OHFA.org Redesign

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency

Management Innovation: Technology

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Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency
NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence
Entry: OHFA.org Redesign | Category: Management Innovation: Technology

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency's website, www.ohfa.org, serves as a primary source of information and program resources. OHFA worked with external developers to create a totally redesigned and retooled website that would help the Agency to fulfill its mission of "providing housing resources with an eagerness to serve." This version represents the first-ever complete overhaul of the website, including content and structure. OHFA launched the new version of its site June 1, 2021.

Management Challenges and Opportunities

The previous version of OHFA's website, forced by the host to be located at www.ok.gov/ohfa (see attached screenshots) and redirected to www.ohfa.org, presented numerous technological issues. Users deemed the site unfriendly to mobile users and confusing to use. It lacked Search Engine Optimization (SEO), included lengthy URLs, and required multiple clicks to get to information. Its outdated Content Management System (CMS) often made updating the site difficult, even to the most astute content creators. Site developers were no longer supporting the CMS. An analytic and site inventory showed a bloated site with 9,000 individual pages, including 4,500 created from search alone. Of these, only 165 pages had been visited more than 100 times in the previous year. Through a survey of OHFA employees and external stakeholders, and in-person feedback sessions, the website redesign team determined extensive site enhancements and structural changes would be required.

Housing Finance Agencies offer a variety of programs that serve diverse audiences. OHFA's primary customer base includes low to moderate income individuals applying for rental assistance or purchasing homes, Realtors and mortgage lenders, investors in multimillion-dollar housing developments, property managers, OHFA staff, and board members. Analytic data showed more than half of OHFA's website users accessed the site via mobile. Launching a site optimized for mobile that would help customers quickly obtain information and resources was crucial. As a service-oriented organization, OHFA consistently receives 75% of its website visits from first-time users.

Innovation and Replicability

The web development team received feedback and input from key OHFA employees and external partners such as Realtors, mortgage lenders, and members of the housing development community. Additionally, websites of each of the member agencies from the National Council of State Housing Agencies were scanned for best practices and for items that could be replicated to fit the unique needs of Oklahomans.

After extensively evaluating every page of the existing site, the website redevelopment team streamlined site structure, rewrote text, and prioritized content. Team members evaluated content for clarity and purpose. The resulting comprehensive wireframe served as a road map for theme development and site structure.

Developers created a custom Wordpress theme with graphic elements that could be utilized across the entire site. Along the way, the redevelopment team consulted with OHFA program administrators and customers to ensure ease of navigation and obtaining information. Wordpress offers easy replication through its numerous open-source plug ins and resources. In developing this site, OHFA strived to create an innovative site that would be user friendly on the back end and for anyone visiting.

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Key innovations:

- The site moved to WP Engine for hosting and additional security. WP Engine offers on-demand site support and provides immediate alerts when there are site errors or security breaches.
- Prior to site launch, arrangements were made with the former host to redirect all traffic so that visitors would not receive 404 errors if they accessed the previous site.
- Prior to launch, Google and Bing received a site map to better facilitate website scanning.
- Capability of incorporating annual reports into the website rather than hosting on a separate microsite.
- Updating the website has been made more efficient by the implementation of a new CMS.
- Visitors may select a language across the website with the Google Translate tool.
- The website has been optimized for use on a variety of devices including mobile, tablets, and desktop computers.

Achieving Measurable Improvements in Agency Operations

The specific improvements for the brand new www.ohfa.org accomplished by site launch included:

- Creation of a streamlined site that allows customers to quickly obtain information.
- Implementation of Search Engine Optimization strategies to better direct site visitors.
- Utilization of a Content Management System that allows OHFA's small team to efficiently make site changes and create content as housing programs evolve.
- Implementation of a simplified URL structure based on the www.ohfa.org website address rather than the lengthy www.ok.gov/ohfa address.

The new site features the following enhancements:

- Content has been consolidated to approximately 70 pages from 165 active pages.
- SEO helps direct site visitors to the right information. The site experienced 54.7% growth in search impressions (From August 12, 2021-September 9, 2021)
- Blog posts showcase OHFA news, testimonials, and announcements.
- The calendar allows for sharing of events on other parts of the site and through social media
- Databases allow visitors to search for a mortgage lender, a Realtor, or affordable rental housing.
- Graphics such as accordions, boxes, icons, and buttons break up text heavy information.
- Interactive forms allow visitors to more effectively complete tasks such as open records requests.
- User friendly program guides that often contain a multitude of required links have been created.
- Content can be easily shared on social networks.
- An announcement banner can be utilized in emergency situations such as weather-related office closures.
- Google Translate and One Click Accessibility plugins have been added to meet the unique needs of OHFA's customers.
- Consolidated information allows access by multiple categories of users in one location. OHFA's previous website separated Allocation and Compliance topics, for example.

- A simplified CMS for content creators features WYSIWIG editing. The CMS also allows for greater internal control of website updates and features. The newly uploaded Simple History plugin allows a quick glance of recent changes made to the site, along with the content created who made them.
    - The implementation of the Google Site Kit plug in allows a quick look into site analytics to see trends in real time. Google Analytics offers an in-depth look into site metrics. No paid search tools have been utilized.

Benefits That Outweigh Costs

Research, strategy building, site design and development, plugins, and training – less than $60,000
Website hosting - $2,900/yearly

Demonstrate Effective Use of Resources

The new site allows for flexibility in future site enhancements and spinning up new content. For example, Google Analytics shows that pages covering the Emergency Housing Voucher and Homeowner Assistance Fund programs quickly jumped to the second and fifth most visited pages on the site.

The new site's flexibility has also allowed OHFA to add a simple intranet onto the same server at no additional cost.

End Results

Future enhancements include providing more information through the databases. OHFA's website content creators consistently evaluate the site to make updates to the site and to keep it technologically sound.

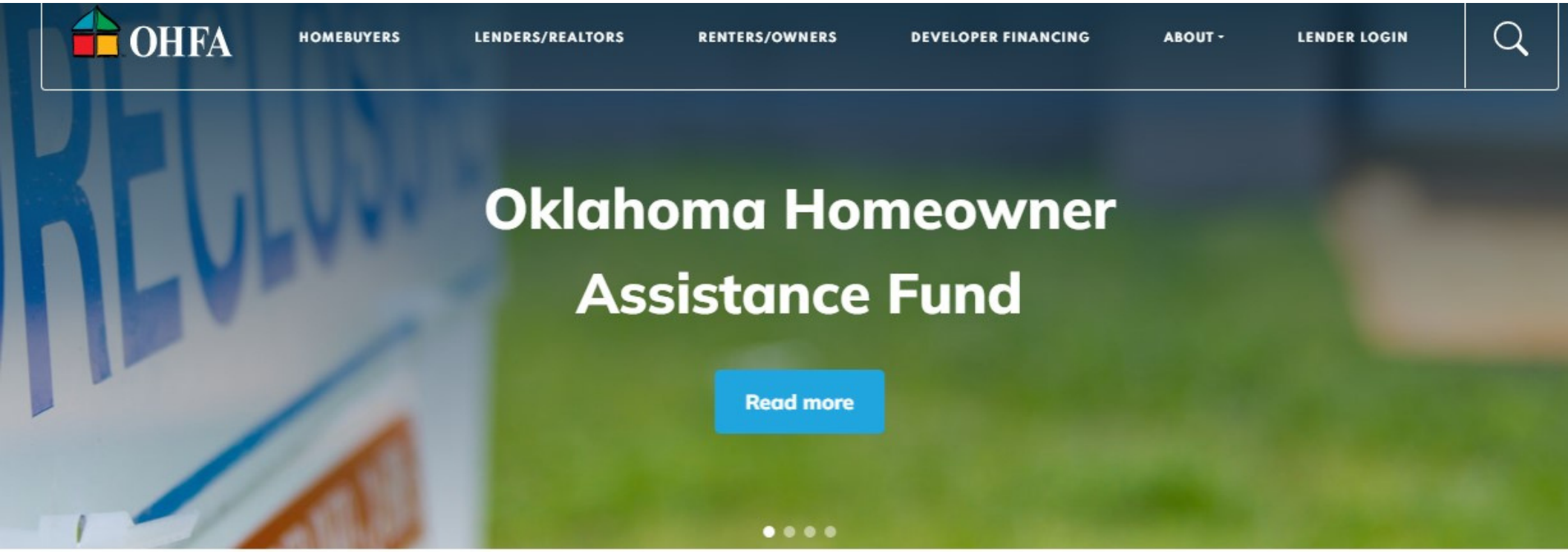
The resulting website features mobile-first, user-friendly content that is accessible to a variety of users. The implementation of modern site functionalities helps the Agency better serve OHFA's diverse key customer groups. Metrics and analytics not only show how improved SEO helps guide customers to the information they need, but they also guide continued site content creation.

An employee in OHFA's Housing Choice Voucher shared the following customer feedback:

"The sister of an applicant called and said that the new website is wonderful. She said she has not encountered a website where her sister who is mentally challenged has been able to navigate so easily, and she is grateful for that."

A long-time partner who works with OHFA's HOME Investment Partnerships Program shared the following:

"Initial reaction---love it and looks modern. Easy to find what I'm looking for."

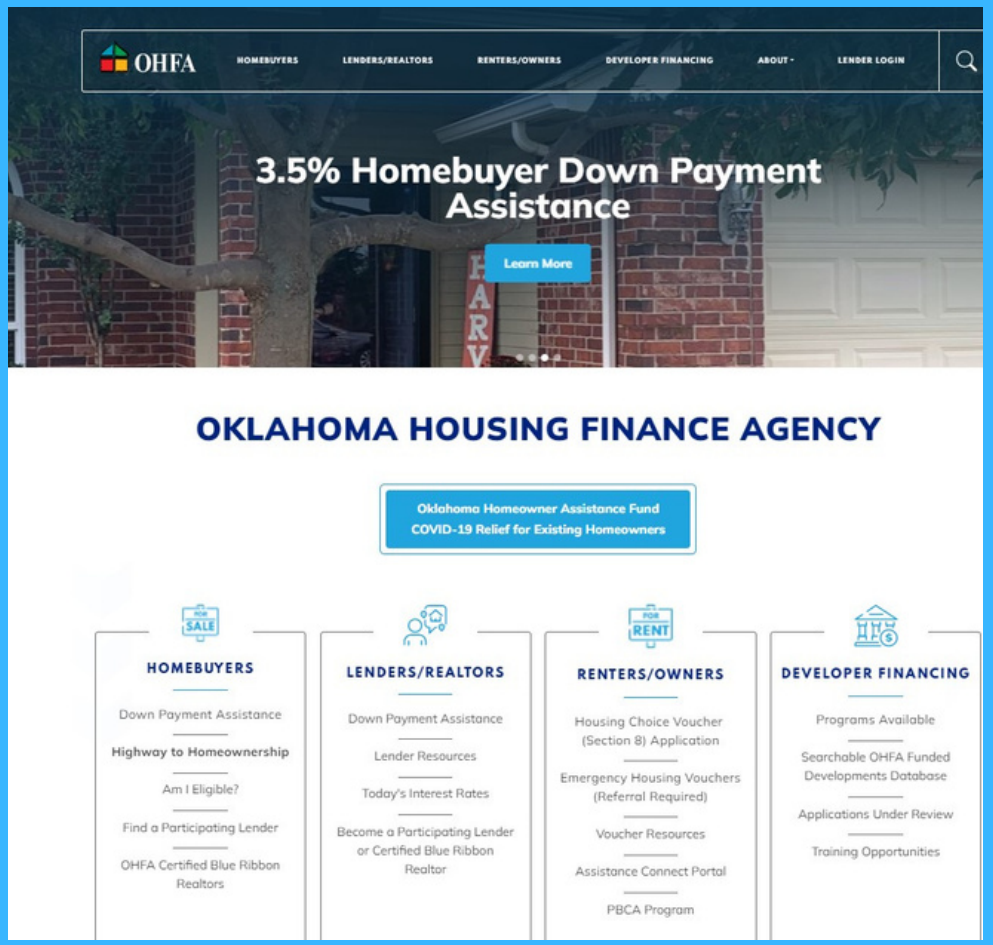


OKLAHOMA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY

ohfa.org Redesign - Visual Aids

ohfa.org Home Page Transformation

BEFORE



AFTER

Improved Events Calendar

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

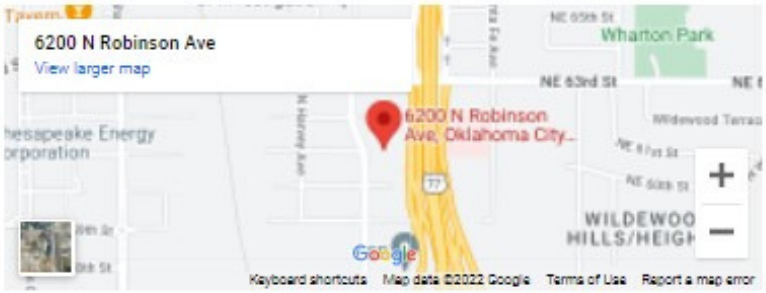
« All Events

MAY 25 AT 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
HOLIDAY INN & SUITES

May 25, 2022 quarterly meeting of the OHFA Board of Trustees

Agenda will be posted one week prior to the meeting

+ Add to Google Calendar + Add to iCalendar



DETAILS

Date:
May 25

Time:
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Event Category:
Trustees

VENUE

Holiday Inn & Suites
6200 N. Robinson.
Oklahoma City, OK 73118 United States +
Google Map

ORGANIZER

Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency

Website:
View Organizer Website

Dynamic Interest Rates Module

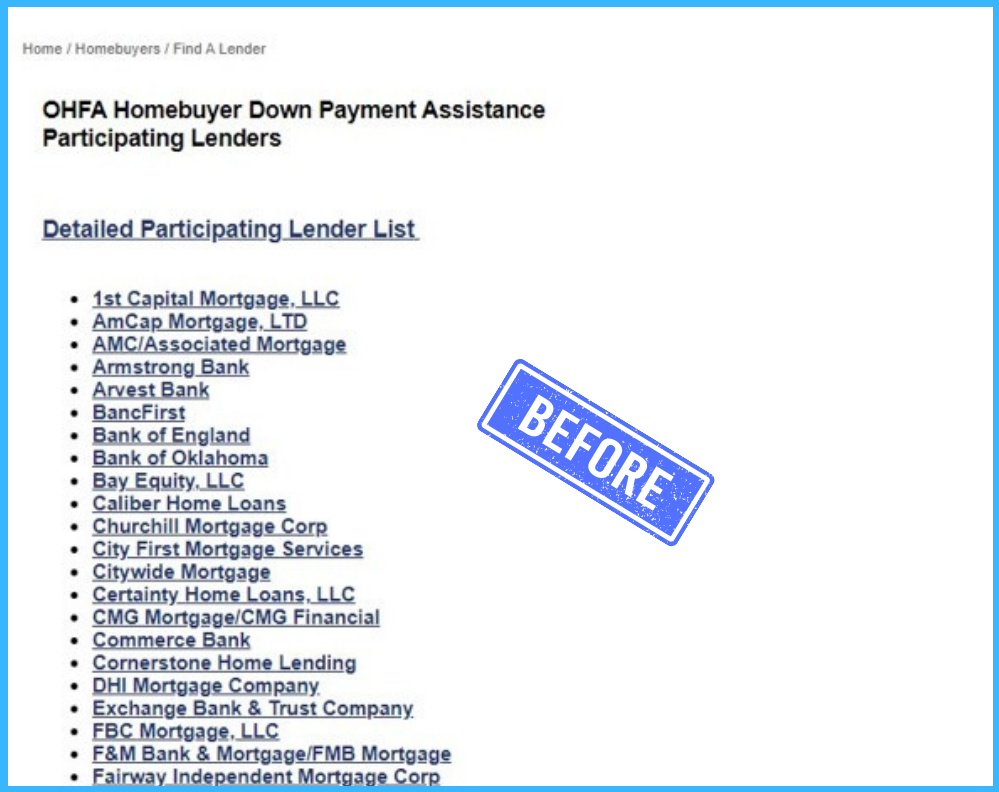
Current Interest Rates
Effective May 26, 2020
Interest Rate Change - Notification 10:00 AM.
Rates subject to change at anytime based on daily market.

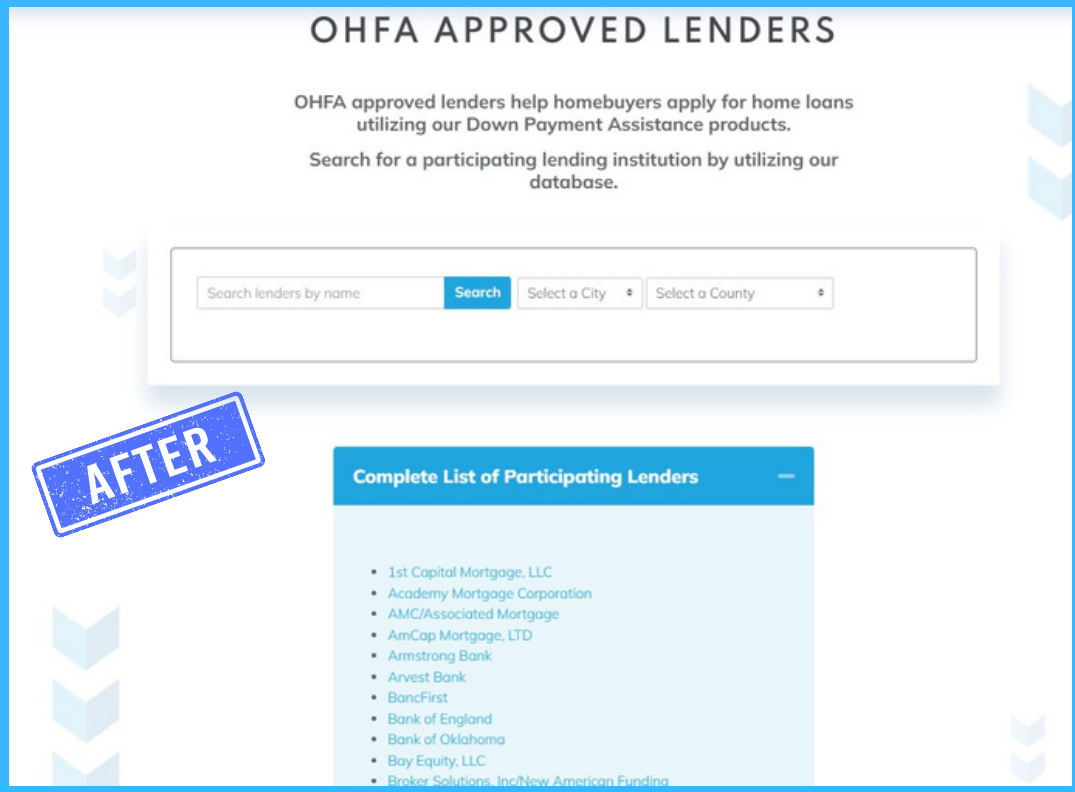
***Please view in landscape on mobile**

Product	Rate	Assistance/ DPA
GOLD GOVT	3.625%	3.50%
GOLD FREDDIE HFA Advantage	4.000%	3.50%
GOLD GOVT 4Teachers/Shield/OSE	3.375%	3.50%
GOLD FREDDIE 4Teachers/Shield/OSE	3.750%	3.50%
DREAM Government	3.625%	3.50%
DREAM FREDDIE HFA Advantage	4.000%	3.50%
DREAM Government Zero DPA	2.875%	0.00%
DREAM Conventional Zero DPA	3.250%	0.00%

New Interest Rates Module:
https://www.ohfa.org/interest-rates/

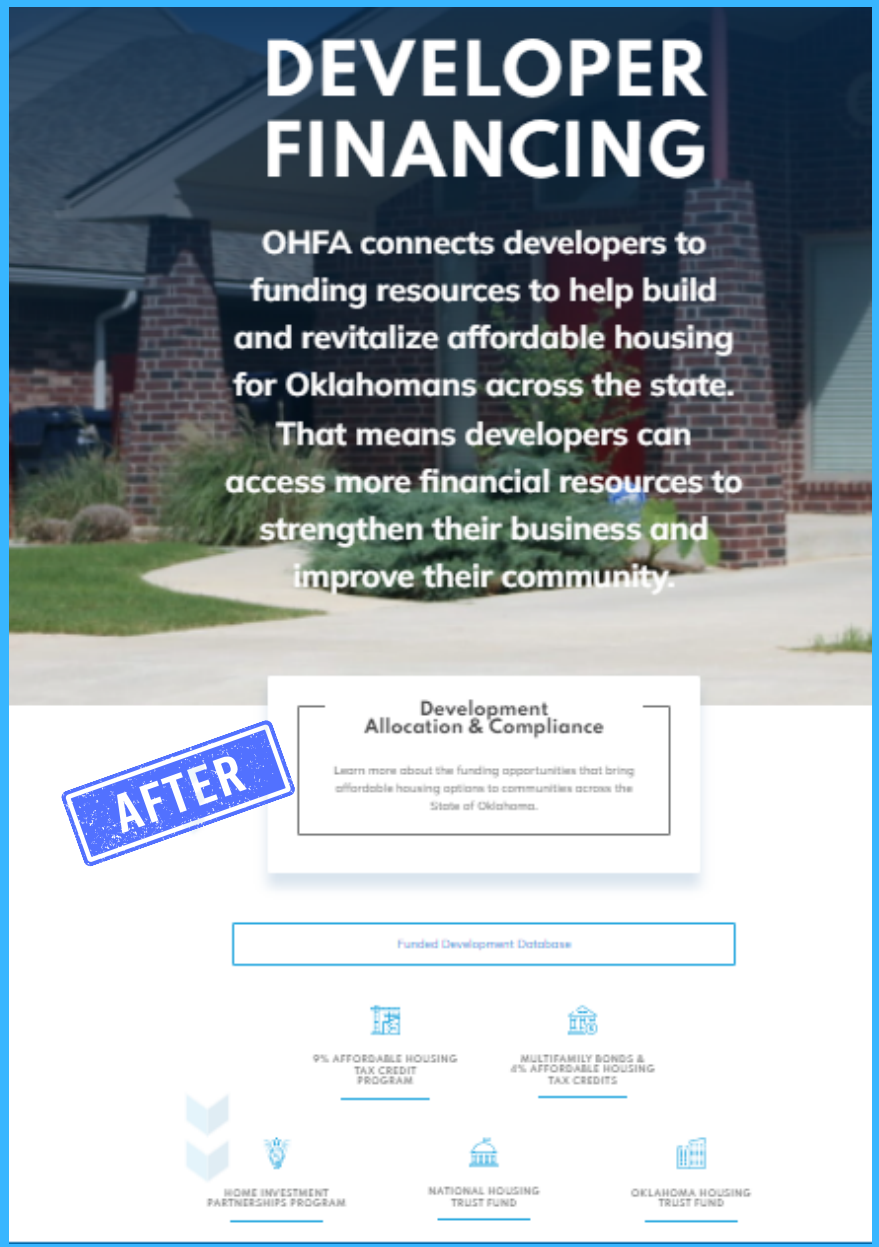
Lender Database



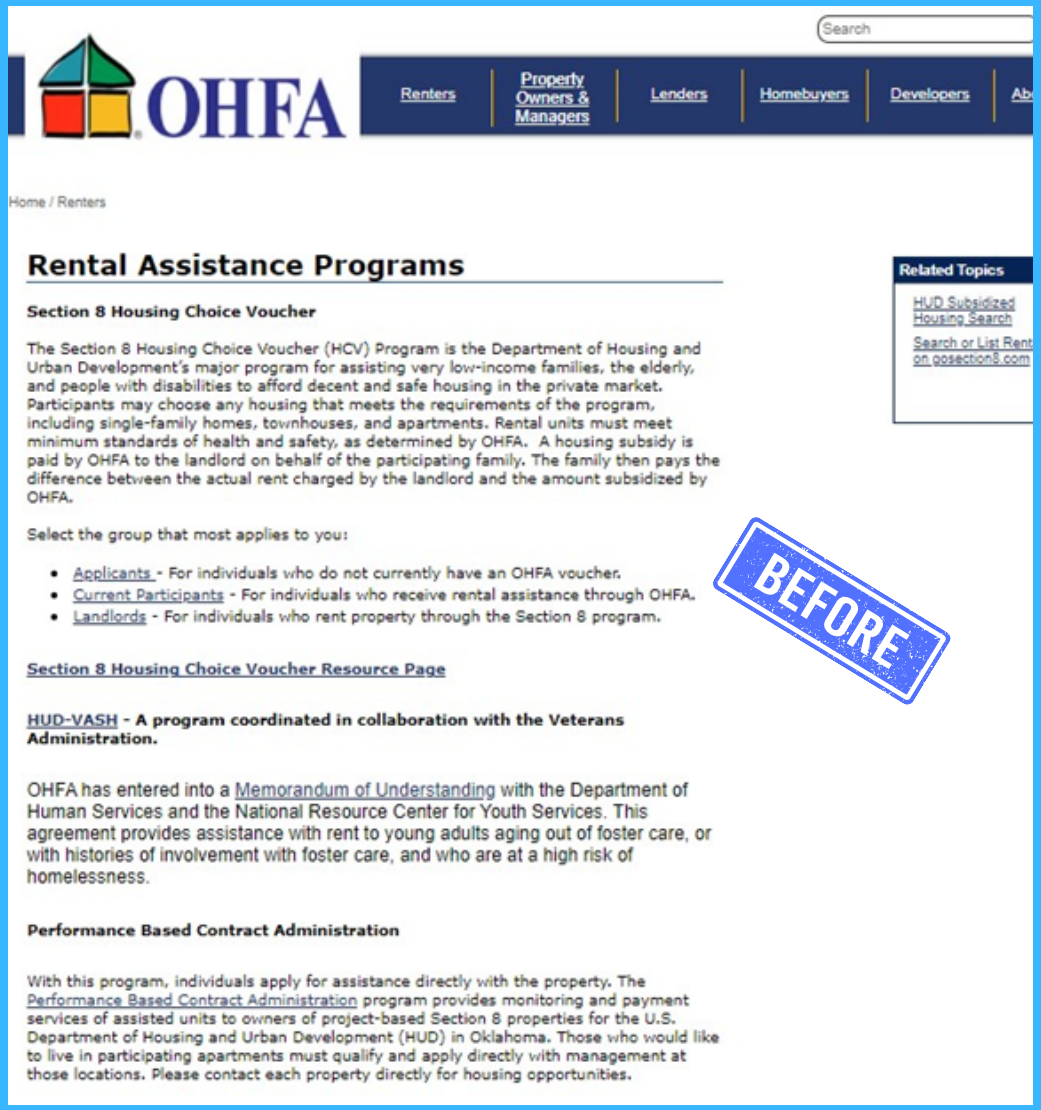


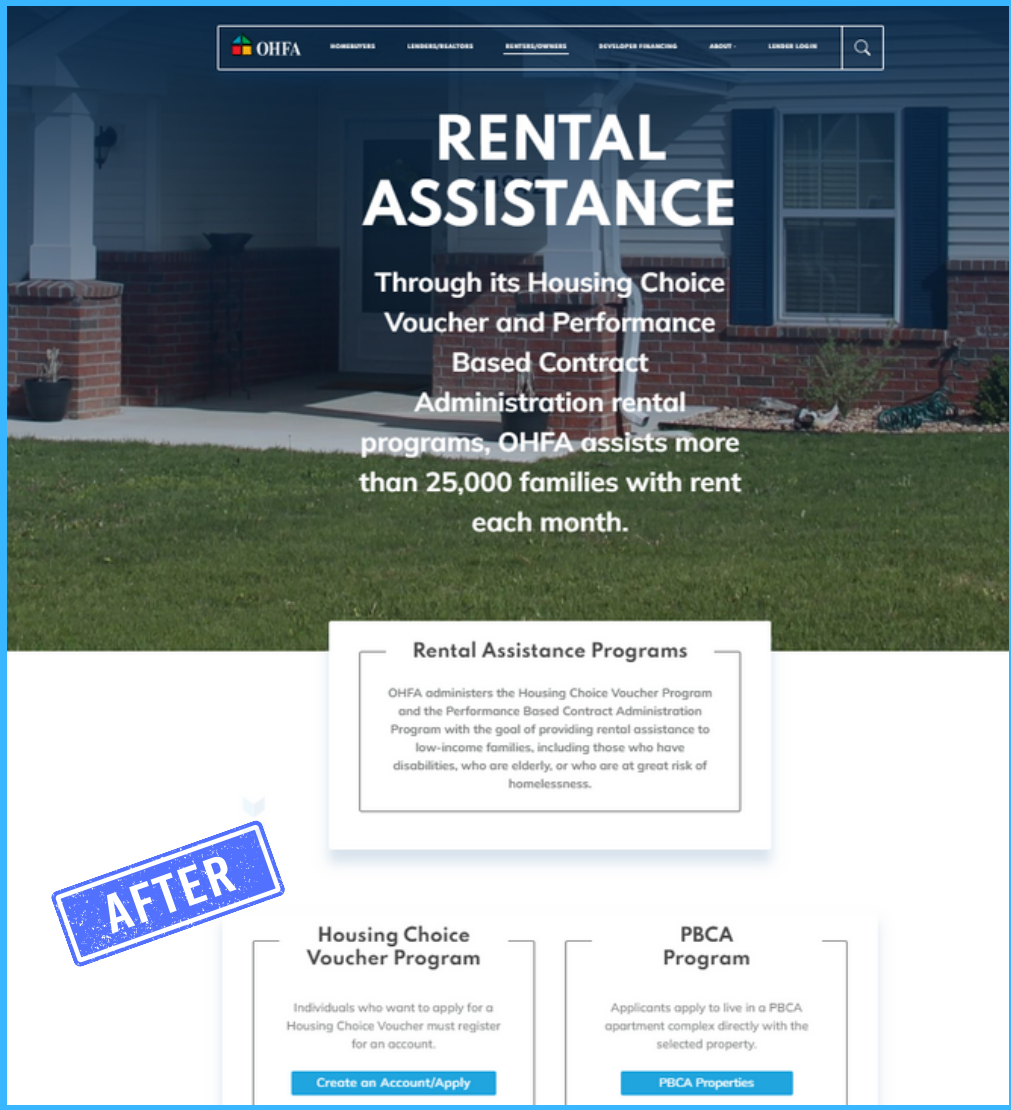
https://www.ohfa.org/ohfa-approved-lenders/

Enhanced Landing Pages With Custom Icons

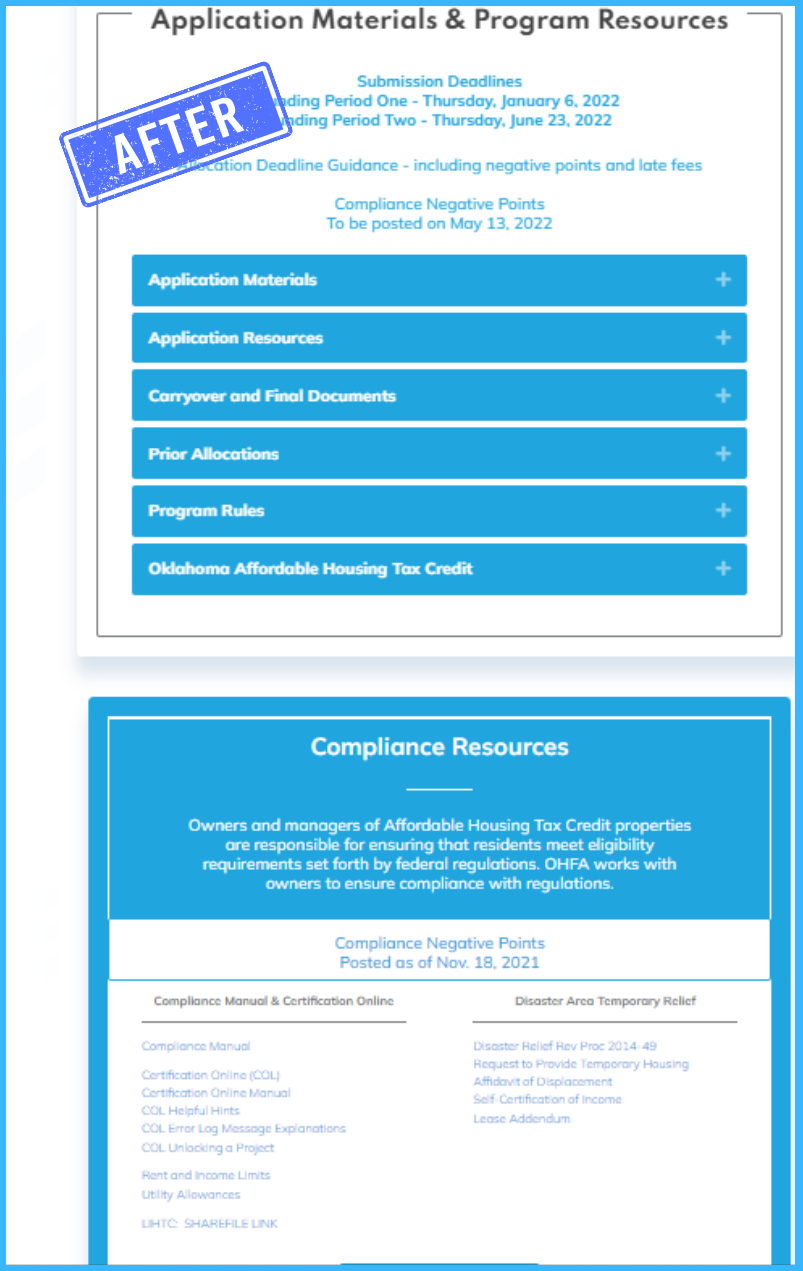


Program Landing Pages





Consolidated Program Information



Funded Development Database

BEFORE

1504	Legacy Senior Residences- Ada	1929 N. Country Club Rd.	Ada	74820	Pontotoc	42	42	5			E	PIS
	Rolling Meadows of Ada	1300 Kerr Lab Rd.	Ada	74820	Pontotoc	58				58	F	PIS
02-11	The Linden's Apts.-Ada	1315 N. Oak	Ada	74820	Pontotoc	42	42				F	PIS
7761	Adair Apts.	504 S. Hall	Adair	74330	Mayes	4		4			F	PIS
01-03	Serenity Park III	Myall SW & Hailey SE	Admore	73401	Carter	12	12				F	PIS
01-03	Afton Village	320 S. Maple	Afton	74331	Ottawa	29	29				F	PIS
8870	Farm Labor Housing	various addresses	Altus	73521	Jackson	10		10			F	PIS
01-02	Parkridge Estates Apartments	1220 Asa Lee St.	Altus	73521	Jackson	60	60			59	E/D	PIS
	Ridgecrest Apts. (aka Lincoln Manor & Altus Apts.)	1205 Springfield Dr.	Altus	73521	Jackson	62				62	F	PIS
1520963	Southwest Oklahoma Community Action Group, Inc.	various addresses	Altus	73522	Jackson	6		6			F	PIS
1214	Southwest Oklahoma Community Action Group, Inc.	scattered sites	Altus	73521	Jackson	2		2			F	PIS
06-66	The Towers Apartments	101 E. Commerce St.	Altus	73521	Jackson	44	43			43	F	PIS
	Buena Vista Apts.	1901 College Ave.	Alva	73717	Woods	50				50	F	PIS
	Freedom West Community Development											

Page 1

AFTER

ADA HEIGHTS (AKA EMERALD POINTE)
631 & 701 W. Cottage
Ada, OK 74820
(580) 272-0030
Status: In Service

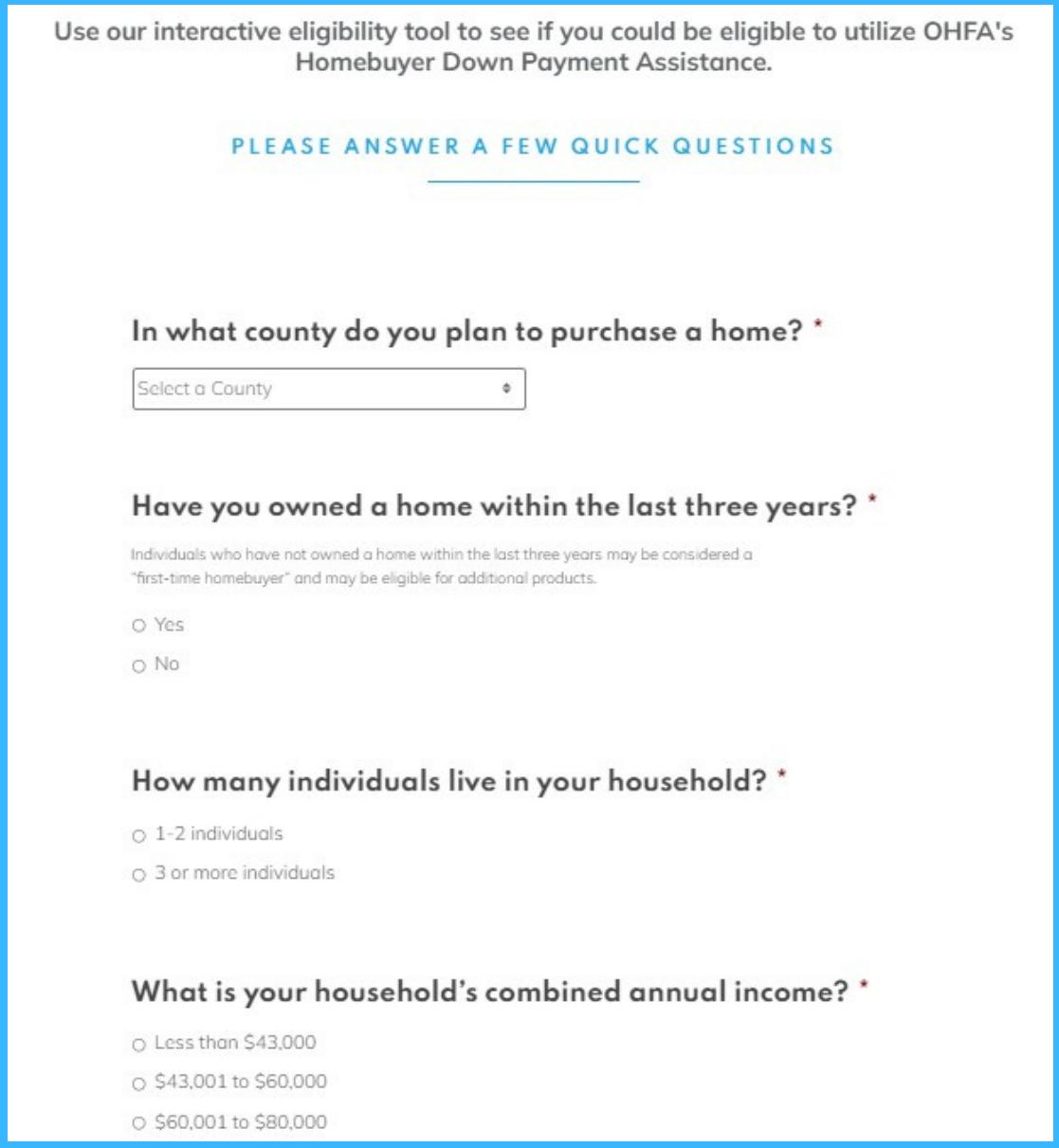
FILE #: 19-06-27
ADA HEIGHTS II
700 Block Of W Cottage St.
Ada, OK 74820
(580) 272-0030
Pontotoc | Units: 16 | Affordable Housing Tax Credits: 16 | Type: Family | Status: In Service

FILE #: 05-06-22
ADA MEADOWS (AKA MEADOWVIEW APARTMENTS)
700 West 1st
Ada, OK 74820
(580) 332-3590
Pontotoc | Units: 20 | Affordable Housing Tax Credits: 20 | Type: Elderly | Status: In Service

FILE #: 07-07-45
ADA SQUARE (AKA OXFORD SQUARE)
2001 "b" St.
Ada, OK 74820
Pontotoc | Units: 56 | Affordable Housing Tax Credits: 56 | Type: Family | Status: In Service

https://www.ohfa.org/funded-developments/

New Down Payment Assistance Eligibility Tool



Use our interactive eligibility tool to see if you could be eligible to utilize OHFA's Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance.

PLEASE ANSWER A FEW QUICK QUESTIONS

In what county do you plan to purchase a home? *

Select a County

Have you owned a home within the last three years? *

Individuals who have not owned a home within the last three years may be considered a "first-time homebuyer" and may be eligible for additional products.

- Yes
- No

How many individuals live in your household? *

- 1-2 individuals
- 3 or more individuals

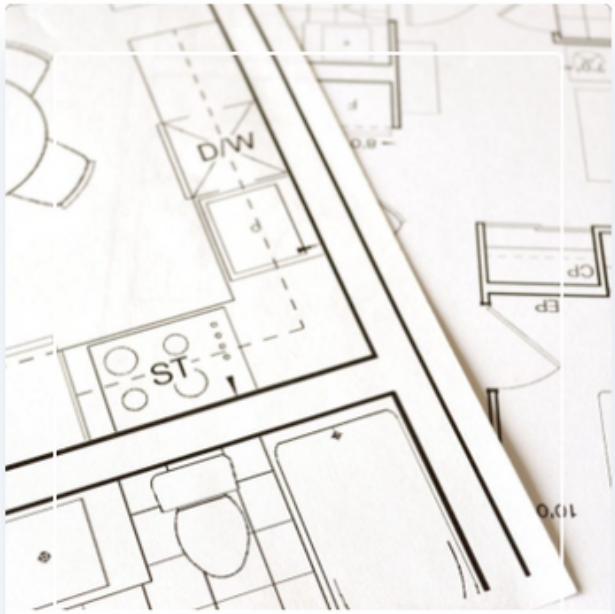
What is your household's combined annual income? *

- Less than $43,000
- $43,001 to $60,000
- $60,001 to $80,000

https://www.ohfa.org/eligibility-tool/

Linked Social Media Content

Distinctive News and Announcements Page



DEVELOPERS, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, NEWS
MAY 3, 2022

State Housing Tax Credit Changes – Senate Bill 1685

Read More

DEVELOPERS, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, NEWS
APRIL 20, 2022

Invest in Oklahoma: $659 Million Available Through Multifamily Bonds

Read More

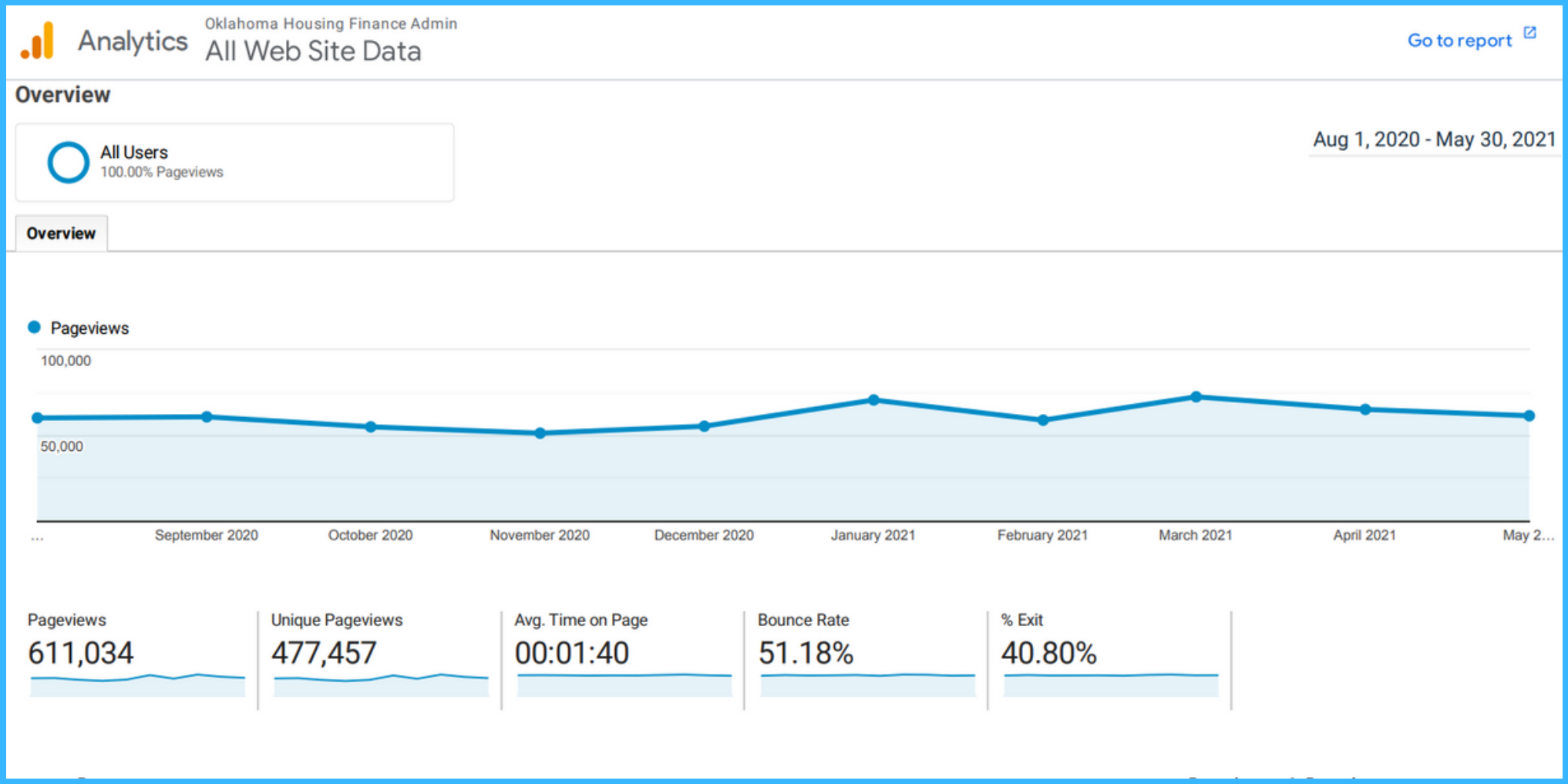
DEVELOPERS, HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, NEWS
APRIL 5, 2022

$4.5 million available: National Housing Trust Fund

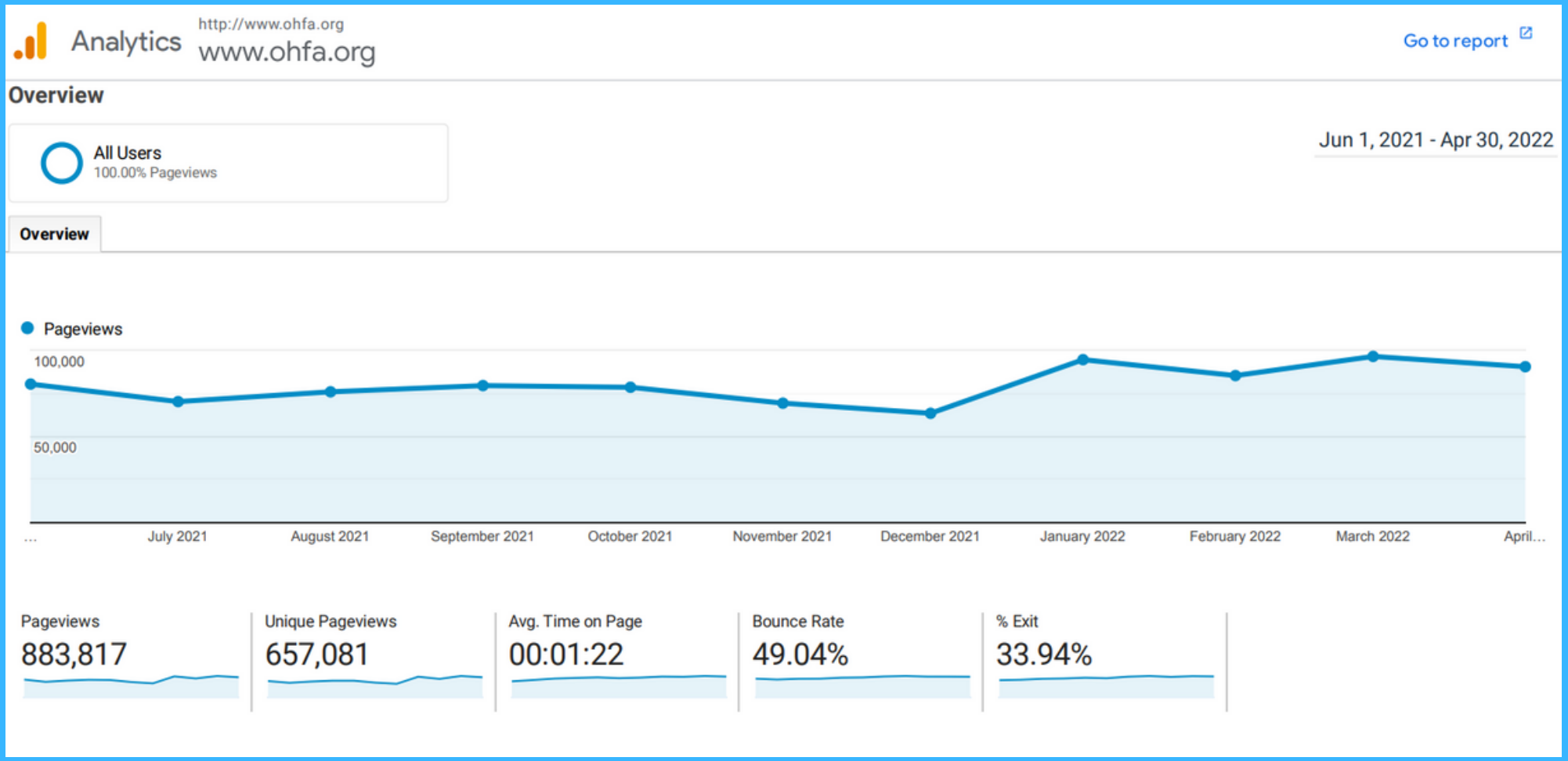
Read More

NEWSROOM

Analytics From the 10 Months PRIOR TO Site Launch



70% Growth in Site Views Since Launch



Top Search Terms

See how your content is doing

Keep track of your most popular pages and how people found them from Search

Top search queries for your site	Clicks	Impressions
1. ohfa	3,266	17,341
2. first time home buyer oklahoma	1,185	4,850
3. oklahoma housing finance agency	1,159	3,954
4. down payment assistance oklahoma	631	1,558
5. oklahoma homeowner assistance fund	530	643
6. ohfa oklahoma	467	1,398
7. oklahoma homeowners assistance fund	448	574
8. oklahoma section 8 housing list	442	2,610
9. ohfa housing list	371	1,623
10. oklahoma down payment assistance	371	663

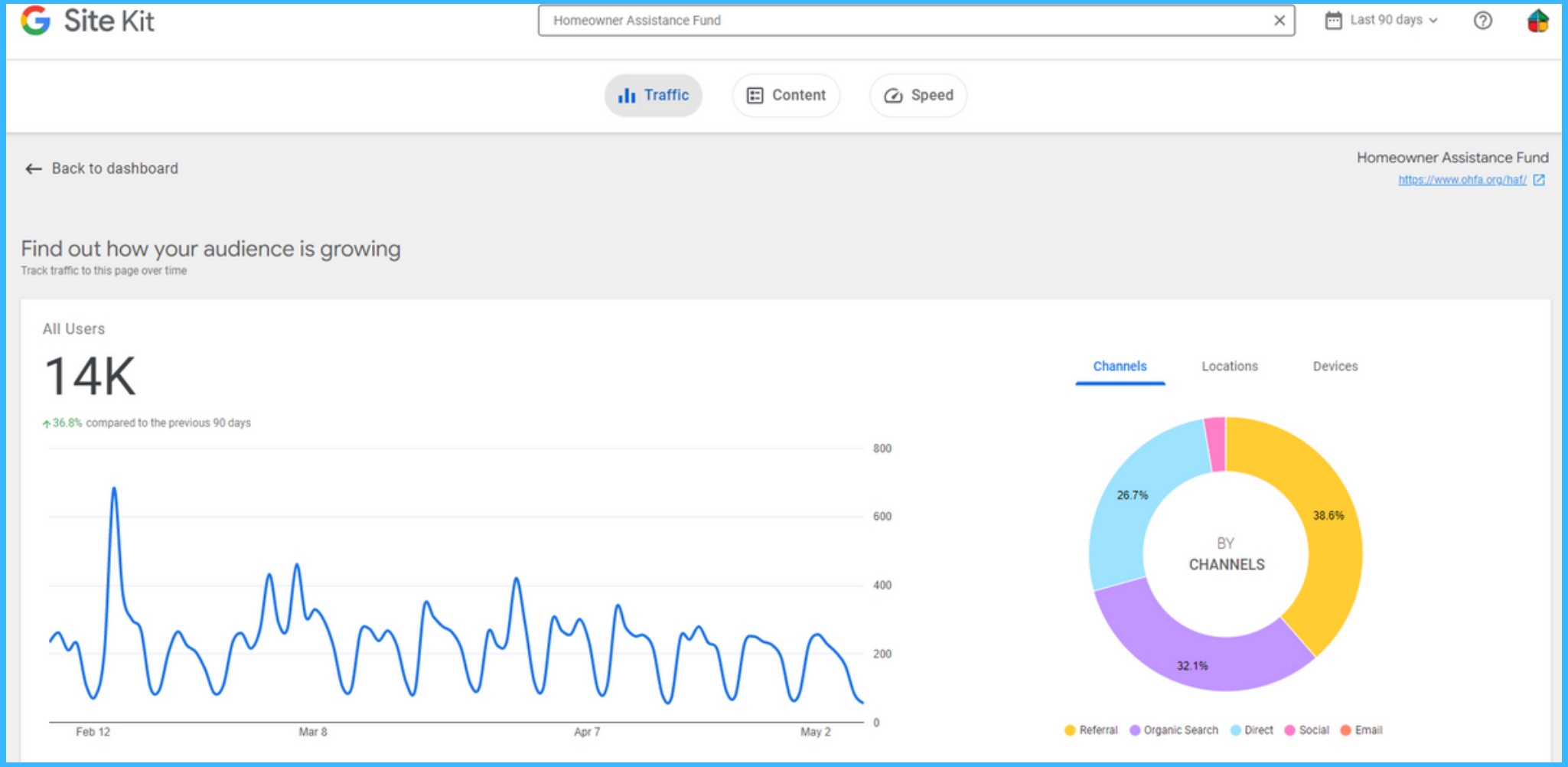
Source: Search Console

Top Content

Top content over the last 90 days

Title	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
1. Home - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /	57,804	43,613
2. Homeowner Assistance Fund - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /haf/	29,556	22,689
3. Housing Choice Voucher - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /housingchoicevoucher/	14,843	11,423
4. Rental Assistance - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /rentalassistance/	13,942	10,156
5. Homebuyers - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /homebuyers/	13,717	9,680
6. Emergency Housing Vouchers - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /emergency-housing-vouchers/	12,689	9,887
7. Eligibility Tool - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /eligibility-tool/	11,690	8,286
8. Lenders & Realtors - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /lenders-and-realtors/	9,703	6,097
9. Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance Program - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /homebuyers/downpayment/	8,579	6,915
10. Interest Rates - Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency /interest-rates/	6,866	6,029

Audience Growth



INTRODUCING A BRAND NEW OHFA.ORG

OHFA

Thank you for visiting!