



Region VI Update

SUMMER 2014

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A Message from Your Chair

After 40 years of the Community Development Block Grant program and despite over a decade of funding cuts, there have been some notable accomplishments. We have managed to complete some ambitious and innovative projects from our region. Whether through our housing rehabilitation and emergency repair programs, small business and economic development



opportunities, sustainable communities initiatives, new construction and infill development, home-buyer assistance and financial education services, or public education and workforce development efforts, we will continue to develop programs, build partnerships, and leverage resources to compensate for federal budget cuts and improve the conditions in our communities.

It is imperative that we continue to work together. I am urging you to participate in our 2014 Region VI Annual Conference. The 2014 event brings together seven cities and one county in the Rio Grande Valley to host the conference. The conference will be held October 22-24 in McAllen, Texas. It will be an exciting opportunity to for our region to gather, learn and exchange ideas. I look forward to a great conference and hope to see you there!

**SEE PAGE 6 FOR REGION VI
CONFERENCE INFORMATION !!**

EL PASO Provides Affordable Housing And Praises CDBG



ABOVE:

Joyce Palmer
Chair
CD Steering Committee

Cortney Niland,
City Representative
District 8

Bill Schlesinger,
Director
Project Vida

On April 24, 2014, a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony and Open House was held for the construction of New Affordable Homes for low income residents located in the Chamizal Revitalization Strategy area using Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) funds in the amount of \$993,328.

The City partnered with Project Vida CD Corporation to construct a new two-story

apartment complex which provides safe, decent and affordable housing for low-income families in the Chamizal area. The complex has ten units and each is equipped with three (3) bedrooms, gas stoves, dishwasher (energy star appliance) and landscaping with water conservation methods.

Pat White, Hsg Programs Mgr for the Department of Community and Human Development welcomed all of the guests and spoke about the impact CDBG funding has in providing safe, decent and affordable housing for low-income residents.

City Representative Cortney Niland spoke to residents about the importance of federally funded programs such as the

CDBG program. She stated that without the CDBG program many projects such as this would not be possible.

Mr. Bill Schlesinger, Director of Project Vida thanked the CDBG Program along with the City of El Paso for making a difference in the community and making it possible for them to provide affordable housing for people in need.

Project Vida CD Corporation provided complimentary food and beverages and a tour of the homes. Several families attended, and stated they were interested in renting an apartment. One of the families in attendance said the units were beautifully designed and had exactly what they were looking for. Media

not only attended, took footage and conducted interviews, but were personally impressed on the impact that CDBG has on residents and in the neighborhood as a whole.



A Path Home Opens in Farmington

A Path Home, owned by the Four Corners Foundation, recently opened in Farmington, NM. The construction of the \$3.5M emergency and transitional housing project was partially funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program awarded by the City of Farmington over four (4) Action Plan years amounting to over \$588,000.

The project consists of a new 13,600-square foot emergency facility which houses up to 90 homeless individuals

and families and an apartment complex with 12 units that will provide qualified residents supportive services as they continue working towards independence and self-sufficiency. Residents of the project have access to necessary support services including substance abuse and behavioral health programs, medical and dental care, counseling, employment assistance, educational opportunities, job skills training, child care, money management, parenting, and nutrition classes.





NCD Assistant Director, Vicki Watson, Instrumental in Forming the CDBG Coalition

The CDBG Coalition is working with a bi-partisan group of House members on a resolution to support the Community Development

Block Grant (CDBG) program on its 40th anniversary. H. Res. 668 was introduced on July 14, 2014 by three Democrats and three Republicans: Representatives Chaka Fattah (D-PA), Mike Turner (R-OH), Lou Barletta (R-PA), Robert Brady (D-PA), Chris Gibson (R-NY), and James McGovern (D-MA). To date, 51 House members have added their names as co-sponsors to the resolution. The resolution will be added to the House calendar in September when Congress returns from a five week recess. Our hope is to have the resolution bundled with other non-controversial bills and resolutions under what's called suspension of the rules; a procedure generally used to quickly pass non-controversial measures in the House. Please reach out to your House members during August and September and urge them to co-sponsor H. Res. 668 by contacting either Jared Bass (jared.bass@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Chaka Fattah's office or Vince Erfe (vince.erfe@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Mike Turner's office. To locate your House member go to www.house.gov/representatives/find/

Now that Julian Castro has been sworn in as the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the CDBG Coalition plans to meet with him in September to discuss the importance of providing a solid base of funding for CDBG in the FY16 budget. The CDBG Coalition also sent a letter to Office of Management and Budget Director Shaun Donovan seeking no less than \$3.3 billion in formula funding for CDBG in FY16, an increase of \$270 million from the current funding level.

In the coming days, the CDBG Coalition will send out a set of suggested activities and talking points for communities to use in reaching out to their Congressional members during August and September.

Please feel free to contact Vicki Watson at vicki@ncdaonline.org with any questions regarding the CDBG Coalition.

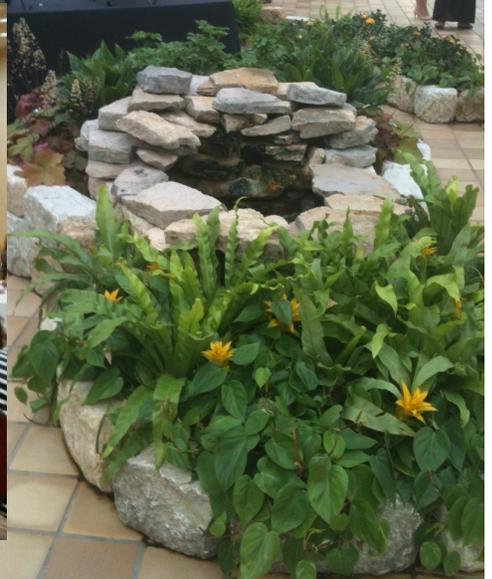
CDBG Coalition Members

- U.S. Conference of Mayors
- National Association of Counties
- National League of Cities
- National Community Development Association
- American Planning Association
- Council of State Community Development Agencies
- Feeding America
- Habitat for Humanity International
- International Economic Development Council
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation
- National Association of County Community and Economic Development
- National Association of Development Organizations
- National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies
- National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
- National Rural Housing Coalition
- National Urban League
- Rebuilding Together
- YWCA USA



CONGRATULATIONS EL PASO!

Rudy Reyes Accepts the John A. Sasso, National Community Development Award for El Paso's great celebration of CD WEEK! The Award was presented by our NCD A officers and staff. From left: Michael Look, Seattle WA; Cardell Cooper, NCD A; Rudy Reyes, EL Paso TX; Willie Day, Anderson SC; Bob Gehret, Boston MA.



City of Brownsville
City of Edinburg
City of Harlingen
City of McAllen



City of Mission
City of Pharr
City of San Benito
Hidalgo County

NCD REGION VI - SOUTHWEST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WHO

The eight entitlement communities of the Rio Grande Valley would like to extend an invitation to you and your staff to participate in the NCD Region VI Annual Conference. We are located in Deep South Texas and have beautiful year-round tropic-like weather. October in the Valley is always spectacular!

WHAT

As you know, Community Development Block Grant is celebrating 40 years and what a better way to celebrate than with your NCD Region VI friends! Recently appointed HUD Secretary Julian Castro has been invited to be this year's keynote speaker.

WHEN

The conference will be held October 22-24, 2014 with plenty of great sessions and entertaining evening events. A pre-conference training will also be held October 20-21, 2014. The training topic is Advanced CDBG and Underwriting Projects and is sponsored by National Community Development Association.

Registration for the conference is attached. Registration for the training is available online at www.ncdaonline.org.

WHERE

A block of rooms have been reserved for NCD participants at the Embassy Suites Hotel located at 1800 S. 2nd St., McAllen, TX 78503. A special rate of \$86 single and \$96 double is available. Please mention the "NCD Conference" when making reservations. Hotel reservations may be made by calling (956) 686-3000.

For those flying into McAllen, Embassy Suites Hotel provides a courtesy van to and from McAllen International Airport (MFE: Airport Code). Additionally, Southwest Airlines flies into the city of Harlingen (HRL) which is located 35 miles east of McAllen.

WHY

The Conference is an opportunity to learn from other CDBG practitioners, view successful projects and their impact on the local community as well as re-energize yourself about the work we do! As a special treat, Mexican artisan vendors will be onsite. Bring your checkbook!

[SEE EMAIL ATTACHMENT FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)