Choice Neighborhoods: Using Critical Community Improvements to Transform Neighborhoods

July 16, 2014
2:00 – 3:00 PM EST
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Purpose

• Explore Choice Neighborhoods’ focus on neighborhood transformation, with revitalized housing as a central component

• Build on the Promising Practice Guide on Boston’s Critical Community Improvements

• Dive deeper in to how the City of Boston leveraged their Critical Community Improvement funds to develop creative and strategic neighborhood improvements

• Identify “lessons learned” helpful for other communities

The Promising Practice Guide on Boston’s Critical Community Improvements can be found online at: www.hud.gov/choiceta
Presenters

- **Mindy Turbov**, Director, Choice Neighborhoods, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- **Bob Gehret**, Deputy Director, Department of Neighborhood Development, City of Boston

- **Harry Smith**, Director of Sustainable Economic Development, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
Neighborhood Focus

• Choice Neighborhoods goes beyond revitalizing public or HUD-assisted housing

• Grantees develop comprehensive neighborhood plans that address broader neighborhood needs:
  - Public safety
  - Local schools
  - Employment
  - Economic development
Critical Community Improvements

• Critical Community Improvements are innovative projects that reach the entire community

• 15% of the Choice Neighborhoods implementation grant award can be used to leverage these neighborhood improvements

• Strategic use of CCI funds
  • Creatively addressing community priorities
  • Not replacing other dollars
  • Leveraging other dollars
Boston’s Choice Neighborhood

- One of five initial Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grantees awarded in 2011
- $20.5 million grant to revitalize a housing project in the Quincy Corridor neighborhood
  - About 38% of Quincy Corridor residents have incomes below the poverty line
  - The neighborhood is ½ square mile with more than a third of its housing units subsidized
- Grant award allowed the city up to $3,075,000 to invest in Critical Community Improvements
Boston’s CCI Collaboration

• Former Mayor Menino created an advisory committee for the entire Choice Neighborhoods initiative

• Committee included leading community organizations including the city’s co-grantee Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Project RIGHT, and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative

• Committee also included representatives of the city departments most involved in the Choice Neighborhoods effort and Quincy Corridor, the Departments of Neighborhood Development, Streets, Public Property, as well as the Mayor’s Office of Advocacy and Strategic Investment and the Boston Public Schools’ Office of Community Engagement and Circle of Promise
CCI Advisory Committee’s Guidelines

Projects must be:

• Transformational
• Create an obvious physical presence
• Not merely replace money the city otherwise would have invested in the community
Boston’s CCI Projects

• Bornstein and Pearl Small Business Center (Pearl Meats) - $500,000
• Façade Improvement Projects/Main Street Revitalization - $300,000
• Facilities Improvements for Nonprofits - $200,000
• Grove Hall Wi-Fi - $300,000
• Playgrounds - $825,000 and $450,000
• Additional Commercial Redevelopment & Infrastructure Projects – $500,000
## Bornstein & Pearl Food Production

### Small Business Center

**Leveraged Funds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Funding for Pearl Meats TOTAL</th>
<th>$13,987,500</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice Neighborhoods</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section 108 Loan Guarantee</td>
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<td>HHS/OCS grant</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
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<td>New Markets Tax Credit Equity</td>
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<td>State Government Mass Works</td>
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<td>Boston Community Capital</td>
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<td>Boston Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DBEDC Cash/Equity</td>
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Bornstein & Pearl Food Production Small Business Center

Before renovations

After renovations
Interior Photographs

Baxter oven

shared conference room
Other Resources and Investments in the Quincy Corridor

• Designation of the Quincy Corridor as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) under Boston’s Community Development Block Grant Program

• Commercial component of the Quincy Commons housing project - $920,000 in Section 108 loans and CDBG and Economic Development Initiative grants

• Community Gardens on Leyland Street and the Julian-Judson-Dean - $297,000 in CDBG

• Greater Grove Hall Main Streets organization - $150,000 in CDBG

• Acquisition/demolition of decrepit 3-family home on the Pearl Meats sites - $217,000 in HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant

• Donation of many city-owned vacant land parcels
Neighborhood Improvements Lessons

- Engage city leadership at the highest possible level
- Think strategically and develop local guidelines for qualifying neighborhood improvements
- Engage community partners in decision-making
- Listen to all stakeholders involved
- Create synergies across investments
- Leverage other dollars
Questions and Discussion

To submit a question to our presenters, please type it in to the question box on the GoToWebinar menu bar on the side of your screen.
To Learn More:

• Share and discuss the Boston guide with your partners
  ▪ Community-driven process
  ▪ Benefits and impact
  ▪ Lessons learned

• Guide is available online at: www.hud.gov/choiceta

• Keep an eye out for new guides based on grantees’ promising practices