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**HEALTHY ROWHOUSE PROJECT SECURES NEARLY $1 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDING TO KICK OFF INITIATIVE TO REPAIR PHILADELPHIA’S ROWHOMES**

*Funding from Oak Foundation and The Barra Foundation will help create healthier homes, promote financial stability, and preserve Philadelphia’s neighborhoods*

PHILADELPHIA—(December 16, 2015)—[The Healthy Rowhouse Project](http://healthyrowhouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/HealthyRowhouse-Fact-Sheet_061915.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) announced that it has received nearly $1 million in grants to fund a three-year project to create new programs to repair the homes of low-income renters and homeowners in Philadelphia. The grants include $820,228 from Oak Foundation for the first three years of the project and $175,000 from The Barra Foundation.

The funding will allow the Project to hire an Executive Director and to develop the policy, financing, and business models required to provide home repairs at scale, improve the health of Philadelphians, and preserve critical affordable housing. As the initiative progresses, the goal is to equip for-profit and non-profit service providers with the resources and tools they need to assist 5,000 households each year.

“There are government and non-profit partners providing home repairs in Philadelphia, but the need so outstrips the demand that wait lists are four or more years long, and thousands of Philadelphians are forced to live in substandard housing,” said Karen Black, co-founder of The Healthy Rowhouse Project. “Healthy Rowhouse is devoted to the idea of using creative financing to extend home repair help to thousands more Philadelphians each year.”

“Rowhouses are an extraordinary asset and allow Philadelphia to offer homeownership to a higher share of low-income households than almost any city in the country, but these homes are deteriorating faster than their owners can repair them,” said Kiki Bolender, the Project’s co-founder. “In many cases, the homes are making residents sick.”

In Philadelphia, where 70 percent of all housing units are rowhouses and 75 percent of those homes are over 50 years old, deteriorating rowhouses create financial burden and health issues for residents. For example, many homeowners cannot afford to fix roofs in disrepair. Older homes often expose residents to mildew, lead paint, and pests, which create and perpetuate health conditions like asthma and lead poisoning in vulnerable populations.

“We’re talking about roughly $10,000 in repairs per home, but the benefits of maintaining these homes are extraordinary,” said Bolender. “Families are able to stay in homes they have had for generations, the culture of our neighborhoods remains strong, and residents miss fewer days of work and school.”

In its first year, the Healthy Rowhouse Project will address the following goals:

* Determine how many Philadelphia homes need repairs that the owners cannot afford and how many substandard homes are making their residents sick.
* Research all existing home repair programs across the country to determine how to bring home repairs to scale.
* Identify financing to pay for the repair of 5,000 homes per year.
* Work collaboratively with experts and stakeholders in the fields of health, housing, community development and planning to achieve project goals.
* Work with potential customers and determine what kind of assistance is needed.

To learn more about the Healthy Rowhouse Project, visit [http://healthyrowhouse.org/](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__healthyrowhouse.org_&d=CwMFAg&c=2qwu4RrWzdlNOcmb_drAcw&r=a_6zGpYaSVUVqvMrzDalEyUic_gIPygh5iV04arc_Bs&m=lSqSF-cZMNCqkf023gYX0xj1S054iXpEzS8REP14kGk&s=uHx-j8hZvCBeQC3yefXROg_PEfzn7oetwx2LLkFWgJs&e=).

**About the Healthy Rowhouse Project**
Founded in December 2014 by the Design Advocacy Group, the Healthy Rowhouse Project is a coalition of organizations in the fields of health, housing, planning and preservation dedicated to improving substandard conditions in rowhouses owned by lower-income Philadelphians. The Healthy Rowhouse Project is a project of the Center for Architecture.