



## Community Building and the Plan for Transformation

At a September 2008 MPC forum entitled *“Back to the Drawing Board? Revisiting Local Housing Strategies During the Market Meltdown,”* Oakwood Shores’ co-developer Joe Williams described the revitalization of the former Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Ida B. Wells site. “Ten years ago,” at the start of the Plan for Transformation, “people didn’t realize how much work it was going to take to build a neighborhood,” said Williams. “I think the public perception was that we were just building moderate-income rental housing.” Instead, as is true with the 10 major mixed-income sites, the demolition of the old high rises is long complete, and a mix of new rentals and condos are now occupied by households from a range of backgrounds: Former CHA residents occupy some of the new rentals, and Williams is proud several CHA families have bought condos through Choose-to-Own, a CHA Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program. In addition, a number of local employees have purchased homes with employer support, as part of a broader strategy to ensure 10 percent of the new homes are supported by employer-assisted housing strategies. Finally, a group of residents with incomes and backgrounds as diverse as the city itself are living in the remaining apartments, condos and townhomes. **“The bricks and mortar part of my job is not the end game,” Williams stressed. The core focus must be about fostering community, both within and around these new developments.**

Today’s economy clearly impacts “bricks and mortar” development across the nation, but it also underscores the need for the stability derived from community building. This October 2008 Update

will reveal progress and lessons learned about community building since the [August 2006 Plan for Transformation Update](#) on this topic, outline new initiatives that impact community building in CHA neighborhoods, and provide an overview of the key community building initiatives at each of the mixed-income sites.<sup>1</sup>

### Reconnecting Neighborhoods Update

Without a community center, retail options and user-friendly ways to commute from home to work, shop, or play, it’s difficult to build community at all – let alone among an extremely diverse group of households. Sharing this understanding, concerned residents in and surrounding the new mixed-income communities created by the Plan for Transformation are taking an active role in planning for their community’s future through [Reconnecting Neighborhoods](#). This initiative, led by the Chicago Dept. of Planning and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), in partnership with MPC and HNTB, aims to better connect residents and communities through improved transit and commerce in three Chicago neighborhoods – Mid-South, Near North, and Near West. Residents and community stakeholders in each of these areas have accepted the invitation from the City of Chicago to be active participants in the development of their neighborhoods.

This July, Reconnecting Neighborhoods presented its preliminary transit, retail and pedestrian recommendations to local stakeholders. Guided by the input received from the public meetings, three local Task Forces, and an Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IGAC), Reconnecting Neighborhoods will prepare final recommendations, with the help of a high caliber group of volunteer experts who will ensure the recommendations have a probability of being enacted. The final recommendations, including strategies for implementation, will be presented at the December 2008 *“Building Successful Mixed-Income Communities”* forum.

Visit [www.reconnectingneighborhoods.org](http://www.reconnectingneighborhoods.org) or e-mail [info@reconnectingneighborhoods.org](mailto:info@reconnectingneighborhoods.org) to stay informed and share thoughts about this initiative.

### Should Community Building be Intentional, Organic, or Both?

In addition to outlining the status of development underway at the time, the 2006 Update underscored this work requires “attention to an array of issues, including supportive services; social, cultural, and civic activities; community governance; and connections to surrounding resources. In Chicago, different sites are experimenting with different models. No single formula can be applied to every mixed-income site.” In the years since that Update, the developers and staff involved in these efforts have been meeting regularly, exchanging best practices, trouble-shooting, and pursuing common solutions where appropriate.

Like his colleagues, **Joe Williams points out “these neighborhoods are not going to be habitable until a number of things are a part of them,” including walkable amenities like recreation and cultural activities, retail, jobs, and public transit, which, said Williams, “is at the core of this question.”** Engaging residents in discussions on this realization, through the Reconnecting Neighborhoods initiative, is among the more promising community building strategies in several mixed-income site neighborhoods. Why? Because it brings together people of all backgrounds to pursue a common interest, one that cuts across income, race, and housing tenure status (renters vs. owners).

On the north side, **Jackie Holsten of Holsten Real Estate Development Corporation, co-developer at North Town Village, reflects on lessons learned. “Whether we’re bringing people together to advocate for improved transit and retail or to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we’re always balancing the same questions: How can we be intentional about community building and making progress in this area, while also leaving room for the very organic nature of this work? If this is all staff led it defeats the purpose. And yet, there’s a role we need to play to make sure this all works, including supporting the various governance structures – the condo and tenant associations, for example -- that need to exist and co-mingle.”**

The three questions raised in MPC’s last Update on Community Building continue to guide this discussion:

1. What are the necessary ingredients to build community among diverse of residents?
2. Who is responsible for providing those ingredients?
3. How can we gauge success?

## What Community Building Involves

In general, community building in the mixed-income sites refers to a range of efforts and activities aimed at building relationships between residents, and fostering mutual support and respect for each other and the community they share.<sup>2,3</sup> In traditional Chicago neighborhoods, people’s love for and loyalties to their neighborhoods often trace back to the very organic nature of how the communities evolved — potlucks and community gardens, neighborhood watch activities and block parties. Indeed, as growth and redevelopment become a part of all neighborhood life, there is an increasing national focus on “placemaking” and what it takes to sustain safe places that encourage people to gather and interact.<sup>4</sup> More intentional strategies and staffing commitments for community building are common in the supportive and affordable housing arenas, where dedicated staff work closely with residents to design programs and meeting agendas that are responsive to people’s interests and needs.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the question in the new mixed-income sites that are central to the Plan for Transformation is often about how to translate and adapt lessons from both traditional Chicago neighborhood life as well as from these developments with residents of the same housing tenure status.

### Building Mixed-Income Communities: Documenting the Experience in Chicago

Beginning in 2007, researchers from the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service Administration began a three-year study of three mixed-income communities created as part of the Plan for Transformation: **Oakwood Shores, Park Boulevard, and Westhaven Park**. Research focuses broadly on **community building strategies and progress, and resident experiences and outcomes**.

Funded by the MacArthur Foundation, the study involves **in-depth interviews with residents, developers, and other community stakeholders at each of the three new developments**. In addition, **researchers observe meetings and interaction at each site, as well as collect administrative data and other documentation**. Mark Joseph, Ph.D., and Robert Chaskin, Ph.D., are the lead researchers.

To maximize the value of the Mixed-Income Developers Roundtable and Working Groups, MPC is collaborating with the University of Chicago research team throughout the study to ensure it both benefits from and supplements the experience of the 10 mixed-income development sites. The goal is to circulate key emerging findings as fast as possible among developers and staff, making sure this research informs the work on the ground of all development teams. The study recently released a research brief on “Building Community in Mixed-Income Developments,” which summarizes findings about expectations, strategies and responses to community building at the three sites. To receive a copy of the brief, please contact Amy Khare, project director, at [akhare@uchicago.edu](mailto:akhare@uchicago.edu) or (773) 834-3003.

Initial results from the University of Chicago’s ongoing mixed-income study suggest the need for cautious expectation-setting. The study found, for example, most residents and stakeholders now have only modest expectations for social interaction across income levels, and although there are broadly shared expectations for neighborhood-level improvements, there are some questions about who those changes will benefit.<sup>6</sup>

The University of Chicago research does point out some of the particular strategies that are being engaged in these developments to build community. Development teams and their partners are attempting to facilitate community building through specific design choices and management of the environment, by attempting to “level the playing field” by providing supports to former public housing residents to build up their well-being and sense of efficacy, and by making intentional efforts (along with, in some cases, residents themselves) to promote interaction through governance bodies and community activities.

Success, of course, can be gauged by such basic indicators as the stability of occupancy, engagement level of residents, **individual** effect on individuals and families, and broader neighborhood impact and integration.

More specific examples follow on how various development teams are incorporating these universal principles into community building efforts at the major mixed-income sites.

**CHA’s Mixed-Income Ombudsman**

*What is the main job/role of the mixed-income ombudsman?*

The Office of the Ombudsman is a new unit within the CHA’s Resident Services Division that will serve public housing residents residing in mixed-income developments. The primary role of the Ombudsman will be:

- Responding to all questions and inquiries received via the telephone, written letters and e-mail from public housing residents residing in mixed-income communities;
- Facilitating responses to all questions and inquiries posed by public housing residents residing in mixed-income communities and resolving issues where reasonably possible;
- Conducting meetings at least semi-annually for public housing residents residing in mixed-income communities and communicating issues of concern to the Ombudsman; these meetings will be held in or near the mixed-income communities at times, such as in the evening, that are convenient for working families;
- Communicating all significant issues reported by public housing residents in the mixed-income communities to the Central Advisory Council, CHA’s Chief Executive Officer and CHA’s Board Chairperson.

*What type of issues should be brought to the Ombudsman?*

Public housing residents residing in mixed-income communities should bring issues to the Office of the Ombudsman that they feel have not been adequately addressed by their property manager.

Source: CHA

**Hilliard Towers Apartments**

	CHA Homes		Affordable Homes		Total
	Family	Senior	Family	Senior	
<b>Occupied as of September 2008*</b>	115	188	177	153	633
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	117	188	185	164	654

\*Construction has been completed on all units and occupancy numbers reflect current vacancies.

Source: Holsten

The rehabilitation of the Hilliard Towers Apartments, a rental community located on the Near South Side adjacent to Chinatown, includes affordable apartments for seniors and families. The redevelopment effort was led by

Holsten Real Estate Development Corp., a Chicago-based company that provides development, property management, and supportive services.

Holsten Human Capital Development (HHCD) staffs an on-site office and provides resident/social services, workforce development, and community building activities. Services include needs assessments,

employment assessments, and social service referrals, including health care, mental health and wellness, education, financial literacy, job training, energy assistance, childcare assistance, and counseling. Holsten provided employment opportunities for residents during construction and currently employs residents in positions with the Property Management, Human Capital, and Property Rehab divisions of the company.

HHCD works to foster and build community interaction through such recreational and social events as

resident meetings, health and wellness seminars, job seeker meetings, children’s recreational and educational events, and health fairs. A community art project, in partnership with the Chicago Public Art Group, trained residents of all ages to create mosaic collages that now decorate benches positioned throughout the grounds. A monthly calendar and quarterly newsletter keep residents informed of events and services available through HHCD, as well as in the larger community.

All residents are encouraged to attend meetings with the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), local boards, and organizations. However, participation in community activities is higher among seniors than families. An important physical feature of Hilliard that contributes to a healthy community is its 12 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds, which include an outdoor amphitheater, basketball courts, playground areas, and a sitting garden. Holsten complements funding from CHA for these amenities and services with its own resources.

Jazz on the Boulevard	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	30	9	27	N/A	51	117
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	30	36		71		137

Source: Heartland Housing

At Jazz on the Boulevard, located between 41<sup>st</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> streets along Drexel Boulevard, developer Heartland Housing has teamed up with Heartland Human Care Services for a Resident Success housing model, incorporating property management, resident services, and community leadership. The

Community Building-Ambassadors for Change program is an important component of the model. It comprises primarily former CHA residents, though it is currently evolving to include all Jazz renters and homeowners. The group promotes community building through social events, youth activities, and

broader neighborhood gatherings such as summer picnics. There also are plans to organize a community watch program.

Lake Park Crescent	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	73*	44	3	26	8	154
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	TBD	TBD		TBD		TBD

\*Includes 13 for-sale homes

Source: Draper and Kramer

Through collaboration between the developer and property manager, Draper and Kramer, social service providers Abraham Lincoln Centre (ALC) and Centers for New Horizons (CNH), and the Field Museum continue to provide a range of amenities for residents at Lake Park Crescent, located

between 40<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> streets along Lake Park Avenue. In spring 2008, families began moving into the for-sale property; to date 11 market and affordable units have been sold, as well as another 13 sold to CHA residents.

CNH began implementing CHA’s FamilyWorks program in spring 2008, working on-site with approximately half of the CHA families who live in rental units. The remaining CHA families have demonstrated self-sufficiency after two years of post-occupancy engagement led by ALC. All interested residents have

benefited from attending programs such as job fairs and financial coaching that ALC, CNH, and other neighborhood social service providers have offered since occupancy at Lake Park Crescent began in October 2004.

Drawing on the interests and talents of residents, Field Museum staff has developed art programs that foster relationships across income levels and connect residents to opportunities in the North Kenwood/Oakland neighborhood. Residents recently celebrated the unveiling of a second

photography installation at Lake Park Crescent; this project involved residents in developing the theme, taking and selecting photographs of what participants saw as the neighborhood’s gems, and editing the installation’s label copy. Residents also have formed a walking group, taken an active engagement in the new city park in the center of the development, and have served on important local bodies such as the Local School Council for Jackie Robinson Elementary, and on the Reconnecting Neighborhoods Task Force. Regular Town Hall meetings

continue to attract 30 to 40 residents who learn about development updates in the neighborhood, the work of local organizations, and governance concerns within Lake Park Crescent.

Apart from CHA dollars for implementation of FamilyWorks by Centers for New Horizons, Abraham Lincoln Centre and the Field Museum have each received three-year grants of \$375,000 from the MacArthur Foundation for community building, neighborhood integration, and family stabilization efforts.

**Legends South**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	145	119	0	45	0	309
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	794	666	99	434	395	2,388

Source: Michaels Development

At Legends South, to date, two phases of construction have been completed and a third is scheduled for completion by year’s end to provide new housing for more than 400 families. The development team Brinshore/Michaels is currently in the planning phase for an additional 138 units, with construction anticipated to begin in late summer 2009.

Equally important as the progress made on the construction front, is the progress that has been made in the quality of life for the residents at Legends South. The second phase of development, Hansberry Square, includes an on-site community center, where residents have the opportunity to meet with one another and participate in a variety of activities designed to enhance resident life at the development. The center is run by a full-time social service coordinator and

includes meeting space, management offices, and a state-of-the art computer center. Activities and programs that have taken place at the community center include health fairs, fitness classes, workshops, employment training, meetings with local officials, and a summer youth employment program.

This summer, 13 Legends South youth were hired to work with Architreasures, a group of artists and architects who work with community residents to plan, design and build artistic features intended to enhance public spaces. The youth participated in a six-week paid program that resulted in the transformation of the park adjacent to the Hansberry Square Community Center into an active, welcoming community space.

To encourage resident engagement and responsibility, two block clubs have been formed — at Hansberry Square and Mahalia Place. Officers have been elected and are responsible for recruiting residents for meetings, walking their communities, and notifying management of neighborhood issues. Through the block clubs residents have attended numerous functions where they rubbed elbows with the police commander, Ald. Pat Dowell (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward), local pastors, and CAPS officers.

The on-site staff at Legends South enjoys an excellent working relationship with the second District Police Department and the alderman. Several CAPS meetings have been held at the community center, and the Police Department has been recruiting youth for the Jr. Explorers and Jr. Police programs. In addition, Ald. Dowell has

been instrumental in ensuring residents receive timely information about community matters, and has even taken time to meet on-site with residents in a community forum dubbed “Chat with

Pat.” The alderman and second District Commander both have expressed a willingness to continue to work with residents of Legends South and keep them informed. All of these

collaborations provide a safer and more enjoyable living environment for Legends South families.

**North Town Village**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of September 2008*</b>	78	39	11	38	94	260
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	79	39	11	38	94	261

\*Construction has been completed on all units and occupancy numbers reflect current vacancies.

Source: Holsten

As it does at Hilliard Apartments, Holsten Human Capital Development (HHCD) manages post-occupancy services and activities in North Town Village (NTV). The community occupies seven acres near the former Cabrini-Green, and was one of the first mixed-income communities to be developed as part of the Plan for Transformation.

HHCD reports consistent resident participation at NTV, and is optimistic

about the future. Residents also have become more involved in the surrounding community, as the area has experienced a growth in housing and retail development. Resident services are self-funded and include supportive services, employment referrals, and community building activities.

HHCD completes annual check-up assessments, helps families develop five-year plans, and connects residents

to community resources. Social gatherings are held every quarter, with healthy participation rates. Holsten encourages new families to introduce themselves through a variety of social events including block parties, holiday gatherings, and area CAPS meetings on site. At North Town Village, there is currently a condominium association and shared area committee. The latter includes owners and renters who jointly tackle common area issues.

**Oakwood Shores**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	126	101	18	87	42	374
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	1000*	680		1320		3000

\*Includes 100 for-sale homes

Source: The Community Builders

As developer, property manager, and service provider (known as Community Initiatives), the Community Builders (TCB) is responsible for redeveloping the Oakwood Shores neighborhood on the former site of the Madden/Wells CHA development (bounded by 35<sup>th</sup> Street, Pershing Road, Ellis Avenue, and Martin Luther King Drive). With a site team that includes a senior development manager, senior property manager, and senior program manager, there is a collective

goal of making Oakwood Shores a destination for families looking to reach their personal short and long-term goals. Formerly known as resident service coordinators, marketing specialists are charged with assisting CHA residents with the relocation process, engage youth in productive activities, and encourage neighbor-to-neighbor connections between all Oakwood Shores residents. TCB Community Initiatives partners with

Ujima — a word that means “collective work and responsibility” — an organization founded by former Ida B. Wells residents in 2001, to assess resident needs, provide connections to support resources, and identify and locate former residents of Madden/Wells to help them make their final housing choice.

TCB resource programs include career advantage preparation and placement,

asset building, community organizing, and neighborhood building. As a part of the broader community Quality of Life master plan developed with residents and the Quad Communities Development Corporation (QCDC), TCB is diligently working to realize the development of an 85,000 sq. ft. arts and recreation center in the heart of the community. TCB understands building the Oakwood Shores neighborhood must include strong public amenities as a long-term sustainability strategy. Quality education, through University of Chicago’s charter school — Donoghue Elementary, located in the middle of the Oakwood Shores’ community and the only charter school with a neighborhood boundary in the state of Illinois — and additional commercial activity are examples of amenities TCB believes are necessary elements in its master planning and redevelopment of the neighborhood.

Additional resources in the surrounding community including the Center for Working Families, which assists all community residents with access to public benefits; financial support; job placement, retention, re-placement; and other career advancement opportunities. As a partner in the Mid-Southeast Region of FamilyWorks, the final housing choice and employment assistance initiative of CHA, TCB leverages programs and resources with Stateway Community Partners (SCP) and the partnership lead agency, Center New Horizons (CNH). Other community organization partnership’s include working with Abraham Lincoln Center (ALC), Chicago Youth Center, Lake Park Crescent (another CHA mixed-income community), and Monumental Baptist Church, a local culturally historic church in the community.

Broader neighborhood efforts include the development of the Bronzeville-Oakland Neighborhood Association (BONA). With the support of TCB staff,

Oakwood Shores’ (rental and homeowner) residents and long-time residents of the neighborhood have begun the work of defining the character and identity of their community. BONA is a new association, and has already been engaged in identifying opportunities for youth in the neighborhood, recruiting new members, and encouraging voter registration.

In addition to TCB’s own contributions, funding for these efforts in 2008 includes CHA’s continued support via Community Supportive Services (CSS) funding, along with a final installment of a \$1 million grant from the MacArthur Foundation.

**Park Boulevard**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	74	53	15	0	35	177
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	439	438		439		1316

Source: Stateway Community Partners

Stateway Community Partners (SCP) is a nonprofit organization located in Bronzeville. It works to bring leadership and support to the people who comprise the transitioning South State Street community that includes Park Boulevard, a new mixed-income, mixed-use development located at 35th and State streets. SCP stems from a public-private partnership, and its goal is to ensure Park Boulevard and nearby South State Street and Bronzeville succeed as a model for mixed-income housing and developing vibrant urban

neighborhoods. To achieve this goal, SCP works closely with individuals in the community, primarily former residents of Stateway Gardens.

In 2007, SCP contracted with Boulevard Group, Inc., an award-winning firm known nationally for planning and managing mixed-income public housing revitalization programs, to manage, coordinate and expand the role and capacity of SCP. Boulevard Group is providing social services and community building with a unique combination of experienced professionals and former

Stateway Gardens residents. Together, they serve the community in an innovative manner characterized by relevancy and cultural sensitivity. The resident service workers coordinate a wide range of social services that accompany former Stateway residents on their paths to self-reliance, and help those who choose to transition into the new Park Boulevard neighborhood. SCP works with all families to help them become self-reliant in whatever housing type they may choose, whether at Park Boulevard or elsewhere.

SCP is a unique public-private partnership that includes:

- Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)
- Stateway Associates, LLC
- Stateway Gardens residents

- MacArthur Foundation
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- Boulevard Group, Inc.

In addition to CHA funds for these services, SCP has received generous support from the MacArthur Foundation

to enrich these services and offer community building opportunities to anyone who calls the area around Park Boulevard (or Stateway Gardens) home.

**Parkside of Old Town**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of September 2008</b>	10	0	0	0	22	32
<b>To be developed by end of Plan*</b>	246	137	26	61	348	818

\*subject to change

Source: Holsten

Parkside of Old Town is nearing completion of its first phase of construction. Located at Division and Clybourn, the 18-acre site is being built on the footprint of the previous Cabrini Green Extension North property. Adjacent to the recently renovated Seward Park, the mixed-income development consists of spacious townhomes and condo and rental midrise buildings with high quality amenities. The development team is led by Holsten Real Estate Development Corporation, Kimball Hill Urban, and the Cabrini-Green Local Advisory Council Community Development Corporation. The Parkside development team is

unique in that it includes Cabrini-Green residents as a one-third partner in the project.

Holsten Human Capital Development (HHCD) oversees outreach efforts to locate previous Extension North residents, who have the first priority to return to the newly constructed site. HHCD completes family needs assessments and helps interested families meet the site-specific criteria through housing counseling, job placement, and referrals for services. More than 100 residents have been placed in various jobs, including construction, home health care, social

services, security, and private sector positions through Holsten Human Capital’s workforce efforts in the community. HHCD also provides post-occupancy services.

HHCDI is working to foster community interaction through social and educational events for all residents. “Meet and greet” receptions encourage homeowners and renters to meet their neighbors, as well as provide information about community resources and upcoming events. A monthly calendar and quarterly newsletter are planned for the site, as are educational and health and wellness workshops.

**Roosevelt Square**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	213	97	72	N/A	156	538
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	755	334	385	N/A	967	2,441

Source: Related Midwest

Roosevelt Square Community Partners (RSCP), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit entity established by the “at-risk” development partners in Roosevelt Square, continues to serve as a community catalyst and program coordinator. RSCP has been funded to

date with capital garnered by a “giveback” of 10 percent of the earned developer fees from both the rental and for-sale development components. Since August 2006 the development team has contributed more than \$950,000 to fund RSCP programs,

including employment-related services, resident outreach and communications, and a wireless network aimed at helping to bridge the digital divide. One of the results of these initiatives is that more than 100 community residents have received on-site employment training



and placement in administrative, project management, property management, construction, security, and cleaning jobs.

RSCP is currently focused on development plans for a "Community Academy and Technology Center." RSCP procured the consulting services of IFF (formerly Illinois Facilities Fund) to evaluate the goals outlined in the original CSS Plan, develop a current needs assessment of community programming, and create a comprehensive plan that will result in the development of a multi-purpose community facility. The updated needs

assessment has concluded the Roosevelt Square community is well served with quality child care providers, parks and recreation facilities, as well as programming for youth ages 12 and under. It also highlighted the current void in programming for adolescent youth aged 13 and older, senior services, and arts and culture focused programming. In addition, the development team expressed a desire for the new community facility to accommodate space for property management and social services for the emerging community.

Based on the results of the updated needs assessment and evaluation of the building footprint, IFF has prepared two development scenarios for evaluation by the RSCP Board and funders. The next steps are to update the community on the findings of the needs assessment and garner feedback; solidify the financing and ownership structures; procure an architectural firm; and secure tenants for the new center that will address the gaps in arts and culture-based youth programming.

The work on the Community Academy is being funded in part by a \$200,000 grant to RSCP from the Ford Foundation.

**West End**

	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	71	53	0	18	7	149
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	230	230		230		690

Source: East Lake Management and Development

Located at Madison Street and Western Avenue, the first redevelopment phase of West End (formerly known as Rockwell Gardens) combined on and off-site land to create a mixed-income community consisting of rental and ownership housing at all three income levels (public, affordable, and market rate).

To promote community building and resident engagement, East Lake Management Group, Inc., the property manager, employs a resident services manager (RSM). The RSM works with every family in the community, and plans and promotes activities designed for all members of the community. These activities include a summer cook-out, interior decorating seminar, financial literacy workshop, and a back-

to-school party. The RSM also utilizes alternative dispute resolution strategies to defuse disagreements among neighbors, which do not always include people from different income categories or housing types. A central part of the RSM's work is with former public housing residents to solve employment problems. This includes job and training referrals. Another significant role for the RSM is connecting residents to local resources such as Illinois Action for Children and the Salvation Army. CHA provides partial funding for the RSM for the first year of post-occupancy. After that, the position is funded through the property management budget.

The community still needs, and the developer and residents are working to develop, a community center with

extensive programming for children and 24-hour day care. CHA has identified land near West End that is perfectly sited, and various local institutions are working to make such a community center a reality. In addition, the former local grammar school has been converted to Marine and Army Military High Schools. The schools' administration is reaching out to West End residents, which could have a positive impact on West End's growing identity.

The Chicago Park District is installing a two-acre park on land within the West End footprint. It will have playgrounds and a running/walking track. This park also will aid in promoting community identity and strength.

Westhaven Park	CHA Homes	Affordable Homes		Market-rate Homes		Total
		For Rent	For Sale	For Rent	For Sale	
<b>Occupied as of August 2008</b>	191	58	19	67	120	455
<b>To be developed by end of Plan</b>	258	137		349		744

Source: Brinshore/Michaels Development

To date, four phases of construction have been completed at Westhaven Park, including a 155-unit rental phase, 113-unit condominium tower, 60 for-sale condos, and most recently a 127 rental unit phase. Construction on another 92 rental homes is scheduled to start in November 2008. The 316 rental units are fully occupied, and all but three of 139 for-sale units have been sold.

Westhaven Park Tower has a community room that has been used for numerous community and resident meetings. Several neighborhood events have been held to build relationships between the income groups. An

innovative program, Pathways To Rewards, housed at the Home Visitors Program and funded by the MacArthur Foundation, provides the structure, support and incentives for public housing family members of all ages to set and work toward individual goals around employment, lease compliance, academic and extracurricular achievement, and community involvement. Activities for children consist of private lessons, organized sports, including an Djembe drumming class, tap dancing class, and spelling bee.

Many families have chosen to participate in Pathways, including 201

adults, 44 preteens/teens and 205 young children. At quarterly banquets, residents receive public recognition and praise, group identification and social modeling. This program has been studied as a national model, with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg looking to implement a similar program on a large scale. The development team is currently talking with Archtreasures to manage a community arts project that will advance social integration goals as well as beautify the site. In addition, Brinshore/Michaels will design and build a park as part of the final development phase. Both the design and use of the park will be an asset in building community.

**CHA Youth Programming Update**

In the summer of 2008, CHA continued its ongoing partnership with the Chicago Park District and After School Matters, and entered into a new partnership with the City of Chicago’s Dept. of Children and Youth Services, to engage CHA youth in constructive out-of-school-time activity. More than 1,700 CHA children between the ages of 6 and 12 participated in this year’s Chicago Park District Summer Day Camp program. The cost of participation for CHA residents is \$10 per child for the entire summer, with the remaining costs subsidized by CHA and the Park District. This year, CHA expanded its partnership with the Park District to allow CHA youth to participate in year-round programming at a cost of just \$10 per seasonal session (or \$40 annually per child). CHA has worked with After School Matters for several years to ensure participation by CHA youth. In 2008, 150 new pre-apprenticeship and internship opportunities were made available to CHA youth over the summer. As a result, more than 370 CHA teens participated, earning \$600 to \$900 stipends.

Through a newly established partnership with the Dept. of Children and Youth Services (CYS) in 2008, CHA had an opportunity to pilot two new summer programs. The School and Career Readiness program targeted CHA youth between the crucial gap ages of 13 and 15, when youth are too old for the Park District day camps, but not quite old enough for employment. Via a partnership with Sylvan Learning Centers and six community-based agencies, more than 140 CHA youth received instruction in math, writing and organizational skills, and participated in field trips and guest lectures to assist with career exploration. Each participant who completed the program received a stipend of \$600. Additionally, through CYS, 60 CHA youth between the ages of 16 and 20 were placed in summer jobs with community-based organizations across the city. The partnership with CYS also allowed CHA to transition the operation of its Summer Food Program, which serves free daily nutritional meals and snacks to CHA children. CYS took over CHA’s locations and expanded the availability of the program to residents at 580 sites throughout the city.

CHA also is fortunate to partner throughout the year with Chicago’s professional sport teams which sponsor youth holiday initiatives such as a holiday party and toy giveaway for 500 CHA youth, a \$200 per child holiday shopping spree for 50 CHA youth, and various ticket giveaways to games.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

In the long run, the more successful the redeveloped Plan for Transformation sites are, the less associated those sites will be with the Plan itself. Those involved in the buildings will no longer be focused on financing and development activities, but instead on the day-to-day work of knitting the various communities within those buildings — and the neighborhoods surrounding them — into the fabric of the city.

The summaries in this Update underscore the commitment to this work, and the wide-ranging diversity of both organic and intentional community-building efforts piloted within these new mixed-income communities. However, many of the outstanding questions surfaced in the August 2006 Update still remain. While there has been greater attention and progress related to the integration of workforce development strategies and the focus on children and youth, there is still significant uncertainty about the long-term funding sustainability of the community building work. Similarly, while all parties recognize the value of meaningful resident engagement, no one has introduced new governance models to reflect the evolution of the historic public housing leadership advisory councils. It is unclear if or how CHA's newly created ombudsman position is designed to contribute to these discussions, but it may be a promising opportunity.

Also encouraging is the continued joint efforts of developers and CHA to learn together about this elusive concept of community building. Some of the questions under discussion include the following:

- Despite the differences in how development teams assign this work to their own personnel or contractors, what are the common costs of “community building” in terms of staff, resources, etc.?
- For each development team, what are minimal/optimal staff components necessary to manage and coordinate community building activities? (ie., staff-to-resident ratios, structure, etc.) What does this assume is available in terms of support and in-kind services from city or community agencies and partners?

To “make the case” for sustainable funding for community building work, shared and transparent tracking mechanisms will go a long way in demonstrating how this work promotes individual and families self-sufficiency; bottom-line property performance; and the broader community.<sup>7</sup> While national studies have portrayed some of these outcomes and indicators, local data also demonstrates such basic results as increased household income, improved school grades, lower turnover rates and higher property value around mixed-income sites.

In today's economy, the stability derived from successes such as those outlined above are clearly needed more than ever.

*For a more comprehensive analysis of CHA's historic Plan for Transformation, visit MPC's Web site at [www.metroplanning.org](http://www.metroplanning.org). MPC Fact Sheets, Updates, and other research papers examining various components of the Plan are available.*

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> August 2006 Plan for Transformation Update, available online at [www.metroplanning.org](http://www.metroplanning.org).

<sup>2</sup> See Corporation for Supportive Housing's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, "Community Building in Supportive Housing Developments" (March 2006), available online at [www.csh.org](http://www.csh.org).

<sup>3</sup> Patrick Costigan and Leo Quigley (2006), "Resident Success in Economically Integrated, Socially Diverse Housing: a Practitioner's Guide Prepared for the Ford Foundation Mixed-Income/Mixed-Race Housing Initiative," available online at [www.tcbinc.org/what\\_we\\_do/ci\\_ford\\_mimr.htm](http://www.tcbinc.org/what_we_do/ci_ford_mimr.htm).

<sup>4</sup> For more information on placemaking in Chicago, visit [www.metroplanning.org](http://www.metroplanning.org). For additional info, visit Project for Public Spaces (PPS) online at [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org).

<sup>5</sup> See Enterprise Foundation's "Creating Opportunities for Families Through Resident Services: A Practitioner's Manual" (2006), available online at [www.practitionerresources.org](http://www.practitionerresources.org). See endnote 2.

<sup>6</sup> University of Chicago's mixed-income research study brief, "Building Community in the Mixed-Income Developments" (2008). For more information, contact Amy Khare, project director, at [akhare@uchicago.edu](mailto:akhare@uchicago.edu) or (773) 834-3003. See page 2 of this Update.

<sup>7</sup> See Enterprise Community Partners' "Research Demonstrates Positive Impact of Family Resident Services On Property Financial Performance" (2007), available online at [www.practitionerresources.org](http://www.practitionerresources.org). See HUD's "Hope VI: Community Building Makes a Difference" (2000), available online at [www.huduser.org](http://www.huduser.org). See endnote 3.