Affordable Housing Initiatives:
Building Your Own Local Toolbox

Mara S. Register
Assistant to the City Manager
City of Valdosta, Georgia
The Role of Local Government In Housing

Historically, local government involvement in housing has been through zoning, subdivision controls, building and housing codes and sanitation ordinances (So, Frank S., 1988).
Current Issues Impacting Housing

- Role of Federal Government has Continued to Diminish
- Segment of Population Affected by Housing Problems has Broadened
- Housing Affordability is now an Issue for Low to Moderate Income Households
- Changing Demographics and Limited Funds for Infrastructure
Current Role of Federal Government in Affordable Housing

- Limited Funding from Various Sources – CDBG, HOME, NSP
- Housing Finance – FHLB, FHA
- Limited Housing Subsidies – Section 8, LITC, Section 202, Section 212
- Fair Housing Guidance and Enforcement
- Regulatory Functions
Current Role of State Government in Affordable Housing

- Pass-through Agencies for some federal funding
- Community Development Assistance
- Infrastructure Assistance
- Building Codes and Environmental Regulations
The New Role of Local Government in Affordable Housing

- Continue the Regulatory Function
- Financial Support – state and local
- Provision of Infrastructure – public and private
- Social Programs – Fair Housing, local shelters, specialized housing
- Housing Program Implementation
Establishing Your Local Housing Goals – Four Areas

- Community Life – *From a community perspective, the objective of housing policy is the provision and maintenance of safe, sanitary, and satisfactory housing together with efficiently and economically organized community facilities to support it.*
Social And Equity Concerns – Every community should provide safe, satisfactory housing opportunities to all households at costs they can afford, without regard to income, race, religion, national origin, family structure, or disability.
Stability of Production – *Housing production should be stabilized to reduce fluctuations in construction, ensure a predictable supply of new units, provide steady employment, reduce inflationary trends, and direct a reliable flow of credit into the industry.*
Design and Environmental Quality – Housing should be designed to accommodate household needs, optimize the quality of life, use land and resources efficiently, and create minimal adverse impact on the natural environment.
Conducting a Housing Analysis

- Determining the Housing Need in Your Community – Need refers to the gap between what does exist and what should exist if adequate housing is to be provided for every household.
Establishing Housing Standards

- Housing Cost
- Housing Condition
- Overcrowding
- Design
- Housing Choice
- Community Facilities
- Environmental Factors
- Control
Developing a Housing Plan

- Housing Market Analysis – projecting supply and demand
  - Housing market area
  - Components of change
    - Number and composition of households
    - Number of vacant units
    - Existing supply of housing
Elements of a Housing Policy Plan

- Identifying issues
- Gathering and analyzing data
- Identify all available resources
- Setting program objectives
- Implementing plans
City of Valdosta Efforts

- 1999 Housing Survey conducted by VSU and 2006 Update
- Mayor/Council Resolution to eliminate all substandard housing by 2020
- Designation as a 21st Century Challenge Community
- Establishment of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Land Bank Authority
Valdosta Effort (Cont.)

- Local Assistance Grant - $300,000 (Consolidated Plan and Property Acquisition)
- Focus groups facilitated by VSU
- Consolidated Plan – Development of the Neighborhood Concept of Planning within the Designated Revitalization Area. Second Plan submitted and approved by HUD.
Valdosta Effort (Cont.)

- 2003 Jimmy Carter Work Project
- Ongoing Housing and Code Enforcement
- Southern Hospitality Workcamp Effort
- Completion of the first eight Neighborhood Assessments
- Update of the Housing Survey
- Home Repair/Homeownership Programs
2003 Jimmy Carter Work Project
Neighborhood Assessments

- Condition of Housing Stock
- Assessment of Homeownership Rates
- Condition of Infrastructure and Related Master Plans
- Condition of Public Facilities and Related Master Plans
Neighborhood Assessments (Cont.)

- Condition of Recreational Facilities and Related Master Plans
- Condition of Community Facilities and Related Master Plans
- Location of Non-profit Offices and Developments
- Location of Other Related Government Properties and Developments
Conclusions

- Every Citizen Deserves a Decent Place to Live
- Collaboration with other Agencies for Resources and Services is Critical to the Success of Your Efforts
- Remember – the People you are trying to help are the priority of your effort, not the program itself
Questions & Discussion