Now more than ever we must ensure every resident of Connecticut has access to an affordable, safe, stable home in communities across the state.
Welcome

Partnership for Strong Communities (PSC) welcomes you to **Tipping Point**: Connecticut’s first Affordable Housing Conference Series. PSC created Tipping Point to offer conversations that explore challenges, share best practices, and coalesce us around critical next steps to address key affordable housing issues in our state.

Connecticut has the 9th highest housing costs and the 5th oldest housing stock in the nation. There are approximately four affordable and available rental homes for every ten deeply poor renter households in Connecticut. Thousands of affordable housing units need immediate investment in order to preserve them. Structural inequity and racism pervades our housing, healthcare, education, justice, and economic systems. Black and Latinx households in our state are at higher risk for being rent burdened, living in unsafe housing, facing eviction, and more.

**What can we do?** Tipping Point features a daily menu of timely, engaging, and thoughtful sessions which address opportunities for action around Connecticut’s affordable housing crisis. Throughout the week, Tipping Point will feature a range of sessions relevant to affordable housing developers, tenants and tenant advocates, lenders and funders, public housing authorities, municipal and state policy leaders, housing advocates and partners.

Join us in exploring and sharing new ideas, building your networks, and committing to your next steps in ensuring everyone has access to a safe, affordable, stable home across our state.

Kiley Gosselin
Executive Director, Partnership for Strong Communities
Thank you to our generous sponsors who helped make Connecticut’s first virtual Affordable Housing Conference Series a success!

Creating and Expanding Affordable Housing Opportunities for Connecticut Residents
- Building and preserving affordable housing
- Investing in neighborhoods and people
- Ending homelessness
- Promoting economic growth
- Enhancing Connecticut’s quality of life

This is where we stand—today and every day.
- We stand for equity and human rights.
- We stand for architecture that strengthens our communities.
- We stand for a sustainable future.
- We stand for protecting communities from the impact of climate change.
- We stand for economic opportunity.
- We stand for investing in the future.
- We speak up, and policymakers listen.

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Agenda

Monday November 16

9:30  Tipping Point Kick-Off
Sponsored by Fairfield County’s Community Foundation
Governor Ned Lamont
Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Connecticut Department of Housing

Keynote: Dr. Tiffany Manuel, TheCaseMade
DrT (as she prefers to be called) is a dynamic speaker, best-selling author and the President and CEO of TheCaseMade, an organization dedicated to helping leaders powerfully and intentionally make the case for systems change. In her role at TheCaseMade, DrT works with hundreds of passionate social changemakers, innovators and adaptive leaders around the United States who are building better, stronger communities that are diverse, equitable and inclusive. By aligning their community stakeholders around the kind of deep systems changes that can improve population outcomes, these leaders are able to grow their impact, scale their programs, and harness the investments they need to improve their communities.

11:30  Growing Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options Across Connecticut
Sustainable CT and the Partnership for Strong Communities will describe its collaborative efforts to incentivize and support municipalities in growing sustainable, affordable housing. Sustainable CT will highlight how housing fits into its conception of sustainability; outline its action development process; and discuss how its housing roadmap has grown and evolved through stakeholder engagement. Finally, Sustainable CT will gauge feedback from participants on its proposed housing actions. Presenters: Alyssa Norwood, Program Manager, Sustainable CT; Lisa Noriega, Intern, Sustainable CT; Sean Ghio, Policy Director, Partnership for Strong Communities

12:30  Community Leadership and Sponsorship in Creating Affordable Housing Options
Gyroscope Development Group, LLC (GDC) recently completed a successful land-use process in the Town of Orange to develop 46 units of affordable housing. The Town is 94% white, and has a poverty rate of 3.8% and ranks fourth in the State of Connecticut’s best public school districts according to NICHE. The leadership needed & the lessons learned on engagement, communicating effectively, and listening become a road map for other communities to replicate. Presenters: Carol Martin, Owner/Developer, Gyroscope Development Group LLC; Andrea Gomes, Attorney, Shipman and Goodwin; Bruce Whitaker, Developer, Millenium Real Estate Services, LLC

1:30  Connecticut’s Eviction Crisis, COVID-19, and Interventions
According to recent research, four of Connecticut’s largest cities had some of the highest eviction rates in the country prior to the pandemic. Now, as Connecticut’s housing courts begin to reopen, the state’s eviction rates are expected to climb to unprecedented heights. Without additional tenant protections, these evictions will disproportionately impact Black and Latinx households, increase homelessness during the pandemic, and intensify disparities in racial wealth and housing access. This panel of tenant attorneys and organizers will provide an overview of evictions in the state, the impact of the pandemic on evictions, and the limitations of current eviction moratoriums and rent relief programs. The panel will also discuss the possibilities for an eviction intervention approach to homelessness prevention and conclude with an overview of resources available to residents at risk of eviction in Connecticut. Presenters: Melissa Marichal, Staff Attorney, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Elizabeth Rosenthal, Deputy Director, New Haven Legal Assistance Association; Shaznene Hussain, Community Education Specialist and Tenant Organizer, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Ashley Blount, Community Organizer, CTCORE

3:00  Montgomery Mill: A Case Study of Mixed-Income, Transit-Oriented Development
A case study of the transformation of a blighted historic structure into a mixed-income, Transit-Oriented Development. Boston-based developer Beacon Communities will describe the permitting, design, and financing challenges involved in the development of Montgomery Mill, a former mill complex that is now a 160-unit mixed-income housing community. Presenters: Dara Kovel, Chief Executive Officer, Beacon Communities, LLC; Emily Bouton, Development Director, Beacon Communities, LLC.

3:30  The Role of Philanthropy in Affordable Housing: What’s New and What’s Next?
This session, moderated by Susan Thomas, Executive Director of the Melville Charitable Trust, will feature a conversation about the role that funders play in advancing affordable housing. In recent years, we’ve seen more foundations join this space - creatively investing not just dollars, but also expertise, time and voice to this important issue. Jeanne Fekade-Sellassie, Project Director for Funders for Housing Opportunity will share insights about their current projects and where they see opportunities ahead. Mendi Blue-Paca, Chief Community Impact Officer for the Fairfield County’s Community Foundation will share a regional perspective and offer thoughts about the new ways local and regional funders are becoming engaged in the affordable space. Presenters: Susan Thomas, Executive Director, Melville Charitable Trust; Jeanne Fekade-Sellassie, Project Director for Funders for Housing Opportunity; Mendi Blue-Paca, Chief Community Impact Officer, Fairfield County’s Community Foundation; Fred Karnas, Senior Fellow, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation; Warren Hanson, President & CEO, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund
Tuesday November 17

9:30   **Keynote:** Jacqueline Rabe Thomas, CT Mirror
Jacqueline Rabe Thomas, Education and Housing Reporter. Jacqueline is the CT Mirror’s education and housing reporter, and is an original member of the CT Mirror staff, joining shortly before our January 2010 launch. Her awards include the Theodore A. Driscoll Investigative Award from the Connecticut Society of Professional Journalists in 2019 for reporting on inadequate inmate health care, first-place for investigative reporting from the New England Newspaper and Press Association in 2020 for reporting on housing segregation, and two first-place awards from the National Education Writers Association in 2012 – one in beat reporting for her overall education coverage and one for an investigative series exposing questionable monetary and personnel actions taken by the Board of Regents for Higher Education. She was selected for a prestigious, year-long ProPublica Local Reporting Network grant in 2019, exploring a range of affordable and low-income housing issues.

10:30   **Separate & Unequal: The Interactive Effects of Housing and Education Policies on School Segregation in Connecticut**
This session will explore the interactive effects of housing and education policies on school segregation. Connecticut Voices for Children will discuss their recent report on the topic. Desegregate CT and Elm City Communities will outline how this research fits in with their respective legislative priorities and provide actionable ways to get involved in their legislative agendas.

Presenters:  Erin Sheehan, Legislative & Data Analyst, Connecticut Voices for Children; Whitney Dukes, Community Engagement Associate, Connecticut Voices for Children; Sara Bronin, Founder, Desegregate CT; Karen DuBois-Walton, President and Executive Director, Elm City Communities

11:30   **What Should We Expect This Session?**
Join us for a roundtable discussion featuring housing advocates and lobbyists as they discuss what we might expect in the upcoming 2021 legislative session. The panel will explore opportunities and challenges facing the housing sector once the legislature reconvenes in January. Presenters: Kayleigh Pratt, Senior Policy Analyst, Partnership for Strong Communities; Bill Welz, Gallo & Robinson; Mike Hanley, Consultant, Partnership for Strong Communities; Donna Hamzy Carroccia, Advocacy Manager, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities; Jim Perras, CEO, Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Connecticut

12:30   **Your Fair Share of Affordable Housing: Meeting the Regional Need with Every Town in CT**
Open Communities Alliance has initiated legal advocacy in CT, challenging zoning that eliminates the possibility of creating affordable housing in towns. OCA believes that many towns need to overhaul their zoning in order to do their part to meet the regional need for affordable housing. In this session OCA will address how a Fair Share system works, how to calculate and allocate regional housing needs to towns, and how legal advocacy can hold towns accountable for doing their Fair Share! Presenters: Sam Griffin, Policy and Data Analyst, Open Communities Alliance; Erin Boggs, Executive Director, Open Communities Alliance; Taniqua Huguley, Outreach Director, Open Communities Alliance
Tuesday November 17 continued

1:30 **Embracing the Opportunity to Plan for Affordable Homes in Connecticut** Sponsored by Housing Enterprises

This session will discuss the guidebook that Regional Plan Association is working to create with the State’s Department of Housing and partners across CT to help communities create local affordable housing plans in compliance with §8-30. It will focus on how to design a planning process that brings your local community together, connecting affordable homes to community values like diversity and opportunity, and will highlight tools communities can use to successfully plan for more affordability. **Presenters:** Melissa Kaplan-Macey, VP State Programs & CT Director, Regional Plan Association; Beth Cavagna, Town Planner, Town of Bethel; Mark Barnhart, Town Planner, Town of Fairfield; Jocelyn Ayer, Community and Economic Development Director, Northwest Hills COG

2:30 **Can You Build It? Yes You Can! -- Resident-led Affordable Housing in Rural and Suburban Communities**

Housing Connections (HC) is a technical assistance program operated by LISC and sponsored by CHFA, which assists residents and municipal leaders in building affordable housing in suburban and rural communities. HC is available at no cost and provides guidance from the early planning stages through to development and management. Since 2007, HC has helped 18 communities build 622 units of affordable housing. Learn more during this Q&A round on how to create housing opportunities in your community. **Presenter:** Matt Straub, Program Officer, LISC Connecticut

3:00 **Greener, Healthier Homes for All: Current Resources and Green and Healthy Homes Initiative Update** Sponsored by Connecticut Green Bank

Learn about the current financial resources offered by the Connecticut Green Bank to help remediate mold, asbestos, lead and other health and safety issues in single and multifamily homes. Also, attendees can hear about the Connecticut Green & Healthy Homes Project, which seeks to invest in housing interventions for low- and moderate-income families, and unlock sustainable funding from the health sector to fill the existing gap in resources for green and healthy homes across the state. **Presenters:** Madeline Priest, Senior Manager, Market Engagement, Inclusive Property Capital; Kim Stevenson, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Inclusive Prosperity Capital

3:30 **Measuring the Impact of Housing Revitalization Projects in Connecticut Cities** Sponsored by CRDA

This session will present recent research on the effect of community development corporation (CDC) housing revitalization projects on neighborhood stability in Hartford and New Haven. This research used quantitative and qualitative data to study several key indicators of neighborhood stability in CDC target areas from 2000-2019. Indicators studied included property values, homeownership rates, vacancy rates, and street conditions. **Presenter:** Gabby Nelson, Assistant Director, Urban Engaged Learning, Trinity College

Wednesday November 18

9:30 **Keynote:** Alan Mallach, Center for Community Progress

Alan Mallach is a senior fellow at the Center for Community Progress in Washington DC. A city planner, advocate and writer, he is nationally known for his work on housing, economic development, and urban revitalization, and has worked with local governments and community organizations across the country to develop creative policies and strategies to rebuild their cities and neighborhoods. A former director of housing & economic development in Trenton, New Jersey, he currently teaches in the graduate city planning program at Pratt Institute in New York City. He has spoken on housing and urban issues in the United States, Europe, Israel and Japan, and was a visiting scholar at the University of Nevada Las Vegas for the 2010-2011 academic year. His recent books include A Decent Home: Planning, Building and Preserving Affordable Housing and Bringing Buildings Back: From Vacant Properties to Community Assets, which has become a resource for thousands of planners, lawyers, public officials and community leaders dealing with property and revitalization issues. He is a member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and holds a B.A. degree from Yale University.

10:30 **What’s New in CT Housing Data Tools** Sponsored by Liberty Bank and Fairfield County’s Community Foundation

Presenters will walk participants through the newly released Housing Data Profiles from Partnership for Strong Communities. Learn how to view and download town level housing data reports as well as compare housing indicators across communities. The Planning Research & Evaluation Department of Connecticut Housing Finance Authority will demonstrate some of the interactive data reporting and data dashboard tools available on their website, such as mapping, housing market data dashboards, and congressional district data reports. **Presenters:** Sean Ghio, Policy Director, Partnership for Strong Communities; Christopher Brechlin, Senior Program and Data Analyst, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

11:30 **Homeownership as a Means for Poverty Deconcentration in Urban Centers** Sponsored by LISC

Programs to help urban centers have focused on increasing the supply of affordable rental housing. These programs are aimed at residents with low incomes. An unintended consequence has been to concentrate poverty in a number of urban zip codes. This session explores expanding homeownership programs in order to diversify the income mix of neighborhoods. We will look at examples and a new homeownership incentive tool and discuss whether/where to set affordability guidelines and the potential for gentrification. **Presenters:** Melvyn Colon, Executive Director, Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance; Dean Ianniello, Director of Real Estate Development, Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance; Kevin Taylor, Executive Director, Neighborhood Housing Services of Waterbury
12:30  Aquí Para Quedarnos: La Ciudadanía Como Barrera Para una Vivienda Asequible y Segura / Here To Stay: Citizenship as a Barrier to Affordable and Safe Housing (English translation available)
Systematically excluded from basic human right like housing is a reality for many CT residents. Advocates discuss barriers to safe and affordable housing for community members without US citizenship. Presenters: Maria Cristina Cuerda, Fair Housing Specialist, CT Fair Housing Center; Patricia Rosas, Hartford Deportation Defense; Imelda Barajas, Hartford Deportation Defense; Constanza Segovia, Hartford Deportation Defense; Barbara Lopez, Director Make the Road CT; Additional Community Experts to be announced.

1:30  Land Banks: What Are They and Does My Community Need One?
Session will include fundamentals training on land banks and CT’s new legislation (PA19-175): what they are, when you need one, and how to set one up. Session will highlight the Hartford Land Bank and CT Vibrant Communities Coalition. Participants will learn about land bank examples from outside of Connecticut, such as Michigan and Louisiana, as well as federal legislation. Participants will gain an understanding of an important tool for long-term, equitable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Presenters: Laura Settlemeyer, Executive Director, Hartford Land Bank; Karla Henderson, Partner, Volte Strategy

2:30  LIHTC Developments From Concept to Reality
Presenters will share the fundamentals to LIHTC developments and their role in solving Connecticut’s affordable housing needs. Presenters will demonstrate how the process can be taken from a concept to a reality including developing a team, aligning credits and other funding sources, and formulating a development plan. Attendees can bring their technical questions to ask of the experts. Presenters: Edward Engberg, Partner, Whittlesey; Niko Yanouzas, Partner, Whittlesey; Jenna Zaiakarite, Manager, Whittlesey; Carol Martin, Executive Director of Westport and Fairfield Housing Authority

3:30  Family Self Sufficiency: A Proven and Powerful Solution to Connecticut’s Affordable Housing Crisis
The Challenge: Asset poverty, rather than income poverty, is the true measure of inequality in the United States and Connecticut. The Solution: The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, an effective asset building and financial empowerment initiative that helps lift individuals and families out of poverty. FSS was created by Congress in 1990 for families in federally subsidized housing by combining a powerful savings incentive & coaching to support residents to reach their goals. Presenters: Claudia Tejada Riley, Senior Financial Coach, Compass Working Capital; Holly Kobayashi, Family Self Sufficiency Coordinator, Bristol (CT) Housing Authority

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Wednesday November 18 continued
9:30  Keynote: Diane Yentel, National Low Income Housing Coalition
Diane is the President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a membership organization dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. Diane is a veteran affordable housing policy expert with over two decades of work on affordable housing and community development. Before rejoining NLIHC (where she previously worked as a policy analyst), Diane was Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs at Enterprise Community Partners, where she led federal, state and local policy, research and advocacy programs. Prior to Enterprise, Diane was the director of the Public Housing Management and Occupancy Division at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), where she managed a team overseeing the development and implementation of nationwide public housing policies, procedures, and guidelines. She also worked to advance affordable housing policies with Oxfam America and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless and served for 3 years as a community development Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia. Diane is frequently quoted in major media outlets, and has testified multiple times before Congress. Diane has a Masters in Social work from the University of Texas at Austin.

10:30  The Intersectional Work of Education and Housing Policy
We have heard the slogan, every child should have the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their zip code. But, what does that mean here in Connecticut? What are the education and housing policies that would help more students and families access these opportunities? This conversation will explore how to build a diverse coalition of allies, be a good partner in advocacy, and case study of a recent legislative effort to tie housing and education resources to other policies with Oxfam America and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. before the audience. Suggestions on how to address housing inequality in various situations will be presented as action steps for moving forward. Presenters: Amy Dowell, State Director, Education Reform Now CT; Lisa Hammersley, Executive Director, CT School and State Finance Project; Liz Donohue, Strategic Partner, Intersect Public Consulting; Representative Jason Rojas, CT State Representative, 9th Assembly District

11:30  Legislative Roundtable  Sponsored by Pennrose
The Legislative Roundtable will feature a discussion with members of the Housing and Planning and Development Committees: Senator Saud Anwar, Representative Brandon L. McGee, and Representative Cristin McCarthy Vahey. Moderated by Kate Robinson, Principal, Gallo & Robinson, the panel will explore topics including bonding/housing development, zoning, and COVID-related housing concerns. Following the moderated panel discussion, the legislators will engage in an audience question and answer period.

12:30  We Want To Be Your Neighbors: Obstacles Faced By People With Disabilities When Moving Into New Communities
Too often housing developers and providers assume that people who are disabled must live together in a group setting like a group home or with other disabled people like elderly/disabled housing. In reality, people with disabilities would like to have the option of living in the same types of housing as people who are not disabled. This panel will explore the issues faced by people with disabilities in finding housing that truly integrates them into the community of their choice. Presenters: Erin Kemple, Executive Director, Connecticut Fair Housing Center; Kathy Flaherty, Executive Director, Connecticut Legal Rights Project; Eileen Healy, Executive Director, Independence Northwest; Regina Dyton, Director, Community Health and Wellbeing, Trinity Health New England

1:30  Dealing with Housing Inequality on the Local Level  Sponsored by Shipman and Goodwin
After a presentation of housing data illustrating the scope of the issues, panel members will be asked questions about their experiences with affordable housing in their communities and their work. The panel will then respond to questions from the audience. Suggestions on how to address housing inequality in various situations will be presented as action steps for moving forward. Presenters: David Fink, Consultant/Educator/Journalist; John Guszkowski, Project Manager – Planning & Landscape Architecture Group, CHA; Khara Dodds, Director of Planning and Land Use Service, Town of Glastonbury; Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development, Town of Avon

3:30  Untapped Housing Solutions - ADUs and Conversion in the Tri-State Area
The session will discuss the ideas presented in the Regional Plan Association’s recent report titled, Be My Neighbor: Untapped Housing Solutions - ADUs and Conversions. The report finds that NY-NJ-CT lawmakers can increase the region’s supply of affordable housing and create more diverse communities by allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and conversions of single- and two-family homes, and that restricting land uses for large single-family homes heavily contributes to racial segregation. Presenters: Melissa Kaplan-Macey, VP State Programs and CT Director, Regional Plan Association; Marcel Negret, Senior Planner, Regional Plan Association; Alec Schierenbeck, Attorney and Housing Advocate, New York State; Mia Sacks, Councilwoman, Princeton Council and member of the Planning Board, Princeton, New Jersey; Danielle Dobin, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Town of Westport

Thursday November 19
Friday November 20

9:30 Opening Remarks: Nandini Natarajan, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

What’s Next: CHFA Listening Session for the 2022 QAP
Sponsored by Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
As CHFA is revising the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) for 2022, hear what we are envisioning and share your ideas and input for a better application experience. This is the first of several planned listening sessions, each with specific topics, and we invite you to join us for this and future sessions. Be prepared to discuss specific topics such as classifications (currently Public Housing and General Class), balancing preservation and new construction, driving production for people and communities not traditionally served, innovative models, and cost containment measures. Bring your experience and ideas. Presenters: Terry Nash Giovannucci, Community Engagement Manager, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority; Masouda Omar, Managing Director, Multifamily, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

11:30 Connecticut’s New Opportunity Map
Sponsored by Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
The State is committed to expanding housing opportunities for safe, decent and affordable housing. The Department of Housing along with the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority worked closely with the Connecticut Fair Housing Center and the Open Communities Alliance to create a new opportunity map. The map uses a combination of indicators in educational, economic, and neighborhood quality to help guide investment and assist historically disenfranchised groups connect to areas that are thriving. Participants will receive an overview of the opportunity map, learn about the methodology, and hear how the map will be used. Presenters: Jonathan Cabral, Interim Director of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority; Michael Santoro, Director, Office of Policy, Research and Housing Support, Connecticut Department of Housing; Erin Boggs, Executive Director, Open Communities Alliance; Sam Giffin, Policy and Data Analyst, Open Communities Alliance; Samir Gambhir, Program Manager, Equity Metrics, Othering & Belonging Institute; Erin Kemple, Executive Director, Connecticut Fair Housing Center

12:30 A Way Forward: Changing the Housing Narrative in Fairfield County
(recorded)
This 90 minute, pre-recorded webinar explores the results of months of research in Fairfield County by nationally renowned sociologist, Dr Tiffany Manuel, President & CEO of The Case Made who held “community voice sessions” engaging roughly 250 county residents. Mendi Blue-Paca, Chief Impact Officer at Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, moderates this one hour session with Dr. Manuel, which includes an outline of her research findings as well as 20 minutes of question and answer with over 135 webinar participants.

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