

# NCSHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry Form

(Complete one form for each entry)

**Deadline: Wednesday, June 15, 2016**

Visit [ncsha.org/awards](http://ncsha.org/awards) to view the Annual Awards Call for Entries.

**Instructions:** Type entry information into the form and save it as a PDF. Do not write on or scan the form. If you have any questions contact [awards@ncsha.org](mailto:awards@ncsha.org) or 202-624-7710.

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

**Entry Name:** Leveraging Results: 2015 Report on Achievements

**HFA:** North Carolina Housing Finance Agency

**Submission Contact:** (Must be HFA Staff Member) Connie Helmlinger **Email:** cshelmlinger@nchfa.com

Please provide a 15-word (maximum) description of your nomination to appear on the NCSHA website.

Leveraging Results communicates a powerful message to busy lawmakers quickly with concise text, eye-catching photos and cutting-edge graphics.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page:

**HFA:** North Carolina Housing Finance Agency

**Entry Name:** Leveraging Results: NCHFA 2015 Report on Achievements

**Select the appropriate subcategory of your entry and indicate if you are providing visual aids.**

| Communications  | Homeownership  | Legislative Advocacy   | Management Innovation  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Annual Report<br><input type="radio"/> Creative Media<br><input type="radio"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters     | <input type="radio"/> Empowering New Buyers<br><input type="radio"/> Encouraging New Production<br><input type="radio"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation | <input type="radio"/> Federal Advocacy<br><input type="radio"/> State Advocacy | <input type="radio"/> Financial<br><input type="radio"/> Human Resources<br><input type="radio"/> Operations<br><input type="radio"/> Technology |
| Rental Housing  | Special Needs Housing  | Special Achievement  | Are you providing visual aids?   |
| <input type="radio"/> Encouraging New Production<br><input type="radio"/> Multifamily Management<br><input type="radio"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation | <input type="radio"/> Combating Homelessness<br><input type="radio"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs   | <input type="radio"/> Special Achievement                                      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes<br><input type="radio"/> No   |

## **Leveraging Results: NCHFA 2015 Report on Achievements**

*NSCHA 2016 Annual Awards Entry  
Communications: Annual Report*

Now more than ever, North Carolina lawmakers want to see a measurable return on state investments. And they want assurance that programs—whether they be for housing, transportation or education—are not solely dependent on state tax dollars. *Leveraging Results: 2015 Report on Achievements* is designed to communicate a powerful message through a brief format: We leverage the state's affordable housing investments with federal and private funds to maximize the return to benefit citizens, workers, businesses and communities across the state.

Like the message, the report's presentation is tailored to lawmakers' desire to quickly see—and easily understand—the results of their funding decisions. So, while many agencies and corporations are going bigger with their format, we're going smaller. By not loading the report with financials—which are easily accessible on our website—we can highlight the production numbers and case studies that best illustrate our accomplishments.

### ***Developing the Message***

It's simple. Elected officials want results. They want to know the investment of public funds had a strong economic impact and made a significant difference across the state. They know that taxpayers want a return on the state's investment. To accomplish this, we defined our message around the outcomes in three specific areas: how we are boosting the state's economy, the impact on communities and the benefits of our efforts to North Carolinians. To highlight the state's primary investment in affordable housing, the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund, we devoted the bulk of the back cover to showcase both annual and cumulative results of that funding source.

Using the RIMS II Model from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis to determine economic impacts for the report, we meticulously calculated and thoroughly reviewed the data. As a result, we are able to provide the kind of numbers that command attention and document the effect of our work on the state's economy. This includes real estate activity financed (\$1.4 billion), jobs supported (14,190), tax revenues generated (\$76 million) and wages and spending sent through the economy by our production (\$1.5 billion).

This is the kind of impact lawmakers want to see!

We also drilled down beyond the data to show how our investments are enhancing the home buying market, expanding prospects for developers and small businesses, revitalizing struggling communities by preventing foreclosures that drag down property values, and financing housing that infuses taxes and spending into local economies and provides opportunities for citizens.

Since lawmakers are most concerned about their own constituencies, the report provides examples from locations across the state to demonstrate how affordable housing investments translate into real economic gains for communities large and small. Photographs underscore the diversity of people served and projects completed to dispel any preconceived notions about affordable housing benefits for all North Carolina citizens resonate with elected leaders.

Mindful that leaders are scrutinizing the state's investments, we devoted some of the report's valuable real estate to the N.C. Housing Trust Fund, which is the state's largest source of funding to finance supportive housing and emergency repairs/accessibility modifications. With so much competition for state funding from worthy interests, it's imperative that lawmakers understand both the vital need for, and the successes of, the Housing Trust Fund. As we did with other investments, we used numbers and examples to show how the state's small investment is leveraged to produce powerful results.

### ***Showcasing the Message***

Successfully promoting the vital work of affordable housing means standing out among competing interests. Social media has made communication instantaneous and has reduced complex issues to hashtags and icons. People now read and listen in sound bites. Lawmakers must get engaged—and educated—on the value of housing investments within a very brief timespan.

With that in mind, we trimmed our already compact report, designing a landscaped, four-panel document that opens into a poster. Our approach? Intersperse the following:

- photos of properties we've financed and families we've helped
- icons that quickly put our ROI top-of-mind
- short, targeted messages that lead readers through the piece

The result? A digestible, easy-to-understand infographic that quickly tells readers that we are a can-do organization that **DOES**.

As infographics grow in popularity, there is a danger for information to be lost in a busy design. To avoid that, we used icons sparingly but with purpose. If a lawmaker walked away remembering only one thing, we wanted it to be the production numbers that illustrate our ROI for the state.

While electronic reports are proliferating, print remains the most effective medium for our audience. Most of us struggle daily with overflowing email boxes that are clogged with junk. Legislators and their staff are no different, and we fear our report would get lost in this already cluttered venue. Even if a lawmaker spotted emails about our report, no guarantee exists that they'll take the time to open the email and click on a web link.

However, we *have* witnessed them quickly flipping through a printed piece on numerous occasions, and find that printed materials are the best way to quickly engage our audience within a limited window of time. When visiting or meeting with lawmakers, having a printed piece enables Agency staff to point out a photo or program that matters to them, which wouldn't be possible with an electronic version. The fresh new look with a new orientation allows lawmakers and other audiences to tack the center spread up on a bulletin board as a poster.

Because this report is critical to making our case for funding, we invest time and money in the product. Total cost for this year's report was just under \$9,000: \$2,500 for professional photography, \$4,500 for graphic design and \$1,800 for printing. Concept, text and photo direction were produced by Agency staff.

### ***Sharing the Message***

We use the *Report on Achievements* to raise awareness of our achievements and to strengthen our ongoing message among our elected officials about our work and its benefits for North Carolina. In addition to distributing copies in person to lawmakers and state leadership, we showcase the annual report at a legislative breakfast we host each year and ensure that our partners have copies to share with their local officials.

The report is also used with local governments and potential partners to show them what type of results they can expect if they work with us to meet their affordable housing goals.

### ***What's Our Return on Investment?***

The reaction to our new approach has been exceptional. It has sparked enthusiasm among staff who share it at conferences, workshops and meetings across the state to illustrate the work that we do. Partners have requested copies to use in their own communities and with their own elected officials, calling it an effective tool to elevate affordable housing's role in sparking economic development.

But what about our main audience? At this year's legislative breakfast, only a small number of reports were left behind at place-settings—far fewer than prior years—and many lawmakers grabbed extra copies on their way out. In discussions with staff, legislators reference items from the report and praise the Agency's accomplishments, which are front and center and not buried in pages of prose.

*“As legislators, we receive hundreds of annual reports every year. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency's report was a standout because its excellent design and use of infographics imparted information in a way that was easy to quickly read and comprehend.”*

*– Rep. Jason Saine, chairman of the N.C. House Committee on Finance*

*“Brevity and clarity is crucial when we are hearing from so many competing interests. The NC Housing Finance Agency's annual report quickly and effectively communicated how the Agency is using and leveraging the state investments we entrust to it.”*

*– N.C. Senate Minority Leader Dan Blue*

**Our message is being heard.**



# LEVERAGING RESULTS

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency 2015 Report on Achievements

# BOOSTING THE ECONOMY

As a self-supporting public agency, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency leveraged state and federal resources with private funds in 2015 to finance more than \$1.4 billion in real estate activity—meeting critical housing needs and putting North Carolinians to work in communities statewide.



New Home, High Point

Our home buyer loans contributed to the state's robust housing market, helping 5,090 North Carolinians with moderate incomes buy homes—more than twice those helped just two years ago. About a quarter of these buyers purchased a newly built home.

Our investments sent \$1.5 billion in wages and spending through the state's economy\* and kept hundreds of small businesses and their employees on the job.



Willow Pond, Mocksville

We crossed the milestone of 70,000 Housing Credit apartments financed in the state in 2015.

## 2015 Production Results



10,370  
homes and apartments



14,190  
jobs supported



\$76 MILLION  
taxes and revenue

# BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES



The Agency invested \$748.8 million in home ownership opportunities in 2015. Our ongoing work with community partners, including Habitat, helped working families in towns such as Boone (above), High Point and Southern Pines. Our investments were impactful, reinvigorating Durham's Southside neighborhood and bringing life to long-vacant residential land in Huntersville.

We partnered with developers, local governments, nonprofit groups and builders across the state to develop housing that strengthened communities, revived neighborhoods and built the tax base.



Glenbrook Meadows, Garner



## 2015 Investments will help



5,090 home buyers



520 communities



4,210 renters

Rental investments generated money and jobs for smaller towns that lagged after the recession, such as Locust and Lenoir (above). 2015 Housing Credits and bonds will produce 49 developments in 40 communities, with at least 10 percent of the apartments targeted for persons with disabilities. The state's Workforce Housing Loan Program will bring new developments to counties that have not had affordable apartments built in several years, such as Washington and Yadkin.

# BENEFITTING NORTH CAROLINIANS

2015 was the year of home for many North Carolinians. We helped some become homeowners, prevented foreclosure for others and provided financing that made a difference for veterans who had run out of housing options.



Our NC Home Advantage Mortgage™ fueled a 58 percent increase in home buyers assisted over the previous year. The 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage with down payment assistance offered opportunity for both first-time and move-up buyers.

The Agency continued to finance housing to help veterans affected by homelessness or disabilities, such as Tyvola II in Charlotte (below), Compass Point in Jacksonville and Bellamy Housing in Lexington.



Tyvola II, Charlotte

The NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund paid the mortgage for nearly 3,000 additional homeowners in 2015 while they looked for work or completed job training, including veterans transitioning to civilian life. Another 7,690 received housing counseling through the State Home Foreclosure Prevention Project and federal grants.



## NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund All-Time Results



21,104  
homes saved



\$3.8 BILLION  
property preserved



98%  
avoided foreclosure

\*The Agency uses the RIMS II model from the Bureau of Economic Analysis to calculate economic impacts. Job estimates include jobs supported within North Carolina in construction and other economic sectors.

# EACH TRUST FUND \$1 = \$5 IN HOUSING\*

By leveraging the state's investment with federal, local and private sector funds, the NC Housing Trust Fund financed 960 homes and apartments in 2015 to benefit North Carolina's most vulnerable citizens. Nearly 93 percent will provide housing for North Carolinians making less than half of the local median income.



Every dollar appropriated to the Housing Trust Fund goes directly into bricks and mortar. Since its creation, it has financed \$1.1 billion in housing. Other successes:



**30,470**  
homes and apartments



**19,970**  
jobs



**\$135 MILLION**  
in tax revenues

Housing Trust Fund dollars made rents more affordable in apartment developments in towns such as King and Pittsboro. It paid for emergency repairs and accessibility modifications for 770 elderly homeowners and those with disabilities.

*\*Based on a five-year average.*



The Trust Fund filled critical gaps. Mother Teresa Villa in Charlotte (above) was just one new development that opened its doors for people with disabilities. Others included apartments in Gastonia and Ahoskie. Trust Fund dollars also helped break ground on a domestic violence shelter in Franklin that will open in 2016.

## LEVERAGING RESULTS SINCE 1974

| HOUSING FINANCED     | 1974–2015      |                       | 2015          |                      |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
|                      | Homes          | Value                 | Homes         | Value                |
| Home Buyers          | 94,980         | \$8.2 Billion         | 5,090         | \$748.8 Million      |
| Rental Production    | 84,620         | \$6.6 Billion         | 4,210         | \$510.1 Million      |
| Housing Preservation | 30,470         | \$319.9 Million       | 980           | \$11.9 Million       |
| Supportive Housing   | 4,250          | \$259.6 Million       | 90            | \$11.4 Million       |
| Rent Assistance      | 30,310         | \$2.0 Billion         | 25,910        | \$155.2 Million      |
| <b>TOTAL**</b>       | <b>241,960</b> | <b>\$17.4 Billion</b> | <b>34,830</b> | <b>\$1.4 Billion</b> |

*\*\*Rental production units that also have rent assistance or preservation loans are counted once in the grand total.*

The NC Housing Finance Agency has financed 241,960 homes and apartments, totaling \$17.4 billion, increasing housing opportunities and supporting jobs statewide. Our proven strategy of leveraging public resources with private investments has been good business for North Carolina.

In 2015, our self-supporting Agency continued to keep its operating costs to less than 2 percent of the housing financed and maintained its AA/Aa2 bond rating.