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CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS CRITICAL COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

ACTIVITY #1: IMPROVEMENTS TO RYAN PARK

Background

- Ryan Park is a 2.2 acre city-owned neighborhood park and is the only significant public open space within the Choice Neighborhood.
- It is directly across Day Street from Washington Village, the target public housing development.
- There are limited facilities.
- Residents consider it unsafe.

Project Description

- The Norwalk Transformation Plan calls for redevelopment to increase facilities and usage.
- The Mayor recently appointed an Advisory Committee (residents, community, stakeholders) to develop a plan to include physical redesign, amenities and programming
- CCI funds will be used to develop the plan and fund improvements.

Administration

- The CCI project will be administered by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, the co-grantee
- A consultant will be hired to lead the community design process
- Once completed, the park will be maintained by the City Recreation and Parks Department

Project Budget(to be finalized following community planning process)

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
Choice Neighborhoods	A/E	$ 70,000
Choice Neighborhoods	Construction	$930,000
TOTAL		$1,000,000

Status of Financial Commitments

- Commitment letter from City regarding park administration

Project Schedule (to be determined)

Milestones	Date
Consultant Contract Execution	
Complete Neighborhood Needs Assessment	
Complete Preliminary Design	
Common Council Approval	
Complete Final Design	
Out to Bid	
Construction Start	
Construction Completion	

Use of Program Income: N/A

Measures of Success

- Decrease in number of crimes in and around Ryan Park
- Increase in number or % of residents who feel safe in Ryan Park (collected via resident survey)
- Increase in number or % of residents who utilize Ryan Park (collected via resident survey)
- Increase in number of events held at Ryan Park annually (collected from Parks and Rec)

ACTIVITY #2: Improvement of Norwalk Community Center / Public Art Installation

Background

- The South Norwalk Community Center (SoNoCC) is heavily used for after school programming, social service delivery, community programming
- SoNoCC is next to Ryan Park and 1 block from Washington Village, the target public housing site
- SoNoCC has fallen into disrepair
- Interior renovations are underway

Project Description

- Create a permanent public art installation on the exterior of SoNoCC as part of a larger community based art project at the entrance to SoNo
- The project will help "brand" the neighborhood
- A "Call for Artists" was released and an artist selected
- A series of public forums will be held to determine the final design

Administration

- The CCI project will be administered by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, the co-grantee.
- A consultant will be hired to lead the community design process
- Once completed, the art will be maintained by the City

Project Budget

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
CDBG	Interior Renovations	$300,000
Choice Neighborhoods	Exterior Art	$100,000
TOTAL		$400,000

Status of Financial Commitments

- $200,000 CDBG program years PY 39 and PY40 received
- $186,000 CDBG program year 41 (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016) requested

Project Schedule

Milestones	Date
Select Artist	April 2015
Commence Community Meetings	June 2015
Complete Final Design	January 2016
Construction Start	April 2016
Construction Completion	July 2016

Use of Program Income: N/A

Measures of Success

- Increase in number or % of residents who feel increased pride in the neighborhood (collected via resident survey)
- Increase in number of people who use SoNoCc

ACTIVITY #3: Complete Streets

Background

- The City prepared a "Transit Oriented Development Program" to enhance public streets with walkability, bike-abilty and public transit consistent with "Compete Streets" standards.
- Phase I of the Program includes 4 major thoroughfares and work has begun on 2, including decorative lighting, sidewalks, street repairs, signage, bike lanes, etc.
- Lighting has been identified as critical element of Complete Streets and planned for all streets in SoNo for safety, aesthetics and "placemaking."

Project Description

- Install 80 additional street lights in SoNoalong streets not included in Phase 1 of the Program
- 40 paid by developers and installed in conjunction with new developments (including Choice)
- 40 paid with Choice and CDBG funds

Administration

- The CCI project will be administered by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency; City Department of Public Works will handle construction/installation
- The lighting will be maintained by South Norwalk Electric Works (local utility company)

Project Budget

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
DOT	TOD Program	$486,000
CDBG	Phase I Improvements	$ 500,000
City	Phase I Improvements	$ 714,000
Developer	Lighting	$1,265,000
Choice Neighborhoods	Lighting	$ 765,000
TOTAL		$3,730,000
TBD	Remaining 2 Phase I projects	$2,770,000

Status of Financial Commitments

- CDBG: committed
- Developers: committed
- City: committed

Project Schedule (80 street lights)

Milestones	Date
Complete Final Design	January 2017
Complete Bidding	March 2017
Construction Start	May 2017
Construction Completion	December 2017

Use of Program Income: N/A

Measures of Success

- Decrease number of crimes in and around the neighborhood
- Decrease number of pedestrian/vehicle accidents throughout neighborhood

ACTIVITY #4: Small Multi-Family Preservation Program

Background

- There is a need to preserve affordable housing per a recent market study
- Many homes inSoNo have been subdivided into apartments and allowed to deteriorate

Project Description

- The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency will acquire and rehabilitate 8 homes in the target area and sell them to owner-occupants with incomes at or below 120% of AMI
- Owner-occupants will rent units to tenants at or below 120% of AMI
- Homes to have a 20 year covenant restricting ownership to 120% of AMI or below
- If homes are re-sold to buyers over 120% of AMI, Choice funds must be repaid
- Landlord&homeownership training; down payment assistanceprovided
- Home #1 has been identified; sale negotiated with bank; environmental approvals done

Administration

- The CCI project will be administered by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
- Technical assistance provided by Jonathan Rose Companies, a national place-based developer

Project Budget

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
Choice Neighborhoods	Acquisition & Rehab	$ 875,000
CDBG	Acquisition & Rehab	$ 400,000
Connecticut HFA	Acquisition & Rehab	$ 600,000
State Dept of Housing	Acquisition & Rehab	$1,000,000
TOTAL		$ 2,875,000

Status of Financial Commitments

- CDBG - committed
- CT HFA - committed
- State Dept of Housing – application due March 15, 2015

Project Schedule

Milestones	Date
Guidelines/ProceduresEstablished	Completed
Year 1 Acquire first home	March 2015
Start rehab	July 2015
Complete rehab	January 2016
Sell first home	November 2016
Year 2 (2 homes completed & sold)	November 2017
Year 3 (2 homes completed & sold)	November 2018
Year 4 (2 homes completed & sold)	November 2019
Year 5 (1 home completed & sold)	June 2020

Use of Program Income

- Excess sales proceeds to be returned to the program or used for other affordable housing initiatives in the Choice Neighborhood

Measures of Success

- Number of homeownership units preserved/created
- Number of rental units preserved/created

ACTIVITY #5: Residental Façade Improvement Grants

Background

- There is a relatively low rate of homeownership in SoNo.
- Many homes are deteriorated and blighted

Project Description

- Grant up to $25,000 to homeowners with incomes at or below 120% of AMI
- Grant to be used for exterior façade rehab
- If homes are re-sold to buyers over 120% of AMI, Choice funds must be repaid
- A total of 15 grants projected

Administration

- The CCI program will be administered by a Grant Committee to be managed by the Neighborhood Coordinator.Funds will be managed by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency.

Project Budget

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
Choice Neighborhoods	Grants to Homeowners	$375,000

Status of Financial Commitments: N/A

Project Schedule

Milestones	Date
Program Guidelines Established	July 2015
Provide First Grant	September 2015
Year 2 (3 grants made & work completed)	September 2016
Year 3 (3 grants made & work completed)	September 2017
Year 4 (4 grants made & work completed)	September 2018
Year 5 (3 grants made & work completed)	September 2019

Use of Program Income

- Funds provided as a grant; any funds recaptured to be returned to the program or used for other affordable housing initiatives in the Choice Neighborhood.

Measures of Success

- Increase in median sales price by housing type
- Decrease in long-term vacancy rates throughout neighborhood

ACTIVITY #6: Community Policing Program

Background

- The incidence of crime in SoNo is the highest in Norwalk
- The Norwalk Police Department (NPD) offers outreach at its SoNostation, but events are not well attended; residents are reluctant to come into the station
- NPD wants to strengthen its community policing and outreach program

Project Description

- NPD will revive its mobile substation program by purchasing a new vehicle to replace the non-functioning one purchased with Weed and Seed funds 15 years ago.
- The mobile substation will host neighborhood meetings, deliver programs, assist homeless, work with neighborhood schools, address individual resident concerns, provide a visible police presence, etc.
- Neighborhood patrols will be dispatched from the mobile substation
- NPD will purchase 5 bicycles to supplement neighborhood patrols
- The mobile substation will be based in SoNo, but available for use by other areas of Norwalk; it is expected to spend 90 % of its time in SoNo.

Administration

- The Community Policing Program will be administered by NPD.

Project Budget

Source of Funds	Use of Funds	Amount
Choice Neighborhoods	Mobile Substation	$80,000
Choice Neighborhoods	Bicycles	$ 5,000
City (Capital Budget)	Mobile Substations	$120,000
TOTAL		$205,000

Status of Financial Commitments:

- City Funds: 2016-2017 Capital Budget pending approval

Project Schedule

Milestones	Date
Approval of City funds	July 2016
Acquire mobiles substation	October 2016
Acquire bicycles	October 2016

Use of Program Income: N/A

Measures of Success

- Decrease in crime in the target neighborhood
- Increase in number / percentage of residents who feel safe in their homes (collected via resident survey)
- Number of police outreach events