

Harris County 2013 – 2017 Consolidated Plan Executive Summary

The Harris County Community Services Department (HCCSD) assists low- income communities by providing and supporting community programs, facilities and services through the distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and the Housing for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) entitlement funds are distributed by the City of Houston, the largest metropolitan entity within Harris County. In order to receive these annual grants, Harris County must submit a five-year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan to HUD for approval.

The 2013–2017 Consolidated Plan represents Harris County’s vision for improving the quality of life in the low- and moderate-income areas of the county. It is a comprehensive plan addressing the County’s housing, homelessness, and non-housing community development needs for the five-year period. The plan contains goals, performance outcome objectives, and implementation strategies for each of the plan’s elements. The plan describes the activities the county will fund, implement, and/or support using its annual federal allocation. It provides useful information about current conditions within the county and identifies its strengths and weaknesses on community development issues. The Consolidated Plan also explains the long-term goals and objectives for improving the quality of life for financially challenged residents, and states its specific plans for making improvements throughout the next five years.

HCCSD is required to submit a Consolidated Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order to receive funding for program years 2013-2017. This money is provided to Harris County in order to benefit low- and moderate-income persons, eliminate slum and blight and to provide for urgent needs within the County.

SUMMARY OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Existing needs in Harris County are largely driven by current difficulties in the housing market, limited opportunities in the employment sectors, and shifting population trends. Population size and location are dependent upon a number of factors. These include but are not limited to a community’s ability to provide quality infrastructure such as roads and bridges and satisfactory levels of basic public services and facilities, such as police, fire, public health and emergency medical services, schools, and utilities. All of these impact the natural environment and affect quality of life for residents and visitors.

At the same time, affordability of housing continues to be a major issue in Harris County, especially for minority households, special needs populations, and female headed households. Within the housing market the age of available homes, and more significantly the high level of deferred maintenance, often leaves only substandard housing available for low and moderate income households. This is particularly true within the rental housing market and for elderly home owners or homeowners with disabilities.

Difficulties in the local labor market, especially given the impact of the recession, have led to increasing unemployment as well as underemployment for many skilled workers. This is

especially true for low and moderate income LMI) workers. At the same time, many individuals in the local labor force are under skilled for the available jobs in local manufacturing and other knowledge based jobs.

Numerous public and human services needs were identified that relates to primary issues of housing safety and affordability, youth and special needs services, adult education, job training and employment assistance. Youth services for counseling, mentoring, after-school programs, and academic assistance are some of the most cited services needed. Services for persons with special needs, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, veterans and others, are also services that are in great need.

Additional areas of economic need cited by residents and service providers are for accessible job training, employment assistance programs, and better transportation or transportation assistance to available jobs and job centers.

Other needs impacting Harris County include the continued waiting lists for public housing, increasing demand for housing assistance and homelessness prevention, growing needs for improved public infrastructure including water and sewer, transportation, and the continued need to reduce the negative impact of blighted conditions on low and moderate income communities.

Many communities within the Harris County service area lack the basic necessities for a suitable living environment. There are often significant deficits in affordable housing options, supportive services for special needs populations, available homeless facilities, education and job training opportunities, and necessary infrastructure.

SUMMARY OF PLAN GOALS AND MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Unfortunately, statistics regarding changes in the Harris County population potentially indicate that the need for community services and facilities is likely to continue to grow while the ability to cover rising costs may shrink. In order to address these needs, Harris County through a collaborative planning process has developed the following goals and measurable objectives in coordination with community partners over the next five years:

Housing - To create the opportunity for affordable housing for low income persons by providing homeownership to 500 families with down payment and closing cost assistance and rental based tenant assistance to 50 extremely low- and low-income assistance families; new construction of 50 single-family (SF) affordable homes and 300 affordable multi-family (MF) housing units; minor rehabilitation for 100 SF homes and 50 MF housing units; and abatement of lead-based paint hazards for 130 SF homes and 15 renter-occupied SF homes.

Homeless – To provide essential services to 3,650 unsheltered homeless individuals and families living on the streets; renovations of structures to provide shelter for 7,500 homeless persons within new and existing emergency and transitional shelters; provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to prevent 1,000 households from experiencing homelessness; provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to quickly move 1,000 households experiencing homelessness into stable, permanent housing; and

to support the expansion and data quality of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by providing technical assistance to 300 homeless assistance providers and collecting data on 8,000 homeless individuals.

Public Facilities – To provide improvements and/or construction to 5 neighborhood or social service facilities benefiting 2,000 LMI areas; provide improvements to 3 senior center facilities; provide improvements to 2 youth centers; provide improvements to and/or construction of 5 parks/recreational facilities for 2,500 residents of LMI communities.

Economic Development - To provide direct financial assistance to for-profit businesses for the purpose of creating/retaining 20 jobs with at least 51 percent reserved for LMI persons; to assist 3 businesses in expanding, maintaining, and improving operations by providing financial and/or technical assistance for the purpose of retaining and creating jobs particularly jobs for LMI persons.

Infrastructure - Construct and improve 15 miles of roadways for 10,000 LMI persons; provide improvements to 90,000 linear feet of water/sewer lines and 4 water/sewer facilities; construct and improve 3 miles of sidewalks/pathways for 5,000 LMI persons; construct and improve 1,000 feet of flood drains for 5,000 LMI persons.

Public Services - To provide general public services to 5,000 LMI persons; provide senior services to 8,000 elderly and frail elderly persons; provide youth services/child care for 12,000 LMI persons, 5-19 years of age; provide health prevention, services, and outreach to 8,000 LMI persons; to provide services to 450 disabled adults; to promote transportation services to 3,000 LMI persons; to provide services to 200 persons with HIV/AIDS and their families; to provide services to 3,000 abused and neglected children; assist and provide 1,000 LMI youth and their families with crime awareness, prevention and juvenile justice programs.

Other - Clearance and Demolition to eliminate 150 dilapidated and/or unsafe structures located in LMI areas; provide assistance to 5 non-profit organizations, including assistance to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and Community Based Development Organizations (CBDOs), to build capacity to support revitalization activities in LMI communities; to support, encourage and facilitate local community planning activities to provide neighborhood level planning for 3 LMI target areas.

EVALUATION OF PAST PERFORMANCE

Harris County has been very successful in meeting many of the objectives in the previous five-year (2008-2012) plan. Cited below is a list of our major accomplishments during 2008-2012. They include:

- Provided 486 households with downpayment and closing cost assistance.
- Created 57 units of new affordable single-family housing and 140 new rental affordable multi-family housing units.
- Provided minor home repair to 84 households.
- Abated 124 households for lead based paint hazard control.

- Provided emergency and transitional shelter for 9,467 homeless persons.
- Provided 8,261 homeless persons with essential services.
- Provided 201 persons with homeless prevention services at risk of homelessness.
- Provided improvements and or construction of neighborhood centers for 2,471 persons.
- Provided improvements to senior center facilities for 700 persons.
- Provided improvements or construction of parks/recreational facilities for 31,299 persons.
- 4,351 persons have improved access to roadways.
- 146,076 persons have improved access to water/sewer improvements.
- 3,785 persons have improved access to sidewalks/pathways.
- 1,950 persons have improved access to flood drainage.
- 624 persons have access to general services.
- 10,707 persons have access to senior services.
- 17,860 persons have access to youth services.
- 13,608 persons have access to health services.
- 283 persons have access to services for persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS.
- 2,245 persons have access to transportation services.
- 4,356 abused and neglected children have access to services.
- 11 non-profits (150) persons affected have access to planning services.

Citizen Participation for the 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan

The cornerstone for the development of the Year 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan for Harris County was active citizen participation. Built on participation and cooperation, the Consolidated Plan is an expression of many voices: community leaders, educators, developers, nonprofit workers and government officials, and most importantly, the views of residents living in Harris County's low- income communities. The Harris County Citizen Participation Plan, *Section II*, provides details about the processes of obtaining public opinions for the Year 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan and how they will be collected in the future.

The Citizen Participation Plan emphasizes the involvement of low- and moderate-income residents including non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments. The Plan outlines the process through which the public can access general information, receive technical assistance, provide comments on critical issues, and receive timely responses to questions raised.

To identify the nature and level of needs within Harris County, a survey was developed and distributed for use as part of the citizen participation process for the consolidated plan. This broad based survey included questions related to Housing, Fair Housing, Social Services, Transportation, Senior and Youth Services, Parks, Public Facilities, Public Services, Infrastructure, Homelessness, and Education. It was developed to help identify the needs, goals, and objectives of the services needed in Harris County. The use of one survey, instead of having additional versions for service providers, was supported by the additional consultation efforts

with various service providers to better capture their needs and opinions. Harris County CSD received over 100 responses to the survey.

The opinions of Harris County residents on problems that exist at the neighborhood level and their preferred methods of mitigating them are of utmost importance when drafting needs statements, goals, objectives, and strategies for building better communities. To this end, the survey was distributed to residents throughout the CSD service area to residents, social service providers, homeless care providers, cooperative cities, developers and nonprofits.

As part of the citizen participation process, focus group meetings were also held at the precinct level to help identify and evaluate characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of the four precincts in Harris County. The focus group meetings were held at four Harris County Housing Authority Properties and three additional meetings were conducted as part of the developing the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

The results of the meetings helped us identify prominent issues facing Harris County and each of its four precincts. A brief outline of these issues is as follows:

Precinct One Issues

1. Lack of jobs and means of improving quality of life
2. Affordability concerns because of increasing rents
3. Lack of public transit/expand METRO service area
4. More parks and bike trails
5. Improve aging infrastructure to handle higher population and flooding

Precinct Two Issues

1. Safety concerns presented by large petrochemical facilities and the Port of Houston
2. Exposure to natural hazards (hurricanes, flooding) and recovering from Hurricane Ike
3. Lack of public transportation options
4. Higher quality housing options (many older homes and apartments present)
5. Improving safety and reducing crime

Precinct Three Issues

1. Reduce congestion and provide light/commuter rail option
2. Preserve the area's heritage while continuing to grow
3. Need to maintain safe, family friendly environment
4. Greater diversity of economic opportunities for all levels of education
5. Need to find balance between housing costs and commute time/distance

Precinct Four Issues

1. Increased traffic congestion from current and new developments
2. Loss of greens space and rural atmosphere
3. Lack of public transportation options
4. Affordable housing options beyond single-family homes needed, but need to avoid the stigma often associated with the term “affordable housing”
5. Need more sidewalks or trails that lead to commercial areas

The results of these meetings assisted in recognizing the needs, goals, and objectives of the services offered in Harris County and are a part of the Consolidated Plan.

CSD also assisted in the facilitation, coordination and presentation of the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County’s Community Charrette to help create a Community Action Plan to in compliance with the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act. This very large group of stakeholders discussed six distinct issue areas:

1. Integrating Housing and Services
2. Performance and Accountability
3. Right Sizing the Continuum of Care Housing Models
4. Prevention and Diversion
5. Coordinated Access
6. Political Will and Advocacy

Over 450 diverse stakeholders participated, including the following agencies:

- AIDS Foundation of Houston
- Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries
- Bay Area Homeless
- Bay Area Turning Point
- Bread of Life
- Catholic Charities
- City of Houston
- Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County
- Covenant House
- Harmony House
- Harris Health System
- Healthcare for the Homeless – Houston
- Houston Housing Authority
- Interfaith Caring Ministries
- Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County
- Michael E. Debakey Veteran's Administration Medical Center
- Neighborhood Centers Inc.
- Northwest Assistance Ministries
- Powell Foundation

- Salvation Army Houston
- Star of Hope
- The Beacon
- The Men’s Center
- The Women’s Home
- Unite Way of Greater Houston
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Wells Fargo

The information obtained through this process was one of several primary considerations in the development of goals and objectives for each planning element described in the Strategic Plan section of the 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan.

Once the Plan draft was completed, the plan was made available to the public through the internet, and advertised in major publications including the Houston Chronicle and La Voz Spanish newspapers stating that the document was under review. During the following 30-day public review period, comments and suggestions were recorded and considered for addition and/or revision to the plan. In addition, a public hearing was held on December 6, 2012 in which Harris County residents voiced their opinions on the Consolidated Plan and the 2013 Annual Action Plan. All comments recorded during the public review period and public hearing was then added to the Consolidated Plan (see Appendix D).

COMMUNITY PROFILE

According to Dr. Steve Murdock, Rice University Professor and former State Demographer, four key demographic elements are changing the Nation, the State of Texas, and Harris County. They will affect nearly all persons in coming years. These four factors include 1) the rate of population growth, 2) the aging of the population, 3) the growth in racial/ethnic minority populations, and 4) and changes in household composition.

Dr. Murdock notes “the Texas of today is the U. S. of tomorrow,” because the state has more than doubled its population within the span of a single human lifetime. California remains the only state with a higher population. 25,145,561 people counted as Texas residents in the 2010 Census. Demographers estimate that by 2040 the state will have somewhere between 35 and 50 million residents. Growth is attracted primarily to urban areas. Many of the more rural areas of the state are actually losing population.

Rapid growth and diversification were trends common to the demography of Harris County from the 1990s through the national economic collapse of 2008. Harris County continues to experience substantial population growth with a Census estimate of 4,180,894 in 2011, up 2.1 percent from the recent 2010 Census. Much of that growth is due to immigrants from other states and nations, and their descendants. Non-White and Hispanic or Latino persons continue to increase their share of the population, transforming Harris County into a place with no racial or ethnic majority. The larger increase in non-White population is impacting both Harris County and Texas significantly. In 2003 Anglo/White persons became less than half of the population of

Texas for the first time. While the United States will not pass that statistic until around 2042, non-White children are projected to become more than half of U. S. persons under the age of 18 by 2033. Growth of Hispanic or Latino population is a national phenomenon according to Dr. Murdock.

This diverse population will also be an aging population. “Baby boomers,” as the generation born between 1946 and 1964 is called, make up about 24 percent of the Texas population. As more baby boomers reach retirement age, median age will increase to reflect an older population.

Young minority population in Harris County tempers the boomers’ growing age. According to Dr. Murdock, in the next three decades, the aging of the baby boomers will create the largest number and percentage of elderly people that ever existed. In addition, household composition will continue to change as more single persons, single parents, married couples without children, and other non-traditional family types form households alongside child-bearing married households.

These projected demographic changes have far-reaching implications. If demographic changes continue as projected, and relationships between such factors as minority status, educational achievement and income do not change, Harris County will continue to grow but will become poorer. It could then attract less economic development and advantage in the future

Housing Market Analysis

Harris County has fared better than most U.S. counties in regards to successfully navigating the recent housing market crash and national recession. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Greater Houston area had the highest job growth rate among the country’s twelve largest metropolitan areas. This combination of job growth and rising population has contributed to the area’s ability to address housing supply and demand fluctuations.

The housing market in Harris County continues to experience growth in the development and construction of both single-family and multi-family housing units despite the nationally felt housing market collapse. However, the local market has not gone unaffected. Housing starts peaked in 2006 at 33,023 single-family permits, slowly declined in 2007, and then dropped sharply by 59 percent in 2008 to 14,823 building permits. They continued to decline through 2010 before increasing from 11,057 to 11,107 permits in 2011. In the Houston/Harris County region, the price of single-family homes remain below the national average.

Locally, the slowdown in the housing market is predominately a result of the tightening of credit and underwriting standards due to the crash of the sub-prime mortgage industry. However, according to the Texas A&M Real Estate Center, the Houston market has a lower share of subprime loans than the average market and also a lower share of subprime foreclosures. Harris County had a September 2012 foreclosure rate of .09 percent, or one in every 1,011 housing units, compared to the national average of .14 percent, or one in every 730 housing units. While the region’s foreclosure rate is lower than the national average, foreclosed properties have a strong impact on housing inventories. A higher foreclosure rate causes housing starts to remain lower than usual, as well as place downward pressure on median home prices.

Even though median home prices remain relatively low in Harris County, the more restrictive lending practices have disproportionately impacted persons with marginal credit. This situation is optimal for the apartment industry as more households will opt for renting over buying. However, when analyzing housing in terms of the availability of a variety of housing products to meet a diverse population, there are significant shortfalls. Large families, lower-income families, and disabled persons may encounter obstacles when searching for affordable housing units that meet their space, accessibility, and income needs. The following narrative will focus on these issues, describe the current conditions of the availability of housing, and identify major deficits in housing needs, as well as future trends for Harris County.

Total Units

In 2010, Harris County was the third-largest county in the United States in population with 4,092,459 people and an estimated 1,598,698 total housing units. Between 2000 and 2010, total housing units in Harris County grew by 23.2 percent, increasing by an estimated total of 300,568 units. Occupied housing units, however, grew at a lower rate of 19.0 percent, increasing by over 230,000 units, see Table 3.1 Population, Household, and Housing Unit Growth 2000-2010.

Community Development Needs

Many communities within the Harris County service area lack the basic necessities for a suitable living environment. There are often significant deficits in affordable housing options, supportive services for special needs populations, available homeless facilities, education and job training opportunities, and necessary infrastructure.

Unfortunately, statistics regarding changes in the Harris County population potentially indicate that the need for community services and facilities is likely to continue to grow while the ability to cover rising costs may shrink.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

HOUSING

The housing goal is to create the opportunity for adequate, affordable, accessible housing for extremely low- and low- income persons through eventual elimination of lead-based paint hazards, encouragement of homeownership, rehabilitation of single family and multi-family housing, provision of rental assistance, new construction, and development of partnerships.

Owners

Objective 1: Homeownership (13)

To provide 500 individuals and families with the opportunity for homeownership by February 28, 2018, thus improving quality of life and supplying decent housing. This objective will be accomplished through financial assistance to prospective homebuyers. Financial assistance includes, but is not limited to downpayment and closing cost assistance. Programs providing Downpayment and Closing Cost services should provide a minimum of \$10,000 in

downpayment and closing costs per eligible program participant. Harris County places a high priority on projects serving seniors, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Objective 2: New Construction (12)

To provide financial assistance to aid in the construction of 50 affordable housing units within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of supplying decent housing for low- and moderate income owner occupied households. Harris County places a high priority on projects serving seniors, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Objective 3: Single-family Home Rehabilitation (14A)

To provide 100 low- and moderate-income homeowners with minor home repair assistance for the purpose of supplying decent housing for low- and moderate-income households. Minor home repair assistance includes but is not limited to rehabilitation of septic systems and water wells. Harris County places a high priority on projects serving seniors, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Objective 4: Lead-Based Paint Abatement (14I)

To assist in the abatement of lead based paint hazards in 130 owner-occupied, single-family housing units by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of providing safe and decent housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Renters

Objective 5: New Construction (12)

To provide financial assistance to aid in the construction of 300 affordable multi-family housing units within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of supplying decent housing to low- and moderate-income renter households. Harris County places a high priority on projects serving seniors, the homeless, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS.

Objective 6: Acquisition and/or Rehabilitation, Multi-Unit Housing (01)

To provide financial assistance to aid in the acquisition and or rehabilitation of 50 multi-family, affordable housing units in the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of supplying decent housing to low- and moderate-income renter households. Harris County places a high priority on projects serving seniors, the homeless, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS. (If acquiring and rehabilitating units use code 14G)

Objective 7: Rental Assistance (CDBG 05S and HOME 21F)

To provide tenant based rental assistance to 50 extremely low- and low-income Harris County families and individuals, by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of supplying decent housing for low- and moderate income renter households. Programs should partner with a local Housing Authority in providing assistance.

Objective 8: Lead Based Paint Abatement (14I)

To assist in the abatement of lead based paint hazards in 15 renter-occupied, single-family housing units by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of providing safe, decent housing for low- and moderate-income renter households.

Strategies for Fair Housing:

The Harris County Fair Housing Plan contains the following:

Strategy One: *Aggressively enforce and enhance existing fair housing laws.*

To continue the enhancement of the principles of Fair Housing, Harris County and its subrecipients should undertake an aggressive fair housing program that includes:

- Information on fair housing issues
- Public Education
- Counseling
- Conciliation
- Referral and follow-up for fair housing compliance and/or redress
- Pro-active rental testing for fair housing compliance

Strategy Two: *Eliminate discriminatory lending.*

The County should investigate methods to encourage reinvestment by private lending institutions in needed areas of its jurisdiction. Public-private strategies will be developed to promote reinvestment in housing and other sectors, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Strategy Three: *Eliminate barriers to affordable housing development.*

The County should work to educate community groups about the benefits of affordable housing development at the front end of the development so they can have empowering input in the development process. In this fashion, community groups are included in the overall process. Harris County continues to promote and provide technical assistance for the review and revision of land-use regulations in cooperative cities to allow for the development of affordable, accessible housing.

Strategy Four: *Encourage educational activities that promote awareness about fair housing and individuals rights about fair housing choice.*

Local public announcements should be created and sent to local media, including public television, radio, and newspapers and placed on the CDD website, particularly during National Fair Housing events. Pamphlets should also be developed and given to the general public. Additionally, posters should be sent to non-profits, civil rights groups, and community action agencies on fair housing law.

Strategy Five: *Encourage assistance to families.*

Activities should be undertaken by those entities that have a vested interest in the rental and sale of housing to lower income families. These activities could include:

- Mortgage lending counseling
- Rental maintenance counseling
- Referral programs for home seekers and renters
- Budget/credit counseling for first time homebuyers
- Foreclosure/forbearance assistance

- Emergency Housing assistance

Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Strategy

Effective September 15, 2000, all housing activities supported by funding administered by HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development must comply with lead-based paint regulations (Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992). The changes will affect housing rehabilitation activities, tenant-based rental assistance, and acquisition, leasing, support services and operations. The new regulation changes the acceptable work practices and expands the requirements to protect occupants and workers from lead-based paint hazards. In addition, it requires testing for lead, stabilization, control or abatement in the event that lead is found on the property. Certain programs will have the additional responsibility of on-going maintenance and record keeping. The impact of the regulations on existing programs will be in several areas such as budgeting, productivity, and staff training.

Harris County will continue to implement HUD's Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction strategy. This strategy includes incorporating the approved Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction regulations into all housing programs operated by CSD and those programs funded/operated by subrecipients. Subrecipient training will continue to include information regarding implementation, documentation and reporting on all housing activities that are affected by changes in regulations.

Other strategies for lead based paint hazard reduction include the continued support of the Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services Department's Childhood Blood/Lead Screening/Abatement Program. Through these programs, Harris County will actively pursue the reduction of the number of lead based paint hazards in the Harris County service area.

HOMELESSNESS

Objective 1: Street Outreach- To provide essential services, housing resources and urgent care to 3,650 unsheltered homeless individuals and families living on the streets by February 28, 2018. Through its subrecipients, Harris County will provide direct services to meet the immediate needs of people living on the street to stabilize and engage them in services as a path toward accessing permanent housing. Street outreach services include engagement that provides immediate support and links to other support networks and may include addressing immediate needs (food, clothing, toiletries, etc); assessment and case management to understand client barriers and identify housing options; emergency physical and mental health services; and services for special populations including homeless youth, victim services and services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Objective 2: Emergency and Transitional Housing- To maintain and expand operations and support renovations and rehabilitation of structures to provide shelter for 7,500 homeless persons within new and existing emergency and transitional shelters by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of providing decent housing and essential services for the homeless population. Essential services include, but are not limited to case management, child care, education services, employment assistance and job training, outpatient health services, legal services, life

skills training, transportation, services for special populations, and substance abuse treatment as they relate to locating and maintaining more permanent housing.

Objective 3: Homeless Prevention- To provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to prevent 1,000 households from experiencing homelessness by February 28, 2018. Harris County and its subrecipients will provide services to extremely low income individuals and families living in the County to maintain or identify alternative permanent rental housing and achieve housing stability. Housing relocation and stabilization can include, but is not limited to, financial assistance including moving related costs and utility assistance, housing search and placement and housing stability case management. Households may also receive up to 24 months of rental assistance for fair market rental housing.

Objective 4: Rapid Re-Housing -To provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to quickly move 1,000 households experiencing homelessness into stable, permanent housing by February 28, 2018. Harris County and its subrecipients will provide services to homeless individuals and families living in the County to maintain or identify alternative permanent rental housing and achieve housing stability. Housing relocation and stabilization can include, but is not limited to, financial assistance including moving related costs and utility assistance, housing search and placement and housing stability case management. Households may also receive up to 24 months of rental assistance for fair market rental housing.

Objective Five: Homeless Management Information System-

To support the expansion and data quality of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the Houston/Harris County Continuum of Care by providing technical assistance to 300 homeless assistance providers and collecting data on 8,000 homeless individuals served in the community. In coordination with the Coalition for the Homeless Houston/Harris County, Harris County will support the improvement of homeless data collection to improve community outcomes for homeless individuals.

Homeless Strategies

- Funding for homeless programs will be allocated to assist in the expansion and improvement homelessness services and prevention efforts, along with expansion of facilities (beds for emergency shelters and transitional homes.)
- Homelessness prevention for low-income families will be concentrated on services such as Section 8 rental assistance, housing counseling, emergency financial assistance (for rent and utilities), consumer credit services, domestic violence counseling, and substance abuse treatment and prevention.
- In an effort to provide outreach services, Harris County will collaborate with the Houston/Harris County Coalition for the Homeless, Inc. and Harris County homelessness service providers. Harris County will additionally support outreach efforts through the Collaborative for the Homeless funding application.
- Emergency and Transitional Shelters will be supported through funding allocated for the expansion and maintenance of bed capacities, in an effort to provide decent housing for the homeless population.
- CSD will promote the transition of homeless individuals and families to self-sufficiency through funding support of permanent supportive and transitional housing. In addition,

through various Harris County Housing programs such as the “Independence” Homeownership Program, Homeless Housing Program, and others, Section 8 families and individuals are able to move toward becoming self-sufficient, thereby increasing the availability of rental assistance opportunities for at-risk families.

- Harris County will support the ideals of Rapid Re-housing and expanded Medical Services for the homeless as stated in the Houston/Harris County Strategic Plan for Homeless conducted by the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County, Inc.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

To provide, improve and maintain community facilities, which contribute to the quality of life for extremely low-, very low-, low-income persons living in the Harris County service area, particularly in target areas with special emphasis on the needs of youth, senior citizens and disabled persons.

Objective 1: Neighborhood or Social Service Facilities (03E)

Provide improvements and/or construction of 5 neighborhood or social service facilities benefiting 2,000 low- and moderate-income areas by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 20,000 residents of low- and moderate-income communities by promoting the availability of public facilities to the meet unmet neighborhood needs. Neighborhood facilities include but are not limited to community centers, multi-purpose centers, and arts and crafts facilities. Social Service Facilities are structures, which provide space for the purpose of providing a needed service to low- and moderate-income persons such as group homes, libraries, and healthcare facilities.

Objective 2: Senior Centers (03A)

Provide improvements to 3 senior center facilities located throughout the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 1,500 elderly individuals by promoting the availability of facilities to serve unmet needs. Senior centers are facilities that exclusively provide space for services to persons aged 65 years and older.

Objective 3: Youth Centers (03D)

Provide improvements to 2 youth centers located in the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 1,000 youth by promoting the availability of facilities to serve unmet needs. Youth centers are facilities that primarily provide space for services to persons aged 18 years and younger.

Objective 4: Parks (03F)

Provide improvements to and/or construction of 5 parks/recreational facilities benefiting low- and moderate-income areas by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 2,500 residents of low- and moderate-income communities by promoting the availability of green space and playground areas to serve recreational and leisure needs.

INFRASTRUCTURE

To ensure quality infrastructure in low-income communities, including improvement and provision of adequate streets, sidewalks, water systems, wastewater systems, and storm drainage sufficient to eliminate severe flooding problems.

Objective 1: Street Improvements-Construct and improve 15 miles of roadways benefiting low-income areas of the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 10,000 low- to moderate-income persons.

Objective 2: Water/Sewer Improvements-Provide improvements to 90,000 linear feet of water/sewer lines and 4 water/sewer facilities benefiting low-income areas within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018, for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 20,000 low- to moderate-income persons. Improvements may include, but are not limited to sewage treatment facilities, rehabilitation of manholes, rehabilitation of water storage tanks, and construction and maintenance of lift and pump stations.

Objective 3: Sidewalks/Pathways-Construct and improve 3 miles of sidewalks/pathways benefiting low-income areas within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018, for the purpose of improving the living environment and improving the quality of life for 5,000 low- to moderate-income persons.

Objective 4: Flood drain improvements-Construct and improve 1,000 feet of flood drains and controls benefiting low-income areas of the Harris County service area by February 28, 2012 for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 5,000 low- to moderate-income persons.

PUBLIC SERVICES

To provide direct social services that improve the quality of life of extremely low, low and moderate income persons, including accessibility to information and educational opportunities from preschool to adult education, provision of a safe and comfortable educational environment, provision of general welfare services including food and clothing, accessibility to quality health care for seniors and youth, development of educational programs and youth enrichment programs, promotion of programs benefiting abused and neglected children, support of indigent bereavement services, and accessibility to social, medical and employment services.

Objective 1: General Services – To provide general public services to 5,000 low and moderate persons to increase quality of life and general well-being for individuals and families throughout the HCCSD service area. Services include but are not limited to food and clothing distribution, housing counseling, and neighborhood clean-up.

Objective 2: Senior Services (Special Needs Population) – To provide senior services to 8,000 elderly and frail elderly persons to enable them to increase or maintain quality of life and promote physical, mental, and social well-being. Senior services include but are not limited to food and clothing distribution, housing counseling, transportation services, enrichment classes, exercise and recreation programs, healthcare/medication assistance, emergency dental care and services for Alzheimer’s disease patients and their families.

Objective 3: Youth Services/Child Care – To provide youth services/child care for 12,000 low- and moderate-income persons, 5-19 years of age, for the purpose of enriching, protecting, and improving quality of life by February 28, 2018. Youth services include but are not limited to counseling, after-school programs, sports and recreational programs, education and tutoring programs, life skills building, self-esteem building, drug and alcohol education, youth retreats, mentor programs, summer youth programs, and job and career counseling.

Objective 4: Health Services – To provide health prevention, services, and outreach to 8,000 low and moderate income persons to increase the mental, physical, and social well-being of the individual and family by February 28, 2018. Health prevention, services, and outreach include but are not limited to immunization, health clinic service, mobile care, vision care, dental care, nutrition counseling, tele-medicine, after hours care, physical rehabilitation, and health education and awareness.

Objective 5: Services to Persons with Disabilities (Special Needs Population) – To provide services to 450 disabled adults to enable them to increase or maintain their quality of life and promote physical, mental, and social well-being. Services to the disabled include but are not limited to counseling, housing placement, food and clothing distribution, transportation services, enrichment classes, exercise and recreation programs, job training and placement and independent living skills training.

Objective 6: Transportation Services – To promote transportation services to 3,000 low and moderate-income persons by February 28, 2018 to increase mobility to access essential service, facilities, jobs and employment centers thus improving the quality of life.

Objective 7: Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS (Special Needs Population) – To provide services to 200 persons with HIV/AIDS and their families to increase or maintain their quality of life and promote physical, mental, and social well-being by February 28, 2018. Services to persons with HIV/AIDS include but are not limited to counseling, education, housing placement, referral and outreach, health services, transportation services, food and clothing distribution, independent living skills training, job training and placement and awareness.

Objective 8: Abused and Neglected Children – To provide services to 3,000 abused and neglected children by July 31, 2018 for the purpose of enabling a secure and stable environment thus increasing quality of life. Services include but are not limited to advocacy, counseling, childcare, and protection.

Objective 9: Crime Awareness and Juvenile Justice – To assist and provide 1,000 low- and moderate income youth and their families with crime awareness, prevention and juvenile justice programs by February 28, 2018. Services in this objective include, but are not limited to juvenile justice, delinquency and gang prevention services, crime awareness activities, in areas at particular high risk of crime to hinder potential criminal activity and increase safety awareness thus improving the quality of life. Crime awareness, prevention, and juvenile justice programs includes, but is not limited to police storefronts, safety and self-defense workshops, crime watch programs, equipment, and security guards.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To encourage economic revitalization efforts, stimulate economic opportunities in low and moderate income communities throughout the Harris County service area and create jobs for low- and moderate-income persons, by providing assistance to for-profit businesses, encouraging microenterprise development and providing technical assistance to existing and new businesses.

Objective 1: Direct Financial Assistance to For-Profits

To provide direct financial assistance to for-profit businesses by February 28, 2018, for the purpose of creating/retaining 20 jobs with at least 51 percent reserved for low and moderate income persons thus expanding economic opportunity and improving the quality of life for unemployed and underemployed individuals.

Objective 2: Technical Assistance

To assist 3 businesses in expanding, maintaining, and improving operations by providing financial and/or technical assistance for the purpose of retaining and creating jobs particularly jobs for low- and moderate-income persons thus expanding the economic opportunity and improving the quality of life for unemployed and underemployed individuals. Technical assistance includes, but is not limited to marketing, referrals, workshops, small business training and counseling, and competitive business planning.

OTHER INITIATIVES

To develop an expanded and enhanced delivery system by building capacity of non-profit organizations, developing a planning process to be utilized to comprehensively address the needs within the extremely low-, very low- and low-income areas, assisting in creation of additional community development organizations, constructing of a network of service providers to coordinate resources or other means by which community development and revitalization is bolstered.

Objective 1: Clearance and Demolition (04)

To eliminate 150 dilapidated and/or unsafe structures located in low and moderate-income areas in an effort to improve integrity of Harris County neighborhoods by February 28, 2018.

Objective 2: Nonprofit Capacity Building and Technical Assistance (19C)

To provide assistance to 5 non-profit organizations, including assistance to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and Community Based Development Organizations (CBDOs) to build capacity to support revitalization activities in low and moderate-income communities. Assistance includes but is not limited to technical assistance, referral services, and providing research and information services.

Objective 3: Planning (20)

To support, encourage and facilitate countywide service planning and local community planning activities through the Harris County service area for the purpose of preparing for the future and ensuring stabilization and needed expansion of services and facilities through February 28, 2018.

Local planning activities to provide neighborhood level plan for 5 low- and moderate-income target areas by developing and conducting a planning process, supporting research and analyses, and providing technical assistance. Four plans to be submitted to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development as Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies (NRS) by February 28, 2018.

ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

In Harris County, a number of factors impact a household's poverty status, such as housing cost, employment opportunities, and educational attainment. The goals and objectives in the Harris County strategic plan describe the roles that the county will play in efforts to move people out of poverty and to revitalize geographic areas of the community with high poverty levels by focusing resources on low-income populations, coordinating development with supportive services, enabling low-income persons to accumulate assets through homeownership and housing assistance, providing access for people in poverty to employment opportunities; and empowering low-income residents to provide leadership and solve problems in their neighborhoods.

According to the 2011 ACS, 19.6 percent of individuals in Harris County fell below the poverty level. Poverty rates in Harris County also differed by age and household type. Nearly one-third of children under 18 years living in Harris County were in poverty in 2010 (27.5 percent). Persons age 65 and over had one of the lowest poverty rates in Harris County (11.6 percent). The poverty rate for female-headed households in Harris County (34.6 percent) was more than double that of all families living in the county (16.2 percent), and almost 1 out of every 2 female-headed households with children in Harris County were living below the poverty line (43.2 percent). When analyzing female individuals, the poverty rate increases to 46.9 percent. High child poverty percentages may be attributed to lower earnings for female head of household families, declining value and availability of public assistance, and the lack of affordable housing.

Anti-Poverty Strategies

Many Harris County residents are currently living at or below the state poverty level, with many of these people being homeless or at risk of becoming homeless because of insufficient income. There is a great need among these individuals to expand their opportunities for education and employment, and thus improve their quality of living. The consolidated plan's comprehensive collection of goals, programs, and policies will work to reduce the number of poverty-level families, develop affordable housing, and coordinate with other programs and services to increase opportunities. The anti-poverty strategies address goals in the housing, economic development, and coordination sectors:

- To prevent low- to moderate-income persons and families from falling into poverty and to assist low- to moderate-income persons in exiting poverty. This will be achieved by increasing economic opportunities within the CSD service area and improving the quality of life for unemployed and underemployed individuals. Harris County CSD will provide direct financial assistance to for-profit businesses for the purpose of creating/retaining jobs reserved for low and moderate income persons. CSD will assist businesses in expanding, maintaining, and improving operations by providing financial and/or

technical assistance for the purpose of retaining and creating jobs, particularly jobs for low- and moderate-income persons.

- To provide programs and services offered by the CSD, HCHA, Public Health Department, Community Assistance and local organizations to persons in need, placing high priority on projects serving seniors, the disabled, and persons with HIV/AIDS. This will be achieved by increasing the number of affordable housing units, increasing the number of Section 8 vouchers, expanding public health initiatives to underserved areas, and offering affordable general and social services. Harris County CSD will provide low- and moderate-income individuals and families with the opportunity for homeownership, minor home repair assistance, construction aid for affordable multi-family housing units, and tenant-based rental assistance to families and individuals.
- To provide essential services, housing resources and urgent care to homeless families and individuals and those at-risk of becoming homeless. Through its subrecipients, Harris County will provide street outreach, emergency and transitional housing, homeless prevention, and rapid re-housing services. These services include engagement that provides immediate support and links to other support networks, emergency physical and mental health services and services for special populations. Through emergency and transitional housing CSD will maintain and expand operations and support renovations and rehabilitation of structures to provide shelter for homeless persons within new and existing shelters for the purpose of providing decent housing and essential services for the homeless population. Through homeless prevention, CSD will provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to prevent households from experiencing homelessness. Through rapid re-housing, CSD will provide housing relocation and stabilization services and rental assistance to quickly move households experiencing homelessness into stable, permanent housing.
- To develop and maintain partnerships with Community Based Development Organizations (CBDOs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) in order to build capacity to support revitalization activities in low and moderate-income communities. Assistance includes but is not limited to technical assistance, referral services, and providing research and information services. To support, encourage and facilitate countywide service planning and local community planning activities through the Harris County service area for the purpose of preparing for the future and ensuring stabilization and needed expansion of services and facilities. Through community plans, neighborhoods can begin to implement strategies that can improve the local socio-economic environment.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

To effectively communicate with cooperative city governments, as well as Harris County neighborhood associations, CDC's, CHDO's, surrounding entitlement jurisdictions, assisted housing providers, private and governmental health, and service agencies to ensure coordination and compatibility of planning efforts, specifically with regards to all Consolidated and Action plans, and neighborhood revitalization strategies. This will be accomplished by requiring

certifications of consistency in all plans (to be signed by all affected jurisdictions), actively encouraging all Harris County CDCs, CHDOs, adjacent jurisdictions, and cities with CSD cooperative agreements to participate in public hearings and community surveys. This will be done by establishing personal contacts by telephone, and sending meeting information by fax and mail.

To form partnerships with local non-profit organizations as well as private agencies and local service providers in order to eliminate overlap and promote cooperation of community development planning efforts. This will be accomplished by gathering participants through the professional consultation forum process, then working to form committees that regularly meet to establish contacts, discuss issues, and develop and implement solutions.

ONE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

Harris County anticipates receiving \$13,212,544 for use towards community development activities during Program Year 2013 (PY2013), which begins March 1, 2013 and ends February 28, 2014. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determines this allocation amount based on Harris County's Service Area population, poverty, housing overcrowding and age of housing. Based on this, the total HUD Entitlement Grant funds will be comprised of \$10,400,428 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds, \$2,012,116 in HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program funds, \$800,000 in Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funds, \$84,950 in prior year funds plus an estimated \$27,098 in program income for a total of \$13,324,592.

In preparation for the proposed Congressional Appropriation cuts to HUD entitlement funding, Harris County Community Services Department (HCCSD), in conjunction with the Harris County Budget Department, is proposing to fund a total of \$10,145,923 in a combination of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds. The 38 projects in this action plan address the PY2013-2017 Consolidated Plan's priority need areas of housing, homelessness, infrastructure, public services and other.

The following matrix reflects Harris County's funding allocations by Consolidated Plan Need area:

Consolidated Plan Need Area	Number of Projects	Amount Allocated
Housing	2	\$1,532,931
Homelessness	10	\$1,343,013
Infrastructure	11	\$5,152,915
Public Facilities	1	\$1,000,000
Public Services	13	\$957,141
Other *	2	\$159,923
Total Allocations	39	\$10,145,923
Unprogrammed Funds		\$810,905
Administration		\$2,341,296
Total Funds		\$13,298,124

Although additional applications were evaluated during the PY2013 competitive RFP process, selected projects were conservatively chosen due to limited available funding. Thus, viable projects that are able to expend funds are pending release of HUD contracts and may be funded depending on the extent of the funding.