

# CHFA Community Partnerships

**Colorado Housing and Finance Authority**

Management Innovation: Internal Operations

## **HFA Staff Contact**

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## Summary

In addition to its work in homeownership, rental housing, and business lending, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) has developed a fourth line of business called Community Partnerships. The Community Partnerships team engages with communities to learn about unique needs, inform investment, and build capacity. Through this framework, CHFA collaborates to create strong partnerships and invest strategically to achieve greater impact and outcomes in targeted communities.

## Responding to a Management Challenge or Opportunity

CHFA's vision is that everyone in Colorado will have the opportunity for housing stability and economic prosperity. Research has shown that individuals and families are more likely to achieve housing stability and/or economic prosperity when they reside in strong, supportive communities. As a statewide agency headquartered in Denver, CHFA sought ways to strategically engage and invest in communities across the state, including those in rural areas.

In its development of a Community Partnerships line of business, CHFA developed a place-based, community driven investment strategy that identified targeted communities where CHFA would undertake strategic engagement activities and make investments to support improved economic and social outcomes.

## Innovation and Implementation

CHFA took a multi-pronged approach to creating its Community Partnerships division, building upon the organization's Community Investment Framework, which focuses on community outreach, capacity building, corporate giving, and access to capital. This framework, combined with the place-based investment strategy, built a comprehensive approach to serving the state as whole. The Community Partnerships division has three overarching areas of focus: Community Engagement, Corporate Giving, and Technical Assistance.

### *Community Engagement*

CHFA has hired five Community Relationship Managers (CRMs) throughout the state of Colorado. These staff members live, work, and play in their respective communities. Their role is to:

- Increase CHFA's visibility and presence in the region;
- Identify local issues, needs, and opportunities, with the goal of increasing impacts and outcomes;
- Expand CHFA's network of local partners to assist in advancing affordable housing and economic development goals; and
- Strengthen CHFA's brand awareness in local communities and ensure CHFA is thought of as a respected partner.

To elevate the learning and priorities of their regions across CHFA, the CRMs have designed engagement tours for CHFA's Leadership Team. These tours provide an opportunity for CHFA's leadership to meet with local organizations and governments to understand the unique needs of the communities. These visits have resulted in several investments that have made large impacts in these communities. Some examples include a multi-year investment in the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe to assist the tribe with its housing efforts, an investment made with the San Luis Valley Housing Coalition for a housing

rehabilitation program, and an investment in the United Way of Pueblo for financial education classes. These connections and investments have helped to build trust between CHFA and various entities across the state, many of whom now view CHFA as a true partner in the work that they are doing.

### *Corporate Giving*

- CHFA supports nonprofits and community led initiatives that advance housing stability and economic prosperity in Colorado through sponsorships, donations, and volunteerism.
- In 2019, CHFA committed to dedicating 1% of its annual general fund cash net income to Corporate Giving efforts. Over the past several years, the effects of Corporate Giving investments have proven to be effective in improving outcomes in communities, and CHFA has increased this budget as result.
- In 2023, CHFA invested \$6.9M to 490 nonprofit and/or community-based organizations through Community Partnerships. These investments strengthen Colorado communities by providing necessary funding to allow them to address needs that are specific to their region and populations.

### *Technical Assistance*

- **Small-scale Housing Technical Assistance:** This program helps catalyze small-scale affordable housing developments by providing access to a *pro bono* affordable housing consultant and pre-development grant assistance. Potential small-scale projects of 30 units or less may apply for affordable housing planning and development technical assistance (TA) services and pre-development grants.
- **Nonprofit Capacity Building:** In 2023, CHFA invested \$150,000 in Community Resource Center (CRC) and Resilia to support nonprofit capacity-building efforts. These investments sponsor access to skills training, grant coaching, and consultation services for small nonprofits. Additionally, CHFA invested \$95,000 in the Community Investment Alliance BIPOC Community Impact Fellowship program, which trains and equips a pipeline of diverse leaders to advance housing solutions in their communities.
- **[Colorado Affordable Housing Developer's Guide](#):** The Affordable Housing Developer's Guide is a resource designed to support local for-profit and nonprofit developers, community leaders, and advocates seeking to ensure that safe, decent, and affordable housing is an intentional and integrated part of their community fabric. Following its publication, CHFA hosted several training webinars to provide insight on how to effectively use the guide.

## Replicability

The idea of place-based investing is one that can be replicated throughout the country. Key to CHFA's success in this endeavor has been hiring Community Relationship Managers who reside in the communities CHFA serves, and aligning their efforts with those occurring across the organization. This "boots on the ground" approach has been essential to building trust and understanding needs.

Small, targeted investments into nonprofits is another key step to building partnership, trust, and supporting organizations in their work to address community needs. These key tactics can then be built upon and scaled as appropriate.

## Measurable Improvements in Operations and Strategic Objectives Achieved

Community Partnerships has evolved into an essential function of CHFA. The work being done through community engagement is regularly communicated with CHFA's Leadership Team and Board and helps to determine the direction of its strategic plan and drive innovation. In 2023, Community Partnerships directly contributed to two of CHFA's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These included KPIs measuring efforts to expand and improve access and delivery of service throughout the various phases of the customer experience, as well as leveraging financial resources to invest intentionally in community needs.

In addition to our five Community Relationship Manager positions, the impact of the work through Community Partnerships also led to the creation of two new positions at CHFA – Chief Communications and Community Partnerships Officer and Manager, Regional Community Relationships.

### **Benefits vs. Costs and Using Resources Effectively**

Community Partnerships efforts have proven to be extremely beneficial in effectively engaging communities throughout Colorado. In 2023, CHFA reported a leverage ratio of 7.1 on funds invested through community investment and subsidy grants. CHFA has become a trusted partner to local governments, nonprofits, community organizations, and community members. This work is ongoing, and the investments made have been crucial in guiding us in our strategic planning efforts.

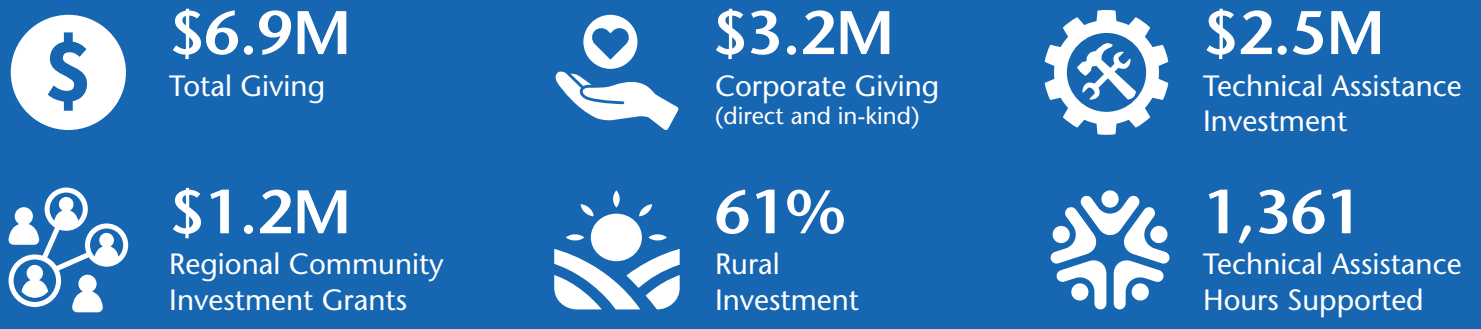
# 490

Organizations Supported

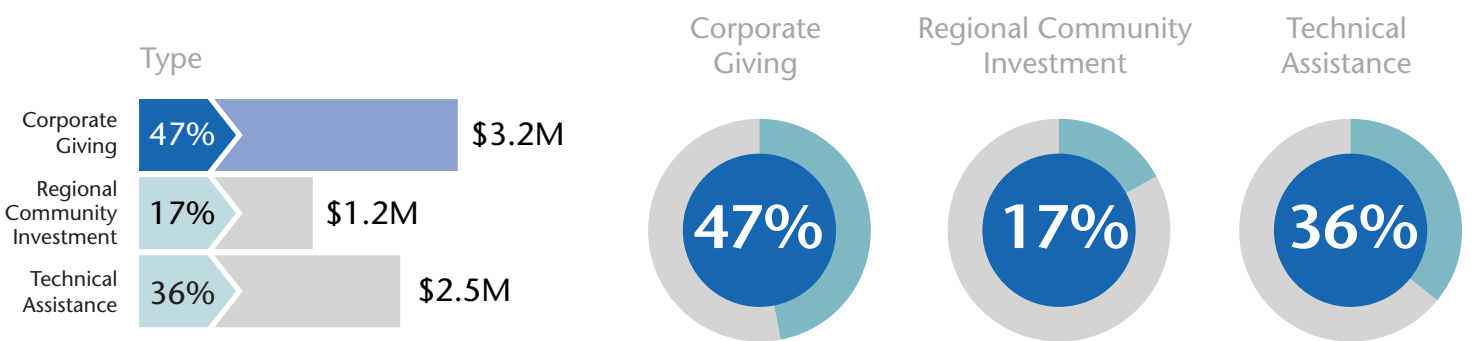
# community partnerships

January 1 to December 31, 2023

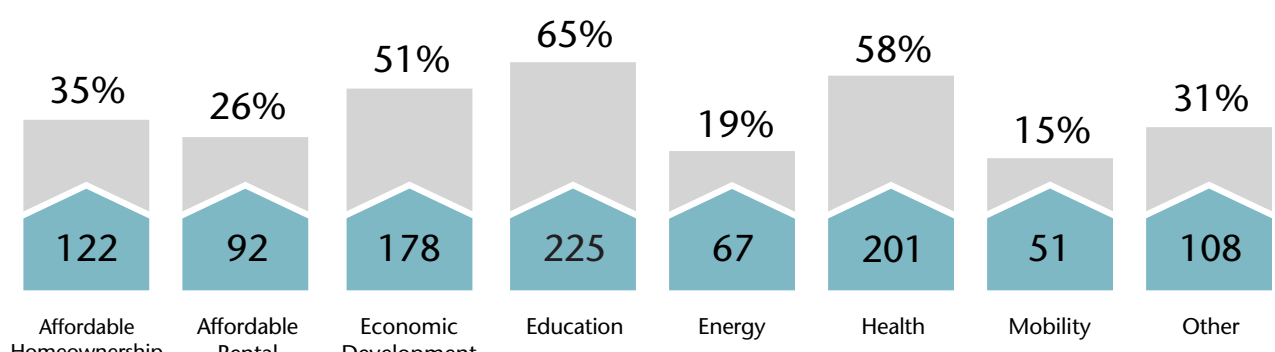
## Who We Serve



## Investment by Type



## Corporate Giving Recipient Areas of Focus



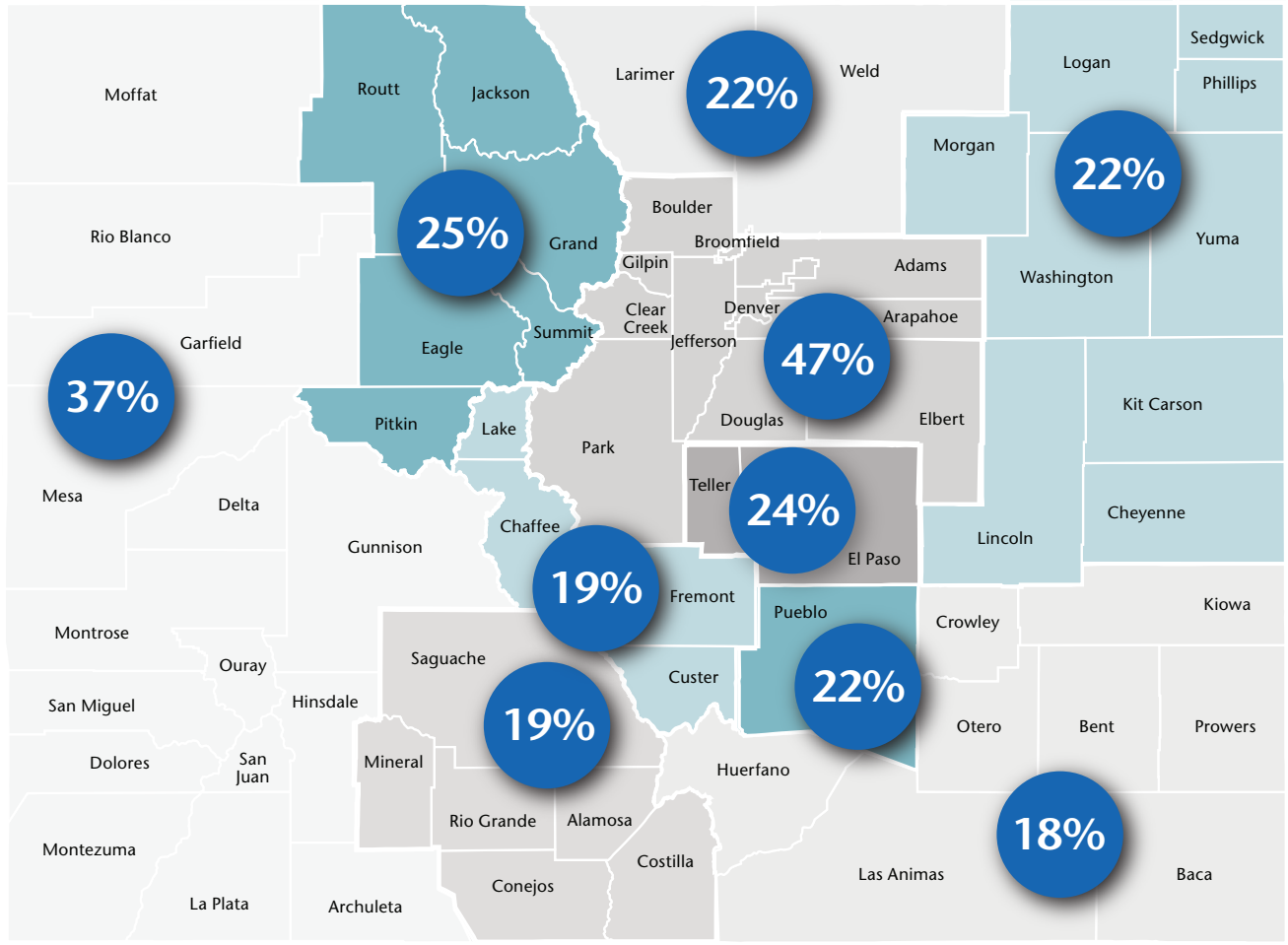
348 Unique Organizations  
Organizations can select multiple areas of focus

## Small-scale Housing Technical Assistance



## chfa investment

## Areas Served by Organizations Supported



490 Organizations Supported  
Organizations can serve multiple regions.

	Number of Organizations	Percent of Total		Number of Organizations	Percent of Total
Denver Metro	205	47%	Pueblo	95	22%
El Paso/Teller	103	24%	San Luis Valley	81	19%
Larimer/Weld	94	22%	Southeast	76	18%
Mountain Rural/Resort	107	25%	Upper Arkansas Valley	84	19%
Northeast	97	22%	Western Slope	158	37%

Data accessed February 2024.

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## community engagement

respect, listen to, and learn from all members of the community

cultivate strong customer and partner relationships

engage stakeholders to align resource and strengthen programs



## capacity building

strengthen internal expertise

support community readiness

provide trainings and education

advance shared data and research



# community investment

## corporate giving

align sponsorships and donations with mission

encourage volunteerism and civic engagement



## access to capital

finance loans and investments

allocate tax credits

manage community impact funds



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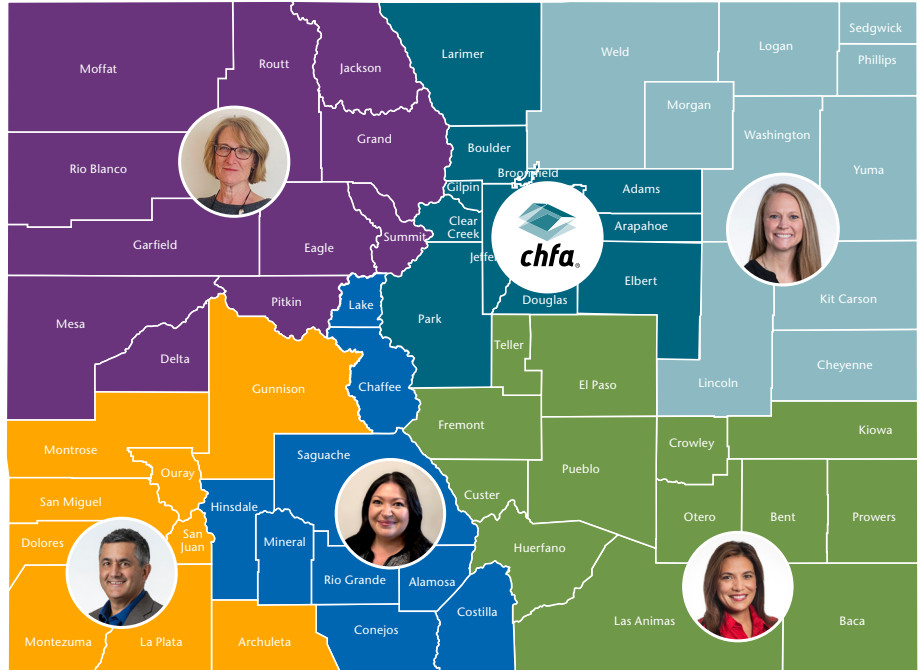
**chfa**<sup>®</sup>

financing the places where  
people live and work

# community relationship managers in your region

## regions

- teal Denver Metro and Northern
- light teal Eastern
- blue South Central
- green Southern
- yellow Southwest
- purple Western Slope



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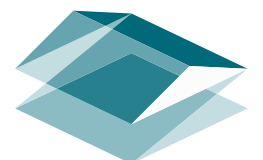


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# engagement model

