

**Choice Neighborhoods Planning Tool**  
**Topics to Consider When Developing Your Transformation Plan**

**Updated March 2018**

<b>Topics to Consider</b>	<b>Questions to Consider</b>
<p><b>RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engage target housing residents, other neighborhood residents, and community organizations throughout the planning process and ensure that they substantially inform the Transformation Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you involve residents and the community in decision-making?</li> <li>• How will you ensure continued engagement with the residents and the community throughout the planning process to include identification of priorities and strategies in the final Transformation Plan?</li> <li>• What efforts are in place to prevent or resolve engagement challenges?</li> <li>• What capacity building will you do with residents and the community to ensure meaningful participation?</li> </ul>
<p><b>NEEDS ASSESSMENT:</b> Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the neighborhood, including but not limited to a household-level survey of the target housing residents, to inform the development of the Transformation Plan. Consider all 3 Choice Neighborhoods Goals: Housing, People, Neighborhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you identified what indicators to collect; how to collect them; and who will provide the information?</li> <li>• How will you conduct the household-level survey and ensure a high response rate?</li> <li>• If applicable, how will you manage privacy requirements, e.g., HIPPA, in collecting data?</li> <li>• How will you collect open-ended information from the target housing residents and the broader community?</li> <li>• How will your needs assessment fully examine community challenges so that it provides insights into why challenges persist and what interventions have and have not worked in the past?</li> <li>• Are there opportunities to include residents and community members in the assessment process?</li> <li>• How will data from the resident survey and neighborhood needs assessment inform decision-making and plan development?</li> </ul>
<p><b>SHARED VISION:</b> Develop a shared vision for neighborhood revitalization, including a common understanding of the neighborhood challenges, the community’s aspirations for the neighborhood’s future, and well-defined goals that capture what success looks like.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What meaningful opportunities will residents and stakeholders have in shaping the vision and plan priorities?</li> <li>• How will you build consensus among all of your stakeholders, including residents, community members, potential funders, City officials, etc., when they have differing objectives?</li> <li>• If applicable, how will you integrate local initiatives and plans into the planning process?</li> <li>• How will measurable, shared target outcomes be established?</li> </ul>
<p><b>COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES – Housing, People, Neighborhood:</b> Use the neighborhood needs assessments to select and prioritize strategies that will have the most impact on the neighborhood by addressing critical gaps and building on strengths. Develop a cohesive plan that integrates Housing, People,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence base and successful examples inform the development of core strategies?</li> <li>• What information leads you to believe the strategies you selected will work in your particular community? Does the strategy consider why the problem exists</li> </ul>

<p>and Neighborhood strategies. Ensure that the strategies selected will achieve the target outcomes the community establishes.</p>	<p>and what barriers may need to be addressed in order to achieve substantial gains? Does it consider what assets and opportunities may be untapped?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you prioritize and make decisions about which strategies become central to the Transformation Plan?</li> <li>• Have you identified a master developer/housing developer and leads for the neighborhood, people, and housing components?</li> <li>• <i>Neighborhood</i>: Which strategies will most effectively create the conditions for public and private reinvestment in the neighborhood to offer the kinds of amenities, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices?</li> <li>• <i>Housing</i>: Which strategies will most effectively replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed, financially viable, and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood? Which strategies will most effectively improve housing choice and stability for original residents of the HUD-assisted housing?</li> <li>• <i>People</i>: Which strategies will most effectively improve outcomes in employment, health, and education for target housing residents? How will strategies improve the coordination, quality, and impact of existing supportive services for target housing residents and other neighborhood residents?</li> </ul>
<p><b>DOING WHILE PLANNING/EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES:</b> Design and implement early activities in the neighborhood that will engage the community, enhance the neighborhood, and that residents, community members, and/or local stakeholders will implement during the 24-month, planning process. Grantees may use up to \$100,000 of Choice Neighborhoods funds for Early Action Activities, and/or use leverage for other Doing While Planning projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have not already selected these activities, what criteria will you use in selecting them?</li> <li>• How will these activities enhance the neighborhood and build neighborhood confidence?</li> <li>• How will these activities foster participation from target housing and other neighborhood residents in the way they are designed, led, and implemented?</li> <li>• If you are using Choice Neighborhoods Early Action Activities funds, have you followed all of the Early Action Activities requirements, including the environmental requirements?</li> </ul>
<p><b>PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE:</b> Identify and obtain commitments from local government, anchor institutions, and community leaders to finalize the transformation plan, work long-term to implement the plan, help ensure continued programmatic success of the plan, and develop an integrated working structure to support consistent communication among workgroups, facilitate decision-making, and hold partners accountable for meeting performance goals and milestones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the governance or decision-making structure for the entire planning process?</li> <li>• How will you maintain partnership engagement?</li> <li>• Who is responsible for partner development, management, and strategic alliances?</li> <li>• What is your strategy for holding partners accountable for meeting performance goals and milestones?</li> <li>• Do partnership agreements for the planning and /or implementation process align with priorities? How will you build in the ability to adjust strategies?</li> </ul>

<p><b>MESSAGING AND COMMUNICATIONS:</b> Communicate clearly and regularly with the community, other stakeholders, and funders to build support for the shared vision and Transformation Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are your audiences, and what range of communication methods have you selected to match these audiences?</li> <li>• How do you explain how you are building on previous or existing local efforts and how do you distinguish this planning process from previous efforts that have not worked?</li> <li>• How can you use your communications strategy to document your accomplishments in real time and build support?</li> </ul>
<p><b>TRACKING PROGRESS:</b> Develop a plan for tracking progress on Housing, People, and Neighborhood outcomes during implementation. Develop a method for partners and the community to review data regularly and adjust strategies, as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your plans for tracking progress on Housing, People, and Neighborhood outcomes during the implementation of your Transformation Plan?</li> <li>• How will data be used to regularly review progress and adjust strategies as needed? Who will be involved in these conversations?</li> <li>• How will you develop data sharing agreements with your partners to collect information in areas, such as safety, education, and health?</li> <li>• How will you manage privacy requirements, e.g., HIPPA, in collecting and managing data?</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY:</b> Ensure the strategies identified in the Transformation Plan are sustainable beyond the grant term. Develop a strong core of partners that will remain engaged after the term of the grant to ensure that activities are implemented. Work with public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals to gather and leverage resources needed to achieve the goals set in your Transformation Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you cultivate a group of partners and stakeholders that buy into the Transformation Plan goals and strategies and will commit resources?</li> <li>• Have you sought out existing and new resources, including public, private and philanthropic, to achieve your plan's goals?</li> <li>• How will you market and promote the community's vision and Transformation Plan to potential funders?</li> </ul>