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In 2017, LISC DC invested $55 million throughout DC, ensuring that existing affordable housing is accessible to all. By working with several of our longtime partners, including Manna, The NHP Foundation, The National Housing Trust, and Mi Casa, we were able to preserve nearly 1,000 units of affordable housing in DC through supporting Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) acquisitions and reinvestment.
LISC DC provided the Phoenix Tenants’ Association with a $19,000 recoverable grant and $1.3 million acquisition loan to help them acquire and enhance their 14-unit building at 505 Jefferson Street NW. Purchase of the property completed a four-year process of the residents pursuing their TOPA rights in order to preserve the building as long-term affordable housing. This building, located in the rapidly changing Brightwood Park, is home to a diverse group of residents who will now have greater control over their home and futures. These residents will now be able to keep rent affordable and improve the building’s conditions.

“For many of us it’s stability, knowing where we are going to be, where we can live, without fear. To put down roots and be a part of a living community—not one full of violence and crime—where we are comfortable.” – James Washington, president of the Tenants’ Association

LISC DC provided a $1.8 million acquisition loan and an $18,000 recoverable grant to the 710 Unidos Tenants’ Association to acquire their 14-unit building in Brightwood Park. Most residents of the building have lived at the property or in the neighborhood for many years, including the Board President who has lived in the building for 18 years. The residents of 710 Unidos acquired their building by exercising their TOPA rights and forming a cooperative. Though the tenants formally incorporated into an association in 2017, they have a long history of working together to address issues at the property.

By owning their building, 710 Unidos will hope to achieve “fair housing, and a more secure, cleaner building, giving a better life for [their] children.” – 710 Unidos Resident

LISC DC provided the Ben-E Cooperative Association with a $1.9 million acquisition loan and a $75,000 recoverable grant to help the residents purchase their 29-unit property in Ward 7’s Benning Ridge neighborhood by exercising their TOPA rights. This neighborhood is beginning to experience rapid change that has the potential to displace long-term and low-income residents. Many residents have lived in the building for decades. The residents of Ben-E enjoy their location, and with LISC’s support, they will be able to complete much needed renovations while preserving affordability.

“I like the convenience of the closeness to the bus and metro. There is a lot of development happening in the area. Everything has been upgraded except us [our building].” – Shalon Wooden, Ben-E Group Cooperative President
Anacostia Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) partnered with Flaherty Collins to create CT Campus, a new LIHTC rental housing complex located in one of the main residential facilities of the historic St. Elizabeths campus. LISC DC provided a $2.85 million predevelopment loan, as well as a $100,000 recoverable grant enabling them to proceed with the creation of this $100 million affordable development that will help transform St. Elizabeths from a vacant relic into housing that will benefit low income residents in the Congress Heights neighborhood. This project will create a new mixed-income community and include 188 affordable units at 50% AMI and below, 13 permanent supportive housing units, and 51 market rate units. Importantly, 52% of the affordable units will be 2- and 3-bedrooms, providing 105 lower-income families struggling to find high-quality, safe, and affordable housing a new place to call home.

LISC DC provided a $20,000 grant to The Sanctuaries to support the launch of its new initiative, the Arts Activist Bootcamp (AAB). The AAB allowed alumni of the program to become paid facilitators of workshops with organizations seeking to use the arts to help build strong, equitable communities in the Washington, DC area. Our grant funding supported the costs of curriculum development, training, outreach, and start-up costs, including equipment that was used in the Bootcamps. In addition to grant support, LISC DC is providing ongoing technical assistance to The Sanctuaries to establish systems that will help this newly formed nonprofit successfully grow in a sustainable manner, as well as connect to additional community development organizations working in DC neighborhoods.

The Sanctuaries, the first interfaith arts community in the country, is a safe space for passionate people to gather to promote social change in neighborhoods throughout Washington, DC. The Sanctuaries is supported by the University of the Arts, the John Pratt Company, and the Community of Sant’Agnese. The company is currently working on a new building in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC.
LISC DC provided WC Smith & Company, a developer with a proven track record in affordable housing, with a $6.9 million loan for the acquisition of Terrace Manor, an eleven-building, 67-unit apartment complex on Savannah and 23rd Streets SE in DC’s Ward 8. Over its lifetime, Terrace Manor has suffered from physical deterioration, concentration of poverty, and economic disinvestment. The complex is almost entirely vacant, and has both environmental and physical hazards. The project is a partnership with the residents and the WC Smith, even though it is not a TOPA transaction. The proposed renovation will provide at least 70 units (including 7 permanent supportive housing units) of much needed, high-quality, energy-efficient affordable housing.

LISC DC provided a $100,000 recoverable grant to Victory Housing to support the redevelopment of the historic Hebrew Home property into a mixed-income development. The Hebrew Home property is a 145,000 sq. ft. District-owned parcel located at 1125 Spring Rd. NW in the Petworth neighborhood. It will be transformed into “Spring Flats,” a development consisting of 88 units of affordable senior housing, a new multifamily 91-unit rental property (including 60 affordable units), and 8 units of homeownership. Overall, the Spring Flats development will activate a vacant parcel and create a significant infusion of affordable housing into a neighborhood experiencing rapid housing price increases and demographic changes.
LISC DC provided a $50,000 grant to Housing Counseling Services (HCS) to support tenant outreach and advocacy efforts within our Elevating Equity impact area, with the goal of preserving affordable housing and preventing the displacement of current residents. Grant funding supported HCS’s Tenant Education, Advocacy, and Counseling for Housing Empowerment (TEACH-E) program, which provides outreach, education, and technical assistance to the landlords and tenants of properties in the neighborhoods surrounding the future 11th Street Bridge Park. HCS’s TEACH-E program provided an on the ground “strike force” to ensure all residents know their rights and have access to prompt technical support to address issues such as serious code violations, unsustainable living conditions, and landlords’ overall disinvestment in rental properties that force their tenants to vacate. In 2017, HCS provided tenant services to 24 buildings representing 1,072 households in the impact area, ultimately helping to form new tenant associations in 7 buildings representing 447 households.
On May 9, 2017, LISC DC staff and members of other community organizations gathered for a groundbreaking at the site of the Commons at Stanton Square. The Commons at Stanton Square represents the community services portion of the Stanton Square project, a collaborative effort between two long-time LISC DC partners, Martha’s Table and Community of Hope. Martha’s Table will provide quality early childhood education, out of school programs for children and youth, and a nutrition program. Community of Hope will provide behavioral health services for the entire family, connection to health services, and supportive services for individuals and families; LISC DC provided $50,000 in grant funding to both Community of Hope and Martha’s Table for community outreach and planning, as well as $5 million in New Markets Tax Credit equity to Martha’s Table and a $735,000 loan to Community of Hope.

LISC DC is proud to be a recipient of the SunTrust Bank Lighting the Way Award in recognition of our small business and entrepreneurship work on the Rhode Island Avenue Main NE Street. The award includes a $25,000 grant to be used to further our corridor revitalization work. LISC DC staff attended a luncheon at the Tower Club in Virginia where we met other recipients of the award and shared more about the work we do throughout Washington, DC to move people from a life of financial stress to one of financial confidence. “We are proud to support the many ways these organizations are changing individuals’ lives for the better and helping them create a path to financial well-being.” - David Fuller, president of the SunTrust Foundation.

On May 10th, LISC DC celebrated the one year anniversary of the Elevating Equity Initiative at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. Over 150 people representing various nonprofits, for-profits, philanthropists, housing developers, advisory neighborhood commissions, and more joined us in this celebration. The event began with a showcase featuring our initiative partners, where attendees were encouraged to visit each table and learn more about each organization’s work. The highlight of the event was hearing from neighborhood residents who have benefited from the work of our nonprofit partners. To date, we have invested nearly $13 million in the Elevating Equity Impact Area, benefiting the people who live and work in the neighborhoods surrounding the future 11th Street Bridge Park.
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