



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

Issue 80 | April 2019

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choice Neighborhoods FY2019 Planning Grant Applications Due June 10

HUD recently posted the [FY19 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants NOFA](#). With this publication, HUD is making available up to \$5,000,000 for Planning Grants, including Planning and Action Grants. Planning Grants are two-year grants that assist communities with severely distressed public or HUD-assisted housing in developing a neighborhood transformation plan and building the support necessary for that plan to be successfully implemented. Planning and Action Grants are three and a half year planning grants that pair planning with action. In addition to developing a neighborhood transformation plan, these grants enable communities to carry out Action Activities. Applications are due on Monday, June 10, 2019. The NOFA and application package must be downloaded from the www.grants.gov site. Potential applicants may submit questions to ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov.

Moving to Work (MTW) Expansion

HUD is inviting a first and second round of public housing agencies to join the Department's expanding [Moving to Work \(MTW\) demonstration program](#). MTW allows public housing agencies (PHAs) to practice greater program flexibility and encourages housing choice and self-sufficiency among low-income families. The Department has [extended the application timeline](#) for agencies to apply to the Cohort #1 of Moving to Work Demonstration Program. Through this extension notice the Department will select thirty agencies to study MTW flexibility. Cohort #1 will consist of high-performing agencies that administer 1,000 or fewer HCVs and public housing units combined. The deadline to submit the letter of interest package for Cohort #1 is May 13, 2019. On March 14th the Department published [Notice PIH 2019-04](#) which invites eligible agencies to submit letters of interest for MTW Cohort 2. Agencies selected into Cohort #2 will study different rent reform models that may or may not be income based, to include tiered rents and/or stepped rents. Cohort #2 will consist of agencies with 1,001 or more public housing and HCV units. Further, Cohort #2 will require agencies to have 1,000 or more existing non-elderly, non-disabled public housing and/or HCV households in order to ensure adequate sample size. The deadline to submit letters of interest for Cohort #2 is June 12, 2019.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

AARP Community Challenge 2019

AARP's Community Challenge program is now open, offering grants ranging from several hundred dollars for smaller short-term activities to several thousand dollars for larger projects. The program is open to nonprofits and government entities. The following [project types](#) will be prioritized over ongoing programming or events: permanent physical improvements in the community; temporary demonstrations that lead to long-term change; and new, innovative programming or services. [Applications](#) are due by April 17, 2019 and all proposed projects must be completed by November 4, 2019.

PRO Neighborhoods CDFI Collaborative Competition

JPMorgan Chase is soliciting proposals for their sixth [Partnerships for Raising Opportunities in Neighborhoods \(PRO Neighborhoods\) CDFI Collaborative Competition](#). Investments up to \$5 million will be made to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) towards two opportunities: 'Planning for Equitable Development Grants' – a one-year grant of up to \$100,000; and 'Collaborative Capital for Equitable Development' – a three-year grant of up to \$5 million. Proposals are due by April 22, 2019.

Opportunities for Adult and Young Adult Reentry Projects

The Department of Labor has recently announced the availability of grants for initiatives that assist communities in planning and implementing comprehensive reentry programs for individuals involved in the adult and juvenile justice systems transitioning back to the community. The Department will award up to \$1,500,000 each to approximately 20 non-intermediary organizations proposing to serve adults and 14 non-intermediary organizations proposing to serve young adults. Applications to serve adults are available [here](#). Applications to serve young adults are available [here](#). The application closing date for both is April 25, 2019.

2019 National Preservation Award

HUD and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) will be recognizing developers, organizations, and agencies for their success in advancing the goals of historic preservation in affordable housing, community development, and/or expanded economic development opportunities for low- and moderate-income communities. All nominations are due by 11:59 pm PDT on April 30, 2019. Download the 2019 Award Brochure and apply [here](#).

New Funding Opportunity Pays for Results

The U.S. Department of Treasury recently released a [Notice of Funding Availability](#) for a social impact program open to local governments and their partners. The [Social Impact Partnership to Pay for Results Act \(SIPPRA\)](#) seeks proposals to achieve outcomes such as increased employment among chronically unemployed populations, increased financial stability of low-income families, improved educational outcomes, improved early childhood development, improved health, reduced recidivism, and more. Awardees will only receive payment for project costs if the outcome is achieved and payment will not exceed the value of the outcome to the federal government. All awardees will receive funding for an independent evaluator to determine whether the outcome is achieved. Treasury expects to award up to \$66 million in competitive grants. [Applications](#) are due between April 22 and 4 PM EST on May 22.

Upcoming National Dislocated Worker Grant

The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration will award \$28.5 million through their [Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities \(WORC\) grants](#) for workforce development projects within the Appalachian and Delta regions. Grants will range from \$150,000 to \$2.5 million. Eligible applicants include local governments, public/Indian housing, and nonprofit organizations. This opportunity will be available in May 2019 at [Grants.gov](#).

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Vacant, Abandoned, and Deteriorated Properties Training Academy

On May 14-15 in Houston, TX, the [Vacant, Abandoned, and Deteriorated Properties Training Academy \(VAD Academy\)](#) will host a free, two-day intensive training primarily designed for public and nonprofit leaders who are ready to take a more strategic, comprehensive approach to revitalizing VAD properties. Attendees will participate in classroom sessions and group exercises on property market dynamics, code enforcement, delinquent property taxes, land banking, and disaster planning and recovery.

National League of Cities' City Summit

On November 20-23 in San Antonio, TX, the National League of Cities will host their annual [City Summit](#) conference for local leaders to convene and collaborate on solutions to common challenges facing American cities. The conference will also offer mobile workshops and guided tours of noteworthy municipal projects offering best practices for government officials to improve conditions back home. [Click here](#) to register.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Bringing Opportunity Zones and CDFIs Together

A new report shares both the [financial and non-financial value](#) that Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) have to offer low- and moderate-income communities interested in investing in Opportunity Zones. With long-standing relationships with these designated communities, CDFIs are positioned to provide: facilitation of transactions between community needs and investor plans; project monitoring; below market rate senior debt; layered tax credit investments; innovative equity instruments; and more to foster equitable and inclusive growth in communities that have been financially marginalized. Read the full report [here](#).

Do Suspensions Affect Student Outcomes?

A [podcast](#) from Mathematica discusses a new report showing how school suspensions negatively impact school performance. The [report](#) also reviews the disparities in discipline across race, gender, and ability, suggesting school discipline reforms often have unintended consequences.

Next Generation Sector Partnerships Advancing the Labor Market

The Federal Reserve has published a series of case studies that demonstrate success through cross-sector partnerships that advance workforce and economic competitiveness in five regions: Rio Grande Valley, Texas; West Central Texas; Northeast Louisiana; Lane County, Oregon; and East Bay, California. The Next Generation Sector Partnerships are regional collaborations of businesses from the same industries and labor market regions that work with education, workforce development, economic

development and community organizations to identify opportunities for growth with community support. Read the case studies [here](#).

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

Louisville Breaks Ground on First Housing Phase

The Louisville Housing Authority and their partners have broken ground on the Russell neighborhood's first phase of Choice Neighborhoods housing. The new senior building will create 117 units by fall 2020. An [article](#) in the Louisville Courier features the groundbreaking, a resident's perspective on the redevelopment, and the broader Choice Neighborhoods initiative.

SPOTLIGHT: Elevating Results Together: An Education Convening with Urban Strategies, Inc. and the San Francisco Unified School District

In June of 2018 Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI) hosted its inaugural *Elevating Results Together* national education convening in partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District. This two-day event brought together school district superintendents and other school leadership from eight Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grantees as essential partners in supporting families and children living in assisted housing. The overarching objective of the convening was to build on existing school-community partnerships and address challenges that prevent students living in assisted housing from being academically successful.



Figure 1: Dr. Vincent Matthews, Superintendent of San Francisco Unified School District joined participants to meet members of the Alice Griffith community and neighborhood.

Results Count

The convening began with a comprehensive review of education data from each of USI's Choice Neighborhoods sites. While most student evaluations were based on standard HUD metrics – kindergarten readiness, proficiency in reading and math, graduation rates, etc. – a more wholistic perspective was needed to address the personal barriers that students were facing. Tyronda Minter, Vice President of Educational Initiatives at USI, shared, “We brought attention to the importance of acting on disparities, recognizing that race, class and culture impact outcomes and opportunities for vulnerable children.”

For example, after disaggregating the data by race and gender, attendees recognized that African American boys faced increased challenges within the education system. Guest speakers, San Francisco Unified School District's Kevin Truit, Chief of Student, Family and Community Support, and Superintendent Dr. Vincent Matthews, shared how in response to these types of disparities they launched the African American Achievement Initiative. The initiative – a series of mentorship, tutoring, and other support programs such as a relationship building exercise with local police officers – was used to address the disproportionate suspension and attendance rates among students. Within 3 years of implementation, the district experienced a 59% reduction in suspensions overall and a 69% reduction in suspensions for African American students. Measures of attitude and attendance rates also dramatically improved.



Figure 2: Kristie Stutler, Regional Director of Urban Strategies, Inc, facilitates a discussion on achieving results through aligned actions at the person, role, and systems level.

Building on Insights

School district leaders and USI staff from the eight Choice Neighborhoods sites identified several takeaways from the convening that they committed to address:

- **Timing Relocation with the Academic Year** – USI shared data with the group on the significant impact a disruption in the academic schedule can have on elementary-aged students, who lost up to 2-3 months of math and reading comprehension. As a direct result of the convening, attendees began a more intentional partnership between school districts, housing authorities, and developers to plan housing development timelines around the academic calendar, setting a goal to better time relocation during non-instructional and annual testing times. With the support of the local USI staff, monthly and/or weekly meetings continue to occur – creating timetables around testing periods and religious observance periods and developing communication materials that promote awareness among residents. The team advocated for flexibility among partners, who may have competing timelines, in order to protect the needs of families and children.
- **Engaging Parents Where They Are At** – Participating superintendents and school district representatives recognized the value in face-to-face interactions within their students' communities. Participants agreed that parent teacher conferences and other parent engagement activities should occur on target housing sites or be closer to areas where convenient public transportation is available to further encourage participation.
- **Focusing on Race and Equity** – School district partners agreed to disaggregate their data by race to better identify the needs and challenges of students of color. By using the aggregated and disaggregated data, staff began to examine how

personal and institutional biases shaped assumptions about their students and impacted the strategies and programs meant to serve them.

Moving from Talk to Action

In addition to the commitments above, USI and school leaders have put several other promising practices in place to improve student outcomes:

- **Recognizing Relocation as a Transition** – Without intentional efforts, relocation often has an emotional impact on children that can negatively affect student performance. To ease the anxiety children experience while transitioning to a new home, USI has collaborated with school districts, teaching staff, and community partners to host the “Celebrating the Journey” program. This series of focus groups for elementary, middle, and high school students experiencing relocation explores their emotions, embraces community change, and promotes dialogue on what students want their communities to look like. Held on-campus, school leaders granted students permission to attend the activity throughout the school day. Participants of the exercise, including school staff and teachers, reported improved relationships with the children they already worked so closely with and emphasized the need to engage communities at every level of the transition process.
- **Making Attendance a Priority** – In response to school data showing challenges with attendance rates, USI recently launched the “Cheeks in the Seats” campaign in partnership with Attendance Works. The campaign calls attention to the cumulative learning time lost from missed school days and promotes shared community responsibility to keep students on track to succeed. Adopting an individualized approach, each participating community is in the process of identifying tailored strategies to raise student attendance, such as individual home visits and weekly school meetings.
- **Approaching Discipline through a Trauma-Informed Lens** – Given the challenges that children in Choice Neighborhoods often face, USI has begun to provide trauma-informed care trainings to school staff and other community partners. The approach moves away from traditional disciplinary practices and works to understand why certain disruptive behaviors are expressed and how to address those root causes.

For more information, please visit the Convening Portal (scroll to bottom) at <https://elevatingresults2018.wordpress.com/>.

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