

Jefferson County, Alabama
Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program
B-13-UT-01-0001

Summary of Changes in Amendment #7 to the CDBG-DR Action Plan

Jefferson County, Alabama, and a consortium of municipalities located within the County (excluding Birmingham, Bessemer, Sumiton, and Helena), received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Grant.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, Jefferson County, Alabama is hereby publishing the Final Amended Statement of Objectives and Projected Use of Funds. This Final Amended Statement will be developed after receiving citizen comments and views at a public hearing to be held August 26, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in the Jefferson County Office of Community Services & Workforce Development located at 716 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd N, Ste. A-430.

Special accommodations are available, upon request, for those with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. Those requiring special accommodations or questions regarding the Plan, should call 325-5761 in advance for assistance.

AVAILABILITY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

This is a summary of the proposed amendments for Community Development Programs. Copies of this summary may also be reviewed online at (<https://www.jccal.org/Default.asp?ID=1765&pg=CDBG+Disaster+Recovery>) or by calling 205-325-5761. Arrangements can also be made to meet the Special Needs Requirements of those with disabilities as well as those with limited English proficiency. Those in this category should contact the Office of Community Services & Workforce Development and telephone number leaving a message with their name and number if they reach voicemail. Copies will also be provided to the 34 participating consortium cities: Adamsville, Argo, Brighton, Brookside, Cardiff, Center Point, Clay, County Line, Fairfield, Fultondale, Gardendale, Graysville, Homewood, Hoover, Hueytown, Irondale, Kimberly, Leeds, Lipscomb, Maytown, Midfield, Morris, Mountain Brook, Mulga, North Johns, Pinson, Pleasant Grove, Sylvan Springs, Tarrant, Trafford, Trussville, Vestavia Hills, Warrior, and West Jefferson.

Comments must be submitted prior to September 12, 2022 at 5:00 PM. Written comments must be submitted to the following:

Jefferson County Office of Community Services & Workforce Development
716 Richard Arrington Jr Blvd N, Ste. A-430
Birmingham, AL 35203
Attn: Amendment Comments

The purpose of Amendment #7 to the B-13-UT-01-0001 Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Action Plan is to reduce and increase funding in certain projects and activities. Additionally, the amendment seeks the addition and funding of a new project and activity. A summary of those changes are listed below:

Decrease Funding in the Following Ongoing Activities:

McAdory2 R3 (Ext) \$1,101,557.88 to \$991,694.67 (-\$109,863.21)

Hueytown R3 (Ext) \$1,269,143.16 to \$1,065,517.90 (-\$203,625.26)

Add and Fund the Following Proposed Activity:

Economic Development: Hallmark Farms \$0.00 to \$313,488.47 (\$313,488.47)

Introduction

The April 27, 2011 tornado devastated Jefferson County, causing over \$600 million in property damage. According to the Jefferson County Coroner office 21 persons were killed in the storm. According to the Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency, there were multiple tornados ranging in capacity from EF-4 to EF-5 that impacted Jefferson County. The recovery effort began immediately with various local, state, and federal agencies responding. The responding agencies included the local Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency; local law enforcement agencies; the Alabama National Guard; FEMA; as well other community based and volunteer organizations.

This section of the Action Plan will address eligible areas in the Jefferson County HUD Consortium impacted by the April 27, 2011 tornado; define unmet needs; provide a historical perspective of tornados impacting Jefferson County; present contributing factors to frequent tornado activity in the county; provide an initial needs assessment by local and federal agencies; provide an overview of recent public meetings held in the impacted communities to determine unmet needs; present the Jefferson County CDBG-DR program guidelines; and present a proposed disbursement of the county CDBG-DR funds. Eligible Areas Impacted by the April 2011 Tornado eligible areas for the Jefferson County Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds include Concord, Pleasant Grove, Alabama, North Smithfield, McDonald Chapel, Warrior, Alabama, Fultondale, Alabama and Vestavia Hills, Alabama. Unmet Needs is defined as the difference between damages sustained in the impacted areas during the storm event mentioned above and post disaster impacted areas. These areas are eligible to receive in the recovery effort. Participants receiving assistance from insurance payments, FEMA, SBA, etcetera will be documented and not duplicated.

Historical Perspective of Tornados in Jefferson County Since the 1950s

Jefferson County has experienced five (5) major tornados. The capacity of these tornados has ranged from EF-4 to EF-5. The county was struck by major tornados in 1956, 1977, 1998, 2011 and 2012. Below is an overview of the first three (3) major storm events that hit Jefferson County, which will be followed by the two (2) most recent tornado events. The first tornado, which occurred on April 15, 1956, originated near Pleasant Grove, Alabama with an approximate 21 mile path and struck the communities of Edgewater, Tarrant, Alabama, McDonald Chapel and Pratt City, which is a community in Birmingham, Alabama.

The second major tornado struck on April 4, 1977. This F-5 tornado moved through Pratt City and North Smithfield and killed 22 people. The third major tornado struck the Oak Grove community on April 8, 1998 and killed 32 people. The storm traveled more than 30 miles impacting Concord, Pleasant Grove, Alabama, Edgewater and McDonald Chapel. More than 1,000 homes were destroyed and 900 homes suffered major damage.

On April 27, 2011, multiple tornados touched down in Jefferson County. It was reported that 21 persons were killed from tornados ranging in capacity from EF-4 to EF-5. There were countless others who were seriously injured from the major storm event. Moreover, the property damage from the storm was estimated to be over \$600 million.

On January 23, 2012 another major tornado storm struck Jefferson County. This EF-3 tornado winds peaked at 140 miles per hour. The tornado did significant damage to Oak Grove, Pinson, Center Point, Alabama and Clay, Alabama. The storm killed two (2) people, a 16-year-old girl who resided in Clay, Alabama and an 81 year man who lived in the Oak Grove Community.

Project

Jefferson County proposes the Hallmark Farms Economic Revitalization (Economic Development redefined for Disaster Recovery) Project at 9484 Highway 31, Warrior, Alabama 35180 for the development of infrastructure to develop a mixed use industrial/commercial/retail area.

Jefferson County proposes reallocating the remaining CDBG-DR 2012 and 2013 monies to this project, but for CDBG-DR funding of the economic revitalization activity this would not happen.

The Project has been determined to be eligible for Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding and meets National Objective as required at 24 CFR 570.200 for Low/Moderate-Income job creation/retention.

The Project is an eligible activity and meets the CDBG-DR eligibility criteria for 24 CFR 570.203(b) Special Economic Development Activities and Economic Revitalization per Applicable FR Notice. 77 FR 22587 notes that

“(3) Economic Revitalization. Economic revitalization is not limited to activities that are “special economic development” activities under the HCD Act, or to activities that create or retain jobs. For CDBG disaster recovery purposes, economic revitalization can include any activity that demonstrably restores and improves some aspect of the local economy; the activity may address job losses, or negative impacts to tax revenues or businesses. Examples of eligible activities include providing loans and grants to businesses, funding job training, making improvements to commercial/retail districts, and financing other efforts that attract/retain workers in devastated communities. All economic revitalization activities must address an economic impact(s) caused by the disaster (e.g., loss of jobs, loss of public revenue). Through its needs assessment and Action Plan, the grantee should clearly identify the economic loss or need resulting from the disaster, and how the proposed activities will address that loss/need. (4) Preparedness and Mitigation. The Appropriations Act states that funds shall be used for recovering from a Presidentially-declared major disaster. As such, all activities must respond to the impacts of the declared disaster. HUD strongly encourages grantees to incorporate preparedness and mitigation measures into rebuilding activities, which helps to ensure that communities recover to be safer and stronger than prior to the disaster. Incorporation of these measures also reduces costs in recovering from future disasters. However, given the limited funding available and the language in the Appropriations Act, CDBG disaster recovery funds may not be used for activities that are solely designed to prepare for and/or mitigate the effects of a future disaster without any tie to rebuilding from the previous disaster. (5) Tie to the Disaster. Grantees must document in each project file how that activity is tied to the disaster for which it is receiving CDBG assistance. In regard to physical losses, damage or rebuilding estimates are often the most effective tool

for demonstrating the connection to the disaster. For economic or other non-physical losses, post[1]disaster analyses or assessments may best document the relationship between the loss and the disaster. Note that grantees are not limited in their recovery to returning to pre-disaster conditions. Rather, grantees are encouraged to undertake activities in such a way that not only addresses the disaster-related impacts, but leaves communities better positioned to meet the needs of their post-disaster populations and prospects for growth.”

The evidence of project/activity eligibility from the Jefferson County Profile, created by the Alabama Department of Labor’s (ADOL) Labor Market Information Division notes an unemployment rate of 2.9% in Jefferson County representative of 9, 419 citizens. Unfortunately, Jefferson County continues to experience significant underemployment bringing the total pool of unemployed or underemployed to 79,156 citizens at a rate of 24.7%.

As a HUD designated Urban County, Jefferson County’s unemployment is further exacerbated by the fact that the count nets an additional 155,930 employees from the surrounding counties while only 70,451 citizens of Jefferson County work outside the County.

Jefferson County is seeking to redevelop Hallmark Farms in the City of Warrior as a special economic revitalization project which is an eligible impacted area for Community Development activities. Without the return of businesses and jobs to a disaster-impacted area, recovery may be impossible. The Economic Revitalization will be for the easement/property acquisition, soft costs, and construction of sanitary sewer improvements for the purpose of developing Low- to Moderate-Income jobs in this impacted area. Jefferson County projects the creation of 20 or more jobs that will be available for Low- to Moderate-Income persons.

The project is projected to include more than 5,000 linear feet of 4’ PVC, CL200 Force Main and more than 500 linear feet of HDPE Fore Main (Direction Drill Installation) in addition to a new Lift Station and upgrades to an existing Lift Station that will service the site.

The Appropriations Act requires funds to be used only for specific disaster recovery-related purposes. The use of CDBG-DR funds for this specific activity are authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 or allowed by a waiver or alternative requirement published in an applicable Federal Register Notice. The Economic Revitalization will be for the easement/property acquisition, soft costs, and construction of sanitary sewer improvements for the purpose of developing Low- to Moderate-Income jobs in this impacted area. The project is projected to include more than 5,000 linear feet of 4’ PVC, CL200 Force Main and more than 500 linear feet of HDPE Fore Main (Direction Drill Installation) in addition to a new Lift Station and upgrades to an existing Lift Station that will service the site.

The use of CDBG-DR funds for this specific activity responds to a disaster-related impact and provides for long term recovery to the economic environment that is necessary as a direct result of the disaster. Jefferson County identified Economic Revitalization (Economic Development redefined for Disaster Recovery) as a need relating to the disaster response. Jefferson County is seeking to redevelop Hallmark Farms in the City of Warrior as a special economic revitalization project which is an eligible impacted area for Community Development activities. Without the

return of businesses and jobs to a disaster-impacted area, recovery may be impossible.

Jefferson County proposes reallocating the remaining CDBG-DR 2012 and 2013 monies to this project, but for CDBG-DR funding of the economic revitalization activity this would not happen. Jefferson County projects the creation of 20 or more jobs that will be available for Low- to Moderate-Income persons.