

## Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville Awarded Large Congressional Grant to Support Southwood

In December, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville had been awarded a \$29M, seven-year grant to support the revitalization and preservation of the Southwood Mobile Home Park.

The grant – part of a new congressional program called the Preservation and Reinvestment Initiative for Community Enhancement (PRICE) – was the second largest allocated under PRICE and will help Habitat redevelop the community without resident displacement. It will dramatically improve the quality of life for residents while contributing significant new public infrastructure to the southern portion of the Albemarle growth area.

Habitat was one of only 17 awardees competing with 175 municipalities and other NGOs across 44 states. Habitat reached agreement with HUD on a contract for the work in January.

What follows is an interview conducted with President and CEO Dan Rosensweig to address some of the fundamental questions pertaining to this award.



*Let's start with the basics: what exactly is the PRICE grant?*

Rosensweig: The \$235 million PRICE program is a brand new federal funding initiative passed by Congress, separated into two tracks: \$210 million was designated for PRICE Main and \$25 million for the PRICE Replacement Pilot. PRICE Main focuses on affordable housing preservation by encouraging revitalization and enhancement activities in existing mobile home communities and manufactured housing units, including infrastructure improvements and planning and resilience activities.

The PRICE Replacement Pilot was designed to support the redevelopment of manufactured housing communities to benefit households living in substandard housing or in disaster prone areas, and includes activities such as construction of replacement housing.

Because Southwood is both a preservation and a redevelopment initiative, we qualified for funding from both programs.

*What does being an award recipient of the PRICE grant mean for Habitat, and for our community?*

First, it is a huge honor to be recognized for the resident-led redevelopment work without displacement at Southwood and, more importantly, for *how* we are doing it, hand-in-hand with the residents themselves.

It also provides a huge benefit to the entire Greater Charlottesville community by allowing us to upgrade and install vital public infrastructure like public connector roads, trail access to Biscuit Run Park, new public sewer and water lines and a multi-use building that can host a variety of services currently missing in southern Albemarle County.

*How does the recent change in administrations at the Federal level change the grant?*

Legally, it shouldn't impact it. PRICE funds were appropriated by Congress, and we have a binding contract with HUD to carry out the work. As we await final implementation guidance from HUD following the change in administrations, we remain eager to put this award to work for the hardworking residents of Southwood and for the Greater Charlottesville community which badly needs new infrastructure.

*How will this grant help you carry out plans at Southwood and in the surrounding area?*

It's truly a game changer. This is the first large public grant of its kind from a single funding source that allows us to plan in a more efficient and coordinated way. Previously, we have needed to braid together multiple funding sources, each with its own timeline and requirements that were often at odds with each other. This often left Southwood and the County in limbo, not knowing when we would be able to start particular components of the project such as the replacement of Hickory Street.

These inefficiencies, when added up, could have resulted in millions of dollars of cost increases over the years. The PRICE grant will save time and money and, as importantly, allow us to convey a clear timeline to the residents and the surrounding community. In turn, families and communities will be able to plan

effectively for the changes. For example, bringing on-line a crucial missing component of the local public infrastructure – an east-west arterial road – will alleviate congestion in a growing part of the County while providing a knowable timeline to families whose trailers are adjacent to Hickory so that they can make plans to move into their new homes in the redeveloped areas of Southwood. It's a win for the entire region.

*You mentioned added community amenities. Can you elaborate on what this funding will support?*

There are a number of deliverables in the PRICE grant that will provide significant quality of life improvements to the whole region. The grant provides seed funding for us to construct a multi-use community building that can support a health clinic, early childhood education, after-school programming, business incubation, a farmers market and more. The grant also will help create an enhanced trail system, linking Albemarle County southern neighborhoods with Biscuit Run Park to the south and with Fifth Street Station to the north.

*Is this the final piece to the funding puzzle?*

Absolutely not. While it is a huge boost to the project, it represents about 7% of the total cost of Southwood. We will still rely on private donations, land sales, Habitat Store income, Partner Family mortgage proceeds and other public grants to complete the project.

*Is there anything else you'd like to say to the community about this grant?*

We would never have been in a position for this award without the support we've received from our generous community of donors and volunteers. We see this award as a vote of confidence in how we are doing things here in Charlottesville. It's an acknowledgement that we are effecting real, substantial change locally and creating a national model for how to reinvest in communities fairly and efficiently.

To all of our supporters, I want to express my sincere thanks for always standing with us to make dreams of community stability and homeownership a reality for so many families. Onward!

For more information about the HUD PRICE award, [go here](#).

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## UVA Mobile Health Unit Hosts Ribbon Cutting at Southwood

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On a chilly but sunny Thursday in January, the UVA Health System hosted the official ribbon cutting ceremony for their Mobile Health Unit at the Southwood Mobile Home community. This innovative approach to patient care meets community members where they are – in their own neighborhoods.

UVA Mobile Health currently travels to Southwood the second and fourth Wednesday evening each month between 2 and 6 pm, stationing outside of the Southwood Community Center to provide care for the community. Services provided range from general health check-ups and treatment for minor illnesses

and injuries to lab tests, pediatric care, and women's health services.



Healthcare provider Amy Boitnott, DNP, FNP-BC, CPNP-PC, regularly volunteers her time to staff the unit each Wednesday and loves working with her team and the families. Living with multiple sclerosis for the last 20 of the 25 years she's worked for UVA, Boitnott doesn't let her wheelchair interfere with providing consistent quality care, even in tight mobile quarters. She's most proud of removing barriers to care – which can range from geography, transportation, finances and navigation of a complex healthcare system – and providing “care without judgement and care without fear.”

“I've never seen stronger family relationships than I've seen in that [Southwood] neighborhood,” stated Boitnott.

Family members may schedule appointments during the bi-weekly visits, or they may visit as walk-ins. To schedule an appointment with the mobile health unit, call 434.297.7800.

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## The Habitat Store X UVA Women's Rowing Club

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The recent blast of wintery weather was no match for the UVA Women's Rowing Club and their volunteer spirit. When it comes to community service, they are just as serious about it as they are about rowing. And they proved that by turning out in big numbers, bringing two groups of 20 strong to pitch in at the Habitat Store to help dig us out!

Third year student and team member Skylar Gash shared sentiments from the experience.

“The team at Habitat for Humanity is obviously passionate and enthusiastic about their organization. Their enthusiasm created an amazing environment for our team to work together while giving back to the community. The Habitat for Humanity mission ... towards the betterment of the community...closely aligns with our team’s goals. We worked at the Habitat for Humanity Center on a day both mourning and celebrating Jimmy Carter, who was entwined with the charity for [more than] 30 years.

Specifically, the team shoveled the drop off driveway so that donations could be made after the winter storm and helped organize donations. It was a great time with great people doing great things for the community. The team wants to thank Habitat for Humanity for creating such an amazing volunteering experience.”

-Skylar Gash, UVA Women’s Rowing Team



If you too would like to pitch in at the Habitat Store, contact Rick Hazekamp, Volunteer Engagement Manager, at 434-257-0300.

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Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville | 434-293-9066

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