



Choice Neighborhoods e-Newsletter

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CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Choice Neighborhoods Awards Five New Implementation Grants

HUD Secretary Julián Castro [announced](#) that five communities will receive a combined \$150 million in highly competitive Choice Neighborhoods awards to redevelop severely distressed public housing and revitalize the surrounding neighborhood. Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants were awarded to city and housing authority partnerships in: Atlanta, Georgia; Kansas City, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Sacramento, California. Read the grantee project summaries [here](#).

2015 Choice Neighborhoods Grantee Report

Choice Neighborhoods recently released the [2015 Choice Neighborhoods Grantee Report](#). The dynamic report highlights an impressive range of early accomplishments from the first 12 Implementation Grantees and all 63 Planning Grantees: from the conversion of an abandoned factory into a job-creating, small business food production facility in Boston; to school improvements and educational supports in Seattle; to the development of quality mixed-income housing in the town of Salisbury, North Carolina.

Choice Neighborhoods Conference Date

The 2016 Choice Neighborhoods is tentatively scheduled for March 17-18 in Washington, DC. The conference will be open to current Choice Neighborhoods grantees. Current grantees will receive a Save-the-Date in the coming months.

Choice Neighborhoods Conference Call for Sessions

The Choice Neighborhoods office is seeking proposals for 90-minute sessions for the 2016 Choice Neighborhoods Conference, tentatively scheduled for March 18. Roughly 250 Choice Neighborhoods planning and implementation grantee representatives and their partners are expected to attend, as well as representatives from HUD and other federal partners. This conference is an ideal setting for experts to share best practices in: community safety; improving student outcomes; community engagement; and stabilizing distressed or vacant properties. For more information, [click here](#). Submissions are due by Friday, October 30.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Kresge Foundation Developing Healthy Places Grant

The Kresge Foundation is offering Developing Healthy Places grants to advance place-based efforts in the areas of healthy housing and neighborhoods, food systems that benefit low-income communities, and equitable transportation and land use. The foundation will award grants to government entities and certain types of 501(c) (3) organizations. [Applications](#) are accepted on an ongoing basis.

2016 AmeriCorps State and National Competitive Grants

The Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) is providing AmeriCorps awards for work with community economic opportunity, safer communities, education, environment, disaster services, and Veterans and Military Families. Organizations serving multiple states must [submit](#) a notification of intent to CNCS by December 9. Organizations operating in a single state can learn about their state's process and deadline [here](#). A toolkit providing technical assistance on how to apply for AmeriCorps awards can be found [here](#).

People's United Community Foundation Grant

The People's United Community Foundation is awarding grants of up to \$10,000 to 501(c) (3) organizations in communities where Peoples United branches are located, including in CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, and VT. Grants focus on affordable housing, community development, and youth development. The [application](#) cycles are October 1, February 1, and June 1.

Fifth Third Foundation Grant

The Fifth Third Foundation is accepting proposals on an on-going basis from 501(c) (3) organizations in areas served by Fifth Third Bank. Grants can be used for work in arts and culture, community development, education programs, financial literacy, health and human services, homeownership and housing programs, and job creation initiatives. For more information, click [here](#).

EVENTS AND TOOLS

CEOs for Cities 2015 National Meeting

On October 12, 2015 Indianapolis City Cluster and Leadership Indianapolis will host hundreds of urban leaders from around the country focusing on how to create inclusive economic development strategies, close the skills gap, retain and engage millennials in civic life, and develop a talented city workforce. Click [here](#) to register.

PolicyLink's Equity Summit 2015

Policy Link is hosting the Equity Summit 2015 in Los Angeles, California. Summit attendees will explore new strategy focused sessions from innovative financial strategies such as tax reform to place based tactics like community benefit agreements, local hire, and Promise Zones. The Equity Summit will be held from October 27-29. Click [here](#) to register.

2016 National Interagency Community Reinvestment Conference

The National Interagency Community Reinvestment Conference is scheduled for February 7-10, 2016. The conference is a national networking and training event for community development professionals, including CRO officers and staff from CDFIs, nonprofits and government agencies. [Registration](#) will be available in fall 2015.

Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development

The US Department of Labor has released a revised [toolkit](#) to assist in providing services to workforce system customers. The toolkit highlights six key elements: building cross-agency partnerships and clarifying roles; identifying industry sectors and engaging employers; designing education and training programs; identifying funding needs and resources; aligning policies and programs; and measuring system change and performance.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Creating Sustainable Places

This Urban Institute [case study](#) highlights Kansas City's use of a HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative grant to improve its region's development process. The study showcases the use of a region-wide neighborhood level data system and new decision support tools to demonstrate the feasibility of higher density development in key suburban areas.

Effective Policing Practices for Reducing Crime

This new [report](#) by the Harvard Kennedy School's Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety evaluates the effectiveness of policing in reducing crime. The heart of this paper describes policing strategies that work, including problem-oriented policing, hot spots policing, focused deterrence strategies, and community policing.

Expanding Pathways to Good Jobs in a Regional Economy

This Brookings [report](#) analyzes economic and employment trends in New Orleans and describes how local leaders can expand economic opportunities. The report identifies how the local economy can provide good jobs to workers lacking a college degree. While New Orleans is unique, this case study can provide insights into how other localities might develop their regional employment strategies.

A Community School's Turnaround Effort

In this [case study](#), Child Trends evaluates the turnaround efforts of J.C. Nalle, a community school in one of DC's poorest neighborhoods. The study identifies effective practices that led to an increase in math outcomes, and offers recommendations for supplemental practices that might improve reading.

SPOTLIGHT: DESIGNATING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD AS AN NRSA

Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Communities can often maximize the benefits of their Choice Neighborhood Planning or Implementation Grants by designating their Choice Neighborhood boundaries as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). A Choice Neighborhood with an NRSA designation allows the Entitlement Community greater flexibility in how it can use its CDBG funding to assist in neighborhood transformation efforts, especially when working with Community-Based Development Organizations. Several Entitlement Communities already have NRSA designations that align with their Choice Neighborhood boundaries, including the Boston and Cincinnati Implementation Grantees.

As stated in the Office of Community Planning and Development's Notice CPD-96-01, [CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies](#), the objective of designating NRSAs is to "create communities of opportunity in distressed neighborhoods." This goal aligns well with the mission of Choice Neighborhoods. Some of the benefits of securing an NRSA designation include:

- flexibility on meeting national objective documentation requirements for economic development activities that are often viewed as an impediment for businesses;
- exemption from the use of the aggregate public benefit standard that is required when underwriting economic development activities;
- aggregation of CDBG assisted housing units in order to encourage mixed-income housing by viewing scattered housing projects as one development; and
- exemption from the public service cap for services carried out by Community-Based Development Organizations.

In addition to the CPD Notice 96-01, the Consolidated Plan regulations describe the process for designating an NRSA, including:

- the community outreach needed to develop a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy;
- the components of the strategy (i.e., description of the target area with demographics; assessment of economic conditions; description of strategies to create meaningful jobs for the unemployed and low-income residents; and performance metrics); and
- HUD's review process and performance reporting.

When applying for NRSA designation, Entitlement Communities may be able to build upon the work Choice Neighborhoods grantees have already completed to create a community-driven Transformation Plan. The CDBG regulations provide further information related to national objective and eligibility compliance, especially with regard to economic development activities.

For further guidance on designating NRSAs, view the [2014 CDBG Training Manual](#) and Appendix E of the [Guide to National Objective and Eligible Activities](#).

For more information on Community-Based Development Organizations and the types of activities they can carry out, please refer to the CDBG regulations at [24 CFR 570.204\(a\) and \(b\)](#).

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