



### Problem Statement

Community and economic revitalization in transitioning and low-income neighborhoods is a much more complex undertaking than most realize. There are several significant factors such as racism, systemic barriers, ongoing community trauma, a lack of resources, and a lack of technical expertise that complicate the development process. Giving critical evaluation to these factors, it is no wonder why the impact of investment and effort by funders, government, and partners in these communities is minimal by both qualitative and quantitative measures.

### Solution

In order to solve this problem a regional/state-wide non-profit organization has been created. LEVEL: Equity Buildings (LEVEL) will alleviate the most risky and burdensome aspects of the development process from the community. The focus of the organization is to acquire, assemble and own real estate, and provide development and construction management expertise and capacity to Community Development Corporations (CDCs), Municipalities, and neighborhoods. LEVEL will engage in partnerships through but not limited to MOU's, cooperation agreements, and/or joint ventures. LEVEL has cross-sectional expertise that would provide adaptable solutions to neighborhoods based on the existing community conditions. There is a particular focus on the rehabilitation of vacant, existing single family homes, along with new construction homes. These properties will be sold to qualifying low-moderate income existing community residents who in their current situation are renting. Additionally, small scale commercial projects, community facilities, parks and green spaces, and other opportunities could be considered.

By creating a regional/state-wide non-profit development organization to facilitate revitalization efforts, several benefits will be realized. There will be a more proficient use of resources and talent across the community development ecosystem. CDC's will focus more directly on their residents and not pursuing real estate deals or managing construction projects. Level will be able to coordinate funding for development and the management of construction projects across southwest PA. This coordination will also allow for opportunities in workforce development, not only at the entry level, but also with existing small scale construction companies, helping to grow sector-wide capacity.