

2005-2009 Consolidated Plan

for the
Community Development Block Grant
and
HOME Programs



City of Kenosha, Wisconsin

ATTACHMENT

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Basis for Assigning Priorities

The local priorities established take into consideration the overall need for services that the local homeless providers are witnessing today. It also reflects ESN's commitment to providing shelter as a first priority to all homeless and at-risk households.

Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Need

The primary obstacle in meeting underserved needs is the lack of sufficient private and public funding and the growing homeless population.

Resource Allocation

a. Acquisition

CDBG The City of Kenosha is an Entitlement City for the CDBG Program. Funds are used by non-profit agencies and the Department of City Development.

b. Rehabilitation

CDBG The City of Kenosha is an Entitlement City for the CDBG Program. Funds are used for rehabilitation loans/grants of low and moderate income owner occupied housing units citywide.

HOME The City of Kenosha is a Participating Jurisdiction for the HOME Program. Funds can be used for rehabilitation loans of low and moderate income owner occupied housing units citywide.

CAA The Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency operates a weatherization program funded by the US Departments of Energy, Housing & Urban Development, and Health and Human Services, and Exxon

WHEDA Low interest rehabilitation loans for low and moderate income owner and occupied housing.

NHS Rehabilitates houses for existing homeowners and new homebuyers within the NHS target area.

c. New Construction

HOME Construction of new single-family homes for low/moderate income persons on vacant inner-city lots

d. Home Buyer Assistance

WHEDA Low interest loans to low income first time home buyers.

HCRI Homebuyer downpayment/closing costs assistance grants NHS
Homebuyer counseling for potential homebuyers.

e. Rental Assistance

Section 8 Existing Certificates and Vouchers for low income households.
HCRI Short term rental assistance to low income households.
CAA Rent and escrow assistance to homeless and at-risk households.

f. Homeless Assistance

Shalom Center Provides emergency family shelter facilities and soup kitchen.
INNS Coordinated shelter program operated by local churches on a rotating basis.

g. Homeless Prevention

ESG Can fund homeless prevention programs.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

There are a number of State and local regulations designed to promote the orderly development and maintenance of safe, decent and sanitary housing in the community. Sometimes these regulations can act as barriers to affordable housing. That does not appear to be the case in Kenosha.

To eliminate duplication, the City uses the building codes established by the State for uniform construction standards. These standards parallel the three National Code standards and are minimum provisions to ensure general safety for the public. The State codes and guidelines are also appealable to the State. Consequently, the City's building codes do not appear to hinder the development or preservation of affordable housing.

Likewise, the locally established Minimum Housing Code does not create a barrier for affordable housing. These standards parallel the National Minimum Housing Code Standards and are minimum requirements established to preserve and promote the public health, safety, comfort, personality and general welfare of the people. Their enforcement is necessary to preserve and encourage the private/public interests in housing and its maintenance. At the same time, these standards are appealable, locally, to ensure there are no undue hardships.

An examination of the community's fee structures indicates the City's building permit fees and charges are at a median, as compared to surrounding communities. In fact, in the case of new housing development, the City is currently subsidizing the cost of services because the cost to the City is greater than the development fees charged. The City's positive, proactive position on housing development and preservation is further evidenced by its departmental restructuring to facilitate and better coordinate the development and housing process, as well as the substantial resources and technical assistance the City provides to the development and preservation of affordable housing.

The City's zoning and land-use codes promote the morals, aesthetics, prosperity, health, safety and general welfare of all people in Kenosha. These codes are constructed to allow compatible development throughout the community and are flexible enough to encourage redevelopment in the community's existing, established areas. This is evidenced by development in both the City's outlying and urban areas. These codes, like other local codes, are appealable locally to ensure equitable and fair treatment.

All residential properties are assessed on a citywide basis using market sales data of comparable properties in and around the immediate neighborhood. Citywide assessing appears to ensure an equitable treatment of residential property and provides an incentive to those who maintain and improve their properties.

The current public policies relating to housing and, in particular, affordable housing, do not appear to be excessive, exclusionary, or discriminatory nor do they duplicate any other policies. However, the City will continue to monitor those relevant public policies to ensure they do not change in such a manner as to constitute a barrier to affordable housing. The City will also continue its pro-active position, regarding affordable housing, by continuing to provide both financial and technical assistance to affordable housing activities and projects.

The City will continue its proactive position in regard to affordable housing by continuing to provide both financial and technical assistance to affordable housing activities and projects. The City is committed to the principle that all individuals should have available to them an equal opportunity for housing choices regardless of their race, color, religion, familial status, sex, national origin or handicap. The City will also continue to plan for and assemble vacant lots for the construction of new infill housing.

The City also fosters and maintains its affordable housing stock through the code enforcement program, a systematic exterior inspection program targeted towards the City's Reinvestment Neighborhood; the housing rehabilitation grant program which provides very low income homeowners assistance with addressing the orders through the code enforcement program; and the HOME Buyer Program which

purchases and rehabilitates substandard housing and builds new houses on infill sites. HOME funds are also used to provide second mortgage assistance to homebuyers in order to keep projects affordable.

Fair Housing

The Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections is responsible for receiving all housing discrimination complaints per Section 22.01 of the Code of General Ordinances of the City of Kenosha.

No complaints were received by the Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections.

The City of Kenosha's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing was completed and submitted to HUD for review and approval on April 29, 1998.

The Kenosha Housing Authority gives presentations to both landlord groups in Kenosha regarding their programs and fair housing issues. KHA staff attend monthly landlord meetings where questions are asked regarding fair housing, as well as answer calls daily from landlords asking fair housing questions. During 2003, fair housing issues were discussed and promoted during every briefing for Port-ins.

Organizational Structure and Coordination

The City has adopted a more coordinated and cooperative approach in order to build on the strengths and prevent any gaps in its delivery system.

A Neighborhood Improvement Committee has been created to support and reinforce positive actions taken by the City, non-profit organizations and private developers toward upgrading low and moderate income neighborhoods. The committee will encourage reinvestment, provide property for development that will contribute to the improvement of targeted neighborhoods, and support and reinforce efforts to preserve and develop affordable housing. To further reinforce and focus positive actions, the committee has designated three specific target areas within the larger Reinvestment Neighborhood.

Two neighborhood revitalization strategies have also been developed. The strategies allow the committee to take a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to targeting areas for investment of program funds. The strategies also address both the housing and community development needs of the reinvestment neighborhood, thereby consolidating all resources and efforts.

The Carpenters Home Improvement Program (CHIP) is an existing effort between the City, school district, and local carpenters' union to provide on the job training for high school students and assist lower income homeowners with necessary repairs to their properties as well as to construct new single family infill housing. The advantages of this program are two-fold. First of all, a low income homeowner or homebuyer is provided with assistance to make repairs or purchase an affordable home. Secondly, a group of students are provided with an opportunity to develop the skills necessary to allow them to enter into a construction apprenticeship program after high school.

As previously described, the Emergency Services Network (ESN) is a consortium of nearly all of the homeless service providers and local government housing assistance agencies, including the City. ESN's mission is to strengthen the impact of service delivery in meeting emergency needs through the coordinated planning and cooperative delivery of services. ESN has adopted a Continuum of Care philosophy.

The only gap in the organizational structure continues to be the availability of only one CHDO. The City continues to pursue the possible creation of an additional CHDO in the future.