Affordable Housing in Chester County

In the most recent five year American Community Survey the median value of an owner occupied home was $435,000 and the median gross rent is $1,601, which is unattainable for many Chester County residents. Chester County is committed to ensuring that everyone who wants to live in this county has safe, affordable housing options available, allowing them to age in place and live near work and schools.

In 2022, DCD set an ambitious goal of adding 1,000 affordable units to the county’s inventory over 10 years. This goal comes with many challenges, including the availability of land and rising construction costs. However, through dedication and collaboration, DCD has met over 30% of that goal in the first two years, with 111 units opened and 204 under development.

1,000 units by 2032

92 PENDING

204 UNDER DEVELOPMENT

111 UNITS

111 new units have been opened since 2022.

30 households participated in the Housing Partnership of Chester County Credit Counseling program in 2023.

15 homes purchased through Habitat for Humanity of Chester County.

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Community Services

DCD-funded community service programs include street outreach, emergency shelter, training, legal assistance, financial literacy, and case management. Programs are spread throughout Chester County and assist low to moderate income residents.

Community Impact

**Financial Literacy**
Open Hearth’s Family Savings Partner program and the Financial Navigation services assisted 307 households in Chester County with financial literacy guidance and savings assistance.

**Fair Housing Training**
Housing Equality Center of PA conducted 4 fair housing trainings with 130 attendees; technical assistance and information was provided to 10 organizations; referrals and counseling were provided to 51 people.

**Prevention and Diversion**
Kennett Area Community Service Homeless Prevention & Diversion program engaged 127 households in Chester County.

**Legal Services**
Legal Aid of SE PA provided 254 individuals with housing based legal services.

**Emergency Shelter**
In 2023, Coordinated Entry Call Center received 2,073 shelter related calls. 1,261 were directed to the Chester County Street Outreach team.

Emergency Shelter
470 households were referred for emergency shelter stays in 2023. Our participating shelters include: Ann’s Heart, Community Youth and Women’s Alliance, Good Samaritan, Friends Association, Safe Harbor and W.C. Atkinson.
Construction & Public Works

Construction and public works programming funded through the Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) includes non-profit community construction and municipal infrastructure. These activities vary greatly from year to year.

Community Impact

$651,278 was awarded to Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children for the rehabilitation of trauma-informed shelter.

The main building for the Community Youth and Women’s Alliance was rehabilitated to allow for expanded emergency shelter and service delivery space with an award of $518,163 from DCD.

$519,000 was provided for Electrical and HVAC upgrades, and repairs to Phoenixville Area Community Services, and Phoenixville Area Senior Center.

Over $5,000,000 was awarded for street improvements, parking lots, stormwater and, sewer updates to 11 Chester County boroughs and the City of Coatesville.

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Housing Stabilization

Housing stabilization programs funded by the Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) are specifically designed to ensure that Chester County residents can remain stably housed. This is accomplished by providing housing repair and rehabilitation, case management, and rental and utility assistance. These programs address health and safety factors, financial stability, and access to housing supports.

In 2023, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) assisted 2,341 total households to prevent evictions and utility shutoffs. ERAP providers include Brandywine Valley Active Aging, Friends Association for the Protection of Children, Human Services, Inc., and Oxford Neighborhood Services.

446 persons and 42 households were provided housing stability case management services to ensure they remained stably housed and minimize the risk of experiencing homelessness.

In 2023, the Whole Home Repairs Program was launched. Whole Home Repairs providers received 163 applications from Chester County homeowners to the participating providers, Good Works, Good Neighbors, Habitat for Humanity, and the Housing Partnership of Chester County.

126 HOMES

Critical repairs were provided to 126 households by Good Works, Good Neighbors, and the Housing Partnership of Chester County to ensure residents remain in stable, safe, and healthy homes.
Funding Resources

The Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) provides resources and assistance to local providers throughout Chester County through grant funding, technical assistance, community outreach, street outreach and more.

Funding Streams and Community Impact

DCD is an entirely grant-funded department. DCD follows a two-year application cycle. Visit DCD’s Apply for Grants page to view current open applications. Subscribe to the DCD Newsletter to stay up to date on funding opportunities and award announcements.

- The **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** supports affordable housing development, public works, community, and nonprofit construction, public services and homeowner rehabilitation activities.
- The **HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)** is used for affordable housing construction and first-time home buyer assistance, and support for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).
- The **Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)** provides funding that assists with street outreach, homelessness prevention, emergency shelter operations, rapid rehousing, and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- The **Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)** funds are used to help Chester County nonprofit organizations set up and maintain various programs. The goal of CSBG is to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty with eligibility tied to federal poverty levels.
- The **Human Services Block Grant - Homeless Assistance Program (HSBG-HAP)** is a county-directed program that provides homeless assistance. It has five components: bridge housing, case management, rental assistance, emergency shelter and innovative supportive housing.
- The **Community Revitalization Program (CRP)** funds are directed towards Chester County’s urban centers with the goal of increasing the tax assessment and encouraging revitalization.
- The **Housing Trust Program (HTP)** Act 137 funds focus on developing affordable housing and ensuring access to vital public services and assistance for homeowners and renters.
- The **Home4Good program (H4G)** assists with the operations and administration of certain programs and provides housing stability case management through local nonprofits.
- The **Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Fund (PHARE)** supports a variety of services, including the DCD Street Outreach Emergency Response Team.

Funding Resources: Total Amount $11,170,745