

Executive Summary

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

1. Introduction

The City of Mount Vernon receives an annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for community development and affordable housing needs. The City has received CDBG funds since 2004. Every five years, as a condition of receiving this federal financial assistance, the City is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to prepare a "Consolidated Plan." The Consolidated plan consists of a Strategic Plan covering a five-year period, and an annual action plan during each of those five years.

The Strategic Plan brings needs and resources together in a coordinated strategy to meet housing, community development, and non-urgent needs. Developed at the commencement of each Consolidated Plan term, the Strategic Plan serves as a guide for developing the annual Action Plans.

The Strategic Plan is designed to achieve the following CDBG and National Objectives:

CDBG Objectives

- Provide decent housing
- Create suitable living environments
- Expand economic opportunities

National Objectives

- Benefit persons with low-income*
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight
- Meet a need having a particular urgency

**For the purposes of the Strategic Plan Section, the term "low-income" will include those households with income at or below 80 percent of the area median income, adjusted by HUD for household size*

The basic elements of the Consolidated Plan includes: Public and Stakeholder Input - Needs Assessment - Housing Market Analysis - Strategic Plan - First-Year Action Plan.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This could be a restatement of items or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis or the strategic plan.

The five-year plan goals include (A) increasing the supply of affordable rental housing, (B) maintaining existing affordable housing stock, (C) supporting public facilities for neighborhood revitalization, (D) increasing the supply of affordable owner-occupied housing through direct financial assistance to 10 low-income homebuyers, and (E) supporting efforts to reduce poverty. See the objectives and outcomes of these goals in the table below.

3. Evaluation of past performance

This is an evaluation of past performance that helped lead the grantee to choose its goals or projects.

The 2017 and prior Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Reports identified the goals and accomplishments for the previous years against the outcomes expected in the Consolidated Plan. In reviewing activities accomplished with its federal funding the last fiscal year, the City of Mount Vernon advanced its goals of increasing the capacity of housing and human service organizations to serve the **people experiencing poverty or low-income and to provide effective support services**. The projects were selected based on consultation with local agencies and in response to the area's countywide Continuum of Care Plan. Along these lines, funds were allocated to public services provided to city residents by Community Action of Skagit County.

In addition, the City chose to focus attention and resources on the revitalization of one of its highest concentration low-income neighborhoods – the downtown area (Census Tract 9525, especially block group 3). Funds were allocated to implementing a flood hazard mitigation project to protect the neighborhood from catastrophic flooding from the adjacent Skagit River.

4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process

Summary from citizen participation section of plan.

To prepare the Consolidated Plan, the City consults with appropriate public and private agencies and conducts a public hearing to obtain citizen input. This assures that the document is comprehensive. This draft Action Plan is made available for review and comment by the public between April 10, 2019 and May 10, 2019. A summary of citizen comments is in the General section of this document under Citizen Participation.

The City consulted with key stakeholder groups and organizations in the process of developing this Consolidated Plan. The City consulted with the following community groups during preparation of the plan:

- Community Action of Skagit County
- Skagit County Public Health
- Housing Authority of Skagit County
- Skagit County Coalition to End Homelessness
- City of Mount Vernon elected officials and staff

PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS: The City Council Public Hearing on the Annual Action Plan was held on March 27, 2019, following a public notice that was published in English and Spanish. The purpose of the hearing was to obtain the views of citizens and other interested parties on the housing and nonhousing community development needs of the City before the 2019 Annual Action Plan was prepared. On May 8th, the City Council will hold (change to past tense after hearing) a second Public Hearing and discussion of the draft plan prior to taking Council action to approve the plan.

5. Summary of public comments

This could be a brief narrative summary or reference an attached document from the Citizen Participation section of the Con Plan.

On March 27, 2019, the Public Hearing comments included:

- ADD content from Public Hearing.

On May 8, 2019, the Public Hearing comments included:

- ADD content from Public Hearing.

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

All comments and views were accepted for consideration. After consideration of priorities, the City has prioritized CDBG investment in the goal of increasing the supply of rental housing, while carrying forward without any current allocations for the goals of maintaining affordable housing stock and increasing the supply of affordable owner-occupied housing.

7. Summary

The City of Mount Vernon's Strategic Plan outlines the housing and community development goals and strategies to meet the priority needs with available resources. This Strategic Plan covers the period from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2022.

PRIORITIES: The level of need in a community is always greater than the limited resources available to help meet those needs. The City uses these priorities and goals to form the basis for determining what

types of housing and community development programs the City will fund over the next three years. The City has identified the following general priorities (not in order) for the use of CDBG funding.

Priority 1. Homelessness: The Washington State Legislature required all Counties to develop a plan to reduce homelessness. The City adopts, by reference, Skagit County's Homeless Plan, including its goals and strategies.

Priority 2. Increase affordable housing supply: The cost of rental and homeowner housing is beyond the reach of many Mount Vernon households who are homeless or who are struggling with a severe housing cost burden, putting their future tenancy at risk. The City's CDBG program is part of that larger strategy as it relates to housing within the City of Mount Vernon.

Priority 3. Public facilities to support revitalization: The opportunities for Downtown Mount Vernon revitalization are many, and they promise to increase safety and create economic development opportunities that will increase employment and housing for LMI area residents. Some of the revitalization activities will require upgrades to, or new infrastructure (e.g. pedestrian mobility improvements, utilities, flood hazard mitigation facilities, etc.).

Priority 4. Preservation: Preservation strategies are needed to maintain the stock of existing affordable housing resources.

Priority 5. Supportive efforts to reduce the impacts of poverty: Public services are needed to help individuals and families with low income and/or special needs obtain help with basic needs, food, housing, employment, health, and other important services.

Priority 6. Administration and planning: Implementation of this consolidated plan requires certain administrative and planning activities including the development of the plan, environmental review of projects, subrecipient monitoring, development of fair housing information, and other activities required by law.

GOALS: Based on the needs, housing market analysis and priorities, the Strategic Plan proposes the following goals over the next three years:

- Increase supply of affordable rental homes
- Support public facilities for revitalization
- Supportive efforts to reduce the impacts of poverty
- Maintain affordable housing stock
- Increase supply of affordable owner-occupied homes
- Administration and planning

PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies – 91.200(b)

1. Agency/entity responsible for preparing/administering the Consolidated Plan

Describe the agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

Agency Role	Name	Department/Agency
Lead Agency	MOUNT VERNON	
CDBG Administrator		Project Development Manager
HOPWA Administrator		
HOME Administrator		
HOPWA-C Administrator		

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative (optional)

The City of Mount Vernon CDBG program is managed from the Mayor's Office by the City Project Development Manager.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

Peter Donovan
Project Development Manager
City of Mount Vernon
910 Cleveland Avenue
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 336-6211
peterd@mountvernonwa.gov

AP-10 Consultation – 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)

1. Introduction

As part of its Consolidated Plan development, the City undertook an outreach program to consult and coordinate nonprofit agencies, affordable housing providers, and government agencies. The outreach program has been summarized in the Executive Summary and Citizen Participation sections of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan.

Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction’s activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(l))

The public and low-income housing providers, as well as the governmental planning, health, mental health and service agencies, have close working relationships in Mount Vernon and Skagit County. Skagit County Public Health is the lead agency for homeless housing and behavioral health activities in our community. The City consults regularly with the local Continuum of Care (Skagit County Coalition to End Homelessness). The City also consults regularly with the Housing Authority of Skagit County and other agencies and advocates involved in housing affordability.

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness.

The City has incorporated into the Strategic Plan, the local Continuum of Care plan to end homelessness, which will be the blueprint for prioritizing the use of CDBG funds toward the goals of ending homelessness in the City.

Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the jurisdiction's area in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards for and evaluate outcomes of projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS

The City has coordinated with Skagit County Public Housing, the Skagit County Coalition to End Homelessness, and Community Action of Skagit County, the organizations most responsible for using ESG funds and for administering HMIS for service providers who operate in the City. The City has incorporated their goals, strategies, activities and outcomes in its Consolidated Plan.

2. Describe Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and describe the jurisdiction’s consultations with housing, social service agencies and other entities

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

1	Agency/Group/Organization	Community Action of Skagit County
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Strategy Non-Homeless Special Needs
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	One-on-one meetings with senior staff and multi-agency meetings. Participated in various committees in which they provided input to the groups. Anticipate continued coordination of public services activities and increased coordination of homeless activities.
2	Agency/Group/Organization	SKAGIT COUNTY
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - County
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy Non-Homeless Special Needs Market Analysis Economic Development

	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	One-on-one meetings with senior staff and multi-agency meetings. Anticipate increased coordination of homeless activities and other CDBG-eligible and HOME-eligible activities as part of the Skagit County Consortium processes.
3	Agency/Group/Organization	Skagit Habitat for Humanity
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	One-on-one meetings with senior staff and board members, and multi-agency meetings. Anticipate continued coordination of homeownership activities.
4	Agency/Group/Organization	Housing Authority of Skagit County
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	PHA
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	One-on-one meetings with senior staff. HA staff have met with local agencies to discuss possible opportunities to connect housing projects to HOME and CDBG funding, emphasized the need to increase affordable housing stock.
5	Agency/Group/Organization	Home Trust of Skagit
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment

<p>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</p>	<p>Participation in meetings with senior staff and board members, and multi-agency meetings. Home Trust successfully used CDBG for homeownership assistance activities and would like to continue to do so. Note also the Home Trust of Skagit is a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO).</p>
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Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting

There is no Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO) or Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Agency (NRSA) currently.

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Continuum of Care	Community Action of Skagit County	The Strategic Plan (in section SP-60) has adopted the major strategies of the 10-year Plan
Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan Project	City of Mount Vernon	The Strategic Plan identifies Downtown Mount Vernon as a target area for revitalization and incorporates the major goals of public facilities (infrastructure) improvements.
Skagit County Housing Affordability Strategy	Skagit County Public Health	Building a better, coordinated strategy for LMI-affordable homes and related issues
Redevelopment Tools for Downtown Mount Vernon	HUD OneCPD, Enterprise Community Partners	This report summarizes a technical assistance team's findings and suggests an array of strategies and tools that will help the City achieve its Downtown redevelopment goals.
Skagit Valley Farmworker Housing Trust plan	Skagit Valley Farmworker Housing Trust Advisory Council	his plan describes the needs for farmworker housing in the region and the current conditions of substandard and overcrowded housing.
WA Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plans	Skagit County Council of Governments	GMA quote: "availability of housing affordable to all economic segments..."

Table 3 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Narrative (optional)

AP-12 Participation – 91.105, 91.200(c)

1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting

Citizen participation efforts included direct outreach to organizations and stakeholder groups, public notices, including notices published in Spanish to accommodate the high percentage of Mount Vernon residents who do not speak English very well or at all. The impact on goal setting was particularly strong for the planned strategies and priorities for homeless strategies, affordable housing, and Downtown Mount Vernon redevelopment efforts.

Citizen Participation Outreach

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
1	Newspaper Ad	<p>Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish</p> <p>Persons with disabilities</p> <p>Non-targeted/broad community</p> <p>Residents of Public and Assisted Housing</p>	No responses directly to the ad, which was a public notice for the public hearing	See comments of April 27th public hearing	Not applicable	

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (if applicable)
2	Public Hearing	Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish Persons with disabilities Non-targeted/broad community Residents of Public and Assisted Housing	City of Mount Vernon Council Public Hearings were accessible and well attended	See comments of April 27th public hearing	Not applicable	

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (if applicable)
3	One-on-one discussions	Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish Persons with disabilities Non-targeted/broad community Residents of Public and Assisted Housing	Most people quite interested in sharing their perspective on priorities	Wide variety of perspectives, general agreement about housing as a top priority along with public services using CDBG		

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

The City anticipates annual CDBG grant funds of approximately \$400,000 per year. Approximately \$110,000 of each year’s CDBG grant will be used to repay the Section 108 loan principal, plus additional payment for accrued interest. In the event that appropriations are greater or less than anticipated, the following activities are proposed as contingencies: Public Facilities, Homeownership Assistance, Rental Housing Acquisition. The City will publish notices and solicit comments for substantial amendments that equal 10% or more of the annual CDBG grant amount.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	400,000	0	0	400,000	1,200,000	Funds used for acquisition, admin/planning, housing, public facilities, public services

Table 1 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied

Federal funds the City receives through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) are used to leverage other federal, state, local and private resources to meet housing and community development needs. While matching funds are not currently required for the City's CDBG program, the City anticipates that most major projects will be funded primarily through non-CDBG resources. For example, new multi-family housing will be funded primarily through low-income housing tax credit program and the WA State Housing Trust Fund, with relatively small local investment of CDBG dollars. The City owns land that will be used to complete the flood hazard control project in the Downtown neighborhood, and most of the \$30,000,000 floodwall project has come from non-CDBG sources.

If appropriate, describe publically owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan

Not applicable

Discussion

If the 2019 CDBG award is larger or smaller than \$400,000, the projects in the action plan will have their funding levels addressed in proportion to the difference.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Increase supply of affordable rental housing	2018	2022	Affordable Housing	City of Mount Vernon	Homelessness Increase supply of affordable rental housing	CDBG: \$190,000	Other: 1 Other
2	Support public facilities for revitalization	2018	2022	Non-Housing Community Development	DOWNTOWN MOUNT VERNON	Public facilities to support revitalization	CDBG: \$110,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 3000 Households Assisted
3	Supportive efforts to reduce poverty	2018	2022	Non-Homeless Special Needs	City of Mount Vernon	Assist special needs populations	CDBG: \$60,000	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 1200 Households Assisted
4	Adminstration and planning	2018	2022	Administration and planning	City of Mount Vernon	Administration and planning	CDBG: \$40,000	Other: 0 Other

Table 2 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Increase supply of affordable rental housing
	Goal Description	
2	Goal Name	Support public facilities for revitalization
	Goal Description	
3	Goal Name	Supportive efforts to reduce poverty
	Goal Description	Public services for people who have low-income and are not currently experiencing homelessness
4	Goal Name	Adminstration and planning
	Goal Description	City costs of CDBG general administration and planning

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

- Public services - 15% of CDBG grant
- Public facilities – 27.5%
- Housing rehabilitation - 0%
- Affordable rental housing – 47.5%
- Administration - 10%

Projects

#	Project Name

Table 3 - Project Information

Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

Allocation priorities are based on the needs and market analysis identified in the Consolidated Plan, along with requests from housing and nonprofit agencies for funding assistance.

The 2018 Action Plan includes funding to address public facility improvements in Downtown Mount Vernon as part of the City’s Downtown revitalization strategy. Approximately 28% of the 2018 CDBG allocation will be used to make one annual payment (including interest) on the City’s Section 108 Loan (the total loan amount was \$1,000,000) that was used to fund the remaining work on the flood wall that will protect Downtown Mount Vernon residents and businesses, and create a suitable environment for substantial private investment.

The public (human) service funding was based on priorities set forth in previous years. The City’s allowable allocation is, by law, only 15% of the grant funds, amounting to only \$60,073, which supports Community Action of Skagit County’s Housing Resource Center.

Home Trust of Skagit will receive a portion of the 2018 CDBG funds to continue its low-income homebuyer assistance program that helps low-income homebuyers purchase modest priced homes that will remain affordable in perpetuity due to Home Trust’s innovative community land trust model of

shared equity homeownership.

The City will invest 15% of CDBG funding in 2015 in the development of affordable rental housing, with priority for land acquisition for supportive housing project

The City will address any obstacles to underserved needs as follows:

- The City will work with other funding agencies, including Skagit County, United Way, and private foundations, to coordinate funding to more effectively meet the needs of the community.
- The City will seek opportunities to increase funding available for affordable housing.
- The City will work to inform lenders and households regarding Fair Housing laws, and in particular, to encourage greater participation by minorities and ethnic groups disproportionately represented in homeownership. The City will also update its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.

AP-38 Project Summary
Project Summary Information

AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)

Description of the geographic areas of the entitlement (including areas of low-income and minority concentration) where assistance will be directed

Approximately 27.5% of 2019 CDBG funds will be directed to public facility improvements in Downtown Mount Vernon. The remaining funds will not be directed to any target area.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
DOWNTOWN MOUNT VERNON	27
City of Mount Vernon	73
Census Tract 9523	
Census Tract 9522	

Table 4 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

The projects that have been targeted into neighborhoods reflect the priority to encourage activities to locate where they are most effective and efficient.

Discussion

Downtown Mount Vernon is the only single neighborhood target area. Census Tract 9522 has a high proportion of LMI residents. There are a wide variety of other needs and priorities throughout the City.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

The City of Mount Vernon has prioritized the use of CDBG for property acquisition to create affordable rental housing. In prior years, CDBG was earmarked for property acquisition for a permanent supportive housing project. In 2019, CDBG will be available for property acquisition for a potential project proposed by Friendship House.

One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported	
Homeless	0
Non-Homeless	0
Special-Needs	0
Total	0

Table 6 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement

One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through	
Rental Assistance	0
The Production of New Units	0
Rehab of Existing Units	0
Acquisition of Existing Units	0
Total	0

Table 7 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type

Discussion

The property acquisition will occur during the 2019 Program Year, if all goes well, with the number of households to be supported likely to begin in 2020.

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

The City of Mount Vernon neither owns nor managing any public housing. The City has not chartered a public housing authority. The Housing Authority of Skagit County serves the Mount Vernon area.

HASC owns and manages 263 homes. Sixty of these homes receive rental subsidies through the USDA, and occupancy is for farmworker households. Eighty homes were developed through tax credits and are available to farmworker households. Of the remaining 123 homes, 85 homes are located at the Burlington Terrace. The final 38 homes are located in the President Apartments, located in downtown Mount Vernon. Rents at these apartments are below area market rents. The Housing Authority does not own or manage any HUD subsidized “public housing” units. HASC manages a Housing Choice Voucher Program for all of Skagit County including VASH and non-elderly disabled programs.

Actions planned during the next year to address the needs to public housing

The City of Mount Vernon has no actions planned during the next year to address public housing. However, the City stands ready to cooperate with the Housing Authority of Skagit County if requested. Currently, the Housing Authority of Skagit County does not own or manage any public housing units.

Actions to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership

The City of Mount Vernon encourages local homeownership agencies to reach out to public housing residents who might be interested in affordable homeownership.

If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance

Not applicable

Discussion

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

Introduction

The City of Mount Vernon has prioritized the needs of people experiencing homelessness and, for the last several years, has budgeted a portion of its CDBG entitlement grant toward the proposed purchase of property for a permanent supportive housing project. In 2019, the City will budget a portion of its CDBG award to the purchase of property as proposed by Friendship House, a local nonprofit that provides services and shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including

Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs

Each county has implemented a coordinated entry system for conducting needs assessments of individual households experiencing homelessness as a first step toward addressing their needs through a network of Continuum of Care organizations that provide shelter, housing, and supportive services.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

The City does not receive funding for activities concerning homelessness; however, when possible, it supports the organizations that provide services to homeless populations.

Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again

The City of Mount Vernon has prioritized the needs of people experiencing homelessness and, for the last several years, has budgeted a portion of its CDBG entitlement grant toward the proposed purchase of property for a permanent supportive housing project. In 2019, the City will budget a portion of its CDBG award to the purchase of property as proposed by Friendship House, a local nonprofit that provides services and shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); or, receiving

assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs.

The City of Mount Vernon allocates 15 percent of its CDBG award to public services that help individuals and families avoid becoming homeless.

Discussion

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.220(j)

Introduction:

In 2013 the City participated in the Skagit County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (SCAHAC) process that recommended 12 strategies to increase affordable housing through a mix of policy and funding actions. The City uses the resulting set of strategies and those strategies it identified as a result of OneCPD technical assistance the City received through HUD that focused on the redevelopment of Downtown Mount Vernon.

Actions it planned to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment

The City intends to review periodically the SCAHAC strategies and the recommended actions in "City by the River: Redevelopment Tools for Downtown Mount Vernon" and integrate those recommendations, as appropriate, into the City's ongoing housing affordability strategies.

Discussion:

The City remains committed to removing or ameliorating the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing.

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

Because the City of Mount Vernon's annual CDBG grant is relatively small, it is difficult to use CDBG for many other purposes than those already identified. However, the City does intend to invest other resources and effort toward the following actions below.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The City will conduct outreach to various community sectors to inform lenders, property managers, and the public about Fair Housing laws; the City recently updated its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and will be developing an action plan for fair housing activities based on that analysis.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

The City will work in partnership with the Housing Authority of Skagit County to secure the resources necessary to rehabilitate the President Apartments, an important low-income housing resource in Downtown Mount Vernon. Rehabilitation of this historic landmark is a priority action for the revitalization of the Downtown neighborhood.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

All housing rehabilitation efforts on homes that were built before 1978 will include lead-based paint hazard evaluations. All hazards will be addressed, either through abatement or interim controls to minimize the hazards.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

Poverty is a function of income, which is related to education, job training, and employment. Annually the City provides CDBG funds to public service agencies to assist households below the poverty level with services. Major economic development programs in support of business development and job creation are being undertaken, including efforts to revitalize the Downtown neighborhood. The City continues to have three major priorities for expanding the range of economic development

opportunities available to low- and moderate-income residents:

- Improve access to employment opportunities within the target areas, and
- Help residents acquire the skills required for success in today's job market.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The City is working in partnership with adjacent and regional jurisdictions to implement a regional HOME Consortium. A regional HOME Consortium has enhanced the resource base for developing more affordable housing, and for addressing institutional barriers to creating more affordable housing.

Actions planned to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies

The City will support the efforts of the Coalition to End Homelessness and participate more regularly in their multi-agency meetings. More active participation in the Coalition will improve the coordination of the City's Consolidated Plan goals and the Coalition's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.

Discussion:

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.220(l)(1,2,4)

Introduction:

The 2019 Action Plan continues some of the programs and one project that the City has implemented in the past, including public (human) services, property acquisition for affordable rental housing, and flood hazard mitigation in Downtown Mount Vernon.

