AVONDALE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD

Building A Stronger Avondale
Dear Friend,

In 2012, The Community Builders joined with a network of partners to bring the Choice Neighborhoods initiative to Cincinnati. We worked with Avondale community residents to set priorities and create an integrated plan for improved housing, education, economic self-sufficiency, safety, community engagement and health. Then, we got to work.

There is much to celebrate in Avondale today. More young children are enrolled in preschool, fewer residents lack health insurance and hundreds of families have a new or renovated place to call home. Avondale Choice residents now feel safer in their homes and more connected to their neighborhood.

The progress in Avondale is inspiring. None of this would have been possible without the engagement and genuine partnership of Avondale Community Council and Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation (now known as Avondale Development Corporation). Please consider this report your invitation to join us in building a stronger Avondale. Partner with us to bring new approaches, new ideas and new investments to this vibrant community. Together, we are proving what works and enhancing Avondale as a neighborhood of choice.

Sincerely,
The Community Builders Midwest Cincinnati Team

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Regional Vice President of Development, Midwest

Elizabeth Gonzalez-Suarez
Vice President of Community Life

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Director of Development, Cincinnati Office

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Portfolio Operations Manager

Reginald Harris
Community Life Senior Manager
A Winning Partnership
TCB, in partnership with the City of Cincinnati, Avondale Community Council, Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation, Cincinnati Public Schools and the Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio, begins to invest a $29.5 million HUD Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant and over $100 million in leveraged funds to revitalize the Reading Road corridor in the heart of Avondale. This coalition works to improve neighborhood safety, access to healthy food and healthcare, increase civic engagement and promote early learning for young children.

Connecting with Community Wi-Fi
TCB, the Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation and Powernet worked to bring connectivity to the Avondale community. A three-square-mile area now provides free wireless internet connections in places for work, school or play, such as retail stores, churches and libraries.

Transformation of the Avondale Town Center
Construction of the new Avondale Town Center begins, When complete, in early 2019, the center will consist of 75,000 square feet of retail space and 119 units of mixed-income housing across two buildings that wrap around the historic Carmel Presbyterian Church. The center is expected to include shops, restaurants, businesses, a community health center and a grocery store.

Housing Renewal Begins
After decades of disinvestment, TCB, HUD and local partners begin to implement comprehensive transformation to address blighted properties, distressed occupied and vacant buildings and bring new commercial development. Over the next three years, TCB builds or restores nine apartment buildings, home to more than 200 families, on or near Reading Road between Blair Avenue and Shuttlesworth Circle.

The ‘First Family’ Returns Home
After two years of construction, families return to their newly renovated homes in architecturally-historic Crescent Court Apartments in Avondale, welcomed by the mayor, community partners and neighbors in a celebration of the Avondale Choice Neighborhoods development project.

200 Homes Completed
Avondale Choice reaches another milestone. Two hundred Avondale families reside in new apartment homes in restored historic structures and newly constructed buildings. The bright, airy apartments feature modern kitchens and baths with floorings and windows designed for healthy living.
About the Avondale Choice Initiative

The Avondale Choice Neighborhoods initiative is a multisector partnership, led by The Community Builders, to improve the Avondale neighborhood through investments in Housing, the Neighborhood and People.

The origin of Avondale Choice dates back to a 2007 community engagement process led by the Avondale Community Council, supported by a broad coalition of community institutions and informed by one-on-one door knocking and dozens of community and stakeholder meetings. A Place Matters plan, supported by LISC, provided a foundation for the Avondale Choice initiative.

Once selected by the Cincinnati Multi-Family Consortium in 2011 to address a foreclosed portfolio of distressed project-based Section 8 housing, TCB formed a partnership with The Urban League of Greater Cincinnati (later known as Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio), Cincinnati Public Schools, Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation (now known as Avondale Development Corporation), Center for Closing the Health Gap, and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center. The partners secured a Choice Neighborhoods grant to implement Avondale’s plan for transformation with the Avondale Community Council providing crucial guidance, oversight and engagement.

The Avondale Choice partnership has a three-part approach:

**HOUSING INVESTMENT**
TCB serves as Housing lead, responsible for housing acquisition, rehabilitation, property operations and asset management for 319 mixed-income rental homes, including the preservation of 140 homes supported by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development subsidies.

**NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENT**
Avondale Development Corporation and TCB lead a critical community investments plan to enhance the neighborhood’s appeal to live, work and play. Direct funding from the Choice grant supports new amenities at the Avondale Town Center and Avondale Business Center, a free Community Wi-Fi network and Gabriel’s Place Commercial Kitchen. Leveraged funding from the City of Cincinnati financed renovations at the Hirsch Recreation Center.

**PEOPLE INVESTMENT**
People investments, including resident services that support financial self-sufficiency, training and employment, health and wellness, and public safety are implemented by TCB, Urban League, Cincinnati Public Schools, Gabriel’s Place and the Center for Closing the Health Gap.

ADC leads resident engagement and outreach, ensuring the community voice is part of decision-making, and that Avondale Choice Neighborhood programs and services are provided and delivered in ways that best serve the residents and the neighborhood.
Avondale Choice Objectives


EDUCATION

• Increase the percentage of children ready for kindergarten
• Increase the percentage of children scoring proficient or above in state math and reading tests
• Increase graduation rates

SAFETY

• Decrease the percentage of residents experiencing or witnessing a crime within the past 12 months
• Increase the number of residents who feel safe in their apartment building and the neighborhood

ECONOMIC SELF SUFFICIENCY

• Increase resident financial stability

HOUSING

• Create or preserve 319 affordable housing units, including 140 in existing buildings and 179 new units

HEALTH

• Increase the number of residents with access to medical care other than the emergency room
• Increase the number of residents with health insurance
• Increase the number of residents making annual primary care visits

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

• Promote resident involvement
• Prepare residents for leadership positions
• Increase funding resources to sustain programming after the Choice grant period

Performance of the Avondale Choice Initiative is tracked through an online dashboard at www.avondalechoicedata.com.
Housing Impact

The new Pointes at Avondale community is home to 200 families and represents the first two completed phases of housing developed. TCB's transformational development work preserves the historic fabric of the neighborhood by revitalizing distressed or abandoned historic structures with repointed masonry, restored balconies and refinished marble stairs. New infill construction includes bright airy apartments with modern finishes designed for healthy living. These two phases restore 140 subsidized apartments and add 60 new apartments to the area.
Rich History, Bright Future

Built in the early 1900s, many ornately designed grand apartments, churches and civic buildings are scattered along the Reading Road corridor. Boasting unique details and an architectural mix, the Alameda’s Beaux Arts style offers smooth masonry walls decorated with garlands, floral patterns or shields. Poinciana and Somerset Apartments reflect the Queen Anne style, with wall surfaces as the primary decorative elements and a variety of colors and textures are showcased on building exteriors. TCB’s housing development restored five building to their original state, listing each on the National History Register and preserving their elegance for generations to come.
**SOARING TO WORK**

Tracy Griffin, resident

Tracy Griffin is a resident of The Pointes at Avondale and a recent graduate from the Urban League's Solid Opportunities for Advancement and Retention (SOAR) job training program. Known for her warm energy and optimism, Tracy credits the comfort and safety of her home, along with the SOAR program, for landing a new job. Tracy is already looking forward to continuing education courses and taking the next step in her career.

"TCB is good at what they do. I've benefited from all of the partnerships, especially the Urban League. Being a TCB resident and receiving the support from staff helps keep me moving forward. I am proud of where I am today."

**A HAPPY, HEALTHY HOME**

Patience Moore, resident

Patience Moore has been a Poinciana resident for 10 years! A stay-at-home mom who cares for her 14 year-old son living with Autism, Patience has seen evolution in the community. She reports feeling optimistic about the improvements made in her building in terms of safety and renovation.

"The location, the community, and (TCB) people who work in the office keep me here. I am happy with where I live."
A CHAMPION FOR HEALTH
Nikita Anderson, resident

TCB resident and motivated mom of four, Nikita Anderson is making house calls to improve the health of her community. She is employed as a Health Champion in a maternal and child health initiative called Avondale Children Thrive. Trained in best practices for safe infant sleep, breastfeeding, early education and client confidentiality, Nikita provides in-home coaching to new and expectant mothers in Avondale with the aim to reduce infant mortality and improve the health of the neighborhood's youngest residents.

I’ve been more able to be active in my community and advocate for the things I need. Being a resident of TCB, I have someone to help me stay on the right track, instead of giving up hope.

Nikita Anderson
AVONDALE BUSINESS CENTER
Modern Office Space, Designed for the Community

$1,600,000

Owned and developed by the Avondale Community Council, the business center is the organization’s headquarters and income-producing commercial office space—that includes TCB and Avondale Development Corporation among its tenants.

THE POINTES AT AVONDAL
Healthy Stable Homes for Hundreds of Families

$51,800,000

The Pointes at Avondale incorporates nine previously distressed or abandoned apartment buildings on the Reading Road corridor in the heart of Avondale, restoring 140 subsidized apartments and adding 60 new apartments to the area.

AVONDALE COMMUNITY WI-FI
Connecting Neighborhood Businesses, Residents and Visitors

$100,000

The Avondale Community Wi-Fi network is free to neighborhood residents and visitors. The Community Builders, Avondale Development Corporation, and Powernet developed the network to support revitalization of the neighborhood, improve the quality of life, and attract future business to the Avondale area. A second phase will bring free wireless broadband into all Choice apartment homes.

Housing and Neighborhood Investments
$43,000,000

The Avondale Town Center brings two new mixed-use buildings and the rehabilitation of a third commercial building, with 75,000 square feet of commercial space and 119 units of mixed-income housing. There will be a vibrant mix of new and existing businesses on the ground floors with a grocery store, health center and retail amenities. In addition, construction of the new center includes robust commitments to economic inclusion and hiring from the Avondale community.

$90,000

Gabriel’s Place is based on a seed to table approach, offering Avondale residents gardening resources, cooking classes and a free weekly community meal. The program also provides environmental sustainability education and Marketplace, a fresh food retailer.

$750,000

TCB and Uptown Consortium, Inc. partnered to acquire a dozen blighted properties in Avondale for improvement or development. This investment leverages and extends $30 million of site assembly coordinated by Uptown over the past five years.
Measuring the Progress of Our People

Supported by stable homes and community partnerships, Avondale Choice families are making strides in Education, Health, Economic Self-Sufficiency, Community Engagement and Safety.

**EDUCATION**
Counting Down to Kindergarten

- 2013: 18%
- 2017: 73%

73% of our youngest residents enrolled in early care and education in 2017, up from just 18% in 2013.

**SAFETY**
Feeling Safe and Sound

- 2013: 18%
- 2017: 73%

80% of residents reported feeling safe at home in 2017, a 21% increase since 2014. Avondale Choice fosters trust and security with investments in community policing programs.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
Having a Voice

- 2013: 53%
- 2017: 73%

73% of residents feel they have a say in their community. This empowered majority was just 53% in 2013.

**CHOICE PARTNER:** Cincinnati Public Schools

**CHOICE PARTNERS:** City of Cincinnati, Avondale Development Corporation
HEALTH
Accessing Family Healthcare

% of Residents with Health Insurance

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% of Children with Primary Care

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ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY
Earning an Income

30%

The percentage of residents who earned their own income increased nearly 30% between 2013 and 2017. Avondale Choice is activating earners with connections to training, childcare, transportation and jobs.

CHOICE PARTNER: Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio

Performance of the Avondale Choice Initiative is tracked through an online dashboard at: www.avondalechoicedata.com

CHOICE PARTNER: Center for Closing the Health Gap, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and Medical Center
Avondale Choice Grant Investments

**GRANT FUNDING**
$29.5 Million in Choice grant spending

- People: $4,326,000
- Neighborhood: $3,147,000
- Housing: $21,002,000
- Administrative: $1,025,000

**TOTAL FUNDING**
$114.7 Million in Choice grant spending and leveraged investments, including public and private loans, grants and equity

- People: $7,604,000
- Neighborhood: $19,737,000
- Housing: $87,741,000

Avondale Choice grant period ending September 30, 2019
Avondale is now slated for almost $1 billion of new hospitality, office, retail, residential and institutional development.

In addition to new and revitalized apartment homes, our transformation plan allows us to invest in people; and in the services and resources that help make their lives healthier and safer. Investments by HUD and TCB have spurred new private investment and helped cultivate a culture of neighborhood pride among residents.
Beyond Choice: What's Next for Avondale

The community vision and powerful partnerships in Avondale continue beyond the Choice Neighborhood completion milestone. The Community Builders and other stakeholders are collaborating with neighborhood groups, charitable foundations, elected officials, impact investors, corporate stakeholders, anchor institutions and other to realize and sustain the goals to enhance Avondale as Cincinnati’s neighborhood of choice.

HEALTH AND HOUSING
Avondale Children Thrive

Funded in part by the BUILD Health Challenge, The Community Builders, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and The Cincinnati Health Department formed a partnership called Avondale Children Thrive. The program addresses maternal and child health issues in the neighborhood by hiring and training neighbors as Health Champions to promote healthy behaviors, such as breastfeeding, reading at home and enrolling their young children in preschool.

TRANSFORMING A COMMUNITY
Avondale Town Center

The new Avondale Center is a mixed use development that includes 119 rental homes for residents with a variety of incomes and over 75,000 square feet of commercial space. The vibrant new neighborhood Center in the heart of the Avondale community will be anchored by a grocery store and include a health center, cafes, and other retail and office spaces with LEED Certified green design.

ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY
Community Life Workforce Initiative

TCB Community Life partners with the Urban League, Family Independence Initiative, and the Home Ownership Center of Greater Cincinnati to place residents on track to economic self-sufficiency. Supported by the hope, comfort and safety that comes from stable housing, residents can take the next step in their careers with continuing education, such as Solid Opportunities for Advancement and Retention (SOAR) and Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) that match residents personal savings to start a business, go back to school, or buy a home.
Help us build a stronger Avondale together.

Contact us to volunteer, partner or donate.

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD GRANT PARTNERS
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
The Community Builders
Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio
Cincinnati Public Schools
Avondale Development Corporation (formerly ACDC)
Center for Closing the Health Gap
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center

2012 – 2018 COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Avondale Community Council
City of Cincinnati
Avondale Coalition of Churches

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Patricia Milton, Chair; Avondale Community Council
Rev. Dr. Robert Baines, Jr., Southern Baptist Church
Jennifer Foster, Resident
Christie Kuhns, Esq., UC Health
Roy Hackworth, City of Cincinnati, Department of Community & Economic Development
Brenda Harris, Nanny’s Multilevel Learning Center
Captain Martin Mack, Cincinnati Police Department, District 4
Pat Neal-Miller, Cincinnati Public Schools
Michelle Taylor Mitchell, Resident
Bridget Patton, City of Cincinnati, Office of Mayor John Cranley
Eileen Cooper Reed, Esq., Cincinnati Public Schools (retired)
Natasha Robertson, Resident
Kathy Schwab, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Terri Hamilton Brown, The Community Builders
Donna Jones Baker, Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio
Russell Hairston, Avondale Development Corporation
Renee Mahaffey Harris, Center for Closing the Health Gap
Monica Mitchell, PhD, Chair; INNOVATIONS in Community Research and Clinical Psychology

DEVELOPMENT FUNDING PARTNERS
Key Bank
US Bank
LISC of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky
Low Income Investment Fund
Cincinnati Development Fund
Ohio Housing Finance Agency
JP Morgan Chase
Uptown Consortium
RBC Capital Markets
National Affordable Housing Trust
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
City of Cincinnati

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