



ANNUAL REPORT 2024- 2025

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the County of Kern is comprised of seven community members who volunteer their time to provide leadership and direction for the Agency.



Raju Jassar
Chariman-2nd District



Ingrid Lake
Vice-Chair- 1st District



Carlos Baldovinos
Commissioner- 3rd District



Jessica Janssen
Commissioner- 4th District



Carter Beardsley
Commissioner- 5th District



Maurice Preston
Tenant-Commissioner



Jerry Winkle
Tenant-Commissioner

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STATEMENT

During the past year, we continued to make significant progress in expanding resources to achieve our mission while at the same time facing challenges in the effective implementation of existing programs. We were challenged with the turnover of two key administrative positions (Personnel and Finance Directors), extended shortfall status in our voucher program followed by a last-minute increase in funding, and difficulty recruiting and filling some positions. Despite these challenges, our team continued to further our mission and provide essential housing and support to an increasing number of households in need.

In addition to the daily activity of providing affordable housing to over 25,000 Kern County residents, during FY 2024/25, our employees achieved the following special accomplishments:

- Through the Authority and our affiliated non-profits, we continue to aggressively pursue affordable housing development with 131 units in predevelopment with at least one committed funding source, 351 units currently under construction, 114 units under modernization, and another 213 units to begin modernization in the next year.
- Submitted successful applications for \$71,026,421 in funding for future affordable housing developments (new construction and modernization).
- Completed the full roll out of the Building Hope program with over 1,000 participants enrolled.
- Completed the construction and lease up of the Renaissance at Baker, CityServe, Haley Street Apartments, and Oregon Street Apartments and the rehabilitation of Adelante Vista RAD, Delano RAD, Maganda RAD, and Milagro RAD.

OUR MISSION

Improve the quality of life for low-income residents of Kern County by providing safe, affordable housing and assisting residents towards self-sufficiency and homeownership

2024-2025 HIGHLIGHTS



256

Number of Formerly Homeless Persons Placed in Housing



144

Number of Veterans Receiving Housing



12

Housing Authority Families Who Became First Time Homeowners



3,582

Affordable Rental Units Owned/Managed by Agency



\$131,697

Total Disbursed in Family Self-Sufficiency Escrow



1,035

Residents Receiving/Participating in Supportive Services



16

Number of College Scholarship Recipients



10

Number of Family Self-Sufficiency Graduates:



210

Total Number of Agency Employees



9,854

Households on Public Housing Waiting List



\$52,532,204

Total Housing Rental Assistance Paid



5

Number of New Affordable Housing Developments Constructed

HOUSING AUTHORITY & CITYSERVE CELEBRATE THE GRAND OPENING OF ELEVATE APARTMENTS



On July 8, 2025, the Housing Authority of the County of Kern and CityServe Network welcomed community leaders, partners, and stakeholders to the official Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Elevate Apartments, a first-of-its-kind supportive housing development located at 3201 F Street in Downtown Bakersfield. This event marked a significant step forward in addressing homelessness in Kern County by offering a pathway toward healing, stability, and long-term independence.

Held in the CityServe building, the celebration brought together elected officials, project partners, service providers, and community members to tour the newly completed facility and learn more about the comprehensive vision behind the project. The program featured remarks from Mayor Karen Goh, CityServe Co-Founder Wendell Vinson, and Housing Authority Executive Director Stephen Pelz, each emphasizing the shared mission to bring hope and opportunity to Kern County residents.

Elevate Apartments is a 126-unit community designed specifically for individuals experiencing homelessness who are actively seeking stability and a fresh start. The complex includes one-bedroom units, gated entry, 24/7 security and surveillance, and a robust network of on-site support services. These services ranging from faith based and community gatherings to practical resources create an environment where residents can rebuild their lives with dignity and support. The project reflects a holistic and collaborative approach to addressing homelessness by pairing safe, quality housing with structured care, mentorship, and wraparound service.

As the first development of its kind in the region, Elevate stands as a testament to what is possible when organizations, community partners, and local leaders come together with a shared vision to uplift those in need. The Housing Authority remains committed to expanding innovative housing solutions like Elevate as part of our mission.

VOUCHER PROGRAM ENDS SHORTFALL

After enduring a shortfall of Housing Choice Voucher funds for most of 2024 and part of 2025, in April 2025, the Housing Authority learned it was no longer in shortfall status and could resume issuing vouchers. HUD does not provide sufficient funding to utilize all the vouchers available in Kern County and only provides a fraction of the vouchers needed in our communities. That's why our voucher waiting list is typically closed and families must wait years for the chance to be selected. When a housing authority is in shortfall status, it is even more challenging as there is not funding available to issue vouchers even to replace households who have exited the program. So, the end of the shortfall was very good news for Kern County and the Housing Authority has been working hard since April to issue as many vouchers as current funding allows. This means more families can find safe affordable housing and an increase in investment in our community.

RAD UPDATE

Fiscal year 2024/25 marked a period of significant progress for the Authority's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) portfolio, reflecting the continued commitment to advancing the preservation and modernization of affordable housing across Kern County. A major highlight was the completion of the rehabilitation work at four RAD sites: Adelante Vista RAD, Delano RAD, Maganda Park RAD, and Milagro Del Valle RAD. Bringing four projects to completion within a single calendar year is a notable accomplishment for the Authority and underscores the coordination among development, construction, asset management, and property management teams.

Adelante Vista RAD reached construction completion in April 2025. Similarly, Delano RAD completed construction in January 2025 and achieved 100% occupancy by March 2025.

Maganda Park RAD also completed construction in January 2025 and reached 100 percent occupancy upon completion. Milagro Del Valle RAD, the fourth project to finalize construction during the year, reached completion in June 2025.

Other notable accomplishments include Letzring Gardens (one of two sites to replace Plaza Towers & Annex), which began construction in April 2025, and HUD conditional approval to move forward with the Little Village RAD conversion. Letzring is expected to be completed in October 2026 and Little Village RAD will begin modernization in June 2026.



Milagro Del Valle Community Room



Adelante Vista

RENAISSANCE AT BAKER: A NEW CHAPTER IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR OLD TOWN KERN



On June 16, 2025, the Housing Authority of the County of Kern, in partnership with the Cesar Chavez Foundation, proudly celebrated the grand opening of Renaissance at Baker (RAB), an 85-unit affordable housing community located in the heart of Bakersfield's historic Old Town Kern neighborhood. The ceremony opened with remarks from Executive Director Stephen Pelz, who welcomed guests and highlighted the collaborative efforts that made the development possible. He was followed by Mayor Karen Goh, Councilmember Andrae Gonzales, and Kern High School District Principal/Director Mark Wyatt, each emphasizing the positive impact RAB will have on families, youth, and the broader community. Cesar Chavez Foundation Executive Vice President Alfredo Izmajtovich also spoke about the importance of housing that supports stability, opportunity, and neighborhood investment. A ribbon cutting, photos, and unit tours concluded the celebration.

Renaissance at Baker offers one-, two-, and three-bedroom homes, with 84 units reserved for households earning below 60% AMI, along with community amenities and neighborhood improvements such as a Job Spot employment center, new bus stops, bike lanes, and urban greening. Designed by Y&M Architects and managed by the Housing Authority, the development reflects the agency's commitment to building safe, modern, and sustainable housing for local families. The project was funded through HCD's Accelerator and Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities programs, Banc of California, and the City of Bakersfield, and constructed in partnership with the Cesar Chavez Foundation.

This development represents a major step forward in creating safe, modern, and connected housing opportunities for Kern County families, advancing the Housing Authority's mission to support stability, self-sufficiency, and thriving communities.

BUILDING HOPE GRADUATE

When Lareina Lopez joined the Building Hope Program in January 2023, she was among our earliest participants and a dedicated single mother of two daughters. At the time, Lareina was receiving CalWORKs and Food Stamps, but she was determined to build a stable and independent future for her family. From the start, Lareina fully embraced the program. She set clear quarterly goals focused on becoming self-sufficient, securing full-time employment, improving her budgeting and debt-management skills, and learning about homeownership. She actively engaged in every opportunity made available to her, participating in online financial literacy courses and attending as many of the program's monthly workshops on credit, employment, education, and homeownership as she could.

Lareina's hard work paid off. In July 2024, she began working for Winn Residential as an Assistant Property Manager at Summerhill Family Apartments. Even as she transitioned into full-time employment, she remained committed to her growth- staying in regular communication, reporting changes, and continuing to learn through workshops and financial empowerment courses.

In July 2025, Lareina took a courageous step toward complete independence: she voluntarily gave up her housing assistance, expressing that others might need the help more than she did. She made this decision without knowing that the program offers a \$600 incentive for participants who reach that milestone. Shortly after, she received the incentive and proudly graduated from the Building Hope Program.

Her determination, resilience, and commitment to self-improvement have been inspirational. In just a short time, she achieved extraordinary progress-transitioning from public assistance to stable employment and financial independence. Her accomplishments reflect not only her personal strength but also her dedication to creating a better future for her daughters. Lareina's story exemplifies the mission of the Building Hope Program. We are confident she will continue to do great things for herself, her family, and her community.



LETZRING GARDENS GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY



On May 19, 2025, the Housing Authority of the County of Kern proudly celebrated the groundbreaking of Letzring Gardens, a transformational new senior housing community located at 4215 Letzring Lane in Bakersfield. The event marked a significant milestone in the agency's ongoing commitment to expanding high-quality, affordable housing opportunities for Kern County's older adults. The ceremony drew community leaders, project partners, and local officials who came together to commemorate the start of construction. Assistant Executive Director Heather Kimmel opened the event with welcoming remarks, highlighting the importance of the development and the collaborative efforts that brought it to fruition. Distinguished guest speakers included Mayor Karen Goh and Councilmember Eric Arias, both of whom emphasized the City's continued support for housing initiatives that address the growing needs of local seniors. Formal recognitions were also presented by representatives from the Office of Senator Melissa Hurtado and the Office of Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Bains, further highlighting broad support for the project.

Letzring Gardens is designed to replace Plaza Towers and Plaza Towers Annex, both long-standing Low Income Public Housing communities serving seniors. Once completed, the development will offer 150 new one-bedroom and studio apartment homes, all deeply affordable for households earning below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Residents will benefit from modern amenities including outdoor activity areas, a community building, an activity room, a services office, an exercise facility, and on-site laundry. These features reflect the Housing Authority's commitment to creating safe, accessible, and service-rich living environments that support health, stability, and aging in place. The project is made possible through the generous support and partnership of numerous funding entities, including Bank of America, the City of Bakersfield's Public Safety and Vital Services Loan, Permanent Local Housing Allocation, American Rescue Plan Act funds, HOME and HOME-ARP, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, the California Community Reinvestment Corporation, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Letzring Gardens represents more than a new development; it signifies a renewed investment in dignity, stability, and opportunity for local seniors. As construction moves forward, the Housing Authority remains dedicated to ensuring that every resident who will one day call Letzring Gardens home has access to quality, affordable housing that meets their needs and strengthens our community.

2025-2029 FIVE YEAR GOALS

At the annual Board workshop in November 2024, the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners established new Five-Year goals for the Authority for 2025-2029. These goals are aspirational goals that motivate our team to reach new levels of performance and help further our mission. Below are the 2025-2029 goals:

2025-2029 Goals
Reduce employee turnover by 10% (excluding retirements)
Increase average participant income in our Building Hope program by 10% per year
Provide Permanent Supportive Housing to at least 1,500 more persons experiencing homelessness by 2029
Create 750 new affordable homes
Hire 50 participants/residents
Assist 100 households in obtaining homeownership
Provide outstanding customer service as measured by 75% satisfaction on customer surveys
Achieve positive cash flow at all properties
Increase local reserves to \$10,000,000
Explore alternative housing types
Improve employee satisfaction as measured by annual employee survey

We track our progress towards these goals on a quarterly basis and are well on our way to achieving many of the goals.



GOALS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025



Operating Revenue	
Tenant Rents	\$8,739,819
Project Fees	\$755,202
Other Revenue	\$10,145,938
Total Operating Revenue	\$19,640,959

Operating Expenses	
Administrative Salaries	\$5,706,417
Employee Benefits Administrative	\$3,115,501
Utilities	\$2,236,893
Ordinary Maintenance/Operations	\$5,170,144
Protective services	\$558,710
Pilot	\$57,306
Insurance	\$518,053
Asset Management fees	\$70,810
Bad debt	\$90,992
Management Fees	\$2,176,686
Bookkeeping Fee	\$389,812
Tenant Services - Salaries	\$2,200,742
Employee Benefit - Tenant Services	\$643,131
Other General Expenses	\$10,245,981
Extra Ordinary Maintenance	\$1,229,924
Depreciation	\$2,121,348
Total Operating Expenses	\$36,532,450
Operating Income (Loss)	\$-16,891,491

NON-Operating Revenue and Expenses	
Operating Grant Revenue	\$20,456,334
Investment Income	\$506,311
Interest Expense	\$-125,065
Gain (Loss) Sale of Capital assets	\$11,432
Transfers Between Programs and Projects	\$48,835,298
Housing Assistance Payments	\$-45,505,239
Total Non-Operating Revenue/Expenses	\$24,179,071
Income (Loss) Before Capital Contribution	\$7,287,580

Change in Net Assets	
Capital Grants	\$0
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$7,287,580
Net Assets 07/01/2024	\$114,879,380
Prior Period Adjustments	\$-844,841
Net Assets 06/30/2025	\$121,322,119