



**PRESERVING & CREATING
NEW HOUSING:**

**FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF
A COC LEAD AGENCY**

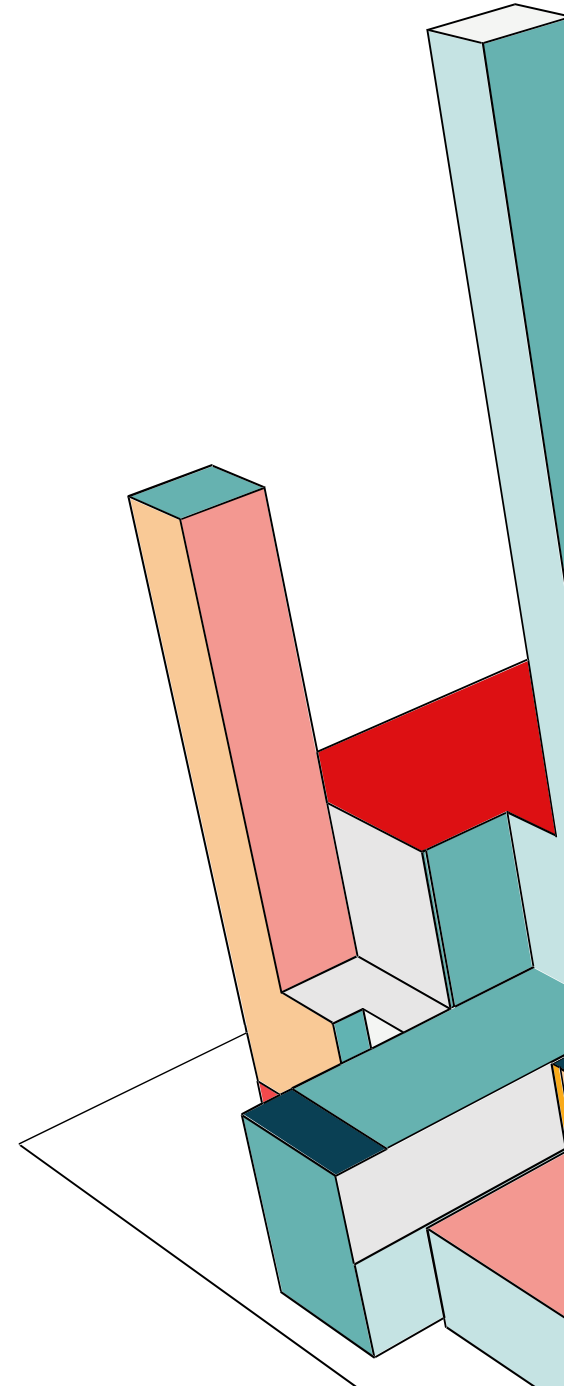


ABOUT UNITY OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS:

Founded in 1992, UNITY's mission is to coordinate community partnerships to prevent, reduce and end homelessness.

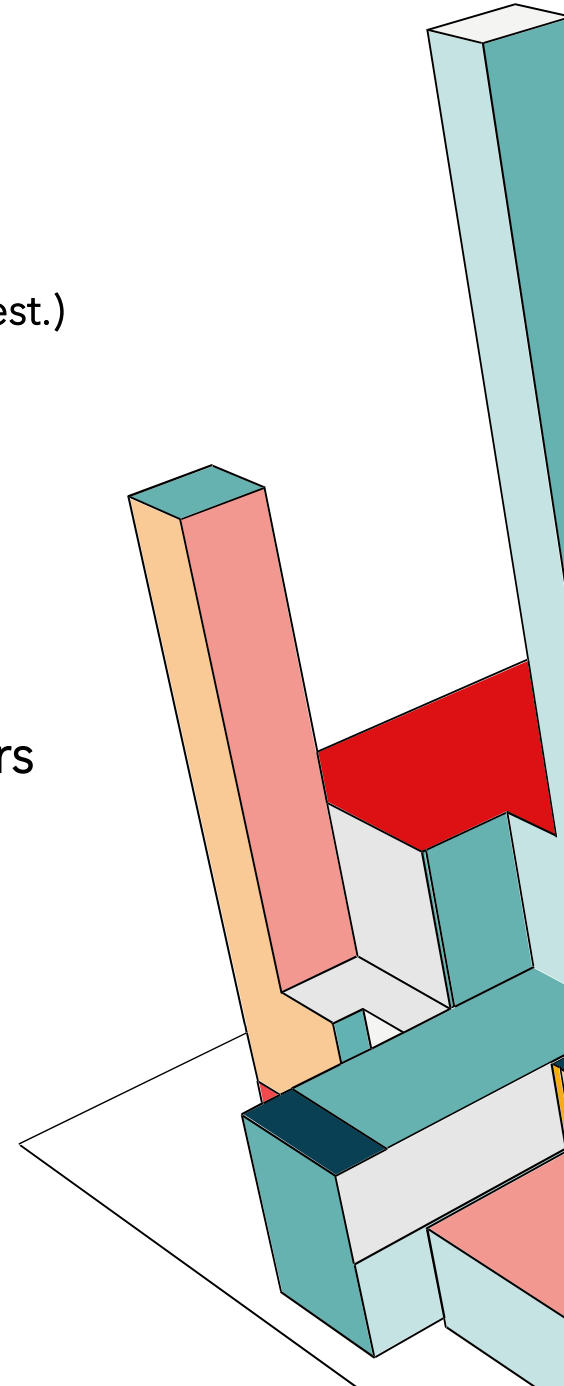
UNITY works in close partnership with HUD, the City of New Orleans, Jefferson Parish government, the City of Kenner, the Louisiana Housing Corp., the Louisiana Department of Health, the VA, housing authorities, behavioral health agencies, and a host of nonprofit organizations.

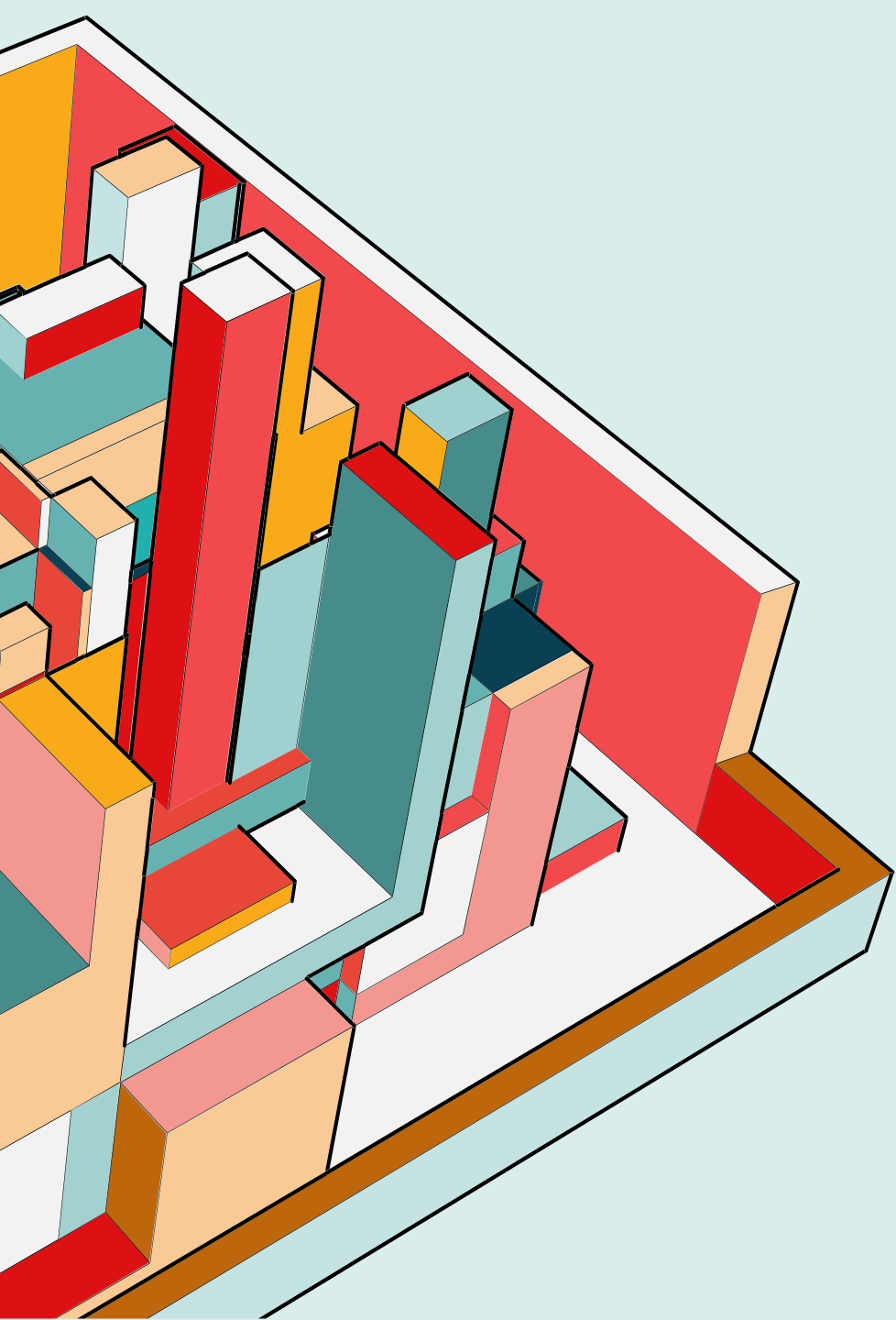
At any given point, UNITY and its member agencies are providing permanent housing and case management services to about 3500 people who were previously unhoused.



FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Combined population of Orleans and Jefferson Parishes is 785, 913 (2024 est.)
- Despite population decreases, climate-related weather events and other factors have kept housing prices high.
- Lack of state minimum wage, racism, tourism-centered economy are factors in high poverty: 50,599 households live at < 30% AMI.
- As a result 87% of extremely low-income renters are cost-burdened, and 77% pay over half their income in rent. (NLIHC.ORG, "Gap Report")





APPROACHES TO CREATING AND PRESERVING HOUSING

Development

Advocacy

Partnerships

DEVELOPMENT

Beginning in 2012, UNITY opened 3 supportive housing developments over a 3 year period.

- 211 new units; mix of PSH and affordable at <50% AMI in both rehab and new construction of buildings.
- Community Solutions (NYC) was partner on initial development
- Local Property Management Partners and On-Site Case Management





ZONING-RELATED ADVOCACY

- City of New Orleans has struggled to deal with Short-Term Rentals and their impact on housing markets. UNITY has advocated for strict limits, if not bans, on residential STRs and linking commercial STRs to affordable housing development.
- UNITY helped to pass an inclusive zoning ordinance, spoke in favor of small multi-family & ADUs, and opposed off-street parking mandates in select neighborhoods.
- After a decade of community organizing, City passed Healthy Homes ordinance that will raise the floor on habitability and prevent retaliation against tenants who report problems. We hope this will lead to greater availability of units.



ADVOCACY ON FUNDING

ARPA & Budget Surplus

- City's ARPA-related Budget Surplus was a focal-point of Community Organizing.
- UNITY has been pushing for dedicated local stream of revenue to go toward Rapid Rehousing and Problem Solving.
- City made excellent use of Emergency Rental Assistance to prevent evictions and new entries into homelessness.

Housing Trust Fund

- Housing Trust Fund received one-time deposit of \$17M in '23. Council committed to \$20M annual investment.
- On the Nov. Ballot, is Charter Amendment to require 2% of General Fund go to Housing Trust Fund annually (from non-federal, non-state sources).

EXPANDING OUR NETWORK OF ALLIES

Promoting a Big Easy Deal:

- Alliance of Youth, Immigrant Rights, Criminal Justice Reform, Workers, Environmental Justice, Good Governance, and Housing Advocates to push for appropriate City Budgeting – especially with ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act).
- The biggest spending priority for ALL of these groups is Affordable Housing.
- Secured \$19.5M in discretionary spending for Housing in 2023.
- Aiming much higher in 2024, over \$100M for housing – including creation and preservation of rental and owner-occupied.



PARTNERSHIPS WITH PROPERTY OWNERS

In Nov. 2022, when long-time agency lost funding for housing program, they were forced to sell building with over 40 rooms for formerly unhoused persons.

UNITY has worked with new owner who has renovated into studio apartments to place tenants who are being housed as part of Unsheltered Housing Initiative beginning in Sept 2023.



PARTNERSHIPS WITH PROPERTY OWNERS

Landlord / Developer Outreach has led to other housing opportunities. One recently-opened privately-financed development has over 100 newly-renovated units.

New construction affordable developments. Housing-specialist teams aggressively pursue rental opportunities at City and State financed projects. Pictured here is newly opened 192-unit new-construction done in partnership with Federally-qualified Health Center.

We continue to pursue this strategy with for-profit and non-profit developers.





CHALLENGES

STIFF HEADWINDS PERSIST

- Archdiocesan Bankruptcy threatens to jeopardize affordable PSH, Veterans and Senior Housing units.
- City has made little headway in chipping away at deficit in available units to low-income households.
- Gentrification and zoning restrictions drive up cost and limit areas open to development of new housing.
- NIMBYism is Alive and Well



THANK YOU

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