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Regional consortium lands \$24M to clean up neighborhoods

SOAPBOX, 1/19/2010

The [Cincinnati-Hamilton County NSP2 Consortium](#) (CHCHC) has landed more than \$24 million for neighborhood stabilization efforts in seven different communities throughout Hamilton County. The awarded money is a result of a successful grant proposal put together by the consortium this past summer and is part of the second round of Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding.

Made up of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), [Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#) (LISC), the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County and [The Model Group](#); the consortium works together with the purpose of redeveloping specific neighborhoods and communities within Hamilton County.



Within the City of Cincinnati, Avondale, East Price Hill, Evanston and the Northside neighborhoods will receive funding while Golf Manor, Lincoln Heights, and Mt. Healthy will receive funding elsewhere throughout Hamilton County.

Some preservationists see the use of these funds as a threat to historic properties that make Cincinnati unique, and that it could cost the region down the road. Further, its alleged that the use of such funds without a proper review is illegal.

"These funds should yank these funds unless the city and county can provide a process to the State for [Section 106 review](#) that provides for public input on those properties that will either be demolished or rehabbed as part of this process," said historic preservationist Paul Wilham. "The preservation community should insist that federal law be followed and a proper Section 106 review takes place."

As part of the application, CHCHC has committed to not exceed a 10 percent threshold for demolition activities, but has proposed demolition of blighted structures in all seven of the targeted areas.

According to the CHCHC, the targeted communities have lower economic indicators that result in higher numbers of homes that end up vacant. This, in combination with overwhelmed local code enforcement agencies, has led to homes becoming blighted and becoming a destabilization factor in the neighborhoods.

Hamilton County Commissioner David Pepper sees the \$24 million from the [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) as a great opportunity for communities throughout Hamilton County that have been hit hard during the housing crisis saying that, "this competitive grant will allow us to clean up vacant, blighted and abandoned properties in some of our hardest hit communities."

"Those funds are going to help us have a big impact on Cincinnati neighborhoods," according to Cincinnati Mayor Mark Mallory.

"We will be taking properties that are dragging down our communities and turn them into new housing opportunities that will strengthen our city."

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