



Fourth Program Year **CAPER** **2014-2015**



SECTION I: GENERAL CAPER NARRATIVES

This performance report is for the fourth year of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida's 5-Year Consolidated Plan for 2011-2015 and includes activities from October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015.

The City's 2011-2015 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2014-2015 Action Plan include support for programs, projects and organizations that promote revitalization and stabilization, economic viability and small business expansion and job creation that is primarily focused on lower income residents and neighborhoods. Additionally, the City continues to emphasize the development of a viable urban community and conform to the primary objectives of the Department of Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

The City of Fort Pierce's 2011-2015 5-Year Consolidated Plan includes the following goals:

- Provide Decent Housing
- Establish and Maintain a Suitable Living Environment
- Promote Neighborhood Stabilization
- Stabilize and Expand Small Existing Businesses

Assessment of Annual Goals and Objectives

During Program Year 2014-2015, the City of Fort Pierce's continued to strive for efficiency and effectiveness.

CDBG ANNUAL ENTITLEMENT FUNDS

The City of Fort Pierce received \$507,702 in Program Year 2014-2015 (PY14) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Program income for PY14 totaled \$4,901, increased the PY14 budget to \$512,603. The City does not receive HOME, HOPWA or ESG grant funding.

The City exceeded the minimum 70% requirement of CDBG funds for activities that benefit low and moderate income persons.

A. Assessment of progress toward one-year goals and objectives.

1. Describe the accomplishments in attaining the goals and objectives for the reporting period.

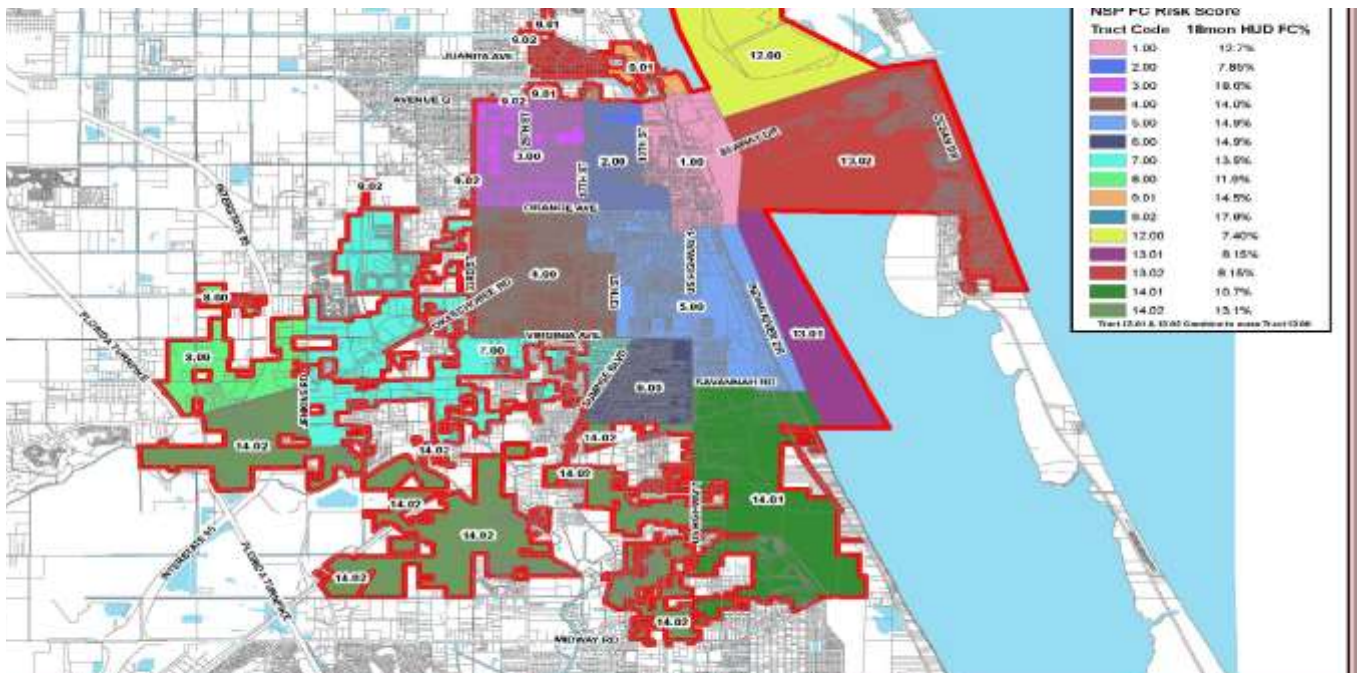
The City's primary objectives for PY14 were:

1. Provide decent, affordable rental and owner-occupied housing for low-to-moderate income persons throughout the City;
2. Provide Neighborhood Revitalization by upgrading public infrastructure and facilities in areas that are primarily inhabited by persons with low and moderate incomes;
3. Provide support for public services for low and moderate income citizens; and
4. Stabilize and expand small existing businesses.

Following is a breakout of the City's accomplishments toward its PY14 goals and objectives.

PY14 Goals and Objectives	Projected PY14 Accomplishments	Actual PY14 Accomplishments
Housing Rehabilitation – Assist very low income families with home repairs / rehabilitation.	Number of Houses Rehabilitated - 4	SHIP Housing Units Rehabilitated – 13 World Changers Housing Units Rehabilitated- 4
Address Spot Slum and Blight – Demolish, clear, and remove derelict structures including housing, public and commercial; secure abandoned structures; abate potential spot slum and blight conditions.	Number of Buildings Addressed - 5	Number of Buildings Addressed - 6
Infrastructure – Improve/repair infrastructure in lower-income neighborhoods.	Number of Infrastructure Projects - 1	Number of Infrastructure Projects - 1
Senior Citizen Housing Assistance – Provide funding to use as 'cash match' for Fort Pierce Housing Authority's Tax Credit grant application to rehabilitate former hospital into apartments for very low income senior citizens.	Number of Senior Citizen Housing Projects - 1	Number of Senior Citizen Housing Projects - 0
Weatherization Assistance – Fund weatherization assistance for lower-income homeowners.	Homeowners Assisted – 5	Homeowners Assisted - 6
Code Enforcement – Fund salaries for up to 3 Code Enforcement Officers who will inspect more than 200 structures to help alleviate spot slum and blight conditions in lower income neighborhoods.	Homes Inspected - 200	Homes Inspected - 544
Public Service Projects - Fund public service activities that serve lower-income citizens.	Citizens Served – 500	Citizens Served – 5,240
Neighborhood Revitalization – Provide funding for Lincoln Park and Fort Pierce Main Street Community-Based Development Organizations to assist businesses located in low and moderate income areas by providing neighborhood revitalization, economic development, heritage tourism and historic preservation projects/ services.	Organizations Assisted - 2	Organizations Assisted - 2
Provide grants for Commercial Façade improvements in low and moderate income areas.	Number of Commercial Facades Improved - 5	Number of Commercial Facades Improved - 19
Micro-Enterprise – Provide marketing/ development campaign for small businesses.	Businesses Assisted - 25	Businesses Assisted - 43
Promote local art and cultural heritage in lower-income neighborhoods.	Projects - 2	Projects - 2
Improve Community Focal Points in lower-income neighborhoods (Community Garden).	Projects - 1	Projects - 1

CDBG TARGET AREA BOUNDARY - The target area and boundaries for infrastructure/development and capital improvement projects include areas where no less than 51% of the population is low and moderate income, according to the U.S. Census. CDBG housing and economic development activities occurred within the corporate limits of the City of Fort Pierce. Following is a Census Tract map of the City of Fort Pierce:



2. Provide a breakdown of the CPD/CDBG formula grant funds in attaining the goals and objectives.

Spot Slum and Blight Remediation	\$ 47,029
Weatherization Assistance	\$ 13,331
Code Enforcement	\$ 33,355
Public Service Projects	\$ 81,863
Neighborhood Revitalization – CBDO’s	\$100,000
Commercial Façade Improvements	\$ 85,730
Micro-Enterprise	\$ 68,540
Promotion of Local Art and Cultural Heritage	\$ 10,430
Community Focal Points (Community Garden)	\$ 341
World Changers / Paint Our Town	\$ 4,493
Infrastructure Improvements	\$451,159
<u>Program Administration</u>	<u>\$ 68,752</u>
TOTAL CPD/CDBG GRANT FUNDS EXPENDED	\$ 965,021

3. If applicable, explain why progress was not made towards meeting the goals and objectives.

Progress was made towards meeting the goals and objectives of the PY14 Action Plan and PY2011-2015 Consolidated Plan.

B. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

1. **Summary of impediments to fair housing choice.** An Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice was prepared in September 2007. The following impediments were identified through the study:

- Discrimination in housing against classes of persons protected under fair housing laws
- Lack of awareness of rights and responsibilities under fair housing laws
- A strongly segregated housing market
- A severe shortage of affordable housing
- Racial disparities in fair and equal lending

The City is in the process of preparing an updated Analysis of Impediments and will submit it along with our 2016-2020 5-Year Consolidated Plan during Spring, 2016.

2. **Identify actions taken to overcome effects of impediments identified.** An Action Plan was created to address and correct the impediments in October 2009. The following goals were listed in the Action Plan:

Goal 1: Increase knowledge of fair housing rights and responsibilities to reduce the incidence of discrimination in housing

Goal 2: Increase affordable housing activities

Goal 3: Eliminate disparities in lending practices

The City provided the following actions in PY14 toward overcoming the identified impediments:

Goal	Activity	Action	Measurable Results
Goal 1	Provide fair housing information to elected officials, City employees, and the general public and housing providers	- Provide workshops, seminars, media campaigns and other outreach activities - Promote fair housing on City website.	Fair Housing brochures and signage are prominently displayed and available in City Hall lobby and in the Urban Redevelopment Department Fair housing information, including videos, are posted on City website.
Goal 2	Increase number of affordable homes in higher-income areas.	Working with Habitat for Humanity to identify and rehabilitate foreclosed and abandoned homes in higher-income areas.	Referred Habitat for Humanity of St. Lucie County to four (4) potential homes needing rehab in higher income areas.
Goal 3	Support pre-purchase counseling programs	Support monthly 1 st Time Homebuyer Workshops which distribute HUD-generated information on fair housing	Four (4) First-Time Homebuyer Workshops were held during PY14. 53 citizens attended. Four (4) Lending Consortium meetings were held during PY14. Referred numerous citizens to the Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council, Inc., (TCHSC) who provided Housing Counseling services for St. Lucie County residents.
	Provide predatory lending information to citizens.	Provide "Don't Be a Victim of Loan Fraud" brochures published by the US Department of HUD.	Disseminated approximately 100 brochures to encourage citizens to protect themselves from predatory lenders.

C. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Table 2A – Priority Housing / Special Needs

PART I. PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS		Priority Level (H, M, L)	
Renter	Small Related	0-30%	H
		31-50%	H
		51-80%	H
	Large Related	0-30%	H
		31-50%	H
		51-80%	H
	Elderly	0-30%	H
		31-50%	H
		51-80%	H
	All Other	0-30%	H
		31-50%	H
		51-80%	H
Owner	0-30%	H	
	31-50%	H	
	51-80%	H	
PART II. PRIORITY SPECIAL NEEDS		Priority Level (H, M, L)	
Elderly		H	
Frail Elderly		H	
Severe Mental Illness		H	
Developmentally Disabled		H	
Physically Disabled		H	
Persons w/Alcohol/Other Drug Addictions		H	
Persons w/HIV/AIDS		H	
Victims of Domestic Violence		H	
Other		H	

Table 2A – Priority Housing Activities / Investment Plan

Priority Need	5-Yr. Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 1 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 2 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 3 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 4 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 5 Goal Plan/Act	Yr. 6 Goal Plan/Act
CDBG							
Acquisition of existing rental units							
Production of new rental units							
Rehabilitation of existing rental units							
Rental assistance							
Acquisition of existing owner units							
Production of new owner units							
Rehabilitation of existing owner units	20 /	4 / 2	4 / 1	4 / 2	4 / 17	4 /	
Homeownership assistance							
HOME	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Acquisition of existing rental units							
Production of new rental units							
Rehabilitation of existing rental units							
Rental assistance							
Acquisition of existing owner units							
Production of new owner units							
Rehabilitation of existing owner units							
Homeownership assistance							
HOPWA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rental assistance							
Short term rent/mortgage utility payments							
Facility based housing development							
Facility based housing operations							
Supportive services							
Other – SHIP & WORLD CHANGERS							
Rehabilitation of existing owner units		2	1	2	17		

Table 3B – Annual Housing Completion Goals - CDBG

Grantee Name: City of Fort Pierce	Expected Annual Number of Units To Be Completed	Actual Annual Number of Units Completed	Resources used during the period			
			CDBG	HOME	ESG	HOPWA
Program Year: 2014						
BENEFICIARY GOALS (Sec. 215 Only)	N/A	N/A				
Homeless households			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-homeless households			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special needs households			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Sec. 215 Beneficiaries*			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RENTAL GOALS (Sec. 215 Only)	N/A	N/A				
Acquisition of existing units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Production of new units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Rehabilitation of existing units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rental Assistance			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Sec. 215 Affordable Rental			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOME OWNER GOALS (Sec. 215 Only)	N/A	N/A				
Acquisition of existing units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Production of new units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Rehabilitation of existing units	4	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Homebuyer Assistance			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Sec. 215 Affordable Owner	4	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMBINED RENTAL AND OWNER GOALS (Sec. 215 Only)	N/A	N/A				
Acquisition of existing units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Production of new units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Rehabilitation of existing units			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rental Assistance			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Homebuyer Assistance			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Combined Total Sec. 215 Goals*			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL HOUSING GOALS (Sec. 215 + Other Affordable Housing)						
Annual Rental Housing Goal			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual Owner Housing Goal	4	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Overall Housing Goal	4	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The 2008 housing market crash led to drastically decreased property values which has increased the amount of affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents. Unfortunately, home prices steadily increased throughout PY14. Investors have purchased hundreds of foreclosed homes within the City, leaving very few affordable homes available for first time homebuyers and lower income citizens. This dilemma is partially remedied through properties financed through Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac coming out of foreclosure being first offered to qualifying citizens for approximately 30 days before they are available to the general market.

The economic downturn resulted in soaring unemployment and Fort Pierce still has not recovered. Fort Pierce's unemployment rate in August, 2015 was 10.8%, compared to St. Lucie County's rate, which was at 6.8%, and the State of Florida, which was 5.3%. Unemployment and also "underemployment" remain on the forefront for the City of Fort Pierce, St. Lucie County, the State of Florida and the entire country.

The City has not detected that we are causing a negative impact on the development of affordable housing. Compared to surrounding communities, the City's fees and policies are reasonable. Nevertheless, the City will continue to periodically reassess development and impact fees, regulations and program policies and procedures and if we ascertain that a revision to these would enhance affordable housing opportunities for lower income residents of the City, we will certainly execute policy revisions, as needed, and as quickly as possible.

1. Comparison of proposed numeric goals (from the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan) with the actual number of extremely low income, low income, and moderate income renter and owner households assisted during the reporting period.

Households Assisted by Income Level (CDBG funding)	Proposed	Ext Low	Low	Moderate Renter	Moderate Owner
<i>Strategy/Activity</i>					
Housing Rehabilitation		4			
Senior Citizen Housing Security Program					
Total	0	4	0	0	0

Households Assisted by Income Level (State Housing Initial Partnerships – SHIP Program)	Ext Low	Low	Moderate Renter	Moderate Owner
<i>Strategy/Activity</i>				
Down payment				
Rehabilitation	13			
Emergency Repair				
Disaster Mitigation				
TOTAL	13			

2. Report the number of households served meeting the Section 215 requirements of affordable housing. The City did not serve any households that entailed Section 215 requirements.

3. Description of efforts to address worst case needs. "Worst Case" housing needs are defined by HUD as very low-income unassisted families who pay more than half their monthly income for rent, live in severely substandard housing, or both.

The Fort Pierce Housing Authority administers a Section 8 Rental Housing Choice Voucher System, which provides rental assistance to very low income individuals and their families in Fort Pierce.

The City also continues to strive to address these worst case needs using SHIP funds to provide home rehabilitation for very low income homeowners and by partnering with organizations like

World Changers and Habitat for Humanity and through our new “Paint Our Town” program to provide home repairs for very low-income home owners.

4. In PY14, the City:

- Provided rehabilitation to thirteen (13) homes of citizens meeting this “worst case need” definition through home rehabilitation services as listed in the tables above during PY14, using SHIP funds.
- Provided CDBG funding and project coordination to World Changers organization who painted the exteriors of four (4) homes belonging to citizens meeting the “worst case need” definition during PY14.
- Began the “Paint Our Town” program at the end of PY14 which will provide paint, paint supplies and materials for local nonprofits to paint the homes of our lower income citizens for free.
- Began accepting and processing applications that will result in 2015 rehabilitations to homes belonging to very low income homeowners that meet the ‘worst case need’ using SHIP funds.
- Currently collaborating with Habitat for Humanity who has stated that they plan to rehabilitate between 21-27 Fort Pierce homes that belong to very low income citizens that meet the ‘worst case need’ definition during PY15.

5. **Description of efforts to address accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.** During PY14, the City provided funding and coordination to the World Changers organization who assisted four (4) senior and/or handicapped households, which are included in the ‘worst case needs’ paragraph description in #3, above. Additionally, thirteen (13) homes were rehabilitated with Florida State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funds belonging to senior and/or handicapped citizens (also listed in #3 and #4, above).

D. CONTINUUM OF CARE

1. **Identify actions taken to address the needs of homeless persons and persons with special needs that are not homeless but require supportive housing.** The Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council, Inc. (TCHCS) serves as the official Continuum of Care for St. Lucie, Martin and Indian River Counties. It is the official qualified applicant for State and Federal homeless prevention and direct services funding on the Treasure Coast and the Lead Agency for the State Office on Homelessness. The City of Fort Pierce does not directly receive funding for homeless prevention.

During PY14, the TCHCS provided more than \$1,493,000 in services to 6,382 individuals.

The City sent a letter requesting assistance for our homeless population to the TCHCS in September, 2015 and later met with the executive director and requested assistance. We are hopeful that this meeting and future meetings will result in the TCHCS allowing the City of Fort Pierce to apply for grant funding through the Coalition to help address our growing homeless population.

2. **Identify actions taken to prevent homelessness and to help homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living.** TCHCS operates a Homeless Resource Center for Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin Counties, which provides approximately \$300,000 per year in direct assistance to homeless and near-homeless families and \$800,000 per year in rental housing payments on behalf of the disabled. TCHCS also provides approximately \$300,000 annually in direct funding to the homeless family shelter on the Treasure Coast, serving Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin Counties. Approximately thirty percent (30%) of the Homeless Family Center’s clients were from the City of Fort Pierce during PY14.

Based on the “Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan” form that the City of Fort Pierce recently received from the TCHCS, St. Lucie County receives \$289,776 in funding that is only used to cover the rent for chronically homeless individuals and families. No funding is provided

to City of Fort Pierce agencies that provide services to the homeless. According to the TCHCS' Point in Time County for January, 2015, the City of Fort Pierce has experienced a 185% increase in homeless children since January, 2014.

3. Identify Federal resources obtained from the Homeless Super NOFA.

The TCHCS coordinates all grant funding applications through the State Office on Homelessness and HUD.

City staff met with staff of the TCHSC, several Fort Pierce nonprofit community supportive service organizations, local law enforcement and numerous concerned citizens at City Hall approximately two years ago to discuss coordination of services for our homeless population and to request assistance from the TCHSC. No collaborative offerings or financial support resulted from this meeting.

Staff at the City met with Ms. Lori Sorino from HUD via telephone in August, 2015 and subsequently sent a letter to the director of TCHCS, with content based on Ms. Sorino's recommendations, requesting assistance to address our growing homeless population. The director of the TCHSC met with City Staff in late September, following our written request for assistance. To date, the City has not been approved to submit a grant funding request or offered any collaborative solution through the TCHCS to address this critical issue.

Following is an overview of PY14 and previous funding accomplishments for the TCHCS:

- The TCHSC has received more than \$20 million in grants for homeless services since it began.
- The TCHSC is currently applying for renewal of grants totalling over \$1.4 million to cover the costs of housing chronically homeless individuals. \$289,776 will be used in St. Lucie County.
- In PY14, the TCHSC provided 307,314 to provide mental health services to 611 individuals.
- In PY14, the TCHSC provided \$1,595,254.63 to 4,308 individuals for rental assistance.
- In PY14, the TCHSC provided \$130,257 in short term rent through the Emergency Shelter Grant.
- TCHSC received FEMA Phase 30 Grant funds in 2013 for rental assistance, utility payments, security and utility deposits to 618 people.
- In PY13, the TCHSC provided 1,332,016 in rental assistance to 250 clients.
- In December, 2012, the TCHSC received a "Emergency Solutions" grant from the Department of Children and Families for \$104,500.
- The TCHSC receives at least \$950,000 per year from McKinney Vento under the Homeless Continuum of Care Competition.
- For 2010, the TCHSC received \$985,804 for Transitional Housing Supportive Services (SHP) and Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS).
- In May, 2010, the TCHSC received \$344,160 from the Shelter Plus Care (S+C), program, which provides subsidized housing for disabled individuals and families in St. Lucie, Martin and Indian River Counties.
- The TCHSC also received \$60,000 from the State of Florida's Emergency Shelter Grant program during PY10. This funding was used to provide rent and mortgage payment assistance.
- The TCHSC also received \$100,000 from the State of Florida's Challenge Grant opportunity in PY10 to provide daycare and employment services for homeless living in TCHSC housing, and also case management and financial assistance for utilities and housing for disabled homeless individuals. The program will serve up to 145 individuals.
- During PY10, the TCHCS also secured \$2,101,264 in State of Florida Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds to provide affordable rental housing to families who are at or below 50% of area median income and \$2,105,537 in Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Funding, of which \$1,236,207 was targeted to St. Lucie County residents. To date, more than 4,300 unduplicated individuals have been assisted since this program was implemented in 2009.

- The TCHSC also operates a mortgage modification program which has successfully assisted many families avoid foreclosure. Through the TCHSC Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program, persons who are homeless or are subject to become homeless may receive down payment and closing cost assistance toward the purchase of a home, once they have obtained steady employment and have established an acceptable credit rating.
- Financial and credit counseling are provided by Consumer Credit Counseling Services, now rebranded under the name of CreditAbility, and is paid for by banks in the St. Lucie County Lending Consortium.
- Staff from the City is looking forward to attending TCHSC board meetings and future meetings with the TCHSC director and staff and are hopeful this will result in a collaborative effort to address the growing homeless issues within the City of Fort Pierce.

E. OTHER ACTIONS

Other actions described in the Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plan are described below:

- 1. Address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.** The City amended its 2011-2015 Consolidated and 2013-2014 Action Plans to better address underserved needs, including support for the Fort Pierce Housing Authority's (FPHA) application for tax credits to rehabilitate a former hospital into apartments for lower-income senior and/or disabled citizens, slum and blight and infrastructure improvements in lower-income neighborhoods, and assistance with weatherization improvements for our lower-income citizens. The FPHA was denied funding in their first two (2) requests and are awaiting news of their third attempt at this funding request.

- 2. Foster and maintain affordable housing.** Several affordable housing concerns were made evident in the 2014 Action Plan Community Survey – code enforcement, street light improvements, signage and road improvements.

To help address these issues, the City used its CDBG funds to complete the Lincoln Park Improvement Project, more than \$500,000 in street repaving, curbs, gutters and sidewalk replacements and new signage. The City of Fort Pierce also replaced all of the existing lights in our lower income areas with LED lighting.

As stated earlier in this report, the City allocated funding in its 2013 Action Plan for 'cash match' toward the Fort Pierce Housing Authority's (FPHA's) grant application for tax credits to transform a vacant hospital into apartments for lower-income senior and/or disabled citizens. The FPHA continues to await news of the application.

Additionally, as detailed earlier, the City provided funding and project coordination for the World Changers Organization who painted and provided some rehabilitation to twelve (12) homes in 2013 and four (4) in 2014. Left over funds from the 2014 project are being used for our "Paint Our Town" program, which includes the City's collaboration with local businesses and nonprofits to provide exterior home rehabilitations to our most needy citizens. This program is proving very successful and we expect to list it as an activity throughout our next 5-Year Consolidated Plan.

The City also used State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funds to rehabilitate thirteen (13) homes belonging to our very low income disabled senior citizens during PY14.

Eliminate barriers to affordable housing. The 2008 housing market crash led to drastically decreased property values which has increased the amount of affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents. Unfortunately, home prices have steadily increased throughout PY14. Investors have purchased hundreds of foreclosed homes within the City, leaving very few affordable homes available for first time homebuyers and lower income citizens to purchase. Properties financed through Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac coming out of foreclosure are offered to qualifying citizens for approximately 30 days before they are available to investors, which is very helpful.

The economic downturn resulted in soaring unemployment and Fort Pierce still has not recovered. Fort Pierce's unemployment rate in August, 2015 was 10.8%, compared to St. Lucie

County's rate, which was at 6.8%, and the State of Florida, which was 5.3%. Unemployment and also "underemployment" remain on the forefront for the City of Fort Pierce, St. Lucie County, the State of Florida and the entire country.

- 3. Overcome gaps in institutional structure and enhance coordination.** The City of Fort Pierce works with the City of Port St. Lucie and St. Lucie County to coordinate three Housing Assistance Programs (CDBG, SHIP, and Hardest Hit). Quarterly lending consortium meetings are held to keep the groups connected and focused on affordable housing issues.

The City has been successful in engaging the Fort Pierce Housing Authority (FPHA), local non-profits, financial institutions, and the private sector in the provision of low and moderate-income housing. No gaps have been identified in this institutional structure.

- 4. Improve public housing and resident initiatives.** The delivery of public housing requires the coordination of a number of agencies, both public and private. These agencies will continue to work together to eliminate potential gaps within the delivery systems in Fort Pierce. A vital agency in this initiative is the Fort Pierce Housing Authority (FPHA).

For PY14, FPHA activities included:

- A. Up to \$10,000 in educational scholarships were available to outstanding students in FPHA's Public Housing, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, or its Affordable Housing Program to start or continue secondary education. Scholarships were available for Associate Degrees, Bachelor Degrees, Master's Degree or Vocational Training.
- B. The FPHA allocated 844 Section 8 vouchers and provided 827 Public Housing leases in PY13; and administers 18 units of non-subsidized rentals.
- C. Out of the 844, 39% of the households were elderly and/or disabled and 11% were elderly (not disabled).
- D. Installation of impact-rated windows and doors to 20 units
- E. Crime Reduction Initiatives – increase site lighting to 239 units and on site's parking/pedestrian area redesign
- F. FPHA is currently extensively renovating the community center at 3100 avenue G for various community based services such as health care, youth programs, food bank, religious activities, etc.
- G. Upgrading a multi-family high rise building with fire rated entry doors for each unit and upgraded fire alarm system
- H. Replace emergency generators at Buell Brown Center and Park Terrace
- I. FPHA hired a firm to conduct an energy audit on all 827 public housing units and recommend energy saving methods or products.
- J. FPHA applied for and received funds to administer a Family Self – Sufficiency Program for both its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing Programs. This program is designed to mentor families and link them to services, training, education and child care to help them eliminate the need for welfare. Currently, there are seventy-five (75) participating families.
- K. FPHA has applied for and received 35 HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program vouchers in conjunction with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.
- L. FPHA received a \$500,000 Tenant Based Rental Assistance Grant from the State of Florida to be offered to families awaiting housing assistance through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program for a term no longer than two (2) years. Families receiving rental assistance under this program are required to enroll in FPHA's Self-Sufficiency Program and receive mentoring and job training to reduce the dependence on welfare.

- M. FPHA’s policies now allocate Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers to local area witnesses of violent crime who agree to testify in court. The use of these vouchers is to relocate witnesses and protect against potential retaliation.
 - N. FPHA requires all Public Housing families and their members who are 18 years and older to participate in obtaining at least eight (8) hours of Community Services and volunteer work unless they are disabled, attending post-secondary schooling or gainfully employed.
5. **Evaluate and reduce lead-based paint hazards.** During PY14, the City continued to encourage residents and property owners to test for and reduce lead paint. Homes assisted with CDBG or SHIP funding that were built prior to 1978 are automatically tested for lead-based paint, and safe practices and abatement/reduction procedures are followed on projects where lead based paint is identified.
 6. **Ensure compliance with program and comprehensive planning requirements.** The City of Fort Pierce initiated a major reorganization to its housing program in February, 2010 and again in July, 2013. Trained, experienced staff is now responsible for ensuring compliance with all comprehensive planning requirements.
 7. **Reduce the number of persons living below the poverty level.** The U.S. Census Bureau's State and County Quick Facts (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12/1224300.html>) lists Fort Pierce with 35.7% of its population below the poverty level, compared to 16.3% of Florida and 14.9% in the United States, as a whole. The per capita income in Fort Pierce in November 2014 was \$16,597, which is low-income, compared to the State of Florida (\$26,236) and the Nation (\$28,051). The PY15 Public Service grant opportunity will be open to organizations that provide job training and job placement activities. We are hopeful this will initiate opportunities for local organizations to provide these much needed services within our lower-income neighborhoods.

Additionally, the City is collaborating with Career Source Research Coast (formerly Workforce Solutions) that provides job training, job placement and oftentimes stipends for childcare for the newly employed. We will be holding a job fair in our Lincoln Park neighborhood on January 14, 2016.

The City is also collaborating with the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) organization that will provide quarterly business informational workshops beginning November 18, 2015 for existing small micro-enterprises located in some of our very low income areas. Attendees to at least two (2) workshops will qualify to apply for a small grant from the City to purchase equipment, signage, etc. that will help increase their capacity and sustainability.

8. **Address Crime Prevention within the City of Fort Pierce.** The Florida Department of Law Enforcement website shows a decrease in crimes in St. Lucie County from 2013 through 2014. Please see the table below.

St. Lucie County Crime Data Summary			
County	2013	2014	% Change
Population	281,151	282,821	0.6
Total Arrests	13,889	14,247	2.9
Total Index Offenses	7,666	7,045	-8.0
Violent Rate	424.0	336.3	-20.7
Non-Violent Rate	2,307.7	2,154.7	-6.4
Index Rate	2,726.6	2,491.0	-8.6

Specific Fort Pierce Crime Statistics for 2013 and 2014, provided by the City of Fort Pierce Police Department, per the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program:

FORT PIERCE CRIME SUMMARY			
UCR Category	2013	2014	% Change
Homicide	7	12	71.4
Forcible Rape	27	36	33.3
Robbery	113	114	0.9
Aggravated Assault	405	298	-26.4
Total Violent Crimes	552	460	-16.7
Burglary	624	529	-15.2
Larceny/Theft	1,560	1,525	-2.2
Auto Theft	114	106	-7.0
Total Non-Violent Crimes	2298	2160	-6.0
UCR TOTAL	2850	2620	-8.1

If a community fails to look after its physical fabric — overgrown vacant lots, junk vehicles and buildings with broken windows or unkempt appearance — sooner or later crime will follow, and it’s likely to get worse as the surroundings deteriorate.

So, it’s no surprise that the areas of Fort Pierce with the highest crime statistics are those with the largest slum and blight areas. The City, along with neighborhood residents, are stepping up and taking charge, clearing overgrowth on unused lots, and cleaning up trash and debris.

The amount of trash removed from some northwest neighborhoods during a recent “Great America Cleanup” event, sponsored by the City’s Public Works Department, was staggering. The cleanup was held on May 16, 2015, resulted in tons of debris collected in just four hours.

There are many vacant lots in our depressed neighborhoods, and left unattended, undergrowth can easily reach head-high, which allows bad guys to stash weapons or drugs or to even use the overgrown plants as cover to hide themselves from law enforcement officers. Criminals also use dilapidated buildings for the same reasons. Lots can become so overgrown that buildings on them are completely hidden.

The City continues to allocate funding to help cover the salaries of Code Enforcement officers assigned to our lower income areas to address the blighted conditions. Additionally, we are currently working to complete ‘The Lincoln Park Improvement Project’ that will improve infrastructure, including new sidewalks, street re-paving, curbs and gutter replacements, signage and lighting in one of our targeted lower-income neighborhoods. We believe these priorities will have a significant positive impact on crime and economic development.

The City continues to promote the following programs, as detailed in earlier Action Plans as its “Anti-Poverty Strategy”:

(1) Anti-Poverty Strategy

- a) **The “Where to Turn” - 211 System.** The City of Fort Pierce is too small to be the lead agency for major social welfare programs such as Family Self-Sufficiency, Head Start, State and local Programs, Section 3, Welfare to Work or Workforce Development initiatives. Instead, the City partners with other Counties on the Treasure Coast to sponsor the “Where to Turn” - 211 Network which provides an annual written update as well as computer and telephone information and referral for all social service needs.

The 211 system provides all special needs groups with a single point of contact for finding solutions to their problems and is available in English, Spanish and Creole. The 211 system links all social service providers into a multi-county network seeking solutions to individual and family needs.

- b) **St. Lucie County Social Services Department.** Beyond the 211 network, the St. Lucie County Social Services Department serves as the lead agency for the three-County Treasure Coast Community Action Agency assisting low income citizens with Community Services Block Grant funding. These services include: rent/mortgage assistance, emergency car repairs, prescriptions, utility deposits and billings, and camperships for children. Additional services include: assistance for indigent burials, administration of a program which provides emergency medicine needs and manages the State-mandated share of county Medicaid Hospital and Nursing Home funding, as well as the Health Care Responsibility Act. County staff serves on state-wide advisory committees that relates to social services that serve the area.

The County ADA coordinator participates on the Emergency Disaster Team and in the staffing of a Special Needs shelter. This Department also serves as a First Stop Center for referral services, enabling clients to access assistance that is not budgeted by the City but is available by other agencies within our County. In addition, the Department distributes Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets, coordinates the "Adopt A Family" program for the holidays, maintains a food pantry, participates with non-profit agencies to provide toys at Christmas for less fortunate children within St. Lucie County and miscellaneous assistance throughout the entire year. Funds from the Community Services Block Grant targets low income persons which is commensurate with the Community Development Department's Anti-Poverty strategy on behalf of the very low-income households with incomes under 30% of median annual income.

- c) **Economic Development and Anti-Poverty.** It is important to recognize that the Anti-Poverty Strategy is not a housing plan; it is an economic development plan to increase incomes, and create and sustain jobs for low and moderate-income citizens. As noted earlier, the economic crisis in St. Lucie County, the State of Florida, and all across the United States has led to a significant decrease in employment opportunities and increased housing foreclosures for all sectors. The City believes housing must be a major component of any anti-poverty strategy, since a secure and affordable residence allows household members to pursue jobs, education and training without having to worry about the threat of homelessness.

Economic development is listed as one of the top three highest priorities in the City's Consolidated Plan, along with affordable housing and a suitable living environment.

The City supports its two Main Street organizations (Community Based Development Organizations-CBDOs), with CDBG funds. These CBDOs are tasked with providing specific business development assistance in lower income areas.

We believe that economic opportunity refers not just to economic opportunity for individuals in the form of jobs, but also to economic opportunities for local businesses who provide goods and services. As populations and commercial activity increases, the ability of a community to be economically competitive and the success of the community in sustaining and growing existing, local businesses and employers and attracting new ones, also increases.

Implementation of anti-poverty efforts is a cooperative effort between County agencies, the City of Fort Pierce, the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency, local organizations, including the Fort Pierce and Lincoln Park Main Street Programs, Allegany Franciscan Ministries, and the Fort Pierce Housing Authority.

The City is currently collaborating with St. Lucie County, Allegany Franciscan Ministries and Lincoln Park Main Street to acquire commercially-zoned property in our Lincoln Park neighborhood to offer to developers for a large grocery-retail store on the main thoroughfare which will provide jobs, employment training and potentially lay the cornerstone to trigger an economic upsurge for the entire area.

- d) **Key Players** - The economic and housing programs that are instrumental in the Anti-Poverty Strategy include:
- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** - CDBG funds will be used to update infrastructure, rehabilitate commercial facades and address spot slum and blight in lower

income areas. Additionally, these funds will be used to enhance cultural offerings, promote tourism in our lower income neighborhoods and encourage visitors to come to Fort Pierce, which will create and sustains jobs for low- and moderate-income persons and invigorate community-based organizations that provide positive activities for youth development and services for our senior citizens, and the un- and underemployed, such as educational opportunities and job training.

- **Florida State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program:** The City uses SHIP monies to assist very low income homeowners with repairs to their property.
- **Hardest Hit Program:** When the City disbanded the Department of Urban Redevelopment in 2013 due to budget shortfalls, the City of Port St. Lucie, Florida took over our Hardest Hit program, including providing oversight for all of our active clients. Port St. Lucie is about 12 miles from Fort Pierce. We now refer all calls for Hardest Hit assistance to the City of Port St. Lucie. To date, the City of Fort Pierce has processed 165 applications for foreclosure assistance, and qualified 45 citizens who have actually benefitted from the program.
- **Fort Pierce Housing Authority:** Very low-income households, particularly renters, are rated as priority numbers 2 and 3 in the City's Consolidated Plan. Persons who are represented in this category are eligible to receive assistance from the Fort Pierce Housing Authority. The City of Fort Pierce obligated \$37,500 in its PY2013-2014 Action Plan as a cash match for the Fort Pierce Housing Authority's grant application to rehabilitate a local abandoned hospital into apartments for lower-income senior citizens.
- **Allegany Franciscan Ministries:** The City of Fort Pierce's Lincoln Park Neighborhood was selected by Allegany Franciscan Ministries to receive financial support for economic development initiatives. To date, this collaboration has resulted in additional funding for Public Service grant awardees located in the neighborhood and a commitment for financial assistance to provide a large grocery/retail business for the food dessert, which will provide employment for local residents and potentially spur economic development in the area.

E. LEVERAGING RESOURCES

1. Identify progress in obtaining "other" public and private resources to address needs.

SHIP Funding - The City is currently preparing to rehabilitate the exteriors (roofs, gutters, siding/paint, exterior doors, hurricane shutters, ac/heat systems, etc.) for fifteen (15) homes belonging to very low income citizens using its SHIP funds during PY15.

Local banks that are members of the St. Lucie County Lending Consortium contribute to the provision of affordable housing by helping to defray the cost of the homeownership workshops. The local banks pay a fee to be a member of the consortium, which in turn is used to procure the services of Consumer Credit Counseling Services to provide the training. Participating in the affordable housing program also aids in promoting the local banks' Community Reinvestment Act federal compliance. Six (6) workshops for new homebuyers were held during PY14. Approximately 40 Fort Pierce residents attended the workshops.

State of Florida Hardest Hit Program Funding – The City's Hardest Hit Program was transferred to the City of Port St. Lucie in August, 2013, due to staffing shortages. As mentioned earlier in this report, the City of Port St. Lucie is approximately 12 miles from Fort Pierce.

Section 8 Program - The mission of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is to provide housing assistance to eligible low-income families, enabling them to rent decent, safe and affordable housing of their choice within the private rental market. The Fort Pierce Housing Authority's (FPHA) Five-Year Agency Plan's Strategic Goal is to encourage homeownership by providing HCV participants with the tools to effectively acquire homes by participation in a Self Sufficiency Program.

The HCV program provides assistance to eligible households leasing existing privately owned housing. Participants pay no more than 30 percent of their adjusted gross income for housing. The Section 8 moderate rehabilitation program provided property owners with low interest loans to rehabilitate their properties. The properties were rented for a specified period of years to low income tenants.

The FPHA managed an allocation of 844 vouchers, and 827 leases. The program's family make-up included 39% elderly and/or disabled; 11% elderly (not disabled).

World Changers – The City of Fort Pierce used CDBG funds to purchase supplies and materials for the World Changers, an energetic group of volunteers from across the United States, who traveled to the City and transformed 4 dilapidated structures belonging to some of our poorest citizens into attractive, livable homes.

Paint Our Town – The City of Fort Pierce continues using CDBG funds and collaborations with local merchants and nonprofits to provide paint and paint supplies and free labor to paint the exteriors of homes belonging to our lower income citizens.

Habitat for Humanity – The City continues to corroborate with Habitat for Humanity and will donate abandoned homes and provide materials to the organization, who rehabilitated 6 homes for lower-income Fort Pierce citizens in PY14.

Allegany Franciscan Ministries – The City continues our collaboration with Allegany Franciscan Ministries which selected the Lincoln Park Neighborhood in Fort Pierce to receive financial assistance for the development of economic development initiatives over the next 6-7 years.

2. How Federal resources from HUD leveraged other public and private resources.

Commercial Façade Grants – The City expended \$85,730 in CDBG funds for commercial façade grants, which leveraged over \$450,000 in commercial property improvements.

Public Service Agencies – Allegany Franciscan Ministries provided 'cash match' totalling more than \$41,000 for CDBG grants provided to Public Service Agencies located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood in Fort Pierce.

World Changers / "Paint Our Town" – The City of Fort Pierce used CDBG funds to purchase supplies and materials for the World Changers, an energetic group of volunteers from across the United States, who traveled to the City and transformed 4 dilapidated structures belonging to some of our poorest citizens into attractive, livable homes. Following the World Changers event, the City began our "Paint Our Town" program, which involves collaboration between the City and local businesses and local nonprofits. The City provides funding, the businesses provide materials, paint, etc. either free or at a discounted price, and local nonprofits provide free labor to paint homes belonging to our lower income citizens.

G. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Citizen comments on the PY14 CAPER were solicited through a "Public Notice" request that was placed on the City's website (cityoffortpierce.com) and in the local newspaper, and on the Public Information Board at City Hall. The public was provided an opportunity to review the CAPER online via the City's website, at the Fort Pierce Public Library and at City Hall between October 19 and November 16. Public Hearings were held on November 2 and again on November 16, 2015, at regularly-scheduled City Commission meetings at Fort Pierce City Hall. *Please see the enclosed transcribed minutes from the City Commission meetings relating to the CAPER and Public Comments received during those meetings.* Also enclosed is a copy of the advertisement that ran in a local newspaper promoting the availability of the PY14 CAPER, the public comment period and the dates and times for the public hearings.

Comments received from the public will be placed here.

H. SELF EVALUATION

Are activities and strategies having an impact on identified needs? What indicators would best describe overall results? Are major goals on target?

We believe the PY14 activities are having an impact on identified needs. Please see overview of indicators for each activity below. All major goals are on target.

Housing Rehabilitation - Provided rehabilitation assistance for 13 homes through the SHIP program and painted the exteriors of four (4) homes belonging to very low income citizens through the World Changers outreach project.

Address Spot Slum and Blight – Demolished, cleared and removed or secured 6 structures.

Infrastructure – Currently implementing infrastructure improvements, including new street lighting and street resurfacing, sidewalks, repair/replace curbs and gutters, adding new signage and landscaping in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. This project is still underway and should be completed within the next 30 days.

Senior Citizen Housing Assistance – Allocated \$37,500 in the 2013-2014 Action Plan for the Fort Pierce Housing Authority (FPHA) to use as ‘cash match’ in their tax credit grant application to rehabilitate former hospital into apartments for very low income and disabled senior citizens. The FPHA is awaiting word on the application.

Weatherization Assistance – Provided funding to complete weatherization improvements for six (6) very low income Fort Pierce citizens. Improvements included windows, insulation, roofs, HVAC systems, etc.

Code Enforcement – Provided salaries for 2 Code Enforcement officers who inspected 544 buildings to help alleviate slum and blight conditions in lower income neighborhoods.

Public Service Projects – Provided grants to seventeen (17) public service organizations who directly served more than 5,240 citizens.

Community Based Development Organizations - Provided grants to Lincoln Park and Fort Pierce Main Street Organizations conduct neighborhood revitalization, economic development, heritage tourism and historic preservation projects/services for businesses located in lower income areas.

Commercial Façade Grants – Provided grants to upgrade the facades on nineteen (19) commercial structures in low and moderate income areas.

Micro Enterprise – Provided marketing/development campaign for 43 small businesses.

Promoted local art and cultural heritage projects which are serving as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization in lower-income neighborhoods.

Provided maintenance and ongoing upkeep for our beautiful community garden in the Lincoln Park Neighborhood, a community focal point.

- 1. What barriers may have a negative impact on fulfilling strategies and achieving the overall vision? We do not foresee any barriers at this time.** We do not see any barriers at this time.
- 2. Based on this evaluation, what adjustments or improvements to strategies and activities might help meet the identified needs more effectively?**

Creating an environment conducive to economic growth is a complex process, requiring planning, community leadership and involvement, and innovative thinking. Jobs alone will not necessarily generate sustainable economic opportunity. What worked twenty years ago will not necessarily create a solid economic base today, particularly in smaller urban settings.

The City of Fort Pierce recognizes that our tourism industry is an integral and important part of the future economic development and employment growth within the area. Support for the continued competitiveness of our local tourism industry and the creation of an environment where businesses can succeed, in all commercial areas of the City, are central to our objectives.

Many factors contribute to whether or not a community can generate and sustain economic opportunity, including community quality of life, the appearance and vitality downtown areas, business centers and surrounding residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors, infrastructure availability and capacity, the presence of essential services such as health and public safety, education and skill level of the workforce, ability of the community to provide for current and future workforce needs, adequate and easily-accessible transportation that provides access to markets and linking employers, customers and employees, and so forth.

At the same time, the existence and obstacles to development, such as abandoned and dilapidated buildings that dominate decaying town centers can impede economic growth if they are not identified and eliminated.

The City's strategy is reflected in its amended 2011-2015 Consolidated and new 2015-2016 Action Plans involves addressing code violations, improving infrastructure and helping to rebuild a sense of 'community' in our lower-income neighborhoods and commercial corridors, revitalizing and invigorating commercial areas, stabilizing and improving the sustainability of local businesses, addressing brownfields and environmental and expanding overall essential business and residential services.

The City will continue to pursue other forms of public and private assistance that will directly result in new or retained jobs, particularly for low and moderate income residents and for projects and activities that enrich communities, revitalize neighborhoods and holistically address elements that impact the City's attractiveness to business and industry, its ability to grow local businesses and industry and its overall ability to support economic activity and growth.

Future Plans – Additional adjustments may be required to CDBG funding priorities and activities in the future, as needs continue to change, funding levels are reduced or increased, new funding sources are obtained, or shifts occur in strategies for housing, community or economic development.

Some of our future plans which we have listed in our 2015-2016 Action Plan include providing small business consultation and workshops, grants to increase the capacity and sustainability of small micro enterprises, collaborating with Career Source Research Coast to provide a job fair and continuing our work of implementing a 'creative placemaking' initiative in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, using cultural arts and history recognition events to instill civic pride and hopefully help bridge the divides within our city and spur economic development and job creation.

Part of the 'Creative Placemaking' initiative involves capitalizing on our local assets, which include the world-renown Highwaymen Artists, many who still live and paint in Fort Pierce. The Highwaymen, also referred to as the Florida Highwaymen, are a group of 26 African American Florida Hall of Fame landscape artists. Self-taught and self-mentoring, they created a body of work of over 200,000 paintings, despite living in Jim-Crow era Florida and facing many racial and cultural barriers.

The Highwaymen painted landscapes and made a living selling them door-to-door to businesses and individuals throughout Florida from the mid-1950s through the 1980s. They also peddled their work from the trunks of their cars along the eastern coastal roads, thus earning them the "Highwaymen" name.

The City is very close to completing the final phase of The Highwaymen Heritage Trail project, which includes a self-guided commemorative trail and complementary website which has been partially funded through two (2) grants from the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) and our CDBG "Art in Public Places" and "Promotion of Local Art and Cultural Heritage" activities.

The ribbon cutting for the project will be held February 20, 2016. The invitation list includes dignitaries all across the country – even to Washington, DC. When complete, trail stops will be

located throughout our lower-income Lincoln Park neighborhood. The project's complimentary website will feature Lincoln Park restaurants and retail. We expect this project to help create a resurgence of civic pride, increase tourism, expand economic opportunities and create jobs.

In addition to the Florida Highwaymen, the City recently assumed ownership of the Zora Neale Hurston Dust Tracks Heritage Trail from St. Lucie County. Ms. Hurston lived the final years of her life in Fort Pierce. The cultural trail, which is also located within the Lincoln Park neighborhood, is visited by local citizens, students and tourists from across the globe. We are currently working to restore the sign frames and plan to have a re-dedication of the trail and an all-day family friendly festival in April, 2016. Like the Highwaymen Heritage Trail Festival and Art Show, The Zora Festival will also become an annual event and will be held in the heart of the Lincoln Park neighborhood, along the beautiful Moore's Creek Linear Park.

The City is looking into the possibility of a \$300,000 'Revolving Loan' from the Fort Pierce Regional Planning Council to complete the brownfield abatement process at the site of the former King Power Plant in downtown Fort Pierce. Once the abatement of this site along our beautiful downtown waterfront is complete, the property will provide an excellent opportunity for investors and developers to spur job creation which will enhance our overall economic viability.

Florida has just recorded another record-breaking year in tourism. Promoting our small tourism-based businesses will also spur economic growth, development, and create jobs.

In late 2013, Allegany Franciscan Ministries developed the "Common Good Initiative" designed to mobilize communities towards better health and wellness through community engagement with a long-term commitment of resources. After an extensive and thoughtful discernment process, one community in each of Allegany's three regions was chosen for the new initiative. The City of Fort Pierce's Lincoln Park neighborhood was selected from Allegany's Palm Beach region.

Allegany now has a placed-based funding commitment of \$4.2 million over five to six years for the Lincoln Park community. The City is collaborating with Allegany to facilitate economically viable investment opportunities, including a new grocery/retail business along Avenue D, the neighborhood's commercial corridor.

Youth and gang violence is a significant issue that impacts many communities across the United States, including Fort Pierce's Lincoln Park Neighborhood. Many different groups have come together such as law enforcement, public health, faith leaders, residents and other stakeholders to address the issue. They have agreed to use a public health approach of focusing on the root causes of gang life – poverty, education attainment, and unemployment to reduce the violence.

The Fort Pierce Police Department was awarded a \$203,000 grant from OJJDP and St. Lucie's Board of County Commissioners awarded \$40,000 to implement the "Restoring the Village" initiative. The City of Fort Pierce provides office space, utilities, etc. to the director and staff of the initiative, now based at City Hall.

I. MONITORING

1. **Describe how and the frequency with which you monitored your activities.** In compliance with Section 91.230 of the Final Rule, the following is a description of the standards and procedures the City of Fort Pierce uses to monitor project and program activities authorized under federal programs. The City of Fort Pierce is committed to using federal funds appropriately and in such a manner that maximizes public benefit to low and moderate income households. The City utilizes a variety of administrative mechanisms to ensure the success of their endeavors through both project and program monitoring:

a) **Project Monitoring.** The goal of project monitoring is to ensure that HUD-funded projects and activities are implemented in a timely manner in accordance with federal regulations and other statutory or regulatory requirements. As a means to achieve this goal, the City's monitoring efforts focus on identifying deficiencies, promoting corrections, and providing technical assistance in order to improve the performance of the City and all its partners. This process

involves effective communication and cooperative, problem-solving relationships between the City, contractors, and subrecipients.

Project monitoring activities are comprised of desk reviews and/or on-site visits during which management procedures, goal establishment and achievement, record keeping, organizational financial status, construction and labor standards (if applicable), procurement procedures, and other areas relevant to the project are reviewed. The information to be reviewed is outlined in checklists that are developed for each type of activity. These checklists are created using HUD's Monitoring Handbook, regulations, and other requirements from each funding source

- b) Desk Review.** Desk review is a monthly, ongoing process in which the City Grants Administrator uses monthly reports submitted by recipients to review the subrecipient or business performance in carrying out the approved project or activity. This review process enables the City to identify problems requiring immediate attention and to prepare for more in-depth on-site monitoring, as needed. Materials used for this review include, but are not limited to, the executed subrecipient/business agreement, requests for reimbursement, monthly, quarterly, and annual reports, audits, Certificate(s) of Liability Insurance, participant eligibility information, documentation from previous monitoring visits, and the original funding application.
- c) On-site Monitoring.** On-site monitoring is a structured review at the location(s) where project activities are being carried out or where project records are maintained. In preparation of an on-site monitoring visit, the assigned staff contacts the subrecipient/business to explain the purpose of the visit, schedules a time and date, sends a confirmation letter, and performs a desk review.

Once on-site, staff reviews the subrecipient/business files, including source documentation, to ensure compliance with all regulations governing their administrative, financial, and programmatic operations. Staff also verifies that performance objectives are on target and that the activity or project is projected to be completed within budget and schedule. This information is utilized to complete the appropriate checklist(s) and exit interview prior to site departure. During the exit interview, staff provides the subrecipient/business with an explanation or overview of the tentative conclusions reached during the monitoring visit.

Once the on-site visit is concluded, a formal written report describing the results of the visit, including a list of any findings or concerns is provided. This report also recommends corrective actions to address and rectify any issues, as needed. Once the corrective actions are addressed, the City closes out the monitoring review.

The City's Grants Administrator monitors all project activities, including housing, infrastructure, public service agencies, economic development programs, and Section 108 projects. Staff works independently to monitor all respective projects and activities.

- d) CDBG Public Service and Economic Development Activities.** City staff performs monthly desk reviews and, when necessary, on-site monitoring visits for each public service activity to ensure that subrecipients are in compliance with federal regulations, statutory requirements, and the terms of their subrecipient agreement with the City. Additional monitoring is conducted, as needed. Prior to approval, staff verifies eligibility with regard to the criteria outlined in the individual agreements, services provided, and other relevant criteria, as appropriate. These periodic reviews enable staff to measure performance and ensure the timely expenditure of funds.
- e) All Other Projects and Activities.** The City Grants Administrator and Federal Projects Administrator are responsible for monitoring all projects and activities funded by CDBG, SHIP and NSP. At the beginning of each project, staff develops a Monitoring Plan/Schedule for all projects and activities. This plan is derived by conducting an assessment of all projects and activities included in the Action Plan. Additionally, the Monitoring Plan considers HUD's requirements for post-completion monitoring such as minimum-use period, affordability, income eligibility, and housing quality standards requirements.

All projects administered by the City undergo monthly and annual desk reviews as well as periodic reviews similar to those discussed above when reimbursements are requested. When it's a housing and/or infrastructure activity, staff members, including employees from our Engineering and Building Departments, perform a physical inspection of the work that has been completed and reviews the recipient's Davis Bacon documentation, as necessary, prior to any payment, if applicable.

- f) **Program Monitoring.** The City understands the importance of performing a periodic self-evaluation with respect to the goals and objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan as well as the activities included in each Action Plan. The purpose of this review is to ensure long term compliance with program and comprehensive planning requirements. The core component of the City's structure for Program Monitoring is the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS). In this system, all CDBG and Section 108 funded projects are reviewed in report format to track the timely expenditure of funds as well as overall program performance.
- g) **Timeliness.** The City of Fort Pierce made its Timeliness ratio for PY14.
- h) **Program Performance.** The primary means of assessing program performance is through the development of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) at the end of each program year. The information that is provided in this report allows the City and HUD to review the overall program's performance. The performance measurement system clearly demonstrates whether the City has met the annual goals and objectives and is on target to meet its projected goals and objectives.

The final layer of program performance is provided through an annual audit by external independent auditors. Information obtained from these audits is evaluated and incorporated, as appropriate, as revisions to the City's policies and procedures.

- **Contract Agreements.** The City enters into binding contractual agreements with parties participating in federal programs. Such agreements are useful tools for insuring compliance with program provisions by the City and these parties. Additionally, these agreements provide a basis for enforcing program requirements and for identifying remedies in the event of a breach of the provisions by these parties. Elements contained in these agreements are inclusive of, but not limited to: type of activity, specific "boiler plate" provisions, other terms and conditions, special program requirements, budget, scope of services, reporting requirements, and other special provisions.

2. What is the status of your grant programs?

- **Are any activities or strategies falling behind schedule?** No.
- **Are grant disbursements timely?** Yes
- **Do actual expenditures differ from letter of credit disbursements?** No

SECTION III: CDBG PROGRAM

J. Assessment of Relationship of CDBG funds to Goals and Objectives. During PY14, the City of Fort Pierce expended \$965,021 of CDBG funds to address spot slum and blight, provide weatherization assistance, code enforcement, public service projects, neighborhood revitalization, commercial façade improvements, micro-enterprise assistance, to promote local art and cultural heritage, community focal points and grant administration.

1. Assess the use of CDBG funds in relation to the priorities, needs, goals and specific objectives of the Consolidated Plan, particularly the highest priority activities. (breakout)

The Goals and Priorities of the Consolidated Plan are:

- Provide Decent Housing
- Establish and Maintain a Suitable Living Environment
- Promote Neighborhood Stabilization
- Stabilize and Expand Small Existing Businesses

2. Evaluate progress toward meeting the goals of providing affordable housing using CDBG funds, including the number and types of households served.

The City of Fort Pierce will use State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funds to provide housing rehabilitation for our citizens.

3. Indicate the extent to which CDBG funds were used for activities that benefited extremely low-income, low income and low and moderate income persons.

Extremely Low Income - Spot Slum and Blight Remediation	\$ 47,029
Extremely Low Income - Weatherization Assistance	\$ 13,331
Low Income - Code Enforcement	\$ 33,355
Extremely Low Income - Public Service Projects	\$ 81,863
Low and Moderate Income - Neighborhood Revitalization – CBDO’s	\$100,000
Low and Moderate Income - Commercial Façade Improvements	\$ 85,730
Low and Moderate Income - Micro-Enterprise	\$ 68,540
Low Income - Promotion of Local Art and Cultural Heritage	\$ 10,430
Extremely Low Income - Community Focal Points	\$ 341
Extremely Low Income - World Changers / Paint Our Town	\$ 4,493
Low Income - Infrastructure Improvements	\$451,159
<u>Program Administration</u>	<u>\$ 68,752</u>
TOTAL CPD/CDBG GRANT FUNDS EXPENDED	\$ 965,021

4. Low/Moderate Income Benefit. In accordance with the HUD-approved Consolidated Plan, the City of Fort Pierce allocated CDBG funds to meet HUD’s National Objectives.

5. Amendments and Other Changes to the Programs. The City pursued the resources identified in the Consolidated Action Plan.

6. National Objective Failures. The City experienced no National Objective Failures in PY14.

7. Actions Taken to Avoid Displacement. The City did not have any activities taking place during the program year which had the potential to cause displacement.

8. Compliance with URA. In cases where the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA) applies, the City reviews files and monitors the following areas: all activities subject to adding to the workload (relocation/acquisition management), persons displaced and not displaced, temporary moves, the adequacy of replacement housing, benefits calculation, advisory (supportive) services and complaints and/or appeals that may be provided.

- 9. Jobs filled with Lower Income People.** There were no jobs created in PY14 as a result of CDBG Entitlement funding support.
- 10. For Limited Clientele Activities.** In PY14, the City of Fort Pierce conducted Limited Clientele Activities utilizing CDBG funding in the Public Services Strategy, which provided CDBG funding for a total of 17 community non-profit organizations. All of these organizations were of such nature and/or in such location that it was reasonably concluded that their clientele were primarily extremely low and low-income.
- 11. Rehabilitation Accomplishments and Costs.** The City rehabilitated thirteen (13) homes belonging to very low income residents for a total cost of \$213,000 using SHIP funds. Additionally, the exteriors of four (4) homes belonging to our lower-income citizens were painted by the World Changers organization. The City contributed approximately \$4,000 toward the painting and minor repairs. World Changers provided volunteer labor, donated supplies and materials and also contributed money for the rehabs. All of these rehabilitation services were provided to citizens who were extremely low and low income
- 12. Changes in Program Objectives.** Identify the nature and reasons for any changes in program objectives and indications of how the jurisdiction would change its programs as a result of its experiences (24CFR81.520(c)).
Economic shifts, high unemployment, increased crime and uncertainties relating to funding are propelling the City to continuously explore new strategies.
- 13. Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies.** The City of Fort Pierce does not have an approved Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area.

Section 108 Loan Guarantee

Grantee Name	ST	Section 108 Project #	Project Name	108 Loan Amount	108 Amt Advanced	Total CDBG Assist	FTE Jobs Est. in 108 Appl.	Total Actual FTE Jobs Created or Retained	# of FTE Jobs Held by/ Made Avail. to Low/ Mod	Total Housing Units Assisted	# of Units Occ. by Low/ Mod HouseHlds	Slum/ Blight Area Y=Yes
Coral Square Shops of Florida LLC	FL	B-08-MS-12-0031	Coral Square Shoppes Redevelop Project	\$3,395,000	\$3,395,000	0.00	115	35	30	N/A	N/A	Y

SECTION IV: HOME PROGRAM

The City of Fort Pierce does not receive funding under the HOPWA Program.

SECTION V: HOPWA PROGRAM

The City of Fort Pierce does not receive funding under the HOPWA Program.

SECTION VI: EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANTS PROGRAM

The City of Fort Pierce does not receive funding under the Emergency Shelter Grant Program.

IDIS REPORTS

Summary of Accomplishments Report (C04PR23)

Summary of Consolidated Plan Projects for Report Year XXXX (C04PR06)

CDBG Financial Summary Report (C04PR26)

CDBG Summary of Activities (C04PR03)

CDBG Performance Measures Report (C04PR83)

CDBG Strategy Area, CDFI, and Local Target Area (C04PR84)

HOME Housing Performance Report (Grantee/PJ) (C04PR85) – *Not Applicable*

ESG Performance Measures Report (C04PR81) – *Not Applicable*

HOPWA Measuring Housing Stability Outcomes (C04PR80) – *Not Applicable*

HOPWA Units/Households and Funds Expended (C04PR82) – *Not Applicable*