



2023 Awards of Excellence

NACCED 48th Annual Educational Conference & Training

Homeless Coordination/Assistance

Orange County, FL and Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida: “Rapid ReHousing”

Orange County has partnered with Coalition for the Homeless, a private not for profit homeless corporation with experience providing shelter and supportive services to the homeless population and to provide Housing Stability Case Management services to qualified low-to-moderate income individuals experiencing homelessness using the Rapid ReHousing approach to reduce the length of time households are homeless.

In response to Florida Statutes encouragement of counties participating in State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) to develop a strategy within its local housing assistance plan which provides program funds to reduce homelessness and partner with lead agencies of local homeless assistance to combine resources to reduce housing costs for the targeted population, Orange County has thus far awarded the Coalition for the Homeless with \$2.2 million dollars to be administered until the end of 2024 for the purpose of Rapid ReHousing.

The Coalition has demonstrated that they are able to provide a high level of quality of services efficiently and effectively to eligible participants in the SHIP Rapid ReHousing program. Over the past two years the Coalition has assisted 187 unduplicated households and they anticipate assisting a minimum of an additional 100 unduplicated households in years 2023 and 2024 with a maximum allowable assistance of \$10,000 per client. With the average assistance per client being approximately \$4,000, additional assistance to even more households is likely.

Orange County has been pleased to collaborate with the Coalition for the Homeless to provide Rapid ReHousing assistance to alleviate homelessness in Orange County, Florida.

Innovation

City of Vancouver, WA: “Fourth Plain Commons”

The Fourth Plain Community Commons is a flexible community space and hub for “upstream” community development resources that is located along Vancouver’s Fourth Plain Corridor. It includes space for the Fourth Plain community to gather, hold events, and access services. The following elements are in the community space:

- A commercial kitchen incubator to launch and support emerging food-based businesses.
- A shared office space to co-locate upstream services to make it easier for residents and businesses to access resources on the corridor.
- A community event space that can be rented for festivals, birthdays, trainings, and other events
- A public plaza with infrastructure to support a community market

This project is a collaboration between the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) and the City of Vancouver, and the Commons is located on the ground floor of a future mixed-use development project that will also include 106 units of affordable housing. The Vancouver Housing Authority will own and operate the apartments located on the upper floors. The City of Vancouver will develop and own the ground floor space, partnering with Fourth Plain Forward to operate it.

Planning/Policy/Program Management

Chester County, PA Department of Community Development: “Chester County Creative Collaboration – Seeking Housing for All”

The Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness created a county-wide Affordable Housing Developer Collaborative, bringing together traditional and new stakeholders with the goal of finding and executing these creative solutions. Because of Chester County, Pennsylvania’s large size, regional groups were also brought together to address geographically specific needs. This has led to new partnerships with non-profits and municipalities to maximize potential and leverage opportunities that may otherwise have been dismissed as non-options.

As these groups formed to find housing solutions, the County received an influx of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and joined the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) House America initiative. With the forward momentum, Chester County set the ambitious goal of adding 1,000 affordable units over ten years.

These new partnerships and creative solutions have been instrumental in getting Chester County to over 30% of that goal in the first two years.

Affordable housing options that opened in 2022 in Chester County include 111 new units in West Chester and Kennett Square. The Willows at Valley Run in Caln Township will see 120 new affordable rental units, funded partly by \$1.9 million of County resources, including \$500,000 of County American Rescue Plan funds. Also, in Caln Township, Habitat for Humanity is acquiring land to build 25 to 30 affordable single-family homes for first-time homebuyers, made possible through a \$640,000 County HUD grant. Habitat for Humanity has also received \$500,000 in ARPA funds from Chester County to complete 100 housing rehabilitation projects within the City of Coatesville over the next three years. In November 2022, ground was broken on Phoenixville Commons, a senior housing development of 51 units located in the center of Phoenixville. The Villas of West Whiteland – 35 affordable units – has been awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits and County HUD Funding.

The Chester County Board of Commissioners has pledged to continue planning and partnering with our municipalities, developers, and our state and federal governments to help those who want to live in Chester County. Making housing that is safe and affordable for more people is not just the smart thing to do – it is the right thing to do.

Our commitment to developing housing for all residents of Chester County remains strong with an additional 206 approved affordable housing units in active development, and 105 units in the pipeline pending approval of the next round of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

Economic Development

Cuyahoga County, OH Department of Development: “STIMulus Small Business Grant”

With COVID causing immense negative impact on national and localized economies throughout the United States, Cuyahoga County was a location that also witnessed the imminent closing of many small businesses during the pandemic, with others finding a way to adapt, survive, and even thrive in such conditions. To assist these small businesses working toward their next stage of growth and expansion, the STIMulus Small Business Grant was created. Rather than taking the approach of a rescue grant, like many public entities were committed to during COVID, this grant was designed to support those small businesses who proved their resilience in a time of uncertainty and seeking to grow. The grant was specifically directed towards small businesses who proved their resilience in a time of uncertainty and seeking to grow. The grant was specifically directed towards small businesses with an eye on minority-owned businesses, with the score of the applicant receiving extra points when the small business was minority-owned, had secured another source of outside funding, and could provide job creation. The reason for the preference of secured outside funding and job creation was to approach the grant allocation from an innovative standpoint of viewing businesses through the eyes of an investor, noting a guarantee that the business had developed ground of establishment before relying on the application for continued support. The amounts were also allotted into significantly portioned sums of \$50,000, \$25,000, and \$10,000 to be authentically transformative to a business's growth opportunity. As a result, many small businesses that were awarded the grant funding have reported substantial growth in their business from the various uses of the funds, creating an increased customer base and newly hired staff.

Affordable Housing

Westchester County, NY Department of Planning: “Mayfair Apartments, Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County, New York”

Mayfair Senior Apartments, located at 1 Fairway Drive in the Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County, New York consists of the redevelopment of a vacant former homeless shelter into 74 affordable housing units for seniors aged 62+ adjacent to Westchester Community College.

The site, consisting of six acres, owned by the County, was leased to WestHelp for development and use as a transitional homeless facility. Completed in 1990, with 108 units in nine two-story buildings to house homeless women and their children. It was utilized through 2011 and sat vacant for nearly a decade before being redeveloped. Through an RFP process, Marathon Development Group was selected by the County in 2012 to convert the abandoned homeless shelter into 74 affordable housing units for seniors 62 and over. After many years of negotiations, an agreement was finally reached in 2018 with Marathon, the County and the Town. The new lease was entered into for 65 years and included one-time payments of \$600,000 to the Town and \$900,000 to the County. These negotiations also included the nearby neighborhood associations.

The developers renovated all of the buildings and created 6 studio, 60 one-bedroom and 8 two-bedroom units for seniors aged 62 and over with affordability ranging from 40% to 80% of the County's Area Median Income (“AMI”). Twenty units are for formerly seniors who were homeless and suffer from mental illness with supportive services provided one-sit by a local non-profit, Community Housing Innovations (“CHI”). The Development was financed with a conventional mortgage and subsidy from New York State.

Common area amenities include community room, patio and laundry rooms. The buildings have elevators, outdoors seating areas and parking. The development meets Energy Star Certification and include numerous green features.

The development is very important for the County because it creates safe, decent and affordable housing for senior citizens with fixed and moderate incomes. It shows a terrific example of teamwork among various stakeholders such as the Town, the local neighborhood association and the County, working together to find a long-standing solution to critical housing needs.

This past Spring, to highlight the success of the Development, the Westchester Municipal Planning Federation awarded the County a Planning Achievement Award.

With this success, the County and the developer are working on the development of Phase II which will include the adaptive reuse of the former administrative building into 14 units and the new construction of one building with 48 units.

Community Development

Henrico County, VA Department of Community Revitalization: “Small Business Resiliency Grant Program”

The Henrico County Small Business Resiliency Grant Program provided small business coaching and grants up to \$50,000 to small businesses and microenterprises to implement adjustments to their business enabling them to continue to function during the COVID-19 pandemic or any similar future business interruption. Eight businesses received grants that provided new furniture and equipment, physical modifications to their commercial space, technology and services to transition to greater e-commerce presence, and other costs related to transforming critical components of their business in support of long-term resiliency and profitability.