



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2028



## **MISSION**

PROVIDE QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AS A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR ALL TO THRIVE.

## **VISION**

BE THE LEADER IN PROVIDING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE BY LEVERAGING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS.

# THE PLAN | OVERVIEW & PROCESS

In 2022, Columbia Housing (CH) embarked upon a journey to create a five (5) year Strategic Plan that would establish a framework for the preservation and development of new, quality, affordable housing in the City of Columbia and throughout the Midlands. After a solicitation for qualified strategic planning consulting firms, CH entered into an agreement with the Bronner Group, LLC (BRONNER).

BRONNER was established in 1987, and is a multi-disciplined firm focused exclusively on providing strategy, transformation, and accountability services to government. In partnership with CH, BRONNER developed this Strategic Plan (the Plan) which builds upon:

- CH's organizational strengths and successes to support organizational growth, quality affordable housing, and contribute to the prosperity of the City of Columbia and Richland County;
- Yearly milestones which identify, communicate, and monitor progress of key priorities to assist in the advancement of the Strategic Plan; and,
- Organizational priorities aligned with CH's stakeholders.

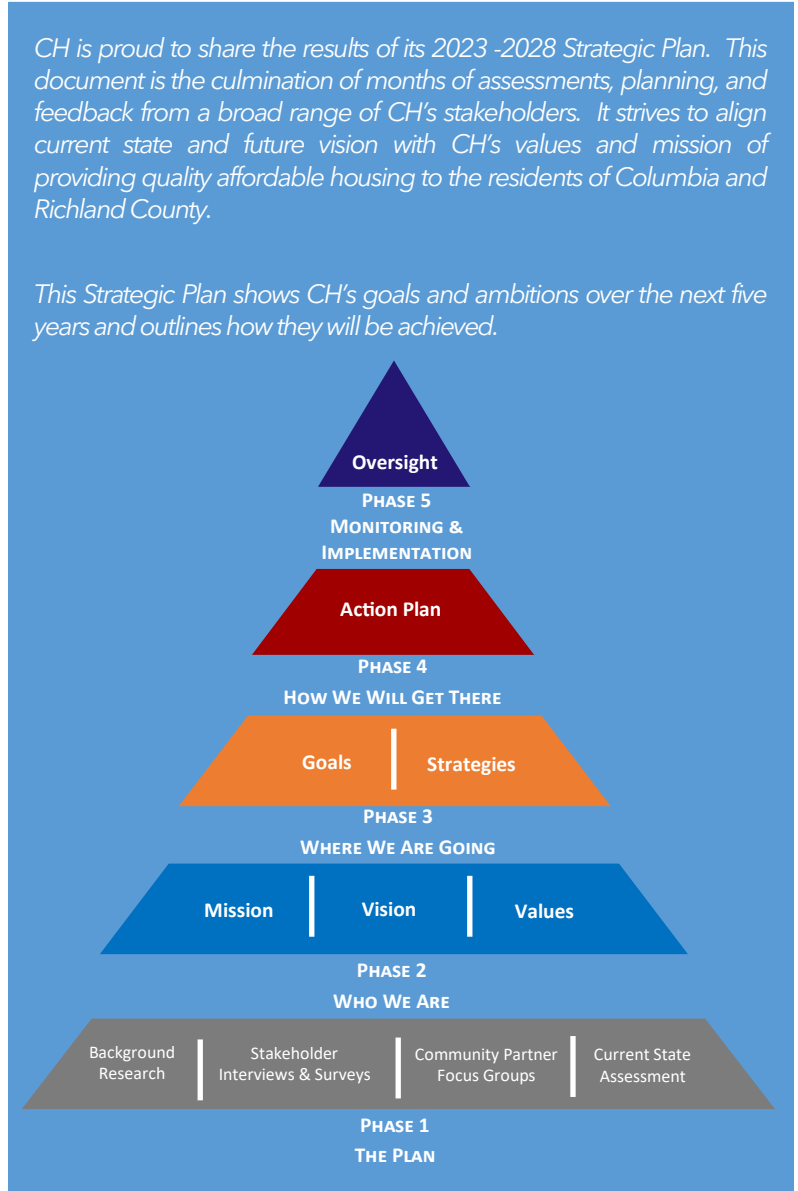
## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Plan was developed through five phases:

1. BRONNER conducted background research on local market conditions, conducted surveys and interviews with community partners and other stakeholders as well completing a Current State Assessment for CH.
2. BRONNER facilitated a Vision Setting Retreat with Board members and the Chief Executive Officer in which key issues related to mission, vision, goals, and strategies were discussed.
3. The mission, vision, and goals devised by the Board of Commissioners for review and feedback from the Executive Leadership Team.
4. The Executive Leadership Team further refined the strategies and developed associated action items that will be implemented.
5. A dashboard and toolkit were created to ensure that all benchmarks are met and the goals remain on track for accomplishment.

CH is proud to share the results of its 2023 -2028 Strategic Plan. This document is the culmination of months of assessments, planning, and feedback from a broad range of CH's stakeholders. It strives to align current state and future vision with CH's values and mission of providing quality affordable housing to the residents of Columbia and Richland County.

This Strategic Plan shows CH's goals and ambitions over the next five years and outlines how they will be achieved.



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS & SURVEYS

Key stakeholder groups were surveyed between August 9 - August 20, 2022. Stakeholders (CH Board of Commissioners, Senior Leadership Team Members and Community/City Government Partners) were also engaged via interviews.

**Employee Surveys**  
87 Responses

**Resident & HCV Participant Surveys**  
280 Responses

**Vendor Surveys**  
15 Responses

**Landlord Surveys**  
84 Responses

**Stakeholder Interviews**  
11 Interviews

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Columbia Housing has proudly served the citizens of the City of Columbia and Richland County in the Midlands of South Carolina since 1934.



# INTRODUCTION | BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## **ERNEST CROMARTIE, III** **COLUMBIA HOUSING BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Columbia Housing has adopted a practical plan for the coming years to guide its development and strengthen community partnerships. CH's Strategic Plan was designed through a collaborative process of meetings, discussions and retreats which prized open communication and coordination across stakeholders and departments.

The agency's focus is guided by extensive feedback from all stakeholders, including residents and participants, employees, board members, department leadership, and outside partners. CH strives to implement CH's Strategic Plan reflecting the same approach and values that informed its creation; further emphasizing strong relationships, collaboration, accountability, and pragmatic decision making.

The Board of Commissioners is deeply committed to our Mission and Vision and the residents we serve. We appreciate the time you are taking to learn more about our goals and plans to achieve them.



Ernest Cromartie, III  
Chairman

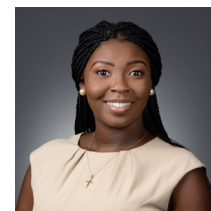
## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

A seven-person Board of Commissioners authorized by laws of the State of South Carolina and appointed by Columbia City Columbia and the Mayor, is responsible for; governance of the authority, oversight responsibilities, fiduciary obligations, and financial viability.

Commissioners must be aware of and follow federal, state and local laws and housing regulations. The leadership and service of an involved and committed Board of Commissioners are essential for meeting the housing needs of low-income citizens.

The Board of Commissioners meet monthly every 3rd Thursday and hold Committee meetings the week prior to the regular meeting. The Board is led by a Chair and Vice-Chair elected at their annual meeting, typically held in January.

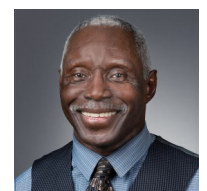
The Board of Commissioners for CH also serve on the Boards of CH's non-profit affiliates; Columbia Housing Authority Developments, Inc. (CHAD) and the South Carolina Affordable Housing Initiative (SCAHI).



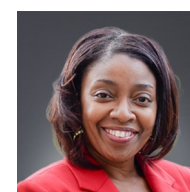
Vice Chair  
Kara Simmons



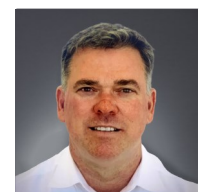
Commissioner  
James Chatfield



Commissioner  
George Green



Commissioner  
Selena Pickens



Commissioner  
Kevin Werner

# INTRODUCTION | CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE



Yvonda A. Bean  
Chief Executive Officer

## YVONDA A. BEAN

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COLUMBIA HOUSING

We are elated to share CH's Strategic Plan, as it provides the roadmap necessary for carrying out our mission. As we reimagine the future of CH, we hope that readers will find our Strategic Plan reflective of our agency's commitment to communities and families we serve.

It's also important for our readers to know that we are dedicated to connecting the families we serve to much needed resources, and we do that through strategic alliances. It truly takes a collaborative approach to solving complex challenges and we are grateful to have a plethora of partnerships that help us meet the wholistic needs of the families we serve. Fortunately, the **#PowerOfPartnerships** has proven impactful.

Housing is the foundation that drives an individual's ability to lead a healthy and productive lifestyle, and CH remains committed to providing quality and affordable housing options for all.

We invite you to learn more about these plans and to join us in these efforts in the coming years ahead. In this Strategic Plan, we share who we are as CH and lay out the path to create sustainable communities and future affordable housing development activity.

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Executive Leadership Team played an essential role in the creation of this Strategic Plan. Their Role will facilitate a strong implementation process.

The CH Executive Leadership Team has both the content expertise and years of leadership experience to carry the Plan to fruition and lead the agency forward with the help of our dedicated staff members.

*The Strategic Plan focuses on five major goals:*

1. **Implementing an assets repositioning strategy** for properties that fosters quality, affordable housing options for the citizens of Columbia and Richland County.
2. **Expanding resources and services** that enhance quality of life opportunities for our residents and program participants.
3. **Using CH's communications** medium to increase awareness of programs and services.
4. **Maintaining an Organization of Excellence** as the premier leader of affordable housing with the City of Columbia and Richland County.
5. **Ensuring the future viability** of CH to continue to meet the housing demands.

- **LaQuile Bracey**  
CH Cares Coordinator
- **Nathan Childs**  
Vice President of Information Technology
- **Cynthia Gore**  
Vice President of Human Resources
- **Barry Hall**  
Chief Operating Officer
- **Cynthia Hardy**  
Senior Vice President of Communications
- **Cindi Herrera**  
Chief Development Officer
- **Lee McRoberts**  
Chief of Staff
- **LaToya Nix**  
Senior Vice President of Property Management & Maintenance
- **Marisa Stanley**  
Chief Financial Officer
- **Taleshia Stewart**  
Senior Vice President of Resident & Strategic Initiatives
- **Candice Tollison**  
Vice President of Housing Choice Voucher
- **Officer Damian White**  
Community Safety Manager

# INTRODUCTION | OUR RESIDENTS

CH's mission is to provide quality, affordable housing opportunities as a strong foundation for all to thrive. CH is committed to being a premier leader of housing by providing housing opportunities it owns or manages, as well as by providing rental assistance to families pursuing housing opportunities in the private housing market.

## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

CH provides housing for over 16,000 low-income individuals and families throughout the City of Columbia and Richland County. While CH provides housing first, it hopes readers will also appreciate the value placed on its partners in being able to address the complex needs of the families served.

Harnessing the strengths and abilities of CH's partners is one of the most strategic ways CH has tapped into immeasurable public and private resources, services, and opportunities that might not be otherwise accessible to its residents.

*"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals."*  
- Idowu Koyenikan

CH celebrates the valued Community Partners who provide Health Care, Child Care, Career Development and many other valuable resources who make the lives of others better every day!

## The Power of Partnerships

WE are better together! 





# INTRODUCTION | OUR VISION & VALUES

CH has spent much of the past few years responding to the urgent needs of our residents and workforce, navigating through uncertain experiences and unprecedented challenges. We are proud of the work our employees and partners have done to connect our residents to Covid-19 vaccines, improve our properties, and provide shelter to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

As the leader in providing affordable housing to the City of Columbia, CH provides vital infrastructure. This infrastructure provides our residents stability, allowing them to focus less on meeting basic needs and more on what they need to thrive.

We envision a more equitable and inclusive Columbia in which everyone has a place to call home, and CH is committed to doing its part to bring this vision to reality. It will take the commitment of our whole ecosystem to foster sustainable change as there is much work to do in Columbia.



Reimagining CH is ensuring our vision becomes a reality. CH's reality will manifest through the application of six core values and principles in our decision making and execution of our work.

**Our staff cares deeply for CH's mission and residents and are committed to realizing our strategic goals in the next five years guided by the following:**

- **Collaboration and community involvement**
- **Bridging equity gaps and creating inclusive environments**
- **Development that centers on opportunities that support perpetual and sustained affordability**
- **Innovation and creativity in problem-solving**
- **Honest, empathetic, and frequent communication**

1. **We** believe that all individuals, no matter what their background or life circumstances, have the right to safe, quality, affordable housing.
2. **We** will provide the highest quality housing, complemented by supportive services and excellent property management.
3. **We** will expand individual and community capacity by engaging local minorities, women, and small business enterprises in all development efforts.
4. **We** believe that collaborations and partnerships with community stakeholders will enable us to further enhance our work.
5. **We** will engage and develop our employees, enhancing their knowledge, growth and understanding so that they may better serve the citizens of Columbia and Richland County.
6. **We** are stewards of limited resources and will use our resources to thoughtfully develop properties and programs that meet immediate and long-term needs to achieve maximum impact.

# WHERE WE'RE GOING | GOALS

## The Strategic Plan contains five goals.

1. **Housing:** Implement repositioning strategy for properties to provide quality affordable housing to the citizens of Columbia and Richland County.
2. **People:** Expanding resources and services that enhance quality of life opportunities for our residents and program participants.
3. **Communication:** Using CH's communications medium to increase awareness of programs and services.
4. **Organizational Excellence:** Maintaining an Organization of Excellence as the premier leader of affordable housing with the City of Columbia and Richland County.
5. **Fiscal Stability:** Ensuring the future viability of CH to continue to meet the housing demands.

### GOAL 1: IMPLEMENT REPOSITIONING STRATEGY FOR COLUMBIA HOUSING PROPERTIES TO PROVIDE QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO THE CITIZENS OF COLUMBIA AND RICHLAND COUNTY.

#### STRATEGIES

- Maintain ownership and or control to the greatest extent possible and exercise Right of First Refusal [ROFR] when appropriate.
- Obtain financing for repositioning of all current CH properties.
- Implement new development strategies to expand the supply of quality affordable housing.
- Maximize the use of project based vouchers as a development tool for repositioning.
- Develop a RAD Resident Handbook.

COMING SOON—*The Haven at Palmer Pointe*—OPENING SUMMER 2024



### GOAL 2: EXPANDING RESOURCES AND SERVICES THAT ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.



#### STRATEGIES

- Increase self-sufficiency by expanding education, counseling, and financial literacy services.
- Identify solutions to fill gaps in services for residents and program participants
- Expand homeownership opportunities through implementation of lease purchase program and obtain HUD approved housing counseling designation.



# WHERE WE'RE GOING | GOALS

## GOAL 3: USING CH'S COMMUNICATIONS MEDIUM TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

### STRATEGIES

- Enrich relationships with federal, state, county, and city officials/stakeholders.
- Control the narrative and continue to tell our own stories via social media.
- Increase the number of partners engaged with CH that can assist and help fulfill our vision.
- Conduct surveys with residents and program participants.
- Offer and identify employment opportunities for residents and program participants.
- Facilitate opportunities for CH commissioners to engage in existing resident activities and conduct board of commissioners' meetings at CH developments.



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## GOAL 4: MAINTAINING AN ORGANIZATION OF EXCELLENCE AS THE PREMIER LEADER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH THE CITY OF COLUMBIA



### STRATEGIES

- Attract and retain talent through market competitiveness to support long-term growth and sustainability.
- Maintain IT infrastructure.
- Increase both programmatic and internal operational efficiencies.
- Assess and improve Customer Service.
- Maintain fiscal solvency.

## GOAL 5: ENSURING THE FUTURE VIABILITY OF CH TO CONTINUE TO MEET THE HOUSING DEMANDS.

### STRATEGIES

- Build property management expertise to facilitate CH's self-management in compliance with investor/lender.
- Assess, identify, and evaluate options for maintaining physical conditions of properties (via internal staff, outsourcing [3rd party] or a combination of the two).
- Maintain existing funding and explore/pursue new funding opportunities to support the organization.



## How We'll Get There | MONITORING & IMPLEMENTATION

The Strategic Plan will be implemented over the next 5 years (2023-2028). CH will utilize a "Progress-to-Goal" method including monthly progress reports, quarterly project team check-ins, and annual SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis.

Implementation of CH's Strategic Plan will be carried out over the next five years (July 1, 2023—June 30, 2028). These efforts will be spearheaded by the Chief Executive Officer with support from CH employees, and oversight by the CH Board of Commissioners.

**Monthly** – The CH Executive Leadership Team will provide a performance report detailing the status of the CH's Five strategic goals. The CEO will meet with the Executive Leadership Team to discuss performance and ensure that the actions are aligned with the Plan's goals and strategies.

**Quarterly** – The CEO will provide an update on the progress of the Plan to the CH Board of Commissioners.

**Annually** – At the Annual CH Board of Commissioners meeting, usually held in January, the Executive Leadership Team will present an update on the progress of the Plan, using the SWOT model.

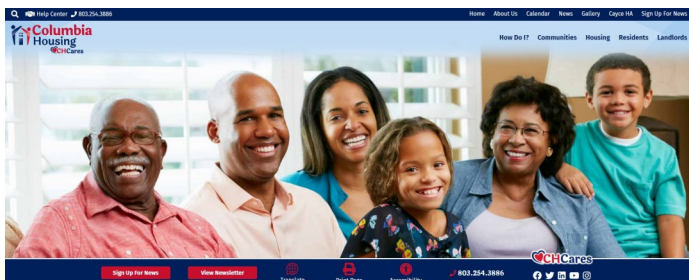
*The above implementation plan will enable CH to successfully realize its goals of providing quality affordable housing, enhancing quality of life opportunities for residents and program participants, using communication to increase awareness of the programs and services available, maintaining an Organization of Excellence, and ensuring the future fiscal stability of Columbia Housing.*

### Staying in Touch

Visit our website [www.columbiahousing.org](http://www.columbiahousing.org) and

**Subscribe to News** to receive regular updates on Columbia Housing.

Check out our newsletter **"THIS is Columbia Housing"** to read more about Resident Success Stories, Events and Partnership Wins!



We also invite you to join us on our social media outlets



CH's 2023–2028 Strategic Plan is more than a report. It is a living, breathing plan that needs your support. Help us reach our goals as we reimagine Columbia Housing.



# How We'll Get There | A CH Thank You

To our residents, partners, stakeholders, CH staff, Leadership Team, and the Board of Commissioners:

Thank you for your tangible & intangible contributions to CH.

This strategic planning process could not have occurred without your engagement, enthusiasm, and participation throughout this endeavor. CH looks forward to serving the community members of Columbia through the Plan's proposed initiatives.

THIS is Columbia Housing!





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