



*Building Community Enriching Lives.*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Media Contacts:**

Kim Armstrong  
Marketing and Communications Manager  
ECHO Housing and Community Development  
[Kim.Armstrong@echohousing.org](mailto:Kim.Armstrong@echohousing.org)  
Office: 812-423-8422 EXT 600  
Mobile: 812-454-5638

**CenterPoint Energy Foundation grants ECHO Housing & Community Development \$20k to support the emerging Evansville Community Development Collaborative.**

ECHO Housing & Community Development (ECHO) was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the CenterPoint Energy Foundation. The funding will support a new initiative: the Evansville Community Development Collaborative (ECDC).

ECDC will hold its initial organizing session on May 20<sup>th</sup>. With participation from 20+ key community development stakeholders, including community-based organizations, local government, funders, and economic development entities, the purpose of the session is to develop the form and function of the Collaborative. Once established, the Collaborative will be open to all community development stakeholders, including residents.

“The timing of this award is ideal as we work to expand collaboration with other non-profits, community members, and stakeholders prior to the Promise Zone designation sunset. Through the generosity of the CenterPoint Energy Foundation, we will be able to go into our initial organizing session with funding that can be immediately deployed to support collaborative initiatives that will improve lives within the community,” says Erik Tilkemeier, ECHO’s Chief Operations Officer.

The vision, according to Savannah Wood, ECHO’s C.E.O., is to develop a forum that serves as a matchmaker and convener of collaborative efforts to address community needs. “Issues such as housing affordability and stability, income security, economic mobility, public health, food insecurity, environmental justice, and neighborhood vitality are too complex for any one organization to solve on their own. Working collaboratively, capitalizing on each other’s strengths, and coordinating our efforts to avoid duplication, we can make a real difference. The Collaborative forum allows us to link all the incredible work happening across the city by individuals and organizations to maximize impact,” says Wood.

ECDC will be organized on a collective impact model, relying on dispersed leadership and opportunity area champions to build and maintain momentum. Collective impact is dependent on five conditions: a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communications, and a strong backbone. ECDC will define these conditions during the May 20<sup>th</sup> session and build consensus on how they will achieve goals in three interdependent opportunity areas: Physical Development, Social Development, and Economic Development. ECDC initiatives will incorporate and expand on the Evansville Promise Zone program initiated in 2016 and sunsetting in 2026. They will also coordinate with and complement the work of the Promise Neighborhood Cradle to Career program.

ECHO Housing & Community Development applauds CenterPoint Energy Foundation for their vision in supporting this emerging initiative.

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## **ABOUT ECHO HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

ECHO Housing & Community Development Corporation is a designated non-profit 501(c)(3) Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a mission to improve lives by reducing barriers to housing, social wellbeing, and economic opportunity. Since its founding, ECHO Housing and Community Development has been the leading provider of homeless services, including permanent supportive housing, for individuals experiencing homelessness in the community. ECHO has continued to grow, now encompassing eight homeless service programs, all dedicated to serving those experiencing homelessness or housing instability.