



FY 2011 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan for the City of Dunkirk, New York

Introduction

The City of Dunkirk, New York has been, and is, a recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The City's Department of Development is responsible for managing and overseeing these funds in partnership with the Mayor and City Council, Fiscal Affairs Office, and Treasurers office. The City of Dunkirk is looking forward to having a successful 2011 program year. The Action plan includes the dollar amounts allocated and is arranged under their appropriate CDBG categories. The total of **\$622,391** is our estimated entitlement for FY 2011.

The City will be focusing its efforts in 2011 on the 3 main program goals supported by HUD which are promoting: **Decent Housing, a Suitable Living Environment, and Expanding Economic Opportunities**. The city will focus its attention on targeted areas and will coordinate activities within these target areas in order to provide more comprehensive housing rehabilitation, neighborhood and public facility improvements, economic development opportunities and youth and senior services.

Areas will be targeted for comprehensive rehabilitation, upgrading, and/or street improvements in our designated Target Area and elsewhere in the City. Discussions are continuing with the Code Enforcement Officer in order to coordinate projects in areas where there are a number of substandard dwellings and/or businesses. Economic Development, Public Service, Public Facility, and Housing improvements will be the major categories of the City's activities in 2011.

We are optimistic that through the assistance of HUD and the partnerships we have in place with the various community agencies and sub-recipients, we will be able to create a better living standard for the low-moderate income city residents and the overall economic climate of which we are all seeking to improve.



City of Dunkirk's CDBG FY 2011 Annual Action Plan

The City of Dunkirk's FY 2011 Annual Action Plan is being prepared according to priorities and needs specified at the two public meetings held in the City this past fall and in its proposed 2008-2012 Consolidation Plan. These priorities and needs will be addressed in 2011 with the following types of programs and projects, and are outlined in further detail below.

- **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES (\$240,000)**
- **DECENT HOUSING (\$205,500)**
- **SUITABLE LIVING ENVIRONMENT (\$83,500)**
- **ADMINISTRATION (\$93,391)**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – NEEDS RELATING TO JOB CREATION AND BUSINESS GROWTH

The City identified sufficient living wage jobs as a priority need in 2003 and this continues to be a pressing need in the City. In the past, the City has utilized CDBG funds for economic development activities to mostly retain jobs and support the expansion of existing industrial and commercial businesses. As previously disclosed the fruits of these labors were seen in 2007 and 2008 with the ground breaking on the approximately \$5 million SUNY Technology Incubator as well as the completion of the Chadwick Bay Lofts project both of which are located within the City's target area. The Boardwalk Market was also completed in 2008 along the City's waterfront. In 2009 we were fortunate to see the SUNY Incubator open for business and new projects begin to attract and retain jobs that include the Brownfield Redevelopment of the Alumax and Roblin Steel sites and the retention of Remtronics to a new facility within the City of Dunkirk. These projects relied in part on CDBG assistance to make them economically viable and provide expanded employment opportunities. In 2010, The City acquired an old car dealership along the waterfront for a second phase boardwalk.

The year 2011 looks to be another critical year for economic development as the City attempts to continue the positive momentum in the midst of a deep economic crisis affecting a substantial amount of state funding available. For these reason the City seeks to continue to utilize its CDBG funds for economic development activities.

- **Economic Development Agency Funding (\$165,000)**
- **Commercial Façade Improvement Program (\$40,000)**
- **Tourism Development (\$35,000)**

Economic Development Agency Funding (Economic Development)

Monies allocated to this program will be utilized to support the For Profit Assistance initiatives of the City of Dunkirk and its Development Partner the Dunkirk Local Development Corporation. This funding will be used for loans for eligible businesses through the revolving



loan fund, grant and other financial incentives for business and employment expansion opportunities, Waterfront redevelopment initiatives including debt service, property acquisition, and investment and the combating of blight and slums within the commercial and industrial areas of Dunkirk.

Commercial Façade Improvement Program (Economic Development)

The commercial façade program is used to assist commercial property owners revitalize their store fronts. Applications are kept in the Department of Development office and eligible business located within the Target Area or that otherwise directly serve or employ the low to moderate income citizens of Dunkirk are eligible to apply for a grant up to \$15,000 to upgrade their facilities.

Tourism Development (Economic Development)

Funds will be utilized to create and brand a VisitDunkirk Online Marketing Strategy and assisting in the marketing and creation of events and festivities designed to bring overnight visitors to the area. The online component will include small business assistance in establishing website, search engine maximization and the proper way to utilize social networking to increase business opportunities. The long range goals of the program is to create a sustainable marketing engine that will increase the amount of overnight visitors to Dunkirk annually and thus promote the opportunities for the local small business to prosper and grow.

DECENT HOUSING

The City always needs and allocates funds towards owner-occupied rehabilitation activities. In 2009 the City released a new streamline housing rehab program targeted to more quickly and efficiently get housing rehab dollars working for those resident that are in greatest need. In 2010 the City continued its rehab program, as well as a electrical safety program. In 2011 the city is hoping to impact 20-25 more homes with these funds.

The program will again focus on maximizing its CDBG expenditures, and affecting a positive change upon the greatest number of Dunkirk Residents.

Along with owner occupied rehabilitation, the Department of Development will be working with the Code Enforcement officer to improve the housing stock and affordability in the City.

- **Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program (\$74,750)**
- **Community Smoke Detector Program (\$750)**
- **Residential Demolition & Acquisition (\$30,000)**
- **Code Enforcement (\$35,000)**
- **Sidewalk Replacement (\$65,000)**



Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program (Housing Rehabilitation)

The City will allocate \$74,750 to the extremely successful owner occupied rehab program. In the past two years, the City has rehabbed over 50 homes through its program, investing nearly \$300,000 to local contractors doing this work. In 2011, the City hopes to rehabilitate additional 20-25 homes.

Community Smoke Detector Program (Housing Rehabilitation)

The Dunkirk Fire Department currently provides a limited number of Smoke and CO2 detectors to low income families throughout the City. This funding will allow for the purchase and distribution of approximately 30 additional units to income qualified residents.

Residential Demolition and Acquisition (Housing Rehabilitation)

Clearance and demolition of uninhabitable residential properties, either because of on-going neglect, fire and/or other emergency situations, will continue. We have proposed \$30,000 of our FY 2011 allocation towards this activity. These funds will be used in targeted areas that have been identified as areas that have potential or are currently in the process of being rehabilitated and revived.

Code Enforcement (Public Service)

Code enforcement is an absolute necessity and the City will allocate \$35,000 of its FY2011 allocation towards this activity. The City uses these funds for a code enforcement assistant, whose primary responsibility is to canvass the City's targeted area for code violations and to issue citations when they do exist.

The FY2011 report from the Code Enforcement Officer stated that over 1,400 violations citations were issued, of which over 700 were corrected and approximately 400 were in progress. These results have been due to the efforts of CDBG funds allocated towards an on-going code position to assist with code enforcement compliance of exterior conditions.

Sidewalk Replacement (Public Facility)

The City of Dunkirk utilizes the sidewalk replacement monies to replace worn and deteriorated sidewalks located throughout the Target Area. In addition, money will be allocated towards the recreation trail improvements. In 2011 the City of Dunkirk is committing \$65,000 of this allocation to revitalize City sidewalks.



SUITABLE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

The City's overall focus to concentrate on specific areas for rehabilitation projects includes a suitable living environment as well.

In the past the city has funded streetscape projects, trees and water and sewer lines. However, after reviewing the various activities, the City has taken a more concentrated, comprehensive look at what it wants to accomplish with its future CDBG funding.

Again, rather than just "hitting" spots that need to be addressed, the City wants to concentrate the majority of its efforts on specific areas in the Target Area that need more comprehensive suitable living environment. Therefore, we are proposing that our FY2011 funding include activities for:

- **Streetscape Improvements (\$40,000)**
- **Literacy Volunteers (\$2,000)**
- **Summer Better than Others Day Camp (\$5,000)**
- **Crime Awareness & Prevention (\$2,500)**
- **Senior Nutrition Program-Meals on Wheels (\$6,000)**
- **Cultural Organizations (\$28,000)**

Streetscape Improvements (Public Facility)

Funds allocated to this program are used to improve the community areas and street "scenes" throughout the City. Examples of activities funded in the past have included improved handicapped accessibility, park benches, and tree planting.

Literacy Volunteers (Public Service)

Literacy Volunteers is looking for funding to help fund their bookstore and café. Literacy Volunteers provides free tutoring service. The bookstore and café provides an inexpensive source of books and café/meeting place; and to give their students and clients of other agencies training in real life workplace.

Summer Better than Others Day Camp (Public Service)

The City of Dunkirk provides free or low cost camp educational experiences to the youth of the community. This funding provides transportation and other activities to those students who would not otherwise be able to participate in these programs.

Crime Awareness and Prevention Services (Public Service)

This activity provides the basis for the Dunkirk Police Department's National Night out Programming which is geared toward low income children and families.



Senior Nutrition Program (Public Service)

This program is facilitated throughout the local Meals on Wheels chapter and provides hot meals to elderly or other home bound residents that otherwise could not afford proper meals.

Cultural Organizations (Public Service)

These funds will be distributed to local cultural organizations that have felt the effects of the declining economy. Funds will be utilized to stabilize organization that provide valuable services and resources to the community and to enhance their programming offerings to complement the tourism development strategy. Examples of the end users of these funds include the Dunkirk Historical Society, Dunkirk Free Library, Dunkirk Veteran's Museum and Lighthouse Park, local Veterans organizations and the Adam's Art Gallery.

Conclusion

HUD representatives and personnel from other communities have spent time with some of the City's CDBG personnel in order to give us information on their programs and suggestions on how to run our program so we have more flexibility in meeting real situations that occur throughout the year.

We are always striving to improve our overall administration of the program and have created a structure and environment that is allowing us to conduct a better, more efficient and effective way of working with CDBG funding. We are confident that 2011 will prove to be a successful year and look forward to implementing our **ACTION PLAN** to better serve the low-moderate income city residents and improve the overall quality of life in Dunkirk.