

RESOLUTION No. 116-2008

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF THE  
FFY2009 ACTION PLAN AND THE FFY 2009 TO FFY2013 FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN  
TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, under 24 CFR Part 91, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) outlines the consolidated submissions for community planning and development programs which will serve as: (1) a planning document for the City that builds on a participatory process at the grass roots level, (2) an application for federal funds under HUD's formula grant program, (3) a strategy to be followed in carrying out HUD programs, and (4) an Action Plan that provides a basis for assessing performance;

WHEREAS, the FFY2009 to FFY2013 five year Consolidated Plan (35th to 39th years - January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2013) specifies activities the City will undertake to address priority needs and local objectives using formula grant funds and program income the City expects to receive during a five year period;

WHEREAS, the FFY2009 (35th CD year January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009) Action Plan specifies activities the City will undertake to address priority needs and local objectives using formula grant funds and program income the City expects to receive during the program year;

WHEREAS, the proposed Citizen Participation Plan amendment removes the statement that an amendment will be made to the approved plan if funding resources for a program activity change by more than forty percent (40%). All other terms and conditions of the existing Citizen Participation Plan will remain the same.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING THAT:

The FFY2009 (35th year January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009) Action Plan, the FFY2009 to FFY2013 five year Consolidated Plan (35th to 39th years - January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2013), and the Citizen Participation Plan amendment are hereby approved.

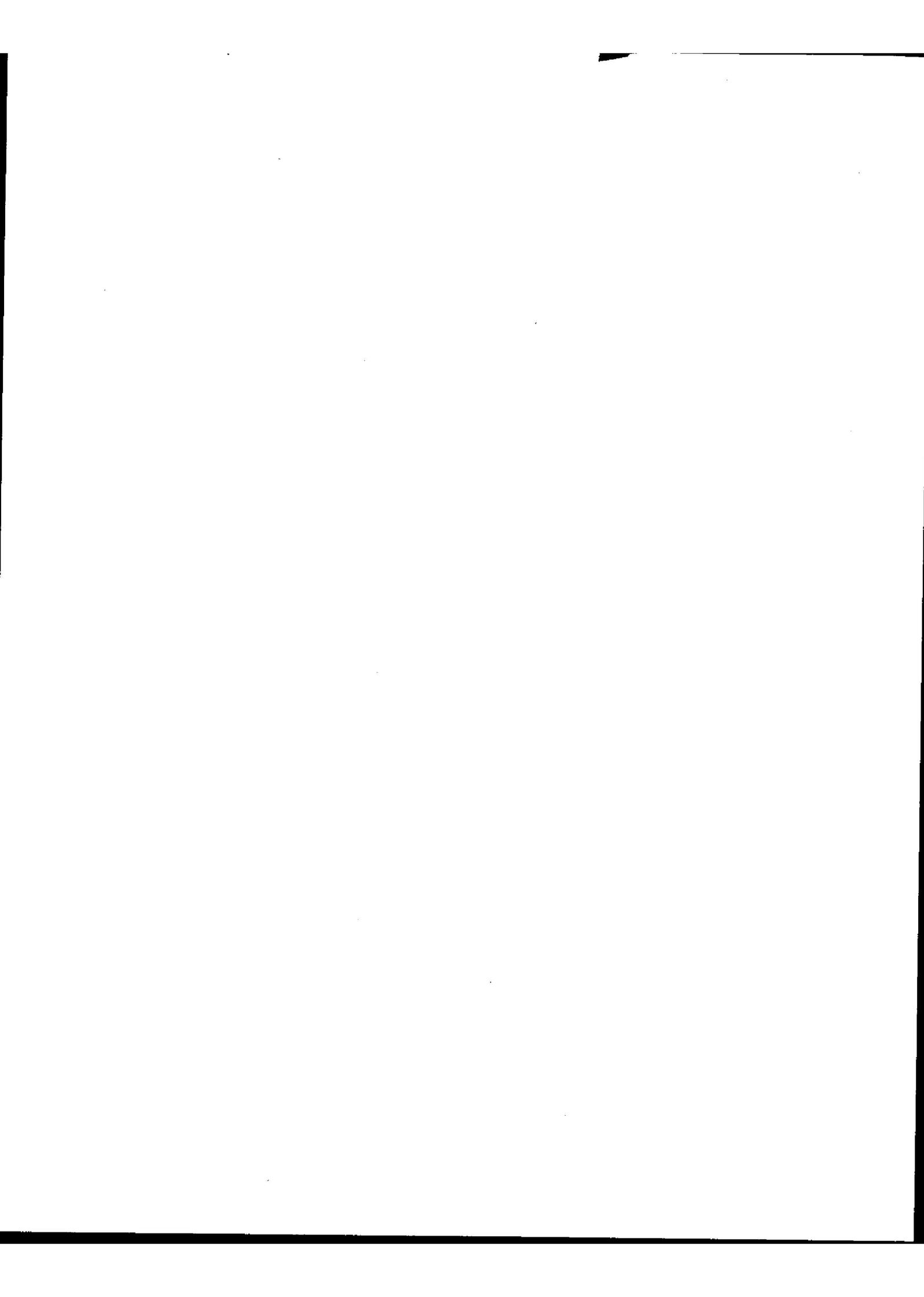
The Mayor, on behalf of the City of Reading, is authorized and directed to file the application for financial assistance to carry out the housing and community development activities outlined in the plans; and to execute the necessary certifications in connection with the plans and provide such additional information as may be required.

PASSED COUNCIL [Signature] 2008

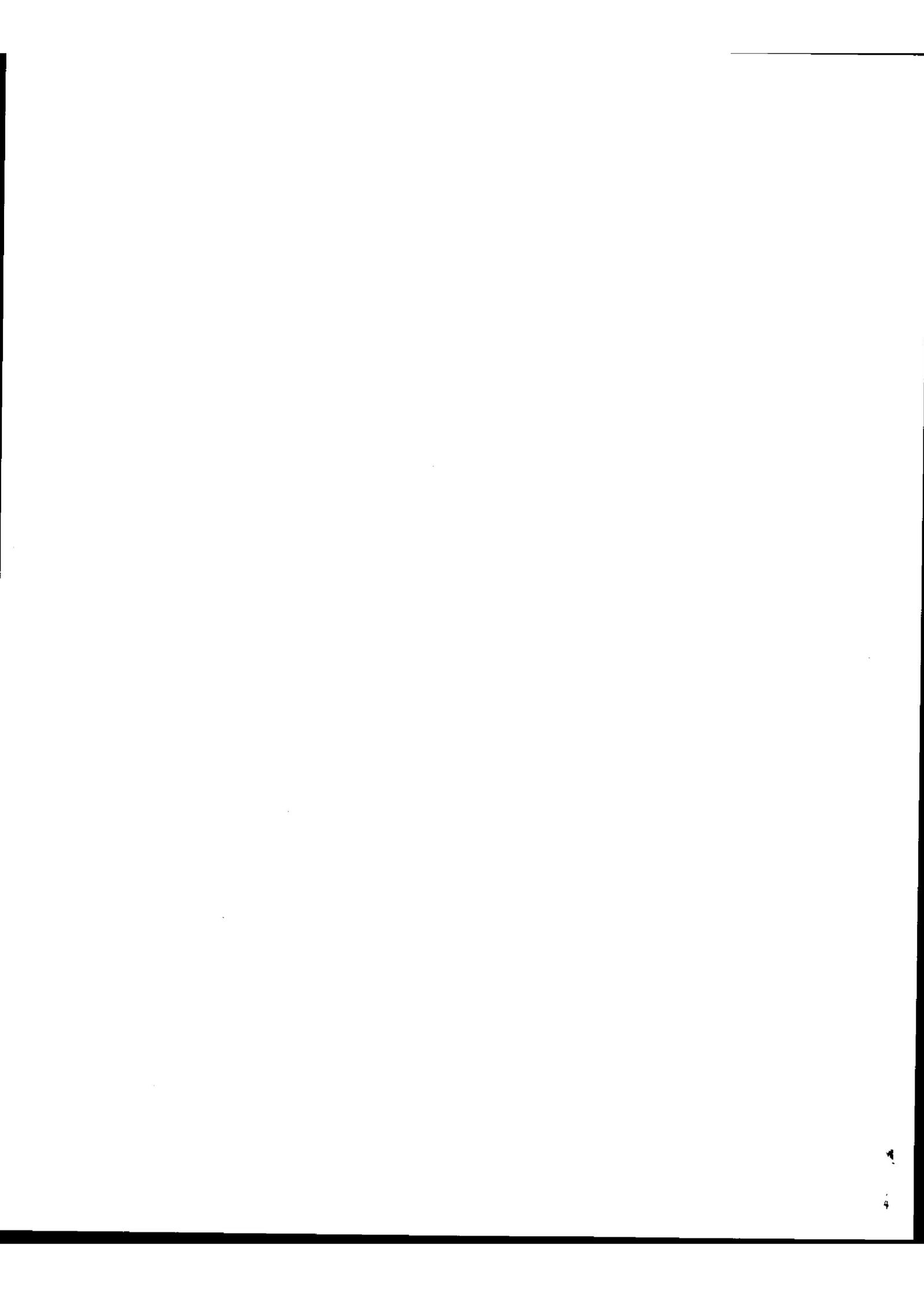
[Signature]  
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK



CDBG activities		2007	2008	not drawn (08/06/08)	2009 req	2009 AP	differ	%
3rd & Spring Sts. Playground			\$89,000	\$89,000				
Abe Lincoln Hotel 108 payment	CDBG payment to HUD	\$260,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$216,000	\$0	0%
Adopt-A-Tree			\$20,000	\$20,000				
Baer Park			\$230,000	\$230,000				
CDBG Admin. (20% cap)		\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$0	0%
Centre Park Blotg Façade		\$100,000		\$6,397				
City Park	Phase III	\$392,000	\$100,000	\$469,735	\$354,500	\$354,500	\$0	0%
Code Enforcement		\$336,000	\$360,000	\$261,758	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$0	0%
Commercial Façade (slum blight)			\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	(\$100,000)	-100%
Commercial Façade (low mod)		\$20,000		\$20,000	\$50,000	\$0	(\$50,000)	-100%
Community First Fund	L/M only & <6 person business	\$20,000		\$20,000				
529 Court Street Façade (slum blight)				\$276,277	\$0	\$0	\$0	#DIV/0!
De-conversions - OCR Inc.		\$509,000	\$500,000	\$395,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0	0%
Emergency Demos			\$48,500	\$48,500				
Essick Playground				\$462				
Fire Engine 1	received	\$475,000		\$462				
Fire Engine 3	received	\$475,000		\$4,944				
Fire Engine 11	received	\$475,000		\$4,944				
Fire Engine 13	received	\$475,000		\$7,994				
Fire Ladder 3	truck ordered		\$850,000	\$850,000				
Habitat public improvements			\$50,000	\$50,000	\$182,500	\$182,500	\$0	0%
Handicap Ramps			\$47,000	\$47,000				
Hamden Park			\$165,000	\$165,000				
Hillside Playground			\$285,000	\$285,000				
Liberty Façade		\$100,000		\$100,000				
Litter Baskets	baskets ordered		\$99,960	\$99,960				
Major System Rehab - NHS		\$180,000	\$46,000	\$100,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0	0%
NHS home ownership assistance		\$375,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0%
Northmont Playground					\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	0%
Olivet / PAL Bldg. Façade		\$100,000		\$100,000				
Orange & Cherry Sts. Playground			\$82,000	\$82,000				
Re-Lighting (street lights)		\$450,000		\$349,525				
Residential Façade (slum blight)		\$60,000	\$40,000	\$66,000	\$60,000	\$50,350	(\$9,650)	-16%
<b>CDBG activities total</b>					<b>\$2,638,000</b>	<b>\$2,478,350</b>		



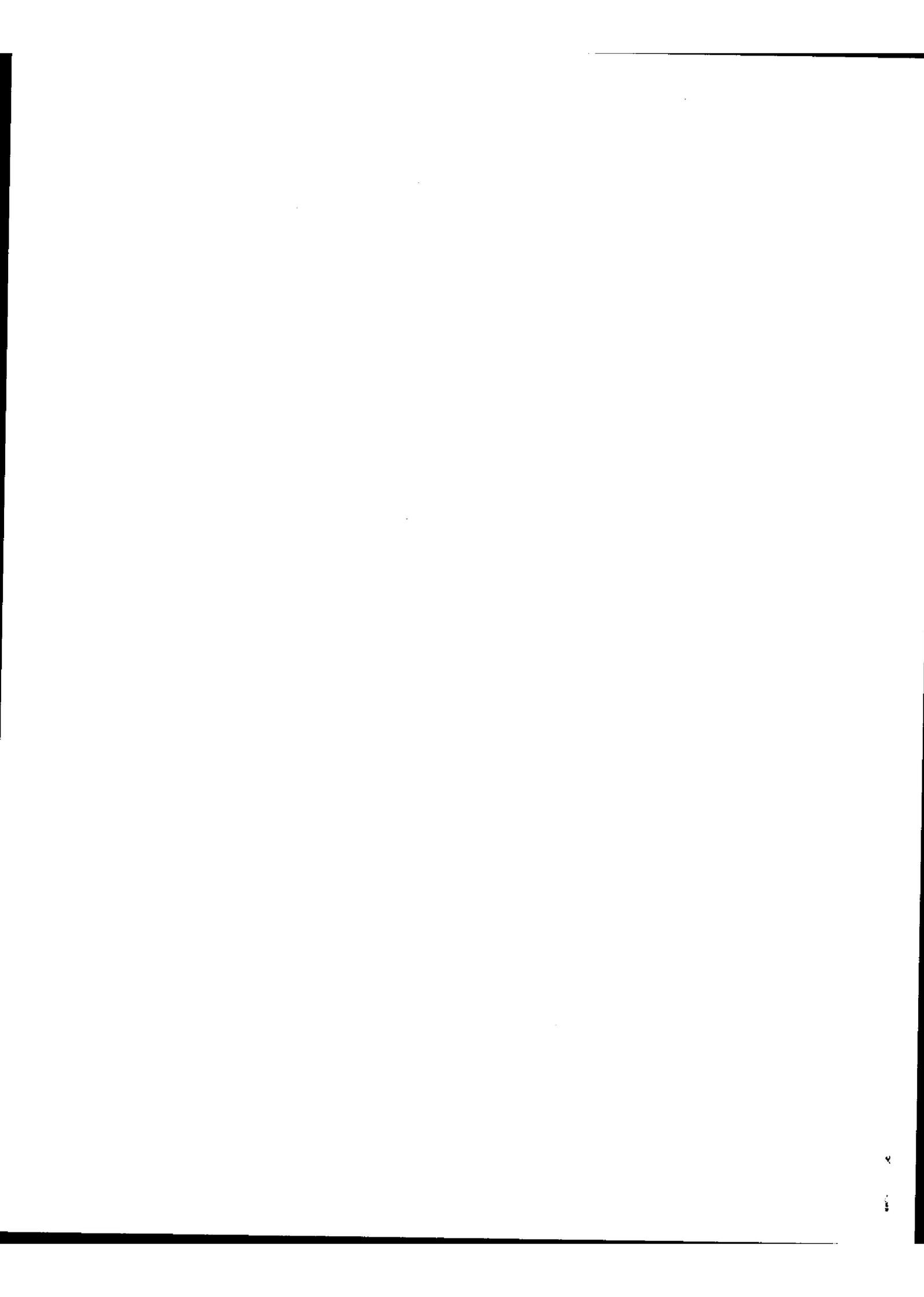
CDBG PS \$556,650	15% of (09 EN + prev yr PI) PI \$711,000 07/17/08	2007	2008	est not drwn (08/06/08)	2009 req	2009 AP	differ	%
CARE		\$20,000	\$329,000	\$17,775	\$357,900	\$357,900	\$0	0%
Community Policing		\$375,000	\$329,000	\$277,645	\$23,800	\$23,800	\$0	0%
Human Relations					\$18,000	\$18,000	\$0	0%
Millmont RAFT		\$25,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$44,260	\$0	(\$44,260)	-100%
Literacy Council					\$50,000	\$0	(\$50,000)	-100%
NHS education	eligible ? fundable ?	\$58,000	\$35,000	\$22,444	\$85,300	\$85,300	\$0	0%
Olivet's southeast		\$154,376	\$30,000	\$19,494	\$117,000	\$15,650	(\$101,350)	-87%
Community Organizers OND/RBI	need joint application	\$80,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0%
Recreation NEAR		\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0	0%
activity delivery	\$1000 per activity							
	CDBG PS total				\$717,260	\$521,650		

CDBG activities	\$2,478,350
CDBG public services	\$521,650
FFY2009 CDBG Total (EN est)	\$3,000,000 & 2009 Income

\$655,000 slum and blight cap	
2009 Emergency Demolitions	\$500,000
Commercial Façade	\$0
Residential Façade	\$15,000

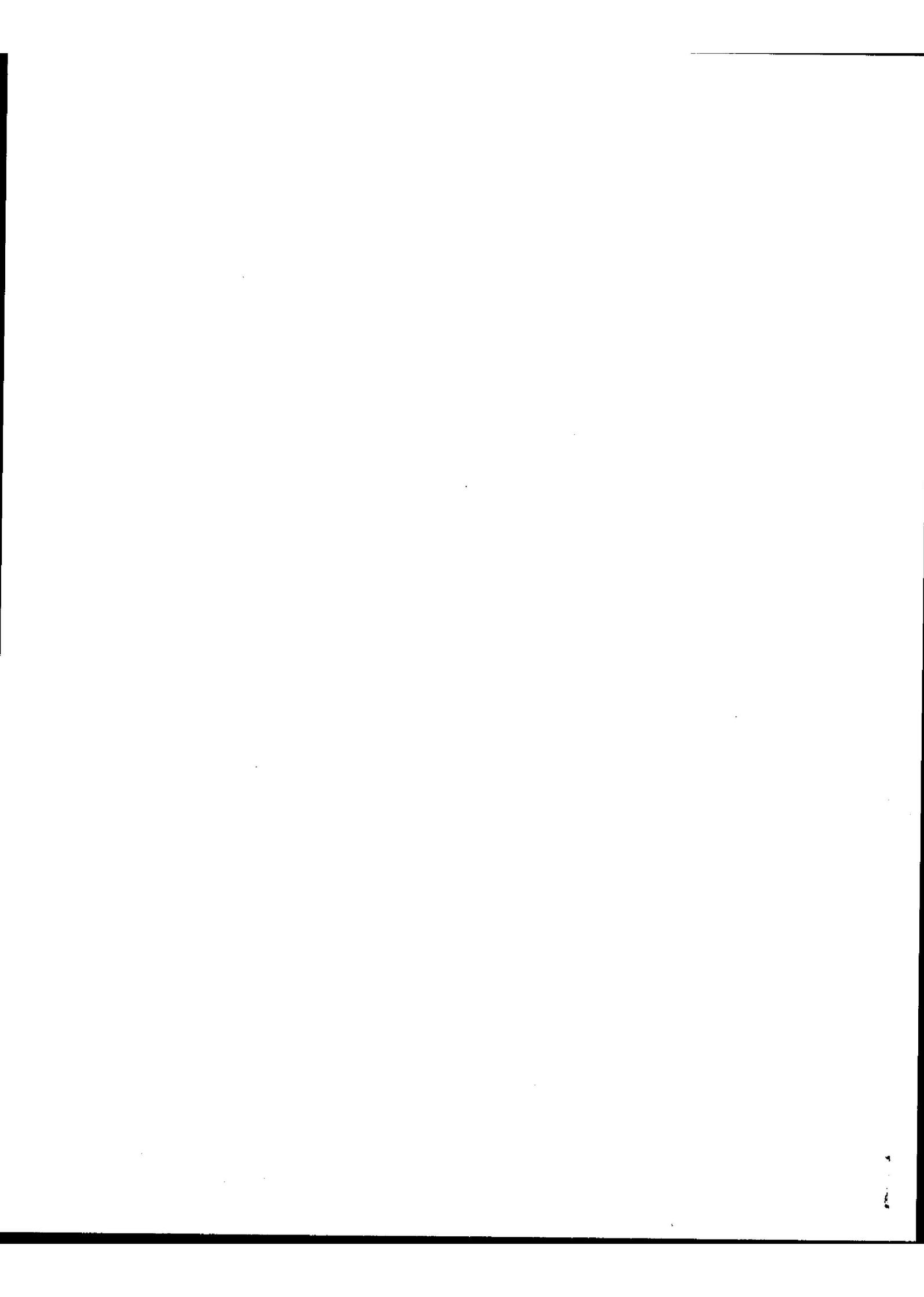
2006 and prior CDBG	not spent as of 07/17/08
2005 CDBG Admin	\$61,393
2008 CDBG Admin	\$137,592
Brookline Playground	\$1,858
ED drawdown error	\$600,000 to CDBG LOC ?

Sect 108 loan pay. (exc. Lincoln)	
Buttonwood Gateway	?
Goggle Works	\$241,326
Hydrojet	?
KVP	\$150,928
Readings Future	\$163,368
Sun Rich	?
Total Section 108 payments to HUD	\$555,622



	2007	2008	2009 req	2009 AP	differ	%
<b>FFY 2009 HOME EN est. \$950,000</b>						
Habitat for Humanity			\$90,000	\$90,000	\$0	0%
HOME Admin. (10% cap)	\$99,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$0	0%
NHS CHDO Admin			\$42,000	\$0	(\$42,000)	-100%
NHS CHDO Set Aside	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$142,500	\$142,500	\$0	0%
OCR Inc.	\$630,000	\$580,000	\$580,000	\$572,500	(\$7,500)	-1%
Act delivery - "one" Rehab Specialist	\$120,000	\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
2nd & Wash Sts Apts BHP CHDO	\$1,000,000					
<b>HOME total</b>			\$999,500	\$950,000		

	2007	2008	2009 req	2009 AP	differ	%
<b>FFY2009 ESG EN est. \$135,000</b>						
ESG Admin. (5% cap)	\$6,750	\$6,750	\$6,750	\$6,750	\$0	0%
OH / RBES	\$112,198	\$128,250	\$237,870	\$128,250	(\$109,620)	-46%
BCAP	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	(\$30,000)	-100%
BCCD may fund	\$68,000	\$0	\$70,000	\$0	(\$70,000)	-100%
BWIC			\$20,000	\$0	(\$20,000)	-100%
Easy Does It	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	(\$25,000)	-100%
Family Promise	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	(\$50,000)	-100%
Mary's Shelter	\$0	\$0	\$439,620	\$135,000		
<b>ESG total</b>			\$439,620	\$135,000		





09/30/08 revision

# First Program Year Action Plan

The CPMP First Annual Action Plan includes the SF 424 and Narrative Responses to Action Plan questions that CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG grantees must respond to each year in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations. The Executive Summary narratives are optional.

## Narrative Responses

### GENERAL

#### Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is required. Include the objectives and outcomes identified in the plan and an evaluation of past performance.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Executive Summary:

The City of Reading, Pennsylvania has prepared the FFY2009 Action Plan in order to strategically implement federal programs that fund housing and community and economic development activities within the whole community. The FFY2009 Action Plan is the first action plan of the City and County of Berks FFY2009 to FFY2013 Consolidated Plan. Recognizing the need for more efficiency and the effectiveness of the various HUD and non-HUD programs that the City of Reading and the County of Berks utilize, both entitlements have undertaken an effort to increase cooperation between the two community development offices. This cooperation focuses on the sharing of administrative duties, pooling resources and joint decision making. Through a collaborative planning process, involving a broad range of public and private agencies, the County and the City have developed a single, consolidated planning and application document for the use of federal entitlement funds available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program.

The federal funds made available to the City through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program will be used to address the needs outlined in the Strategic Plan.

The three overarching objectives guiding the proposed activities are:

- Providing Decent Affordable Housing
- Creating Suitable Living Environments
- Creating Economic Opportunities

Outcomes show how programs and activities benefit a community or the people served. The three outcomes that will illustrate the benefits of each activity are:

- Improve Availability/Accessibility
- Improve Affordability
- Improve Sustainability

All activities support at least one objective and one outcome.

The framework for realizing the objective and outcomes include the following goals:

- provision of decent, affordable housing
- increase homeownership
- provision of a suitable living environment
- expansion of economic opportunities
- support County-wide efforts to end homelessness

(Also, see the attached FFY2009 CDBG, HOME, and ESG Activities spreadsheet.)

### General Questions

1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low-income families and/or racial/minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed during the next year. Where appropriate, the jurisdiction should estimate the percentage of funds the jurisdiction plans to dedicate to target areas.
2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) during the next year and the rationale for assigning the priorities.
3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.
4. Identify the federal, state, and local resources expected to be made available to address the needs identified in the plan. Federal resources should include Section 8 funds made available to the jurisdiction, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and competitive McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds expected to be available to address priority needs and specific objectives identified in the strategic plan.

Program Year 1 Action Plan General Questions response:

1. The City of Reading contains 37.2 percent of the low income persons in Berks County compared to about 22 percent of the total population in the County. The low income population in Reading is 68.4 percent of the City's population.

(Also, see the attached minority concentration by Census Tract table and Census Tract map.)

#### Activity names and locations:

Abe Lincoln Hotel 108 payment – 5th & Washington Sts.

City Park Improvements – 11th & Washington Sts.

City Recreation NEAR Program – 18th & Forrest Sts.

Code Enforcement – Census Tracts 1, 5, 7, 8 (BG 1&2), 9 to 22, 25, 29 (BG 2)

Community Organizers OND/RBI – City wide

Community Policing – Northwest, northeast, south Reading

- Emergency Demos – City wide
- Goggle Works 108 loan payment – 2nd & Washington Sts.
- Habitat for Humanity – City wide
- Handicap Ramps – Northeast Reading
- Human Relations Commission – City wide
- Hydrojet 108 loan payment - Gateway Drive area
- KVP 108 loan payment – Morgantown Road
- NHS Major System Rehab – City wide
- Millmont RAFT – Millmont neighborhood
- NHS CHDO Set Aside – City wide
- NHS home ownership assistance – City wide
- Northmont Playground – 700 Delta Ave.
- Reading Revitalization OCR Inc. - Census Tracts 1, 5, 7, 8 (BG 1&2), 9 to 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 (BG 2).
- Olivet's - Southeast Reading
- Opportunity House – 430 N. 2nd St.
- Readings Future 108 loan payment – 5th & Washington Sts.
- Residential Façade – City wide
- Sun Rich 108 loan payment - Gateway Drive area

2. The funds are intended to provide lower and moderate-income households with viable communities, including decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities. Eligible activities include community facilities and improvements, housing rehabilitation and preservation, affordable housing development activities, public services, economic development, planning, and administration.

The system for establishing the priority for the selection of these projects is predicated upon the following criteria:

- Meeting the statutory requirements of the CDBG program;
- Meeting the needs of very-low, low- and moderate-income residents;
- Focus on low- and moderate-income areas or neighborhoods;
- Coordination and leveraging of resources;
- Response to expressed needs;
- Sustainability and/or long-term impact; and
- The ability to measure or demonstrate progress and success.

3. The primary obstacle to meeting underserved needs is the limited resources available to address the identified priorities. The City of Reading will partner with other agencies when feasible to leverage resources and maximize outcomes in housing and community development.

4. The following table indicates the programs, sources, amounts and uses of federal, state, local, and private funds the City expects to be available during FFY2009. These funds will be used to address a variety of priority needs and specific objectives identified in the FFY2009 to FFY2013 Consolidated plan.

State, local and private funds will be used to match federal funds for such programs as ESG and HOME. When appropriate, federal funds will be used to leverage state, local and private funds.

<b>Programs</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amounts</b>	<b>Needs</b>
CDBG	Federal	\$ 3,000,000.00	C.D & Housing
CDBG Program Income	Federal	\$ 18,836.00	C.D & Housing
Section 108 Loan payments	Federal	\$ 681,697.00	C.D
HOME	Federal	\$ 950,000.00	Housing
ESG	Federal	\$ 135,000.00	Homeless
PHA Comprehensive Grant	Federal	\$ 500,000.00	Housing
Supportive Housing	Federal	\$ 1,711,303.00	Housing
Act 137 Affordable Housing Trust Fund	County	\$ 732,000.00	Housing
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 7,728,836.00</b>	

### Managing the Process

1. Identify the lead agency, entity, and agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.
2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.
3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to enhance coordination between public and private housing, health, and social service agencies.

#### Program Year 1 Action Plan Managing the Process response:

1. The Reading Community Development Department has been designated as the lead agency responsible for overseeing the development of the Consolidated Plan. The primary programs administered by the Department are the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the Federal Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, and the Federal Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program
2. and 3. During the preparation of the five year Consolidated Planning process public service providers were contacted informing each of the opportunity to apply for funds, to offer comment on the five year needs of the community and to attend a public hearing to discuss the needs of the County that could be met with federal funding.

The public hearing was advertised in the local newspaper of general circulation, the Reading Eagle.

The needs within the community were identified through a series of interviews and surveys as well as on the results of the Fair Housing Analysis Update, Human Services Needs Study and the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness.

During a 30 day review period, the Strategic Plan and Annual Plan were reviewed by the Mayor and City Council. Before submission to HUD and after the incorporation of any comments received, City Council will authorize adoption of the Plan.

During the development of the five year Consolidated Plan, the following groups were interviewed. These groups represent the special populations whose needs were considered in this Strategic Plan.

**Children:**

Berks County Children and Youth Agency

**Elderly persons:**

Encore (formerly the Area Agency on Aging)

**Racial and Ethnic Minority Representative:**

Hispanic Center

**Persons with disabilities:**

County Office of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MH/MR)

Center for Independent Living - Physical disabilities

Council on Chemical Abuse (COCA)

Abilities in Motion - Persons with developmental disabilities

Service Access and Management, Inc

Berks Counseling Center

Mental Health Association

**Persons with HIV/AIDS and their families:**

Co-County Wellnes Center/Berks AIDS Network

**Homeless Persons:**

Berks Coalition to End Homelessness

**Victims of Domestic Violence:**

Berks Women in Crisis

**Veterans:**

Berks County Department of Veterans Affairs

**Affordable Housing:**

Reading-Berks Habitat for Humanity

Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.

**Other:**

Reading Housing Authority

Berks County Housing Authority

Board of Realtor's

Mid - Penn Legal

BCBS/Berks Connections

The City's Community Development Department has been assigned the task of carrying out the Consolidated Plan for the City. When appropriate, the C.D.

## City of Reading, Pennsylvania

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Department will work with non-profit organizations, and public institutions to implement the Plan.

Neighborhood Housing Services of Reading, Inc. (NHS) has been certified as a CHDO for the City and the County. The agency provides a full range of housing services (from education, financing, single family development, to community organizing). Its subsidiary, Housing Development Corporation of Berks County, is engaged in affordable housing development.

Another CHDO for the City of Reading is the Berks Housing Development Partnership formed by the Reading Housing Authority. The Partnership will create new low/mod housing in the City of Reading.

The City will continue to remain open to partnerships with other groups, however, the technical complexity of the development process, operating and start up costs, resource availability and the experience necessary to operate a non-profit housing corporation will inevitably limit the number of potential partners to those who are the most qualified. The City will encourage non-profit organizations who have little or no experience in housing development to "partner" with one of the more experienced development organizations.

### **Citizen Participation**

1. Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.
2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.
3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.
4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.

\*Please note that Citizen Comments and Responses may be included as additional files within the CPMP Tool.

#### Program Year 1 Action Plan Citizen Participation response:

1.
  - a. Notification

An ad was placed in the *Reading Eagle* announcing the hearing. The ad was run on February 8<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

- b. Public Hearings

The City held two public hearings per year to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. These hearings were held at two different stages of the program planning process.

- 1) Initial Public Hearing
-

The purpose of this initial hearing is to obtain the views of citizens and organizations regarding overall community development and housing needs. Since it also includes specific needs for the Annual Plan, discussion of proposed activities is encouraged. Information on the estimated amount of funding that will benefit persons of low and moderate income and a review of program performance in the past year are incorporated. This hearing was held on February 29, 2008.

The hearing was broadcast on BCTV, a local community television station, for later re-broadcast. In this manner a wider-range of people can obtain information on the process.

This hearing is conducted jointly by the County Community Development Office and the City of Reading Office of Community Development.

2) Second Public Hearing

A second hearing was held on October 30, 2008. The purpose of this hearing was to provide citizens an opportunity to comment on the Strategic Plan and the proposed 2009 Action Plan. A summary of the Plan and proposed activities was published. The notice appeared in the non-legal section of papers of the *Reading Eagle* on September 26, 2008 which is thirty (30) calendar days prior to the adoption of the Strategic Plan and provided locations at which the Plan was made available for public review.

This hearing was conducted by the Berks County Community Development Office and the City of Reading Community Development Office.

c. Acceptance of Written Comments, Proposals, or Recommendations

All Citizens and Organizations within Berks County were provided with an opportunity to submit comments, proposals, or recommendations on the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan for 2009.

During the program year, any written statements received will receive a written response no later than fifteen (15) working days from the date of receipt, setting forth the action taken or to be taken with respect to the comment, proposal, or recommendation. Written statements that are intended to suggest modifications to the application can only be considered if they are received by the end of the thirty (30) day review period on the draft AP.

2. None.

3. The City has opportunities for regular dialogue with a wide-range of community groups. These groups have regular access to representatives of the City including the Mayor. The City's participation in the HUD programs are widely and regularly advertised and discussed in public forums. Many local organizations participate in the funding programs as subrecipients or through the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness and similar organizations. These forums provide additional opportunity to learn about the federal funding programs.

4. None.

### **Institutional Structure**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to develop institutional structure.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Institutional Structure response:

1. The City's Community Development Department has been assigned the task of carrying out the Consolidated Plan for the City. When appropriate, the C.D. Department will work with non-profit organizations, and public institutions to implement the Plan.

Neighborhood Housing Services of Reading, Inc. (NHS) has been certified as a CHDO for the City and the County. The agency provides a full range of housing services (from education, financing, single family development, to community organizing). Its subsidiary, Housing Development Corporation of Berks County, is engaged in affordable housing development.

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The City will continue to remain open to partnerships with other groups, however, the technical complexity of the development process, operating and start up costs, resource availability and the experience necessary to operate a non-profit housing corporation will inevitably limit the number of potential partners to those who are the most qualified. The City will encourage non-profit organizations that have little or no experience in housing development to "partner" with one of the more experienced development organizations.

### **Monitoring**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Monitoring response:

Performance monitoring is an important component in the long-term success of the federal grants programs. It helps to ensure that the recipients of federal funds meet the purposes of the appropriate legislation and regulations, and that funds are disbursed in a timely fashion.

The three programs for which the City enter into contracts with HUD are the HOME Program, the CDBG Program, and the ESG Program. Monitoring will occur in accordance with these agreements, the certifications the City signs and the regulations for these programs. Monitoring responsibility for projects funded by the City will continue to be assigned to the City's Community Development Department.

The City exercises a high degree of control over the projects and activities of subrecipients of the HOME, CDBG and ESG Program. Therefore, minimum monitoring procedures consist of day to day contact either by telephone or in person, copies of all project document in City files, written documentation of expenditures for reimbursement of costs by the City and the submission of written progress reports. For the ESG Program, the City conducts on-site monitoring at least once during the term of the subrecipient agreement. For the CDBG Program, the City select a representative sample of completed projects for on-site monitoring. For the HOME Program, the City follows the schedule at 24 CFR Part 92.504(e) for on-site monitoring.

The City monitoring standards and procedures ensure that statutory and regulatory requirements are being met and that information submitted to HUD is correct and complete.

#### Performance Measurement Plan

In accordance with HUD's Community Planning and Development Notice 03-09, the City developed a Performance Measurement System designed to measure both the productivity and impact of the Community Development Block Grant Program. In accordance with the HUD Training Manual and Guidebook *Community Planning and Development Outcome Performance Measurement Framework*, the City of Reading has developed the following:

For each activity, HUD requires that an Objective and an Outcome as per the new guidelines, are identified.

#### Objectives

Creating Suitable Living Environments

Providing Decent Affordable Housing

Creating Economic Opportunities

#### Outcomes

Availability/ Accessibility

Affordability

Sustainability

The combination of these creates an Outcome Statement for each activity. The Outcome Statement is also indicated on the individual Project Activity forms under Proposed Outcome. Additionally, the City will indicate the Specific Outcome Indicators that are required to be reported to HUD for each activity.

### **Lead-based Paint**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing lead-based paint hazards in order to increase the inventory of lead-safe housing available to extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families, and how the plan for the reduction of lead-based hazards is related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Lead-based Paint response:

Estimated Number of Housing Units that Contain Lead-Based Paint

HUD has made the elimination of housing units containing lead-based paint a priority. The poisoning of children from contact with lead based paint has been recognized as a major public health problem by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). According to the CDC, lead is the number one environmental health hazard to American children. It is estimated that 10-15% of all preschoolers in the United States are affected. Lead poisoning causes IQ reductions; reading and learning disabilities; decreased attention span; hyperactivity and aggressive behavior. Lead-based paint was banned from residential paint in 1978. All homes built prior to that time may contain lead-based paint.

Lead exposure may occur from the dust in the air. It is now known that eating paint chips is not the cause of lead poisoning in young children. When a surface painted with lead-based paint begins to deteriorate, lead dust is produced. Climbing a stair tread or the wind blowing through an open window will cause dust to circulate dangerously through a room.

Blood lead level testing is needed to determine if a child has been exposed to lead-based paint. Levels in excess of 10u/dl are considered harmful. Levels over 20u/dl are considered extremely harmful.

The Pennsylvania Lead Elimination Plan notes that children residing in homes built prior to 1978, whose families receive Medicaid, have a history of anemia and have less than 12 years of education are particularly at risk. In 2005, the Pennsylvania Department of Health records report that 135 children in Berks County had an elevated blood lead level. It is not known how many of these children lived in Reading.

Most of the factors that contribute to the prevalence of lead-based paint poisoning in housing can be quantified. According to the Report on the National Lead-based Paint in Housing, there are no statistically significant differences in the prevalence of lead-based paint by type of housing, market value of the home, cost of housing, household income or geographic region. By allying estimated national percentages of housing with lead-based paint to the housing stock figures from the 2000 Census, we can estimate the number of homes with lead-based paint.

Estimated Units with Lead Based Paint – City of Reading

Construction Year	Housing Units	Estimated Number of Housing with Lead-Based Paint	
		Units	Percent
1960-1979	4,571	2,834	62%
1940-1959	4,791	3,832	80%
Pre-1940	24,014	21,613	90%
Total:	34,276	28,279	63%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Based on these estimates, 28,279 homes in the City of Reading have lead based paint that present a potential hazard. However, the number of these homes with children under age 6 is unknown.

**Estimated Number of Housing Units that Potentially Contain Lead-Based Paint by Income Category**

CHAS Data 2000 contains information about units affordable to low income households. The information only identifies total units and units constructed before 1970. The information does not provide a further break down of units by decade built.

Using data provided by HUD, it is also possible to approximate the number of housing units that may contain lead based paint and that are occupied by LMI households. The significance of this data is that LMI owner households who are cost burdened may not have the resources to abate lead based paint in their homes. LMI renter households may not even be aware that their leased units contain lead based paint, or they may be hesitant to ask their landlord to abate the problem for fear of being evicted or having their rent increased. The following tables provide an estimate of the number of renter and owner housing units by level of affordability (0 - 80% MFI); by tenure, and the number of bedrooms. This data is matched against the number of units built before 1970 to estimate the number of units that potentially contain lead-based paint.

**Number of Units by Age, Tenure, and Affordability**

Housing Units by Affordability	Renter Units by Number of Bedrooms				Owner Units by Number of Bedrooms			
	0-1	2	3+	Total	0-1	2	3+	Total
<b>0-&lt;30% of MFI</b>								
Occupied Units	1,995	915	935	3,845	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Built Prior to 1970	1,254	754	875	2,883	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>30-&lt;50% of MFI</b>								
Occupied Units	3,500	2,360	2,025	7,885	479	1,840	10,740	13,059
Built Prior to 1970	2,951	2,115	1,875	6,940	440	1,726	10,353	12,519
<b>50-&lt;80% of MFI</b>								
Occupied Units	1,155	890	730	2,775	87	368	1,095	1,550
Built Prior to 1970	936	610	645	2,191	87	270	815	1,172
<b>Total Units Built Prior to 1970</b>	<b>5,140</b>	<b>3,478</b>	<b>3,396</b>	<b>12,014</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>1,996</b>	<b>11,168</b>	<b>13,691</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; U. S. Dept. of HUD, SOCDS Data

The following analysis is based on the table above:

**0 - 30% MFI:**

HUD estimated that 2,883 rental units were occupied by extremely low income households were built prior to 1970. This represents 74% of the housing stock affordable to households with incomes of less than 30% of the MFI.

**30-50% MFI:**

6,940 units constructed prior to 1970 were identified as affordable to households with incomes between 30-50% of the MFI, which represents 88% of the stock affordable to households with incomes between 30-50% MFI.

**50-80% MFI:**

A total of 2,191 units were identified as constructed prior to 1970 and occupied by households with incomes between 50-80% of the MFI. This represents 78% of the housing stock affordable to households with incomes between 50-80% of MFI.

Altogether, 12,014 rental units were occupied by LMI households in 2000 and built prior to 1970. This was equivalent to 82% of the total 2000 housing stock for those between 0 - 80% MFI.

For owner-occupied units, a total of 13,691 units were identified as occupied by and affordable to LMI households and built prior to 1970.

The above analysis was conducted in order to estimate the number of units occupied by households earning between 0 - 80% of MFI that might contain lead-based paint. Given the limited data available to correlate income by age of housing stock, the HUD CHAS data provided a reasonable estimate of the number of housing units constructed prior to 1970 as well as the number of units occupied by income level in Berks County and the City of Reading. The data highlights the high probability that those with 0 - 80% MFI are much more likely to occupy units that were built before 1970, thus were more likely to have higher exposure levels to lead-based paint.

#### Actions Being Taken to Reduce Lead-Based Paint

The lead based paint rules at 24 CFR Part 35, went into effect in 2002. The City's strategy to reduce the hazards presented by units which contain lead-based paint includes:

- improved educational efforts to inform households of the hazards of lead-based paint
- examination of existing municipal codes and encouragement of housing codes which promote lead abatement
- seeking other sources of federal funding to assist low-income homeowners to abate lead-based paint hazards when a child is identified with an Elevated Blood Lead Level.
- Abate lead hazards in vacant units being rehabilitated for occupancy.

## HOUSING

### Specific Housing Objectives

\*Please also refer to the Housing Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve during the next year.
2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Specific Objectives response:

#### Decent Housing

#### New housing construction:

- Habitat For Humanity – Construction of four new housing units for low mod households. Outcome - Availability/Accessibility

Home buyer assistance for low mod households:

- NHS home ownership assistance – Down payment and closing costs assistance for 10 low mod households. Objective – Affordability.

Rehabilitation of existing housing units:

- NHS CHDO (set aside funding) – Acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale of one housing unit to a low mod household. Outcome - Availability/Accessibility.
- NHS Major System Program – Housing rehabilitation for 15 owner occupied elderly person housing units. Outcome – Availability/Accessibility.
- Reading Revitalization - Acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale of 22 housing units to low mod households. Outcome - Availability/Accessibility.
- Residential Façade Improvement - Housing rehabilitation for ten housing units. Outcome – Sustainability.

Fair Housing assistance:

- Human Relations Commission – Fair housing discrimination education and enforcement program. The service area is city wide and contains 79,073 persons. Outcome - Availability/Accessibility.

2. Utilization of Resources

The sources of funds that may be available to address each of the objectives stated above is shown on the matrix below:

Resources Potentially Available for Housing Objectives

	Rehabilitation of housing stock	Development – Owner occupied	Development – Rental Properties	Homebuyer Assistance
CDBG	X	X	X	X
HOME	X	X	X	X
Act 137 Affordable Housing Trust Fund	X	X	X	
Penn HOMES			X	
LIHTC			X	
NRI – PHFA	X	X		X
HRA – DCED	X	X	X	
LCHA – Sec 8				X
Public Housing CFP	X			

The Federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 includes \$4 billion of grant funds for the Emergency Assistance for the Redevelopment of Abandoned and Foreclosed Homes. The legislation provides for the following uses:

1. Establish financing mechanisms for purchase and redevelopment of foreclosed upon residential properties;
2. Purchase and rehabilitate abandoned or foreclosed upon residential properties, for rent, sale or redevelopment;
3. Establish land banks for homes that have been foreclosed upon;
4. Demolish blighted structures;
5. Redevelop demolished or vacant properties.

If the City receives funding it will use the funds to provide for neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment of vacant properties in support of the above goals.

### Needs of Public Housing

1. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake during the next year to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership.
2. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation during the next year.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Public Housing Strategy response:

#### 1. Maintenance of Housing and Suitable living environment

The Reading Housing Authority provides public housing in Reading. The Authority meets the HUD guidelines for income targeting as a means of serving the lower income residents of the City. The Reading Housing Authority uses work and education preferences for public housing and for Section 8 Vouchers.

The Reading Housing Authority maintains the public housing units on an on-going basis utilizing the Capital Fund Program. Housing units are in very good condition. Implementation of the HUD required Asset Management Plans is underway.

#### Public Housing Resident Participation

The Reading Housing Authority utilizes the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) for the preparation of the Annual Plan and Capital Funds budget. The Reading Housing Authority has a well developed Resident Advisory Board process and on-going tenant committees in each development. These committee interact regularly with management to initiate and review capital fund improvements. The Resident Services Department provides an array of services for residents.

City of Reading, Pennsylvania

Program	Description	Target Population
Daily Living Programs	Chore Services: Reading Housing Authority contracts with Rhyno Cleaning Company to provide daily living services to residents of the agency's seven developments who do not qualify for existing services. Services are based upon resident need with a concentration in housekeeping issues that affect issues of lease compliance.	Elders, Persons with disabilities
	Furniture "Bank": In effort to meet the need for household furnishings, Resident Services coordinates the redistribution of "gently worn" furniture and household items within the high-rise settings.	Elders, Persons with disabilities
	Reasonable Accommodations are provided in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Reading Housing Authority will modify policies, rules, and procedures, or make a structural change to a common area or dwelling, in order to accommodate persons with disabilities so that such individuals can have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the housing program. Residents are assisted as needed with the application and review process.	Persons with disabilities
	Community Policing Program: Reading Housing Authority contracts with Reading Police Department to provide police officers who cover each public housing development. Officers are charged with balancing intensive, development-dedicated investigation and patrol with outreach events such as general community meetings, specialized anti-crime campaigns and youth sports rallies.	Individuals, Families, Elders, Persons with disabilities
Educational and Economic Self-Sufficiency Programs	Holiday Basket Program: In cooperation with the Salvation Army, Resident Services provides an opportunity for all elder and disabled residents of Reading Housing Authority to sign up for and receive a holiday food basket. Sign-ups are conducted in November, and baskets are delivered in December to residents in the seven public housing community spaces.	Elders, Persons with disabilities
	Scholarship Program: In memory of long-time board member Stokes Stitt, Reading Housing Authority offers a scholarship program to residents of Oakbrook and Glenside Homes. Two scholarships, each a maximum of \$8,000, are awarded on a competitive basis. Information and applications for additional housing-based scholarships are offered.	Individuals
Resident Initiatives	Resident Councils function as the 'united voice' for each public housing development. Council membership is open to all residents of the respective development. Monthly general meetings are held in each location, with agenda items focused primarily upon housing-based issues and planning for recreational functions. Duly elected council officers chair monthly meetings, manage council finances, record meeting minutes and represent the membership at large in agency policy and procedures. Staff attend monthly general meetings, monthly executive planning meetings, committee meetings as appropriate, and provide ongoing support and assistance. The Citywide Resident Council is comprised of the elected officers of each public housing development.	Individuals, Families, Elders, Persons with disabilities
	Resident Advisory Boards are instrumental in assisting public housing authorities in the annual planning process for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Citywide Resident Council functions as the agency's RAB. Reading Housing Authority supports resident advisory board input and influence by orchestrating meetings for member contribution. Board membership includes those duly elected officers of the respective public housing communities, representative(s) from the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and the Resident Commissioner to the agency Board of Directors. During the annual planning process, members review the proposed agency budget for the upcoming fiscal year and review, comment upon and propose policy changes and additions.	Individuals, Families, Elders, Persons with disabilities

City of Reading, Pennsylvania

<p>Health and Wellness Programs</p>	<p>Wellness Program: Reading Housing Authority contracts with Berks Visiting Nurse Association to provide this comprehensive program that encompasses all health and wellness programs provided in the agency's five highrises. Services are delivered once per week at each site and include individual wellness counseling, preventative screenings and coordination with community medical providers. Group education programs are conducted through cooperative planning with educational institutions. Beginning in 2008, this initiative will be expanded to include Oakbrook Homes.</p>	<p>Elders, Persons with disabilities</p>
	<p>90+ Birthday Club: Birthday wishes are delivered to those ages 90+ in each public housing development, providing an opportunity for service coordination follow-up of the organization's frailest residents.</p>	<p>Elders</p>
	<p>Food Pantries: Through collaboration with the Greater Berks Food Bank, pantry services are delivered on-site in each public housing development. In five elder/disabled sites, services have expanded to meet the needs of residents age 60+. Through efforts of Christ Lutheran Church volunteers, home deliveries are provided to residents of Hensler Homes who may not otherwise be able to utilize the program. RHA partners with the Seventh Day Adventist Church to bring this service to residents of Oakbrook Homes. In 5 sites, programs are managed as a function of the respective resident council.</p>	<p>Elders, Persons with disabilities</p>
<p>Social and Recreational Programs</p>	<p>Senior Community Center: Social, educational and health-related programming, along with an afternoon meal, is offered at Kennedy Towers. The Daniel Torres Hispanic Center, under contract with Berks County Office of Aging, performs center management. The intended audience for this program is elder residents of Kennedy Towers and neighboring communities, but is delivered to younger persons with disabilities on a case-specific basis.</p>	<p>Elders, Persons with disabilities</p>
	<p>Summer Picnics: In effort to increase resident participation and involvement in agency policy, summer picnics are sponsored one per year and followed by the monthly Board of Directors meeting at each agency high-rise.</p>	<p>Elders, Persons with disabilities</p>
	<p>Summer Camp: Reading Housing Authority sponsors daytime camping activities for youth of Oakbrook and Glenside Homes through a contract with the YMCA of Reading and Berks County. Students who have "graduated" from this camping program receive an opportunity to return in a special "counselors-in-training" program that includes a stipend for participation.</p>	<p>Youth</p>
	<p>Boys and Girls Clubs: Through a contract with Olivet Boys &amp; Girls Club, after-school and summer programs are delivered Monday - Saturday in Oakbrook and Glenside Homes targeting community youth. While social in nature, activities focus upon a range of needs of young persons, including physical recreation, nutrition and substance abuse prevention. Assistance with homework and development of computer literacy skills are highlighted.</p>	<p>Youth</p>
<p>Service Coordination</p>	<p>Service coordination includes all components of individualized services provided to residents of Reading Housing Authority's public housing developments. Services are primarily social casework in nature, and include the provision of direct service, information and referral, crisis intervention, mediation, and internal and external advocacy.</p>	<p>Individuals, Families, Elders, Persons with disabilities</p>
<p>Home Ownership Program</p>	<p>A Homeownership Program was initiated in 1995 to provide home ownership opportunities to individuals and families that are eligible for the public housing program. Participants receive budget counseling and homeownership preparedness counseling from BCAP. To date, 44 of the 50 homes have been sold, 4 are occupied by program participants and two are available for those wishing to enroll in the program.</p>	<p>Individuals &amp; Families</p>

Agency standing with HUD

The Reading Housing Authority is not a troubled agency.

## **Barriers to Affordable Housing**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to remove barriers to affordable housing.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Barriers to Affordable Housing response:

### **1. Public Policy**

The City of Reading in particular has a ready supply of affordable housing. Housing is particularly inexpensive in Berks County and Reading compared to neighboring municipalities and Counties. The low cost of the housing though is, at least in part, tied to several negative factors. Further exacerbating the problem is that the depressed housing market suppresses new housing development. The impediments to housing are:

- Older housing stock that requires extensive modernization and rehabilitation.
- Shrinking state and federal funding sources to subsidize affordable housing projects and rehabilitation.
- The 2000 Comprehensive Plan for Reading cites density as a housing problem. Lack of parking, small yards, limited open space and privacy negatively impact housing.
- The 2000 Comprehensive Plan for Reading states that the City accommodates a disproportionate share of the county's low income persons and special needs housing. The effect is to depress the tax base which results in a higher mil rate than surrounding municipalities.
- Developers frequently cite the problems of working through zoning issues in most as a cost factor that impedes development.

Strategy to remove or ameliorate negative effects of public policies

The Berks County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Reading Comprehensive Plan each cite objectives for the development of decent affordable housing:

- Encourage government officials to revise their local zoning ordinances to reflect more opportunities for affordable housing development. Using cost-benefit analyses, illustrate how family housing and clustered single family development can be more cost-effective to local elected officials. Encourage local units of government to revise their ordinances to be consistent with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan
  - Developers identified the insufficient supply of land zoned for multi-family housing as one of the factors driving up the cost of land acquisition and development. Lack of infrastructure is often the reason for limited multi-family zoning. Outreach initiatives focused on educating public officials and planning commissions on the benefits of affordable housing may encourage the rezoning of more land to multi-family zoning designations, as well as eliminate unnecessary and excessive development standards for multi-family housing.
  - Educate and inform owners of tax-credit development and County assessors about Act 39 of 2003 (HB 1854), a new law that instructs assessors to consider rent restrictions, affordability restrictions, and the income approach to value
-

rather than comparable sales approach to value, when assessing affordable housing developments

- Encourage "streamlined" approaches to obtain permits and funding for affordable housing projects.
- Active and productive nonprofit housing developers need ready access to capital in order to finance the front-end soft costs associated with new development. Utilizing a lesser-restrictive source of financing for this (such as Act 137 Housing Trust Fund resources) would enable nonprofits to seek out more development opportunities and fully investigate the financial feasibility of potential projects early on.
- Encourage land use policies that diversify the affordable housing stock to address needs of smaller families, people with disabilities needing supportive housing, and seniors; encourage multi-use, residential development in commercial structures in business zones; and encourage mixed use development. Mixed use developments will contain a mix of stores, restaurants, professional offices that would be appropriate settings for low to moderate-income housing at an increased density.
- Support the adoption of building codes that facilitate the rehabilitation of existing homes.
- Encourage the establishment of new residential uses and/or neighborhoods at appropriate locations including upper-story reuse.

### **HOME/ American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI)**

1. Describe other forms of investment not described in § 92.205(b).
2. If the participating jurisdiction (PJ) will use HOME or ADDI funds for homebuyers, it must state the guidelines for resale or recapture, as required in § 92.254 of the HOME rule.
3. If the PJ will use HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is that is being rehabilitated with HOME funds, it must state its refinancing guidelines required under § 92.206(b). The guidelines shall describe the conditions under which the PJ will refinance existing debt. At a minimum these guidelines must:
  - a. Demonstrate that rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity and ensure that this requirement is met by establishing a minimum level of rehabilitation per unit or a required ratio between rehabilitation and refinancing.
  - b. Require a review of management practices to demonstrate that disinvestments in the property has not occurred; that the long-term needs of the project can be met; and that the feasibility of serving the targeted population over an extended affordability period can be demonstrated.
  - c. State whether the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, create additional affordable units, or both.
  - d. Specify the required period of affordability, whether it is the minimum 15 years or longer.
  - e. Specify whether the investment of HOME funds may be jurisdiction-wide or limited to a specific geographic area, such as a neighborhood identified in a neighborhood revitalization strategy under 24 CFR 91.215(e)(2) or a Federally designated Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community.

- f. State that HOME funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any federal program, including CDBG.
4. If the PJ is going to receive American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI) funds, please complete the following narratives:
  - a. Describe the planned use of the ADDI funds.
  - b. Describe the PJ's plan for conducting targeted outreach to residents and tenants of public housing and manufactured housing and to other families assisted by public housing agencies, for the purposes of ensuring that the ADDI funds are used to provide down payment assistance for such residents, tenants, and families.
  - c. Describe the actions to be taken to ensure the suitability of families receiving ADDI funds to undertake and maintain homeownership, such as provision of housing counseling to homebuyers.

Program Year 1 Action Plan HOME/ADDI response:

1. No other forms of investment, outside the scope of 92.205 (b) are planned to be used at this time. The following is a breakdown of the utilization of resources by the City of Reading in conjunction with the HOME Program. Rehabilitation of the housing stock is funded through: CDBG, HOME, Act 137 Affordable Housing Trust Fund, NRI-PHFA, NRA-DCED as well as Public Housing CFP. Funding for the Development of owner occupied units derive from the following sources: CDBG, HOME, ACT 137 Affordable Housing Trust Fund, NRI-PHFA and NRA-DCED. Development Rental Properties are funded through CDBG, HOME, Act 137 Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Penn Homes, LIHTC and through NRA-DCED. The City's Homebuyer Assistance program is funded through the following channels: CDBG, HOME, NRI-DCED and LCHA-Section 8.
2. The City of Reading currently uses the resale method where properties and units are presumed and deemed affordable. The guidelines are consistent with section §92.254. (See the attached study by OCR-Inc.)
3. No funds are planned to be utilized to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is that is being rehabilitated with HOME funds.
4. N/A

## HOMELESS

### Specific Homeless Prevention Elements

\*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Sources of Funds—Identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.
2. Homelessness—In a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.
3. Chronic homelessness—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.
4. Homelessness Prevention—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.
5. Discharge Coordination Policy—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.

Program Year 1 Action Plan Special Needs response:

1. The city will utilize the Emergency Shelter Grant funds to support the Opportunity House to provide emergency shelter services. Funds will be used for supportive services and operations.
2. The City of Reading's homeless priorities revolve around a concentrated effort of both prevention of intervention. The Berks Coalition to End Homelessness places an emphasis on Chronic Homelessness and homeless families who are more episodically homeless. The locally developed plan to end homelessness details priorities. As mentioned, the priority needs relate to the strategic Plan in that they center on the principles of prevention and intervention. The Prevention section consists of the following four (4) methods: Emergency prevention: provides emergency services to percent loss of housing. Systems prevention: examine and change institutional policies and regulations that adversely impact housing. Outreach: identify Street homeless and at risk persons and families. The final prevention method consists of services and maximizing the utilization of mainstream resources. The intervention strategy also consists of four (4) components, they are: (1) Rapid Re-housing which is identified in The Housing First Model. (2) Supportive transitional housing for chemically dependent homeless individuals. (3) The expansion of permanent housing revolving around the development of safe and affordable housing and finally (4) Income: Job training and services accessible for homeless individuals. Reading and Berks County seek to reduce the number of homeless families/persons in Emergency shelters by 5% in the coming year (25% over five years).

3. The Berks Coalition to End Homelessness places a high priority on homeless families and individuals including those who are chronically homeless. Shelter, transitional and permanent supportive housing are each valuable components to the overall Continuum of Care and there are unmet needs for both transitional and permanent housing. Between February 1st, 2006 and January 31st, 2008, there was an increase of 34 beds for chronically homeless individuals. There were new beds created at Easy Does It and Opportunity House. In 2008, plus Care will fund and additional 24 beds. Specific actions identified in the Continuum of Care include:

- Create new PH beds for chronically homeless persons, increase percentage of homeless person staying in permanent housing over six months to at least 71%.
- Increase percentage of homeless persons moving from temporary housing to permanent housing to at least 61.5%.
- Increase percentage of homeless persons employed at exit to at least 18% and ensure that the Continuum of Care has a fully functional HMIS system.

4. Homeless prevention is based on working with mainstream resources to stop the flow of people to homelessness. The Continuum of Care application identified one implementation strategy that would significantly decrease the homeless population. The Plan to End Homelessness identified systems prevention strategies to pursue over the longer term:

- a. Work with Berks County Prison officials to develop adequate facilities for on-site community involvement
- b. Coordinate activities of County Prison, County Parole office, State Parole office and community providers
- c. Provide post-release housing assistance and information to prisoners re-entering community.
- d. Work with State mental health officials on community re-integration programs and funding.
- e. Coordinate planning with local hospitals on discharge planning for homeless persons
- f. Encourage youth in foster care to take advantage of transitional and preparatory programs that prevent homelessness.

5. The Continuum of Care applications provides an overview of the state of the discharge planning efforts in Berks County. The components consist of the following elements: Foster Care, Health Care, Mental Health and Corrections. Foster Care: Formal Protocol Finalized - Berks County Department of Children and Youth Services (CYS) provides transitional living services for youth in foster care and those in out-of-county placement foster care returning to Berks County. Youth are to be screened for risk of becoming homeless and extended care provided until they are able to support themselves. Youth are not discharged to homeless shelters or facilities. CoC and CYS have implemented this policy that is understood and agreed upon by both parties. Health Care: Reading and St. Joseph's Hospitals are the primary health institutions in the county. No protocol has been finalized. We are working with the hospitals to identify homeless individuals and to find appropriate housing placement. Mental Health: Persons hospitalized locally and at the state facility in Wernersville receive discharge planning from the Berks County Office of Mental Health and Retardation. Community treatment and housing assistance are provided to ensure a safe return to the community. Persons are not returned to the community through the homeless shelters or housing facilities supported by McKinney funds. The CoC and institutions providing treatment have agreed to and understand this protocol. Corrections: Berks Connections/Pre-Trial Services, in cooperation with Berks County





















































Actual Units

2024/01/01



Actual Units

2023

Actual Units



















































