



2015 NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WEEK PLANNING GUIDANCE

National Community Development Week: April 6-11, 2015



**CDBG: 40 Years of Building Strong Communities
HOME: More than 20 Years of Providing Decent, Safe, Affordable Housing**

The National Community Development Association (NCDA) is proud to lead the annual National Community Development Week campaign and work with its membership, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and other national partners to educate Congressional Members, the media, and the local citizenry on the impact and merits of CDBG and HOME in local communities nationwide – and the need for more funding. Please contact Vicki Watson at vicki@ncdaonline.org with any questions regarding National Community Development Week or this guidance.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WEEK ACTION ITEMS

- 1. *Organize the Working Group.*** The first step to a successful National Community Development (CD) Week campaign is organizing a working group to plan and implement the CD Week activities. A lead staff person should be appointed to shepherd the process and assignments given to working group members to accomplish the CD Week activities. Involve other departments and groups who receive CDBG and HOME funds.
- 2. *Establish Regular Meetings of the Working Group.*** The working group must meet regularly to ensure the CD Week activities are planned and implemented on time. The working group should establish a time line and assignments early on in the process. In addition to the events, staff need to be assigned to gather the data for the CDBG and HOME fact sheets, develop the press release and the proclamation (examples are attached), and organize other CD Week activities.
- 3. *Identify Your CDBG and HOME Constituency.*** Include partners that invest in your CDBG and HOME projects in your CD Week activities, such as non-profit organizations, businesses, banks, and contractors.
- 4. *Decide Upon the CD Week Activities.*** Public support and involvement from your Congressional delegation, community groups, media, business and community leaders, and program beneficiaries is vital. Focus your efforts on the following activities.

- ***At the minimum,*** issue a press release announcing National Community Development Week and have your local governing body pass a proclamation. A sample press release and proclamation is attached. Send the proclamation to your Congressional Members.

- ***Also,*** send a fact sheet to your Congressional delegation outlining the accomplishments of your CDBG and HOME programs. A sample fact sheet is attached.

These activities require minimal effort and little cost and can be done by every grantee.

· **More robust activities** include:

- **A tour of local CDBG- and HOME-funded projects** for your Congressional Members, their staff, local leaders, media, and others. Select projects that positively showcase CDBG and HOME. Develop a written project description, including financing, to hand out during the tour. Make sure tour participants meet program beneficiaries during the tour.
- **Make sure the local press is invited** to cover your National CD Week activities.
- **Involve others**; local businesses, community leaders, sub-recipients and beneficiaries in the sponsorship of activities or participation in planned events.
- **Announce your events** through press releases and local news articles.
- **Start a letter writing campaign** during National CD Week. Ask your program beneficiaries to write a quick note to their Congressional Members describing how CDBG and HOME have helped them. Present the notes to your Congressional Members during the project tour or other CD Week event or mail them to their Washington, DC and local district office.
- During CD Week, **start a community-wide petition** in support of increased funding for CDBG and HOME. Present the signatures to your Congressional Members during your CD Week projects tour or other event or mail it to their Washington, DC and local district office.

Congress will be in recess during CD Week, so invite them or their staff to your events. Meeting with a member of Congress, or congressional staff, is a very effective way to convey a message about a specific issue or legislative matter. With the continued budget pressures to reduce federal funding, it is imperative that you invite your Congressional Members to participate in your National CD Week events and continue to meet and correspond with them throughout the year.

How to Reach Your Member of Congress

Call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to your member of Congress or dial the number directly. You can obtain your Member's phone number and mailing address (both DC and the local district offices) at <http://www.house.gov> and <http://www.senate.gov>. Not sure who your House Member is? Then go to <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>. Introduce yourself and ask to speak to the

Member's appointment secretary/scheduler. If the scheduler is unavailable, leave a message with your name and phone number requesting the event be placed on your Member's calendar. Keep making follow-up calls until you speak to the scheduler directly to confirm your Member's participation in your event.

Tips on Writing to a Congressional Member

Due to tightened security of the mail to Congress, a letter can take up to 3 weeks to reach your member, so please ALSO FAX AND E-MAIL a copy of the letter to your member. Their fax number and e-mail address can be found on their website.

Addressing Correspondence:

To a Senator...

The Honorable (Full Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last Name):

To a Representative...

The Honorable (Full Name)
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (Last Name):

SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

(Please feel free to modify the documents)

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION/RESOLUTION

Present this proclamation to your Congressional Members during the National CD Week tour of CDBG and HOME funded projects or mail it to them.

WHEREAS, the week of April 6-11, 2015 has been designated as National Community Development Week by the National Community Development Association to celebrate the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program; and

WHEREAS, the CDBG Program provides annual funding and flexibility to local communities to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities to low- and moderate-income people; and

WHEREAS, the HOME Program provides funding to local communities to create decent, safe, affordable housing opportunities for low-income persons. Nationally, over one million units of affordable housing have been completed using HOME funds; and

WHEREAS, over the past five years, our community has received a total of \$_____ in CDBG funds and \$_____ in HOME funds; and

WHEREAS, the following activities have been funded (please list); and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City/County of _____ designates the week of April 6-11, 2015 as National Community Development Week in support of these two valuable programs that have made tremendous contributions to the viability of the housing stock, infrastructure, public services, and economic vitality of our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that our community urges Congress and the Administration to recognize the outstanding work being done locally and nationally by CDBG and HOME by supporting increased funding for both programs in FY16.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

City, USA

Date

For further information, contact

Jane Doe at (202) 777-CDBG

The City/County of _____ Celebrates National Community Development Week; April 6-11, 2015

Mayor/County Executive _____ and the City/County Council today issued a proclamation supporting the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program by recognizing National Community Development Week, April 6-11, 2015. Spearheaded by the National Community Development Association, the week-long celebration brings together citizens, government officials, businesses, media, and non-profit organizations through events to showcase the impact of CDBG and HOME on our community. National CD Week also serves as a venue for educating the public about the programs.

This year marks the 41st anniversary of the CDBG program. The CDBG program provides grants to over 1,200 local governments to devise neighborhood approaches that improve the physical, economic and social conditions in communities. Every \$1.00 of CDBG leverages another \$4.07 in other funding; bringing additional vital resources to communities. The HOME program, now in its 24th year, provides grants to over 600 local participating jurisdictions to create safe, sanitary, and affordable housing conditions in communities nationwide. Every \$1.00 of HOME leverages an additional \$4.16 in other funding.

Both programs are administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

CDBG and HOME have seen funding reductions in the past several years. In FY 2010, CDBG was funded nationally at \$3.990 billion and HOME was funded at \$1.825 billion. CDBG is now funded at \$3.0 billion nationally and HOME at \$900 million. These programs are needed more than ever to help our most vulnerable citizens and improve the overall condition of our neighborhoods.

The City/County will highlight both programs during National CD Week by conducting the following activities [Describe your CD Week activities].

SAMPLE FACT SHEET

Please complete this fact sheet and send it to your Congressional delegation and local press. Attach a brief executive summary that answers the following questions:

Why are CDBG and HOME important to my community?

Who do the programs serve in my community?

How is the program funding used in my community?

Why is more CDBG and HOME funding needed in my community?

Attach a statement to the fact sheet that gives a clear picture on how the cuts to CDBG and HOME have affected your program operations and delivery.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE CITY/COUNTY _____

For every one dollar of CDBG funding another \$_____ in private and public funding was leveraged.

CDBG assisted _____ persons in the past five years.

CDBG created or retained _____ jobs in the past five years.

CDBG funds in the amount of \$_____ were spent on economic development activities (outline the types of activities and the beneficiaries assisted).

CDBG funds in the amount of \$_____ were spent on public improvements (outline the types of activities and the beneficiaries assisted).

CDBG funds in the amount of \$_____ were spent on public services (outline the types of services and the beneficiaries assisted)

CDBG funds in the amount of \$_____ were provided for housing activities (outline the types of activities and the beneficiaries assisted).

**HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS (HOME) PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FOR THE CITY/COUNTY OF _____**

For every one dollar of HOME funding another \$_____ in private and public funding was leveraged.

HOME assisted _____ persons in the past five years.

HOME funds in the amount of \$_____ were provide for housing activities, such as homebuyer assistance, rental assistance, and the production of affordable rental units.

A total of _____ units of affordable housing were created

_____ households received assistance in purchasing their first home

_____ rental units were constructed and/or rehabilitated

_____ homeowners received rehabilitation assistance

