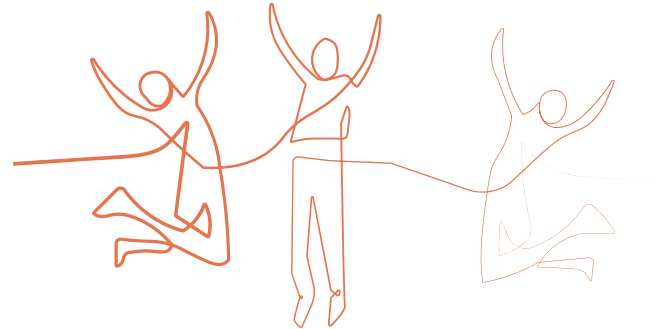
**3**

**subcommittees formed**



**3**

**short-term goals adopted**

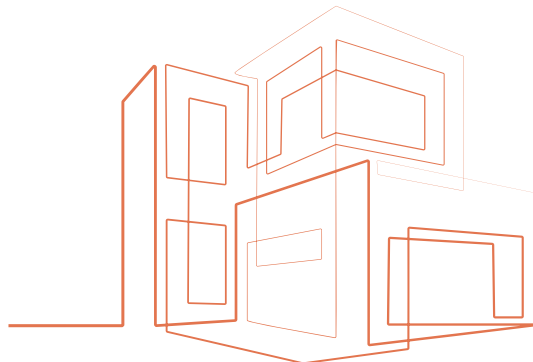


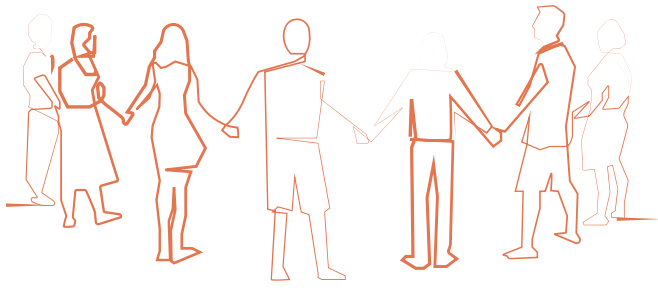
**4**

**long-term goals adopted**

**1**

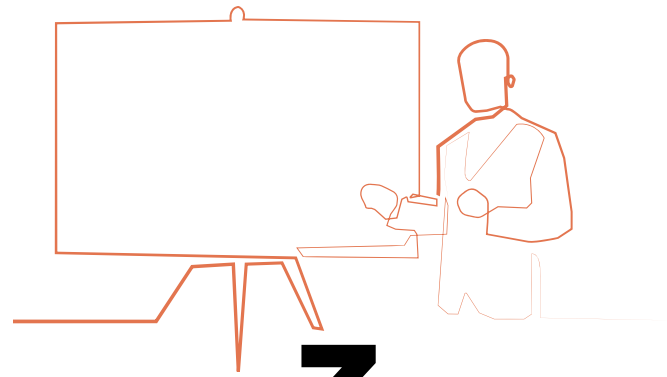
**tour of affordable housing projects**





**7**

**neighborhood ambassadors  
deployed to engage Thrive in  
the 05 neighbors**



**3**

**public meetings on the draft  
transformation plan**

**LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022...**

Following adoption of the Thrive in the 05 Transformation Plan, HCD will coordinate community partners and area residents to implement neighborhood improvement projects in 2022.

- **9** Action Activity projects
- **\$1.5M** in HUD funds invested

Learn more at: [thriveinthe05.tucsonaz.gov](http://thriveinthe05.tucsonaz.gov).



*Action Activities Logo*



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- HCD's Planning and Community Development (PCD) division 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. PCD administers U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Planning and Development funds (CDBG, ESG, HOPWA, HOME) in addition pandemic relief and recovery dollars. PCD's work in 2021 is included on the next page.



*Sister Jose Women's Center*

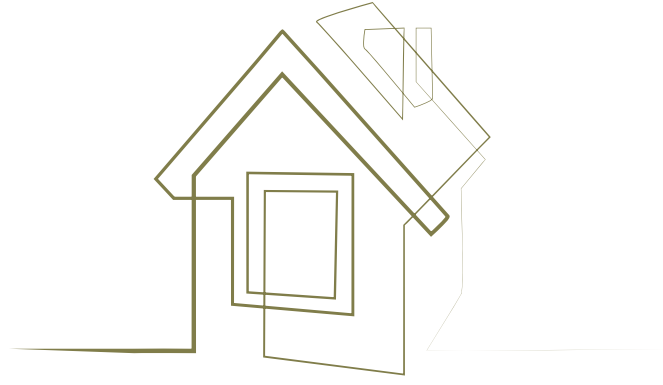


*Dunbar Pavillion, a formerly segregated school turned community center was remodeled using CDBG funds*



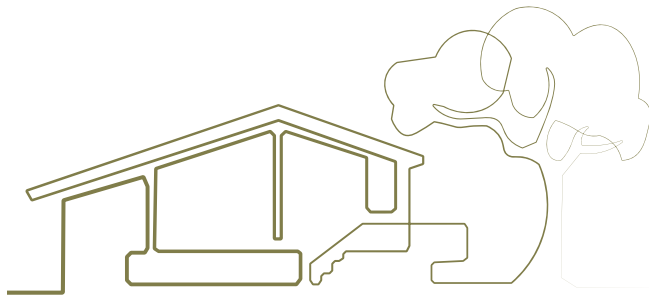
**1,175**

**households provided with  
Tenant Based Rental Assistance**



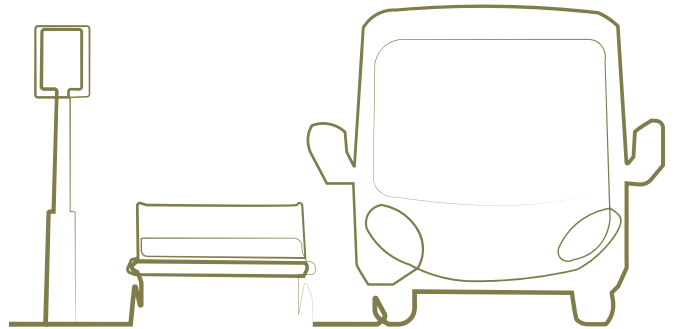
**68**

**households provided with  
down payment assistance**



**13**

**public facilities  
projects completed**



**10**

**public bus stops manufactured  
and installed**



**76**

**affordable housing  
units rehabilitated**

**16**

**manufactured homes  
rehabilitated**

**78**

**households given  
lead abatement and  
home rehabilitation**

## **P-CHIP CALL FOR PROJECTS**

PCD administered the first Call for Projects based on the newly adopted P-CHIP in spring 2021. Through a “People” Call for Projects, local partners applied for funding for projects and programs such as affordable housing, shelters, and outreach for people experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, and services for low- and moderate-income people.

### **New Leadership**

In June 2021, Jason Thorpe was hired as the Community Services Administrator for the Planning and Community Development (PCD) division at HCD. “I am excited to move into this role and re-focus my passion for addressing the crisis of homelessness to more upstream approaches that advance affordable and equitable housing opportunity and strengthen our community,” said Jason about his transition to the Community Services Administrator position





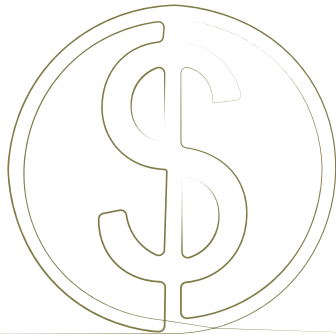
**26**

**partners selected for funding**



**79**

**human service  
agreements executed**



**\$4.7M**

**allocated through the  
Call for Projects**



# ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

HCD has long been involved in the region-wide effort to end homelessness, most recently serving as the local Continuum of Care lead applicant and hosting outreach services in-house. The City's efforts deepened in 2021 through the hiring of a Housing First Program Director. The joint efforts between the City, partner agencies, and the Tucson Pima Collaboration to End Homelessness (TPCH) accomplished can be found on the next page.

## Tucson House Resident

Ken Allcock, 53, was houseless until three years ago when he moved into the Tucson House, the City's largest public housing facility. He has found public housing staff receptive and helpful and caring, giving him a new foundation on which to renew his life.

"Things are coming around. Now that I am here, I am building myself back up."

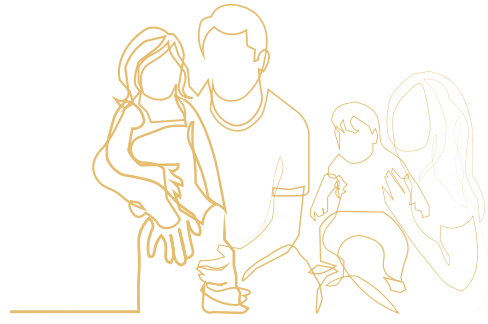


*Tucson House Resident, Ken Allcock*



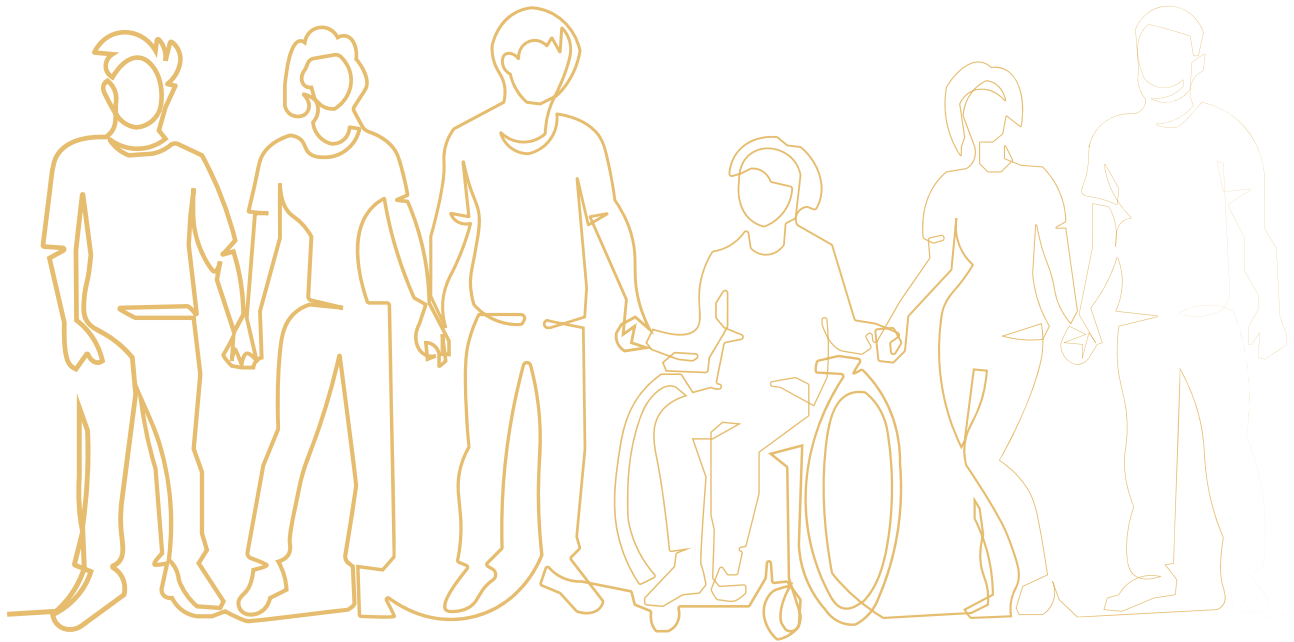
**1,509**

**persons served through City's homeless services programs**



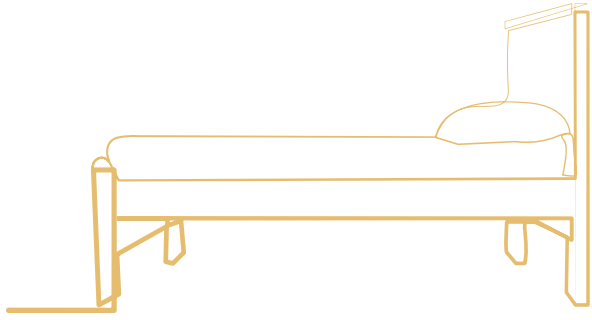
**163** of **202**

**Emergency Housing Vouchers issued and in the process of lease-up since July 1, 2021**



**1,813**

**households served through City-funded street outreach, emergency shelter, and rental assistance programs at partner agencies**



**155**

**beds for bridge shelter created  
through the purchase of 3 hotels**



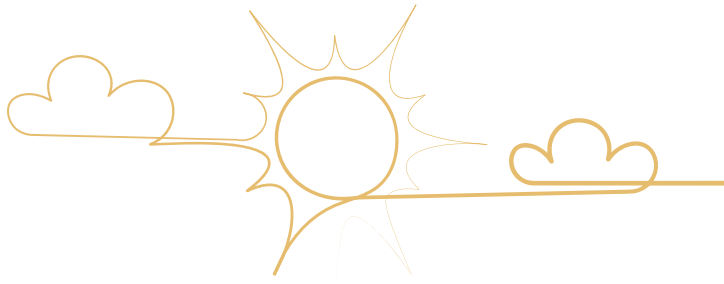
**927**

**persons served by HCD's  
Homeless Outreach Staff**



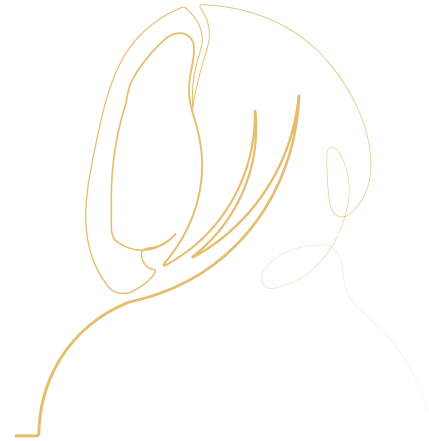
**133**

**persons served by HCD's Homeless Outreach  
Staff obtained permanent housing**



**620**

**people experiencing  
homelessness served through  
TPCH's summer heat relief program**



**5,000+**

**blankets and sleeping bags given  
out to people experiencing  
homelessness this winter**

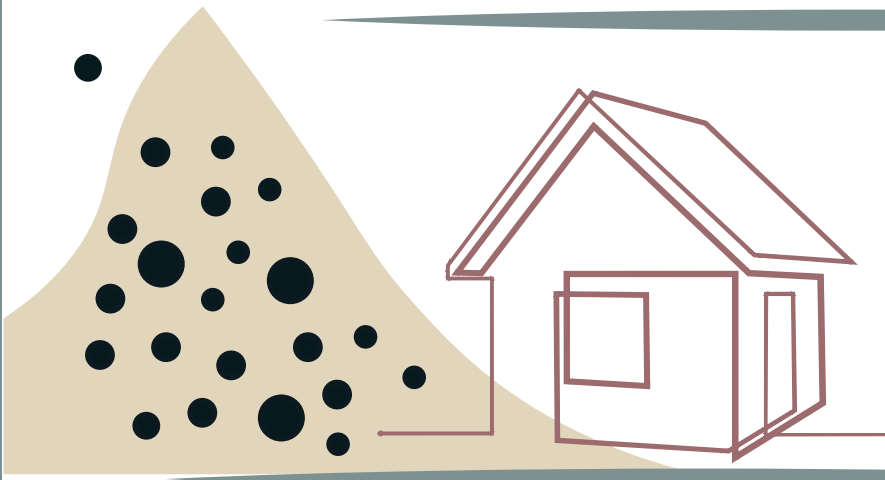
### **New Leadership**

The City hired Brandi Champion to serve as Tucson's first Housing First Program Director in October 2021. In her new role, Ms. Champion will lead the effort in ending homelessness through a Housing First lens, which is the approach in which the solution to homelessness is both housing and an array of support services for the individual or family.

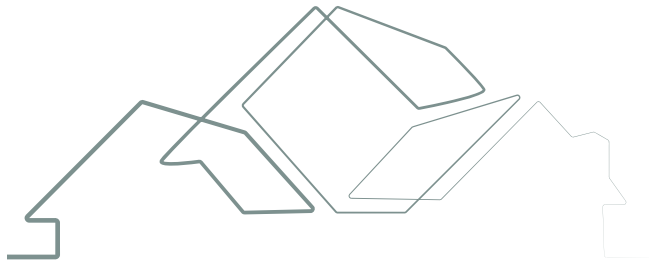




# HOUSING



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



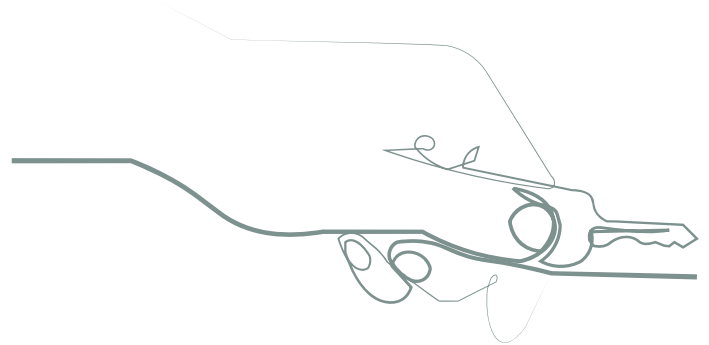
**451**

**additional units of below-market affordable housing**



**1,505**

**public housing units owned and operated by HCD**



**5,500+**

**Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) administered to residents renting from private landlords**

## Landers Garden Project

Ernesto Espinosa is a 94-year-old widower who lives in the Cressworth Lander Gardens public housing facility. When he and his late wife, Evangelina, needed to find an affordable home, they found this one-bedroom apartment which “we fell in love with.”



*Landers Garden Resident, Ernesto Espinosa*

“It is very calm here,” he said about the apartment complex where he has lived for the past 14 years. “The services are good,” said the former gardener.

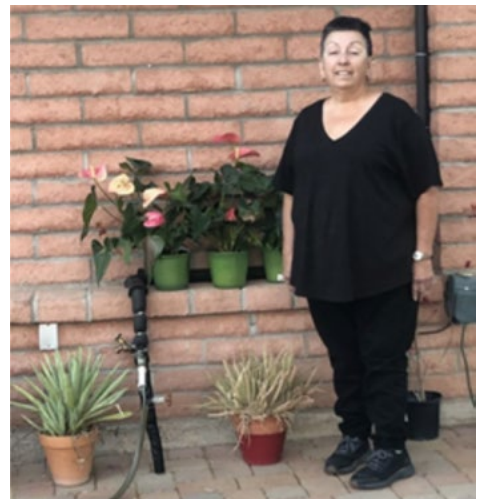
## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS**

In 2020, the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program made significant improvements by decreasing times for inspections and payments. In 2021, improvements continued through in-house training for staff and navigation assistance for voucher holders searching for housing.

\$350K in CARES Act funding used for landlord incentives to house voucher holders

### **Family Self-Sufficiency Program**

The Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS) assists and motivates participants to continue their education, increase their earning power, and save money. During the five-year term of this program, whenever earned income increases in the household, the family's rent also increases. A portion of the rent increase is credited monthly to an interest-bearing HUD escrow account. At graduation, the family is eligible to receive the account balance to use on homeownership, a vehicle, etc.



*Family Self-Sufficiency Program  
Participant, Diana*

In 2021, 7 families graduated from the FSS Program. The total combined disbursement of their savings account(s) was \$95K. These funds will help the families continue down the road of economic self-sufficiency. Congratulations to our families!

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES**

### **Homeless Preference Program Support**

Many Tucsonans who stayed at the City's Hotel Shelter Service for those experiencing homelessness in 2020 were permanently housed in public housing thanks to the Homeless Preference Program. In 2021, HCD allocated staff to help support these residents find resources and services as they have made the transition.



*Team members from ASU OCHER Preparing for the Winter Blanket and Clothing Drive at Tucson House*

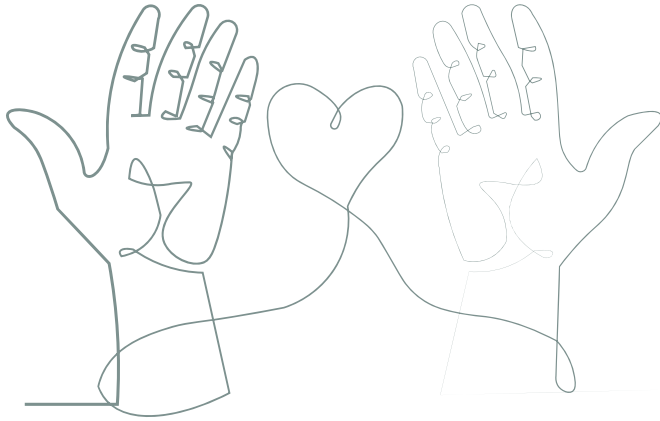
### **ConnectHome**

As a ConnectHomeUSA participant through HUD, HCD is coordinating increased access to affordable internet service, devices, and digital literacy training among public housing residents, including a partnership with the Pima County Public Library to provide a customized digital literacy curriculum.



*The City of Tucson, ASU Office of Community Health Engagement and Resiliency (OCHER), and volunteers from the University of Arizona's College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture (CAPLA) distributed tablets with two years of data to Tucson House residents in October*





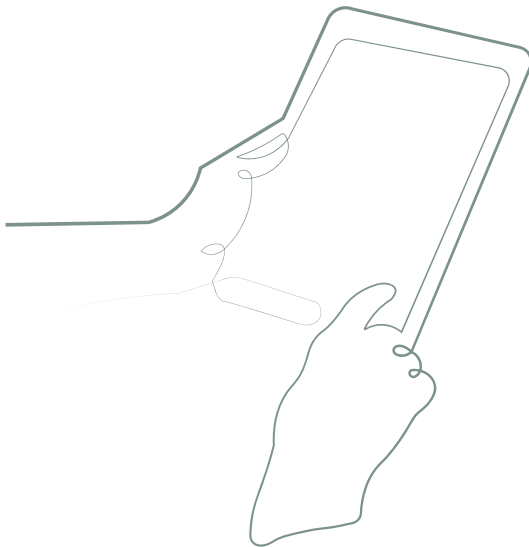
**127**

**residents received support  
in 2021**



**2,062**

**total resources provided to HPP  
residents, including food boxes,  
clothing, household supplies,  
and connections to services**



**200+**

**tablets distributed to  
Tucson House residents**

# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



Looking forward to 2022, implementation of the HAST plan will focus on the development and preservation of new housing units. In 2021, City funding commitments helped facilitate the following affordable housing projects featured on the next page.



*Newport at Amphi, Photo by: Enzo Photography*

## Partnerships to Build Capacity

In 2021, HCD conducted a nationally competitive process to hire a co-developer partner to redevelop Tucson House as part of our Thrive in the 05 / Choice Neighborhoods work. Gorman & Co will work with HCD to rehabilitate the 408 units of public housing at Tucson House on Oracle Road and other projects related to the housing strategy in the Thrive in the 05 Transformation Plan.



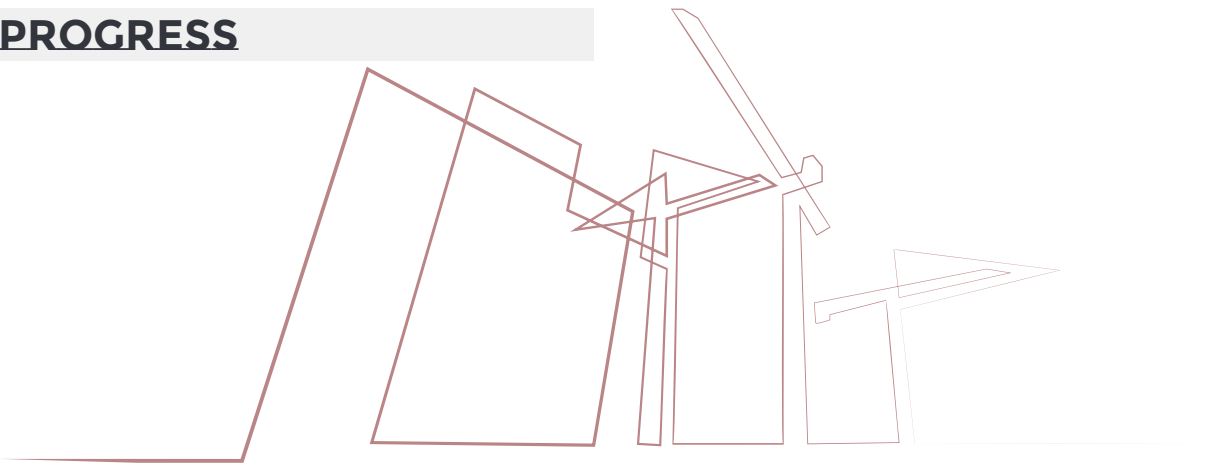
**127**

**new units at Alborada Apartments  
(18 funded with HOME)**

**40**

**new units at Newport at  
Amphi (4 funded with HOME)**

**IN PROGRESS**



**119**

**new units at Gateway  
Apartments expected in 2024  
(18 HOME units)**

**96**

**new units at Talavera  
Apartments in 2022  
(11 HOME units)**

**107**

**new units at Rio Mercado  
coming in 2022  
(17 HOME units)**

## **ZONING FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

In 2021, HCD collaborated with the Planning and Development Services Department (PDSD) on two zoning projects to help facilitate more housing development:

### **Casitas**

In fall 2021, following a year of public engagement, Mayor and Council adopted an amendment to the Unified Development Code to allow [Accessory Dwelling Units](#) (ADUs) or casitas on residential lots in Tucson.

### **LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022...**

HCD will continue to build its internal capacity to build affordable housing by hiring a Housing Development Manager, further exploring a development arm, and beginning development activity on several city-owned parcels.

An ADU is an independent housing unit with its own kitchen, bathroom, living and sleeping space. These units are typically under 1,000-square-feet and are accessory to a primary residence.



*Casita, a type of Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) commonly found in Tucson*



## Sunshine Mile Overlay District

In 2021, Mayor and Council adopted a zoning overlay district along the “Sunshine Mile” along Broadway Blvd between Euclid and Country Club. The primary purpose of the [Sunshine Mile District](#) is to support economic vitality along a multi-modal transportation corridor that forwards community values, embraces its historic features, and enhances the character of the Sunshine Mile. The recently approved overlay includes an affordable housing incentive called a “density bonus.”



*The Sunshine Mile Overlay includes the first affordable housing density bonus incentive in Tucson*



# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

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 2022. Here is a sneak peek at a few of our goals for the upcoming year:

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Hire a Housing Development Manager to oversee HCD development work
- Create nonprofit for housing development and submit LIHTC application
- Select developer and plans for three infill development projects on City-owned land
- Draft plan for phased acquisition and development of new affordable housing

## HOUSING

- Achieve 98% vacancy Public Housing rate and 100% HCV utilization rate
- Open Waitlist for HCV and Public Housing
- Implement document upload functionality for landlord and participant paperwork
- Obtain Board of Commissioners approval of Public Housing Repositioning Plan

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Commit HOME ARP funding to housing projects: \$1.5M to affordable rental, \$3.5M for supportive services in non-congregate shelters, \$1M for renovation and service expansion of Emerge domestic abuse shelter.
- Complete three sales of South Park Villa homes
- Launch P-CHIP call for projects in fall 2022

## **HOUSING FIRST**

- Open new City sites to provide shelter and bridge housing
- Issue Project Based Voucher RFP for permanent supportive housing project

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- Hire a Public Information Officer / Community Engagement Coordinator
- Engage Thrive in the 05 residents, neighborhood ambassadors, and community partners in implementing 9 Action Activities projects
- Launch a new “Thrive Zone” effort