



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ConnectHome Expansion to 100+ Cities

EveryoneOn, in partnership with HUD, announced that the ConnectHome pilot program, created to bridge the digital divide in 28 communities, will expand to over 100 cities. Participating communities will gain access to stakeholder commitments for free and discounted internet services and devices, technical support from HUD and access to a community of practice. [ConnectHome](#) will begin accepting applications on July 17, 2017.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Resources for Funding Opportunities

The following websites regularly post funding opportunities, including regional resources. Grantees may wish to periodically check these links for relevant postings:

- www.grants.gov – Federal funding opportunities
- <http://www.cof.org/organization-type/regional-associations> - Regional philanthropy
- <http://philanthropynewsdigest.org/> - News about national and local philanthropy
- <http://grantspace.org> – Fundraising tools and support
- <http://www.fundersnetwork.org/> - Funding specifically around sustainable regions & communities
- <http://www.nfg.org/> - Membership association of neighborhood-level grantmaking institutions
- <http://www.greenfunders.org/> - Funder network for grant-makers on environment and conservation issues
- www.edfunders.org – Funder network for grant-makers for education

Small Business Incubator Funding

The Department of Commerce is seeking applications for the [Regional Innovation Strategies program](#) which makes funding available for capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs. Under the RIS Program, EDA is soliciting applications for two separate competitions: the 2017 i6 Challenge; and the 2017 Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition. Individual grants are \$500,000, with \$17 million total program funding available. [Applications](#) are due by June 23, 2017.

Microgrants for Youth-led Community Projects

The Karma for Cara Foundation is seeking applications from kids 18 and under for community service projects to benefit their neighborhood. Microgrants range from \$250 to \$1,000. [Applications](#) are due July 31, 2017.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

HUD Webcast on Using the Historic Tax Credit for Affordable Housing

HUD's Office of Environment and Energy hosted an informative webcast to provide clarity on the Housing Tax Credit (HTC) program requirements, dispel myths about the program, share successful case studies, and answer questions live from HUD Headquarters. The [recording](#) is now available online. Find out what's covered by the credit, what properties are eligible, how to combine the HTC with other incentives, common pitfalls to avoid, and where to look for additional resources.

Youth Savings Accounts – How Banks Can Prepare Youth to Manage Finances

FDIC released [lessons](#) from a pilot program in which 21 banks created and implemented youth savings programs. Their [roadmap](#) identifies promising approaches and lessons learned from combining traditional, classroom-based financial education with the opportunity to open a safe, low-cost savings account. The report defines a range of models that offer banks flexibility to adapt to varying opportunities to promote youth savings.

Worksheets for Personal Financial Management

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau released a suite of tools to help consumers manage their spending better. Tools include a [worksheet](#), [ideas for financial educators](#), [consumer insights on managing spending](#), and a [guide](#) to maximizing your tax refund.

Poverty Risk Calculator and Discussion Guides for Confronting Poverty

A new website, [confrontingpoverty.org](#), provides policymakers and practitioners with research on poverty and offers tools, such as [discussion guides](#), to examine the causes of poverty and implications for their communities. Based on Rank and Hirschl's analysis of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, which has been tracking the economic fortunes of a nationally representative group of Americans over the past five decades, the site also provides a [Poverty Risk Calculator](#), which enables individuals to estimate their likelihood of experiencing poverty in the future.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Landbanking in Detroit to Cure Urban Blight

This [article](#) from PoliticoMagazine, part of the What Works series on innovative urban reinvention, describes the efforts of the Detroit Land Bank Authority to address an enormous volume of vacant and blighted houses.

10 Best Practices for Placemaking

This Urban Land [article](#) highlights ten best practices for placemaking – including the importance of visioning, artist partnerships, utilizing cultural assets, and working across sectors. Urban Land is a magazine produced by the Urban Land Institute.

SPOTLIGHT

Community-Led Development: Land-Use Planning to Repopulate Pittsburgh's Larimer Neighborhood

The Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) and the City of Pittsburgh received a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant in 2014 for the Larimer/East Liberty neighborhood. Since that time a great deal of progress has been achieved, including the completion of 85 new mixed-income units thus far. Now, the Choice Neighborhoods grantees and their partners are using a unique, community-led process to tackle the challenge of vacancy and connect Larimer/East Liberty to nearby economic development.

Despite its proximity to the thriving East Liberty Business District, which has offices for Google, RAND and Disney Research, the Larimer/East Liberty neighborhood has a staggering vacancy rate (as depicted in yellow in Figure 1). The majority of these parcels are owned by the Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA), while some are owned by the City and by private individuals. Given that many areas have entire blocks of vacant fields and unsecured green space, the community has pushed to convert this vacant land for [future agricultural uses](#), commercial purposes, and for the development of market-rate housing. To ensure this development is strategic and in line with the community vision, a Choice Neighborhoods project manager has facilitated a partnership between community members, stakeholders, and the City.

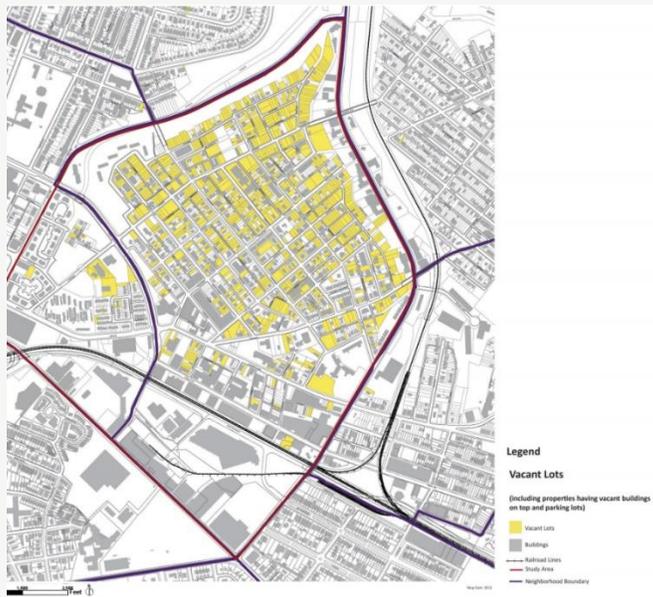


Figure 1: Yellow parcels represent vacant plots.

The Larimer/East Liberty community has several strong community groups that have been engaged in the Choice Neighborhoods revitalization efforts. These groups include the Larimer Consensus Group (LCG), an incorporated group established during an intense community planning process in 2008 as highlighted in a Choice Neighborhoods [Promising Practice Guide](#), and the Larimer Neighborhood Watchers group – a volunteer-run association of concerned homeowners. Although the community did not want to establish a CDC or act in a developer capacity, they did want to influence the redevelopment process. As a

result, the Housing and Land Use Committee was formed to include representatives from LCG and the Larimer Neighborhood Watchers.

The committee has collected input from community members, going street by street to gather information, and developed a Land Use Plan for Larimer. The plan's goals include neighborhood cohesion, wealth-building, increasing home-values, creating constructive green space, and ensuring a transparent process in working with developers. The plan

subdivides Larimer into target areas, with prioritization around phasing, desired uses, and even housing stock preferences. Priority areas were identified based on existing concentrations of homeowners and proximity to neighborhood assets. Subcommittee members, including homeowners from the community, participated in a walking parcel-by-parcel survey for the first priority area (labeled as R1 in Figure 2). These volunteer surveyors recorded conditions and preferred outcomes for each parcel in that area. Complementary efforts will be launched such as credit-counseling for young people in the community, and outreach to local banks to help long-time residents have the opportunity to buy in Larimer.

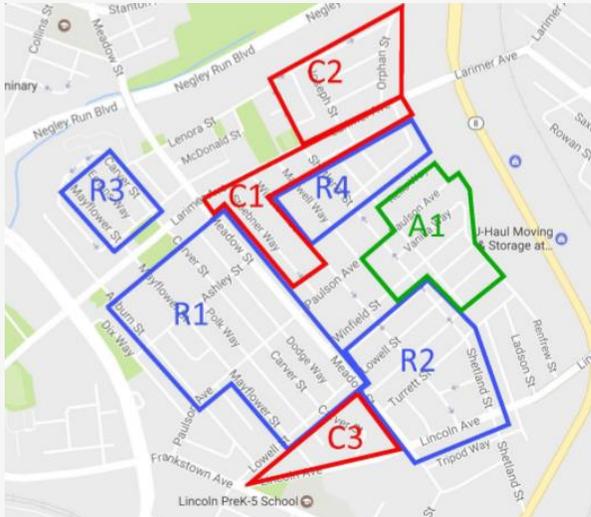


Figure 2: Target areas in a draft land-use plan

This plan will be codified in a formal MOU between the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and the Larimer Consensus Group (LCG) through which LCG will direct URA to release parcels to the market via a Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in accordance with their Land Use Plan. As one block face progresses, LCG will direct URA to release the next, and so forth, working through the first priority area (R1), then on to the second, third and fourth. LCG will also direct URA's phasing for clearing titles and securing city-owned properties so as to best

align this with their redevelopment phasing efforts.

Through the strategic release of parcels to the market, the community hopes to build and maintain momentum. Partnering with the URA on this process allows those controls to be written into the contractual agreements with developers – so that parcels in a specific target area can only be developed for particular uses, such as single family owner occupied or semi-attached owner occupied, as directed by the community. The MOU will also ensure that everyone understands and is following the same 'set of rules', or process, for redevelopment in this area. Subsequently, if a developer approaches the City directly about acquiring a few blocks, the City will direct that developer to contact the LCG.

The committee expects an absorption rate of 5-15 new single family units per year, so the process will take time given the extensive number of vacant parcels. Thus, a good relationship with the URA is critical for long term community-led development. Despite the gradual nature of this redevelopment, residents are committed to implementing their vision. Betty Lane of the Larimer Neighborhood Watchers suggested that activities that build relationships between community-members will help sustain long-term involvement and increase resiliency in the face of parcel-specific difficulties. As a result of these efforts, the Choice Neighborhoods team has created a strong, community-driven infrastructure to sustain progress and ultimately create a new market dynamic in the Larimer/East Liberty neighborhood.

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