Choice Neighborhoods
FY2019 Implementation Grant Awards

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Fort Worth, TX | Los Angeles, CA | Philadelphia, PA | Winston-Salem, NC

Project summaries include photos and excerpts from each submitted application, edited for grammar and style.
FY 2019 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant
Fort Worth, Texas
Fort Worth Housing Solutions & City of Fort Worth
Stop Six

project OVERVIEW

Initially a thriving community on an interurban streetcar system, the Stop Six neighborhood of Fort Worth is now a neighborhood of contrasts. Today, nearly half of the lots in Stop Six are vacant, and the crime rate is almost four times that of the City. Despite its challenges, Stop Six remains the heartbeat of Fort Worth’s African American community and is just a 15-minute commute to Fort Worth’s downtown and nationally acclaimed biomedical center. With the award of a $35 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant, Fort Worth Housing Solutions, the City of Fort Worth, and their partners will transform the historic Stop Six into a neighborhood of choice. Central to the community’s plan is the revitalization of Cavile Place – a 300-unit distressed public housing development. Cavile Place will be replaced with nearly 1,000 new units as part of a larger mixed-income, mixed-use community. Meanwhile, supportive services will be in put in place with a focus on increasing residents’ income, delivering high quality health care, and supporting families’ and students’ educational goals. The Choice Neighborhoods Plan will further benefit the Opportunity Zone designation encompassing a portion of the Stop Six area.

key PARTNERS

Urban Strategies, Inc. | McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc. | Fort Worth Independent School District | City of Fort Worth Library | Child Care Associates | Urban Village Family Services | Boys & Girls Club | Brighter Outlook | Camp Fire First Texas | Center for Transforming Lives | Clayton Youth Services | Healthy Tarrant County Collaboration | Idea Public Schools | John Peter Smith Health Network | Meals on Wheels | My Healthy My Resources | One Safe Place | Pathfinder | Tarrant County College | Texas Wesleyan | United Way | Univ. of North Texas Health Sciences | Urban Village Family Services | Urban Theory | Workforce Solutions | Huong Dao Buddhist Temple | U.S. Bank | YMCA

committed LEVERAGE (self-reported)

Housing Leverage Committed: $91.6 million
People Leverage Committed: $31.9 million
Neighborhood Leverage Committed: $130.6 million

neighborhood BACKGROUND & VISION

The Stop Six neighborhood was originally known as Cowanville, a community of small farms and homesteads founded by Amanda Davis, an African American pioneer in the late 1800s. By the early 20th century, Cowanville was a thriving, working-class African American neighborhood. The area continued to grow and ultimately became known as Stop Six, reflecting its place on an interurban streetcar system connecting Fort Worth to Dallas. Like many urban neighborhoods, the Stop Six Neighborhood came to experience decades of disinvestment and abandonment.

Evidence of this decline is apparent by the fact that nearly half of all lots are vacant, absentee owners are prevalent, and the neighborhood’s crime rate is close to four times that of the city. Despite its challenges, Stop Six remains the heartbeat of Fort Worth’s African American community and is just a 15-minute commute to Fort Worth’s downtown and nationally acclaimed biomedical center.

Since 2012, Fort Worth Housing Solutions, the City of Fort Worth, community residents, and stakeholders have been methodically planning for the revitalization of Stop Six. The plan is reflective of the community’s needs and desires. The Housing Plan is centered on the replacement of Cavile Place – a 300-unit, 70-year old public housing development. To link Stop Six to Fort Worth’s downtown and attract additional residents to the neighborhood, the new construction will integrate 300 project-based vouchers with 50 permanent supportive housing units, 351 workforce housing units, and 289 market rate units. The housing team will follow a design approach that respects the neighborhood’s historic feel and will deconcentrate poverty and reduce density by building on several housing sites throughout the neighborhood.

Building upon this housing investment, the Neighborhood Plan addresses key community goals to redefine the area’s image. Vacant land will be returned to productive use by introducing neighborhood-serving amenities, including pocket parks, recreation sites, and retail. Transportation and mobility barriers will be addressed through improved transit service, new and improved sidewalks, and bike lanes.
Safety will be improved through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design features and concerted efforts with the police department and the community. Recreational needs will be met by planned community facilities, including a new community swimming pool, library, and YMCA, and by creating fitness opportunities through outdoor sports and recreational parks. Finally, the City will further invest in the neighborhood with an expansion and targeting of its homeownership programs. Tying these efforts together, a portion of the Stop Six neighborhood is within a designated Opportunity Zone—setting the stage for further investment.

Meanwhile, a variety of supportive services providers will work in concert with residents to access a continuum of holistic health supports, job opportunities in rapidly growing industries, and wrap-around educational services for both youth and adults. A service provider network will be assembled to continually review and improve outcomes of Cavile Place residents with an emphasis on equity, identifying and addressing gaps in needed services, and coordinating strategies. To improve the health of target residents, the case management team and service provider network will deliver comprehensive, family-centered support and high-quality, accessible health services. Education and early learning outcomes will also be a key focus. Child Care Associates will operate multiple Early Head Start and Head Start facilities in Stop Six and plans to open a facility across the street from the target site. My Health My Resources will provide two-generation programming to support parents in healthy development play and activities with their children.
The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and the City of Los Angeles were awarded a $35 million FY 2019 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant to revitalize the Jordan Downs public housing site and the Watts neighborhood. Today, Jordan Downs has more than 600 units of barracks-style public housing that is physically isolated from the surrounding community. Building upon input gathered through a community planning process, HACLA, the City, and their partners will use this grant to create 1,434 new mixed-income housing units on a revitalized site featuring a new, 3-acre park; a 50,000 sq. ft. community center; and new through streets reconnecting it to the surrounding neighborhood. This new housing development will be bolstered by the nearby Freedom Plaza, Watts’ first new commercial development in 50 years. To expand opportunities for Jordan Downs families, the Children’s Institute, Inc. will lead a broad coalition of supportive services providers in connecting families to health care providers, employment resources and enhanced educational opportunities. The Choice Neighborhoods Plan will further benefit the Opportunity Zone designation encompassing the Watts neighborhood.

Amidst this progress, the Watts Rising Housing Plan will transform Jordan Downs into a 1,454, mixed-income and mixed-use community with 1,304 rental units and 150 homeownership units. Each of Jordan Downs current public housing units will be replaced with a new, affordable unit. By using a “build first” approach, the development team will ensure residents do not have to relocate off-site during construction unless they want to move elsewhere. To date, more than 150 replacement housing units have already been built or are under development on parcels adjacent to Jordan Downs. When complete, the revitalized site will feature a variety of amenities, including a new 3-acre park, a 50,000 sq. ft. community center, and hundreds of new trees.
Based on in-depth resident surveys, Watts Risings’ People strategy will bring together a variety of community partners to address Jordan Downs residents’ health, education, and economic needs. The Children’s Institute, Inc., a nonprofit that has served Southern California families for more than 100 years, will oversee the grant’s supportive services initiatives. As part of the People Plan, mobile health clinics and mental health counseling will be offered onsite. A robust variety of employment supports will help residents with everything from obtaining their GEDs to gaining soft skills training, applying for jobs, and becoming entrepreneurs. Early childhood education initiatives will empower parents with young children and increase the availability of Head Start. Ongoing educational initiatives will bolster local schools and provide college readiness activities to help students pursue higher education.

Choice Neighborhoods funding will also be used to make a variety of neighborhood improvements. To enhance economic opportunities, grant funds will support façade improvements for local businesses and will help to create a new commercial kitchen incubator at MudTown Farms, an urban farm and public park adjacent to Jordan Downs. The Resilient Homes Project will provide green retrofits and other improvements to neighborhood homes. The future Watts Empowerment Music and Film Studio will offer residents a creative outlet and training venue, helping them to pursue careers in the creative arts. Additional neighborhood investments will be made by the City and other partners, including two new parks, thousands of new trees, enhanced public transit, new bike lines, improved cross walks, and more. Lastly, the Watts neighborhood is a designated Opportunity Zone—setting the stage for further investment in this area.
The Philadelphia Housing Authority and City of Philadelphia were awarded a $30 million FY 2019 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant for the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. This community is ready to herald in a new era for a neighborhood once defined by vacant land, public housing high-rise buildings, and decades of disinvestment. Since securing a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant award in 2013, the Housing Authority, City, and community partners have made significant strides toward their goals, including beginning the first phases of housing redevelopment and establishing strong community assets ranging from an innovative charter high school to a University-led health clinic. Now through the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant, Sharswood/Blumberg can realize its full potential. The grantee and their partners will: create 646 new, mixed income rental and homeownership units; develop a new fresh food grocery store and retail complex on a historic commercial corridor; rehab owner-occupied housing and infill vacant lots; and connect residents to employment, health, early learning, and education opportunities. The Choice Neighborhoods Plan will further benefit the Opportunity Zone designation encompassing the Sharswood area.

key PARTNERS


committed LEVERAGE (self-reported)

Housing Leverage Committed: $119.5 million
People Leverage Committed: $19.2 million
Neighborhood Leverage Committed: $73.0 million

neighborhood BACKGROUND & VISION

In Philadelphia, the Sharswood/Blumberg community is ready to herald in a new era. After over 40 years of disinvestment and concentrated poverty, the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood had acquired a reputation as a dangerous, hostile environment. Vibrant commercial and healthy housing markets were eventually replaced with open drug dealing and wide swaths of vacant land and boarded up buildings. Businesses and institutional partners had abandoned Sharswood, and eventually the neighborhood’s two main public schools closed. A turning point came in late 2013. A group of committed residents and partners, in collaboration with the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA), won a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant award and have since started to carry out their community plan. A central focus has been replacing the existing Norman Blumberg development – a complex of high-rise buildings and townhomes with a superblock design. To pave the way for redevelopment, PHA and the City acquired 1,300 vacant and blighted neighborhood parcels. The Choice Neighborhoods team went on to complete the first 151 replacement housing units and begin construction on another 83. Beyond the target housing, they and their partners have also rehabbed 70 owner-occupied homes and transformed a vacant school building into an innovative community center, which now houses a cutting-edge, new high school; a workforce EnVision Center; and a Temple University-run community health clinic.

Building on this impressive success to date, the Sharswood/Blumberg community will use the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant and over $250 million in leverage to complete their neighborhood vision. PHA and its development partner, Hunt-Pennrose, will develop 646 new units of mixed-income rental and homeownership units at on- and off-site locations, including 276 replacement units. A strategic phasing and infill approach will build on market forces from adjacent neighborhoods, while making formerly distressed community blocks whole.

Meanwhile, the City of Philadelphia, as the Neighborhood Lead, will continue to orchestrate critical investments in the surrounding neighborhood. With Habitat for Humanity, they will rehab another 60 owner-occupied homes, bolstering the ability of homeowners to remain in their community in attractive and safe housing.
The team will also focus on restoring the vibrancy of Ridge Avenue, a historic commercial corridor that connects Sharswood/Blumberg to the more affluent Fairmount neighborhood. Plans include establishing an anchor grocery store, creating opportunities and incentives to attract small businesses, and installing placemaking features. The team will also expand upon the community center, adding new assets such as a training facility focused on plumbing and construction trades. Additionally, the City has committed to renovating two neighborhood recreation centers and improving parks and greenspaces. Lastly, the Sharswood neighborhood is a designated Opportunity Zone—setting the stage for further investment in this area.

Crucially, PHA has also assembled a range of service providers and education partners to advance the lives of the former Blumberg residents. A PHA-led case management team will assess resident needs and goals and will connect them to aligned services.

To improve resident income and employment, over 100 slots in intensive training and job placement programs will be offered in diverse fields, such as culinary, healthcare, childcare, and hospitality. Health goals will be reached through a partnership with Temple University’s community health clinic, which will deploy outreach workers and offer primary, dental, and mental health care. Educational opportunities from birth through high school will be strengthened. PHA and their partners will connect children to high quality services at every stage of life, from an evidence-based early learning program that combines early family support with early education slots to University-led tutoring services and advanced scholars programming.
FY 2019 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Housing Authority of the City of Winston-Salem & City of Winston-Salem
North East Winston - “Newside Neighborhood”

project OVERVIEW

The North East Winston-Salem (“Newside”) Transformation Plan presents a rare opportunity to reconnect a community that was artificially divided by urban renewal programs, highway building, and systemic racial and economic segregation. With the award of a $30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant, the Housing Authority of the City of Winston-Salem, the City, and their partners will work to connect the two sides of Newside, building on the strengths of each to meet the deficiencies of the other.

Central to this plan is the redevelopment of Cleveland Avenue Homes – a 199-unit distressed public housing site. Cleveland Avenue Homes will be replaced with 406 new mixed-income housing units available to a broad range of incomes. Residents of Cleveland Avenue Homes will be further supported with connections to an array of educational opportunities, proven employment programs, and a network of medical providers. The Choice Neighborhoods Plan will further benefit from the partnership and investments from Winston-Salem State University, a local HBCU.

key PARTNERS

Urban Strategies, Inc. | McCormack Baron Salzar, Inc. | Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools | Forsyth County Public Library | Forsyth Technical Community College | Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center | Wexford Science & Technology, LLC | Winston-Salem State University | Big Brothers Big Sisters | Childcare Resource Center | Children’s Development Services Agency | Circles of Generations | Daymark Recovery Services | Family Services | GIDE | Goodwill | Habitat for Humanity | Kidz Extreme | Parenting Path | Piedmont Triangle WDB | YMCA | YWCA | Winston-Salem Foundation | National Cycling Center | ORIX Real Estate Capital, LLC

committed LEVERAGE (self-reported)

Housing Leverage Committed: $17.7 million
People Leverage Committed: $282.7 million
Neighborhood Leverage Committed: $367.7 million

neighborhood BACKGROUND & VISION

The North East Winston-Salem Choice Neighborhood, otherwise known as Newside, is a broad, eclectic blend of unique communities within Winston-Salem, a city in the midst of an exciting urban reinvention. For much of the 20th Century, Winston-Salem was synonymous with tobacco. The Newside area included both the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company manufacturing facilities and an adjacent employee residential area known as “Reynoldstown.”

The decline of the tobacco industry, coupled with mid-century urban population shift, left empty warehouses without jobs and deteriorating housing for increasingly poor, predominantly African American residents. Accelerating the area’s decline, a highway was built through Newside in the early 1970s, separating the old employment center from the housing center.

In recent decades, the warehouse side has resurfaced as a center of arts and innovation, filled with employment and educational opportunities and new business and residential spaces. On the other side of the highway, residents of what became Cleveland Avenue Homes and their neighbors have continued to struggle against poverty, neglect, crime, and the lack of employment and retail options.

Connecting these two halves is a critical component of the current Transformation Plan. The warehouse side, now called the Innovation Quarter, is now home to 3,600 workers, over 90 companies, 1,800 students, and 5 academic institutions. Meanwhile Cleveland Avenue Homes, 244 units of distressed public housing sits just one mile away. To build upon the Innovation Quarter’s success, the obsolescent public housing development will be transformed into 406 mixed-income, mixed-use, multi-generational apartments.

The neighborhood strategy is aligned with two major existing master planning efforts led in partnership by the City and local anchor institutions. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools has proposed to relocate a new elementary school adjacent to the redeveloped site, in anticipation of future demand.

Pictured: The boundaries of the Newside Choice Neighborhood.
To close the physical divide, the historic commercial heart of the African American community – the North Liberty Street Corridor – will be used to weave Newside into one cohesive neighborhood. This crucial pathway from residential to commercial hubs will be realized through significant investments in streetscaping, commercial investment, the Zagster bike share program, and infrastructure and service improvements.

Access to high quality early childhood education and living wage jobs will be central to the transformation of Newside and improving the lives of Cleveland Avenue Homes residents. A comprehensive case management system, led by Urban Strategies, Inc., will support linking residents to an array of educational opportunities, proven employment programs, and a network of medical providers.

Parenting PATH will meet residents where they are to provide two-generational programs, in-home support, and enrichment in group settings for caregivers of children under five. An education equity team, led by Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools, will be formed to support early learning and out-of- and in-school-time of students. Forsyth County Public Library will provide a bookmobile and early literacy programming that includes a STEAM initiative for all 267 Cleveland Avenue Homes children. Additional education supports regarding STEM learning will be provided by Winston-Salem State University, a local HBCU. Employment and health services will also be offered to all Cleveland Avenue Homes residents, coordinated through a robust service provider network.