



2025 Awards of Excellence

NACCED 50th Annual Educational Conference & Training

Affordable Housing

Suffolk County Community Development Office: “The Green at Gardiner’s Point Suffolk County New York”

In the heart of one of the most expensive housing markets in the country, The Green at Gardiner’s Point—also known as Three Mile Harbor—emerges as a critical solution to Suffolk County’s growing affordability crisis. Located on a 14.3-acre site along Three Mile Harbor Road in East Hampton, this newly constructed 50-unit affordable rental development directly addresses the increasing cost burdens faced by low- and moderate-income households across the region.

Developed by Georgica Green Ventures LLC in partnership with the East Hampton Housing Authority, the project stands as a testament to what can be accomplished when public-private collaboration is leveraged to serve community need. In a town where median home prices exceed \$1.5 million and market rents far outpace local wages, The Green at Gardiner’s Point offers one of the only affordable rental housing options for individuals and families earning between 30% and 60% of the area median income (AMI). This income group—often made up of teachers, healthcare workers, first responders, and service employees—is too frequently priced out of the communities they serve.

The five two-story buildings include a thoughtful mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments, designed not just for affordability, but for impairments. A centrally located community building offers shared amenities including a meeting space, Wi-Fi hotspot, kitchenette, laundry room, and emergency generator—underscoring the development's commitment to resilience and equity.

Outdoor features such as a playground and reservable patio further enhance the quality of life for residents, fostering a sense of connection often missing in high-cost housing markets. Importantly, the project increased the total number of affordable units managed by the East Hampton Housing Authority by nearly 50%, representing a transformational impact on the town's affordable housing inventory.

For Suffolk County, The Green at Gardiner's Point is more than just housing—it is a blueprint for sustainability, inclusivity, and economic fairness. It relieves rent-burdened households, strengthens the local workforce, and restores the opportunity for long-term residency in a community that has, for many, become financially out of reach.



Affordable Housing

Washington County Office of Community Development: “Alongside Senior Housing”

Situated on City of Tigard land next door to the Tigard Senior Center and Fanno Creek natural area, Alongside is a new-construction housing community that provides 57 affordable homes to seniors, 62 years old and older. It dedicated 40% of its units to serving extremely low-income households, income at 30% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) with federal project based rental assistance. The remaining 60% of the units serve households earning less than 60% of AMI. The project, developed by Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA) and designed by SERA Architects, was constructed by Walsh Construction with a sustainable Earth Advantage Multifamily Certification Built with a focus on walkability and public transportation, it is located within walking distance of TriMet bus stops, Tigard Public Library and Universal Plaza, in addition to the Senior Center being just steps away. Alongside also uses universal design principles: units and common spaces meet ADA accessibility standards, a subset of units have auditory and visual accommodations, and additional units can be easily adapted.

In an attractive wooded setting with creek access and within the newly developing and highly walkable Tigard City core, residents enjoy building and independence. Connections with the directly adjacent Tigard Senior Center provide meals, exercise, financial and legal education and supports and transportation connections for medical, shopping and community activities. This unique project was possible thanks to the City's vision for the site as affordable housing, combined with resources from Washington County, the state housing finance agency, and others.



Community Development

Clark County, NV; Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth: “NPHY Outreach, Volunteer, and Operations (OVO) Center”

Clark County, Nevada, remains one of the hardest-hit regions in the nation for youth homelessness. Thousands of unaccompanied youths experience housing instability each year, many of whom have fled abusive homes, experienced neglect, or faced family rejection. These young people often lack access to safe shelter, consistent meals, and caring adults, placing them at extreme risk for exploitation, long-term trauma, and chronic homelessness.

To confront this crisis with strategic and scalable action, Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY) developed and launched the NPHY Outreach, Volunteer, and Operations (OVO) Center. The OVO Center is a 4,400 square-foot facility designed to serve as the logistical and operational backbone of NPHY’s comprehensive homelessness response. Located directly adjacent to the NPHY Drop-In Center in Unincorporated Clark County, the OVO Center consolidates key functions such as outreach deployment, volunteer coordination, donation processing, and storage of food and survival supplies: a best-in-class model of operational innovation which allows frontline staff to focus more fully on direct care and crisis response.

Funded in part through Clark County’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the OVO Center is a critical infrastructure investment that enhances capacity across NPHY’s entire continuum of care. Its construction enabled NPHY to relocate administrative and logistical operations out of the crowded NPHY Drop-In Center, thereby unlocking more than 1,000 square-feet of new space for youth services. The OVO Center also includes a walk-in cooler, reach-in freezer, and organized warehouse shelving, which significantly expanded NPHY’s ability to store and distribute essential supplies such as food, hygiene kits, and clothing.

This facility has transformed how youth homelessness services are delivered throughout Southern Nevada. By centralizing core operational functions, it has improved internal efficiency and strengthened NPHY’s ability to meet youth where they are at, whether it be on the streets, in schools, or via the Safe Place mobile crisis intervention program. The OVO Center also provides a dedicated home for volunteer engagement, allowing NPHY to better train, support, and mobilize the hundreds of community members who are vital to the mission of ending youth homelessness in Nevada.

Completed in 2024, the OVO Center has become central to NPHY’s daily operations and youth engagement strategy. By eliminating bottlenecks in donation processing, outreach logistics, and volunteer coordination, it has enhanced programmatic service delivery. The facility also enables faster, more efficient crisis response and expands NPHY’s capacity to consistently meet basic needs with dignity and care. This project reflects the forward-thinking, community-driven innovation celebrated by the NACCED Award of Excellence.



Disaster Preparedness & Response

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara: “Escalante Meadows Affordable Housing Development and Community Center”

Escalante Meadows represents a RAD conversion of a Public Housing development in rural Guadalupe, CA, to a multi-family tax-credit development. It incorporates significant energy efficiency improvements, adds and improves transportation-related public infrastructure, and revitalizes the city through quality, new affordable housing, community facilities, public infrastructure, and amenities, while incorporating a community center serving both residents of Escalante Meadows as well as the greater community.

Located in the City of Guadalupe, CA, Guadalupe Ranch Acres was a 56-unit Public Housing Development first constructed in 1958. It has since been operated and maintained by the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara using available federal and internal modernization and capital improvement funds. Based on the property's age, utilization of land, and the need to update and renovate in accordance with prevailing construction and building standards, it was identified for HUD's RAD initiative and was included in the Housing Authority's 2020-2024 5-Year Agency Plan as a site for conversion.

This reconstruction, financial restructure and investment serves to the benefit of this lower-income community's security, health, welfare and safety, future growth, and economic development. It represents a visionary and innovative project in terms of design, scope, financing, private and public planning and execution, as well as community collaboration.



Economic Development

Cuyahoga County Office of Small Business: “Cuyahoga County Office of Small Business”

Cuyahoga County’s Office of Small Business (OSB) is a concierge-style initiative launched in May 2024 to streamline access to support services, funding, and technical assistance for all small businesses across the county’s 59 municipalities. OSB embodies the County Executive’s vision to make small business success more accessible, coordinated, and efficient. County Executive Chris Ronayne tapped Vaughn Johnson, Deputy Director for Economic Development, to build and create the new office from the ground up. A year later the new office was launched on the final day of SBA Small Business Week. Vaughn now also serves as the lead for the new office.

OSB’s concierge model consists of: (1) intake (2) curated listening sessions, (3) Listening session recap (4) internal team huddles to assess business needs, (5) Determine if partner is available to meet with client (6) permission-based warm introductions to capital and resource partners, and (7) structured follow-up and ongoing check-ins. This human-centered process ensures business owners are not handed a directory but guided every step of the way.

Since its launch, OSB has delivered 2,500+ hours of technical assistance support and worked with 1000+ small businesses. It facilitated 45 loans totaling \$1.50M (generating over \$9M in estimated economic impact) and activated more than 60 vetted capital and resource partners. OSB regularly on-boards new resource partners and conducts quarterly check-ins with them, while capital partners are reviewed biannually.

Capital partners: Small Business Support Organizations, Funders and CDFIs receive reimbursement grants funded through the County’s Economic Development Fund (not ARPA). The OSB team manages these grants end-to-end: reviewing client logs, validating invoices, confirming performance, and submitting for fiscal approval. OSB also vets every new resource partner to maintain a trustworthy, high- quality referral network.

Resource Partners: Fully vetted, experienced and trusted small business support organizations and funders that do NOT receive Cuyahoga County Funding but are part of our list of over 50 resource partners with include CDFIs, Crowd Funders, Venture, Technical Assistance, MBACs, SBDCs, SBA, Credit Unions, Community Banks, Coaches and mentors, and other professional service providers.

OSB’s impact is amplified through in-person outreach, community tabling, LinkedIn engagement, and collaborative events with municipal partners and chambers of commerce. Continuous innovation is built into its structure through surveys, ecosystem gap analysis, and integration with broader Urban Agenda strategies.



Cuyahoga County Office of Small Business

Offering guidance to small business owners, who get the support they need to navigate the business landscape.



Homeless Coordination/Assistance

Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority: “Fair Ridge Shelter”

In a mere eight months, an 80-bed facility for families experiencing homelessness was acquired and made operational in Fairfax County, VA. The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority

(FCRHA) purchased an extended stay hotel and converted it into a shelter for families experiencing homelessness. This was made possible through coordination with and commitment from many partners, including the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development’s Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, community non-profits, and elected officials.



Innovation

Clark County, Nevada Community Housing Office: “Clark County, Nevada Section 3 Program”

The County's compliance with the Section 3 safe harbor targets, which require a certain percentage of total labor hours on covered projects to be performed by low-income workers, has been notably low. Recognizing the importance of the law, the County conducted an analysis and developed a Section 3 Program to address this issue.

The program is designed to enhance compliance with Section 3 labor participation targets through a three-pronged approach: a) Increasing awareness of Section 3 and its requirements, b) Engaging with agencies that have aligned programs to foster collaboration, and c) Providing guidance and support to partners, including subrecipients and contractors, to help them meet the established targets.

Innovation

Washington County Office of Community Development: “Just Compassion Tigard Safe Parking Program”

When a person or family is homeless and shelters are typically over capacity, the Safe Parking Program operated by Just Compassion, a local nonprofit organization, is a unique alternative that allows participants to safely reside in their vehicle while having access to onsite storage, trash and hygiene facilities. While homeless services have grown exponentially in the past several years thanks to a local levy approved by voters in addition to ongoing CDBG and ESG support, there are still more households in need than shelter available. The Safe Parking Program provides critical support in addition to a place to park.

The program case manager helps households access employment opportunities and other resources for which they qualify. People that reside in their vehicles often have jobs that allow them to maintain their vehicle, but without stability they are at risk of losing that one thing that has been keeping them safe and from being stranded on the street. Losing a car can easily result in losing a job, which then results in further economic loss and feelings of hopelessness and despair. Safe parking helps bridge that gap from being houseless to a path of regaining dignity by moving from car to permanent housing. Allowing people to safely reside in their cars allows for more houseless individuals to access and stay in Just Compassion's congregate shelter.

In the first 9 months of the program, 16 households have been served with an average participation of 4 to 6 months. One man entered the program with serious mental health concerns, including suicidal ideation. Working with the case manager, he began to improve symptom management and started to make the most of a range of support services. He transitioned from the program to a pod-style shelter before entering transitional housing, and now he's well on the way to obtaining permanent housing. He is an active volunteer in the community, practicing personal care, and has become excited about the future. This story highlights the unique impact and flexibility of the program.



Planning/Policy/Program Management

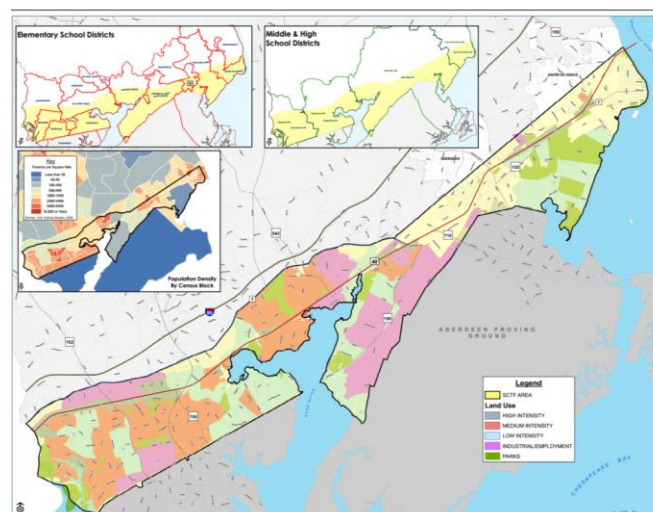
Harford County Department of Housing and Community Services: “Southern County Task Force”

Harford County’s southern county or “route 40 corridor” has historically seen the jurisdiction's highest levels of racially concentrated areas of poverty. Decades of neglect allowed these communities to deteriorate, both in its physical and neighborhood structures. Despite previous community development investment, the area continues to struggle with low homeownership rates, substandard rental properties, and high levels of poverty.

When County Executive Bob Cassilly came to office in late 2022, he formed the Southern County Task Force to combat the on-going issues existing in the southern part of our community. The goal of this targeted task force was to direct all available county resources to this distressed area. Every division of county government was instructed to direct and/or increase whatever service they provide to this area. A Task Force Administrator was hired to work cooperatively across the divisions of local government to coordinate community development funding and direct targeted delivery of services. Whether by increased street sweeping or increased access to senior care, each division was tasked with providing new or more services in the designated task force area, utilizing CDBG, HOME, and other available funding.

The results are unprecedented. Better access to community amenities, higher curb appeal, faster emergency service response, larger parks and rec programs, increased senior care services, increased ride share opportunities, and increased access to safe, decent, affordable housing.

On June 23, 2025, the task force presented a public update combined with a call for both positive and negative feedback. Community support is tantamount to the continued success of this project. Based on the comments received at the June 23rd public session, new projects have been identified, ensuring the on-going success of the Southern County Task Force.



Veteran Services & Assistance

County of Kern Planning and Natural Resources - Community Development: “Covey Cottages Permanent Supportive Housing for Veterans”

Kern County faces one of the highest rates of veteran homelessness in California, particularly among older adults. In response, Covey Cottages was created as an innovative, permanent supportive housing community in north Bakersfield. Developed through a partnership between local government, nonprofits, health systems, and private donors, the project provides 12 dignified, service-enriched homes consisting of 11 designated for unhoused veterans and 1 unit non designated

Located at 604 Covey Avenue, Bakersfield, CA, 93308, the land was donated by Patriots of Kern, a local nonprofit organization that assists youth and veterans in Kern County. Each 400 square foot cottage includes a full kitchen, private bath, living and sleeping areas, and pet-friendly accommodation. Residents benefit from shared amenities such as a green space, garden area, on-site laundry facility, barbeques, and a community room for programing and other services. By blending federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds through state Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program (HHIP) funding, County HOME Investment Partnerships Program

(HOME) funds, philanthropic support, and grassroots fundraising, Covey Cottages offers a scalable, community-driven model for ending veteran homelessness through partnership and permanent housing solutions.

