



# PITTSBURGH HOMES

## An Update on 15 Years of Promising Housing Strategies

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Pittsburgh Homes project offers practical lessons for funders seeking to invest in affordable housing while preserving community stability and preventing displacement.

### Overview

In 2010, the Annie E. Casey Foundation pursued a neighborhood transformation strategy aimed at increasing housing stability, expanding homeownership and creating pathways for residents in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Atlanta to build long-term savings and assets.

A decade later, the Foundation published a report about the project, [Affordable Housing in Pittsburgh. A Collaborative Approach to Neighborhood Development in Southwest Atlanta](#). Since then, Casey has continued to increase affordable homeownership opportunities in Pittsburgh, despite rising housing costs.



“[Pittsburgh Homes] let me be able to purchase a home, maintain it and pass it on to my child who may pass it on to her children.”

—E. MONIQUE JOHNSON, RESIDENT  
*Pittsburgh Homes*

## The Project at a Glance: 2010-2025

### WHAT WE BUILT



70 affordable homes built or renovated across 54 properties

### WHAT CHANGED



Vacancy rate dropped from 36% to 11%<sup>1</sup>  
\$3 million investment leveraged \$8 million in additional funding

### DEMOGRAPHICS REACHED



Majority of homeowners earned **41%–80%** of Area Median Income<sup>2</sup>



**77%** African American  
**18%** White  
**5%** Asian<sup>3</sup>

Over time, the project adapted its approach to better preserve long-term affordability. This included expanding use of the Atlanta Land Trust to ensure homes remained permanently affordable, offering greater flexibility in pathways to homeownership and investing more heavily in predevelopment work and partner capacity.

# Lessons for Funders and Partners

## SET STRATEGY AND STAY FLEXIBLE

- Set clear goals using **data and community input**.
- Define your role: **lead, coordinate or support**.
- Invest **for the long term**.
- Be ready to **adapt as markets change**.

## PARTNER FOR IMPACT

- Work with **mission-aligned developers**.
- Use **land banks and land trusts** to protect affordability.
- Engage **community-based organizations**.

## PUT RESIDENTS FIRST

- Build **long-term trust and relationships**.
- Listen and respond to **community needs**.
- Offer **flexible pathways to homeownership**.

## USE FLEXIBLE FINANCING

- Implement **multiple funding sources**.
- Use subsidy options to **close affordability gaps**.
- **Combine financing** for multiple sites to reduce costs.
- Invest in **partner capacity**.

## BUILD STRONG SYSTEMS

- Engage **specialized experts**.
- Maintain **clear records and documentation**.
- Use **legal structures, such as LLCs**, to manage risk.

“Listen to people living in the neighborhood who are renting...and [want to] purchase [a home in the neighborhood]...because they're telling you what they need...”

—KAREN BABINO, STEWARDSHIP MANAGER  
*Atlanta Land Trust*

# Scaling Impact

The Casey Foundation is shifting from direct real estate investment to enabling partners and the broader field to sustain and scale affordable housing solutions. The Foundation's key housing priorities include:

- advancing policy and systems change;
- investing in innovative ownership models;
- supporting community-led housing initiatives; and
- expanding strategies for investing a portion of endowment funds, known as impact investing.

“Impact investors can create thriving neighborhoods, without displacement, if they are willing to put in risk capital, find aligned partners and exercise patience and flexibility.”

— AMANDA JAQUEZ, SENIOR ASSOCIATE  
*The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Atlanta Civic Site*

## LEARN MORE

Watch videos and listen to interviews with Pittsburgh Homes residents and development partners.



Read the 2020 report.



## CONTACT

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