



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choice Neighborhoods FY2018 Implementation Grant Applications Due September 17

The [FY18 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants NOFA](#) makes available approximately \$145 million to award grants of up to \$30 million each. Applications are due by Monday, September 17, 2018. Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants support the implementation of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that are expected to: replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing; improve resident outcomes; and create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods. The NOFA and application package must be downloaded from the www.grants.gov site. Potential applicants may submit questions to ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

BUILD Infrastructure Investments Program (Formerly Known as TIGER)

The Department of Transportation's BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grants offers funding for infrastructure planning and construction for a variety of transportation modes. Grants range from \$5 million to \$25 million. Eligible applicants include local governments, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations, and other political subdivisions of State or local governments. [Applications](#) are due by July 19, 2018.

Grant Opportunity for Transit-Oriented Development Corridor Planning

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) expects to award 35 grants of \$250,000 to \$2,000,000 for comprehensive transit planning, including economic development, ridership, multimodal connectivity and accessibility, increased transit access for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and mixed-use development near transit stations along an entire transit capital project corridor. Applicants must be existing FTA grantees as of the publication date of the notice. [Applications](#) are due by July 23, 2018.

Support for Efforts to Stop School Violence

The Bureau of Justice Assistance expects to award 70 grants of up to \$1,000,000 for efforts to prevent and reduce school violence. Eligible applicants include local governments. [Applications](#) are due by July 23, 2018.

Matching Funds to Delivery Capacity-Building to Entrepreneurs

Funding from the Economic Development Administration is available for capacity building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to entrepreneurs, and for operational support for organizations that provide early-stage funding to start ups. Applicants must provide a matching share from non-Federal sources of at least 50 percent of the total project cost. The award ceiling is \$750,000. Eligible entities include local governments, non-profits, public-private partnerships, economic development organizations, and public institutions of higher education. [Applications](#) are due by August 29, 2018.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Placemaking Webinar

On July 12 at 2 pm EST, Enterprise Community Partners will be hosting a webinar on placemaking. The webinar will feature a discussion of perspectives on how placemaking can be a more interdisciplinary tool and what its benefit is to community members, community developers, and national organizations. To register, [click here](#).

Housing Counseling Webinar for Housing Authorities

On July 12 from 2-3 pm EST, HUD will be hosting a webinar on what HUD housing counseling is and how public housing residents can benefit from it. The webinar will also discuss HUD's new housing counseling certification standards. To register, [click here](#).

Toolkit for Leading Collective Impact Working Groups

FSG published a [toolkit](#) on how to effectively manage working groups within collaborative initiatives. Key takeaways include the importance of structuring teams to have diverse perspectives, developing a culture of trust, and utilizing data to guide decision-making.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Using Data and Technology to Mobilize Assets and Form Collaboratives

The Civic Tech & Data collaborative has published a report on how to harness the power of data and technology to increase efficiency, equity, and effectiveness of policies and programs that benefit low-income urban residents. The [report](#) offers insights from seven cities and regions using data and technology to intentionally leverage their assets.

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

Dayton, OH Choice Neighborhoods Grant Builds on Phoenix Project

[An article](#) in BizJournal highlighted the revitalization efforts in west Dayton facilitated by a \$1.5 million Choice Planning and Action Grant awarded in 2016. The community engagement process led to the establishment of six key goals for the neighborhood redevelopment, including improved educational outcomes for children, better transportation and housing options, and improved safety and community perception.

SPOTLIGHT: Highlights from the Choice Neighborhoods Convening for FY17 Planning Awardees

On June 6-7, 2018, the six FY2017 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grantees convened to discuss how to create aspirational and actionable Transformation Plans. During the convening, community development experts and prior Choice Neighborhoods planning

grantees shared best practices related to neighborhood revitalization, place-making activities, early actions, and developing a successful housing plan. Presentation materials and unedited videos of each session can be viewed [here](#); edited versions of session videos will be posted in the coming weeks.

To kick off the convening, Secretary Ben Carson, Public and Indian Housing General Deputy Assistant Secretary Dominique Blom, and Choice Neighborhoods Director Mindy Turbov welcomed the new cohort of Planning Grantees. They encouraged grantees to take advantage of the experience of past Choice Neighborhoods cohorts, and to leverage the supportive Choice Neighborhoods HUD staff. Afterwards, the [new planning grantees](#) introduced themselves by showcasing their neighborhoods in 5-minute [presentations](#).

The first session explored [The Power of Placemaking](#). The session defined placemaking as “what makes people love where they live” and as efforts that create a sense of place. For example, murals, sculptures, or signage that commemorate historical neighborhood events evoke pride and hope about the neighborhood’s future. Public seating, pop-up events, community gardens, and playspaces for all ages can also be examples of placemaking. Placemaking is important because it strengthens neighborhood identity, changes internal and external perceptions of the neighborhood, improves quality of life, empowers residents to create a shared vision, builds social capital, and catalyzes implementation.

Presenter Mukul Malhotra challenged attendees to think about the story of their community and what kinds of placemaking elements would help tell that story. In placemaking, the process is as important as the final product. Malhotra recommended that grantees think outside the box about how to engage the community and make it fun for people to participate. He suggested using non-traditional meeting locations, such as outdoor spaces, hosting pop-up meetings, or collecting resident input through chalk walls. Malhotra also encouraged grantees to include children in the planning efforts because they enhance creativity and can help adults see their neighborhood from a new perspective.



Figure 1: (Top Left) Leaf sculpture that embodies community's story; (Top Right) Outdoor community meeting; (Bottom Left) Chalk wall to collect input; (Bottom Right) Mural design celebrating neighborhood culture.

On Day 2, the [Doing While Planning](#) panel provided some examples of best practices for early physical neighborhood improvements, including Choice Neighborhoods-funded Early Action and Action Activities. Neighborhood Revitalization expert, Michael Schubert, underscored that there are three critical aspects in planning – trust, belief, and confidence – that can be bolstered by low-cost, early actions. Early neighborhood actions can: restore community trust by following through on tangible changes; foster the belief that the neighborhood is improving; and build confidence in the neighborhood which in turn spurs further community investment. Schubert emphasized that the decisions of the community, stakeholders, and local institutions determine the condition of the neighborhood and that the objective of neighborhood actions is to influence the decisions of these parties in ways that are positive for the neighborhood. When done with strong community participation, small scale projects, such as home-improvement projects/contests, landscaping, fence painting, lighting, and engaging neighbors in marketing for-sale homes, can demonstrate positive neighborhood change.

As part of the panel, Jeana Dunlap and Jackie Floyd from the Louisville Choice Neighborhood described how they are using early activities to build neighborhood confidence. The Louisville team intensively engaged the community in the plans, design, and (when possible) implementation of the activities. They chose projects that were highly visible, geographically targeted, responsive to community needs, and aimed at connecting the neighborhood to the surrounding city. You can read about Louisville's community process, Action Activities, and the intentionality behind each project in last month's newsletter [spotlight](#).



Figure 1: Louisville's Action Activities: (Top Left) SmART stop bus shelter that reads 'welcome' in multiple languages; (Top Right) Splash pad designs for redeveloped park; (Bottom Left) Plans for vacant lot re-use project; (Bottom Right) Mural design to improve unattractive underpass.

The [Developing a Successful Housing Plan](#) panel discussed what to consider when planning for mixed-income housing. HUD representatives spoke about the importance of ensuring units for all income levels are of high quality design, have the same level of amenities, and are well-maintained so that units are attractive to families with choices, can “float,” and are equitable. When considering housing design, panelists emphasized considering: who is going to live in the housing and what their characteristics are; your current and future market; the architecture and history of the surrounding neighborhood; features that will attract higher-income renters including sizes, amenities, and livability; defensible space principles; connections to the neighborhood street grid; and incorporating green spaces.

April Kennedy and Glenda Graves from the New Orleans Choice Neighborhoods demonstrated how they incorporated these considerations into their mixed-income housing design. Tasked with the redevelopment of over 800 housing units, New Orleans created a mixed-income community with a senior building, low-rise apartment buildings, and townhomes on the target housing site and are developing additional replacement housing units offsite to deconcentrate poverty on the target housing footprint. They considered the historical influences and architecture of the neighborhood to inform their design. In determining their particular mix of units by income type, they considered the current and potential strength of their market once the site was revitalized. The team also made resident engagement a priority. To engage hard to reach populations, the Housing Authority established a resident-elected, paid group of residents to support community engagement and work closely with the design team. Through one of their outreach efforts, the residents discovered Cody Marshall, a talented, young artist who was living in the target housing. The Housing Authority connected Cody with several internships and Cody ultimately went on to design the facades of the revitalized housing.



Figure 3: (Left) Cody's designs; (Right) A new, revitalized building based on Cody's designs.

The Convening also included an informative session on [Opportunity Zones](#), as well as break-out conversations in which participants worked with other grantees and within their planning teams. Overall, the event welcomed, informed, and inspired the newest members of the Choice Neighborhoods network, providing an advantageous launching pad for their planning efforts.

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