

A PROPOSED INNOVATION AND ACTION NETWORK TO PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN

EQUITABLE MIXED INCOME COMMUNITIES

THE OPPORTUNITY



In most major U.S. cities there are now efforts to create safe, healthy, more equitable mixed-income neighborhoods as one strategy to improve opportunities and quality of life for low-income households. These transformative efforts use housing as a platform for a renewed attack on concentrated poverty and inequality. They seek to revitalize urban cores and create ladders of opportunity for citizens who have often lacked access to – or been denied – them.

Increasingly, health and wellness are recognized as critical elements in the development of mixed-income communities. Burgeoning evidence about the social determinants of health has made it clear that addressing health disparities among the U.S. population requires a focus on *place*.

However, the collaborative, multi-phase process of creating vital, thriving, inclusive mixed-income communities is extremely complex – and can fail to produce the full, intended results for those who most need them. Some elements of these efforts are very successful, but, depending on the quality of implementation, others may actually be counter-productive for some residents of disadvantaged communities.

THE VISION



We recognize, and share a sense of urgency about, what is needed: *a more coherent, systematic and field-based effort to advance knowledge, test new approaches to neighborhood development and finance, focus on the equity dimensions of creating mixed-income communities, and accelerate and advance human capital development as the critical element in creating thriving and inclusive mixed-income communities.*

Our vision goes beyond minor improvements to current work. Rather, we want to create transformative new capacity to deliver new knowledge and learning, hands-on assistance, policy and financing strategies and evidence of effectiveness to the field at the local, regional and national levels.

THE PROPOSED INNOVATION AND ACTION NETWORK



The National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities at Case Western Reserve University (NIMC), Urban Strategies, Inc. and the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) joined together to help improve, accelerate and better track the progress of the national effort to develop mixed-income, equitable and thriving communities. We will develop, support and accelerate change through an **Innovation and Action Network** of redevelopment initiatives in 8-10 cities. The focus will be on cities with neighborhood-wide mixed-income revitalization initiatives that place housing transformation within a broader commitment to create healthy, thriving and equitable communities. With Network partners, we will:

- **Advance the larger equitable development field's knowledge and experience** in areas that often impede progress, so that the collective experience can advance change (with a major focus on addressing how mixed-income revitalization efforts can address the health challenges of neighborhood residents, broadly defined, and how to amplify positive health outcomes);
- **Create an accountability framework** for neighborhood transformation efforts that defines a results-based, practical, comprehensive and generally accepted set of metrics and methods for continuous learning and measuring progress in multiple domains;
- **Formulate sustainable comprehensive financing strategies** so that strong human capital development (e.g., a focus on strategies for stable, economically successful families; youth development; and strong early childhood initiatives), are part of the "new normal" of how mixed-income communities are created and sustained;
- **Craft local, state and federal policy strategies** that support what we learn about sustainable finance strategies and impact practice in related domains (e.g., education, income supports, youth development, transportation planning, etc.) that are critical to communities' success; and
- Through the Network, **make technical assistance available and disseminate information** to assist the broader field to share learning in real time.



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INITIAL PRIORITIES

The foundational principle of the Network is for development partnerships themselves to identify, test and assess strategies they feel are most relevant. Based on our interactions with likely partners to date, priority topics for action and learning are likely to include:

- *Putting in place human capital development and neighborhood development strategies that are as strong, supported and successful as the physical transformation of housing and urban space;*
- *Incorporating in human capital development the health outcomes and the community conditions that affect health equity and health outcomes;*
- *Putting in place the policy and financing mechanisms that sustain approaches that embody comprehensive human capital development; and*
- *Ensuring that community efforts have strong resident and youth voice and leadership in both planning and implementation.*

What difference do we hope to see as the result of the knowledge-building, exemplary practice identification and action acceleration of the Network?



BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

- Residents of participating neighborhoods, including those who face barriers of institutional and structural racism and intergenerational poverty, will have increased opportunities for robust health and wellness, stable housing, economic mobility, strong early childhood experiences and education, and positive youth development – documented through rigorous performance and outcomes measurement;
- Innovative strategies to advance health – and the social determinants of health – are integrated within broader human capital development efforts;
- Unified metrics are identified for measuring the development of human capital and addressing health concerns and strategies in the context of mixed-income community developments and broader neighborhood transformation;
- New and successful revenue and financing models will support a triple focus on human capital, housing and neighborhood development;
- Recommendations for policy change will be advanced by the Network and adopted at local, state and national levels;
- Best practices, working models and cutting-edge research will be shared broadly with the field, and through a variety of vehicles (publications, presentations, and through other networks); and
- Ultimately, communities and development partnerships will be better equipped to achieve their long term transformation goals.



THE PARTNERS

- **The National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities** reduces urban poverty and promotes successful mixed-income communities by conducting high-quality research and making information and evidence easily available to policymakers and practitioners. Building on 12 years of mixed-income research, NIMC is the nation's central resource for research and information about creating and sustaining mixed-income communities.
- **Urban Strategies, Inc.** has a 38-year track record as the premier national provider of human capital development as part of creating mixed-income communities. It has a broad national portfolio that includes 30 neighborhoods in 24 cities.
- **The Center for the Study of Social Policy** brings 37 years of experience and a strong focus on equity to work with policymakers, public systems and communities to improve well-being for children and families who are most often left behind. It has provided technical assistance to dozens of communities in every area in the nation on coordinating and integrating public systems and private resources into results-driven solutions.

National Initiative on Mixed-Income Communities



URBAN STRATEGIES

Center for the Study of Social Policy