

## **SECTION 7. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

### **PART 1. COMMUNITY INPUT**

As described in Section 1 of this plan, the Washtenaw Urban County and HOME Consortium held two public hearings and contacted a variety of non-profits to solicit citizen input for the Consolidated Strategy and Plan.

The first public hearing was held on February 18, 2003 at the Ypsilanti Charter Township Civic Center at 7:00pm, immediately preceding a Township Board of Trustees meeting. Written feedback forms were distributed, and public comment was invited at this meeting. Comments made during the hearing and in written form after the hearing included the following:

- A resident expressed concern at the public hearing about Zeolite insulation, which is chemically related to asbestos, and asked that the Urban County and HOME Consortium make sure to inspect and abate this material appropriately.
- A written feedback form echoed the above concern about Zeolite, and reminded the Urban County and HOME Consortium that the “removal of this toxic material can be prohibitive for low and middle-income families and individual property owners”.
- A written feedback form urged the Urban County to consider allocating more funds toward public transportation, door-to-door service for the disabled, and greater frequency of existing routes.
- A township representative asked the following **question**: Is road construction an allowable activity with CDBG funds and if so, can we discuss using those dollars to assist in improvements to Holmes Road in Ypsilanti Township?

**Answer:** Yes, this is an eligible activity. However, the funds are limited and must be targeted to serve low-to-moderate income families.

**Action:** This type of project was added to the non-housing community development needs assessment, strategic plan, and action plan.

The second public hearing was held on February 25, 2003 at the Pittsfield Charter Township Administration Building, immediately preceding the Township’s Board of Trustees meeting. The Consolidated Plan draft was released and made available for public comment on this date. Comments made and questions posed at the hearing included the following:

- A resident asked several questions about the presentation given by County staff regarding the calculations of affordable rental housing and possible projects.
- Township representative asked the **question**: Can the Urban County presentation be given to the entire Pittsfield Township Board of Trustees?

**Answer:** Yes, County staff will coordinate this presentation with the Township Clerk.

In addition, input was solicited from several local non-profits involved in housing and housing development. None of those agencies replied to the request for information. However, during the development of the initial HOME Consortium 2001-2005 Consolidated Strategy and Plan, several CHDO’s and other non-profits replied to the request for information about their goals and/or assessment of housing needs. The following is a summary that feedback, which still has relevance to the current plan:

### **Washtenaw Affordable Housing Corporation**

#### Priorities:

- Annually 5-10 single-family rental and ownership, primarily new construction units
- Develop projects for other nonprofit agencies with targeted populations
- Renovation opportunities as they become available
- Also prepared for development beyond these goals if any of the participating jurisdictions express a desire for more units or targeting at a specific area

### **Michigan Ability Partners (MAP) /Washtenaw Intergenerational Supportive Housing (WISH)**

#### Priorities:

- Develop 5-10 individual unit permanent supported housing for disabled veterans
- Develop 5 units of supported housing for women leaving domestic violence shelters
- Develop 4-5 self-contained permanent housing projects for selected WISH graduates
- In partnership with other agencies or developers, developing 10 or more units for individuals

### **Washtenaw Home of Your Own Coalition**

#### Priorities:

- Rehabilitate and buy down prices of existing homes to sell to persons of low income
- Develop funds for renovation, rehabilitation and modification of homes and rental units
- Build new homes and rental units that are affordable, accessible and visit-able
- Establish an emergency grant fund to assist with disasters, emergencies and unexpected expenses
- Down Payment Assistance in conjunction with MSHDA and other down payment assistance
- Guarantee assistance for mortgages for people with poor credit history who demonstrate ability to make house payments

### **CAP Non Profit Housing, Inc.**

#### Priorities:

- Over a 5-year period, 5 units per year: combination of new construction and major rehabilitation projects
- Mostly single family, all sold at median income levels of 50% and 80%
- One rental development project/year will be developed by their organization
- Total annual construction budget will be approximately \$375,000, their organization will provide a 25% match

### **Community Housing Alternatives**

#### Priorities:

- Development of 20 rental (new construction) units for mixed use for persons with disabilities and low-moderate income families in Ypsilanti Township Area
- Development of rental (new construction) duplexes (4 units) for persons and families of persons with disabilities in Ypsilanti City
- Acquisition, rehab and sale of affordable units for low-income families completing home purchase education programs in coordination with MSHDA down payment assistance program and Section 8 Homeownership program. Up to 10 units per year.

**Power Inc.**

Priorities:

- Development of 20 rental (new construction) units for mixed use for persons with disabilities and low-moderate income families in Ypsilanti Township Area
- Renovate and/or build new affordable housing units in targeted areas

**Ypsilanti Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation**

Priorities:

- Homeowner-occupied rehab projects
- Homeowner-occupied emergency repairs
- Neighborhood beautification program
- Demolition of blighted buildings
- Design and implementation of a down-payment assistance program for first time homebuyers
- Acquisition of 2-3 homes for low to moderate-income families

**PART 2. FEEDBACK FROM CONSOLIDATED PLAN DRAFT**

The Draft Consolidated Plan was published on February 25, 2003. The executive summary of the plan along with instructions about how to access copies of the plan were sent by email to approximately 55 interested parties ranging from local government units to non-profits. The Plan was also posted on the County Website, delivered to each of the Township offices, given to each of the public housing commissions, and delivered to the two major public libraries. In each case, the plan was made available with a public comment form, a flier inviting comment, and a cover sheet describing how to participate by providing feedback on ways to change or approve the plan and relevant suggestions have been incorporated into the final plan. Below are the list of suggestions, followed by the Urban County and HOME Consortium responses.

***City of Ypsilanti***

- The City of Ypsilanti does not desire to expand their stock of rental housing; rather they would like to improve the quality and management of city rental housing stock. Currently, more than 60% of Ypsilanti's housing stock is rental housing. An increase in the proportion of owner-occupied to rental housing is a high priority.

*Plan now includes language to indicate the above.*

***Ypsilanti Township***

- The Charter Township of Ypsilanti does not want to encourage further development of rental housing, but rather improvements to the existing stock of affordable rental housing. Therefore, they would request a change to goal three of the Strategic Plan and Action Plan to reflect that priority.  
*The Plan has been changed to reflect this suggestion.*
- The Township is not in favor of funding any type of homeless shelter with CDBG funds, and want to clarify that goal 9 does not call for any such action.  
*Staff clarified the goal to reflect that the Urban County may only fund supportive services to prevent homelessness, rather than housing for the homeless. The plan has been clarified to reflect this Urban County medium priority.*
- The Township requested a change from medium to high priority for homeowner assistance to households at 0-30% of AMI in the Housing Priority Table.

*With approval from the Urban County Executive Committee this change was made to the plan.*

### **Superior Township**

- Superior Township expresses their desire to improve a particular neighborhood within their jurisdiction with CDBG funds- the Wiard Road/ Harvest Lane area. They wish to emphasize that this is their number one priority for these funds. *Staff amended the plan to include this emphasis within the 2003-04 Action Plan, particularly in the area of homeowner rehabilitation.*
- The Township emphasizes the importance of improving existing rental and homeownership opportunities, rather than building more affordable housing in their jurisdiction. They report concern that the Strategic Plan Goal 3 calls for an expansion of rental housing. *Staff responded to this concern and the similar concern from Ypsilanti Township by amending that goal to read "improve" rather than "expand".*

### **Pittsfield Township**

- Pittsfield Township requested that transportation services be changed from a medium to high priority in the non-housing community development priority table, as the expansion of transportation to seniors and LMI households is a priority for Pittsfield and many of the other townships. *With the approval of the Urban County Executive Committee, this change was made to the consolidated plan.*

### **Ypsilanti Housing Commission**

- Commission reviewed document and pointed out an error in the calculations of housing units built, pointing out that the total number of units from Ypsilanti was incorrect. *This table was corrected in the final draft of the plan.*

## **PART 3. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The purpose of the community participation plan is to provide a framework for the Washtenaw Urban County and HOME Consortium to use in order to assure that community members have an opportunity to provide meaningful input in the design and review of programs and activities addressed in the Washtenaw Urban County/ HOME Consortium FY2003-FY2008 Consolidated Strategy and Plan.

### **A. Community Outreach Procedures**

In order to assure meaningful community involvement and comply with federal regulations, the Urban County and HOME Consortium will adopt the following process to ensure maximum community outreach activities in developing and implementing the Consolidated Strategy and Action Plan.

- **Identify low- and very low-income as well as visibly distressed target areas** through the use of Census Block data and windshield surveys.
- **Contact community leaders and stakeholders** throughout the Urban County and HOME Consortium areas and particularly in targeted areas. Those community leaders may include: Ministers, Civic Leaders, Block Captains, Leaders of Neighborhood Organizations, School Officials and Local Small Business Owners.

- Urban County/ HOME Consortium representatives will **participate in community forums and meetings** pertaining to the issue of decent, safe and/or affordable housing.
- **Ensure adequate and timely notification of public hearings** as to maximize community attendance. A Notice of Public Hearing will be published in the Ypsilanti Courier as well as the Ann Arbor News. An announcement of the hearing will also be posted on CTN, the local public access television station. Notice of the availability of the draft document and the dates of public hearings will be mailed to the aforementioned community leaders as well as churches and public service agencies in the Urban County and HOME Consortium areas.
- **Hold at least two public hearings** that are conveniently timed and located to provide access for all communities, including minorities and persons with disabilities, especially for those who might or will benefit from program funds.
- **Provide citizens a period of not less than 30 days** (15 days for performance reports) to review and submit comments on the draft Consolidated Annual Action Plan. A summary of comments will be attached and submitted with the Consolidated Annual Action Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As appropriate, comments and suggestions will be incorporated into the plan. Community input submitted in writing will receive response from the Consortium within 10 working days.

### **B. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan**

According to this Plan, a substantial amendment is any modification that completely eliminates a project from the Plan or any change that is greater than 10% of the fiscal year entitlement. If a substantial amendment to the Strategy or Action Plan is proposed, public notice will provide for a 30-day public comment period to allow review and comments on the proposed changes. This public notice will be advertised using the same procedure as a Notice of Public Hearing

### **C. Publication of the Consolidated Strategy and Plan**

The Urban County and HOME Consortium will distribute its draft Consolidated Plan and Performance Report so that affected communities will have adequate time and opportunity to review them and participate effectively in developing the final version. Copies of this document will be distributed to Urban County Township offices and City of Ypsilanti (HOME) public offices, some Washtenaw County offices, and to some previously identified local leaders. The plan will also be posted on the Washtenaw County website front page.

### **C. Complaints**

The Urban County and HOME Consortium staff will provide a timely (10-15 working days) and responsive written reply to every written community complaint regarding the Consolidated Plan, yearly action plan, amendments and performance reports.

**D. Public Information about Programs and Services in the Plan**

The Washtenaw County Community Development Division of the Department of Planning and Environment will provide interested communities and community groups with information about eligible programs and activities, given due regard to privacy and confidentiality. The Community Development program will keep a list of the names and addresses of interested groups and communities and will use the file to distribute information.

**E. Retention of Records**

The following records will be maintained for the duration of the plan (2008) and will be available to the public at the Community Development Division Office, within the Washtenaw Department of Planning and Environment<sup>1</sup>:

- Records of public hearings
- Mailings and other promotional materials
- Written and other records of the efforts made to involve communities in the development of HOME grant applications
- Copies of all relevant program applications
- Copies of Grantee Performance Reports (Annual Performance Report)
- Copies of prior applications, letters of approval, grant agreements, progress reports, Regulations and other pertinent documents

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Planning and Environment address: 705 N. Zeeb Road, PO Box 8645, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8645.

**Attachment A- Amendment to FY 2002-2003 HOME Consortium Action Plan**

This amendment is presented to HUD as official notification of a significant change in the budget allocation for FY 2002-2003 HOME funds. Page 8 of the FY 2002-03 Washtenaw HOME Consortium Action Plan listed the funding allocations to different types of HOME activities (excluding administrative and CHDO Operating allocations). Those allocations are presented in the left two columns of the following table:

<b>ORIGINAL 2002-03 ALLOCATIONS</b>	<b>ACTIVITY/CATEGORY</b>	<b>AMENDED ALLOCATIONS</b>
\$110,000	Rental Rehabilitation	\$185,000
\$100,700	Homeowner Rehabilitation for income eligible homeowner occupants	\$46,440
\$100,000	First Time Homebuyer Down payment Assistance	\$30,000
\$150,000	Purchase, Rehabilitation, Resale to income eligible homebuyers (Homeownership Assistance)	\$183,000
\$0	CHDO Capacity Building	\$16,260
<b>\$460,700</b>	<b>Total Allocations to Activities</b>	<b>\$460,700</b>

Also included in the preceding table are the current amended allocations to HOME activities (right column). The funding of all four activities changed in the following ways: 1) Rental Rehabilitation- increased by \$75,000; 2) Homeowner rehabilitation- decreased by \$54,260; 3) Down payment assistance- decreased by \$70,000; 4) Homeownership Assistance- increased by \$33,000; and 5) CHDO Capacity Building- category included and increased to allowed amount \$16,260.

The allocation of rental rehabilitation was increased to meet increased demand for that service in the community. Homeowner rehab was decreased to meet only the need to finish current projects in that category, as CDBG will be used for this purpose beginning with FY 2003-04. The need for down payment assistance was re-assessed and decreased because the funds from FY 2001-02 had yet to be spent. Homeownership assistance was increased to meet a larger-than-estimated need for homeownership subsidies. CHDO Capacity-building funds were included, as they were needed to support the growth of the Ypsilanti Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation.

These changes were approved by the HOME Consortium Board on April 14, 2003, as they continue to reflect the priorities of that decision making body. In addition, this amendment was presented to the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners for approval along with the 2003-2008 Urban County/ HOME Consortium Consolidated Strategy and Plan on May 7, 2003.