Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority investing more than $26.3 million to protect and preserve a combined total of 165 apartments at four nonprofit-owned Central Ohio affordable housing communities through at least 2032

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) announced today its Board of Commissioners has approved more than $26.3 million in contract extensions with the non-profit owners of four affordable housing communities in Central Ohio that ensures a combined total of 165 apartments will remain affordable to low-wage-earning renters, senior citizens and people with disabilities through at least the next 10 years.

“The Board’s decision should provide peace of mind to the residents of these four communities that they will have a place to call home that accommodates their household budget for the foreseeable future,” said CMHA Commissioner Fred Ransier.

“Extending the lifespan of these communities as affordable housing means that CMHA will continue to meet the resident’s affordable housing needs,” Ransier said.

The CMHA Board’s decision will help low- and fixed-income renters in Central Ohio who rely on federal Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) to help pay for their monthly housing costs, particularly people with disabilities. PBVs are issued to public housing authorities such as CMHA through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The vouchers are attached to specific units in a specific building or community, whose landlord contracts with the state or local public housing agency to rent to families and individuals with low incomes and disabilities.

For elderly or disabled tenants, PBVs have the advantage of offering more services closer to hand because a higher percentage of residents in the apartment building have similar needs, which enables service providers to work more efficiently.

“Our aim is for CMHA to help make it possible for the families and residents who work, live and raise families in Central Ohio to be able to actually afford to live here,” said CMHA President and CEO Charles Hillman. “When people in Greater Columbus can afford to live and work in the same community, it reduces commuter traffic, fuels local business investment, and improves employer’s recruitment and retention of talented, skilled employees.”

The pacts approved by the CMHA Board include:

- **East Fifth Avenue**, which is owned by the nonprofit Community Housing Network and has 19 one-bedroom units for households tailored to people with disabilities, including comprehensive support services. This community will receive a 10-year extension on its Project-Based Voucher (PBV) contract worth approximately $6.45 million.
• **Chantry Place**, a 50-unit community owned by **National Church Residences** and has a mix of 40 one-bedroom, five two-bedroom, and five three-bedroom apartments with comprehensive support services for people with disabilities. This community will receive a 10-year extension on their PBV contract worth approximately $5.9 million.

• **Berwyn East Place** is an 88-unit community owned by National Church Residences that was awarded 55 project-based vouchers worth approximately $12 million to continue providing affordable housing and permanent support services through 2042.

• **Hamilton Annex Homes** is an 8-unit community operated by **Wallick Communities** that was awarded eight project-based vouchers worth approximately $1.96 million that will provide affordable housing and permanent supportive housing services to the central Ohio community through 2042.

In addition, CMHA announced today two new agreements that were approved by the CMHA Board of Commissioners during its April 27 meeting:

• CMHA will provide a $300,000 grant to the **Franklin County Land Bank** to support the redevelopment of **The Edna Building** on the city’s Near East Side in the King-Lincoln Bronzeville neighborhood. This building housed the former Fireside Mutual Aid Association, an insurance company for Black residents. The building later housed the African American newspaper the Ohio Sentinel, as well as the Dukes and Duchesses, a private upscale social club for African Americans. The redevelopment effort is included in the **Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT)** initiative that is led by CMHA in tandem with **The Ohio State University** and the **City of Columbus**. The partners’ task is to undertake a community-based process to develop the **Blueprint for Community Investment**, a plan to revitalize Near East Side neighborhoods. The Near East Side PACT neighborhood boundaries are: I-71 on the West; I-670 on the North; E. Broad Street on the South; and Woodland Avenue on the East.

• Wallick Communities will become the largest professional property management firm in CMHA’s affordable housing portfolio through a new $1.45 million contract. Wallick will provide professional property management services for a combined total of more than 500 apartments at **Sawyer Manor** and **Trevitt Heights**, 940 Caldwell Place in Columbus; **The Meadows**, 4855 Pintail Creek Dr., Canal Winchester; **Jenkins Terrace**, 1100 E. Broad St. in Columbus; and, **Worley Terrace**, 99 South Central Ave. in West Columbus. The CMHA contract with Wallick is for two years and includes the option for CMHA to renew the agreement annually for an additional three consecutive years.

CMHA data reflects a well-documented shortage of affordable housing in Central Ohio. Only 29 affordable housing units are available for every 100 extremely low-income households in the Columbus metropolitan statistical area. In Franklin County, roughly 54,000 families spend more than half of their income on housing.

The trend is expected to continue. In 2021, the hourly wage needed in Franklin County to afford the average two-bedroom apartment was $19.83, up 24% in five years, according to the **Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio**. Ohio’s minimum wage, which was just raised in January 2022, is $9.30.

Approximately 500,000 single adults and heads of households in the U.S. who used homeless shelters over the course of a year reported having a disability, according to data from the **Annual Homeless Assessment Report**.
“Finding affordable housing is a challenge in Central Ohio and across the U.S., but it’s especially difficult for low-income people with a disability,” said Wallick Communities CEO Amy Albery. “The risk of homelessness can be a real threat when quality, affordable housing is difficult to access, so we are proud and excited to continue working with CMHA to help improve the quality of life for our region’s hard-working and most vulnerable citizens.”

For more information, visit cmhanet.com.

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**About CMHA:** CMHA helps people access affordable housing through collaborative partnerships, promotes neighborhood revitalization and assists residents in accessing needed social services. CMHA has more than doubled its portfolio of housing over the last five years. It owns over 4,500 units of affordable housing and through its Housing Choice Voucher and Project-Based Rental Assistance Programs provides rental assistance to nearly 250,000 Ohio and Washington, D.C., residents. Approximately 71% of the units in the CMHA portfolio are affordable to renters making 80% AMI or less.