

2016 Impact Report

A decorative background featuring a large sunflower with a black and white patterned center and yellow petals. The sunflower is set against a teal background with dark brown hand silhouettes. The entire scene is overlaid with a wavy, multi-colored banner in shades of yellow, orange, and green.

**IN SERVICE OF
PEOPLE AND PLACE**





Community Progress envisions a future in which all people live in strong, healthy communities where widespread deteriorated, vacant, or abandoned properties no longer exist. Land and buildings are well-maintained assets that support community needs, such as economic opportunity, green space, and safe, stable, affordable housing. Local, state, and national leaders remained committed to preventing the systemic causes of vacancy, abandonment, and property deterioration and to building stronger neighborhoods for and with the people living in them.

Founded in 2010, Community Progress is the leading national, nonprofit resource for urban, suburban, and rural communities seeking to address the full cycle of property revitalization. The organization fulfills its mission by nurturing strong leadership and supporting systemic reforms. Community Progress works to ensure that public, private,

and community leaders have the knowledge and capacity to create and sustain change. It also works to ensure that all communities have the policies, tools, and resources they need to support the effective, equitable reuse of vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.

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DEAR FRIEND,

The Center for Community Progress helps communities find a way forward in their work to reclaim vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.

However, our work is not, at its core, about properties.

Our work is about serving people. It's about creating places of opportunity, places that are safe and vibrant, places that reflect and respect the culture, experience, and dreams of their residents.

In this annual report we share three stories from 2016 that are emblematic of our work to improve the wellbeing of residents and the places they call home.

We deepened our commitment to providing neighborhood residents with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for change from the ground-up. This work included hosting an intensive training and roundtable for delegations of community leaders from Flint, Michigan; Toledo, Ohio; and Atlanta, Georgia.

In Detroit, we partnered with the Building Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department to register residential landlords and bring rental properties up to code. This work is already helping to create safer, more habitable living conditions for the City's renters.

And at our 2016 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference, themed "In Service of People and Place," more than 1,000 people gathered in Baltimore to learn from each other about strengthening communities. They attended sessions covering topics such as equity in community development, arts and placemaking, land banking, demolition, and the reuse of buildings and land.

Throughout 2016, we were honored to have the opportunity lift up and support residents and communities who are engaging in deeply transformative work. We are proud to continue to help them carry their visions for change into the future.



Sincerely,

ERIKA POETHIG
Board Chair

2016 Where We Worked



2016 By The Numbers

75% of Cities who participated in two flagship programs, the Community Progress Leadership Institute and the Technical Assistance Scholarship Program, **went on to re-engage with Community Progress' services—**

demonstrating the value of the organization's assistance



1,100 People from 37 States & Five Countries

attended the national Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference in Baltimore



Featured or sought out as experts in 99 news articles:

68 local media hits, 23 national, 8 other



Provided technical assistance to 34 Communities

Reached 2,700 People through educational presentations



2016 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference





2016 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference

In Service of People and Place

The national Reclaiming Vacant Properties (RVP) Conference is the apex of our work to bring knowledge and tools to communities impacted by vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.

In September 2016, we were thrilled to bring the Conference to Baltimore, Maryland. Themed “In Service of People and Place,” the 2016 RVP gathered 1,100 people from 37 states to explore the latest tools to combat vacancy while supporting neighborhoods that reflect and respect the culture, experience, and needs of their residents.

“Every year I take a lot of notes, and I start dreaming big and dreaming small. And that’s what I love—it reinvigorates me and it gives me a lot of ideas,” said Maureen Milligan, Dallas City Attorney’s Office, Dallas, Texas.

Year after year, new and returning attendees are drawn to the Conference for the singular

opportunity to connect with practitioners from across the country over the course of three days.

Approximately 245 speakers shared their knowledge on topics including land banking, code enforcement, demolition, property tax and mortgage foreclosure, understanding neighborhoods; arts and placemaking, reuse of buildings and land, and equity in community development.

“[RVP is] one of the only opportunities that folks in our community—in the land banking community—have to come to learn about the techniques that other communities are employing,” said David Mann, President of the Lucas County Land Bank, in Toledo, Ohio.

The opportunity to learn about techniques from fellow practitioners extended outside of the Conference sessions halls. During 16 mobile workshops, participants had the chance to venture into Baltimore and learn firsthand about innovative approaches to addressing vacancy and abandonment. The workshops included visiting urban forest patches, witnessing how residents and nonprofits are partnering to revitalize the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood, and exploring how formerly vacant industrial spaces can be repurposed to support the growing maker economy.

“We continue to learn things [at the Conference]... and nobody else is doing this. That’s why we come back [to RVP]. And we’ll continue to come back. You can just put us on a permanent list: we’ll be here,” shared Michael McNair, Director of Community Development and Housing for the City of High Point, North Carolina.



The 2016 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference was made possible by the generous support of:

VISIONARY

Bank of America
JPMorgan Chase & Co.

TRAILBLAZER

PNC Bank

LEADER

The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Nan McKay and Associates, Inc.

COMMUNITY BUILDER

The Community Foundation of Greater Flint
National Community Stabilization Trust
NeighborWorks America

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Baltimore Greenspace
BB&T Bank
Civic Works
Dynamo Metrics
ePropertyPlus
Goldseker Foundation
Harsany & Associates, LLC
The Home Depot Renovation Services
LISC
Loveland Technologies
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Mortgage Bankers Association
National Association of Realtors
National Coalition of La Raza
National Urban League
Northern Trust
OpportunitySpace
Parks & People Foundation
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage

Resident Engagement





Resident Engagement *Community-Driven Neighborhood Change*

Residents are the fiercest advocates and most powerful change-makers in their communities. But they're usually volunteering their time, wedging it around work and family responsibilities.

That means community leaders don't often have access to the same resources or learning opportunities as those who work on neighborhood revitalization as part of a full-time job.

That's why in 2016 we rolled out expanded programming to build grassroots leadership capacity in neighborhoods impacted by vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties.

In September, for example, we brought delegations of community leaders from Flint, Atlanta, and Toledo to Baltimore for a learning exchange held on-site at the 2016 Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference. While there, these

residents learned from their peers and benefited from tailored trainings. For Joan, a resident leader from Atlanta, the experience was transformative. "I have come back really a different person," she shared. "I'm in a position now after the trip to really make a difference."

Over the course of two days, our expert staff guided the delegations through an immersive training in the policy and programmatic systems that impact vacancy and abandonment. These complex systems often mystify even those working in City Hall, so this training helped break down knowledge barriers. Complementing the technical content, Training for Change, a social justice and anti-

racism organization, facilitated a community organizing session on how to become effective catalysts for neighborhood change.

New working relationships formed within and across the delegations from the three participating cities. Creating the space, away from normal day-to-day life, to meet new people, can have a profound effect on the work that takes place after returning home.

One Flint resident shared that he was able to draw on those new relationships in the subsequent months to secure a fiscal sponsor for his fledgling nonprofit and a \$10,000 grant to improve a neighborhood park. Neither would have happened, he attested, if he hadn't had the chance to participate in the learning exchange in Baltimore. Joan, the community leader from Atlanta, has deepened her commitment to her neighborhood association, and recently took the helm as President of the organization.

"I'm way more committed [to revitalizing the neighborhood] than I was," Joan said. "I feel in my spirit [...] that I'm needed."



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Proactive Rental Housing Preservation in Detroit





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The foreclosure crisis resulted in dramatically decreased rates of homeownership.

Detroit is no exception, and the majority of people living in the city are now renters.

This includes approximately 60% of Detroit's children—and Detroit's kids deserve safe, quality homes.

Low value rental properties are the likeliest to cycle through multiple investors before ultimately ending up deteriorated, tax foreclosed, and destined for demolition. Long before, however, they are a financial, economic, and safety burden for the City, for tenants and for neighbors.

In Detroit, the need was especially acute: in late 2015, only 3% of properties in the whole city had documentation demonstrating that they were up to code and habitable. Therefore, the City of Detroit's Building, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) asked for our help to increase the supply of safe, high-quality rental housing.

BSEED selected two neighborhoods to be part of a pilot program, and with our guidance, began to implement best practices in strategic, proactive code enforcement. We worked with BSEED to implement changes that made it easier for landlords to schedule inspections of their properties, designed a system for tenants to issue anonymous complaints about their homes without fear of retaliation from the landlord, and made other improvements.

The resulting impact on the pilot neighborhoods was dramatic. After 6 months, the share of properties possessing a certificate of compliance in those neighborhoods

increased from less than 1% to 30%. More residents now live in safer homes that meet the City's property maintenance standards.

Lessons learned from the pilot program are now being used to expand the project's impact on the rest of the City. This includes increasing education for landlords, and better coordinating the City's inspection capacity. Leveraging CCP's recommendations, the City has also introduced a revised rental ordinance to move the city toward performance-based rental regulation to incentivize good landlord behavior.

David Bell, Director of BSEED, shared, "[Community Progress] has been an integral part of helping the city of Detroit turn around people's vision on blight...It is truly amazing- – the help that we get from Community Progress."



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The mission of Center for Community Progress is to foster strong, equitable communities where vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties are transformed into assets for neighbors and neighborhoods.

In 2016, our work was made possible by the generous support of the following funders:

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Ford Foundation

JPMorgan Chase

The Kresge Foundation

Oak Foundation

Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Foundation for Louisiana

NeighborWorks America

National Endowment for the Arts

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy



2016 Financials

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as of December 31, 2016

Cash and Investments	\$	3,395,305
Other Current Assets		135,140
Net Fixed Assets		<u>6,243</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	<u>3,536,688</u>
Accounts Payable	\$	51,470
Other Liabilities		<u>69,214</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>120,684</u>
Board Designated Reserves		1,850,000
Other Unrestricted Net Assets		118,518
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets		<u>1,447,486</u>
Total Net Assets		<u>3,416,004</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$	<u>3,536,688</u>

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

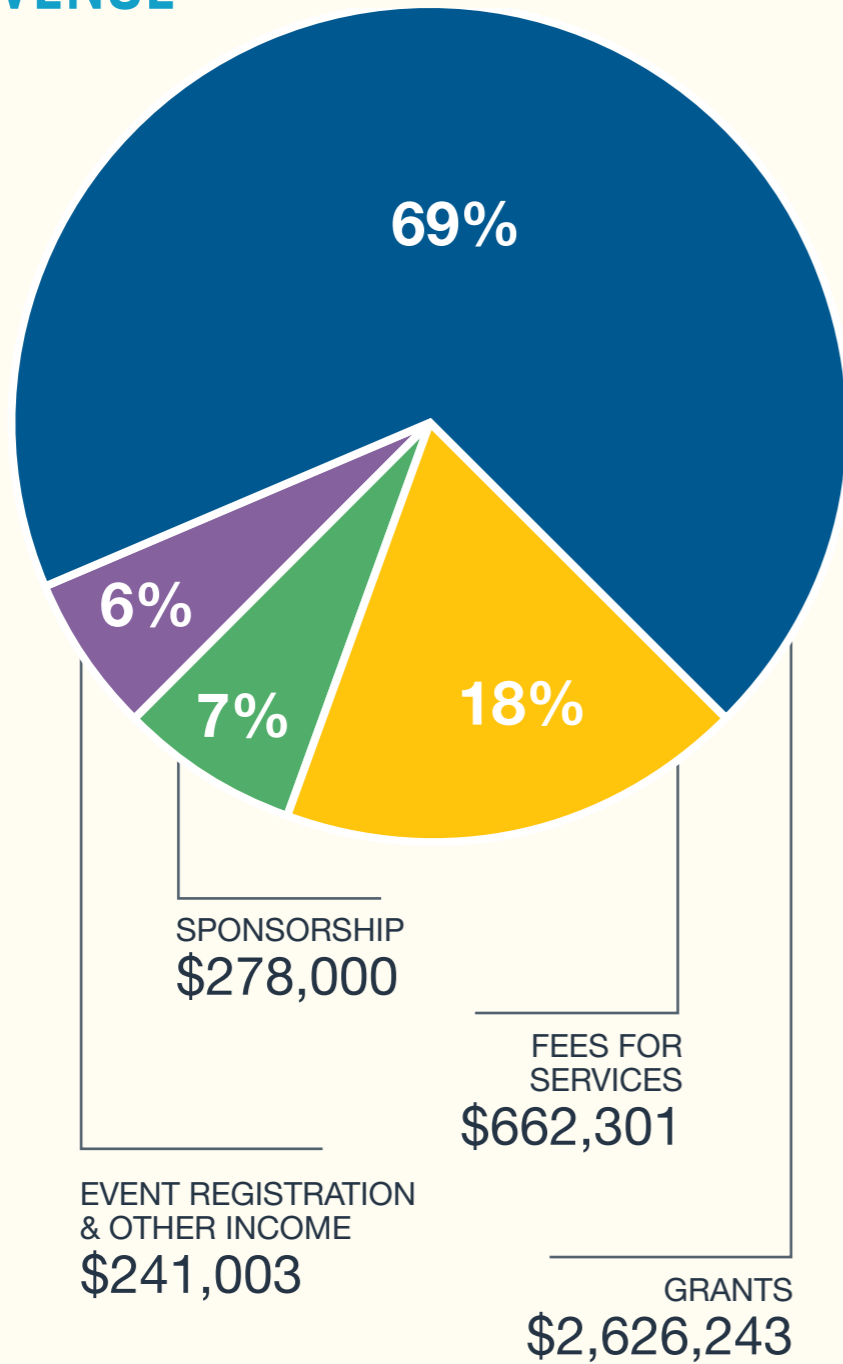
for the year ended December 31, 2016

	Unrestricted	Temp Restricted	Total
Grants	\$ -	\$ 3,627,509	\$ 3,627,509
Fees for Services	662,301	-	662,301
Sponsorship	278,000	-	278,000
Event Registration and Other Income	241,003	-	241,003
Total Revenue	1,181,304	3,627,509	4,808,813
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	2,626,243	(2,626,243)	-
Expenses:			
Program Services	2,983,224	-	2,983,224
Fundraising	169,778	-	169,778
General & Administrative	682,184	-	682,184
Total Expenses	3,994,472	-	3,994,472
Increase(Decrease) in Net Assets	(27,639)	1,001,266	973,627
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	1,996,157	446,220	2,442,377
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 1,968,518	\$ 1,447,486	\$ 3,416,004

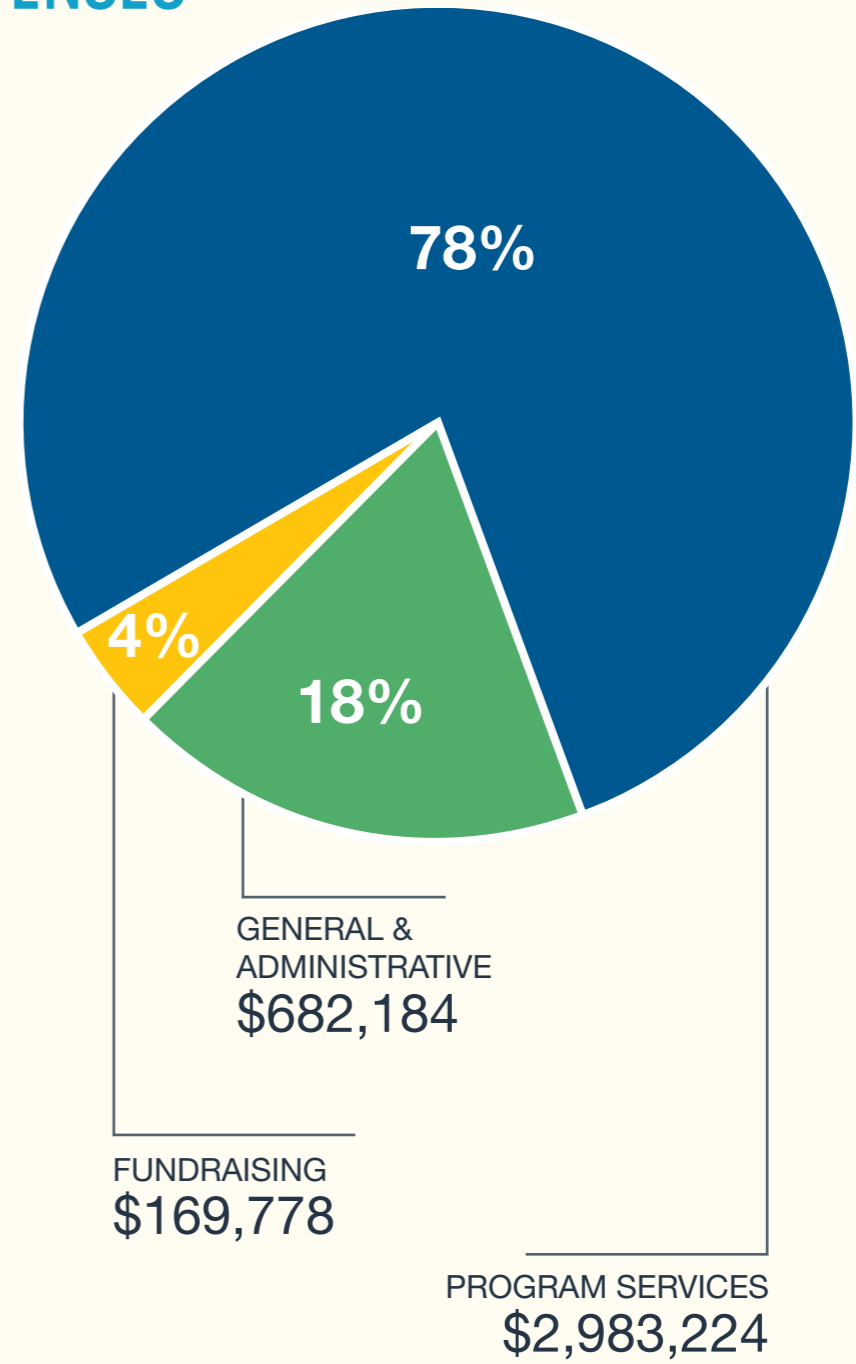
SOURCE: 2016 CENTER FOR COMMUNITY PROGRESS AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

2016 Financials

REVENUE



EXPENSES





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