

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN****1. Period of Applicability**Grantee: City of HammondFROM: 05/07/18 TO: 05/06/21**2. Comprehensive Community Development and Housing Needs:****(Provide a brief narrative in accordance with instructions for each listed area)****A. NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION NEEDS***(Describe all needs. All needs listed may or may not be resolved with the current LCDBG Grant.)*

Neighborhood revitalization needs in Hammond include sewer rehabilitation, drainage improvements, new sidewalks, and new/improved recreational spaces.

Hammond's gravity-collection-based sanitary sewer system includes some 427,680 linear feet (81 miles) of sewer lines and manholes mostly constructed of vitrified clay pipe and brick between 1920 and 1940. Heavy rainfalls can lead to infiltration and inflow (I/I) of/into the system resulting in backflow into streets, businesses, homes. To reduce I/I, the City rehabilitated approximately 20% of the system between 1990 and 2000 using cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) to rehabilitate the oldest and most problematic lines. Since 2000, CIPP had continued to be used in patchwork fashion to mitigate I/I. In 2011, recognizing the need for a more comprehensive solution, the City applied for and received funding from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to conduct a sewer system evaluation survey (SSES) to identify remaining lines in most critical need of rehabilitation. In 2012, the City applied for and secured additional funding from the Foundation to install emergency generators at key lift stations, which assist in moving sewage to the South Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWTP); similar applications submitted between 2013 and 2018 were also funded by the Foundation—leading to upgrades at 12 additional lift stations (4 of these upgrades are currently in progress). In 2013, the City also secured a \$5 million loan from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) for I/I work beneath "Old Hammond," a central area of some 4,206 residents, approximately 87% of whom are low to moderate income. In 2014, the City applied for and secured a \$1 million Louisiana Community Development Block Grant (LCDBG) to improve the performance of the SWTP. In 2015, the City was granted permission by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to expand CWSRF-funded I/I work into areas outside Old Hammond—up to the corporate limits of the city—to correct I/I where locally-funded SSES had revealed the problem was significant; residual funding from the loan will be applied to major repairs at 2 additional lift stations. Most recently, in 2017, the City applied for and received conditional approval of nearly \$3 million in LCDBG and CWSRF funding to continue I/I work and make additional improvements to the SWTP. The area targeted for this I/I work is a portion of southwest Hammond roughly bound by West Thomas Street (US 190) to the north, Mooney Avenue to the east, Palmetto Road to the south, and South Morrison Boulevard (US 51) to the west. Identified as Block Group 3 of Census Tract 9543, the area is home to some 1,120 residents and 384 households—most (approximately 96%) of whom are low to moderate income.

Neighborhoods in most need of drainage and sidewalk improvements lie in northeast Hammond and include the Arnold and Kenmore Additions and Pine Ridge and Sunny Acres Subdivisions. Here, narrow streets and a lack of adequate drainage and sidewalks means that pedestrians, typically from minority and low to moderate income households, are forced to use roadways to move about their neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods in most need of new sidewalks include the more westerly Lincoln Park, Greenville Park, and Colonial Place Subdivisions, as well as the Barber Addition; the neighborhoods of Greenville Park and the Barber Addition lie within Block Groups 1 and 4 of Census Tract 9543 and are roughly 60% and 98% minority respectively.

Beyond these neighborhoods, the Hammond Comprehensive Master Plan (2011) articulates a desire to see more sidewalks generally, connecting neighborhoods to one another, to schools, to parks and other recreational centers, and to business and industry. Focusing on areas of greatest need and supporting this desire, the City's Streets Department budgets about \$100,000 annually and the City's Grants Department continues to pursue Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and other Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (DOTD), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) grants to install new sidewalks, improve pedestrian safety, and promote alternatives to personal motor vehicle travel throughout Hammond.

In 2011, successful grant applications to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the TDF Foundation, and KaBOOM! made possible the first phase of the revitalization of Zemurray Park, Hammond's oldest, largest, and most-visited municipal park, located adjacent to the neighborhoods of Coleman Park, Greenville Park, and the Barber Addition. Phase 1 included the rehabilitation of the park's 3½-acre, ½-mile fishing pond and the installation of free Wi-Fi, a playground, and outdoor fitness equipment. Successful LWCF applications in 2013 and 2016 have made possible additional phases of improvements to the park including a toddler playground, a splash pad, family-size pavilions, a fishing station, and enhancements to the pond, as well as set the stage for a new public swimming pool—the only such pool in Hammond—to replace the old.

Successful grant applications to KaBOOM! in 2013 and 2015 led to the opening of a new park and playground in the Lincoln Park Subdivision of west Hammond and a new playground in North Oak Park on the campus of Southeastern Louisiana University. Additional improvements to the new park, Jackson Park, including a Born Learning Trail and basketball court followed in 2015 and 2016. Jackson Park is located in Block Group 1 of Census Tract 9541.01, which is approximately 47% minority. North Oak Park primarily serves Southeastern students and a surrounding area of 2 miles, in which live some 15,837 people, 67% of whom are minority, and 76% of whom are of low income.

A \$20,000 Keep America Beautiful (KAB)/Lowe's Community Partners Grant will see a new playground erected in Cate Square Park in 2018. Though smaller than Zemurray Park, Cate Square Park benefits from its proximity to the larger park and location in historic downtown Hammond to function as Hammond's second community park, serving a population of 20,389 people, including 3,432 children under the age of 14.

**B. COMMUNITYWIDE HOUSING NEEDS**

(Describe all needs. All needs listed may or may not be resolved with the current LCDBG Grant.)

Throughout Hammond, there is a shortage of affordable low to moderate income housing.

Since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the population of Hammond has grown by more than 10%—helping to make Hammond the fastest growing city in Tangipahoa, the fourth fastest-growing parish, or county, in Louisiana. With this increase in population, the demand for and cost of housing has increased, and, consequently, safe and affordable housing has become harder to find. This is especially troubling given 32.2% of the population—1½ times the State average and more than twice the national average—lives in poverty. And though the city is nearly equally racially divided—white residents make up 50.5% of the population; black residents, 46.5%—low income is disproportionately high among black residents, among whom 48.7% lives in poverty.

The City has specifically identified the following communitywide housing needs:

1. more consistent enforcement of zoning ordinances and building and safety codes to require owners to maintain their properties at minimum standards and ensure planned renovations, redevelopment, and new construction is appropriate based on location, use, age, impact, and other factors (these codes and ordinances also define what a mobile home is, indicate where mobile homes may be located, and establish acceptable ages for mobile homes);
2. greater availability of affordable housing opportunities, including housing rehabilitation, for residents of low income (between 2013 and 2018, with Affordable Housing Program (AHP) grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas (FHLBank Dallas), the City completed major repairs to 16 homes owned by seniors of low to very low income);
3. more educational programs on housing maintenance and financial literacy/credit repair (through a partnership with First Guaranty Bank, financial literacy is now part of the City's HOPE Summer Program, which annually serves over 100 children and their families, some 60% of whom are low income; the City also hosts tax preparers from HelpLA who, each year, provide free tax and financial assistance to Hammond residents regardless of income status); and
4. additional public-private partnerships to ensure new subdivisions are developed with adequate and effective water and sewer services, drainage, sidewalks, and lighting.

**C. COMMUNITYWIDE NEEDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS**

(Describe all needs. All needs listed may or may not be resolved with the current LCDBG Grant.)

By far, the greatest communitywide need in Hammond is an improved sewer system, including the SWTP. Other needs include a larger courthouse and jail and improvements to Hammond Northshore Regional Airport and fire safety.

LDEQ has cited the City for permit exceedances at the SWTP (linked, in large part, to the underperformance of certain industrial users' pretreatment facilities) and unauthorized discharges of sewage (following heavy rains). For years, when the SWTP was overloaded, a foul odor blanketed nearby neighborhoods, which are mostly low to moderate income. Recent SSES and I/I work, the installation of emergency generators at lift stations, increased system monitoring, and, most critically, the conversion of an existing/abandoned oxidation ditch at the SWTP into a pretreatment facility have all played roles in improving the performance of Hammond's sewer system and have significantly decreased odor from the SWTP. Planning of nearly \$3 million in conditionally approved LCDBG and CWSRF funding to continue I/I work and make additional improvements to the SWTP is now underway. The City remains in discussions with other local governments about establishing a regional sewer system better equipped to address the increased demands of South Tangipahoa and the Northshore of Lake Pontchartrain's growing populations. And the City continues to invest resources in wetland wastewater assimilation, which has helped to stay salt water intrusion and regrow wetland vegetation—including Cypresses—in the Joyce Wildlife Management Area south of the City of Ponchatoula.

As the population of Hammond has grown, existing courthouse facilities have become overcrowded and inefficient. With nowhere else to sit or stand, victims, plaintiffs, defendants, attorneys, jurors, witnesses, and family members are often forced to wait in hallways, along office corridors, and, in some cases, even outside. In late 2014, the City relocated its Police Department from the courthouse into a repurposed and renovated former bank building downtown to alleviate some of this overcrowding and inefficiency. This has helped, but is seen as more of a stop-gap than a long-term solution.

2014 also saw the construction and opening of an air traffic control tower at the City's previously towerless Airport. Along with a newly-purchased airport rescue and firefighting vehicle, the tower represents a direct response to communitywide safety concerns. With 199 aircraft based at the airport and more than 278 aircraft operations each day, the airport was at an increased risk for an accident without a tower and ill-equipped to respond to one if it occurred. Accommodating more diverse air traffic, the new tower also positions the airport for future growth and was a welcome addition for the Louisiana National Guard, which, following Hurricane Katrina, moved its 1/244th Air Assault Helicopter Battalion and 1/204th Theater Air Operation Command to and built permanent facilities at the Airport. Since 2014, a series of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and DOTD grants and City investment in the operation and promotion of the Airport have achieved additional major improvements including new air traffic control, navigation, and weather technologies; runway improvements; and (soon) new hangars. In late 2018/early 2019, grants from the Delta Region Authority (DRA) and State Capital Outlay Section are anticipated to make possible the build-out of 3 floors and the installation of an elevator within the tower.

Finally, related to fire safety, several areas of the city need new and larger-diameter water lines for adequate fire protection. Most of these areas are located in Old Hammond and west of the city center, where, like the city's sewer lines, water lines were installed decades ago using materials now considered obsolete and inadequate.

**D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

*(Describe all needs. All needs listed may or may not be resolved with the current LCDBG Grant. Additionally, identify any population group(s) with high unemployment or a statement that there is no high unemployment population group(s).)*

Between 2012 and 2016, the most recent 5-year-period for which economic data is available, the poverty rate in Hammond averaged 32.2%—the result of historic undereducation and underemployment, especially among minorities. Among all adults over the age of 25, 19.3% had yet to earn a high school diploma or its equivalent; among black residents, this rate was over 24%. While the overall unemployment rate averaged 14.8%, among black residents it was 19.7%. These latter figures represent a marked increase over the previous 5-year period (2007–11), during which the rates were 8.9%—making the latest unemployment rate nearly double—and 15.2%, respectively.

Specific economic development needs among low to moderate income residents who are under- or unemployed include:

1. increased recruitment of manufacturing, distribution, and skilled labor industries offering above-minimum-wage jobs and increased promotion of these jobs (in 2014, the City received a \$150,000 DRA Reimagining the Workforce grant specifically to provide educational and employment opportunities to high school juniors and seniors in the Welding, Machine Tools, HVAC, and Electrical industries through partnerships with Northshore Technical Community College (NTCC) and Tangipahoa, Washington, and Helena Parish public schools; over the course of the 2-year grant, the "Career Pathways Program" enrolled 123 students, who completed 366 courses worth 997 credit hours);
2. increasing the size of Hammond's business and industrial park; and
3. more generally, attracting new businesses and industries to Hammond that will draw visitors (since 2015, examples have included State and national supermarket, retail stores, and restaurant chains, as well as a large number of family-owned restaurants and small businesses).

**3. Data Sources**

Data for these and other sections comes from the City of Hammond's 5-year Capital Improvements Plan; the Hammond Comprehensive Master Plan; the U.S. Census Bureau (particularly, the American Community Survey); the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; discussions with the Hammond City Council and City administrators, department heads, and staff; surveys of Hammond residents; and input from district townhall and Council meetings.

**4. Comprehensive Community Development and Housing Strategy:  
(Provide a narrative in accordance with instructions for each listed area.)****A. NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY**

*(State how the needs listed in 2A will be addressed to include objectives, activities, timing, monetary amounts and funding sources.)*

The City's neighborhood revitalization strategy begins with investing in areas where need is greatest and, wherever possible, seeking ways to supplement these investments with State, federal, private funding to maximize outcomes. Communitywide development/re-development, housing, and zoning and code enforcement projects are also priorities. Many of these priorities are identified in a 5-year Capital Improvements Plan informed by public input, progress made on individual projects, and regular public hearings and meetings.

Objectives and activities include:

1. currently and for the foreseeable future (e.g. over the next 4 years), rehabilitating sewage collection and treatment facilities to reduce I/I, improve sewage treatment, and reduce operation, maintenance, and replacement (OMR) costs (as previously noted, recent SSES and I/I work, the installation of emergency generators at lift stations, increased system monitoring, and the conversion of an existing/abandoned oxidation ditch at the SWTP into a pretreatment facility have all played roles in improving the performance of the system, but this is a long-term objective, and additional local, State, federal, and private funding will be needed to address increasing demands on the system by a growing population and new businesses and industries; planning of nearly \$3 million in conditionally approved LCDBG and CWSRF funding to continue I/I work and make additional improvements to the SWTP is now underway.);
2. over the next 5 years, local investment of some \$2.7 million into drainage improvement projects (wherever possible, the City will combine drainage and street improvement projects to maximize outcomes);
3. over the next year, the completion Phase 3 of the revitalization of Zemurray Park through a LWCF grant and local investment (the cost of Phase 3 has been estimated at \$1.25 million, of which the City has budgeted nearly the remaining \$1 million);
4. over the next 5 years, park improvements at each of the City's 6 parks and at North Oak Park totaling some \$1.1 million, paid in part or supplemented by federal, State, and private grants; and
5. over the next 5 years, installation of nearly \$1.1 million in ADA-accessible sidewalks throughout Hammond through TAP grants and local investments spurred by the Hammond Comprehensive Master Plan and the current Mayor's vision of a walkable/bikeable Hammond.

## **B. COMMUNITY-WIDE HOUSING STRATEGY**

*(State how the needs listed in 2B will be addressed to include objectives, activities, timing, monetary amounts and funding sources.)*

The City continues to work with the Hammond Housing Authority, representatives of special zoning districts—such as the Downtown Development District Board and Hammond Historic District Commission—local lenders and developers, community and neighborhood organizations, and exiting and new businesses and industries in developing communitywide housing strategies. The City has further coordinated with FHLBank Dallas and participating member banks, contractors, homeowners, and nonprofits in the rehabilitation of low-income

owner-occupied housing. Additionally, the City's Building Department has been working to identify homes too foregone for rehabilitation and, in the interests of public health and safety, better demolished. The City now budgets \$30,000 for the demolition and/or clearing of at least 10 vacant/blighted properties annually. And the Council has passed property maintenance regulations to ensure rental units are up to code; these regulations also assist with neighborhood stabilization.

An example of one such strategy, the Terrace of Hammond Apartments, the City-approved redevelopment of which was supported by tax credits, now provides rental units to residents qualified for assistance under Section 8; the 20-building complex includes 108 apartments.

More recently, the City approved proposals by developers to build 39 "work force" homes near the Phoenix Square Subdivision and to create a new subdivision, the Providence Ridge Subdivision that will initially include lots for 99 new homes.

The City also continues to work with developers to create sustainable and affordable housing and to infill areas where needed.

### **C. STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING COMMUNITYWIDE PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

*(State how the needs listed in 2C will be addressed to include objectives, activities, timing, monetary amounts and funding sources.)*

Examples of the City's ongoing strategies to provide communitywide public facility improvements include planned improvements to the SWTP, recent and planned SSES and I/I work, the recent and planned installation of emergency generators at lift stations, increased system monitoring, and the conversion of an existing/abandoned oxidation ditch at the SWTP into a pretreatment facility; all have played/will play roles in improving the performance Hammond's sewer system.

In the past 5 years, the City has applied more than \$615000 in State Capital Outlay and Local Government Assistance Program (LGAP) funding, matched by nearly the same in local funds, to repurpose and renovate a former bank building into a new police stations to alleviate some of the overcrowding and inefficiency of a collocated police headquarters, courthouse, and jail. Since 2014, the Hammond Police Department has operated from the renovated building—opening the door to a renovation of the former police headquarters into court facilities. The City is also researching funding opportunities to construct a new courthouse and jail.

2014 also saw the construction and opening of an air traffic control tower at Hammond Northshore Regional Airport—listed as a priority in the City's 2014 Community Development Plan. In addition to making airport operations safer, the new tower positions the airport for future growth. During the planning of the tower, the City and the Louisiana National Guard, which, following Hurricane Katrina, moved its 1/244th Air Assault Helicopter Battalion and 1/204th Theater Air Operation Command to and built permanent facilities at the airport, entered into a partnership through which the Guard would staff and equip the tower. Ultimately, the project was made possible because of partnerships like this one and funding from multiple sources, such as the FAA, DOTD, and Louisiana Office of

Facility and Planning Control (OCD).

The City Engineer and Fire Chief continue to work with the Administration to identify and prioritize fire protection needs based upon future growth projections and existing water lines and hydrant locations. Between 2011 and 2012, the City installed 5,600 linear feet of new water lines and 6 new hydrants with \$210,000 in EPA grant funding and \$172,000 in local matching funds. Another \$500,000 in water system improvements, including major improvements to one of the City's wells, are planned over the next 2 years. Finally, the City is considering applying for EPA and/or LCDBG funding in the future to extend fire protection capabilities even farther.

Critically, with a population of 20,389 and recent inclusion in a metropolitan statistical area, Hammond has found itself in a precarious situation: too big and no longer "rural" enough to apply for many of the large federal grants upon which it once depended (e.g. United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) rural development grants) and, almost paradoxically, still too small and not "urban" enough to apply for most of the large federal grants for which it would otherwise apply. As a consequence, the City has ramped up the number applications that it makes for State and private funding and has even entered into special very-low-interest loan agreements (e.g. those made possible through CWSRF).

#### **D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

*(State how the needs listed in 2D will be addressed to include objectives, activities, timing, monetary amounts and funding sources.)*

Despite a high poverty rate, Hammond's population, tax base, and business and industry sectors have been growing steadily over the past decade. In May 2011, Hammond was selected for the LED Ready Communities Program and developed an economic development plan for future. This plan includes specific goals for an expanded business and industrial park, airport improvements (including the now-completed air traffic control tower), workforce training, and an improved K-12 education system (in 2015, the City's Recreation Department began hosting an afterschool program—an offshoot of the department's successful HOPE Summer Camp—that now provides tutoring in all subjects, special instruction in reading, homework assistance, hands-on learning experiences, computer lab time, physical exercise, opportunities for socialization and behavioral growth, healthy snacks, and even nutritionally balanced dinners to some 150 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>-graders Mondays through Fridays from 3:00-6:00 p.m. during the school year).

The City has partnered with the Hammond Area Economic and Industrial Development District and Tangipahoa Economic Development Foundation to recruit new business and industry to Hammond and to increase the number of certified and fast development sites within the city limits (3 sites have already been certified and another 17 are in the process of becoming fast development sites). To encourage development of Hammond's business and industrial park, the City has pursued funding to upgrade and extend an existing rail spur. The City has also pursued funding to establish a public-private fiber optic network to recruit high-tech businesses and to provide broadband to small businesses at lower costs. In 2014, the City received a \$150,000 DRA grant to create a "Career Pathways Program" matching high school juniors and seniors with high-wage local jobs in the Welding, Machine Tools, HVAC, and Electrical industries. And the City continues to partner with the Tangipahoa Parish

School System, TangiConnect, NTCC, and Southeastern on K–12 education, including afterschool and summer programming, workforce training, and environmental education. The City also continues to partner with and support area nonprofits—including by providing, free of charge, office and meeting space at its Safe Haven Community Center.

Each fiscal year, the City appropriates matching funds to leverage for large grants, typically for public works projects. The City's Grants Department has also applied for and secured low-interest loans for especially large projects: in 2013, the \$5 million CWSRF loan for I/I work; in 2018, the \$2.1 million CWSRF loan for improvements to the SWTP. Since the current Mayor's term began January 1, 2015, the department has generated nearly \$5 million in grants and loans supporting litter prevention; police and fire enforcement and equipment and supply purchases; summer and afterschool programming and school supply purchases; new playgrounds; home rehabilitation; building renovations; new construction projects; major landscaping projects—including, at the intersection of I-12 and US 51 Business (Southwest Railroad Avenue, one of Hammond's most important commercial/industrial corridors, directing visitors to historic downtown Hammond and Southeastern), the "Gateway to Hammond," a placemaking project intended to welcome visitors to the city; park improvements—including, to date, over \$1 million dollars in improvements, funded by more than \$500,000 in grants, completed at Zemurray Park; and water and sewer system improvements.