

## **HUD CONSOLIDATED PLAN –STAKEHOLDER SURVEY COMMENT SUMMARY**

### **Question 1): Other Housing and Facilities Needs & Comments**

#### **Needs:**

- More home ownership opportunities for low income families
- Affordable housing availability, both owner and renter occupied units
- Additional market rate, quality rentals
- Additional emergency and shelter housing
- Maintenance and rehabilitation of older housing stock
- Overall neighborhood revitalization projects
- Construction of new owner-occupied housing
- Affordable housing for persons facing high housing barriers or homelessness
- Assistance for new homebuyers
- Increased workforce rental housing availability
- Financial incentives for current homeowners
- More single family homes available as rentals
- Permanent supportive housing for special populations
- Accessible one story housing with multiple bedrooms

#### **Comments:**

- Overall funding levels are inadequate to meet a large need
- Changes needed to HOME program
- Habitat for Humanity should be funded by State
- Private sector unwilling to take many housing development risks in rural areas
- Much of Iowa housing stock is old and needs repair

### **Question 2): Other Economic Development Needs & Comments**

#### **Needs:**

- Additional placement services for job seekers
- Additional small business development services; entrepreneurship training
- Target workforce development initiatives to a greater degree
- Increased venture capital sources
- More aggressive state-wide marketing / pro-active business development strategy /tourism
- Filling of vacant office spaces
- Increased job training opportunities

#### **Comments:**

- Incentives not always necessary for business to expand
- Less reliance should be placed on gaming sources for revenue
- Some rural areas have very little growth and a lingering depressed economy
- State should be marketed as welcoming and inclusive
- Iowa should be promoted as a tourist and convention destination

### **Question 3): Other Special Needs and Services**

#### **Needs:**

- Emergency shelters for homeless women and children
- In-patient psychiatric services

- Homelessness prevention programs
- Services for alcohol/drug abuse victims
- Domestic violence services and shelters
- Long term treatment centers

*Comments:*

- Overall increase in funding levels needed / restoration of cuts
- There are gaps or cracks in mental health system that some fall through
- Persons in rural areas sometimes have to travel to urban settings to receive appropriate care
- Regional mental health consolidations damage county ability to serve needs
- Special populations, other than perhaps elderly and disabled, are underserved

*Question 4): Other Downtown Revitalization Needs & Comments*

*Needs:*

- More comprehensive downtown revitalization needed; other than just facades
- Additional funding sources
- More public/private partnerships
- More resources and flexibility in state historic tax credit program
- Upper Story residential renovation
- More energy efficient lighting
- First floor improvements – commercial or residential

*Comments:*

- Alleyways need maintenance in some downtowns
- Various regulations a deterrent to downtown revitalization efforts through added cost
- Building stabilization sometimes more crucial than facades
- Facades and downturns may not be the primary need for most communities

*Question 5): Other Community Facility Needs & Comments*

*Needs:*

- More affordable, accredited child care – particularly for infants and young children
- More locally available funding for parks and recreation and smaller neighborhood parks
- More public facilities of various types need in rural areas
- Replacement of trees in public areas

*Comments:*

- State mental health system is in a crisis; money going to mental health should be regarded as an investment for the long term
- Many empty buildings could be reutilized for public purposes
- Rural areas may need to rethink themselves in terms of being bedroom communities

*Question 6): Other Water/Sewer Needs & Comments*

*Needs:*

- More grant monies in lieu of loans which result in the raising of user rates
- Assistance for rural homeowners to meet state septic system requirements

*Comments:*

- EPA regulations always changing and difficult to meet – the continual cost is hurting communities
- Adequate water and sewer still a primary concern for many communities
- Required improvements are very costly and force up utility rates
- Growth depends on adequate, compliant water and sewer systems

Question 6): Describe any Additional Priority Needs

*Comments:*

- Home ownership is crucial to the stability of rural communities
- A state-wide rental building code is needed
- Elderly, disabled, veterans need assistance to remain in their homes
- Planning & engineering should become CDBG funding priorities, (master planning)
- Highway 61 needs to be widened to promote growth
- Façade program is largely wasted money on aesthetics when compared to other needs
- Need a program focused on reclamation or demolition of vacant housing
- Changing DNR discharge criteria present an affordability issue
- Grants would be more effective and transformative if funding was 75% -100% of a project
- Creation of upper story apartments downtown should receive more emphasis
- Access to high speed internet should be more uniform state-wide

## **Narrative Questions Responses**

*Question 1): In your opinion, what are the highest priority needs in Iowa in the next 5-10 years?*

- Home ownership programs including owner occupied rehabilitation
- Affordable rental housing
- Adequate water and sewer infrastructure
- Public infrastructure- sidewalks, streets, roads, highways
- Improved mental health and domestic violence services
- Creation of high-quality jobs
- Homelessness prevention
- Serving an aging population
- Education and workforce preparedness/ job training
- Broadband access
- Attracting and retaining younger workers

*Question 2): Do you believe any priority needs have changed significantly over the past 5-10 years?*

- Yes (approximately 33% of respondents)
- No (approximately 22% of respondents)

Remaining 45% of respondents provided comments to this question, rather than answering “Yes” or “No.”  
Summary of comments include:

- Increased need for elderly services based on Iowa’s aging population
- Increased need for affordable housing/ rehabilitation
- Increased need for planning in communities
- Increased need for water and sewer improvements across Iowa

- Need for veteran's services
- Increased need for mental health services
- Storm water management/flood prevention
- Need to attract new business and support start ups

*Question 3): In your opinion, which HUD-funded activities have been the most successful?*

- Infrastructure/water and sewer improvements
- Owner occupied housing rehabilitation
- HOME assisted rental and homeownership programs
- Homelessness assistance/ Rapid Rehousing
- Rental assistance
- NSP
- Community Facilities funding
- Section 8

*Question 4): Do you have any recommendations to improve the delivery of HUD-funded activities in Iowa?*

- State should not create additional restrictions above and beyond what the federal government requires
- Distribute funds on a regional basis
- Provide funding for planning activities
- State should continue to improve and streamline program processes and documents (applications, reports)
- State should work to ensure rural areas of the state are aware of funding opportunities
- Increase funding for housing activities
- Increase funding for infrastructure/water and sewer improvements
- State should revise funding cycles to better align with construction seasons
- Increase fair housing training for landlords and tenants
- Increase training on program administration for HUD funded programs
- More support for non-profits and homelessness service providers