

**CITY OF TAMPA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FY2006-2007
December 5, 2006**

Block Club: Area VI

Neighborhoods: Northeast MacFarland, Old West Tampa, and Ridgewood River.

Boundaries: Dr. Martin L. King Jr., Blvd. (north); I-275 (south), Florida Avenue (east); MacDill (west).

**Chairperson/
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Need and Recommendation 7. Down-payment assistance program be increased for home ownership in West Tampa.

The need in West Tampa is for more workforce home-ownership. The area in need is the West Tampa Economic Development Plan Study Area: northern parcel line of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard on the north, the western parcel line of Himes Avenue on the west, the southern parcel line of Kennedy Boulevard on the south and the Hillsborough River on the east. The city currently has a down-payment assistance program that is funded with CDBG funds. It is recommended that due to the rapidly rising cost of housing in West Tampa, that the down-payment assistance program be increased to \$50,000.00 for all qualified residents of the area described above.

The percentage increase in the cost of home ownership in West Tampa is probably greater than in most other Tampa neighborhoods; however, the income of residents has not kept pace with the cost of housing. The need for affordable home ownership was recognized by the city with the initiation of the current down-payment assistance program.

Response: From Fred Meyer, Chief Underwriting Supervisor, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. The down payment assistance is already at \$50,000 city-wide including West Tampa, and we are working to increase it to \$60,000 which is funded by HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships Program and State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) dollars.

Update: From Fred Meyer, Chief Underwriting Supervisor, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. The down payment assistance has been increased to \$60,000 city-wide including West

Tampa. Downpayment assistance is funded by HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships Program and State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) dollars. CDBG funds are not used for downpayment assistance.

Need and Recommendation 8. Provide mechanism and funds for homeowners ability to keep homes up to code.

The need is for low-income homeowners within the West Tampa Overlay District (the precise boundaries of which are established in the City of Tampa's Land Development Code) to be able to rehabilitate their residences after receipt of a code violation. The city has established that the appearance of housing as a public policy with the establishment of the Overlay District and is active in enforcing the building code in an area with many older structures.

It is recommended that \$100,000.00 per year be provided for three years in the form of grants to low-income homeowners within the overlay district to repair code violations. Individual grants could be capped at \$5,000.00, for example, per housing unit.

There has been a concerted effort by the City of Tampa and the residents of West Tampa to improve the quality of the housing stock in West Tampa. West Tampa is primarily a low-income neighborhood and the enforcement of the building code places a hardship on existing low-income homeowners. Frequently, the code violations go un-repaired, and the city puts liens on the property. A grant program that would provide low-income homeowners within the West Tampa Overlay District direct grants is the best way to ensure that the needed repairs are completed.

Response: From Fred Meyer, Chief Underwriting Supervisor, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The City of Tampa, Housing and Community Development Division has partnered with the Centre for Women to provide assistance with home repairs. Grants up to \$5,000 and/or zero interest loans up to \$50,000 are available to rehabilitate homes or to repair code violations to the homeowners in the West Tampa Community. If citizens need additional information about the program please contact Joyce Stevens, City of Tampa, at 274-7954 for zero interest loans and/or Connie Hachman, Center for Women, at 250-9336 for grants.

Response: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. The following is a detailed description of the city's Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Deferred Payment Loan Program. This program is available city-wide, including West Tampa. The city is in the process of evaluating changes to this homeowner rehabilitation program, which may include incentives for homeowners who live in the West Tampa target area.

City of Tampa

Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Deferred Payment Loan Program

Rehabilitation of Owner-Occupied Residences –
Deferred Payment Loan Program

To enable low and very low income owner-occupant residents to maintain ownership of housing that is decent, safe, and sanitary. Maximum Deferred Payment Loan amount shall be \$50,000.00.

Eligibility and Assistance Policy

- The homeowner’s total annual household income shall not exceed 80% of the area median income as published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

FEDERAL (HUD)/ STATE (SHIP) INCOME LIMITS (80% of Area Median Income):

1 PERSON	\$30,450	5 PERSONS	\$47,000
2 PERSONS	\$34,800	6 PERSONS	\$50,450
3 PERSONS	\$39,150	7 PERSONS	\$53,950
4 PERSONS	\$43,500	8 PERSONS	\$57,400

- The dwelling must be owner occupied one to four units after completion of rehabilitation and located within the city limits of the City of Tampa.
- The dwelling must be in violation of the Minimum Standards Code. Eligible repairs are limited to elimination of code violations related to the structure. Removal of accumulations, inoperative vehicles, trees, and overgrowth is ineligible unless required in connection with eligible repairs.
- If, due to the extent of deterioration, the structure cannot be made decent, safe and sanitary, for a total cost that does not exceed the maximum amount of assistance available under this program, the structure shall be determined to be ineligible for this program. If the owner of the structure can provide the additional funds needed to make the structure decent, safe, and sanitary, the structure can then be considered eligible. Owner’s funds must be verified prior to closing, and placed in a construction escrow account at time of rehabilitation loan closing.
- The interest rate on this loan shall be 0% and payments on the loan shall be deferred while the property remains the applicant’s primary homestead residence.
- Property taxes must be current. Applications shall not be approved for funding if there are delinquent property taxes outstanding.
- Fire and Extended Coverage Insurance will be required and the structure shall be insured to value. The initial annual insurance premium will be an eligible loan expense.
- Flood insurance will be required in special flood hazard areas and the initial annual insurance premium will be an eligible loan expense.
- These funds cannot be used for refinancing an existing debt.
- The property must be owner fee simple estate at the time of loan closing.

- Loan to value after completion of rehabilitation should not exceed 100%, unless repair and replacement items are necessary for health, safety, and welfare of the applicant. Loan to value is a determining factor in loan approval. Loan to value: the value of the property must be sufficient to support the amount of existing liens on the property and the amount of the DPL.
- In the event that loan to value is in excess of 100% using this computation, and the dwelling appears to be undervalued by the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser, HCD management can authorize an independent appraisal to determine after-rehab value.
- The value of the dwelling after rehab may not exceed the limits set by the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program. These limits are subject to change from time to time, and current limits will be verified. The maximum SHIP value for an existing structure is \$164,000.00.

Update: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. The city has allocated CDBG funds to the Centre for Women to implement a Targeted Neighborhood Rehabilitation program which includes West Tampa.

Response: From Bill Doherty, Deputy Director, Code Enforcement, 274-5562. The Code Enforcement Department has in place a Diversion Program which diverts home owner occupied property owners with hardships out of the code enforcement process. The department works with many different non-profit agencies and volunteer groups to bring the properties into code compliance. Citizens enter the program after area supervisors review their particular case situation and then following verification of the hardship, forward the case to the Barbara Bunting, Diversion Coordinator, at 274-5565.

Need and Recommendation 10. Completion of Centro Espanol renovation.

The need is for completion of renovation of the Centro Espanol building on N. Howard Avenue as a community center. It is recommended that \$50,000.00 per year in CDBG funds be used to supplement City of Tampa funds that would complete the entire renovation of the Centro Espanol to include the theater on the west side of the building. It is recommended that the \$50,000.00 per year in CDBG funds be allocated to the project until the Centro Espanol is totally completed.

The West Tampa Economic Development Plan recognized the significance of the Centro Espanol and the need to encourage more community activities and the creative industries in West Tampa. West Tampa, given its racial and ethnic diversity, has excellent potential to attract the develop wealth from creative industries.

The completely renovated Centro to include the theater, the balconies and all original outside furnishings, would provide a much needed focal point for the community and finish a project that is glaringly incomplete.

Response: From Jeanette Fenton, Manager, Drew Park and West Tampa Redevelopment, 274-8860. I concur with the need to compete renovation of the Centro Espanol, but not with the recommended action or funding. Completion of the renovation involves complex financial, legal, and restoration issues and should be approached in a comprehensive manner with a specific, viable financing plan.

Response: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. The Centro Espanol de West Tampa building is currently owned by the Tampa Hillsborough Urban League (THUL), not the City of Tampa. THUL may apply for CDBG funding for renovation work for the historic building through the city's annual Request For Proposal (RFP) process. The CDBG RFP is usually issued in later January or early February. Each proposal will be reviewed by a committee and all recommendations for project funding will be considered by the Mayor and Tampa City Council.

Please note the City of Tampa has invested substantial amounts of CDBG funds for building improvements over the years including roof replacement, exterior restoration and construction of a parking lot. Additionally, the city was instrumental in assisting THUL secure an Economic Development Initiative – Special Project (EDI) grant for substantial building rehabilitation. The EDI funds were leveraged with private financing to substantially complete the first phase of renovations. The second phase of the building, including the theater, was not included in recent renovation due to THUL's limited resources and extremely high rehabilitation cost.

Update: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-8228. Apparently, THUL organization has experienced extreme financial issues and the building is for sale. THUL, or a non-profit organization that may purchase this building, may apply for CDBG funding for renovation work for the historic building through the city's annual Request For Proposal (RFP) process.

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