

The Future We Deserve



Message From Our Board Chair

“A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more.”

-Rosabeth Moss Kanter

There have been few moments in our history where the future feels as palpable and inevitable as it does today. Our new certainty is growth. Central Ohio is on a flourishing path to grow our economy and grow influence in the world. With that, we will grow our population and continue to blossom into a world-class metropolis.



BOB BITZENHOFER
AHACO Board Chair

**Vice President for
Planning & Development,
Columbus Metropolitan
Housing Authority**

As a million more residents flow into our region - 45 new families every single day! - we have a crucial choice to make. We can choose to ignore the realities of this future, refusing to resolve our mounting housing needs, allowing poverty to grow. Inequity will spread and our quality of life will suffer. Our latest research shows the stark result of inaction: another 20,000 of our neighbors will fall into severe housing instability. Economists further warn that failing to meet these housing needs will hinder employment growth and hamper the economy.

Or, we can meet the momentum of the moment with action and we can be the first community to not just grow, but to thrive, through housing. We can unlock the future that Central Ohio deserves, one in which we remain the ‘biggest small town in America,’ where our kids can grow up to do better than us, where everyone has a fair shot at the American dream, and where we respect and protect even the most vulnerable amongst us.

I am proud to share that the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio’s 2024-2026 Strategic Plan is the roadmap that ushers in this kind of security and prosperity. We invite you to join us in this march to the future that we deserve.

AHACO is a nonprofit organization that uses data, research, education, and advocacy to close Central Ohio's housing gaps.

We are guided by the expertise and experience of our members who compose the spectrum of housing services including homeless advocates, developers, property owners, home-ownership proponents, lenders, and the philanthropic community. And we are lifted up by the public-private partnerships that unlock housing solutions.

We do this because housing affordability is the key to unlocking security and prosperity for our people and our region.

OUR PURPOSE & PASSION

OUR VALUES

CONFIDENT. We understand that affordable housing is a solvable puzzle and we remain positive while advancing practical solutions.

EMPIRICAL. We are guided by data, research, and the evidence of lived experiences.

ENGAGING. We find success in allyship and collaboration with our community, housing stakeholders, media leaders, and public officials.

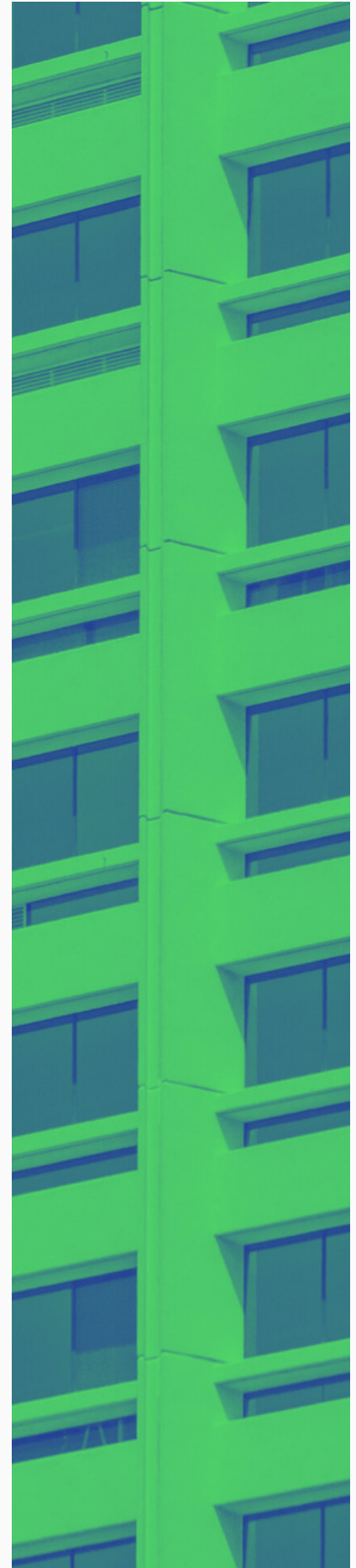
EQUITABLE. We promote fairness, equity, and justice in our housing system.

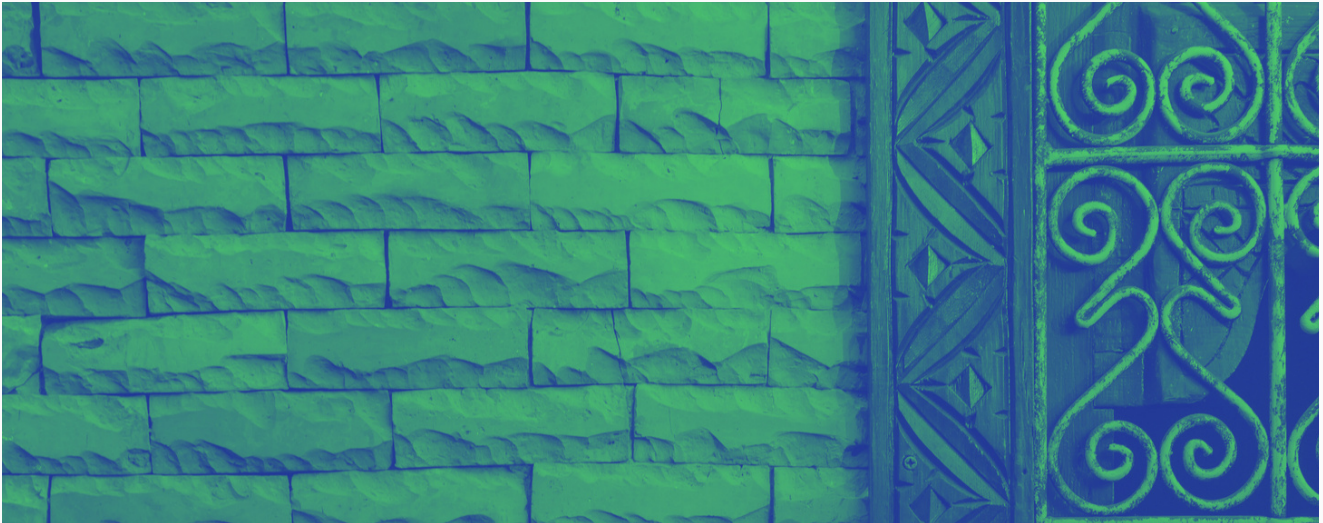
FOCUSED. We know that housing is the best platform for individual and regional success, and we use that foundation as our guide.

FORWARD THINKING. We have long recognized the value of affordable housing and we will continue to push critical needs and big ideas to the forefront of debate.

PERSONAL. We see that change requires empathy and understanding which can only be achieved by telling the real life story of housing's impact and challenges.

IN SOLIDARITY. We are champions of all low- and moderate-income residents regardless of the types of barriers that inhibit their housing stability.





Building This Plan

AHACO leads through consensus, collaboration, and positive iteration. The development and adoption of this strategic plan is a reflection of that commitment.

The activities that culminated in this plan included Central Ohio stakeholder meetings conducted by the AHACO Board Chair, community leader meetings conducted by the Executive Director, a Strategic Advisory Council guided discussion, a membership survey assessing the impact of past activities, a professionally facilitated Member planning retreat, and the aggregation and presentation of a plan-end report debriefing successes and challenges incurred during the 2021-2023 plan years. This information was synthesized into a Strategic Plan and accompanying Implementation Model, which the full membership review and approved by consensus vote on November 29, 2023. The Board of Directors expresses their thanks to all the partnership who contributed to this important work.

THE PLAN

AHACO'S 2024-2026 ACTION PILLARS

Ensure Housing Development is Optimized to Central Ohio's Affordability Needs

Expand funding tools to develop affordable homes for renters, including for people with the lowest incomes

Expand funding tools to develop affordable homes for homeowners

Advance policies that facilitate affordable housing development

Stabilize Renter Households with Short-Term Rental Assistance and Supportive Services for Security & Economic Mobility

Expand funding for eviction prevention and rapid rehousing

Expand funding tools for targeted, time-limited rent assistance and non-profit, sponsor-based rent assistance

Advance policies that stabilize renter households and promote economic mobility

Promote Wealth-Building and Community Stability Through Obtainable and Retainable Homeownership

Expand funding tools for homeownership purchase, repair, modification, and improvement

Advance policies that expand and preserve homeownership to reduce wealth and equity gaps



Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in Our Work and Workplaces

Advance just policies that are informed by history, influenced by those we serve, and crafted with racial and gender equity lenses.

Approach internal processes, including purchasing and hiring decisions, with racial and gender equity lenses. Equip member organizations with tools and resources to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in their internal operations.

Solidify AHACO's Reputation as a Strong, Trusted, and Reliable Authority in the Housing Space

Promote collaboration among members and peers.

Share impactful and accessible information, research, and resources with the community freely.

Selected Priorities

The AHACO Implementation Model operationalizes the Strategic Plan through evolving policy priorities and strategies.

The following key priorities are samples from the AHACO 2024-2026 Implementation Model that illustrate some of the most impactful and collaborative ways the Central Ohio region can tackle its housing needs under each of the strategic pillars.

01 **Growth: Modernizing Land Use Practices**

Central Ohio's zoning and land use laws are built following inclusive community engagement, are justice-oriented, and meet current housing needs as informed by research and planning.

02 **Ownership: Unlocking Equitable Homeownership**

CONVERGENCE Columbus is a broad and respected coalition with efficient and effective administrative leadership.

03 **Stability: Building the Next Bridge**

A new program or intervention is grown in Central Ohio that promotes economic mobility through housing and cross-sector supports.

04 **Equity: Supporting a Diverse Housing Workforce**

Members feel supported in their efforts to recruit and retain a talented and diverse workforce necessary to meet the region's housing needs.

05 **Community: Lifting Up Local Voices**

Central Ohio residents can learn and grow their housing skills in a collaborative and supported environment to better serve as local advocates.



OUR ACTIVITIES & TOOLS

Research. We conduct original research, leveraging the resources and experiences of our members, and aggregate, localize, and interpret available data and literature and apply it to the Central Ohio landscape.

Educate. We convert our research and knowledge into publicly consumable materials that are engaging and enlightening. We use this platform to lift up powerful stories and give audience to those with unique insights into the housing affordability atmosphere.

Thought Leadership. We support creative thinking, authentic and deep community engagement, and ideation that is not bounded by existing models of success. Our work must inspire, invest, and equip our allies with the skills and confidence to overcome the challenges before us.

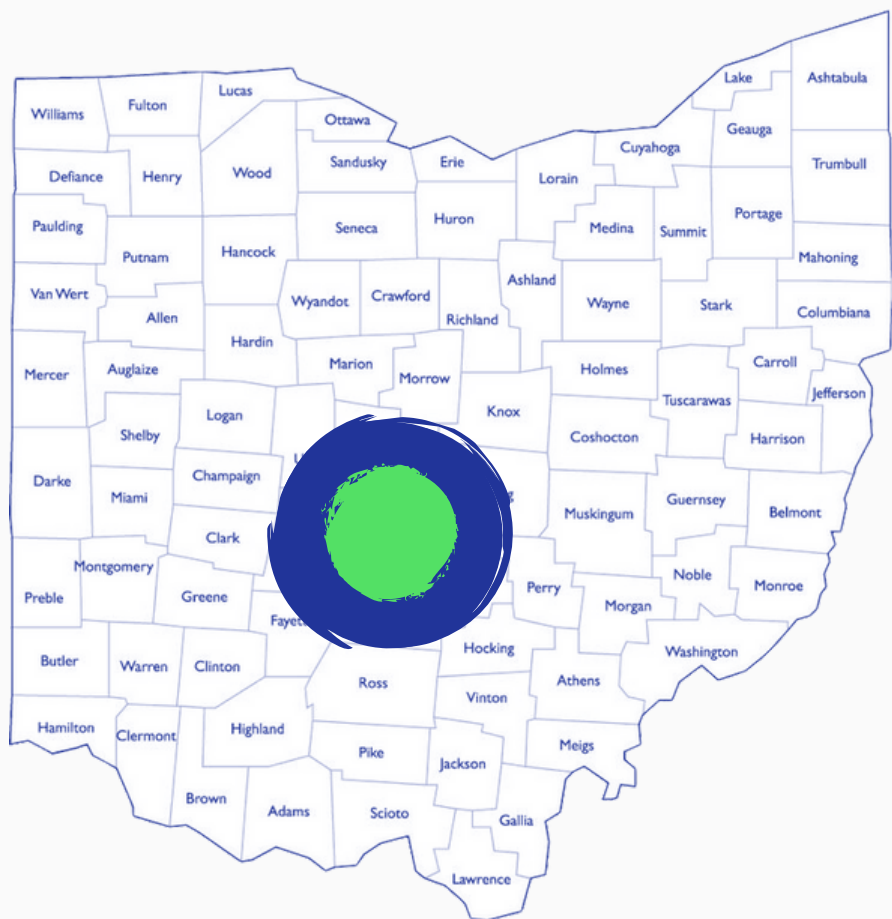
Convene. We connect people across professions and backgrounds to scrupulously understand affordable housing intricacies and activate the power of group dynamics for comprehensive problem-solving.

Advocate. We deploy all these tools to inform policymakers of Franklin County's housing affordability needs and collaborate with industry and government leaders to solidify our region's position as an innovator in housing justice. Together, we can eliminate the housing gap.

The Central Ohio Region

AHACO is committed to promoting housing access throughout the Central Ohio region, covering an eleven-county region.

As a young organization, AHACO originally concentrated most activities inside Franklin County. We continue to build upon that foundation but recognize the regional collaboration that is needed for success. We are proud to support, provide allyship, and serve as thought-partners with housing advocates and other stakeholders in communities throughout our engagement area, which includes the counties of Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, and Union.





MISSION

AHACO's purpose is to ensure that households in Central Ohio with lower incomes have a safe, decent, affordable home.

VISION

In 2017, Franklin County documented a 54,000 household affordability gap. We envision halving that by 2027 and continuing progress until every Central Ohioan can access dignified, affordable housing.

2024 MEMBERS

Beacon 360 Management
Columbus Housing Enterprise
Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority
Columbus Urban League
Community Development for All People
Community Housing Network
Community Shelter Board
Creative Housing
Fairfield Homes
Finance Fund
Franklinton Development Association
Habitat for Humanity - MidOhio
Home for Families
Homeport
Homes on the Hill
Huckleberry House
Impact Community Action
Jewish Family Services
Legal Aid Society of Southeast & Central Ohio

National Affordable Housing Trust
National Church Residences
Nationwide Children's Hospital
NRP Group
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
PACT
Preservation of Affordable Housing
Renter Mentor
RISE Center
Star House
TFG Housing Resources
The Columbus Foundation
The Community Builders
The Refuge
United Way of Central Ohio
Wallick Communities
Woda Cooper Companies
YMCA of Central Ohio
YWCA Columbus

2024 ADVISORS

Affordable Housing Trust
American Electric Power Foundation
AT&T
Charter Communications
EMH&T
Fifth Third Bank
Health Impact Ohio
Huntington National Bank
I&D Consulting
JPMorgan Chase

Mortgage Bankers Association
Nationwide Foundation
Park National Bank
PNC Bank
RiverHills Bank
The Robert Weiler Company
Sawmill Road Management
Tidwell Group
United Way of Central Ohio