

# **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

## *Background Information for the Community Resource Investment Strategy*

**FINAL**

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## ***Introduction***

### **PREFACE**

This is an update to the Community Profile, developed in 1987 and revised in 1997, which has served to guide the Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles' (CDC) community development activities within the unincorporated areas of the Los Angeles Urban County. The updated report provides social, economic and housing data derived primarily from the 2000 Census to describe those areas of the unincorporated County that qualify for use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. This update allows for the reexamination of the original Strategy Areas and serves as a tool for projecting funds for future projects and activities. A comparison of the 1997 and 2004 strategy areas is provided in Appendix A.

The CDC, established in 1982, operates a variety of community and economic development programs to assist residents and businesses in the unincorporated areas of the County and selected cities.

The objectives of the CDC are to provide affordable housing, arrest neighborhood decay, and revitalize commercial and industrial areas. This is achieved through the completion of public works projects, economic development programs, and housing production and rehabilitation programs for low- and moderate-income persons.

Funding to implement CDC programs and projects comes from several sources, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the HOME Investment Partnership Program, and Economic Development Administration and other Federal programs, Mortgage Revenue Bond Programs, tax increment financing, and a variety of state and local programs.

### **PURPOSE**

The Community Profile serves as a resource tool to guide the CDC's community development activities, and to prioritize the use of CDBG and other funds within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

The document identified target areas, referred to as "Strategy Areas," which are eligible for CDBG funding based upon the income levels of residents and the physical condition of the neighborhoods. While many areas of Los Angeles County can benefit from public community development efforts, the target areas designated in this document have a majority of low- and moderate-income residents, as defined by CDBG requirements, and a demonstrated pattern of disinvestment and deterioration. The document provides statistical data and brief narrations to describe the character of the Strategy Areas and indicates in general the type of community development activities needed in these neighborhoods.

## **SCOPE**

This report deals with the unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles. It presents complete profiles, with maps of the Strategy Areas, which have been identified as needing public investment. The Strategy Areas are organized by the County of Los Angeles' five (5) Supervisorial Districts. The methodology for determining Strategy Areas is discussed below.

## **DEFINITION OF STRATEGY AREAS**

Strategy Areas are defined by the particular communities in unincorporated Los Angeles County, which have been designated as targets for public investment. These areas were selected using the methodology outlined below. They are delineated by census tracts or portions thereof, known as block groups.

## **DOCUMENT LAYOUT AND STRATEGY AREA NAMES**

The document is laid out by Supervisorial District. Within each Supervisorial District are Strategy Areas with maps and their corresponding tables that are arranged alphabetically by community name. For example, *Avocado Heights-Bassett* is followed by *Covina Islands (Citrus)*.

In the event that there is more than one Strategy Area in the same community, they will be arranged in descending order of Investment Level and will be named based on Investment Level. For example, East Los Angeles is comprised of three Strategy Areas and will therefore be arranged in descending order as follows: *East Los Angeles IV, East Los Angeles III, and East Los Angeles II*.

Communities that are only comprised of one Strategy Area will not have a Roman numeral as part of its name to indicate its Investment Level. For example, Avocado Heights-Bassett has only one Strategy Area, which is designated as Investment Level III. In the document, the Strategy Area will simply be named: *Avocado Heights-Bassett*.

## **METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING STRATEGY AREAS**

Strategy Areas are designated through: a) the identification of CDBG eligible areas based on the concentration of low- and moderate-income populations, b) an assessment of the level of community development needs within each area, and c) prioritization of the areas according to investment needs.

The socioeconomic characteristics analyzed include: income, unemployment rate, age of the housing stock, vacancy rate, proportion of homeownership, and education levels. Statistical analyses were based largely on 2000 U.S. Bureau of the Census data.

Population figures may vary from those accessible from the U.S. Bureau of the Census for two reasons, which warrant clarification.

1. Total Population and Low/Moderate Income Population figures were acquired from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The dataset was designed by HUD in conjunction with the Bureau of the Census for use by grantees in determining Low/Moderate Income population comparisons for their areas. Total populations differ from Census data in that those living in group quarters (such as prisons, ships in port, dormitories, hospice facilities, etc.) are omitted from the HUD dataset.
2. Due to Congressional redistricting in Los Angeles County, some Congressional boundaries were inconsistent with actual block group boundaries. In these instances, the County reassigned numeric counts of the population to adjacent block groups. Thus, block group populations differ from those shown in Census Bureau data. Although this difference ranges from -22.87% to +85.71% within a Strategy Area, only six vary by more than 10%. In these six instances, a notation to this effect is included in the text. Overall, however, the sum of the population in all block groups (i.e., total unincorporated county population) differs by just 0.2% (767 individuals out of over 388,000). Tables accompanying maps reflect census populations, and not reallocations.

Through field surveys, the physical condition of each area was assessed, including exterior appearance, degree of property maintenance, vacant property, effect of disinvestment and the condition of public facilities such as roads.

Based upon these statistical analyses and field surveys, community profiles were prepared for the identified Strategy Areas. These areas were categorized into four levels of investment, which are defined below.

### **DEFINITION OF INVESTMENT LEVELS**

Each Strategy Area has been assigned a level of investment. These levels are:

Level IV Extensive Investment

Level III Intensive Investment

Level II Selective Investment

Level I Limited Investment

The investment levels indicate the extent of community development needs for each Strategy Area and the level of public investment required to stimulate private investment to revitalize these areas. For example, Willowbrook was determined to be a target area, or Strategy Area. Portions of this area have been assessed as needing extensive investment (Level IV). The next page provides definitions for the investment levels as well as indicates the corresponding colors that are shaded on each Strategy Area map based on investment level.

Defined below are the criteria that describe and differentiate the levels of investment.

EXTENSIVE INVESTMENT—LEVEL IV



Level IV areas exhibit severe conditions of physical and economic distress. A majority of the buildings show the effects of age, disinvestment, and lack of maintenance. Typically, vacant or abandoned properties are present. The level of distress is such that any specific property investment by itself may not attract collateral private investment. Therefore, a long-term incremental program of community revitalization is required to reverse the economic decline, which characterizes these areas. Generally, fewer than half of the buildings within this classification are in standard condition. Minor rehabilitation/heavy maintenance is required in more than 25% of the buildings, while more than 20% need major rehabilitation or replacement.

INTENSIVE INVESTMENT—LEVEL III



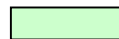
In Level III areas, significant portions of the properties require investment, from heavy maintenance to demolition and replacement. These areas are frequently inconsistent, with a mix of well-maintained properties on one block and obvious deterioration on the next. A comprehensive range of programs is needed to attract private investment and discourage the emerging pattern of disinvestment. Generally, 50% to 75% of the buildings within this classification are in standard condition. Minor rehabilitation/heavy maintenance is required in 10% to 25% of the buildings, and 10% to 20% need major rehabilitation or replacement.

SELECTIVE INVESTMENT—LEVEL II



Level II describes areas where the majority of properties are in standard condition and adequate private investment occurs. However, specific properties or limited areas show signs of disinvestment. Programs are targeted to eliminate site-specific deterioration and prevent the spread of blight. Generally, 75% to 95% of the buildings within this class are in standard condition. Minor rehabilitation/heavy maintenance is required in 5% to 10% of the buildings. Up to 10% need major rehabilitation or replacement.

LIMITED INVESTMENT—LEVEL I



Level I areas typically show little or no evidence of physical deterioration or lack of private investment. In some cases the low-income population is a specific group, such as residents of a senior citizen facility, whose income status is not correlated to revitalization needs. No specific programs are recommended for these areas. Allocations of community development resources for specific programs proposed by citizens or business groups will be considered. Generally, 95% to 100% of the buildings within this classification are in standard condition. Minor rehabilitation/heavy maintenance is required in up to 5% of the buildings. Few, if any, properties need major rehabilitation or replacement.

## **INVESTMENT GUIDELINES FOR HOUSING REHABILITATION AND REPLACEMENT NEEDS**

As part of the field survey to determine Strategy Areas, the extent of housing rehabilitation and replacement needs in the Strategy Areas was determined. The following three categories of housing need were identified:

**Minor rehabilitation:** Housing units that are inadequately maintained but show no apparent structural deficiencies.

**Major rehabilitation:** Housing units that have apparent structural deficiencies.

**Total replacement:** Housing units that have been abandoned or are unfit for occupancy due to the extent of evident structural impairment.

*(NOTE: When a census tract is followed by the word “all,” this indicates that the selected census tract is included in its entirety.)*

### **A NOTE ABOUT TERMS**

The socioeconomic profiles are summaries of 2000 Census data for the census tracts and block groups that comprise the particular Strategy Area. Some of the data, such as for age of housing and contract rents, come from survey questionnaires; therefore, it may not total to 100% or may differ from other data that come from so-called “100% counts.”

<b>Employable</b>	Employable persons are persons 16 years of age or older.
<b>Unemployed</b>	Unemployed persons are persons 16 years of age or older in the civilian workforce (e.g., persons who choose not to work are not unemployed, as they are not in the workforce).
<b>Median Income</b>	If a Strategy Area is comprised of more than one census tract or block group, then the median income is a weighted average of the median income of each block group in the Strategy Area.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) ELIGIBILITY**

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The primary objective of the CDBG Program is to develop viable urban communities through the provision of decent housing and suitable living environments, and to expand economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

The Commission administers the CDBG Program for the unincorporated areas of the County. It also operates the program for participating cities which are eligible for CDBG funds, and which contract with the Commission to provide services.

In general, the types of projects eligible for CDBG funding include community conservation, housing production, neighborhood development, community business revitalization, public works and public services. Projects and activities funded under the CDBG Program must meet one of three broad, national objectives:

- Benefit low- and moderate-income persons;
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight;
- Meet other community development needs having a particular urgency.

#### 1. Median Household Income Level Criteria

This objective uses median household income within block groups or census tracts. If the majority of residents (51%) within a census tract, or a block group of a census tract, are low- or moderate-income, that area is eligible for assistance. Low- and moderate-income residents are those earning less than 80% of the County median income, adjusted for family size. For example, according to the 2003 CDBG requirements, the eligibility level for a family of four is a maximum of \$45,100.

#### 2. Slum and Blight Criteria

CDBG funds may be expended on projects and activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slum or blight. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a Slum and Blight Area as an area:

- which, under State or local law, meets a definition of a slum, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating area; and
- where there is a substantial number of deteriorating or dilapidated buildings or improvements throughout the area.

In order for a project to be eligible for CDBG funding under the slum and blight criteria, the project must be located in a geographical area that has been designated as demonstrating slum and blight conditions. For an area to be designated as a Slum and Blight Area, a Neighborhood Condition Survey must follow the criteria established in the “Final Statement on Slums and Blight for the County of Los Angeles Community Development Block Grant Program” adopted by the Board in November 1983.

### 3. Urgency Criteria

Projects developed under the urgency criteria must alleviate existing conditions that pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of residents of the County. The urgency must be of recent origin and funding from other sources must not be available. A catastrophe, such as an earthquake, would qualify as such an event under the urgency criteria.