Enterprise is a leading advocate for the Section 4 Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing (Section 4) program. Over the past 10 years, Enterprise has distributed approximately $80 million in Section 4 grants and loans to more than 900 local nonprofit organizations across 48 states and Puerto Rico. These organizations develop affordable housing, finance small businesses, revitalize commercial corridors, and help address local health care, child care, education and safety needs.

Section 4 is the only federal program that is exclusively focused on increasing the effectiveness of these organizations. Through grants, loans, training and guidance, Section 4 provides local organizations with the staffing, program development and financial resources to maximize the impact of the services they provide and ensure the long-term sustainability of their investments.

With Section 4, organizations develop core skills that strengthen their ability to implement HUD programs, raise capital for community development and affordable housing, coordinate on cross-programmatic, place-based approaches, and facilitate knowledge sharing.

**Spotlight on Section 4 Grantee: NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley**

Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation, doing business as NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley (NWBRV), is a nonprofit community development corporation that works with residents, businesses, neighborhood institutions, partners and communities to enrich neighborhood life and make affordable housing opportunities available throughout Northern Rhode Island.

NWBRV develops a range of affordable housing, commercial and community facilities focusing on neighborhood revitalization. Under its homeownership program, NWBRV provides a one-stop shop for education and financial planning programs that bring individuals and families into the economic mainstream so that they can make wise choices about their budget, credit and housing options. Moreover, the organization spearheads special initiatives and projects that bring residents together to plan and take action to create positive change, build prosperity, and make their neighborhoods exceptional places to live, work and invest.

**Local challenge**

Like other rural communities, Burrillville, Rhode Island, struggles to provide affordable homeownership and rental housing opportunities to its residents. NWBRV had a vision for creating an inclusive, intergenerational development in Burrillville that would not only help meet the critical need for affordable housing in the area, but would also maximize green design and construction, as well as universal design elements. NWBRV wanted to target the development to particularly vulnerable populations, including youth aging out of state foster care, low-income families and aging seniors. To do this, NWBRV needed to increase the capacity of its service providers to meet the needs of an underserved, rural area. In addition, NWBRV needed help to develop a comprehensive program model that focused on affordable housing as the foundational and stabilizing component for such vulnerable populations.
How Section 4 funds were used

In 2012, NWBRV used $25,000 in Section 4 funds to help it develop an innovative, affordable housing project in Burrillville, Rhode Island, that will provide much needed rental and homeownership opportunities to the area. The 105-unit development includes 75 units of affordable rental housing exclusively targeted to low-income families earning up to 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) and 30 homeownership units for families earning up to 80 percent of AMI.

Specifically, Section 4 funds were used to:

• Convene community meetings about the development and initiate resident focus groups to solicit input on design issues and strategies.
• Develop financial pro formas and enter into memorandums of understanding with partner service agencies to provide necessary support and services to targeted vulnerable populations within the development.
• Hire an architect to help with universal design and visitability, as well as contract with a civil engineer.
• Perform a market study on the feasibility of the project.
• Identify and access the financing necessary to close the project.

NWBRV also used Section 4 funds to develop and share best practices and lessons learned with local partners, other NeighborWorks America members and the Institute for Comprehensive Community Development.

How Section 4 funds enhanced capacity of organization

The investment of $25,000 in Section 4 funds allowed NWBRV to continue to develop quality affordable housing and provide the necessary services to the residents and communities they serve. This support led directly to the development of a 105-unit, inclusive, intergenerational, green community that provides 75 units of affordable rental housing and 30 homeownership units to low-income families, youth aging out of state foster care and seniors.

Moreover, the Section 4 grant allowed NWBRV to:

• Design a comprehensive program model to integrate housing and services for vulnerable populations into a larger affordable housing development.
• Assess the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of maximizing green design and construction in its development plans.
• Maximize universal design features and project site visitability.
• Develop and undertake agreements with partner service agencies to provide the necessary support and services for targeted populations within the development.

For more information about this project, please contact: Cheryl Gladstone, 212.284.7192, cgladstone@enterprisecommunity.org.

For more information about the Section 4 program, please contact: Sarah Mickelson, 202.649.3903, smickelson@enterprisecommunity.org.