

Part Three

HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

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The Housing Market Analysis was prepared using data from the 2000 Census, citizen comments from two public meetings, a community survey, and information received from the City Departments and other agencies. We have also reviewed the housing market conditions for the last three years using “For Sale” information from Greater Northwest Indiana Association of Realtors, GNIAR, Multiple Listing Service (MLS) records of sales for the city of East Chicago and Lake County.

The issues raised by the citizens at the public meetings predominantly concerned making housing and homeownership affordable to the residents. Other issues expressed were: elderly housing, lack of quality affordable housing, code enforcement, and homeless needs.

The following sections provide an assessment of the housing supply and conditions in the City of East Chicago. In this assessment the needs have been separated into households occupied by renters and owners and also further divided by type, income and housing problems. Income for each household is divided into four groups: extremely low income (0 to 30% MFI), very low income (31% to 50% MFI), low income (51% to 80% MFI) and moderate income (80% to 95% MFI.)

Another area discussed is cost burden (the amount of household income spent on housing costs) which is separated into two groups - extreme (more than 50% of HH income) and heavy (30% to 49% of HH income). The Cost of Housing is discussed in the following section.

1.0 HOUSING TYPES

The Census 2000 reports the total housing inventory in East Chicago as 13,261 units. Of this total 4,796, or 36% are single family detached units, and 886 units (6.7%) are single family attached. The remaining 57% are multifamily units. The total number of housing units in the city fell by 223 units over the last decade. There was also a decline in the number of owner-occupied units as many homes were abandoned and later demolished by the city in an effort to eliminate abandoned and highly dilapidated structures in the city. Table 15 exhibits the housing tenure for the city of East Chicago. Changes in the number of the housing stock are also presented in this Table. Accordingly, the number of owner occupied housing decreased by more 5% or 287 units, while the percentage of the housing stock that is renter-occupied decreased by about 2% between 1990 and 2000. The actual number of rental housing units decreased by 140 units. The decrease can be attributed to demolition of mostly dilapidated rental structures in the city.

Table 15 - Housing Tenure

| Tenure | 1990 | % | 2000 | % | Change | % |
|-----------------|-------|------|-------|------|--------|------|
| Owner Occupied | 5,505 | 40.8 | 5,218 | 39.3 | -287 | -5.2 |
| Renter Occupied | 6,617 | 49.1 | 6,489 | 48.9 | -140 | -2.1 |
| Vacant | 1,362 | 10.1 | 1,554 | 11.7 | 192 | 14.1 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|-----|--------|-----|------|------|
| Total | 13,484 | 100 | 13,261 | 100 | -223 | -1.7 |
|-------|--------|-----|--------|-----|------|------|

The distribution of housing stock between owner and renter units shows that 39.3% of all housing units are owner-occupied. Of this total 78.7% are single family units. The homeownership rate has declined since the last decade when owner-occupied housing was more than 40.8%. As such, the city has become a predominantly rental housing community with multi-family structures with more than 5 units filling a large portion of the housing demand (over 16.6%) in the city. Table 16 shows the housing tenure by occupation type. Table 17, shows units by structure. As noted, the single family homes constitute a relatively large portion of the occupied rental units with 1,191 units or 9% of the total housing units.

Table 16 - Tenure by Occupation

| Tenure | Total Units | Single Family | % | 2-4 Units | % | All Others | % |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|------|-----------|------|------------|------|
| Owner Occupied | 5218 | 4106 | 78.7 | 1054 | 16.2 | 58 | 1.1 |
| Renter Occupied | 6489 | 1191 | 18.4 | 3098 | 47.7 | 2200 | 33.9 |

Table 17 - Tenure by Units in Structure

| Housing type | Owner | Renter | Vacant | Total | % of Total |
|-----------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|------------|
| Single Family | 4106 | 1191 | 385 | 5682 | 42.8 |
| 2 to 4 Units | 1054 | 3098 | 731 | 4883 | 36.8 |
| 5 or More Units | 63 | 2184 | 438 | 2685 | 20.2 |
| Mobile Home | 0 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 0 |
| Total | 5223 | 6484 | 1554 | 13261 | 100 |

The census data indicates that 18% or 1191 units of all rental units in the city (6484) are single family homes. This number also represents 22.5% of the total single family units. Small multi-family rental units consisting of 2-4 unit structures (4152 out of 6747) account for more than 61% of the total rental units. Many of these smaller rental units are reported to be larger homes converted to rental units. This was a concern expressed during the community and stakeholders meetings.

The relatively high percentage of single family rental homes offer opportunity for homeownership. The large number of converted units also offers opportunities for preservation of the older and larger homes. The single family rental homes and the converted units represent a major housing issue as many of these homes are rental because of their conditions, obsolescence, or excessive cost of maintenance. The high vacancy rate in the city is also attributed to these older homes which many of them are not attractive even as rental units.

The housing decline appears to be throughout the City. A review of different census tracts shows that most tracts lost housing in the last decade. However, census tracts 303 and 310 lost the highest

number of housing units. The housing vacancy also increased during the last decade. The increase was both in the total number of vacant units as well as the vacancy rate. Increase in the number of vacant structures is a major concern. It appears that the vacant structures are the major contributing factor to the neighborhood image and deterioration.

Table 18 - Housing Units Changes

| CENSUS TRACT | 1990 | 2000 | Change | % Change |
|--------------|-------|-------|--------|----------|
| 301 | 514 | 506 | -8 | -1.6 |
| 302 | 668 | 629 | -39 | -5.8 |
| 303 | 1438 | 1364 | -74 | -5.1 |
| 304 | 1524 | 1563 | 39 | 2.6 |
| 305 | 1702 | 1654 | -48 | -2.8 |
| 306 | 2102 | 2059 | -43 | -2 |
| 307 | 1007 | 960 | -47 | -4.7 |
| 308 | 1,818 | 1,830 | 12 | 1 |
| 309 | 1690 | 1733 | 43 | 2.5 |
| 310 | 1021 | 963 | -58 | -5.9 |
| Total | 13484 | 13261 | -223 | -1.7 |

2.0 HOUSING SUPPLY

The total housing units in the city declined by more than 1.7 % during the last decade. The decline was most critical particularly for the homeowners. Availability of single family homes in the City of East Chicago continued to decline. The decline in the number of the housing units appears to be more driven by lack of market and obsolescence than any other issues. Information obtained from the Building Department indicates that more than 147 buildings have been demolished in the last four years. The majority of these structures are reported to be residential properties.

The high number of vacant structures among both homeowners and rental units indicates obsolescence, lack of market, and overall decline in neighborhoods. The high number of the single family rental units also is an indication that a large number of single family homes becoming rental units, as the “For Sale” market is not strong for available housing. It is estimated that 385 single family vacant units exist in the City that are for sale.

Availability of different housing types appear to be uniformly distributed throughout the city with the exception of four census tracts where a single type of housing predominates. These are Census Tracts 301 , 302 , 303, and 310. In these tracts, rental units constitute the overwhelming majority of all the units. The owner occupied units only have the majority in Census Tracts 309 and 307.

The median price of a home in the City of East Chicago increased from \$42,600 to \$ 69,900 during

the last decade, an increase of more than 64% . During the same decade the median cost of a house in Lake County increased from \$54,800 to \$112,333, a 105% rise. The lag in the rise of housing value with the County is an indication of a comparative weakness for the East Chicago market.

Table 19 - Housing Supply

| Census Tracts | Total Units | Occupied | | Unit Type | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------|-------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| | | Renter | Owner | S.F. Detached | S.F. Attached | Multifamily |
| 301 | 494 | 446 | 25 | 17 | 21 | 456 |
| 302 | 666 | 437 | 82 | 82 | 81 | 503 |
| 303 | 1339 | 796 | 201 | 403 | 111 | 827 |
| 304 | 1563 | 809 | 389 | 389 | 224 | 950 |
| 305 | 1654 | 762 | 596 | 697 | 60 | 897 |
| 306 | 2059 | 904 | 780 | 1,063 | 29 | 967 |
| 307 | 930 | 291 | 463 | 550 | 26 | 354 |
| 308 | 1860 | 812 | 679 | 839 | 63 | 958 |
| 309 | 1721 | 642 | 665 | 592 | 271 | 858 |
| 310 | 975 | 578 | 112 | 164 | 0 | 811 |
| East Chicago | 13261 | 6477 | 3992 | 4796 | 886 | 7579 |

The weakness of the housing market is also evident by the vacancy rates. The Census bureau reports the vacancy rate for owner-occupied homes as only 2.2%, while rental units have a modest vacancy rate of 8.8%. By itself this is relatively low for the market. But the number of houses for sale and the average days on the market indicate weakness of the market.

Information obtained from Greater Northwest Indiana Association of Realtors (GNIAR) indicates the sales volume for the City as being relatively low and soft. For the period between January 2000 and January 2004, there were only 260 homes sold in the city, an average of 87 units per year. Although the number of sales are low, and days being on the market are higher than the average, the difference between list and sale price tend to be relatively low. The median list price was \$ 70,217 and the median sale price was \$66,833. This is an indication of the stability of the prices in the market, albeit the prices are very much lower than the regional mean.

Table 20 - Housing Market

| YEAR | No. of Sales | Ave. Price | Median Price | No. of BR | No. Bathrooms |
|------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| 2001 | 87 | \$63,414 | \$64,000 | 3 | 1.5 |
| 2002 | 95 | \$62,188 | \$65,000 | 3 | 1.47 |
| 2003 | 78 | \$66,967 | \$71,500 | 3 | 1.58 |
| Average, 3 years | 86.7 | \$64,190 | \$66,833 | 3 | 1.5 |

The quality of rental housing stock was expressed as a concern during the community meetings. With the exception of a couple of newer developments in the city, most of the rental units are old or are converted single family homes. The single family rental homes frequently do not meet quality standards and are often owned by absentee owners. Many of the existing rental properties are small and do not address the needs of the larger households, especially growing families. The older rental homes or smaller multifamily structures often require substantial rehabilitation to make them habitable as single family home or rental units.

Construction activity

The residential construction activities in the city are very much limited to developments that are heavily assisted by the City. It appears very little development occurs by the private sector. The City’s Building Department reports that a total of 3 new housing construction permits were issued last year. During the same period more than 616 permits were issued for residential rehabilitation. According to this information, about 56 new house permits and 2,475 remodeling permits have been issued in the last four years covering approximately 19.1% of the total housing supply. The Department Redevelopment plays a significant role in rehabilitation activities in the City, as it provides rehabilitation loans and grants for a variety of activities. The Department on the average assists more than 30 families for rehabilitation.

Although the city maintains an aggressive effort to provide assistance for rehabilitation of existing housing, and the number of Building permits show healthy levels of rehabilitation. The obsolescence of housing stock is a major contributor to the neighborhood decline in the city. This contribution is clearly evident by the abundance of vacant structures as they are more and more expensive to maintain or rehabilitate.

Table 21 - Residential Building Permits

| Type | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| New residential | 16 | 18 | 19 | 3 |
| Remodeling | 681 | 613 | 535 | 605 |
| Additions/expansion | 11 | 17 | 2 | 11 |
| Total | 708 | 648 | 556 | 619 |

New construction in the City has occurred in several areas in the northern part of the City. A new subdivision, Geneva Glenn, is the latest development in the City. This project, consisting of 13 single family lots, is being developed on 145th Street. Another development consists of 86 infill housing spaces in the Carey/Drummond Street Redevelopment area . To date eight of this development have been constructed. The Washington Square development is in its final stages of development, where the majority of the 82 planned dwellings have been constructed. Both of the last two developments are actively developed by the City’s development partner Second Century Development. In addition, the City, in working with different neighborhood groups continues to build new homes in different parts of the City. In recent years, RONA has constructed one new house, in the New Addition neighborhood. The Faith Temple CDC plans to build a 32 unit rent to

own townhomes complex in the Harbor area.

3.0 HOUSING CONDITIONS

In 2000 the city of East Chicago had a total of 13,261 housing units. Of this total, 11,707 were occupied and the remaining 1,554 were vacant. Many of the vacant units are abandoned and dilapidated structures and only a fraction is available for occupancy. In the city of East Chicago, housing conditions vary significantly depending on the neighborhood and the character of the housing. For the purpose of this plan, the substandard conditions and the level of lead paint are two main determinant factors which affect the condition of the homes. The Census Bureau defines the housing conditions based on these four different factors. *Households with housing problems* is defined as those households that occupy units lacking a complete kitchen or bathroom, contain more than one person per room and have a cost burden greater than 30% of their income.

3.1 Age of Housing

The city's housing stock dates back to many decades as new construction or rehabilitation of the existing housing stock have been very limited. Of the total housing units, more than 36% were built prior to 1940, and close to 87% of the entire stock is older than thirty five years. The owner-occupied units constitute more than 2,181 units. 1,925 rental units or more than 30% of the rental stock was also built prior 1940.

Table 22 - Tenure by year of Structure

| Year Built | Owner Occupied | % | Renter Occupied | % | Total | % of Total |
|-------------|----------------|------|-----------------|------|-------|------------|
| 1990 - 2000 | 59 | 1.2 | 180 | 2.7 | 239 | 2.0 |
| 1980 | 51 | 1 | 209 | 3.2 | 260 | 2.2 |
| 1970 | 303 | 5.8 | 937 | 14.5 | 1240 | 10.6 |
| 1960 | 519 | 9.9 | 1132 | 17.5 | 1651 | 14.1 |
| 1950 | 1047 | 20 | 1090 | 16.8 | 2137 | 18.3 |
| 1940 | 1063 | 20.4 | 1011 | 15.6 | 2074 | 17.7 |
| 1930 | 2181 | 41.8 | 1925 | 29.7 | 4106 | 35.1 |

The owner-occupied units built between 1940 and 1950 represent more than 20.4% of the housing stock. The largest group of owner-occupied units (2,110) was built between 1940 and 1960. This group represents more than 16% of the housing stock. The renter occupied units built between 1940 and 1950 represent 16% of the rental stock while similar to owner-occupied units, the largest number of rental units (1,090) was built during 1950's. Single family detached homes are the largest group of vacant structures. There are about 700 vacant single family homes in the city. This represents 45% of all vacant structures. The median age of the owner-occupied homes is 51 years old. The median age for rental occupied homes is 60 years old.

3.2 Housing Vacancy

The overall housing vacancy rate in 2000 was 11.7%. The vacancy rate among homeowner units was 2.2% or 292 units were vacant. Of this total, 116 units were reported to be “For Sale” units. The vacancy rate for the rental units was 8.8% or 1,167 units. The vacancy rate is typically within the range of the region and typically should be an indication of the strength of the housing market. But in the case of East Chicago, this is more of an indication of the softness of the market, as many homes remain vacant for a long time and “For Sale” homes stay on the market for a long time.

Table 23 - Number of Vacant Housing Units

| CENSUS TRACTS | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | % Change |
|---------------|------|------|------|----------|
| 301 | 28 | 17 | 24 | 41.2 |
| 302 | 142 | 117 | 107 | -8.5 |
| 303 | 174 | 211 | 192 | -9 |
| 304 | 172 | 155 | 255 | 64.5 |
| 305 | 130 | 116 | 152 | 31 |
| 306 | 128 | 160 | 201 | 25.6 |
| 307 | 74 | 108 | 114 | 5.5 |
| 308 | 116 | 136 | 151 | 11 |
| 309 | 148 | 158 | 177 | 12 |
| 310 | 126 | 184 | 181 | -1.6 |
| TOTAL | 1238 | 1362 | 1554 | 14.1 |

It is estimated that 50% of the substandard rental units are suitable for rehabilitation and 60% of the substandard owners’ units are suitable for rehabilitation. Therefore it is estimated that 786 owner-occupied units need to be rehabilitated. Similarly the needs for rehabilitating rental units exceed 1,340 units. The City is also estimating that at least 50% of the vacant structures need to be demolished (777 units).

Table 24 - Vacant Housing Units

| Year | Total Units | Vacant Units | % Vacancy |
|------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1980 | 14916 | 1238 | 8.3 |
| 1990 | 13484 | 1362 | 10.1 |
| 2000 | 13261 | 1554 | 11.7 |

The Census Bureau reports a fairly large number of structures as being vacant. The abandonment

rate or vacancy jumped during 1990-2000 at an alarming rate to more than 11% of total housing stock or 1,554 units. The vacant homes are distributed throughout the City in different tracts. This downturn in housing conditions and neighborhood deterioration causes much concern. Many of these homes become dilapidated structures in the City and create eyesores in the community. The high vacancy rate also is contributing to the decline of several neighborhoods. The abandoned homes change the image of the neighborhoods, while single family rental homes have become a major issue for stability of several neighborhoods. Among different neighborhoods, Census tracts 304 and 306 had the highest number of vacant units. Similarly tracts 304 and 306 showed the highest increase in the vacancy rate during the last decade.

3.3 Housing Conditions

In 2000, of all owner-occupied units, 23.8% or 1,241 units had one condition, while 63 units had two selected conditions. For the renter occupied units, much more households indicated housing problems.

Table 25 - Housing Conditions

| Condition | Occupied Housing | % of Units |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Total Occupied Units | 11707 | 88.3 |
| Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities | 132 | 1 |
| Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities | 130 | 1 |
| No Telephone Service | 938 | 7.1 |

Table 26 - Tenure by Selected Conditions

| Census Tract | Owner | | | Renter | | |
|--------------|-------|--------------------|---------------------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | Total | With one Condition | With two Conditions | Total | With one Condition | With two Conditions |
| 301 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 455 | 117 | 15 |
| 302 | 140 | 29 | 0 | 382 | 183 | 33 |
| 303 | 332 | 109 | 0 | 840 | 353 | 28 |
| 304 | 500 | 104 | 17 | 808 | 273 | 40 |
| 305 | 739 | 195 | 17 | 763 | 281 | 40 |
| 306 | 939 | 183 | 6 | 919 | 363 | 22 |
| 307 | 565 | 128 | 0 | 281 | 119 | 8 |
| 308 | 860 | 227 | 8 | 819 | 290 | 34 |
| 309 | 923 | 193 | 15 | 628 | 199 | 22 |
| 310 | 188 | 73 | 0 | 594 | 222 | 17 |
| East Chicago | 5218 | 1241 | 63 | 6489 | 2400 | 259 |

Of all households, 2,400 or 37% had at least one housing condition. 259 units reported having two conditions and 33 renter units reported having had three conditions. Among the owner-occupied units, 6 households reported as lacking complete plumbing facilities, while 18 households reported lacking kitchen facilities. In the same year, the renter occupied households reported 126 units as lacking plumbing facilities and 112 units lacking kitchen facilities.

4.0 FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO ASSIST SPECIAL NEEDS

There are many services and facilities available throughout the City and the surrounding communities to assist the homeless and the various homeless Subpopulation (families with children, victims of family violence, runaway youths, persons with HIV/AIDS, mentally ill persons, etc.).

4.1 Housing Available to Persons with Disabilities

The Census 2000 reports estimates the number of persons with a disability at more than 7,509 people in the city of East Chicago. Although not all of these people have special needs, many do require assistance. There are more than 2,103 elderly residents that have a disability. Of this total, 563 have mental disability and 1,468 have physical disabilities. The Census report also indicates that close to half of all persons with a disability do go outside the home and presumably are able to hold a job, and do not have intensive needs.

Table 27 - Population with Disability

| Age | Total | With a Disability | Percent |
|-------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 5 and over | 29,385 | 7,509 | 25.6% |
| 5 To 15 | 5,908 | 421 | 7.1% |
| 16 To 64 | 19,079 | 4,985 | 26.1% |
| 65 and over | 4,398 | 2,103 | 47.8% |

Outside of the units provided by Tri-city Mental Health, there are no other facility in the city for people for disability. Developmentally disabled and mentally ill residents and those requiring transitional housing also add to the demand for affordable housing in the city. Most of these individuals are on public assistance which entitles them to monthly income of less than \$600. This group is reported to be frequently victimized by unscrupulous landlords. They are often forced to live in substandard conditions. Thus, there are many groups dependent on an increased affordable housing supply, creating a demand that the current supply cannot meet.

Table 28 - Disabled Going Outside the Home

| Age | Number of persons | Percent of the total disabled |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16 To 64 | 2,288 | 45.9% |

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| 65 and over | 1,034 | 49.2% |
|-------------|-------|-------|

Data on the housing needs of the special needs populations is not readily available. Nevertheless, after consulting a number of different sources, it is possible to make some estimates regarding the housing needs of these groups. There is no readily available information which indicates the number of available housing units suitable for use for individuals with disabilities.

The Housing Authority reports that there are 5 units within the public housing stock that have been redesigned as accessible units. All units (318) in the two senior buildings, Nicosia and Hunter, are, however, accessible units. And typically most units in East Chicago Public housing stock are adaptable. The Authority, as a matter of practice, makes the unit suitable for the needs of disabled on an as need basis. The City also has a ramp program. This program provides funds for construction of ramp for disabled. The Department of Redevelopment further provides ramp assistance to homeowners in dire need of assistance.

For persons with mental health disabilities, Tri-city Mental Health Center is the only agency which offers an array of services to assist chronically mentally ill persons, many of which have substance abuse problems. The agency services all five communities within North Township. Tri-city Mental Health has facilities in East Chicago, Hammond, Highland, and Munster. It operates three adult residential facilities in Hammond and Munster. Tri-city Mental Health Center provides a daytime drop-in Center in Hammond, two group homes for adults, and several scattered sites. It also has a counseling center, a day treatment program, social detox/rehab program, outpatient counseling, in-patient psychiatric services at St. Catharine's Hospital, and twenty four -hour emergency services with a psychiatrist on-call.

The latest information available from this agency indicates that the agency treats approximately about 750 individuals on an annual basis from East Chicago. Most of the clients are ages 24-40 years old. Many of its clients are also homeless or at great risk of becoming homeless. It also has a Day Treatment facility for children. Tri-city mental has a six unit adult facility in East Chicago which provides supportive housing services to up to 12 individuals. In addition, the agency is proposing to develop another 5-6 unit structure to accommodate the needs of mentally ill individuals. The agency reports that there is substantial need for units suitable for female clients. The agency also plans to build a supportive housing facility, if it can find a suitable site for its development.

4.2 Housing Available to Persons with HIV/AIDS

Detailed and confirmable information about the persons with HIV/AIDS is generally not available in the City. Indiana Department of Health reports the number of diagnosed cases in East Chicago since 1985 as being 87. But the total number of cases as of December 2003 is reported to be 96. About two thirds of all cases are male and one third are female. The report identifies 6 children infected with HIV/AIDS. The racial breakdown of the data indicates that Blacks occupy the largest number of patients with HIV/AIDS.

Information obtained from Northwest Indiana Aliveness Project, indicates that there are 31 active

HIV/AIDS cases where they have sought assistance at the present time in the City of East Chicago. Most of these individuals are assumed to be in need of assistance including housing assistance.

Table 29 - Persons with HIV/AIDS

| Age | Sex | | Total |
|-------|------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | |
| 0-12 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| 20-29 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 30-39 | 18 | 11 | 29 |
| 40-49 | 23 | 10 | 33 |
| 50-59 | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| 60+ | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 62 | 34 | 96 |

Table 30 - HIV/AIDS Race & Ethnicity

| Race | Sex | | Total |
|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | |
| Hispanic | 18 | 10 | 28 |
| Black | 35 | 14 | 49 |
| White | 9 | 10 | 19 |
| Total | 62 | 34 | 96 |

Table 31 - Living with AIDS/HIV Insurance Coverage

| Coverage | Number |
|------------------------|--------|
| Insurance not Reported | 26 |
| Medicaid | 21 |
| Private | 13 |
| No Coverage | 8 |
| Other Public Funding | 9 |
| Government Program | 3 |
| Unknown | 16 |
| Total | 96 |

Currently, there are no supportive housing facilities in the City for persons with AIDS. Northwest

Indiana Aliveness Project is the recipient of a HOPWA Grant from HUD. Most of this grant is distributed for housing assistance to persons with AIDS. Greater Hammond Community Service administers this program for the three county area. According to Greater Hammond Community Services, 22 individuals receive housing assistance in East Chicago. Information obtained from the Indiana Department of Health also indicates that the overwhelming majority of the individuals living with HIV/AIDS are too poor to have private insurance (83) and are either on public support or are not covered at all.

4.3 Elderly Housing

There are no assisted housing facility in the city of East Chicago. The Housing Authority operates two of its developments as senior facilities. These facilities combined provide 316 elderly housing units to residents. The Nicosia Building has 207 units. All units are one bedroom units, except one which is a two bedroom unit. The James Hunter Building has 109 units in which 108 are one bedroom units. Both of these developments are full and the Authority maintains a waiting list. The Authority, however, is planning to convert up to 100 units in the Nicosia Building to assisted living to address some of the needs. This work is expected to be completed in the next two years. There are no other designated senior facility in the city. There are however many smaller apartment buildings that accommodate seniors.

Table 32 - Elderly Housing

| Development | Number of Units | Handicapped Units | Availability |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| James Hunter | 209 | 209 | Low income Seniors |
| John Nicosia | 107 | 107 | Low income Seniors |
| Total | 316 | 316 | |

The elderly population of the city (65 years and up) exceeds 4,315 or 13.3% of the total population. As a group, the elderly have a substantially higher percentage of homeownership than the rest of the community as they own more than 22.5% of the housing stock while they are only 13.3% of the total population. Census reports indicate that approximately 23% of the elderly who own their homes live below poverty. Similarly, more than 47.8% of the elderly population suffer from some sort of disability. Others indicated a desire to move to smaller units where they would not be forced to maintain their homes while they can still have a sense of security and ownership. There are two elderly development facilities in the city of East Chicago. These facilities collectively provide 316 units for the elderly and families. All of them are primarily occupied by low income and disabled elderly.

5.0 FACILITIES THAT SERVE HOMELESS AND SPECIAL NEEDS

As a matter of philosophy and practice, the City of East Chicago has always chosen to direct the majority of its resources towards longer-term, more comprehensive solutions to homelessness. The

city has attempted to reduce the need and remove the causes of homelessness in the City rather than provide facilities. The City’s efforts in this area are concentrated on preventions rather than provision of support services. Although the City has attempted to secure funding for a range of supportive and transitional housing, these efforts have not been successful.

There are no facilities in the City of East Chicago for the homeless. The City relies and has cooperated with other agencies to provide services to East Chicago residents. The needed services by the homeless and special needs are difficult to determine under the best circumstances. This task becomes even more difficult as there are no homeless facilities in the City of East Chicago to gauge the demand and the City does not have a current Continuum of Care plan. Nonetheless, there are many facilities and services available locally and regionally to assist the homeless and the various homeless sub-populations from East Chicago. The City has a continuing contract with the Haven House to provide shelter for women and children who are victims of family violence for East Chicago residents.

The Greater Hammond Community Services provides assistance to North Township residents ranging from housing counseling to utility assistance. The agency also serves as the Food Bank for the Township. The North Township Trustee further assists families in dire need. This assistance is limited to emergency assistance, food, and limited housing assistance. The Salvation Army provides comprehensive emergency assistance to the needy families which includes social services and food assistance. The Catholic Charities similarly provides temporary assistance to families and individuals in needs in the City. There are also several soup kitchens in the area churches where they offer warm meals on a regular basis. These services however are very sporadic. Haven House is a family violence shelter which provides assistance to women and children of family violence. The shelter has a capacity to accommodate up to 16 families.

Table 33 - Homeless Shelters

| Agency | Primary Service | Target Population | Level of Service |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Capes House | Emergency shelter, referrals | Homeless families, individuals | 9 families |
| Disabled American | Emergency shelter, food | Veterans | 25 |
| Hammond Rescue Mission | Emergency shelter, food | Single Men | 35 |
| Haven House | Emergency shelter, food | Battered Women, Children | 16 beds |
| State St. Warming Shelter | Emergency shelter, food | Homeless | 88 beds |
| Claude Street Shelter | Emergency Shelter | Homeless Families | 4 families |
| The Rainbow | Emergency Shelter | Battered Women, Children | 6 beds |
| Brother’s Keeper | Emergency Shelter | Homeless Men | 36 beds |
| Crisis Center/Alternative House | Emergency and long term shelter | Runaway Teens | 52 beds |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Serenity House | Emergency and long term Shelter | Adult substance abuser | 9 beds |
| Aliveness Project | Assistance for housing | AIDS/HIV Victims | 96 |
| The Ark | Transitional Shelter | Homeless Women, Children | 14 families |
| Bridges | Emergency | Services to mentally disabled | 32 group homes |

In addition to above shelters, there are several organizations that provided temporary assistance to needy families, children and individuals. Although most of these organizations provide services at the regional level, several of them are easily accessible by East Chicago residents. In a telephone conversation with the Brother's Keepers, it was reported that approximately 5% of the individuals using the shelter come from East Chicago. The following Table 34 lists these organizations and their level of service.

The Tri-city Mental Health Center provides a variety of services aimed to assist chronically mentally ill persons who may or may not also have substance abuse problems. Many of the persons assisted by the agency are also homeless or at great risk for becoming homeless. In our discussion with the Center, a concern was raised that many of patients are defrauded by landlords and cannot find quality housing.

Table 34 - Emergency Relief Organizations

| Agency | Primary Service | Target Population | Level of Service |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|
| Red Cross | Disaster relief | Victims of tragedies | No Beds |
| Greater Hammond Community Services | Food, Counseling, Referrals | Homeless, needy families | No Beds |
| Tri-city Community Mental Health Services | Mental and social services, inpatient detox | Adults, children | 52 beds, 12 for detox unit |
| LCEOC | Emergency assistance, utility assistance | Families, homeowners | No bed |
| Catholic Family Services | Emergency Assistance, food | Families, adults, children | No bed |
| Twin Cities Community Services | Emergency Food Only | Individuals and Families | open to the general public |
| New Day Detox Center | Substance Abuse Facility | Single Men | 15 individuals |
| Salvation Army (East Chicago) | Feeding Program 5 days a week, Help with rent and utilities, shelter | Families and Victims | generally feed 100 people a day |
| Serenity House (Gary) | Emergency and long term shelter, extensive help in job hunting | Adult substance abusers | 9 beds and 110 daily clients, 400 monthly |

The need for emergency and transitional shelters is perhaps the most critical gap in housing in the city of East Chicago. Recent interviews with social service agencies and the Community Survey indicate a dire need for a temporary shelter and transitional housing.

6.0 COMMUNITY-BASED HOUSING PROGRAMS

Community-based housing programs assist families in getting and maintaining stable housing. These housing programs supplement the new construction affordable housing strategies often funded by the city's CDBG and HOME allocations.

6.1 Housing Counseling & Placement

Given the lack of high paying employment opportunities for persons living in poverty in the City, many low-income households will not be able to maintain stable housing without some type of long-term assistance. Several organizations provide housing counseling that may assist households in the identification of sound housing choices. The Community Reinvestment Project (CRP) provides home buyer counseling, landlord-tenant counseling, and eviction and foreclosure counseling. Faith Temple CDC also provides counseling for new homebuyers. RONA, a CHDO, provides assistance in housing placement and first time homebuyers.

6.2 First-time Homebuyers Assistance

For families who might be more suitable for homeownership than paying excessive rents, one CDC in the city provide financial assistance and housing counseling for first-time homebuyers. This assistance can be used towards downpayment or closing costs, and does not have to be repaid until the resale of the home. Several other organization also provide assistance to first time homebuyers.

7.0 LEAD-BASED PAINT HAZARDS

Childhood lead poisoning is the number one environmental health hazard facing American children. There are several factors that contribute to lead-based paint hazards in the housing stock. Although lead was banned from residential paint in 1978, units built prior to this date may contain lead hazards; flaking or peeling lead-based paint or excessive levels of tiny lead particles in household dust. Another factor in the risk of lead poisoning is the number of families with young children. The Census 2000 reports that there are 1,940 families, 24.4% of all families, with children under the age five. As a whole, there are 2,944 children below the age of five who live in the city of East Chicago.

The age of housing and the ability to maintain it also is a contributing factor to the environmental quality of a home. Following Table 36 using a HUD formula provides an estimate of presence of lead in homes. According to this Table, there are an estimated 9,315 housing units, or more than 70% of all units are at high risk for lead-based paint hazards. This high level of hazard has been a major concern of the City and State Department of Health. The State has issued established a goal to remove all lead hazards in the State by 2010. The City will anticipate to participate in the State's plan to eliminate the lead poisoning.

Table 35 - Estimated Housing Units with Lead-based Paint Present

| Housing | Owner Occupied | Renter Occupied | Total Units |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
|---------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Total Housing Units | 5,218 | 6,489 | 13,261 |
| Units with Lead Presence | 4,285 | 5,030 | 9,315 |
| % with Lead Presence | 82% | 77.6% | 70.2% |

It is also estimated that 5,030 rental households, or 77.6% of all units have maintenance problems including peeling, chipping and flaking paint. Among owner occupied units, 4,285 units or 82% of the total units are estimated to have presence of lead in their homes.

7.1 Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction

Currently, the Lake County Health Department is responsible for responding to the hazardous conditions in the City. The East Chicago Department of Health also carries out lead screening among school children on a regular basis. The Department test K to 6 grade students for elevated levels of lead. The Department also tests all kindergarten students at the school. Any child found with high levels of lead is referred to a physician. The Department has a licensed Risk Assessor on staff. The Risk Assessor typically follows up with visits to the home of children diagnosed with high levels of lead and provides the family with information and advice on how to eliminate the hazards of lead in their home. In 2003, the Department tested more than 554 young children for high levels fo lead. Of this total, 32 were identified as having had exposure to lead. These individuals were referred to their physician for further observation. 20 of the cases were later followed by the Department staff for further consultation. These families were provided with additional information about the lead hazards.

The Department of Redevelopment has adopted policies which requires all houses assisted by Federal dollars to be assessed for lead. The Department has on going contractual services to a private firm which evaluates the homes by obtaining dust, water and soil samples and analyze on-site for contamination. The contracted firm carries on a regular basis lead testing in homes that are being rehabilitated and if required these homes will be abated.

The Housing Authority has also established policies which require property owners who participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program to reduce or eliminate lead dangers in their properties. The city will continue these policies in the near future. The city will also, work with other agencies to educate citizens of the dangers of lead and enforce existing regulations and laws to the greatest extent possible.

8.0 PUBLIC AND ASSISTED HOUSING

The East Chicago Housing Authority (ECHA) operates public and assisted housing within the city of East Chicago. The Housing Authority, as of April 2004, had 808 units in its inventory. The Authority's mission is to provide safe and sanitary housing to extremely low income families, disabled persons, elderly citizens and special needs persons who are financially unable to afford safe and decent housing on the private market. This year, the Authority applied for the HOPE VI grant from HUD to revitalize 234 units of single family homes and replacement rental housing in the Harbor area. If the Authority is successful in obtaining this grant, the Authority will revitalize the area. The plans calls for construction of 61 units of Tax Credit units and 173 new mixed income

community.

The Authority has continuously improved its housing stock in recent years. All of the housing units have been abated and improved on a regular basis. The Housing Authority maintains all of its inventory on a continual basis. At the present time, almost all of the units are habitable. In fact almost all of the public housing units meet Housing Quality Standards (HQS). This high level of HQS compliance is maintained by rapid responses to resident maintenance requests, on going preventive maintenance programs and a comprehensive capital improvement strategy. As a result of these efforts the Authority has always enjoyed a high rating for its modernization efforts. The Authority also enjoys a very good PHAS Score of 92 with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Table 36 - Public Housing Developments

| Development | Total Units | Elderly Units | Family Units | 0-1 Br | 2 Br | 3 Br | 4-5 Br | Handicap Unit | Minority Households | Vacant |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| West Calumet | 346 | 0 | 346 | 36 | 73 | 124 | 96 | 2 | 258 | 17 |
| James Hunter | 109 | 109 | 0 | 108 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 109* | 69 | 37 |
| John Nicosia | 207 | 207 | 0 | 206 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 207* | 154 | 31 |
| Columbus Drive | 17 | 0 | 13 | 3 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 1 |
| Scattered Sites (I) | 104 | 6 | 87 | 16 | 28 | 36 | 24 | 2 | 93 | 11 |
| Scattered Sites (II) | 25 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 25 | 0 |
| Total | 808 | 316 | 492 | 369 | 142 | 160 | 120 | 5 | 614 | 97 |

* All units are handicap accessible, but they are designated as handicap units.

The Authority provides rental assistance by providing Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and certificates to 570 families at the present time. The Authority has an allocation of 636 vouchers but several are open at the present time. The rental assistance allows lower income families and individuals to seek housing from private housing providers in the City. The rent that is paid to the landlord by the tenant is then subsidized by HUD. Landlords receiving rental subsidies through the Housing Choice Voucher program are required by Federal law to maintain their properties to the designated HUD Quality Standards in order for their properties to qualify as eligible housing unit. This ensures that the recipient of the Housing Choice Vouchers are afforded appropriate housing conditions. The number of assisted rental units in any given area varies with the renewal of each certificate. The following Table 37 provides information about the current holders of the Housing Choice Vouchers in the City of East Chicago.

Table 37 - Rental Assistance

| Voucher/Certificate | 0 B.R. | 1 B.R. | 2 B.R. | 3 B.R. | 4 B.R. | Total |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 0 | 149 | 224 | 167 | 28 | 570 |

The Authority's Section 504 Needs Assessment is old and needs updating. The Authority is in the process of completing a new Section 504 Assessment. This assessment is expected to be complete by June of 2004 and will be filed with HUD once complete. As of April 2004, there are five units that are handicapped accessible, although many units are adaptable and if the need arises they can be modified to accommodate the needs. All non-dwelling structures within the Authority are all accessible. The need for mobility and sensory accessible units cannot be identified from available demand. The Housing Authority's waiting list does not have anybody with mobility disability. The Authority, however, has about 70 individuals with other disabilities. Although this represents a large number to accommodate, the Authority has continually been updating its units and has tried to convert more units to accommodate handicapped and disabled needs.

9.0 OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS

The preceding sections discuss in detail the obstacles to meeting the needs which are identified in this document. The major obstacle is lack of sufficient funding in all areas to address the physical, environmental, social, and housing needs. Some specific examples that are particularly serious include: insufficient funds for housing subsidies under the Section 8, and other programs which assist families, particularly those with large families, inadequate resources for employment training (particularly for difficult to serve populations such as ex-offenders), and generally inadequate levels of funding for social and health services. Obstacles with regard to the development of housing include the high cost of housing in East Chicago and the various barriers discussed in the housing section, including especially deterioration of neighborhoods and code enforcement.