
Five County Association of Governments



Consolidated Plan -
One Year Action Plan



July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018

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AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

 A. EVALUATION OF CURRENT NEEDS 1

 Housing 1

 Community Development 2

 Economic Development 2

CHAPTER II. OUTREACH 5

 A. SUMMARY OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION 5

 B. CONSULTATION 5

 1. Balance of State Continuum of Care Committee (BOS/COC) 5

 2. Local Homeless Coordinating Councils 5

 3. Other Groups 6

 4. Steering Committee 6

 5. Five County Human Services Council 6

 6. Jurisdictions 6

 7. Association of Governments Newsletter 7

 C. COORDINATION 7

 1. Business Community 7

 2. Other Agencies 8

 D. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION 9

 1. Community Needs Assessment Survey Instrument 9

 Outreach to Community Service Block Grant / Social Services Block Grant Clients 9

 Outreach to Minority Groups and Sub-populations through Community Partners 10

 Demographics of Survey Respondents 11

 2. Public Forums 18

 3. Five County Association of Governments Human Services Council 18

 4. Public Availability of the Plan and 30-day Comment Period 18

CHAPTER III. EXPECTED RESOURCES 20

 A. HISTORY OF REGIONAL CDBG FUNDING ALLOCATION 20

 B. EVALUATION OF PAST PERFORMANCE 21

CHAPTER IV. GOALS & OBJECTIVES 22

CHAPTER V. ALLOCATION PRIORITIES 23

 A. FUNDING PRIORITY DECISION MAKING PROCESS 23

 B. PRIORITIES 23

AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

1. Housing.....	23
2. Community Development.....	23
3. Economic Development	24
4. Emergency Shelter/Food/ Permeant Supportive Housing / Rapid Re-Housing.....	25
C. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	25
1. Public Safety/Protection	25
2. Public Utilities/Works	25
3. Community Facilities/Public Services.....	26
4. LMI Housing	26
5. Transportation.....	26
6. Recreation.....	26
7. Planning.....	26
CHAPTER VI. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION	27
A. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION BASED ON NEED.....	27
B. SOLUTION STRATEGY	27
C. PRIORITY BY LOCATION OR TYPE OF DISTRESS	27
CHAPTER VII. PROJECTS.....	28
A. Summary of One year Performance Measures.....	28
CHAPTER VIII. METHOD OF DISTRIBUTION	30
A. SUMMARY OF HUD PROGRAMS	30
B. OUTREACH EFFORTS WITH MINORITY/ETHNIC POPULATIONS	32
C. RATING AND RANKING TIED TO IDENTIFIED NEED AND ACTION PLAN CONTENT.....	33
CHAPTER IX. PUBLIC HOUSING.....	35
A. MULTI-FAMILY PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING.....	35
1. Regional Housing Vision Statement.....	35
2. Affordable Housing Defined	35
3. Income Guidelines.....	35
4. Public Housing Programs	37
CHAPTER X. BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING	39
A. SUMMARY OF BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....	39
B. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN DEVELOPMENT.....	42
CHAPTER XI. OTHER.....	44
A. SINGLE-FAMILY	44
B. POINT IN TIME NEEDS ASSESSMENT.....	44

AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

C.	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.....	48
D.	OVERALL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT	53
1.	Local Government Housing Needs Summary	53
2.	Regional Analysis of Affordable Housing Needs	53
E.	SPECIAL NEEDS HOMELESS HOUSING PRIORITIES	54
1.	Chronically Homeless:	54
2.	Homeless Youth:	55
3.	Homeless Chronic Substance Abusers:	56
4.	Homeless Veterans:	56
5.	Homeless Seriously Mentally Ill:	57
6.	Victims of Domestic Violence:	57
7.	Persons with HIV/AIDS:	57
F.	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	58
G.	LEAD BASED PAINT STRATEGY	58

APPENDICES

- A. ONE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS LISTS
- B. RATING AND RANKING
- C. PUBLIC HEARING NOTICES AND MINUTES, AND AOG NEWSLETTER
- D. CONSULTATION FORMS
- E. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

CHAPTER I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. EVALUATION OF CURRENT NEEDS

Local elected officials in southwestern Utah continue to foster a cooperative allocation of federal, state, and local funds to address regional priorities. This cooperative spirit has been the norm for more than 50 years. Community development and human services staff at the Association of Governments have worked diligently to document 2017 priorities, as reflected in the Consolidated Plan template. The complete document is available on the Five County AOG website at: <http://www.fivecounty.utah.gov/dep/community/consolidated.php>

Housing

- Meeting the workforce housing and low-income housing demand remains to be a challenge for communities across the region. During the 2008-2011 recession, housing prices decreased substantially, but have since increased to near pre-recession levels. Rental housing prices continue to increase and in many communities and obtaining affordable rental housing for low to moderate income households remains a significant challenge.
- All cities throughout the region have some provision for affordable housing within respective zoning ordinances. However, all cities could take steps toward improving regulatory barriers to providing affordable housing and FCAOG recommends that all communities review ordinances and regulations to improve affordable housing conditions.
- Current lending data indicates that there is a disparity in the St George Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for mortgage loan denial rates for the minority population and white, non-minority population. FCAOG encourages lenders to abide by Fair Housing Laws to affirmatively further fair housing. (The new Fair Housing rules speak more about inclusion in geographic areas rather than discrimination).
- The Five County Association of Governments has been actively working with cities throughout the region to develop affordable housing plans. Such plans include an assessment of affordable housing needs and strategies to improve affordable housing options for low to moderate income households. FCAOG will continue to work with communities to develop meaningful affordable housing plans, which meet the requirements of state statute.
- Southwest Utah leaders continue to pursue efforts to end chronic homelessness, but those efforts must compete with other priorities. The Housing First concept is being implemented in the region.
- Rent vacancy is less than 1% as of end of summer 2016. This has widespread impacts on potential employees and housing prices.
- Instances of fair housing violations continue to be under-reported, especially in cases of source of income, gender, and family composition. Additional educational outreach and training from the Utah Labor Commission could help landlords to stop illegal discrimination.

AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

- Visioning processes through the Vision Dixie (Washington County) and Iron Destiny (Iron County) exercises focused on means by which communities could help reduce housing costs. Some of the ideas discussed included improving permitting processing and re-evaluating impact fee structures. The 2014 Vision Dixie Report indicates that communities are continuing to pursue the principles of Vision Dixie, including those related to housing.

Community Development

- In the Five County region community infrastructure remains a higher priority of regional investment of funding. This is due to a combination of systems that have aged that need upgrading as well as expansion necessitated by growth demands. In addition to infrastructure such as culinary water systems, emergency services such as fire protection are high priorities. Housing has been for a number of years a very high priority, but it is evident from on-site evaluation visits with each entity in our region, that focus on public safety through improved fire protection is our region's highest priority at this time.
- A Housing Condition Windshield Survey was updated most recently in 2012. The staff of Five County has determined that the instance of homes in severely deteriorated or dilapidated in our region as a whole is very small. There are a few small communities having a higher percentage of homes in those conditions in their respective jurisdiction, however, the number of units in those conditions is relatively small.

Economic Development

- Local jurisdictions in southwestern Utah continue to participate in county-wide economic development programs for active business development; however, the recent economic recession resulted in tight municipal budgets and in many cases reductions in staffing. The Five County AOG will focus on the continuation of regional priorities including utilizing the Five County Economic District Revolving Loan Fund as well as other economic technical assistance.
- A recently completed project included the development of a Regional Broadband Plan which was a part of a statewide Broadband Plan. The Association's Economic Development staff provides support to the regional Small Business Development Centers including active participation in the "Meet the Money People" workshops held annually. As available housing for a workforce is critical to economic development, affordable housing plan development for cities has been a focus of the Community Development staff at the Five County AOG.
- A voluntary community self-assessment is utilized along with community development program staff knowledge and expertise to determine the state of infrastructure and other non-housing community development needs in our region.
- Local jurisdictions in southwestern Utah continue to benefit from county economic development activities by economic development professionals that actively promote business development. The Five County AOG's continuation of regional priorities includes a focus on utilizing the

AGENDA ITEM #III-A. (Continued)

resources of the Five County Economic Development District Revolving Loan Fund as well as other technical assistance. In addition, we are currently providing contracted technical planning assistance to Kanab City for current planning. Our staff has recently assisted the City in the processing of applications for two large downtown hotels, as well as a new expanded pharmacy to serve the area.

- Recent projects completed by the staff of the Association included a Regional Broadband Plan that was part of a larger state-wide Broadband Plan produced by the Governor's Office of Economic Development. The Five County Community Development staff also provides ongoing technical support to the regional Small Business Development Centers including participation as presenters at the successful "*Meet the Money People*" workshops. The staff of Five County also participated in comprehensive visioning process for the small rural town of Rockville, enabling them to conduct a series of town planning meetings to discuss the future of that community. In addition, because available housing for a workforce is critical to economic development, the staff at the Association has developed, with the participation of cities in our region, affordable housing plans required under the Utah Code.