



2017 – 2019 Community Investment Plan: Executive Summary

In response to the Department of Housing and Community Development’s notice of fund availability for Community Investment Tax Credits, and modeled after our prior success with the program, Allston Brighton CDC has developed a Community Investment Plan for 2017-2019. The goals and activities for the Plan were derived from ABCDC’s strategic plan and input from community residents and other stakeholders.

The long-term impact we envision is to create a neighborhood that as it grows retains a diverse socio-economic population, and becomes more stable with stakeholders who participate in ensuring its well-being. As we increase engagement among residents who live in our housing and in the broader community, diverse voices will be at the table when decisions about housing and transportation are made that affect the neighborhood.

Goal 1: Increase resident leadership and engagement in ABCDC owned housing.

ABCDC is committed to ensuring that all residents living in ABCDC owned housing have access to the services and resources they need for secure tenancies, to avoid homelessness, and to foster a stable environment for the entire portfolio. We also believe that meaningful resident engagement and leadership is essential to creating a positive and healthy environment in the housing and in the larger community. We will:

- **Increase resident participation in ABCDC resident-specific events, programs, and services.** Through surveys, one-on-one contact, and focus groups, we will gather input from residents about programs and services to meet their needs, and then work with residents to increase their participation in the programs we design with their guidance. By working with community-based service providers, we will increase resident access to the resources they need to improve their quality of life. Measures of success include:
 - 250 families complete an annual survey or participate in one of nine focus groups
 - 180 residents attend specific events geared to their interests
 - 60 families referred to a “new” service area not previously available to them
 - 45 youth participate in one-on-one tutoring or homework help
 - 60 families engage in at least one service aimed at increasing economic resiliency
 - 60 families engage in at least one program aimed at increasing a healthy lifestyle
- **Ensure stable tenancies for residents in ABCDC properties.** By organizing a quarterly move-in orientation and providing individualized support to build tenant’s knowledge of their rights and obligations, we will help tenants to maintain a stable tenancy. For residents who do not make timely rent payments, we will help them to develop household budgets, learn how to track expenses, and refer them to appropriate rental assistance or other financial education programs. Measures of success include:
 - 60 families participate in a move-in orientation

- 500 residents receive individual support services
 - 20% decrease in number of referrals related to lease violations
 - 15 families will participate in budgeting assistance sessions
 - 30 families in danger of eviction avoid eviction and maintain stable tenancies
- **Increase resident leadership and civic engagement.** Through one-on-one interactions and informal and formal training programs, ABCDC will increase the leadership of residents within the properties and in the community including leadership roles in planning, coordination, and promotion of events. Our work will include strengthening the existing Commonwealth Tenant Council (CTC) which comprises residents from our largest property, and continuing to encourage residents living in our housing to be active in civic life, and in broader community planning and advocacy efforts. Measures of success include:
- 15 residents will participate in leadership training programs
 - 10 residents will become actively engaged resident leaders
 - 8 tenants will be elected by the full tenant body as the leaders of the CTC
 - 30% of CTC households will participate in activities (about 70 households)
 - 10-15 ABCDC residents consistently attend neighborhood civic meetings and actively advocate for affordable housing

Goal 2: Increase supply and access to quality housing for a range of incomes.

We will increase access to affordable and workforce rental housing and homeownership ensuring that Allston Brighton remains a vibrant community for residents from a range of incomes. All our housing development activities will maximize sustainable and green housing practices to the degree feasible, and be located near transit for easy access to employment centers including downtown Boston. We will:

- **Increase the supply of rental housing affordable for families who have low and moderate incomes.** Through new construction and preservation strategies, we will increase the supply of rental housing for residents at or below 60% of median income. Projects include the Carol Avenue Coop, a 33 unit preservation deal saved from foreclosure, and two to three joint venture Low Income Housing Tax Credit deals on vacant sites for a total of 88 – 132 units affordable for families between 30-70% of AMI. In all of our development, we are committed to engaging the residents who live in the housing and in the surrounding areas. Measures of success include:
- Increase the ABCDC portfolio by 100 – 150 units for a total of 573-623 units
- **Increase the supply of homeownership opportunities and access to homeownership for low and moderate income families, and for a range of incomes.** For families priced out of the market, we will develop a new construction affordable homeownership project in North Brighton at the Brookline Machine Site for families between 80-110% of median income. Continuing our successful project with Harvard University, the All Bright Homeownership program increases access to homeownership by purchasing homes at risk of turnover to investor owners, and then reselling the properties to buyers who wish to remain the neighborhood with the condition that the units be retained as owner-occupied. We will also continue our successful homebuyer education and training programs. Measures of success include:
- 20-24 units of affordable homeownership developed
 - 21 existing units purchased and resold as permanent homeownership
 - Hold 30 Homebuying 101 classes over 3 years
 - Graduate 700 first-time homebuyers
 - 100 people complete the online program - The Road Home

- 120 graduates receive intensive coaching
 - 10% of graduates who receive coaching services will purchase an affordable deed restricted home
- **Improve performance of ABCDC properties.** We will continue to monitor the performance of all our properties monthly with our contracted asset manager- Nuestra Comunidad, and develop a Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) on all of our properties to identify and implement improvements needed to keep all units up to housing quality standards. As properties get close to term, we will develop a plan for investor exits, including Ashford Street, Hano Homes and Brian J. Honan. Finally, we measure tenant satisfaction with ABCDC and property management annually. Measures of success include:
- All financial issues are quickly resolved and all properties meet annual benchmarks
 - All properties have a CNA and improvements are implemented
 - All properties as needed have an investor exit plan that leads to long term health and stability
 - 80% of residents will indicate a high level of satisfaction on the 2017 survey and a consistent increase in tenant satisfaction is reported in 2018 and 2019

Goal 3: Ensure housing and transportation projects meet the needs of the diverse population of Allston Brighton.

Working with neighborhood residents and other stakeholders, we will advocate for policies to ensure that housing and transportation changes in Allston Brighton meet the diverse needs of the community. Our goal is to engage residents as leaders and ambassadors in community planning efforts to ensure that the views of residents are incorporated into decision making. We will:

- **Promote policies that increase access to quality housing for existing residents and to ensure equitable transportation access.**
- Housing policy advocacy areas include:* Working with the City of Boston, we are promoting policies to discourage absentee landlords from renting to undergraduate students and to enforce existing provisions such as the Student Housing Ordinance. We are also advocating for zoning reform, increases in the percentage of affordable housing units required through the Inclusionary Development Program from 13% to 20%, and measures to increase equity, walkability, and smart growth. As new developments are proposed through Article 80, we will advocate for developers to increase affordability or make other adjustments to their plans to benefit the community. Working through the Institutional Master Plan, we will ensure that universities and hospitals are accountable and transparent in their planning and development practices, and that their community benefits programs meet the needs of the residents. We intend to work with BPDA to support a process that is consistent and transparent, and to encourage the City to conduct a community needs assessment to ensure that future plans and community benefits are aligned with community needs. Housing advocacy measures of success include:
- Achieve progress on policies that discourage absentee landlords from renting to undergraduate students, increase enforcement of existing ordinances, and advance other policy objectives
 - 450 residents who participate in affordable housing advocacy
 - Increase transparency and accountability through the Institutional Master Plan
 - Advocate for the City of Boston to conduct a community needs assessment

Transportation policy advocacy to include: Working with the Transportation Management Association (TMA) formed by A Better Cities, we will ensure that low and moderate income residents have access to new private transportation systems. ABCDC is also an active member of the I-90 Task

Force that is working to move the Mass Pike, change exit and entrance ramps to create more urban interchanges, and move the surface of the highway to grade-level. We are also advocating for changes to the Route 66 bus to connect the main part of Allston back to Lower Allston through West Station, and we are active in ongoing discussions about increasing capacity and instituting technology upgrades on the Green Line- both B and C routes that service Allston Brighton.

Transportation measures of success include:

- Increase access to new private transportation for Allston Brighton residents
- Achieve progress through the I-90 Task Force, the Route 66 bus connection, and the upgrades to the Green Line to better serve and increase access to transit options for Allston Brighton residents

➤ **Increase resident engagement in community and transportation planning and advocacy to ensure the voice of residents is incorporated into decision making about the future of Allston Brighton.**

We will educate residents about the various community and transportation planning efforts underway in Allston Brighton, and support them in increasing their involvement and active roles in the planning process. We are training residents who are part of our All Bright Homeownership program as Ambassadors who will go door-to-door to educate their neighbors about our programs and encourage residents to take a ‘pledge’ to support neighborhood stability by adhering to a “community standard” that Lower Allston/N. Brighton homeowners do not sell to investors because they care about their neighborhood and wish to preserve it for future generations. To build on this successful model of leadership engagement, we intend to create Transportation Ambassadors.

Measures of success include:

- Ensure that a diverse group of Allston Brighton residents are engaged in decision making about changes to the major transit routes that go through our neighborhood and in community planning efforts
- 250 unique residents are engaged participants
- 75 unique individuals are emerging leaders
- 25 unique individuals are facilitative leaders
- Train 4 All Bright Homeownership Ambassadors
- Ambassadors will knock on 500 doors and speak with 100 owners and distribute materials about homeownership options through the CDC
- Identify multi-year funding to expand the Ambassador program to transportation
- Identify four to five Ambassadors who are interested in working on transportation advocacy
- Engage at least 100 new residents in multiple events occurring around transportation issues

By advancing the three goals listed above, ABCDC will be closer to realizing our mission of building a stronger and more stable community by representing and supporting the expressed interests, positive engagement and leadership of Allston Brighton’s diverse local communities, institutions, individuals, and families of all incomes. Through direct housing development – both rental and homeownership – we will increase access to quality housing for a range of incomes, and through education and support, we will help ensure that new homeowners have the information they need to become sustainable homeowners. Through housing and transportation policy advocacy and by building partnerships with local institutions, agencies, and leaders, we will ensure that changes in Allston Brighton benefit the community. Upon implementation of this Community Investment Plan, we believe that Allston Brighton will continue to grow as a vibrant, diverse community, supported by policies and programs that benefit the people who live here and want to remain a part of a stable neighborhood.