

Theory of Change: Increasing the supply of affordable housing improves individual lives and communities, generates and saves tax revenue and creates jobs and wealth. People who are stably-housed consume fewer public resources, are healthier and perform better on their jobs and in school.

Program Goal: To ensure that vulnerable populations, including homeless and low- and moderate-income individuals and families, have the opportunity to live in housing that meets their service needs and is not a cost burden.

All proposals submitted to the Foundation should adhere to one of the following strategies:

STRATEGY A

Housing and Services to Prevent or End Homelessness

Target Population: Homeless or at-risk youth, adults and families

Components

- Aligns with Chicago's homelessness plan, *A Home for Everyone (Plan 2.0)*, and focuses on building long-term independence and stability
- Prioritizes services for people with multiple challenges, including physical and mental illness, active substance use and other high-risk behaviors
- Utilizes harm reduction, trauma-informed and asset-based principles
- Includes a comprehensive, developmentally-appropriate menu of services, including access to physical and mental healthcare, connection to mainstream resources and strong partnerships with child care and employment programs

Program models include

- Emergency financial support and services to prevent homelessness
- Rapid rehousing, short-term housing and supportive services
- Permanent supportive housing
- Collaborations that leverage public dollars and promote systemic change

Evaluation Criteria

- Client retention
- Positive movement toward stable housing, educational achievement and/or employment
- Client outcomes related to health and increased independence
- Number of clients who move to and/or maintain stable housing
- Number of clients who increase income/benefits

STRATEGY B

Affordable Rental Housing Production and Preservation

Target Population: Adults and families earning less than 60% of area median income and/or living in buildings with expiring affordability requirements or sub-standard conditions

Components

- Constructs and rehabilitates multi-family and single-room occupancy rental units
- Incorporates energy-efficient technology to lower building operating costs and tenant utility bills
- Offers contracts and employment opportunities to local sub-contractors and residents
- Includes community and tenant engagement and leadership development activities
- Provides nontraditional lenders with low-cost, flexible financing to projects and communities underserved by mainstream lenders

Evaluation Criteria

- Number of new rental units developed or preserved
- Duration of affordability
- Percentage of household income paid for rent
- Number of jobs created
- Number of tenant councils formed

STRATEGY C

Homeownership Support and Preservation

Target Population: Low- to moderate-income, first-time homebuyers and homeowners in or at risk of foreclosure

Components

- Constructs and rehabilitates for-sale units
- Incorporates energy-efficient technology to lower utility bills
- Offers contract and employment opportunities to local sub-contractors and residents
- Provides nontraditional lenders with low-cost, flexible financing to projects and communities underserved by mainstream lenders
- Offers pre- and post-purchase homebuyer counseling that includes financial literacy training and credit counseling
- Provides foreclosure prevention counseling that informs homeowners of the process and negotiates with lenders on their behalf.
- Alternative models such as land trusts and cooperative, employer-assisted and lease-to-own housing are eligible.

Evaluation Criteria

- Number of for-sale units built or rehabilitated
- Number of people who receive counseling
- Number who improve credit scores
- Number of homes purchased
- Number of foreclosures averted
- Number of abandoned properties returned to productive use

STRATEGY D

Systems Improvement and Innovation

Target Population: Local, state and federal policymakers; government decision-makers

Components

- Provides a clear action plan, developed with participant input, that includes benchmarks for progress, defined organization and sector goals and anticipated outcomes and timing
- Provides individualized technical assistance and/or advanced training for staff at participating organizations
- Offers opportunities for cumulative learning to promote effective systems integration and improvement
- Advocates to raise the profile of housing issues with decision-makers
- Encourages policies that leverage public dollars and promotes the sharing of resources across systems
- Advances policies that increase resources to address homelessness or increases the affordable housing supply including inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, trust funds and public awareness campaigns, and policies that remove barriers that hinder production and increase costs

Evaluation Criteria

- Description, number and length of activities
- Number of staff from participating organizations, including number who attended multiple sessions, and total number of organizations
- Documentation of learning that will lead to greater reach, impact, or efficiency for participating organizations and the sector
- Collection and assessment of reliable and useful data that informs ongoing sector development
- Adoption of policies that encourage the development and sustainability of supportive and affordable housing
- Increased financial resources for homelessness or affordable housing development and services
- Increased resources to prevent and ameliorate the impact of foreclosures