

VALLEY BUILDS COMMUNITY

Valley
Community
Development

As a small community development organization, we are rooted in the places where we work. Like you, we want thriving communities with a diversity of people and places. For 35 years we have worked on economic and affordable housing development with the help of our neighbors. You can help us continue to do this important work!



Revitalizing Vibrant Communities

Valley is thrilled to have played a role in helping new owners revive an iconic Northampton music venue!

“Valley played a pivotal role in The Parlor Room’s business planning to acquire The Iron Horse. As a passionate musician with experience performing at the [Iron] Horse, I possess a deep-rooted vision for the club’s history and future. However, tackling the business planning and development required at this scale demanded expert support. Sarah and Eyad’s vast experience were crucial in creating strong financial predictions by analyzing various factors. Their guidance was instrumental in formulating a secure and strategic plan for the future of our community’s music scene at The Parlor Room.” – Chris Freeman, Executive Director, Parlor Room



Parlor Room Staff in front of the Iron Horse Music Hall.
Photo by Dan Little of the Daily Hampshire Gazette.

Our small business staff works closely with local businesses to bring vacant spaces back to life — in addition to our exciting work with the Parlor Room, we were integral to Assemble’s move to a vacant location on Main Street. Empty storefronts take away from our community’s vibrancy. We are happy to see these locations filled by already-established Northampton businesses!



A ramp funded by the HMLP program in Southampton.
Photo courtesy of CEDAC.

Keeping Neighbors Housed

While foreclosures were paused during the pandemic, those pauses have now been lifted. Valley has seen an uptick in people facing financial challenges. Particularly heartbreaking is that these hardships often arise after the death of a spouse or result from costs associated with long term medical care. People come to Valley frightened that they will lose their only source of wealth and equity. To address this community need — and to help more people become first-time homebuyers — we added to our homeownership staff. We now have two people working with and supporting homeowners!

Our local population is aging, and people are staying in their homes as long as they can because they lack other options. Valley helps people age in place using the Home Modification Loan Program. We work with homeowners to obtain 0% interest loans to make changes to their homes such as ramps or wheelchair-accessible bathrooms. While adding this program placed more demand on our staff, this is an important part of our mission to ensure people have safe and affordable housing.

Helping People Have a Place of Their Own

Building affordable homes requires time, a lot of patience, and considerable financial investment. We're proud to have brought all the pieces together at East Gables, where tenants are beginning to move in. This has been a long time coming — the development process began with community engagement in 2018! Neighbor support can make or break affordable housing development and Valley's staff worked patiently to overcome initial neighborhood opposition and move East Gables forward.

While touring the building before moving in, soon-to-be tenants remarked, "I get to have my own mailbox — I haven't had one in years," and "I have space for my own plant now!" Ten of the units are set aside for people coming out of homelessness. For these tenants especially, having a safe physical space, with a locking door, and yes, a place to get your mail, is transformative. It shouldn't be — our society shouldn't be in this situation — but we are working hard to provide more people with these simple attributes of autonomy and dignity.

In the next five to seven years, we have an ambitious plan to build 240 more affordable homes for people in Amherst, Easthampton, and Northampton. This is only a small dent in our community's ocean of need. The timeline from start to finish is a daily stressor for us, knowing how many of our neighbors are struggling. Yet we steadily push on, making a huge difference to each person or family who moves into a Valley-developed home.

East Gables Open House.
Candace Morgan Hope Photography



How You Can Help

Your donation helps your community by increasing access to affordable housing, helping small businesses thrive, and making the American dream a reality for people historically excluded from homeownership.

Your financial support is vital! Your gifts allow us the flexibility to seize opportunities to best serve our community. Gifts in any amount are important to us, but if you are able, please consider making a donation of \$1,000 or more. As a certified CDC (Community Development Corporation), we benefit from the Community Investment Tax Credit program. Donors who make a gift of \$1,000 or more receive a 50% tax credit or a refund if you do not owe state taxes.

Your support can extend beyond your dollars — rally your friends and neighbors to attend local public meetings when affordable housing is on the agenda! Reach out to your legislators and urge them to support foreclosure prevention programs! When a small business opens in your community — go support them! Together, we can make the Valley the best possible place to live, work, and thrive.

p.s. Interested in other ways to give? Please ask us about making a gift as part of your Required Mandatory Distribution or about including us in your estate plans!

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