

SECTION XVI CONCLUSION

The Process - Barriers to Goal Accomplishment

Some of the most frequent reasons given by departments and agencies in missing goals include:

- There were community issues that delayed design and construction;
- Not enough money to complete the project;
- There were legal issues delaying design and construction;
- There were delays in executing contracts;
- The city's procurement and contracting requirements caused delays in the start and completion of projects;
- Different methodology for counting clients; i.e., unduplicated v. duplicated client data; and
- Project match did not materialize.
- The CDBG program year (April 1-March 31) differs from the City's year (July 1-June 30) and partner agencies LAHSA and HACLA (July 1-June 30)
- CDD misunderstood goals or misreported goals in the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan

The following comments from departments and agencies participating in the 2003-2004 CAPER Narrative submission elaborate on some of these concerns:

Department of Aging – More Funds Needed

The programs have been very successful; however, it could use additional funds to expand its programs to serve more seniors and their families who are in need of the services. Increased funding could be used to extend center hours and to hire additional personnel to accommodate the working family caregivers. They requested service hours before 8 a.m. and after 4 p.m., and weekend services. It would enable family caregivers to continue working, and relieve them of the financial burden of paying day care for their loved ones. Additional funds could also be used to provide more training for Social Workers, more educational programs for the caregivers, and to focus more outreach to the minority community.

Department of Building and Safety – Staff and Funding Needs

The greatest limitation to the current fulfillment of the strategies and goals of the program is the lack of funding to create more PACE teams. Additional PACE teams are necessary to accomplish primary inspection tasks, eliminate blight through the enforcement process, and accomplish follow-up inspection work.

CDD, Industrial and Commercial Development Division – Language and Paperwork Barriers

The language barrier or lack of understanding of the forms and documentation required of participants in order to receive free business assistance and/or training, and the amount of confidential information they are required to provide to receive loans or loan packaging services.

Los Angeles Housing Department, HOME Program – Regulatory Relief Needed

There are a number of factors operating in the Los Angeles housing market that have resulted in fewer multifamily loans funded and fewer properties rehabilitated than anticipated. The first factor is requirements of the primary source of funds, HOME. These requirements place a limit on rents that can be charged, mandate long-term covenants for rental properties and mandate that all HQS items be addressed. While LAHD believes the objective of expanding and maintaining the stock of affordable housing is paramount, it is often difficult to locate an eligible project or an owner that is willing to accept the conditions of the loan program as presently constituted. The result is that we have had to solicit a large number of applicants and perform extensive analysis to reach those eligible and willing to participate.

LAHSA, Homeless Shelter and Services – Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY)

Roadblocks faced by the LA Continuum of Care have been articulated by many stakeholders in the Bring LA Home strategic planning process as well as the year around Continuum of Care Planning process held

in throughout the Service Planning Areas in the County. There is a lack of community acceptance of projects for homeless persons known as “not in my back yard or NIMBY”. At the core of this problem is community apathy and/or antipathy and fear towards homeless persons, particularly the chronic homeless population with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. This combined with reluctance of some communities to enforce fair housing laws, results in extreme difficulty in siting projects. In addition, poor individual credit history, high poverty, high housing costs/tight housing market, and scarcity of housing vouchers work against homeless people who are trying to stabilize themselves.

Conclusions

Some of these factors may not have easy solutions; some solutions may require a closer working relationship among major departments and city agencies; others would require an overhaul of existing programs and priorities. It is unknown whether additional funding for Consolidated Plan programs will be forthcoming, or in what form. However, formation this year of a City task force to determine the most equitable method of distributing Consolidated Plan funds augurs well for better targeting of federal housing and community development resources, particularly to areas of the city in greatest need. The City has made significant improvements in developing methods of spending federal funds in a timely manner, and in establishing methods to track grant projects and accomplishments. Next year will undoubtedly see further improvement in citywide grant management.

The Results

This CAPER reporting cycle was highlighted by training provided to departmental and agency representatives in May 2003. CDD continues to maintain a CAPER Users Group (GroupWise E-mail shared group) composed of over 90 departmental and agency representatives as a forum to share information on CAPER reform, the Consolidated Plan, completion of required HUD documents, and to exchange information on program eligibility and regulations. It's hoped that participants will continue to share approaches to preparing the CAPER, trade ideas, and problem solve on defining and tracking accomplishments. And participation in preparation of the CAPER narratives this year was high; few follow up phone calls or e-mails were required.

Analysis required for the CAPER reveals that the City of Los Angeles had a relatively successful year in meeting program goals and focusing on its priorities and strategies. Project activity accomplishments generally met or exceeded 2003-2004 goals established in the Third Year Action Plan, and projects were consistent with HUD's National Objective. Appendix 1 provides in-depth detail on goals and accomplishments for all city projects over the last year and provides perspective on how City projects stacked up against goals established in the 2000-2003 Consolidated Plan.

Looking Back

It's hoped that this year's CAPER provides a useful and informational overview of Consolidated Plan project performance over the last year. One of the primary goals of the CAPER is to provide useful information to residents and HUD for reflection and intelligent decision-making. Residents are encouraged to learn more about the programs offered by the city by contacting the Community Development Department or the Los Angeles Housing Department. The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority can also provide excellent supplemental information about programs.

The four grants that fund the city's housing and community development activities work together in a complex manner, and may seem bewildering to most. This is partly due to the specific program mandates for at least three of the grants; funds can only be spent on certain activities. CDBG is the most flexible of the city's fund sources and can be used for a variety of eligible activities throughout the City.

As the city gains more experience in consolidated planning, and refining its strategies and priorities, there will undoubtedly be a far greater degree of cooperation among city departments and agencies in developing joint approaches to solving the city's problems. The Consolidated Plan and CAPER will

hopefully promote regional planning, recognizing that community development needs do not stop at the city's boundaries. The greater citizen involvement in developing strategies and priorities for these valuable funds is critical.