

## **CHAPTER 6** **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIES, 2005-2009**

Historically, Evanston has been committed to a diverse community that is inclusive and encourages residents and institutions to work together to achieve a stronger community. As noted in Chapter 1, Evanston has numerous recent plans, programs, and policies related to housing, community development, and economic development. Some are city-wide and issue-specific, whereas others are neighborhood-specific and address a set of issues. Nearly all are in some stage of implementation. These efforts are having significant impacts, but to be sustained in the future, continued funding from HUD and other public and private sources is needed.

Per HUD requirements for the 2005-2009 HUD Consolidated Plan, City staff evaluated demographic and housing conditions (Chapters 1 and 2) and obtained input from the appropriate entities and the public (Chapter 3). Housing and non-housing needs have been identified (Chapters 4 and 5). To address these needs, strategies and objectives are listed in the five-year Strategic Plan (Chapter 6). The 2005-2009 Strategic Plan is a substantial continuation of existing/ongoing activities that the Consolidated Plan process indicated should continue and be enhanced. It focuses on neighborhood revitalization in accordance with HUD's statutory goals for the Consolidated Plan:

- (1) To provide decent housing;
- (2) To create communities with suitable living environment; and
- (3) To expand economic opportunities.

Geographically, the Strategic Plan focuses on city-wide efforts and those in CDBG Target Areas in south and west Evanston. These neighborhoods are eligible for assistance with HUD resources and are positioned to leverage other public and private funds for revitalization. Individuals throughout the city who are income eligible are the primary beneficiaries of the Strategic Plan, with the secondary benefits of revitalized CDBG Target Area neighborhoods to be felt city-wide.

The Annual Action Plan is the primary tool to guide decision-making on timely action items and appropriate funding. It is derived from the five-year Strategic Plan and contains annual goals based on current conditions. The progress of approved projects is reported in the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER).

### **A. Anti-Poverty Strategy**

Evanston is one of the most diverse communities in Illinois. There are very wealthy residents but also very poor residents. The 2000 Census indicated that roughly 10% of Evanston residents had incomes below the poverty level, as noted in Chapter 1. Poverty is concentrated in west Evanston and along the eastern part of the Howard Street corridor.

Poverty is evident within the public schools, in public housing, in the number of current and prospective Housing Choice Voucher holders, in the General Assistance Program of Evanston Township, and in the offices of numerous social service providers funded by CDBG. Severe poverty is visible in the community homeless shelter and within the soup kitchens operated by churches in Evanston. For this reason, the strategy to address poverty is multi-faceted.

The City is committed to alleviating poverty to the extent possible in partnership with the private sector, institutions, citizen organizations, the school districts, other governmental agencies, and self-help activities of Evanston residents. The anti-poverty strategy includes maintenance issues, such as continuing funding of shelters and soup kitchens with Emergency Shelter Grant funds. It also involves funding legal counsel to assist eligible residents with a wide variety of legal problems. Job training and placement programs address critical income earning needs, and the City's economic development

strategy attempts to create economic opportunities that can be captured by low and moderate income residents. Creating stronger child care centers are essential elements of this strategy so that single parents can work while knowing their children are safe and nurtured.

Decent shelter and housing improvements are an important part of the City's strategy. Through partnerships with housing development organizations and private developers, new housing has been created for persons in poverty, and rehabilitation loans have assisted many eligible households in improving the safety and condition of their homes. Health problems associated with deteriorating housing are a concern, including lead based paint abatement. Evanston also has an excellent free health clinic in the Civic Center for income eligible residents.

Neighborhood planning has become an essential tool to enable residents to identify needs and opportunities and access resources and partners to make moderate income neighborhoods healthier. Infrastructure, city services, private investment, security, housing, and economic development have been the focal points of the neighborhood planning process which strengthens community development.

The emergence of new community based development organizations has been promising in the past two years in west Evanston. Both organizations have a housing focus but are committed to a wider variety of community development priorities including local employment, micro enterprise development and local leadership development, and community organizing.

Leadership development and capacity building also is an important part of an anti-poverty strategy. This occurs for all ages in a variety of institutions, processes and in employment. For young people, it is most likely to occur in schools and community institutions. Evanston's strong elementary and secondary school systems contribute greatly to this development and are partners in the City's community development strategy.

### **B. Local Planning and Regional Coordination Strategy**

Suburban planning in the United States traditionally has emphasized land use regulatory activities and long term land use planning strategies, with less emphasis on programmatic and project activities aimed at revitalization. Evanston's Planning and Zoning Divisions address land use responsibilities, but the community's history and challenges have led to the development of plans, programs, and policies for housing, community revitalization, and economic development (as noted in Chapter 1) that are more typical of larger cities than suburbs of comparable size. The City of Evanston is the lead agency for planning and coordinating the implementation of most efforts described in Chapter 1.

The 2000 Comprehensive Plan, together with the five-year HUD Consolidated Plan and the annual Capital Improvement Plan, establish the City's major development priorities and are the responsibility of the Planning Division. The HUD Consolidated Plan process, citizen based neighborhood planning, and several of the City's housing activities are facilitated and implemented by the Planning Division as part of the City's neighborhood revitalization strategy. This strategy places enhancement of Evanston's low and moderate income neighborhoods as one of the City's highest priorities. The CDBG and HOME programs are crucial to neighborhood revitalization and are administered by the Planning Division per HUD requirements. The Planning Division also staffs six citizen Boards and Commissions that address community development priorities. In addition to local planning activities, City staff participate in discussions and efforts on regional issues, which may include but are not limited to regional housing strategies and enhancement of public transit.

### **C. CDBG Target Area / Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy**

Since the mid-1990s, Evanston's neighborhood planning efforts have focused attention and resources on strengthening its neighborhoods. The stated goal is to promote the quality of life, physical environment, and economic health of its neighborhoods and to help them realize their full potential. At its

heart is a broad based public participation process which serves as a forum in which all stakeholders - residents, businesses, developers, community groups and organizations, elected and appointed officials, and City staff – are able to focus on identifying, prioritizing, and addressing neighborhood issues and problems.

### 1. Neighborhood Plans

Within the CDBG Target Area, the plans resulting from the neighborhood planning process—the 1996 Southeast Evanston Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan and the 2004 Neighborhood Planning Report for the Canal-Green Bay Road-Ridge Avenue-Church Street Study Area—serve as the principal vehicles for reaching consensus on community development priorities and developing the revitalization strategies described below. The 1996 plan for southeast Evanston is in implementation, and the 2004 plan for west Evanston soon will be in implementation, per the action matrix of short-term and long-term action items in Appendix 1.6.

#### a. Neighborhood Greening and Beautification

An overarching goal is to create an environment in which neighborhood pride is defined by its members and communicated through local public and private improvements. Community members consistently expressed the opinion that creating an interesting, attractive, and unique neighborhood is an important part of their vision of the future.

Neighborhood residents, property and business owners would like more input prior to sidewalk replacement projects. They would also like to see a more active street tree planting and the encouragement of private landscaping initiatives. Brighter, more attractive street lighting is desired in both residential areas and neighborhood business districts.

Finally, both residents and local business associations would like to capitalize on west Evanston's function as an entryway to downtown Evanston. They would like to establish neighborhood gateway features on the major thoroughfares of the community.

- Widen sidewalks and increase the use of street trees, particularly along major arterials.
- Conduct neighborhood visioning workshops to establish neighborhood gateway features.
- Encourage voluntary greening and beautification projects amongst residents and local business groups.
- Retrofit existing Tallmadge street lights in the neighborhood with new high voltage bulbs.
- Switch from davit arm lighting to Tallmadge poles in neighborhood business districts.

#### b. Access and Safety for Persons with Disabilities

Provide improvements requested by local residents for greater safety and mobility and which enable them to participate more fully in the community:

- Install emergency phones and 24-hour lighting along pedestrian paths in neighborhood parks.
- Provide traffic signs alerting motorists to the presence of wheel chair users on neighborhood streets and arterials.
- Continue curb and sidewalk replacement program to increase wheelchair accessibility.

#### c. Neighborhood Parking

- Explore ways to increase on-street and off-street neighborhood parking options.

d. Infrastructure Improvements

Provide improvements necessary to neighborhood revitalization. Better water service, both for domestic and fire safety purposes is a critical need for new projects in southeast Evanston. City assistance in creating additional parking will assist CDBG Target Area residential and commercial developers in competing with other locations.

- Upgrade water delivery system and local service in southeast Evanston, beginning with the Howard Street TIF district.

e. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation and Safety

Address pedestrian and vehicular safety and circulation needs highlighted in the neighborhood planning process. Provide solutions to problems created by the mix of non-residential uses and traffic generators within areas of homes, parks, and recreational facilities.

- Conduct a west Evanston neighborhood traffic study to consider vehicular and pedestrian circulation, existing and proposed land use mix, and other local access needs.

f. Children, Youth, and Family Support

A top priority of the community is preparing its youth for a better future. Strategies needed to achieve this must address youth from birth to young adulthood. Businesses have indicated that they would support more local workforce development programs. The need for recreational programming in southeast Evanston exceeds that currently offered.

- Continue to expand current child care services and after-school programs for low and moderate income families.
- Expand focus of counseling and mentoring programs for youth to include family services, parenting skills, and adult mentoring.
- Sharpen the focus on youth job training programs on marketable skills/careers and improve their marketing and outreach function.
- Expand secondary and continuing educational program offerings to include vocational training, trade certification, and apprenticeship programs tied to new construction, rehab projects, or businesses in the CDBG Target Area.
- Improve existing community GED programming by adding more evening, weekend, web-based, and bilingual instruction.
- Conduct a needs analysis for youth recreational programming in southeast Evanston and coordinate staff and facilities to deliver needed services.

g. Neighborhood Housing Center

Establish a local housing center to promote homeownership and provide financial and technical assistance. Community members expressed interest in a variety of seminar topics, including home improvement programs, the wise use of home equity, predatory lending practices, real estate tax relief for seniors, and proper tenant screening practices.

- Establish a Neighborhood Housing Services Center.

h. Anti-Crime and Enhanced Community Policing

Reduce the effect of crime, vandalism, gang activity, and other anti-social behaviors within the CDBG Target Area neighborhoods.

- Hire an independent facilitator to study and to address attitudinal barriers between the Evanston Police Department and community.

i. Community Cohesiveness

Increase the capacity of west Evanston neighborhood groups and organizations to work together on a variety of issues and strengthen the sense of community.

- Beginning with west Evanston, conduct a census of neighborhood groups and organizations in the City.
- Utilize a community organizer to assist west Evanston community stakeholders in improving the degree to which they communicate and cooperate on common interests and problems.
- Develop a community web site to report local events and programs.
- Re-establish an umbrella organization for Evanston's neighborhood associations and organizations for the purpose of addressing common problems and issues.

j. Economic Empowerment

Provide assistance and resources to businesses and developments that will provide job and technical training, local employment, and needed commercial retail.

- Provide technical and financial assistance to attract and "grow" new businesses and micro-enterprises in the CDBG Target Area.
- Focus entrepreneurial assistance on local minority and female businesses.
- Work with local employers and institutions on workforce development programs for trades, technology, and services. Tie programs with new development and businesses.
- Provide technical and financial assistance for redeveloping neighborhood sites idled or abandoned due to environmental contamination.
- Expand capital assistance for façade improvements, business district improvement plans, and promotions.

2. Neighborhood Plan Implementation

Since its adoption in October 1996, implementation of the *Southeast Evanston Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan* has focused City efforts on several projects affecting Howard Street and adjacent neighborhoods. One of the issues identified by the plan was the need to improve the aesthetics of public areas in the neighborhood, particularly that of the Howard Street commercial corridor. Several City-funded actions have addressed this issue.

In recent years, the City provided CDBG money to fund beautification efforts of the Citizens Planning Committee (CPC). In the program's initial year, CPC volunteers purchased, installed, and filled with annuals several concrete planters along Custer Street. The CPC has since taken ownership of the program. Each year these planters are replanted and maintained by group members, using donations solicited from neighborhood residents.

A more attractive and pedestrian friendly streetscape for both sides of Howard Street, the city's southern boundary, was constructed in 2002. This street forms the boundary between Evanston and Chicago, and the project's total \$3 million cost was split between the two cities. Evanston funded its half of the project with CDBG and Capital Improvement fund dollars.

In 2004, the City used CDBG funds to rehabilitate a beautification project at Oakton and Custer, originally created in 1997. Work included repairing a flagstone carriage walk and replanting perennials on the intersection's four corners. The original project also constructed low, masonry walls on each corner which remain in good condition.

Another set of issues identified by the plan focused on the need for economic development for the Howard Street commercial corridor. These include the persistent presence of vacant storefronts, the lack of diverse businesses and basic services, and the lack of incentives that encourage new development.

In 2001, the City convened a series of developer focus groups to obtain the private sector's impressions of the problems and possible opportunities for desirable redevelopment. At the request of these developers, the City used CDBG funds to commission a housing market study by Tracy Cross and Associates. This report found a heightened level of opportunity for mid-price townhouse and condominium development, which would be competitive with similar developments in outlying Chicago neighborhoods. In 2004, the City established a new Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) for this portion of Howard Street. Proceeds from the TIF will be used to upgrade water service to the area and provide other financial assistance to desirable redevelopment projects.

The City also has requested a study, to be financed by the Regional Transportation Authority, to investigate the market feasibility of adding one or more additional CTA Yellow Line stations in south Evanston. Formerly, there were stations at Ridge, Asbury and Dodge Avenues. Beginning in mid-2005, the CTA will be spending \$30 million to construct a new, ADA accessible Howard Street rapid transit station. The work will also include the rehabilitation of the existing station entrances, located directly on Howard Street.

The 2004 Canal-Green Bay Road/Ridge Avenue-Church Street Neighborhood Planning Report was recently adopted by the Plan Commission and forwarded to the City Council for its consideration and approval. Funding recommendations and resources for plan implementation are pending the Council's review and final action.

#### **D. City-Wide Strategies for HUD Consolidated Plan Goals**

##### **1. Strategy to Expand Economic Opportunities**

The City of Evanston's economic development strategy for 2005-2009 will focus on the following major activities, with funding sources noted:

- Neighborhood revitalization (CDBG, TIF, CIP, HOME, sales tax sharing);
- Downtown development (TIF, bonds, CIP, sales tax sharing);
- Tax base enhancement strategies (TIF, bonds, sales tax sharing);
- Job generating business development (industrial & commercial);
- Housing development (market rate financing, HOME assistance, Mayor's Special Housing Fund); and
- Redevelopment of distressed properties (TIF, sales tax sharing).

These activities will occur throughout the city, including CDBG Target Areas. Capturing the economic benefits of these activities for Evanston residents is an important element of the strategy. Tools which will be used to implement this strategy include:

- Tax Increment Financing Agreements;
- Public infrastructure investment;
- Sales tax sharing;
- Funding of local economic development organizations;
- Bond volume cap;
- New Markets Tax Credits (Federal);
- Historic Preservation tax credits (Federal); and
- Environmental/brownfields assessment and remediation assistance (State).

Specific projects to be completed in year 2005-2006 of the strategy include the following, with funding sources noted:

- Redevelopment of the former Main Street Commons Shopping Center (Builders Square) (sales tax sharing);
- Redevelopment of the former Belmont Steel site (no funding identified at this time);
- Completion of the Sherman Plaza Development (TIF);
- Implementation of the goals of the Howard Street TIF (TIF, CIP);
- Consideration of the proposed West Evanston TIF (TIF, HOME, CDBG, CIP);
- Implementation of the West Evanston Neighborhood Planning recommendations (HOME, CDBG, CIP);
- Completion of the downtown visioning process (Economic Development Fund);
- Revitalization of neighborhood business districts (façade rebate, CIP, CDBG);
- Implementation of the Chicago Avenue Streetscape - Phase I (market rate financing, CIP); and
- Completion of the revitalization of the Dempster Dodge Shopping Center (sales tax sharing).

## 2. Strategy to Provide a Suitable Living Environment

### a. Infrastructure Improvement Strategy

The City's draft Capital Improvement Plan for 2005-2009 was described in Chapter 1, with additional information in Appendix 1.4. This strategy includes all City expenditures for public infrastructure for the next five years, with specific budgeted projects for 2005-06. These projects include improvements to the right of ways (streets, alleys, sidewalks), public facilities, parks and recreation facilities, service infrastructure (sewer, water, etc.), parking facilities and systems required to maintain government functions (computer hardware and software, etc.).

Private utilities such as electric and gas utilities, phone, and cable companies are subject to municipal franchises and are monitored and dialogued with by the City to insure reliable service. This has been most noticeable in electric service reliability improvements that have affected all neighborhoods in the city, including CDBG Target Area neighborhoods. The engagement with the electric utility continues as part of a new three year franchise extension approved in July 2004.

Total capital expenditures proposed for 2005-2009 are \$98.5 million, and \$32.3 million is budgeted for 2005-2006.

### b. Public Services Strategy

As part of its services to the community, the City of Evanston provides funding to organizations that provide public or human services for the City's low and moderate income residents. The CDBG program's public services category is funded annually to the maximum allowable level of 15% of CDBG funds for the program year. The City's annual ESG entitlement is allocated towards programs and services to assist homeless persons and families in Evanston.

The City's goal for public services is to improve the safety and livability of neighborhoods and to improve the general welfare of low and moderate income residents. Five-year strategies include:

- Provide employment, job preparedness training, and job placement for Evanston's low and moderate income residents, including youth ages 14-24.
- Help meet day care needs of low and moderate income families.
- Provide for the basic needs of low and moderate income residents, including food, shelter, heat, clothing, safety, health care, emergency shelter, and access to legal services, employment, and jobs that provide a living wage.
- Provide services to residents with disabilities in order to integrate them into the community.
- Develop or increase recreational programs for low and moderate income residents.

- Provide assistance to Evanston's elderly residents, helping them to obtain access to benefits and services.
- Ensure that persons and property are protected.
- In conjunction with service providers, coordinate access to programs for the treatment of alcohol and substance abuse.
- Provide access to information for all residents by publishing informational materials in Spanish and other languages.
- Provide programs and services for underserved populations, such as female heads of households with children under age 18.
- Conduct educational programs to prevent foreclosures and predatory lending.
- Conduct outreach to families.
- Coordinate resources.
- Cooperate with neighborhood organizations in developing programs which will meet the needs of low income persons.

c. Public Facilities Strategy

Public facilities such as recreation centers, community centers, parks, and the lakefront need to be periodically renovated so their use can be maximized by residents and playground equipment is safe and accessible for disabled residents. Many of the public facilities and infrastructure improvements are funded by the City's Capital Improvement Plan. CDBG funds are utilized for park and community center improvements in CDBG Target Area neighborhoods.

The City's public facilities goal is to provide and maintain public facilities and infrastructure, enhance access to these facilities, and improve the livability of neighborhoods, particularly for low and moderate income persons. Five-year strategies include:

- Maintain the street system, including curb and sidewalk replacement, street and alley paving, and alley resurfacing which provide, safe, efficient, and convenient access to homes and business establishments.
- Ensure that there is sufficient parking in neighborhoods and the downtown business district and that parking lots and structures are maintained in safe condition and have sufficient lighting.
- Improve energy efficiency in recreation and other public buildings, and rehabilitate outdated and inadequate public buildings with special emphasis on making the buildings accessible to physically disabled persons.
- Ensure that public buildings, parks, and curb cuts are ADA-compliant to provide access for disabled residents.
- Provide and maintain recreation buildings, parks, and other open areas to meet the recreational needs of CDBG Target Area residents.
- Improve the safety of CDBG Target Area playgrounds to meet U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.
- Improve the physical appearance of the community, especially in the CDBG Target Area, through landscaping of parks, housing, commercial rehabilitation, and neighborhood cleanup.
- Strengthen the image of the community by emphasizing appearance and design in redevelopment and rehabilitation of public and private facilities that primarily serve low and moderate income persons.

### 3. Strategy to Provide Decent Housing

- Maintain existing affordable housing options and promote opportunities that increase the supply of affordable housing for low income households.
- Continue addressing barriers to affordable housing, which include:
  - High costs of housing, land, and new construction;
  - High property taxes;
  - Violations of the Fair Housing Ordinance; and
  - Zoning ordinances, property standards, and building codes that may be unreasonable, per periodic review.
- Provide funds and assistance for low income single family owner-occupants to rehab their homes.
- Provide low interest rehabilitation loans for existing rental properties with a majority of low income households.
- Provide funds and technical assistance for rental development projects that serve low income households.
- Provide funding for first time home purchase opportunities – new construction or rehabilitation.
- Promote owner financial education:
  - Refinancing issues / avoidance of predatory loans;
  - Home repair and maintenance; and
  - Credit or budget counseling.
- Promote educational workshops and/or home buyer clubs for prospective homeowners:
  - Responsibilities and benefits of homeownership;
  - What 'affordable' means;
  - Budgeting and saving;
  - Managing credit and addressing credit problems; and
  - Mortgage financing.
- Reduce vacant and boarded properties.
- Maintain property standards and enforce building codes.
- Reduce foreclosure actions through education and early intervention and explore efficient and equitable methods to turn around foreclosed properties.
- Explore downpayment and closing cost grants.
- Explore subsidies for affordable set-aside units in market rate developments.
- Promote a mix of incomes in assisted projects and in market rate development.
- Preserve existing subsidized rental units and public housing units.
- Ensure Fair Housing Opportunities are enforced and individuals seeking housing are not discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, familial status or national origin.
- Support housing efforts to address the needs of special needs populations: elderly and frail elderly; victims of domestic violence; youth at risk of becoming homeless; and persons with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, mental illness, substance abuse problems persons, and HIV/AIDS.
- Support housing efforts to address the needs of homeless persons for a variety of housing options and help end chronic homelessness.

Specific resources will be identified as individual actions that address strategies are identified. Resources may include the following:

- Mayor's Special Housing Fund through the City of Evanston
- First Time Homebuyers Program through the City of Evanston
- Federal CDBG Funds through the City of Evanston
- Federal HOME funds through the City of Evanston
- Local Lenders, Businesses and Foundations
- Private Developers' Contributions
- Community Investment Corporation

- Affordable Housing Program through the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago and participating member financial institutions
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund through Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA)
- City of Evanston Ceded Bond Volume Cap to IHDA
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits through IHDA
- Single Family Homeownership Program through IHDA
- HUD SuperNOFA Funds for Fair Housing activities
- Class 9 Affordable Housing Multi-family Rental Rehab Property Tax Rebate program through Cook County
- HUD Section 202 Housing for the Elderly
- HUD Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities
- Regional Partnership Initiative through IHDA (LIHTC and Project Based Housing Vouchers)

*a. Homeless Strategy*

*(1) Overarching Homeless Strategy*

- Maintain emergency and short term transitional services to prevent first time or recurring homelessness, including rental and utility assistance, Housing Choice Vouchers, case management services to families facing a crisis, and the 36 bed facility at Hilda's Place which offers short term (up to 6 months) transitional housing or emergency housing up to 3 nights.
- Maintain existing transitional housing programs: YWCA's Transitional Housing Program and Connections' New Beginnings for Young Families.
- Maintain permanent supportive housing for 10 mentally ill homeless individuals.
- Maintain 7 units of affordable housing for the disabled homeless.
- Expand services where possible to meet identified needs such as Spanish-speaking staff for an HIV Support group, computer access, daycare service for homeless toddlers, parenting skills training, and family counseling.
- Develop additional supportive housing for homeless families (including domestic violence families), find an appropriate housing model for long term homeless families, and identify an agency to undertake the program.
- Improve access by homeless individuals and families to mainstream resources throughout the Continuum of Care, with training for agencies and families.
- Expand participation in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) among agencies to coordinate, track, and analyze services and results.
- Foster community understanding of issues relating to homelessness with articles in local media, informational meetings among organizations and government officials, and material on available resources.
- Work toward regional approaches and solutions to homelessness through participation in the Regional Round Table.

*(2) Chronic Homelessness Strategy<sup>1</sup>*

- Provide as necessary those services that successfully prevent the development of chronic homelessness. Continue intensive outreach efforts, followed by assessment, supportive services, and appropriate housing. Continue the policy of not enabling long-term homelessness by limiting the stay at emergency shelter (Hilda's Place) unless persons are willing to address the causes of their homelessness and work with a case manager.
- Provide intensive street outreach to the unsheltered, followed by engagement and linkages to move the chronically homeless into stable, permanent housing. Maintain intensive outreach efforts in place serving all the sub-populations.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the Continuum of Care Housing Activity Chart (HUD 40076 COC-G) on pages 30-31 of Exhibit 1 Continuum of Care 2004, for specific emergency and transitional programs to be maintained.

- Provide either directly or through linkages, a comprehensive range of support services to enable the chronically homeless to move into and maintain a stable living environment. Increase the range of support services available to the chronically homeless to address identified needs.
- Increase the number of permanent supportive housing units for the chronically homeless. Individuals with a serious mental illness or a chronic substance abuse problem will need both stable housing and long-term support services. Some will need in-patient services, followed by permanent supportive housing. Increase the range of housing options by 46 permanent supportive housing units over the next 8 years.
- Develop new risk-reduction programs. There are 14 chronically homeless individuals who are mentally ill, not taking any medication, and actively abusing drugs. These individuals are among the most difficult to engage and serve and would profit from self-contained, risk reduction housing programs that provide shelter while slowly working to minimize harmful behaviors. Develop 14 risk reduction housing units within the next 6 years.
- Maintain and improve access to mainstream resources. In order to end chronic homelessness, we need to access as fully as possible all available mainstream resources. EAH will continue to provide training sessions available to all Evanston agencies by staff from mainstream resource providers and local agencies providing services to the homeless, expand participation in HMIS, and encourage use of RealBenefits to allow online application for various mainstream resource programs.
- Gather appropriate data concerning the chronically homeless in Evanston and the progress made in moving individuals into permanent housing and sustaining them. Collect accurate data in order to adapt or revise strategies. Collect more comprehensive data each year as additional providers participate in the HMIS.
- Address the societal factors causing homelessness. Continue working with other organizations and coalitions to increase the number of affordable rental units in Evanston in an effort to help prevent homelessness. Assist in developing 20 additional affordable rental units in Evanston in each of the next 8 years. Independently and in conjunction with the Regional Round Table, work to improve the current systems so that individuals are not discharged from institutions to homelessness. Improve protocols concerning discharge planning from 2 institutions within the next 3 years.

### (3) Resources for Homeless Strategies

The following resources for homeless strategies have been identified:

- HUD Homeless Assistance and Supportive Housing Programs;
- City of Evanston Mental Health Board; and
- HUD Emergency Shelter Grants.

#### b. Lead Based Paint Strategy

Lead based paint hazard remediation in Evanston has been an ongoing effort. Lead based paint hazards primarily are addressed through the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program in the City of Evanston's Health Department. Identification and repair of deteriorating paint is required through the property inspection process, and lead disclosure statements are required. Abatement or mitigation is required where lead paint hazards are identified.

Education for homeowners, landlords, and tenants is provided through media campaigns, health fairs, school based activities, day care outreach, and community presentations. Safe work practice education is offered to homeowners doing their own painting, maintenance, and renovation work.

Owners who do their own lead abatement work are required to attend an individualized safe lead removal education and training session provided by the Health Department. The owner must submit a safe lead removal plan that is approved by the Health Department prior to beginning abatement work.

By law, all children living in CDBG Target Areas must be screened for lead poisoning before entering school. All Evanston zip codes are targeted areas because of the age of the housing stock. Consequently, all Evanston children under age 6 must be screened for lead poisoning before entering school. Some children may be screened more than once, and children with elevated blood lead levels may be re-tested periodically.

When a child has an elevated blood lead level at or above 15 micrograms per deciliter, medical case management is provided. When the child has a lead level at 25 micrograms per deciliter or above, dwellings and daycare locations are investigated for lead hazards by Health Department Lead Inspectors/Assessors.

The City of Evanston has been awarded money from the Cook County Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program to help Evanston residents “get the lead out.” Owners with children on the premises who suspect the presence of lead on their property may be eligible for a grant to assist their rehabilitation efforts. City health inspectors will visit properties to test them for the presence of lead and to assess the owner’s qualifications for the grant program. Landlords in Evanston also can save money rehabilitating properties that they rent to families with children by qualifying for matching grants.

The following resources for lead based paint strategies have been identified:

- Cook County Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction Grant Program;
- HOME; and
- CDBG.

c. Public Housing Strategy

The Housing Authority of the County of Cook (HACC) manages public housing in Evanston. According to their Annual Plan, they anticipate making the following expenditures utilizing 2005 funding at these Evanston buildings:

Scattered Sites	Replace Water Heaters	\$19,000
	Entrance Doors	\$15,000
	Landscaping	\$15,000
	Security Lighting	\$ 5,000
Walchirk Apartments	MATV System	\$10,000
	Parking Lot	\$120,000
	Stand Pipes	\$5,000

Through the Capital Fund Program, HACC has the following Public Housing Rehabilitation activities planned as outlined in their PHA Plan for Fiscal Years 2006-2009.

Perlman Apartments	Renovate Bathrooms, Replace Roof
Scattered Sites	Painting, Replace Furnaces, Bathroom Renovation, Replace Roofs
Walchirk Apartments	Ranges, Painting, Emergency Generator

On occasion during the past five years, the City has interacted with HACC concerning property standard issues and tenant screening to improve the quality of affordable housing. The City also has engaged in discussions with HACC concerning the disproportionate concentration of Housing Choice Voucher holders in one census tract in South Evanston. All discussions have been designed to improve the voucher program in Evanston and increase the range of quality affordable housing choices.

The City does not have a formal plan to work with HACC on activities that involve public housing residents in achieving homeownership. Because of Evanston's high housing costs, households between 60 and 80% of median income are the primary target audience for homeownership assistance. However, the City acknowledges the opportunity to use Housing Choice Vouchers for ownership and is open to exploring this in appropriate situations. For example, it will be explored in a recently approved HOME project with Reba Place Development Corporation that will convert a multi-family rental building to affordable condominium ownership with emphasis on assisting existing tenants, a few of whom are Housing Choice Voucher holders.

### **E. Implementation of the Strategic Plan**

The strategies and objectives of the 2005-2009 HUD Consolidated Plan will be carried out through the collaboration of public, private, institutional, and philanthropic organizations referred to throughout the Consolidated Plan. Evanston has a history of effective partnerships among these sectors to achieve public purposes in the areas of economic development, housing, education, human services, recreation, and infrastructure development. Substantial private investment has been leveraged throughout the community through the use of public funds. Private, institutional, philanthropic, and community actors also have initiated endeavors to achieve community development objectives without the direct use of City funds.

A gap in the delivery system that had existed until 2004 was the lack of sufficient development organizations in west Evanston. This has been addressed through the emergence of two new community development associations in the last year and the commitment of two existing CHDOs to sponsor or co-sponsor development projects in west Evanston.

Substantial examples of community/lender partnerships exist throughout the CDBG Target Areas with a focus on debt financing. The need for more equity financing of below market return development opportunities is a gap that exists in Evanston and that is a common issue in community development priorities throughout the nation. The City addresses this gap through the use of Tax Increment Financing and other forms of public involvement, although not all gap financial needs can be addressed with this approach.

As noted in Chapter 3, public participation opportunities during the implementation of the Strategic Plan will primarily include the regular meetings of citizen advisory boards, commissions, and City Council and its three standing committees: Human Services, Administration & Public Works, and Planning & Development. All open meetings have a citizen comment period scheduled for anyone wishing to address a particular board, commission, or members of the City Council. Special meetings can be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the Chair of the respective board, commission, or committee. In addition, City staff will continue to regularly consult with appropriate agencies and organizations on housing and social services, as well as community development and economic development matters. Together, these efforts will aid the City in monitoring progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.