

ACTION PLAN

Fiscal Year 2005-2006



**City of Decatur, Alabama
Community Development Department
February 14, 2005**

2005 - 2006 Action Plan Narrative

The City of Decatur’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan goes into great detail outlining the needs of the community. Specifically, Tables 2A and 2B shows that the proposed activities in our 2005 – 2006 Action Plan were all given a “High” Priority Need Level (Appendix #2).

The City of Decatur will allocate investments geographically within our jurisdiction during the next year (4/1/05 – 3/31/06) to the following priority projects (Table 3, Appendix #2)

1. Program Administration	\$122,380	(20%)
2. City Wide Public Services	\$91,786	(15%)
3. Housing – Down Payment Assistance	\$66,900	
4. Public Facilities		
a. Senior Community Resource Center	\$300,000	
b. NWCDC/Northwest Decatur Historical Review	\$30,847	
Total Budgeted Amount	\$611,913	

Program Administration

This activity involves the general administrative activities required by the CDBG program in maintaining accountability for the expenditure of CDBG funds by the City of Decatur. The City proposes using these funds toward the salary and benefits for three positions in the Community Development Department. Supplies, professional services, vehicle expenses, training and seminars will also be paid for out of this activity. The City is proposing budgeting \$122,380 toward this activity (20% of our Grant).

City Wide Public Services

This activity consist of funds totaling \$91,786 for 11 Public Service providers whose main focus is that of assisting low and moderate income individuals (see descriptions on pg. 5). All of the Public Service Providers selected are carrying out activities that address our Community Development Needs as outlined on Table 2B in our Consolidated Plan (Appendix #2). Our providers will be addressing Handicapped Service Needs (High), Health Services (High), Other Public Service Needs (Medium), Youth Services (High), Other Youth Programs (High), and Senior Services (High). Accomplishments for these activities are located on Table 3 in Appendix #2.

Housing - Down Payment Assistance

As outlined in our Consolidated Plan, Homeownership Assistance, in the form of Down Payment Assistance to home buyers, was one of our goals. Our goal for 2005-2006 is to provide assistance to 20 families in obtaining a home (Table 2A, Appendix #2). Accomplishments for these activities are located on Table 3 in Appendix #2.

The Down Payment Assistance Activity (#3 above) will benefit low and moderate income residents citywide, with priority being given to persons locating in neighborhoods with 50% or less homeowner occupancy (Appendix #3). The reason for giving priority to these neighborhoods is due to the fact that the majority of our Code Enforcement complaints come from the Northwest and Goodyear/Grant Street Target Area. These areas also have the lowest number of owner occupied housing in the City. Our strategy for addressing the goal of increasing homeownership in these areas will hopefully decrease the amount of Code Enforcement violations in the Target Area and increase the potential for residential investments in these neighborhoods. This Activity meets our Housing Priority #1 – Promote Homeownership listed in the Executive Summary on page 7. Accomplishments for these activities are located on Table 3 in Appendix #2.

Over the past 3 years, the City of Decatur has allocated more than \$340,000 for our Down Payment Assistance Program we have named – Decatur H.O.M.E. (Home Ownership Made Easy). During this time period we have assisted 130 families in reaching the American Dream of homeownership throughout the City Limits (Appendix #3). Since the City of Decatur does not receive HOME funds, we decided to use a portion of our CDBG grant annually for this worthwhile activity. We estimate the total number of minority households expected to be assisted in becoming homeowners to be 15 during the 2005-2006 Action Plan time period.

Public Facilities

The Public Facilities Activities (#4a above) include the completion of our Senior Community Resource Center which is located in our Northwest CDBG Target Area (Appendix #3). The Northwest Target Area is 90 African-American with a growing senior population. This Activity meets both our Social Services Priority #4 – Seniors and other special groups support, and Neighborhood/Economic Development Priority #3 – Public Facilities Investment listed in the Executive Summary on page 9. The City of Decatur and the community started planning for a Senior Community Resource Center in 1999. After a series of meetings with residents and HUD and City officials, the decision was made to acquire a warehouse in 2000, located in a residential district in one of our target areas, and transform it into a space that could be used for Senior activities, community events and meetings, and educational and cultural programs. Construction began on the facility in 2004 and occupancy will take place in 2005.

The facility has office space that will be used by local non-profits and the Decatur Police Department; a computer lab that will be used for Adult Education in partnership with Calhoun Community College; and meeting rooms and an auditorium that will be used by Senior residents in the target area as well as other citizens and groups throughout the City. The City will develop a fee schedule for use of the facility by local groups/individuals, and will maintain and operate the facility with both CDBG and City General Fund dollars.

The Northwest Community Development Corporation (NWCDC) /Northwest Decatur Historical Review Activity (#4b above) will meet our Neighborhood/Economic Development Priority #1 – Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area on page 9 of the Executive Summary. Through this activity we will encourage and support programs that will lead to residential and economic investment in the Northwest Target Area.

Resources

The federal resources and private and non-federal public resources expected to be available to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the 2005 Action Plan are as follows:

2005 Community Development Block Grant	\$585,913
2005 Program Income	\$26,000
2005 Total Available Resources	\$611,913
Decatur General Fund Support (Target Area Code Enforcement Officer Salary)	\$32,994

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

As outlined in our Consolidated Plan, and in our Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) Plan, Northwest Decatur is a predominately African-American community that has been a CDBG Target Area for many years (Appendix #3). The majority of our activities will either take place in the Northwest Target Area (Area Benefit), or benefit citizens living in this Target Area. We are specifically proposing to provide an Area Benefit in the Northwest Target Area, in the form of the Senior Community Resource Center and a Northwest Decatur Historical Review Study; City Wide Public Services benefiting our L/M Income residents; and City Wide Down Payment Assistance to first time home buyers – with priority being given to person buying homes in neighborhoods with less than 50% homeowner occupancy (Appendix #3)

HOMELESS AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS ACTIVITIES

The City of Decatur, along with the United Way of Morgan County, the Morgan / Lawrence County Chapter of the American Red Cross and Crisis Services of North Alabama are members of the North Alabama Coalition on the Homeless (NACH). Currently, a member of the Decatur Delegation serves on the Executive Committee, and all members attend monthly meetings on a regular basis. NACH is charged with homeless prevention activities throughout North Alabama, and we are actively working toward the Elimination of Chronic Homelessness.

OTHER ACTIONS

The City of Decatur is committed to fostering decent housing through our Down Payment Assistance Program and by the City's continued financial support of Code Enforcement Activities in both the Target Areas and City Wide.

The City of Decatur does not propose to fund any public housing improvements, but does meet with public housing residents monthly at the District One Community Meeting. This meeting takes place at the Carrie Matthews Recreation Facility which is located across the street from a public housing development. The Decatur Housing Authority and the City of Decatur work together on several projects and supports each others efforts in making Decatur a better place to live for all.

Community Development Staff members visually inspect all homes that first time homebuyers select for purchase in an attempt to evaluate and reduce lead-based paint hazards in our City. Staff has been trained to be able to detect potential lead-based paint hazards, and they advise the potential homebuyers of any concerns before a contract is signed. If detected problems are not corrected by the seller, federal funds are not used toward the purchase of questionable properties.

The City of Decatur works with the Decatur Business Incubator and the Decatur/Morgan County Chamber of Commerce Work Force Development Board to find ways to encourage businesses to not only locate in our community, but to hire persons from our Target Areas. The Decatur Business Incubator is committed to providing space, at a reduced rate, to persons wanted to start micro-enterprise businesses with the condition that they make every attempt to employ residents from our Target Areas.

The City of Decatur continues to work with the Building Department and Planning Department, and local builders/rehabilitation specialist, to improve the quality of the housing stock in our Target Areas. The Community Development Department's Code Enforcement Staff works very closely with Building Inspectors in making sure that International Codes are followed using practices that insure the integrity of our housing stock while using affordable practices when practical.

The Decatur Housing Authority is not a troubled public housing agency.

MONITORING STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

The City of Decatur currently receives only CDBG funds direct from HUD. The Department of Community Development has the responsibility for administering these program dollars. The specific nature of that responsibility involves documenting the needs, developing plans and carrying out approved program, projects and activities in compliance with state and federal regulations. This responsibility also includes ensuring that sub-recipients of funds carry out their program according to applicable laws and regulations.

The monitoring procedures and process is designed and implemented to assure the following:

- * The projects are developed and implemented according to all applicable local, state, federal laws and procedures;
- * The project funded through sub-recipients follow all local, state, federal policies and regulations;
- * Charges against projects are eligible cost and in accordance to applicable regulations and the grant agreement.
- * Projects are managed and carried out in a timely manner;
- * Programs have procedures in place to protect against fraud;
- * Sub-recipients remain capable of fulfilling the scope of their agreements; and
- * All other applicable laws are being adhered to.

Management of Monitoring Activities

The monitoring procedures implemented involve both internal administrative monitoring and field monitoring.

To assure that the City fulfills the goals of the Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plan, internal administrative monitoring involves review and analysis of the following:

1. Approved application
2. Grant agreements and contracts
3. Environmental and historic significance reviews
4. Drawdown request for reimbursement
5. Budget updates or changes
6. Litigation matters
7. Citizen complaints
8. Audit reports
9. Monthly project update reports
10. Annual CAPER
11. Monthly review of Goal and Objective status per activity
12. Monthly review of the timeliness of the overall grant and approved activities

Field monitoring involves the City conducting:

- * Periodic on-site monitoring of project and program activities
- * Neighborhood site reconnaissance, specifically target neighborhoods
- * Visits for all sub-recipients (at least once during the program and once after completion of the sub-recipient program)

The internal and external management and monitoring activities will cover the following:

Review and Monitoring Activities

- * Applicant meeting threshold criteria
- * Grant or regulatory agreement, to include compliance requirements
- * Environmental review (including flood insurance, historic preservation)
- * Local record keeping requirements
- * Review of drawdown of funds
- * Real property acquisition
- * Labor standards (wage decisions/payroll/reviews/employee interviews)
- * Housing rehabilitation (program guidelines, housing quality standards, write up/cost estimates, inspections)
- * Review of operations/maintenance, essential services and homeless prevention services cost.
- * New Housing Construction
- * Fair Housing/EEO
- * Close out report (review)
- * Financial and compliance audits

2005-2006 CDBG Public Service Subrecipients

P.A.C.T. – (Parents and Children Together) works to prevent child abuse and neglect by providing family strengthening programs to Decatur residents by providing transportation assistance to families enrolled in their Welfare to Work Program.

Funding Amount: \$2,500.00

Program

The Caring Car Program

This program will assist in repairing 10 donated cars to low income Decatur residents enrolled in their Welfare to Work Program for transportation to and from work.

Decatur Department of Youth Services - provides youth in the City of Decatur with safe after school and summer enrichment activities.

Funding Amount: \$49,286.00

Program

Decatur Youth Services Programs

These programs will assist approximately 350 youth through activities including Educational Enrichment Programs such as tutoring, computer lab assistance, performing arts and educational field trips, vocational training, and summer recreational activities.

Decatur Youth Enrichment - provides educational, cultural and psychological enrichment for Decatur youth and senior citizens.

Funding Amount: \$4,500.00

Program

Decatur Youth Enrichment Programs

These programs will assist approximately 100 youth through activities including a read to me program for Spanish Speaking youth and an educational field trip.

Mental Health Association of Morgan County – provides services for mentally ill residents in the City of Decatur.

Funding Amount: \$6,000.00

Program

Alzheimer's Patients and Family Project Care

This program will provide incontinence products, nutritional supplements, and respite care to 15 low income families caring for Alzheimer family members.

Volunteer Center of Morgan County – meets critical community needs by mobilizing volunteers and providing assistance to families in need.

Funding Amount: \$6,000.00

Program

Senior Citizen Emergency Relief Program

Friend to Friend Mentoring Program

The Senior Citizen Emergency Relief Program will provide elderly disabled individuals with 5,000 BTU air conditioning window units and wheelchair ramps if deemed necessary by their primary care physician. The Friend to Friend Mentoring Program pairs community leaders with at risk youth. Funds will be used to defray a portion of the expenses associated with the mentoring program.

Decatur Police Department A.C.E.S. Program - provides safe summer alternatives for Decatur youth.

Funding Amount: \$10,000.00

Program

ACES (Alternative Choices)

This program will provide 350 at risk youth with summer activities over a 5 week period.

U.M.R.A. (United Methodist Residential Alternatives) was established to develop, maintain, and operate residential facilities for adults with mental retardation.

Funding Amount: \$5,000.00

Program

This program will assist with utility payments associated with the operation of 6 group homes with a total of 20 residents with mental retardation in Decatur.

King James Communications Alternative School of Choice – provides tuition free educational opportunities for “at risk” students in Decatur.

Funding Amount: \$2,000.00

Program

GED Preparation materials for training program and necessary equipment (computer software) to support program.

Decatur Cadet Corp, Inc. – provides services for low income individuals in Decatur.

Funding Amount: \$2,000.00

Program

School supplies and education equipment for students in after school and summer programs.

The Arc of Morgan County – provides services for the physically and mentally challenged in Morgan County.

Funding Amount: \$2,500.00

Program

Provide funding for a chain link fence for affordable housing units for two physically and mentally challenged families with children.

Even Start Literacy Program – provides GED and literacy programs for L/M income adults, many of whom use English as their second language, and provides educational child care for participants during programming.

Funding Amount: \$2,000.00

Program

Provide funding for the purchase of educational equipment for adults and children, and supplies for educational instruction and infant care.

Citizen Participation

All public comments received at Public Hearings on October 5, 2004, November 16, 2004, and December 7, 2004 are listed in the Citizen Participation Appendix # 4. All of the Public meetings were advertised in the Decatur Daily, per our Citizen Participation Plan, and held at the Carrie Matthews Recreation Facility located in the Northwest Target Area. The minutes from these meetings are also included in Appendix #4.

The Proposed 2005 – 2010 Consolidated Plan and 2005-2006 Action Plan were available for public review and comment from December 31, 2004 through January 31, 2005 at the Wheeler Basin Regional Library, the Decatur Housing Authority, the Carrie Matthews Recreation Facility, and the Community Development Department Office. This information was advertised in the Decatur Daily on December 31, 2004. Our department did not receive any comments on the Proposed 2005 – 2010 Consolidated Plan or the 2005-2006 Action Plan. These plans, along with the Citizen Participation Plan and 2005 – 2010 Fair Housing Plan were adopted and approved by the City Council of the City of Decatur on February 7, 2005 – Resolution No. 00-033.