

**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



---

**Housing Providers and Voter Engagement**

**July 29, 2024**

# Agenda

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- Bernadine Martin, director of resident services, Eden Housing
- Cydni Polk Blocker, senior director of community life for Chicago and the MidAtlantic Region, The Community Builders
- Katie West, director of strategic initiatives, and Harrison Tuttle, manager of advocacy and civic engagement, Housing Network of Rhode Island

# Housekeeping Items

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- This webinar is being recorded.
- Recording, slides, and links will be distributed in our Friday email newsletter, “The Connection,” and recording will be posted on NLIHC YouTube channel by the end of the week
- Closed captioning is enabled
- Use the Q&A feature to ask questions throughout the webinar
- Ensure respectful dialogue in the chat
- *Our Homes, Our Votes* is 100% nonpartisan

**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



**Bernadine Martin**

*Director of Resident Services*

**Eden Housing**



# COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT

Presenter:

Bernadine Martin, Director of Resident Services





# COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT

## Mission Statement:

Eden Housing creates and sustains high-quality affordable housing communities that advance equity and opportunity for all.





# ***Home is just the beginning***

**For 55 years Eden Housing has existed to address the need for affordable housing in California—serving more than 100,000 people**



- **Eden works in partnership with cities and local communities to develop new housing communities**
- **By 2026, Eden has committed to acquiring more than 10,600 homes in communities throughout California and serve a diverse population of 25,000 low-income seniors, families, and people with special needs**





# WE BELIEVE THAT HOME IS JUST THE BEGINNING

“Quality, affordable housing is a foundational **social determinant of health** and can serve as a platform to increase access to opportunity and promote the independence and dignity of residents.”

In order, to realize the full benefits of housing as a platform to create healthier and more equitable communities, housing and services must be connected in a way that not only provides resources to residents, but also recognizes and supports the agency of residents and gives them real voice and shared power in shaping the design, culture, and the operations of their community.” - ***“Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future”***







# EDEN HOUSING 5-Year STRATEGIC PLAN





# WHY IS COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

- ❑ To educate and engage residents in the civic process
- ❑ Building sustainable housing justice movement
- ❑ Engaging residents in the process of electing city, county, state, and national officials
- ❑ ***YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE***





# EDEN HOUSING RESIDENT SERVICES ADVOCACY

Eden Housing defines advocacy as:

A way to create the political will to build, preserve, and to support low-income Californians.

- Housing Entitlement Process: city council meetings, planning commission, elected officials
- Regulatory: State and Federal Government
- Public Policy: bills and laws
- Individual outreach and access to services







# VOTER REGISTRATION

## Collaborated with EBHO & NPH

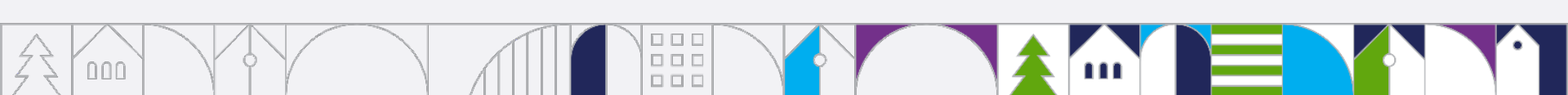
- Education & Training
- Messaging to residents
- Voter Registration Materials





# COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT

- 2024 FOCUS:
- Voter Registration
  - **R**ight to Vote
  - **A**ccess to Vote
  - **P**articipate in the political process





## **PASSAGE OF SOME LEGISLATION HAS MADE IT EASIER:**

- ❑ 1975 – Amendments to Voter Rights Act, voting materials in various languages
- ❑ 1993 – National Voter Registration Act passed – making registration available at the Department of Motor Vehicles, and public assistance and disabilities agencies.
- ❑ California continues to provide a safe and secure election process that allows people to engage and participate in the civic process.
- ❑ Please note requirements for voting are different in every state.





# 2024 VOTER REGISTRATION ENGAGEMENT GOALS:

- ❑ ASSIST RESIDENTS WITH VOTER INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION,
- ❑ VOTER REGISTRATION BE PART OF NNO
- ❑ INTEGRATE VOTER REGISTRATION ON THE RESIDENT PORTAL
- ❑ REMINDERS OF UPCOMING NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY AND LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS







# QUESTIONS?

Contact:

[Bernadine.Martin@edenhousing.org](mailto:Bernadine.Martin@edenhousing.org)

[www.EdenHousing.org](http://www.EdenHousing.org)



**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



## **Cyndni Polk Blocker**

*Senior Director of Community Life for Chicago  
and the Mid-Atlantic Region*

**The Community Builders**

WWW.TCBINC.ORG

# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

THE COMMUNITY BUILDERS

THE **COMMUNITY**  
**BUILDERS**

CYDNI POLK BLOCKER  
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY LIFE  
CHICAGO & MID-ATLANTIC



## Non-Partisan Civic Engagement

### WHY NON-PARTISAN?

- **TAX-EXEMPT STATUS** -TO MAINTAIN STATUS YOU CANNOT ENDORSE OR OPPOSE POLITICAL CANDIDATES OR PARTIES
- **LEGAL COMPLIANCE** -WE WOULD NEVER WANT TO JEOPARDIZE OUR ABILITY TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY AND CREATE AN IMPACT
- **PUBLIC TRUST** -WE SERVE THE PUBLIC GOOD , MAINTAINING A. NON-PARTISAN STANCE HELPS PRESERVE PUBLIC TRUST AND ENSURES. WE ARE SEEN. AS FAIR AND UNBIASED
- **MISSION FOCUSED** -WE BUILD AND SUSTAIN COMMUNITIES WHERE ALL PEOPLE CAN THRIVE



---

# Civic Engagement Strategies

## SITE-BASED STRATEGIES

- Deputy Registrar Registration
- On-Site Voter Registration
- Targeting 17-Year Olds
- Activating Polling Places
- Youth & Resident Leadership Support
- Incentives & Events

## PARTNESHIPS

- City & Local Partners
- Candidates Forums
- Neighborhood Polling Places

## LEADERSHIP PRIORITY

- Strategic Outcome
- Interdepartmental Support
- TCB Communications



## THE COMMUNITY BUILDERS

# WHY IS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT TO RESIDENTS

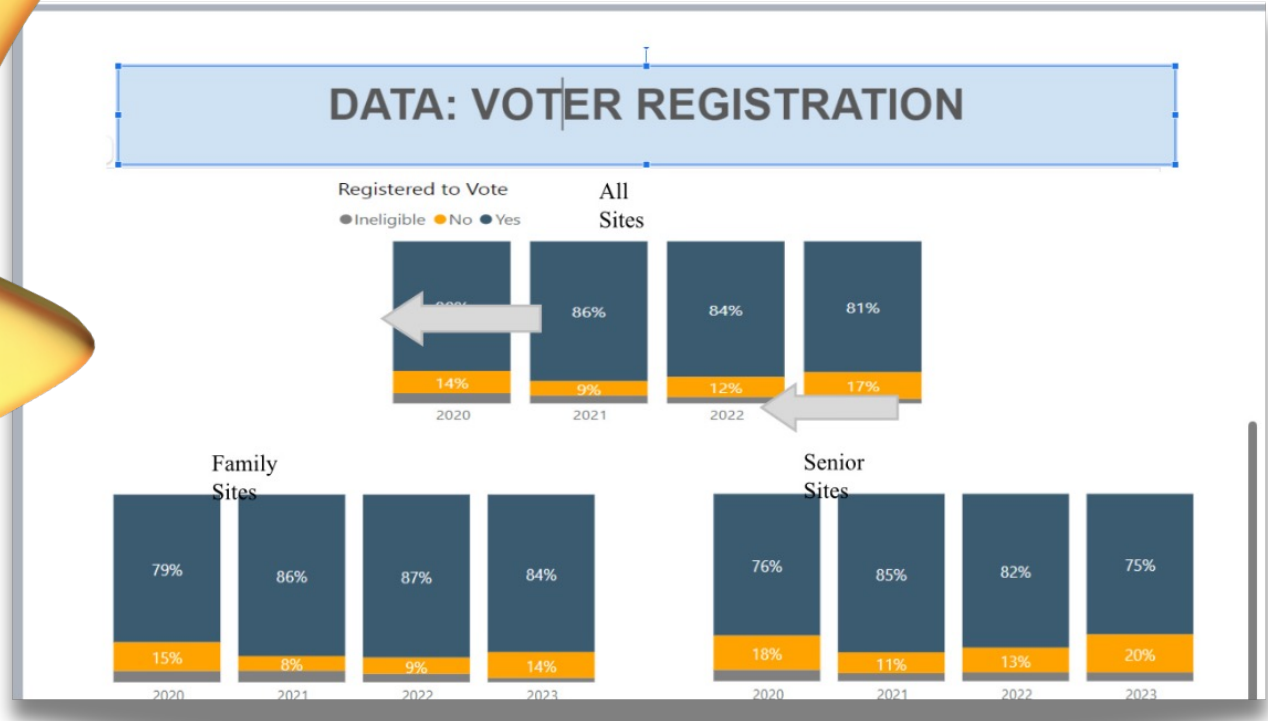
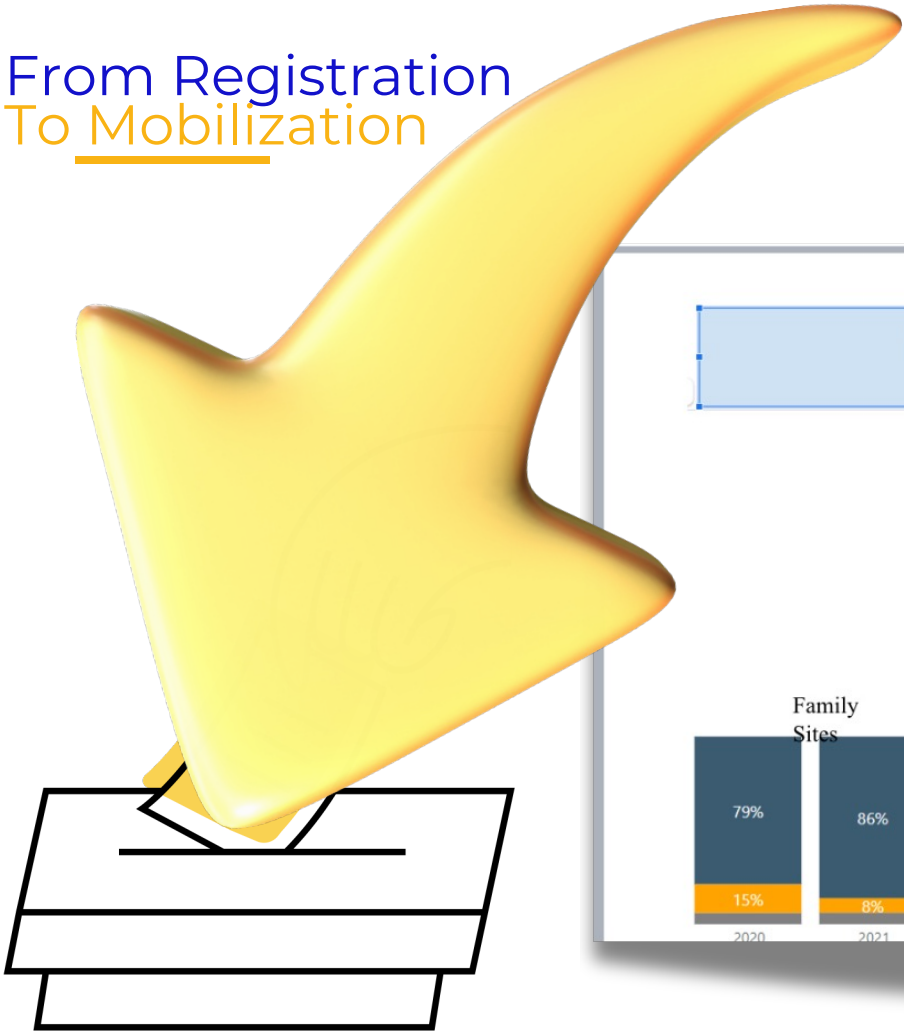
- Advocacy for Needs
- Access to Resources
- Community Empowerment
- Policy Influence
- Representation
- Improved Quality of Life
- Education and Awareness
- Building Networks

Overall, civic engagement enables residents to take an active role in shaping their communities, advocating for their rights, and improving their overall quality of life.





# From Registration To Mobilization



**THANK YOU**

FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP

WWW.TCBINC.ORG

CPOLK@TCBINC.ORG  
773.967-9201



**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



# **Katie West + Harrison Tuttle**

*Director of Strategic Initiatives*

*Manager of Advocacy and Civic Engagement*

## **Housing Network of Rhode Island**



**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

**2024**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



**OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES WEBINAR SERIES**  
**HOUSING PROVIDERS AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT**  
**JULY 29, 2024**



**HOUSING NETWORK**  
OF RHODE ISLAND

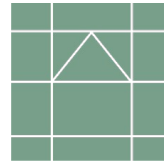




# ABOUT US

[WWW.HOUSINGNETWORKRI.ORG](http://WWW.HOUSINGNETWORKRI.ORG)

[WWW.HOMESRI.ORG](http://WWW.HOMESRI.ORG)



HOUSING NETWORK  
OF RHODE ISLAND

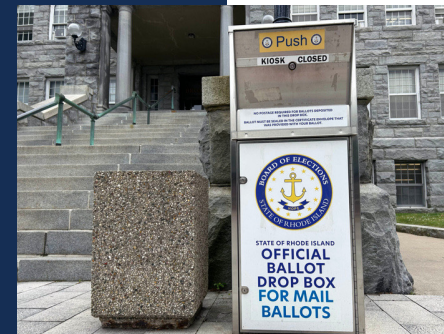
- Membership organization of 19 nonprofit community development organizations
- Current mission centered around convening members, advocacy, and collaboration
- Backbone for Homes RI
- State partner organization of NLIHC, third cycle participating in OHOV



- Multisector coalition of 80+ organizations focused on increasing the supply of safe, healthy, affordable homes
- Staffed and coordinated by HNRI
- Vehicle for multiple advocacy campaigns, as well as OHOV

# BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

- Nonprofit housing provider membership served as natural built-in partners, also reached out to two non-members who are part of HPC who have RI footprint
- Internally, decided to focus on five core cities in RI
  - Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket
  - High percent of renters, higher rates of poverty, comparatively lower voter turnout, and strong member “anchor” in communities
- Hosted an orientation in April for members in core cities to learn more about OHOV, almost all of the members who attended agreed to participate in some way
- Tried to make it easy for members to say “yes” to be an active participant, while being mindful about their capacity
  - Followed up to presentation with a draft “field plan”
- In different stages of implementing plans with members
  - Have started in-person canvassing with two members, based in Providence (West Elmwood Housing Development) and Woonsocket (NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley)
  - Have tabling scheduled at different outreach and community events with members (community music festival, mobile shower/outreach van, block parties)





# WHY COLLABORATE WITH HOUSING PROVIDERS

- To reach low-income renters
- Partner with a trusted community institution or “anchor”
- Build a culture of civic engagement
- OHOV supports goals that housing providers might have around resident engagement
- Help “build base” by providing an access point for residents to get more info about housing policy issues and to civically engage



# CANVASSING: PLANNING

- Decide how you will target locations and voters
- Created list of all the membership rental units in our target cities, verified physical addresses using tax assessment data, then with membership staff
- Access to voter file data extremely helpful
- Develop canvass scripts depending on your goals
- Create literature to leave behind

**YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE**

**MAKE IT COUNT**

*Take the 2024 voter pledge, check your voter status, and get election info here:*

**OUR HOMES OUR VOTES 2024**  
BECAUSE HOUSING IS BEST WITH BALLOTS

**HOMES RI**  
www.homesri.org  
401-721-5680

**How to use a QR code:**

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Point the camera at the code.
3. Wait for the notification and link to pop up.
4. Tap the notification to open the link.

# CANVASSING: CONSIDERATIONS & LESSONS

## Site Prep

- Have (an) established contact(s) at the site - RSCS, property managers
- Advance notice to residents can be helpful, especially in secure building
- Are there secure buildings the canvasser will need to access?
- Will housing providers want to assign a staff person to canvass?
  - Make sure that individual understands intent and is trained on any software or materials
- Bring paper copies of any forms that people might be interested in

## Technology

- Training on using voter file data is essential, need to know how to run canvassing lists, create scripts, enter data....expect some process hiccups if this is new
- Use of tablet / smartphone is beneficial to cut down on paper, make sure to test functionality
- Have a backup method if tech fails

## Language

- Be prepared with materials in multiple languages
- Multi-lingual canvassers if possible



# CANVASSING: CONSIDERATIONS & LESSONS

## Be Flexible

- Some sites expressed hesitancy with doorknocking, so we are planning alternative voter engagement events
  - Coffee/donuts, workshops
- Estimating staff time for canvassing - sometimes adjustments are needed
- Don't be discouraged by low contact rates, but do assess the data to determine if a different approach is needed

## Use multiple approaches for voter engagement

- Canvassing is one method of outreach / engagement
- More beneficial when paired with other supports, such as training for site staff
  - Trainings/workshops for housing providers
  - Tabling at community or site-sponsored events
- Exploring phone / text canvassing in GOTV period (Sept/October)





# CONTACT INFO:

Harrison Tuttle

- [htuttle@housingnetworkri.org](mailto:htuttle@housingnetworkri.org)
- 401-721-5680 x 106

Katie West

- [kwest@housingnetworkri.org](mailto:kwest@housingnetworkri.org)
- 401-721-5680 x 106



# THANK YOU

## General Info

- [www.homesri.org](http://www.homesri.org)
- [ohovri@gmail.com](mailto:ohovri@gmail.com)
- 401-721-5680



[homes\\_ri](#)



[homesRI\\_](#)



Housing  
Network of  
Rhode Island

# HUD-Funded Agencies CAN and SHOULD Do Nonpartisan Voter Engagement!

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



## MULTIFAMILY HOUSING NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



### Voting Rights and Access for Residents at HUD-Assisted Properties

The Office of Multifamily Housing Programs is making multifamily owners/agents of HUD-assisted properties aware that residents have the right to access voter registration activities and to participate in the electoral process.

Under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, Congress has found that the right of citizens to vote is a fundamental right and that it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

ces with residents, including helpful information, nes, and specific informati

February 9, 2022

Dear Executive Director:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has received inquiries from PHAs about what role PHAs may play in ensuring that public housing residents have access to voter registration activities and participation in the electoral process. Congress has found that the right of citizens to vote is a fundamental right and that it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right.<sup>[1]</sup>

Accordingly, the Department is sharing information on activities PHAs may engage in to ensure that public housing residents and Section 8 participants have access to this fundamental right.

Many rules about voting are set by states, so PHAs should check with their counsel to ensure that all activities are compliant with local and state law.

Permissible PHA activities include:

## THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF VOTER ENGAGEMENT IN HUD-ASSISTED PROPERTIES

Housing providers can create a culture of civic engagement and provide important opportunities for residents to update their voter registrations, learn about elections, and cast their ballots. Some owners of HUD-assisted properties, however, worry that federal funding prohibits them from doing voter engagement work. Fortunately, this is not the case!

This resource provides guidance for public housing agency (PHA) directors, owners and operators of federally assisted housing, service coordinators, tenant leaders, and other advocates who are seeking to encourage voter participation and strengthen civic engagement in their communities.

### Background

President Biden's [Executive Order on Promoting Access to Voting](#) (March 2021) affirms that the right to vote is fundamental to American democracy and that it is the obligation of the federal government to ensure that American citizens can exercise that right. The executive order directs federal agencies to evaluate ways to expand voter registration opportunities, provide information about voting, and facilitate participation in the electoral process.

In response to the executive order, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [circulated announcements](#) to its email lists on February 9, 2022, clarifying that PHAs and recipients of HUD funding are permitted - and actively encouraged! - to facilitate nonpartisan voter engagement activities. This resource summarizes key takeaways from HUD's announcements.

For more info, visit:  
<https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/hud-usich-info>

# Housing Providers Council

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- Nonpartisan group of housing developers, property managers, and resident services staff committed to boosting voter turnout among their residents
- Regular virtual meetings (bimonthly in 2024) to exchange ideas and receive trainings on best practices in nonpartisan voter engagement
- Topics have included: connecting with city clerks, transportation to the polls, language access, connecting residents with voter ID
- More info and application link:  
<https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/housing-providers-council>



**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



# Questions?



# Affiliates Network

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- Open to all nonpartisan organizations that share campaign's goals
- Regular office hours, email listserv, and post-election virtual gathering
  - Office hours this Friday, July 19, from 1-3pm ET
- Enhanced access to *Our Homes*, *Our Votes* tools and resources
- Sign up: [www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/affiliates](http://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/affiliates)



# OurHomes.TurboVote.Org

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



Register to vote and update your voter registration, check your voter registration status, find election information for your community, and sign up for election reminders!



# *Our Homes, Our Votes* Educational Resources

- Comprehensive online resource library
  - Visit: <https://www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org/resources>

**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



# National Voter Registration Day

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- Save the date: Tuesday, September 17, 2024
- Sign up to become a community partner
  - <https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/2024-partner-sign-up/?partner=nihc24&source24=pp>
- Benefits of community partnership
  - Posters, stickers, and other swag
  - Digital assets including posters and toolkits, state-by-state guides, and webinars
- Expectations
  - Stay nonpartisan
  - Host voter registration activities in your community





# Next Webinar: Getting Candidates on the Record About Housing and Homelessness

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



*Too often, affordable homes are ignored in the public debate leading up to elections. To elevate housing as an election issue, candidates for elected office must understand that the issue of affordable housing is important to voters. This webinar will explore the most common methods to get candidates to discuss housing solutions on the record and legal considerations for nonprofits. The discussion will also feature ideas for social media and conventional media engagement with candidates.*

# Preview: Full Webinar Series

OUR HOMES

OUR VOTES

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



- **Monday, August 19** – Getting Candidates on the Record About Housing and Homelessness
- **Tuesday, September 3** – Celebrating the Civic Holidays
- **Monday, September 16** – Voter Education: The Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How
- **Monday, September 30** – Voter Education: Combating Misinformation and Disinformation
- **Monday, October 7** – Knowing Your Rights: Voter Protection During Election Season
- **Monday, October 21** – Countdown to Election Day: Getting Out the Vote!
- **Monday, November 4** – Overcoming Voter Suppression and Boosting Election Day Voter Turnout
- **Monday, November 18** – A Look Ahead: Next Steps for Civic Engagement and the Housing Justice Movement