THE YEAR IN REVIEW | 2021

Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation
It was a busy year filled with challenges, perseverance, and many successes.

- We achieved significant victories in our efforts to improve the quality and quantity of affordable housing. A vulnerable apartment building was placed in the hands of a responsible management team. And new building concepts received funding and became poised to emerge from the ground.

- Culture Club, a new arts & culture group, was formed by our highly-regarded creative institutions and talented residents.

- The challenges that emerged this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic continued to make us stronger. Our successes in addressing residents needs came from multiple collaborations with like-minded organizations focused on addressing food sovereignty, health & wellness, and environmental sustainability.

Enjoy this look back at a year filled with progress and the building of a solid foundation for the future of our neighborhood.
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

As market-rate and working-class housing are built, we strive to maintain the mix of affordable units.

- The WHRF purchased Alexandra Apartments, saving the building from foreclosure and protecting its affordable housing status for at least 13 more years.

  While acting as the interim property owner, we began to seek financing for the rehabilitation of the building to provide quality, affordable housing for residents for the next 30 years. So far, we have secured a 4% low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) and historic tax credits. It will be a phased rehab to begin end of 2022 or early 2023 with little to no tenant relocation.

- Walnut Hills received two, 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit allocations of the 36 awards statewide and of the four awarded in the entire city! This $1.84M in gap financing will enable The Model Group to construct 42 affordable units at the Peebles Apartments.

  And at Gilbert & Lincoln, Pennrose will be able to build 50 new affordable units. And we are seeking gap funding for 36 more units.
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

A great deal of construction was seen throughout Walnut Hills in 2021. Less visible was our behind-the-scenes work to lay the legal and financial groundwork for this to happen.

- We worked with the City and funders to get the former Kroger site into the hands of The Model Group for Q1 2022 demolition.

- On a parallel track, Yard & Co. provided both in-person community engagement and digital surveys to discover what residents wanted to see at the site. They received input from nearly 500 people that favored an active site with a blend of affordable & market-rate housing, ground-floor storefronts, and outdoor plazas.

- Progress continued on our Carnegie Library with a reopen date slated for Q3 2022. It will feature a full range of traditional and contemporary library spaces/services all while preserving historic elements from the original. The large theater on the lower level will be fully restored. When completed, the Walnut Hills Branch Library will be double its original size and fully accessible.
The WHRF works in Walnut Hills, East Walnut Hills, and Evanston.

- Additional bays in our Rainbow Building in EWH are now occupied by Hello Honey and Dentistry on Madison. All with the help of the Port Authority’s Dream Loan Fund.

- Cream and Sugar celebrated their first anniversary at our building in Evanston.

- Walnut Hills Day fundraisers were supported by local businesses: Esoteric Brewing, Fern, Fireside Pizza, The Fix, and Just Q’In.

- New storefronts opened: ArtWorks, Decibel, Fern, Manifest Station, and 10 Tiny Canvases.

- TriVersity’s new offices on Curtis Street made great progress. Move in date – April 2022.

- Historic tax credits and new markets tax credits were secured to finance the rehab of the Durner Building near Peebles Corner.

- And we supported 15 businesses with a portion of the proceeds from our Inside Walnut Hills fundraiser.
Health & Wellness

Collaborations with health organizations and partners grew dramatically in 2021.

- We have worked with Dr Anna Goroncy and her UC | Christ Hospital Family Medicine Residency for the past four years. Her team of medical students | residents volunteered in the FD School Garden and assisted neighbors with COVID-19 testing and vaccines. Anna co-chaired WHAC Health Committee, acted as a liaison with the Health Department, organized a holiday meal at an affordable building, and ran Pathways to Medicine at FD School.

- The new WHAC Health Committee brought in Hamilton County’s 513 Relief Bus for our Walnut Hills Street Food Festival & EmpowHERment Palooza. COVID vaccines were administered, at-home tests were distributed, and questions were answered.

- Every Wednesday evening, Esoteric Brewing hosted the Walnut Hills Run Club as they hit the streets for a 3-4 mile community run and then, maybe, a refreshing beverage.

- Vitality Cincinnati offered free, beginner Tai Chi classes at Green Man Park.
Weekly programs and special events reduced resident’s food insecurity issues while we worked on the long-term goal of developing a grocery storefront.

- We held nearly 50 Friday Food + Fun events with Freestore Foodbank, La Soupe, Open Door Pantry, and Black Power Initiative providing over 50,000 pounds of chef-prepared casseroles and soups, as well as meats, salads, breads, milk, and produce.

- We popped-up with free, hyper-local produce markets at area churches with Black Power Initiative and their holiday hot meal event.

- An Associated Wholesale Grocers’ Market Study was co-funded with Co-Op Cincy to determine the feasibility of grocery retail in Walnut Hills.

- Yolanda Hill, our Community Food Champion, developed Connecting in the Gardens – a 15-episode cinematic Livestream show focused on culinary education, community building and basic garden training for at-risk Walnut Hills residents. She and Dr Goroncy also hosted a holiday meal for Alms Apartments’ residents.

**FOOD Access**
**Urban Agriculture**

Growing food had multiple benefits – healthy, delicious produce and increased physical, mental and spiritual wellness.

- We made many new friends this year and, sadly, said goodbye to one. Danny Haynes tended his bed of sunflowers and peppers with a persistent grin. A gardening program for Alms Apartments residents like Danny was established so they can grow their own food.

- Prince Lang got the St James Art Garden off the ground. Visual artists, musicians, and designers from surrounding streets and nearby neighborhoods grew together and shared their harvest with those in need.

- HGC Construction & SSRG donated their time and expertise to install fences and build rainwater collection structures.

- We donated thousands of pounds of produce to neighborhood partners – Queen City Kitchen, Open Door Pantry, and La Soupe.

- Hamilton County R3Source provided funding to build food waste diversion composting infrastructure in the gardens.
COMMUNITY BUILDING

We continued to develop strong working relationships with community organizations and neighbors.

- We co-hosted the Walnut Hills Street Food Festival and EmpowHERment Palooza with HER Cincinnati and the generous funding of our neighborhood partners.

- Cincy Nice programmed and managed Five Points Alley. They hosted a variety of events – comedy showcases, live jazz, political debates, pop-up coffeehouse, ethnic foods at Tasty Thursdays, Workout Wednesday, Urban Consulate community dialogue, and movie night.

- Two new murals by ArtWorks: Manse Senior Housing (right) and Urban Blooms living wall (next page).

- UC students from CleanUp Cincy did a Spring & Fall blitz. Early in the year, they worked on Green Man Park and the Walnut Hills Business District. In the Fall, they made the neighborhood shine – from the former Kroger parking lot all the way down to Eden Park’s Mirror Lake for the inaugural Peebles 5K.
Arts & Culture

Walnut Hills has a thriving arts & culture scene and is home to the City’s premier creative institutions.

These local organizations formed Culture Club to build a strong, equitable, and dynamic community by employing arts & culture. That is accomplished through collaboration & the appreciation of diversity to lift up, enhance, and enrich the artistic & cultural sectors of Greater Walnut Hills.

Multiple local organizations joined together to host activities at the Walnut Hills Street Food Festival and collaborated on the living wall mural.

**Culture Club Founding Members**
- ArtWorks Cincinnati
- Cincinnati Art Museum
- Cincinnati Ballet
- Cincy Nice
- Haile Foundation
- Harriet Beecher Stowe House
- millergardette
- Public Library | Walnut Hills Branch
- SKT Ceramics | Century Design Workshop
- Walnut Hills Area Council
- Walnut Hills Historical Society
- Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation
We established new connections in 2021 while strengthening our existing partnerships. Our successes came as a result of our collaborations with people and organizations that shared their skills, ideas, passion, and persistence.

We received generous operational and programmatic support from our many long-standing funders.

Developers worked with us to both rejuvenate historic buildings and bring new structures out of the ground.

With our program partners, we made advances in the areas of affordable housing, food access, urban agriculture, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

Number of events ........................................ 94
Number of volunteer hours ......................... 598
Interactions with residents ....................... 2,650
Pounds of food served ............................... 40,000
Pounds of garden produce donated ........... 1,200

OUR SUPPORTERS

FUNDERS

Developers

PARTNERS

Volunteers
**Staff & Board Members**

- Samantha Reeves  
  Executive Director

- Marie Hopkins  
  Compost Coordinator

- Gary Dangel  
  Food Access Coordinator

- Ed Herzig  
  Board President

- Matt Cuff  
  Board President

- Kathryn Gibbons  
  Board Vice President

- David Lopez-Kurtz  
  Board Member

- Terri Martin  
  Board Member

- Kevin Tighe  
  Board Member

- Keyu Yan  
  Board Member

- Alena Cunningham  
  Board Treasurer

- Maria Walley  
  Board Secretary

- Yolanda Hill  
  Community Food Champion

- Matt Cuff  
  Board President

- Ed Herzig  
  Board Member

- David Lopez-Kurtz  
  Board Member

- Terri Martin  
  Board Member

- Kevin Tighe  
  Board Member

- Keyu Yan  
  Board Member
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

A neighborhood is only as strong and resilient as its residents. Discover how you can become a contributing member of the community. Find your areas of interest and connect.

BEAUTIFICATION
Join in monthly cleanups and street landscaping.
Fred Orth
forth3rd@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBER
The Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation has several board seats available.
Samantha Reeves
samantha@walnuthillsrf.org

CULTURE CLUB
Bring your ideas for Arts & Culture collaborations.
Carrie Atkins Maras
cultureclub45206@gmail.com

FOOD ACCESS
Come and volunteers at Friday Food + Fun!
facebook.com/events/3140263882855022/

HEALTH & WELLNESS
Dr Anna Goroncy leads a group that promotes better health outcomes.
goroncar@ucmail.uc.edu

HEALTH & WELLNESS (cont.)
Walnut Hills Run Club every Wednesday.
facebook.com/groups/828362597745612

Free Tai Chi | Vitality Yoga in Green Man Park.
facebook.com/events/659297742135833

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Get involved in researching and preserving the area’s rich history.
Geoff Sutton
g Geoff@sutton-consulting.com

HOUSING
Discuss relevant information and resources for owners and renters in Walnut Hills.
Mary-Cabrini Durkin
ursulines@fuse.net

REAL ESTATE
Help to preserve the existing, historic buildings and guide the aesthetic and architectural standards of future developments.
samantha@walnuthillsrf.org

SAFETY
Work together to create safer streets for all.
Matt Corbett
mattcorb419@gmail.com

TRANSPORTATION
Assist in building a multi-modal, walkable neighborhood. Whether it’s a protected biking lane on Gilbert Avenue or a bus transit station, please come and share your thoughts.
Samir Kulkarni
samir.kulkarni@solicaconstruction.com

URBAN AGRICULTURE
Make new friends, help food insecure neighbors, and take home some fresh produce.
Gary Dangel
gary@walnuthillsrf.org

OUTREACH
Our Community Food Champion keeps residents of affordable housing informed about all the beneficial happenings. Your volunteer time would be very helpful.
Yolanda Hill
yolanda@walnuthillsrf.org

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