

# Crystal Towers Overview

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- Downtown Core Location
- Construction started in 1968 and finished in 1972
- 201 Units (all one bedroom)
- Independent Living designated for *the elderly and disabled*
- *Section 9 Housing (Public): Residents Pay 30% of AGI or \$50 (~\$11,000 Average AGI)*





# Crystal Towers Overview: Staff

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Crystal is but **1 of 16** multi family communities in our portfolio (1512 units total)





# The New Model



Brookside View



Camden Station

Brown School Lofts



Oaks at Tenth





# The Old Model

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Piedmont  
Crystal  
Sunrise  
Cleveland







# The Old Model

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Piedmont; Crystal; Sunrise; Cleveland

- Product of obsolete approach and design
  - Lack of defensible space (Barracks Style)
  - Concentration of poverty (Cf. mixed-income)
  - Unforeseen consequences of deinstitutionalization
  - Disconnected from Case Management
  - Housing-Centric (no training, experience, authority to treat mental, emotional, behavioral health)
- Crystal Specifically
  - Elevator Dependency (High Rise Style)
  - Loss of symbiosis

# A National Issue & Not a New Issue

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- “Yours is not a problem unique to Winston Salem, or even NC” – Rich Monocchio, Under Secretary of HUD, while visiting Crystal Towers (2024)
- But soon the great towers erected to replace slums became slums themselves. After [the federal government] choked off funding, public housing fell into a miserable state of disrepair – *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond (2016)
- The Board’s decision comes after years of decreasing federal support to public housing agencies across the country, many of which are struggling to maintain their aging housing stock. Housing Authority CEO Larry C. Woods said, “We received an independent report less than four years ago identifying over seven million dollars in needed capital improvements at the Crystal Towers site. Our agency has neither the funds nor access to the financing mechanisms that would enable that work to be completed.” (2018)
- HUD identifies a \$72.6B in capital backlog for public housing -- *National Low Income Housing Coalition article, published 3/11/24*)



# Examples of Responses



## **Durham, NC (Local)**

- 2019 Bond for \$95M
- Coupled with \$65 in local and federal funding
- \$160M to “Forever Home, Durham” Program
- Portion of Funds Dedicated to Renovate and Preserve High Rise Public Housing

## **Cincinnati, Ohio (State)**

- November of 2024
- \$3M in Housing Development Assistance Funding Directly to Cincy Metro Housing Authority
- Authorization for up to \$25 million in (Ohio Housing Finance Agency) OHFA-issued Multifamily Housing Bonds
- Another \$3M in tax credits over 10 years



# Examples of Responses (Federal)

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## **The Federal Bill That Would Pour \$40 Billion Into NYCHA's Section 9**

**By Tatyana Turner. Published November 4, 2024**

**It's been nearly five years since the Public Housing Emergency Response Act was first introduced, without progress. But some see renewed hope in Tuesday's election, should it bring new leadership in the White House and Congress.**

# Starting Point

- Yes, aging public housing everywhere – including our "Original 4" – desperately needs modernization and has for a long time
- BUT, needing modernization is A LOT different than what was described during Council's public comment periods
- CATEGORICALLY REJECT allegations of plumbing system failures, defective work order system, non-responsiveness of management or maintenance staff
- CATEGORICALLY REJECT accusation that "nothing has been done"





# Work Order System

- **1712** Work Orders Entered and Completed at Crystal Towers in 2024
  - Report in-person to management office
  - Call management office
  - Email management office
  - Call after-hours line
  - Input online (industry software)
- Allows tracking of opening and closing of work orders
- Low Barriers to Entry for Reporting





# Referenced Fire

- Resident's Unattended Cooking Materials
- Smoke Detectors Functioned Properly & Alerted WSFD
- WSFD Responded Promptly
- Minimal Damage Limited to Single Unit
- Second Resident Evacuated Under Own Power: Medical Emergency Following Evacuation



“They have none”

## Fire Extinguishers

Multiple on Every Floor  
Routinely Inspected







# Plumbing Maintenance

- Independent Assessment (2025): "Plumbing Equipment and fixtures are generally in fair to good condition"
- 108 Plumbing Work Orders Received This Calendar Year
  - 94 closed within 24 hours
  - Most Within Same Day
    - 11 came in on weekend or holiday and were completed with 24 "business" hours
    - Other 3 required parts ordered, none longer than 4 days
- Zero Open Work Orders at Time of January Meeting. Zero Open Work Orders at Time of February Meeting
- Routine (No Pressurized Failures, Sewage Exposure)





# General Maintenance

- Passed HUD Inspection (1/30/23)
- Passed Independent Third-Party Inspection (4/03/24)
- \$607,000 spent on Maintenance in 2024
- Zero Code Violations YTD



# Petition Response

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- 101 Residents Identified in Petition
- 13 Residents Cited No Issues in Petition (Staff Confirmed)
- Of remaining 88, staff inspected every unit
- Of 88, 5 issues were confirmed
  - 83 of 88 had no existing issue
  - Residents reported citing examples of past maintenance items in petition
- Of the 5 confirmed issues, none had been previously reported
- The 5 issues:
  - Dripping Faucet (Stem Replaced within 24 hours)
  - Dripping Faucet (Stem Replaced within 24 hours)
  - Loose toilet (Tightened within 24 hours)
  - Inoperable Bathroom Exhaust Fan (Replaced within 24 hours)
  - Damaged bathroom ceiling (Repair completed within 4 days)



# Select Projects (22-Present)

Lobby Upgrade

Laundry Upgrade

Elevator Replacement

Bench Seating

Parking Lot Lighting

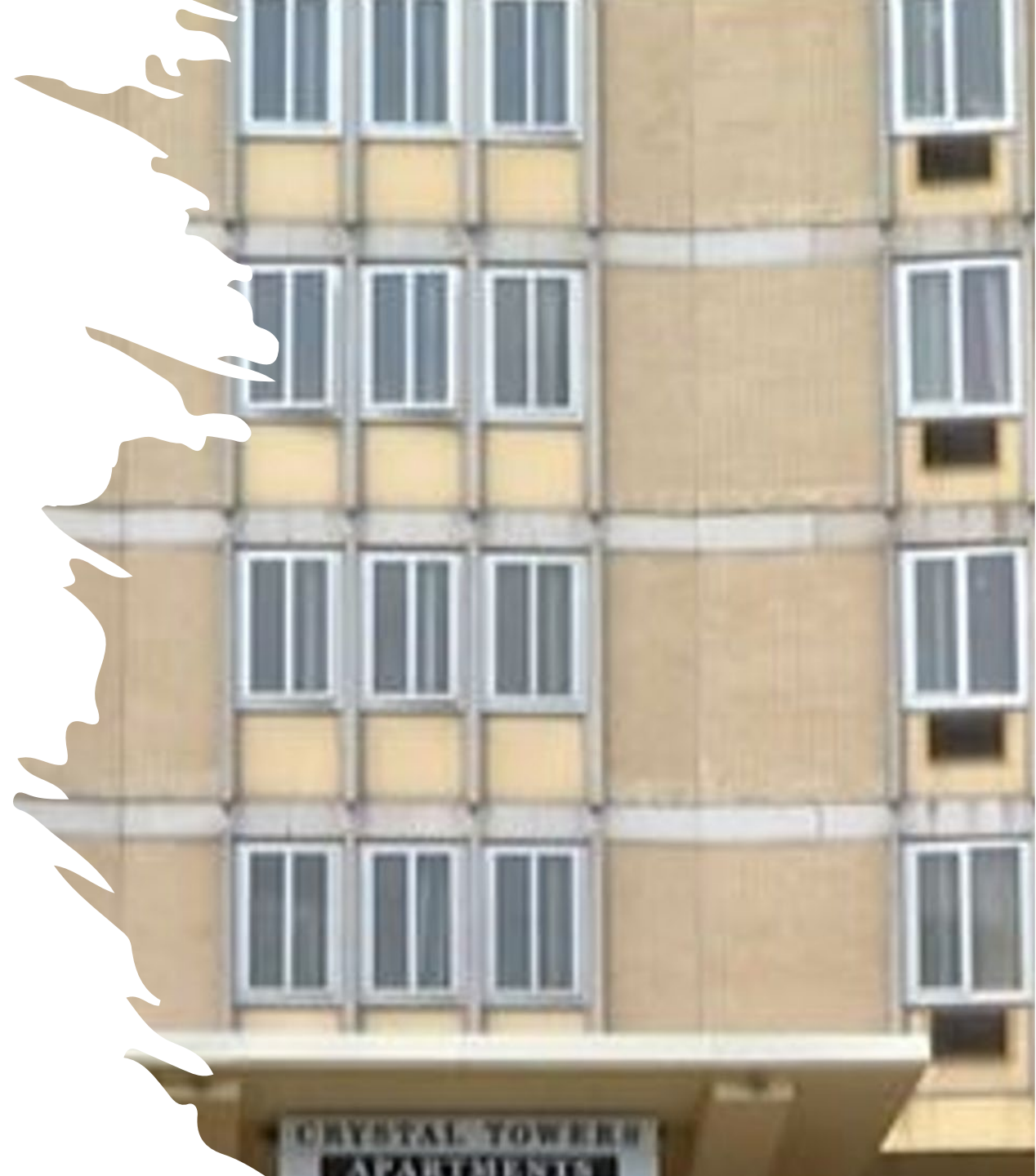
Computer Lab

Security Window

Security Doors

Courtyard Fencing

GCFI replacement



# Lighting Upgrade

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# Computer Lab





# Bench Seating Installations





New  
Elevators

# Renovated Community Room

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# Centralized & Upgraded Laundry Facilities



# Response to Capital Need Across Portfolio

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- Healy Towers Day Room Renovation
- Healy Towers Elevator Replacement
- Sunrise Towers Elevator Replacement
- Piedmont Park Roof Replacement
- Piedmont Park HVAC Replacements
- Townview Roof Replacement







# Other Recent Initiatives

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- Heights Acquisition
- King Building Renovation
- Brookside Completion
- Loewy Repositioning
- Happy Hill Phases 1 and 2
- Lansing Ridge Phases 1 and 2
- Brown School Lofts
- Bond Financing (3 Developments)







Do the best you can  
until you know better.  
Then when you know  
better, do better.

- Maya Angelou



# Communication

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- Resident Advisory Council
- Resident Advisory Board
- Community Engagement Staff
  - On-Site
- RAC Office Space
- Tangible Outcomes
  - Facilities (Projects Previously Noted)
  - Security Contractor (Staff Changes)
  - Programs (VA; Narcan; WSFD Training)



# Phased Approach

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- Phase 1: Centralize Laundry to Address Water Intrusion into Elevator (Complete)
- Phase 2: Renovate Lobby to Improve Security and Ingress/Egress (Complete)
- Phase 3: Replace Elevator System (Complete)
- Phase 4: Conduct Assessment and Develop Recommendation and Scope of Work (In-Process)
- Phase 5: Structure Financing to Implement Recommendation







# Phased Approach

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- Deliberate approach ensures proper sequencing and long-term perspective
- Avoids reactionary decision-making
- Draft assessment received
  - Awaiting recommended "starting point" scope of work and cost estimate
- We will continue to work the plan

# Moving Forward

Age, design, nature of federal programs make high rise public housing everywhere a challenge – both to operate and to live in – and it's fair to be frustrated about that

Must be honest about issues to solve them

-Histrionics are a hindrance and a distraction

Investment in building is useless if we don't invest in the people living in the building - same conditions will manifest in very short period of time