



**Initiatives and Outcomes – 2020 At-a-Glance**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Accomplished</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<b>Operations/Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV)</b>			
<b>Continue issuing the HCV program 2 Year Model to Grow Budget Authority through Increased Leasing</b>	Multi-year project to enhance and utilize HCV program 2 Year Model to maximize utilization while remaining within the allowable budget authority.	A total of 85 vouchers were issued from wait list, and 65 were leased up. This included special purpose vouchers, such as Mainstream, Family Unification and Relocation vouchers. An additional 51 vouchers were absorbed.	Continue to utilize vouchers to support COC's mission of expanding affordable housing opportunities, while maximizing HCV budget authority.
<b>Service owners and developers for purpose of managing Below Market Rate units</b>	Utilize COC expertise and resources to build upon entrepreneurial activities.	Executed an additional contract with BLT to provide affordable management services, which include marketing, wait list management, resident selection and leasing to their new property, Allure Harbor Point, A proposal was submitted to BLT for their newest community, Escape at Harbor Point.	Expand COC's revenue source to include other business activity.
<b>Rent Relief Program(s)</b>	To offer temporary rent relief to residents affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic to avoid homelessness and prevent the accumulation of insurmountable arrearages.	The Charter Oak Communities-Family Centers Rent Relief Program was created using \$115,000 of funding from Family Centers and 4CT, with all funds matched by COC. Program documents were created detailing eligibility criteria and terms. We have also created RRP 2.0, which provides one-time \$1000 credits for households who experienced a short-term financial impact from the pandemic	Continue to prevent homelessness and high arrears for residents impacted by COVID-19. To date, 25 families have been enrolled with approximately \$105,000 in program funds being dispersed. We anticipate rent relief funding to last through June 2021.
<b>Create Marketing Plan</b>	Create a marketing plan for each property that capitalizes on its unique attributes and partner with other entities to enhance and coordinate marketing efforts.	Updated leasing advertisements to generate additional leads for most properties. Advertisements displayed refreshed property graphics, property details and eligibility information. Updated information was added to our website to reflect building highlights and amenities.	The marketing plan was developed to target all income levels, with a primary focus on attracting 50% and 60% of the AMI prospects. Additionally, technological media options were considered and will be implemented as appropriate. We continue to update marketing material by development as waitlists open.
<b>Update development physical needs assessments (PNA)</b>	Update development physical needs assessments (PNA) to evaluate the current conditions of the properties and projections of short- and long-term capital needs to inform asset management decisions.	Procured the services a vendor to complete PNA's for all COC federal properties, Wormser Congregate and Scofield Manor. Services included a comprehensive assessment of all properties included along with a report.	PNA's provide valuable information regarding the current conditions of the properties. These assessments will be used to support funding request, budget development and the RAD application process.
<b>Implemented monthly on-site COVID-19 testing events at all senior buildings.</b>	Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and noting that seniors are particularly vulnerable, there was a need to provide access to regular, convenient testing to our senior residents.	We worked with community partners to schedule monthly on-site testing for all seniors. Testing is free. Residents can register easily with the help of their RSC.	COC has been able to monitor our senior sites for spread of COVID-19 to avoid exposure to staff. We have been able to work with our seniors to promote regular and frequent testing.

<p><b>Implemented on-site COVID-19 Testing events on a monthly, and later a bi-weekly basis at Scofield Manor.</b></p>	<p>As the most vulnerable of all COC properties, Scofield Manor has been greatly impacted by COVID-19. At the peak of the virus within the facility there were as many as 33 COVID positive residents and 8 employees. Tragically, two Scofield Manor residents succumbed to underlying conditions and positive COVID-19 diagnosis.</p>	<p>COC implemented strict safety protocols, which include and are not limited to recruitment of temporary staff, increased janitorial services, temporarily relocated “healthy” resident off-site to ensure their safety and create isolation areas, and very importantly coordinated frequent testing for all residents, employees and vendors.</p>	<p>The strict safety protocols, including COVID-19 testing, has been instrumental in monitoring resident and employee status and has helped to mitigate the spread of the virus within the facility.</p>
<p><b>Established a Basic Needs Pantry for our State residents</b></p>	<p>Due to financial challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, many residents struggled to afford food for their families. COC was able to apply to CHFA for a grant to establish a Basic Needs Pantry.</p>	<p>COC was able to submit two grant applications to CHFA for a total award of \$7000. COC purchased Shop Rite gift cards to distribute to residents.</p>	<p>We were able to assist 241 families combat food insecurity by providing supermarket gift cards.</p>
<p><b>Develop Maintenance Team Training</b></p>	<p>Develop measurable goals as part of the employee development process to ensure the maintenance team receives proper and up-to-day training which will allow for advancement opportunities.</p>	<p>The maintenance team engaged in a series of training sessions ranging from in-house workshops, online webinars, and off-site seminars. These training opportunities will continue to be developed and provided to ensure team members have the resources needed to perform at their fullest capacity. Maintenance staff was able to participate in online-training offered as a result of the pandemic.</p>	<p>The training program identified strengths amongst current employees that can be maximized by using this internal expertise to develop other team members. These sessions also identified areas of opportunity to focus on and the need to develop new programs.</p>
<p><b>Finance/IT/Risk Management</b></p>			
<p><b>Improve Enterprise-wide Information System (MIS)</b></p>	<p>Deploy a new system that enhances and integrates information; reduces manual intervention and data entry; improves reporting capabilities and supports decision-making at all levels of the organization.</p>	<p>Evaluated and selected MRI as our partner. Began the planning and deployment of the Finance Modules (expected completion Q2 2021) and operational modules to follow in the Q4 2021.</p>	<p>Implementation of a new MIS System will improve employee and customer functionality; provide organizational process efficiencies; and, enhance customer service options for long term business sustainability and growth.</p>
<p><b>Enhance Cyber-Security Understanding and Mitigate Risk</b></p>	<p>Develop a robust cyber-security program including analyses and system monitoring and improved employee awareness through on-going training and communication.</p>	<p>Deployed e-mail encryption software; delivered 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National “Cyber-Awareness Month” with several training and engagement events with a special focus on security in the remote work environment; reviewed and renewed Cyber-Insurance policy to mitigate risk and limit liability.</p>	<p>Advance the industry best practices related to Cybersecurity Awareness to mitigate identified and potential risks and create a “Security First” culture at COC. Ensure system security using technology and protect confidential and sensitive data through continuing education efforts.</p>
<p><b>Provide Robust and Secure IT Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Develop a modernized and secure infrastructure that harnesses new information delivery models to enhance voice, network, data and video capabilities, providing secure platforms for communication and business critical data and IT assets.</p>	<p>Installed fiber at Headquarters location, secured redundant Internet route and seamless failover, implemented advanced network monitoring tools and provided secure Wi-Fi. Installed IP Phones at headquarters and remote sites.</p>	<p>Provide a robust, secure and stable IT Infrastructure. Ensure data and systems are reliable, accessible and safe to meet current and future business needs.</p>
<p><b>Support a Proactive Risk On Management Program</b></p>	<p>Proactively assess and manage our insurance needs to ensure proper coverage levels and coverage that protects our physical assets.</p>	<p>Reviewed and renewed all policies and altered coverage where necessary; provided training to senior staff and the Board on related insurance coverages and limitations; created an on-line training module (on Litmos) for new members; continued to deploy our Safety Committee and review organizational policies and procedures to enhance risk management.</p>	<p>Evaluate and mitigate potential risks through conscientious insurance policy and risk control management, using a consultant familiar with the real estate industry and best practices, for the benefit of residents while meeting financial and regulatory obligations of the organization.</p>
<p><b>Investments in New Software</b></p>	<p>Select, implement and manage innovative software applications that conserve resources and/or provide higher quality and more reliable service levels to the end-user and customer.</p>	<p>Evaluate and select new software to increase efficiency and effectiveness, including Litmos (a learning management system), Insight (a budget and financial reporting solution), Call Max (an automated communication system), Avid (vendor payment solution), and File Vision (an on-line file management system).</p>	<p>Improved the use of resources through automation efforts, which allowed the redeployment of staff resources to areas of higher need and improving customer service.</p>

<b>Internal Process Improvement and Resource Reviews</b>	Perform internal reviews of program and expense areas for enhanced compliance, controls and cost savings opportunities.	Finance and IT performed 6 internal reviews. Some of the areas reviewed included contract compliance, travel policy, portability billing and collection process, 1099 TIN review for IRS compliance and ADP time and attendance.	On-going formal Internal Review Plan ensures compliance with policies and procedures. It supports a continuous improvement cycle on an organization-wide basis.
<b>Provide additional payment options for vendors</b>	Rollout of ACH and other payment options to reduce inefficiencies and improve vendor service.	Implemented Avid, a technology solution that processes payments and gives vendors the choice of payment method (check, ACH, Procurement Card).	Providing alternatives for vendor payments increases staff efficiency, saves money and improves vendor relations.
<b>Maximize Investment Income</b>	Continue to implement the Investment Policy by ensuring that all idle funds are invested in insured or collateralized instruments that maximize return.	Proactive tracking and monitoring of idle funds to maximize interest income using allowable investments per the adopted COC Investment Policy.	Maximum potential interest income was generated by investing idle cash (in allowable alternative higher earning instruments. Interest income benefits all the individual properties/programs at COC.
<b>Support COC Business Development Activities</b>	Prepare responses to RFP opportunities. Structure the responses to ensure that program goals are achieved.	Prepared cost/profit estimates for proposals for Affordable Housing Management Services to ensure we maintain our profit margin goals for the BMR Program business initiative.	COC is fulfilling a private market niche in a sustainable cost structure using separate financial ledgers and profit center tracking mechanisms to ensure adequate controls.
<b>Financial Reporting and Analyses</b>	Supplement monthly financial reporting to aid in management decision-making and strategic planning.	Continued to improve the quarterly financial reporting package to include ratio analyses, dashboards, benchmarks and out-year forecasting.	Provide enhanced financial and operational data to senior management and the COC Board to better identify areas of superior or average performance and set financial and operational goals.
<b>Financial Statement Audits</b>	Complete all audits to ensure good fiduciary controls and regulatory compliance to improve NOI and balance sheet ratios for all properties and programs.	Issued all audits in a timely manner with an unqualified opinion.	Provides confidence to stakeholders that the integrity of financial statements is excellent and that internal controls are sufficiently robust.
<b>Human Resources</b>			
<b>Administer Employee "Climate" Survey</b>	Assess the engagement level of all employees at COC.	Compared 2019 & 2018 survey results and identified areas of improvement. Presentation of results was presented to employees. In addition to presentation, information on the variances year to year was obtained.	In areas of weakness COC developed targeted initiatives to ensure improvements. In the 2019 survey communication between departments increased from 58% to 75%, with a positive variance of 17%
<b>ADP modules</b>	Optimize ADP Modules that will improve personnel processing.	Continue to develop modules to increase employee and manager self-service options to streamline and standardize personnel actions.	Ongoing development to ensure utilization of modules to fullest capacity.
<b>Housing Development &amp; Preservation</b>			
<b>Westwood and Palmer Square</b>	Refinance FHA mortgages for both properties	Completed refinance of FHA first mortgages for both properties, achieving significant reductions in debt service costs	Contributes to financial stability and long term sustainability of these developments and neighborhood
<b>Lawnhill Terrace 3</b>	Revitalize Lawnhill Terrace 3 community.	Completed renovation of 52 affordable apartments. Expanded management office to create community space	Revitalization has preserved and significantly upgraded public housing property.
<b>Lawnhill Terrace 4</b>	Revitalize Lawnhill Terrace 4 community	Received State and City funding commitments for Phase 4 (34 units). Relocated all remaining residents.	Revitalization will preserve and significantly upgrade public housing property.
<b>Rippowam Manor</b>	Renovate and refinance existing senior development	Commenced comprehensive renovation of 81 unit senior development.	Renovations will preserve and upgrade aging affordable housing resource.
<b>Glenbrook Manor</b>	Renovate and refinance existing senior development	Commenced comprehensive renovation of 44 unit senior development.	Renovations will preserve and upgrade aging affordable housing resource.

<b>Oak Park</b>	Renovate existing family development.	Continued planning and predevelopment for renovations of 168 family units. Obtained funding commitments in excess of \$2 million.	Renovations will preserve and upgrade aging affordable housing resource.
<b>Scattered Sites Disposition</b>	Obtain relocation vouchers for six resident households. Sell three, two-family homes at market prices	Successfully relocated all residents. Sold three properties for above asking price	Sale proceeds will support operation of public housing and Section 8 programs.
<b>RAD Application</b>	Convert five public housing developments to Project-Based Section 8 rental assistance	Received CHAP award for first five proposed conversions. Continued work on all five proposed conversions	Conversion will increase long term financial stability and reliability of subsidy flow.
<b>Resident Services</b>			
<b>Expand Resident Services by Expanding Program Space</b>	Provide space to various resident service programs.	COC has enhanced resident service delivery by providing meeting space for all Resident Service Coordinators to use at the individual and group level. This space has also been used to host reoccurring events such as the "Homework Club" and special events such medical wellness checks and cultural celebrations.	The provision of site-based program spaces has allowed COC to reinforce its commitment to resident services and community engagement.
<b>Conduct collaborative workshops with Resident Service Coordinators (RSCs) and Property Management (PM).</b>	Conduct collaborative team meetings with RSCs and PM to exchange knowledge of COC policies and practices in order for the RSCs to better support and advise residents.	Collaborative workshops were held throughout FY2019. Workshop topics included US Census, United Way 211 and team building activities.	Strengthening the partnership between the RSCs and PM will equip both teams to better serve residents.
<b>Community Impact</b>			
<b>Vita Health and Wellness Partnership</b>	Create strong, enduring and effective collaboration of community agencies and interests in furtherance of the social determinants of health	Formalized (and grew) Vita Partnerships with unanimously accepted Memorandum of Understanding, refinement of the Practice Book, expansion to citywide status and initial steps toward joint venture with Cradle to Career. Expanded to Vita Community Table during the Covid-19 pandemic to help	Vita has become the de facto "human services council" based upon a place-based, prevention focused, collective impact model of multi-sector collaboration. Vita played a uniquely valuable role in enhancing a community-level response, of social service agencies, to the Covid-19 pandemic
<b>Fairgate Farm - Array of Programs</b>	Develop Fairgate Farm into a sustainable, thriving and essential part of the Stamford community fabric centered on the values of health and wellness	Celebrated Fairgate Farm's 10 <sup>th</sup> anniversary during the pandemic, by adapting programs and practices to CDC guidelines. Dramatically increased Market volumes, volunteer support and educational programming using social distancing and virtual applications. Obtained numerous grants for special programs and facility improvements	Fairgate Farm continues to gain recognition as Stamford's premier source of locally grown healthy food and as a center for wellness, healthy lifestyle and community building. As with Vita, above, the Farm played a uniquely valuable role in supporting the community's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
<b>"Parents as Co-Educators" Initiative</b>	Reduce achievement gap in children of non-native families by increasing parent participation, coupled with rigorous measurement and evaluation practices	Continued implementation of successor programs to the original "Co-Ed" design, including New Connections and Bridge to K.	Results continue to show acceleration in kindergarten readiness of treatment families and reduction of potential achievement gap with indicators for sustained impact.
<b>Stamford - "Cradle to Career" (SC2C) Initiative</b>	Oversee Community Task Force (CTF) to engage community-based providers and residents in supporting, informing and responding to SC2C. CTF is committed to four campaigns, centered on Food Security, Racial Equity, Family Engagement and	Took initial steps toward aligning Vita partnership with SC2C based upon similar approaches and mutual commitment to the social influencers of health and education. SC2C progress has been impacted by Covid-19 pandemic.	CTF Campaigns have established traction and buy-in across multiple silos. CTF is in process of adapting to the "new normal" of constraints on public education imposed by the pandemic.
<b>Administration</b>			

<b>COC Website</b>	Engage residents, community members and policy makers in the work of COC through use of the COC website; Enlist both residents and staff to communicate the mission, role and progress of program and resident COC activities.	Continued to update residents, stakeholders and community members on a range of topics including useful COVID-19 Rent Relief program, Centers for Disease Control guidance, development progress and COC internal initiatives.	Ensured that residents and the broader community had a broader awareness of COC's mission; closely monitored COVID-19 precautions to help avoid the spread of illness.
<b>Communicate between Collaborative Partners</b>	Circulate materials to and between partner organizations to share vital information and forge collaborative solutions	Function has increased in importance with the expansion of community level partnerships, including Special Weekly Vita Community Table meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairgate Farm, CAMH Campaign, SC2C and many other collaborative programs.	Ensured that collaborative partners were effectively linked and coordinated to become an ever-stronger innovative network to support each other in response to current issues and challenges.
<b>Increase Grant Funding</b>	Improve capacity to identify grant opportunities for all aspects of COC Programs and to prepare professional and detailed applications for funding.	Completed drawdown and reports: - AARP Community Challenge \$9,800; - AARP Livable Communities \$2,500; - CT Farm Viability \$21,000; - EPA Heaps for Health Composting Grant \$25,000; - Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) COVID-19 extension to 9/30/2021;	Supported grant implementation; streamlined internal controls on required reports and drawdowns. In specific, strengthen working relationship with Farm Manager to assure farm needs and grant opportunities can be best coordinated.
<b>Strategy &amp; Capacity Development</b>			
<b>Board of Commissioner/Senior Staff Organizational Development</b>	Implemented Board of Commissioner strategic planning process, new member recruitment, leadership transition and training initiatives	Engaged and supported Board in their oversight roles and increased collaboration with senior staff on establishing Core Objectives, successfully attracting new Board and Advisory Board members, transition of chairmanships and launching a training/onboarding initiative (LITMOS)	Process has focused the attention and involvement of Board members and collaboration with senior staff in a thoughtful, inclusive process to build stronger participation and sustainable membership.
<b>Dovetail – A Social Innovation Platform</b>	Continued to build Dovetail as an essential participant in supporting collaboration, evaluation, communication and funding.	Consolidated all COC social enterprise initiatives (Vita, Fairgate Farm, SC2C, Anchor networks) under the umbrella of Dovetail: SIP, Inc.	Dovetail has increased its profile as a valuable entity, within the COC Family, by adding strengthening diverse efforts at addressing complex social challenges
<b>Address Changes in Governmental Policy</b>	Participated in state-wide, regional and local affordable housing development advocacy efforts	Increased involvement in regional and local advocacy initiatives through Fairfield County Housing Alliance and Stamford Affordable Housing Plan task force, respectively.	Progressive recommendations will continue to inform and enable sensible priorities for the development and preservation of affordable housing.