

SECTION 3 – HOUSING

Specific Housing Objectives

In 2005, Lancaster County will provide financial and technical assistance for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation activities; rental housing rehabilitation and new construction activities; and for homebuyer assistance activities. It is anticipated that 125-140 households will receive assistance to rehabilitate their home; that 30-35 households will receive assistance to purchase a home; and that 35-40 new apartments will be created and 35-40 apartments will be rehabilitated. In addition to the CDBG and HOME funds to be provided by the County for these activities, funding will be provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Federal Home Loan Bank, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, private lending institutions and investors, and from Lancaster County through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (PA Act 137).

Needs of Public Housing

There are no public housing units in Lancaster County.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

The Consolidated Plan includes a discussion of development issues facing Lancaster County, which have resulted from the high levels of growth experienced during the 1990's. Within an environment marked by opposition against new development of almost any kind, the Lancaster County Commissioners authorized the Lancaster County Planning Commission (LCPC) to complete a County Growth Management Plan, identifying how and where growth can be accommodated. Managed growth is essential for local communities to meet the needs of residents for jobs, affordable housing, and transportation. A major goal of the Growth Management Plan is to direct growth to existing urban areas, and away from the County's agricultural and resource lands.

The Growth Management Plan was adopted by the Lancaster County Commissioners in October of 1994 and was updated in 1997. Its framework is based on cooperative relationships with local government, balancing local versus regional needs.

During 1999, the Lancaster County Commissioners adopted an update to the Policy Plan for the Comprehensive Plan. To date, the Lancaster County Planning Commission has facilitated the adoption of 25 Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs). In total, 25 of 26 targeted communities have adopted UGBs in Lancaster County. Nine (9) of these 25

municipalities also have Village Grown Boundaries (VGBs). Four municipalities have VGBs only.

The County's limited land use powers under the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code continue to limit the County's ability to deal effectively with land use matters that affect the provision of housing. The County planning staff continues to consult with municipalities as they update their comprehensive plans, zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances to consider the recommendations included in the County's Housing Plan, adopted in May of 1995.

The County Housing Plan identifies current and projected housing needs for:

- specific geographic areas,
- specific impediments to the provision of housing in those areas, and
- actions that need to be taken to remove those impediments.

A full copy of the current Lancaster County Housing Plan is available at the offices of the Redevelopment Authority, the Lancaster County Planning Commission and other local municipal offices.

In September 2003, the Lancaster County Planning Commission appointed representatives of a broad range of stakeholder groups involved in housing matters to serve on a Steering Committee that will oversee the update to the Housing Plan Element of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan. This Committee, led by Chair Allan Granger, has been charged with preparing an update to the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan to identify housing needs through 2030, in order to ensure housing needs will be met for all income groups in a manner that coincides with the smart growth provisions of the County's Comprehensive Plan and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code. This plan will also analyze certain barriers to affordable housing such as zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances.

The Housing Steering Committee has been meeting monthly with the charge to review recommendations of the Housing Element adopted in May 1995, analyze more recent data, engage public review and comments, and prepare a strategy that addresses the housing needs of the County through 2030.

In June 2004, the County Board of Commissioners contracted with a consultant team that will lead the Committee through completion of a final update by June, 2005. This team, led by ACP Visioning and Planning, Ltd. of New York, New York, also includes Thomas Comitta Associates of West Chester, Pa and Zimmerman/Volk Associates of

Clinton, New Jersey. All three firms have extensive experience in planning and housing, and all three have experience working in Lancaster County. This team is assisting the committee with a Public Participation process that will provide opportunities for individuals, developers, financial institutions, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to provide input and share information about housing issues in Lancaster County. In late 2004, this process is holding meetings throughout the County to obtain input on the issue of housing, including affordable housing.

The Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority, in partnership with the City of Lancaster, completed an updated joint *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing*. The County Commissioners adopted the plan on July 15, 1998, and the City of Lancaster approved the plan on July 28, 1998. A Fair Housing Action Committee, comprised of many diverse organizations, was formed in 1998 to implement many of the recommendations in the *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing*. The Human Relations Commission's Fair Housing Program has been allocated \$45,000 to:

- enforce fair housing rights,
- provide information,
- continue its testing program, and
- coordinate the activities of the Fair Housing Action Committee.

In 2005 the Fair Housing Program will expand its education and outreach services in the following ways:

- Provide landlord/tenant information to college campuses throughout Lancaster County. The Fair Housing Specialist will also provide these campuses with copies of the Landlord/Tenant Rights and Responsibilities Booklet.
- Provide copies of the Landlord/Tenant booklet to all District Justices in Lancaster County.
- Provide copies of the Landlord/Tenant booklet to all libraries in the County.
- Conduct an ongoing media campaign, focusing on familial status, race and disability protected classes. This media campaign will take the form of participating in family oriented activities such as local fairs. The Fair Housing Program is also looking into the feasibility of working with an advertising agency to expand this effort.
- Participate in the regional predatory lending taskforce headed by the South Central Assembly for Effective Governance. The Fair Housing Program is working in cooperation with other local agencies to educate potential and existing homeowners that are either purchasing or refinancing their home about predatory lending. The Fair Housing Program will target local churches in low income

neighborhoods and organizations serving senior citizens for predatory lending presentations.

The Fair Housing Action Committee has three subcommittees that address the action steps listed in the *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing*:

- public education,
- government education, and
- fair lending practices.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and the American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI)

Use of HOME/ADDI funds

Lancaster County will utilize HOME funds in 2005 primarily for the new construction of rental housing units. Lancaster County provides up to \$25,000 per HOME-assisted rental unit. HOME funding is generally combined with funding from the Pennsylvania Housing Financing Agency through the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. Matching funds are provided to these projects with money the County receives through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (PA Act 137).

HOME funds will not be used to refinance existing debt for multi-family housing being rehabilitated with HOME funds.

Up to \$30,000 in HOME funds will be made available to support the operational costs of County-certified Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and 15% of the amount of HOME funds received will be reserved for rental housing projects to be owned, developed or sponsored by CHDOs.

ADDI funds will be utilized to provide assistance for down-payment, closing costs and rehabilitation costs for first-time homebuyers in accordance with the American Dream Downpayment Assistance Act. ADDI funds will be provided only to households participating in the Section 8 Homeownership Program operated by the Lancaster County Housing Authority. To be eligible to receive ADDI funds, the household must be enrolled in the Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency Program and must successfully complete a homeownership counseling course offered locally by the Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership Program.

Forms of Investment

Lancaster County invests HOME funds in eligible projects only as interest-bearing and non-interest-bearing loans. No other forms of assistance are anticipated at this time.

Resale/Recapture Provisions

HOME/ADDI funds provided for homebuyer assistance are subject to full recapture. The amount provided to eligible homebuyers is due in full upon sale of the property.

HOME funds provided for rental housing activities are due in full either as deferred loans due on sale of the property or as fully amortizing loans. There are no forgiveness provisions and properties are subject to the applicable affordability periods specified at the time HOME funds were invested in the project.