
CRAIN'S CLEVELAND BUSINESS

EDITOR'S CHOICE

A little help here

By **SCOTT SUTTELL**

1:07 pm, February 28, 2008

Some of the nation's wealthiest philanthropies are turning their attention to the growing foreclosure crisis, and Cleveland is one of the cities that could benefit from their efforts.

So says *The Wall Street Journal* in a [story](#) that says some foundation officials fear the foreclosure crisis "could usher in the type of urban blight that devastated pockets of American cities in the 1970s and 1980s."

The Journal says the Ford Foundation, which has about \$12.8 billion in assets, "is looking to fund programs aimed at reducing the number of homes that wind up in foreclosure, perhaps by making it easier for homeowners to get mortgages modified."

Meanwhile, Living Cities, a consortium of major foundations and financial institutions working to revive inner cities, "is considering funding programs to keep borrowers in their homes and get abandoned properties back into use," the newspaper notes.

The Living Cities consortium, which includes the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and several big companies, "met this week to weigh about a dozen proposals from local governments and community groups," *The Journal* reports.

Among projects the consortium is considering funding is one proposed by nonprofits and local governments in Cleveland, according to the newspaper.

"It would aim to acquire 450 foreclosed properties in the area at a cost of roughly \$21 million, and either rehabilitate them as homes or rental units, or demolish them to make way for parks and other uses," *The Journal* reports.

Doris Koo, president and chief executive of Enterprise Community Partners, which has helped bring in about \$240 million for affordable housing in Cleveland, tells *The Journal*, "Over the last 20 years, we have worked with local community-development organizations to really stabilize these neighborhoods. We've produced some stable communities, but because they are so fragile, any large-scale abandonment can bring them down."

PRINTED FROM: <http://www.crainscleveland.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080228/BLOG01/75719248/1052/newsletter01&template=printart>

© 2008 Crain Communications Inc.
