



WORKING GROUP STRATEGY GUIDE

Housing and Neighborhood Improvements

Priority Outcomes

- Distressed housing is replaced with energy efficient, financially viable, mixed income housing that is sustainable over time.
- Neighborhood amenities are as good or better than those available in other Chicago Heights neighborhoods

Framing the Challenge

- How can we create a neighborhood that attracts people with choice?
 - Attracting new, modern housing will be a game changer in the South Suburbs.
 - Visual transformation is needed.
 - Maximize assets and create first-class amenities.
 - Create the prospect of rising property values.
 - The use of incentives for homebuyers may be needed.

What Neighborhood Residents Have Told Us

- Need to clean up the Downtown/East Side Neighborhood so that it is more visually appealing, especially along Lincoln Highway as the gateway to the community. This involves addressing property maintenance issues, infrastructure improvements (streets, alleys, street lights, etc.), developing vacant property, beautification, and continued demolition of vacant and dilapidated buildings.
- Desire for a mix of housing types and more owner-occupied housing. In addition to building new housing, there is a need to rehab the existing housing stock. New/rehabbed housing should include modern amenities standard in today's housing market.
- Find a way to bring retail and other commercial activity back to the Downtown.
- Desire for additional community facilities such as a youth center, senior recreation center, community learning center, community gardens, parks, arts facilities, computer center, etc. Parks should be located close to housing.

Assets

- Lots of vacant land
- New single-family houses built under NSP program along 16th Street
- Anchor institutions (churches, Jones Center, Lincoln-Gavin School, City facilities, etc.) with historic neighborhood roots

Challenges

- Creating the kind neighborhood that will attract new residents.
- Securing funding to demolish additional vacant and dilapidated buildings
- Public housing units that are obsolete and in need of replacement
- Poorly buffered housing immediately adjacent to industrial uses
- Recently-built single-family homes aren't in locations that can be seen from major arterials – so the positive impact of recent investment is somewhat hidden and not fully-captured
- Not enough neighborhood residents (population density) to support new commercial uses
- Finding funding to address identified infrastructure improvement needs