

Live Where You Work – A Win-Win for NJ Municipalities and Residents

Triad Associates

The goal of the Live Where You Work Home Buyer Program is to build stronger communities through promoting homeownership and encouraging people to live closer to their jobs. This, in turn, will reduce the need for cars and increase the use of alternative transportation.

The program, sponsored by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA), offers home buyers who live and work in participating municipalities a low interest 30 or 40 year fixed rate first mortgage. Additionally, the Live Where You Work program provides down payment assistance and/or closing costs in an amount equal to 5% of the first mortgage loan. Borrowers also benefit from significantly more buying power. The anticipated commuting costs savings allows underwriters to expand their guidelines for borrowers' housing and overall debt ratios by 3% over the usual underwriting limits.

Employees benefit from attractive mortgage rates, more flexible loan application review and underwriting criteria and reduced commuting times to work. Municipalities benefit from having a committed workforce living nearby, in addition to the activity and economic vibrancy that comes with people living near where they work.

The properties must be located in a participating Live Where You Work municipality. Eligible properties include single family units, condominiums and existing two to four family unit properties more than five years old. In Urban Target Areas, eligible properties can include new 2-unit residential dwellings. Participants must adhere to the household income limits (set by the Federal government) for the county in which the property is located. The maximum permitted income is determined by family size and area of purchase. There are also maximum purchase price limits for both Statewide and Urban Targeted Areas. The limits can be found at www.state.nj.us/dca/hmfa/consu/buyers/ownprg/limits.html.

HMFA encourages municipalities to take advantage of this program and become Live Where You Work Partners. Why become a Live Where You Work Partner?

- To attract individuals who work in your municipality to also live in your community;
- To strengthen neighborhoods and community involvement through homeownership;
- To develop positive relationships with members of the business and residential communities; and
- To encourage walking, biking and public transportation.

Once you become a partner, HMFA will help you develop additional municipal incentives for homebuyers, such as: credit counseling, partnerships with local lenders and community discounts. To become a Live Where You Work Partner contact Ed Collins at ecollins@njhmfa.state.nj.us or (609) 278-7478.

Triad Associates is currently the League's Grant Consulting Firm. Their firm, which is known for its expertise in community and economic development, including strategic planning, redevelopment, acquisition, relocation and funding, has brought diverse plans and projects to life by generating more than \$580,000,000 for over 120 public, private and nonprofit clients throughout the Northeast region since 1978. Every member of the Triad team is personally committed and dedicated to the success of its clients and the projects that benefit communities.