

# CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK



## PROPOSED FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN FY 2016-2020 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2016



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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# Executive Summary

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

### 1. Introduction

Eligible local governments may receive annual grants for community development and affordable housing through application to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Available grants include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) grant. The CDBG Entitlement Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons. The HOME program provides formula grants and is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low income households. A city must match community needs to eligible grant activities, and as part of that process, HUD requires grantees to prepare and submit a Consolidated Plan. The City of North Little Rock Five Year Consolidated Plan FY2016 – FY2020 has been developed in accordance with federal regulatory requirements in 24 CFR Part 91.

The Plan is used to outline levels of need in the areas of affordable housing, community development, special needs, and homelessness. This information was gathered through a number of approaches including public outreach, consultations with local agencies, a review of the latest demographic and economic data provided by HUD, and an analysis of market conditions. These methods are further explained in the Process, Needs Assessment, and Market Analysis sections of this Plan.

The needs assessment and market analysis formed the basis of the Strategic Plan, which details how the City's priority needs will be addressed by utilizing local service delivery capabilities, allocating anticipated funding, setting goals, and outlining performance and monitoring measures. Partnerships with agencies and organizations in our community are important to the successful implementation of the Plan, and we acknowledge and appreciate their work and the services that they provide. The City strives to identify service delivery methods that are meaningful and beneficial to our diverse community. The consolidated planning process serves as a framework for a community-wide dialogue to identify housing and community development priorities that align and focus funding from the grant programs. All funding recommendations for activities operated with these grants are evaluated based on the ability to help the City meet the goals outlined in this Plan.

Finally, for each of the five years covered by the Consolidated Plan, the City of North Little Rock is required by HUD to prepare an Annual Action Plan. The Action Plan will detail the intended activities to be funded in that particular fiscal year, as well as other actions that will be taken to meet the objectives of the Consolidated Plan. The Action Plan serves as the application to HUD for CDBG and HOME funding. The FY2016 Annual Action Plan is included in this document.

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

The Plan's needs assessment identified a wide range of needs related to affordable housing, non-housing community development, special needs, and homelessness. The Plan develops goals, determines objectives, and describes anticipated outcomes to address many of these issues. However, limited grant allocations preclude funding projects and activities for all identified needs. For the objectives listed below which are not funded through this Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, rather than financial assistance, the City can provide support through coordination and collaboration of efforts with partner agencies.

Goal: Affordable Housing – Rehabilitation / Development

Objective: Improve the condition and increase the availability of decent affordable housing for low to moderate income persons.

- Maintain affordability of existing homeowner housing through housing rehabilitation programs.
- Increase affordability options for low to moderate income homebuyers by developing affordable housing units.
- Support North Little Rock Housing Authority (NLRHA) efforts to modernize stock, work with landlords to identify housing opportunities, and maintain and expand Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership, Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), and other program initiatives.
- Support private and nonprofit developers in identifying opportunities to utilize Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) for the construction of assisted rental housing for low income families and seniors.
- Support alternative housing assistance efforts such as faith-based initiatives, volunteer housing assistance programs, self-help and neighborhood group empowerment programs.
- Support and help facilitate access to lenders or programs offering subsidy, down payment or closing cost assistance to homebuyers.
- Support Continuum of Care efforts, including an increase in inventory of permanent housing units for the homeless and permanent supportive housing units for special needs populations

Goal: Public Improvements – Infrastructure / Facilities

Objective: Foster suitable living environments and address non-housing community development needs.

- Sustain and revitalize low to moderate income neighborhoods with infrastructure improvements including streets, drainage, and sidewalks.
- Improve public facilities to enhance neighborhoods by serving low to moderate income populations, including homeless, special needs, youth, and elderly.
- Support the City's Fit 2 Live initiative to create environments that empower the community to adopt healthy life choices, such as community gardens.

Goal: Public Services

Objective: Stabilize living environments and improve well-being of economically disadvantaged residents.

- Provide availability and accessibility of public services geared toward the benefit and security of at-risk youth, seniors, special needs, homeless and other low income populations.
- Support coordination and collaboration with service providers and Continuum of Care members.
- Support nonprofit efforts to expand their funding sources through certificates of consistency with the Consolidated Plan.
- Support economic development, job development, and workforce training efforts.

Administer, plan, and monitor CDBG and HOME grant programs to ensure anticipated outcomes and performance measures and compliance with all regulations. Continue to assess, and support other needs including awareness and promotion of fair housing, removal of barriers to affordable housing and lead-based paint hazards, and an anti-poverty strategy.

### **3. Evaluation of past performance**

The City of North Little Rock has implemented several successful programs in the past with CDBG and HOME funding. Neighborhoods in low to moderate income areas of the City have been preserved through infrastructure projects such as sidewalk, street and drainage improvements. The condition of existing housing stock has been improved through programs providing emergency assistance grants for housing repair needs, and both minor (CDBG) and major (HOME) housing rehabilitation projects for low to moderate income residents. The number of new homes available in the affordable housing market in North Little Rock has increased through the efforts of our Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). Wheelchairs ramps have been built for disabled residents. Homelessness issues, special needs, care of the elderly, and youth and neighborhood services have been addressed and provided through partnerships with our nonprofit agencies and various public service and public facility projects.

At the end of each fiscal year, the City must prepare a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to provide information to HUD and our citizens detailing the accomplishments for that year. This report allows HUD, City officials and the public the opportunity to evaluate the City's performance and assess whether the activities undertaken during that fiscal year helped to meet the City's five-year goals. The City of North Little Rock began receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in 1975, and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) funds in 1992. HUD has consistently determined that the City has met its performance objectives and goals, and that the City has the capacity to continue effective administration of its grant programs.

#### **4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process**

As per the Citizen Participation Process and in preparation of the Five Year Consolidated Plan, City staff held public hearings in several accessible locations in low to moderate income areas in order to receive input from citizens and to inform them of the availability of Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership funding and programs. Technical assistance to groups seeking funding was provided upon request at public hearings, at the CDA office, and by phone. A Fair Housing Forum was held to receive citizen input prior to development of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, and a presentation of the report and public hearing was announced. Citizens were notified of hearings/meetings through local newspaper display advertisements and through postings on the City website. In an efforts to reach more North Little Rock residents, notices were posted on City and neighborhood organization Facebook pages. Nonprofits who serve low and moderate income persons, neighborhood and community leaders, and other interested parties were notified of meetings by direct mailouts. Notices of public hearings/meetings were listed as a communication to City Aldermen on the City Council agenda and read aloud at Council meetings. The notices offered special accommodations at the public meetings upon request from hearing impaired or non-English speaking residents, and persons with disabilities.

In addition, a survey to establish a community involvement process for prioritizing needs was distributed among nonprofits, neighborhood and community groups, organizations, and residents. The survey was handed out at the public hearings and was posted on the City website and on Facebook. It was also included in the direct mailouts mentioned above.

Notice of a 30 day public comment period on the final draft of the Five Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) was published in the newspaper, posted on the City website and on Facebook. Copies of all documents were made available for public review at City Hall and at the Community Development Agency, as well as on the City website. Adoption of these Plans for submission to HUD requires a majority vote of the City Council. The Citizen Participation process is also followed if a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan is needed and with a notice of comment period for CAPER actions.

The consultation process included extensive outreach to elected and appointed officials, key City staff, and numerous agencies and organizations as detailed in section PR-10.

#### **5. Summary of public comments**

To be completed after comment period.

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

To be completed after comment period.

## 7. Summary

Although the dollar amounts awarded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investments Partnerships (HOME) programs have decreased significantly over the past few years, the City of North Little Rock recognizes and values the opportunities the available funding provides to enhance the quality of life for our low to moderate income residents. The City strives to maintain its history of administering successful and effective programs and continues to encourage broad community involvement in the process.