



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Pennsylvania State Office
The Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3380

The Honorable Gabriel J. Campana
Mayor of Williamsport
City Hall
245 West Fourth Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

MAY 6 2010

Dear Mayor Campana:

SUBJECT: Annual Community Assessment
Williamsport, Pennsylvania
January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009

The provisions of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, and the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, require the annual submission of performance reports by grant recipients receiving Federal assistance through programs covered under these Acts. Additionally, these Acts require that a determination be made by the Secretary that the grant recipient is in compliance with the statutes and has the continuing capacity to implement and administer the programs for which assistance is received.

The Consolidated Plan regulations at 24 CFR 91.525 require this Department to evaluate and report to the public on a community's overall progress in the management of its program funds; compliance with the Consolidated Plan; the accuracy of performance reports; and the extent to which progress has been achieved toward the statutory goals identified in Section 91.1. This letter serves to apprise you of our assessment of Williamsport's overall progress.

In making our evaluation, we relied primarily upon the City's submission of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for Fiscal Year 2009. This report summarized accomplishments made with funds provided from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program. In addition, we took into account technical assistance, follow up conversations with the City's staff, and the handling of citizen comments and complaints. This letter is a summary of our review of Williamsport's overall performance.

As you know, under the update to the Part 91 Consolidated Planning regulations that came into effect March 13, 2006, all Annual Action Plans and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPER) are required to include Performance Measures as part of their annual reporting. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has deemed this information necessary to validate the continued funding of HUD programs. The City provided Performance Measures as required by the new guidance.

The HUD timeliness requirement is that a community may have no more than 1.5 times their most recent annual grant remaining in the line of credit 60 days prior to the end of their program year. When the 60-day timeliness test was conducted on November 2, 2009, it was calculated that the City had a balance in its Line of Credit of 1.47 times its annual grant and is apparently in compliance with the 1.5 timeliness standard.

During the 2009 program year, the City has expended 95.8 percent of its CDBG funds for activities benefiting low/moderate income persons, which meets the Primary Objective of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. In addition, the City obligated 0.46 percent of funds on public service activities which meets the 15 percent regulatory cap. Williamsport also obligated 19.5 percent of its funds on planning and administration, less than the 20 percent regulatory cap.

The City has met the HOME requirements for expenditure by committing all funds to projects within two years and expending funds within five years. The requirement to provide at least 15 percent of HOME funding to Community Housing Development Organizations has also been achieved. We also remind grantees that all HOME projects should be closed within 120 days of their final draw.

The City included in its CAPER their role in affirmatively furthering Fair Housing and identifying impediments to Fair Housing. The City has continued its Homebuyers program to help low to moderate-income residents purchase single-family units. To disseminate fair housing information, the Community Development Office mailed flyers to banks, credit unions, and realtors and placed a "Fair Housing Notice" in the Williamsport Sun-Gazette and on the City's website. It advised all residents that certain actions, if based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, handicap are considered to be discriminatory. According to the notice, residents are directed to contact the City Fair Housing Officer, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, or the HUD Office of Fair Housing to file complaints.

To address lead-based paint hazard reduction, in 2009 the rehabilitation program limits were increased to compensate for the increased costs. All Rehabilitation Specialist have completed "Visual Assessment Training" and attended "Safe Work Practice Training for Contractors". One staff member is a certified Pennsylvania Risk Assessor and performs clearance testing for rehabilitation cases. Testing has been contracted to a certified lead base paint inspection firm from Harrisburg. The City is sponsoring a "Certified Renovator Initial Training Course" for contractors in March 2010. The City has also publicized the Lead Paint Rule changes. Beginning in April 2010, contractors performing renovation, maintenance, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, childcare or child occupied facilities, and schools built before 1978, must be certified and must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. To be certified they must register with the EPA as a Certified Renovator Firm.

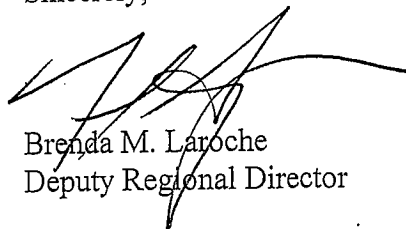
During 2009, the City received a total of \$339,198 of CDBG-R (Community Development Block Grant Recovery) and \$518,859 of HPRP (Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-Housing Program) funding. The program funding has been appropriated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). To date, the City has only expended 3.6% of its CDBG-R funding for a street reconstruction project which will be completed by June, 2010. In reference to HPRP, the City has expended 21% of its funding to two sub-recipients who are currently qualifying clients for the program. It is anticipated that drawdown of funds should occur more frequently. Based on our review, it appears the City has the capacity to carry out the programs and has met its reporting requirements.

We congratulate the City on its many accomplishments during this program year. Based on our review we have concluded that the City of Williamsport has the capacity to carry out its programs and has met its reporting requirements.

We ask that you review our assessment of your performance and provide any comments that you may have within 35 days of the date of this letter. Upon receipt, we will evaluate your comments and make any revisions that are deemed appropriate. If you do not have any comments, we request that you formally notify us of that fact within the 35-day timeframe. Where no comments are received within the designated timeframe, our initial letter will serve as our final assessment of the performance for this program year. To facilitate and expedite citizen access to our performance letter, we request that you inform the general public and interested citizens' organizations and non-profit entities of its availability. If, for any reason, the City chooses not to do so, please be advised that our Office is obligated to make the letter available to the public. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and members of your staff to accomplish Departmental goals and mutual objectives to develop viable urban communities. We would also be pleased to provide you with any information on resources that may be available to your community. If you need assistance, or if you have any questions concerning the content of this letter, please contact Mr. Nadab Bynum, Community Planning and Development Director, at (215) 861-7652, or Ms. Michelle Patterson, at (215) 861-7665. This Office may be reached via text telephone (TTY), by dialing (215) 656-3452.

Sincerely,



Acting

Brenda M. Laroche
Deputy Regional Director