

# **The Community Weatherization Study:**

## **How Three Weatherization Agencies Implemented Programs Now Dubbed “Weatherization-Plus”**

### **Introduction**

The Community Weatherization Study analyzes case studies of their subgrantees’ successful Weatherization Plus work, projects that provided more services and investment than traditional Weatherization services. Included are examples from three federal regions. EOS selected two successful agencies whose work had already been identified by other researchers<sup>1</sup> as rich in partnerships, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Toledo, Ohio, and Choanoke Area Development Agency (CADA) of Rich Square, NC and added one other from Region I, Community Concepts (CC) of South Paris, Maine. This report is designed for WAP managers seeking operational details about the management structure and approach of the three agencies; the research explores their funding sources and management approaches in depth. All agencies invited interested colleagues to contact their Directors with any further questions. The Community Weatherization Study was funded by the Department of Energy (Purchase Order AP 26 00 NT 00901). It

### **The Weatherization Plus Agencies: A Comparative Overview**

The three successful “Weatherization Plus” (WAP Plus) agencies studied are similar in a dozen ways, and yet the ways their WAP Plus activities were initiated and managed also differed in at least a half dozen ways. Weatherizers may identify with one or more of the factors compared. This detail is intended to assist others in determining whether the program approach would be appropriate.

#### **The similarities are as follows:**

1. All three are multi-purpose agencies.
2. All three are DOE/WAP subgrantees;
3. All three administer federal and state housing and community development programs;
4. All three are the designated as a “CHODO” (Community Housing and Development Organization as required for US H.U.D. programs) for their service area;
5. In all three states, Weatherization is managed in the same state organization as the state Energy Office, and
6. Their state Energy Office is also their state’s Housing and Community Development Agency;
7. All found expansion opportunities and resources in “niche” housing programs, i.e. programs aimed at subpopulations with a specialized need. For example, CADA and CC both assumed responsibility for providing efficiency improvement to a new special needs residential facility and to a homeless shelter facility that offers transitional housing. NHS created a Revolving Loan Fund for credit-challenged buyers.

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<sup>1</sup> Aspen Systems, Rebuild America Case Studies for the Office of State and Local Programs, U.S. Department of Energy, 2000.

8. All are willing to use and supervise volunteers for some of their work. CC developed a permanent apprenticeship program, as well;
9. All interpret their mission as serving the poor "*Plus*" changing their community physically and institutionally.

The differences among them are more subtle, but are they related to the different ways each approached the Weatherization Plus challenge.

1. While all are multi-purpose agencies, their list of services varies. However, Choanoke Area Development Agency (CADA) and Community Concepts (CC) are private non-profit Community Action Agencies (CAAs) serving rural areas. They offer family services and provide multiple and coordinated resources from Head Start to WAP; they also take a leading role in community development initiatives and programs. National Housing Services of Toledo (NHS) has a focused mission of delivering community development improvements and expanded homeownership for low- and moderate-income areas of Toledo. Its programs and services all relate to its core mission and it coordinates with other non-profits when clients need additional supports.  
Being a CAA is different from being a comprehensive "LPA", or Limited-Purpose Agency, like NHS. The scope of progress and range of personnel at the CAA is wider. However, the expertise focus, and number of connections to the industry sector (in this case, real estate, developers, and homebuilders) and government agency specialists (HUD, state housing department, state housing finance) at an LPA can be deeper. NHS is expert in many kinds of real estate development and buildings and has managed residential, institutional, and commercial facility projects.
2. The geography of the area – especially the rural or urban setting – affects the agency's local visibility, and its claim on resources; the variety of homes and building types it serves is related to location and climate.
3. The income mix is different in the three service areas. The City of Toledo is home to a heterogeneous economy and a population with a significant range of incomes. But the two CAAs serve large geographic areas with ex-urban populations and little economic growth; CC also serves older industrial towns in Maine.
4. The ratio of energy investment to other spending and the range of technology choices involved in the housing work, measured as the proportion of funds and the sophistication of the energy technology, was greatest at the most specialized agency, NHS.
5. The three organizations' identified different major challenges: outreach to the non-poor was most difficult for NHS; finding resources for community development projects was CADA's biggest hurdle; CC struggled with financing energy efficiency resources within their new construction projects.
6. The management approaches were different. The following generalizations are discussed in depth in the case study descriptions.

- a. National Housing Services of Toledo (NHS) has chosen a hub-and-spokes centralized management structure in large part dictated by the complexity of its financial mix.
- As much of NHS project work depends on financing leveraged from multiple sources, the financial manager of the agency closely oversees coordination of individual investments and at sites of project management decisions.
  - Not all their staff are energy/weatherization specialists.
  - It does have specialists in specific non-residential building types.
  - It is creating its own financing assets.
  - Its director is primarily responsible for marketing, leveraging and coordinating the resources the specialized staff will use, as well as for building partnerships in the community at large.
  - Its Rebuild America partnerships were a basis for acquiring skills in energy services for non-residential buildings and to develop the conventional housing stock as a market.
- b. Choanoke Area Development Agency (CADA) organizes its staff's work by stressing technical and financial "cross-competence" for individual staff members. It decentralizes decisions so as to require field-level control on the part of the site managers.
- It has specific incentives and retention strategies;
  - Its staff is trained to link with other programs;
  - Agency leadership maintains close coordination with the N.C. Housing Finance Agency and;
  - Its WAP-PLUS clients are evaluated for, and connected to, the integrated social and family services provided by other departments in the agency.
  - Its Rebuild partnerships were used, as were NHS' to expand the types of buildings and services addressed by its low-income program.
- c. Community Concepts (CC) is similar to CADA in its approach;
- Decisions are made by trained staff on the projects sites, in close consultation with the financial managers of the housing and energy programs.
  - CC also maintains a wage and benefits structure aimed at retaining skilled workers, and
  - Its staff is trained to link with other kinds of low-income programs;
  - Agency leadership maintains close coordination with the N.C. Housing Finance Agency and;
  - Its WAP-PLUS clients are evaluated for, and connected to, the integrated social and family services provided by other departments in the agency.
  - CC has expanded its technical capacity in the building trades and its capabilities with small commercial facilities without assistance from Rebuild America.
  - CC has projects not found in Toledo or North Carolina, all aimed at new housing development. These include self-help housing, replacement homes and land banking operations
  - Its leadership is planning to develop CC financing resources, as does NHS.

## **A Closer Look: Neighborhood Housing Services of Toledo (NHS)**

Neighborhood Housing Services of Toledo (NHS)<sup>2</sup> attributes its WAP-Plus success to its role as a nonprofit organization governed as a partnership. Neighborhood residents, financial institutions, local governments, and other stakeholders committed to neighborhood revitalization and to expanding home ownership by low- and moderate-income families make up its Board of Directors. The services it provides are all related to its core business. NHS uses energy efficiency investments as one part of enriched community development. NHS offers residents homebuyer education and other training programs, mortgage and home improvement loan programs, and residential Weatherization and energy-efficiency improvement programs.

NHS has an annual budget of \$2,619,383 and total direct investment in the community of \$3,646,417. It has a staff of 34 full-time employees. In FY 2000, NHS:

- provided 235 families with pre- and post- purchase housing counseling;
- rehabilitated or repaired 382 rental or owner occupied units (1-4 units build up);
- assisted 38 families in purchasing a home through homeownership counseling, down payment, closing cost or financing assistance;
- owned or managed 9 rental units;
- provided \$745,326 to community residents and businesses through Neighborhood Housing Services of Toledo, Inc.'s revolving loan fund, which leveraged \$2,901,091 from conventional lenders and other sources.

### **Housing and Development Strategy**

NHS brings together funds from the state Weatherization program, local utilities and property owners and developers to develop affordable housing in Toledo and all of Lucas County. It is involved in both the development and the sale of affordable housing units and the pre-development of market-rate single-family housing. After acquiring houses in its service area NHS either completely rehabilitates the homes or tears them down to build new homes. Table 1 is a matrix of NHS projects showing the sources of funding or other support for each:

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<sup>2</sup> All information about NHS is taken from its reports and from interviews with Executive Director Paulette Huber and NHS staff. All interviews were conducted between March and July of 2001 by EOS staff.

## **Elements of NHS Success**

### **Staff**

As the official NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center of Ohio, NHS of Toledo receives funding from Neighborhood Reinvestment for homeownership training staff and for purchase equipment. NHS has expanded the schedule of homebuyer-training sessions, conducted a series of public relations events, and invested heavily in marketing tools and personal contacts. While there are many training opportunities for its homeownership staff, NHS found the classes provided by Affordable Comfort, the Energy Building Association (EBA), and Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation to be among the best.

Twenty people on the thirty-seven member staff work in NHS's Weatherization Assistance Program. These twenty staff members are fully trained in and able to answer any type of question regarding the Weatherization Assistance Program and other NHS affordable housing projects, but not all construction managers and agency housing staff are proficient in Weatherization.

Further, the agency has invested in a full time expert fiscal manager to help the agency manage all its funding programs and answer questions about how and when to combine funding sources. This centralized management role is vital to NHS's success; mixing other funds with weatherization can be difficult due to management and organizational capacity issues. An expert fiscal manager ensures that NHS follows funding program guidelines and demonstrates risk adverse behavior in utilizing funding.

NHS of Toledo is a member of the Energy Star Alliance, a group of builders, product manufactures, utility companies, retailers; HERS raters who come together to pool resources and share leads. NHS staff meets with agencies that provide social services including the CAAs, so it can refer clients.

### **Marketing**

NHS of Toledo heavily markets to promote its Weatherization and energy efficiency activities. The agency recommends that agencies wanting to use the media to market their services to be prepared to treat the media well and devote considerable senior staff resources to this task. The biggest barrier the agency faces in marketing its services is the perception that the services it offers are only for the poor. Through the Energy Star Alliance, the agency hosts consumer seminars to reach consumers who can afford market-rate housing. NHS spends time educating others about its services and the benefits of energy efficiency measures. A full-time staff manager does marketing and media outreach to publicize the agency's energy efficiency and related services.

**Table 1. Neighborhood Housing Services Programs, Partners, and Funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>Housing Development</b>			
Low and Moderate-Income Energy Star Housing Home Ownership	Homeownership training Development and sale of affordable housing units	NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center of Toledo Home Depot Aspen Systems Technology	Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation Private construction financing H.O.M.E. funding from Toledo Dept. of Neighborhoods  Banks and Insurance Companies  National City Community Development Corporation NeighborWorks® Full-Cycle Lending Program
Energy Star Market-Rate Housing	Pre-development of market-rate single-family housing	Owens – Corning Corp. Starboard Side Development, Ltd.	Private Construction Financing (Banking etc.)
<b>Energy Programs</b>			
Ohio Home Weatherization Program	Energy efficiency program for low-income homeowners or renters: insulation of attics.	Ohio Department of Development Columbia Gas Corporation Aspen Systems Toledo Edison	U.S. Department Of Energy Utility Companies (System-Benefit Fund)
Rebuild Toledo	Energy efficiency audits and ratings Management of retrofits in housing and other building types	US DOE’s Rebuild America Lucas County Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA)  Randal Homes McPartland Construction City of Toledo’s Dept. of Neighborhoods Building Science Consortium  Ohio State Office of Energy Fifth Third Bank	LMHA City Ohio State Energy Offices

## **Leveraged Programs and Resources**

### **Federal WAP and Utility Energy Programs Combined**

During 1999-2000, the agency delivered energy conservation and Weatherization assistance to five hundred and twenty-six low-income households, for a total investment of approximately one million dollars. Of those units, 296 received \$186,888 from the federal **Home Weatherization Assistance Program**, 193 units also received \$742,937 from the Columbia Gas **Warm Choice Program** and 37 units received \$70,128 from the **Toledo Edison Program**.

NHS receives Ohio's energy efficiency program funding directly from local gas and electricity utilities along with the DOE funding. It is the utility that provides the list of eligible customers, as NHS does not administer the energy assistance program. NHS selects the units from the eligible pool and selects the utility funding measures to use in the WAP program as appropriate. After 2001, the electric program will change, but its "menu" of measures was:

- insulation on electric hot water heaters,
- compact fluorescent light bulbs,
- testing and replacement of inefficient refrigerators,
- testing and replacement of inefficient heaters, and
- electrical system upgrades.

This last feature that is not common in the nation's utility DSM programs. For gas customers, all the same measures WAP offers are allowable, as well as replacement of unsafe gas fired heating units.

Utility funding offers more flexibility than the federal funds in that NHS may combine them with new housing development. Although NHS has been successful with mixing private funds with WAP housing programs, the agency feels that some funds can be difficult to mix due to regulators and organizational capacity issues.

### **Federal and Local Housing and Community Development Resources Combined**

NHS's affordable housing development is funded through private construction financing from a Fifth Third Bank line of credit, from equity investment by the National City Community Development Corporation as well as through HOME funding granted from H.U.D federal sources to the City's Department of Neighborhoods.

## **Rebuild America Partnership**

NHS of Toledo is an active member of the Department of Energy's Rebuild America program that fosters a nationwide network of community partnerships providing agencies with access to the resources needed to retrofit existing buildings. The goal of Rebuild Toledo is to increase awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency for commercial and multifamily building owners. When the City of Toledo received funding to become a DOE Rebuild America partner, the city sub-granted the management of the entire program to NHS of Toledo.

The agency's experience with weatherizing single-family homes made it an ideal candidate to manage the Rebuild Toledo program. In addition, the agency's in-house Weatherization crew could easily learn to provide audits of Rebuild Partner's multi-family and commercial buildings.

Through the Rebuild Toledo Partnership, NHS has formed alliances with developers and community development corporations to promote the use of energy efficiency retrofits as a catalyst for economic development. The NHS's Rebuild partnership has allowed the agency to increase revenue and raise funds to use for low-income Weatherization. Part of NHS's Rebuild Toledo effort has included commercial space energy audits and the management of the energy retrofit of a 105,000 square foot indoor food market.

### Rebuild's Mixed Funds

NHS's first Rebuild client was the Lucas County Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA), which collaborated with Rebuild Toledo to retrofit a high-rise apartment building for seniors that had an inefficient hot water system and out-of-control operating costs. NHS combined \$450,000 in housing modernization funds received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and LMHA with funds from Weatherization and state programs. Mixing funds allowed NHS to conduct a more complete renovation. The initiative is projected to yield \$90,000 in annual energy savings at 1999 energy costs.

NHS worked with Randal Homes, McPartland Construction, City of Toledo's Department of Neighborhoods, U.S. Department of Energy, the Building Science Consortium, the Office of Energy Efficiency and Fifth Third Bank, and other experts to design and construct the first Energy Star home. At the time of construction, it was estimated that it would cost around \$250 annually to heat an Energy Star® Home using natural gas. The cost for natural gas for the Energy Star® home was \$235, \$15 less than expected. This is outstanding considering that homeowners of a typical modular home of the same size paid \$1,400 for that year. This achievement has earned NHS the Ohio Governor's Award for Energy Efficiency.

## **State and Local Toledo Home Energy Rating System (HERS) program**

NHS of Toledo is the only energy organization in Toledo and the only Home Energy Rating System (HERS) contractor in the area. The agency receives referrals from the Energy Assistance program as well as from private leaders and building owners. NHS Weatherization inspectors receive fees for HERS ratings. Also, the agency currently has four HERS trainers and demand for these services increases. It costs the agency \$1200 to train a HERS rater.

The market for HERS was built by a multi-year effort by the Ohio State Energy Office to develop ratings, to adapt the technicians and to train competent energy raters, and to market the service lenders and building owners.

### **Private Programs**

For the past five years, NHS of Toledo has participated as a member of a limited liability company known as **Starboard Side Development, Ltd.**, whose purpose is to develop market rate single-family housing in East Toledo, using Energy Star® modular housing. A mix of housing including 20 market-rate homes, 18 subsidized homes, and 20 upscale condos will be their first development project.

Local universities provide excellent resources and partnerships for CADA. With help from the university, CADA is creating a computer program to transition to a web-based client system to track from client application to the final outcome. Funding sources and uses will be part of the system which will allow combined funding sources to generate reports within a central database.

As of 2001, six affordable homes had already been built for families earning no more than 80 percent of the area median income. With down-payment assistance, the final cost to the buyer will be about \$70,000. NHS's **NeighborWorks® Full-Cycle Lending<sup>SM</sup>** that includes pre- and post-purchasing counseling held at the organization's **NeighborWorks® Home-Ownership Center.<sup>SM</sup>**

Because the neighborhood in which the homes are being built lies in a CRA reinvestment area, homeowners will not have to pay property tax for 15 years, thus leaving more money available for home quality. The homes are being built 30 percent more energy efficient than required by Ohio's energy code.

For a short period the **Owens Corning System Thinking program** provided heating guarantees for condominiums. Each unit has to be Energy Star® rated; NHS's Weatherization crew was asked to provide fee-for-service diagnostic/ratings and was reimbursed \$300 per house (plus mileage). (The funding generated was classified as agency Weatherization program income; it purchased laptop computers to conduct on-site energy ratings and WAP audits.)

NHS of Toledo is a member of the **Energy Star Alliance**, a group of builders, product manufacturers, utility companies, retailers; HERS raters who come together to pool resources and share leads. NHS staff meets with agencies that provide social services including the CAAs, so it can refer clients.

### **A Closer Look: Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA)<sup>3</sup>**

CADA is a private non-profit Community Action Agency serving a four-county service area in North Carolina. Like all CAAs, it provides a variety of social services to low-income families, selecting and coordinating the resources that meet each unique combination of needs. CAAs also engage in community improvement and CADA has a major role in upgrading, expanding and mobilizing resources for its many rural communities.

CADAs housing staff is trained to take an integrative approach to each home; this means a full assessment of the needs of the building that is informed by the comprehensive assessment the agency's other professional developed regarding the family's needs and goals. CADA staff evaluates homes needs and develops a strategy to get resources to address these needs. To do this CADA looks at what the family qualifies for and the needed investment for the house. The housing services CADA provides can be considered 'home' case management.

### **Elements of CADA success**

#### **Staff**

CADA's director says the primary reason for CADA's success is the staff, and that directing resources to personnel development and support is a key strategy. The housing and energy personnel are required to be multi-skilled, as at NHS in Toledo. They must know the industry, its financing, the programs and rules, and have the technical skills to go out into the field and lead crews which work on homes at a high performance level.

Effectively using multiple funding sources with Weatherization requires a CADA staff member who knows what each funding program does, understands how to use different funding sources, and can ask the funders the right questions about use of funds. CADA keeps such a position filled.\

CADA uses its own staff as crew labor for the Department of Energy (DOE) program, and bids out most of its rehabilitation work to private contractors. When there is Weatherization activity on a site, CADA's Weatherization crew usually does the work. It consists of two staff members and one consultant, all of whom can evaluate both what a home needs in order to be brought up to building code and to energy efficiency standards. For public housing projects, the agency may send its Weatherization crew to do the

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<sup>3</sup> All data on CADA programs from agency reports and interviews with CADA Executive Director, Sally Surface, between May and August 2001.

diagnostic testing. Certified rehabilitation contractors are also trained by CADA to do DOE energy audits and blower door tests on units they are rebuilding.

CADA's Weatherization department has low turnover. The agency provides competitive wages, good benefits, training tools, and equipment. Cross-training staff conditions them to approach a house as system, as well qualifies them to address multiple housing tasks. CADA believes in having its staff certified in various program areas. Having a qualified staff means having them attend much training, for which CADA uses Weatherization T&TA funds. For example, CADA's Weatherization crew attends training sessions for Section 8 inspectors, and its Section 8 inspectors attend Weatherization training sessions. In addition to training, CADA believes in holding staff accountable for doing things correctly. Staff accountability is maintained from intake to the quality of service provided.

### **Programs and Resources**

CADA believes well-targeted programs coupled with mixed funding can successfully address the communities' needs.<sup>4</sup> North Carolina has several state and federal programs whose resources can be used in a home with Weatherization Assistance Program:

#### **Federal**

##### **WAP**

The agency received \$271,000 from the Department of Energy in PY1999 for Weatherization. With these funds, the agency weatherized 116 units, three-fourths of which had other money combined with DOE funding. In PY 2000, CADA's annual funding for Weatherization activities was slightly less, \$235,003. Fifty percent of the houses CADA works on receive DOE Weatherization investments.

**The Heating Appliance Repair and Replacement Program (HARRP)** is a LIHEAP-funded activity created to complement North Carolina's Weatherization activities. HARRP works in conjunction with Weatherization to repair and replace unsafe and inefficient heating systems using CADA's Weatherization staff.

##### **USDA 504 Rural Development Grant and Loan**

In most years, CADA has been a recipient of these flexible federal funds which permit multiple kinds of housing investment.

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<sup>4</sup> Interviews with Sally Surface, Executive Director

## **HUD HOME and Other**

All the funding available to designated CHODOs from HUD programs is part of the mix of CADA resources. CADA counseling all agencies considering major low-income housing initiatives to seek designation as a Comprehensive Housing Development Agency by their state. In 1996 and 1997, CADA had funding from HUD's Housing Preservation Grants and from Enterprise Community.

## **Rebuild America**

CADA considers the technology Weatherization brings to housing to be an important aspect of the Rebuild program. The agency's skill in WAP delivery led to the formation of a four-county Rebuild America Partnership: Roanoke-Chowan Rebuild – in which CADA serves as the lead agency.

The Rebuild America program gives community organizations access to resources and expertise. For Roanoke-Chowan Rebuild it provided skilled technical assistance and resources to train CADA's weatherization staff as "Building Owner Agents." They are to assess energy needs of small communities, schools, small businesses, and multi-family housing and act on behalf of owners managing energy equipment and usage. This can be a significant source of income for the agency.

## **State Programs**

**The Single-Family Rehabilitation Program (SFRP)** provides deferred loans to finance the comprehensive rehabilitation of moderately-deteriorated single-family homes owned and occupied by households with incomes below 50% of area median. Under SFRP, CADA can buy materials to do diagnostic tests and moderate income rehabilitation. Once a home is rehabilitated to NC housing code, the owner usually has good housing for 20-30 years.

**The Urgent Repair Program** is for elderly and special needs homeowners whose household incomes do not exceed 50% of area median. It provides grants for emergency home repairs and modifications. Urgent Repair funds can only be matched with Weatherization money and HARRP. Both the **Single Family Rehabilitation** and **Urgent Repair** programs are housed under the North Carolina Finance Agency that issues grants through the N.C Trust Fund. Developing relationship with the state agency staff that manages these resources and learning the rules governing each was of critical importance to CADA in seeking resources to coordinate in its housing initiatives.

As a Rebuild partner, CADA requested an expert from Aspen Systems to help them plan projects. Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnered with the Summer Youth Job Training Program to train low-income youth to conduct Federal Energy Decision System computerized energy audits of public buildings. The data collected from these audits were submitted to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory to be analyzed and

presented to the 100 building owners who participated in the project to allow them to develop efficiency investment plans.

CADA crews and contractors, in collaboration with the City of Woodland, retrofitted the Woodland-Olney historic school building and renovated it into a 30-unit apartment building for low-income elderly. Since the apartments were designated for low-income seniors, the units were eligible for Weatherization assistance. Weatherization funded foam insulation installed by a contractor and energy efficient, apartment sized heating unit. CADA's staff audited the buildings, interacted with lenders on financing, secured vendors, and managed the work. Since Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan rented the bottom level for commercial use, CADA's staff was compensated on a fee-for service basis. The private retrofit financing package was designed to recover these funds from the energy savings. Rebuild partners help the CADA staff and the lender with the financing design.

Before its involvement with Rebuild, CADA had not considered expanding its services to the commercial building market. CADA's Rebuild initiatives are now matched by state funds. The Woodland-Olney Apartment project was a multi-million dollar project, and several funding sources were tapped to help pay for the renovations. A \$100,000 grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Energy Division awarded to CADA was important in conveying development costs.

Since the Woodland-Olney school was a historic landmark, also CADA learned to secure federal historic preservation tax credits, along with low-income housing tax credits. Although the tax credits expanded the pool of money available for renovations, they came with stipulations like design requirements that turned compliance into a time-consuming process. CADA sold some of the tax credits and used the proceeds to pay for the renovations directly.

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)/ State Office of Aging**

CADA received \$23,298 in CDBG from the North Carolina Office of Aging to assist 37 older families with home repairs. That program's funding comes directly from the Home Community Development Block Grant for Seniors. Half of these units also received up to \$600 in Weatherization Assistance to help pay material costs for the energy related repairs. CADA used contractors to make repairs. The staff referred both Weatherization candidate referrals and other eligible seniors to relevant CADA programs and activities.

### **Barriers to Mixing Resources**

CADA found variation among funding requirements to be a barrier to providing clients the services they may need. While Weatherization eligibility goes up to 150% poverty, an individual who qualifies for Weatherization assistance may not qualify for the other programs because of different limits. For

instance, both Urgent Repair and SFRS have lower eligibility requirements than Weatherization. Additionally, those who qualify for the Urgent Repair program may not qualify for the State Single Family Rehabilitation program. The matrix below shows some of these combinations.

### **CADA, Programs Partners and Resources**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>Federal Programs</b>			
Weatherization	W.A.P		U.S. Department of Energy
Homes of rural seniors	Received a grant to pilot a national program in 1996	DOE/WAP	Rural Development 504 Grant and Loan Program - USDA "Enterprise Community" Funds in 1996--HHS Housing Preservation Grant in 1997 - HUD
Heating Appliance Repair and Replacement Program	Works with Weatherization to repair and replace unsafe and inefficient heating systems	NC Dept. of Social Services	DOE WAP LIHEAP
Energy Audits of Public Buildings	Provide governments with assessments that lead to efficient energy upgrades	Aspen Systems	Summer Youth, Job Training (U.S. DOE)
<b>State Programs</b>			
Seniors Housing: Home and Community Development Block Grant	To assist seniors with housing needs (Not income-based) only rural	DOE/WAP NC Office of Housing	Community Development Block Grant for Senior Homes
Single Family Rehabilitation Program	To rehab up to standard/NC code – required Energy Standards Homeowner at 50% or less of median income	NC Housing Finance Agency	NC HPA Some DOE WAP
Urgent Repair Program	Elderly/ special needs homeowners with 50% or less median income and need for major repairs	NC HPA	DOE WAP, HAARP/LIHEAP NC Housing Trust Maximum funding \$3,500 per unit. (These funds cannot be matched with other federal programs, except Weatherization and HARRP)
Senior Housing	Converted a school into 30 apartments for seniors (Woodland-Olney)	Rebuild	Shared Energy Savings fees from lessees' tax credits NC Dept. of Commerce  DOE - WAP
<b>Foundations and Other Non-Profits</b>			
SAMI (Safe and Affordable Modifications for Independence)	Provides technical assistance and resources for building modifications for persons with disabilities	NC State University School of Design	NC Dept. of Social Services  Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
Group WorkCamp (may be used for several of projects listed above)	Nationally-based in Loveland, CO	Church youth groups  Local agencies	Provides labor and materials to rehab houses identified by CADA (local agency must provide match)
PassPort Program (may be used for several of projects listed above)	Groups work on repairing homes for three weeks	Baptist Church groups	Labor and some materials
Four-Town Upgrade	Converted an old supermarket into a library	Rebuild America  Local banks  Four county governments	Private lenders State/Federal historic preservation tax credits

### **A Closer Look: Community Concepts, Inc. (CC)<sup>5</sup>**

Community Concepts, Inc. (CC) is a private nonprofit Community Action Agency that offers comprehensive social services for central Maine residents. Its mission is to bring together and focus resources to help people in need “build opportunities for tomorrow.” The agency coordinates family services through a comprehensive Family Support Program; support for families can include Head Start, Early Head Start, other information and referral, homeless shelters and transitional housing help, home repair, and homeownership, support medical or job transportation, Fuel Assistance, DOE Weatherization, and business development counseling.

The CC’s Department of Housing and Real Estate Development provides the low-income community with expanded affordable housing opportunities, home repairs and rehabilitation, modern office space, safe children’s facilities and other economic development such as for alternative financing businesses.

### **Elements of Success**

#### **Staff**

Like its peers, CC emphasizes a well-trained staff. Competence in communicating with participants to customers is as important as are technical and managerial skills. Community Concepts maintain a high retention rate among its Weatherization staff by offering competitive pay, a family-friendly and progressive work environment, and generous employee benefits. The agency works to build trust among its employees and management staff by offering both technical and leadership training classes. DOE T&TA and state money only partially covers the cost of staff training sessions with the balance divided from program funds. Staff members include licensed skilled trades and licensed real estate buyer brokers.

Staff is allowed to try new initiatives and, to fail at them without penalty CC considers itself a risk-taking organization that is willing to learn from its mistakes. The agency tries to establish a strong management base, which has the ability to both organize and motivate staff and to coordinate and leverage new resources. Since the agency’s senior housing managers have years of Weatherization experience, they are given leeway to make decisions about program operations and are encouraged to form mentoring relationships with new employees. CC has tied its housing construction work to its employment and training projects and maintains a few apprenticeships under the supervision of the housing division specialists.

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<sup>5</sup> All information on Community Concepts program comes from its reports, its presentation at the DOE Weatherization Conference Nov. 28, 2001 and several interviews with key managers from September through November 2001: Charlene Chase, Executive Director and Matthew Green

## **Broad Housing Portfolio**

CC built on its base of responsibilities for managing federal/ state housing services, Section 8 rental vouchers, homeless assistance, energy and home ownership counseling. To address the chronic shortage of sound affordable housing, it has aggressively sought opportunities to act as developer, general contractor and/ or owner manager. Like CADA, it took advantage of 'niche' markets, special needs and non-profit facilities. Like NHS and CADA it secures income for its low and moderate income programs by marketing conventional-market homes. However, its leadership believes that to a strategy of banking land and assets for financing is the key to significant results.

## **Programs and Resources**

### **Federal**

#### **Housing Programs**

Community Concepts manages Section 8 rental assistance for about 900 families, and these clients provide a ready group of potential homeowners and units in need of repair. The shortage of affordable housing drives CC's emphasis on construction and major rehabilitation.

HUD's Homeless Emergency & Transitional Housing program supports a nine-unit facility of rental units for families leaving homeless shelters. USDA's Rural Development loans fund several initiatives including the Home Replacement Program, in which derelict, but inhabited homes are torn down and rebuilt for the occupant.

The USDA-supported Self-Help Housing Program gives families the opportunity to build their home themselves. Community Concepts keeps an inventory of empty lots. A group of families works together on building a cluster of houses, after selecting a site from the land inventory each member of the group helps build all the homes. No construction experience is needed, as professionals from Community Concepts perform the foundation, plumbing and electric work and direct the on-site work. Fifty-three housing units were completed in eight years and seven more were under construction in 2001.

A pilot project in FY 2000 allowed use of Weatherization funds to install efficiency measures on one subdivision once families took possession of their home.

HomeQuest is CC's home buying support program that provides not only home buyer education, credit counseling and financial literacy education, but also home search and brokerage services. Fees from participants support the program, as do agency social services and training resources such as Community Services Block Grant.

## **Low-income Energy Programs**

Community Concepts (CC) is, unlike CADA and NHS, the agency that manages all LIHEAP “fuel assistance” resources for its service are as well as DOE Weatherization Services. Fuel assistance provides payment to low-income homeowners and renters for heating bills. Fuel assistance clients are also eligible for electric & telephone discounts. The Weatherization/ Fuel Assistance ‘portfolio’ led to the creation of an integrated program that permits use of LIHEAP to repair central heating systems, state funds to replace leaking oil tanks, and state roof repair funding (FIX-ME).

### **State/Local**

#### New Affordable Subdivision

Maine State Housing Authority used its funds to finance a subdivision of manufactured energy efficient homes and the proceeds from an Affordable Housing Bond issue were also devoted to the project. Special support from the town of Paris and private financing were key ingredients.

#### Rehabilitation

FIX-ME couples state funds with Weatherization or rehabilitation to make major repairs.

#### Special Needs

Development of supported housing for special needs individuals with housing work and continuing service provision funded by the Maine Housing Authority and the Maine Bureau of Mental Health.

### **Private**

Financing: Several subdivisions of moderate-income homes have been completed with private financing. CC is itself owner-manager of several buildings.

Joint ventures: CC staff also successfully marketed a project to a major employer in the area; it provides management and support for a large poultry farm operation’s worker housing, including replacing dilapidated units, rehabilitation, and energy improvements.

Trainees: CC uses crews of regional vocational high-school students as labor on some of its new construction.

Volunteers: Habitat for Humanity volunteers were mobilized for construction of Replacement Homes.

The matrix below shows some of these combinations.

## Community Concepts Programs Partners and Resources

Program	Purpose	Partner	Funding
<b>Federal Programs</b>			
Home Quest	Homeownership		CSBG, fees
Weatherization combined w/ LIHEAP repair funds (CHIP)	W.A.P		U.S. Department of Energy, US DHHS/LIHEAP
Home Replacement	Replace substandard owner-occupied houses	Habitat for Humanity Home Owners	Fix-ME, DOE, WAP, Housing Preservation Grant, (USDA) and Hav2 HUD
Self-Help Housing	A Homeownership program of new homes with  Lower labor costs	Home Owners Vocational Schools  Federal Home Loan Bank	Rural Dev. 502 loans and 515 grants  USDA Rural Development DOE-WAP pilot H.O.M.E.
Home Repair	CHIP/ LIHEAP FIX-ME		CHIP/LIHEAP meeting system AST (replace tank)
Homeless and Transitional Housing	9 units of transitional housing		Funded by HUD, CDBG HUD McKinney
<b>State /local Programs</b>			
Single-Family Subdivisions:	7 lot subdivision completed in 2001 Energy efficient construction	MHFA, town of Paris Vocational Schools	FHLB Boston, USDA Rural Development, special state bond issue Norway Savings
Lead Inspection and removal	Make child care facilities and homes safe	ME Department of Human Services	CDBG from ME Housing Authority ME bureau of rehab
Special Needs Housing	Rehab and modify group home for special needs program participants, provide supportive services	ME Bur. of rehabilitation	MHFA,ME Bur. of Rehab
<b>Private Market</b>			
Property Management	Operate affordable homes and facilities	Other non-profits or private owners	Fees including from public sector programs using the space. FHLB
Farm Housing Upgrade and Management	Improve farm worker housing	DeCoster Farms	fees