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Director

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Dr. Cody Price
9% Housing Tax Credit Section Chief
Ohio Housing Finance Agency
2600 Corporate Drive, Suite 300
Columbus, Ohio 43231

Re: City of Columbus Response to the 2026 Qualified Allocation Plan

Dear Dr. Price:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the City of Columbus comments on the draft 2026 Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). For more than two decades, the Department of Development has partnered with for profit and nonprofit developers to deliver high-quality affordable rental housing. Today, that work continues through project financing and policy collaboration, including the transition of LIHTC properties to long-term resident ownership.

Housing is a central priority for the City of Columbus and an essential component of regional growth and prosperity. We have consistently leveraged Low Income Housing Tax Credit equity with local HOME and Capital funds, along with other public and private sources. Mayor Andrew J. Ginther has made housing a top citywide priority, and Columbus voters have repeatedly affirmed their support by approving bond packages dedicated to affordable housing.

Columbus is the fastest growing region in Ohio, and this growth brings an urgent need to expand and preserve affordable housing. In 2022, Mayor Ginther launched the Columbus Housing Strategy, led by Deputy Director of Housing Strategies Erin Prosser, to guide our work under four pillars: Build, invest, preserve and include. Since its launch, the city has committed more than \$26.2 million in HOME funds and \$26.5 million in capital funds — leveraging approximately \$63 million to create or preserve 1,720 affordable rental units.

We respectfully request that OHFA consider:

- Population growth and regional context — ensuring that rapidly growing metropolitan areas, as well as rural communities, are reflected in the proportional allocation of credits.
- Local financial participation — recognizing the use of local funds as leverage to maximize the impact of OHFA allocations and considering this as an allocation factor or potential tiebreaker.



- Flexibility on developer caps — allowing projects that serve the most vulnerable residents — including households experiencing or at risk of homelessness, families, seniors, CHDO developments and specialized populations — to move forward without being limited by cap constraints.

In addition to direct investment, the city's Residential Tax Incentive program reduces long-term operating costs through 15 year, 100% abatements on the improved value of income-restricted units. Coupled with targeted corridor rezonings and our ongoing comprehensive zoning modernization, these policies support higher density, streamlined development for projects that include affordable housing.

As CelebrateOne, our city's infant mortality initiative, has demonstrated, stable housing is foundational to maternal and infant health. Expectant mothers and newly parenting families facing housing instability experience higher rates of preterm birth, low birth weight and infant mortality while stable housing improves prenatal care access, birth outcomes and early childhood development. Housing stability is health care — and projects serving these families save lives while reducing long-term public health costs.

Looking ahead, Columbus remains committed to leveraging every available tool to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population. This fall, Columbus voters will consider a \$500 million affordable housing bond package, the largest in our city's history. The Department of Development will deploy these funds strategically and in alignment with OHFA programs, including LIHTC, OLIHTC, BGF and HDAP. Future local funding rounds will be timed to maximize OHFA coordination and impact.

We value OHFA's partnership in expanding equitable housing access and addressing critical community needs. Thank you for your leadership and for considering the city's input on the 2026 QAP.

Best regards,



Michael H. Stevens
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