

# Re-imagining Housing Data for Impact

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Communications: Creative Media

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## Summary

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency works hard to ensure every Ohioan has a safe and affordable place to call home. Our annual strategic planning process is a key component of delivering on this goal. Three documents have historically been produced through this process: a Housing Needs Assessment that gauges the state's housing needs; an Annual Plan that outlines agency's goals in relation to the existing need; and an Annual Report that measures our progress on each goal and priority area.

The Housing Needs Assessment is a particularly critical component of developing and tracking state need and progress. It brings together more than 30 sources of data to provide a detailed look at the state, its people, and its housing needs. The Housing Needs Assessment is also frequently used by partners statewide who use the data to inform their understanding of and approach to housing-related issues. In years past the Housing Needs Assessment was printed and distributed within the agency and to partners. The size and magnitude of the document made it cumbersome to use and share. In addition, partners were limited to the specific maps and charts created by our Housing Policy office.

## Execution

In FY 2019, OHFA reimagined the Housing Needs Assessment to bring it online, with the goals of democratizing knowledge, improving agency efficiency, and inspiring more statewide coordination. The Office of Housing Policy worked with the Office of Communications and Marketing to re-conceptualize the layout and format of the data for an online interface.

The goals of moving the Housing Needs Assessment online were multifold. First, we wanted an interface that would make understanding and using the data easier for all partners statewide. Second, we wanted to improve internal efficiency by better identifying and highlighting key patterns and themes throughout the state. Third, we wanted to improve the distribution of the key takeaways and needs within Ohio.

To that end, we created an online and interactive interface for the Housing Needs Assessment using Tableau as a platform. The structure of the webpage includes 10 unique sections listed on the right panel of the website ([Figure 1](#)), so that users can easily navigate between these sections: Executive Summary; Homeowner Costs; Renter Costs; Housing Insecurity; Housing Stock; Households & Tenure; Income & Labor; Demographics; Vulnerable Populations; Appendix. At the top of each section there is a short description of the section topic and three to five key takeaways. The main content of the page ([Figure 2](#) and [Figure 3](#)) is a set of interactive county maps and data visualizations. These maps and data visualizations use Tableau's interactive data tools to highlight and pull-out key pieces of information for specific geographies, demographics, and sub-groups. At the bottom of each section, there is a list of resources, and a downloadable Excel file that includes a formatted set of data used in that section.

## Impact

This website has helped us make substantial progress on the goals we set out to achieve. First, by creating a more interactive platform, OHFA employees and statewide partners can more easily navigate many data points, zoom in and focus on geographies or demographics of interest. This helps provide the specific data that groups may need to better understand the populations they work with, or better inform the housing-related problems they wish to solve.

The availability to download the data also empowers individuals to access and use the data in ways that best serve their needs. So, for example, individuals who work with specific geographies can focus only on their geography, and get a more complete picture of their region of interest. In the same vein, if somebody is focused on a specific sub-group, such as children or aging adults, they can engage more directly with the data on those specific populations. Having worked with the Housing Needs Assessment for many years, we know that data can be a large barrier for many statewide partners who work on housing.

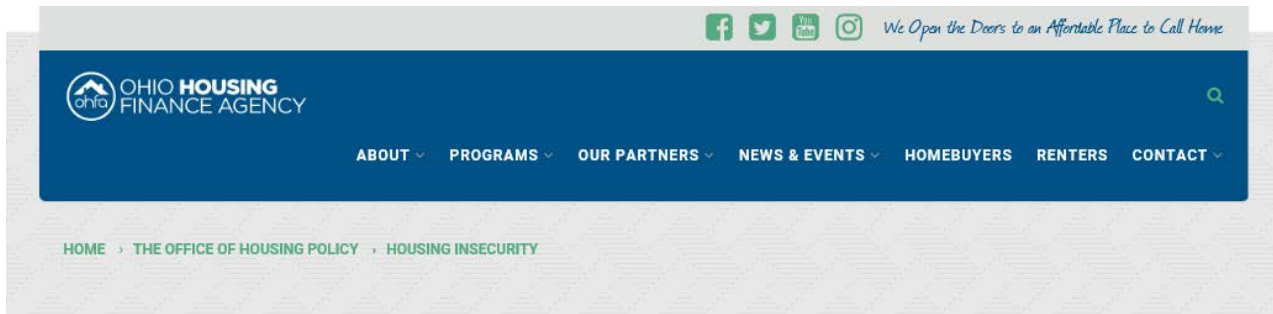
Second, this interface allows OHFA to be more efficient and targeted in our own strategic planning. By having a nimble interface for data visualization, we're able to better track patterns throughout the state, and build an informed, data-driven Annual Plan that highlights the most pressing needs. Likewise, the Housing Needs Assessment format helps us more effectively produce an Annual Report that situates OHFA's progress within the broader context of the state and its needs. The nimble format of the data gives OHFA employees access to data that helps us reach our goals more quickly.

Third, the new online Housing Needs Assessment allows us to share housing trends with a broader range of people and partners in an interactive, environmentally-friendly way. The past versions of the report were too large and heavy to distribute to a broad group. However, the new format allows anybody to access the data. Additionally, by keeping the majority of our data tables in an online interface, we were also able to pull out and print only our Executive Summary, which has a targeted set of themes. The Executive Summary is a much shorter document that can be re-printed in its entirety in the Annual Plan and distributed to partners in hard copy. In doing so, we hope to engage more stakeholders.

The format of the report is replicable for other state agencies and other HFAs. Ohio is beginning to see many state agencies use Tableau for their Strategic Planning. As we design our Housing Needs Assessment, we're also working with other agencies and organizations, such as Health Policy Institute, to bring multiple platforms together to build a comprehensive picture of needs at the state level.

Finally, this Housing Needs Assessment format allows us to connect and manage our metrics and analysis as an agency more effectively. Within OHFA, we have developed a series of Dashboards that show daily updates to work flow for both single family and multi-family goals ([Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#)). By including our Housing Needs goals in an interactive format, at the end of the year we are able to more effectively incorporate the housing needs and our agency progress together in a single format. This allows us to be data-driven and mission-oriented.

## Figure 1: Section Introduction



### HOUSING INSECURITY

This section focuses on the population at risk for or experiencing homelessness. Data on those who are housing insecure is difficult to find, particularly because many who are evicted or lose their homes may go to live with friends or family for a short period of time. Thus, many of the numbers in this section are likely an undercount of the total Ohio population experiencing housing insecurity.

#### SECTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- In 2017 there were 105,150 eviction filings statewide, or 6.7% of all renter households. As of 2016, Ohio's eviction filing rate was slightly higher than the national average.
- Ohio's public and community schools reported that 23,398 students lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence during the 2017–18 school year.
- In 2017 there were 32,562 beds in Ohio for homeless persons, including 9,269 in temporary housing and 23,293 in permanent housing.
- At least 70,000 Ohioans accessed homelessness services in 2017 from one of the state's continuums of care. This represents a 20% increase from 2012.
- On a single night in January 2018, 10,249 individuals were counted statewide as living in temporary housing for homeless persons—such as emergency shelters—on the streets.

Jump to: [Maps](#) | [Visualizations](#) | [Tables & Reports](#) | [Notes](#) | [Sources](#)

### HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

[Executive Summary](#)

[Homeowner Costs](#)

[Renter Costs](#)

[Housing Insecurity](#)

[Housing Stock](#)

[Households & Tenure](#)

[Income & Labor](#)

[Demographics](#)

[Vulnerable Populations](#)

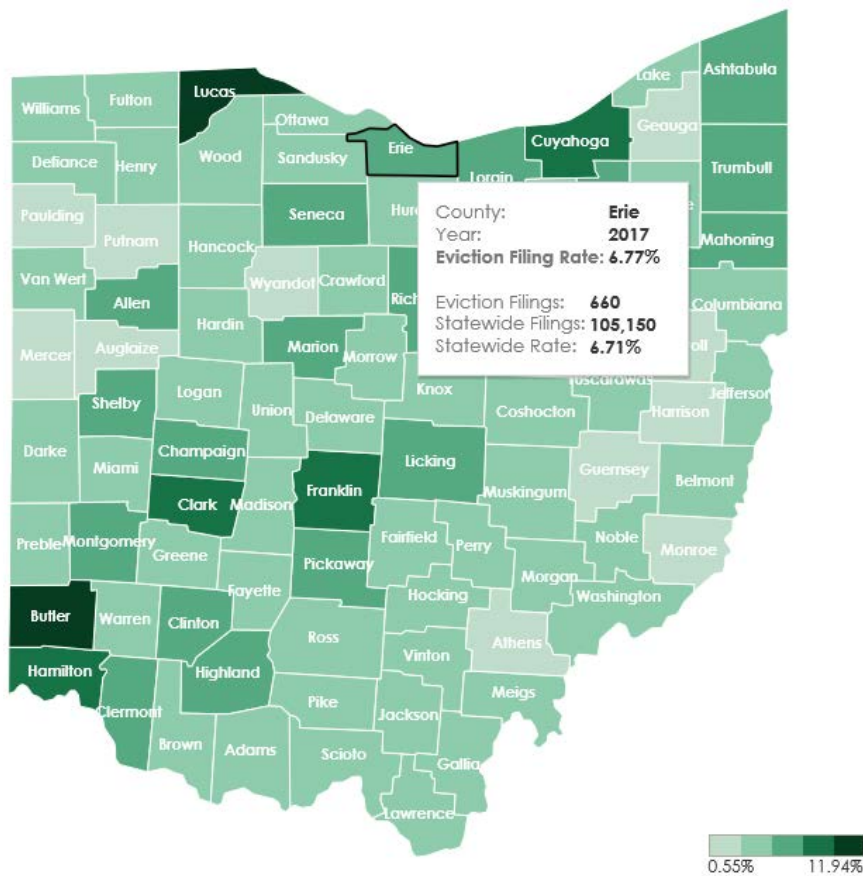
## Figure 2: Interactive Charts

EVICTION FILINGS

STUDENT HOMELESSNESS

Please be advised that the following maps and data are provided for informational purposes only. Load times will vary depending on your internet connection speed.

### EVICTION FILING RATE



## Figure 3: Interactive Figures

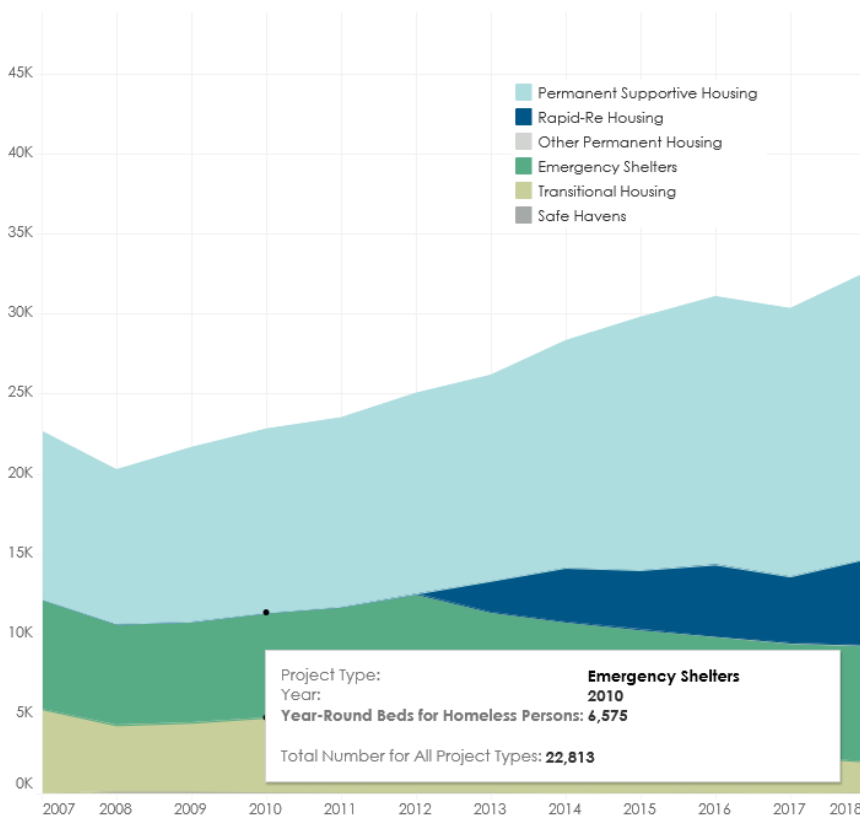
EVICTION FILINGS

BEDS FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

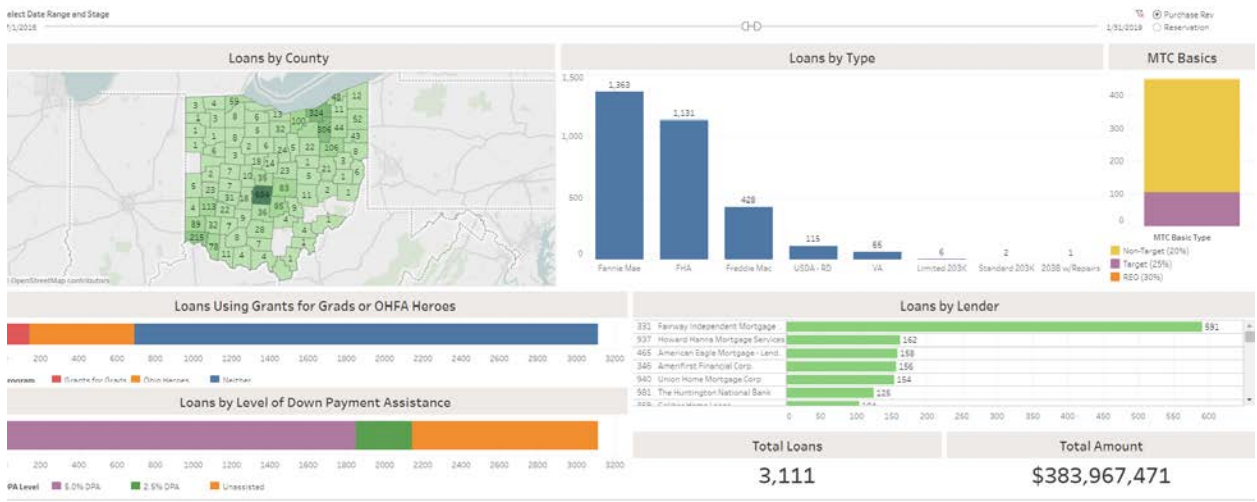
HOMELESS POPULATION

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### YEAR-ROUND BEDS FOR HOMELESS PERSONS BY PROJECT TYPE



## Figure 4: Single Family Housing Dashboard



## Figure 5: Single Family Dashboard

