



2012 Program Plan

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2012

Founded in 1989, the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey is a statewide association of non-profit housing and community development corporations, individuals and other organizations that support the creation of homes people can afford and economic opportunities for all New Jerseyans. The Network seeks to promote the affordable housing and community development sector as a critical vehicle for fostering healthy, vibrant communities. The Network and its members share a commitment to promoting economic justice and the empowerment of low-income individuals and communities, and encouraging wider participation in the framing and implementation of public policies. *Access to safe and decent shelter for low- and moderate-income residents should be a priority for all communities in New Jersey.*

The Network partners with our members to create and preserve homes and build strong communities in New Jersey by pursuing the following strategic goals.

STRATEGIC GOALS & TARGETED OUTCOMES

CITIES & LOCAL WORK

Work with municipal staff, elected officials and local CDC associations to expand leadership capacity, build collaboration, and create better systems, policies and strategies for addressing problem properties and neighborhood revitalization.

Facilitate local education, policy, and strategy development in support of community development, drawing on available programs, policies and opportunities

- Help members and stakeholders to create local resource development strategies to finance housing development and neighborhood revitalization, including accessing local Housing Trust Funds (which will be recaptured by June 2012 if not obligated) and other sources.
- Work with city-wide coalitions in Paterson, Newark, Jersey City, Camden and Trenton to prioritize and pursue specific local policies and strategies to promote equitable revitalization.
- Foster and support staffed city-wide organizing to implement local strategies. Encourage and promote the importance of neighborhood-level organizing, and help link to city-wide and state level organizing so strategies are cohesive and supportive of each other
- Identify and share promising local and national practices for CDC/municipal partnerships, including contracts for neighborhood stabilization services, through peer learning opportunities and other mechanisms

Work with local teams of members and municipal staff in 8-10 cities to develop comprehensive vacant and abandoned property strategies to include such elements as inventory analysis, data management, improved property management systems, and more strategic disposition alternatives and redevelopment strategies.

- Continue to support implementation of problem properties strategies with municipal teams in Newark, JC, Irvington, Orange, Paterson, Bridgeton, Camden and Trenton.

STRATEGIC GOALS & TARGETED OUTCOMES

- Facilitate the development of municipal Land Banking operations as part of the tool kit to manage vacant and abandoned properties
- Identify opportunities for strategic partnerships to pursue joint purchasing or shared services in targeted areas
- Work with IT and code enforcement professionals to help cities flesh out strategies in data base development and management and strategic code enforcement
- Support development of successful approaches to manage scattered site properties acquired and developed as part of neighborhood stabilization strategies in Newark and other cities where this is needed

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND REVITALIZATION

Promote neighborhood revitalization by supporting the 25 to 30 Network members developing or implementing neighborhood plans with their overall revitalization efforts, by promoting peer sharing, collaboration and efforts to address common barriers.

Create opportunities for Network members and municipalities to collaborate on neighborhood plans and work toward integration with municipal master plans and redevelopment plans;

- Identify opportunities in 6-8 targeted cities where the majority of neighborhood plans have been developed for coordination between non-profits sponsoring the plans and municipal departments responsible for overall city planning.

Identify partner organizations and consultant(s) who can help members create neighborhood plans, develop more detailed plans in key areas (ie TOD, workforce or commercial development, etc.), connect to regional planning efforts, and/or participate in and influence the municipal master planning process

- Develop new and expand existing collaborations with planning and TOD partners (Tri-State Transportation Campaign, RPA, NJT, MLUC, NJAPA, Bloustein School, DVRCP, etc.)

Identify and share proven approaches to sustainable planning and redevelopment, including economic development and commercial district revitalization, Transit-oriented Development strategies, job creation, crime prevention, education reform, and park and open space development, among others.

- Organize peer learning sessions with Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force on key topics of interest, with follow up TA and advocacy as needed.
- Help organize workshops on community revitalization topics for other organizations' events.

STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Leveraging the strength of our members through area Advocacy Teams and citywide member networks, we will work with strategic partners & stakeholders to research, propose and advance public policy, legislation and regulatory reform, increase public awareness, and advocate for vital issues that improve opportunities for our members and the communities they represent.

Support Network's 13A-Teams and related citywide teams, which include members in 15 counties.

- Provide staff support in areas with strong member concentration and overlap on other priority program areas; provide as-needed support to more self-sufficient and/or less developed areas
- Prepare 2-4 A-Team events during the year; coordinate with Cities & local work projects as much as possible
- Recruit and retain members and engage them in Advocacy Team activities

STRATEGIC GOALS & TARGETED OUTCOMES

- Continue to build connections between Executive Board and A-Team leaders

Support member efforts to create and sustain state and local funding streams, including County Homeless Trust Funds, the Special Needs Housing Trust Fund and others.

- Develop analysis of impact and opportunity for CHTFs
- Work with allies on strategy to refund SNHTF

Advocate for passage of comprehensive housing reform policy that encourages the creation of homes and jobs in appropriate places, and preserve Fair Housing Act and gains achieved in A500.

- Monitor Supreme Court cases and other legal/regulatory/legislative developments relating to FHA and COAH.
- Continue to address regulatory barriers that impede our members' efforts to create homes, including UHAC rules, NSP challenges, etc;
- Facilitate increased draw-down and targeted use of underutilized federal and state housing funds to maximize production, including providing guidance about "use-or-lose it" provisions in 2012, and accessing federal Hardest Hit funds.

Promote neighborhood stabilization and revitalization by:

- Pursuing problem property agenda to enhance revitalization tools available to members and municipalities, including land banking legislation and amendments to tax sale law
- Working with the courts to expedite the foreclosure process for abandoned properties
- Supporting efforts to promote progressive state planning and transportation policies that benefit older communities, enhance local community development efforts and expand transit oriented development opportunities.

Work with allied organizations to secure broad political support and funding for work to secure faster, less expensive and more community oriented development of schools, especially in communities of need

- Move schools facility amendments as part of NJCA/EF reform effort
- Monitor implementation of any schools facilities changes

Work to defeat legislation or regulations that harm members, the CD sector, and our key partners

- Monitor legislative and regulatory proposals
- Work with Board and members to craft alternatives and campaigns to preserve resources and opportunities for our members

Work with NLIHC, NACEDA, Center for Community Progress and others on federal issues, including NSP, National Housing Trust Fund, HUD Budget & programs, CRA Modernization, better targeted TA for CDCs, and TOD Policy & Programs

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION AND REMEDIATION

Expand and strengthen the resources and tools available in NJ for preventing and mitigating the neighborhood impacts of foreclosures, while expanding the capacity of the community development sector to access and put those resources and tools to work in their communities (i.e. Mortgage Resolution Fund, NSP, NMFC, etc.)

STRATEGIC GOALS & TARGETED OUTCOMES

Work with CDCs and community providers to develop solutions and strategies to address ongoing challenges related to foreclosure prevention work in New Jersey

- Organize quarterly meetings and provide staff support to the foreclosure working group
- Continue participating on and providing assistance to regional Task Forces

Work with members to navigate effectively and efficiently state administered foreclosure prevention programs

- Build relationships with the court system to address fee issues and minimize delays related to the Mediation program
- Continue to communicate with HMFA and encourage meetings to help address counselor challenges
- Plan and implement training and support program for asset resolution managers as part of Mortgage Resolution Fund

Bring in speakers and other expertise on topical areas of interest

- Identify best practices in other parts of the country, to document and share with task force members

Identify training gaps and work with providers and funders to bring affordable, accessible, and current training resources to New Jersey

- Continue to secure NWA NTI training slots
- Identify opportunities for greater alignment with Rutgers' Bloustein School

Help members to integrate foreclosure prevention work with neighborhood, municipal, and regional stabilization strategies

- Connect members to Mortgage Resolution Fund (MRF) program in areas being targeted
- Use lessons learned with MRF to help other communities connect counseling with stabilization.
- Continue to assist members to identify solutions to address challenges related to NSP and other government programs.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Enhance the ability of members to create and preserve long-term affordable housing and build strong communities in New Jersey through education and training, capacity building, networking and support services.

Provide regular communication and interaction with our members and supporters; continue to develop resources for honing values-based messages and utilizing social networking tools, and encourage our members to do the same

Improve Members' Access to Resources

- Provide regular updates about local, state and federal programs to help members' access resources, through TA alerts, meetings & training workshops and individual TA.
- Collect feedback on how funding programs are working to feed into regulatory advocacy process
- Publicize members' accomplishments and encourage peer sharing by updating the Network's web-based Membership Directory with information on members' programs, activities, and successes.
- Continue to collect information on members' access to financing; work with lenders to promote existing products and develop new banking products and strategies to finance our members' projects and get more investment into low-income communities.
- Monitor SEED loans on a monthly basis
- Continue build-out of Green resources, highlight member projects and programs, and foster dialogue about sustainable resources, techniques and strategies on the web.

STRATEGIC GOALS & TARGETED OUTCOMES

Offer Training and TA to members in strategic areas:

- Plan and market the following courses with goal of 25 – 30 TA participants:
 - ✓ Feasibility Analysis/Project Financing 101 for Rental & Homeownership (1st Qtr – 2 day)
 - ✓ 4% vs 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit Financing (2d Qtr – 1 day)
 - ✓ Business Planning for Affordable Housing (3d Qtr – 3-day)
 - ✓ Succession Planning (4th Qtr –1 day)
- Offer follow-up one-on-one TA related to training courses, as well as other specialty areas
- Develop consultant/coach pool for members to access needed services;
- Provide on-site TA and coaching for Passaic County CHDOs individually or in groups on: obtaining CHDO status, business planning, acquisition strategies, project feasibility analysis & management, local rehab standards & tools and/or organizational development.
- Provide targeted TA & training through our new One-CPD CHDO TA partnership to enhance CDCs' ability to develop affordable housing and address foreclosure and abandoned properties in their communities.
- Partner with the City of Newark and the Newark Community Development Network to help CDCs and contractors to incorporate Newark's Green Rehabilitation Standards
- Provide additional training courses and other resources related to Green building