



## Choice Neighborhoods e-Newsletter Issue 41 / August 2015

### CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

#### **Finalists Identified for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants**

On July 14, HUD [announced](#) that they have identified nine finalists for the 2014/2015 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants. The finalists include communities in: Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Boston, MA; Camden, NJ; Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; Milwaukee, WI; King County, WA; and Sacramento, CA. HUD anticipates announcing awards in September, 2015.

#### **Performance Measurement Systems: Experiences from Grantees**

On September 15 at 1PM, the Choice Neighborhoods office will host a one hour facilitated peer-to-peer exchange, in which Choice Neighborhoods grantees will share their experiences with different performance measurement systems. This is a great opportunity for grantees to ask questions about the pros and cons of various system options. Please register [here](#) and send questions by September 1 to [Brandy.Bones@icfi.com](mailto:Brandy.Bones@icfi.com).

### NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE AND PROMISE ZONES CORNER

#### **Third Round of Promise Zone Competition will open in Fall 2015**

The third and final round of the Promise Zones competition will open in the Fall of 2015 with award announcements anticipated in the Spring of 2016. HUD and USDA published a [Notice in the Federal Register](#) seeking comments, until September 28. HUD intends to designate five urban communities and USDA intends to designate one rural and one tribal community.

Additionally, HUD will host a webcast on August 11 at 2:30 pm to provide an overview of the draft application for urban communities. Please [register](#) to receive the webcast link. The USDA will also offer webcasts for rural and tribal communities on August 12 and will post registration information on the [Promise Zone website](#).

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### **Hope VI Main Street Grant Available**

The Hope VI Main Street program will provide a grant of \$500,000 to a small community to assist in the renovation of a "Main Street" by replacing unused commercial space with affordable housing. The [application](#) deadline is August 27.

### **Funding Available to Hire Service Coordinators as part of the Resident Opportunity and Self Sufficiency (ROSS) Program**

HUD is offering 110 grants of up to \$738,000 to assist residents of public and Indian housing to achieve economic sufficiency by hiring Service Coordinators, who will work to link residents to supportive services. The [application](#) deadline is August 31.

### **Grants Available for Rural Capacity Building and Affordable Housing**

HUD is offering four grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$2,500,000 to implement community development and affordable housing initiatives that will benefit low/moderate income residents in rural areas. The [application](#) deadline is September 14.

### **Technical Assistance Available to Help Develop Food Strategies that Spur Neighborhood Revitalization**

[“Local Foods, Local Places”](#), a program sponsored by several federal agencies, will provide direct technical assistance to help selected communities develop action plans that use local foods to support healthy families and communities and spur downtown and neighborhood revitalization. The [application](#) deadline is September 15.

### **National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) Creative Placemaking Grants Available for FY2016**

NEA sponsors the Our Town program for creative placemaking grants, grants that integrate the arts into neighborhood revitalization. For FY 2016, NEA will award grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000. The [application](#) deadline is September 21. NEA recently awarded 69 Our Town grants totaling almost \$5 million in FY 2015. [Click here](#) for more information on recent grantees.

### **100 Resilient Cities Challenge Offers Funding to Support Resilience Strategies**

The 100 Resilient Cities Challenge, sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation aims to help individual cities become more resilient to physical, social and economic challenges. This last round of funding will be awarded to 33 cities to develop and implement a holistic resilience strategy, including hiring a new innovative position in city government, the Chief Resilience Officer. The [application](#) deadline is November 24.

### **ArtPlace Selected 38 Creative Placemaking Projects as part of its 2015 National Grants Program**

ArtPlace invested \$10 million to 38 creative placemaking projects that will play a central role in strengthening their communities, including the Pittsburgh Choice Neighborhood. [Sign up](#) for ArtPlace emails for details on the next round of grants.

## EVENTS AND TOOLS

### **Neighborworks America Offers Training in Affordable Housing Planning**

Join two thousand peers from across the country to network, share and learn best practices related to affordable housing on August 17-21 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. [Click here](#) to learn more and register.

### **Annual Fall Affordable Housing Conference**

CohnReznick will be hosting their annual fall affordable housing conference in Atlanta from September 21-22 to discuss the key challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for affordable housing. [Click here](#) to learn more and register.

### **Volunteer Toolkit from the National Main Street Center**

A vibrant main street (or retail corridor) is a key aspect of strong neighborhoods. The National Main Street Center has developed a customizable [volunteer toolkit](#) with a wealth of resources and best practices on volunteer management.

## RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

### **White Paper on Best Practices for Creative Placemaking**

Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and partners, this white paper covers two decades of research using case studies and original economic research on creative placemaking.

### **Case Study on Creative Placemaking in Tuscon, Arizona**

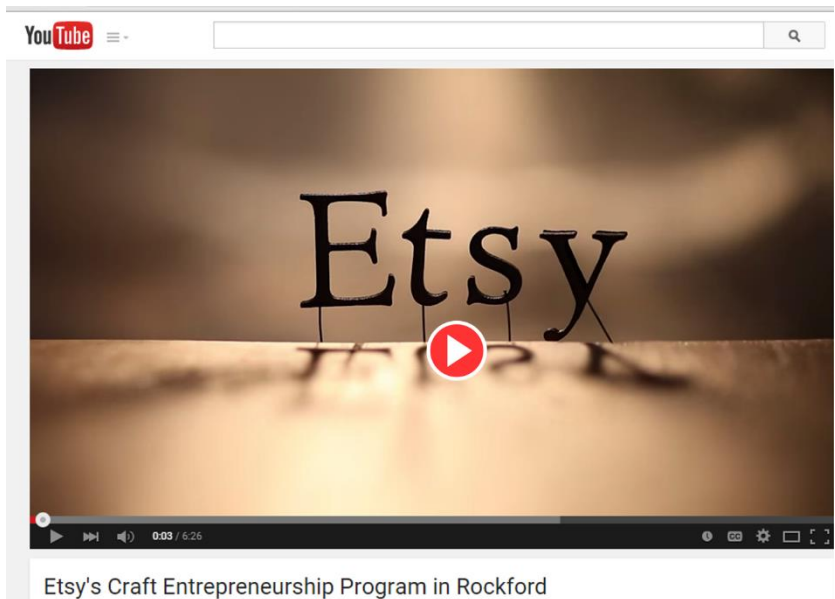
In this [case study](#), the “PLACE” (People, Land, Arts, Culture & Engagement) initiative in Tuscon, Arizona demonstrates the dynamic ways the arts can help transform a community and documents its associated impact.

### **Report Provides Insight on Indicators to Measure the Impact of Creative Placemaking Initiatives**

In order to help communities measure and communicate outcomes of creative placemaking efforts, the Urban Institute conducted a [study](#) to assess the effectiveness of various placemaking indicators.

## GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

In Rockford, Illinois, the Ellis Heights Choice Neighborhood team has developed a Transformation Plan to reverse a history of concentrated poverty and high vacancy rates and create a neighborhood of opportunity. As part of its revitalizations efforts, they have created “New Mix.”



New Mix is an arts-based community development group that was formed with the Rockford Area Arts Council and has received a \$75,000 National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant. New Mix has partnered with Etsy, an on-line marketplace, to create a platform for residents to make and sell their products – creating an innovative approach to entrepreneurship.

As part of the New Mix initiative, Etsy is working with Rockford’s public housing

residents under its [Craft Entrepreneurship](#) program. The program works directly with creative people from underserved communities to help them turn their crafts into an online business that can generate a sustainable income. Through the Craft Entrepreneurship Program, budding entrepreneurs receive information and training on topics such as marketing, financial planning, and time management. Etsy’s Craft Entrepreneurship program is currently offered in more than 20 cities globally and is expanding. Click [here](#) to see a powerful video on how Rockford residents are connecting with Etsy.

**If you have suggestions for topics or content that you would like to see in upcoming newsletters, please submit those requests to [choicetnewsletter@bctpartners.com](mailto:choicetnewsletter@bctpartners.com). Content must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month to be considered for the upcoming month’s publication.**

**[Click here](#) for access to previous editions of the Choice Neighborhood newsletter.**