<u>NEW YORK STATE HOUSING STABILIZATION FUND</u>

The grants from the New York State Housing Stabilization fund are being deployed in municipalities across New York State in five key areas:

1) Zombie and Vacant Properties Grant Program

These flexible grants, totaling $12.6 million, are earmarked for code enforcement and housing quality improvement in New York State municipalities. They are designed to fund local enforcement of the New York State Abandoned Property Neighborhood Relief Act of 2016 (aka the "Zombie Law") and other vacant property initiatives. LISC is working with 76 cities, towns and villages, enabling them to deploy the funds for the following efforts:

- Connect at-risk homeowners to foreclosure prevention programs.
- Inventory and assess their zombie (vacants with liens) and other vacant properties and develop plans for repurposing them and restoring them to the tax rolls.
- Enforce the obligation of banks to maintain vacant properties during the foreclosure process.
- Increase capacity by adding staff within the Code Enforcement, Corporation Counsel and other other municipal offices to assist with enforcement issues related to vacant or highly distressed homes.
- Research and develop innovative local policies to address housing vacancy and distress.
- Create interdepartmental task forces to prioritize problem vacant properties and develop strategies to transform them into community assets.
- Purchase and implement new technology to enable interdepartmental property data sharing and analysis to use municipal resources strategically to revitalize housing and neighborhoods.

2) **Land Bank Capitalization Program**

These grants, totaling $12.8 million, are providing resources to thirteen land banks to acquire, rehabilitate or demolish deteriorated, vacant homes and to construct new homes on vacant land. The crucial work of the land banks fosters affordable homeownership and rental opportunities and removes deteriorated, abandoned structures to enable the land to be repurposed – all with the goal of revitalizing neighborhoods and supporting them to be vibrant places to live. With LISC grants, land banks are:

- Acquiring and stabilizing seven properties for transfer to Habitat for Humanity to rehabilitate, using volunteers and donated materials, to create homeownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income families.

- Acquiring, stabilizing and transferring a group of one-to-four family houses, concentrated in a four block area of a historic district, to a high quality nonprofit affordable housing developer to create 45 rental apartments affordable to households ranging from extremely low- to moderate-income with apartments set aside for people at risk of becoming homeless.

3) AmeriCorps Members for Land Banks

In partnership with **LISC's National AmeriCorps Program**, we provide AmeriCorps members to serve at land banks throughout New York State. Their service enables land banks to inventory and evaluate properties for potential acquisition and to engage their communities in this work. To date, 21 LISC AmeriCorps members have participated.

4) Subsidies for Affordable Multifamily Rental Housing and Services and Programs

These housing grants, totaling over $44 million, have been committed to twenty affordable housing developments throughout New York State, to complete the following:

- Creating a community hub in affordable senior housing including a senior center, health center, and pharmacy and back-up generators to create a "cooling center" in the event of power loss.
- Building affordable rental housing complex for both families and developmentally disabled adults in an integrated, community setting on a campus with support services.
- Demolishing a vacant, severely deteriorated school building and replacing it with affordable housing for very-low income seniors in the city center that both revitalizes the property and makes the downtown accessible to the residents.
- Constructing and rehabilitating apartments to house families and adults with physical disabilities including traumatic brain injury.
- Financing infrastructure improvements to prepare the downtown property for construction of a mixed-income housing development on the site of an underutilized expressway that has been converted to development parcels in the central business district. Some of the apartments are being set aside for formerly incarcerated, homeless people who are graduating from transitional housing.
- Renovating housing into affordable housing for domestic violence survivors with on-site services.
- Financing to enable a consortium of ten nonprofit community development corporations who are placing portions of their affordable housing portfolios in a jointly operated entity to create a balance sheet large enough to enable the consortium to successfully compete to obtain and rehabilitate existing affordable

housing developments and build new ones to be operated as permanent affordable housing.

5) "BuildingBlocks" Tech Platform for Fifteen Cities and Towns

LISC has also used grant proceeds to purchase two-year licenses, for fifteen cities and towns, to BuildingBlocks, a cloud-based application designed specifically to coordinate housing and asset management-related data for local governments. The platform integrates disparate datasets from across municipal departments—such as Code Enforcement, Legal, Police, and Fire—into a single, map-based dashboard that provides property details.

BuildingBlocks also overlays market-strength indicators—including income levels, and vacancy rates, and other relevant publicly available information—to inform decision-making. Easier access to cross-departmental data available in one easy to use format is intended to help municipalities to craft or refine strategies to deploy limited housing and code enforcement resources efficiently and equitably.

For a short demonstration of BuildingBlocks see https://vimeo.com/211261548.

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