



Greater Minnesota Housing Fund  
Employer Assisted Housing

---

**Projects and Initiatives**

Employers in Greater Minnesota have invested over **\$19.5 Million** helping to create more than **1,500 homes** for Minnesota's Workforce through GMHF's EAH Program

**Reasons Why Employers Participate**

---

**Company Interests:**

- Recruit / retain employees
- Increase workforce stability
- Increase employee productivity
- Human Resource Investment

**Civic Interests:**

- Meet *community-wide* needs
- Strengthen community relations
- Leverage other resources
- Civic pride, leadership

...not mutually exclusive.

Greater Minnesota Housing Fund  
Employer Assisted Housing

---

**Lessons Learned**

Employer Assisted Housing investment can be cost effective for a business

- Example: cost of turnover (recruitment and training) can be more expensive than providing a forgivable downpayment loan to an employee that will keep the employee at the company for a number of years.

Greater Minnesota Housing Fund  
Employer Assisted Housing

---

**Lessons Learned**

Employer involvement stems from either:

- strong civic responsibility (strong ties to community)
- urgent need for employees
- Community stabilization concerns

## Lessons Learned

**Employers are often attracted by ability to leverage other private and public funds (ie: Matching funds)**

## Lessons Learned

**Employer “funding pools” or joint programs can attract smaller employers with limited resources**

## Lessons Learned

**Local leadership or catalyst needed to obtain employer commitment:**

- City with a vision
- Developer with a specific plan
- Advocating around known needs

That leadership needs to build a strong relationship with employers before commitment will be made

## Lessons Learned

**Working relationship and common vision needed before commitment is made**

## Lessons Learned

**Employers do not want “red tape” when establishing a program or making a contribution or investment**

## Lessons Learned

**Employers need someone with experience to put projects together and administer programs**

## Lessons Learned

**Employers need to be able to choose their method of involvement based on their resources**

## Best EAH Prospects



- Employers with local headquarters more likely to invest in affordable housing than are companies with headquarters in other states or countries.
- Must be able to talk to “decision makers”
- Starting with HR staff is not effective for forming Capital Pools; marginally useful for “employee benefits” model
- Best to Start with CEOs

## Best EAH Prospects

1. Local owners are accessible
2. Local owners make decisions more quickly
3. Community concern and involvement is higher
4. Local connections create a stronger sense of civic responsibility
5. Smaller local employers are motivated to improve civic life

**GREATER MINNESOTA HOUSING FUND**



***Working with Employers in Both Large and Small Communities to Achieve Local Affordable Housing Goals***



BLANDIN FOUNDATION

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

A special project of The McKnight Foundation and Blandin Foundation

END

## Lessons Learned Talking Points

- Employers can be slow to commit to affordable housing
  - EAH took 3 yrs for GMHF to gain traction in Minnesota
- Employer involvement stems from either a strong civic responsibility (strong ties to community or neighborhood), an urgent need for employees, or clear needs to improve community stability
- Employers are attracted by ability to leverage funds (like having their funds matched)
  - Employer pools are a way to attract employers with limited resources
- Local leadership needs to be a catalyst to engage employer commitment
  - City with a vision
  - developer with a specific plan
  - Residents rallying around housing needs
- That leadership needs to build a strong relationship with the business(es) before commitment will be secured
- Employers do not want "red tape" when establishing a program or making a contribution or investment
- Businesses need to understand the issue of affordable housing in simple terms
- Employers with local headquarters or ties are much more likely to invest in affordable housing than are companies with headquarters in other states or countries. Must be able to talk to "decisionmakers"
  - Starting with HR staff, not effective at all for Pools; marginally useful for "employee benefits" model
  - Best to Start with CEOs
- Employers need to be able to choose their method of involvement based on their resources.
- Employer Assisted Housing investment can be cost effective for a business.
  - Example: cost of turnover (recruitment and training) can be more expensive than providing a forgivable downpayment loan to an employee that will keep the employee at the company for a number of years.
- Employers need developers and agencies with experience to put projects together and administer programs