

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSOLIDATED PLAN

### PURPOSE

The Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan (H&CD Plan) incorporates planning and reporting for two federal community planning and development programs, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME). The objective is to make these programs more accessible to communities by making them easier to understand. The intent is that communities can make enhanced use of the benefits embedded in CDBG and HOME to address housing and community development needs.

The goals of these two programs reflect the major commitments and priorities of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These include: 1) decent housing; 2) a suitable living environment; and 3) expanded economic opportunities. The purpose of the H&CD Plan is to incorporate planning functions for these three broad activities, and to consolidate the local applications and reporting processes for federal entitlement programs. Figure I-1 illustrates the relationship of the local funding processes and the H&CD Plan.

The Clark County H&CD Plan is a strategic plan that outlines specific courses of action for revitalization. It provides the means to analyze the local context and linkages to the larger region. The strategies build on local assets coordinating responses to the needs of communities. This plan attempts to integrate comprehensively the economic, physical, environmental, community and human development issues of the region. As a strategic plan, it also articulates goals, objectives, and performance indicators for measuring progress and establishing a framework for assessing new knowledge and experience, identifying how these various targets can add to a successful plan for local revitalization.

### FUNDING RESOURCES

Clark County prepares the H&CD Plan for the following federal funding sources and jurisdictions:

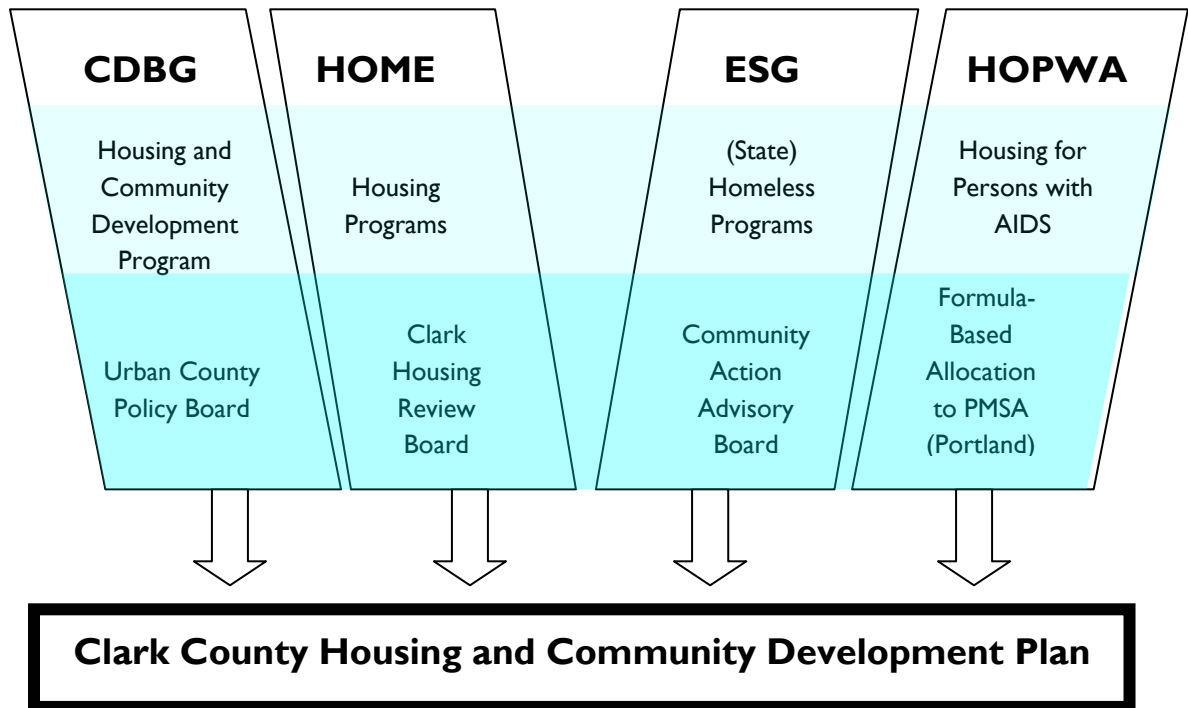
#### **Clark County Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)**

CDBG funds are allocated principally for housing and community development projects that benefit low and moderate-income households. The Clark County CDBG entitlement area includes Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal, Yacolt, the unincorporated areas of Clark County, and the City of Woodland. The Urban County Policy Board, comprised of one County Commissioner and the Mayor from each incorporated city except Vancouver, recommends allocation of the funds for the county. The Vancouver City Council allocates the city CDBG funds.

## Clark County/Vancouver HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

Clark County/City of Vancouver HOME funds generally are used for the development of low- and moderate-income housing. Such development includes construction, rehabilitation, tenant-based rental assistance and operating funds for non-profits providing affordable housing. Funding decisions are made by the Clark Housing Review Board.

**FIGURE I-1**  
**Housing and Urban Development Funds Allocated through the Consolidated Plan**



## Clark County Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG)

ESG funds are used for services and facilities that benefit homeless persons and families. The Clark County ESG entitlement area includes all of the incorporated cities within the County. Clark County does not receive a direct ESG allocation; funds are obtained from the State of Washington through a formula process.

## Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA)

HOPWA funds provide supportive housing services for persons with AIDS. Clark County is not the lead applicant for HOPWA funds for the area, but receives funds through an Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area (EMSA). For Clark County, the EMSA administrator is Portland, Oregon.

## METHODOLOGY

The Clark County H&CD planning process draws from a wide range of sources and integrates a variety of planning processes. The intent is not to duplicate existing efforts, but rather to build on them. The

H&CD Plan incorporates existing plans and documents (identified below) and is meant to be consistent with the policies and programs presented in those plans. In addition, the planning process includes a broad base of citizen input, which is gathered from public meetings.

## **Plans Incorporated**

- **2000-2004 Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan**

The new H&CD Plan contains an updated needs assessment from the 2000-2004 H&CD Plan and incorporates many of the strategies and actions outlined in previous H&CD Plans.

- **Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan**

Clark County adopted its updated Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (20-Year Plan), in August of 2004. The objectives of the H&CD Plan are intended to be consistent and work in conjunction with the activities outlined in the updated 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Plan.

The Housing Element of the 20-Year Plan describes needs and the direction the county will take to influence the type, location, and affordability of housing. Issues addressed include development standards, fair share housing, special needs housing, neighborhood character, and vitality. Other elements of the 20-Year Plan describe the investment in public infrastructure required to support existing and proposed land use including housing, transportation, and economic development components of growth.

- **Cities' Comprehensive Plans**

Each incorporated city in Clark County is responsible for preparing a comprehensive plan as part of the Growth Management planning process. Information relating to housing and community development needs from these plans was incorporated into the H&CD Plan.

## **Group Involvement**

- **Human Service Providers**

Housing needs for the homeless and special needs populations were compiled from housing plans and assessments developed by agencies working with specific populations. These groups include: Council for the Homeless, Area Agency on Aging, Clark County Developmental Disabilities Program, Clark County Equal Opportunity Committee, Southwest Washington Health District, Community Choices 2010, Clark County Community Action Program, Clark County Regional Support Network, and Clark County Alcohol and Drug Program. Service providers were also invited to the citizen input/developer outreach meetings (see below).

- **Continuum of Care Planning Group (COCPG)**

Clark County utilizes a continuum of care model for providing for the needs of people who are homeless. The model is governed by the COCPG, which is a consortium of non-profit homeless service providers, state and local government agencies, faith community representatives, school

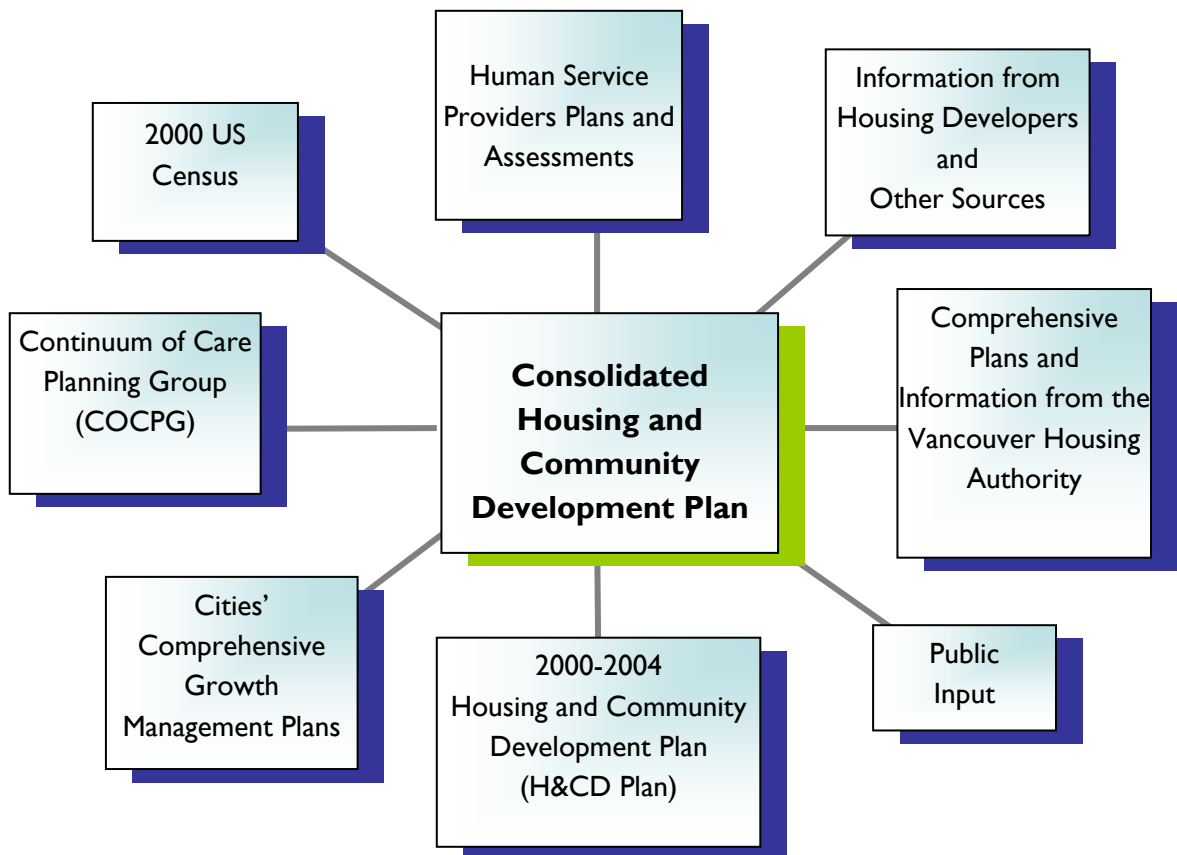
homeless liaisons, business and neighborhood associations, and homeless and formerly homeless people. COCPG represents all of Clark County, including incorporated cities and town.

The group meets monthly under the leadership of the Director of the Council for the Homeless, who chairs meetings and acts as staff to the group. The director also coordinates the annual HUD McKinney-Vento application, which provides funding (approximately \$1 million) to the community for homeless services.

**Other Sources**

Data from U.S. Census statistics provided a base of demographic information about Clark County's population, housing, and income. Information about housing market trends was compiled using data from realtors, builders, and a variety of local sources which track homeownership and rental costs, vacancy rates, and building activity. Information about economic trends was compiled from local plans, data from the Clark County Department of Assessment and GIS, the Employment Security Department, and the Columbia River Economic Development Council. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides specific 2000 census housing information for Clark County and the cities in the county.

**FIGURE I-2**  
**Development of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan**



## **Public Input**

Citizens were offered a variety of opportunities to participate and comment on the development of this Plan, including providing input on the needs assessment and objectives, commenting on the proposed use of federal funds from HUD, and responding to the implementation of the funded activities.

Two public meetings were held with citizens, service providers, public and private housing developers, and public housing residents. Outreach efforts included mailings to minority groups, neighborhood associations, and seniors. Newspaper advertisements, cable television announcements, and flyers were mailed to service organizations for posting. Articles were placed in neighborhood, human service, and public housing newsletters to notify citizens about the public meetings and the availability of the draft for the 30-day comment period. A summary of public comments and ideas is included in Appendix I.

Approximately 35 people attended the first meeting March 16, 2004. After a brief introduction to the process, the participants worked in small groups to identify the affordable housing and community development needs.

A second meeting was held April 7, 2004, with 30 people in attendance. Again in small groups, they worked with a matrix showing the current services plotted against special needs populations currently served. The attendees helped identify housing and community development needs.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN**

**Chapter One** identifies the purposes of the plan, funding sources, participants and methodology.

**Chapter Two** presents demographic information about Clark County, including population, labor and employment data; income, race, and education information; and social trends based on those data.

**Chapter Three** identifies housing and community development needs, presenting an assessment of the housing market, housing cost, needed housing units, affordable housing policies, and the non-housing community development needs identified by each city and the county.

**Chapter Four** presents a summary of federal, state, and local housing resources available for housing and community development needs. It also presents the Five-Year Strategic Plan for addressing these needs, including broad-based objectives and proposed actions designed to achieve stated objectives.

The Clark County/City of Vancouver Consortium Annual Action Plan, an outcome of this planning process, offers a specific blueprint of housing and community development activities the County will undertake using federal, state, and local resources in a separate document.

**Appendices** provide additional details about federal funding programs; outreach efforts; ideas and priorities identified by citizens; resources used to develop the Plan; additional information about households in need of assistance; and information about H&CD Plan consistency verification procedures.