

**CITY OF ROGERS, ARKANSAS  
ACTION PLAN  
FOR PERIOD  
JANUARY 1, 2007 – DECEMBER 31, 2007**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The City of Rogers, Arkansas is a participant in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, managed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City is awarded funds annually to carryout eligible activities that benefit extremely-low to moderate-low individuals and families and is a significant community development resource for the City of Rogers. The Action Plan is a planning document submitted each year detailing how the City proposes to spend the requested CDBG funds during the program year. The Plan will also discuss citizen participation as well as City Management input in setting up needs and priorities for the 2007 Plan Year.

**ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:**

The City has developed their own programs, funding priorities, and partnerships based on local needs. HUD has established guidelines to define the types of projects/activities that may be taken to meet CDBG criteria. The City of Rogers follows these guidelines to ensure each project/activity meets one of the following national objectives. Listed below are examples of eligible projects/activities:

- Acquisition and disposition of real property
- Acquisition, construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of public facilities such as community, senior and health centers. Public facilities also include streets, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, and infrastructure (water and sewer or flood and drainage improvements)
- Provisions of public services such as child care, health care, recreation or education programs for senior citizens and services for homeless persons
- Residential housing rehabilitation

## **NATIONAL OBJECTIVES:**

HUD guidelines have been followed to ensure each project/activity meets one of the following national objectives of the CDBG Program:

- Benefiting low and moderate income persons either individually, such as housing rehabilitation, or area wide, such as improvements to streets, sidewalks, and parks, activities that benefit special populations that are presumed to be low and moderate income such as elderly persons, abused spouses or children, homeless persons, and developmentally or physically disabled/handicapped persons.
- Preventing or eliminating slum or blight conditions.
- Meeting a particularly urgent community development need that poses a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The City of Rogers is aware of the need of the many and various community development activities, both housing and non-housing needs. Funding limitations will not allow all of the City's needs to be met in 2007, however, the City hopes to continue carrying out the CDBG Program in future years to meet the needs of the extremely low to low-moderate individuals and families. The 2007 needs for the City have been identified in the 2007 Action Plan. These needs were identified through the citizen participation process and City Management's input.

The Community Development Block Grant Program will continue to partner with the City and other agencies to accomplish their goals and the goals set by HUD. These goals include:

- Decent Housing - Providing decent housing includes assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing, assisting individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless, retention of affordable housing stock, increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing in standard condition to low income and moderate income individuals and families, particularly to members of disadvantaged minorities without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability, increasing the supply of supportive housing

which includes structural features and services to enable persons with special needs (including persons with HIV/AIDS) to live in dignity and independence, and providing affordable housing that is accessible to job opportunities.

- Suitable Living Environment – Improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods, increasing access to quality public and private facilities and services, reducing the isolation of income groups within areas through spatial de-concentration of housing opportunities for lower income persons and the revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods, restoring and preserving properties of special historic, architectural, or aesthetic value, and conserving of energy resources.
- Expanded Economic Opportunities – Providing job creation and retention, establishment, stabilization and expansion of small businesses (including micro-businesses), provision of public services concerned with employment, provision of jobs to low income persons living in areas affected by those programs and activities, or jobs resulting from carrying out activities under programs covered by the plan, availability of mortgage financing for low income persons at reasonable rates using non-discriminatory lending practices, access to capital and credit for development activities that promote the long-term economic and social viability of the community, and empowerment and self-sufficiency for low income persons to reduce generational poverty in federally assisted housing and public housing.

## **OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:**

### **Housing Services Program:**

Habitat for Humanity of Benton County: The City of Rogers will continue to partner with Habitat for Humanity in providing affordable housing in Rogers by land acquisitions for Habitat homes. Construction has started on an environmentally friendly eco-subdivision on Old Wire Road. This subdivision will provide 12 to 15 homes. Families have already been selected for these homes with other families waiting for the possibility of a Habitat home in future developments. All selected families are in the extremely-low to low-income range. The entire subdivision will be dedicated to preserving the environment. The development will include a wetland conservation area, community area, a park, and is within walking

distance to several Rogers Public Schools. A property's owner's association will be developed along with covenants for the owners. This will be the first "Habitat" neighborhood in Rogers. The City will purchase one acre of land with their 2007 CDBG funds.

Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas: The City of Rogers will partner with Rebuilding together of Northwest Arkansas and provide funding to assist the homeowners in the Rogers City limits. Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas is a non-profit organization that preserves and revitalizes homes. All homeowners must be low-income and unable to financially pay for the work. Some of the rehabilitation projects will include the building of ramps, installing grab bars, and other home modifications to allow our elderly and disabled to safely use their homes. Rehab work will also include weatherization, plumbing, and electrical work. Some painting and flooring replacement will be done, if needed, because of damages from plumbing and electrical problems. In addition to housing rehabilitation, emergency year-round services and/or repairs are made to qualified individuals. Selection process for 2007 rehabilitation work will start in November 2006 and continue through early 2007. Site visits will be made with each applicant to ensure applicants meet all income criteria. The visits will also allow the City to meet with the homeowners and determine the scope of work needed in making their homes safe and dry. Since no locations for rehab work are known at this time, we will set up activities under the Rehab Project as addresses become available. Funds requested will cover five home rehabs and three emergency repairs.

### **Public Services Programs:**

City of Rogers Transportation Assistance Program: The objective of the City is to improve the mobility of income eligible citizens as determined by the Consolidated Plan criteria. All the participants are approved residents of the City of Rogers. Although they all do not live in the low to moderate areas as determined by Census Block Groups, their incomes do not exceed HUD guidelines. The City's approved transportation system is Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) headquartered in Springdale, Arkansas. ORT provides several fixed routes in Rogers as well as door to door service for the disabled. The City uses a coupon system and identification cards for the City sponsored riders. Each approved rider is furnished coupons for 24 rides each month. At the end of each quarter, ORT provides a breakdown on each rider which includes dates picked up, where taken, and when returned home.

A quarterly invoice is also provided with the breakdown. The City and ORT have implemented procedures to safeguard against any program abuse. The City conducted a survey in 2006 to see how the City's assisted riders viewed this service. Many of the riders commented it was their only way to get out of their homes and to places they needed to go. For some, it was their only means of transportation to get back and forth to work. Several of our riders are cancer patients who were missing treatments because of lack transportation and/or means to afford the cost of a taxi ride to and from the treatment facility. The survey was affirmation of how valuable this service is to some of the citizens of Rogers. The City anticipates to serve 46 low-income individuals with the Transportation Assistance Program.

English as Second Language Program: The City of Rogers has many immigrant needs. Our goal is to foster trust and provide a bridge between cultures while maintaining the present quality of life. The typical new arrival is Hispanic and illiterate to the English language. Because of the language barrier, simple things like opening a bank account, obtaining housing and utilities, and enrolling in school are very difficult for those immigrating into the City. CDBG funds will be used to provide funding for the Family ESL classes. These classes are free to students in grades K-12 and their families for developing math and literacy skills in order to improve English skills, strengthen family relationships, and increase community involvement. Childcare for children younger than school age will be provided. Classes will be held in four schools in the Rogers Scholl District. This is a win/win situation for our Hispanic population, the schools in our City, as well as our community. We project 200 students and parents to be enrolled in the 2007 ESL classes.

**Public Facilities Program:**

City of Rogers Adult Wellness Center: The City of Rogers dedicated a new Adult Wellness Center (AWC) in September of 2006. Since the opening of the Center, over 3,000 people have joined. The Center is located on a 20 acre site off Dixieland Road. AWC will provide adults (50 or over) a place to maintain physical agility and mental activity. A walking track, lap pool, warm-water therapy pool, cardiovascular workout area and kitchen are just some of the items offered by the Center. Kitchen equipment was furnished with 2006 CDBG monies. These funds provided the Center with a fully functional kitchen. Membership fees have been set at \$25 per year, but no one who meets the age criteria will be turned away because of inability to

pay. This 20 acre site will also support a senior HUD housing project known as Dixieland Gardens. Construction is underway with a 32-unit apartment complex for low income seniors. The City of Rogers views the outdoors as a very important aspect of whole person wellness and is already looking at ways to enhance the existing Adult Wellness Center. With 2007 CDBG monies, we are proposing the need for walking trails, exercise stations, and a meditation garden. This project would not only create an outdoor space to be used for exercising and relaxing, but would connect the senior housing project to the Center, provide a connectivity to the proposed trail system in Rogers, and create a new park for the citizens of Rogers. Preliminary plans call for walking trails, exercise stations for stretching, strengthening, and balance training, a labyrinth for mental and physical exercise, a meditation garden with a water feature, a memory garden, a pavilion, benches, adequate lighting for safety and irrigation. A fence would also be constructed around the retention pond for safety. CDBG monies would be used for design and construction of the project with design starting in early 2007 with a tentative completion date of the construction by Spring of 2008. The City anticipates over 4,000 people to use the outdoor facility connected to the AWC with the park and walking trails open to the entire City.

**Revitalization Area Infrastructure Improvements:** The revitalization area occupies several areas within the City. In these areas the City deals with flooding and impassable streets during heavy rains and abnormal amounts of rain. A project in Cole and Wallace Subdivisions (A, B, C, and D Streets) was started in 2005 with the design and purchase of boxes to collect surface accumulation and transport this water off the site. This project will also repair the streets in this neighborhood. This area has never had any drainage structures in place and as more land is developed around these neighborhoods, increased runoffs have caused extensive damage to not only the homes, but the streets in the area. Pictures were provided in the 2005 Action Plan to show this area and the water conditions that had occurred due to the rainfall. Due to delays in the City's work schedules, lack of manpower, and obtaining all the necessary right of ways for installing the boxes and pipes, this project will not complete until 2007. No additional funds will be requested for this project. Funding was established under the 2005 and 2006 Action Plans and there are still monies available to complete the project.

The City will do another street project in 2007. This street is in the southeast area of Rogers and is located in a low to low/mod section of town. Currently traffic in this area is routed to a narrow, non-curbed two lane road. With the construction of many new smaller homes and the location of three schools in the area, the City is proposing to build a new three lane road with curb and gutter. The completion of this road will relieve traffic for the three schools located on First Street and will provide access to Hwy 71-B for the low to low-mod homes in the area. Funding for design and construction of this project will be made available with previous committed street and drainage funds that were not used in previous years. Upon completion of the design, these funds will be recommitted for the Price Lane project.

The City will continue with revitalization infrastructure improvements to include street and drainage work in the north and west areas of Rogers. Work was done in these areas in 2005 and 2006, but there are still some places water will need to be collected and moved out of the area. There are also some areas where street repairs will be needed.

Since all of the street and drainage work are on City streets and right of ways, the entire City will benefit by these infrastructure projects.

### **EVALUATION OF PAST PERFORMANCE:**

The City of Rogers is required to complete a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) within 90 days after the CDBG Program Year ends (January 1 – December 31). The report is a HUD requirement. The CAPER covers the accomplishments, funds expenses, and other actions accomplished during the prior program year. The CAPER is displayed at the City's CDBG Office at City Hall, the City Library, The City's Activity Center, and the City's Adult Wellness Center for review by the citizens of Rogers.

The City submitted the CAPER on time and received a review letter from HUD on July 5, 2006. In the review letter, HUD congratulated the City on its many accomplishments during 2005 and making substantial progress in meeting the City's goals within the constraints of having only a six-month program year. It was determined the activities described were viewed as contributing substantially to meeting the statutory primary objectives of the CDBG Program thus improving the living environment for citizens of the community. The City met and exceeded the regulatory requirement of

expending at least 70 percent of CDBG funds for activities that principally benefit low and moderate-income persons and operated within the regulatory limitation of 20 percent of CDBG funds for planning and administration and 15 percent for public services. The City was in conformance with HUD's citizen participation requirements. There was a major concern over the City's timeliness standard for expenditure of funds and the City was required to submit a plan and a schedule of program draws to get the City as close to the 1.5 standard as possible. A plan and schedule was submitted to HUD in August outlining the City's plans to meet the 1.5 standard. Overall, HUD stated the City's CDBG Program was being carried out as proposed by the City's approved Consolidated Plan and was substantially in compliance with HUD regulations. The City's performance was viewed as satisfactory and the City was determined to have the continuing capacity to administer the CDBG Program in accordance with applicable Federal requirements.

### **GEOGRAPHIC AREAS:**

Housing Services Programs: The City of Rogers does not restrict the Housing Program to any single area within the City limits. The City does make sure all recipients are in the low to moderate income levels and meet all HUD requirements for Government assistance. Most all of the City's rehab work has been in the targeted revitalization areas and are located in low income neighborhoods. This will continue to be a priority of the City in 2007.

Public Facilities Programs: The City chose to fund the trails and parks at the Adult Wellness Center because of a need for this in the City. The Center is located in a low to moderate income neighborhood with new HUD housing to be available at the site. Since these facilities will be located outdoors, all citizens in Rogers will have access to use these trails and parks. As stated earlier, the City sees this as a very important aspect of whole person wellness. The infrastructure improvements were chosen because they are in the City's target area for revitalization. One of the projects is located in an extremely low income neighborhood where flooding and drainage problems exist year round.

Public Service Programs: The City chose to fund the ESL project because of the minority needs in the City of Rogers. Approximately 20% of the population in 2000 was Hispanic. It is anticipated when the final numbers come in on the special census completed in August 2006, the City will see

that number increase to near 30%. The Transportation Assistance Program was chosen to improve the mobility of the City's income eligible citizens.

### **UNDERSERVED NEEDS:**

All the projects proposed in the 2007 Action Plan in some way address the obstacles to meeting underserved needs. Many of the City's elderly have no means of transportation. A lot of the Hispanic population struggle with the use of the English language making simple tasks such as banking, job interviews, and communicating their needs a difficult process. Until the City's Adult Wellness Center opened, there was no adult facility available in Rogers for low income individuals to come and participate in a wellness program. Wellness facilities already located within the City limits had membership fees that were higher than most people in the City could or were willing to pay for the service.

### **RESOURCES:**

The estimated CDBG amount for the 2007 Plan Year is \$487,000. If the Annual Plan is approved, the funds will be distributed as shown in this plan.

The City receives no program income.

The City of Rogers will contribute to the Housing Services Program by waiving all building fees normally required to be paid by contractors performing the rehabilitation work.

Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas will partner with the City and provide some materials and labor for the City's Rebuilding Day set for April 28, 2007. If that day becomes a rain out, the City's Rebuilding Day will be May 5, 2007.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Existing Conditions and Needs: The Rogers City limits occupy about 38.25 square miles, an increase of nearly six square miles since November of 2005. Although the southern and western side of Rogers is seeing most of the development, the City is still seeing steady growth in the northern and eastern sections of the City.

Population: According to the 2006 special census, the City's population is at 48,666, an increase of 9,666 from the 2000 census. Thirteen percent of the population was below the poverty level. Northwest Arkansas has a low unemployment rate. The City's largest industrial employers are continuing to need workers, and as a result of this need, the City can continue to see an influx of immigrants moving into Rogers to fill these jobs. As the population continues to grow, the City will see a strain not only in affordable housing, but a strain on the City's infrastructure, overcrowding in the school system, and various problems that occur with a large non-English speaking population.

At this time, the City has not received any breakdown information from the special census. Based on the 2000 census, 70% of the population was over 18 with 11.8% being over age 65. Home ownership was at 63% with the median value of owner/occupied housing at \$91,700. Although the City has seen tremendous residential, retail, and commercial growth over the past five years, the City has seen no new industry move into the area. With the addition of a World Trade Center to be located in Rogers in 2007, the City is hoping to see the smaller industries relocate to Rogers for easy accessibility to the World Trade Center.

### **MANAGING THE PROCESS:**

The City of Rogers' Planning and Transportation Department has a CDBG Administrator who is responsible for overseeing the CDBG Program and the development of the City's Annual Action Plan. The CDBG Administrator is responsible for administering the programs covered by the Action Plan, including its development, implementation, monitoring, and reporting activities. The CDBG Administrator works with the citizens of Rogers, community and neighborhood organizations, non-profit housing agencies, as well as the private housing industry. The CDBG Administrator gathers data from citizens, meetings, and public hearings to encourage public comment and to use these views to establish priorities for housing and community development needs.

The CDBG Administrator communicated with the several agencies in the development of the 2007 Action Plan. Among those was Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas, Boys and Girls Club of Benton County, Arkansas Legal Aid, Samaritan House, Ozark Regional Transit System, and the Adult Development Center. The CDBG

Administrator also visited with City Staff including the Mayor, Director of Planning and Transportation, Police Department, Director of Parks and Recreation, and the Rogers Community Support Center. A meeting was also held with the Rogers School District Migrant Program.

## **DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:**

The City of Rogers has developed the Annual Action Plan for the period of January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.

Funding Applications for Program Year 2007: The City does not have funding applications in place, however, one will be developed for future years. Many of the non-profits in the Rogers City limits were called in June of 2006 advising them the City would be taking CDBG requests for the 2007 Program Year. All requests were asked to be submitted no later than August 1, 2007. Meetings were also held with the City's Street and Parks and Recreation Departments concerning possible funding for 2007. All agencies contacted were given the CDBG national objectives as well as criteria for submitting their requests.

Public Hearing: The CDBG Administrator and a City Code Inspector, who is fluent in Spanish, had two public hearings. One hearing was held at City Hall on October 30, 2006 at 5:30 P.M. The other hearing was held at the Adult Wellness Center on October 31, 2006 at 1:00 P.M. There was no one in attendance at either public hearings and no written comments were received by the City's CDBG Administrator. A display ad was placed in The Morning News on Sunday, October 22, 2006, and Wednesday, October 25, 2006 announcing the City of Rogers Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing for the 2007 Program Year. A draft of the Annual Action Plan was made available to all Rogers residents from October 20, 2006 until November 30, 2006. Copies of the draft Annual Plan were placed in the Rogers City Library, Rogers Activity Center, Rogers Adult Wellness Center, and City Hall.

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:**

Participation: The City takes whatever actions are appropriate to encourage its citizens, including minorities, non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, residents of public and assisted housing development, extremely low, very low, and low to moderate income individuals and

families, residents living in slum and blighted areas, areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, residents in predominantly low to moderate-income neighborhoods, along with other low income residents of the City to participate in the City's development of their Annual Action Plans. The City encourages residential participation in the process of developing the City's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, Citizen Participation Plan as well as providing an opportunity to comment on any substantial amendments to the City's plans.

Access to Information: The City will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties the amount of assistance the City expects to receive from CDBG funding. The City will provide an estimated amount that will benefit persons whose income levels range from extremely low to low-moderate income levels. Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties, especially those most affected, will have the opportunity to receive information, review and submit comments on any proposed submission concerning the proposed activities. The City will provide reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the preceding five years to its citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties.

Displacement: The City works extremely hard to not displace any persons, however, if displacement is necessary, The City will assist any persons displaced within the jurisdiction's guidelines.

Publishing: A summary of the proposed 2007 Action Plan was published in The Rogers Morning News. The summary described the contents and the purpose of the Action Plan and a list of the locations where the entire proposed Action Plan could be reviewed. Copies of the City's 2007 Action Plan were made available at the Rogers Public Library, The City's Community Center located at the Rogers Activity Center, The Adult Wellness Center, and City Hall. Anyone who requested a copy of the Action Plan was furnished a copy.

Public Hearings: The City will provide a minimum of two public hearings during each program year. The hearings will be adequately publicized and will be conveniently timed and located for people who might or will benefit from program funds. The hearings will address housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, and review program

performance. The hearings will be held to respond to proposals, to answer questions, and to obtain view of citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties that will or may be affected by program funds. Based on the size of the City's Spanish-speaking population, a bilingual (English/Spanish) person will be present at the public hearings.

Notice of Hearings: A "Notice of Public Hearing" will be published as a display ad in The Rogers Morning News at least one week before each public hearing. The "Notice of Public Hearing" will be published in a Wednesday and a Sunday paper because these are the two most popular days the newspapers are sold. Effort will also be made to notify agencies that provide services and/or support to low to moderate income individuals.

Access to Meetings: The City of Rogers will hold all public hearings in buildings that have access for persons with disabilities. At least one public hearing will be scheduled during the evening hours and/or weekends to provide working individuals and families with a greater opportunity to attend.

Comment Periods: The City of Rogers encourages its citizens to comment during the development of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan. A summary of all comments and views will be attached to the final plans. The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally at the public hearing in completing the preparation of the plan.

Substantial Amendments: A substantial amendment is a change in the allocation of \$100,000 or greater and changes the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another. The City will encourage its citizens to comment on substantial amendments to the plan. The comment period from citizens will be 30 days after the date the amendment is published in The Rogers Morning News and will not be implemented until the 30-day comment period has elapsed. The City will consider all comments or views of citizens received in writing and orally. A summary of all comments and responses will be attached to the substantial amendment when it is submitted to HUD.

Performance Reports: The City of Rogers encourages its citizens to comment on performance reports. The Performance Report (CAPER) will be made available to the public. A notice will be published in The Rogers Morning News that the Performance Report is available for comment at the

CDBG Administrator's Office located in City Hall, the Rogers Public Library, the Rogers Activity Center, and the Adult Wellness Center. The CDBG Administrator will accept comments for 15 days, starting the day after the publication in the newspaper. The City shall consider all comments or views of citizens in writing or orally in preparing the Performance Report. A summary of all comments or views shall be attached to the Performance Report.

Availability to the Public: The City will make available to its citizens during normal business days and hours the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, and Substantial Amendments. The physical address of the City's CDBG Office is 301 West Chestnut, Rogers, AR 72756.

Technical Assistance: Technical assistance will be provided by the CDBG Administrator to low through extremely low-income individuals and groups that request assistance in developing a proposal. A bilingual (English/Spanish) person will be made available to non-English speaking persons.

Complaints: The City will provide timely written replies to complaints and grievances within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.

Amendments: The City shall amend its approved plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- (a) A change in its allocation proprieties.
- (b) A change in its method of distribution of funds.
- (c) To carry out a new activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan not previously described in the Action Plan.
- (d) To change the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

The City encourages its citizens to comment on substantial changes to the Plan and will make the change(s) available to the public. Citizens will have a minimum of 30 days after the date the change(s) is published in The

Rogers Morning News to comment on the change. The letter transmitting the copy of all amendments shall be signed by the Mayor.

Program Year: Rogers CDBG Program Year runs from January 1 through December 31.

### **INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE:**

The City of Rogers will carry out its Action Plan through the use of federal funds received from HUD. The CDBG Administrator will use City Management and non-profit organizations to implement the City's planned use of funds. The City's main goal is to benefit its low to moderate-income citizens. Although the City has major strengths with a good economy, low unemployment, quality health care facilities, a public education system that has received national awards for its education programs, and a variety of local non-profits and social service agencies, the City does have gaps that affect quality of life for some of the citizens. The City will continue to work through these gaps with the use of the CDBG funds as well as City resources for community development and to provide a high quality of life for all the citizens in Rogers.

### **MONITORING:**

Monitoring will assure the Federal funds received by the City of Rogers comply with CDBG Program directives, and meet the objectives as set forth in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

All agencies receiving funds will enter into an agreement with the City of Rogers before funds are released.

The Administration Program will be monitored by the CDBG Administrator and the Director of Planning and Transportation.

All housing and housing rehabilitation projects will be monitored by the CDBG Administrator, the Director of Planning and Transportation, and the City's Building Inspection Department. Inspections will be performed on any facility receiving CDBG funding until the completion of the project to ensure all code compliances are met. These inspections will be performed on any facility receiving CDBG funding until the completion of the project to ensure all code compliances are met. These inspections will be

documented and made a part of the project file. The City will maintain copies of all appropriate paperwork required in land acquisition. No displacement of individuals will be associated with land acquisitions. Any CDBG funds used to acquire land for affordable housing will be documented.

Transportation and Assistant Project is monitored by the CDBG Administrator. Steps are in place to assure all recipients meet the guidelines for assistance. Reports are provided by Ozark Regional Transit each month prior to any funds being released.

The City's infrastructure projects are monitored by the CDBG Administrator, Director of Planning and Transportation, and the City's Street Superintendent. Where City personnel are used to provide the labor and material on these projects, the Street Superintendent will be required to provide the CDBG Administrator with all material invoices as well as labor expenditures by City work forces. Where contract forces are used, the City will advertise for bids and all work will be awarded using the bid process. A bid guarantee from each bidder shall be a minimum of five percent of bid. A written contract will be executed for all work performed. The accepted contractor will be required to furnish a performance and payment bond in the amount of 100% of the contract. All bid packets will contain information on the prevailing wage rate schedule prescribed and mandated by the Federal Labor Standards Provision HUD-4010 and General Decision Number AR0300044. On site monitoring will be conducted using the Street Superintendent, City inspectors, and the Director of Planning and Transportation. These inspections will be documented and made a part of the project file.

The EIS Program will be monitored by the CDBG Administrator and the Mayor.

The Park and Walking Trail at the Adult Wellness Center Complex will be monitored by the CDBG Administrator, the Director of Parks and Recreation, and the Director of the Adult Wellness Center. This project will follow all the bidding processes to meet Federal guidelines. Bid guarantees in the amount of five percent of bid will be required with the accepted contractor providing a 100% payment and performance bond. All work will use the prevailing wage rate schedule prescribed and mandated by the

Federal Labor Standards Provision HUD-4010 and General Decision Number AR0300044.

Two City employees, the Treasurer, and the CDBG Administrator will oversee the handling of CDBG funds. This will provide a check and balance for these funds. The CDBG Administrator will draw down the funds with approvals being made by the City Treasurer. Receipt and disbursement of CDBG funds will also be a part of the City's annual audit.

No files will be archived until inspected by the Arkansas HUD Office. Any citizen complaints will be addressed by the Mayor or CDBG Administrator within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.

### **EVALUATION AND REDUCTION OF LEAD-BASED HAZARDS:**

Each home built before 1978 that qualifies for rehabilitation through the City's contracting policies will be tested for lead-based paint by an Arkansas State Certified and Licensed Lead-Based Paint Inspector/Risk Assessor. All material identified as containing high levels of lead-based paint will be removed and replaced if feasible or it may be covered. All construction material being removed from the home containing lead-based paint belongs to the contractor performing the work and he/she will be required to remove the material from the property.

### **SPECIFIC HOUSING OBJECTIVES:**

The City is aware of the need for more affordable housing and will continue to partner with Habitat for Humanity to assist in the construction of affordable homes. Rehabilitation of existing homes will also continue with the partnership between the City and Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas. The rehabilitation projects will bring these homes up to energy conservation standards, current plumbing, electrical, and HVAC codes. The City will continue to support the non-profit agencies that provide programs to enhance the construction of new affordable housing as well as providing rehabilitation work for existing homes.

## **PUBLIC HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS AND RESIDENT INITIATIVES:**

The City of Rogers does not have a Public Housing Agency.

## **BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING:**

For several years, the new construction approach is being hindered by the existence of a strong high-end market and lack of affordable builders in the residential market. Land prices have escalated to a point that the cost of land precludes being able to build affordable housing to meet the low end housing. In early 2006, it became obvious that Northwest Arkansas, including the City of Rogers, was over-built, and as a result of massive housing construction, the City has plenty of vacant new housing. Most of these do not fall into the affordable housing category.

With Northwest Arkansas rated as one of the top places in the United States to live and the rapid growth that has occurred over the last five years, the housing values have continued for the most part to accelerate upward. The housing demand has also impacted rental property with rents increasing making it harder for the low-income renter to save for a down payment to purchase a home. In 2005 there were 1,226 permits issued for homes with a median value of \$167,055, a decrease of only \$6,577 in median value from 2004. To date, the City has issued 978 permits with a median value of \$134,087, a decrease of \$32,968 in median value from 2005. The decrease in value is attributable to the development of subdivisions with house square footages between 1,200 and 1,500 square feet. With high land prices, the developer must build as many homes allowable per acre to make his profit. Even with the median value of the homes in Rogers decreasing, the low income individual or family still cannot afford to purchase a new home creating the need for the City to look for ways to construct single-family dwellings that are affordable and meet the low income needs.

With the housing market and land prices at all time high, the City is seeing developers begin to look at smaller parcels of land for building homes in the \$90,000 to \$110,000 price range. This kind of development will be a big housing help for the City to provide much needed affordable housing for the low income. The City has also partnered with J-Quad & Associates out of Dallas, Texas to do a fair housing assessment for the City. This assessment will be completed in 2007.

Just like new housing, the City faces a barrier with the lack of qualified builders who are willing to do rehabilitation work. The qualified builders are looking at the larger houses which provide a higher profit to the builder.

### **SPECIFIC HOMELESS PREVENTION ELEMENTS:**

The City of Rogers will continue their commitment to decent and affordable housing by assisting the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless.

The City has partnered with the Cities of Fayetteville, Springdale, and Bentonville to have the University of Arkansas perform a Homeless Needs Assessment. This assessment is scheduled to be performed during the third week of January 2007. Upon completion of this assessment, the City should have a better understanding of what actions are needed to be taken to eliminate any homelessness in the City. The City is also a member of a coalition of Northwest Arkansas Cities working towards the President's ten year goal of eliminating homelessness in America.

There are several organizations that exist in Northwest Arkansas that serve families or persons who are homeless or at a risk of becoming homeless. The chief homeless providers in the City of Rogers are Souls Harbor, a private organization located in the City's low income area and the Salvation Army. No funding has been requested by these organizations in 2007, however, the City will provide transportation assistance on an as needed basis for individuals staying with those agencies. The City will keep abreast of any homeless situation.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

The City of Rogers has many agencies that were created to assist low income residents of Rogers. The City is aware, as population continues to grow, it will be increasingly important for the City to insure the needs of our growing population are met. A high priority has been placed on meeting needs of the abused or neglected children, physically, sexually, or emotionally abused individuals, developmentally disabled or emotionally disturbed individuals, and persons with drug and alcohol abuse problems.

## **ANTIPOVERTY STRATEGY:**

The City recognizes that in order to reduce the number of households earning income below the poverty level, we not only need educated and trained people, but we must have the positions available in our work force. Millions of dollars are being spent on the City's infrastructure to attract development. The City has just opened the Pinnacle Promenade, an open air shopping center that will contain 134 stores and restaurants when fully completed. Many new jobs have been created by this development during the construction phases and hiring of employees as retail and restaurants opened. The City just recently announced the building of a 9,000 seat stadium near the Promenade. Rogers has a stable government and an excellent health care system. With the \$145,000,000 construction of the new St. Mary's Hospital along I-540, the City is seeing many new medical offices and medical centers being built in the area.

The City will work with local businesses to stimulate business and economic development in impoverished areas of the City. We will also continue to foster good working relationships with our non-profit agencies that provide services to the low income individuals and families in our City.

## **NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS:**

### Gaps:

As stated earlier, a gap does exist in affordable homeownership opportunities. Escalating home prices combined with population growth will likely increase investment pressure in older established low to moderate income neighborhoods.

### Housing Needs:

The City has watched the median home value of new construction increase from \$78,000 in 1996 to \$167,055 in 2005. In 2006, the value of new construction decreased to \$134,087.

### Housing Market:

Based on the construction median value of new single-family housing in Rogers, low to moderate income individuals or families can still not afford to purchase a new home. The City has a great need to construct single-family dwellings that are affordable to the low to moderate income citizens of the City.

### Market Analysis:

The City has seen a decrease in the development of new subdivisions. In 2005 the 1,226 residential permits issued included 1,071 single family residences. In 2006, there were 1,093 residential permits issued with 978 being single family residences. There were 93 less building permits issued in 2006 than 2005.

The major reason the City has seen a decrease in home prices is because of the number of unoccupied new larger homes within the City. Until those homes sell, the City does not expect any new subdivision development like what occurred in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Northwest Arkansas continues to be one of the top ten places in the United States to live. As population continues to grow and those homes become occupied, the City will see an upward turn in residential housing permits issued and median value of homes to start back on an upward trend.

### Housing Characteristics:

As of the census of 2000, there were 38,829 people living in Rogers, with 14,005 households and 10,209 families residing in the City. Based on the 2000 census, 70% of the population was over 18 with 11.8% being over age 65. Home ownership was at 63% with the median value of owner/occupied housing at \$91,700. Thirteen percent of the population was below the poverty level. The City conducted a special census in 2006. According to the special census, the City's population is at 48,666. At this time the City has not received any other information breakdowns from the special census.

In 2000, the City had 14,836 housing units. A breakdown of those units is listed below:

11,031 - Single-Family

993 - Duplex  
781 - 3 or 4 Units  
665 - 5 to 9 Units  
589 - 10 to 19 Units  
295 - 20 or More Units  
479 - Mobile Homes  
3 - Boat, RV, Van, Etc.

Based on this breakdown, 94.4% of the total housing units were occupied with 8,855 (63.2%) being owner occupied and 5,150 (36.8%) being renter occupied. There were 831 (5.6%) vacant housing units. The average family size for each household was 3.21. Roughly 17% of the occupied housing units pay more than 30% of their income toward a mortgage. This can cause individuals and families to be cost-burdened and make it difficult to pay the necessities such as utilities, food, etc.

#### Substandard Housing:

Substandard housing is defined as any house lacking complete plumbing facilities, complete kitchen facilities, and/or having inadequate heating systems. These houses, though substandard in condition, are suitable for rehabilitation.

#### Rehabilitation:

Rehabilitation of older housing units using CDBG funds provided by HUD is still the most efficient method of preserving affordable housing stock. By providing housing assistance through the CDBG Program to improve dilapidated housing structures which have been identified by City Code Enforcement Officials and other agencies, the City of Rogers can more easily obtain the City's goal of preventing many at risk owner households from becoming homeless and/or improve the quality of life for these individuals and families.

#### Supportive Housing Organizations:

Several organizations exist that serve families or individuals who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. These organizations provide a range of services to these individuals and families. Listed below are several agencies located in Northwest Arkansas who provide supportive housing:

Children's House in Fayetteville, and NWA Children's Shelter in Bentonville serves abused or neglected children. Children's House has a capacity for 22 children, while the Children's Shelter can house 21 children.

Peace at Home Family Shelter in Fayetteville serves physically, sexually, or emotionally abused woman and children. This facility can handle 20 people. Placement is strictly voluntary.

Lifestyles, Inc., in Fayetteville, and the Richardson Center in Springdale, serves the developmentally disabled. There is no restriction on the age of service for Lifestyles, however, the Richardson Center only serves children. Ozark Guidance Center in Fayetteville serves only emotionally disturbed children. Lifestyles has 11 rent-assisted dwellings, 8 single apartments, and 4 double apartments. The Richardson Center can serve as many as 86 children while the Ozark Guidance Center has a maximum capacity of 26 children.

Youth Bridge located in Fayetteville and Centerton, serves as an emergency shelter for children between the ages of 12 and 18. The two facilities can house 34 children ranging in age from 12 to 18.

Vista Health in Fayetteville serves people with acute or sub-acute mental illness. One must be referred to be accepted by this facility. Maximum capacity for this facility is 16 in the children's unit and 28 in the adolescent unit.

Salvation Army in Fayetteville and Bentonville, Souls Harbor in Rogers, and Seven Hills Homeless Shelter, Fayetteville serves the homeless. These three facilities can house approximately 125 people, however, no one will be refused admittance in the Salvation Army facilities.

Decision Point, Inc., located in Springdale serves adults with drug and alcohol abuse problems. Maximum length of stay at this facility is 30 days. The facility is staffed to handle 25 men and 15 women.

### Housing Strategy:

In July 2005, the City's CDBG Program partnered with Habitat for Humanity (Benton County) in the construction of affordable single-family

housing. With the purchase of land, Habitat will be able to build between 12 and 15 homes. The first home started under construction in November of 2006.

In November of 2005, the City partnered with Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas to work together to rehab single-family housing in the City of Rogers. On the first weekend of May 2006, the City completed the rehabilitation of four homes and in 2007, the City of Rogers and Rebuilding Together will partner to complete an additional five rehabs in the City's low to medium-income areas. Although Rebuilding Together provides most of the volunteers for these projects, several City employees donated their time in 2006 on the four selected homes. Rebuilding provides a food coordinator, volunteer coordinator, tools, materials, and lunch for the volunteers. The CDBG Administrator is heavily involved in finding the homes for selection process as well as working with the Rebuilding Together Board in the selection of the rehab homes. The City also partners with Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas for emergency services and/or repairs, when needed, however, most of those requests are handled through the CDBG Administrator's Office.

#### Special Populations:

The needs of the special population are very similar to some of the needs for other Rogers' residents. These include affordable and accessible housing, services for the handicapped, assistance with utility bills, as well as emergency needs.

#### Housing Needs of the Handicapped:

Structural barriers and handicapped showers/ramps are some of the work the City accomplishes in their housing rehabilitation program. The City has also been placing handicapped ramps where sidewalks meet the streets in all their drainage and street projects constructed with CDBG funds. The City of Rogers will continue to support efforts in providing services for the handicapped.

Latino Population Stats:

The 2000 census shows the total population to be 38,829 with 7,490 (19.3%) being Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic or Latinos were the next largest population group in Rogers.

The City of Rogers' Citizen Participation Plan encourages minorities and non-English speaking persons to participate in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan. A Spanish translator is provided at all public hearings relative to the CDBG Program.

It appears the biggest need of the Hispanic/Latino Community is affordable housing, health care, and communication. All of the agencies the City has provided funding to in 2005 and 2006 provide some type of assistance or service to the Hispanic/Latino Community.

**CDBG FUNDING REQUEST FOR 2007:**

Listed below are the 2007 funding requests for the City of Rogers:

Housing Needs:

Land Acquisition	\$ 40,000
Rehabilitation	25,000

Public Services Needs:

Transportation Assistance Program	\$ 5,000
English as Second Language	20,000

Public Facility:

Walking Trails, Parks, Outdoor Exercise Stations	\$283,000
Drainage and Street Projects	31,000

Administration:

Program Administration	\$ 83,000
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Percentages of the 2007 CDBG Grant Committed by Program:

Administration	17%
Housing Services	14%
Public Facilities	64%
Public Service	5%

The City of Rogers has met their cap request for Administration and Public Service.

It is the City's desire to take these resources and apply to our needs to provide the following:

- Infrastructure to include providing drainage where none has existed and replacing antiquated drainage structures.
- Decent housing.
- Suitable living environment.
- Eliminate conditions that are detrimental to health, safety, and public welfare.

**ADMINISTRATION:**

City of Rogers - \$83,000

This project is set up for staff cost to administer the CDBG Program, newspaper publications for public hearings and project bidding, supplies, travel expenses, training, studies, and other requirements of the grant. Since the City of Rogers provides an office for the CDBG Administrator, no funds are needed for rent and utilities.

**HOUSING SERVICES PROGRAM:**

Habitat for Humanity - \$40,000

Purchase of land for the Habitat Trails Subdivision, an environmentally friendly eco-subdivision on Old Wire Road. With the purchase of this land, 15 families will be the recipient of a new home. Based on the number of

people per home (2000 Census number), 48 individuals will realize the American Dream of Home Ownership for the first time.

Rebuilding Together of Northwest Arkansas - \$25,000

Rehabilitation of five homes in Rogers as selected for the 2007 Rebuilding Work Day. Work will include building of ramps, installing grab bars, weatherization, plumbing, electrical, painting, and possibly flooring replacement where deemed necessary. Because a lot of the material and labor costs are donated by local businesses, the City is able to accomplish a lot of work at a very low cost. All of the recipients are low-income and are individuals and families who do not have the financial and/or physical capability to make the repairs. The goal is to make these residents warm, safe, and dry in their homes. Based on the number of people per home (2000 Census number), at least 16 individuals will be the recipient of work to make their homes, warm, dry, and safe.

**PUBLIC SERVICES PROGRAM:**

Transportation Assistance Program - \$5,000

This program will improve the mobility of income eligible residents of Roger. Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) provides fixed routes for those who can walk to a pick up point and door to door service for the disabled. All approved riders are income eligible qualified. At the present time, the City is providing 24 free rides per month to 36 low income individuals. We anticipate to pick up at least ten additional riders in 2007.

English as Second Language - \$20,000

This program will provide funding for the Family ESL Classes and are free to students in grades K-12 and their families in the City of Rogers. The program not only improves English skills, but strengthens family relationships and increases community involvement. Childcare for children younger than school age will be provided. Based on last year's enrollment and the increase in the Hispanic/Latino population, it is anticipated this program will serve over 200 people in 2007.

## **PUBLIC FACILITY PROGRAM:**

### Rogers Adult Wellness Center - \$283,000

This funding will enable the City of Rogers to build walking trails, exercise stations, and a park in an area behind the Adult Wellness Center and two HUD Housing Projects. It will create an outdoor space for exercising as well as relaxation and would connect the HUD Housing Project to the Adult Wellness Center and provide a connectivity to the proposed trail system in Rogers. It will also create a new park in this area of town. Upon completion of this project, it is anticipated that over 4,000 individuals will have access to the part of this project connected to the Adult Wellness Center. Because the Rogers Trail System is open for everyone's use, the park and connectivity to the trail system can be enjoyed by all Rogers residents.

### Revitalization Area Infrastructure Improvements - \$31,000

This project will include street and drainage work in the low to moderate income areas of the City. No traffic counts were done in this area, however, because they are all public streets they do benefit everyone in the City. There are over 40 houses who will be recipients of the drainage project and the movement of water off their property.

Exhibits are available at the Office of Planning and Transportation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the City Hall Building, located at 301 West Chestnut.

## **EXHIBITS**

1. Habitat Trails Land
2. Habitat Trails Site Work Under Construction
3. Habitat Trails Site Plan
4. Map of City Assisted Riders
5. Location Map of Cole and Wallace Subdivision
6. Pictures of A, B, C, and D Streets
7. Map of Area for Additional Street Drainage Work
8. Price Lane Existing Entrance
9. Price Lane Existing Road
10. Picture of Proposed Park at Adult Wellness Center
11. Picture of Adult Wellness Center Proposed Park in Relationship to new HUD Housing
12. Map of ESL Classes
13. Notice of Public Hearing

