



Transition Age Youth Supportive Housing Development: Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS THE CUYAHOGA TAY¹ SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT?

The Cuyahoga TAY development is a new, 50-unit supportive housing development for young adults ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness. Supportive housing combines safe, stable, and non-time-limited affordable housing with services designed to support young adults in reaching their goals.

The Cuyahoga TAY development combines the expertise of young adults with lived experience of homelessness and housing instability with the skills of established housing partners with a track record of success. Partners include: A Place 4 Me, REACH Youth Action Board, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland, Enterprise Community Partners, CHN Housing Partners, EDEN, Inc., and FrontLine Service.

Currently in the development phase, we anticipate opening the doors to young adults in summer 2023. The development will include both one and two-bedroom units to serve parenting young people and their children.

WHAT DOES “TRANSITION AGE YOUTH” MEAN? WHO WILL LIVE IN THE CUYAHOGA TAY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT?

Transition Age Youth (TAY) are young people ages 18 to 24, an age range that encompasses the transition from adolescence into adulthood. This timeframe is a critical period of brain development characterized by innovation and creative thinking, the importance of relationships with others, growing abilities to think critically and regulate emotions, and learning through supported risk-taking. The young adults who will live in the Cuyahoga TAY development are striving for the stability of a home to help them accomplish their hopes, dreams, and plans for the future. These young adults have experienced homelessness as the result of system failures, an insufficient safety net, racism, and/or discrimination due to sexual orientation or gender identity. Local and national data show that homelessness disproportionately impacts young adults who are Black, who identify as LGBTQ, and who have prior experience with public systems, including child welfare and juvenile justice.

Residents will be identified for housing in the development in partnership with Coordinated Intake (the front door to our county's homeless services), with prioritization based on length of time experiencing homelessness, disability status, and other challenges young people are experiencing.

WHAT IS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING?

Supportive housing is a national model and best practice for ending long-term homelessness. The model links decent, safe, affordable housing with flexible, voluntary support services designed to help an individual stay housed, meet their goals, and thrive in the community. Barriers to accessing housing are low, meaning that the priority is to get individuals into housing first where they can then access the services they need. Supportive housing is increasingly recognized as a promising practice for tackling youth homelessness and especially effective when targeted to young people most likely to benefit from on-site support services. While this housing is non-time-limited, we anticipate that most young adults will move on after stabilizing in housing and making progress toward their goals.

¹“Cuyahoga TAY” is a working title. The building will be named with the input of young adults at a future date.



WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE THE TAY APARTMENT BUILDING/WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE INSIDE THE BUILDING?

The Cuyahoga TAY Development will provide housing first, followed by support services – giving individuals space for recovery from the trauma of homelessness and the events that may have led to it, along with young adult-identified support services. Services may include physical and mental health care, employment and education supports, conflict and family mediation, and other services to help residents maintain stable housing and move successfully into the future.

The building will include one- and two-bedroom apartments that come with basic furnishings for each resident. Each resident signs a lease, just like any private market apartment. For the security of the residents, there is a 24-hour front desk with monitoring. Preliminary building plans include a training kitchen to support life skills development; indoor and outdoor play areas to provide safe places to play; a computer room to support residents' educational and employment efforts; property management and service spaces on the first floor; and additional private counseling spaces on the upper floors. Plans also include outdoor space for residents to enjoy and relax, such as a basketball court and an outdoor seating area.

HOW HAVE YOUNG ADULTS INFORMED THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

We recognize young adults as experts in their own experiences and in what they need to be successful. Young people have shared insight to inform the need for, creation, and design of the development, and will continue to serve as collaborators throughout the building and service design processes. The REACH Board is the Youth Action Board of A Place 4 Me, comprised of young adults with lived experience of homelessness, housing instability, and/or child welfare. Supportive housing for young adults was first identified as a priority by REACH. REACH has advised on site location, building design, evaluating success, and more, with additional input gathered from residents of North Point Youth Shelter.

HOW DO YOU KNOW SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKS?

Supportive housing is a well-researched and proven solution for helping those with ongoing experiences of homelessness access housing. Our partners have a strong track record of providing permanent supportive housing to end long-term homelessness in Cuyahoga County through the Housing First Initiative. As we turn to a young adult development, we continue to monitor federal guidance and best-practices for serving young adults, including learning from peers in Ohio already engaged in this work.

WHAT MAKES THE TAY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UNIQUE?

- **Core values:** The Cuyahoga TAY Development is guided by the core values of youth leadership, racial and LGBTQ equity, hospitality, highly-relational, and flexibility.
- **Collaboration:** Our partners bring a unique stability, institutional knowledge, and adaptability from our collective experience with the long-standing Housing First Initiative to collaborate with young adult experts for a better process and final product.
- **Tailored to young adults:** The Cuyahoga TAY Development will meet young adult residents where they are, recognizing their developmental stage in life and helping them achieve their individual and self-identified goals related to housing stability, education and/or employment, and well-being.

HOW WILL THE TAY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT BE FUNDED?

The Cuyahoga TAY Development will be funded by a number of different sources, including the private sector, federal, state, and local governments, and philanthropy. The federal Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) grant program presents a significant opportunity for ongoing funding for operations and services and our partners will work to secure these funds, including participating in the community planning process used to assign funding.

WHERE WILL THE BUILDING BE LOCATED?

The proposed site for the Cuyahoga TAY Development was selected in collaboration with all partners. Site selection began with a thoughtful list of priorities determined by young adults. The centrally located site is convenient to public transportation, employment opportunities, daycare, and other needed services.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

For more information, please contact Kevin Nowak of CHN Housing Partners (knowak@chnhousingpartners.org) or Elaine Gimmel of EDEN, Inc. (egimmel@edencle.org).