



Choice Neighborhoods Initiative



Revitalizing Washington Village & South Norwalk



www.norwalkcni.org

The Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

Housing Authority of the City of Norwalk & the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

project DETAILS

The Norwalk Housing Authority and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency were awarded a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant (CNI) from HUD for South Norwalk in 2014. This undertaking will be based on the community-driven Transformation Plan created through a \$500,000 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant awarded in 2010. The effort will lead to the re-development of the Washington Village public housing development, recovering brownfields and improving public amenities in this high opportunity area. The CNI designated target area is approximately 100 acres.

key PARTNERS

Trinity Financial | Housing Opportunities Unlimited | Norwalk Community College | Family & Children's Agency | Bridgeport Rescue Mission | Riverbrook Regional YMCA | CT Association for Human Services | Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust | Person-to-Person

key FUNDERS

U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development | the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency | the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority | the Connecticut Department of Housing | City of Norwalk | TD Bank | Goldman Sachs | Red Stone Equity Partners | the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development

committed CAPITAL

CNI Housing Committed: \$21.4 million

Additional Housing Investment: \$137 million

CNI People Committed: \$5.4 million

Additional People Investment: \$18.8 million

CNI Neighborhood Committed: \$3.2 million

Additional Neighborhood Investment: \$15.5 million

neighborhood BACKGROUND & VISION

Norwalk's Choice Neighborhood, South Norwalk, is ready for significant change. South Norwalk is considered the City's only truly walkable area, and "SoNo," the area around Washington St., is a regional dining and entertainment destination. Despite these successes, the community struggles with commercial vacancies, poverty, unemployment, the obsolete Washington Village public housing project, and a perception of crime that deters investment. The neighborhood also lies in a 100-year flood plain and experiences persistent, property-damaging flooding. The area was hit particularly hard by 2012's Superstorm Sandy, which caused severe damage to the Washington Village property and the displacement of residents.

Sandy's damage was a wake-up call for immediate action that includes new storm-resilient infrastructure and housing. This fact, coupled with growing demand for private development along the river, has rallied the entire Norwalk community around revitalizing this key neighborhood. The resulting vision for South Norwalk is one of opportunity for all current and future residents of all incomes who want high quality housing in a safe and welcoming neighborhood, for businesses along Washington and South Main Streets that want to be part of a thriving commercial district, and for children and parents who want high-quality education and economic opportunities.

The Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan calls for rebuilding the 136 Washington Village public housing units into a new 273-unit mixed-income development on three parcels – the current Washington Village site and two City-owned vacant properties immediately to the north. To address State and FEMA floodplain regulations, the new housing units will be raised 2 feet above the 500-year floodplain, with on-grade parking under the residential structures. New street infrastructure will mitigate the recurring flooding with funded from the City and federal Storm Sandy Disaster Recovery funds allocated by the Connecticut Department of Housing.

Ryan Park, a beloved community park adjacent to Washington Village, will be redesigned to be storm-resilient and more responsive to community needs. Additionally, a homeowner rehabilitation program, employment, health, and education outcomes will be improved through case management, wrap-around services, and the enhancement of cradle to career educational opportunities.