



CONTRA COSTA CONSORTIUM CDBG/HOME Newsletter

MARK THE DATE!

- January 17th – FY 2007/08 2nd Quarter Performance Report Due
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DID YOU KNOW...?

....that the City of Concord has hired **Cathy Gaughan** to help support the administration of the CDBG program on a part-time basis. Cathy is a resident of the Concord's Monument Corridor area. She and her husband, Pete, are parents of two children, including a developmentally disabled daughter. Cathy was formerly a student at the Martinez Adult School, where she received training in office systems and applications. You can reach Cathy mornings from 8:30 to 1:00 at 671-3111.

Breaking News

CDBG and HOME Programs Cut Again!

One of the final votes that Congress cast this year was to bundle most of the FY 2008 spending bills into one omnibus appropriations bill. The omnibus bill which funds 14 cabinet agencies, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development, was scaled back to meet the administration's insistence that the bill not exceed an overall ceiling of spending of \$933 billion. As a result, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME) programs were cut again – this time by **3 percent**. To put this cut and the other cuts made to the CDBG program over the last few years in perspective, **Contra Costa County's CDBG grant has decreased by approximately \$700,000 or 17 percent!** Other CDBG Consortium entitlement cities have experienced similar percentage reductions in their grant amounts. Needless to say, this most recent cut will make it even more difficult for CDBG Consortium members to fund the applications submitted for FY 2008/09.

Foreclosure Assistance Offered

If your staff or clients need information about foreclosure assistance, call NeighborWorks at 1-888-995-HOPE or go to their website at www.nw.org.

The CDBG Consortium members have met to discuss the housing foreclosure situation facing many homeowners in Contra Costa County. At the last meeting, Consortium members met with representatives from a number of the non-profits working on the issue and the District Attorney's Anti-Predatory Lending Task Force. Although there are no easy solutions, we did come up with a plan to provide information and assistance to city and county residents.

Cities and the County are planning links on their web sites to a centralized resource page which can help homeowners determine where to go for help. We are publicizing a new 800 phone number sponsored by NeighborWorks, a national non-profit organization. Staff there will do intake and refer callers to the proper local agency (in Contra Costa this could be Community Housing Development Corporation, Housing Rights, or Bay Area Legal Aid). This is the most efficient way to triage calls and get callers to the proper counseling agency.

PROJECTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Interested In A Job In Technology?

Street Tech has been expanding economic opportunities for low-income persons in west Contra Costa County for over seven years by providing job training, career development and job placement in the field of computer/information technology. Street Tech provides technical job training, professional and career development skills, and one-on-one job placement assistance utilizing a four component curriculum: 1) education and credential; 2) equipment; 3) experience; and 4) placement assistance.

Street Tech provides its clients with three levels of training involving three to five month sessions that meet three to five days a week. Students acquire high quality technical skills, professional, life and career development skills, and industry recognized certifications. Clients who do not have computer equipment or cannot afford computer equipment can acquire (at no cost) the computer equipment needed for specific training to be carried outside of Street Tech's classrooms. In these cases, clients are trained to refurbish computers that they will eventually use for their studies and in their technical jobs. In addition, clients are given the opportunity to gain the experience needed and find career opportunities through Street Tech's social venture program, Relia Tech, where they engage in paid and unpaid internship programs. Ultimately, students find full-time/part-time employment with various local agencies and companies, some of which have partnership agreements with Street Tech. Once clients complete the necessary training, Street Tech provides one-on-one job placement assistance to their clients where they find employment that matches their clients' specific technical skills. With over 80% of Street Tech students completing their course(s) and over 90% of job ready graduates finding jobs, Street Tech's programs are working.

For more information on Street Tech, go to their website at: www.streettech.org

Affordable Senior Housing Development Completed

Villa Vasconcellos is a newly constructed 70-unit affordable housing development for low and very low income seniors (55 years and older), including 25 units specifically targeting persons with disabilities. Residents are expected to begin moving into their new apartments over the next couple of months.

Conveniently located near Pleasant Hill BART in Walnut Creek, residents are close to public transportation, stores, parks, restaurants and other amenities. The development incorporates various green building techniques including solar electricity and solar hot water. Villa Vasconcellos also offers professional and friendly onsite management and services such as lectures, exercise group, cooking demonstrations, arts and crafts, computer education, preventative health services, nutrition programs, and more. The development is a collaborative effort between the City of Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County, and the State Housing and Community Development Department. **For more information or to receive an application, call (925) 465-3858**