



Opportunity City Program

Program Outcomes

Decision-makers are implementing changes based on audit findings, data analysis, and best practices.

- Rental housing is important
- Housing choice helps stabilize cities
- New programs & land use tools are needed to meet market demand and future demographic shifts
- Stronger connection between land use policies, transportation, employment and school planning is essential

The Opportunity City Program provides technical assistance, tools and strategies to support a full range of housing choices - a diverse mix of housing types and prices in connected livable communities.

Tools:

Housing Audit.....This template allows cities to review and evaluate the effectiveness of their existing tools and strategies to meet housing goals.

Community Change Data.....Detailed information about household change over a five-year period—including turnover, commuting patterns, household ages and incomes—helps cities evaluate program outcomes and future needs.

Community Site Principles.....Developed by a team of ULI MN professionals and based on national best practices, application of these principles to a site can create housing opportunity and choice while maximizing land use efficiency and connections to jobs, amenities and transportation.

- The program created a **learning environment** for policy leaders and their city staff to share best practices and evaluate programs and policies against their community goals.
- Analysis of **community change data** strengthened awareness of future development and reinvestment opportunities. The data, along with the housing audit, help cities modify their programs and policies to be better prepared for future growth and demographic changes.
- The cities applied audit findings and incorporated **ULI MN Community Site Principles** to opportunity sites that were selected for their potential to meet future housing needs while making connection to jobs, services and transportation networks.

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Visit www.housingpolicy.org/toolbox/index_MN.html

Opportunity Cities have moved from awareness to action in the following ways.

Anoka...(2010).....

→ **Inform HRA strategic plan.** The Opportunity City recommendations were adopted by the Anoka HRA in January 2011 and will now be the basis for their housing strategic plan which includes opportunities to regenerate neighborhoods, provide new housing choices within future development areas, and continue to support neighborhood and rental reinvestment.

Brooklyn Park...(2009).....

- **Build community pride.** Engage school officials, increase presence at school and community events and intentionally encourage new residents to participate in the city visioning process.
- **Preserve and improve apartments.** Work strategically with apartment owners on a regular basis and develop an Apartment Action Plan. Incorporate ULI MN Site Principles into the City's Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Program. Create a short term rental assistance program to help keep kids in school and decrease turnover in apartments.
- **Improve home maintenance and purchase programs.** Incorporate green building principles into foreclosure recovery efforts (currently 10 homes rehabbed), build a "green" demonstration home and work with three townhome associations using the Housing Improvement Area financial assistance program.
- **Update land use regulations.** Revise zoning ordinances to better support and promote sustainable development and train building officials in green design to better respond to the construction of green buildings.



Coon Rapids...(2011).....

→ **Review summary report.** City policy leaders provided key input regarding the outcome of the housing audit in late 2011. The city will review the Opportunity City report, identify key recommendations for adoption and program modifications and participate in Navigating the New Normal public officials training program.

Minnetonka...(2009).....

- **Provide access to housing options for aging residents.** Apply a "resident first" policy to new senior housing developments, strategically market the HOME maintenance program for low income seniors.
- **Increase opportunities for young households.** Continue to financially support the Homes within Reach Land Trust and establish a First Time Homebuyer Program.
- **Support neighborhood preservation.** Create a new housing rehab program targeting those with incomes up to 115% of the area median income and evaluating the use of a Housing Improvement Area financing tool to renovate older townhomes and condominiums.
- **Improve land use efficiencies.** Develop a more robust civic engagement process within city "village" centers and actively engage in transit oriented development, mixed use and alternate zoning methods along the SW Transit Corridor.

Eagan...(2010).....

→ **Adopt summary report.** After numerous public official presentations, the Opportunity City program report was adopted by the Eagan City Council in March 2011. The City Council directed the Advisory Planning Commission to review the recommendations to set priorities for policy, program and service modifications.

Richfield...(2009).....

Richfield HRA adopted a two year implementation plan based upon the Opportunity City recommendations including options to:

- **Enhance program delivery.** Convene interdepartmental staff to review and collectively resolve housing issues, provide one-stop shop approach to housing and expand outreach by increasing partnerships.
- **Provide improved housing opportunities.** Increase funding of the Transformation Home Loan program, expand the Kids @ Home program, develop an egress window program, acquire and demolish substandard and/or vacant properties for new infill homes, develop a remodeling and rehab program for rental properties and partner with architects to provide design advice for home renovation.

Shoreview...(2009).....

- **Evaluate needs for residents aging in their homes.** Analyzed and applied Community Change Data for specific townhome and condominium complexes regarding turnover and retention patterns.
- **Provide new rental housing opportunities.** Apply ULI MN TAP recommendations to Midland Terrace rental housing complex to allow for construction of a new rental units, revise Shoreview Town Center plan to include rental housing and apply for CDBG funding for property acquisition that may include rental units.
- **Support new options for young households.** Partner with Rondo Land Trust, Habitat for Humanity and local employers to build and expand the market for new affordable homes for workers in the city.
- **Preserve neighborhoods.** Create an energy improvement loan program and evaluate the use of Housing Improvement Area financing assistance for townhome and condominium complexes.

Rosemount...(2009).....

- **Expand rental options and provide renovation assistance.** Assist in the renovation of Kidder Park Townhomes and work with three developers on senior rental projects.
- **Help meet changing demographics.** Evaluate opportunities for a community senior center within a senior housing development and work in partnership with University of Mn on market studies for the UMore site.
- **Support compact and connected development.** Use PUD process to increase housing density and incorporate ULI MN Site Principles in plat and site plan reviews.

