

# **NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION**

## **2010 NATIONAL CD WEEK GUIDEBOOK**

The 2010 National Community Development (CD) Week will be celebrated from **April 4-10, 2010**. It provides the opportunity for CDBG grantees to meet with their congressional members, showcase CDBG-funded projects and programs, and involve the local community, including local businesses, citizens, and community groups in the week-long celebration.

The National Community Development Association is pleased to provide you with information on National Community Development Week 2010. For the 24th consecutive year, NCDA is spearheading the National Community Development Week campaign. This annual campaign is designed to focus local as well as national attention on the numerous outstanding accomplishments over the past 36 years of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

National Community Development Week provides an ideal opportunity to educate citizens at the local level as well as members of Congress regarding the Community Development Block Grant Program and its critical importance in the lives of low- and moderate-income citizens. Last year, hundreds of communities across the nation participated in the campaign and we hope that your community will be able to join us in the 2010 national celebration.

### **WHY NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WEEK?**

CDBG program funding has been reduced. In FY 2001, the program received \$4.406 billion in formula funding. By FY 2007, the level had been reduced to \$3.58 billion. Although, Congress provided a \$347 million increase to the program in FY10; the program is still funded (\$3.990 billion for FY10) well below the FY 2001 level. It is imperative that all CDBG grantees celebrate and recognize the good work of the program during the 2010 CD Week campaign to gain support for increased funding for the program in FY 2011.

### **THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS' 10 POINT PLAN**

On January 24, 2007, the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) announced the 2007 *Mayors' 10 Point Plan*. Included in the Plan is the doubling of funding for CDBG, to \$8 billion. NCDA worked closely with USCM to develop this policy position. As stated in the Plan:

*"The nation's mayors recommend that CDBG formula funding be doubled to \$8 billion. This additional funding would address the delayed projects and activities which have come about because of cuts to CDBG, and further build on the proven record of an effective affordable housing and revitalization program."*

USCM and NCDA are committed to reaching this goal; however, the goal will be never be

attained without grassroots support from grantees, their subrecipients, and their beneficiaries – and without data to back up the need for this level of funding. All CDBG grantees, not just a few, must commit to this goal and must continue to work with USCM and NCDA to achieve this goal. National CD Week will help us demonstrate the community development needs nationwide.

## **CD WEEK ACTION ITEMS**

1. Plan Your CD Week Activities; Start Now. Public support from your congressional delegation, community groups, the media, business and community leaders, and the beneficiaries of the program is vital.
  - When was the last time you briefed your local elected officials, community groups, banks and businesses about the CDBG activities in your community?
  - When was the last time an article appeared in your local media on CDBG?
  - When was the last time you spoke to a member of your congressional delegation about CDBG?

If your community, media, and congressional members are unaware of your CDBG activities or funding needs, then we urge you to educate them.

*Start to plan your 2010 CD Week activities now.*

- ☐ **involve the local community: local elected officials, neighborhood groups, area banks, local businesses.** Ask the mayor to participate in activities. Ask local businesses and banks to sponsor activities.
- ☐ **invite your congressional members.** Plan to meet with your congressional members in their district offices during CD Week. Invite them to tour a CDBG-funded project.
- ☐ **involve the media.** Provide a press release on your CD week activities. Invite the press to your events. Ask them to write an article on CDBG.
- ☐ **select positive venues.** Select locations that showcase CDBG-funded projects and programs.
- ☐ **announce your events.** National Community Development Week should begin with press releases and informational materials distributed as soon as possible. Announce planned events to your local media, community groups, and your congressional delegation.

Most importantly, *start planning your activities now!*

2. ***Your CD Week Message.*** The message should be simple: “We...

- support local flexibility and increased formula funding for the program so that grantees may continue to respond to current and emerging community development needs
- emphasize how the program has helped your community (e.g., what projects and programs have been developed through the program to assist the community and its residents). **Develop a local fact sheet on CDBG-funded activities** in your community and distribute it to the press, your congressional members, and at CD Week activities.

3. ***Focus on your congressional members.*** Meet with your congressional members at their district offices during CD Week. Meeting with a member of Congress is a very effective way to convey a message about a specific issue or legislative matter. Since Congress will be in recess during CD Week, congressional members will be in their home districts. Plan to meet with them.

***Steps to meet with your congressional member***

(1) **Make an Appointment:** Start planning your visit at least two months in advance. Congressional members are extremely busy and their calendars fill up quickly. When attempting to meet with a member, contact the appointment secretary/scheduler at the local district office. Explain your purpose and who you represent. You can obtain your member’s information at <http://www.house.gov> and <http://www.senate.gov>. When you speak to the scheduler, ask to have a face-to-face meeting with your member of Congress at their local district office during CD Week.

(2) **Make the issues real:** Convey to your member how the programs help constituents in their district. Provide specific examples. If possible, bring a subrecipient or beneficiary to the meeting with you. Congressional members are interested in hearing directly from the organizations or people the programs directly benefit. You should bring the following information with you to the meeting:

√ **Good data.** Show how the cuts to CDBG have affected your program. Convey the backlog of community development need in your community. Provide the following information.

·The actual cut to your allocation over the past few years.

·The number of people that have not/will not be assisted and a breakdown by sub-population. Here are some examples:

- # of elderly that will not be assisted
- # of youth that will not be assisted
- # of people that will not receive assistance to buy a home

·The economic loss to the community. Here are some examples.

- # of jobs lost
- # of businesses that have lost revenue and may lose revenue in the future (e.g., contractors associated with your program, local lending institutions, non-profit organizations, etc.)
- the loss/potential loss to the economy in the purchase of supplies and materials

✓ **Actual examples.** Tell the story of a particular family that will not be assisted or the plight of the elderly or other special population that will not receive assistance. Again, if you have brought along a subrecipient or beneficiary to the meeting, have them tell their story.

✓ **Show how the programs are working in your community.** Dispel the belief that these programs are not effective. Bring a brief outline of your CDBG program detailing how the programs have assisted your community over the past 5 years (if you want to provide data that goes back further, that's great). Some areas to highlight include: # of people assisted, # of businesses assisted, # of neighborhoods assisted, # of jobs created or retained, # of homes that have been rehabilitated, # of new homeowners, # of blighted buildings that have been demolished, # of infrastructure improvements, etc. Leave copies of this information with your congressional member and staff.

(3) **Be Responsive and Follow-Up:** Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information in the event the member asks questions. Follow-up the meeting with a thank-you letter. Send along any additional information and materials requested.

In addition to the meeting, it is *imperative* that you undertake the following additional activities to increase congressional support for CDBG:

- ✓ Have your program beneficiaries fill-out CD Week postcards telling how CDBG has helped them and either mail the postcards to your congressional members, or present the postcards to them at your CD Week event, or at a meeting with your congressional members to discuss CDBG.
- ✓ Start a community-wide petition in support of increased funding for the CDBG program formula allocation. Some communities have done this in the past, collecting thousands of signatures, and it has been very effective. Present the signatures to your congressional members.
- ✓ Invite your congressional members to a CDBG-fund project.

## **THE 2010 JOHN A. SASSO NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WEEK AWARD**

This year, NCDA will present its 10th annual John A. Sasso National Community Development Award. This award recognizes the community or communities that exemplify the spirit of the CDBG program by showcasing its good works through the activities and events held during the 2010 National Community Development Week, April 4-10, 2010.

To be eligible for consideration, communities must be a member of NCDA and must provide an essay of 1,000 words or less describing their activities and events undertaken as part of its 2010 National Community Development Week celebration. Award submissions are due at NCDA's office by the close of business, **May 8, 2010**. Upon receipt of your essay, NCDA will select the finalists by **May 22, 2010**. Finalists may be required to submit additional information regarding their submission. Winners will be notified no later than **May 29, 2010** in order to make the necessary arrangements to attend the Award Luncheon. Activities conducted during National Community Development Week should have generated media coverage and included the involvement of your congressional delegation.

The awards will be presented at the John A. Sasso National Community Development Week Award luncheon during NCDA's 2010 Annual Conference in June. Winners will be notified of the exact venue.

All submissions should include the following information: contact name, address, phone and fax number, and e-mail address. Submissions should be sent to:

National Community Development Association  
522 21<sup>st</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 20006  
Washington, D.C. 20006

If you need additional information, please call (202) 293-7587.