

Prioritizing Greatest Need Activities, 11/11/20

James Höemann: Next slide, please. Good morning to grantees further west, and good afternoon grantees closer to the East Coast. I'm James Höemann, the director of the Entitlement Communities Division. I thank you for joining us for the CDBG webinar series on CDBG best practices.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the panelists today who agreed to share their creative strategies of how to best prioritize their jurisdiction's greatest needs. The goal of this series is to provide a platform for our grantees to learn from each other and share useful program models that can be adapted to fit different grantee needs.

We hope that this series and accompanying CDBG best practices report will assist CDBG grantees in identifying and replicating successful CDBG strategies. As part of a Senate Appropriations Committee request, the Office of Block Grant Assistance at HUD headquarters was asked to put this series together with a focus on four specific areas – prioritizing greatest need activities and projects, grant oversight strategies, reducing CDBG administrative costs, and leveraging CDBG funds.

In an effort to encourage peer-to-peer learning among CDBG grantees, HUD will have these webinars posted on the HUD Exchange so that they can be viewed and shared widely. In addition, the CDBG best practices report HUD is preparing for Congress will also be posted so that it can be shared with grantees and their staff. Thank you.

Kelly Price: Thank you, James. My name is Kelly Price. I'm the vice president of ICF. I've been working there about 25 years providing grant-funded technical assistance and training. And we're more than happy to sponsor and carry out this series on behalf of HUD. We have a great agenda for you today. As James said, we'll be focusing today on identifying greatest need activities and projects in your communities and geographic areas that you serve. We have four speakers today, four best practices that we'll be introducing to you.

And we hope in doing that that you'll be able to see those practices out in the field and how they came up with those ideas and carried them out in their communities; how they were able to take the information and data and public meetings that you'll hear about and prioritize their activities in their consolidated plans, action plans, CAPER report, and in other local strategies that they're implementing to carry out affordable housing and community development activity.

So we will first give you an idea of who the four folks are that'll be presenting today. They'll each run through a quick presentation about their best practice that was identified. And we'll have an opportunity for folks to ask questions. You'll want to put those into the Q&A box on the bottom right side of your screen. We'll be watching that box as the questions roll in, and also facilitating some conversation with each of the speakers to provide some additional context and information for you as we go through the slides.

Our four gracious volunteers who present today on their best practices include Marilyn Harris of the Louisville-Jefferson County Kentucky Metro Government; Kate Bartholomew of

Bellingham, Washington; Brooklyn Holton of Wenatchee, Washington. I was making sure I got that name right and I still fumbled it somehow. I apologize for that. And Caroline Gregerson from La Crosse, Wisconsin. The speakers will be speaking in that order. And we'll take a little break in between to also get a little bit more information from you, the attendees, about your program and facilitate those questions and answers as we speak about their program.

Jon, do you want to do the poll question? Great. So our first question for you guys in the audience – and hopefully you can see the polling information on the right. It should be sort of towards the middle of your screen. We're curious to know – we have a large number of attendees today, and we're curious to know the size of your grant and the order to have a better understanding for whether or not you're more of a rural smaller community or larger.

So if you will, over on the right, you can click on the radio dial button whether or not your grant allocation most recently was less than \$300,000; or B, less than \$600,000; C, less than \$999,000 essentially; or D, greater than \$1,000,000 – so a larger grantee. I'll give you a few seconds to complete that poll really quickly. I should have the results here in just a second. Great. It looks like the largest number of folks on our call today, there's almost a tie somewhere between \$600- and \$999,000 grant – a tie between over \$1,000,000 and no answer.

We do have larger grantees in the pool with those folks that did answer the question, and then the smallest group being our smaller grantee. So a real range here, but it looks like of those that answered, we have many of our larger grantees \$1,000,000 or more answering today. All right. Our first presenter today is Marilyn Harris. Marilyn is the director of the Office of Housing for the Louisville Metro Government. Louisville-Jefferson County is a city-county consolidated government located in the state of Kentucky. And with that, Marilyn, we'll turn it to you. Let me get you down here to be the speaker. Marilyn, it's all yours.

Marilyn Harris: Good afternoon. Thank you, Kelly. First of all, welcome, everyone. It's afternoon here in Kentucky. But I suppose if you're on the West Coast, then it's still morning. So good morning to those of you that are on the West Coast. And I think all my panelists are over in Washington. So you guys are over on the West Coast. It's a beautiful day here and I am happy to be here. And I am the director of the Office of Housing. I've been with Louisville Metro Government just for a couple years. And prior to that, I worked for the State Housing Finance Agency as the director of homeownership development. Next slide.

When I came to metro government a couple years ago, there was a lot of conversation about – and unfortunately, negative conversation about, we don't need that kind of housing in our community, right? We're all fighting "NIMBYism" in some way, shape, or form. And in Louisville, unfortunately we heard a lot of, we-have-already-too-much-affordable-housing-in-our-community. We don't have any; we don't need any; we don't want any. And a lot of it was a lot of myth and lore. And there was no real, good, hard statistical data on how much housing we absolutely had in each one of our segments of Louisville.

In 2016, we had a very detailed report done for a different department in Louisville through economic development. And it broke up our Louisville-Jefferson County merge government to 21 market areas. And those market areas are defined as where the majority of people get all of

their goods and services. So if you're in the far Floyds Fork area, which is down in this area, then you go to church there. Your kids go to school there. All of your services are provided there. So the community is really divided up into these 21 market areas.

We did in 2008 a really deep comprehensive analysis of our housing for the entire community. But we also specifically broke it up into these 21 market areas. And we used the results of that housing needs assessment to identify strategies and policies for Louisville Metro Government moving forward. So one other thing that I do want to mention is that when we did the housing needs assessment, we did not focus only on affordable housing. We assessed the housing opportunities across the spectrum. So whether you are at 0-30 or whether you are 200 percent of area median income, your housing need is addressed in the housing needs assessment.

So as we started to undertake this initiative, we went and got a lot of community input. So we had a series of stakeholder meetings. And by a series, I mean 10-12 stakeholder meetings. And we invited everyone that had a stake in some way, shape, or form to these meetings to discuss what they thought the need was in the community for affordable housing. So that was from our for-profit builders and developers to our nonprofit partners. But we also went out to – we have a group in Louisville called – it used to be the home builders association. And now it's the Building Industry Alliance. So BIA, we involved them.

We involved our Realtors, but also advocacy groups and grass root organizations. So we have the Metropolitan Housing Coalition. They were invited and they participated. The Urban League participated. So we had just a very broad spectrum of community input. And we had over 100 groups participate in these stakeholder meetings. And we broke them down into groups of like 8 or so. I should back up and tell you we hired a consultant. We didn't do this on our own. We did hire a consultant to come in and help us. And they were absolutely fantastic. They were out of Pittsburg.

They were really instrumental in the final product in that they really allowed us to tell them what we wanted to see. And they made our vision come to life. These stakeholder meetings were absolutely phenomenal. We actually got new partners out of these stakeholder meetings once we started inviting people in and they started telling us what they want. And we were able to interact with them and tell them what we already offered. We did get new partners out of these stakeholder meetings. Over the course of a year, they did this analysis. And they broke it down into three very specific spheres.

And they used those spheres to make the final assessment. So they looked at the health of the community. And by health, I mean things like financial stability, the housing stock, the pace and the type of the development in the housing market, and what our eviction and foreclosure rates were across the spectrum. They looked at that as negative or positive. And then the diversity, the types of housing, what types we had – were they single-family? Were they multifamily? Were these duplexes, triplexes? We really focused a lot on that we have a void in what is commonly referred as the "missing middle."

So we have very few duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes here in Louisville. And that was pointed out through our assessment. And then the location preferences that meet the needs of the

residents that we have in the community. So they looked at it from the spectrum of are we completely homogeneous? Or do we have a good variation? And then equity and whether or not certain areas had opportunity for economic mobility and growth and wealth-building. And did we have concentrated opportunity or distributed opportunity?

So looking at these three spheres, they were able to take that information and give us 22 profiles. And this is really small on your screen and I apologize. But I want you to have the view and consider this a folded 8.5x11; but when it's not, it's a huge 11x17, I think is the final dimension. And it's two-sided. And it folds up very nicely. You'll see the fold mark down the middle. But it really is awesome because we can give that to our council people for their specific areas. And we can say, this is very specific to your area, to your community, to your district.

So we have 21 of these for each one of our market areas. But then we have one that is overall that encompasses the entire Jefferson County area. And it's got some really great data. But this is really the coup de grace of the entire report, because these documents really give the narrative. It's about 185 or 200 pages long. But this document in the 21 – one for each market area and the combined one – really summarizes everything that they have done, and tells us where we are and where we need to go.

This is the outside cover – the back and the front. But then this is the information that is in the middle. So it tells us what the local solutions are for the problems that they identified. It tells us what areas are vulnerable to displacement. So it tells us where the greatest opportunity is. And I did bring these two out specifically because I want you to recognize that the areas that are vulnerable to displacement are also very much the areas where there's limited opportunity. And we as a community need to recognize that.

So we have taken that and recognize that. And we have started to really focus on that. It breaks down all of our problems into – what they identified as our problems into solutions that we as the community local solutions that we can address through funding. And those are things such as a dedicated funding source for housing initiatives. We have a housing trust fund in the City of Louisville. Unfortunately, we don't have a dedicated funding source to it. So that poses a problem because we don't have enough money going into that to really build the amount of housing that we need to address the issues identified.

One of the things was the creation of a community land trust. And we have just launched that this year in response specifically to our needs assessment, and then preserving unsubsidized, naturally-occurring, affordable housing units. And these are not the only solutions. I'm just pointing out there. There were several funding solutions that we can undertake. We also identified policy changes – so things like inclusionary zoning in our land development code, maybe extending our affordability periods, and some anti-displacement strategy.

And then it broke it out into, what do we really need to do and change at the state level that might have an impact on what we're trying to do in Louisville locally? So by breaking those out, it really gave us an overview of how if we take these initiatives and our existing strategies, and if we apply them across the board where our greatest areas for investment are, do we need to invest

in the core – which is the dark blue that you see on your screen – or is that our greatest need for investment? And it is.

That's what we determined is that that is the greatest need for investment, so that we can get everybody with diverse housing, with healthy housing, and equitable housing. That really was the crux of what we were looking for – where we need to develop and what we need to develop. I will tell you the thing that our housing needs assessment told us was that we are short 31,412 units for households at or below 30 percent of area median income in our community; 31,000 is a lot of units. We have a big job ahead of us to create those units.

We use the housing needs assessment to kind of be the foundation of our consolidated plan. So we followed the housing needs assessment when we started working on our consolidated plan. We used the same type of stakeholder meetings but then we also did neighborhood meetings. We have lots of small neighborhoods in Louisville. And many of them have neighborhood councils. And we went to many of those neighborhood meetings. Our council people in Louisville also hold town halls very much like what you see on TV.

And we attended those town halls. And we talked to people across all parts of Louisville to find out what they thought was the most important thing that we do with our federal dollars as we started to develop our next five-year consolidated plan. And of course, our plan was due in June this year – actually the end of May. And that was, of course, right when Covid hit. So one of the things that we ended up doing was holding many of our public meetings via WebEx or Zoom. And it turned out to be absolutely one of the best things we did.

Even when Covid is done, we will probably continue to hold public meetings via WebEx only because the turnout was so sensational. I sometimes train. And in my classes, I always say to people, how many of you have been to a con plan meeting? How many of you have been to a con plan hearing or an action plan hearing? And I'm quite amazed at the number of people that don't go to those. So we had this WebEx, and we had over 380 participants between our two public hearings and our community outreach, which was absolutely phenomenal.

I've been to public meetings where there's three people, and those are the three people that are presenting the plan. So really we had some absolutely fantastic participants in our action. And we got some really great feedback. We also specifically ask everyone at the community meetings, the public hearings some very pointed questions. What do you think we need to do with this money? What do you see as the greatest need in your community? You have \$2 million to spend – what are you going to spend it on?

And we got some really great information back. And the overwhelming responses were, we needed affordable housing. That was the number one response from everyone who participated. But we also have these other needs, which are nonhousing community development, homeless services, nonhomeless special needs, and business small development. And so we take all five of those and those are our guiding principles for our con plan and our action plan moving forward.

That's really kind of my spiel. We just really pulled it all together to come up with what our guiding principles are moving forward for the next five years with our federal dollars. And so these are what we are going to focus on. All right. So I'm going to pass it back to Kelly.

Kelly Price: Thank you, Marilyn. This is very interesting. You may be getting some calls or emails from folks interested in your procurement and the company that helped you with this. Those questions I think are better to refer to you. Let's do our poll question really quickly. Then I think we'll go to the next presenter. But we do have a couple of questions for you, Marilyn, to discuss at the end of the session. So real quickly, we have a poll question for you.

Based on what Marilyn talked about and the efforts that Louisville Metro undertook to gather the data and hold all the community meetings and get all of that input, we're curious to see the grantees that are attending today – how do you normally collect and analyze your data, greatest needs, and activities and projects in your community? Jon, can we get that poll up and running? You may already have it. I'm running out of space on my screen. If you could show that poll real quick over to the right on your screen. At the very bottom, you may have to click on that arrow to bring that up.

Do you use outside partners, like universities and colleges? Do you conduct listening sessions among city/county departments, community faith-based organizations, and elected officials to create a citizen survey? Or all of the above? Or other? It will give us some idea of how you are currently carrying out this process of collecting, analyzing data, and prioritizing.

Jonathan Vehlow: Polls are closing in 20 seconds.

Kelly Price: Okay. So we should have results. All right. Great. I know we have some folks not answering our poll questions today. But outside of that, it sounds like folks are using a real mix of different methods. The answer of all of the above was the one that had the most responses here. Conducting listening sessions with different parties and stakeholders looks like it sort of came in second place there. Folks using different strategies to carry that out in their communities. I imagine it probably changes over time.

And with that, we're going to move on to our next presentation. We may not have you totally off the hook there, Marilyn. So we'll come back to you at the end essentially for some additional questions and discussion. I'm going to turn it over to Kate Bartholomew with Bellingham, Washington. Kate, you should have the microphone at this point.

Kate Bartholomew: Thank you. Good day, everybody. Here I go. Here's my slide. Hello from neither sunny nor warm Bellingham, Washington. It's a cold, rainy day today. Louisville is sounding kind of nice. But a little bit about our town – we're kind of a small or mid-sized city depending on how you define that. It's about 100,000 residents and we're pretty steadily growing here. Bellingham is a college town, so even though we're a pretty small town, we're also the city within a very rural county.

And we receive an allocation. The most recent one was \$840,000. So something that's sort of interesting or might be a little different about Bellingham is, in addition to that, we have a voter-

supported housing levy, which is also to benefit low-income and moderate-income residents with a priority on housing. So we combined the process of community participation and planning with our CDBG and our consolidated plan, and use both processes to inform the funding.

So even though it's a smaller allocation than I see many of you have, this would be probably strategies that are applicable to larger grantees as well. I should mention, as a college town, obviously, we have quite a large young adult population, but also a pretty significant number of retirees and young families as well. So that's a little bit about us. I'm going to focus more on the public participation and how that informed our goals and priorities here in Bellingham.

First, we relied very heavily on data analysis to draft the initial consolidated plan. But obviously, data is not perfect and it can't tell the whole story. So we made sure to check what we found in the data with the public to see if that felt right and matched the experiences of people here in our community. That's kind of a way we can triangulate the experiences with the insight. However, as Marilyn was speaking, I was also thinking it was also an opportunity to correct a lot of misperceptions.

A lot of people's information is based on anecdotes. And for example, in Bellingham one common refrain I would often hear in this process was people blaming the student population for our high cost of living and our housing costs. But for example, if you look historically, the data doesn't really support that assumption or bear that out. So whenever possible, we used local community data to supplement what was available in the American community survey, because at the point in time we were doing our data analysis, that was quite dated. And I'm sure many of you have struggled with that.

So for example, we have a data-sharing agreement with our local school district and being able to access data about where free and reduced lunches were being served to families with children was hugely helpful in identifying disparities at a more localized neighborhood level. In addition, before drafting an entire version of the plan, I created several two-page fact sheets on specific topics of interest that were a little bit more digestible that people could read on subjects like population growth, cost burden, and homelessness. So from there, we sought to get the public's input in a variety of ways.

At this point in time, I was pretty new in my role, so I kind of threw everything in the kitchen sink to add it but with the thinking that if you want to reach lots of people and a variety of people, you need to use a lot of different modalities. So there were of course in-person stakeholder meetings with our partners. But there were also online surveys and physical written surveys that we left in places where we thought we could access residents who don't normally bring their voice to the table.

So posting posters and hard copy in low-income, for example, housing projects, waiting rooms of our local low-income medical providers, sending hard copies to the Goodwill job training center, translating all of our surveys and posters into Spanish, which is our second most common language here in Bellingham. Then finally, we hosted an open house in person at the library, which was in the evening after work hours, and offered refreshments and an activities table for kids.

Although we tried many different things and we got over 2,000 responses to various surveys and in-person meetings, it's admittedly still difficult to get responses from low-income residents who are really our target group here in terms of these funds. So only about 5 percent of our online survey responses were from residents who themselves identified as low-income. And I definitely don't feel like any survey was necessarily exemplary, but I did just want to say that it's very interesting to segregate out and analyze how the priorities differed if you compared those who are economically advantaged to those who are economically disadvantaged.

So I would just advocate that you should always ask demographic questions and income questions on any survey you give, because that can be very telling. After doing all that public feedback and data collection, we distilled our consolidated plan and fair housing information into five broad goals, which might look familiar to many of you in your community – increased supply of affordable housing, address and prevent homelessness, preserve existing housing, promote neighborhood equity, and coordinate effective delivery of services.

However, those broad goals really mean very specific things to our community. So I know this is going to be small on your screen and I don't expect you to read them all. But just so you're aware, we had distilled these down and used the community input to prioritize what were the most important priorities that the community wanted us to focus on with our CDBG dollars and our levy dollars. The yellow ones are ones that are meant for the city to take the lead. And the blue ones to the right are priorities that are meant for some of our partner agencies, like the housing authority, the county health department, and other nonprofits. It would be more appropriate for them to take the lead on advancing those.

We had to have a hard conversation at the end and realize we would love to do it all, but really we cannot do everything. However, I'm going to focus on just one example of an area where the city could take the lead and be creative about how to respond to a community-identified goal. This one was to offer home rehabilitation loans with favorable terms to low-income homeowners, especially those who are elderly and disabled. Through the process, it came to our attention there were two very high priority needs in our community – one for more adult family homes, and another priority for more child care facilities.

So we have a home rehabilitation loan program. And about half of our CDBG allocation goes towards this program, which just celebrated its 40th anniversary. Traditionally, this is a deferred loan payment program where usually low-income or moderate-income seniors or folks with disabilities can get a low interest rate to do health and safety repairs on their home, like replacing plumbing, replacing the roof so that they continue to age in place in their own home. However, we realize that we could use the same program, the same staff, and basically the same procedures to also help those who wanted to open an owner-occupied adult family home, or an in-home child care.

As you may know, those can be quite expensive to meet the local regulations in terms of the actual structure of the home. There's fencing, there's ramps, showers and bathrooms that are required and can be quite difficult for a moderate-income resident to make those rehabilitations in order to be certified. So we were able to piggyback off of this existing program and really

target it towards two of the community-identified needs. One trade-off to make this eligible for CDBG funds was that, for example, over half of the residents would be required to be Medicaid recipients for adult family home or child care voucher recipients for in-home child care. So the community gets a benefit for our low-income residents.

And of course, the city doesn't license adult family homes or child care. So we had to work closely with partners outside of the city in order to develop our regulatory requirements and to write the guidelines. And they were actually reaching out to these other organizations that I don't normally work with, like the youth and family services, or the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. I was pleased to see that they were quite thrilled actually to work with us and help develop these program guidelines because they also recognize this huge need for more child care and adult family homes, especially those that serve low- and moderate-income residents.

In conclusion, having done all this legwork with the community together, input and identify very specific priorities, led us to feel really confident about choosing the specific program. Because when you get buy-in and participation early on from both partners and elected officials, it's easy to move forward quickly and make programs such as this come to fruition. So I'll conclude there. Should I pass it over to Brooklyn?

Kelly Price: Yes. I think we'll go directly to Brooklyn.

Kate Bartholomew: I'll pass it over to Brooklyn, my neighbor in Wenatchee.

Brooklyn Holton: Okay. Awesome. Thank you. I'm Brooklyn. I am the neighborhood and community services coordinator for the City of Wenatchee. And I actually went to school at Western in Bellingham. So I love that I have kind of a connection with the previous presenter. We are similar to Bellingham, kind of an urban hub in a really rural area.

We have about 35,000 people in Wenatchee; and within our two-county area – which is actually our functional MSA – just right around 100,000. So we're pretty small. Our CDBG allocation is right around \$240,000. We used to average right around \$200,000 but it went up. So when I saw those poll questions of a lot of people getting close to a million dollars, I had a little bit of jealousy in that.

Anyway, I will be focusing on today kind of some information around how we leverage. With such a small allocation to really make an impact on our community, we have to leverage and really pull in a lot of partners and also build on other capacity that our city is able to do even outside of the CDBG Program. So I'm going to start and share a little bit about a specific neighborhood that's really our major target area for our program, and that's the South Wenatchee neighborhood. It's our essentially oldest community in terms of development. When it started, a lot of older and earlier mid-1900s homes.

So there's a lot of infrastructure that's either needing to be replaced, updated, or that just doesn't even exist – it was never developed with our code having that requirement after that area was already constructed. In addition, different community facilities like our community center

upgrades, or power, bus stops, transit access, things like that, because of the nature of the design of the community, it's been really hard to have those pieces be new and also installed. So South Wenatchee – which has our higher population of low-income – we see more of our first responder calls in that area, more need around pedestrian multimodal access, because most individuals utilize a non-single occupant vehicle for their transportation.

There's also, like I said, that first responder piece. So a sense of safety in both the neighborhood dynamic, but also in terms of lighting we don't have a lot of pedestrian-scale lighting. We don't have a lot of adequate public pedestrian infrastructure, so those upgrades are really important to the community. And then because it's been an area that's not seen as much recent development, the past couple decades have really focused on development and new money emphasis on more of a North End uptown. So that community ownership is a challenge in terms of their identify being relevant to what feels like growth in our community.

And also, about 50 percent of that community is renter-occupied. So you see a lot of turnover. You don't see as much stability in the development of relationships, of knowing your neighbor, and also just having that ownership within their own residence because we do have that turnover; so not only 6 percent owner-occupied are largest percent of individuals that are households that would identify as low to moderate income. South Wenatchee does have a community center. It's an old church that was turned into a community center. And adjacent to that is a park.

Around that area, we have our highest rates of obesity, childhood obesity, chronic disease, lower income. So that park has been a big focus of us to improve to make sure it's accessible. We were able to do a project with the trust republic lands around a \$3 million park renovation to include basketball court, turf, space for commerce, so like a farmer's market, things like that. Really just trying to make sure that the assets that are existing in South Wenatchee get improved, and that there's a lot of engagement that is able to happen around them, and then always incorporating public art.

Over 50 percent of the residents in South Wenatchee are Spanish-speaking. So in honoring that culture, honoring their culture, being able to bring in that public art piece, that visual, the color, the excitement, the energy and the vibrancy, that's not as common as you would see in a modern American skilled neighborhood, so really trying to honor that excitement and that energy that they bring. I just wanted to give a background on that, because the project that I'll be talking about took place in South Wenatchee.

And we also combined it with what we call the South Wenatchee action plan, which that was happening. We identified with all the things that were challenges in South Wenatchee. We identified an opportunity to develop a South Wenatchee action plan. And that focused on a couple things – specifically, how do we make sure that we're developing a plan that is lively, that doesn't just get made and sit on the shelf. And I think that the community ownership piece was the biggest difference in that. So we allowed them to really own the process.

And that included the outreach. What did we have with the public meetings? I got to have a lot of tamales. In 2016 that was wonderful. Looking at multi stakeholders for implementation – so instead of having the city develop a plan for a neighborhood that we would then be responsible

for, how do we develop this plan so that the city is just kind of the backbone? And then the community and the community stakeholders really get to be the hands and feet of the implementation. So how to incorporate that into the work that is already being done or is hoped to be done by agencies outside of the city.

And then the South Wenatchee action plan because of the CDBG project all talk about, we were able to have tangible results during the planning process. So being able to implement this project as a part of the planning so that over the course of the two-year planning period, the community members are able to see projects come to fruition. We're able to see movement on many of the projects. And then a big piece – there is a common phrase that we are done serving you to death and saying instead, we're going to take what we think we've heard over the last 20 decades, because there's been a lot of surveying. I think a lot of our more vulnerable neighborhoods tend to be justification for grant applications.

And then that relationship sort of ends there. So there is this turmoil in terms of what can we do to make sure that the information that we've gathered from you is utilized and honored today? And then just affirm that so that going forward we know we're still in the right direction. Okay. So during that South Wenatchee action planning process, the Chelan Avenue project started. They started the same time. And they complemented each other really well because this project existed in that neighborhood and had a lot of the same neighborhood members close to the project location that were also interested in being involved in the South Wenatchee action planning.

So we utilized the engagement for the Chelan project because one of the biggest priorities is pedestrian infrastructure and sense of safety. So in order to do that here, we were able to construct sidewalk, rechannelize the street, incorporate – you'll see in the after photo there's a pedestrian-scale light post with a metal banner in the sidewalk and also a fixture later. But in the sidewalk is also public art. So we had art festivals and art parties that the community got to come to and just draw or sculpt or play in sand.

We had all these different mediums that they were able to utilize to express the imaging that really honors what their neighborhood stands for. And then we translated that into metal banners, into stamped concrete. So with that, because there was so much happening – we were engaging them through art, we were engaging them through a construction project, and we were also engaging them in terms of prioritizing what they wanted to see happen in the South Wenatchee action plan – there was a lot of momentum for this project.

And the project is three full blocks. And because of the arch and the lighting, the curbs, the gutter, the sidewalk, the re-channelization, it was an expensive project. And having about 200 – we're right around \$210-, \$220,000 in our entitlement during this time. So that was wildly inadequate. So we started looking for alternative funding. How can we pair some priority projects that our public works department had? How can we look for grants that support the public art piece?

I actually was able to get grant funding from our MCOs, which are managed care organizations like Amerigroup, Molina, the ones that provide Medicaid support to show that we are increasing

the opportunity and access to health and building community vibrancy. So they actually helped sponsor and make some of those community engagement meetings. They helped sponsor the tamale making or the homemade salsa. They helped sponsor the events in bringing the art opportunities in. So we were able to really leverage different sources of funding to make sure that the planning and engagement was adequate, and that the project itself could be done.

That was a huge piece of building trust in terms of this project and that ownership. We did so much outreach during this project that they really started sharing how they as a neighborhood if they get involved can make a difference. One of the things that we wanted to make sure was on this project, there were both businesses and residents. It's kind of a mixed-use corridor. It's actually a highway that comes through our town. So we had an opportunity to engage businesses because their driveways, their parking needs were completely different than those of the residential units that were literally next door to it.

So really working with our engineers to say, what is the allowance for parking? What is the allowance and the setup? We can't have the light post right here because that needs to be a driveway. This is the storage unit. They're really engaging and saying, hey, we're listening. We want to make sure that this works for you. We don't want to just build a project in your community – we want to build a project with your community. And we found that through all the feedback, the timeline and the completion for the project was really important because everyone got so excited. So I learned a lot about preaward costs.

And we actually were able to leverage different city and grant funding to be able to complete the project. It ended up being around a million dollar project in just a three-year time, and instead of what we had expected to do like a four-year cycle with our CDBG. So being able to finish that fully beginning to end in three years with all the planning was huge.

So the opportunity to do reaward cost, if you haven't done them, I highly encourage you, especially if you're a small entitlement, or a project is in front of you that is a really large price tag where economies of scale plays a big part in terms of getting the bulk of it done or being able to purchase all of the pedestrian-scale lighting and all those things up front. It was a huge asset to us to have that.

I think I kind of already talked about this and I want to be cognizant of time, but we were able to demonstrate through the planning process with the South Wenatchee action plan and the implementation of the sidewalk project that we can do access planning. We don't have to wait for a plan to be done to start the projects and the priorities that get identified in it. And because of that, because we're able to structure in such a way that we can see movement and at the end of the planning project or at the end of the action planning process, we were able to check things off our list that were already done that they identified as priority. And that built a ton of trust.

And this is actually the only project and the first project that community members came to our city council and thanked them for sidewalks, thanked them for investing in their community. And that is also the only one in that area that had not been vandalized throughout the entire process. So one of the community members actually came into ownership and protection of, and we didn't have to deal with any adverse effects or frustration in terms of graffiti or vandalism.

This built momentum for that \$3 million park project that was next to the community center. That happened subsequently.

And so the same individuals that were involved with this planning process went into that really smoothly. And the momentum was so high that that park project came to fruition with very little hiccups in it. And then finally, a united neighborhood association actually formed out of this project; and that is a group of individuals that prioritize public safety, pedestrian infrastructure, and quality of life. They are mainly Spanish-speaking. So I've been so thankful that my comprehensive is pretty good because I walk in there and I'm the one that needs the translator.

And the friendships that have come out of this have been pretty personalized. So our city when we walk in or we suggest a public meeting, they come back and they say, hey, this is actually a better time. There's trust. And there's open, transparent communication to be able to support larger projects and really just set a best practice for ourselves around community engagement. And how do we honor the voice, the history of data collecting, and also the excitement and energy around how to move forward and just get their hands dirty? because planning can be boring.

And they've been really good at helping us, the city, remember that engagement doesn't have to be at 3:00 p.m. on a Thursday in city hall. It can be on a Saturday from noon to 4:00 with tamales and a party and art and actually having those neighborhood members engaged. That was my timer. That was my slide.

Kelly Price: Yes. If you could move it to Caroline, that would be great.

Caroline Gregerson: All right. It looks like I am next. A lot of great information ahead of me. And I hope I can kind of build on the momentum of these presentations. A little bit about La Crosse, Wisconsin. We have about 50,000 in our population, but also an urban area and a larger rural community. So our whole area is about 100,000. Our annual HUD allocation entitlement is just over \$800,000. And we also receive a significant amount of program income from a variety of programs where we're lending out funds.

And I would say some of our biggest challenges are being a challenge town as well and being relatively land-locked. So redevelopment is certainly the name of the game in La Crosse. So I am the community development administrator. And I took on my position in 2013. So I've been here for about seven years. And when I came on board, I noticed that we had a lot of really great programs. But I also noticed a couple CDBG activities that we were taking on that didn't seem to really be linked to our community's highest priority needs.

We've had a wonderful housing rehab program that we've operated, small business loans. We offer affordable homeownership opportunities. But we also took on projects like fixing an elevator in a senior center that, ultimately long-term, the city no longer wanted responsibility for. We created an ADA-compliant building and an art center and it wasn't really linked to our consolidated planning priorities. Much of our funding allocations that we gave out on an annual basis were based on a formula about what had been funded the prior year.

We didn't get many new projects or new applicants. And I also noticed that we were missing accountability for the goals that we had set out in our consolidated plan and how we were meeting them. And there was a strong call back at that time to create more affordable housing opportunities for renters, and our CDBG projects didn't address the needs of renters whatsoever. And I also saw that a funding formula based on our consolidated planning goals was missing. So I've had the opportunity to do two consolidated planning processes now. And that's where, like everybody else, it's about that needs assessment.

What I've noticed through doing public hearings, those traditional public hearings, traditional surveys tend to represent the needs of homeowners, tend to be our white residents, and a lot of retired residents as well. So our goal is that we set out in doing community engagement, doing our two consolidated plans was also doing some targeting of renters, people with disabilities, people of color, single moms. And so for me, I've always been really leading the charge in my staff as well on doing our own citizen engagement.

I know some communities choose to contract that out, but we've found that it's extremely helpful to have our knowledge in connection to our community. We've also had a lot of success using the AmeriCorps VISTA Program and interns from the college to help organize the logistics around community engagement.

So our first thing that we did in our last consolidated planning process is staff. It was fall at that time before Covid. So we sat around talking about where could we already find these target groups of people that we were seeking to target? Where would they already be? How could we show up to that event, bring our community needs survey, ask questions, and get public participation that way?

So we've had a lot of success in attending school open houses and family orientations. And we set up a booth at those events. And another best practice that we've learned is have a game. So we have a pretty fun wheel that we take to these open houses with us. And we're guaranteed that with a game and some prizes, the kids will come to our table. And then we can capture their parents and have them fill out the survey. Every fall our parks and rec department does this Field of Screams event where they have different foods and kids go around to the different foods and play a game, receive some candy. They're in their costumes.

So we, again, showed up with our game, showed up with our community needs survey. And while the parents waited in line for the kids to play the game, we were getting that survey out and having a lot of interesting conversations. I got to talk to a mom who lives in public housing nearby. And she was talking about her concerns about crime in the area. So that was an event we did. We also worked with college students and a service day in our neighborhood associations. And we did some door-to-door surveying with our community needs survey.

I found that to be extremely helpful to just have different conversations for neighborhoods that we were prioritizing CDBG funds for. We have a CDBG neighborhood revitalization strategy area. And so door-to-door surveying was a key part of filling that out. The other thing we did was we worked with school social workers and asked them to help us bring together some focus group where we could have a little longer conversation, dig into the issues. And we would offer

pizza and child care and even raffle some gift cards. And we're able to have some in-depth conversations with single moms about what they saw as a community need.

Again, you're just getting a little different lens on your issues. For example, one of them was just talking about the fact that there's no safe way to cross a busy street between the public housing and the QuikTrip gas station where a lot of them went to meet their food needs. Other methods that we've used to engage citizens like others have been neighborhood association meetings, resident meetings at the public housing authority where we provide refreshments, a press release. And we've also done Facebook advertising.

And like the other presenters, I have found it very helpful to disaggregate our community needs survey results by different demographic. So we always ask demographic questions; and in particular, the needs of a low-income renter are very different from what maybe an upper income homeowner sees in your neighborhood. So also disaggregating that needs survey helps inform our consolidated plan.

We had just almost 2,000 residents take our community needs survey. And we also connected 18 public meetings with 235 participants in that with our last consolidated plan. So here are some of the needs on this next slide of what we identified. A lack of affordable housing also came up, lack of quality housing, a concern for our homeless population. The state of our roads in La Crosse was identified as a high priority, along with a lack of child care services and mental health services.

Then for me, the next step is also, we hear the needs. How do we translate this into results for the community so they feel heard? So what I have done is translated those needs into the specific goals with specific performance metrics I'll go over later. With here on the screen but for example, one goal that we had and continue to have is building 200 mixed-income, affordable, multifamily housing units over our five-year consolidated plan. So I definitely create very specific metrics that we can continue to track.

And then I've also learned that you have these great goals, but how are you getting there? So we use a traditional basically grant application process in advance of our action plan to get projects. But I've found that if I'm waiting until that RFP and just expecting the projects to come or happen, I'm not going to get those goals achieved that I've set out. We've developed a process where I'm out speaking to partners and working on getting those projects developed year round. We set out parameters for our RFP that we will only fund activities that are outlined as priority needs.

We rank order all of our projects and have an evaluation process. And the highest ranked projects are fully funded. And we fund the highest priority projects. One particular area if you are trying to expand a multifamily affordable housing, we've actually created a CDBG loan pool to cover CDBG-eligible costs for multifamily construction, and have found a lot of success in partnering with low-income housing tax credits. We use our CDBG funds to maybe cover the acquisition, demolition, or a community center aspect of the project, and those low-income housing tax credits to partner on the project covering a lot of the new construction cost.

We've found that to get those projects in front of our community development committee, inviting tax credit developers to our community has been very helpful as a smaller community. And we've also started a strategy of pledging future CDBG allocations, or doing a two-year funding commitment for these projects. They take a long time to get off the ground. And so just relying on that annual CDBG allocation was a detriment in terms of meeting our timeliness. We started funding projects for two years in a row and gathering two years' worth entitlement funds to make the project happen, or accepting applications now, providing a funding commitment letter, and pledging future CDBG dollars.

I have here, and hopefully will also be available to all the listeners, how we're tracking those goals annually. So I take our CAPER very seriously at the end of the year as a way to communicate back to the community, back to the policymakers. We listen to the needs. We translated those into goals. And here's how we are doing in achieving all of these. So as you can see, the five-year outcomes I have are very specific in terms of the number we're hoping to achieve. And I do track percentage of goals met. And when we're not meeting the goal, it's not necessarily a bad thing. We're just explaining to the committee here's why this project didn't take off. And here's where we're trying to improve it.

I do have the spreadsheet here if anyone wants to use it in incorporating it to report on your goals annually. I've also found that the generated CAPER out of IDIS is a 100-page document with oddly spaced graphs that really no one is going to read. So I've always done a separate executive summary of all the different reports. I do an executive summary for action plan, and an executive summary of our CAPER, which really summarized with graphs and quotes what our program accomplished that year in a way that people can understand.

And I've found that that is really helpful for our mayor and council to understand what CDBG funds are accomplishing in our community. And then the other thing that I just started in the past couple years is I felt that just reporting, this year we did 20 housing rehab loans, wasn't really communicating the impact. So I've also started doing what I call a CAPER slide show in which I capture testimonials from a variety of our projects. So for example with CDBG funds, we funded and partnered on a low-income housing tax credit project that had homeless Veterans living there. So I went back there and interviewed Tony, pictured here, and included a quote.

We do a homeownership program, so we were able to talk and learn about how a family had gone from homelessness to homeownership thanks to our CDBG Program. Here is a housing rehab loan client that testified that they live in the floodplain. We provided funds to fill in their basement. And without this housing rehab program, they would have lost their home. And in the slide show, I also include graphs of how our performance metrics have performed over the past five years and how we're on track to meet our five-year goals. And I've found that this slide show is what the council and the mayor look forward to hearing about.

Every year it provides a personal connection to the dollars. And it provides a personal connection for myself as the administrator and my staff of here's how we're really impacting lives. So I would say it's not just about the numbers – it's also about those stories. And then I'm a member of the National Community Development Association, so I've also had the opportunity to share a slide show like this with our congressman who supports the CDBG Program. And then he has

some testimonials and some real examples of how CDBG funds support the La Crosse community.

So that is all that I have. It looks like I'm leading the poll. If everybody would like to provide some feedback on, how do you solicit feedback on program and activities and projects? A, solicit input from elected officials and city/county council. Do you conduct formal surveys or feedback, meetings or calls with subrecipients? – that's B. C, do you do a formal survey or feedback? Or D, all of the above. Or E, other? And then I believe I'm giving this to Kelly.

Kelly Price: Yes. Thank you so much. That was helpful. The poll should be ending shortly. All right. So the poll is ended. We'll just give it a few seconds to tabulate. Okay. Great. Well, we have the results. And again, the most popular answer here is all of the above, or probably a mix of some of the above. Over 21 percent of our respondents indicating that they use different formal surveys and input of different parties in their community. So that's helpful and interesting to know. So a real variety of things going on out there.

We want to direct your attention at the end of the slide deck. We'll have resources, so we do have some of the links here that seem to be for CDBG grantees. This would be for the regular CDBG Program. The CDBG landing page website is on there first. There are a number of other best practices that have been collected in recent years and are in the explore CDBG section of that page. There are a number of videos, as well as other materials located there. And I know we had one question that was a little more regulatory in the question box related to providing homeowner rehabilitation funds that might have a renter living in the unit and how to carry that out.

Your best resources for things like that are going to be the guide books. There's a guide book to national objectives and eligible activities, both for entitlement grantees as well as for states. There's also of course the regulations, the statute, other webinar materials from prior webinars, and other tools and policy bulletins as well all located there. So hopefully, that is helpful to folks. If you're not that familiar with the HUD Exchange, we'd also encourage you to sign up for the HUD Exchange CDBG Listserv and make sure you get notifications when those products are updated or when there are additional webinars.

And with that, we have about 15 minutes to go through some questions that have come in for the different speakers. Again, I want to thank all the speakers for all of their hard work that went into getting to today and to doing such great presentations. Marilyn, if you're still with us, I may point to you first so we can give the more recent speakers a little bit of a break. A number of questions related to the effort that Marilyn Harris in the Louisville Metro Government undertook as far as their data analysis and planning project.

One relates Marilyn to when you talked about those marketed areas and also your – [inaudible] background onto that slide so folks remember what we talked about because we had a lot in here today – but whether or not those were organic. Were those typical neighborhoods that folks recognize in your community as being neighborhoods? Or was it more about grouping for the purposes of data and analysis, or neighborhood strategy areas or something like that? Can you

talk a little bit more about how you determined those areas? probably in consultation with the firm that you hired.

Marilyn Harris: Yes. The project that actually divided these into the market areas was a couple years before I came to metro government. But the market areas don't necessarily coincide with major corridors in the area. Kind of like if you're looking at this area here, we have a major corridor that runs through the middle of East Metro. So it doesn't start at the road and then go west or north or south or east – it encompasses a range on both sides of that road. So I want to say they form semiorganically. I don't know if that's really the word. And they're not necessarily just one neighborhood.

So each one of these areas could have five or six neighborhoods within them. But it is where people get the majority of their services. And I know I've said that and I don't know if I'm really answering the question the best that I can or answering it so that you understand it. But they just did an in-depth dive to look at where people went to get their groceries and their kids went to school and they don't generally.

So people that live in this area generally get all of their services here. People that live here don't generally go downtown for this or that. They generally get all of their services here. But you could have Lyndon and Anchorage and Saint Matthews and J-Town and there's all these other little subdivision or communities within the larger area. So they're not necessarily microscopic neighborhoods. They're a collection of those neighborhoods. That's the best answer I can give. I'm sorry.

Kelly Price: That's helpful. You know I'm from there, so when you talk about some of those, they sound very familiar. And one question that definitely came up a couple of times was, how did you get such high numbers on your WebEx meetings in particular? And kind of related to that, if you don't mind me tagging on, was another question that came in, holding virtual meetings. We're all having to do that right now. It's not the same as being in a room and being able to do like dot voting – if others on the call have done that before – where you're given five dots and you go up to the front of the room and vote.

So holding those virtually, A, you had very high attendance, and B, it was a lot of participation. What was the key to that? What tips would you give to folks about how to make those meetings virtually as effective as possible? And if others on the call also take your own [inaudible] in there and Brooklyn have any input, I think this probably applies also to you guys. Marilyn, do you have some tips first, and then we'll open it up to the other speakers?

Marilyn Harris: I think my first tip would be that people were not kind of WebEx'd out at that point. It was kind of new and still interesting. And it was an opportunity for people to see what was going on. Now, I'm not going to tell you that we had 380 different entities. I mean, we might have had five people from the same nonprofit all viewing it. But we did have 380 participants view the meeting either live or go back and watch it on Facebook or watch it on our web page.

Our mayor has a Facebook page. And he posts videos there all the time. So we posted it there. We posted it on Facebook so it was available for people to go back and watch it. We posted it on

Instagram so that the link was there and people could go back. I should say that Caroline did a really good job of saying, our city is this big. We have about three quarters of a million people in Louisville. So we are a fairly large city.

The mayor likes to say we're the 16th largest metropolitan area. But that really includes some of Indiana. So I don't know if we really want to go down that road. But we are a pretty large area compared to some of the other presenters. So 380 participants is a lot for our meeting, but it's not a large number for having three quarters of a million people in the area. We did a lot of outreach. We advertised at all the neighborhood meetings that we went to, all of the community town halls. We talked to all of our council people.

We just really kind of beat the bush getting the word out that this was something that we wanted people to participate in. And we really wanted to hear them. And I'm afraid that for so many years we have said, hey, come to our public meeting. And we didn't really take into account what people said. And we really went out on a limb this year and said, we really want to hear what you say. And this is kind of my favorite phrase, but the definition of an idiot is somebody doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

So we really had to go and figure out what was different and how we could do it different, but also how we could approach community development differently. And for years, it's been those of us that sit in the offices saying, this is what we're going to do. And we really wanted to come back and say, what do you want us to do? And I would just say, that was the big key. We convinced people that we really wanted to hear what they had to say. And we were willing to do whatever it took to listen to them.

Kelly Price: I think that's a common theme. And a lot of what all of you guys talked about was that trust and the listening and the bottom-up versus the top-down decision making and showing them that that was genuine. Kate and Caroline both, we had questions related to your surveying that you did. Kate, I believe you mentioned that you guys used Survey Monkey.

And, Caroline, I'm not sure if you used Survey Monkey specifically or not, but how did you manage that surveying process and ensure that – like one question we got a couple times was making sure you only had one survey per household or per organization? Any tips on how to manage the survey process that you would provide?

Caroline Gregerson: I did hear even at the time in the community that fear that somebody was going to sit there and submit their response to the survey 25 times. In reality, in Survey Monkey – and I'm not necessarily advertising Survey Monkey. We did use that, but in that survey tool, and I think others, you can control for that in the settings. So you can disable multiple responses from the same IP address. And I don't think people swaying the data with multiple responses is really a concern that I had.

But more importantly, I think it's important to recognize up front to your community that surveys are one tool for collecting input from lots of different voices. That doesn't necessarily mean they are scientifically rigorous or randomized. So I think a lot of people got anxious about survey, saying, you're cherry picking or you might not hear from everybody or it's not representative.

And you have to say, yes. That is true. So that's why I believe surveys should be coupled with other kinds of data collection and outreach. And they can't stand alone.

Although, they're extremely valuable because I think if we combined our assessment of fair housing and consolidated plan surveys, we got almost 3,000 responses to just the surveys, not including in-person meetings of any kind. And in Bellingham at that point in time, there was only about 80,000, 90,000 people in the community. So that's a pretty big representative sample. But that's just one way to get information.

Kate Bartholomew: I would not have anything to add other than I think at a staff meeting, the same thing – what if somebody tried to take it? I'm like, if somebody cares that much to take our community needs survey, sway the results, like go for it. Usually, we're just begging people to participate in same thing. I mean, the biggest thing was just breaking it down by renters versus homeowners. But I would agree exactly what was just said, you've got to combine it with data, with speaking.

Kelly Price: Right. More participation is better than none. So we'll take it. That's a great point. I think, Caroline, some people are interested in your wheel game you mentioned, so you may get some outreach from some folks on the call today. Folks have asked about paying for refreshments or prizes, as you guys talked about some of the really neat meetings that you had and gatherings and whatnot.

I want to remind folks to refer to the regulations and the OMB Omni Circular. Those sorts of things are typically not allowable with CDBG funds. For those of you who did that, was that more donations and community organizations that helped to provide those things to get people to come out to meetings and to community gatherings so that you could start your process?

Caroline Gregerson: Yeah. I believe we used either our levy funds or our general fund for that kind of thing.

Kelly Price: Okay. Great. And, Brooklyn, we have a question I think is a good one of asking a little bit more – when you talked about equity audit, a little bit more information about that and what that means and how that really impacted your process that you spoke about earlier. I'll see if I can find that slide while you're talking.

Brooklyn Holton: Yeah. We had a couple different planning grants, like curb grants, they were able to help us identify more of the deeper demographic information. So we partnered a lot with our health system. They have a lot of data because public hospitals – which is what we have here – are required to do a health needs assessment every couple years. So they were able to really support our data collection in terms of what does equity access in terms of health look like? And then we actually worked with our GIS to do a multilayer essentially pedestrian analysis.

So we looked at what are all the infrastructure conditions and how can we rate those? What are our incomes in terms of our block groups? How do we look at where our transportation access is – so all of our public transportation, all of the facilities, all the stops? Where does the paratransit go? So we went through a lot of different determinants of health to identify the most vulnerable

areas within that community. And so where that sidewalk project was, the community center, and that park essentially had the most layered indicators for challenges towards equity and negative relationships with health equity. Is that kind of what that question was?

Kelly Price: I think so. There wasn't a lot of information. But I found that helpful. And I think the term "equity" came up in almost every presentation we talked about. And with that being very much more the focus of the planning analysis that all you guys undertook. We did have a couple questions about preaward cost, because you mentioned that as well. Pay for some of the up-front planning and even potentially starting on projects.

I would refer – because that gets a bit regulatory and we're getting close to time – I would refer folks on the call if you're interested in learning more about preaward cost, there is a provision in the regulations. If you go to the regulations in HUD Exchange or HUD.gov, do a search for the term "preaward cost" and you'll see a definition, as well as some of the requirements around that. And also, that is also in the OMB Omni Circular 2 CFR 200. If you haven't done that, it can be a little tricky in terms of knowing what requirements to adhere to up front. Because if you're going to use the funds to pay yourself back, you've got to make sure you're in compliance with all the requirements. So work with your field office to round that out, would be my advice.

Julia and Joey from HUD are on the call, and they can certainly weigh in there. But that's probably a little too regulatory for us. I think one other question we had, and I had as well even, was of all of the planning efforts that many of you undertook, did that result in additional designations of, say, neighborhood revitalization strategy areas and the use of that flexibility that's in the CDBG regulations? You can do a few other things you normally can't do. And there's some flexibility around national objectives built into the rules. Were any of these areas, like Chelan, designated as NRSAs after you were finished with this process?

Brooklyn Holton: Yeah. We actually have our con plan that I'm updating right now. And as a result of a lot of this, we are working with our council to get the blessing to go through the process to establish that NRSA area. We do have a CBDO that works in that self-matching community. So we're actually now going through that process. And it's largely because of this engagement that I think the council is feeling support to go forward with that.

Kelly Price: Great. Okay. Others?

Joey: Kelly, this is Joey from HUD. I'll just add that I'm working with a contractor to develop a separate webinar and some resources around the NRSA designation. So we should be releasing that shortly. So hopefully, more grantees can hop on board that NRSA designation train.

Kelly Price: Oh, great. That's fantastic. I remember some time ago, it was quite the hot topic. And it may have sort of filled into the side with time and with everything else folks are going through. This kind of really in-depth and concentrated planning and analysis project that these communities have undertaken lends itself well to the NRSA model. So that's great. We actually have some other questions coming in. So I wanted to let folks know that we will be providing the questions that have come into the Q&A box to HUD. And HUD will be assessing specifically how they can follow up.

We do encourage you to talk to your field offices and see how they can help you in terms of peers located in your area in connecting you with those folks. The folks that are on this webinar today, these projects will also be featured in a report that will be provided forthcoming and posted to the HUD Exchange website. And again, just to remind folks the slides from today's presentation, as well as a recording and transcript, will also be posted to the HUD Exchange. So you'll have access to seeing and hearing this information, to getting the links, and the contact information for folks after this is over [inaudible] with your colleagues in your local communities.

And finally, just want to close with a reminder that this is part of a series. So we do have an additional webinar this week – grant oversight strategies. One of the key features there will be ensuring that we don't have any fraud or abuse or other client issues in programs. The following week we will have two webinars – one on reducing CDBG administrative costs, and the final one on leveraging CDBG funds and other resources in your community. So a great list of topics, all probably very applicable to a lot of your HUD programs and metrics that you undertake.

On behalf of HUD, I want to thank the panelists today and all their hard work they've put into forming their presentations and getting ready for this and the time and effort that was spent on it. With that, HUD, Julia, Joey, any other closing comments?

Julia: This is Julia. I just want to thank everyone. I'm from HUD. And I want to say if you really want to look up things quickly, use Google. Just google explore CDBG, and you'll find all the videos quickly. You'll find notices around preaward cost. You'll find CPD notices that have been written up on how to form a neighborhood revitalization strategy area. So Google is your friendly, powerful machine that you can get this information quickly, because it's kind of hard to capture the links there. I want to thank the panelists and ICS. This was a wonderful presentation. And I think it's going to foster a lot of conversation and peer learning among grantees. So thank you for joining us today.

Kelly Price: Thank you, all. Have a good day.

Kate Bartholomew: Thank you.

(END)