

Information Item

Date: May 12, 2020

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Tasha Logan Ford, Assistant City Manager
Marla Y. Newman, Community Development Director

Subject:
Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant award and key next steps for implementation

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: Yes

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



The City and the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem (HAWS) have been seeking grant funds to revitalize the Cleveland Avenue Homes since 2013, when HAWS received a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant from HUD. HAWS subsequently submitted Choice Neighborhoods Implementation (CNI) Grant applications in 2016, 2017 and 2018 which were not funded.

On April 23, 2020 HAWS and the City were notified that its 2019 CNI grant application was selected for funding. The \$30 million grant will leverage funds from other sources, include city bonds, community development block grants and private equity to create more than \$100 million in new housing development for the Cleveland Avenue Homes community. The grant will allow HAWS to replace the 244 existing apartments in Cleveland Avenue Homes with 406 new units, including 199 units of replacement public housing, 86 units of workforce housing, and 122 units of market-rate housing. Though the new development will have 45 fewer public housing units, Housing Choice Vouchers will be provided for those residents to use anywhere.

Choice Neighborhoods is focused on three core goals:

1. Housing: Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood;
2. People: Improve outcomes of households living in the target housing related to employment and income, health, and children's education; and
3. Neighborhood: Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices about their community.

To assist with project implementation, the City and HAWS are partnering with McCormack Baron Salazar, an urban design firm that specializes in the revitalization of urban neighborhoods with multi-block, mixed-income projects; and Urban Strategies Inc., an independent national not-for-profit planning organization with extensive experience in education, workforce development and other “human capital” programs.

The Housing Authority of Winston-Salem will oversee construction of the new housing and such programs as education, training and similar programs. The City will be responsible for neighborhood revitalization efforts, including business development and public safety.

Key next steps towards implementation include:

1. Receipt of the HUD grant agreement and negotiating contracts with McCormack Baron Salazar and Urban Strategies Inc.;
2. Advertising for and hiring a project manager to begin resident engagement, in collaboration with Urban Strategies Inc.;
3. Resident and community engagement to initiate collaboration, planning and goal-setting;
4. Updating and maintaining a website to keep residents, stakeholders and other partners informed and engaged during the community transformation;
5. Preparing the former Brown Elementary School site for the 1st phase of housing development;
6. Refining the roles and responsibilities of the partners—including community stakeholders—supporting the Housing, People and Neighborhood outcomes; and
7. Reconfirming financial commitments made by community partners and stakeholders prior to the grant award.