



**Housing Finance
Agency**

OHFA Annual Plan

Fiscal Year 2026

Office of Research and Analytics | May 1, 2025

Seeking to provide input?

OHFA will be accepting comments on this draft beginning May 1 through May 30, 2025. Comments may be submitted via e-mail to OHFAPublicHearing@ohiohome.org

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FY 2026 Ohio Housing Needs Assessment

Executive Summary

Housing is a critical component for building a healthy and prosperous future for Ohioans, however the state faces a number of sustained challenges to providing affordable and accessible housing. The Ohio Housing Needs Assessment uses a wide range of data to identify the scale and scope of Ohio’s housing challenges. As part of the Annual Plan, the assessment plays a critical role in providing baseline information that the Agency uses to determine its strategic priorities and additionally serves as a resource for OHFA’s Board, staff, and the state at large. The following executive summary highlights the key trends related to affordable and accessible housing throughout Ohio. The full FY 2026 Housing Needs Assessment will be available on OHFA’s website in the summer of 2025. Previous versions can be found [here](#).

Glossary

- **Housing cost burden:** Spending more than 30% of household income on housing-related costs, such as rent, mortgage payments, utilities, property taxes, and other such fees. The 30% threshold is a commonly used measure of housing affordability.
- **Severe cost burden:** Spending more than 50% of household income on housing-related costs. The 50% threshold is commonly associated with being housing unstable and at risk of losing one’s home to foreclosure or eviction. Related terms include severe mortgage burden, and severe rent burden.
- **Area Median Income (AMI):** The midpoint of a region’s household income distribution, as calculated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at the county level.
- **Extremely Low-Income (ELI):** Having a household income at or below the Federal Poverty Guidelines or 30% of AMI, whichever is higher.
- **Very Low-Income (VLI):** Having a household income at or below 50% of AMI.

Despite increasing home prices, higher interest rates, and declining home sales, homeownership in Ohio is on the rise.

- Home sales have been dropping since the start of the pandemic. In 2024, there were about 179,000 homes purchased in Ohio—a 24% decline from 2019 and the fewest since 2014.

- The decline in home sales is largely driven by higher prices and interest rates. The annual average rate for a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in 2024 was a near-record high 6.7%, down only slightly from 2023 (6.8%), and more than double the record-low of three percent in 2021. And in 2024, the median home price in Ohio (\$198,183) was higher than any year on record.
- The median home price in Ohio is currently 2.6 times the median household income—the largest price-to-income ratio since 2005—making homeownership less affordable for many prospective homebuyers, especially those on fixed incomes.
- In spite of these trends, the rate of homeownership in Ohio has started to increase after a period of decline from 2020 to 2022 when it reached an historic low of 64%. By the end of 2024, the homeownership rate had risen to 70%—the highest since 2010. This would suggest that while home sales may be declining, first-time homebuyers are making up a larger share of sales in the current housing market.

While monthly housing costs for Ohio mortgage holders have generally declined, severe mortgage burden has become more prevalent, putting many Ohioans at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure.

- Ohio mortgage holders are spending less on housing than they were a decade ago—both the median monthly costs relative to inflation (\$1,468) and the median share of income spent on housing (19%) are currently lower than pre-pandemic levels.
- At the same time, the prevalence of severe mortgage burden has increased. In 2023, 8.2% of Ohio mortgage holders were spending at least half their income on housing—up from an historic low of 7.2% in 2019—putting them at risk of mortgage default and foreclosure.

While vacancy rates remain historically low, a growing supply of vacant units for sale or rent indicates a potentially less competitive market in the near future.

- Vacancy rates have generally been falling since 2009, creating a relatively tight housing market. In the first quarter of 2024, Ohio's homeowner vacancy rate dropped to 0.3%—the lowest level on record—and the following quarter the rental vacancy rate fell to a near-record low of 4.4%. By the end of the year, however, Ohio's homeowner and rental vacancy rates had improved to 1.1% and 7.2%, respectively, indicating a tight but potentially less competitive housing market in the near future.
- From 2022 to 2023, there was a 27% increase in the number of vacant units for rent, totaling nearly 80,000 available units and matching pre-pandemic levels. At

the same time there was only a three percent increase in the number of vacant units for sale. The number of homes for sale (under 24,000 in 2023) remains well below the housing stock available for homeownership in 2019 (about 36,000).

As rents increase faster than incomes, Ohio renters are finding themselves severely cost-burdened and at risk of eviction and homelessness.

- Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, rents in Ohio have been rapidly increasing. Adjusted for inflation, the median rental price for a two-bedroom apartment in Ohio increased by 22% from December 2019 (\$963 per month, in 2024 dollars) to December 2024 (\$1,174 per month). At the end of 2024, rent was higher than any month on record.
- Rent increases are also outpacing income growth for most Ohioans, regardless of where they fall in the income distribution. From 2006 to 2023, median gross rent increased 1.2 times faster than incomes for the wealthiest 20% of Ohio households, and 1.6 times faster than incomes for the bottom 20%. As such, Ohio renters are spending more relative to income. The median share of income spent on rent (29%) has been steadily increasing since before the pandemic, after a decade of decline.
- The number of Ohio renters experiencing severe housing cost burden is also on the rise. In 2023, over 397,000 Ohio renters (26%) spent at least half their income on housing—up from a record low of 23% in 2019—putting them at risk of eviction and homelessness.

While Ohio continues to build more multifamily housing, there are still not enough affordable rental units for low income Ohioans, and the gap between supply and demand is widening.

- New residential construction has been steadily increasing since 2009; however, production is still far below the norm before the Great Recession of 2008. In 2024, about 30,000 new privately-owned housing units were constructed in Ohio, representing a 24% increase from 2019.
- This construction boom is primarily driven by increased production of multifamily units (80% growth)—including condominiums and market-rate rental housing. Over the same period—by comparison—single-family housing construction only increased by 11%.
- At the same time, there has been a net loss of affordable rental housing for very low-income (VLI) Ohioans. There are more than 706,000 renters in Ohio with incomes at or below 50% of area median income (AMI), but only about 503,000 rental homes affordable and available to them—leaving a shortage of over 202,000 units.

- The affordability gap between supply and demand for VLI renters is also widening, with a net loss of over 62,000 affordable units since 2019. Closing this gap requires large-scale and sustained public investment in affordable housing development.
- There is a lack of affordable rental housing in all regions, but the situation is most dire in Central Ohio, where there are only 58 affordable and available units for every 100 renters earning no more than 50% AMI. Supply in the region is also down from 2021, when the ratio was 69 units for every 100 renters at that income level.

While serious mortgage delinquencies and foreclosures have become less frequent, evictions have returned to pre-pandemic levels, and an increasing number of Ohioans find themselves at risk of eviction and homelessness.

- Over 1.2 million Ohioans (11%) live in a household spending at least half its income on housing, putting them at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure or eviction. This includes over 496,000 people living in households that are severely mortgage-burdened and over 761,000 Ohioans living in severely rent-burdened households.
- Since returning to pre-pandemic lows in 2022, serious delinquencies on mortgage payments have become even less frequent for Ohio mortgage holders. In May 2024, the 90-day delinquency rate dropped to a record low of 1.1%. By the end of the year, the serious delinquency rate remained historically low (1.2%).
- After the expiration of the federal foreclosure moratorium, the monthly number of foreclosures in Ohio nearly doubled from December 2021 to February 2023. Since then, however, the foreclosure rate has steadily declined, dropping from 0.5% at its peak in February 2023 to 0.3% by the end of 2024.
- With the expiration of COVID-era moratoria on evictions, filings in Ohio have returned to pre-pandemic levels. In 2024, landlords filed evictions against 104,844 renters (6.5%), putting these households at risk of homelessness. The eviction filing rate was highest in Central Ohio, where 8.5% of renters faced an eviction.

As housing instability increases and affordable options remain scarce, more Ohioans are experiencing homelessness.

- On a single night in January 2024, 11,759 people were counted statewide as living in temporary housing, homeless shelters, or on the streets. This represents a 14% increase from 2019, and the highest point-in-time count of homeless Ohioans in a decade.

- There are not enough shelter beds available for individual adults who are homeless. In January 2024, there were 8,338 homeless individuals aged 18 or over counted in Ohio, but only 5,701 year-round beds in temporary housing available to them—leaving a shortage of 2,637 shelter beds. When the number of shelter beds does not keep up with demand, people are forced to sleep on in unsafe environments not meant for human habitation.

Poverty, housing instability, and homelessness remain serious concerns for Ohio’s youth.

- Ohio’s children are more likely than adults to live in poverty; 18% of the population under 18 and 19% of children under 5 are living in households below the federal poverty level – compared to 13% of the overall population. This is also higher than the national child poverty rates (16% under 18, 17% under 5).
- One in eight Ohioans under 18 (12%) live in a household spending at least 50% of its income on housing. This includes nearly 92,000 children living in households that are severely mortgage-burdened and over 219,000 living in severely rent-burdened housing.
- Homelessness among school-age children remains high. Ohio’s public and community schools reported that 31,883 students (1.8% of total enrollment) lacked a fixed, regular, and adequate place to sleep during the 2023–2024 school year. Students who experience housing instability are at higher risk for poor school performance, mental and physical health issues, and other concerns.¹ Failing to address issues of housing affordability and instability for families with school-age children will have long-term negative impacts on Ohio’s youth and ultimately the state at large.
- In 2024, one in four 19-year-olds transitioning out of foster care in Ohio (26%) reported experiencing homelessness in the prior two years, which is the highest share among Ohio’s neighboring states and a considerably higher likelihood than the national average (19%). At the same time, Ohio’s cohort of 17-year-olds exiting foster care is less likely to have recently experienced homelessness (22%) and less likely than the national cohort at that age (24%).

The state’s aging housing stock poses serious challenges to providing safe and accessible housing, especially for families with young children and Ohioans with disabilities.

- Ohio’s housing stock is relatively old. One in four housing units in Ohio (24%), were built before 1950 when the nation’s first laws banning lead-based paint were enacted—higher than the national share (16%). Northwest Ohio has the

¹ <https://nche.ed.gov/research/>

highest share of pre-1950 homes (30%). These homes are more likely to contain chipped lead paint or lead-contaminated dust, which can be ingested by young children. Having safe and quality housing improves their chances of living healthy lives.

- In 2023, 1.7 million Ohioans (17%) were living with a disability. Ohio adults are also currently more likely to have a disability than in the past—a 14% increase since 2010. Furthermore, Ohio’s prevalence rate has consistently been above the national average (16% in 2023).
- Due in part to the age of Ohio’s housing stock, 53% of housing units in the state are in buildings that require steps to enter—considerably higher than the national average (44%). This is a problem for those who have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, which is the case for 50% of Ohio adults with a disability.

As Ohio’s baby boomers age, housing options remain limited for older adults.

- Ohio’s population is relatively old. In 2023, the median age in Ohio was 40 years compared to the national median of 39. Ohio’s older adult population also continues to grow, however the rate of growth is slowing down. From 2002 to 2017, the number of Ohioans aged 55 or over increased steadily by about two percent annually—from 2,600,657 (22% of the population) to 3,550,617 (31%). Since then the annual growth rate is slowed to less than one percent since the pandemic. In 2023, there were 3.7 million older adults in Ohio, or 32% of the state population.
- Demographers predict the population aged 55 or over will peak between now and 2030. Central Ohio is the only region expected to experience an increase in the older adult population by 2030 (+8%) compared to a two percent decline statewide.
- While the 55-or-over population may be peaking this decade—as baby boomers continue to age—older population cohorts are expected to peak in the decades to come. By 2050, there will be 27% more Ohioans aged 85 or over than there are currently, which poses serious challenges to housing and caring for the elderly.
- Although the overall older adult population may soon be peaking, the number who live alone is still on the rise. More than 653,000 Ohioans aged 65 or over live alone, representing 13% of all households. Aging householders living alone face unique challenges when it comes to maintaining the cost and upkeep of homes, especially among those who wish to age in place.

- One in three Ohioans aged 65 or over also live with a disability (31%). One in five (20%) have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, and one in eight (12%) have difficulty doing errands alone. With this population cohort still growing and these disabilities becoming more prevalent with age, there is a growing need for affordable housing options that are more accessible and designed for older adults with independent living challenges.
- Older adults are more likely to be severely mortgage-burdened. One in eight mortgage holders aged 55 or over (13%) spends at least half their household income on housing. Prevalence of severe mortgage burden among older adults also increases with age. Eighteen percent of mortgage holders aged 65 or over and 24% of those aged 75 or over are severely mortgage-burdened, putting them at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure.

Despite gains in homeownership for Black Ohioans, there are still large gaps and deep disparities in housing compared to white Ohioans

- One in five Black Ohioans (20%) live in a household spending at least half its income on housing. This includes over 68,000 people living in households that are severely mortgage-burdened and nearly 275,000 living in severely rent-burdened housing.
- Black householders are far less likely to own a home, as their white counterparts (37% compared to 73%). The gap in homeownership between white and Black Ohioans, however, has narrowed slightly to 36 percentage points—matching pre-pandemic levels.
- The narrowing of this gap has been driven largely by an increase in Black homeownership—5.7% growth between 2018 and 2023—nearly three times faster than the overall homeownership rate (+1.9%).
- Both Black and white potential homebuyers in Ohio are less likely to be denied on a home purchase loan application than they were a decade ago. While the denial rate gap between them has also narrowed, Black Ohioans are still more likely to be denied (17% compared to 9%).
- Despite increased homeownership, Black Ohioans still hold a disproportionately small share of the state’s housing wealth. While 13.6% of occupied housing units in Ohio have a Black head of household, only 6.2% of total home values in the state are held by Black homeowners. Studies show that homes in Black communities tend to be undervalued compared to similar homes in majority white neighborhoods.² Furthering fair housing practices in both the mortgage lending

² <https://www.brookings.edu/events/valuing-homes-in-black-communities/>

and appraisal processes will enable Black Ohioans to build more generational wealth and achieve greater economic stability for their families.

- Black mortgage holders in Ohio are almost twice as likely to be severely cost-burdened as white homeowners with a mortgage (15% compared to 8%), placing them at greater risk of losing their homes to foreclosure.
- One in three Black renters in Ohio (32%) was severely rent-burdened in 2023, compared to one in four white renters (23%). This gap was widest in Northeast Ohio (13 percentage points), where Black renters are the most likely to spend more than half their income on housing (35%) compared to their white counterparts (22%). This puts Black renters in Ohio at increased risk of eviction and homelessness.

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FY 2026 Annual Plan Strategic Priorities

Guiding Principle 1: Create affordable and accessible housing opportunities for low- to moderate-income Ohioans through OHFA's core programs.

1.1 Encourage homeownership through increased loan volume and assistance for low- to moderate-income Ohioans.

OHFA will strive to expand affordable homeownership through new financing mechanisms and the development of products that support limited or fixed income homebuyers.

1.2 Increase the supply of accessible and affordable housing for homeownership through the development of new single-family homes for Ohioans on limited or fixed incomes.

Through the Single Family Tax Credit program, OHFA will help more Ohioans achieve the dream of homeownership by financing the increased supply of affordable single-family housing stock.

1.3 Increase the availability of affordable and accessible housing at varying income levels through both the production of new rental units and the preservation of existing affordable housing.

OHFA will use the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, the Ohio LIHTC program, the Housing Development Assistance Programs (HDAP), and other development tools to fill critical housing needs throughout the state.

1.4 Expand affordable and accessible housing opportunities for all Ohioans, by incentivizing the inclusion of multifamily units for individuals with disabilities, independent living challenges, and other special housing needs.

OHFA will continue to lead and support the administration of the Ohio 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) Program, which allows extremely low-income (ELI) renters with disabilities to live in community settings through rental subsidies and access to supportive services. Additionally, OHFA will work with developers to create affordable rental housing for Ohio seniors with independent living difficulties through the new 4% LIHTC Affordable Assisted Living (AAL) program.

Guiding Principle 2: Ensure access to quality affordable housing through compliance standards and asset management.

2.1 Maintain high-quality affordable rental housing that is responsive to resident needs and program compliance requirements.

Through physical inspections and file reviews for Compliance Audit Reports, OHFA will continue to ensure that funded projects provide affordable and accessible housing to meet the needs of Ohioans.

2.2 Prioritize compliance with the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and administer funding programs in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing to protect renters and homeowners.

OHFA will continue to prioritize and promote fair housing practices in both single and multifamily housing and remain committed to encouraging housing choice through development and preservation across revitalizing neighborhoods, historically disinvested communities, and high-opportunity areas.

2.3 Strengthen the performance and financial condition of OHFA's rental housing portfolio through asset management.

OHFA will remain committed to encouraging the maintenance of quality, affordable rental housing by working with relevant stakeholders to improve the monitoring, management, maintenance, and repositioning of assets.

Guiding Principle 3: Educate stakeholders and the public about Ohio’s housing challenges and how OHFA programs address them.

3.1 Engage with interested parties to build relationships with future partners and increase stakeholder participation in OHFA’s housing development programs.

OHFA will develop processes to engage with businesses and other potential partners that have historically been left out of the affordable housing development process. Through these relationships, OHFA hopes to improve access to resources for the development of affordable single and multifamily housing and further the Agency’s mission.

3.2 Cultivate strong partnerships outside the housing sector to promote research and informed decision-making as well as leverage funding and support for multisector approaches to increase access to affordable housing.

OHFA will remain focused on nurturing relationships and sharing expertise with community organizations, academic institutions, and other governmental agencies. By leveraging such collaborative partnerships, OHFA will further the development of innovative housing solutions that seek to improve outcomes for Ohioans.

3.3 Utilize a data-driven framework to inform programmatic and policy decisions.

OHFA will keep the public informed of affordable housing issues and the Agency’s impact across the state while also shaping public policy through research and assessment of Ohio’s housing needs.

3.4 Work to improve the wealth building capacity of LIHTC residents through financial literacy, education, and outreach.

By adjusting review criteria and requirements for existing programs; using new approaches to outreach, training, and marketing efforts to residents of existing LIHTC properties; and developing and funding wealth-building pilot programs, OHFA will increase the effectiveness of services and supports for residents in proposed and existing LIHTC communities to increase and sustain financial literacy, enabling them to build generational wealth.

Guiding Principle 4: Strengthen OHFA’s ability to carry out its mission by developing innovative approaches to a constantly changing housing landscape.

4.1 Maintain and strengthen the financial resource structures that allow OHFA to provide down payment assistance and increase access to homeownership.

OHFA will continue to monitor market conditions and examine financing strategies that allow the Agency to respond to changes and evolve as needed.

4.2 Leverage technology to increase efficiency, make interdepartmental procedures and communications within the Agency more effective, and improve the customer experience through IT updates and personalized assistance.

OHFA will continue to utilize and invest in the most up-to-date, effective, and efficient technologies and public-facing tools to improve day-to-day operations and program administration, reduce processing times, and improve data quality.

4.3 Assess internal policies and procedures to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.

OHFA will improve upon current practices to develop new ways of doing business and solving problems that allow the agency to operate as efficiently as possible while also reducing risk exposure.

4.4 Strengthen OHFA’s work culture through talent recruitment and employee engagement to sustain the Agency and its mission.

OHFA will continue to recruit and attract highly qualified staff while maintaining a healthy work culture that is committed to talent retention and employee engagement.