

1. Increase Homeownership Opportunities

- Expand national homeownership opportunities.
- Increase minority homeownership.
- Make the home buying process less complicated and less expensive.
- Fight practices that permit predatory lending.
- Help HUD-assisted renters become homeowners.
- Keep existing homeowners from losing their homes.

2. Promote Decent Affordable Housing

- Expand access to affordable rental housing.
- Improve the physical quality and management accountability of public and assisted housing.
- Increase housing opportunities for the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Help HUD-assisted renters make progress toward self-sufficiency.

3. Strengthen Communities

- Improve economic conditions in distressed communities.
- Make communities more livable.
- End chronic homelessness.
- Mitigate housing conditions that threaten health.

4. Ensure Equal Opportunity in Housing

- Resolve discrimination complaints on a timely basis.
- Promote public awareness of Fair Housing laws.
- Improve housing accessibility for persons with disabilities.

5. Embrace High Standards of Ethics, Management, and Accountability

- Rebuild HUD's human capital and further diversify its workforce.
- Improve HUD's management, internal controls and systems and resolve audit issues.
- Improve accountability, service delivery, and customer service of HUD and our partners.
- Ensure program compliance.

6. Promote Participation of Grassroots Faith-Based and Other Community-Based Organizations

- Reduce regulatory barriers to participation by grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations.
- Conduct outreach to inform potential partners of HUD opportunities.
- Expand technical assistance resources deployed to grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations.
- Encourage partnerships between grassroots faith-based and other

community-based organizations and HUD's traditional grantees.

You can find out about HUD's Strategic Framework and Annual Performance Plans at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cfo/reports/cforept.cfm>.

Policy Priorities. HUD encourages applicants to undertake specific activities that will assist the Department in implementing its policy priorities and which help the Department achieve its goals for FY 2004, when the majority of funding recipients will be reporting programmatic results and achievements. Applicants who include work activities that specifically address one or more of these policy priorities will receive higher rating scores than applicants who do not address these HUD priorities. Section VII, Rating Factors, will specify which priorities relate to the ICDBG Program and how many points will be awarded for addressing those priorities.

(A) Providing Increased Homeownership and Rental Opportunities for Low- and Moderate-Income Persons, Persons with Disabilities, the Elderly, Minorities, and Families with Limited English Proficiency. Too often, these individuals and families are shut out of the housing market through no fault of their own. Often developers of housing, housing counseling agencies and other organizations engaged in the housing industry must work aggressively to open up the realm of homeownership and rental opportunities to low- and moderate-income persons, persons with disabilities, the elderly, minorities, or families with limited English proficiency. Many of these families are anxious to have a home of their own but are not aware of the programs and assistance that is available. Applicants are encouraged to address the housing, housing counseling, and other related supportive services needs of these individuals and coordinate their proposed activities with funding available through HUD's affordable housing programs and home loan programs. Proposed activities support strategic goals 1, 2, and 4.

(B) Improving our Nation's Communities. HUD wants to improve the quality of life for those living in distressed communities. Applicants are encouraged to include activities which:

- (1) Bring private capital into distressed communities to:
 - Finance business investments to grow new businesses;
 - Maintain and expand existing businesses;
 - Create a pool of funds for new small and minority-owned businesses;

- Create decent jobs for low-income persons.

(2) Improve the environmental health and safety of families living in public and privately-owned housing by including activities which:

- Coordinate lead hazard reduction programs with weatherization activities funded by state and local governments, and the federal government;
- Reduce or eliminate health related hazards in the home caused by toxic agents such as molds and other allergens, carbon monoxide and other hazardous agents and conditions.

(3) Make communities more livable.

- Provide public and social services;
- Improve infrastructure and community facilities.

Activities support strategic goals 2, 3, and 4.

(C) Encouraging Accessible Design Features. As described in Section V, applicants must comply with applicable civil rights laws including the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. These laws, and regulations implementing them, provide for nondiscrimination based on disability and require housing and other facilities to incorporate certain features intended to provide for their use and enjoyment by persons with disabilities. HUD is encouraging applicants to add accessible design features beyond those required under civil rights laws and regulations. These features would eliminate many other barriers limiting the access of persons with disabilities to housing and other facilities. Copies of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) are available from the SuperNOFA Information Center (1-800-HUD-8929 or 1-800-HUD-2209 (TTY)) and also from the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Room 5230, 451 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20410; 202-755-5404 or 1-800-877-8399 (TTY Federal Information Relay Service).

Accessible design features are intended to promote visitability and incorporate features of universal design as described below:

(1) Visitability in New Construction and Substantial Rehabilitation.

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate visitability standards where feasible in new construction and substantial rehabilitation projects. Visitability standards allow a person with mobility impairments access into the home, but do not require that all features be made accessible. Visitability means that there is at least one entrance at grade (no steps), approached by an