



Community Housing Services Agency, Inc.

The Insider Update

Community Housing News

Volume 1, Number 6 August 2023

Historic Savannah Foundation awards Kiah House RFP to the Galvan Foundation and the City of Savannah



The Galvan Foundation and the City of Savannah have agreed to purchase the Kiah House in the Cuyler-Brownville Community. Their proposal includes working with the African Diaspora Museology Institute to “establish a Kiah-inspired creative arts program that embraces the community and its future, and thus reinstate its status as an important community asset.” Full renovations are estimated to cost \$1.2M. (The City’s portion of that cost will be subject to the approval of the City Council.)

“We are immensely pleased with the acquisition of the Kiah House by the Galvan Foundation and the City of Savannah,” said Gloria Williams, President of the Cuyler-Brownville Neighborhood Association.

Artist and owner Virginia Kiah remodeled her long-time residence in 1959 to include a museum. After Mrs. Kiah’s death in 2001, the home fell into disrepair. Seeking to save the historic landmark, the Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF)

purchased it last year and administered the RFP process that led to choosing Galvan Foundation and the City as partners to purchase and renovate the property.

“If there was such a thing as ‘my wildest dreams coming true,’ this might be the closest thing to that happening for me,” said Dr. Deborah Johnson-Simon of the African Diaspora Museology Institute.

“Kiah House once stood as a bold lesson in fortitude and a beacon for all of Savannah,” said T. Eric Galloway, Galvan President. “We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Historic Savannah Foundation, the City of Savannah, and the African Diaspora Museology Institute to invest in Cuyler-Brownville by rebuilding this historic institution.”

More information on the Kiah House

**DESIGN
for
AFFORDABILITY**

November 2018

*Four housing product solutions that
are quickly implemented,
unsubsidized,
utilize existing land and materials,
and affordable for 10% - 120% AMI.*

ULI Urban Land Institute Atlanta
Technical Assistance Panels

Looking for some fresh ideas about affordable housing design? The Urban Land Institute in Atlanta provided a great report to help housing developers with affordable options in new developments. Because the average cost of a single family home in Savannah is now \$290,815, many households with modest incomes cannot afford to buy a single family home.

The four housing development solutions in this report are quickly implemented, unsubsidized, use existing land and materials, and affordable for households with up to 120% AMI. The design solutions focus on potential co-living arrangements such as rentals with co-living spaces, accessory units and other multi-generational options. Savannah has already approved an ADU ordinance in June 2023. ([Here is a link to the new ADU ordinance from the City's zoning office.](#))

CHSA offers technical assistance to developers as well as financing opportunities for housing developments that include affordable units.

Questions should be directed to Anita Smith-Dixon at 912-651-2169.

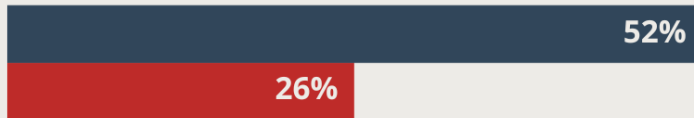
[Download ULI Report](#)

Housing Problems Renters Face

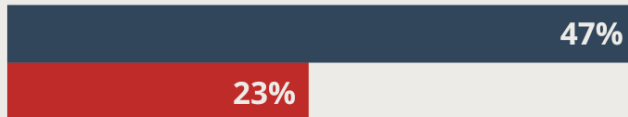
Housing problems include inadequate kitchen or bathroom facilities, overcrowding and pest infestations. And, in the summer months, housing affordability is impacted by air conditioning / electricity costs which can run over \$400 a month.

Percentage of **renters** and **homeowners** with at least one housing problem.

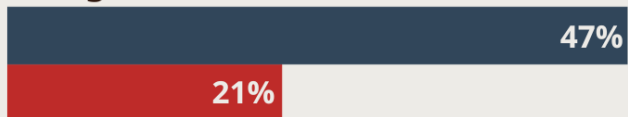
Savannah



Chatham Co.



Georgia



HIGH COSTS FORCE FAMILIES INTO SUB-STANDARD HOUSING

Unsafe rentals are common. More than half of Savannah residents (52%) have at least one housing problem, including overcrowding, high housing costs or incomplete kitchen or plumbing facilities. CHSA funding increases the number of safe AND affordable housing units.

Source: HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2022

The Savannah Agenda supports the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund using crowdfunding!



Eric Curl, editor of the *Savannah Agenda*, raised \$3000 using GoFundMe for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF). He was inspired by the City Council’s \$7M investments in affordable housing. He says, “I started the *Savannah Agenda* to encourage residents of Savannah to be active in their community. The Savannah Affordable Housing Fund is worth supporting. I wanted to call attention to that opportunity.”

Mr. Curl presented a check at a City Council meeting on March 9, 2023. He posed with representatives from CHSA, Housing Savannah, Inc., and the City's Housing and Neighborhood Services Department.

CHSA administers the SAHF. Anita Smith-Dixon of CHSA says, "This donation will help six families with home repairs. Every single donation, no matter the size, helps retain housing for persons with modest incomes."

Please consider making a donation to CHSA, in support of the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund.

Donate to CHSA!

Housing Savannah Dashboard shows \$17M invested in affordable housing through July 2023.

Housing Savannah Dashboard: January - July 2023

Total Investments	Housing Goals*	Housing YTD**	Total Investment	SAHF/City Investment	Other Investment
	650	463	\$ 17,015,032	\$ 5,398,274 32%	\$ 11,616,758 68%

City & Linked Investment	Housing Goals	Housing YTD Status	Total Investment	SAHF/City Investment	Other Investment
Home Repairs for Homeowners	221	90	\$ 811,114	\$ 744,563	\$ 66,551
Single Family Home Purchases	75	24	\$ 5,246,332	\$ 971,000	\$ 4,275,332
Single Family Home Construction	20	17	\$ 2,761,628	\$ 1,427,330	\$ 1,334,298
Rental Renovations/Construction***	60	5	\$ 23,935	\$ 23,157	\$ 778
Rental & Security Deposit Assistance	100	285	\$ 470,816	\$ 470,816	\$ -
Persons Experiencing Homelessness****	24	8	\$ 1,722,925	\$ 1,722,925	\$ -
1K-in-10 Property Acquisitions	50	2	\$ 38,483	\$ 38,483	\$ -
Total	550	431	\$ 11,075,233	\$ 5,398,274 49%	\$ 5,676,959 51%

Other Investment	Housing Goals	Housing YTD Status	Total Investment
Single Family Home Purchases GA DIM*****	10	2	\$ 458,000
Single Family Home Construction*****	15	30	\$ 5,481,799
Rental Renovations/Construction	75	0	\$ -
Total	100	32	\$ 5,939,799

The 2023 Housing Savannah Action Plan goal for the number of dwellings created or renovated is 650 units. CHSA and its partners are at **71%** of the 2023 goal. Click for more details, and contact us if you want to get involved.

[See the Dashboard](#)

Energy Costs Affect Housing Affordability

Nicole Lee of Be Smart Home Solutions provides energy audits for homeowners, and weatherization and energy efficient upgrades. CHSA is partnering with Be Smart Home Solutions to address challenges faced by homeowners with modest incomes. CHSA is actively seeking funding for energy efficient upgrades.

[Watch a video about her work.](#)



Help us share good news!

Please share our newsletter with friends and colleagues!
Each month, we bring you updates on the projects and partners who
contribute to affordable housing in Savannah!

NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

DONATE to CHSA



Our Contact Information

Community Housing
Services Agency, Inc.
20 Interchange Drive
Savannah, GA 31415
912-651-2169
EIN 58-1850981



Community Housing Services Agency, Inc.