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# The 2014 Annual Report

of the City of Columbus – Community Development *Department*

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*This Annual Report is prepared for the City of Columbus and the following 2014 elected officials:*

**Columbus Mayor:**  
*The Honorable Kristen Brown*

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**Columbus City Council:**  
*Dascal Bunch, District 1*  
*Ryan Brand, District 2*  
*Frank Jerome, District 3*  
*Frank Miller, District 4*  
*Tim Shuffett, District 5*  
*Jim Lienhoop, At Large*  
*Kenny Whipker, At Large*

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## **Executive Summary**

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The Columbus Department of Community Development implements a variety of activities, programs and projects that facilitate the development, enhancement or redevelopment of “community” throughout central city neighborhoods and other challenged areas. With the election of Mayor Kristen Brown and her assumption of office on January 1, 2012, the Community Development Department was asked to focus its efforts on outcome-driven priorities to provide safe, standard, decent and affordable housing for all; proud neighborhoods that exhibit a quality and supportive living environment; and travel corridors that link neighborhoods together and provide neighborhood residents access to quality goods and services.

During 2014 the Department of Community Development continued its mission to advance the above-referenced priorities. The staff continued to facilitate and implement several traditional programs or special projects begun in prior years. But, in addition, considerable progress was also made to address priorities borne out of the Advance Columbus strategic planning process.

This report summarizes the specific of accomplishments by the Department of Community Development during 2014. Brief narratives are presented and, where appropriate, quantitative metrics are provided.



## Section 1: Department Overview

### Department Mission:

The mission of the City's Department of Community Development is to improve the environmental quality of the City's neighborhoods; to assist in the production of and access to affordable housing; and to build and foster the fabric and spirit of "community" throughout the City of Columbus. The Community Development Department performs its mission by convening regular monthly meetings to the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing; assisting and supporting the programs and projects of private sector for-profit and non-profit housing developers and providers; and collaborating with City departments, neighborhood organizations, interest groups and citizens. The Department of Community Development plans, organizes and manages activities, events, initiatives, policies, programs and projects that are consistent with and facilitate the strategic objectives of the Advance Columbus strategic planning process which melds the community priorities of the City's numerous business and organizational partners.

The Community Development Department and its lean, devoted professional staff pay particular attention to the needs and concerns of economically challenged citizens and central city neighborhoods. The staff routinely provides guidance and technical assistance to citizens, neighborhood groups and private non-profit organizations that serve the disadvantaged. Finally, the staff also facilitates private sector investments throughout the City that creates job opportunities.

### 2014 Community Development Department Staff (as of 12/31/2014):

<b>Carl Malysz</b>	Director
<b>Chris Schilling</b>	Communications and Program Coordinator
<b>Beth Ostby</b>	Secretary
<b>Fred Barnett</b>	Code Enforcement/Coordinator*
<b>Ali Crimmins</b>	Special Projects Coordinator (part-time)

\*Position on loan from the Columbus Planning Department.



## Program and Project Funds:

The following spreadsheet summarizes Calendar Year 2014 fund activity by the Department of Community Development for the purpose of implementing its various projects and programs. With the exception of Fund 472, which is funded with General Fund revenues, the sources of funding for each program/project fund listed below consists of private contributions and/or Federal and State grants and aid.

### 2014 Program and Project Expenditures

Fund #	Fund Name	Beginning Balance	Revenue	Expense	Ending Balance
246	NSP1 Northbrook & Lincoln Central	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
118	NSP1 Revenue Rent & Sale	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
276	Housing/Com Dev	36,801.01	-0-	12,136.00	24,664.01
277	Com Dev Special Projects	12.34	-0-	-0-	12.34
284	CDBG Entitlement & House RLF NR	-0-	266,025.92	263,131.19	2,894.73
285	CDBG Local Match	15,270.03	4,491.29	15,491.29	4,270.03
286	Com Dev Ethnic Expo	21,271.29	54,080.20	58,439.71	16,911.78
287	Banner Fund 287	11.00	1,125.00	-0-	1,136.00
288	Com Dev Garden Plots	1,954.81	1,795.00	785.00	2,964.81
289	Volunteers in Medicine	7,513.57	204.06	-0-	7,717.63
290	Maint. Eastside Comm Center	418.07	-0-	-0-	418.07
291	Ethnic Expo Grant Fund	133.82	-0-	120.00	13.82
292	Mayor's 2013 Cheer Fund	-0-	320.00	320.00	-0-
293	Adopt A Brick	2,939.24	-0-	-0-	2,939.24
472	Com Development Streetscape	9,394.64	-0-	-0-	9,394.64
<b>FUND TOTALS</b>		<b>95,719.82</b>	<b>328,041.47</b>	<b>350,423.19</b>	<b>73,337.10</b>

Note: This table does not reflect any obligations expensed but due and payable from the Unsafe Building Fund.



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## Section 2: Ongoing Programs and Projects

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### Community Engagement Programs

#### *Downtown Banner Program—*

The Banner Program is intended to share space on downtown banner posts for civic activities of local significance or interest. Banner guidelines were prepared and adopted several years ago, and numerous banner proposals were approved according to the current guidelines. During 2014 Downtown banners were approved for several civic events, including those of the *Literacy Festival, Columbus Regional Hospital Foundation, Neighborfest, Biggest Block Party, Domestic Violence Month, Ethnic Expo, United Way of Bartholomew County Annual Campaign, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Ethnic Expo, Mill Race Marathon, Domestic Violence Month, LGBT History Month, National Family Week, and the Downtown Holiday Banners.*

For at least two years running, the request for banner space has outstripped the capacity of the Downtown banner post infrastructure to accommodate all requests. The “bumper crop” of banner requests has caused the Community Development Department and the Board of Public Works and Safety to take pause. The Downtown Banner Program guidelines need to be examined and, if necessary, amended to better accommodate events and programs for which the City of Columbus is a direct sponsor and which promote the Downtown, the Arts District and tourism.

#### *Ethnic Expo and Other Civic Events—*

The Community Development Department produces or facilitates several civic and municipal events. In addition to Columbus's signature Fall event—*Ethnic Expo*—during 2014 Department staff time was spent on the *Christmas Lighting Program, Columbus Regional Hospital Open House and Cummins Mill Race Marathon.* The Department wishes to thank the countless individuals and organizations that work together with the City to make these special civic/municipal events a reality.



### *Community Garden Program—*

The Community Development Department has managed the City's Community Garden project since the early 1980s. The City's Community Garden is currently located on property owned by the Municipal Airport just off of Cessna Drive. All 138 total garden plots were rented to citizens and cultivated in 2013.

The City also reinstated an awards program for its Community Gardeners. Working in conjunction with Kris Medic, Purdue Cooperative Extension-Bartholomew County, several community gardeners were recognized: Most Productive; Most Colorful; Best Ethnic Produce; Sprit Award; and Mayor's Choice. (Discussions are underway to recognize other achievements including Youth Gardener.) In addition to award certificates, the award winners were presented gift certificates to help supply their 2015 garden plots. These certificates were funded by an anonymous donor. The awards and gifts were presented to the winners at *Ethnic Expo*.

### *Neighborhood Dialogues—*

During 2014 Mayor Brown and the Community Development Department continued hosting Neighborhood Dialogues and other events with the residents of several neighborhoods within the city including the 9th Street Park Neighborhood, the East-end Neighborhood, and the 11th and Washington Street Neighborhood. The meetings were often attended by several partners including the Columbus Police Department, the Columbus Fire Department, the Columbus Parks Department, and local non-profit partners the Lincoln Central Family Center, the Eastside Community Center, the United Way of Bartholomew County, Housing Partnerships, Inc./Thrive Alliance, and the Southern Indiana Community Development Corporation. Finally, the Community Development staff began "shadowing" *Neighborhood Watch* meetings being convened by the Columbus Police Department. Even in the City's stable neighborhoods, issues regarding trash collection and code enforcement occur with growing frequency.

### *Neighborhood Cleanup Campaigns—*

The Neighborhood Cleanup Campaigns begun by the Brown Administration begun in 2012 continued to be key events instilling neighborhood pride into central city residents of Columbus. During 2014 spring and fall campaigns were conducted. The geography of the cleanup areas was expanded. In addition to the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood and 11<sup>th</sup> and Washington Streets Neighborhood which were original focus



areas, the Eastside Neighborhood was revisited—particularly the Pence Park Area—and additional areas in the greater Lincoln Central Neighborhood were added to the mix. This expansion has been made possible because the neighborhood cleanup campaigns are becoming very effective. While there are still problem areas about, City staff and the volunteers both agree that the culture of neglect is beginning to subside.

Finally, it should be noted that these successful neighborhood cleanups would not be possible without the dedication, numbers and strength of the volunteers that participate. In particular, our hats go off to First Christian Church, which addresses private property issues confronting senior citizens and persons with developmental or physical disabilities, and Cummins, Inc., which tackles a variety of tasks and projects in public rights-of-way or on private property. Working together residents, property owners, volunteers and city staff are instilling a new attitude into the central city—*neighborhood pride*.

## **Community Development Investment Programs**

### *Community Development Block Grant Program—*

Columbus receives an annual entitlement of approximately \$250,000 per year from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. CDBG funds must be primarily utilized to address the housing and neighborhood and community development needs of low- and moderate-income households and persons. Occasionally, and in accordance with strict regulations, they may be expended for activities that address or remove conditions contributing to slums and blight.

The City of Columbus utilizes the services of Administrative Resources association (ARa) to administer the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and to seek out, secure funding and implement programs and projects through other State and Federal sources. Working with ARa, the Department and City developed a new Five-Year Consolidated Plan (FY 2014-2018) for the City's CDBG Entitlement Program in 2014. The City's CDBG Program Fiscal Year begins on September 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year.

During 2014 CDBG Program funds were expended on a variety of affordable housing and neighborhood improvement projects including the following: Sidewalk Reconstruction (\$85,000); Acquisition and



Rehabilitation of affordable rental property by Housing Partnerships, Inc./Thrive Alliance (\$80,000); Columbus Housing Improvement Program (four owner-occupied units, \$21,804); Centerstone Services, Inc. (\$10,132); and Acquisition and preservation of Town and Garden Apartments as affordable senior rental housing by Southern Indiana Housing and Community Development Corporation. In addition funds were expended for contractual administration and program delivery services by ARa.

Several of the above-referenced CDBG expenditures funded projects articulated in the housing and neighborhood element of Advance Columbus. These will be discussed further in **Section 3: Goals and Measures**.

#### *CDBG – Disaster Recovery OOR Program—*

In collaboration with ARa, the City's CDBG Program implementation partner, the City applied for and was awarded \$262,500 in CDBG Disaster Recovery for funding Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation (OOR) from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) for use primarily in the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood. Four rehab projects were completed and one begun in 2014 (\$82,050). Five projects were in the bidding queue at years end. This OOR program will be finished in 2015 with a total of twelve lower-income homeowners being assisted. The City routinely applies for OOR assistance as opportunities become available from IHCDA or other funding sources.

#### *Code Enforcement and Unsafe Building Program—*

2014 was a significant year of change for how the City implements code enforcement and addresses vacant/abandoned/dilapidate properties. In the spring of 2014, it became abundantly clear that the City needed to ramp up code enforcement and the eradication of blight in many of the City's central city neighborhoods. The Community Development Department was asked to refocus the work priorities of a staff member on loan and funded through the Planning Department. The rebranding of the Code Enforcement/Coordinator position is now to focus on code issues in the built environment.

The Table on the following page depicts code enforcement activity in aggregate during calendar year 2014:



### 2014 Code Enforcement Activity

Code Violations Reported	Number	Percent
Chapter 10.48 Abandoned Vehicle Private	175	55.9%
Chapter 10.48 Abandoned Vehicle Public	138	44.1%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>313</b>	
Chapter 15.20 Unsafe Building	42	59.2%
Article 10 Sign Standards	6	8.5%
Chapter 8.24 Garbage and Refuse	16	22.5%
Article 10.30 Storage of RV	5	7.0%
Chapter 15.04 Building Code Fencing	2	2.8%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>71</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>384</b>	
<b>Corrective Action Status on 12/31/2014</b> (not including abandoned vehicles)	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Completed	42	59.2%
Not in Compliance	4	5.6%
Work under way	25	35.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	

Alleged code violations are received by the Community Development Department in three ways. First, the Code Enforcement/Coordinator routinely canvasses the central city neighborhoods of the City where such code violations have typically occurred. Second, alleged violations are received periodically through *URReports*, a web-based reporting service that is accessed via the City of Columbus website (<http://www.columbus.in.gov/>). Third, the City also receives phone calls, letters and other oral tips on the location of problem properties. It is very important for citizens to be the “eyes and the ears” of code enforcement.

In review of 2014 Code Enforcement Activity, it should be noted that the vast majority of complaints occurred in the abandoned vehicle category. Two policy modifications appear to have contributed to occurrence.

First, the sections of the Columbus Municipal Code dealing with abandoned vehicles were rewritten and formally amended. These amendments primarily addressed the definition of abandonment and extended the reach of the code to address such vehicles on private property.



The second policy change involves the enforcement agency. The Columbus Police Department is now clearly responsible for issuing citations dealing with abandoned vehicles on both private and public property. The Code Enforcement/Coordinator, however, does make abandon vehicle referrals to the CPD. At the time of the writing of this annual report, data was not available regarding the status of corrective action.

Vigorous code violations activity dealing with private property also ramped up during 2014. The vast majority of calls and complaints involved unsafe building conditions and garbage and refuse issues. Together these two categories amounted to nearly 80% of the violations.

Progress resolving code enforcement issues in 2014 was respectable. Of the 71 reported and investigated code violations dealing with private property, nearly 6 out of 10 have been addressed and resolved: an additional 3 out of 10 violations are in process of being corrected. For those properties not being amicably addressed by responsible property owners, the City may choose to invoke due process action through the Board of Public Works and Safety to mow tall grass and other rank vegetation and to remove garbage, trash and debris. In addition, the City has ramped up use of State and local Unsafe building laws and codes to resolve vacant/abandon/dilapidated property issues.

In addition to code amendments pertaining to abandoned and unlicensed vehicles developed by the Community Development Department working with the ad hoc codes and code enforcement sub-committee of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing, the Columbus City Council appropriated \$200,000 into the Columbus Unsafe Building Fund which had been on the books for decades but never funded.

At mid-year the Code Enforcement/Coordinator had compiled a list of 22 properties that were deemed unsafe according to the City's local codes and Indiana Unsafe Building Law. Working with and through the Columbus Board of Public Works and Safety, due process was implemented to gain the attention of several property owners. At year's end, the status of the original list of 22 unsafe buildings stood as follows:



## 2014 Unsafe Building Activity

	Status of Unsafe Building(s)	Number of Unsafe Building Sites
1.	Owner implemented demolition	4
2.	Owner corrected unsafe condition(s); building being rehabilitated	6
3.	BPWS demolition implemented; funded through Unsafe Building Fund.	6
4.	Unsafe Building sites in holding pattern.	6
	Total Sites	22

In reviewing the above table, the reader should note that a total of ten unsafe building were either demolished by the owner or via action of the Columbus Board of Public Works and Safety. The total value of the contract for the six (6) BPWS demolitions amounted to \$39,000. These expenditures will be recorded as liens against the subject properties for collection at tax sale or upon title transfer.

### *Blight Elimination Program—*

In addition to the locally funded Unsafe Building Program, the Community Development Department also applied for and received a funding allocation of \$760,000 to address blighted/abandoned/dilapidated property from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. These funds will assist the City and programmatic partners purchase properties from known title holders who no longer care to own the subject properties. Minimal funding is available to purchase the property net of taxes and other liens to clear title. Up to \$10,000 may be spent to acquire and clear title for houses having a basement; only \$7,500 may be spent for this purpose for houses on crawlspaces or slabs. The Blight Elimination Program (BEP) will also fund the cost of demolition. The award received by the city appears to be ample funding is available to address approximately 36 vacant/abandoned/dilapidated residential structures. That said the City has essentially the calendar year of 2015 to implement its BEP award. The City has executed a program delivery services contract with ARa for this purpose.

## **Economic Development Incentive Programs**

### *Tax Abatement Program—*

The Community Development Department manages the City's property tax abatement program. Property tax abatement is a local option economic development tool to stimulate investment in real and personal



property by companies located inside the City limits that increases the local tax base to create jobs. Typically, tax abatements do not deplete the local tax base or reduce the property tax levy which the City is permitted to collect. Rather, it gradually phases in any increase in the assessed value due to qualifying investments, lessening the initial tax burden placed on new investments.

The following Table lists the tax abatement requests that were awarded in 2014:

### 2014 Columbus Tax Abatements

Resolution Number	Company	Projected # Employees	Attraction or Expansion	Type and Total Investments
01-2014	Gateway Apartments, LLC	3	Attraction	Real Property
02-2014	Nagakura Engineering Works Company	6	Expansion	Personal Property
03-2014	Toyota Industrial Equipment Mfg.	0	Expansion	Real Property
03-2014	Toyota Industrial Equipment Mfg.	10	Expansion	Personal Property
04-2014	Force Holdings, LLC	0	Attraction	Real Property
8-2014	Applied Laboratories, Inc.	26	Expansion	Personal Property
17-2014	Rightway Fasteners	3	Expansion	Personal Property
18-2014	Tallman Equipment Company	4	Attraction	Real Property
18-2014	Tallman Equipment Company	0	Attraction	Personal Property
21-2014	Kroger Limited Partnership I	104	Attraction	Real Property
23-2014	Blairex Laboratories LLC and Moravec Realty LLC	0	Expansion	Real Property
23-2014	Blairex Laboratories LLC and Moravec Realty LLC	3	Expansion	Personal Property
27-2014	Advanced Mold & Engineering, Inc.	1	Expansion	Personal Property
28-2014	Impact Forge Group, LLC	37	Expansion	Personal Property
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>197</b>		<b>\$68,385,729</b>



From a fiscal perspective, City Council granted 14 tax abatements for calendar year 2014. The abatements consisted of eight (8) Personal Property and six (6) Real Property tax abatements representing approximately \$68,385,729 in investment and the creation of approximately 197 local jobs.

One tax abatement request is particularly noteworthy, that granted for Gateway Apartments, LLC. Gateway Apartments was awarded Rental Housing Tax Credits by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority in February 2014 for the development of 60 two- and three-bedroom affordable rental units. The project site is the five eastern-most acres of the former-Golden Casting Foundry site for which substantial site remediation will be undertaken and financed privately by the developers.

Prior to closing on the real estate transaction, several changes to affordable rental housing tax credit finance diminished the value of the funding that could be raised through the sale of Rental Housing Tax Credits. The financial gap for the proposed project grew by several thousand dollars. A portion of the financing gap was closed by the award of a “fortified” ten-year tax abatement award to the project. This enabled the developers to incur more project debt but, also, keep rents low enough to meet programmatic guidelines.

A second noteworthy tax abatement request involves the Kroger Company. In the fall of 2014 Kroger announced its intention to purchase, clear and redevelop the site of the former-Hostess Bakery facilities on National Road (U.S. 31) for a new concept store. Real property tax abatement was awarded for this redevelopment project in order to offset the burgeoning cost of acquiring and clearing this brownfield site of all existing buildings and improvements. At year end the purchase of the subject property had been consummated and this major brownfield redevelopment project is proceeding to a ground-breaking by mid-2015. The City of Columbus should be lauded for utilizing property tax abatement as an incentive to redevelop its inventory of brownfield sites.

### *Columbus Small Business Loan Program—*

The Community Development Department implements the Columbus Small Business Loan Program (CSBLP) which is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This program is currently administered with the assistance of Administrative Resource association (ARa). Since 2008, only



five loans have been approved. There have been very few inquiries from the business community during 2014. To date the fund balances stand as follows:

Current grant amount available to draw from USDA :	\$110,000.00
Recaptured Loans:	76,346.50
Outstanding Loan Balances:	13,694.57

It is anticipated that in 2015 that the Small Business Loan Program will be rebranded and repurposed for small business loans to stimulate investments along the State Street corridor.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

### *Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing—*

Shortly after taking office in 2012, Mayor Brown concluded that it was in the City's best interest to develop an outcome-driven approach to community development, her primary focus being housing and neighborhoods. The Brown administration understands that safe affordable housing and strong, proud neighborhoods are key facets of sound economic development policy. Moreover, the Mayor's Advisory Council on Housing continued its work during 2014.

Housing is a commodity that provides shelter and refuge for the family unit, and it should be safe, standard, decent, affordable and *available* to all families, no matter where they happen to fall within the socio-economic strata of the city. From an economic development standpoint, housing for the managers of industry is just as important as housing for the rank and file of production or those providing essential services in the Columbus economy. Given the evolving nature of production and the world economy, Mayor Brown particularly understands the difficulties confronting those at the lower end of the economic spectrum to find and occupy an available supply of safe, standard, decent and affordable housing.

In order to facilitate a dynamic and transparent strategic planning process for the Department, Mayor Brown has created and appointed members to the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing. The Council was originally composed of two sub-committees, one focused on market rate housing and the other on affordable housing. However, given that the work of the market rate sub-



committee was completed and the thriving local economy and market forces appear to be adequately addressing the housing needs of median income households and above, the market rate sub-committee was disbanded in early 2014.

At this time the focus of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing (Council) is on providing housing opportunities that serve low-moderate income populations and to create and foster quality neighborhood environments—safe and proud neighborhoods. There is also a concerted effort to address the hard to house homeless, particularly those afflicted with substance abuse, mental health issues, and those release from incarceration. The Council meets every first Wednesday of each month at 3:00 pm in facilities at City Hall. Public observation of the meetings and work of the Council is invited.

The strategic planning of the Council is part of the Advance Columbus strategic Planning Process. Annually the Council establishes strategic objectives to accomplish or initiate in a particular calendar year. These or included in the corresponding Advance Columbus annual plan element. The Chair of the Council and the Director of Community Development have seats on the Advance Columbus Board. Finally, the strategic objectives identified and discussed in **Section 3: 2014 Goals and Measures** will make policy recommendations that will facilitate progress in addressing supply and demand along the entire housing market spectrum from high-end corporate housing, to workforce housing, to homelessness.

### **Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing 2014 Membership Roster:**

Ben Jackson – Columbus Township Trustee  
Alicia McCreary – 2-1-1 United Way of Bartholomew County  
Greg Simo – Bartholomew County Landlords Association  
Deborah Holt – Columbus Housing Authority, Chair  
Elizabeth Kessler – Love Chapel  
Michele Lee – Human Services, Inc.  
Sue Lamborn – Lincoln Central Family Center  
Mark Lindenlaub – Housing Partnerships, Inc./Thrive Alliance  
Gary Myers, Bartholomew County Sherriff's Department  
Larry Perkinson – Bartholomew County School Corporation  
Kristin Munn - Heritage Fund of Bartholomew County  
Mark Stewart – United Way of Bartholomew County  
Lindsay Potts – Centerstone Services, Inc.  
Carrie Kruse – Turning Point  
Alan Sladek – Salvation Army



### *Columbus Housing Needs Assessment—*

During 2013 the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing continued its background research and study on the Columbus housing market. In particular a professional services contract was let with the Strategic Development Group, Inc., (SDG) to produce a Housing Needs Assessment that would provide a basis for the development of a comprehensive housing strategy for Columbus. The final report, Columbus Housing Assessment 2013, was completed and submitted to the city on December 31, 2013. Beginning in 2014, the Council began using the Housing Needs Assessment and other emerging data, information and reports to establish its strategic objectives for each calendar year as part of the Advance Columbus strategic planning process.

In 2014 the Council also assessed and amended the *Winter Contingency Plan* that it originally authored in 2013, the purpose of which is to collectively (homelessness service providers) guide actions to accommodate the homeless of Columbus and Bartholomew County during the severe weather in the winter months. The homelessness service providers' sub-committee is committed to evaluating the outcomes and issues of the past winter season each spring to make recommendations for modification of the Plan.

### *Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy—*

Early in 2013 it became abundantly clear that, in order to be competitive in competing for state and Federal funding to support the production of safe and affordable housing, it was necessary to prepare and adopt a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy for the city's targeted neighborhoods. Fortunately, much of the groundwork for the preparation of such plans has been accomplished by other city departments and its non-profit partners. So it was that the Community Development Department wrote the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood, entitled *9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood Comprehensive Revitalization Strategy* (<http://www.columbus.in.gov/community-development/9th-street-park-neighborhood-comprehensive-revitalization-plan/>). The *Strategy* was subsequently adopted as city development policy by the Columbus Common Council.

The *9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood Comprehensive Revitalization Strategy* was a critical reference point cited in the application prepared by Housing Partnerships, Inc./Thrive Alliance for HOME Program funding



to acquire, demolish and rebuild and rehabilitate certain vacant abandoned properties in the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood. Although the original grant amount requested was not funded—this likely due to extreme competition among applicants for funding—HPI was awarded approximately \$225,000 to address two critical properties—the infamous yellow four-plex located at the northwest corner of Wilson and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets (905 Wilson Street) and the historic cottage located at 1232 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

During 2014 HPI/Thrive Alliance began implementing the two projects approved and funded through the HOME Program by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA). The four-plex at the corner of Wilson and 9<sup>th</sup> Street has been demolished. Construction of a new rental duplex is scheduled to begin in spring 2014. The historic cottage at 1232 8<sup>th</sup> Street was purchase and rehabilitated during 2014. It is now occupied by the three-person household—a mother and two children who were homeless.

In addition to the HPI/Thrive Alliance projects, the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood Plan was also instrumental in securing an Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program (OOR) grant from IHCDA. A \$262,500 award was received that is sufficient to fund the rehabilitation of 12 houses. The priority target area for this program is the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Neighborhood. Further details regarding this program can be found on page 9 of this report.

### *Golden Casting Foundry Site Strategy—*

The Golden Casting Foundry ceased its operations in 2002-2003, and ownership was conveyed to KLM National, which claimed it would redevelop the subject property. Well over a decade later, most of the buildings on the subject property—an 18+ acre tract located at Cottage and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets—have been razed. But, overall, the site remains a toxic undeveloped and blighting eyesore in the heart of the city. It is understandable, then, why the Brown administration has targeted this site for proactive change.

On two prior occasions, applications for an affordable housing development—aptly named Gateway Apartments—were submitted to the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA); unfortunately, neither was approved for Rental Housing Tax Credits which, once sold, would have generated approximately 70-80% of the equity needed to fund this 60-unit, two- and three-bedroom



development. But in 2013, the Community Development Department once again worked with the applicant/developer, Jonesboro Investments Corp., to submit a top flight application for Rental Housing Tax Credits to IHCD for Gateway Apartments. The collaborative effort among the City, the developer and other affordable housing advocates was a success. Gateway Apartments was awarded a Rental Housing Tax Credit allocation in February of 2014. At year's end construction and permanent financing had been secured and the property had been acquired. A ground breaking event has been tentatively scheduled in March 2015.

In addition to the Gateway Apartments proposal, the Community Development Department continued working with private interests to facilitate the acquisition and redevelopment of the western-most eight acres of the former-Golden casting Foundry site for an assisted living/memory care facility containing 80 beds. The Environmental Assessment grant (up to \$100,000) applied for through the Indiana Brownfield Program was approved, and the Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments were completed. These documents were instrumental in preparing an application for special CDBG-DR funding from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for building demolition and site clearance. OCRA approved an award of \$157,755 for this project. At year's end, proposals had been received and awarded to commence building demolition and site clearance. Both the Environmental Assessment grant and the CDBG-DR grant were secured by the City through the collaborative efforts the Department Of Community Development and ARa.

### *Brownfields Assessment Strategy—*

A lesson learned by the Department Of Community Development from its work facilitating the redevelopment of the former-Golden Casting Foundry is to become more proactive with the redevelopment of the city's brownfield sites. To this end, the Department of Redevelopment closed 2013 by preparing an application (\$300,000) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for an Environmental Assessment grant which, if approved, will enable the city to implement its own brownfields assessment program at the local level. Unfortunately, the City received word in the spring of 2014 that its application had not been authorized for funding.



In the fall of 2014, EPA announced another round of Environmental Assessment Program funding. A second application was prepared and submitted to the EPA for a similar amount of funding. The City should hear about the outcome of this latest attempt in May 2015.

### *State Street Corridor Reinvestment Strategy—*

An area specifically targeted for environmental assessments in the EPA Environmental Assessment Program grant application is the State Street business corridor. While it is not anticipated that any specific property in the area contains significant environmental challenges to overcome, the investment community and private sector lenders are very careful about new investments in former brownfields. The casual reader should note that property classified as a brownfield is done so not because of known environmental contamination. Rather, a parcel or site is designated a brownfield because it was previously developed for an urban purpose. (Compare a brownfield to a “greenfield”, i.e., formerly tilled agricultural property.)

None-the-less, administering a local program to fund environmental assessments should be a very useful incentive to repurpose/reuse State Street Corridor properties. In addition the city’s small business loan program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be repackaged and rebranded for use along the State Street Corridor during calendar year 2014.



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## Section 3: 2014 Goals and Measures

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### Community Development Department Objectives

As mentioned previously, the annual strategic objectives of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing are being prepared annually and being "baked" into the Advance Columbus strategic planning process. The Brown Administration asks its departments to facilitate and support, to the extent financially feasible and practicable, efforts to accomplish the goals of Advance Columbus. The following annotations explain the status Community Development activities to accomplish related objectives.

#### 1. Implement 9<sup>th</sup> Street Park Comprehensive Strategic Plan:

- a. **Facilitate Neighborhood Clean-Up event(s) (Q2 and Q4).** *Completed spring and fall cleanups in several central city neighborhoods. Primary partners included First Christian Church and Cummins, Inc.*
- b. **Financial assist (CDBG) Housing Partnerships, Inc., (HPI) in the acquisition/rehabilitation of 1232 8<sup>th</sup> Street (Q2-Q3).** *Columbus CDBG Entitlement funds were awarded to HPI. 1232 8<sup>th</sup> Street was acquired and rehabilitated during summer 2014. Shortly after the rehabilitation project was completed, the unit was rented to and occupied by a formerly homeless single parent household with two children.*
- c. **Pending receipt of grant funding through Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), implement Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation (16 units) (Q2-Q4).** *A \$262,500 award was granted to the City. Program delivery is being provided by ARa via professional services contract. The awarded funding is sufficient to assist 12 lower-income homeowners. At the year's end, four rehabilitation projects had been completed and one was underway. The remainder of the projects will be completed in 2015.*
- d. **Apply for vacant/abandoned housing removal funding through IHCDA (Q2-Q3).** *The Community Development Department applied for and received an award of \$760,000 to purchase, clear and facilitate the reuse of up to 36 vacant/abandoned/dilapidated residential properties.*

#### 2. Implement Golden Casting Foundry Redevelopment Plan (this would include Gateway Apartments and MiZac LLC assisted living/memory care facility (Q2-Q4):

- a. **Complete environmental assessment project for the assisted living/memory care site (Q2).** *The requisite environmental studies were completed in the winter and spring of 2014.*
- b. **Apply to Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for funding to clear and remediate assisted living/memory care site (Q3).** *In collaboration with ARa, the Community Development Department applied for and received an award of \$157,755 for this project. Contract has been let, but a Notice to proceed has not been issued.*
- c. **Determine/facilitate implementation of a redevelopment project for the remaining three acres of the Golden Casting Foundry site proper (Q2-Q3).** *The assisted living/memory care developer tendered offer for all 8 acres in 2014 which was accepted by the seller.*

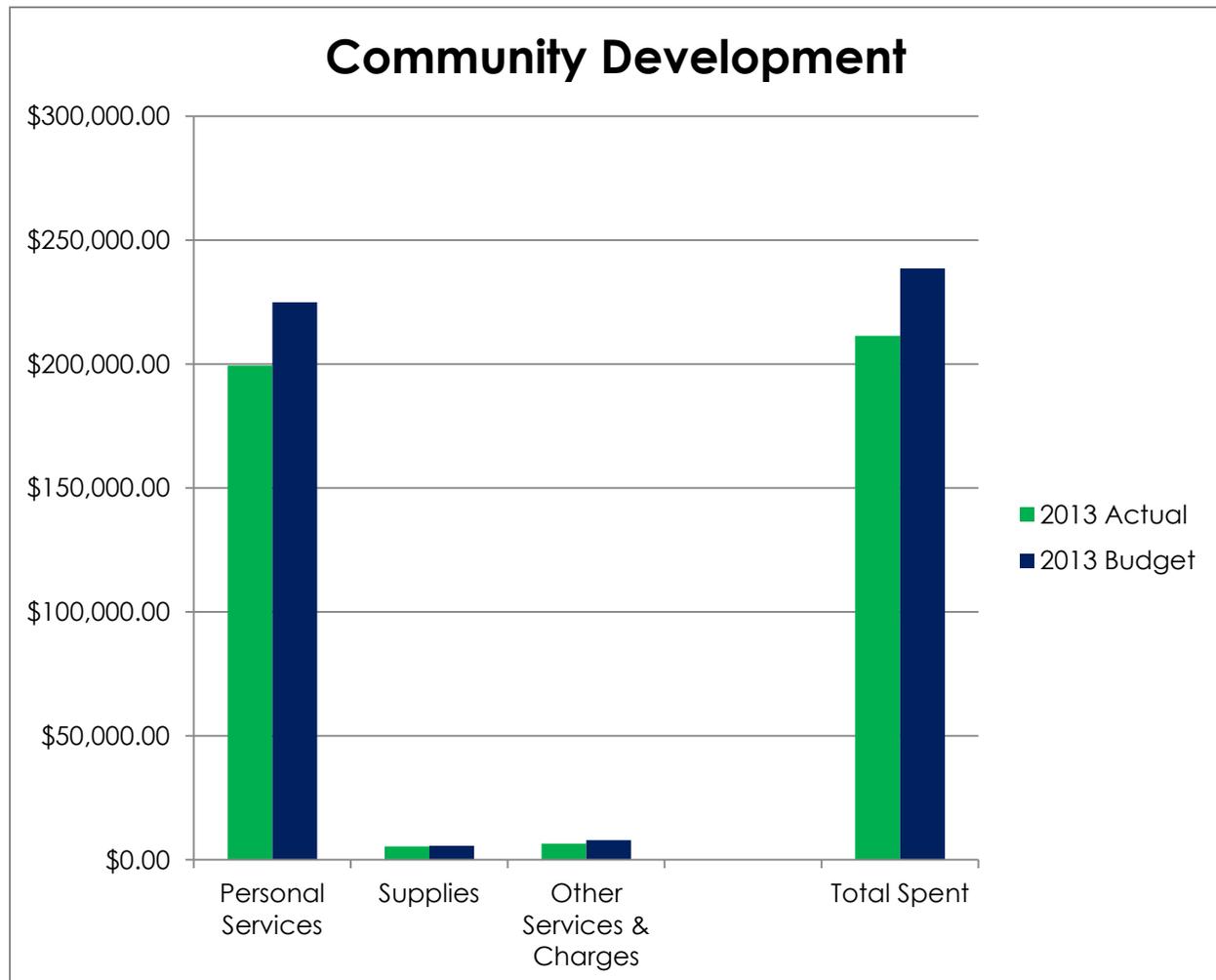


- d. Assist non-profit or other partner to gain site control of the Golden Casting Foundry site parcels south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street (Q2-Q3). *The Community Development Director has spoken with several private for-profit and non-profit developers about this property. But at the year's end, no purchase offers have been tendered for the out lots south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street.*
- e. Implement curb and sidewalk improvements (CDBG-funded) around the perimeter of the Gateway Apartments site. *This project is currently on hold and will likely be implemented in the fall of 2015. A ground breaking for gateway Apartments will be held in late winter or early spring of 2015.*
- 3. In collaboration with the Engineering Department, implement CDBG-funded sidewalk improvements in the Lincoln Central Neighborhood (Q2-Q3).** *This project was completed in the early summer of 2014. \$85,000 was expended on removing and replacing damaged unsafe walks in the 11<sup>th</sup> and Washington Streets neighborhood.*
- 4. Facilitate/institute a 203k homeowner loan guarantee program to address acquisition/rehabilitation/remodeling of existing single-family homes in the Lincoln Central Neighborhood (Q3-Q4).** *Some preliminary research was done. But no program has been established.*
- 5. Update date housing and property maintenance codes and code enforcement (Q2).** *The City Code pertaining to abandoned vehicles was rewritten and amended. A preliminary draft of amendments to the codes as they pertain to the exterior conditions of buildings and housing has been prepared. That draft is awaiting introduction to the Common Council.*
- 6. Complete the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Housing and Neighborhoods (Q2).** *The Mayor's Advisory Council on Safe and Affordable Housing is developing strategic objectives annually as part of Advance Columbus planning process.*
- 7. Prepare a State Street Economic Development Incentive Program (Q3).** *Preliminary research has been conducted to create incentives for the State Street Corridor initiative. These will be prepared/refined in collaboration with the State Street Implementation Team.*
- 8. Redevelop the County Annex Site:**
  - a. **Negotiate working relationship via inter-local agreement with Bartholomew Board of County Commissioners and County Counsel (Q2-Q3).** *No progress has been made as Bartholomew County Government is moving forward with other redevelopment plans.*
  - b. **Submit an application for a RHTC project for senior rental housing and create a private/public partnership to build new County Administrative Offices (Q4).** *No progress.*
- 9. Complete update of the Tax Abatement Incentive Program approval and monitoring process (Q3).** *Initial research completed. Proto-type monitoring tool has been drafted, but noting finalized.*
- 10. Pending funding approval by EPA, begin implementing environmental assessments of Columbus infill sites and other brownfield targets in collaboration with the Planning Department (Q3-Q4).** *EPA grant was not awarded. Community Development Department re-applied in December 2014. Funding announcements are anticipated in May 2015.*



## Financials

	2013 Actual	2013 Budget	Difference	%
<b>Community Development</b>				
Personal Services	\$199,350.53	\$224,950.00	\$25,599.47	89%
Supplies	\$5,443.89	\$5,650.00	\$206.11	96%
Other Services & Charges	\$6,551.33	\$8,000.00	\$1,448.67	82%
<b>Total Spent</b>	<b>\$211,345.75</b>	<b>\$238,600.00</b>	<b>\$27,254.25</b>	<b>89%</b>
Year Over Year- 2012/2013	\$5,189.13	\$5,365.82	\$176.69	
Year Over Year- 2012/2013	3%	2%	1%	





<b>Community Development</b>	2014 Actual	2014 Budget	Difference	%
Personal Services	\$230,802.41	\$231,756.00	\$953.59	100%
Supplies	\$2,754.62	\$3,071.00	\$316.38	90%
Other Services & Charges	\$6,623.17	\$7,650.00	\$1,026.83	87%
<b>Total Spent</b>	<b>\$240,180.20</b>	<b>\$242,477.00</b>	<b>\$2,296.80</b>	<b>99%</b>
Year Over Year- 2013/2014	\$28,834.45	\$3,877.00	<b>\$24,957.45</b>	
Year Over Year- 2013/2014	14%	2%	<b>-92%</b>	

