**IFF: ILLINOIS ACCESSIBLE HOUSING INITIATIVE**

**Affordable Homes for People with Disabilities in Chicago and Suburbs**

**Location:** Multiple Locations throughout Cook County – The project has 70 wheelchair-accessible units in 18 elevator buildings in Chicago and the suburbs of Oak Park, Oak Lawn, Forest Park, Arlington Heights and Northlake.

**Build Illinois Bond Program (BIBP) Impact:** When the Chicago area condominium market flooded with foreclosed units after the market crashed, state capital funds allowed IFF and Access Living to help people with disabilities and condo communities experiencing foreclosure. **Utilizing BIBP funds, IFF acquired and renovated 70 condominium units throughout Chicago and Cook County – one third of which were distressed sales.** IFF was able to take advantage of a lull in the condo market, putting vacant units back into use, stabilizing condo associations burdened with non-paying distressed units. The project is estimated to have created over 112 local jobs and generated over $1.5 Million in taxes and other revenue in the first year. Developing these homes was much less costly in comparison to the cost of long-term institutionalized care, and the project strengthened condominium communities that had been saddled with vacant and foreclosed units, while providing no-cost public space improvements that help all residents age in place. The project has also helped to bring people with disabilities out into their communities, where they can live side-by-side with other neighbors.

**Project Description:** To meet the overwhelming need for community-integrated housing for people with disabilities as called for under the Supreme Court’s Olmstead ruling, Access Living partnered with IFF to launch Home First, a program to develop and own scattered-site rental housing for people with disabilities. Home First’s inaugural project, the Illinois Accessible Housing Initiative, acquired and renovated 70 condominium units. IFF bought units in buildings with elevators near public transit and worked with Homeowners Associations on improving common areas, such as adding automatic doors at building entries. Accessibility features in units include roll-under countertops, grab bars in bathrooms, and flashing light systems to notify residents with hearing impairments when someone is at their door. Residents leaving care facilities were referred through Access Living, Home First’s advocacy partner, and rents were kept affordable through project-based rental subsidies.

**Project Partners:** IFF, Access Living, Worn Jerabek Wiltse Architects, Urban Innovations, Knudsen Construction

**Project Funds:** BIBP Grant; IFF Loan

**Awards:** Urban Land Institute (ULI) Chicago 2018 Vision Award

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* Based on an April 2015 modeling estimate from the National Association of Home Builders.