

## Narrative Report: 2008-09; West Hartford Community Development Activity

The following tables and narratives are presented in a format consistent with HUD Assistant Secretary Saul Ramirez’ February, 1998 memo outlining HUD’s annual reporting requirements for CDBG funded activities. These narratives address each of the areas described in Mr. Ramirez’ memo and provide information highlighting each of the areas being reported on in this year-end report for PY-34 (FY: 2008 to 2009). Any materials related to West Hartford’s CDBG programs are available for viewing in Room 306 in the West Hartford Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford, Connecticut (tel. 860-561-7565).

*Accomplishments for the reporting period are listed within the following table and are in alignment with West Hartford’s 2005 to 2009 Housing and Community Development Strategic Plan Measurable Goals table; included in WH’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan for ‘05 to ‘09*

1	<b>Housing Rehabilitation Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 100 units</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 43 units</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: PY-31 to PY-34: 141 units</li> </ul>
2	<b>Congregate Housing – Assisted Living</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: the completion of a minimum of one new congregate housing –assisted living project</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: none</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: None; this goal has proven difficult for the WHHA and may be unreachable during the next few years.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Day Care Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: conversion of the Salvation Army facility back into a licensed day care center offering a minimum of three full-time, low-cost day car slots to clients referred by social workers from WH Human Services Department.</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: none</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: None; this goal IS no longer a priority for the Salvation Army. This goal will likely not be achieved during the next few years.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Engineering &amp; Design Consultation Services</b>  <i><u>This activity is not funded through WH’s CDBG grant, it is funded through WH’s General Fund</u></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: these services will continue to be made available on an in-kind basis for all CDBG-funded construction projects. Accomplishment for the reporting period: Design and reconstruction work in the Town’s southeast quadrant, which is approximately the geographic equivalent of some of West Hartford’s HUD-designated LMI areas;</li> <li>• For the reporting period: Full scale road reconstruction on Englewood Ave. and on Westphal St. Milling and re-paving on South St. (full-length). Construction and grand opening of a multi-use trail (hiking, biking, walking, etc.) from South Quaker Lane to New Britain Avenue, behind the Elmwood Community Center.</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishments: same as reporting per. accomplishments plus: the Wolcott Park pond reconstruction project, the intersection of South Quaker Lane and New Britain Avenue, and road construction projects on Florence Street, Brian Road, Flatbush Avenue, Boulanger Avenue, Court Park, Fairfax Avenue, Kingston Street, Crosby Street, Gillette Street, Hollywood Avenue, Kingswood Road, Richard Street, Edgemont Avenue, Ringold Street and Farmington Avenue, (east); plus work on Lancaster Road, Englewood Avenue, South St., Colonial St., Winthrop Rd., Brightwood Rd., Westphal Street &amp; the eastern end of Farmington Avenue</li> </ul>

5	<b>Geriatric Volunteer Services and Social Services (case management)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 450 unduplicated geriatric clients</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 75</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 482 unduplicated geriatric clients</li> </ul>
6	<b>West Hartford Dial-A-Ride program</b>  <u><i>This activity is not funded through WH's CDBG grant, it is funded through WH's General Fund</i></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: (each year) 17,300 trips serving 500 residents; cumulative five-year goal is total is 86,5600 trips serving 600 residents (most riders are return members year after year)</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 14,605 trips serving 423 riders; 67 of these riders are new during the reporting period</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 60,386 trips and 621 unduplicated geriatric clients</li> </ul>
7	<b>Community Renewal Team; Suburban Outreach</b>  <u><i>This activity is not funded through WH's CDBG grant, it is funded through WH's General Fund</i></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 2,375 CEAP cases and completion of 2,300 Renter's Rebate applications</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 1,285 CEAP cases and completion of 485 Renter's Rebate applications</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 4,679 CEAP cases and completion of 1,675 Renter's Rebate applications</li> </ul>
8	<b>Emergency Energy/Utility Assistance Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 525 households</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 278 households; 36 - Town That Cares Fund, 196 - Operation Fuel and 46 - WH General Fund (Social Assistance account)</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 605 LMI households</li> </ul>
9	<b>North Central Reg. Mental Health Board</b> <u><i>This activity is not funded through WH's CDBG grant, it is funded through WH's General Fund</i></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: \$2,500.00 in grants to this agency</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: \$4,270.00 grant to this agency (during the budget preparations the WH Town Council approved \$4,270.00 annually for this organization – Town of WH General Fund)</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: \$5,270.00 in grants to this agency</li> </ul>
10	<b>CDBG Program Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: Zero HUD findings or sanctions</li> <li>• During the reporting period there were no findings issued by HUD</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: the only incident during the five-year Con Plan period is: following a CDBG program audit in December, 2006, HUD issued its response, which included several findings and one concern. Each was addressed and resolved by West Hartford in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
11	<b>Fair Housing Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(1)</b> Five-year goal: 100 households will receive fair housing counseling and education services through HERC</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 43 households</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 115 LMI households</li> <li>• <b>(2)</b> Five-year goal: 75 individuals will receive free-of-charge legal assistance from GHLA</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 16 households</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 76 LMI households</li> <li>• <b>(3)</b> Five-year goal: 10 two fair housing related workshops will be done by WH Dept. of Human Services</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 2 (one landlord &amp; tenants' rights workshop and one foreclosure prevention workshop)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 6</li> <li>• (4) Five-year goal: West Hartford will maintain a maximum of a 30% ratio when comparing eviction execution notices served and evictions that are carried out, as scheduled</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 34 eviction notices and 16 evictions carried out (47%)</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 140 eviction notices and 40 evictions (28.6%)</li> </ul>
12	<b>Public &amp; Private Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: the completion of a minimum of two projects per year; cumulative total for the five-year period: 10 projects</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 3 projects (1) Elm Grove Senior Public Housing; 32 out of 42 kitchens remodeled (2) HANOC; community center in LMI area – major rehab of building (3) CW Resources – installation of two ADA-compliant rest rooms</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 11 projects</li> </ul>
13	<p><b>Housing &amp; Neighborhood Stabilization</b></p> <p><u>Fire Code Inspections: no longer funded through WH's CDBG grant;s fundednow through WH's General Fund (local tax dollars)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (1) <u>Health Code Inspections</u> in LMI areas; Five-year goal: 1,000</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 352 inspections completed</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 2,439 inspections completed</li> <li>• (2) <u>Fire Code Inspections</u> in LMI areas; Five-year goal: 600</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 264 inspections completed</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 1,032 inspections completed</li> <li>• (3) <u>Building Code Inspections</u> in LMI areas; Five-year goal: 450</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 447 inspections completed</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 1,778 inspections completed</li> <li>• (4) <u>LMI housing units</u> to be rehabilitated; Five-year goal: 100</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 43 units completed</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 131 units completed</li> </ul>
14	<b>HANOC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 750 individuals will be served through a variety of program offerings Food Share, Homework Center, Youth Summer Enrichment program, ESL Classes, Basic Literacy Classes, Family Self-Sufficiency, misc. youth programs, computer training classes, and other services (case management and info &amp; referral services, etc.)</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 260 individuals served</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 913 individuals served</li> </ul>
15	<b>Geriatric and <u>Volunteer</u> Social Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five-year goal: 1,000 individuals will be served through this program</li> <li>• Accomplishment for the reporting period: 75 new cases (individuals) served</li> <li>• Cumulative Accomplishment: 921 individuals served</li> </ul>

**Strategies to Provide Decent Housing:**

As has been communicated to HUD throughout the past two decades, West Hartford continues to struggle with the lack of land available for construction of new housing of any kind, regardless of the income level of the intended residents. Therefore, the emphasis has been on improving conditions in West Hartford's existing housing stock occupied by the town's LMI households. To this end, West Hartford has continued its support of the CDBG-funded Housing Rehabilitation program, which provides LMI households with code correction and energy improvements through low-interest loans and grants.

West Hartford continues to emphasize the need for stabilizing the housing stock in its LMI neighborhoods through an active and effective code-enforcement program. The West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District, the West Hartford Fire Department and the West Hartford Department of Community Services serve in this capacity by providing code-compliance officers who work cooperatively with property owners to gain compliance, but who also have enforcement authority in the event the property owner is not cooperative. These enforcement officers work closely with West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program in referring property owners to that program for assistance in completing compliance projects. During the reporting period 43 units of LMI housing were rehabilitated under West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program.

**Strategies to Establish and Maintain Suitable Living Environments:**

West Hartford continues to place emphasis on maintaining its high standard of living for its residents of all economic levels. To this end West Hartford has supported its award winning park system by maintaining state of the art facilities including eight ADA-compliant play scapes. Other highlights include:

- Provided in-kind engineering and design services for many road improvement, road reconstruction and public facility improvement projects in West Hartford's HUD-designated LMI areas, including: the design and reconstruction work in the Town's southeast quadrant (which is approximately the geographic equivalent of most of West Hartford's HUD-designated LMI areas); Richard Street, Hollywood Avenue, Edgemont Avenue, Ringold Street and Kingswood Road
- Continued funding (local tax dollars) for the Kennedy Park (Camp Hillcrest) Summer Camp program for residents in West Hartford's lowest income neighborhood.
- Final work was completed in the spring of 2009 in the Farmington Avenue East (FAE) district: this vital mixed-use residential and retail district serves as the eastern gateway into West Hartford. FAE, which is within a HUD-designated LMI area, is the main east-west transportation route between Hartford and West Hartford. FAE supports a strong public bus route through the Connecticut Transit Company. Many of West Hartford's Russian refugee population, all elderly at this point, reside here and West Hartford's largest public housing building is situated along FAE.

During the reporting period West Hartford completed a comprehensive road reconstruction project on FAE. This project is the culmination of a two-year study

commission back in 2001 and 2002. Since that time the Town of West Hartford has continued to pursue the funding needed for this project and has continued to fine-tune all the design work necessary for this to happen. All work on this project has been completed as of the date this report is being written and submitted to HUD.

- Both the Park Road and New Britain Avenue commercial districts, which are the two retail districts serving the bulk of West Hartford's LMI population, continue to receive in-kind support from the West Hartford Town Government. This comes in the way of being a strong and supportive partner of Park Road Association and the New Britain Avenue Task Force. These two are active and vital grass roots organizations heavily involved in the maintenance and community development of their respective districts. During the past several years many CDBG projects were completed in these areas, including the purchase of flags and brackets to improve the uniform and decorative look of the Park Road and new Britain Avenue shopping districts, brick pavers in Elmwood Center, ADA improvements at the Park Road Playhouse (a community theatre) were completed and more. During the reporting period a project involving major re-construction of the intersection of South Quaker Lane and New Britain Avenue was completed.
- Continued growth and support of HANOC, the Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center. Services offered at HANOC include: homework center, ESL and basic literacy classes, computer classes, Narcotics Anonymous meetings, various youth programs, other services (case management and info & referral services, etc. During the reporting period West Hartford completed a major rehabilitation project at HANOC, including a new roof, kitchen remodeling, bathroom remodeling, new heat plant and other smaller improvements.

### **Strategies to Strengthen Economic Opportunities:**

West Hartford has used many opportunities to develop strategies to strengthen economic opportunities in Town. The two primary projects include:

- For the past several years, West Hartford's focus on economic development has been aimed at two large-scale developments.
  - (1) The first of these involves two properties located on the eastern border of West Hartford Center. It involves the purchase (by two different private development companies) of the two properties along Raymond Road; each had prior lives as automobile dealerships and each has been vacant for several years. Also included is the purchase by one of the developers of the building that now houses West Hartford's Board of Education, of the VFW hall on Memorial Road and three small condominium buildings along Raymond Road. In the end these companies plan to replace the existing buildings (other than the WH Board of Education building) with a variety of residential units, office space, restaurants, retail establishments, a health care center, an underground multi-plex movie theatre and, perhaps, a hotel. The total investment is anticipated at more than \$200,000,000. and it is expected this project will lead to the development of hundreds of new jobs of a variety of types and skill levels. Business has begun in many of the new stores, restaurants and offices. Residents, medical and professional office tenants are moved in and this area is full of life and vitality. Additional construction inside some of the unfinished space is continuing.

During the reporting period West Hartford continued to support partnership activities with Blue Back Square in an effort to strengthen the retail and commercial vitality of that development. This has proven to be a tough task given the nature of the economic conditions in the area during the current recession. Most of the shops, offices and residential units are occupied and it is hoped that as the economy improves the vacancy rate will continue to improve.

(2) The second property is situated in the heart of Elmwood Center (HUD-designated LMI area). This property includes a building that was originally built for and used as the Talcott Junior High School. In the mid-1970's the school closed and the building was sold off to Coleco. Eventually, in the early-1980's Ames Department Stores bought it from Coleco and used it as corporate offices. When that company filed for bankruptcy in the early-1990's the building was boarded up and has been a vacant eyesore since. Following several failed attempts by developers to rejuvenate this property the Town, and more importantly the Elmwood Community, finally approved the development of that site into mixed-use housing. This project had been expected to move along on the fast track during the reporting period. However, a lawsuit was filed against the Town and the developers. The lawsuits now seem to be settled and construction on this project should begin during the current fiscal year.

During the reporting period this project was completed and most of the units have been sold and are now occupied. With the completion of this development the entire business community in Elmwood center has taken on a new life. Re-investment has been contagious. Several stores have expanded and completely remodeled (Puppy Center, Gem Jewelry), the Epstein Plaza put new facades on all their buildings, the Elm theatre was converted into a Walgreen's drug store; a project the kept in tact the original old movie theatre character of the building, two new "up-scale restaurants" during the reporting period (Element's Bistro and Bombay Olive) and a new park was developed in partnership between the Town of West Hartford and the Elmwood Business Association – Blanchfield Park.

- The Town of West Hartford continues to explore opportunities for supporting economic development projects in any part of West Hartford. It has been a frustrating experience in that prospective partners in these kinds of projects have not seen the potential benefits of CDBG funded EDI support as being sufficient enough to outweigh the obligations that come along with that support. It is likely that prospective beneficiaries have perceived the use of CDBG - EDI funding as too cumbersome and labor intensive to make it cost effective.
- West Hartford continued operation of a satellite offices for the (1) State of Connecticut's Department of Veteran's Affairs (2) State of Connecticut's Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and (3) the Community Renewal Team in the West Hartford Town Hall for the provision of a variety of medical and financial services for armed forces veterans living in West Hartford and other LMI West Hartford residents.

### **(1b) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**

In its February 2, 1996 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and in its Plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, West Hartford established several specific goals to be achieved. In some cases, these goals have been actively pursued and in others, less so. The following is an update on West Hartford's progress in this area:

#### **Educational Campaigns:**

One of the goals set forth in the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and in the Plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing was to develop and to conduct a fair housing educational campaign. The focus was to be the broad spectrum of issues related to fair housing; landlord-tenant rights and responsibilities, discrimination issues, etc.

- West Hartford has a five-year goal of arranging for two fair housing related workshops each year. During the reporting period two were held, each utilizing Attorney Penny Trick as the keynote speaker. The topics for these two were (1) The Right & Responsibilities of Landlord and Tenants and (2) Foreclosure Prevention.
- The Housing Education and Resource Center provided fair housing counseling services to 43 LMI West Hartford households.
- Greater Hartford Legal Assistance provided free of charge legal services, mostly on housing matters, to 16 LMI West Hartford households.
- West Hartford continued during the reporting period to provide supportive services including counseling and financial assistance to households scheduled for an eviction (final stage). During the reporting period, through these efforts, sixteen of the thirty-four households notified of an imminent eviction by a state marshal were actually evicted (47%). The others remained in their rental unit or were able to get out on their own.

One of the most significant ways in which West Hartford supports its commitment to fair housing education is through its continued CDBG funding of the position of Fair Housing Officer. Through the efforts of this staff person landlords and tenants are provided useful, practical, up-to-date information on their rights and responsibilities in a rapid and informal fashion. Personal consultations are available Monday to Friday, through either a face-to-face interview or over the telephone. Over the years, through this function West Hartford has achieved a long-standing history of successfully averting hundreds of potential evictions (dozens per year). Situations are worked out allowing for more consensus-based resolutions to problems that arise between landlords and their tenants.

In situations calling for more technical or sophisticated consultation of a fair housing nature West Hartford continues its financial support of the Housing Education Resource Center. Through this relationship West Hartford has available to its staff the services of expert housing advocates and attorneys for quick and informative consultations.

#### **Housing Code Enforcement and Lead Paint:**

Code Enforcement: using its CDBG allocation, the Town of West Hartford funds the cost of code compliance services provided by the West Hartford - Bloomfield Health District, the office of the West Hartford Fire Marshal and West Hartford's Community Services Dept.

During the reporting period code compliance officers completed 1,106 cases in West Hartford's HUD-designated LMI neighborhoods; 352 cases were completed by the W. H. - Bloomfield Health District (State of Conn.'s Health Code & Town of W. H. Property & Maintenance Code compliance). The Town's Fire Marshall completed 264 State Fire Code compliance cases and the Town's Comm. Svcs. Dept. completed 447 inspections involving compliance with the State of Connecticut building code. Inspections are followed-up with referrals of eligible property owners to the West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation Program. All services provided by compliance officers are on a "no fee" basis.

Lead Prevention Services; also using its CDBG allocation, the Town of West Hartford has funded lead prevention both through its Housing Code Enforcement program (see above) and through its Housing Rehabilitation program. Emphasis is placed on households having low and moderate incomes and on families residing in housing stock in need of maintenance and/or rehabilitation. Through the West Hartford - Bloomfield Health District, affected children have available to them blood lead screening, educational awareness, necessary counseling and follow-up for Housing Rehabilitation Projects for eligible households.

The construction manager for West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program is a certified lead paint inspector. He has undergone all applicable training in HUD's new regulations. One of his tasks is to be certain that all projects funded through West Hartford's CDBG grant are in compliance with applicable HUD regulations.

#### **Enactment of a Fair Housing Ordinance:**

As stated in its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and in its Plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing West Hartford has in existence a Human Rights Commission. Also, as shown in the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, the level of activity in West Hartford that can be characterized as violations of fair housing law(s) is minimal. In addition, there are in place state laws, making violations of this sort illegal and prosecutable in the state courts. Consideration of these factors makes it unnecessary at this point to enact a fair housing ordinance in West Hartford.

In August 2000 the West Hartford Fair Rent Commission was reactivated to adjudicate complaints from tenants aggrieved by a rent increase being demanded by their landlord. During the reporting period, this commission has heard cases from four different tenants. For each of them the Fair Rent Commission ordered a reduction in the rent being demanded by their landlord. It is likely that, as the cost of rental housing continues to increase in West Hartford (and throughout the Capitol Region), the Fair Rent Commission will remain active.

To this end, however, the Town of West Hartford set forth as its goal to:

- Continue its support of the West Hartford Fair Rent Commission
- Continue its support of the West Hartford Human Rights Commission
- Maintain a relationship with staff at the CHRO, the Housing Court and the Connecticut Fair Housing Center to determine if West Hartford's case level has experienced a significant increase; such an increase would justify a further evaluation of the need for a fair housing ordinance.

- Continue its support of the Housing Education Resource Center through a grant to fund a program which provides information and referral and counseling services to landlords and tenants on topics such as evictions, leases, lockouts, denying rental units to households with children and other discrimination scenarios, rent increases, housing court, etc.
- Continue its support of Greater Hartford Legal Assistance through a grant to fund legal services, free of charge, to those CDBG-eligible West Hartford residents needing legal counsel but with incomes not meeting that agency's usual income guidelines.
- Continue to support the position of fair housing officer to assist landlords and tenants in responding to disputes over fair housing issues and to provide counseling services to landlords and tenants on topics such as evictions, leases, lockouts, denying rental units to households with children and other discrimination scenarios, rent increases, housing court, etc.

**Public and Private Agency Support:**

In this section of the Plan for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing West Hartford indicated its goal to provide financial and other support to a variety of agencies that are related to fair housing in general and more specifically to fair housing choices. This has been accomplished year after year since the plan was developed. During the reporting period highlights for West Hartford include:

- Continued support and partnership with The Bridge for Families and Children (West Hartford's official Youth Services Bureau).
- Through West Hartford's general fund (\$220,000.00) and outside grant sources, continued support of the Dial-a Ride program, which provides door to door transportation services to West Hartford's elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- Through a grant from West Hartford's general fund, continued support of a variety of non-profit organizations through grants to help these organizations by paying for their utility expenses or their insurance, etc. These include: West Hartford Seniors Job Bank, WHCTV-5 (public access station), The Bridge for Families and Children, North Central Regional Mental Health Board, West Hartford Art League, West Hartford All-Sports Council, Noah Webster House, and the Sarah Whitman Hooker House.
- Operation of an emergency fuel program (funded by a variety of sources) administered by the Town's Division of Social Services
- Annual use of CDBG funding to provide a grant to the Community Renewal Team to partially fund the salary of an outreach worker for its energy assistance and community outreach programs
- Annual use of CDBG funding to provide a grant to Greater Hartford Legal Assistance for providing free of charge legal services to CDBG eligible West Hartford residents whose income is in excess of that agency's usual income cap.
- Annual use of CDBG funding to provide a grant to the Housing Education Resource Center for providing (to residents and to staff) educational and counseling services on matters related to fair housing

**Affordable Housing:**

West Hartford continues support of its Housing Rehabilitation program. To this end, West Hartford has continued to fund this program as its biggest single CDBG-funded expense.

Additional support is committed to the West Hartford Housing Authority to add to West Hartford's housing supply additional units of affordable housing. During The reporting period the WHHA has been working with West Hartford on the approval and development of 40 new units of public housing to be added to its Plant Senior Housing facility.

### **AMMENDED**

#### **(1c) Affordable Housing**

This section provides information on affordable housing units added or rehabbed during the reporting period, **July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009**, using CDBG funds. All units reported are for LMI residents.

- Single-family units: 29
- Multi-family units: 14 individual units in 5 buildings

#### **(1d) Continuum of Care**

As indicated in the Consolidated Plan submitted in 2005 West Hartford's homeless population is so minimal it is considered to be statistically insignificant. This continues to be the case. Police activity, social services case loads and other referring agencies continue to provide no evidence that this population has increased in any way since 2005.

For situations that arise when homeless persons are in need of assistance West Hartford has developed effective working relationships with several of the area shelters including:

- Salvation Army Marshall House
- Open Hearth Mission
- Immaculate Conception Church
- South Park Inn
- My Sister's Place
- Hartford Interval House
- YMCA
- YWCA

Through these contacts, referrals are made effectively so that there is no need for residents to remain homeless for an extended period. In addition to its relationship with the above shelter's West Hartford does have within its borders a youth shelter for youngsters aged 11 to 18; Junction 1019. Funding is provided annually to Junction 1019 through West Hartford's annual contribution to the Bridge Family Center (youth services bureau), which is Junction 1019's parent agency. Also in West Hartford is St. Agnes Home; homeless shelter for teen moms and their infant – toddler children. During the reporting period, using a CDBG grant to St. Agnes Home, West Hartford completed a rehab project involving replacement windows and a rehabbed kitchen.

#### **(1e) Other Actions**

Other actions West Hartford has undertaken during the reporting period, in meeting its community development objectives, and not previously mentioned in this report include:

- At Elm Grove Senior Housing a project was completed that entailed complete kitchen remodeling in 32 of the 42 units at this senior public housing complex.
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- Academic support and tutoring services were provided to approximately 69 LMI youngsters through the HANOC after school home work center program
- Summer day-camp services were provided to 42 LMI youngsters from the Hillcrest Avenue neighborhood.
- West Hartford continued (and continues) to work closely with the Park Road Association, the Elmwood Neighborhood Organization and with the Farmington Avenue East Task Force in an effort to keep keenly aware of the Town's community development needs, especially in its LMI neighborhoods.
- Assisted many LMI women who are victims of domestic violence, through a general fund (local tax dollars) contribution to Hartford Interval House, an agency providing shelter and support services for battered women
- Assisted 278 LMI households through the Town's Emergency Fuel program
- Assisted 1,285 LMI individuals through a grant to the Community Renewal Team for the provision of a community outreach worker stationed in the West Hartford Town Hall
- Provided 14,605 rides to elderly and disabled individuals through the Town's dial-A-Ride program.
- Assisted 501 LMI elderly individuals through the Geriatric Social Services program
- Assisted numerous LMI individuals having mental illness, by making a contribution to the North Central Regional Mental health Board which has statutory oversight authority to monitor mental health programs being offered throughout the region
- Assisted 16 households experiencing legal problems through grants to HERC and to Greater Hartford Legal Assistance

### **(1f) Leveraging Resources**

During the reporting period, using Federal funds, the only way in which West Hartford leveraged other funding sources is as follows: using \$4,000. in CDBG funds West Hartford gave a grant to the Community Renewal Team (CRT). In exchange, CRT provided West Hartford a full-time outreach worker stationed in the West Hartford Town Hall, in service specifically to West Hartford residents.

West Hartford continues to be hopeful that in the Farmington Avenue, East area, current discussions will eventually lead to a combination of CDBG funds from West Hartford and private investment, going into the design and building of a community parking lot.

### **(1g) Citizen Comments**

None were received.

### **(1h) Self-Evaluation**

West Hartford continues to progress steadily towards accomplishing its community development goals as stated in its consolidated plan.

**Housing Assistance:** In the Consolidated Plan housing assistance for the elderly was listed as a high priority need. In fact, housing assistance is seen as West Hartford's number one community development priority. Over the past six years the number of Section VIII certificates utilized in West Hartford has increased substantially at all levels.

**Elderly:** The elderly are clearly the group making the biggest gains on increased affordable housing in West Hartford. HUD discontinued the HOPE program, which began in 1996, two years ago. However, this program, which was originally a joint initiative between the West Hartford Housing Authority, the Town of West Hartford and HUD, has enabled an additional 70 elderly households to receive rental subsidies. Beyond the rental subsidies offered through the HOPE program, participants do continue to enjoy the benefits of a variety of support services offered through the Town's Geriatric Social Services Division.

During the reporting period the West Hartford Housing Authority continued pursuing an expansion project for its Plant Senior Housing complex; aimed at expanding that facility by adding approximately 24 new affordable housing units and an underground parking lot. In partnering with WHHA in getting this project underway the Town of West Hartford has made significant zoning concessions and is committed to provide the continuing support needed.

**Families:** The number of families receiving housing assistance has not changed so drastically as with elderly households. During recent years an additional fifteen housing units have been purchased by LMI families through the Scattered Site Programs of the West Hartford Housing Authority and the West Hartford Interfaith Coalition. WHICH and WHHA continue to pursue single-family home ownership opportunities throughout West Hartford and the Town remains ready to support these efforts.

West Hartford, like other communities around the country is concerned over the future of the Section VIII Voucher program. Federal funding remained level this year and last. However, rental costs for those participating in the program have continued to escalate. The waiting list for this program is closed and openings on this list are not anticipated by the WHHA in the foreseeable future.

Annually, West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program continues to add units of family housing back to the market by making them code-compliant, removing them from the ranks of sub-standard housing units.

- 2008 to 2009: 29 units in single-family dwellings
- 2008 to 2009: 14 units in multi-family dwellings
- Cumulative nine - year total beginning July 1, 2000:  
118 single-family units, 25 units in multi-family dwellings

**Assistance to the Elderly:** The 2005 Consolidated plan identified services to the elderly as being a high priority need for West Hartford. Services to the elderly remain a high priority. In particular, services related to supporting the ability of elderly residents to live independent life styles, having sufficient access to medical, transportation, nutritional, social, and other resources are needed.

The most significant action the Town has undertaken to address these needs is the ongoing support of its Geriatric Social Services programs. Social workers enable residents to enjoy the benefits of a variety of support services. Though HUD discontinued the HOPE program several years ago, which eliminated a large portion of the funding needed to carry out these services, West Hartford remains committed to its mission of providing support to this population.

Two years ago West Hartford applied for and received two grants; (1) aimed at providing additional transportation services through West Hartford's Dial-A-Ride program. This program, the Medical Access program (MAP) is underway and provides urgent, on-going medical transportation to West Hartford's elderly and handicapped residents (appointments for kidney dialysis, chemo therapy, cardiac rehab, etc.) During the reporting period nearly 1,000 rides were provided under the MAP program. (2) The second program, the development of an Independent Transportation Network is currently stalled. During the reporting period, the West Hartford Seniors Job Bank, which was to take on the leadership role for this program, closed its doors due to financial shortfalls. West Hartford is continuing to seek other ways to get this program established and operational.

**Homelessness:** as stated earlier in this report the number of homeless persons residing in West Hartford is statistically insignificant. West Hartford's efforts in this area have continued to focus on prevention, through its fair housing program, which serves to avert dozens of evictions per year, and through its ongoing network building with the region's shelters for homeless persons.

**Persons with Disabilities:** West Hartford has an active commission for persons with disabilities, the West Hartford Advisory Commission for Persons with Disabilities. This group serves in an advisory capacity, monitoring issues affecting persons with disabilities and alerting the Town administration of issues needing attention. During the reporting period related community development activities include:

- Installation of two ADA-compliant rest rooms at CW Resources; a Town of West Hartford building leased, at no charge, to CW Resources, for the operation of a vocational training facility for adults with developmental disabilities.

## **(2a) Relationship Between the Use of CDBG Funds and the Priorities, Needs, Goals and Specific Objectives Identified in the Consolidated Plan**

As stated above, in Section (1h) of this report, West Hartford continues to progress steadily towards accomplishing its community development goals as defined in its consolidated plan. A review of each of the subsequent action plans indicate the commitment of CDBG funds to the activities related to these high priority needs.

Also, as stated above in Section (1h) of this report, West Hartford's highest community development priority is in the area of providing housing assistance to LMI households through a variety of programs which receive funding from the Town's CDBG allocation.

Especially included in this category is the Housing Rehabilitation program, the town’s fair housing program code enforcement activities and the Geriatric Social Services program. Each of these provides the support and/or financial assistance needed to enable hundreds of West Hartford’s LMI residents to remain in decent, safe and affordable housing.

To this end, CDBG expenditures on these activities are as follows:

Year	Total CDBG Expenditure for the Reporting Period	Housing Rehab. Exp’s, inc. Grants, loans & admin = % of yr’s. total CDBG allocation)	Geriatric Social Services Exp’s = % of yr’s. total CDBG allocation)	Fair Housing Exp’s, Inc. Town Fr Hsg Officer & Contributions to Hsng Educ Res Cntr = % of yr’s. total CDBG allocation)	Code Enforcement Exp’s – (% of yr’s. total CDBG allocation	Total % of yr’s. CDBG Allocation
2008 to 2009	\$1,418,950.2 2	\$740,450.62 = 52%	\$58,817.55 = 4%	\$110,000.00. = 8%	\$150,000.00 = 11%	\$1,270,305.37 = 90%

As indicated in the above table West Hartford has continued to focus its CDBG expenditures on programs related to affordable housing and to fair housing choice for its LMI residents. Other program areas do not reflect a pattern of expenditure significant enough to mention here.

**(2b) Nature and Reasons for Changes in Overall Community Development Program Direction**

For West Hartford, since adoption of its 2005 to 2009 Consolidated Plan, no changes have occurred significant enough to say that they have caused a “Change in Overall Community Development Program direction”. Most significant in this area is that West Hartford continues to explore its options, albeit unsuccessfully, for future use of CDBG funds for purposes of economic development activities. West Hartford continues to recognize the need to look at Economic Development activities as being a vital part of its overall community development strategy. As opportunities to implement economic development initiatives are identified by Town staff or by community groups or individuals, more emphasis will be put on providing funding for these activities through the use of CDBG funds. To this end, West Hartford continues to appropriate a good deal of its annual CDBG allocation to a program identified as “Public-Private Partnerships”. At the time these funds are allocated each year they are not specifically earmarked for any individual activity(s) but remain available for when the opportunity for economic develop initiatives arise.

**(2c) Assessment of Grantee Adherence to Consolidated Plan Certifications**

**RESOURCES**

**Pursuit of Resources:** During the reporting year West Hartford did seek and received community development-related funding from several other sources:

- In addition, using a \$4,000.00 CDBG grant to the Community Renewal Team, West Hartford was able to leverage the services of one full-time outreach worker stationed in the West Hartford Town Hall, in service specifically to West Hartford residents.

- As outlined above, West Hartford applied and has now received two grants aimed at providing additional transportation for elderly residents and those with disabilities (see the *Assistance to the Elderly* section, above)
- **Other Certifications:** West Hartford is in full compliance with the terms and conditions set forth in each of the certifications submitted as part of its 2005 to 2009 Consolidated Plan and as part of each subsequent Action Plan submitted to HUD.

## **(2d) Funds Utilized for Activities not Meeting Any of HUD's National Objectives**

All West Hartford's CDBG expenditures meet one or more of HUD's National Objectives.

## **(2e) Acquisition, Rehab or Demolition of Occupied Properties**

Most of the projects completed under West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program involve the performance of construction related activity in housing units occupied at the time of construction. In one case short-term relocation of a single family was needed while certain aspects of the construction were underway. Activities are carefully planned so as to minimize discomfort to occupants that might otherwise necessitate relocation.

As an entity, the Town of West Hartford did not engage in any acquisition or demolition activities during the reporting period.

## **(2f) Miscellaneous Narratives**

**Paragraph one:** non-applicable to West Hartford.

**Paragraph two:** In all West Hartford's CDBG-funded activities involving a benefit to LMI persons not presumed to be LMI, verification is assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that more than 51% of the activity's beneficiaries are, in fact, LMI. For example, in West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program the application process involves certified signatures on all applications and a thorough evaluation of each household member's income and credit history follows. Applications for projects not meeting the 51% (+) standard are denied.

**Paragraph three:** During the reporting period the only income West Hartford received, other than its annual allocation was through:

- Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan funds; re-payments and pay backs (\$182,816.09)
- Annual fees charged of the contractors for participation in the Housing Rehabilitation Program together with application fees charged of those applying for participation in the Housing Rehabilitation program (\$5,222.50.00).

**Paragraph four:** During the reporting period, the number of units completed under West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation is as follows:

- Single family units - 29, total cost
- Units in multi-family dwellings - 0
- Total Cost: \$508,217.00

**The remaining sections of Mr. Ramirez' memo are not applicable to West Hartford.**

## **ADDENDUM**

**Overcoming Gaps in Institutional Structure:** during the reporting period West Hartford's activity in this area focused on partnering with the West Hartford Housing Authority on a project aimed at expanding the Plant Senior Housing complex by adding approximately 24 new affordable housing units and an underground parking lot. West Hartford made significant zoning concessions and is committed to provide the continuing support needed to ensure the success of this project.

During the reporting period other actions, which aided in *Overcoming Gaps in Institutional Structure* included:

- West Hartford maintained its partnership with Connecticut Community Court, in Hartford; program is designed to provide non-Hartford residents and non-Hartford arrestees an opportunity for alternative sentencing
- continued the re-organization of the Town's Department of Human Services (following the retirement of the Department's director, after 23 years and merging the Department of Human Services with the Department of Leisure Services).

### **Actions that Reduce the Number of Families in Poverty:**

During the reporting period West Hartford undertook several actions that help to reduce the number of families living in poverty. Among these are:

- West Hartford's Housing Rehabilitation program allowed 39 low to mod-income households to affordably improve the conditions in which they live by making their dwelling units compliant with applicable health, fire and building codes.
- Provided case management services to 501 elderly residents. Through this program assistance is provided to those seniors attempting to remain in their homes, in avoidance of living in a long term care facility such as a nursing home.
- CDBG grant of \$4,000.00 to Community Renewal Team (CRT); partial funding for a full-time community outreach worker to provide CRT and other program services directly from an office in the West Hartford Town Hall (over 1,250 clients served).
- Emergency Fuel and Utilities Assistance Program: During the reporting period services were provided to 278 LMI West Hartford households through this program; funding sources included General Fund (local tax dollars), donated/charitable funds and funding from Operation Fuel grants.
- Grant to Greater Hartford Legal Assistance: during the reporting period free of charge legal services were provided to 16 West Hartford households through this program.

**Public Housing and Resident Initiatives:** The most striking actions in this area are outlined above; the Partnership between West Hartford, WHHA and WHIHC. Other Public Housing and Resident Initiatives occurring during the reporting period:

- WHHA had a stated goal that a minimum of 75% of new Section VIII voucher holders would be "Very Low-Income" households. This goal was significantly exceeded.
- WHHA had a stated goal that a minimum of 40% of new Public Housing tenants would be *Very Low-Income* households. This goal also was significantly exceeded.

**Statement of Affirmation:** During the reporting period, by action or by willful inaction, West Hartford did not hinder implementation of the Consolidated Plan in any way.