

SPECIAL POPULATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION WORKSHEET

List the Learning(s) that this recommendation is addressing

- There is little innovation in developing new programs, opportunities and collaborations to break the cycle of poverty.
- A good education is one of the major factors in helping to overcome poverty.
 - An incomplete education—lack of high school diploma, GED, literacy in English, workforce skills, etc.—is a serious challenge to decreasing poverty in Athens.
 - Persons who drop out of school have few job options in Athens-Clarke County.
- Athens has an unskilled workforce that is a barrier to economic development.
- Seniors need help paying taxes and **fixing up houses**

WRITE THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Expand a home repair program for older adults and people with disabilities. Youth Build should be explored for the Athens community.

Establish a Home Repair –Youth Build Program: Using Hands-On Athens as a model, establish a free or low cost home repair program for low-income elderly or disabled homeowners that is available in all city neighborhoods, regardless of the age of the home. Staff would come from a Youth Build program (see next paragraph). Construction professionals would be sought as volunteers to help with home repairs and to guide the Youth Build participants.

Description of Youth Build Program (www.youthbuild.org):

“Designed to run on a 12-month cycle, the core YouthBuild model combines an alternative school, job training, and a community service program, with an equal emphasis on each. As part of the education component, young people attend a YouthBuild school full time on alternate weeks, studying for their high school equivalency diplomas or GED and for college entrance through a curriculum geared to their interests. The other half of their time is spent on community service and job training through which they build housing for homeless and other low-income people while learning construction skills. The two pieces of the model also serve as a job training and pre-apprenticeship program since YouthBuild trainees are exposed to a construction related curriculum and receive close supervision and training in construction skills from qualified instructors.”

Identify any research, or other kinds of information that was used to craft this recommendation.

The need for additional home repair community service is evident by (1) the state of housing in Athens’ older and lower-income neighborhoods (2) the number of Hands-on Athens applicants whose homes don’t qualify due to the age or location of the house, or the magnitude of the repairs, (3) the number of calls EADC gets from elderly homeowners seeking assistance. I realize this is not a quantitative, but in my work as a housing counselor I believe there is a large, unmet need for assistance with home repairs (but not the loan program we have as this results in unaffordable re-payment requirements).

Youth Build is a HUD/DOL supported activity, although it is not clear if HUD/DOL will support a home repair/Youth Build model. Generally Youth Build involves construction or substantial rehabilitation of an affordable house.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/youthbuild/index.cfm>

The primary Youth Build page is here: www.youthbuild.org

From http://my.brandeis.edu/news/item?news_item_id=103028&show_release_date=1

“Young people who grow up in low-income communities and leave high school without a diploma are often unemployed and may feel depressed about their future. Yet in a new study, Brandeis researchers revealed that unemployed, undereducated youth who completed YouthBuild - a youth and community development program - became optimistic about their future prospects and were doing well by many measures. ...65 percent of graduates believe they will live an average of 32 years longer than they expected to live before joining YouthBuild 75 percent are currently either in post-secondary education or in jobs averaging \$10 per hour 26 percent went to college 76 percent are receiving none of three government supports (food stamps, welfare or unemployment benefits)”

Identify additional research or information, people or groups that we need to talk to help clarify this committee recommendation. List any recommended locations.

Need for home repair in Athens: ACTION, INC – Mr. Charlie O’Shack & Athens Community Council on Aging.

Youth Build programs in Georgia

Program Name	Phone Number
Cobb County YouthBuild 268 Lawrence Street Suite 100 Marietta,GA 30060	(770)429-4400
Community Housing Resource Center of Atlanta 659 Auburn Avenue Studio C-153 Atlanta,GA 30312	(404)658-1322
Empowerment Pathways YouthBuild 1150 Industrial Dr., Suite 2001 Vienna,GA 31092	(229)268-7592

Flint Area Consolidated Housing Authority (478)472-8209
542 Richardson St.
P.O. Box 67
Montezuma,GA 31063

Fulton-Atlanta YouthBuild (404)320-0166
1690 Chantilly Drive
Atlanta,GA 30324

Green Pastures/ OIC Youthbuild (770)987-8121
5455 Flat Shoals Parkway
Decatur,GA 30034

Prevention Plus, Inc. (404)363-8531
260 Forest Parkway
Forest Park,GA 30297

YouthBuild Savannah (912)351-6379
5618 White Bluff Road
Savannah,GA 31405

What kind of action or resources would be necessary to implement the recommendation?

A non-profit organization that wants to pursue the program could apply for a Youth Build HUD grant, which would fund initial research and start-up. Training and on-going grant assistance is available through the national Youth Build organization. Coupling Youth Build with home repair seems to be unique, however, so extra effort would be required for this aspect.

Staff consisting of construction and education professionals would be required. Funding to pay for YouthBuild participants, staff, space, and supplies would be necessary in addition to funding for the home repairs.

Indicate what forces and influences are likely to occur that will support or oppose implementation.

Forces that support (please list):

Homeowners in need of repairs, their neighbors, families, and churches will be happy to have a program for free/low-cost home repair.

Potential youth-participants and their families will support the program as an alternative to existing educational opportunities. The school district should support the program, as it would help some of Athens' numerous drop-outs. Employers in construction, landscaping, and building maintenance business are likely to be support having a trained labor force.

Forces that oppose (please list):

I think "opposition" is most likely to be fiscal. The program could be costly; we would have to see how the other programs in GA are doing with funding. The other potential barriers might come from limitations on the use of HUD/DOL funding for home repair instead of new construction/rehab.