



Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA)

**Wednesday, February 8, 2006
Regular Meeting**

Item X3

Housing Efforts Report

Staff Contact: Chad Nabity

February 3, 2006

To: Community Redevelopment Authority Members

From: Chad Nabity, Director

Re: Partnering with the Community Development Division regarding housing issues

The Community Development Division of the Hall County Regional Planning Department has been involved in housing and housing issues in Grand Island for over 30 years. They have participated in demolishing, building, buying, and rehabilitating housing.

The Community Development Division will continue to facilitate housing programs and address community housing issues well into the future. Based on the interest of the CRA board in housing issues, Community Development would be a good partner in carrying out the purposes and programs of the CRA. Considering the expertise and experience available in the Community Development Division and the commitment of the CRA to housing, it makes sense to explore the possibilities of partnerships between the two groups.

Marsha Kaslon, Community Development Administrator, will be at the meeting on February 8th, to explain the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Community Revitalization Program. The City of Grand Island expects to receive almost \$300,000 a year for at least the next 3 years from this program. Most of that money will be targeted to housing and housing issues in the CRA Area #1. This may be exactly the type of partnership for housing that the CRA Board wishes to pursue.

Excerpted from the proposal to offer services to the CRA submitted to the City of Grand Island from the Hall County Regional Planning Department in May 2005

The City of Grand Island was empowered by Community Development Law to create the Community Redevelopment Authority to aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and/or blight in the City Of Grand Island. *The Law specifically identifies community development and elimination of blighted and substandard areas within the community as important components of the CRA.*

The Community Development mission is “To enhance the quality of life in Grand Island by building partnerships with citizens to consistently provide services that meet the growing needs of the community.”

The Community Development Division would be a good partner with Regional Planning in carrying out the purposes and programs of the CRA. The incorporation of the CRA would allow the Community Development Division to appropriately identify and address building issues and needs, address improvements to land, buildings, streets, utilities, parks, sidewalks, lighting, skywalks and many other public-related areas, and to provide Tax Increment Financing to selected, eligible redevelopment projects.

Community Development has been a strong past partner with the CRA in collaboration on the following projects:

- Upper Level Development Downtown
219 W. 3rd St. \$5,000 grant and interest buy-down on \$17,000
- Single Family Housing Development
Lincolnview Estates, 9th and Lambert \$100,000
- Multifamily Housing Development
415 S Cherry St. (120 Units) TIF
- Other complementing projects include:
 - Contribution of \$26,500 to Senior Center for infrastructure
 - Demolition of Bill's Trading Post, 7th & Plum; 419 N. Vine; 805 E. 9th and other substandard structures in the CDBG project area
 - Demolition of substandard housing, which was replaced by new and Down payment provided by Community Development for first time home buyer
 - Cited matching funds from the CRA in Community Development Block Grant application for demolition and acquisition grant project
 - \$5,000 match provided by CRA for Community Development, 2000 Housing Study Planning Grant

Working to establish a housing advocate position to work as liaison between renters/landlords and landlords/renters

Community Development acts as grant administrator for Economic Development grants, which are often co-funded through TIF or with infrastructure and/or façade improvement.

In addition, portions of several CRA redevelopment areas overlap with the existing CDBG Project Area and will overlap with the area that will be designated in the Community Revitalization study.

The Community Development Division is already familiar with obtaining and securing affordable housing for the residents of Grand Island in the CDBG Project area in northeast Grand Island. In May, the Division was awarded a Comprehensive Revitalization grant through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to "develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, particularly for low and moderate-income persons." This grant encompasses the following possible activities

- Infrastructure revitalization coordinated with potential projects of the City of Grand Island Public Works and Utilities Departments. These may include improvements, replacements and repairs to streets, electrical lines, water/storm sewer/sanitary sewer distribution lines, drainage improvements and sidewalk installation or repair.
- Housing revitalization which may include funding for first-time homebuyers through down payment assistance, owner-occupied rehabilitation; lead-based paint inspections; purchase of MUD homes for resale to low-to-moderate income homebuyers; and acquisition or demolition of substandard housing.
- Public facilities revitalization, which may include updates to existing community meeting facilities or construction of tornado-safe shelters

The Community Development Division has the capacity from past experience and training to assist with tasks of the CRA and benefit the City of Grand Island to reduce duplication of services and to serve the citizens of Grand Island. Community Development is a fully funded division of Regional Planning and is capable of facilitating the programs of the CRA as a function of the City using property tax dollars.

Submitted by Marsha Kaslon and Joni Kuzma

May 20, 2005