

Campaigne Place – A Unique Collaboration

For many years the Arizona Department of Housing struggled to create partnerships that could combine the resources and obtain the valuable necessities needed in order to fully maximize and accomplish its many goals and initiatives. The department quickly realized that it was through these strategic partnerships, around the community that they could fully succeed in overcoming the many difficulties and challenges that lie in front of them. For many years the department, along with other agencies and non profits had been working diligently to end homelessness in Arizona. Creating attainable housing is a key ingredient in achieving this goal and the department expanded on these past successes to incorporate additional partners.

Campaigne Place is a 300 unit single room occupancy apartment home community in downtown Phoenix. Like many real estate properties developed during the economic expansion, the project was burdened with a very high debt and an Arizona economy that was quickly crashing. Eventually, low occupancy and a limited cash flow forced the development to default with HUD.

The department realized that action must be taken on this centrally located project and began working with community leaders to develop a plan to restore this struggling development. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of HUD, the state of Arizona, Maricopa County, and a local nonprofit, Arizona Housing Inc., Campaigne place was able to be purchased using Neighborhood Stabilization Funds. By minimizing the debt, the project has been restructured to serve very low income people with one-third of the complex serving individuals at 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI), another one-third serving individuals at 40 percent of AMI and the final one-third housing individuals at 30 percent of AMI.

The extraordinary success of this collaboration does not rest solely in the initial funding of this project. Currently, the City of Phoenix is working with Campaigne Place to provide project-based vouchers for the units reserved for the individuals at 30 percent of AMI. Additionally, local non-profits, Arizona Housing Inc., Valley of the Sun United Way, and Corporation for Supportive Housing are developing supportive service programs to meet the various needs of the residents for counseling, training, and education. The team is also working with downtown businesses to develop a job bank for residents at Campaigne Place.

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During these economic times we all are learning to do more with less to meet the needs those less fortunate in our communities. At Campaign Place by combining federal, state, county, and city resources along with utilizing the combined experiences of local non-profit organizations we were able to reposition this strategic rental community in downtown Phoenix from a failing project to a thriving multi-use facility serving very low income residents and providing much needed housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. This unique collaboration between federal, state, county, city, and non-profit organizations, to our knowledge, has never occurred before in Arizona.

The department is learning that the purchase of the project and the development of supportive services and a job bank not only produced a great low income housing opportunity, but created relationships between these organizations that will pay many more dividends than just one project and open the door for additional unique opportunities in the near future.