COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Community Development

1. *Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), public facilities, public improvements, public services, and economic development.*

2. *Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.*

   **Note: Each specific objective developed to address a priority need, must be identified by number and contain proposed accomplishments, the time period (i.e., one, two, three, or more years), and annual program year numeric goals the jurisdiction hopes to achieve in quantitative terms, or in other measurable terms as identified and defined by the jurisdiction.*

All projects and activities described in this Action Plan may be considered as furthering community development in the City. However, on July 1, 2013, CDA issued an RFP for CDBG funding that identified several non-housing community development priorities for the City. Based on this process, CDA proposes to fund the following non-housing priority areas in 2014:

Table 8. Non-Housing Community Development Needs.

PRIORITY / ACTIVITY	PRIORITY NEED LEVEL	MATRIX CODE	ACCOMPLISHMENT TYPE	2014 GOAL
Public Improvements: Public Infrastructure	High	03	11 – Public Facilities	1
Public Improvements: Public Facility	High	03A	11 – Public Facilities	1
Public Service: Neighborhood Improvement	High	05	01 – People	200,051
Public Service: Other Supportive Services	High	05	01 – People	6,175
Public Service: Senior	High	05A	01 – People	3,000
Public Service: Special Need Population	High	05B	01 – People	118
Public Service: Youth	High	05D	01 – People	5,939
Public Service: Fair Housing	High	05J	01 – People	750

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Public Service: Health	High	05M	01 – People	29,084
PRIORITY / ACTIVITY	**PRIORITY NEED LEVEL**	**MATRIX CODE**	**ACCOMPLISHMENT TYPE**	**2014 GOAL**
Economic Development: CDFI Building, Acquisition, Construction and Rehabilitation	High	17C	08 – Businesses / 13 – Jobs	15
Economic Development: Other Commercial/Industrial Improvements	High	17D	08 – Businesses	75
Economic Development: Direct Financial Assistance to For-Profits	High	18A	08 – Businesses	50
Economic Development: Microenterprise Assistance	High	18C	01 – People/08 – Businesses / 13 – Jobs	100
Planned Repayment of Section 108 Loans	High	19F	N/A	N/A

The needs specified in the Con Plan are longer term as they require considerably more funding than is available on an annual basis.

Public Improvements

The primary goal associated with public improvements is to build or enhance public capital improvements to serve the diverse needs and constituencies of the City of St. Louis. Under the CDBG program, grantees may use funds to undertake a variety of public facilities and public improvement projects. In general, public facilities and public improvements are interpreted to include all facilities and improvements that are publicly owned, or that are owned by a non-profit and open to the general public.

Please see Appendix C for a summary of 2014 public improvement activities and Appendix F for specific project worksheets.

Public Services

The primary strategies associated with public services are aimed at achieving family self sufficiency by assisting organizations in providing public supportive services for youth, seniors, and low and moderate individuals. Under the CDBG program, grantees may use funds to provide public services (including labor, supplies, materials and other costs), provided the public service is:

- A new service; or
- A quantifiable increase in the level of a service.

Activities eligible for public service funding include but are not limited to recreational activities, senior meals-on-wheels, after-school programs, food pantries, fair housing efforts and employment assistance programs.

Since 2001, the amount of CDBG funds received by the City has been reduced by over 40%.

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This has been devastating, as funding for some public service programs has been eliminated, while other program funding has significantly been reduced.

Please see Appendix D for a summary of 2014 public service activities and Appendix F for specific project worksheets.

In 2014, CDA will implement a new public service activity, the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP). The goal of the NIP is to improve the health of neighborhoods by addressing needs through the active involvement of the residents themselves. Essential to the success of the program are the Community Based Development Organizations (CBDOs) located in low- and moderate income areas. We are convinced that the NIP is best implemented at the grass roots level to maximize resident involvement and to emphasize the importance of neighborhood self-sufficiency. We are also convinced that increasing volunteerism and building stewardship commitment will pay clear community development dividends in both the short and long term.

The following activities will be implemented under the NIP:

1. Neighborhood Ownership Model (NOM):

According to the City's Circuit Attorney's Office in its document entitled, "Neighborhood Ownership Model: A Flexible, Community-Based Approach to Creating Significant and Lasting Crime Reduction":

> *The public is the '800-pound gorilla' in the law enforcement community and when-and only when- citizens assume their power and get involved will St. Louis realize the promise we all know is within our reach. If we all work together each and every day, we can create an environment where criminals live in fear of being held accountable for their actions."*

The NOM is an innovative program started in 2010 by citizens of the Lafayette Square neighborhood. Through this program, residents formed alliances with neighbors, government and law enforcement agencies and implemented strategies that dramatically reduced crime in their community. The Circuit Attorney's Office has identified ways in which residents can utilize the NOM to reduce crime and increase the quality of life in their neighborhoods:

1. Set up a preliminary team of neighbors who will set preliminary goals for reducing crime
2. Assist neighbors in completing a safety assessment
3. Prepare a written neighborhood ownership plan
4. Assist in implementing neighborhood ownership plan by leveraging government partners

CDA will charge certain CBDOs with assisting residents in implementing the above referenced steps of the NOM.

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2. Better Block Program:

The Better Block project started in April 2010, when a group of community organizers, neighbors, and property owners in Dallas gathered together to revitalize a single commercial block in an underused neighborhood corridor. The area was filled with vacant properties, wide streets, and few amenities for people who lived within walking distance. The group brought together all of the resources from the community and converted the block into a walkable, bikeable neighborhood destination for people of all ages complete with bike lanes, cafe seating, trees, plants, pop-up businesses, and lighting. Since that time, Better Block projects have been developed throughout the world with many of the temporary infrastructure improvements and businesses made permanent.

With the assistance of the City's Planning and Urban Design Agency, CDA has identified underutilized commercial blocks in low- to moderate-income areas in the City of St. Louis that could benefit from the Better Blocks approach. Through the NIP, CBDOs will assist residents in transforming a block for at least one weekend. Specifically, CDA is charging certain CBDOs with the following tasks:

1. Assemble a planning committee of residents and businesses
2. Attract and coordinate resident volunteers for the event
3. Work with property owners to allow access to vacant spaces for the event
4. Promote and coordinate the event

In addition, select CBDOs will be invited to participate in the Mayor's Sustainability Conference in November 2013 where the founder and leader of the Better Block movement will speak and where Better Block follow-on discussion and training will be available.

3. Neighborhood Beautification Activity

We believe that all neighborhood residents can play an active role in beautification efforts. Through the NIP, certain CBDOs will help educate residents about the importance of beautification efforts in community development. Specifically, CDA will charge the CBDOs with the following tasks:

1. Design and implement an educational neighborhood beautification workshop for residents

2. Implement quarterly CDA approved beautification projects - with resident volunteers - targeting neighborhood entrances, commercial areas or community gardens

4. Energy Conservation Activity

The Sustainability Plan for the City identifies several strategies for promoting energy efficiency including "encourage[ing] energy conservation programs and services, such as the use of cool roofs, CFL/LED distributions, energy audits, and weatherization activities… and [ensuring] that

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City constituents have access to current energy efficiency and clean energy programs, technical assistance, and advocacy."

We will give certain CBDOs the opportunity to design an energy conservation awareness program tailored to the unique needs of its service area. The goals of this activity are to enhance the culture of sustainability by building relationships, encouraging sustainable practices, and creating measurable change.

Participating CBDOs will be required to design and implement the program during its participation in a CDA-sponsored year-long training program. CDA will approve each program before the program may be implemented.

5. Landlord Training Program (LTP)

Although the housing market has improved, there is still a high demand for quality affordable rental units for low- and moderate-income households residing in the City of St. Louis. CDA proposes to fund two CBDOs to run an LTP that is modeled, in part, after a successful CDBG-sponsored program offered in the City of Milwaukee. The two CBDOs that we propose to run the program are DeSales Community Housing Corporation (in north city) and Shaw Neighborhood Housing Corporation (in south city). Both organizations have strong boards and leaders with significant property management experience.

The LTP will have two significant components: general landlord trainings and lead-specific trainings. The outputs of the general landlord trainings are as follows:

1. Four (two-hour sessions): Each CBDO will be required to design and implement programs on tenant selection, leases (and other important documents), recommended property management practices, and maintenance.
2. Two (five-hour sessions): Each CBDO will be required to design and implement programs on nuisance and the eviction process.

The 5-hour sessions will occur on the weekends. The two-hour sessions will occur in the evenings.

Because there are more than 71,000 rental units in the City of St. Louis constructed before 1978 (the year that the use of lead-based paint was outlawed), the lead trainings are an important aspect of the LTP. Each CBDO will be required to design and implement three two-hour sessions on the Lead-Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting Program (RRP), which is an EPA regulatory program affecting contractors, property managers and others who disturb lead-based paint in residential units and child occupied facilities built before 1978. Program will include the following topics: (1) RRP basics (including leasing requirements); (2) dangers of lead hazards and consequences of non-compliance, and (3) possible financial assistance for remediation.

Not all CBDOs will implement all components of the program. Please see Appendix F for project worksheets reflecting CBDO specific activities.

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In order to participate in the NIP, CBDOs will be required to attend at least two CDA-sponsored training sessions per month in 2014. The sessions will cover various topics, including CDBG rules and regulations, nonprofit capacity and community development. They will be advertised on the City's website and will be available to the greater nonprofit community.

Economic Development

The primary objectives associated with economic development initiatives includes providing assistance/incentives to retain and attract for-profit, retail businesses and microenterprises to the City, to provide jobs to low- and moderate- income persons, and to encourage historic preservation and rehabilitation of business properties through CDBG funds. In 2014, CDBG funds will continue to be used to support the Business Development Support Program, which provides loans to for-profit businesses at slightly below market rates and the Neighborhood Commercial District, which encourages façade improvements in neighborhood commercial districts.

In 2014, CDA will fund two new economic development initiatives: microenterprise assistance and CDFI construction funding. Under the CDBG program, a grantee may use CDBG funds to provide financial assistance to an existing microenterprise or to assist in the establishment of a microenterprise. It also authorizes the provision of:

- Technical assistance to a new or existing microenterprise or to persons developing a microenterprise, and

- General support to owners of microenterprises or to persons developing a microenterprise.

A grantee may also utilize to undertake certain economic development activities, including the construction of commercial buildings.

Please see Appendix E for a summary of 2014 economic development activities.

Section 108 Loan

In 1998, the City submitted a Section 108 Loan Guarantee Assistance request to the Department of Housing and Urban Development to borrow funds to develop the Downtown Convention Center Hotel, undertake the Near Southside Development and fund a number of housing, capital improvement and economic development activities known as Neighborhood Development projects. The original loan amount for the Convention Center Hotel was $20,000,000, which was subsequently amended to $50,000,000 and approved by HUD in 2000. The principal balance on the loan was refinanced in 2012.

Antipoverty Strategy

1. *Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to reduce the number of poverty- level families.*

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Program Year 5 Action Plan "Antipoverty Strategy" Response:

St. Louis has a substantial number of families and individuals who live in poverty. While many factors related to poverty are beyond the control of City government, the City is committed to addressing poverty issues and improving the welfare and economic status of its residents wherever possible. Most of the services described in the Five Year Strategy are services devoted primarily to helping those in poverty. Some, like Homeless Services, are basic elements of the "safety net" geared to those in most need. Others, like promotion of home ownership, job creation and education, are more fundamental to the long term reduction of poverty in society. Throughout the strategy are recommendations and objectives that are central to the reduction of poverty. The City can most effectively fight poverty over the long term by:

- Promoting economic Development, especially job intensive industries.
- Providing employment and Readiness and Training Services to those in need.
- Building the tax base so that basic city services and "safety net" services can be provided to all.
- Helping less affluent citizens purchase a home in a neighborhood where housing values are likely to increase.
- Insuring that problem properties are reduced thereby preserving the value of neighborhood property.
- Striving for better day care, pre-school, after-school and public education systems.

Actions to be undertaken during the 2014 program year that work toward the reduction of poverty in the City include the funding of $3, 125,826 in public service activities through the CDBG program. These activities include youth, elderly, community, health care, and education services, all of which benefit low and moderate income persons and serve to improve the economic status of lower income City residents. Other CDBG and HOME funded activities will assist lower income persons through such activities as home repair, homeownership, and an expanded senior/disabled person minor home repair program. All of these activities benefit lower income persons and serve to improve their economic well being.

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