

W. Cook County Housing Collaborative to benefit from more than \$7M in state, federal funding for foreclosure recovery, housing redevelopment near transit



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development-Region V

December 3, 2011 [Post a comment](#)

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development announces \$2.9 million Challenge Grant; Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity announces \$4.2 million grant

About the West Cook County Housing Collaborative

- The West Cook County Housing Collaborative (the Collaborative), which began work in late 2008, is a joint effort between the municipalities of Bellwood, Berwyn, Forest Park, Maywood, and Oak Park to finance, renovate and make available quality, affordable housing throughout West Suburban Cook County.
- IFF, a nonprofit lender and real estate consultant dedicated to strengthening nonprofits and the communities they serve in Illinois, serves as coordinator of the Collaborative.
- The Collaborative is funded by The Chicago Community Trust and Grand Victoria Foundation, with technical assistance provided by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Metropolitan Planning Council, and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.
- Since its inception, the Collaborative has produced about 30 units of affordable housing.
- The Collaborative is one of four regional collaboratives formed by clusters of neighboring communities that are working across borders on housing and economic development. Learn more at this model for community planning, known as interjurisdictional collaboration, at www.metroplanning.org/ij.
- Illinois Gov. Patrick Quinn, mayors and village presidents of the Collaborative's five community partners, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Regional Administrator Antonio Riley, Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Warren Ribley, and elected officials representing this part of the region announced on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011, that the Collaborative has been awarded more than \$7 million in funding from HUD and DCEO to support its transit-oriented housing redevelopment strategy.

About the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development \$2.9 million Challenge Grant

- The U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development has awarded the West Cook County

Housing Collaborative (the Collaborative) a \$2,916,272 Sustainable Communities Initiative Community Challenge Grant.

- The grant will allow the Collaborative to create new or update existing comprehensive plans for the member communities, and revisit outdated zoning and infrastructure plans that are impediments to transit-oriented, affordable housing development.
- The grant also will help seed an acquisition/predevelopment fund to support affordable housing, preservation and development near transit stops in the five communities. The fund will make financing available to support efforts to preserve and develop housing that uses less energy, provides healthy indoor environments, and conserves resources.
- The Collaborative's award was one of two HUD Community Challenge Grants awarded in Illinois during this round of funding. The other grant, for approximately \$300,000, went to the City of Freeport, Ill., to advance the *Freeport Riverfront Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Growth Initiative*.
- HUD identified the following anticipated benefits of the Collaborative's transit-oriented housing redevelopment strategy:
 - Residents and the local business community will become more engaged in the planning processes.
 - The communities' comprehensive plans will coordinate with and support implementation of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's *GO TO 2040* plan.
 - By using a transit-oriented development strategy, residents of all five communities will have better access to transportation choices.
 - The availability of affordable housing will increase in each community, by providing low-interest loans or equity contributions to support the development.
 - Planning activities will include developing a strategy for implementing energy efficiency measures for new and existing, affordable housing and commercial buildings.
 - Core partners in this regional effort are the Collaborative and its five partner communities (Bellwood, Berwyn, Forest Park, Maywood and Oak Park), IFF, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Metropolitan Planning Council, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, and the Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
 - Additional partners include the Center for Neighborhood Technology, Housing Action Illinois, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Oak Park Regional Housing Center, Regional Transportation Authority, and Woodstock Institute.



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development-Region V

HUD Region V Administrator Antonio Riley announces HUD's \$2.9 million Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant to the West Cook County Housing Collaborative.

About the Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \$4.2 million CDBG Disaster Recovery ("IKE") grant

- The Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has awarded a \$4,257,467 grant, through the federal government's CDBG Disaster Recovery "IKE" funding, to IFF, on behalf of communities in the West Cook County Housing Collaborative.
- The funding will allow these communities to acquire, rehabilitate and sell affordable homes,

with a focus on foreclosed, vacant, and city-owned properties near transit.

- The initiative will target low-and-moderate income households and will provide up to \$20,000 in home buyer assistance to subsidize the sale of each home.
- The DCEO grant will seed a revolving grant fund: As homes are sold, proceeds will be made available for additional housing redevelopment initiatives in all five Collaborative communities.
- DCEO identified the following anticipated project benefits:
 - Increased affordable housing: The funding will provide assistance to the targeted communities by rehabilitating some of the vacant and foreclosed single-family homes and selling these to qualified low and moderate-income families.
 - Transit-focused housing: In addition, the transit lines serve as a major connector between the Collaborative communities, which is the impetus for strategically focusing on transit-oriented affordable housing development.

Remarks

"When the mayors came together three years ago to talk about intergovernmental collaboration around housing issues, it was clear we shared a belief in a unique opportunity to position not just our individual communities, but our entire region for thoughtful, economic gain," said Oak Park Village President David Pope. "We are extremely grateful for the support of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity that is reflected in these grants. We look forward to a continuing partnership to address critical housing issues facing our communities, our state and our nation."

"Oak Park and the West Cook County Housing Collaborative are using new tools to solve old problems, and the result is a dynamic initiative to promote sustainability at the local neighborhood level and increase involvement of residents and the business community in the planning process," said Antonio R. Riley, HUD's Midwest Regional Administrator. "The Collaborative has the right partners, the right approach, and the right vision for success."

"Focusing our foreclosure mitigation efforts on creating affordable home ownership near public transportation is the economically smart thing to do. It reduces the housing/transportation cost expense for working families and it connects people to jobs," said Joe Neri, CEO of IFF, the nonprofit lender and real estate consultant coordinating the efforts of the Collaborative. "We are proud to be selected as part of HUD's Sustainable Communities Program, and we are grateful to HUD and the State of Illinois for their strong support of the work of the West Cook County Housing Collaborative."

"As the region's first truly comprehensive plan in over 100 years, GO TO 2040 recommends that municipalities work together to increase livability by coordinating policies and investments," said Randy Blankenhorn, Executive Director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). "CMAP is proud to support the efforts of the West Cook County Housing Collaborative communities, as they work to create transit-oriented development that will increase the quality of life of our region's working families."

"The HUD and DCEO grants are an endorsement that multi-town collaboration is a smart approach – and, more and more, an economic imperative," said MPC Project Manager Dominic Tocci. "As communities confront major issues, such as foreclosure recovery, in the face of ever-tightening budgets, the benefits of collaboration are clear. By working together, the Collaborative is saving taxpayers' money, making regionally significant investments, and attracting private sector investment through its coordinated, transit-oriented redevelopment strategy."

Contact information

Laura Feldman, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
312-913-8332 or laura.j.feldman@hud.gov

Kelly Jakubek, Illinois Dept. of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
312-520-5242 or Kelly.Jakubek@Illinois.gov

Tammie Grossman, Village of Oak Park
708-358-5411 or tgrossman@oak-park.us

Michelle Hbereth, IFF
312-596-5145 or mhoereth@iff.org

Allison Milld, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

312-201-4507 or amilld@mayorscaucus.org

Tom Garritano, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

312-386-8609 or tgarritano@cmap.illinois.gov

Dominic Tocci, Metropolitan Planning Council

312-863-6046 or dtocci@metroplanning.org