

PIMA COUNTY

TITLE: RECOVERY FROM CRISIS: Stories & Strategies from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program

OPEN: Narrator: The US Department of Housing and Urban Development launched The Neighborhood Stabilization Program in 2008 to stabilize communities across the country hit hardest by the housing crises. We visited 4 of these communities in 2011 and now return in 2014 to learn about the successes, the challenges and the continued stabilization efforts.

TUCSON, ARIZONA
Map of USA and Tucson

Pima County
Population (2010): 980, 263
Area: 9,187 sq mi
Median Home Value: \$177, 500
Median Household Income: \$46,443
Awarded \$25,251,867 in NSP funding

Source: United States Census Bureau State and County Quick Facts

Pima County is located in Southern Arizona along the US-Mexico border. The majority of residents live in and around Tucson, Arizona's second largest city, and a major commercial and academic hub.

IMAGES OF TUCSON, FORECLOSED AND ABANDONED HOUSING STOCK

Gary Bachman, NSP Program Manager, Pima Neighborhood Investment Partnership (PNIP): At the time we received the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding our neighborhoods were in serious decline. We had a situation where we had an oversupply of housing.

IMAGERY OF THE STABILIZATION ACTIVITY IN NEIGHBORHOODS

Gary Bachman: The Neighborhood Stabilization Program has helped stabilize some of our nonprofit organizations, has built and completed communities and subdivisions, has provided affordable housing for hundreds of new homeowners but also, umm, helped us develop and improve our models for delivering affordable housing and strengthened our homeownership programs.

HOMES COMPLETED BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

2011 CONSORTIUM MEETING

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Gary Bachman: So I want to welcome everyone to our quarterly meeting.

Gary Bachman: We had eight consortia members, seven nonprofit agencies as well as the City of Tucson. And we were the lead agency.

Peggy Hutchinson: We are doing acquisition/rehab as well as a new small multifamily housing project for kinship families.

Peggy Hutchinson, Chief Executive Officer, Primavera

One of the exciting components of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program is that it brought together a very wide, diverse, umm, gifted group of community development organizations with the public sector. And through that partnership we were able to transform a number of different neighborhoods across the larger metropolitan area of Tucson, Arizona.

Gary Bachman: Primavera Foundation targets their program to the City of South Tucson.

MAP AND IMAGERY OF SOUTH TUCSON

Peggy Hutchinson: So, the City of South Tucson is a 1.2 square mile city. It's located very close to downtown Tucson. It's primarily Latina, but with this incredibly rich multicultural tapestry of traditions. But it's also families who have a high unemployment rate, and families who live on very little.

CHALLENGE: Extremely distressed housing stock

Peggy Hutchinson: One of the challenges that the City of South Tucson faces is the high number of distressed housing.

STRATEGY: Partnership with police & city to access problem properties

SOLUTION: Partnership with police and the city to access problem properties

JOEL GASTELUM, Planning and Zoning Administrator, City of South Tucson:

This particular property covers almost a full city block. It's a major issue, a major hazard That this individual has these people living under.

Peggy Hutchinson:

We worked very closely with the City of South Tucson with their public works, with the City of South Tucson Police Department. If, for example, there was a property that was attracting a lot of crime and was severely distressed and maybe dangerous, then the police department might call us and say, "Hey, we know about this property that's been really a thorn in the city, and, we did find the owner, and are you interested?"

Peggy Hutchinson:

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But there were many homes that were so severely distressed, or even properties that were blighted that maybe had a small structure or no structure, but they needed to be cleaned, we knew that we had a short window of time for developing the homes, and we wanted to have as big an impact as possible in adding value to the neighborhood. So, we thought about using manufactured homes.

CHALLENGE: Older, deteriorated housing stock – rehab not feasible

STRATEGY: Green manufactured homes

Peggy Hutchinson:

And we also began to educate ourselves about the green aspect of manufactured homes.

SCENE WITH ADAM THE WATER HARVESTING TECHNICIAN AT PRIMAVERA.

Adam Schwartz, Water Harvesting Technician, Primavera

So this is the end result of our laundry to landscape system. And so this water goes into the basin, soaks in and waters this pomegranate tree. It only rains 2x of the year here and the rain we get is pretty significant so it's great to capture and utilize as much of that water as possible. The gutters capture the rainfall, it goes down into this troth here and then into the basins. All the trees and plants in the basins are natives so therefore they use less water.

Peggy Hutchinson:

We also wanted to make sure that the homes fit into the neighborhood. We invited residents to come and look at the home. And so we asked them, "Would you be willing to purchase a home, or would you want to replace your home with this?" And they said, "Yes."

DALIH LEON, New homeowner:

Before we moved to this house we used to live in a one-bedroom apartment. Me and my two daughters. What I love about this home is the space that we have. We all have our own bedroom. When I lived in the 1 bedroom apartment I used to pay 460 dollars. In this new home I pay 489 dollars for a 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, living room, kitchen. It's energy efficient. It's a bigger space and less money when it comes to my electric bill. And it's a blessing. It's a blessing.

Peggy Hutchinson:

People know what they want, people know what they need, and for that change to happen, for it to be lasting, for it to have deep-deep roots, and for it to be transformative, people must be engaged in the process of that change.

2011 SITE VISIT

Peggy Hutchinson:

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Gary this is the site for the Las Abuelitas multifamily housing project for grandparents raising grandchildren and we sometimes call these families kinship families.

Peggy Hutchinson:

Las Abuelitas was the first multifamily project we did from ground up.

12 UNITS/2&3 BEDROOMS

Peggy Hutchinson:

We listened to a growing constituency in the City of South Tucson, in Pima County that says, “Grandparents and great grandparents raising grandchildren are paying way too much money on rent for their housing. They’re economically disempowered. They can’t afford to take care of their grandchildren because it wasn’t part of the plan for them.” And they also want to carry out cooperative childcare, cooperative programming together. They come to us and they say, “This is a huge need in our community.

MEETING ROOM

WE SEE PEGGY AND SAVAHHAAH, the architect WALKING US THROUGH THE PROPERTY

SAVANNAH MCDONALD, Architect, Poster Frost Mirto, Inc.

A special part of the concept of the plan was each unit has its own private patio and the whole community has its own shared patio in the center which is the playground and common green.

Savannah McDonald: One of the processes that we went through for this project was LEED certification, and we are for the USGBC residential program LEED Platinum, which is a great accomplishment we worked hard to achieve.

TRANSITION TOWARDS THE END

CLOSING IMAGERY OF THE NEIGHBORHOODS IN SOUTH TUCSON

Peggy Hutchinson:

We’ve seen many families who, once they get that safe place to call home they begin to build their assets. They become economically empowered.

Peggy Hutchinson:

We believe that everybody should have access to safe, affordable housing that’s energy efficient.

Peggy Hutchinson: Tucson, Arizona is a different place after the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

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For more information about Pima County, AZ:

pima.gov
southtucson.org
primavera.org
habitattucson.org
saltproperty.com

For more information about neighborhood revitalization:

neighborworks.com
nhc.org
enterprisecommunity.org
nlihc.org
habitat.org

To learn about other NSP case studies:

hudexchange.info/nsp