

Executive Summary

ES-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

The following Consolidated Plan (Plan) outlines the current and future housing needs for the City of Aurora, IL, including physical, economic, demographic, and social conditions throughout the city. The Plan is specifically required for receipt of Federal Community Development Block funds (CDBG) and HOME funds and follows the format intended for review by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Consolidated Plan is effective from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2019 and promotes decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing, as well as neighborhood stability. Oversight of the Con Plan lies within the city's Neighborhood Redevelopment Division (NRD).

2. Summary of the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan Needs Assessment Overview

Based on the data included in the HUD tables and available to the City of Aurora, as well as the preferences and observations expressed during the community-wide and stakeholder surveys, the focus groups and the special information interviews, the City has identified these higher priority housing needs for the upcoming 20-15-2019 period:

- Existing housing in need of repairs or renovations in order to meet current building codes, lead paint mitigation standards, or greater energy efficiency standards, and owned and occupied by income-eligible households whose housing costs exceed 30% of income.
- Households between 40% and 80% of median income who are trying to purchase their own homes and contribute to the stabilization of neighborhoods within the city.
- Income-eligible renter households with housing cost burdens greater than 30% of their income, living in housing in need of repairs or renovation in order to meet current building codes, lead paint mitigation standards, or greater energy efficiency standards.
- Very low-income households at risk of becoming homeless or households who are currently homeless and very mobile within Aurora, and who are proportionately larger users of human services, health care, or emergency services.

Based on the City's evaluation of the needs within the community and on the preferences and observations expressed during the community-wide and stakeholder surveys, the focus groups and the

special information interviews, the City has identified these higher priority non-housing needs for the upcoming 20-15-2019 period:

- Increase youth services, especially those proposals/projects which complement overall City goals of violence prevention and youth education.
- Provide supportive services for elderly/disabled persons.
- Provide employment training to unemployed persons
- Mitigate or prevent homelessness.
- Increase/improve the quality of facilities (including public service facilities).
- Help smaller businesses create or retain full time jobs at a living wage.
- Improve rate of survival of micro-enterprise businesses.
- Provide micro-business expansion within locally selected neighborhoods, including the NRSA.
- Initiate improvement efforts in locally selected geographical areas that complement City Neighborhood Plans.

The City will continue to work within the HUD-approved Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) encompassing the City's near-east side and its downtown, covering portions of census tracts 8533.02; 8534.03; 8534.04;8536.03; 8536.04; 8537.01; 8537.02; 8541.02. The NRSA has concentrations of low-income residents, substandard housing and overcrowded housing. The NRSA was first approved by HUD in 1999 and amended and approved in 2011. The City intends to continue to use the amended 2011 Strategy through the 5 years of the Consolidated Plan period. We will re-evaluate the conditions and strategies for the NRSA on a yearly basis and submit an amended Strategy when the conditions warrant a change in strategies or amended service areas.

3. Evaluation of past performance

The Stakeholder Focus Groups held to meet the Consultation requirements for the development of the Consolidated Plan resulted in the following list of Strengths and Accomplishments of community development programs administered by the City over the past 5 Years:

- Focused on infrastructure (bridge, sewer)/ street repairs, historic preservation, tree replacements
- Money was well spent for homeless/ domestic violence programs
- Money for special needs
- Good programs for housing repairs/ energy efficient
- Rebuilding: River Edge, new library, Paramount Building

- Support for projects that provide access to healthcare to underserved populations

Goals and Objectives for 2010-2014 (Accomplishments for Years 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 (Year 2014 submitted in March 2015))

- H1: Repair/rehab existing housing units occupied by LMI owners (215 Units)
- H2: Assisted 1st time homebuyers into ownership (23 Units)
- H3: Promote adaptation of multi-units into lower density and ownership units in target areas (0 Units)
- H4: Assist rental owners improve LMI rental units for special needs/homeless persons (135 Units)
- CD-1: Increase child care/youth services (children served)
- CD-2: Provide support services to elderly/disabled households (869 HH)
- CD-3: Provide employment services to unemployed persons (2359 P)
- CD-4: Reduce homelessness; persons provided prevention and supportive services
- CD-5: Improve child care facilities benefitting LMI families (2 Facilities)
- CD-6: Create/retain permanent FTE jobs at living wages (372 Jobs)
- CD-7: Improve rate of survival for micro-enterprises (5 Businesses)
- CD-8: Promote expansion/start-up of businesses within NRSA (0)
- CD-9: Improve appearances of selected NRSA neighborhoods (34 Street Projects, Ash Tree replacement)
- CD-10: Improve planning and administrative capacity
- CD-11: Improve CHDO capacity to qualify, initiate housing projects

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The City of Aurora invited more than 100 stakeholders and practitioners to participate in the consultation process for the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. On July 30, 2014 and July 31, 2014, Community Planning and Development Advisors, LLC (consultants) conducted two focus groups for stakeholders and practitioners in Aurora to provide an opportunity for advice and input to the City for the development of the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. The Focus Group participants provided input on the strengths and weaknesses of the community development programs in Aurora over the past five years (2010-2014) and what the community development needs will be in Aurora over the next five years (2015-2019). They were asked what programs, policies or efforts by the City would most help their organization to be more effective and what criteria or measures of success would they use to judge the success of Aurora's overall community development programs five years from now in 2019.

A Consolidated Plan Community Needs Survey was conducted during the months of July and August 2014 and was accessible to residents through the City's website. The Mayor of Aurora and the City

Council invited residents of the City of Aurora to participate in the online Community-Wide Needs Survey in a press release issued by the Mayor. The press release was submitted to the Aurora Beacon News. The results of the needs survey were to help the City determine the use of public funds, including their yearly allocations of Community Development Block Grant funds and HOME funds.

Two hundred and seventy-six (276) residents of the City of Aurora accessed the survey. A large majority of the respondents were homeowners (91%) with 30% living in the city for more than 10 years and 38% more than 20 years.

The survey asked community residents to rate the importance of spending public dollars on various activities relating to housing, economic development, public improvements, revitalization efforts, homeless programs and public services. The activities listed in the survey were selected for inclusion based on a review of funding decisions made by the City in allocating Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds over the last 5 years.

In addition, a Stakeholder Survey was sent to a group of key community development stakeholders for their input into the effectiveness of previously funded housing, public infrastructure/improvement, public services and economic development activities over the past five years, the needs of low- and moderate-income community residents over the next 5 years and the priority for funding activities with CDBG/HOME to meet those needs over the next five years.

A complete summary of the responses from Focus Groups participants and Survey respondents are provided as an attachment to this Plan.

5. Summary of public comments

A summary of comments received through surveys, focus groups and public hearings is provided as an attachment to this Plan.

6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them

All comments were accepted.

7. Summary

These funds will be used to meet goals and objectives established and approved by the City of Aurora. The Plan's goals and objectives were developed in consultation with citizens, nonprofit organizations, developers, businesses, funding partners, schools and other governmental bodies. Their overarching purpose is to support the development of viable communities with decent housing, suitable living environments and economic opportunities for the City's low to moderate income households.

The City will pursue these goals and objectives by working with the nonprofit community, housing developers, neighborhood groups, associated businesses, stakeholders, labor union representatives, other local government entities, residents and partners. The Neighborhood Redevelopment Division will also work closely with several other City agencies to jointly plan, implement and evaluate the Plan's core activities.