

2009-2011 HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR CLACKAMAS COUNTY, OREGON



FINAL REPORT

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

In 1994, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued new rules consolidating the planning, application, reporting and citizen participation processes for four formula grant programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnership (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA). The new single-planning process was intended to more comprehensively fulfill three basic goals: to provide decent housing, to provide a suitable living environment and to expand economic opportunities. It was termed the “Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.”

The Consolidated Plan is designed to be a collaborative process whereby a community establishes a unified vision for community development actions. It offers Clackamas County the opportunity to shape these housing and community development programs into effective, coordinated neighborhood and community development strategies. It also creates the opportunity for strategic planning and citizen participation to take place in a comprehensive context and attempts to reduce duplication of effort at the local level.

As the lead agency for the Consolidated Plan, the Clackamas County Community Development Division (CDD) follows HUD’s guidelines for citizen and community involvement. Furthermore, it is responsible for overseeing these citizen participation requirements, those that accompany the Consolidated Plan and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) and the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs, as well as those requirements that complement the CDD planning processes already at work in the county.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The *2009-2011 Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan for Clackamas County* is the comprehensive three-year planning document identifying the needs and respective resource investments in satisfying the County’s housing, homeless, non-homeless special needs population, community development and economic development needs.

GOALS OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The goals of the Clackamas County program are to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities for its low- and moderate-income residents. The CDD and its participating communities strive to accomplish these goals by maximizing and effectively utilizing all available funding resources to conduct housing and community development activities that will serve the economically disadvantaged residents and participating communities of the county. By addressing need and creating opportunity at the individual and neighborhood levels, the CDD and the

participating communities hope to improve the quality of life of all residents of the county. These goals are further explained as follows:

- *Provide decent housing* by helping homeless persons obtain appropriate housing and assisting those at risk of homelessness; preserving the affordable housing stock; increasing availability of permanent housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income persons without discrimination; and increasing the supply of supportive housing.
- *Provide a suitable living environment* by improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods; increasing access to quality facilities and services; and reducing the isolation of income groups within an area through de-concentration of low-income housing opportunities.
- *Expand economic opportunities* by creating jobs accessible to low- and moderate-income persons; making mortgage financing available for low- and moderate-income persons at reasonable rates; providing access to credit for development activities that promote long-term economic and social viability of the community; and empowering low-income persons to achieve self-sufficiency to reduce generational poverty in federally-assisted and public housing.

B. CLACKAMAS COUNTY BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

Over the last several years, Clackamas County has experienced economic growth. However, with both the national and global markets in turmoil, the economic tide has begun to shift. Unemployment rates have risen very sharply in the last few months, and as of November 2008 unemployment in Clackamas County exceeded 6.9 percent. Furthermore, average real earnings per job in the County have been declining for the last few years.

Still, population growth appears to be continuing, with the most recent Census Bureau estimate indicating that the county had some 376,251 residents as of July 1, 2007. Furthermore, all communities in the county have added population since the 2000 Census, with Happy Valley one of the fastest growing.

Over this same period, housing production in the county has continued along with the growth in population, with about 17,643 units permitted since the 2000 Census, when the county had nearly 137,000 housing units. However, over the last few years, new single family construction value has fallen rather sharply, from \$278,237 in 2005 to \$256,916 in 2007. Rental vacancy rates have also fallen to a low of 3.5 percent in early 2009.

C. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The following section presents the overriding goals of the Clackamas County Three-Year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, by general topic area.

HOUSING

HOUSING - GOAL I

Develop new housing ownership units for all high-priority housing need groups identified in the Priority Needs table (HUD Table 2B).

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Maintaining partnerships between the County and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, to promote the production of affordable housing;
- Providing HOME funds to expand the supply of decent and affordable ownership housing, for very-low-income and low-income families;
- Supporting the development of permanently affordable homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents;
- Supporting development of scattered site permanent housing;
- Supporting the use of manufactured home and mobile home parks or subdivisions as a reasonable solution to the affordable housing problem, especially in the rural areas of the county;
- Supporting programs to assist first time homebuyers, especially among lower-income and minority households by providing down payment and closing costs assistance.

HOUSING - GOAL II

Develop new affordable rental housing units for all high-priority housing need groups identified in the Priority Needs table (HUD Table 2B).

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Maintaining partnerships between the County and the private sector, including for-profit and non-profit organizations, to promote the production of affordable housing;
- Providing HOME funds to expand the supply of decent and affordable rental housing, for very-low-income and low-income families;
- Acquiring land for affordable housing developments;
- Supporting funding increases for programs such as Section 8 and low-rent public housing for the eligible populations;
- Supporting development of housing and services to individuals and families living with HIV and AIDS and other special needs;

- Developing inter-county alliances to address commonly shared housing needs for special needs populations.

HOUSING - GOAL III

Preserve and improve the quality of low-income rental units and owner-occupied housing units.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Preserving and rehabilitating existing housing stock so that it remains affordable, viable and productive;
- Supporting the reduction of housing cost burdens for very-low and low-income renters and owners;
- Supporting the re-development of public housing units to maintain and increase the number of available rental units;
- Preserving the existing affordable housing stock to prevent displacement in the Overland Park Urban Renewal Area.

HOUSING - GOAL IV

Reduce homelessness and increase support services to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Supporting all goals listed in the 10-Year Plan to Address Homelessness including Goal 4: Create/Expand Permanent Supportive Housing, Affordable Housing and Services;
- Supporting all goals listed in the annual Continuum of Care 10-Year Plan Objectives to End Chronic Homelessness and Move Families and Individuals to Permanent Housing;
- Sustaining or increasing the stock of permanent supportive housing, or housing that offers support services;
- Supporting development of transitional housing and emergency shelter beds;
- Assessing homeless numbers and needs through regular street counts;
- Promoting and supporting Homeless Planning activities;
- Providing assistance to and developing alliances with community groups that create awareness of homeless issues and housing needs by staffing the Continuum of Care process of applying for federal funds;
- Supporting the development and maintenance of a Homeless Management Information System;
- Supporting programs to assist renters with security deposits and down payments and other emergency assistance funds.

HOUSING - GOAL V

Promote community awareness of affordable housing needs, homeless needs and the need to ensure equal access to affordable housing for all households in accordance with the Fair Housing Act.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Promoting increased community awareness of housing affordability and other related issues associated with planning and growth management in the County;
- Improving public awareness of low-income housing issues, special needs housing issues and homelessness information to foster a collective sense of public concern and responsibility;
- Supporting research and planning activities to improve information available for the development of appropriate strategies through identification and clarification of needs;
- Supporting coordination between active fair housing entities in the County to prepare a uniform and consistent fair housing referral policy;
- Supporting the education of tenants, landlords, property managers and housing staff regarding fair housing rights and responsibilities;
- Supporting the education of builders, Realtors, county employees and citizens to decrease confusion regarding the Fair Housing Act and Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Providing information and referral services to persons seeking housing and housing services;
- Supporting increased homeowner outreach and education or training on financial products and how credit and credit markets can best work for the potential home buyer as a consumer.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - GOAL I

Develop or improve a variety of public facilities to benefit low-income neighborhoods and special needs populations.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Supporting the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and/or installation of neighborhood facilities, youth centers and other public facilities;
- Supporting the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and/or installation of shelters, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families and special needs populations;
- Supporting public projects that remove architectural barriers that restrict the mobility and accessibility of elderly or disabled persons to public facilities.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - GOAL II

Improve the infrastructure in low-income areas to ensure personal safety, welfare and access to services.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Supporting the construction of infrastructure improvements to support affordable housing projects;
- Supporting the construction of new, and/or rehabilitation of existing, streets, storm water drainage, water and sewer facilities to increase system capacity and to improve traffic and pedestrian safety in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - GOAL III

Provide public services that ensure the health and welfare of low-income communities.

Strategies to obtain this goal include:

- Supporting the development of services that assist special needs populations, employment programs, homeless services, childcare programs, renter education, tenant-landlord dispute resolution, fair housing activities and homebuyer assistance programs.