



HUD NEWS

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HUD AWARDS \$30.5 MILLION TO CHICAGO TO REDEVELOP SOUTH-SIDE COMMUNITY

Funding part of comprehensive plan to revitalize Grove Parc Plaza, Woodlawn Community

CHICAGO – U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan, Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Sen. Dick Durbin and Rep. Bobby Rush today announced that the city of Chicago will receive \$30.5 million to redevelop the distressed housing at Grove Parc Plaza and revitalize the Woodlawn neighborhood on the city's south side.

Chicago is one of just five cities nationwide to receive the first-ever Implementation Grants awarded under HUD's [*Choice Neighborhoods Initiative*](#), a new strategic approach intended to help transform high-poverty, distressed neighborhoods into communities with healthy, affordable housing, safe streets, and access to quality educational opportunities. Chicago joins Boston, New Orleans, San Francisco and Seattle to receive a combined \$122 million.

“This is a great day for Chicago and the countless families who will benefit from the transformation this funding will bring to the south side,” said Donovan. “Choice Neighborhoods recognizes that we must link affordable housing with quality schools, public transportation, good jobs and safe streets. This is the next generation of neighborhood revitalization that not only transforms distressed housing, but heals entire communities.”

“Choice Neighborhoods provides funds to improve the lives of children and families in our most distressed neighborhoods and we're pleased to see their work continue through these implementation grants,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. “The White House Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, which includes our Promise Neighborhoods program together with Choice and other initiatives, has created a cross agency effort that combats poverty by ensuring there are great schools and systems of support at the center of every community.”

“I am committed to protecting and investing in Chicago's communities,” said Mayor Emanuel. “This important program will create safe and affordable housing for hard-working families in the Woodlawn community, and will have lasting impact on our neighborhoods.”

Sen. Dick Durbin said, “The federal funding announced today, along with commitments from more than a dozen public and private sector partners, will provide more than \$272 million in direct investments to transform the Woodlawn Neighborhood. But this forward-looking program goes beyond simply renovating public and assisted housing projects. It provides a platform for revitalizing entire neighborhoods with the promise of long-term sustainability and affordability.”

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Rep. Bobby Rush added, “This is a vitally important investment of American tax payer dollars. On its face it is an investment in affordable housing but what we’re really talking about here is an investment in the upward mobility of people. I am proud to have been able to work with the tenants and POAH for almost a decade as we sought to end the decline of Grove Parc while respecting the aspirations of stakeholders large and small. I congratulate Secretary Donovan for his vision and deep understanding of the quality of life issues integral to all housing development. Chicago’s Woodlawn Community is indeed the neighborhood of choice for many of our citizens and deserves this Choice Neighborhoods Award.”

[Preservation of Affordable Housing Inc. \(POAH\)](#), a non-profit housing developer, and the city of Chicago will redevelop Grove Parc Plaza, a 504-unit HUD-assisted housing development built in the 1960s on a 12-acre site in the Woodlawn neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. Crime, vacant homes and lots, poor schools, unemployment, and lack of access to needed services and amenities plagued the site and broader neighborhood. After being threatened with foreclosure because of poor conditions in 2007, Grove Parc residents invited the nonprofit development company, POAH, to intervene to preserve the affordable housing. POAH formed a partnership with the city of Chicago, the Jane Adams Hull House, the University of Chicago, LISC Chicago, and other community partners to redevelop Grove Parc Plaza and revitalize the surrounding Woodlawn neighborhood.

In addition to a wide ranging set of services and neighborhood investments, a total of 965 units are now planned, including replacing the original affordable units, and integrating them with additional workforce, market rate rental and homeownership units. The total direct investment associated with the Choice Neighborhoods funding is estimated to be \$272 million.

Choice Neighborhoods (Choice) promotes a comprehensive approach to transforming distressed areas of concentrated poverty into viable and sustainable mixed-income neighborhoods. Building on the successes of HUD’s HOPE VI Program, Choice links housing improvements with a wide variety of public services and neighborhood improvements to create neighborhoods of opportunity.

Chicago, as well as the other four cities, completed comprehensive local planning processes, and are now implementing plans to redevelop their neighborhoods. They had to demonstrate their ability to revitalize severely distressed public and/or assisted housing while bringing together the partnerships and resources to create high-quality public schools, outstanding education and early learning programs, public assets, public transportation, and improved access to jobs and well-functioning services.

The *Choice Neighborhoods Initiative* is a centerpiece of the Obama Administration’s interagency Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative – a collaboration between the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Education, Justice, Treasury, and Health and Human Services (HHS) to support the ability of local leaders from the public and private sectors and attract the private investment needed to transform distressed neighborhoods into sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods with the affordable housing, safe streets and good schools every family needs.

As a result of partnerships across those agencies, the Obama Administration has reduced bureaucratic hurdles, making it easier for local leaders using Choice Neighborhoods to redevelop their neighborhoods to also access support for cradle-to-career educational programs through the Education Department’s *Promise Neighborhoods*, public safety strategies through the Justice Department, and community health center improvements through HHS.