

**CITY OF TAMPA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FY2008-2009
December 17, 2008**

Block Club: City-wide
Neighborhoods: City-wide
Boundaries: City-wide
Contact Person: All Block Area Captains

As a member of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Advisory Committee, we support the following prioritized projects:

1. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Homeless Outreach (*Eligible*)

A) Homelessness is a significant problem across the state. It is devastating for families as it disrupts virtually every aspect of family life, damaging the physical and emotional health of family members, interfering with children's education and development, and frequently resulting in the separation of family members. The growing number of visibly homeless on our streets, in parks and along the rivers reduces the quality of life for citizens and has potentially an adverse impact on businesses and tourism. The loss of human potential cannot be measured.

Development of public private partnerships and the implementation of federally recognized best practices such as the proposed program can be replicated throughout the state. The Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County would like to develop a Community Kitchen. The Community Kitchen and Services for Homeless program would be a "one-stop" multi-service center operated through partnership with other service providers, government agencies and faith-based organizations. Those services needed by homeless individuals and families to transition from homelessness to permanent housing will be physically and programmatically integrated within this one location improving accessibility, coordination, and reducing costs. Services include, but are not limited to, case management, mental health and substance abuse treatment, education, vocational training, job placement assistance, health services, and other supports. The Center consists of a commercial kitchen, large community/dining room, public restrooms and showers, laundry facilities, classrooms, computer lab, medical clinic, and office space for case managers and other professional staff. Faith-based organizations currently committed to providing food to homeless individuals and families will coordinate their efforts and utilize the community kitchen and dining room instead of providing food to homeless on the streets, in parks, under overpasses and bridges, in alleys and on other public properties. The center will collect and track data of those who access assistance for comprehensive planning and evaluation of the effectiveness of the program.

Response: From Jim Stefan, Budget Officer, Budget Department, 274-8552. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was received from Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County for a project titled *Expanding Outreach to Homeless*. The RFP has been

included with other requests submitted through the RFP process and will be taken into consideration for funding.

Response: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The City of Tampa supports the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, the local U.S. HUD Continuum of Care administrator for Tampa/Hillsborough County and the lead agency responsible for working on behalf of homeless persons and those at risk of becoming homeless. As described in the City's 2007-2011 Consolidated Planning Document, the Homeless Strategic Plan contains the Homeless Coalition's 10-year plan to end homelessness that addresses the development of a one-stop, multi-service Customer Service Center to provide access to housing and supportive services for homeless individuals and families. Public funding from the City for this type of project must be acquired through the City's annual Request for Proposals (RFP) and ideally would leverage combined resources from the State, Hillsborough County, and private sector resources.

Update: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The Homeless Coalition submitted an application for FY09/PY08 CDBG funding for the "Homeless Coalition Outreach Program" which was funded by the City in the amount of \$24,500. The program provides homeless outreach to individuals with mental illness and/or has substance abuse disorders and are living on the streets. Also, HOME funds of approximately \$280,000 have been approved to acquire a four unit apartment building for rehabilitation and housing of eight youths aging out of foster care.

B) Housing for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) Youth

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that the number of homeless and runaway youth ranges from 575,000 to 1.6 million per year. An analysis of the available research suggests that between 20 percent and 40 percent of all homeless youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Given that between 3 percent and 5 percent of the U.S. population identifies as lesbian, gay or bisexual, it is clear that LGBT youth experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate, including in the Tampa Bay area.

WHY ARE SO MANY LGBT YOUTH BECOMING HOMELESS?

Family conflict is the primary cause of homelessness for all youth, LGBT or straight. Specifically, familial conflict over a youth's sexual orientation or gender identity is a significant factor that leads to homelessness or the need for out-of-home care. According to one study, 50 percent of gay teens experienced a negative reaction from their parents when they came out and 26 percent were kicked out of their homes. Another study found that more than one-third of youth who are homeless or in the care of social services experienced a violent physical assault when they came out, which can lead to youth leaving a shelter or foster home because they actually feel safer on the streets.

WHAT IMPACT DOES HOMELESSNESS HAVE ON LGBT YOUTH SPECIFICALLY?

Whether LGBT youth are homeless on the streets or in temporary shelter, our review of the available research reveals that they face a multitude of on-going crises that threaten their chances of becoming healthy, independent adults.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

LGBT homeless youth are especially vulnerable to depression, loneliness and psychosomatic illness, withdrawn behavior, social problems and delinquency. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the fact that LGBT youth live in “a society that discriminates against and stigmatizes homosexuals” makes them more vulnerable to mental health issues than heterosexual youth. This vulnerability is only magnified for LGBT youth who are homeless.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The combination of stresses inherent to the daily life of homeless youth leads them to abuse drugs and alcohol. For example, in Minnesota, five separate statewide studies found that between 10 and 20 percent of homeless youth self-identify as chemically dependent. These risks are exacerbated for homeless youth identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). According to one study, 26 percent of gay teens were kicked out of their homes when they came out to their parents. Personal drug usage, family drug usage, and the likelihood of enrolling in a treatment program are all higher for LGB homeless youth than for their heterosexual peers.

RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

All homeless youth are especially vulnerable to engaging in risky sexual behaviors because their basic needs for food and shelter are not being met. Defined as “exchanging sex for anything needed, including money, food, clothes, a place to stay or drugs,” survival sex is the last resort for many LGBT homeless youth. A study of homeless youth in Canada found that those who identify as LGBT were three times more likely to participate in survival sex than their heterosexual peers, and 50 percent of homeless youth in another study considered it likely or very likely that they will someday test positive for HIV.

VICTIMIZATION OF HOMELESS LGBT YOUTH

LGBT youth face the threat of victimization everywhere: at home, at school, at their jobs, and, for those who are out-of-home, at shelters and on the streets. According to the National Runaway Switchboard, LGBT homeless youth are seven times more likely than their heterosexual peers to be victims of a crime. While some public safety agencies try to help this vulnerable population, others adopt a “blame the victim” approach, further decreasing the odds of victimized youth feeling safe reporting their experiences.

LGBT HOMELESS YOUTH AND THE JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

While there is a paucity of academic research about the experiences of LGBT youth who end up in the juvenile and criminal justice systems, preliminary evidence suggests that they are disproportionately the victims of harassment and violence, including rape. For example, respondents in one small study reported that lesbians and bisexual girls are over represented in the juvenile justice system and that they are forced to live among a population of inmates who are violently homophobic. Gay male youth in the system are also emotionally, physically and sexually assaulted by staff and inmates. One respondent in a study of the legal rights of young people in state custody reported that staff members think that “[if] a youth is gay, they want to have sex with all the other boys, so they did not protect me from unwanted sexual advances. A study of homeless youth in Canada found that those who identify as LGBT were three times more likely to participate in survival sex than their

heterosexual peers.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Homelessness is not an issue that can be tackled piecemeal. Wholesale improvement is needed, and that is what we propose. Our recommendations are not intended to be an exhaustive list of every policy change that would make the experience of homeless youth better. Rather, we highlight some of the crucial problem areas where policy change is both needed and reasonably possible.

STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish funding streams to provide housing options for all homeless youth. Require that recipients of these funds are committed to the safe and appropriate treatment of LGBT homeless youth.
2. Permit dedicated shelter space and housing for LGBT youth.
3. Expand the availability of comprehensive health insurance and services to all low- income youth through the age of 24 via Medicaid.

CONCLUSION

Once implemented, these policy recommendations will help not only LGBT homeless youth, but all youth abandoned by their family or forced to leave home. Regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, every young person deserves a safe and nurturing environment in which to grow and learn. It is our hope that this report will bring renewed attention to an issue that has been inadequately addressed for far too long.

Response: From Jim Stefan, Budget Officer, Budget Department, 274-8552. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was received from Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County for a project titled *Expanding Outreach to Homeless*. The RFP has been included with other requests submitted through the RFP process and will be taken into consideration for funding.

Response: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The City of Tampa supports the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County in its mission to end homelessness in Hillsborough County. Persons who receive emergency shelter and transitional housing assistance from member agencies of the Continuum of Care include single individuals, youth, youth aging out of foster care, families with and without children, veterans, victims of domestic violence, and other persons who are homeless with special needs such as mental illness, substance abuse disorders, HIV/AIDS and physical disabilities. Public funding that is provided through the City for at-risk and homeless populations is awarded through the City's RFP process and is provided to all eligible persons who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Update: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The Homeless Coalition submitted an application for FY09/PY08 CDBG funding for the "Homeless Coalition Outreach Program" which was funded by the City in the amount of \$24,500. The program provides homeless outreach to individuals with mental illness and/or has substance abuse disorders and are living on the streets. Also, HOME funds of approximately \$280,000 have been approved to acquire a four unit apartment building for rehabilitation and housing of

eight youths aging out of foster care.

C) Housing for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

Most young adults in the general population rely upon their families for assistance with a place to live, financial support and other guidance as they transition to adulthood. Indeed, half of young adults ages 18-24 in the general population in the United States live at home with their parents. Yet youth aging out of foster care who have significant trauma histories— are out on their own at age 18 when the child welfare system has failed to connect them to a permanent, loving family.

This tells us that one of the most important factors for positive youth development is a stable, caring relationship with an adult. While some youth who age out without a permanent family do well in their lives, far too many have very poor life outcomes. Research has shown that these youth are highly likely as adults to:

- be unemployed;
- become homeless;
- experience mental illness and drug addiction
- be incarcerated;
- experience early parenthood; and
- become victims of violent crime.

We propose a multi-pronged approach to help these youth by establishing funding streams to provide housing options for all homeless youth and expand the availability of comprehensive health insurance and services to all low- income youth through the age of 24 via Medicaid.

Response: From Jim Stefan, Budget Officer, Budget Department, 274-8552. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was received from Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County for a project titled *Expanding Outreach to Homeless*. The RFP has been included with other requests submitted through the RFP process and will be taken into consideration for funding.

Response: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. As reported in the City of Tampa 2007-2011 Consolidated Planning Document Hillsborough County Homeless Coalition, there are an estimated 5,000 children in foster care in Hillsborough County. Children in foster care are turned out of their homes at age 18, even though they may not have received skills training and may be unprepared to live independently on their own. Public funding support from the City for this type of project must be acquired through the City's annual RFP process and ideally would also involve State-provided funding resources that are geared to vocational/technical job-training and educational opportunities.

Update: From Stuart Campbell, Urban Planner III, Housing and Community Development, 274-7998. The Homeless Coalition submitted an application for FY09/PY08 CDBG funding for the "Homeless Coalition Outreach Program" which was funded by the City in the amount of \$24,500. The program provides homeless outreach to individuals with mental illness and/or has substance abuse disorders and are living on the streets. Also, HOME funds of approximately \$280,000 have been approved to acquire a four unit apartment building for rehabilitation and housing of

eight youths aging out of foster care.

2. **NEED & RECOMMENDATION: TPD/TFD Community Outreach** *(Non-Eligible)*

We propose to incorporate CDBG and TPD/TFD in a community outreach, we are proposing holding community events/programs in our challenged neighborhoods. TPD has a great program called P.A.R.T.Y. in the Park which stands for Police & Residence Teaching Youth. At these events, police sets up games (including flag football) arts and crafts activities, water slide, cool Tampa Police Department (TPD) vehicles and a barbeque that feeds the whole neighborhood. At the last one Shannon Edge attended, Chief Hogue was flipping the hamburgers! It is incredible interaction between the police and youth and provides a fun mentoring opportunity. Many kids end up wanting to be fire and police men after interacting with both. Below is our game plan which dollars will be needed:

Strategically plan 4 quarterly P.A.R.T.Y. in the Parks, one for a north, south, east and west Tampa neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Relations office will provide TPD with location recommendations and coordinate with Parks & Recreation.

We suggest a postcard mailer to the residence surrounding the location of the event. Public Relations through neighborhood presidents and neighborhood schools and need funds for corporate donations for the food, marketing and promotion of the event, and giveaways, i.e.: TFR helmets, TPD badges etc.

As for Tampa Fire Rescue (TFR) one of the areas discussed, in addition to events like TPD's, was providing scholarships to underprivileged youth to go to fire academy.

Response: From Major Robert J. Guidara, Police Department, 242-3899. Tampa Police Department has begun meetings with Shannon Edge of the Neighborhood and Community Relations office to plan the P.A.R.T.Y in the Park events. The events have been planned to coincide with police summertime community events. The coordination for each area of the City will be through the respective division Major.

Update: From Captain Craig Roberts, Police Department, 242-3899. The Tampa Police Department worked with the City's Neighborhood and Community Relations office and completed two P.A.R.T.Y in the Parks events. One was held in District One and the other in District Three. Both were very successful.

Response: From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. The Neighborhood and Community Relations office will take the lead to collaborate with the Tampa Police Department to organize and promote the P.A.R.T.Y. in the Park events. Our communications efforts will include a postcard mailer to the neighborhoods homes, public relations with the neighborhood presidents and providing information to the surrounding schools. If funds need to be raised to pay for the activities and food, the Neighborhood & Community Relations will seek sponsorships from the private sector.

Update: From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. Based on the overwhelming success of the two PARTY in the Parks held in 2008 at the MLK Recreation Center and the Jackson Heights Recreation Center, the

Neighborhood and Community Relations office will continue taking the lead to collaborate with the Tampa Police Department (TPD) to organize and promote the P.A.R.T.Y. in the Park events and handling the public relations for the event. Our organization efforts will include reaching out to TPD and TFR seeking their help to bring out their special vehicles including a fire truck, ambulance, patrol car, and the bomb detector tank that the kids and adults can climb into and be an honorary police officer or firefighter. To cap off the day, we will assist TPD with the barbeque that feeds all attendees at the event.

3. **NEED & RECOMMENDATION: City-wide Recycling Campaign** *(Non-Eligible)*

According to statistics compiled by the Solid Waste Department, currently only 8% of our residents are participating in Tampa's recycling efforts. Five years ago 15-18% participated. This current low participation rate is an embarrassment for our City, we need to do something to increase citizen participation.

We propose:

- #1 **Offer residents an incentive to recycle.** One proposal would be to offer a reduced trash rate for residents who recycle or who have a reduced amount of garbage.
- #2 **Promote a City-wide recycling campaign.** This could be done in conjunction with the current anti-littering campaign.
- #3 **Involve schools in recycling efforts.** At the present time schools are not recycling. Efforts are under way to address this issue and at the present time are going very well. If we can teach our students the importance of recycling now, they will recycle as adults.
- #4 **Involve residents of apartments and condos in the recycling effort.** Currently, most apartment building and condos do not recycle. Develop a plan so that these residents are given the opportunity to recycle.

Response: From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. The Neighborhood and Community Relations office will take a supportive role to collaborate with the Recycling Coordinator at the Solid Waste Department. The Neighborhood & Community Relations Office recognizes the need for an educational campaign on the importance of recycling based on the community meetings attended as well as phone calls received in the office. Our efforts will include attending community meetings with the Recycling Coordinator as well as communications efforts at all of the various community meetings we will attend in the future. This does include public relations with the neighborhood presidents and providing information to the school system.

Update: From Shannon Edge, Director, Neighborhood and Community Relations, 274-7835. The Neighborhood and Community Relations office will continue to take a supportive role to collaborate and disseminate all recycling initiative information provided to us through the Recycling Coordinator at the Solid Waste Department.

Response: From Varghese Jacob, Interim Director, Solid Waste Department, 348-1104. Solid Waste Department received a grant from the State of Florida to study the low participation in recycling in certain areas and discussed low participation among various focus groups. It has been determined that on-going communication

and education as well as incentives are keys for the success of a recycling program. Recently, Department of Solid Waste's Environmental Program Management has expanded the recycling program to include additional materials in a single stream to be more convenient to the citizens. However, additional resources are needed to do the on-going educational campaign especially through schools, as well as implement an incentive program.

Update: From Mark Wilfaulk, Operations Chief, Solid Waste Department, 348-1153. During FY08 the department conducted focus group studies in neighborhoods throughout the City of Tampa with low recycling participation rates. After listening to residents' concerns, the department expanded the scope of the recycling program, adding a number of new materials to the list of already-accepted items, as well as updating brochures and educational materials. In addition, the Solid Waste Team increased their presence at events and neighborhood association meetings to educate and inform residents about the City's recycling program and the importance of waste reduction.

The Waste Reduction team also implemented recycling programs in areas presenting unique logistical challenges as far as container placement and access, including Ybor City, and Tampa International Airport.

The concept of offering the incentive of lower solid waste fees to residents who participate in the City's recycling program has been placed on hold until automated cart distribution is complete and rate analysis has been conducted.

The Waste Reduction Division has stepped up in-school education efforts significantly, adding a new project in Fiscal Year 2008: The McDonalds Tray Liner and McPassport Project, reaching over 200,000 citizens, as well as implementing recycling programs at an additional 28 schools in the City. Almost 2,000 elementary and middle school students participated in the America Recycles Day Poetry and T-Shirt Design project, and next year's project promises to be even bigger and better, with the addition of a touring exhibition of winning artwork and poetry.

4. NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Anti-Litter Initiative (*Non-Eligible*)

Tampa's Anti-Littering Campaign has begun! We are encouraged by the partnership between the Clean City Division and the Solid Waste Departments. We are requesting that the City match with CDBG funds, the Clean City Division's vision of providing adequate trash receptacles throughout the City to help make Tampa litter free. We are concerned with Tampa's image as being one of America's dirtiest cities and want to move Tampa into the top ten lists of the cleanest cities. We are requesting \$35,000 for 50 additional trash receptacles at a cost of \$700 each for the trash receptacle and its installation. We hope to have these trash receptacles installed throughout the City.

We are also requesting the purchase of a 13 yard rear packer truck to assist in disposing of trash placed in the above mentioned trash receptacles.

We are also asking for \$10,000 to support our Anti- Littering Campaign. This money will be used to promote educational materials. These materials consist of two media

kits: one aimed at adults and one aimed at students.

Response: From Jim Pinkney, Manager, Clean City Division, 307-5525. The above-mentioned items will support the Clean City Division's mission to transform the City of Tampa into a cleaner City environment and becoming America's #1 cleanest and most beautiful City within the Nation. This need will be requested in FY09 Budget.

Update: From Jim Pinkney, Manager, Clean City Division, 307-5525. Due to an unforeseen fire incident in February 2008 Clean City lost 30 trash receptacles slated for East Tampa. All 30 trash receptacles were replaced. East Tampa is currently servicing as the Pilot Program. Solid Waste will handle trash collection and additional funding will be requested in FY2010 to support the overall Anti-Litter Campaign Initiative.

5. **NEED & RECOMMENDATION: Recycling Ordinance- Additional Request from City Council** (*Non-Eligible*)

Create an ordinance for the City of Tampa for City-wide recycling which can be similar to Wisconsin mandatory recycling program.

Response: From Varghese Jacob, Interim Director, Solid Waste Department, 348-1104. We believe that providing incentives such as reduced garbage charges for recycling will be a better option to increase citizen's participation in recycling. However, we will research for the Wisconsin Recycling Ordinance to get more information.

Update: From Mark Wilfaulk, Operations Chief, Solid Waste Department, 348-1153. During FY08 the department conducted focus group studies in neighborhoods throughout the City of Tampa with low recycling participation rates. After listening to residents' concerns, the department expanded the scope of the recycling program, adding a number of new materials to the list of already-accepted items, as well as updating brochures and educational materials. In addition, the Solid Waste Team increased their presence at events and neighborhood association meetings to educate and inform residents about the City's recycling program and the importance of waste reduction.

During the upcoming 2009 calendar year the Department of Solid Waste and Environmental Program Management will continue to explore methods to increase the participation rate for the curbside blue box recycling program. Some of the concepts include conducting additional focus group case studies (Wisconsin Recycling Plan) and researching the benefits of implementing mandatory residential recycling within the City limits.

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