



Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chelsea Andrews
Executive Director

December 7, 2022

HOC AT-A-GLANCE: NOVEMBER 2022 (and Our Year-in-Review)

November highlights:

- Brief snapshot of accomplishments via our “Year-in-Review”
- Re-engaging with the Tobytown community in a listening session
- Legislative Updates
- Highlights from our Resident Services Division
- Updates from our Housing Resource Division
- Information Technology Division updates and new initiatives
- Real Estate Development activities

NOTE: HOC’s offices remain closed to the public; however, we continue to provide high-level customer service through virtual meetings and program offerings, on-site engagement at properties and meet with clients in-person by appointment



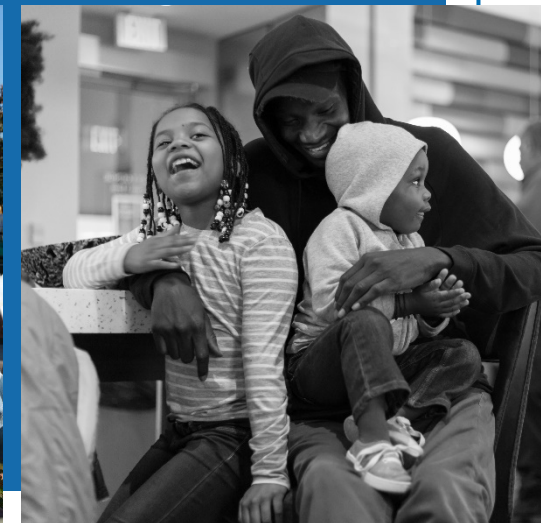
YEAR-IN-REVIEW:

- Delivered and reached stabilized occupancy at Residences on the Lane
- Significantly advanced construction on both the Laureate and The Leggett, with occupancy imminent in early 2023
- Received GFOA Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting and Budgeting
- Doubled Housing Production Fund from \$50 to \$100 million
- Made available \$32.1 million in lendable proceeds for first-time homebuyers
- Provided over \$1.25 million in financial assistance for rental arrearages to HOC customers under the Housing Stabilization Program



YEAR-IN-REVIEW (cont.):

- HOC Academy assisted 18 HOC customers in legalizing their business and providing tuition assistance to 56 HOC customers
- Increased and maintained the program utilization rate of our HCVP to 96%
- HOC “Inspire” celebration raised \$230,000+ to support various STEM activities, Small Business development classes, adult education, etc.
- HOC secured a continuing \$998,000 annual grant from US DHHS Administration to support our Fatherhood Initiative in Year 3 of the five-year grant



The Executive Director Listens to Tobytown Families

- **Nov. 17:** Staff joined the ED for a Tobytown Listening Session for homeowners; thirteen (13) families participated.
- **HOC Tobytown Task Force:** Newly formed taskforce to assist homeowners to become self-sufficient, while preserving the history and legacy of the community.
- **Broader Goal:** Re-engaging with the community to provide resources, services, support and education for long-term sustainability.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

State Bill MC 10-23

- Local bill introduced by Sen. Ben Kramer that will come before the Maryland General Assembly.
- Would alter rules governing the collective bargaining process between HOC and union.
- Would expand the impasse and arbitration procedure beyond contract negotiations to cover all negotiations.
- County Executive has taken position of support with proposed technical amendment that simplifies the drafting, but no change(s) to the bill's substance.
- County Council to consider its position on the bill on December 12, 2022, with public hearing scheduled for December 15, 2022.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

Council Bill 13-22

- **Nov. 29:** Council adopted the Comprehensive Building Decarbonization Act with several amendments, which delayed implementation for an additional year.
- Sponsored by Councilmember Hans Riemer and County Executive Marc Elrich and co-sponsored by Councilmember Will Jawando.
- Final bill will require County Executive to develop regulations that require most new construction in the County to be fully electric beginning in 2025.
- Implementation is delayed until 2027 for schools, developments with more than 50% affordable housing, and residential buildings with four or more stories.
- The amended timeline more closely matches recent legislation passed in the District of Columbia.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

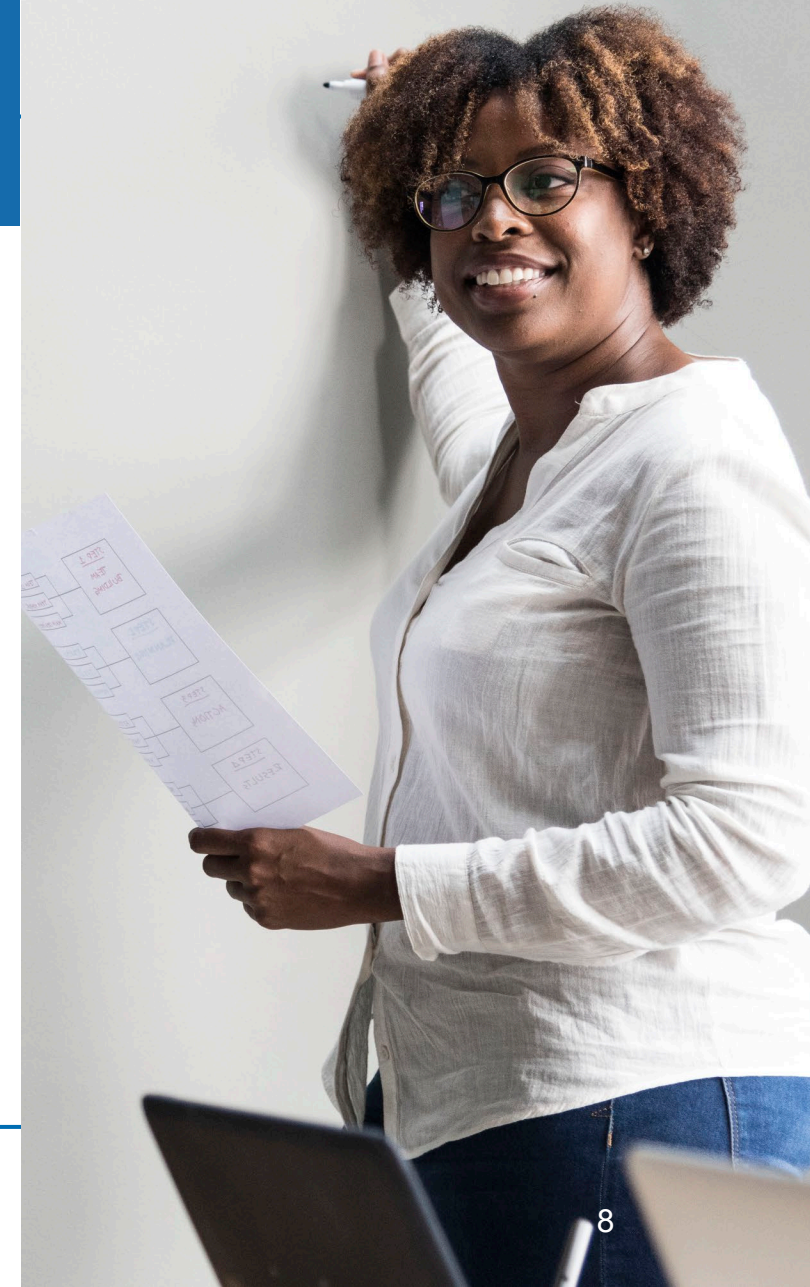
Service Coordination and Programming

Cider Mill

- Continued to facilitate Safe Zones program at Cider Mill, with program expansion to Seneca Ridge scheduled for January 2023.
- Laid groundwork for broadband access and computer distribution events for Cider Mill residents and other HOC customers in up-county area beginning in December 2022.
- Continued work to address rent delinquencies by conducting outreach, assessments, and providing referrals.

Workshops

- **Nov. 16 - 17:** Facilitated the Fundamentals of Housing workshops.
- **Nov. 22 and 24:** Facilitated Resource Sharing workshops.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

Resident Well Being

- **Nov. 3:** Facilitated a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program information session at Magruder's Discovery.
- **Nov. 16:** Hosted a Holiday Bingo event at Residences on the Lane.
- **Nov. 3 and 17:** Completed the final two four-week in-person visual arts series at Arcola Towers.
- **Nov. 18:** Hosted a Thanksgiving brunch at The Willows.
- **Nov. 22:** Facilitated a turkey and food distribution at Tanglewood and Manchester Manor.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming (cont.)

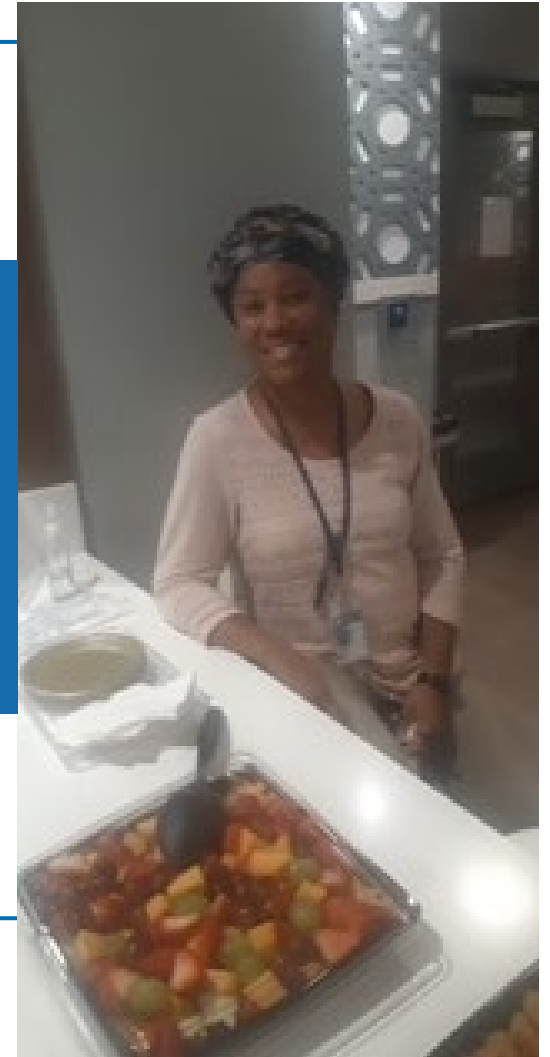
Resident Well Being (cont.)

- **Nov. 22:** Facilitated a Thanksgiving Pie Gobble for HOC customers at Waverly House.
- **Nov. 23:** Facilitated a Thanksgiving gift card distribution to HOC customers at Spring Garden
- **Nov 8 and 9:** Facilitated Flu Clinics for HOC customers at Arcola Towers and Waverly House.
- University of Maryland Nursing Program students continued to provide nursing services to HOC customers at Arcola Towers and Residences on the Lane.
- Resident Services staff registered HOC customers to receive food resources for Thanksgiving through the County's Holiday Giving Program, serving over 700 HOC customers throughout the portfolio.
- Distributed gift cards to HOC customers at Stewartown and Shady Grove to assist families with food for Thanksgiving.

Resident Services: _____

Meet and Greet at Fenton Silver Spring

- Resident Services hosted a “Meet and Greet” to introduce new Resident Counselor (Katrina Gomez) to the community and gather feedback on property-level events and services.



Resident Services:

Events for Seniors & Other Residents

- **Nov. 3 and 17:** In partnership with the Arts for the Aging, completed the final two four-week, in-person visual arts series at Arcola Towers.
- **Nov. 8 and 9:** In partnership with Ultracare Pharmacy, facilitated Flu Clinics for HOC customers at Arcola Towers on and Waverly House respectively.



Resident Services: Thanksgiving Food Distribution Events

- **Nov. 22:** Turkey and food distribution at Tanglewood and Manchester Manor.
- **Nov. 22:** Thanksgiving Pie Gobble at Waverly House.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Relocation and Re-Certification Assistance

- Assisted customers on an ongoing basis with relocations and other needs for RAD and renovation projects at several properties.
- Provided continued outreach and assistance to customers who have failed to submit all required documents for re-certification by the stated deadline.

Rental Assistance

- Provided face-to-face and electronic outreach and assistance to customers with applications for rental assistance programs.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Service Coordination and Programming

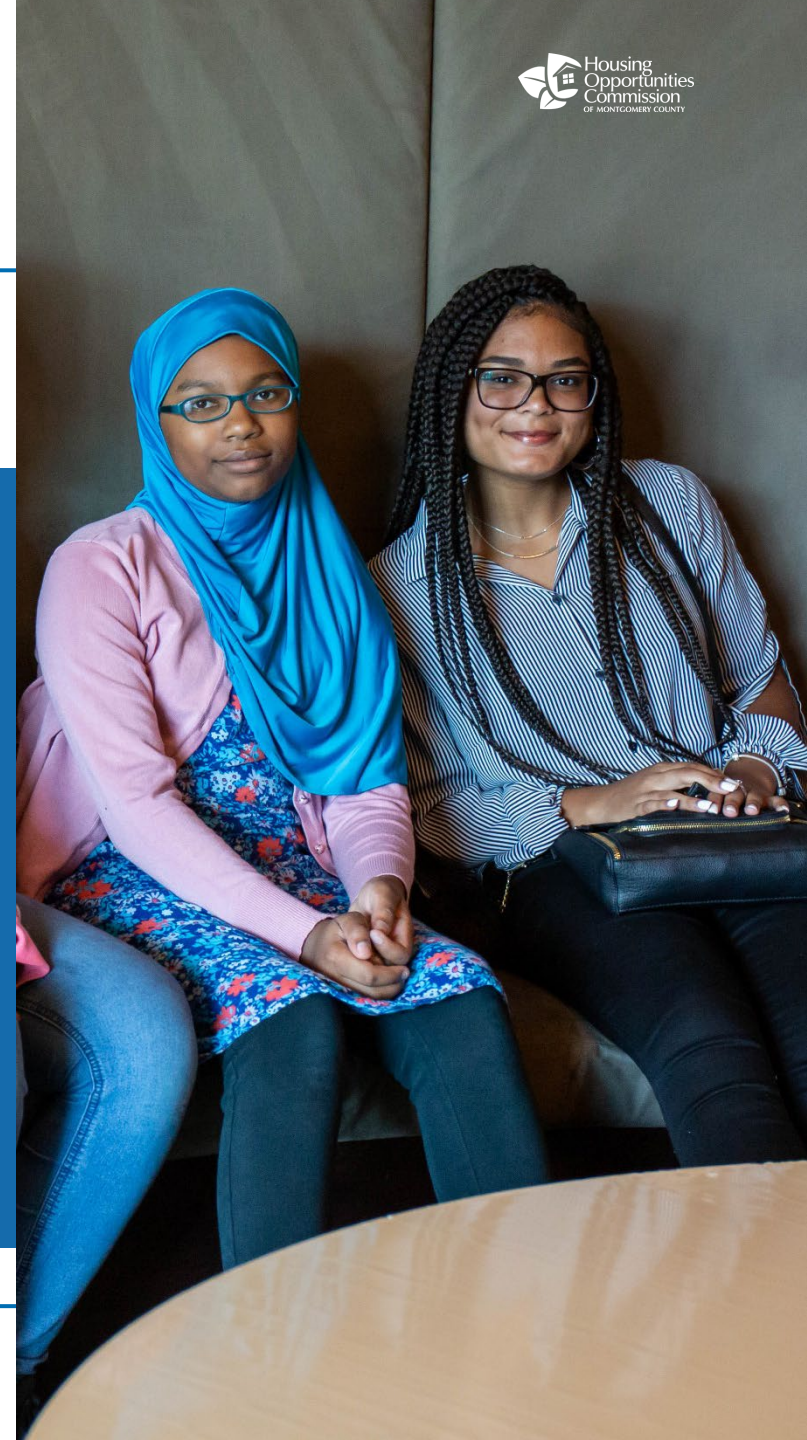
- Provided food and other resource support to 375 HOC customers through partnerships with: Manna Food Center, Emmanuel Brinklow Seventh Day Adventist Church, Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Lunch Program, Capital Area Food Bank's Senior Brown Bag, and My Groceries To Go Programs.
- Continued to facilitate the Senior Nutrition Program, which provides meals and opportunities for seniors to socialize.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy

Youth Education/Enrichment:

- HOC Academy staff continued to operate the First Generation College Bound program involving workshops for participants focused on college preparedness.
- HOC Academy worked to plan future activities for the STEAM Forward Program including the K&M Virtual STEAM Academy which began operations in November.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

HOC Academy (cont.)

Adult Education and Workforce Development:

Small Business Strategy Course (“SBSC”) alumni continue to report their progress and new business ventures. Below are three milestones:

- Wane Mendoza executed his first lease to open a fitness center.
- Mr. Mendoza received assistance from SBSC instructor to complete business license process.
- Shayla Ford legalized her business last month and filed her trade name application this month.

SBSC alumni highlights:

- Qamar Muaket passed Esthetician theory and practical exams, is going through the licensing process and reported new employment.
- Jakerria Hatcher obtained her Child Growth & Development Certificate of Completion.
- Nakelia Field completed the AWS Cloud Solution Architect exam and obtained certifications. AEWD referred customer to community resources and job opportunities.

Nov. 9: HOC Academy hosted a pitch deck webinar entitled, “Creating a Pitch Deck for your Business”. Participants received the slide deck, a pitch deck template for practice, and a list of entities open to investment solicitations.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy Coach continued to work with HOC's customers and individuals on the Housing Path waitlist:

- Provided one-on-one financial literacy coaching to 29 HOC customers and 20 individuals from the Housing Path waitlist.
- Facilitated financial literacy workshops: Nine (9) HOC customers and seven (7) individuals from the waitlist attended the workshops.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Supportive Services

- Program **served 230 participants** by conducting home visits with program participants, providing case management services, and paying rent and utilities.
- Continued to help Emergency Voucher recipients secure housing by providing housing location services, as well as financial assistance for application fees, security deposits, moving expenses and household items.
- Program staff continued to implement the Rent Supplement Program (“RSP”), which provides a shallow rental subsidy (up to \$600 monthly) to county residents, including a large number of seniors on fixed incomes.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Fatherhood Initiative

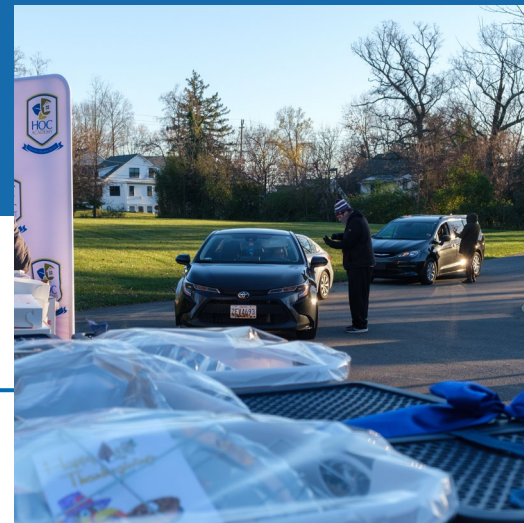
- HOC is the first and only housing agency to be awarded a grant under the Fatherhood Initiative.
- HOC completed its first five-year grant as a 'best practice' model.
- HOC was awarded an additional grant and is currently in year three of the new grant period.
- **Nov. 4:** Graduated 26 fathers from the October cohort and enrolled 15 fathers for the next cohort.



Resident Services:

Fatherhood Initiative Thanksgiving Day Basket Distribution

- **Nov. 21:** Facilitated a Thanksgiving food basket distribution for program participants and their families including refreshments and basket distributions.



HOUSING RESOURCES

DIVISION UPDATE :

Housing Choice Voucher (“HCV”) Program

- Currently, 181 families with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent; and 51 contracts are pending execution. Three hundred (300) families were selected from the HCV waitlist last month.
- During November, the Division received one request for a voucher extension beyond the initial 90-day period.



HOUSING RESOURCES DIVISION UPDATE :

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications

- HOC introduced use of RENTCafé to assist with annual recertifications.
- Customers with recertifications effective November 1, 2022, required to submit electronic annual recertifications.
- Overall, 215 of 595 customers submitted their paperwork electronically.
- One hundred eighteen (118) customers were recommended for program termination effective December 1, 2022. The Resident Services Division worked in collaboration with the Housing Resources Division to assess client needs and to determine why recertifications were not being completed.

HOUSING RESOURCES DIVISION UPDATE :

RENTCafé Used to Support Online Annual Recertifications (cont.)

Resident Services Counselors assisted 74 families with the recertification requirement and overturned the termination. Termination proceedings will continue for 44 families for the following reasons:

- 1 – Voluntarily relinquished voucher
- 1– Skip – vacated unit without proper notice
- 1 – Homeownership
- 1 – Moved to Assisted Living
- 40 – Unable to reach by phone or email; message left by Counselors

Housing Resources Division will continue to work collaboratively with Resident Services to assist customers facing termination.

RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE: _____

Emergency Housing Vouchers (“EHVs”)

HOC has an allocation of 118 Emergency Housing Vouchers.

- Eighty-six (86) families have successfully leased units.
- Seventeen (17) families with issued vouchers are searching for suitable units to rent.
- Staff are reviewing six (6) certification packets to determine program eligibility.
- HOC requested nine (9) additional referrals from HHS for the EHV Program.



RESIDENT SERVICES UPDATE:

Family Self Sufficiency (“FSS”)

- FSS Team resumed recruitment efforts to increase participation size from 358 to the maximum baseline of 441.
- FSS participants remain committed to the alliances formed with the FSS Case Managers. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings are conducted virtually.
- FSS Case Managers continue to work with customers on their long- and short-term self-sufficiency goals.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION UPDATE:

Yardi PHA Client Portal for RENTCafé

Total population of registered HCV participants and participants who have been contacted to enroll in the system increased from 2,469 to 2,817 over last month. Below are recent statistics which reflect increased participation from October 26 - November 29, 2022.

Status of HCV Participant System Enrollment and Recertification	10/26/2022	11/29/2022	Rate of Increase
Completed registration	1,834	2,176	+18.6%
Contacted for enrollment	635	641	<1.0%
Completed annual recertification online	1,346	1,798	+33.6%

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION UPDATE:

Yardi PHA Client Portal for RENTCafé (cont.)

- Eighty-three (83%) of registered participants have completed annual recertification online through the portal. November 2022 - March 2023 are presently available for registered participants to complete their online annual recertification.
- Written and electronic communications continue to be sent to the members of the first and second cohorts of HCV program participants who have not registered or have registered, but have not started their online annual recertification process for follow up.
- Implementation activities for RENTCafé Affordable Module at The Leggett and The Laureate are advancing.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION UPDATE: New IT Cybersecurity Initiative

- IT launched a new cybersecurity initiative, which requires new cybersecurity software installations on all HOC-issued laptops.
- This initiative offers increased visibility into endpoints (i.e., laptops, mobile devices, etc.) that allow IT administrators to defend and protect HOC's data.
- The roll out of this initiative is expected to impact staff productivity only minimally, but serves to enhance our overall information security and aligns with our cybersecurity insurance requirements.



REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE:

Fenton Silver Spring Retail

- **Nearly Complete:** Interior fitting out of The Breakfast Club and the Rockville-based coffee shop and roaster, Black Lion Café.
- These innovative retail spaces, located at HOC's 124-unit mixed-income, mixed-use development in Fenton Silver Spring
- Both establishments are slated for opening in December 2022.

LIHTC Resyndications: Stewarttown Homes

- **Substantial Completion:** 94-unit Stewarttown Homes reached substantial completion milestone for final development phase, with minor site work, playground and community room slated to be completed within the next two weeks by the year-end of 2022.

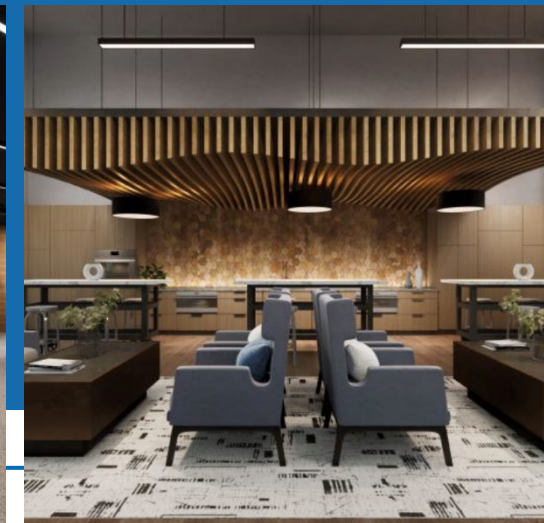
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE:

Hillandale Gateway Grant Award



Hillandale Gateway: Planned first-of-its-kind 463-unit Mixed-Income, Mixed-Use, Passive House and Net Zero multifamily community

- \$320,000 in State Revitalization Program funds awarded to the project.
- Funds will be used for predevelopment and site work-related activities for the upcoming development.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

THE END

