



# The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog  
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## Shining Some Light on the District's New Communities Program

By Jenny Reed

The District's [New Communities](#) program was initiated in the mid-2000s to revitalize the housing and surrounding neighborhoods of four subsidized housing sites in DC — Park Morton (Ward 1), Northwest One (Ward 6), Lincoln Heights/Richardson Dwellings (Ward 7), and Barry Farm (Ward 8). It does this by tearing down the existing public housing and replacing it with mixed-income housing, and by also improving major public amenities in the area such as schools and recreation centers.

Unfortunately, a lack of transparency about the program — from funding to outcomes — makes it hard to determine the impact the program is having on the low-income residents living in these communities. For example, it is unclear if the original goal of building mixed income communities on the sites — with one third of the housing units low-income, one-third moderate-income, and one third market rate — is still being achieved. Moreover, it is unclear what the timeline is for the replacement of the re-developed public housing units to be completed.

Today, the [Committee on Economic Development](#) is taking an important step to shed some sunlight on New Communities by holding a roundtable. The hearing will include testimony from residents living in these communities, government officials, service providers and researchers, including DCFPI. Our [testimony](#) focuses on improving the transparency of the New Communities program so that the public can determine if public dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively to improve the lives of the low-income residents living in these neighborhoods.

You can read DCFPI's complete testimony [here](#).