City of Washington

Neighborhood and Community Revitalization

Combining CDBG and CHIP Funding
Basic Facts

- Small rural cities are unique – Neighborhood Revitalization and Economic Development can be challenging.
- The majority of the residents in the target area had low and very low household incomes.
- The target area had the highest crime rates.
- The target area had more sub-standard rental properties.
- The target area is a “Gateway” entrance into the city.
Basic Facts

The Southwestern area of the City was identified as an area that had more slum and blight and the need to address rehabilitation; conservation; or redevelopment of this target area was necessary in the interest of the public health; safety and welfare of the residents of the City of Washington. The Mayor and City Council found it necessary to exercise powers to address the physical development of this portion of the city.
Empowering the Vision

The Mayor, City Council and City Administrator utilized the services of the CSRA Regional Commission to conduct a Redevelopment Study.

- A redevelopment plan advisory committee was organized.

- The principal objectives of the redevelopment plan
  - Promote housing development.
  - Address public infrastructure and unsightly hazard private property conditions.
  - Develop strategies to promote business growth within the target area.
How It All Began

- Attention given to the community’s revitalization needs.
- The target area could be recognized as a Revitalization Area Strategies (RAS) by DCA.
- Businesses and residents became a part of the planning process.
- The citizens were educated through public meetings; newspaper articles; workshops and surveys.
- A resolution to adopt the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan was approved by the mayor and council and became effective.
The Plan Takes Form

- The City of Washington submitted a 2008 CDBG multi-activity grant application to DCA.
- The activities included acquisition; demolition; extensive infrastructure; relocation and building new affordable homes.
- The DCA application was for $800,000. The city’s cash match and leverage would total $298,500.
- Sept. 2008, the City of Washington was awarded $800,000 in CDBG funds and also $200,000 in CHIP funds for the RAS to implement an owner-occupied rehab program.
- A full time Community Development Manager was hired.
Coordination - Making the Pieces Fit

The City of Washington secured designations and public/private partnerships that included:
- The establishment of an Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)
- Enterprise Zone/Opportunity Zone
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- Brownfield Programs and Incentives
- GICH (class of 2011)
- Entrepreneur Friendly Designation
- Camera Ready and Work Ready
- UGA Small Business Development Center
Collaboration: Making the Pieces Fit

- The City of Washington’s Housing, MainStreet and Economic Development Staff have worked together to establish new projects with the idea of neighborhoods being defined as a combination of residential units served by a centrally located downtown shopping location.

- Coordination and Consolidation planning has included seeking a balance by mixing families; singles, the elderly, and the young. Providing a mix of housing types within walking distance of the city’s downtown shopping area.
Keys To Success
Collaboration; Communication; Cooperation

The City of Washington’s approach to Neighborhood Revitalization included:

- Building capacity to manage economic changes.
- Connecting the community to ideas, resources and opportunities.
- Utilizing local code enforcement to abate nuisance properties.
- Promoting new business start-ups in the target area.
- Encouraging and supporting a Buy-local campaign.
- Utilizing the DCA Single Family Development Program and working with local developers as much as possible.
Partnerships between Local Government; Businesses and Community Based Groups with a focus on:

- Education – Job and Leadership Training.
- Homeownership Programs.
- Community Planning.
- Tourism (a major economic engine for the city).
Still Ahead

- Housing inventory and updating the City of Washington’s Comprehensive Housing Plan.
- Promote mixed-income housing redevelopment.
- Promote neighborhood commercial development.
- Provide resident education opportunities.
- Maximize the opportunities of being a graduate of GICH.
- Continue marketing the Foxwood Senior Village that have 44 units in the target area that utilized DCA’s Qualified Allocation Plan.
Still Ahead continued....

- Implement “Smart Growth” Strategies.
- Continue to support the growth of neighborhood-oriented businesses and provide the infrastructure the community business district needs.
- Work with “Hands On Washington” a program that will support the owner-occupied rehab program.
- Hands On Washington was one of the goals that was accomplished through the GICH program.
The redevelopment of Rusher Street using CDBG funding made it possible to redevelop a dilapidated and crime driven 15 acre site.

**Proposed activities included:**

- Acquisition of private property for re-platting of Rusher Street for single family housing.
- Five (5) permanent tenant relocations.
- Demolition and clearance of 14 dilapidated structures.
Success Story continued...

- Re-aligned Rusher Street required much site development including the City’s installation of electrical utilities burial underground
- CDBG funds were used for basic new infrastructure for street improvements, water facilities, sewer facilities, pedestrian walkways, flood and drainage facilities.
- Rusher Street had a “Ribbon Cutting” on April 21, 2011 Celebrating the Infrastructure Completion.
Neighborhood Revitalization
Rusher Street Project “Outcome”

- The proposed end result includes the re-platting of 27 original parcels in the CDBG funded target area of Rusher Street that created a quality planned subdivision.

- The new platting will result in 21 newly created vacant lots that will be marketed to one or more private developers in the business of building single family affordable infill housing for low to moderate income families.
The CDBG Funded project will benefit a projected 47 people, 100% of whom will be low to moderate families in newly constructed single family houses.

The CHIP Funding from DCA provided Owner Occupied Rehab Repairs for 3 low incomes families that live in the Rusher Street target area. Two of the recipients were disabled and the remaining recipient was on low fixed income. All Three have been living in the area for over 35 years.

It is a win-win situation for this neighborhood to become a community of pride.
Outcome continued....

- The neighborhood will attract people to live there and make a private investment in the community due to the neighborhood revitalization.

- Hopefully the improved quality of life for the residents of this neighborhood will be a model for other communities.
Because of the 2008 Neighborhood Revitalization Project funded with CDBG and CHIP Funding, neighborhood revitalization, affordable houses for low income families, job creation, new properties on the tax rolls were accomplished.

Community Development in the City of Washington’s readiness to continue Housing Development served strongly in two 2014 funding applications. The City of Washington was recently awarded the following:

- $280,500 CHIP funding for Downpayment Assistance and
- $400,000 HOME funding for Single Family Development

This funding helped continue Neighborhood Revitalization in the target area and support affordable housing opportunities for low to moderate families.
Neighborhood Revitalization
“Rusher Street” Before Pictures
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Neighborhood Revitalization
“Rusher Street” Before Pictures
Rusher St
Solomon St
Rusher Street Ribbon Cutting
Rusher Street Ribbon Cutting
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