

## **NeighborWorks Southern Mass Community Improvement Plan 2017-2019**

### **Mission**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass believes that affordable housing and stable neighborhoods help individuals and families realize their full dignity and potential. We are a partnership of residents, businesses and local governments.

*Our mission is to help people have a safe and affordable place to live. We accomplish this by developing and managing affordable housing, educating and assisting first time homebuyers, and helping homeowners repair and maintain their homes.*

### **Organizational Profile, History and Accomplishments**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass is a nonprofit corporation in the state of Massachusetts and is tax exempt under the section 501(c)3 of the federal internal revenue code. The organization is governed by a board of directors of 23 members who represent neighborhood residents, business and local government. Neighborhood residents and low income representatives make up more than one third of the board.

NeighborWorks Southern Mass has its administrative headquarters in Quincy and branch offices in Brockton and New Bedford and provides services in 25 communities on the South Shore of Massachusetts. NeighborWorks Southern Mass has a staff of twenty full-time and part-time employees. NeighborWorks Southern Mass has an annual operating budget of \$2.2M and net assets of over \$3.7 million. NeighborWorks Southern Mass has developed more than 250 units of affordable housing. We currently own 250 units and manage 259 units of affordable housing, and have more than 400 additional units of affordable housing in various stages of development and pre-development. Our portfolio includes single and two-family units, multi-family apartment buildings and SRO (Single Room Occupancy) units and serves low income families, veterans, people with disabilities and many formerly homeless individuals and families.

NeighborWorks Southern Mass is a charter member of the national NeighborWorks® Network.

Since beginning its Homebuyer Program in 2000, NeighborWorks Southern Mass has educated more than 10,000 prospective homebuyers, assisted more than 4,000 buyers to purchase their first homes, we have provided personal finance training to more than 1000 individuals, and provided lead paint abatement loans to more than 250 households. We have also provided foreclosure prevention counseling services to more than 2,800 homeowners since 2007 and have assisted more than 1,100 homeowners in making necessary repairs to their homes.

In June 2004, NeighborWorks Southern Mass celebrated the opening of its full service NeighborWorks® Homeownership Center on Washington Street in Quincy and in 2007 the opening of its second full service NeighborWorks® Homeownership Center at the MultiCultural Banking Center at Harbor One in Brockton. In 2011, the organization opened

its third office location in the City of New Bedford.

Since its inception in 1981, NeighborWorks Southern Mass has grown from a small, neighborhood revitalization program based in a single neighborhood of Quincy into a large, highly respected organization working in more than 25 communities on the South Shore, Southcoast and Southeastern Massachusetts and providing a wide variety of affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate income residents.

### **Part 1: Constituency Served/Service Area**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass serves low and moderate-income residents of the South Shore, Southcoast and Southeastern Massachusetts. The agency's headquarters are in Quincy, MA where we also operate a full-service NeighborWorks Homeownership Center. We also have offices in Brockton (another full-service NeighborWorks Homeownership Center) and in New Bedford.

We primarily serve the following towns which are indicated on our service area map and also provide services to residents of surrounding communities:

Abington, Avon, Braintree, Brockton, Canton, Cohasset, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Hanson, Hingham, Holbrook, Hull, Milton, New Bedford, Norwell, Pembroke, Quincy, Randolph, Rockland, Scituate, Sharon, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, Weymouth, Whitman.

The majority of people we serve through our programs are low and moderate-income residents of these communities. For example, all clients whom we serve through our housing development and property management programs must qualify as low and/or moderate income through income verifications (most are very low income). Clients who access our rehab lending and down payment assistance programs must also meet verifiable income guidelines. Most clients who access our foreclosure counseling program are in great financial distress and qualify as low or moderate income. Approximately half of the clients who attend our homebuyer education workshops are low or moderate income.

Since our service area is so geographically large, we focus our demographic data and market studies for our agency on the communities where we concentrate our services. Typically this includes Quincy, Weymouth, Brockton, and New Bedford.

### **Part 2: Involvement of Community Residents and Stakeholders**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass actively engages local residents and businesses in the work of our organization in several ways. In each of the communities we work in, we work closely with residents, municipal government, local businesses, and other social service agencies. Below are some examples of how our agency engages residents and businesses in our programming and organizational planning.

In Quincy, we are active members of the South Shore Home Consortium. We share office space and work closely with Father Bill's/MainSpring to create and manage supportive housing for formerly homeless residents and residents with special needs. Our Homeownership Committee includes local banking partners from Quincy and surrounding communities who meet regularly to help design, market and implement our program activities.

In Brockton, our office space is provided for us in-kind by HarborOne Bank and is located in the heart of downtown Brockton inside the MultiCultural Banking Center. Our Brockton programs are overseen by our Brockton Steering Committee which is made up of local residents and business partners including Brockton Interfaith Community and local banking partners. We are members of the Brockton Foreclosure Task Force and are the primary foreclosure service provider for the City and we are active members of the Brockton Housing Partnership. Several members of the Brockton Steering Committee are also members of our Board of Directors.

In New Bedford, we work in close partnership with both Housing Solutions for Southeastern Massachusetts and Community Economic Development Center (CEDC) to offer complimentary programs and services to the community. We were recently awarded a Strategic Investment Partnership Grant from NeighborWorks America to support our efforts to grow our partnerships in the New Bedford area.

### *Planning Process*

NeighborWorks Southern Mass's planning process is an ongoing function at all levels of the organization. Board, staff, and advisory council members contribute to the creation of our annual Operating Plan. Each line of business within the organization is overseen by a committee comprised of board members and other volunteers who meet regularly to discuss program efforts, progress against goals and planning for the future.

Program Directors for each line of business are a part of each of these committees. Program Directors, as part of the committees provide communication back to other staff members and communicate information from these staff members back to the committees. Board and advisory council members, as part of these committees, provide communication back to the full Board of Directors and advisory councils and from the Board and councils back to the committees.

Program Directors also meet regularly with the President and Executive Director to discuss progress against goals and future planning.

The organization conducts an Operating Plan update annually and creates a new Strategic Plan every three years. The Strategic Plan is created with the involvement of the entire Board, the staff, and a Strategic Planning Committee made up of staff, board and community members. Both of these plans and progress against goals are reviewed regularly with the full Board of Directors.

When we are expanding programs and services or expanding into a new community, we regularly contract with outside consultants to conduct needs assessments to guide our decision making processes.

### **Part 3: Plan Goals**

The Board of Directors and staff of NeighborWorks Southern Mass have prepared a strategic plan to guide our work over the next three years. We have chosen to continue our approach to our Strategic Planning by following an adaptation of the model from “Achieving Excellence in Community Development”, sponsored by NeighborWorks America in collaboration with Harvard University. In our planning we have focused on three key performance challenges: Sustainability of our Real Estate Development Portfolio, Growth of our CDFI/Lending Business, and Growth of our Private Fundraising Program. We have set goals for improving performance in all of these areas and achieving a dramatic increase in results. This plan is a living document and, while it will guide the direction of our greatest growth efforts over the next three years, it will be revisited frequently as we continually address these performance challenges and apply what we learn to this process.

In summary, our performance challenges include:

1. Sustainability of our Real Estate Development Portfolio:
  - a. Assess current capital needs across the portfolio
  - b. Conduct an in-depth financial analysis of the portfolio as a whole
  - c. Restructure, refinance and reorganize as needed to maximize sustainability and growth potential
  - d. Identify new fundraising opportunities to strategically align with our portfolio and our provision of affordable housing
  
2. Growth of our CDFI/Lending Program:
  - a. Generate new investments and grow loan pool
  - b. Examine and restructure current lending portfolio
  - c. Grow lead abatement, down payment and rehab lending services
  - d. Ensure compliance with ongoing changes in lending regulations
  - e. Brand and position the organization as a "Go To" local lender for low and moderate-income lending needs
  
3. Growth of our Private Fundraising Program
  - a. Increase Board Engagement in Fundraising
  - b. Strengthen and grow staff capacity
  - c. Assess untapped/underutilized opportunities and update fundraising and marketing plans
  - d. Engage new volunteers in our fundraising committee and activities

**Outlined below are our organizational goals based on this strategic plan which are reviewed and updated annually, most goals detailed here are for Year 1 of the Plan:**

## **Sustainability of our Real Estate Development Portfolio Performance Challenge**

The performance challenge is to ensure our Real Estate Development portfolio remains a viable and profitable line of business for the organization to support our mission of providing affordable housing for those in need in our community.

NWSOMA's scattered site portfolio has unique challenges but it is currently succeeding and generating revenue for the agency. The majority of our properties cashflow well and the stewardship of the portfolio over the past two decades has been strong and effective. In order to ensure that the portfolio continues to be successful, there are opportunities we need to take advantage of and strategies we need to put in place over the next several years. There are also challenges we need to acknowledge and address.

Our portfolio contains many older properties and expenses are rising. The amount of debt on our buildings has been gradually decreasing because of our consistent efforts to pay off small loans as we could over the years and we now have a very healthy level of debt. But a deeper capital needs assessment of the portfolio as a whole is needed at this time to develop a complete picture of the portfolio health with 15 years of expense projections based on today's (and future) actual costs.

There are also other issues that need to be considered. Several of our properties have deed restrictions which could have a massive impact on how our taxes increase in the future (some CDCs pay no property taxes but this is not the case for us because of the cities and towns in which we own property). There is also a current trend among municipalities to be more aggressive on water and tax bills, which significantly affects our operating costs.

We also need to consider that, while Father Bill's & MainSpring is a great partner for us to ensure stability in rent payments because of the tenants and resources this partnership provides us, this could shift over time as funding sources change and we need to prepare for this possibility.

The planning committee agreed that the following steps will be taken to address the future sustainability of our portfolio:

**Goal 1:** *Conduct a deep capital needs assessment of our entire portfolio to ensure we are being the best possible stewards of our portfolio and that we have appropriate levels of reserves for every property (by December 31, 2016). This is complete.*

**Goal 2:** *Conduct a strategic financial analysis of the entire portfolio including examination of deed restrictions, performance of the portfolio, physical structure of the portfolio, debt on all properties, funding and funding restrictions on every property, and neighborhood locations of each (by September 30, 2017).*

**Goal 3:** *Use information collected in financial analysis to identify potential opportunities to restructure, refinance and/or reorganize the portfolio and its asset and property management to maximize stability and sustainability for the overall portfolio (by September 30, 2018 and ongoing).*

**Goal 4:** *Examine ways that our fundraising efforts can tie in more directly with our focus on the sustainability of our Real Estate Development portfolio. For example, analyze alignment of banking and municipal relationships with needs of individual properties to engage funders more deeply in charitable giving and grant opportunities (by December 21, 2016 and ongoing).*

### **Growth of our CDFI/Lending Program Performance Challenge**

The performance challenge is to grow our CDFI/Lending program to provide lending services that meet community needs while providing the organization with a profitable lending line of business.

The committee began by reviewing the progress that has been made over the last several years in our CDFI development including:

- We obtained CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution) certification (in April 2014).
- We received a Technical Assistance Award from the CDFI Fund's 2015 round (funding to be received in May 2016).
- We have now been trained by MassHousing to package their Get the Lead Out loans, allowing us to receive a \$1,000 fee for each loan in addition to the 4.5%/up to \$1,000 we currently receive for construction management on lead abatement projects.
- We applied for (March 2016) Financial Assistance from the CDFI Fund in the amount of \$700,000 in capital to lend, create a loan loss reserve and leverage additional capital investment and were awarded \$200,000.

The committee reviewed the environment, challenges and opportunities involved in CDC lending right now and addressed the question of "Why do this?", "Why do lending at all?"

It was agreed that, particularly in the case of lead abatement loans, there is a significant market need but banks do not want to do this kind of lending, as they can't make enough money to justify the program. It was also recognized that MassHousing likes the CDC model of doing lead abatement and the Massachusetts Association of CDCs has been working with MassHousing to make the program more attractive and flexible for consumers. We are also aware of another Massachusetts CDC working in a community similar to our own who is

successfully producing about 30 Get the Lead Out loans per year and generating good income (about \$60,000 per year) with very low risk through the program.

The recent success of our down payment assistance grants/loans (we have made more than 100 in the past three years and exhausted one of our funding sources) is indicative of a continuing need for affordable lending products to bridge the gap to traditional financing for low and moderate-income homebuyers.

The committee also discussed what the next steps could be in growing a loan pool of money to lend with private support. It was agreed that banks that are having trouble with their CRA ratings could be very open to participating in a loan pool. This could be especially attractive to banks if we successfully receive the \$700,000 CDFI FA Award and can create a loan loss reserve which we can use to mitigate risk and protect their investments.

The committee concluded that the overall goals and challenges of the CDFI development include the following three basic areas:

1. Obtaining investments/lending capital (Business Development)
2. Marketing the programs to partners and clients and doing the business of lending (Program Services)
3. Ensuring we are aware of and implementing all current lending regulations and requirements appropriately (Compliance)

The committee acknowledged that the area of Program Services is the area in which we already possess the most experience, expertise and staff capacity. The areas of Business Development and Compliance are where we need to develop additional capacity.

The planning committee also agreed that the following steps will be taken to address the future sustainability of our portfolio:

- Goal 1:** *Upgrade lending software to Calyx, which does underwriting and also generates all disclosures required under new TRID guidelines (by May 2016).*
- Goal 2:** *Hire a part-time staff and/or consultant to help generate new investments in the loan pool (by July 31, 2016). This has been accomplished.*
- Goal 3:** *Hire a part-time staff and/or consultant to examine our compliance infrastructure and conduct a professional analysis of our loan pool to assess what to move, keep, lend etc... including: Reviewing our existing loan portfolio and transferring appropriate loans from NHS to NHF CDFI, and reviewing our current portfolio and resources for additional possible sources of lending capital (by December 31, 2016).*

**Goal 4:** *Meet with other CDC CDFIs to learn best practices wherever possible (by December 31, 2016 and ongoing).*

**Goal 5:** *Work with the City of Quincy on any potential compliance issues that they may need to examine now with new TRID regulations and look for potential opportunities for our growth as a CDC to be advantageous to the Cities and Towns we work in (by June 30, 2017 and ongoing).*

**Goal 6:** *Develop a new, more attractive and flexible home rehab lending product for homeowners (by December 31, 2018).*

### **Growth of our Private Fundraising Program Performance Challenge**

The performance challenge is to grow our private fundraising program into a robust department that can raise significantly increased private funds for the organization's programs and services.

NWSOMA relies heavily on grants from government and corporations and a small base of businesses and foundations for its fundraising sources. The organization began work in 2013 to increase our private fundraising and individual giving program beyond the participation of individuals in our annual golf tournament and a small annual request for support around the time of our annual meeting.

While the organization has long considered the possibility of developing a stronger private fundraising program, until now the resources involved in creating one did not seem to justify the expected return. The creation of the Massachusetts State Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC) in 2013 (which offers significant tax credits to donors who give to Certified Community Development Corporations) now makes private fundraising a much more likely source of funds for CDCs in Massachusetts. Beginning in late 2013, NWSOMA became eligible to apply for State Tax Credits, which allow donors to the organization to receive a 50% State Tax Credit on their qualified donations.

To prepare for and take full advantage of this opportunity, the organization took several important steps over the past three years. These steps included implementing a new contact management database to support communications efforts and donor tracking, applying for and receiving grant funding from CITC to hire a marketing and fundraising staff person, creating an initial information package about the organization to share with prospective donors, and applying for and receiving State Tax Credit allocations in FY2014, 2015 and 2016. In addition, we hired a consultant to help us develop an initial fundraising plan, worked with our board members to increase their involvement in our fundraising efforts, and established a fundraising committee of board, staff and other volunteers to further guide and support our efforts.

While we have made good progress in our private Fundraising efforts, we recognize that the Massachusetts Community Investment Tax Credit is still an undersubscribed opportunity for us. Our Board, through the performance challenge they undertook during our participation in the NeighborWorks America Excellence in Governance program, is also fully committed to increasing their involvement in our success with fundraising. In order to grow this success, the

organization undertook several activities during the current planning process to examine this challenge in more depth. These included:

-We reviewed our progress against our fundraising goals and opportunities over the past four years.

- We met with the Development Director of another nonprofit with a highly successful fundraising program to understand what a well-developed fundraising program could look like after seven years of focused hard work. Their current model, our committee agreed, would be the "Cadillac" of fundraising operations.

- We met with four other Massachusetts CDCs who have been doing very well with the Community Investment Tax Credit to understand how they were each approaching the program and what were the keys to their success. We discovered there was no one perfect formula. Each organization's fundraising success seemed to revolve around one key staff person with the involvement of the Executive Director and, sometimes, the assistance of a fundraising consultant as well as board volunteers.

The planning committee concluded that the best approach for us is to take small and incremental steps to continue to build our capacity over time. The committee agreed that the model used by another CDC (structured similarly to ours) that has had good success with fundraising makes sense for us to mimic. This model includes using experienced fundraising consultants to assist our Resource Development staff and Executive Director to grow our capacity, knowledge and success. Specifically, the committee decided that fundraising consultants should be used to both mentor staff and to assist in increasing Board involvement in Fundraising.

The challenge before us now is to develop a fundraising plan that addresses, maximizes, and grows the leadership capacity of the Board of Directors, the Fundraising Committee and the staff.

**Goal 1:** *Hire a fundraising consultant to assist in Board Engagement in fundraising (by April 2016) and work with this consultant to develop a plan for more board involvement in fundraising (by December 31, 2016).*

**Goal 2:** *Hire a fundraising mentor consultant to work with the Resource Development Coordinator to grow her capacity to manage the Fundraising program while helping senior staff to supervise this position. (by July 31, 2016).*

**Goal 3:** *Create an updated Fundraising Plan for the organization (by Sept 30, 2016)*

**Goal 4:** *Add two new members to the Fundraising Committee who bring specific fundraising knowledge, skills and interest to the Committee (by December 31, 2016).*

**Goal 5:** *Create an updated Marketing and Communications Plan for the agency to support the work of the updated Fundraising Plan (by June 30, 2017).*

**Part 4: Activities to be undertaken (Programs and Production)**

<b>NeighborWorks Southern Mass Program Production for FY2017- Year One of Plan</b>	
<b>Business Lines</b>	<b>2017 Planned</b>
<b>Housing Development Completed</b>	
Veterans Housing	6 Units
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>	
Rehabilitation Projects	12 homes
<b>HomeOwnership and Financial Education</b>	
Workshops Held	40 workshops
Homebuyers Educated	1000 clients
Assisted Home Purchases	400 homeowners
Real Estate Sales Assisted Purchases	25 homeowners
Number of Foreclosure Clients Counseled	150 homeowners
VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Preparation) Program	500 clients
Financial Education and Coaching	25 clients
HECM- Reverse Mortgage Counseling	75 clients

## **Part 5: Success Measurement/Evaluation**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass is a National NeighborWorks Chartered Member and receives multi-year funding from the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley. Through these relationships, we have extensive experience measuring success and evaluating program outcomes for more than thirty-five years.

Our programmatic outcomes are monitored and measured through our client management system (currently Counselor Max and Salesforce) and we produce reports both monthly for internal purposes and quarterly to report to NeighborWorks America to track program success. We also report twice each year to the United Way.

Our progress against organizational goals are tracked by our organizational leadership and Board of Directors regularly by reports to the Board tracking progress against our annual goals in our operating plan and progress against goals in our three-year strategic plan. If adjustments to plan goals are needed, changes are made throughout the process as necessary.

Our relationship with NeighborWorks America requires us to report on our overall progress against both programmatic and organizational goals annually.

## **Part 6: Collaboration**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass was founded on a partnership model of residents, businesses, and local government working together to help us to achieve our mission. Since 1981, we have always worked in collaboration with community members and other organizations to achieve our goals.

In Quincy, we have a strong partnership with the City and we serve on the South Shore HOME Consortium and the Affordable Housing Trust Committee. We have also worked in close partnership with Father Bill's/Main Spring for more than 20 years.

We also have strong established partnerships in both Brockton and New Bedford that support our current programs and provide opportunity for marketing new programs and services to prospective clients.

In Brockton, our office space is provided for us in-kind by HarborOne Bank and is located in the heart of downtown Brockton inside the MultiCultural Banking Center. Our Brockton programs are overseen by our Brockton Steering Committee which is made up of local residents and business partners including Brockton Interfaith Community and local banking partners. We are members of the Brockton Foreclosure Task Force and are the primary foreclosure service provider for the City and we are active members of the Brockton Housing Partnership. Several members of the Brockton Steering Committee are also members of our Board of Directors.

In New Bedford, we work in close partnership with both Housing Solutions for Southeastern Massachusetts and Community Economic Development Center (CEDC) to offer complimentary programs and services to the community.

## **Part 7: Integration of Activities/Consistency with Community Strategy/Vision**

In Quincy, Brockton and New Bedford, we work closely with city government to make sure that our activities and goals are in alignment with the consolidated plans of the Cities. Across our service area, our structure is designed so that all of our programming and planning is created with community input and participation to be in alignment with the community's vision.

The following outlines the organization's operating procedures regarding NeighborWorks Southern Mass' process for soliciting advice and input from low-income program beneficiaries regarding the design, location of sites, and development and management of affordable housing and other financial education and housing counseling services.

NeighborWorks Southern Mass' service area covers 25 cities and towns across the South Shore of Massachusetts and we have several methods of soliciting advice and input from low-income and other program beneficiaries and community members in the communities that we serve.

Our 23-member Board of Directors includes 8 low-income residents and representatives of low-income communities and organizations. These members regularly participate in our full Board meetings, housing development and property management committee meetings and directly contribute to the design, development and management of affordable housing and housing counseling programs as representatives of both themselves and their neighborhoods.

In addition to our low-income board members, we solicit advice and input from low-income members of the larger community in several ways including:

- Participation in public hearings for our various programs such as CDBG and HOME programs
- Use of our website for announcements of meetings and new programs
- Holding open community meetings in the planning process of our new developments, including working with City and Ward councilors and town meeting representatives to organize meetings and reach out to residents, direct mailing to neighborhood residents of the projects and door-to-door direct outreach to neighborhood residents
- Public announcements and flyers in local newspapers about open community meetings and new programs
- Meetings at local community centers to announce and discuss new programs and projects
- Working in close partnership with social service partners in the communities we serve such as homeless service providers, faith based community organizations and community action programs to reach out to their constituency and solicit their input for our programs and projects (for example, we meet monthly with case workers from our partner, Father Bill's/MainSpring, to review property management concerns and residents needs and we post notifications of programs and services in the newsletters of organizations such as Brockton Interfaith Community)

## **Part 8: Financing Strategy**

NeighborWorks Southern Mass' financing strategy has been largely successful for many years in supporting our programs and services. Our operations and programs are supported with a combination of earned income from real estate development projects, property management fees, contracts and fees for service along with annual fundraising efforts. The ratio of these sources of revenue varies from year to year but we typically rely on 50% of our revenue to come from earned income and 50% from fundraising.

Our fundraising efforts are generally derived from approximately 70% government grants, 30% corporate and small foundation donations and less than 10% from individuals and small businesses. This has been a largely successful strategy for us for decades but it also represents a missed opportunity for broader and more diverse support for our programs and services through individual donors which could lead to less reliance on changing government programs and priorities.

According to Giving USA, in 2011, individuals (including bequests) were responsible for more than 81% of private giving in the USA while foundations gave 14% and corporations just 5% of private dollars. While NeighborWorks Southern Mass has performed very well financially over the years, we have long recognized that the creation of an individual giving program for the agency is in the best interest of the long term health and growth of the organization. Prior to the opportunity presented by the Community Investment Tax Credit, we had not had the resources or incentive to devote to this endeavor but over the past three years we have made good progress in increasing private fundraising and we are committed to continuing this growth.

Fundraising goals for each year are created while we are developing our Annual Operating Budget and our Resource Development Director meets twice monthly throughout the year with both our President and Executive Director to examine program needs and fundraising opportunities and measure progress against goals. Grant tracking and reporting requirements for funders are also reviewed at monthly staff meetings using our annual reporting schedule and monthly fundraising tracking sheet. The Executive Committee meets regularly to review these goals and our progress and advise the organization on future fundraising efforts.

Following is an overview of some of our major sources of operating income and our plans to sustain, increase, or diversify them.

**NeighborWorks America** – In FY2010, we achieved Exemplary Status following our Program Review and have maintained that status ever since. We have recently received our highest ever annual operating underwriting grant from NeighborWorks. This support in the amount of nearly \$200,000 was the highest award in 2015 to a New England NeighborWorks Organization.

In 2011 we also successfully applied to NeighborWorks America for expansion funding to New Bedford. This \$300,000 investment over three years has a significant impact on our efforts in the City and has also assisted us in scaling our organization to size and streamlining some technology and operations to make us more effective and productive. NeighborWorks America

also recently awarded us a \$50,000 Strategic Investment Partnership Grant to grow our partnership efforts in New Bedford.

*National Foreclosure Mitigation Funding (NFMC)*- We have successfully completed nine rounds of NFMC funding and are currently completing our tenth allocation. We also participate in the HUD Housing Counseling Program through NeighborWorks America.

**Other resources for foreclosure funding-** Since 2010, we have received several grants totaling more than \$1M in support for foreclosure counseling and homebuyer assistance from the MA Attorney General's office. We also receive regular funding annually averaging \$100,000 for foreclosure counseling and homebuyer education and counseling through the MA Division of Banks (DOB).

**United Way-** In FY2008, we were awarded our first three-year allocation of operating support from the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley. To date, that funding has continued with an average of \$40,000 in support each year.

**Local Public Support-** Our programs in Quincy, Brockton and New Bedford are supported annually by local CDBG and HOME funds.

**Workshop Fees and Sponsorships-** We charge \$25 per participant for in-person First Time Homebuyer Workshop fees, \$95 for online homebuyer education and \$2,500 per class sponsor for these workshops.

**Foundation and Corporate Donations-** We receive annual support from the State Street Foundation, Dedham Savings Bank, Bank of Canton, and South Shore Savings Bank Foundation as well as generous support from Harbor One Credit Union. We also receive annual support from many other local banks.

## **Part 9: Other**

### *Consistency of the plan with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles*

NeighborWorks Southern Mass' plans and activities are consistent with The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' commitment to care for the built and natural environment by promoting sustainable development through integrated energy and environment, housing and economic development, transportation and other policies, programs, investments, and regulations. Our organization also works to advance these same principles by working in partnership with regional and municipal governments, other non-profit organizations, business, and other stakeholders.

One of our most recent projects demonstrates our strong commitment to these principles. In the case of our Winter Gardens project, we were able to concentrate development in an appropriate way and reuse an existing, underdeveloped and blighted site to create a building that integrated perfectly with the existing neighborhood design. We also incorporated a family friendly design with safe play space for children and green space for families.

This project also reduced waste and was an efficient use of land by turning a former single family lot into a home for 24 families which still fit the neighborhood very well. It expanded housing opportunities by creating homes for low-income families and for individuals with disabilities in a way that is highly compatible with the community character.

The project is smart growth compatible and is located on a bus line and provides transportation choice as well as parking for residents. The project also incorporates expanded access to training and educational opportunities by providing a large community space in the building for educational workshops and social gatherings for residents and neighbors. Winter Gardens also uses clean energy sources by employing solar powered hot water for the building and energy star appliances. The project also contributed to the neighborhood as a whole by providing a new water main for the entire street during construction.

### ***Description of our past practices and approaches to the proposed activities in the plan***

NeighborWorks Southern Mass' approach to the proposed activities in this plan are described in various places throughout the plan and our history of past practices and achievements are described in the organization history at the beginning of this document. Additionally, the following is a sample of our recent approach to housing development:

#### ***Rental Housing***

##### **Winter Gardens** -45 Winter Street, Quincy

This project, our largest to date, consists of 24 affordable rental units in Quincy and recently won a national community development award. The project created 18 two-bedroom apartments, 3 one-bedroom apartments, and 3 three-bedroom apartments. All units are affordable to residents at or below 60% of the median area income. Three of the units are for residents with "traditional" disabilities (such as blindness or physical disability) through funds provided by Mass Rehab Community Based Housing (CBH) funding.

All units are handicap accessible and the grounds contain a "tot lot" playground for the family residents. The project utilizes solar power for domestic hot water and is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certifiable. The project was a "prevailing wage project" and created 49 new jobs. This project included the removal of an abandoned property (a blighted, single family home), one of very few remaining in the City of Quincy. This project also allowed the City of Quincy to utilize stimulus funds to install a new water main for the entire street the project is located on, an estimated \$100,000 benefit to the City and local residents. Funding for this \$8M projects came from a variety of sources including \$4M in investor tax credits, \$1M in Mass Housing Affordable Housing Trust Funds, \$1M in Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) HOME funds, \$540,000 in DHCD Low income Tax Credits, \$500,000 in Mass Rehab Community Based Housing (CBH) funds and a \$970,000 mortgage through Mass Housing Partnership. This property is owned by NeighborWorks Southern Mass and Property Management services are outsourced to a property management company.

**Veterans' Preference Housing-** 51 Empire Street, Quincy and 63 Lake Street, Weymouth and 1116 Sea Street, Quincy

These three properties are now owned by NeighborWorks Southern Mass and were rehabbed to be affordable rental homes for veterans and their families. The Empire property is a single family home funded by Quincy HOME and Community Preservation Act funds. The Weymouth property was in foreclosure and being illegally operated as three rental units at the time we purchased it and it became one single family home and one separate studio home on the same grounds. It was funded by Weymouth HOME funds. Sea Street was new construction that transformed a former American Legion Post into 2 three-bedroom units with outdoor space for families with children. Through our ongoing partnership with Youth Build, NeighborWorks Southern Mass worked with young people on these projects to build job skills and create affordable housing.

NeighborWorks Southern Mass also recently completed construction on an additional 12 units of veterans' preference housing in Quincy and acquired and rehabbed 78 units of affordable housing in an expiring use property in Quincy.

**Supportive Housing-** 150 Quincy Street, Quincy

NeighborWorks Southern Mass purchased this single family home and rehabbed it to become home to three women over-55 under our supportive housing model. The residents were placed and supported by our partner, Father Bill's/MainSpring.

***Homeownership Housing***

Over the past several years, NeighborWorks Southern Mass has purchased five foreclosed properties in Quincy and Brockton to rehab and resell to qualified, educated homebuyers. Through a variety of funding sources including Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Affordable Housing Trust funds, NeighborWorks Southern Mass purchases and rehabs these properties that would otherwise likely remain vacant and in disrepair, rehabs them and sells them to new homeowners.

***Construction Management***

NeighborWorks Southern Mass frequently partners with Father Bill's/MainSpring to provide construction management such as a recent 6 units of new Veteran's Housing in Hingham and 9 units of affordable rental housing for formerly homeless persons in Brockton.

***Pipeline/Predevelopment Projects***

NeighborWorks Southern Mass is currently completing construction on another 6 units of veterans' preference housing in Weymouth and has more than 400 units of affordable housing in various stages of development and predevelopment in Quincy, Braintree, Milton, Holbrook and Brockton including workforce housing, family housing, mixed use, homeless and senior housing.