OppCo OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITIES
Where Home Matters

AN INNOVATIVE CDC PARTNERSHIP

Opportunity Communities (OppCo) is an exciting new partnership to build Community Development Corporation (CDC) capacity. The new nonprofit will function as a performance- and learning-driven operating company that increases the ability of local CDCs to deliver high-quality services and achieve impact efficiently.

OppCo is not a traditional merger. OppCo’s founders—The Neighborhood Developers (TND) and Nuestra Comunidad (Nuestra)—are creating a new and scalable organizational model that sustains each CDC’s distinct identity and control over mission, assets, work plan, budget, governance and strategy. What will change are staffing and organizational structures. OppCo integrates the staff of its member CDCs to provide an administrative and service provision platform and to scale the expertise available to CDCs.

The formation of OppCo responds to a perennial challenge faced by our non-profit community development industry. CDCs are embedded in the communities they serve—locally based and community controlled. But being rooted in local community presents challenges: limited resources and capacity to support expertise. Why must we choose between the experience developed through local work and the resources of a larger nonprofit? OppCo allows for both.

Our vision: OppCo provides greater CDC ability to build homes, engage community, and foster economic mobility for low-income families and communities.

THE BENEFITS

OppCo provides value to our home communities, partners, allies and investors. TND and Nuestra will pilot the model and then expand to other CDCs who may elect to join as full members or to purchase specific contracted services. Participating CDCs will:

• Build capacity for high-performing neighborhood-based organizations.
• Support community-facing programming with high-capacity administrative infrastructure that is managed centrally within the operating company.
• Sustain each CDC’s distinct identity and control over mission, assets, work plan, budget, governance and strategy.
• Cultivate sophisticated data-management and learning systems to inform the work.
• Grow in-house expertise and provide greater opportunity for staff advancement.
• Manage uneven real estate production pipelines and program funding streams by sharing staff across CDCs in response to shifting demands.
• Provide high confidence in CDC sustainability and ability to deliver results.
• Capitalize on emerging regional and national trends.
• Leverage experience across communities to raise the bar for all.
HOW DOES IT WORK?

At the heart of Opportunity Communities is a central operating platform with blended service and staffing plans. All participating CDC staff are employed by OppCo. CDCs contract staff from OppCo and in turn pay the operating company for the services rendered. The model defines three types of services and staff:

Centralized

Finance, human resources, communications and other functions that benefit from the scale offered by OppCo are located fully within the central administration of the operating company. This allows each CDC to benefit from strong and efficient administrative systems. CDC investors will benefit from the knowledge that each CDC has access to deep skills and is less susceptible to disruptions caused by staff transitions.

Blended

Some departments will benefit from a blended staffing structure with staff positioned at OppCo's central administration and at the CDC level. For example, both Real Estate and Resident Services will have a single director, but with staff assigned to focus on one CDC or another. By cost-sharing, the CDCs can hire staff with greater expertise than either could afford independently.

Unique

Some staff will remain solely focused on just one CDC's specific services. E.g., Community Engagement staff whose work is unique to a particular community or CDC program.

INVEST IN OPPORTUNITY COMMUNITIES

This new partnership, created and led by The Neighborhood Developers and Nuestra Comunidad, can inform the future directions of the community development industry. Support our success. Invest in OppCo.

Contact:  Ann Houston   David Price
The Neighborhood Developers  Nuestra Comunidad
AHouston@tndinc.org  DPrice@nuestracdc.org
617-889-1375 ext. 112  617-989-1223

OppCo planning and start up financial support was provided by the following funders: