



Center for Community Change



Housing Trust Fund Project NEWS

Iowa Housing Trust Fund Wins Dedicated Public Revenues

Iowa housing advocates have gained dedicated revenue for their state housing trust fund with the passage of new legislation this year. For fiscal years 2009 and the next three years, \$3 million will go into the state housing trust fund from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund.

are transferred and this amount increases until in fiscal year 2014 and each year thereafter, 30% of the revenues are transferred. Transferred funds are capped at \$3 million a year. In addition, each year 5% of the real estate transfer tax revenues are committed to the Shelter Assistance Fund.

2008
SUMMER

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POLK COUNTY HOUSING TRUST FUND



The Iowa Housing Trust Fund Advocates Network sponsored a lobby day with a magnetic puzzle of the state of Iowa containing background pictures of housing and families in the Rotunda at the capitol. Each invited legislator was given a piece of puzzle to add to complete the housing picture for Iowa.

The state housing trust fund was created in 2003 and has been sustained through funds from the Iowa Finance Authority and appropriations. The Iowa Housing Trust Fund Advocates Network has been seeking dedicated revenue to sustain the state's housing trust fund since its inception. Sponsoring Affordable Housing

Beginning in fiscal year 2009, a percentage of revenues collected from the state's real estate transfer tax will also be transferred to the Housing Trust Fund. In the first year, 5% of the revenues

Advocacy Days, working with a lobbyist hired with the help of United Way, and showing the impact of the state fund on

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CENTER for COMMUNITY CHANGE

News is published by the Housing Trust Fund Project of the Center for Community Change. The Center for Community Change is a national nonprofit which helps low-income people build powerful, effective organizations through which they can change their communities and public policies for the better.

The Housing Trust Fund Project operates as a clearinghouse of information on housing trust funds throughout the country and provides technical assistance to organizations and agencies working to create and implement these funds.

For more information or to request technical assistance, please contact:

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IOWA *continued from page 1*

communities throughout the state brought them to victory this year.

The housing trust fund is administered by the Iowa Finance Authority. Funds are used for the development and preservation of affordable housing for low income persons. Two programs are operated under the Fund: the Local Housing Trust Fund Program and the Project-Based Housing Program.

Seventeen local housing trust funds have been certified by the Authority as local housing trust funds in accordance with the administrative rules established for the program. Sixty percent of the funds are allocated to this program. Applicants must meet a series of requirements, including presenting organizational documents; holding public hearings once a year; governing board requirements; and the development of a Housing Assistance Plan approved by the Iowa Finance Authority. If the local housing trust fund does not apply for and receive funds each year from the trust fund, it can be decertified as inactive.

The local housing trust fund must provide a 25% match to the award granted from the state housing trust fund. The match may be cash contributions and/or the fair market value of donated property or services to the local housing trust fund. At least 10% of the match must be provided from local government and/or local private sector contributions. And no more than 25% of the match may be associated with administrative expenses of the local fund.

The seventeen local housing trust funds exist in the cities of Dubuque, Oskaloosa, and Sioux City; and Dallas County, Dickinson County, Fayette County, Floyd County, Johnson County, Linn County, Polk County, and Scott County; along with six regional trust funds.

The remaining 40% of the state housing trust fund supports the Project-Based Housing Program. Cities and counties; nonprofit, for-profit housing, or economic development organizations; neighborhood associations; homeless service and transitional housing providers; and domestic violence shelters are eligible to apply. Funds can support new construction, conversions, acquisition or demolition, and rehabilitation. Up to \$90,000 can be requested and must be accompanied by a 10% match.

In fiscal year 2008, \$1,984,202 was awarded to local housing trust funds and \$1,231,400 was awarded to another sixteen project-based applicants.

Contacts: Sheila Lumley, Polk County Housing Trust Fund, 409 Southwest 8th Street, Des Moines, IA 50309 (515-282-3233) or Terri Rosonke, Iowa Finance Authority, 2015 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50312 (515-725-4900).

FUNDING

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Louisville, Kentucky Metro Council Passes Affordable Housing Trust Fund

The Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund was passed by Metro Council on May 15, 2008 with overwhelming support—a vote of 25-1. Tiffany Smith, a Habitat for Humanity homeowner testified during the lengthy session, capturing the heart of the issue: *“Affordable housing breaks the cycle of renting and needing public assistance. This is not offering affordable housing for people in need; it’s affordable housing helping people achieve.”*

Initial funding for the trust fund is a \$1 million appropriation from the general fund, but the goal is for the board to raise more funds eventually reaching \$10 million annually for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Mayor Jerry Abramson pledged, last February, to secure additional funds over the next four years.



The housing trust fund proposal came out of recommendations from the Mayor’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund Task Force, a 23-member advisory group appointed last year. The ordinance reflects many of their recommendations, after the ordinance was debated for three months in the Council’s

Health and Human Needs Committee. Housing advocates began the housing trust fund campaign in November 2004 and cheered the final decision.

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund will be governed by a thirteen-member Board, appointed by the Mayor and approved by Metro Council. The Board members will include: the banking community, an affordable housing consumer, a low income housing advocate, a neighborhood association representative, a nonprofit developer, a social service provider, the Homebuilders Association of Louisville, the Apartment Association of Louisville, homeless individuals, the Greater Louisville Association of Realtors, one member at-large, a Metro-Council member, and one member from the Metro

Government directly reporting to the Mayor.

The Board is responsible for establishing policies and procedures for operation of the Trust, monitoring the Fund’s activities, and coordinating

activities. The Board is also responsible for identifying and pursuing additional sources of revenue. The Fund will be staffed through the Louisville Metro Department of Housing & Family Services. The Mayor is to appoint an Executive Director.

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund is to address the affordable housing needs of individuals and families of low and moderate income households by promoting, preserving, and producing long-term affordable housing and providing housing-related services. At least half of any public funds supporting the trust fund must be dedicated to serving households at or below 50% of the area median income. The remaining funds are to serve households earning no more than 80% of median income. Any private funds received by the trust fund may serve households earning as much as 110% of the area median income.

The ordinance acknowledges that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund has gained significant community support with more than 90 organizational endorsements, more than 1,500 postcards to the Mayor and Metro Council members, in addition to two rallies supporting the Fund with 350 people in attendance. The coalition supporting the Affordable Housing Trust Fund has included: the Coalition for the Homeless, the Metropolitan Housing Commission, CLOUT (Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together), Habitat for Humanity of Metro Louisville, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Kentucky Jobs With Justice, Women in Transition, the Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, among others.

Contact: Janel Temple, Habitat for Humanity of Metro Louisville, 2277 South Floyd Street, Louisville, KY 40209 (502-637-6265).

Philadelphia Housing Advocates Win Additional Revenues for the Housing Trust Fund

Housing advocates in Philadelphia won another major victory by gaining a \$15 million boost over the next five years for the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund. On May 22, 2008 the Philadelphia City Council voted to amend the City's fiscal year 2009 operating budget and Five Year Plan to expand funding for the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund by \$3 million annually for each of the next five years.

This additional revenue supplements the dedicated revenue committed to the trust fund from the Deed and Mortgage Recording Fees which provides about \$14 million annually for affordable housing activities. The new revenues will come from the City's General Fund.

The victory is the result of concerted education and advocacy by the Campaign for Vibrant and Safe Neighborhoods, a coalition of more than 60 organizations led by the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporation. The final agreement was negotiated between the Mayor and City Council.

The Campaign has advocated for a two-pronged funding increase: a short-term increase to fill the gap resulting from a decline in recording fee revenues and a substantial longer-term increase from dedicated sources such as new property tax revenues from developments as their ten-year tax abatements expire.

Almost since its inception, the trust

fund has received applications for funding in excess of three times the amount of available funds. The fund has also been responsive to growing needs within the community by creating requests for proposals specifically for homeless prevention and a targeted housing preservation program.

The Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund has awarded more than \$40 million to date expanding housing opportunities for 3,500 families and individuals and leveraging more than \$300 million to support the production of new affordable homes, repair existing homes, and homelessness prevention.

The fund was created in 2005 and is administered by the Office of Housing and Community Development with oversight from an eleven member Board.

Half of the funds are targeted to households earning no more than 30% of the area median income and the remaining is targeted to

households earning between 30% and 115% of the area median income. In addition, at least half of the funds are to go toward the production of new affordable homes, with ten percent of these units accessible to people with mobility impairments and four percent accessible to people with sensory impairments.

The Office of Housing and Community Development received five applications to select a program administrator for the Targeted Housing Preservation Program. The program seeks to reinforce investments being made in housing development by geographically targeting home repair and facade improvement funds to repair existing owner occupied homes around newer housing developments. Community-based nonprofits will be able to apply for home repair funds on a rolling basis.

Contact: Rick Sauer, Philadelphia Association of CDCs, 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1600, Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215-732-5829).

PACDC

*Pradera Homes
is a partnership
between Asociacion
Puertorriquenos en
Marcha, Inc. and
the Ludlow Com-
munity Association.
125 new homes
have been developed
since 2003.*



Michigan Promises Housing and Community Development Fund More Revenues

The Michigan legislature increased its commitment to the Housing and Community Development Fund for the 2008-2009 budget. The Legislature adopted a budget that sustains the \$2.16 million in appropriations and secures an additional \$2 million for the Fund contingent upon the receipt of additional funds from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

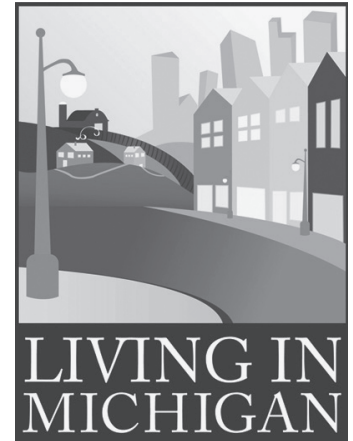
The Community Economic Development Association of Michigan--a member of the Living in Michigan Coalition--states that *"this action on the part of the Legislature underscores its recognition of the importance of the Fund and its confidence in the Fund's ability to assist in Michigan's economic recovery."* After many years of hard work to create this fund, the Living in Michigan Coalition is seeing the fund become a reality.

Legislation was also passed that expands the eligible uses of the Fund and establishes a ten-member Advisory Committee. Projects located in a downtown area or adjacent neighborhood are added as eligible for funding. And instead of targeting all of the funds to serve households earning no more than 60% of the area median income, rental and homeownership projects must set aside at least 20% of the units for these households. While at least 30% of the fund is earmarked for housing that serves extremely low income households, supportive housing has been added as an eligible activity, along with housing

for the homeless, transitional housing and permanent housing.

The ten-member Advisory Committee is to include the Executive Director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority as an ex officio member and an additional nine members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. These include two representatives of housing lenders, developers or builders; one representative of cities, villages, or townships; one representative of a local housing organization; one representative of a local economic development corporation, a downtown development authority, a corridor improvement district, or a principal shopping district; one representative of a local neighborhood association or neighborhood improvement authority; and two other representatives from the state. The Committee may advise the Authority on the biennial allocation plan for the Fund and on expenditures.

Michigan's Housing and Community Development Fund was created in 2004 when the legislature gave the Michigan State Housing Development Authority the power to create and implement the fund. In 2007, the initial funding was committed by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. Residents may also donate to the fund through an income tax check off. The Fund is to support projects designed to fuel strategies leveraging public and private resources to meet the affordable housing needs of



low income, very low income, and extremely low income households.

The Authority is required to develop an Allocation Plan which was released this year, along with the Notice of Funding Availability. Eligible applicants are nonprofit and for-profit corporations and partnerships approved by MSHDA. Grants and loans, not to exceed \$300,000 for a single applicant, can be used for a wide variety of activities for the homeless, homeownership, asset building, community development, or rental development.

The 2008 allocation plan divided the initial \$2,163,400 between rural and urban areas: 25% to rural and 75% to urban. All of these funds were to serve households below 60% of the area median income, with not less than 25% of funds supporting rental housing and 30% of the funds targeted to extremely low income households.

Contacts: Alicia Quintero, Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, 1000 S. Washington Avenue, Suite 101, Lansing, MI 48910 (517-485-3588) or Mary Cook, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, P.O. Box 30044, Lansing, MI 48909 (517-241-3681)

New Jersey Passes Housing Reform Legislation With New Developer Fee Requirements

New Jersey has passed a major housing reform bill that, among other measures, imposes a non-residential developer fee on all communities, with some of the revenues going into the state housing trust fund. It could generate as much as \$163 million statewide, according to the Office of Legislative Services based on 2007 data.

The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey has been a staunch supporter of the measure, which incorporates many of the recommendations the Network and its housing advocacy allies have been making for years. Governor Jon Corzine is expected to make the comprehensive housing reform bill law on July 17, initiating a major set of changes to New Jersey's housing laws. The Network expects the new law to result in more housing that is affordable to people of low and moderate incomes, but also to encourage housing to be built closer to where people work.

"The Fair Housing Act of over 20 years ago intended to give people the opportunity of finding affordable housing in areas of economic growth," said Arnold Cohen, the Network's policy coordinator. "This bill will, at long last, give people the chance to live where the jobs are."

The core elements of the approved bill represent significant opportunities for New Jersey to provide safe, quality and affordable housing, including:



New Jersey housing advocates at the Legislature on Lobby Day 2008.

- **A State Housing Plan and Commission:** This Commission will provide strategic direction in establishing housing goals, strategies and resource priorities for the state. Comprised of public, private and government representatives, it will gather and disseminate information on housing needs, and prepare and adopt an annual Strategic Housing Plan with public input.

- **A Statewide Developer Fee:** This assessment applies a statewide 2.5% fee on non-residential development. Municipalities that have been certified under the existing Council on Affordable Housing regulations may keep these revenues for their own housing funds. Municipalities that have not been certified will collect the fee, but the revenues will go to the state affordable housing trust fund.

- **Very Low Income Housing:** All state housing programs must target 13% of affordable housing

units created to very low-income households.

- **One-for-one Replacement in Redevelopment Areas:** One-for-one replacement is required for housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households, has been occupied any time eighteen months prior to a redevelopment activity, and is deed-restricted to ensure continued affordability. One-for-one replacement applies to currently deed restricted housing.

- **Set Asides for Transit Oriented Development:** Transit Oriented Development and other state-supported developments as well as regional planning areas must set aside 20% of units produced as affordable.

- **Local Spending:** Municipalities with existing housing trust funds are required to commit these funds within four years, or the funding will be remitted to the state.

- **Regional Contribution Agreements:** Regional contribution agreements, permitted under the Council on Affordable Housing certification process, are eliminated. These agreements allowed municipalities to pay other municipalities to assume half of their obligations to provide affordable housing. A new Urban Housing Assistance Fund is created with \$20 million to support the creation and rehabilitation of housing for families earning up to 120% of the area median income in New Jersey's cities.

- **Middle Income Affordability:** The bill creates a new category of housing need for those earning 80-110% of area median income. The Housing Plan and Commission will be able to address the needs of this population and recommend steps that the state and local governments can take to improve housing choices.

- **Impact Analysis:** Any state agency proposing a regulatory rule must issue a housing affordability and smart growth development impact analysis.

The Council on Affordable Housing was created by the Fair Housing Act of 1985 as the legislature's response to a series of New Jersey Supreme Court cases known as the Mount Laurel decisions. The Supreme Court established a constitutional obligation for each of the 566 municipalities in the state to establish a realistic opportunity for the provision of fair share low and moderate income housing obligations, generally through land use and zoning powers. In December 1990, the New Jersey Supreme Court directed COAH to determine criteria for development fee ordinances and then to review and approve the ordinances for municipalities.

New Jersey municipalities enter the COAH process voluntarily. They do so by filing a housing element and a fair share plan. Municipalities may then petition for certification, which is granted for a ten-year period.

Of the 566 municipalities in the state, some 287 are participating in the COAH process. According to COAH, approximately 71,000 affordable housing units have been provided for through the system.

The Neighborhood Preservation Balanced Housing program—the existing state housing trust fund which will now be called the New Jersey Affordable Housing Trust Fund—creates housing opportunities for households of low and moderate income. It receives funds from a portion of the state realty transfer tax. It provides four award cycles each year and funds are provided directly to municipalities that meet selected criteria. The Fund has received more than \$100 million each of the last several years.

In July 2008, the Department of Community Affairs announced awards of \$37.2 million in funding from the Balanced Housing Program and Home Express funds, along with another \$15.1 million from federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits. The funding will support the creation of 752 affordable rental housing units and preserve another 120 units throughout the state.

Contact: Arnold Cohen, Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, 145 W. Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ 08618 (609-393-3752).

JERSEY CITY EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



Jersey City Episcopal Community Development Corporation has developed approximately 145 units of affordable rental housing. In 2004, the Corporation began providing ownership housing. This includes the construction of twelve two-family homes in Jersey City.

Alabama Legislature Creates Housing Trust Fund Task Force

The Alabama legislature created an interim Housing Trust Fund Task Force with passage of a resolution in May of this year. Following up on the House Poverty Task Force Final Report released in February which identified the need to explore the creation of a housing trust fund as a priority in addressing poverty, the Task Force is to:

- (1) Study housing trust funds created in other jurisdictions;
- (2) Study their potential application within Alabama, either at the state, county, or municipal level or at all levels;
- (3) Report its findings, conclusions and recommendations for proposed legislation to the Legislature no later than the third legislative day of the 2009 Regular Session.

The twenty Task Force members include:

- One appointment of the Governor;
 - One appointment of the Lieutenant Governor;
 - One appointment of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
 - Four appointments of the Speaker of the House;
 - Three appointments of the Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama;
 - One appointment of the Alabama Alliance to End Homelessness;
 - One appointment of the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association;
 - One appointment of the Alabama Housing Finance Corporation;
 - One appointment of the Alabama Association of Realtors;
 - One appointment of the Home Builders Association of Alabama;
 - One appointment of the Alabama Bankers Association; and
 - Three appointments of the Alabama Council for Affordable Rural Housing.
- One appointment of the Director of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs;

Trust Fund, which has been proved nationally to be an excellent vehicle to provide resources for more affordable housing.” The membership of the Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama unanimously agreed that work toward a housing trust fund system in Alabama for the production of new housing units affordable to low income individuals and families is paramount to addressing the existing housing shortage throughout the state.

The Coalition concluded that because decisions about creating a housing trust fund are complex, the best way to develop a housing trust fund solution that will work in Alabama is to first create the task force dedicated to developing a viable piece of legislation for the 2009 Session that encompasses the concerns and best thinking of a cross section of housing interests. The Coalition has established a 26-member Steering Committee to implement its mission to “*increase housing opportunities for Alabamians with the greatest financial need.*”

The Coalition began meeting in April 2006 with leadership from Collaborative Solutions, Inc. and United Cerebral Palsy of Birmingham. Four statewide meetings have taken place with more than 70 participants. Its initial goals are to create a stable membership base, establish nonprofit status for the group, and advocate for a low income state housing trust fund.

Contact: Ashley Kerr, The Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama, c/o Collaborative Solutions, Inc., P.O. Box 130159, Birmingham, AL 35213 (205-939-0411).

ALETHEIA HOUSE



Aletheia House develops and manages housing for low-income people. Avondale Gardens won a Fannie Mae Foundation Maxwell Award of Excellence.

The Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama began work on a state housing trust fund last year and strongly endorsed the formation of the Task Force. As the resolution states, “*A proven tool in helping with the production of more housing is the creation of a Housing*

Massachusetts Passes Major Housing Bond

A \$1.275 billion five-year housing bond has been passed by the Massachusetts legislature and signed by Governor Deval Patrick. It is reportedly the largest housing bond in the history of Massachusetts. The capital spending authorization is intended to create and preserve affordable housing throughout the state by authorizing several programs administered by the state Department of Housing and Community Development.

“This bond bill was an important and collaborative effort with the state Legislature to devise a comprehensive plan to provide affordable housing in Massachusetts,” said Governor Patrick. “These are steps we need to take to keep our state a great place to live and work.”

The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which received bond authorization of \$100 million in 2005, will receive an additional \$220 million from the five-year housing bond. It is regarded as one

of the state’s most flexible housing programs.

The Trust Fund was established for the creation and preservation of affordable housing for households whose incomes do not exceed 110% of median income. The Fund is administered jointly by the Department of Housing and Community Development and MassHousing. A 15-member

Advisory Committee makes policy recommendations regarding the program and funding activities.

In addition to the direct assistance provided, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund also funds pre-development activities (administered by the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation); public housing modernization; and development of permanent housing for Department of Mental Health clients in the North East area through the Danvers State Hospital Housing Fund.

Since its inception in fiscal year 2001, the Trust Fund has committed approximately \$111 million assisting 180 housing developments with 6,791 units of housing, 83 % of which are affordable to lower income residents. In addition, \$2.5 million has been awarded by CEDAC to nonprofit developers

MASSHOUSING



This 20-unit development in Newburyport received \$650,000 from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Foundry Square condominiums are housed in four buildings sited around a common. Thirteen of the units are affordable to households earning no more than 80% of the area median income.

MASSHOUSING



Treehouse at Easthampton Meadow is a unique, multi-generational affordable rental community designed to support adoptive foster families as well as senior citizens. The 60-unit community is entirely affordable. It was developed by Beacon Residential Properties.

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for planning and predevelopment purposes.

The new Housing Bond Bill will also help fund:

- Public housing modernization. \$500 million for the modernization of state assisted public housing. The state supports more than 50,000 apartments and the funds will be used for the preservation and development of public housing for families, senior citizens and those with special needs. It is the intent that these funds will address the worst cases first. An additional \$50 million is allocated for a demonstration program to identify and test better ways to build and manage public housing.

- Housing stabilization funds. \$125 million will be used for deferred grants or loans to nonprofits, for-profits or municipalities for homeownership, purchase, preservation or rehabilitation of distressed and foreclosed properties.

- Other housing production, preservation and infrastructure programs. This includes: \$40 million for the Facilities Consolidation Fund; \$75 million for the Housing Innovations Fund; \$30 million for transit oriented development; \$55 million for the Community Development Action Grants; \$100 million for the Capital Improvement Preservation Fund; \$50 million for Home Modification;

and \$30 million for Community Based Housing for people with disabilities.

The bond measure was the top legislative priority for the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association and other housing advocates for the current legislative. CHAPA is the nonprofit umbrella organization for affordable housing and community development activities throughout Massachusetts.

Contact: Aaron Gornstein, Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, 18 Tremont Street, Ste. 401, Boston, MA, 02108 (617-702-0820).



Sponsored jointly by Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership Inc. and the Home Builders Association of Massachusetts, home@last is an initiative whose purpose is to increase the production of high quality affordable housing in the communities of the 495/MetroWest region of Massachusetts and to help the residents of these communities better understand the benefits that affordable housing brings to their towns and the region as a whole.



Neighborhood Stabilization Fund

Governor Deval Patrick has announced a \$20 million Neighborhood Stabilization Fund for developers to buy abandoned, foreclosed properties and reoccupy them. Nonprofit and for-profit developers will be eligible for the loans. All rental units must be affordable to households earning no more than 80% of the area median income. The Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, along with the Massachusetts Association of CDCs and the Urban Land Institute, led a foreclosed properties task force advocating for a state-based fund to purchase foreclosed properties and return them to active housing. The Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership are contributing \$17 million and two foundations (The Boston Foundation and The Hyams Foundation) are contributing another \$3 million. The Affordable Housing Trust Fund will back this private funding by a \$1 million loan loss reserve.

Missouri Coalition Pushes Agenda for Increased Revenues to the State Housing Trust Fund

The Coalition for the Missouri Housing Trust Fund is campaigning for increased revenues for the state trust fund. The Missouri Housing Trust Fund was created in 1994 and receives \$4 to \$5 million a year from a \$3 recording fee on real estate documents. But this amount has been declining and this year the Fund received \$4.1 million. The Coalition, with nearly 70 endorsing supporters, has proposed a \$7 dollar increase in the document recording fee and a \$4 million increase in the Affordable Housing Assistance Program, which enables individuals and businesses to receive a tax credit for 55% of their charitable contributions.

And they've had an impact! The President Pro Tem of the Missouri State Senate has created a Select Committee to study the existing Missouri Housing Trust Fund. The committee consists of five members and they are charged with examining ways to improve on the effectiveness of the Missouri Housing Trust Fund as well as examine means to increase its funding. The committee is to issue a report on their findings and recommendations to the Senate no later than January 1, 2009 for legislative action.

In addition, bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to increase the document recording fee to \$10, with \$9 dedicated to the Missouri Housing Trust Fund, and the remaining \$1 dollar returning to the County Recorder of Deeds.

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund is administered by the Missouri Housing Development Commission. Funds must assist individuals or families with income at or below 50% of the area median income. At least half of the funds are for programs that benefit households earning no more than 25% of the area median income.

Funds can be used for foreclosure and eviction prevention or homeless prevention, construction and rehabilitation, rental assistance, and home repair. At least 30% of the funds are set aside for proposals sponsored by nonprofit organizations.

In 2007, the Missouri Housing Trust Fund made \$6.3 million in awards supporting affordable housing and homeless prevention activities throughout the state. The allocation plan promotes distributing funds across the state based on population,

with slightly more than half of the funds going to metropolitan areas and the remainder divided among three regions. It is the purpose of the Fund to serve the greatest housing and housing service needs in the state with attention focused on the lowest income residents.

The Coalition for the Missouri Housing Trust Fund points out that during the 2006 project year, only 25% of the requested applications were met with available funds. The Coalition's tool kit points out that in excess of 20,000 households are in danger of foreclosure throughout the state, another 4,800 Veterans face homelessness, and 15,000 children are homeless, living in cars or on the streets.

Contact: Sandy Wilson, Missouri Association for Social Welfare, 606 East Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101 (573-634-2901) www.masw.org.

ALMOST HOME, INC.



Almost Home has two core programs: long-term transitional housing for fifteen homeless teenage mothers and their children and apartment living, a next-step toward independence for twelve single mothers and their children. Almost Home's goal is to work with residents to become self-sufficient and independent members of society. Almost Home has received funds from the Missouri Housing Trust Fund.

HOUSING TRUST FUND PROJECT NEWS IS NOW ELECTRONIC

The Housing Trust Fund Project News will now be an electronic only newsletter, available to you by email.

If we have your email address, we will enter it into the system and you will receive your first email newsletter in the fall of 2008. If you so choose, you can opt out of receiving the newsletter at that time.

If we do not have your email address, we will send you a first-class letter asking you to send it to us, if you would like to continue to receive the Housing Trust Fund Project News.

If you would like to make sure that you receive future issues of Housing Trust Fund Project News, please send an email now to mbrooks@communitychange.org.

If you are unable to receive the Housing Trust Fund Project News by email, but would like to receive copies of the newsletter, please email mbrooks@communitychange.org with that information and we will accommodate your request, if possible.

Thank you for working with us during this transition.



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