



Building Stronger Communities

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Special points of interest:

•HUD:

www.hud.gov

•Community Planning and Development :

www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/

•Morgantown Housing Authority:

www.fmhousing.com

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Strategic Plan: How does your proposal fit in?

It is important that agencies keep Morgantown's strategic plan in mind when planning proposals for the 2007 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Proposals should not only fit into the overall strategic plan, but also help achieve the specific goals laid out in the plan. As the Five-Year Consolidated Plan approaches its conclusion, we need to strive to accomplish some of the goals we have set for ourselves.

Disbursement of CDBG funding must address the National Objectives. The City of Morgantown will direct the CDBG funding to *decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities*. At least 70 % of the funding will be utilized in assistance to low and moderate-income persons.

The primary components of Morgantown's strategic plan are the affordable housing strategy, homelessness strategy, non-housing community development strategy, economic development strategy, and anti-poverty strategy.

Affordable Housing Strategy

The CDBG Program enables the city to engage in long term planning and development of housing programs that address our most difficult housing issues.

Goal 1. Develop and fund a home-improvement program where low- and moderate-income income home-owners in repairing and improving their home.

Goal 2. Establish an Emergency Repair Program designed to provide eligible applicants a means to address emergency conditions that threaten the health, safety and well being of the resident and prohibit habitability.

Goal 3. Establish a Rental Rehabilitation Program designed to increase the availability and quality of affordable rental property of low- and moderate-income persons through the rehabilitation of existing properties.

Goal 4. Establish a Barrier Free Program to aid elderly and disabled residents.

Goal 5. Establish a fund to allow the Habitat for Humanity or the Fairmont/Morgantown Housing Authority to purchase vacant or abandoned property and clear for construction of residential housing for low- and moderate-income qualified applicants.

Please see "Strategic Plan" on page 4

New Performance Outcome Measurements

When a proposal has been funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HUD does not simply cut a check to the agency and send them on their merry way. There are several responsibilities that come along with the granting of federal money. One responsibility is keeping track of your funded program's performance and reporting these numbers in a quarterly report. This year, HUD has asked for some additional information in the quarterly reports.

In the past, the quarterly reports have asked for a narrative describing the program's progress and some demographic information describing the people served. The narrative asked for specific outcomes, problems encountered, if the project is on schedule, and for any proposed changes to the project description or budget. The narrative section will remain the same this year. The demographic section asked for the total number of persons served, their income level, race, and ethnicity, as well as inquiring into the number of elderly, disabled, and female heads of household served. The new quarterly reports will require all of this information plus more specific information on who we helped and how we helped them.

Please see "Outcome Measurements" on page 2

Featured Program: Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club



The Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club receives CDBG funding to carry out its Project Learn initiative. Project Learn provides after-school and summer educational enhancement and tutoring services to students ages 6-18. Average attendance is 60 students each day during the academic year and 80 students daily during the summer. The CDBG funds were used to hire an additional two tutors during the summer and into the school year.

Project Learn is a program that helps develop club members' knowledge and skills by integrating fun and educational activities throughout the club. The program offers club members five components: homework help and tutoring, high-yield learning activities, collaboration with schools, parental involvement, and recognition and incentives. Prevention programs are offered every day, including Smart Moves and character education. These strategies work together to help club members reach their full potential. The program does this by helping students become proficient in basic academic skills, teaching them to make informed decisions about post-secondary education, and encouraging them to become lifelong learners.

The Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club is important in the Morgantown area, since it serves youth even when school is out. Many programs for children are only available after school, but leave parents searching for other options on snow days and during the summer. The Boys and Girls Club is also very good at reaching out to serve the children of low and very low-income families, providing to them with opportunities for tutoring and recreation that they may not otherwise have had access to.

The Project Learn program fits into the anti-poverty strategy of the strategic plan, which has the goal of working with support agencies in resolving barriers to independent living and promoting self-sufficiency for individuals and families of low- to moderate-income through job training, literacy programs, after school programs, substance abuse and medical treatment, barrier removal and rehabilitation, and transportation.

2006 Action Plan

Annual Action Plan, July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007

This is the third installment of the one-year action plan that compliments the five year Consolidated Plan.

Summary of recommended spending for Year 1 (2004):

Administration & Planning 20 % Cap \$86,292

CDBG Administration \$86,292
 Planning Activities \$0

Housing Programs \$171,800

Housing Programs Administration \$22,522
 Home Rehabilitation Program \$141,778
 Down Payment Assistance Program \$7,500

Community Development 15 % Cap \$85,037

Bartlett House Inc. \$22,000
 Court-Appointed Special Advocates \$5,187
 Mental Health Assn. of Mon County \$3,698
 Milan Puskar Health Right, Inc. \$11,000
 Mo'town Area Youth Services Project \$8,840
 Mon County Habitat for Humanity \$11,000
 Mon County Schools (Kaleidoscope) \$3,460
 Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club \$8,560
 Society for Crippled Children & Adults \$792
 Northern WV Center for Ind. Living \$3,500
 Rape & Domestic Violence Info. Center \$7,000

Non-Housing Community Dev \$225,585

BOPARC Senior Center & Rec. Center \$50,000
 City - Sidewalks \$169,585
 Mountain Line Transit Authority \$6,000



Outcome Measurements *continued from page 1*

Housing programs will be required to report data on affordable and accessible units, units meeting energy star standards, number of units brought up to standard, and number of units made lead-free. Public service programs will have to report the number of persons assisted with *new access* to a service, the number with *improved access* to a service, and the number of people that have access to a *better quality service*. Economic development programs will have to provide a DUNS number, which can be easily obtained by phone. All programs will be asked how much other federal, state, local or private money will be leveraged by the granting of CDBG funds for the project (projects relying solely on CDBG funds are less likely to be selected).

HUD is also being more stringent about reporting requirements, so it is important to realize that quarterly reports are mandatory. Incomplete, late, and missing reports will factor into program evaluation when new CDBG funds are allocated.



The Unfunded Proposal



Each year, the Community Development Office will receive applications requesting more funds than HUD will be granting. Only 15% of the city's CDBG allocation can be spent on public services, so competition for those funds is especially strong. For these reasons, several CDBG proposals each year will not be funded. When the applications are submitted, city staff reviews them and makes selections based on HUD guidelines and city policies. Some reasons for rejecting proposals include:

- * The application was not complete.
- * The applicant did not follow ALL instructions.
- * The program was not eligible.
- * The program did not meet one or more of the national objectives.
- * Two proposals were denied because they relied entirely on CDBG funds. It is important to leverage other funds in a CDBG proposal.
- * The proposed program was not sustainable—the application did not show how the program would continue without CDGB funding.
- * The applicant received funding in the past and did not perform well (quarterly reports were not on-time or complete, funds were not spent on schedule, reimbursement submissions were not accurate).
- * The percentage of the program that the CDBG can fund is based on the percentage of program participants that are city residents (for example, if a proposal asks for \$1,000, but only 60% of its participants are city residents, then the CDBG can only fund 60% or \$600). Some projects were not fully funded for this reason
- * The proposal did not show that at least 70% of the total CDBG funds would benefit low to moderate-income people.
- * The proposed costs were not reasonable or necessary.
- * The project did not help advance the goals of the city's strategic plan (see related article).
- * The project was not ready to go or could not be implemented in 12 months beginning July 1.
- * The organization did not have the capacity to implement the proposed project.
- * The proposal was an unnecessary duplication of an existing service/project.
- * The funds would not have resulted in the expansion of an existing service or in more residents being served.
- * Environmental concerns with the project (lead based paint, historical significance, asbestos contamination) were not addressed.
- * If repairs/renovations were proposed, the agency did not demonstrate property ownership or submit a lease allowing alterations.
- * The proposal requested funding for new construction.
- * The need for the project was not as pressing as for other proposals that were received.

Workforce Housing Conference

On June 8th, 2006, the Vision 2020 Housing Committee, the City of Morgantown, and the Morgantown Housing Authority co-hosted a symposium on affordable housing in Morgantown. The symposium was co-hosted by the Principal speakers included mayor Ron Justice, Lisa Zukoff (Director of the Fannie Mae WV Community Business Center), Paul Ostergaard (Urban Design Associates), and Joe Hatfield (WV Housing Development Fund (WVHDF)). There was also a panel of local housing providers composed of Dave Bott (City of Morgantown Community Development Director), John Martys (Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority), Wayne Gregoire (WVHDF, Mountaineer Mortgage Plus), Chris Haddox (Habitat for Humanity), Chris Fletcher (Morgantown City Planner), Rick Biafore (Morgantown Rental Developer), and Bill Byrne (Sunnyside Up, Campus Neighborhood Redevelopment Corp.)



There are several barriers to affordable housing in Morgantown. Housing costs generally exceed 30% of gross income, which is considered the threshold of affordability for the low and very-low income households. This high cost is primarily due to the demand for affordable housing exceeding supply in the City. There is little developable, vacant land in the City increasing the price for the land and subsequently the house. The large student population occupies much of the affordable rental units in the city, with only 15% of privately owned rental units being classified as non-student housing. In addition, family rental units of three or more bedrooms are in short supply in the City. Housing within city limits is in such great demand that it can even be difficult for professionals, such as city employees, teachers, and small business owners, to find affordable housing. For these reasons, the Morgantown Housing Authority is proposing an affordable housing plan that utilizes CDBG funds.

Of special note at the symposium was Paul Ostergaard's talk titled, "Affordable Housing Development through New Urbanism." He gave some background on the design of public and private spaces in European urban centers, which can give us some ideas on how to make the most of our neighborhood planning when renewing urban areas. His firm has used these ideas and tried to match the established character of housing in the city when designing affordable housing developments in places such as Charlotte, NC, Portsmouth, VA, Baltimore, MD, and Wheeling, WV.

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CDBG

Calendar



November 2nd– the funding process will begin with a public hearing requesting submissions of proposals.

February 5th – PROPOSALS ARE DUE

Early March – City Council is given a list of proposed project requests.

March 13th – a public hearing will be held for proposed Action Plan budget which begins a 30-day public comment period

May 1st– a final draft of the Action Plan will go to City Council for approval

Prior to May 15th – the final draft will be sent to HUD which will begin a 45 day public comment period

Proposal applications can be downloaded from the City's web site: www.morgantown.com

Strategic Plan (continued from page 1)



Homelessness Strategy

The City of Morgantown will seek to ensure access to quality affordable housing for the homeless, as well as those in eminent danger of becoming homeless by supporting local public service agencies that provide assistance for the homeless population.

Goal 1. The city will facilitate the plan for a homeless needs assessment and promote the development of a continuum of care.

Goal 2. The city will continue to support new and expanded services or activities for social service agencies that provide emergency and transitional shelter for the Morgantown homeless population and will collaborate with service agencies in addressing the needs of the homeless population.

Non-Housing Community Development Strategy

Infrastructure: Many neighborhoods that include low-income residents need to have their sidewalks repaired and handicap access improved.

Goal 1. Provide sidewalk/infrastructure improvements or new sidewalks each year in targeted low-income areas.

Goal 2. The City is committed to removing barriers at all public facilities in order to make all City Facilities ADA compliant.

Parks and Recreation: Many parks need to be upgraded to be accessible to people with handicaps and to include newer, safer playground equipment.

Goal 3. Support BOPARC to improve parks, playgrounds, and other opportunities that primarily serve low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Goal 4. Support BOPARC to improve the BOPARC Senior Center by moving the Senior Center to the former Wiles Hill Elementary School.

Economic Development Strategy

Economic development activities shall include, but may not be limited to; job creation and retention, establishment and expansion of small businesses, infrastructure development, and support of micro-enterprises. Economic development activities shall focus on placing low and moderate-income individuals into full-time employment. Priority will be given to projects that expand or preserve jobs for low to moderate-income workers.

Goal 1: Encourage private businesses through economic development initiatives and incentives, to employ low-and moderate-income people.

Goal 2: Support the expansion and development of micro-enterprises, especially if they are located within historic buildings or historic districts.

Anti-Poverty Strategy

The City collaborates with many social service agencies assisting persons living at or below the poverty level, especially those agencies improving the lives of low to moderate-income youth in order to break the cycle of poverty.

Goal 1: The City will work with support agencies identifying and resolving barriers to independent living and promoting self-sufficiency for individuals and families of low- to moderate-income through job training, literacy programs, after school programs, substance abuse and medical treatment, barrier removal and rehabilitation, and transportation

Proposals will be chosen that fit into this strategic plan and help Morgantown achieve the goals stated above.