

Exodus Community Development Company

Mission

To positively influence the outcomes of systems impacting the life cycles of African Americans and other economically marginalized communities

Results: Affordable Housing with a Purpose

Exodus is a non-profit provider of affordable housing and culturally competent supportive services that reinforce bricks and mortar by sustaining community living environments. Exodus targets African Americans and community members earning 80% or less of the Twin Cities average median income. Since 1991 Exodus has:

- Developed 130+ affordable housing units in African American and diverse-income communities
- Guided over 400 people to homeownership
- Provided support that sustained the self-sufficiency of over 100 families
- Helped over 150 at-risk families find independence by linking them with community resources

“I thank God for giving us somewhere to live until we could do better. Because of Exodus we have reached that point.”

– *Katrina, a resident of Exodus housing*

Distinctiveness

Exodus is one of Minnesota’s few African American-owned and –operated community development companies, and the only one to develop over 100 units of affordable housing. Exodus collaborates with community organizations such as New Salem Missionary Baptist Church and the McKinley Neighborhood.

Goals

1. Create physical environments that affirm the potential for change
2. Develop programming that functions as a catalyst to systemic change
3. Develop and sustain programming that empowers people
4. Broaden the use of culturally competent services

“I like being surrounded by people who care.”

– *D.T., an Exodus supportive service client*

A History of Community Development and Diversity

Residents of the Lyndale Neighborhood in south Minneapolis established Exodus in 1991 when the shooting death of a cab driver underscored the need for community redevelopment. They founded Exodus to represent the interests of African Americans and diverse community members in the redevelopment process. Exodus now represents these interests throughout the Twin Cities.

Development Experience

Highlights of Exodus' 14-year community development history include:

Exodus Block

\$1.3 million 1993 development of 14 affordable housing units.

Finley Place

\$3.5 million 1994 rehabilitation of 89 affordable housing units; created welfare-to-work program.

Home Achievement Program

Counseling that created 400 first-time homeowners from 1996-2000.

Riverwest Day Treatment

Provided culturally competent therapy improving life outcomes of 20 children with mental and emotional disorders from 1995-97.

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)

Provided outreach services increasing school and social success of 70 Hennepin County children with mental and emotional disturbances and their families from 1998-2000.

"The program is still beneficial. I get help making lists of my basic needs and ways to accomplish them."

– Beverly, a two-year Hope resident

Current Work: The I-94/Highway 55 Corridor

US Census reports indicate 25% of Minnesota's African American population is located in a narrow corridor of low-income communities that stretches along I-94 and Highway 55 through north Minneapolis into Brooklyn Park. Residents of corridor communities earn less income, pay a higher percentage of it for housing, and experience a higher incidence of poverty than most Twin Cities communities.

The Hope Apartments

Exodus has responded to the Corridor's needs through development of the Hope Apartments in north Minneapolis at a total cost of \$1.8 million. Hope provides 31 units of affordable housing and works to link community support resources to tenants with mental health disabilities and/or chemical dependency or HIV/AIDS. Hope's rents are more than \$100 below HUD's low-income housing guidelines.

"There's no loitering in the complex. My life is safer and more responsible"

– Brian, a new Hope tenant

How You Can Help

Hope's low rents keep housing affordable and cover some operational expenses. However, your contribution is needed to support other operational expenses that would not be covered unless rents are raised. Expenses include:

1. Damage: Insurance is not covering costs for two damaged apartments.
2. Bookkeeper: A full-time bookkeeper is needed to respond to new tenants.
3. Uncollectible Back Rent: This limits Hope's ability to make improvements.

A one-time contribution of \$ [REDACTED] for operational costs will help address these needs and keep the focus on providing 31 units of very affordable housing.