

Covington Consortium Consolidated Plan 2013-2018

Response to Public Input

1. Increase in green space and recreation activities

Input Received – Need to increase the amount of green space, like to see art in the parks, develop the riverfront, establish a recreation center, need more park facilities to entertain children, keep working on the Licking River Greenway.

Response – The city has dedicated 23% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward infrastructure and green space/park improvements. The city has two park master plans it is currently executing: the Devou Park Master Plan and the Licking River Greenway. The Devou Master Plan contains plans for the development of this 700 acres urban park, while the Licking River Greenway proposes to develop 5 miles on continuous paved trails along the Licking River. The development of a recreation facility would require significant investment and multiple partners. The city is currently in preliminary discussions with potential partners on the feasibility of a joint venture project.

2. Homeowner Rehab/Education and Vacant Space Rehab/Blight Issues

Input Received – Concern for senior who cannot maintain their houses due to hardships, lack of knowledge of new homeowners on what it takes to own a house, issue of rehab of vacant space for rental, need to continue to remove blight.

Response – The city has dedicated 9.6% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward residential programs. The city will be sponsoring a Code Enforcement Hardship Program that will provide the necessary funding to repair issues for individuals receiving code violations with no means to make the repairs. The city will use the expertise and knowledge of the Code Enforcement Officers to make recommendations on hardship cases. This program, along with the dedicated funding through the city's capital budget will work toward improving blight in the community. In addition, the city will be supporting a residential rehab rehabilitation project within our urban core, transforming upper floors of mixed use building into quality rental units.

3. Sidewalk on 43rd Street

Input Received – Need provide the missing distance of sidewalk to provide a safe walking path for citizens who use this path to go to the grocery.

Response – The city has dedicated 23% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward infrastructure and green space/park improvements. The city has a 3-year rotating schedule for infrastructure improvements. Sidewalks are actually the responsibility of the property owners. The city has been investigating options for supporting the necessary rehab to sidewalks with possible use of capital improvement funds as the source of funding.

4. Crime Prevention

Input Received – Continued support of the City Heights crime prevention program

Response – The city has dedicated 9.6% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward public services which includes crime prevention in both City Heights and the Downtown Core. The city will be turning to the expertise of the Police Department to look strategically with its efforts.

5. Staff for nonprofits

Input Received – In the past the city funded a staff person at OASIS and we had determined a few years ago we would no longer provide funding to nonprofits or social services.

Response – With the steady decrease of funding trending over the last 10 years, the amount of funding available to support all the program and activity desires of the community is not feasible.

6. Enhances Businesses

Input Received – Need to increase places to shop/spend money in our downtown, have things that attract people downtown.

Response – The city has dedicated 7.3% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward economic development. One particular program the Business First Program will offer critical support to small businesses allowing them the flexibility to use the grant funds where they need it the most. Whether this might be technical assistance, equipment or rent subsidy.

7. Bike Lanes

Input Received – Need to make it safe for bikers, we are a bike friendly community, but there is nothing to show that.

Response – The city is unfortunately restricted by its existing infrastructure that it is not feasible to establish new bike lanes. The city will be making efforts with the Licking River Greenway to establish legislation or sharing the road and the 3-foot, in which vehicles are asked to give bikers a 3-foot buffer when passing them. To accompany the legislation will be a robust educational marketing effort.

8. Westside Pike Area

Input Received – While the designated downtown area is currently seeing a turnaround the Westside area of Pike Street is still at a disadvantage due to the prohibitive cost to rehab the blighted building and the concentration of social service agencies not providing a welcoming market for small businesses or rehabbers.

Response – The city has dedicated 7.3% of the PY 2013/14 CDBG budget toward economic development. One particular program the Business First Program will offer critical support to small businesses allowing them the flexibility to use the grant funds where they need it the

most. Whether this might be technical assistance, equipment or rent subsidy. In addition we are once again support the Upper Floor Residential Rent Program to further enhance the progress from last program year. The boundaries of this program are in discussion to be expanded to include areas of Pike Street. The City has also restructured its Economic Development Incentive packages to include support for façade and rehab available to the entire city boundaries.