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How CILs Can Transform the Housing Landscape

Making the Case / Estimating the Need & Small Group Activity

Presenters:

Ann Denton

Karen Michalski-Karney

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St. Louis, Missouri

Ann Denton

**Why Resources Should be Allocated
to People with Disabilities
&
How to Find and Communicate
Available Housing Stock vs.
Community Need**

Estimating Need

The next goal on the Action Plan is “Advocacy.”

A first step in effective advocacy is being able to make the case – demonstrating the housing need.

Your basic argument will be some version of:

- We have XXX number of people who need affordable/accessible housing.
- Our housing market has too few housing units that are affordable/accessible; we have funding priorities that are not producing these units; etc.
- This is how we want you to fix this!

What do you already know?

- Some communities, with or without CIL participation, conduct housing market studies or needs assessments. This is excellent. It produces objective data about the desperate need for housing.
- Does your community have a strategic plan for housing?
- If your community has a local market study/needs assessment or strategic plan that you did not participate in, review it for relevance to the housing needs of people with disabilities.

HUD Consolidated Plans

- If your community is 50,000 or higher in population, you have a HUD Consolidated Plan.
- THIS IS ONE OF YOUR BEST SOURCES OF INFORMATION!
- HUD requires communities to present housing market information, do an analysis of that information, identify priority problems and needs, identify goals and objectives for federal funding, identify resources.
- You cannot entirely trust the information presented, as it often uses old data or is skewed to support a particular priority. But, city/county staff have done the bulk of the research for you – let's use it!

HUD Consolidated Plans, cont'd.

Data you can use:

- Housing market analysis. Number of units affordable to different levels of median income households.
- Analysis of housing problems (substandard housing, for example).
- Accessibility should be included as part of the market analysis. Could be called "504 compliance" or something similar.
- Population estimates for various groups.

HUD Consolidated Plans, cont'd. 2

“Non-Homeless Special Needs” – this HUD term includes:

- Elderly
- Frail Elderly
- Severe Mental Illness
- Physical Disability
- Developmental Disability
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- HIV/AIDS
- Victims of Domestic Violence

Number of People Living on SSI

- In order to make the case that you do not have enough *affordable* units, you need to contrast the number of units affordable to households at or below 30% of median income (it is in the ConPlan) and the number of people on SSI.
- You can find out the number of people on SSI in your county here:
 - https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/

Making the Case

- Gather information that will inform this or a similar statement:
- In Anytown, our housing market has XXX accessible housing units. However, the number of people with disabilities is XXXX. So, we need to increase the number of accessible units by XXX.
- Same strategy with affordability: In Anytown, we have only XXX units that are affordable for a household living on an SSI income (\$750/month for a single person). Yet, we have XXX households who must exist on SSI. This means we need to increase the number of affordable units by XXX.

Small group work

In our small group work session, you will have the opportunity to do this research!

Karen Michalski-Karney

**Making the Case and Finding and
Communicating Available Housing
Stock**

Making the Case

- Find the number of SSI beneficiaries in your state, by county at

https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_sc/

- This gives you a base number of extremely-low income households in need.
- Basic federal SSI income, which is \$771 in 2019, always falls within HUD's extremely-low income category.
- You can assume that all of the households receiving SSI need assistance in order to afford housing—and this number is a very conservative estimate of need.

Making the Case, cont'd.

- Determine the number of Housing Choice vouchers your state provides.
- Determine the number of project-based rental assistance designed to lower rents in affordable housing developments (e.g., tax credits, HOME, etc.).
- Determine the amount of funding your state receives through their Continuum of Care award at

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/awards/>

You are building a gross estimate of the number of households that are within your state and need financial help and perhaps services to live in housing!

Making the Case, cont'd. 2

- Unless special provisions are made, people at the lowest levels of income are simply left out.
- Are people with disabilities getting their fair share?
What is a fair share?
- Do people with disabilities have equal opportunity to benefit from resources for affordable housing?
- Does planned housing development include plans for the needs of households receiving SSI?

You can be certain the data will show that people with disabilities are not getting their fair share!

Communicating the Need



One strategy to use is the poverty argument:

- Share of resources based on poverty.
- Leave aside the issue of disability.
- People at extremely-low income must be proactively served.
- Ask for a target or set-aside based on income.
- Most HUD programs are “set” to serve households at 80% of the median income.
- Households receiving SSI are one of the lowest-income groups eligible for housing assistance.
- Using HUD’s own definitions and rules, it’s possible to make the poverty argument.

The housing problems of people with disabilities are more about POVERTY than disability!

Communicating the Need, cont'd.

- A “good” ask is specific. Specific requests might include:
 - An allocation of 25% of HOME funds for extremely low income households.
 - Dedication of HOME funds to subsidize tax credit properties to lower costs for a percentage of units, making them affordable for households at extremely-low income levels.

Communicating the Need, cont'd. 2

Make your organization an informed partner.

- Become an expert on housing and you are more likely to be taken seriously when advocating for more resources or a share of planned developments.
- You are also a better partner for like-minded groups such as homeless coalitions or groups concerned with addressing poverty.
 - If there is no group or coalition in your community, start one!

And, One More Thing!

- People with disabilities have the right to:
 - Live in the community.
 - Rent or buy housing on the same terms as others (without any special conditions or agreements).
 - Request reasonable accommodation for disability when needed.
 - Have the same rights to housing units as any other tenant (assuming use of a standard lease).

Remember!

- Housing officials are compelled by law to uphold these rights.
- Every housing jurisdiction must complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing as a part of its planning process.

Ann Denton

**Action Plan – Small Group Activity
Data on Local Communities**

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How CILs Can Transform the Housing Landscape

Day 2 Wrap Up

**Facilitator:
Tim Fuchs**

**June 12, 2019
St. Louis, Missouri**

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