



## Community Investment Plan January 2014 - December 2016

### Section 1: Communities & Constituencies Served by Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

NOAH (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc.) meets all the CDC/Chapter 40H criteria, including that of 'Service Area': to 'focus a substantial majority of the corporation's efforts on serving one or more specific neighborhoods or municipalities, a region of the Commonwealth, or constituency that is economically disadvantaged'. NOAH is a regional entity based in East Boston but serving multiple communities (with a priority for housing development in Gateway Cities and communities with less than 10% affordability) and diverse constituencies. The greater part of NOAH clients are from low-income to moderate-income households. Approximately 75% of residents/clients served are from ethnic minority households, with 60+% of those served annually being Spanish-speaking residents. All staff members who work with these residents are bilingual or tri-lingual. NOAH develops and manages affordable housing, provides homeownership promotion and preservation programming, repairs homes for seniors and the disabled, and offers rental housing counseling and homelessness prevention services. In addition, we offer three levels of courses of English for Speakers of Other Languages and three children and youth programs. All of NOAH's programming is provided at either no-cost or at a very low cost to clients. Below please find detailed NOAH's community development priorities:

#### **a. Greater Boston Communities Served (With a Special Focus on Eastern MA Gateway Cities)**

NOAH has served the neighborhood of **East Boston** with affordable housing-related programming for 26+ years. NOAH began its focus on Real Estate Development in **Eastern MA Gateway Cities** as a result of a strategic planning process in 2010. We now have two major development proposals pending in the cities of **Everett** and **Haverhill**. We are also discussing potential waterfront development in **Lynn** with LHAND (Lynn Housing). Over our organization's lifetime NOAH has dramatically expanded its reach to serve distressed households in over 137 communities within **Greater Boston/Eastern Massachusetts**. This includes 4,621 households in need of housing assistance, 1,838 of whom were from **21 Gateway municipalities**. The majority of 'Gateway' clients were served in **Lynn** (468 households), **Revere** (452), **Chelsea** (304), **Everett** (202) and **Malden** (160). Our Foreclosure Prevention and Mitigation Education and Counseling Program spearheads the bilingual **North Shore Regional Partnership Foreclosure Education Center**, which markets to and serves households from 33 municipalities, including the six **Gateway Cities** of **Lynn, Revere, Malden, Everett, Chelsea and Salem**. In the past two years, NOAH's First-Time Homebuyer programming has resulted in 26 households from **11 Eastern MA Gateway Cities** buying their first homes, including eight from **Everett** and seven from **Lynn**. Additionally, NOAH's Senior Home Repair and Rental Housing Counseling programs primarily serve **Boston low-income residents** from **Charlestown** and **the North and West Ends and East Boston**. NOAH also owns and manages affordable housing. (NB: NOAH primarily tracks its client data within the comprehensive NeighborWorks America CounselorMax system.)

#### **b. Constituencies Served: Economically Disadvantaged & Latino/New Immigrant Populations**

As noted above, for 26 years, NOAH's target population has been primarily low- through moderate-income individuals and families. The greater part of NOAH's clients are below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), with our primary target being low-income households under 60% of the AMI. Most of these families are from diverse cultures. In the last several years, more than 75% of our clients were from an ethnic minority, with over 60% of all clients being Spanish speakers. In order to better serve these individuals, all of NOAH's service provider staff members are bilingual or trilingual. Helping clients at the lowest income levels is more important in the Commonwealth than ever before, as our state's residents are among those highest impacted with the growing income disparity: "While the Massachusetts median wage has risen over time, the gains have not been evenly shared. In 1984, low-wage workers in Massachusetts (at the 20th percentile) earned roughly 41 cents for every dollar earned by a high-wage worker (at the 80th percentile). By 2011, they were earning just 32 cents. That's a drop of more than 20 percent." (*Mass. Budget and Policy Center 2012*).

*Recent Immigrants:* Of the top 12 Mass. municipalities with the **highest numbers of foreign-born residents**, six are communities that NOAH focuses on serving residents from: **Chelsea\***, **Malden\***, **Everett\***, **Lynn\***, Boston and **Revere\***; five of which are **Gateway Cities\***. Over 60% of NOAH's clientele each year represents new immigrant Latino households. According to a study entitled "*Massachusetts Immigrants by the Numbers, Second Edition*" published by the Immigrant Learning Center, immigrants make up 14.4% of the Massachusetts population; Mass. immigrants make, on average, 11.735% less than native-born residents. However, the immigrants most in need are those newest to the US; once here for 10 years or more, immigrant families and non-immigrant families do not have any high statistical disparity in income. Some 5.3% of the State's population is comprised of new/recent immigrants. NB: 37.4% of new immigrant households pay over 40% of income for housing VS 25.8% native households; 14.5% live below the poverty level VS 11.1% native households; and housing density is at .71 persons per room VS .59 persons per room for long-term immigrant families and VS .43 per room for native households.

*East Boston's Residents:* In our historical service area of East Boston, 10.4% of families lived below the poverty level. Compounding economic challenges, there are cultural issues and language barriers to overcome. Due to a combination of strong industry interests and income disparities, East Boston is the fifth-most polluted community in the state; and is bordered by the Chelsea Creek, the second-most polluted waterway in the state. Over 51% of East Boston's population is foreign born, the highest percentage of all Boston's neighborhoods. Over half of East Boston's foreign born population is from Colombia or El Salvador. The 2010 Census found that East Boston now has more Latinos than any other neighborhood in the City, and is its only Hispanic-majority neighborhood. The Latino population in East Boston increased by 42% over the past decade, and 270% over the last 20 years, today comprising 52.8% of the entire East Boston population. Of residents aged five and older, 55% do not speak English as their native language, and over 57% of residents are considered linguistically isolated. To meet the changing needs of our home base of East Boston, NOAH began hiring bilingual (English and Spanish) staff. As 'word of mouth' marketing about our programming and service areas grew, the fact that we had Spanish-language programs led to our attracting more and more native Spanish-speakers in need throughout the entire region. Today, NOAH utilizes a more deliberate marketing plan to reach out to its targeted constituencies and communities.

*Greater Boston/Eastern Mass. Region's Residents:* In our extended service area, we serve housing-related clients who are economically disadvantaged and/or of low- through moderate-income. Again, a majority of those served are new immigrants who speak Spanish as their first language. In our housing development, NOAH focuses on providing affordability in municipalities that have not reached a 10% affordability threshold (40b) and on providing and retaining affordable housing in communities designated as **Gateway Cities** by the Commonwealth. As noted elsewhere, we have development proposals pending in **Haverhill** and in **Everett** at present; and are in discussions with **Lynn** about a potential waterfront development there. In regional municipalities which have not achieved the 10% affordability threshold, NOAH will oftentimes utilize a 'friendly' 40b strategy, working with municipal officials to help achieve their communities' Economic Development Plan for affordable housing, which benefits very-low-income and low-moderate-income disadvantaged regional residents. Per the US Census *American FactFinder* tool, **Haverhill** has a poverty rate of 14.9%, above the state average of 13.4%. Its housing has a 61.6% rate of homeowner-occupancy in comparison with the state's 62.3%. Of its residents, 14.5% are Hispanic versus the state average of 9.6%. **Everett** has a higher poverty rate of 17.2% versus the state's 13.4%; with a lower rate of homeowner occupancy rate of 39.9%. Of its residents, 21.1% are Hispanic; and over twice as many residents are foreign-born (about 33%) as compared with the state average. **Lynn** has a high poverty rate of 24.7%; yet has a rate of homeowner occupancy rate of 47.4%. Of Lynn's residents, 32.1% are Hispanic. Just over twice as many residents are foreign-born (about 29.6%) versus the state's average.

*The North Shore Communities' Residents:* In the foreclosure avoidance and first time homebuyer service line, we have a special focus on working in the 36 neighborhoods served by the North Shore Regional Partnership for Foreclosure Prevention (managed by NOAH and funded by the Mass. Division of Banks and the Mass. Attorney General's Office), including the six **Gateway Cities** of **Lynn**, **Revere**, **Malden**, **Everett**, **Chelsea** and **Salem**, listed in order by highest number of foreclosure petitions. The other neighborhoods include Peabody, Medford, East Boston, Saugus, Woburn, Somerville, Gloucester, Beverly, Winthrop, central Boston, Wilmington, Wakefield, Danvers, Stoneham, Cambridge, Melrose, Swampscott, Reading, North Reading, Arlington, Marblehead, Lynnfield, Winchester, Charlestown, Middleton, Rockport, Hamilton, Topsfield, Manchester, Nahant, Essex, and Wenham. Our counselors work to educate and counsel residents having trouble making high mortgage payments. NOAH has tracked the ongoing Foreclosure Petition statistics

of these communities since 2007 via Warren Group data. As of October 2013, Lynn\* (at 1,953), Revere\* (1,102), Malden\* (at 845), Everett\* (710), Chelsea\* (551), Peabody\* (540), Medford (507) and Salem\* (506) were the eight NSRFPF communities with the highest numbers of foreclosure petitions. NOAH utilizes targeted marketing such as targeted mailings and radio programming to clients from these municipalities, seven of which are designated **Gateway Cities\***.

*Economically Disadvantaged:* According to the 2012 Census ACS survey, Massachusetts has a poverty rate of 11.9%, with an extreme poverty rate of 5.3% and an unemployment rate of 5.7%. NOAH's programming focuses on serving low-, low-moderate, and moderate-income households. We also help homeless populations via our Rental Housing Counseling program and through owning and maintaining Trinity House in East Boston (for the homeless). Over the last three HUD reporting years, **over 50% of NOAH's clients have earned less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI).**

## Section 2: NOAH's Involvement of Community Residents and Stakeholders

NOAH does not move alone. We are grateful to have many friends, partners, collaborators and supporters. We have a long history of engaging local residents and stakeholders and partnering entities to improve economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income households. In East Boston, NOAH has engaged residents and stakeholders through hosting Chelsea Creek Business Roundtables, and organizing a yearly Chelsea River Revel festival, multiple youth education concerts and workshops, monthly Chelsea Creek Action Group meetings; along with engaging in numerous ongoing meetings with residents and town officials throughout our service area. In addition, NOAH staff and resident volunteers meet periodically with elected officials at the State House. We also conduct various resident surveys in both English and Spanish. This past year, we surveyed our tenants, our past clients throughout the region, Spanish-speaking regional residents (utilizing our biweekly Hispanic radio show program), and East Boston residents via two surveys specific to their community. In addition, NOAH's Board of Directors is comprised entirely of residents from the Greater Boston Region, with half or more at any given time from East Boston, and with four or more Latinos who represent our Hispanic community constituents. The Board of Directors oversees NOAH's strategic planning, adopting this Community Investment Plan at its November 2013 meeting.

*Assessments of constituency/region's priority needs:* NOAH also regularly assesses the priority needs of our service area(s) by continually analyzing market conditions, as well as conducting constituent and community surveys and receiving feedback from neighborhood/community representatives on our Board, in the Chelsea Creek Action Group, and in our CBE Advisory Committee. We conduct industry-relevant research, which helps inform the decision-making processes for various service lines, adding depth to the critical feedback and information received from residents, businesses, partners and stakeholders. (For instance, we track foreclosure petition data regularly via the *Warren Group*.) Our many partners and fellow collaborators (who also double as stakeholders) serve to inform the Plan and its activities on an ongoing basis. In addition, each program line obtains input and seeks engagement from local residents and businesses around its own particular project activities. In communities where we are looking to develop real estate, we hold public planning charettes and meet with municipal officials, often collaborating closely with city municipal Housing Trusts or Housing Partnerships and Selectmen.

NOAH engages its constituents further by interviewing residents in our target area through our ongoing NeighborWorks 'Success Measures' community impact surveying projects. NOAH was a pilot organization in this national project. One major component of this project entails resident surveying, obtaining input as to what the primary concerns and wishes of community members are. Other areas utilize stakeholder, block and parcel surveying. As noted above, in addition to Success Measures input, NOAH also surveys general community residents, past clients, tenants in its properties, and listeners of its twice-weekly Hispanic radio show on housing-related issues. As well as the aforementioned constituent engagement, NOAH's Executive Director and/or Real Estate Director each attend, on average, one to two open-to-the-public meetings per month; and our Executive Director is on the Board of the East Boston Chamber of Commerce, as well as MACDC.

To inform the board and staff as they formulated NOAH's 2012-2015 Strategic Plan two years ago, VIVA Consulting sought commentary and advice from stakeholders across NOAH's housing and community building work, which helped form our current Community Investment Plan. Stakeholder input, for example, helped direct NOAH to its current focus on

**Gateway Cities** real estate development, resulting in development submissions this past year in the **Gateway** communities of **Everett** and **Haverhill**, as well as a TOD (Transit Oriented Development) near NOAH's offices in East Boston.

NOAH tempers direct input from diverse community organizing stakeholders (each sometimes having their own agendas to pursue) with additional, regular input from local residents, businesses and the Chamber of Commerce, political leaders and government officials, as well as its surveying tools. In 2013 NOAH conducted five different surveys in both English and Spanish covering a wide variety of community-related topics; summarized survey results can be found at [www.noahcdc.org](http://www.noahcdc.org). In one, NOAH performed a survey of past clients in order to gauge how well our programs are currently serving community members and also to determine what additional services NOAH might offer in the future. Based on the results of this survey, we determined that 65% of our former clients believe there is a need for developing affordable housing for families/individuals with an annual income between \$30,000 and \$60,000. An online survey of the listeners of our Spanish radio programming confirmed this result, with 77% of respondents stating that families earning \$30,000-\$60,000 are most in need of new housing, as compared with those of higher incomes. As a non-profit developer, this information informs our planning for future projects, as it reiterates the demand for affordable housing at this income level. The results of these surveys also confirmed that the majority of our clients view the housing-related services being provided by NOAH in 2014 (including free foreclosure prevention and rental housing counseling, very low-cost first-time homebuyer classes, grant funds towards closing costs for first-time homebuyers in three **Gateway Cities**, grants to foreclosed-upon residents to help them resettle in new rental homes, no-cost repairs for the elderly and disabled, and more) as very important to community residents. The data further showed that 65% of our clients view financial education/capability classes as also very important; and NOAH has reinstated this programming for 2014.

Of the 2013 surveys conducted, two were large-scale questionnaires of 200+ current East Boston residents each, as well as a small number of external stakeholders. One of these, the NeighborWorks America Success Measures surveying, covered a wide variety of topics such as: the respondent's level of satisfaction with his/her neighborhood, the frequency with which the respondent participates in certain community activities, the respondent's assessment of municipal services, and how safe the respondent feels in the community when performing various daily activities. Based on this data, which we will continue to collect annually in the coming years, we were able to identify strengths and weaknesses of our community in order to better shape our programming. For example, when asked about the quality of municipal services including police, fire, ambulance and trash collection, a majority of residents polled identified trash collection as the service most in need of improvement. Resident interviewing is in-person, conducted in-house by NOAH resident volunteers. This was also an issue that frequently came up in our external stakeholder interviews. Based on this information, NOAH's Youth Leadership Program, part of our Community Building and Environment Department, has begun work on a litter collection study, aimed at identifying sources of litter and combating the trash problem in local streets. This surveying also indicated that only 53% of residents polled felt safe in local parks/playgrounds during the day. Our Community Building and Environment Department therefore used this feedback to shape one of its new activities going forward, which is to increase public safety in community parks. We will reach this goal by implementing a new program that will utilize our youth leaders as park monitors during key days and times throughout the year.

Results of our 2013 East Boston Economic Development Survey indicated that while residents of East Boston are for the most part happy with their neighborhood and the changes taking place, many have concerns about 'gentrification' and rising housing prices. This survey combined an online tool as well as face-to-face surveying by other residents. Out of the 243 people who took the survey, 115 people (47.7%) knew of people or families who have left East Boston because they could no longer afford it. When asked specifically about gentrification, 183 respondents (76%) said they were very concerned about it. Reinforcing this, in an open-ended question on 'what is the most important issue facing East Boston right now', 34% indicated rising rent and housing costs and displacement due to gentrification. For a possible solution on gentrification, 46.9% checked building mixed-income housing or finding programs to help repair homes. Also, when answering a question as to what the former Suffolk Downs casino location should be used for, 42% indicated new mixed-income housing. The respondents - 54.4% (117) of which were renters - answered they would like to see NOAH create and/or rehabilitate housing for individuals and families of low- and moderate-income. When asked what family income levels should be targeted in developing new housing, 124 people, almost 60%, chose '\$30,000 to \$60,000' (the lowest-income range offered). In an open-ended question as to how NOAH could best protect long-time and moderate- and lower-income East Boston residents, the four most common responses were: -Helping control the rising rent costs, -

Adding new low-income housing, -Home repairs; and -Providing education on home-buying. Twenty respondents (15.8%) mentioned a need for rent control or a similar vehicle to assist renters. These are all activities that NOAH will be pursuing.

*Monitoring and Implementing Plan Activities:* The changing nature of resident and community needs requires a circular process of both obtaining input into programming and obtaining feedback and monitoring of the results of Community Investment Plan activities. Accordingly, NOAH does both; and considers its Community Investment Plan a fluid one. For example, once a real estate project is initiated, there continues to be ongoing community and stakeholder engagement, both of municipal committees and also of neighborhood residents. NOAH's real estate development process is, fundamentally, an ongoing, back and forth, community-input driven one; and we always work with communities, and their housing committees and residents to pursue, plan and implement new affordable housing projects. Concerning our housing promotion and preservation and other programs, we periodically survey and/or canvas past NOAH housing clients, as well. NOAH ensures that its Board of Directors has various constituent and community resident representatives, who keep one ear close to the ground to report back to the Board. For additional feedback, we also host monthly Chelsea Creek Action Group meetings; participate in major neighborhood group meetings at least once per quarter; and ask for input from students in our three levels ESOL classes. The results of these client, tenant and community resident surveys are shared with the Leadership Team and NOAH's Board of Directors. Changes can then be made depending on whether our current programming responds appropriately to community needs.

### Section 3: NOAH's Long-Term Plan Goals

#### **I. Multi-Year Outcomes/Production through 2016 – Real Estate Development:**

1. NOAH will pursue a diverse, sustainable development pipeline that will enable the organization to complete construction of at least 50 new low/mod units in underserved communities (with a priority focus on **Gateway Communities**, 40b or less than 10% affordability communities) every second year; or 70 new homes every second year, which will earn fees from \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year that will sustain the organization over the long term
2. NOAH is sometimes engaged in partnership arrangements in order to leverage additional predevelopment capital so if these units are produced in a partnership involving fee-sharing, NOAH's production and financial goals will be increased proportionally in order to sustain the organization

*Community/Constituency Benefits:* The completion of projects in the pipeline and existing portfolio fulfills NOAH's mission of creating affordable housing opportunities within communities with state-mandated housing goals. We want to complete a 3-4 year process to deliver units promised when NOAH has been selected by the towns to help them achieve *their* affordable housing objectives. It is a win-win for NOAH and our partner communities – and the state – and especially the low-income families who will have an affordable new home, many within their own long-term 'home' community. Because the Gateway Cities populations have an average household income below the state average, developing affordable housing in these communities is especially needed by a non-profit entity such as NOAH.

#### **II. Multi-Year Outcomes/Production through 2016 – Community Building & Environment**

1. Increase the number of diverse resident participants taking active/leadership roles in community organizing, esp. for newcomers, underserved residents (ethnic or racial minorities) and low/mod persons and families
2. Advocate for and/or establish at least one new/revitalized public green space
3. Participate in public planning efforts to advocate for green building/design and represent community interests
4. Develop an integrated, community-based Climate Change/mitigation and adaptation program that is so robust and widely adopted that East Boston is seen as a model 'sustainable community'. East Boston is increasingly subject to a sea-level-rise storm-related catastrophe.

*Community/Constituency Benefits:* There are many community benefits, including the bettering of the contaminated East Boston environment (5<sup>th</sup> worse in the state) and of the Chelsea Creek (2<sup>nd</sup> most polluted waterway in the state); and positively impacting the lives of the residents who participate directly in NOAH's programming (including helping ESOL course graduates, and their families) the opportunity to improve their economic status.

#### **III. Multi-Year Outcomes/Production through 2016 – Affordable Housing Services Business Lines (Homeownership Promotion/Homeownership Preservation/Rental Housing Counseling)**

1. Maintain affordable housing counseling/placement and basic core services for the period of the Community Investment Plan, regardless of funding levels; ideally no less than 54 senior home repair clients, 102 first-time homebuyer course graduates, 53 first-time homebuyers, and/or 95 rental housing counseling clients served each year. Annually, through defined marketing/fundraising strategies, strive to serve 108 senior home repair clients, 204 FTTHB graduates, 106 FTTHB's and 190 rental housing counseling clients each year. Reinstate financial education program.
2. Implement new **Gateway Cities First-Time Homebuyer incentive program, in partnership with the Everett, Haverhill and Lynn, utilizing CITC funding.** (Please see letter/s attached.) In 2012 and 2013, 26 NOAH client households from 11 **Gateway Cities** purchased their first homes; including seven from Lynn, eight from Everett, 22 from Chelsea and 17 from Revere; all without grant financing assistance from NOAH. Utilizing CITC-related funds, we will begin offering down payment assistance/closing cost grants to qualified households via the Everett, Haverhill and Lynn Housing Authorities so as to financially assist 60+ new first-time homebuyers, awarding \$25,000-\$50,000 each year to all three Gateway Cities (if awarded the maximum tax credit amount for three years). Counselor/s will have the flexibility of assisting each household with a grant of between \$2,000 to \$5,000, depending on each family's need. We find that in this, as in our affordable/mixed-income real estate development work, Mayors and Community Development Department staffers are happy to support NOAH's programming.

*Community/Constituency Benefits:* Via these programs we will be able to provide much-needed affordable housing-related services to a large number of low-moderate-income clients/community members while offering multiple opportunities for people to take advantage of the resources we have available. We will be able to directly fulfill our mission by assisting residents in need by improving their standards of living; and by creating economic opportunity and/or wealth (asset development) for them. Also, because half of our classes are held in Spanish, we are offering new, diverse Americans equal and fair opportunities to achieve the American dream of sustainable homeownership. Homebuyer education, counseling and down-payment assistance, together, are proven methods of creating wealth for families and of stabilizing communities.

#### **IV. Multi-Year Outcomes/Production through 2016 – Property & Asset Management**

1. Continue to self-manage on a day-to-day basis 101 units of affordable housing plus 2 commercial units and the premises at 143 Border Street, NOAH's headquarters *and* outsource day-to-day management of NOAH's new development units in Holliston, North Andover and Carlisle which include 98 affordable units (and its new development in Webster, and proposed developments in Everett and Haverhill); reviewing reporting by and monitoring of Management activities
2. Continue to strengthen Asset Management via:
  - a. Re-forming the Asset Management team and placing Leadership Team members in charge of collecting, reporting and compliance regarding how NOAH carries out its asset management
  - b. Staff to attend MHP, NW, MLK/MACDC, CHAM and/or other Asset Management trainings
  - c. Review performed of partnership agreements (for allowable fees from operating budgets or cash flow, and to ensure cash remains in the projects)
  - d. Continue to inform the full Board at least twice per year of key indices for both property management and asset management by expanding upon current PM format.

*Community/Constituency Benefits:* The outcomes of NOAH's successful in-house property management include clean, well-maintained properties that set the standard for their neighborhoods, providing the **435+ low-income residents** with affordable housing, and also improving their standards of living. Our diverse residents are treated with fairness, equality and respect. Long-term, this helps build community in the neighborhoods where our properties are located. We believe that all of our Property Management and Asset Management work is vitally important to the lives of our residents, including activities related to upgrading and 'greening' all of our units. As cited elsewhere, in Massachusetts, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing; and the need for affordable housing is more important than ever. "Wages and Inequality in Massachusetts: a Labor Day Report", Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, August 2012 notes: "While the Massachusetts median wage has risen over time, the gains have not been evenly shared. In 1984, low-wage workers in Massachusetts (at the 20th percentile) earned roughly 41 cents for every dollar earned by a high-wage worker (at the 80th percentile). By 2011, they were earning just 32 cents. That's a drop of more than 20 percent".

## V. Multi-Year Outcomes/Production through 2016 – Organizational

### Financial Strength

- a. Each of NOAH's programs will aim to bring in sufficient revenue to cover its direct costs
- b. A minimum of three months (up to six months) of operating expenses will be kept in available cash at all times
- c. NOAH will work to achieve and maintain a ratio of current assets divided by current liabilities of 1.25 or higher
- d. As of FY13 NOAH has shown a surplus 4 years in a row; and will continue this through FY16.
- e. NOAH will continue to have regular and 'clean' audits conducted (with no findings).

### Fund Development

- f. \*Continue raising funds from foundations and corporations. \*Ensure regular receipts from Real Estate Development.
- \*Overall, continue to raise approximately \$2 to \$2.3+ million each year.
- h. Solicit and obtain donations utilizing all CITC awards (up to \$100,000 of credits, or \$200,000) in 2014 (and beyond).

### Staff Leadership and Succession Planning

- i. Finalize Executive Director, Board and Leadership staff succession planning
- j. Continue to recruit and retain Board members who bring a broad range of skills, representing residents from Greater Boston/Eastern Mass. and Gateway Cities, and representing NOAH's Hispanic constituency focus and its LMI clientele
- k. Re-engage an expanded Advisory Board for the NOAH organization and for CBE to involve individuals representing professions, communities or connections that could benefit NOAH and its constituents; and establish and/or strengthen committees such as the Finance, Real Estate and Fundraising Committees.

### Section 4: Activities to Be Undertaken by NOAH (As Determined by Its Short-Term FY14 Goals)

**NOAH's FY14 Activities Performance Targets:** Last year's goals-related accomplishments, coupled with external and internal factors and SWOT analysis, as well as resident and stakeholder input, led to the formulation of this year's targeted activities. Each year, NOAH sets specific annual activities target goals, based on updated input from and oversight of local residents and stakeholders, as well as other external and internal factors. Specific activities goals for FY15 and FY16 will be very similar to those below, but will reflect some changes, due to ongoing engagement with community members, etc.

The **Home Ownership Promotion Line of Business** is fulfilled by NOAH's **Bilingual First-Time Homebuyer Program**. This programming will be led by experienced/10-year-tenured Homebuyer Services Department Director, Diana Franco and by counselor Claudia Gongora (with MS in law from BU) and by. The accomplishment of these activities goals significantly impacts our ability to achieve positive community impact and working towards our Mission, including supporting residents with affordable housing, and improving standards of living and creating social/economic opportunities. NB: NOAH has adopted *The National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling*; and courses are certified by either CHAPA (in-person) or MassHousing (online). Its experienced counselors receive NeighborWorks America and other trainings and professional certifications. Successfully completing these targeted activities will help exceed the achievement of LT Plan Goal III in 2014, assisting disadvantaged residents improve their standards of living and create wealth, while stabilizing the region and community. NOAH's 2014 activities target goals are as follows:

**Activities Goal 1:** In FY14, NOAH will hold 14 bilingual CHAPA-certified first-time in-class homebuyer courses with 370+ graduates, and will also graduate 140+ clients via our new online FTHB course. These activities will be distributed equally throughout the year; with at least one in-class FTHB course held each month. Half of the courses will be in Spanish, and half in English.

**Activities Goal 2:** NOAH will assist 125+ clients to purchase their first homes (roughly 62 each 6-month period, depending on market flux), resulting in at least \$34,700,000 newly invested in the community in FY2014. (This is based on increased FTHB graduate numbers, and our recent HB rates; while we have increased the average home values by some 5%.)

**Activities Goal 3:** In partnership with the Lynn, Haverhill and Everett, NOAH will assist income-qualified residents of these **Gateway Cities** to purchase their first homes through providing a grant (funded with CITC monies) which will assist with financing their down-payments.

**Activities Goal 4:** NOAH will reinstate its Financial Literacy/Financial Capability programming in 2014. NOAH intends to hold 'Credit Smart' or other similar Financial Literacy/Capability classes and/or Financial Coaching with up to 180 attendees/clients on how to better understand their financial options (including budgeting) and how to execute them; the funding for this has come to NOAH from the Attorney General's Office.

The **Home Ownership Preservation Line of Business** activities outcomes are derived from two programs: **Foreclosure Prevention and Mitigation**, and, to a lesser degree, **Senior Home Repair Services**.

**Foreclosure Prevention & Mitigation:**

**Activities Goal 1:** a. NOAH will educate and or counsel 350 households during the year (some 150 of these will be new FY14 clients, and some 200 of these will be clients retained from prior fiscal years whose cases have not yet been resolved); b. This will result in 100 clients retaining their homes in FY14.

**Activities Goal 2:** In FY14, NOAH will continue to maintain high levels of new client intake via its marketing strategies, so as to achieve the following: -continuing our highly successful call-in Latino Radio Show addressing Homeownership Promotion and Homeownership Preservation issues; -sponsoring 484 Latino NOAH 'jingle' radio advertisements during 2014, half during each half of the year; -mailing 600+ outreach postcards to households first appearing in the Warren Group for foreclosure petitions in the **Gateway** communities highest in foreclosure petition numbers; -distributing 2,000+ flyers at community events and local businesses/community organizations; -maintaining our online presence via the NOAH website and through 25+ postings on Facebook and/or Twitter (equally distributed throughout the year).

**Activities Goal 3:** NOAH's counseling staff will continue to receive ongoing education, as per NW/NFMC/HUD requirements.

**Senior Home Repair:**

**Activities Goal 1:** The homes of five or more seniors will be preserved through the rehabilitation of their houses, at an all total investment of \$30,000+ dollars; and the homes of another 55-110 senior or disabled clients will have 150-300+ home/safety repairs completed (depending on funding levels).

**Community Building & Organizing Line of Business:**

Chris Marchi, life-long East Boston resident and experienced community activist and organizer, leads NOAH's CBE environmental/CCAG program areas; Manlio Mendez has led NOAH's ESOL and children's programming since 2003; PT ESOL instructor, Jacky Lara, has been at NOAH for 1.5 years; and PT ESOL instructor Scarlet Mitchell has been with us over a year. NOAH's CBO work improve standards of living, builds community, and creates social/economic opportunities, especially for low- and moderate-income families. Successfully completing the goals below will ensure that NOAH meets its long-term Plan Goal II this year.

**Activities Goal 1:** NOAH will engage and empower East Boston residents in building a strong and sustainable community by working for concrete changes in public policy and in the natural and built environment.

- Launch "Resilient East Boston," a community initiative to protect East Boston from the impacts of climate change.
- Organize at least 20 residents to advocate for infrastructure improvements and policy changes to encourage active transportation in East Boston.
- Maintain "Our Garden" as a youth-run community garden.
- Hold at least 8 outdoor community activities to encourage stewardship of open space resources and interact with community members for feedback and commentary.

**Activities Goal 2:** NOAH will build the capacity of young people as community leaders for environmental change in East Boston. Specifically, we will again recruit, manage and train a crew of 8-10 East Boston teens, who will take a lead role in organizing NOAH's campaigns for a strong and sustainable East Boston.

**Activities Goal 3:** NOAH will ensure that at least 150 East Boston children ages 6-12 have the opportunity to attend a high-quality 6-7 week summer recreational program through the O'Donnell Schoolyard Summer Program and/or the Community Soccer Program.

**Activities Goal 4:** NOAH will increase the capacity of 170 East Boston-area immigrants to engage in their community and to improve standards of living by providing ESOL instruction and citizenship training.

**Asset & Property Management Line of Business:**

Experienced NOAH PM Director, Mal Nelson, has been with NOAH for 5 years. The successful management of NOAH's properties not only assists VLI/LMI residents with affordable housing, but it maintains a valuable physical resource for our organization, and positively impacts our organizational revenues, as well. Achieving this goal significantly impacts our ability to achieve positive community impact while working towards our Mission, including supporting residents with affordable housing, and improving standards of living and creating social/economic opportunities. A major outcome of NOAH's successful in-house management of its East Boston and nearby properties results in approximately 435+ LMI residents who are housed affordably, and whose standards of living are improved. Our diverse residents are treated with fairness, equality and respect. Ultimately, this helps build community in the neighborhoods where our properties are located.

**Activities Goal 1:** In FY14, NOAH will house 225+ low/mod-income residents via its successful in-house management of the 101 affordable housing units, the two commercial units, and the NOAH-owned office space at 143 Border Street, East Boston, which houses NOAH and one other non-profit/ via the following activities/outputs:

1. Maintain and keep in good repair the 101 residential housing units and 3 commercial spaces.
2. Continue to contract a part-time social worker from the Pine Street Inn to work with the formerly homeless clients at Trinity House.
3. Build upon the completed energy audits and improvements for all the properties by continuing to look for opportunities to reduce energy usage through replacing current appliances only with new Energy Star appliances
4. Complete bi-annual Resident Satisfaction Surveys for all the properties.
5. Continue to keep the properties in full compliance with all the funder-related and other agreements and programs that regulate the NOAH properties.
6. In FY2014, NOAH will substantially rehab at least 15 of its rental units and 30 rental units will be refinanced (all of those within the Shalom Properties) to extend affordability, for a total of 45 units.

**Activities Goal 2:** In FY14, 210 low/mod.-income residents will be housed through the management of the three suburban NOAH properties, North Andover and in Holliston outsourced to Corcoran Management, and Benfield Farms to Peabody Properties.

**Activities Goal 4:** In FY14, the Asset Management Plan will continue to be updated on a regular basis, semi-annually, and will continue to meet all of the NeighborWorks Asset Management Plan recommended criteria; staff will work towards creating a more energy-efficient/green portfolio, overall; and progress and key indices reported at least twice a year to the full Board of Directors.

### **Real Estate Development:**

**RED Pipeline:** We have a very active, robust real estate development pipeline throughout our expanded Greater Boston Region territory. We have 26 affordable units in Carlisle, a \$10 million project, about 95% built and on target to be completed near the end of January 2014. There is also a new \$20 million project in Webster for 66 affordable units which should see the closing on the construction financing by mid-January 2014. We are in the permitting and BRA approval stage for a third: Coppersmith Village in East Boston, with 71 units in a \$27 million, mixed-use, mixed-income, ownership/rental development. In addition, we have activity in the following **Gateway Communities** for possible developments: Everett-42 units/\$20 million; and Haverhill-113 units/\$28 million. The Department is capably led by Department Director, Toby Kramer, who has long-term experience in the housing field, and two related master's degrees. NOAH's 26-year-tenured ED, Phil Giffie, also contributes a significant amount of his time to RED activities, particularly in working to build our ongoing RED pipeline. They are assisted by Kristin Carlson, NOAH's RED Project Manager, an architect holding a related MS from MIT.

**Activities Goal 1:** For FY2014, the major RED outcomes-targets for its properties under development are:

**1a:** To complete our 26-unit, new construction, Benfield Farms senior development on time and on budget by January 2014. An open house will be celebrated in the spring. Occupancy for up to 35 LMI seniors will be completed by April 30<sup>th</sup>. NOAH will collect its full fee.

**1b:** We will finish the construction loan closing on our 66-unit senior project renovation of an old high school, The Sitkowski School, in Webster, MA by end of January 2014. We will begin construction on Sitkowski mid-winter 2014. We will be 60% complete by year end.

**1c:** We will continue the permitting process for our 71-unit, mixed-market, mixed-use Coppersmith Village project in East Boston. We will have neighborhood meetings and City hearings and then we will complete the complex City of Boston

permitting process by the end of winter 2014. We will then begin the lengthy financing process with the expectation that we will have a financing One Stop ready for submission to the State by the end of 2014 (or when this process is open again).

**Activities Goal 2:** In FY2014, another major RED outcomes-target is to continue to perform outreach, prospecting and RFP responses, so as to continue to build an active RED pipeline for future RED projects, with a special focus on TOD in **Gateway Cities**. Activities will include:

**2a:** We will continue meetings with the City of Haverhill for a **Gateway Cities** 113-unit, mixed-market project on the Merrimack River. We will offer \$1M using CHC funds for acquisition. The goal is to be designated by the City by summer 2014 and work out a Land Development Agreement so that further planning can take place late 2014. By winter 2015, we hope to have an agreed-upon site plan, achieved City Council approval, begun new zoning, made progress payment to the City and begun drafting plans for a One Stop submission to the State.

**2b:** We have another long-awaited application in with another **Gateway City** in Everett. Everett has interviewed us several times. They are down to 2 finalists. They have recently changed their city charter to make improvements in their decision making process. The Mayor will now have a 4-year term and there will be fewer city councilors. The official change took effect in January 2014. No further actions have been taken in expectation of this change, giving the Mayor more ability to make development decisions. Our proposal for this 400,000 sf vacant but historic high school complex includes senior housing, moving the old leaky City Hall into the High School, retaining the 900 seat auditorium, demolishing part of the 1970 windowless middle, and rebuilding their 40,000 sf gym into a Wellness Center, per the Mayor's request. We have partners and collaborators lined up to help us achieve our objectives, including the Cambridge Health Alliance, Middlesex Boys and Girls Clubs and the Malden YMCA. If chosen, we may achieve designation in the spring of 2014. We would bring in MA Development to help us work through a financing challenge, given that the City may end up owning or renting/sharing space with seniors in the rebuilt high school. Public and private financing modeling will take the better part of the year. Community Housing Capital (CHC) will loan us funds to make progress payments if the City deems them necessary. We will work with the City and multiple social service/wellness partners to program the sizable gymnasium into the Wellness Center. The whole plan for the site will take at least a year to map out.

**2c.** We have other proposals pending in West Concord, Bellingham, Middleboro and Stow. We are not able to expedite these towns in their decision-making processes. We will continue to respond to their needs or interviews or meetings as needed.

**2d.** We will continue to seek additional opportunities in the Greater Boston/Eastern MA Region, with a special focus on creating affordable housing in **Gateway Cities**.

**Rental Housing Counseling:** NOAH intends to counsel 100 low/moderate-income clients via its Rental Housing Counseling (apartment search and retention) line in FY14. Boston remains one of the highest-cost rental markets in the nation, and the disadvantaged residents that we serve are in great need of assistance.

### **Board Governance Target Goals:**

**Activities Goal 1:** NOAH will add two new local/Latino Board members in 2014.

**Activities Goal 2:** The Board will authorize a new 12-month budget for the calendar/fiscal year beginning January 1, 2014. At the recommendation of our auditing firm, the Board and NOAH organization will be transitioning to a calendar/fiscal year in order to align our increasing LLC's which require calendar year audits. Going forward, the fiscal year will be the calendar year.

**Activities Goal 3:** In 2014, the Board will continue to weigh potential mergers, partnerships, alliances or collaborations with other non-profit entities.

**Resource Development Target Goals:** NOAH's Resource Development work is overseen by Department Director, Linda Miller-Foster, who has held this position for seven years and who has extensive prior fundraising and operational management and oversight experience, as well as a related master's degree. We also recently hired a new Assistant Director who has experience in fundraising and lobbying, and is a newly-minted attorney. She will work in a team with our Executive Director and Director of Fundraising and Administration, which will work with the Board's experienced Committee on CITC/Business Development, much as we did for NOAH's successful 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary last June, at which we raised \$100,000. Achieving the activities below will strengthen the financing of NOAH Line of Business programming; and so indirectly help achieve all of the long-term Plan goals. These target goals will remain very much the same in FY15 and FY16, but will be adjusted somewhat depending on FY14 outcomes and input.

**Activities Goal 1.** In order to help NOAH achieve its mission-related outcomes through providing adequate revenues, the NOAH organization will conduct activities which will bring in revenues of \$2,383,336, as follows. The revenues breakdown by LOB categories/sources is as follows:

**First Six Months @ \$1,239,558:** Grants-\$617,360; Contracts-\$84,555; Donations & Events-\$17,800; Program Revenues-\$5,902 (4,002 FTTHB & 1,900 ESOL); Rent & Property Management Fees-\$180,986 (Border St-17,760; PM-163,226); & RED Fees/Int./Earnings-\$332,955. (Of these resources, over \$140,000 is estimated to be from government sources @ \$94,289 City funding; \$16,196 State funding; and \$30,340 Federal funding.)

**Second Six Months @ \$1,143,778:** The revenues breakdown for the second six-month period is currently projected to be as follows: Grants-\$329,767; Contracts-\$79,024; Donations & Events-\$6,490; State CITC-\$37,500; Program Revenues-\$10,750 (\$8,850 FTTHB & 1,900 ESOL); Rent & Property Management Fees-\$190,881; Interest-\$299; RED Fees/Int./Earnings 489,065+. (Of these resources, over \$250,000+ is estimated to be from government sources @ \$102,197 City funding; \$70,031 State funding; and \$78,334 Federal funding.)

**Activities Goal 2: a.** NOAH will submit between 30-35 direct-funding related grant proposals and/or respond to contract RFP's during the first six months of the year, and between 35-40 direct-funding related requests in the second half of the year, for a total of at least 70 such proposals submitted during the 12-month period. **2b.** These 70+ submissions combined should have at least a 50%+ combined positive response ratio (reflective of past responses).

**Activities Goal 3:** At least 100 funder-related reports, surveys and/or audit-related responses will be submitted in a timely basis; approximately 50 during each six-month period.

**Activities Goal 4:** NOAH's Director of Administration & Fundraising (A&F), Assistant Director of Administration and CBE Director will continue to work on increasing the number and dollar value of individual and business donations, maintaining over 1,000 contacts within Constant Contact. They will support and work with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors in attaining tax credit usage of up to \$100,000 (as one-third, up to \$50,000, will be sourced via an agreement with United Way).

## **Section 5: How Success Will Be Measured and/or Evaluated**

The Board of Directors and NOAH management use the Line of Business/Program Outcomes listed above in guiding NOAH and in determining its success, including the Long Term CIP goals (3) and the Annual Activities CIP goals (4). Staff members are held accountable to achieve these goals. Activities and output numbers are monitored on a timely and regular basis (monthly or more often) to ensure that production goals are 'on track'.

*Evaluating and/or Measuring Success:* The short-term annual goals and the long-term multiple year outcomes will be measured as to whether or not they are actually completed within the timeframe set (quantity, dollars, etc.); and also as to the quality of the completed activities; as determined not just by NOAH, but also via feedback and monitoring of the Board of Directors, community stakeholders and partners and funders, community residents and NOAH clients/tenants, etc. NB: **NeighborWorks America, in its latest evaluation, reaffirmed our rating as 'Exemplary'.** NOAH's Board of Directors evaluates the organization's overall performance regularly, including its financial performance, both via monthly departmental reporting, including a Program/Contracts Dashboard Report, as well as through specific Board Committees with specialized focus areas, such as Real Estate, Finance, CBE, Fundraising, etc. NOAH's Leadership Team staff (the ED and department directors) meet monthly, also, to report to one another and receive feedback. There are regular all-staff meetings. Each of the activity areas varies, and so do the evaluation processes and the participants; however, overall, NOAH's funders and NOAH's clientele, in addition to its staff and board of directors, all play an important role in evaluating performance and outcomes.

*Evaluating and/or Measuring Success – Real Estate Development:* The short-term annual goals and the long-term multiple year outcomes are measured as to whether or not they are actually completed within the time-frame set (quantity, etc.); and also as to the quality of the completed projects, including incorporation of 'green'/healthy elements, as determined not just by NOAH, but also via feedback and monitoring of community residents and municipal and state stakeholders. Monthly RED reports/updates are submitted to the NOAH Board of Directors and Finance Committee for review/analysis.

*Evaluating and/or Measuring Success – Community Building & Organizing:* The short-term annual goals and the long-term multiple year outcomes are measured as to whether or not they are actually completed within the time-frame set (quantity of events/clients, etc.); and also as to the quality of the completed activities; as determined not just by NOAH,

but also by surveying and via feedback and monitoring of residents, students, youth, community stakeholders and partners and funders. In the case of our ESOL programming, NOAH both pre- and post-tests its students utilizing BEST Plus, an individually administered, face-to-face oral interview designed to assess the English language proficiency of adult English language learners in the United States.

*Evaluating and/or Measuring Success – Housing-Related Services, Including Counseling & Education:* The short-term annual goals and the long-term multiple year outcomes will be measured as to whether or not they are actually completed within the timeframe set (quantity, etc.); and also as to the quality of the completed activities; as determined not just by NOAH, but also via feedback and monitoring of residents/clients, community stakeholders, and partners and funders. NOAH has officially adopted the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling, and is listed on that website. Our homebuyer courses are CHAPA-certified; and re-attain that certification every few years. Students in our in-house First-Time Homebuyer courses are orally pre- and post-tested to ensure retention of curriculum; and on-line course participants pass written testing prior to obtaining a certificate.

*Evaluating and/or Measuring Success – Property & Asset Management:* The short-term annual goals and the long-term multiple year outcomes will be measured as to whether or not they are actually completed within the timeframe set (quantity, etc.); and also as to the quality of the completed activities; as determined not just by NOAH, but also via feedback and monitoring of residents, community stakeholders and partners and funders. One of the tools that helps us manage and evaluate property management activities is the Yardi Classic software and its reporting capabilities. We also compare and weigh our results against industry standards and principles; for example, in the case of our Asset Management Plan, we analyze its content areas and quality against the NeighborWorks America suggested industry minimum standards; and, similarly, we report quarterly within the online NeighborWorks America Multifamily Initiative system, and receive detailed reporting back from NeighborWorks on our own portfolio, and also as to how it is performing against all of the NeighborWorks American rental portfolios nationally.

*Client Case Measurement:* One measurement method/tool includes the use of the online NeighborWorks America CounselorMax software system for full client intake, processing and reporting; including over 40+ data points. NOAH uploads reports via CounselorMax directly to HUD, NeighborWorks America, and federal award programs such as NFMC (National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling) and EHLP (Emergency Homeowner Loan Program). We also use its reporting to provide reports to the MA Attorney General's Office, the MA Division of Banks, and United Way; and to perform internal analysis on program activities and results (for example, evaluating the number/percentage of successful loan modifications for foreclosure avoidance clients).

*Surveying:* Another tool includes the use of surveys of past clients and current tenants. In its 2013 surveying, 76.5% of past NOAH housing clients were happy with the results of NOAH's counseling and/or repair services. (Of course, not everyone's home mortgage can be modified, nor can every repair be made immediately, and of the 23.5% of clients who were not satisfied with the outcomes, these were, by far, the reasons.) In polling our properties' residents, we learned that 87% of tenants gave our property management staff a rating of 'four out of five' or higher. For those residents who were less satisfied, we request further information, which will be used to further improve our services.

## **Section 6: Collaborative Efforts to Support Implementation**

NOAH has long had a policy of advocating what it terms 'PAC', or Partnerships, Alliances and Collaborations. We are a NeighborWorks America chartered organization and a United Way of Massachusetts Bay agency. While the list of our ongoing partnerships is quite numerous, here are a few representational examples:

**Foreclosure Prevention:** One of NOAH's goals, as laid out in our mission statement, is to help residents maintain their homes affordable while helping them to improve their standards of living. To do this, we have sought out partnerships with community collaborators that can help us maximize our reach. One major effort consists of the spearheading of the North Shore Regional Partnership for Foreclosure Prevention (with partners such as LHAND/Lynn Housing and Gloucester Housing, both of which we were able to give grant funding to in 2013). As part of this foreclosure avoidance and first-time homebuyer service line, NOAH works in the 33 municipalities served by the North Shore Regional Partnership for Foreclosure Prevention, including the six **Gateway Cities** of Lynn, Revere, Malden, Everett, Chelsea and Salem, listed in order by highest number of foreclosure petitions. Another innovative partnership is that with Boston University's Law School, through which we receive volunteer legal interns. We have expanded this to two additional law schools (BC and Suffolk); and have helped other Boston non-profits begin similar programs in-house.

**Senior Home Repair Services:** NOAH has spearheaded a partnership, the Greater Boston Senior Home Repair Collaborative, with three other local organizations that provides senior home repairs to low/moderate-income adults over the age of 50: partners include Kit Clark Senior Services, United South End Settlements, and the Ecumenical Social Action Committee. Funded in part by the AARP Foundation, this collaborative helps improve standards of living via safe housing, allowing seniors to live at home longer, securely. However, the most important long-term partner in this work has been the City of Boston DND, which provides the vast majority of the funding for this work, and helps set annual target goals.

**Community Building and Environment:** One of NOAH's primary goals is to improve standards of living for Greater Boston and Boston-area residents, build community, and create social/economic opportunities. Our partnerships with various local organizations and governmental departments enables us to do this in and around East Boston. NOAH works with the Chelsea Creek Action Group to engage and empower local residents to improve and preserve the community's natural and built environment; this was one of the first examples in the state of two-communities partnering together to combat neighborhood environmental degradation. NOAH is a partner in the Mystic River Watershed Collaborative, to make the Mystic River a model of sustainable urban watersheds. NOAH has worked with the City of Boston for various initiatives and programs including the Mayor's "Complete Streets" initiative and through the Renew Boston low-cost weatherization program. Others of CBE's many partnerships include the Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness and the East Boston Youth Task Force.

**Property/Asset Management:** NOAH works with both the staff of the Pine Street Inn and the Boston Housing Authority to expand resident services and social activities for formerly homeless tenants of NOAH's Trinity House, in order to fulfill our goal of improving quality of life for low-income residents. We contract with Pine Street for a part-time, onsite, resident services provider; as this facility is dedicated to the (formerly) homeless. We partner with government offices for funding and training, as well.

**Real Estate Development:** NOAH has created partnerships with multiple municipalities in the Greater Boston/Eastern Mass. region. Our recent and current partnerships include the municipalities and housing committees of: Holliston (Cutler Heights), North Andover (Stevens Corner), Webster (the historic Sitkowski School), and Carlisle (Benfield Farms). We work closely with each municipality's leadership – Mayors/Selectmen, CDBG staff, Finance Committees, Zoning Boards, Housing Partnerships, Housing Trust s/Authorities and Town Meeting members. Feedback and commentary yields good input as well as healthy, trust-building long-term relationships; and this is how NOAH performs community development in the region. These types of partnerships help us to reach out to **Gateway Cities** communities and to others that may have less than 10% affordable housing and/or that have some financing/infrastructure to help provide more opportunities for low/moderate income residents. These communities are heavily involved in the planning and development process; NOAH views their input as indispensable, and regards these partnerships as true collaborations, enabling local leadership to have a voice in the process and strengthening the communities in which we work. NOAH works with and through municipal and resident partners within such towns/cities to provide neighborhood-friendly affordable housing.

### [Section 7: Integration of NOAH's Activities/Consistency with Community Strategy and Vision](#)

There are many levels of interaction and interrelationship of the Plan activities to be undertaken. At the most basic level, these all work towards addressing issues facing NOAH's communities and constituencies served. At another level, it has inter-relating focus-areas, such as the importance of greening NOAH's properties and its new real estate developments along with its 'green' activities towards improving the ecological state of East Boston, for instance. For another, each of the many activities – taken together – all work towards achieving both NOAH's Mission and, on a local/regional level, the National Housing Goal of 'a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family'.

NOAH is focusing much of its CITC-related programming on **Gateway Cities**, with a second focus on the City of Boston. We plan to increase the supply of affordable and mixed-income, mixed-use housing as well as increase homeownership for first-time homebuyers. These wealth and job creation activities are consistent with all local, regional and statewide plans. They also coincide with NOAH's own strategic vision for the coming years which is one of partnering with municipalities to create housing opportunities and opportunities for equity in the Greater Boston region. We will also be pursuing projects in municipalities which are under the State's 40b/10% requirement.

We believe our plans are entirely consistent with State goals for the following reasons: 1. Massachusetts has a long-standing goal of providing housing choice to individuals and families of low and moderate incomes as expressed through Chapter 40b. Most municipalities in the Commonwealth do not meet that standard. NOAH has been regionalizing its affordable housing endeavors since 2003. We now build housing in partnership communities throughout Greater Boston

and as far away as Webster. We work closely with cities and towns as part of *their* toolboxes so we can create 'friendly 40b's' which provide quality housing for LMI individuals and families. 2. The State has prioritized the 26 Gateway Cities for funding, especially through MA Works, infrastructure investments, expedited permitting, HDIP and more. The State wants to expand housing choice for not only affordable but for mixed-income individuals and families. The State will make further investments where projects are in close proximity to transportation nodes, especially in Gateway Cities. NOAH has several potential projects in the works in **Gateway Cities**. NOAH's projects meet nearly every Sustainable Principle and reduce energy costs for occupants and NOAH alike. They all meet Energy Star standards and are LEED-silver certifiable.

NOAH's plans also are consistent with MAPC and regional planning agencies. That is, their goals aim towards 1. Production of housing to keep younger workers in the Commonwealth retaining intellectual capital after college years, and 2. Building housing for LMI families in Areas of Opportunity outside of high density, impoverished census tracts. They refer to this as 'Equity goals.' The Governor stated it is a State goal to produce 10,000 units of housing per year while the City of Boston said it is a City goal to produce 30,000 units by 2020. NOAH would help meet City/State production goals because we have created several mixed-use, mixed-income projects in Haverhill, Everett and Boston. In Boston, our mixed-income, 71-unit ownership/rental project is nearing final permitting by the BRA. In Haverhill, we have responded to the City's RFP for vacant riverfront industrial land near the commuter rail to build 113 units of mixed-income rental units; the project would connect to the new Rail Trail and provide public access to the Merrimack and clean up an old gas station. In Everett, we would convert their Old High School into a new City Hall, elder or family units and a Wellness Center in collaboration with the Cambridge Health Alliance and the Middlesex Boys and Girls Clubs. All three projects meet Sustainable Principles as they take vacant industrial land and/or restore historic buildings for use as affordable housing.

In addition, we will be offering these municipalities the opportunity to supplement their own first time homebuyer programs with NOAH's down-payment and closing cost assistance funds. We will provide these municipalities with at least \$25,000 to \$50,000 each to supplement their existing and CDBG depleted programs to increase first time homebuyers in their cities. NOAH's goal is to produce up to 60 new first time buyers with the new CITC funds.

### [Section 8: Financing Strategy \(Also Seen in Sections 3 & 4, Long-Term Goals & Short-Term Goals/Activities\)](#)

NOAH has a long history of successfully utilizing funding from private and public sources, including from the City of Boston, the State of Massachusetts and the US Government. During the last five fiscal years, we have ended the year with a budget surplus, while accomplishing 95+% of our annual outcomes and activities goals. Our audits are 'clean'; and the last two years' audits needed no management letter.

### Long-Term Through 2016:

#### **Growing & Maintaining Financial Strength**

Through 2016 each of NOAH's programs will aim to bring in sufficient revenue to independently cover its direct costs. As an organization NOAH will aim to have a minimum of three months (up to six months) of operating expenses available cash at all times. Further, NOAH will work to achieve and maintain a ratio of current assets divided by current liabilities of 1.25 or higher. In FY 2013 NOAH operated at a surplus for the **5<sup>th</sup> straight year**; our goal is to continue this practice through FY16. Finally, NOAH will continue to conduct regular and timely audits each fiscal year.

#### **Fund Development Planning**

NOAH will continue raising funds from foundations and corporations; building on our organization's recognized strength in crafting compelling proposals and producing funding-related reports and surveys by their due dates. As an organization we will also ensure regular receipts from Real Estate Development with the goal of the RED raising approximately \$2 to \$2.3 million each year. In addition we will continue raise \$15,000+ each year in donations from individuals and businesses, including contributions made in relation to fundraising events with the long term goal of growing this amount to \$30,000 by 2015/2016.

NOAH proposes to finance the implementation of our multi-pronged planning as noted. For our two Gateway Cities-related programming, in real estate and in homeownership promotion, we will do this in two different ways. First, for the production of mixed-income, mixed use housing in Gateway Cities and in Boston, we will use the Commonwealth's traditional funding set-asides for housing production. These funding set asides include tax credits, soft debt, permanent

financing, bonds, MA Works, Brownfields/EPA funds, HOME Consortiums, CDBG allocations and Linkage/Inclusionary Zoning funds and, where applicable, Community Preservation Act investments. NOAH has significant, successful experience acquiring and implementing projects using these many and varied sources. Second, we will be working with and soliciting CITC matching funds from banks, investment firms, insurance companies, bio tech firms, REITS, Massport, financial advisors, certain corporations, construction companies, Big Labor, and hospitals. In addition, we will seek funding from important CDC industry stakeholders among the trades, professions and services such as accountants, attorneys, environmental services and property managers. Further, we have formed an internal financial advisory team to help us search out potential investors who would, a) find the credits useful for their own tax/investment/marketing purposes, and b) value our Boston/Gateway Cities housing and economic development strategy. We recognize this may be a challenge. However, from feedback we have received, we think having *an actual credit allocation* and a real plan approved by the State, will better enable us to market and sell the credits to investors. Our research indicates that stakeholders have found it difficult to understand how this new and unique CDC tax credit will translate into real world value for their business. However, investors do seem to understand film credits, historic credits, brownfield credits, housing credits and there are markets for each. Thus we believe that if presented properly to the right investors, there could be a similar market for CDC credits, once appropriated. At present there is a philanthropic market for CDC's including banks and some corporations, but the new CITC credits requires larger investments than heretofore. Therefore, banks and others are having to consider how much they may want to allocate, or re-allocate, to CDC's now that a very useful credit is available to them.

In order to encourage these stakeholders in the new 'CDC credit market' to invest in NOAH we are also going to take two ¼ page ads in the Boston Business Journal after awards are made. We will describe our program and the potential value of a CITC investment to an investor. We will be creating a flyer to be mailed to many of the above mentioned sector businesses. Our internal Business Outreach Committee (we have several lenders, CPA firms, partners on our Board) will direct us to potential investors as well. We also recently hired a new Assistant Director who has experience in fundraising and lobbying, and is a newly-minted attorney. She will work in a team with our Executive Director and Director of Fundraising and Administration, which will work with the Board's experienced Committee on CITC/Business Development, much as we did for NOAH's successful 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary last June, at which we raised \$100,000.

### [Section 9: NOAH's History, Track Record and Sustainable Development](#)

**History & Track Record:** Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc., (NOAH) is a non-profit community development corporation providing a range of housing and community development programs and services in East Boston and the Greater Boston region. It is an award-winning non-profit corporation organized under Chapter 180 and is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. Founded in 1987, NOAH initially focused on serving the East Boston community, with several programs operating in northern Boston neighborhoods. Although NOAH served every disadvantaged client who came to it for assistance, its special focus was on aiding new immigrants in need. Today, all NOAH counseling and program staff are bilingual, most in Spanish and English. Over 60% of its clientele is Latino. NOAH works towards achieving the National Housing Goal of "a decent home and suitable living environment" for as many underprivileged individuals as it can within the Greater Boston Region through the above-noted housing, social and environmental benefit programs. It does so via engaging local residents and businesses to work together to improve the community in sustainable ways which create and expand economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income households. The organizations 33 full- and part-time staff members are governed by its 14-member professional and neighborhood activist Board of Directors, who are both diverse and skilled. Its internal capacity is enhanced by a part-time property/asset management consultant, several temporary summer children's programming associates, as well as approximately 125 volunteers annually.

NOAH's work is guided by the following **Mission Statement:** "NOAH, the Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, is an East Boston based community development corporation structured to collaborate with and support residents and communities in their pursuit of affordable housing strategies, environmental justice, community planning, leadership development, and economic development opportunities. NOAH eagerly partners with those residents, neighborhood entities, municipalities or groups that share similar values and goals in order to improve standards of living, build community, and create social/economic opportunities, especially for low and moderate-income persons, families and disadvantaged groups or areas. NOAH's goals and programs are built on a commitment to equality, fairness, diversity and respect for all people."

NOAH activates and pursues its mission through the following **core business lines**:

**Housing: Real estate development and housing-related preservation and other asset development related services to promote and sustain both homeownership and rental housing efforts**, with a focus on Boston and Greater Boston communities, and with a special focus on **Gateway** communities. Many other Eastern Massachusetts towns do not meet the Commonwealth's 10% requirement for affordable housing, and lack locally-based nonprofit development capacity, but value a real estate partner such as NOAH with which they can collaborate to create appropriate housing options. NOAH's bilingual housing services include senior and disabled homeowner repairs, rental housing education and counseling, foreclosure prevention and mitigation, and first time homeownership counseling efforts; these help families/individuals/seniors retain or obtain affordable homes, including pursuing ownership opportunities in the private sector. Its Property Management and Asset Management activities help NOAH to maintain its own affordable housing to benefit residents and communities. Many Greater Boston **Gateway** communities especially are in need of such services.

**Civic: Community building and environmental programs, projects and services, including community planning, which improve and sustain the quality of life** in East Boston and beyond, to lead mitigation and adaption responses to emerging climate change challenges, help mitigate and prevent environmental contamination, educate new residents in the English language, provide children's programming, and cultivate the next generation of environmental and youthful community leaders while partnering with like-minded civic, advocacy, governmental, academic and cultural groups in the neighborhood and the region. Programs include English for Speakers of Other Languages courses, bilingual children's and youth programs, Chelsea Creek Action Group projects, and more.

**In the course of its 26-year history, NOAH has made significant contributions in each of these areas. To date, working on its own or through a variety of effective collaborations, NOAH has:**

\*Invested over \$253 million in the Greater Boston region (largely via Real Estate Development and First-Time homeownership activities).

\*Created or preserved 290 units of attractive, affordable housing in 66 buildings with 92 more affordable rental units in our current development pipeline – and more in the planning or approval stages (including one in East Boston with 71 units). One of these should be completed in January 2014, with the other beginning immediately.

\*Educated an average of more than 200 families per year for 17+ years and assisted nearly 900 families in the purchase of purchase their first homes; with 300 buying their first homes in the last three years.

\*Provided foreclosure prevention counseling to more than 2,500 households in 95 Eastern Massachusetts communities since 2008, with an 88% positive resolution ratio.

\*Helped some 100 seniors a year, or approximately 3,000 seniors and disabled individuals since 1987, to remain in their homes by performing more than 9,000 critical repairs.

\*Provided rental housing counseling/placement/retention services to over 160 low-income, diverse families per year or nearly 3,900 families since 1988

\*Rebuilt seven decrepit East Boston schoolyards into vibrant neighborhood assets by adding recreation, art, beauty and increased public safety

\*Played a critical role in coalescing community residents to address such serious environmental issues as salt marsh restoration, oil spill mitigation, a youth-led community garden, climate change-related coastal flooding, bike access to the 'T,' brownfields remediation as well as the creation of a beautiful 4-acre Urban Wild, passive recreation park overlooking the Chelsea River (and providing the first community access to the waterfront)

\*Offers 20+ programs and services to scores of diverse East Boston residents including ESOL classes, children and youth programs, youth soccer, citizenship training, non-partisan voting rights education and focused, fun community-building events such as Chelsea River Revels, Maverick Square Clean-ups and themed youth-led concerts.

**Sustainable Development:** NOAH has a strong history of meeting Sustainable Development guidelines as documented in our successful One Stop applications for Holliston, North Andover, Carlisle and Webster within the past four years. Holliston and North Andover are completed and occupied. Carlisle is 95% complete and in rent-up. Webster is about to close on construction financing. Each of these **Expands Housing Opportunities and Advances Equity**. Each of the developments is open to people of all backgrounds and abilities, but is also geared toward families and individuals of limited economic means. Holliston was a collaborative project with the Town and its Housing Authority. In order to build

this 30-unit family project and preserve land for recreation, in the early 2000's the HHA swapped land with the Town which enabled construction for VLI/LMI families in a town well below its SHI of 10%. HHA owned land environmentally unsuitable for development while the Town owned dry hillside ledge it did not need just behind Town Hall and next to 6 units of HHA stock. By **Using Natural Resources Wisely**, the town swapped HHA land for recreation while HHA received the ledge property and worked with our 3-pronged partnership (the HHA and a local private developer) to produce affordable housing. Through Town Meeting, the town also voted over \$900,000 in CPA funds to support the project. The project used the usual assortment of state resources plus TCAP funds from HUD to produce these LEED certifiable units. In North Andover, another town well below 10%, NOAH purchased a vacant nursing home and converted it to 42 units of VLI/LMI family units. Instead of using more land, we re-used existing structures (**Concentrate Development and Mix Uses**), rebuilt decayed open space and sold an attached two-family property to a local resident. We saved most of the exterior of the project but we installed new Energy Star features throughout to promote **Clean Energy** (as we do in all of our projects). The Town had already ID'd the 2.5 acre parcel (which also had 88 parking spaces) as suitable for affordable housing in its own Housing Production Plan. Their Town Meeting also voted the generous sum of \$1.35 million of CPA funds to support the project. The Selectmen and all Town committees consistently approved the project. We later received Energy Star rebates. Toxic soil was remediated. For us, the project was desirable because the former nursing home was within a quarter mile of an elementary, middle and high school. It was easy for families to walk or bike to several schools, lessening the dependency on lengthy vehicular trips while promoting **Transportation Choice**. There were a variety of convenience stores in the vicinity and the project is within ¾ mile of town center and town government. The Town of Carlisle, with less than 1% affordable units, wanted to expand its affordable housing supply. Since this is a densely forested town with no building re-use possibilities, in 2002 it began researching potential acquisition sites. In 2004, it allocated \$2.5M of its CPA funds to purchase a 45 acre parcel, a former farm, Benfield Farms, to **Protect Land and Eco Systems** as well as **Use Natural Resources Wisely**. The Town set aside 10%, 4.5 acres, of the 45 acres for housing and the rest for wetlands protection, future recreation fields and passive conservation land abutting a large pond, Spencer Brook. It was especially important in Carlisle to protect the ecosystem and habitats. The Conservation Commission and Health Commission were actively involved in siting and approvals. From the beginning we kept all Town committees abreast of the project. We spent over a year jointly designing the project with Town members before it even went to the ZBA for approval. By the time it got to ZBA, Benfield had passed muster with nearly everyone in Town. So, **Planning Locally and Regionally** was a hallmark of this particular project. We also preserved land and rock deemed sacred by the Wampanoag Tribe. In the end, 26 affordable units of senior housing, with a community room for use by the Council on Aging and the Minuteman Senior Services Council, has been developed. The project is LEED Silver certifiable. Because the project has been successful and all Town Committees had been intimately involved, the Town is now getting ready to release land for the construction of 56-units of new family housing!

NOAH is about to begin the rehabilitation of an historic school into of 66-units of housing in the Town of Webster. Though all housing development has significant job creation and economic development multipliers, in Webster, the principle of **Increasing Job and Business Opportunities** is very clear. The Town almost tore down the leaky 88,000 sf historic Sitkowski School property but by **Making Efficient Decisions** and hoping for increased **Business Opportunities**, it decided to put the prominent, well-known building out to bid. NOAH won the public bid. They liked our proposal to preserve it for seniors, who are nearly 53% of the town's population, and to convert the old gym into a Community/Senior Center. This \$20M project is now key to the downtown renewal of this aging, working class town. The School and Town Hall sit squarely on Route 12 and predominate over the local geography. The Town has been trying to rejuvenate their older, but still attractive, brick buildings and businesses in 'downtown' to new uses. Their selection of NOAH as developer, the re-use of the historic school for housing and the move to create a new community/senior center signaled to investors that they were very serious about reviving their Town Center. In the past four years, it has become fact as large and small businesses have moved in. The national HQ for Commerce Insurance is also on Main St. A German company just bought a decaying property on the French River across the street from the school/town hall. A new police station was voted favorably to be built across the street (a local philanthropist also donated ½ the cost of the police station!). Adjacent to both Town Hall and Sitkowski, a library reconstruction is being pursued by the Town. Route 12 (*aka* Main Street) with direct bus access to downtown Worcester is in front of the Town Hall/School. The project will be LEED Silver certified. The Town has agreed to invest \$750,000 of their CDBG funds in this historic school rehab project. The project will also create about 200 jobs. We have **Concentrated Development and Mixed Uses** while also **Increasing**

## Business Opportunities.

In East Boston, we are building a 71-unit, mixed-income, mixed-use, combined ownership and rental project 300 yards from the Maverick subway and 150 feet from the waterfront. 'Coppersmith Village' will be the center of the Sustainable Principle bull's-eye. It will be built on the site of a vacant industrial parcel that needs Brownfields attention. It will **Expand Housing Opportunities** for affordable and market rate households. As mentioned, it is a short distance from the Maverick 'T' station. Transportation options are aplenty. It is certainly pedestrian friendly and there will be a separate bike storage shed. We are raising the structure 2.5 feet above grade and moving mechanical services to upper levels to accommodate sea-level rise and future large storms. It will promote **Business Opportunity** because we are creating a 3,000 sf foot outdoor restaurant looking directly west to the Boston Inner Harbor and we are adding 71 new households who will benefit from being a short walk to small businesses and other diverse food options. To note, it will also be among the first projects to have Sea-Level Rise adaptations. That is, Boston has averted a New York 'Sandy' event (one local expert recently testified at a NOAH public educational event) by only ½ a high-tide cycle in the last three large storms to hit Boston, including the pre-Christmas storm, 'Hercules.' Any one of these storms at high tide/full moon would push water well into the neighborhood, flooding homes and businesses. NOAH is actively working on Sea-Level Rise adaptations and mitigations with our East Boston neighborhood. We will build these safety features into our Coppersmith Village project and other projects that may come to fruition in the 500 year flood maps. Coppersmith will be at least LEED Silver certified. It will have **Clean Energy** photo voltaic elements on the roofs of the two 5-story rental buildings. The BRA has completed its public review and will vote on the project this month. We will take ownership of this vacant industrial site at the end of February and submit a One Stop in the next round, which is now likely to be early 2015.

NOAH has pipeline projects in both Everett and Haverhill. Though we do not have site control, we are in dialogue with the CEO's of both Gateway Cities. It is likely Everett will make a selection this winter or spring. We are a finalist. We would convert Everett's historic old High School into a new City Hall, affordable housing, a theatre, and in an alliance with the Cambridge Health Alliance, Middlesex Boys and Girls Clubs and the Malden YMCA, we would create a 40,000 sf 'Wellness Center.' The Mayor of Haverhill just told us he is rezoning the vacant former industrial site on city owned land he had put out to RFP last spring and will announce another round at a later time. NOAH had been the sole bidder on the City's 4.8 acre, Merrimack River parcel, which was 50 yards from the Bradford commuter rail station. We propose 113 units of mixed-income, mixed-use rental housing, a 2-acre waterfront park and a canoe/kayak launch that does not harm the sturgeon breeding grounds nor disturb the bald eagle nests along the beautiful river (**Preserve Ecosystems**). Lastly, it would allow and extend the City's new rail trail through the property, along the River and back into downtown Haverhill over the Comeau Bridge. We understand and build to **Sustainable Principles** in everything we do.

## Community Investment Plan Adoption

Please know that NOAH's current Community Investment Plan was added as an agenda item and was discussed, adopted and voted in by the Board of Directors at its November 21, 2013 meeting. Included is the relevant section from the Board of Directors Minutes of that meeting: "**VOTE:** There was continued discussion about NOAH's updated Community Investment Plan (presented) and CITC/tax credits, following last month's presentation to the Board by John Fitterer of MACDC. The CITC program is a donor-driven tax credit for which Massachusetts individuals or corporations (either for-profit or not-for-profit) can receive a significant tax credit after making a donation to a partner non-profit. The CITC gives a 50% Mass. state donation tax credit, *plus* whatever federal tax donation credit the individual or corporation is entitled to. ED Phil Giffie noted that NOAH's Plan included utilizing approximately half of the potential tax credit award funding to help stabilize the Gateway Cities of Everett, Haverhill and Lynn via creating 60+ new first-time homebuyers through down-payment/closing cost assistance grants. NOAH is asking each of the communities for a letter from its Mayor in support of this program. **The Board voted unanimously to adopt and submit to DHCD NOAH's new Community Investment Plan for January 2013 through December 2016 and apply for CITC funding.**"