

ACTION PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FISCAL YEAR OCTOBER 1, 2009 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2010

BACKGROUND

The City of Baytown receives an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expansion of economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate-income citizens. The City of Baytown's 2009 allocation is \$830,917, an increase from last year's allocation of \$819,318. Funding for the proposed Action Plan includes \$163,812 in unexpended funds from previous program allotments plus \$65,318 in projected program income from repayment of demolition, homebuyers' and housing rehabilitation property liens. The total amount available for fiscal year 2009 is \$1,060,047. There is a 15% statutory cap on public services of \$128,710, using the preceding year's program income of \$68,816. The projected budget also includes a 20% cap on planning/administrative activities of \$179,247. This planning/administrative cap is estimated using the anticipated current year's program income of \$65,318.

ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

This Action Plan employs the 2005 Consolidated Plan's priorities by:

- Continuing the program of rehabilitation of existing owner-occupied single-family dwellings;
- Continuing to provide direct homeownership assistance through closing costs and homebuying counseling workshops;
- Continuing the program of clearance and demolition throughout the city on a spot basis;
- Supporting literacy programs for functionally illiterate, low-income individuals;
- Providing transportation services for income-eligible disabled and senior citizens;
- Assisting victims of domestic violence with becoming self-sufficient from a shelter environment; and
- Providing assistance to neighborhood organizations for youth activities and adult education.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS

The City of Baytown strives to seek the input of citizens in formulating goals and action plans for its Community Development Block Grant programs. There is an active Community Development Advisory Committee (Committee), which consists of representatives appointed by the City Council. Committee members each represent an area of Baytown in which they live. The Committee meets regularly to prioritize needs, allocate funds, review progress of recipients and hear from the public on housing and community development issues. Throughout the year, the Committee held six public meetings. One of the meetings was held to review the previous Action Plan, its accomplishments and to discuss actual project goals versus expenditures. Another public meeting was held to discuss the progress of currently funded programs and upcoming budget process.

There were two public hearings for residents and organizations to discuss community needs, project ideas, and to hear funding requests. In an additional public meeting, the Committee discussed the information gathered from the public hearings and developed a CDBG funding recommendation for City Council regarding the proposed Action Plan. All of the public meetings were advertised in public notices in *The Baytown Sun* and on the City of Baytown's website. The agendas for the public meetings were posted with information for interpretive services for non-English speaking residents and those who are hearing impaired. Additionally, information for accommodations for those with physical disabilities was included with the postings. The public meetings were held in the Baytown Community Center which is located in the CDBG target area. This location is within walking distance for many low-income residents and there is a circulator bus stop in the parking lot for those who do not have

transportation. Further, the City Council meetings are broadcast on the municipal cable station for those who are unable to attend the Committee meetings.

In addition to the public meetings, Staff hosted a CDBG-project tour for the Committee, which highlighted actual projects previously funded by CDBG. This tour was posted as a public meeting and residents were able to attend with prior notification. This year, there was one person who chose to attend with the committee. Staff also held a technical assistance workshop for local organizations and citizens regarding CDBG funding. Participants were encouraged to discuss project ideas, the funding process, and provide input concerning community needs. The goal of the workshop was to assist local non-profit organizations and interested citizens in identifying community needs and completing the grant application successfully to secure CDBG funds for worthy projects.

Staff solicited grant proposals from local citizens and community organizations for various programs. After a preliminary review by Staff to determine if the proposals met technical requirements for CDBG eligibility, the Committee received the proposals and corresponding evaluation forms. The Committee reviewed the seventeen submitted proposals, listened to verbal requests and developed a budget recommendation to present to City Council. On June 9, HUD notified the City that the 2009 entitlement was decreased by \$50. As a result, Staff developed a budget recommendation to reflect the \$50 difference from the Committee's recommendation.

Committee members and Staff were given an opportunity to present their funding recommendations to City Council at the regular public Council meeting on June 11, 2009. Following the meeting, the Staff recommendation was posted as the proposed Action Plan for a 30-day public comment period beginning on June 15, 2009. During the comment period, legal public notices are published in *The Baytown Sun* and posted on the City's website. The notices inform the public of the proposed Action Plan and solicit public review and comments. Staff also mailed letters to those who attended the public hearings notifying them of the proposed Action Plan and invited them to comment. A hard copy of the proposed Action Plan is available for review at the Planning and Development Services Department in the Baytown City Hall and digitally upon request. City Council will review and take action to approve the FY09 Action Plan on July 23, 2009.

Once City Council approves the FY09 Action Plan, additional public notices will be posted in *The Baytown Sun* and on the City's website announcing the City's intent to submit the FY09 Action Plan to HUD on or before August 15, 2009. This allows another opportunity for citizens to comment. The total time allowed for public comment will be 56 days beginning on June 15 to August 10, 2009. Any written comments received will be included in the Action Plan when submitted to HUD.

A copy of the approved Action Plan budget will be mailed to everyone who request funds. Upon approval by City Council, the Action Plan will also be available in the Planning & Development Services Department at City Hall and on the City's website.

PROPOSED OUTCOMES TO ADDRESS ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

Infrastructure: Sidewalk, Curb and Alleyway Repairs – Provides for the cost of materials to repair and/or replace dilapidated infrastructure in the CDBG target areas to improve pedestrian mobility. Proposed outcome: To improve the quality of life for approximately 24,000 people.

Other: Substandard Structures Abatement – Funds for personnel expenses to demolish or secure vacant, dilapidated structures. The Urban Rehabilitation Standards Review Board (URSRB) orders enforcement action for these structures at their monthly meetings. The Staff also administers the

Single-Family Rental Inspection Program. Proposed outcome: Demolition of at least 25 vacant housing units.

Other: Baytown Habitat for Humanity – Funds for demolition of a vacant, dilapidated housing unit that was previously used as a women’s shelter. The project will also provide basic site clearance including playground equipment, carport, wooden walkway and concrete improvements for future use as two sites for Habitat homes. Proposed outcome: To demolish a large residential structure/site clearance.

Owner Occupied Housing: Homebuyers’ Assistance – Closing costs assistance for 10-15 eligible homebuyers and funds are also for personnel expenses. Proposed outcome: To assist at least 10 households.

Owner Occupied Housing: Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation – Provides code-compliant repairs and lead-based paint abatement for at least 7 low-income homeowners, including major rehabilitation, reconstruction and disabled modifications. Funds are also for personnel expenses. Proposed outcome: To assist at least 7 housing units.

Owner Occupied Housing: Residential Sewer Line Repair/Replacement – Funds to repair or replace decayed residential sewer lines for 10-15 low-to moderate-income homeowners. Proposed outcome: To assist at least 10 housing units.

Public Services: Homebuyers Counseling Workshops – Funds to sponsor 8 homebuyer counseling workshops that are open to the public in English and Spanish. Proposed outcome: To assist approximately 175 people.

Public Services: Baytown Resource & Assistance Center – Funds to assist low-income children with school uniforms and shoes through a reimbursable voucher program. Proposed outcome: To assist approximately 250 people (children).

Public Services: Baytown Family YMCA – Funds to provide low-income youths with swim lessons, primarily in West Baytown, under the Swim Safe and Life Guard Training Programs. Proposed outcome: To assist approximately 25 people (youth).

Homeless: New Horizon Family Center – Funds to provide the first month’s rent, deposit, and necessary storage costs for victims of domestic violence who are transitioning from the homeless facility towards self-sufficiency. Proposed outcome: To assist approximately 10 people (households).

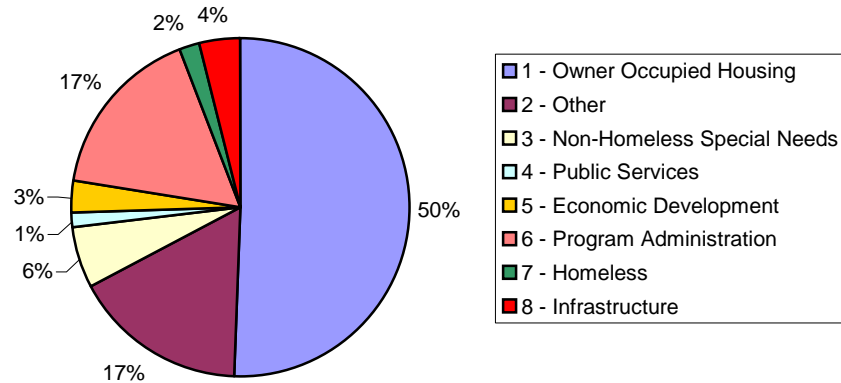
Non-Homeless Special Needs: Senior/Disabled Citizens Transportation Program – Funds to participate in the Harris County Coordinated Transportation Program to provide elderly and disabled citizens transportation service. Funding is also included for 50% of personnel expenses. Proposed outcome: To assist up to 300 people (elderly/disabled).

Economic Development: Adult Literacy Project – Personnel expenses to administer individual and small group tutoring including computer-assisted instruction for functionally illiterate adults and for those whom English is a second language. Proposed outcome: To assist approximately 100 households.

Program Administration: CDBG Program Administration – Operational expenses for the overall administration of the CDBG Program, including personnel expenses. Proposed outcome: To assist 66,430 people.

The following graph and chart illustrates how the funds in this Action Plan are distributed based on the CDBG Priority Needs.

CDBG PRIORITY NEEDS



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
FY09 PROJECTED USE OF FUNDS**

AGENCY	PROJECT	BUDGET
COB Planning	Substandard Structures Abatement	156,233
COB Planning	Homebuyers' Assistance	103,691
COB Planning	Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation	409,983
COB Planning	Homebuyers' Counseling Workshops	3,343
COB Planning	Residential Sewer Line Repair/Replacement	21,600
Baytown Family YMCA	Swim Safe & Life Guard Training	3,000
COB Public Works	Sidewalk, Curb & Alleyway Repairs	40,623
Sterling Municipal Library	Adult Literacy Project	30,000
New Horizon Family Center	Project New Start	20,000
Baytown Habitat for Humanity	New Horizon Center	20,000
Baytown Resource & Assistance Center	Clothing for School Children	9,000
COB Planning	Senior/Disabled Transportation	63,317
COB Planning	CDBG Administration	179,257
TOTAL FY09 CDBG FUNDS BUDGETED		1,060,047

EVALUATION OF PAST PERFORMANCE

The Annual Community Assessment (ACA) for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 Program Year has been recently issued by HUD. There were two areas of improvement noted. The first area recognized that the City does not include the Integrated Disbursement Information System (IDIS) PR03 Report in the hard copy submission of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The PR03 Report summarizes the accomplishments and funds used for the program year in an easy-to-read format. Though this report is completed in IDIS, as required, it is not part of the CAPER submission. The City will include a copy of the PR03 Report in future CAPER submissions. The second area identified is the lack of a clearly adopted Citizen Participation Plan that specifies how the City encourages citizen involvement over and above the activities of the Community Development Advisory Committee. The City has a stand-alone Citizen Participation Plan that is many years old and referenced in the City of Baytown's Code of Ordinances (Chapter 2, Section 2-391). It has all of the elements required in 24 CFR 91. The City will update the Citizen Participation Plan in conjunction with the 2010 Consolidated Plan.

Further, the ACA lists the following conclusions concerning the performance in the execution of CDBG program for the 2005, 2006, and 2007 Program Years:

- The City has carried out its program substantially as described in its Consolidated Plan submission;
- The Consolidated Plan submission as implemented complies with the requirements of the Housing and Community Development Act and other applicable laws and regulations;
- The City has the continuing capacity to carry out the approved program in a timely manner;
- The City has met its annual report requirements; and
- The City has not hindered the implementation of the Consolidated Plan by any action or willful inaction.

Below is a summary of the most recent past performance of CDBG programs. Following the text, the attached CDBG Activities Map (Attachment 1) illustrates physical, address-specific projects that have been completed in the last fiscal year.

Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation

The Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program provided major code compliance repairs up to \$53,600 to repair or reconstruct 6 low-income homes. There were 2 additional projects in progress at the end of the year. All structures were brought into compliance with the city's health and building codes, including testing and clearance of lead-based paint.

Residential Sewer Line Repair/Replacement

The program has assisted 7 low to moderate-income families with necessary repairs to their residential sewer line. There were also 2 projects underway at the end of the year. The costs of repairs have averaged approximately \$2,500 per project.

Homebuyers' Assistance

The Homebuyers' Assistance Program provided up to \$4,500 toward closing costs for 11 low-moderate income families to purchase homes. Each of the homebuyers received a structural inspection when purchasing their home to ensure housing quality. There were 2 liens paid from the sale or refinancing of previously assisted homebuyers, netting \$1,078.11 in repaid CDBG funds. The foreclosure, banking, and lending crisis greatly impacted the ability for first time buyers to secure new loans.

Substandard Structure Abatement

The Demolition Inspector reviewed 112 vacant and dilapidated properties with the seven-member Urban Rehabilitation Standards Review Board during twelve meetings throughout the year. Funding was used to demolish 12 dilapidated structures and board-up five vacant structures. Staff also used City general funds to demolish an additional 13 structures. With the assistance of the citizens' board, Staff monitored property owners who demolished 34 structures, boarded-up 4 and rehabilitated 9 structures. In total, these code enforcement efforts resulted in 79 dilapidated structures being demolished, boarded, or repaired. At the end of the year, an additional seven structures were pending repairs by property owners.

Single-Family Housing Rental Inspection

This initiative is not individually budgeted. The Substandard Structures Program provides staff support to the Single-Family Rental Housing Inspection Program to enforce minimal building standards on a complaint-basis. Staff completed 29 individual inspections at 8 single-family rental units occupied by low to moderate-income renters. No CDBG funds were used for repairs. However, the property owners repaired 5 rental units with repairs pending on 3 units as a result of enforcement activities. Approximately 21 rental-housing occupants benefited from improved housing conditions.

Sidewalk, Curb & Alleyway Repairs

A three-man crew in the Public Works Department administered the Sidewalk, Alleyway and Curb Replacement Program to improve pedestrian traffic in the target areas. They repaired and replaced 3,358 linear feet of dilapidated sidewalks/curbs and 612 linear feet of alleyways. Funds were also used to install four (4) wheelchair ramps where possible.

Homebuyers' Counseling Workshops

In addition to providing closing cost assistance, Homebuyer Counseling Workshops were available to all interested citizens. Staff held 5 English and 2 Spanish-language homebuyer workshops with 7 lenders and 4 realtors participating to share their expertise. The 106 homebuyers who attended received invaluable information regarding credit, benefits of owning a home, and dangers of lead-based paint. Out of the 106 potential homebuyers, nearly 90% were low to moderate income renters.

New Horizon Family Center

The agency implemented Project First Step to provide the first month's rent and deposit costs for victims of domestic violence. Funds were used to assist 17 people who were transitioning from the homeless facility towards self-sufficiency.

Baytown Resource and Assistance Center

The organization used funds to provide shoes and school uniforms through a reimbursable voucher program. There were 375 low-income children assisted with new clothing and shoes suitable for school.

Adult Literacy Project

The Adult Literacy Program assisted persons with English skills that helped mediate poverty conditions. The program provided approximately 1,953 hours of individual tutoring to 94 functionally illiterate adults, including those for who English is a second language. Approximately 53 volunteers and two part-time literacy Staff provided weekly sessions throughout the year for participants to attend and build on their skills from session to session. The Staff also provided 436 hours of computer-assisted instruction at the Sterling Municipal Library.

Baytown YMCA – Swim Safe & Life Guard Training

The Baytown Family YMCA administered the Swim Safe Program at N.C. Foote Park. Funding provided 39 eight-hour swim lesson sessions to 22 low-income youths. There were 2 additional youths who completed lifeguard training. The participants received valuable swim lessons and water safety techniques.

Our Promise for West Baytown

The neighborhood organization, Our Promise for West Baytown provides various initiatives to broaden economic conditions for target area residents. During the year, the organization used funds to re-establish programs at a new site and develop a computer lab for phonics, ESL, homework, and job search activities. Specifically, funds were used for insurance to cover the programs. Approximately 150 people participated in the Adult and Family Education Programs.

Senior/Disabled Transportation

The Senior/Disabled Citizens Transportation Program provided 996 one-way taxi rides to 182 eligible citizens. The program allowed elderly and disabled persons non-emergency travel from their homes to doctors' offices, grocery stores, and other locations within the city limits. Funding was also used to purchase 8,278 ride coupons to allow participants an additional 2,857 one-way shared rides in conjunction with the Harris County Coordinated Transportation Program.

The City of Baytown has been fortunate to successfully administer a wide-range of programs using city Staff and non-profit sub-recipients. The successful past performance of funded programs demonstrates that Baytown is able to assist low-income persons and areas with limited resources. Staff intends to continue performing the funded programs with the guidance of the citizens committee, the assistance of city administration and in coordination with sub-recipients and local partners.

ATTACHMENT 1

Map of CDBG Activities Past Performance