THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS: THE BOSTON EXAMPLE

A Presentation for the Choice Neighborhoods Annual Conference
June 18-19, 2014
The Boston Project: Overview

Award: $20.5 million

Target Area: Quincy Corridor neighborhood, ½ square mile home to about 8900 people in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods.

Target Development: Woodledge/Morrant Bay 129-unit Severely-Distressed HUD-Assisted Multi-Family Redeveloped as 129-unit Quincy Heights (49 units new construction and 80 units renovated).

5 Public Schools and about 150 businesses

Accessible to public transit and “very walkable” 83 score
Target Area – Quincy Corridor
City’s Role: Application Phase

Mayor’s Office & Intergovernmental Relations

- Neighborhood Development
  - Lead Grantee
- Jobs & Community Services
  - People Lead
- Public Schools Education
- Redevelopment Authority
  - Streetscape
- Police Department
  - Public Safety
City’s Role: Application Phase

City (DND) served as Lead Applicant

City took lead in identifying potential housing projects and target areas that would meet HUD criteria

Convened City agencies and community partners to identify needs and available resources

City was responsible for overall coordination and submission of application

City provided matching funds and in-kind matches (land, CDBG, HOME, Section 108 funds) for housing and neighborhood components.
City’s Role: Post Award – Pre Implementation Phase

City served as primary point of contact for months of negotiations with HUD between announcement of award and execution of grant agreement, approval of budget and approval to proceed.

City prepared budget and package of proposed projects for the Critical Community Improvements component.
HUD Secretary Donovan and Boston’s Mayor Menino Celebrate Start of $20.5 Million Transformation of Quincy Corridor (October 2013)

“We’re going to make sure Quincy Corridor is not just another street in Dorchester...

...but an avenue to prosperity for the whole community.”

--Mayor Thomas M. Menino

bit.ly/ChoiceGrant
Secretary Donovan Catches Red Sox Fever

On a dare, Secretary Donovan dons a Red Sox cap at the October 24th groundbreaking for Boston’s Quincy Corridor. A few days later on October 30th the Red Sox defeated the St. Louis Cardinals to be crowned 2013 World Series Champions!
City’s Role: Housing Implementation

DND identified the 129 unit Woodledge / Morrant Bay (Quincy Heights) redevelopment as the focus for housing transformation of the Quincy Corridor.

DND, with its development partner, Dorchester Bay (DB), took the lead in identifying additional City and State resources to close the funding gap.

DND and DB worked together to improve the design through the inclusion of adjacent City land that adds open space and parking.

DND has continued to work with DB and Choice Partners through project construction and the completion of the first 41 of 129 units.
Housing New Construction
Quincy Street

Bornstein & Pearl
12 Units

Quincy Street
10 Units
Quincy Heights Housing
Exterior / Interior Rehab Units

New Solar Array
Fayston / Mascoma Rehab
City’s Role: People Transformation

Mayor’s Office of Jobs and Community Services (JCS) managed procurement of services and provides oversight of service delivery.

A key component is case management for Quincy Heights residents provided by Institute for Health & Recovery.

Other services include after school programs, ReadBoston, Mental Health Services at Burke High, Violence Intervention Program trauma counseling, outreach, asset building, adult education and ESOL.
DND and the Mayor’s Office of Advocacy and Strategic Investments requested projects that promote reinvestment and provide critical support for residents and businesses. The priority projects were identified over many months through a community-led engagement process.


A webinar on the Promising Practice is scheduled for July 16th.
The $3.075 million investment in Choice dollars will leverage $17+ million.

Choice funded projects include: Grove Hall Wi-Fi, Bornstein & Pearl Food Production and Small Business Center, the playground at the Haynes Early Learning Center, the park and playground at the M.L., King School, and a retail business façade improvement program.

City also funded the Leyland Street and the Julian, Judson, Dean Community Gardens through the CDBG-funded “Grassroots” program.
April 2014, Boston’s Public Wireless Network reaches thousands of users with the largest concentration in the Grove Hall neighborhood. An innovative use of Choice Neighborhood funding to an underserved area.
Critical Community Improvements

Bornstein & Pearl Food Production and Small Business Center: Renovation of a former 36,000 square foot former meat packing plant (Pearl Meats) to a state of the art food production and small business incubator.
Choice Funded Playground
Haynes Early Education Center
City’s Role: Governance

Mayor appointed an Advisory Committee consisting of representatives of City agencies and community partners.

DND convenes the monthly Advisory Committee meetings, decisions generally made by consensus.

DND also convenes separate monthly meetings of the City partner agencies to address internal coordination, implementation issues, etc.
City’s Role: Reporting, Etc.

- DND has primary responsibility for required annual and quarterly reporting.
- DND does the reporting on the Housing and Neighborhood components.
- Office of Jobs and Community Services coordinates data collection from partners and service providers and does the reporting on the People component.
Contacts For More Information

- Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing & Director, Neighborhood Development
  E-mail: Sheila.Dillon@Boston.Gov

- Robert Gehret, Deputy Director, Policy Development & Research Division
  E-mail: Robert.Gehret@Boston.Gov

- Boston Choice Neighborhoods website:
  www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/pdr/choice_neighborhoods.asp