

**BOARD AGENDA**  
**OF THE**  
**SYRACUSE HOUSING STRATEGIES CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**August 25, 2025**

0. Call to Order
1. Proof of Notice
2. Approve Minutes of the June 23, 2025 Board Meeting
3. Approve Minutes of the August 4, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting

**New Business**

4. Resolution to amend Block Challenge Program eligibility requirements to include expanded definitions of ineligible projects and additional eligibility requirements.

**Other Business**

5. Other Updates
  - a. Resident Advisory Committee updates
  - b. BCP launch updates
6. Adjournment

City of Syracuse  
Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation  
300 S. State Suite, Suite 700  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
315.448.8100

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PLEASE POST

PLEASE POST

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**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**  
**THE**  
**SYRACUSE HOUSING STRATEGIES CORPORATION**  
**HAS SCHEDULED A**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**FOR**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025**  
**AT**  
**2:00 PM**  
**IN THE**  
**COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**THIRD FLOOR**  
**CITY HALL**  
**233 E. WASHINGTON ST**  
**SYRACUSE NEW YORK, 13202**

For more information, please contact Michelle Sczpanski at:

[MSzczpanski@syr.gov](mailto:MSzczpanski@syr.gov)

**Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation**

One Park Place  
300 South State St., Suite 700  
Syracuse, New York 13202

**MINUTES**

Board of Directors Meeting  
June 23, 2025  
2:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation (the “**Corporation**”) was convened in public session on June 23, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 233 East Washington Street, Syracuse, New York.

**Board Members Present:** Hon. Benjamin Walsh, Patrona Jones-Rowser, Katelyn Wright, Robert Simpson, and Karen Schroeder.

**Excused Members:** Helen Hudson, Patrona Jones-Rowser, and Donald Radke.

**Staff Present:** Michelle Sczpanski and Conor Rourke, Esq.

**Others Present:** Hannah Garty, Lisa Hart, Cimone Jordan, Michael Cannizzaro, Kaylin Hubbard, Manila Southammavong, Madison Young, Mike Massena. and George Lynch

**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Katelyn Wright called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Walsh acknowledged the board members present.

**III. PROOF OF NOTICE**

Mayor Walsh acknowledged that notice of the meeting had been duly and properly provided.

**IV. MINUTES**

Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 27, 2025 board meeting.

**ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 27, 2025 BOARD MEETING.**

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Proposed Annual Operating Budget

Ms. Sczpanski discussed the proposed annual budget and how coordinating with HomeHeadquarters could assist in reducing administrative costs.

Member Caldwell asked if ESD is going to give the Corporation \$2 million before the Corporation spends \$2.5 million or after and reimburse the Corporation. Ms. Sczpanski explained that there are three tranches, the first being \$2 million which occurs once ESD approves the funding. ESD has communicated that would happen around September and at that point the Corporation would have access to those funds. There would then be a spenddown period where those funds would run out in 2026 or 2027, depending on how quickly the program moves.

Member Schroeder asked if State funds are reimbursable after a project is complete. Ms. Sczpanski stated that once the Corporation completes the first \$2 million disbursement it will need to submit a full accounting on how the dollars were spent before it has access to the next disbursement.

Member Caldwell asked if ESD was giving the Corporation the initial \$2 million to get the program started. Ms. Sczpanski replied in the affirmative. Ms. Sczpanski stated the funds cannot be used towards administrative costs.

Ms. Sczpanski stated that no more than 10% of the City's \$2.5 million may be used for indirect administration costs or creation of administrative positions.

Member Wright asked if it is realistic that the Corporation will not have any staff costs in 2025. Ms. Sczpanski stated these costs may be in 2026 because the Corporation's fiscal year matched the calendar year. Member Wright stated that she did not understand how the Corporation could not have staff expenses in 6 months. Ms. Sczpanski stated that all of the positions currently exist within the current City budget.

Mayor Walsh asked if Block Challenge programming dollars are going to be spent before January first or pushed out. Ms. Sczpanski stated that funds for the block challenge program will likely be spent by the end of 2025. Mayor Walsh asked if there was anything preventing these costs from being shifted into 2025. Ms. Sczpanski answered in the negative. Mayor Walsh stated that the more accurate the Corporation can be the better and that it would better to put more of those costs in 2025. Mayor Walsh asked if anyone had an opinion about that. Member Wright stated that it is not a problem if the Board needs to come back and amend the budget later. Mayor Walsh expressed desire for the budget to be more reflective but is fine with amending later on if needed. Member Wright agreed.

Ms. Sczpanski asked if members would be amenable with splitting costs of the block challenge program and staffing fifty-fifty across the two years. Member Wright stated that it could be a good starting point that could be adjusted later.

Member Hogan asked if the money spent will be reimbursed by NBD for administrative costs. Ms. Sczpanski stated the costs would offset a portion of the existing positions.

Mayor Walsh stated that he would like to get funds into the neighborhoods sooner and be more aggressive in budgeting to accomplish that. Member Wright asked if that would entail leaving staffing the same and adjusting the block challenge program. Mayor Walsh answered in the affirmative. Member Wright agreed.

Member Wright asked if SIDA and SEDCO pay the City for staff time. Mayor Walsh stated that he did not believe they do. Michael Cannizzaro stated that SIDA and SEDCO do pay the City for staff time. Member Wright asked if there is an agreement that governs the term of that transaction. Ms. Sczpanski stated that she does not believe there is. Member Hogan stated that he did not understand why staffing costs needed to be adjusted when staff are currently working on this.

Member Wright asked if the staffing costs include fringe costs.

Mayor Walsh asked what costs Ms. Sczpanski would be comfortable shifting. Ms. Sczpanski stated that due to details which need to be finalized, doing that by the end of the year would be difficult. Mayor Walsh asked if Ms. Sczpanski would be comfortable with shifting all of the block challenge program. Ms. Sczpanski stated that she would be.

Member Caldwell asked Ms. Sczpanski to explain the Block Challenge Program. Ms. Sczpanski stated the program is small matching grants up to \$2,500 per property to promote quick beautification in the neighborhoods.

Member Caldwell asked if the owners need to have \$2,500 to match the grant and if 5 or more owners need to sign up. Ms. Sczpanski stated that 5 or more owners need to sign up and three needs to be at least \$1,00 matching funds, groups of more than 5 would be eligible for \$2,500. Member Caldwell stated that she would like to see more funds to be put towards this program so more projects can be completed.

Member Wright asked if the block grant groups can be a mix of owners and occupants. Ms. Sczpanski answered in the affirmative.

Mayor Walsh asked if the citizens in attendance cared to share their thoughts. Lisa Hart asked if the block program must have a minimum of 5 owners/tenants and if each owner/tenant must do the same type of work. Ms. Sczpanski and Mayor Walsh stated that it does not matter if each owner does different types of work. Owners would then submit receipts to the Corporation for reimbursement. Member Caldwell expressed that 3 would be a better number of 5 owners/tenants for the program. A member of the public stated the draft program is overcomplicated. Michael Mesina expressed that 3 would be better than 5 tenants/owners for the program.

It was discussed that funds should be shifted to 2025 to get the block program running.

Member Wright asked about insurance requirements. Hannah Garty answered the insurance question.

George Lynch asked if owner/tenants are required to complete projects within a certain time. Ms.

Sczpanski stated work must be completed within 90 days from when the application is approved. There being no further discussion, Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to approve the Proposed Annual Operating Budget.

**ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PROPOSED ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET.**

**VI. Other Business**

**1. Review of Draft Neighborhood Block Challenge Program Terms.**

Mayor Walsh stated that this topic was covered extensively earlier in the meeting and asked Ms. Sczpanski if there was anything else she would like to share on that, the 10-Year Activity Update Map or the Housing Strategy Areas: Programming & Launch Timeline.

Ms. Sczpanski asked the Board if they are comfortable with the terms of the Neighborhood Block Challenge Program or what changes need to be made. Member Caldwell suggested driveways be added to the list of preferred projects, add back windows to the list of approved projects, and lower the number of owners/tenants required to 3 from 5.

Ms. Sczpanski asked if dropping the number of owners/tenants required to 3 would also lower the dollar amount for matching funds. Member Caldwell would prefer not to lower the matching amount.

Member Wright expressed that she would like greater details on how the plan will be rolled out and an agreement between the Corporation and HomeHeadquarters.

Mayor Walsh asked Ms. Sczpanski if she expects the Governance Committee review the Neighborhood Block Challenge Program terms. Ms. Sczpanski stated that it depends on if the Board feels comfortable moving forward with it. Mayor Walsh asked if Ms. Sczpanski would like the Board to vote on adoption of the Block Challenge Program terms. Ms. Sczpanski stated she would like to have the terms finalized before entering into an agreement with HomeHeadquarters. Member Caldwell asked if changes to the terms could be made at a special Board meeting. Mayor Walsh stated that he suggested voting on the terms now. Member Wright asked if HomeHeadquarters would be creating the application forms. Ms. Sczpanski stated that that has not been determined yet. Member Wright asked if the City will be doing outreach to homeowners to let them know the program is going live. Ms. Sczpanski answered in the affirmative. Member Wright asked who reviews applications. Ms. Sczpanski stated the Corporation would and can provide a monthly report on applications to the Board. Mayor Walsh stated the changes to the terms of the program will be; one tier of up to \$2,500, lowering the number of neighbors to 3 from 5, and add driveways and front walkways to the list of preferred projects.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to approve the Draft Neighborhood Block Challenge Program Terms.

**MEMBER CALDWELL MADE THE MOTION WHICH WAS SECONDED BY MEMBER SIMPSON ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE DRAFT NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM TERMS.**

Ms. Sczpanski stated the 10-Year Activity Update Map or the Housing Strategy Areas has been amended to reflect new data.

Member Caldwell asked if drainage pipes or gutters are included in the scope of services. Ms. Sczpanski answered in the affirmative

## **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Caldwell made a motion. Member Wright seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

# **Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation**

One Park Place  
300 South State St., Suite 700  
Syracuse, New York 13202

## **MINUTES**

Board of Directors Meeting  
August 4, 2025  
10:00 a.m.

A regular meeting of the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation (the “**Corporation**”) was convened in public session on August 4, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., in the Mayor’s Conference Room, City Hall, 233 East Washington Street, Syracuse, New York.

**Board Members Present:** Hon. Benjamin Walsh, Katelyn Wright, Patrick Hogan, Karen Schroeder, Donald Radke.

**Excused Members:** Helen Hudson, Robert Simpson, Patrona Jones, Rowser, and Rasheada Caldwell.

**Staff Present:** Michelle Sczpanski, Conor Rourke, Esq., and Michael Cannizzaro

**Others Present:** Meghan Ryan, Cimone Jordan, George Lynch, Manila Southammavong, and Hannah Garty.

### **I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Mayor Walsh called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

### **II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Walsh acknowledged the board members present and noted the excused absence of members Helen Hudson, Robert Simpson, Patrona Jones, Rowser, and Rasheada Caldwell.

### **III. PROOF OF NOTICE**

Mayor Walsh acknowledged that notice of the meeting had been duly and properly provided.

### **IV. MINUTES**

Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 23, 2025 board meeting. Ms. Garty noted that minutes from the June 23, 2025 meeting were not ready for vote yet.

Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 10<sup>th</sup> governance committee meeting. Member Radke made the motion. Member Schroeder seconded the motion.



ALL OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 10<sup>th</sup> GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution to authorize the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation to enter into agreement with the Syracuse Urban Renewal Agency for the administration of the Block Challenge Grant (“BCG”).

Ms. Sczpanski introduced the resolution and explained that this agreement exists under the terms of the new urban renewal plan.

Member Wright asked why the agreement is focused specifically on the Block Grant Program. Ms. Ryan answered that this agreement needs to be specific enough to describe the terms of the program it is funding such that it remains compliant with the urban renewal plan. Terms relating to the homeowner renovation program can be adopted by both the SURA and SHSC boards when the terms of that program are finalized. Ms. Ryan emphasized that the agreement is flexible enough to be modified and is subject to amendments approved by both boards.

Member Wright asked who SHSC’s counsel is who is reviewing the agreement. Ms. Sczpanski answered that Jean Everett, Esq. had reviewed the agreement, but that Ms. Ryan is serving as counsel for both SHSC and SURA. Member Wright noted that is important that SHSC retain its own counsel to review and advise on agreements such as this one.

Member Wright raised for discussion the requirement that per the SURA agreement, all subcontractors must be approved by SURA. She additionally asked that Home Headquarters be approved as a contractor at the 10:30 a.m. SURA Board Meeting. Ms. Sczpanski noted that SHSC funds will be subject to SURA’s procurement policy, which is very similar to the SHSC procurement policy.

Several members discussed necessary revisions to the agreement. Member Schroeder discussed the need to amend the number of team members in the agreement. Member Wright confirmed whether the agreement allowed for SHSC to utilize funds for administrative costs, including accounting and insurance costs. Ms. Ryan answered in the affirmative.

Mayor Walsh inquired about the status of the legal services RFP. Ms. Garty answered that the RFP had not been issued yet. Ms. Sczpanski noted that the RFP would be released very soon.

Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to authorize the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation to enter into agreement with the Syracuse Urban Renewal Agency for the administration of the Block Challenge Grant (“BCG”).

Member Wright made the motion. Member Radke seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE SYRACUSE HOUSING STRATEGIES CORPORATION TO ENTER**

## **INTO AGREEMENT WITH THE SYRACUSE URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE BLOCK CHALLENGE GRANT (“BCG”).**

2. Resolution to waive the RFP process and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with Home HeadQuarters for administration of Block Challenge Grant program funds.

Ms. Sczpanski stated that the agreement calls out specific terms of the program that have already been discussed by the board. She noted that the administrative fee for Home HeadQuarters would not exceed 10%, or approximately \$7,400 of the total program budget. She also noted that the length of the agreement is until the maximum administrative costs have been expended, or an amendment is adopted extending the term of the agreement, and reinforced that this arrangement is not meant to be permanent.

Ms. Sczpanski described the general process that would be followed for intake of applications, interfacing with residents, and working with Home HeadQuarters to execute checks.

Members asked which neighborhoods the program would be open to. Ms. Sczpanski noted that programs would be open to households in Tipperary Hill and Salt Springs, and that tighter geographies may be adopted for the upcoming homeowner renovation program.

Ms. Sczpanski noted that the participation rate of the program in other communities has typically not reached the \$2,500 maximum grant limit but has typically averaged around \$500 -- \$1,000.

Member Wright asked whether SHSC would be reimbursing Home HeadQuarters for administrative costs or whether SHSC would advance payment. Member Schroeder confirmed that Home HeadQuarters would expect some level of advanced payment. Ms. Sczpanski asked Mr. Cannizzaro whether advancing payment would be possible. Mr. Cannizzaro answered in the affirmative.

Member Hogan asked how SHSC would verify that program participants have appropriately met the 50/50 match requirement. Ms. Sczpanski answered that reimbursements would be issued after work is completed and participants have submitted proof of payment for eligible expenses. Ms. Sczpanski explained several of what would be considered eligible expenses. Member Hogan asked whether a list of approved contractors would be approved prior to program launch. Ms. Sczpanski answered that SHSC would develop a list of recommended contractors but not required contractors. Member Radke stated that personal labor would not be considered an eligible expense.

Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to waive the RFP process and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with Home HeadQuarters for administration of the Block Challenge Grant program funds.

Member Wright made the motion. Member Radke seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION TO WAIVE THE RFP PROCESS AND TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

## **(“MOU”) WITH HOME HEADQUARTERS FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE BLOCK CHALLENGE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS.**

### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **1. Procurement of General Liability Insurance**

Ms. Sczpanski provided updates on the status of the procurement of general liability insurance, emphasizing the need to execute a policy before beginning programming. Ms. Sczpanski also explained that per organizational procurement policy, the insurance premium is low enough that formal board approval is not required; thus the quote provided in the agenda packet is for informational purposes. She additionally noted that Member Wright had reviewed the policy and advised that it is similar to policies of comparable municipal corporations' policies.

Ms. Sczpanski spoke to the timeline of paying the premium, noting that the premium is due 30 days from the time SHSC formally agrees to the policy.

#### **2. Block Challenge Grant Program Updates**

Ms. Sczpanski informed the board that the goal remains to launch programming on August 15th, and that given the short notice about program launch, SHSC should allow blanket extensions past the 90-day completion requirement for applicants participating in the program this year.

Member Schroeder asked whether SHSC would allow participants to be reimbursed for work that was completed prior to the program start. Ms. Sczpanski and Member Radke voiced that this would be too complex.

Member Hogan asked what the process would be for answering phone calls and directing inquiries. Ms. Sczpanski answered that a combination of Neighborhood and Business Development staff would be responsible for this, and that there would likely be a configuration of having an assigned staff “case manager.” Member Radke raised that it seems neighborhood planners would be appropriate to serve in this role.

Ms. Sczpanski also noted that there has been coordination with NBD's Public Information Officer to develop marketing and communication materials for the program and program launch, including website content and a press release. She also noted that there would be several public engagement opportunities in the near future to spread the word about the program, including a yard sale in the Salt Springs neighborhood this coming weekend.

Member Hogan asked whether the board and Common Council could be informed about the press release before issuance. Ms. Sczpanski answered in the affirmative.

### **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Walsh asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Radke made a motion. Member Schroeder seconded the motion. **ALL**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO  
ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:30 PM.**

DRAFT

**Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation**  
One Park Place  
300 South State St., Suite 700  
Syracuse, New York 13202

**04.00-Amendments to BCP Eligibility Policy**

**Ineligible Projects**

*Amend "Ineligible Projects" Section of BCP Eligibility Policy to include:*

- Enclosure of front porches that are currently open.
- Porch removal without in-kind replacement.
  - In-kind is defined as of comparable size/dimensions.
- Removal of trees on private property.
  - Tree removal may be considered an eligible expense if:
    - a) the tree is visible from the right-of-way; AND
    - b) the property owner obtains a statement from a certified arborist or landscape professional who deems the tree hazardous or diseased.
- Installation of chain link fencing.

**Individual Participation Requirements**

*Amend "Individual Requirements" Section of BCP Eligibility Policy to include:*

- Participants seeking reimbursements between \$1,001 and \$2,500 must submit a copy of a quote from at least three vendors.
- Participants must submit a copy of an active homeowner's insurance policy on the property. Dependent on the scope of work, SHSC may need to be named as additionally insured.
- Participants hiring contractors must submit proof of contractor's liability insurance.



## Neighborhood Block Challenge Program Guide

**Overview:** The Neighborhood Block Challenge Program (BCP) provides matching grants to teams of neighbors who complete exterior home improvement projects that increase the curb appeal of their homes. Households are eligible for a 50% match up to \$2,500 per participant for exterior projects such as façade improvements, structural improvements, and landscaping. The program brings neighbors together to build community identity and sense of pride, while improving the physical appearance of Syracuse neighborhoods and establishing momentum to support larger and more impactful property improvements.

### Contents:

- Program Overview & Eligibility Summary..... Page 1
- How it Works..... Page 2
- Program Policies..... Pages 3-6
- Application Instructions..... Page 7
- Scope of Work Form..... Pages 8-9
- Property Owner Consent Form..... Page 10
- Reimbursement Instructions.....Page 11

### Summary of Eligibility Requirements:

- ☐ Properties must be in the Far Westside – Tipperary Hill or Salt Springs neighborhoods.
- ☐ Projects must be exterior improvements that are visible from the street.
- ☐ Applicants must apply as part of a team comprised of three or more participating neighbors. Owner occupants, rental property owners, and renters can all participate.
- ☐ Each team member must complete individual work scopes for their respective project(s) to include with the team application submission.
- ☐ Renters applying must obtain signed owner consent to include with the team application submission.
- ☐ Each individual team member:
  - Must be able to see the front door of at least **one** other teammate.
  - Is eligible to receive up to a \$2,500 reimbursement for their property and respective project(s).
  - Can identify their own project scopes according to their personal needs and budget.
  - Is responsible for keeping their own receipts and / or invoices.
  - Must comply with the permit and building code requirements applicable to their project.
  - Can submit their own Reimbursement Request Form when their project is complete.
  - Can participate up to three times in a five-year period.

# HOW IT WORKS

## Neighborhood Block Challenge Program



### CREATE OR JOIN A TEAM

Review program eligibility and policies. Connect with your neighbors to create or join a team of at least three homes. Meet as a group and choose a team leader.



### APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM

Team members complete individual work scopes and designated team leader submits Program Application.



### MEET WITH SHSC STAFF

Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation staff will schedule a meeting to discuss your project and get approved. Team receives formal notice of application approval and clearance to proceed.



### COMPLETE THE WORK

Complete the work yourself or hire a contractor. Save invoices / receipts and take photos before and after your project is complete.



### GET REIMBURSED

Once your project is complete, submit a reimbursement request with all required information to get reimbursed.





## BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM

### Program Policies

#### Property Requirements:

- ☐ Property must be classified as residential according to the most recent assessment roll adopted by the City of Syracuse Department of Assessment.
- ☐ Property must be in a designated Syracuse Housing Strategy Area as defined by the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation (SHSC), currently the Far Westside – Tipperary Hill and Salt Springs neighborhoods only.
- ☐ Rental properties may be eligible if registered with the City of Syracuse Rental Registry.

#### Participation Requirements:

##### *Team Requirements:*

- ☐ Applicant team must consist of a minimum of three neighbors, each living in individual properties. Properties must be within eyesight of one another.
- ☐ Applicant team must submit one application collectively. A Scope of Work Form must be completed for each member and their respective projects. All participating neighbors must be named on the project application to be eligible for project cost reimbursement through the SHSC.
- ☐ Applicant team must meet as a group a minimum of one time before submitting their application.

##### *Individual Requirements:*

- ☐ All participating homeowners must either be the owner on record of a home in a designated Syracuse Housing Strategy Area **or** applicant must provide proof property is their primary residence (e.g. copy of driver's license/state identification card, utility bill, etc.).
- ☐ Participants must submit a copy of an active homeowner's insurance policy on the property
- ☐ Participants seeking reimbursements between \$1,001 – \$2,500 must submit a copy of a quote from three vendors.
- ☐ Participants hiring contractors must submit proof of contractor's liability insurance.
- ☐ Renters who apply must receive owner consent for their project and submit a Property Owner Consent Form with the team application. Renters who are unable to obtain signed owner consent due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. property heirship / title issues) may inquire about waiver eligibility.
- ☐ Applicants are eligible to participate up to three times in a five-year period.

##### *Ineligible Participants:*

- ☐ Current directors or employees of SHSC. Directors are defined as any board members of the SHSC, and employees are defined as officers and employees of the SHSC, whether elected or appointed and whether compensated or uncompensated.
- ☐ A director's or employee's outside employer or business if the outside employment compensation or business income of the director or employee may be affected by the action.
- ☐ Relatives of current directors or employees of SHSC. Relatives are defined as a spouse or minor child of a director or employee, or a person claimed as a dependent on their latest individual income tax return.





**Project Requirements:**

- ☐ Project must be exterior and be visible from the street right of way.
- ☐ Project must enhance property conditions and/or overall curb appeal.
- ☐ Project must align with SHSC’s mission and objectives as outlined in Syracuse Housing Strategy neighborhood plans.

*Project Examples:*

Use the table below for examples of common projects homeowners may wish to pursue through the program. Note that this list is non-exhaustive, and other types of improvements may be eligible. Contact SHSC staff if you have further questions about your project.

Eligible Project Types	
<b>Exterior Finishes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New House Numbers</li> <li>• Painting or Installing a Front Door</li> <li>• New Mailbox</li> <li>• Exterior Lighting</li> </ul>	<b>Landscaping / Hardscaping:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting and Gardening</li> <li>• Installing Flower Boxes</li> <li>• New / Repaired Walkway or Driveway</li> </ul>
<b>Structural Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Windows / Shutters</li> <li>• New / Refinished Siding</li> <li>• New Roof</li> <li>• Painted or Repaired Front Porch</li> <li>• Repaired / New Front Steps</li> </ul>	<b>Removal and Cleanup:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove Old Fence</li> <li>• Remove Junk and Debris</li> </ul>

*Ineligible Projects*

Program funds may not be applied toward the following project types:

- Enclosure of front porches that are currently open.
- Porch removal without in-kind replacement.
  - In kind means of comparable size/dimensions.
- Removal of trees on private property. Tree removal may be considered a reimbursable expense if:
  - The tree is visible from the right-of-way; and
  - The property owner obtains a statement from a certified arborist or landscape professional who deems the tree hazardous or diseased.
- Chain link fence installation.

**Work Standards:**

- All contractors are subject to SHSC staff approval and may be required to submit additional documentation demonstrating qualifications to complete the project in accordance with SHSC standards and applicable state and local law.
- Eligible projects must be completed at a high standard of work and in compliance with SHSC standards and applicable state and local law. All materials used in connection with projects should be of good quality.
- Eligible projects must follow New York State Uniform Code and Energy Code, evidenced by securing appropriate permits from the City of Syracuse prior to beginning project work.

**Project Execution:***Timeline:*

- Projects must be completed within 90 days from date of application approval, or within the time as indicated by SHSC formal notice of acceptance. SHSC will authorize extensions until June 30, 2026 for any applications approved between August 22, 2025 and February 15, 2026.
- Extensions of the timeline of any project are subject to the review and approval of SHSC staff. If a participant needs to request an extension due to an unforeseen event outside a team or its members' control (i.e. weather), the following must be provided to SHSC staff to be considered for approval:
  - ☐ Explanation for the event causing the delay.
  - ☐ Ability to demonstrate how the project would have been completed on time if not for said event and a commitment to re-commence work after the event giving rise to the delay ends.
  - ☐ A revised timeline for approval.

*Scope of Work:*

- If changes need to be made while the project is in process and the participant wants those expenses to be considered for reimbursement, an email request needs to be submitted to SHSC staff for approval before any related expenses are incurred.
  - ☐ Once a revised Scope of Work Form is signed by a participant and is approved by SHSC staff, all work shall comply with revised work scope to be eligible for reimbursement.



## Requirements for Reimbursement:

### *What to Submit:*

- Each individual team member is eligible for a 50% match up to \$2,500 for their respective project(s) and is responsible for submitting their own Reimbursement Request Form upon project completion.
- Participants must include the following documentation to be considered eligible for reimbursement:
  - ☐ **Before and After Photos:** Photos must clearly show the project site / work area prior to the start of the project (before) and the result of the project (after).
  - ☐ **Invoices and Receipts:** Invoices and receipts must be legible photos or scans.
  - ☐ **Receipts** must include dollar amount spent, the date the expense was incurred and description of expense.
  - ☐ **Contractor invoices** must be itemized and list descriptions of hard costs incurred (such as materials, supplies, etc.), as well as the description and cost of labor.
  - ☐ **Contractor Information:** If you use a contractor, the contractor's information must be included with the Scope of Work Form, as well as a copy of the bid. The bid must include separate line items reflecting the contractor's labor and material costs.

### *Eligible Expenses:*

- Reimbursement requests which are incomplete, do not reflect the project scope as approved or modified, or which are missing permits applicable to scope may be denied.
- Homeowner labor or donated labor **is not eligible** for reimbursement.
- Expenses incurred prior to submission and approval of team application **are not eligible** for reimbursement.
- Expenses incurred related to work completed without an applicable permit may not be eligible.

**Anti-Discrimination:** In consideration of applications and other Neighborhood Block Challenge Program submissions, SHSC will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, ancestry, sex, age, or familial status, or another protected class as identified under applicable law.



## BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM Application Instructions

### Step 1. Complete Application Checklist

Use the application checklist below **before** submitting the team application.

- ☐ Met at least once as a team.
- ☐ Reviewed program policies as a team to ensure eligibility requirements are met.
- ☐ Completed Scope of Work Forms for each team member.
- ☐ Received contractor bids for each project (**if using a contractor**)
- ☐ Completed Property Owner Consent Form (**only required for renters**)

### Step 2. Complete Application

Applications must be completed online. Use your phone to scan the QR code or visit [goto.syr.gov/bcp-application](https://goto.syr.gov/bcp-application). The applicant team must submit one application collectively. The designated team leader is responsible for submitting the application.

If you require assistance with online access or have questions about the application, please contact us at [SHSC@syr.gov](mailto:SHSC@syr.gov) or 315-448-8621.

### Step 3. Submit Application

Application must be completed in its entirety. Incomplete applications will not be processed. Once your application is submitted, SHSC staff will reach with next steps and to schedule a team meeting. Be prepared to provide requested documentation prior to application approval.

### Step 4. Application Approval

You will receive a formal notice confirming if your application has been approved. Project expenses incurred prior to receiving notice of approval are not eligible for reimbursement.

SCAN HERE



[goto.syr.gov/bcp-application](https://goto.syr.gov/bcp-application)

Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation  
300 South State Street, Suite 700, Syracuse, NY 13202  
[SHSC@syr.gov](mailto:SHSC@syr.gov) | 315-448-8621 | [syr.gov/syr-neighborhoods](https://syr.gov/syr-neighborhoods)



## BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM

### Scope of Work Form

Team Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Project	Description of Work	Location	Materials to be Used	Est. Cost	Anticipated Completion Date
1				\$	
2				\$	
3				\$	
4				\$	
5				\$	
6				\$	
7				\$	
8				\$	



**Type of Labor:**

- ☐ I will complete the work myself.
- ☐ I will hire a contractor.
- ☐ Combination of both.

If you are using a contractor, you must include a copy of the bid for your project(s) with the Scope of Work Form. The bid must include separate line items reflecting the contractor's labor and material costs.

**Contractor #1 Information (if applicable):**

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Projects (list the project number(s) above that the contractor will complete): \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Attach contractor bid documentation.

**Contractor #2 Information (if applicable):**

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Projects (list the project number(s) above that the contractor will complete): \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Attach contractor bid documentation.

**Contractor #3 Information (if applicable):**

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Projects (list the project number(s) above that the contractor will complete): \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Attach contractor bid documentation.



## BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM Property Owner Consent Form

### Property Owner Consent & Agreement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned property owner, acknowledge and agree to the following:

**1. Permission to Participate**

I grant permission for the below-named occupant to participate in the Neighborhood Block Challenge Program and to carry out projects on the property listed below as described in the scope of work provided to and approved by the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation.

**2. Project Scope**

I understand that the renovations will be limited to exterior improvements intended to enhance the property's appearance and may include, but are not limited to: painting, landscaping, repairs to steps, walkways, fences, doors, or other approved exterior features.

**3. No Program Liability**

I acknowledge that the Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation shall not have any liability or owe any duty or obligation to owner or with respect to the work, project, or property. The Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation makes no representations or warranties to the owner or with respect to the occupant, the project, or the work.

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupant Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Occupant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR INTERNAL OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Case ID: \_\_\_\_\_



## BLOCK CHALLENGE PROGRAM Reimbursement Instructions

Each individual team member is eligible for a 50% match up to \$2,500 for their respective project(s) and is responsible for submitting their own reimbursement request upon project completion. Your team members do not need to be finished with their projects for you to submit a reimbursement request.

### Step 1. Complete Reimbursement Checklist

Use the reimbursement checklist below before submitting your reimbursement request:

- ☐ Reviewed reimbursement requirements.
- ☐ Took before and after photos of my project(s).
- ☐ Took legible photos or scans of all project receipts which include the dollar amount spent, the date the expense was incurred, and description of the expense.
- ☐ Took legible photos or scans of all contractor invoices which are itemized and include descriptions of hard costs incurred (such as materials, supplies, etc.), as well as the description and cost of labor (**if using a contractor**).
- ☐ Included contractor's information with the Scope of Work Form, as well as a copy of the bid with separate line items reflecting the contractor's labor and material costs (**if using contractor**).

### Step 2. Complete Reimbursement Request

The Reimbursement Request Form must be completed online. Use your phone to scan the QR code or visit [goto.syr.gov/bcp-reimbursement](https://goto.syr.gov/bcp-reimbursement). If you require assistance with online access, please contact us at [SHSC@syr.gov](mailto:SHSC@syr.gov) or 315-448-8621.

### Step 3. Submit Reimbursement Request

Reimbursement requests which are incomplete, do not reflect the project scope as approved, or which are missing permits applicable to scope may be denied.

### Step 4. Receive Reimbursement

Once you submit your reimbursement request, you will receive an email within 1 to 2 weeks notifying you that your reimbursement is ready for pickup. Check pickup will be at Home Headquarters, located at 625 Erie Blvd. West, Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13204.

SCAN HERE



[goto.syr.gov/bcp-reimbursement](https://goto.syr.gov/bcp-reimbursement)

Syracuse Housing Strategies Corporation  
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