

**2010 ANNUAL CONSOLIDATED ACTION PLAN
2010-2014 CONSOLIDATED STRATEGY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Akron, Ohio has prepared an Annual Plan for 2010 that includes the budget for the 2010 federal Community Development Block Grant program, the HOME Partnership Program and the Emergency Shelter Block Grant Program. This Consolidated Strategy Action Plan addresses the housing needs of low-income families, homeless families and others with special needs that require supportive services. The plan includes a one-year budget for applying available resources to meet identified needs.

The City of Akron anticipated committing \$9,065,000 in total program funding including \$6,815,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds; \$1,950,000 in HOME funds and \$300,000 in Emergency Shelter Block Grant funds. Of these funds, approximately \$200,000 is program income.

The proposed plan includes the following initiatives: Neighborhood Redevelopment Program, Neighborhood Housing Development Program (eligible areas); Lead Elimination Action Program (LEAP); Minor (Emergency) Home Repair (city-wide); Non-Profit Community Housing Projects; UNDC New Construction; Neighborhood Partnership Program; Paint program; Waiver Demolition Program; Emergency and Transitional Shelter Housing (city-wide); Neighborhood Business Districts Program; HOME Support for HOPE VI, Community Services Programs (supporting Education, the Arts, Security, Health and Fair Housing); Section 108 Loan Repayments and General Administration.

At least 70% of the Community Development funds are required to be used for activities that principally benefit low-income persons. All HOME funds and ESG funds will be used for activities that benefit low-income persons.

Consolidated Strategy and Plan

Each year the City drafts an Action Plan that budgets funding for the upcoming fiscal year based on priorities that are established in a five-year Consolidated Plan. The 2009 Action Plan is the first year of the five-year strategy for 2010 to 2014.

The Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy for 2010-2014 combines three federal Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG). The National Affordable Housing Act requires that, for certain federal Housing and Urban Development programs, the City of Akron must have an approved Consolidated Strategy and Plan. A copy of the five-year strategy is available in the office of the Department of Planning and Urban Development, City of Akron.

Goal of the Strategy and Plan

The goal of the Consolidated Strategy and Plan is to provide a five-year strategy and annual numerical goals to serve as a working guide for the use of federal resources to address local housing, quality of living, and economic needs. A strategic plan sets forth

goals, objectives, and performance benchmarks for measuring progress and establishes a framework for measuring progress.

Statutory Program Purpose

The Consolidated Strategy and Plan must satisfy the minimum Congressional statutory requirements for Akron's three federal community planning and development formula programs: Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership and Emergency Shelter Grant. Each of these programs must primarily benefit low and very low-income persons. In addition, there are three goals for the CDBG program. The first is the elimination of slum and blight. The programs are to provide decent housing, including programs aimed at assisting persons to obtain affordable housing; retain decent, safe and sanitary affordable housing; and increase the availability of this housing. The second goal of the program is to provide a suitable living environment. The third major statutory goal is to expand economic opportunity.

Consolidated Strategy for 2010-2014

The City of Akron set forth the priority activities to be followed in the five-year strategy as follows:

Priority based on household need:

1. Low Income Owner Household
2. Low Income Renter Household
3. Homeless Families and Individuals
4. Non-Homeless Special Needs Persons

Priority based on activity:

1. Neighborhood Rehabilitation, Owner-occupied Housing
2. New Housing Construction
3. Acquisition and removal of blighted properties.
4. Rental Housing Rehabilitation or Construction
5. Support Facilities and Public Services
6. Homeless Persons, Individuals, and Families Assistance

The Consolidated Strategy includes a narrative describing the housing needs of low income families, homeless families and others with special needs that require supportive services. The five-year strategy also identifies obstacles to meeting identified needs, target goals for the number of households assisted, and target dates for completion. The Consolidated Annual Plan includes a one-year budget for applying available resources to the needs identified.

Coordinating and Managing the Process

The City of Akron, Department of Planning and Urban Development (DPUD), is the lead agency in the coordination and management of the process and preparation of the Plan.

The City will lead and coordinate the consolidated planning, submission and implementation process. The City will continue to be involved in activities over the coming year which enhances coordination between public and non-profit housing providers and private and public health and service agencies.

The City of Akron DPUD has HUD-certified staff trained in HOME Regulations for policy, procedures and monitoring. These individuals are responsible for ensuring HOME funded projects are necessary, prudent, and meet HUD defined criteria.

Consolidated Plan/Citizen Participation

Every year the City of Akron convenes a meeting of interested citizens, community organizers, low-income neighborhood residents and others including affordable housing advocates, providers, social service agencies, homeless housing advocates, lending institutions and the Public Housing Authority to allow citizens an opportunity to present their views on community needs. The 2010 Annual Plan represents the first year of the five-year strategy.

The following schedule refers to the 2009 Plan (tentative):

Public hearing on Housing and Community Development needs (Minutes Attached)	August 26, 2009
Publish Akron's Consolidated Annual Plan in newspaper(s); Begin 30-day public comment period	October 9, 2009
Publish notice on Planning Commission Meeting	October 6, 2009
Planning Commission Public Hearing on Consolidated Plan (Minutes Attached)	October 16, 2009
Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Meeting	October 21, 2009
Akron City Council reviews	November, 2009
End 30-day public comment period	November 9, 2009
Submission of Annual Plan to HUD	November 13, 2009
Emergency Shelter Grant Request for Proposals Due	November 23, 2009
Program year begins	January 1, 2010

Information will be disseminated utilizing mailing lists, neighborhood based groups, block clubs, City Council newsletters and various print media outlets. Presentations are being made to ward meetings and community gatherings.

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

As part of the Consolidated Plan process, the Fair Housing Task Force was established in June of 2000 to conduct an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. Through a process of meetings, presentations and research, an action plan was developed. The Plan was submitted and accepted by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2001. The Task Force remains active to review concerns of Fair Housing Choice in Akron, Ohio. The Task Force is scheduled to meet on October 21, 2009 at the Vernon Odom Boulevard Branch of the Akron-Summit Library to review the “Impediments to Fair Housing Matrix”.

Action Plan

The City’s housing program in focuses on targeted acquisition in deteriorated areas to remove blighting conditions and create buildable lots for new housing construction while expanding some of the rehabilitation programs to assist low and moderate persons city-wide. The City continues to support the rehabilitation of existing housing in specific areas through the Neighborhood Initiative Area program, the Exterior Home Improvement program and the City’s Minor Home Repair and Lead programs. A greater emphasis is now placed on rebuilding neighborhoods with pockets of new housing, rehabilitation assistance for properties that do not need to be removed, new streets, new curbs, new sidewalks and new street trees where necessary.

Akron will afford property owners in targeted areas the opportunity to make an investment in each property to improve its outward appearance and make sure that its major systems – heating, electrical and plumbing – are in good working order. The City will invest up to \$15,000 in each property that is rehabilitated in the Redevelopment Areas, the Lead Abatement areas, and the Neighborhood Improvement areas.

1. Neighborhood Redevelopment Program

In the oldest parts of Akron, the city will support and revitalize existing neighborhoods by removing dilapidated housing, facilitating new housing construction, upgrading the public infrastructure and rehabilitating the remaining existing housing. New construction will occur by for-profit and non-profit builders with the assistance of the City.

Neighborhood Redevelopment Programs are under way in the Edgewood Renewal Area (activities in the Edgewood Areas are in support of adjacent Hope VI initiatives overseen by the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority in coordination with the City of Akron). Work is under way in the Hickory Street and Kelly-Markle areas.

Properties will be acquired, families relocated and land assembled for new development. Activities in each selected area will last about three years.

2. **Neighborhood Housing Development Program**

Neighborhoods (150-250 homes) will be selected by the City to receive financial and technical assistance. Selection of areas is largely based on meeting HUD National Objective and City of Akron criteria.

3. **Program Continuation**

The City will continue to fund a number of programs that have proven their value over the years:

- I. **Non-profit housing development** – the City will provide subsidies to non-profit development corporations for the development of new housing or the acquisition, rehabilitation and sale of existing housing.
- II. **Waiver demolition** – the City will demolish a house or garage for free at the request of the owner. The owner retains ownership of the lot.
- III. **Minor Home Repair** – Small-scale assistance (\$4,000) to low-income homeowners or the elderly on a fixed income to correct an emergency problem.

4. **Lead Hazard Reduction/Rehabilitation**

Within the central part of the city, Akron may combine housing rehabilitation assistance with lead paint abatement activity by the Akron Health Department. Low-income homeowners with children six years old and under who are at risk for lead poisoning are eligible for this assistance. Rental Property owners are also available for assistance through the Lead Elimination Action Program, (LEAP).

Lead Elimination Action Program, (LEAP)

The Lead Elimination Action Program, (LEAP) is operated by East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation (EANDC) on behalf of the Mahoning Valley Real Estate Investors, Association. The Department of Planning and Urban Development entered into the Phase I contract with East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation for the rehabilitation of 30 rental units in the City of Akron. In 2010-2011, DPUD will continue with Phase II of the LEAP Program. The City will again enter into an agreement with EANDC to complete an additional 15 rental units in the City. EANDC will provide services including client intake, relocation services, risk assessments, and clearances. Akron will provide CDBG/Home funding for the rehabilitation portion of the program and CDBG funding for administration services of the program performed by EANDC Lead Office.

The objective of the program in Akron is to provide lead hazard reduction and housing rehabilitation assistance to low income families in rental housing in the City of Akron.

The goal is to assist a total of 15 units, within the term of the LEAP grant agreement, with funding limited to 1-4 unit rental housing. The goal is also to maximize the combination of children under the age of 6 years old protected from lead poisoning and housing units where lead hazards are controlled.

OTHER PROGRAMS THAT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN IN 2010:

Section 108 Loan Repayments

The following projects are or will require Section 108 Loan repayments:

Cascade Hotel-- In 1996, the City of Akron provided loan assistance to a renovated Ramada Plaza Hotel. The Hotel offers 292 rooms for the use of business travelers and families. An Economic Development Initiative Grant of \$300,000 was awarded.

Middlebury Grocery-- In 2003, the City of Akron was awarded Section 108 funding for the development of the Middlebury Grocery Store and retail development.

Other Economic Development Activity

Akron BioMedical Corridor: Opportunity purchases, business studies and marketing activities to encourage biomedical business to locate within the Children's'/General/Summa Hospitals corridor.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program of 2008 (to address foreclosure and economic development).

The purposes of this Act are--

- (1) to establish a loan and grant program administered by HUD to help jurisdictions purchase and rehabilitate owner-vacated, foreclosed homes with the goal of stabilizing and occupying them as soon as possible, either through resale or rental to qualified families;
- (2) to distribute funds to areas with the highest areas of need;
- (3) to provide incentives for jurisdictions to use the funds to stabilize as many properties as possible; and
- (4) to provide housing for low- and moderate-income families, especially those that have lost homes to foreclosure

The City of Akron has been allocated \$8,583,492 in Federal NSP funding, \$2,988,855 in State of Ohio funding. Activities include:

- Acquisition
- Rehabilitation
- Demolition
- New construction
- Financial mechanisms

Specific Homeless Prevention Elements

The City of Akron anticipates a 2010 Emergency Shelter Grant entitlement of \$300,000. The City of Akron issued a request for proposals in October, 2009 to homeless service providers. Funding priorities are given to homeless shelters requesting rehabilitation assistance. Funds are also available to agencies for operating and essential services. Priority is given to agencies not receiving Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program funds.

The three specific objectives in the City's Homeless Strategic Plan are to:

- a. address the need for renovation and rehabilitation of emergency and transitional shelters;
- b. address the need for furnishings, equipment, utilities, maintenance, insurance, operating costs for homeless emergency shelters and transitional shelters;
- c. provide essential services including medical, education, food counseling, training, etc. for homeless shelters.

The City's 2010 Action Plan follows the strategies outlined above in the allocation of funding to shelter facilities. The City's first priority is the rehabilitation of emergency and transitional facilities. The City is committed to assuring that the community's facilities for the homeless provide decent, safe and sanitary residence. Because of the transient nature of shelter operations, these facilities incur significant wear and tear. It is important that the physical condition of these facilities remain high to provide good living conditions for the residents and maintain a standard of quality acceptable to surrounding properties and the community.

The City's second funding priority is for operating costs of shelter activities with an emphasis on the purchase of furniture and equipment. Again, the City is concerned with maintaining a quality living environment for residents and to respond to the inevitable wear and tear on facilities. Normal facility operating costs are also eligible for funding.

The City's third funding priority is for essential services, especially those that assist shelter residents to secure permanent housing. Other eligible activities will be considered for funding if they link residents with needed services or programs.

Obstacles to overcome are a lack of funding to provide adequate staffing and the oversight necessary to assure that individuals can be constantly monitored and steered through a system that will provide the support systems necessary to provide job training, employment, affordable housing, alcohol and drug dependence treatment, child care, etc. to stave off conditions that will lead to a recurrence of homelessness.

The City will review ESGP program requirements and outline the City's funding goals as stated in the application. The City solicited proposals from all interested parties, allowing approximately 45 days returning proposals with the proposal deadline of November 23, 2009.

The City follows several policies in its review of ESGP proposals:

- a) The City will provide assistance to a wide variety of shelters, recognizing the variety of service needs.
- b) Priority will be given to emergency and transitional facilities.
- c) Rehabilitation of structures and the purchase of furniture and equipment will be emphasized.
- d) Existing shelters that provide an essential service will receive priority over the funding of new shelters.
- e) New activities receiving funding will assist in securing transitional and permanent housing for residents.
- f) The City will consider ESGP financial support of new residential developments only if the most recent preceding development by that organization has been outside of the City and is of similar or greater size than that proposed for development within the City. This policy will apply to all organizations developing residential options for the homeless or special needs populations. (For further explanation of this section, please refer to: City of Akron Consolidated Strategy and Plan for Housing and Community Development Programs FY 2005-2009).

The City of Akron is the lead entity for the Continuum of Care planning process. The City of Akron and surrounding communities receive approximately \$3,000,000 annually through the SuperNOFA Continuum of Care process. These funds are primarily used for permanent supportive housing for the disabled, transitional housing and supportive services.

Eliminating chronic homelessness is nearly impossible (this is akin to saying we are eliminating alcoholism, drug dependence, etc.), but the City is working in the Summit

County Continuum of Care to identify the causes of chronic homelessness and assist individuals to overcome the hardships that are causing recurrent episodes of homelessness. The goal of ending chronic homelessness in five years is ambitious and several approaches are necessary. The Akron / Summit County Continuum of Care network will focus on the following key elements to reduce homelessness:

- Establish/develop resources within our community to fund homeless prevention;
- Strengthen homeless prevention programs within the community;
- Expand outreach services to the homeless by creating teams to specifically target subpopulations;
- Improving coordination and access to services;
- Expand availability of affordable housing within the community;
- Improve access to affordable housing for homeless persons;
- Work with the needs of special sub-populations;
- Evaluate role of faith-based organizations;
- Improve job placement linkages.
- Create new permanent supportive housing beds in Akron and Summit County.

The primary obstacles to overcome are the inherently complicated nature of the problem, the coordination necessary between all parties in order to assure the proper delivery of individuals through the system and the lack of funds, manpower and time to devote to each client in order to assure that every individual will end up in affordable housing that will remain viable over an extended period of time.

The Akron/Summit County/Barberton community has a Continuum of Care in place to address the immediate needs of families and individuals at risk of becoming homeless. In 2010, agencies provide short-term rental assistance, assistance in paying utility bills and food assistance. Legal services are available to those at risk of eviction or foreclosure. These resources are limited and are quickly depleted due to heavy demand, but the community has a strong network of organizations that work closely to maximize assistance available to clients.

The Akron / Summit County Continuum of Care intends to incorporate an eligibility module into the Homeless Management information System (H.M.I.S.) that is now up and running. This new module will allow service providers to access additional community services during the client intake process and assist the client on how to access services. Community organizations have already developed resource manuals to assist individuals and families in locating appropriate services.

The Continuum of Care realizes that a key component of homelessness in this community continues to be the lack of a comprehensive homeless and discharge policy from various systems of care. In 2006, the Continuum of Care attempted to evaluate current hospital and jail discharge policies, but did not receive formal responses. In 2010, continued efforts will be made to work with both hospitals and jails to evaluate

current discharge practices, and to obtain their formal policies. At this time there is no mandate for either hospitals or jails to work with the Continuum of Care. The Continuum of Care will attempt to strengthen this connection by engaging their participation in the Network in 2010.

The Akron/Barberton/Summit County Continuum of Care will sponsor Project Homeless Connect in April, 2010. Project Homeless Connect is a one-stop shop model for delivering services to people experiencing homelessness. The Project allows for an immediacy of care rather than a referral. Over 1,000 individuals are anticipated to attend the 2010 event. Akron is partnering with service providers, hospitals, businesses and housing providers to bring multiple resources to one location where people can come and find services they need.

2010 Consolidated Action Plan Budget

**CDBG /HOME/ESG Budget
2010**

	TOTAL	CDBG	HOME
<u>Clearance, Land Assembly and Housing Development</u>			
CHDO/ CDC Housing	450	0	450
Acq/Reloc/Clear	500	500	0
HOPE VI	250	0	250
Demolition	500	500	0
UNDC	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
	1800	1100	700
<u>Rehab Loan and Grants</u>	1330	450	880
<u>Public Improvements</u>	1000	1000	0
<u>Economic Development</u>			
Biomedical Redevelopment	1400	1400	0
Neighborhood Business Districts	<u>250</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>0</u>
	1650	1650	0
<u>Other Housing</u>			
Emergency and Transitional *	355	55	0
Minor Home Repair	250	250	0
Disability Modifications	25	25	0
Paint Program (GWCBC)	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	665	365	0
<u>Public Services</u>			
Community Services	460	460	0
Fair Housing	90	90	0
Neighborhood Partnership Program	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	600	600	0
Program Implementation	1725	1550	175
General Administration	<u>295</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>195</u>
	2020	1650	370
Consolidated Plan Total	9065	6815	1950