

Public Hearing
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Dollie Bristow (Introduction @ 6:30pm): Hi, good evening, everyone. I'd like to welcome you to the annual action plan public hearing. This is for 2016-17, our annual action plan. And also welcome you to Spirit Communications Park. If you have not been here, welcome. If you have, enjoy, again. We are glad to be here this evening and as people are coming in I ask that if you have not received a copy of the abbreviated action plan there is one on the table out front there so I ask that you make sure that you get one of those. And I say that its abbreviated because it is in draft and it's is a 60 page document and we did not want to print 60 pages so we abbreviated the highlights for you. It is available online you can go on the city's website, the community development website so it is online and the full draft is there.

As we are going through introductions I know that we do have our city council member here, Mr. Sam Davis, and I would ask if he would like to come up and have anything to say on this evening.

Sam Davis: No (laughter), I congratulate you for coming and I would suggest that you make this meeting your meeting, not our meeting. We had a certain conversation outside and we were asked what do y'all want to do but I think the more appropriate question is for you to tell us what you want to see, what you want to do based on the need and what you are experiencing in your community and also take a look at the document. Go through the document and see if that meets your expectations. You know really what your needs are and some of the amenities and all that and we'd like to see enhanced quality of life in your community and then get the staff to give us your feedback.

Dollie Bristow: I would ask City Council member Reverend McDowell before you take your seat if you would to have words also.

Reverend McDowell: Thank you everyone for being here. What a delightful time it is for us to come and get some money; I mean some information (laughter). Thank you all so much, I look forward to this being a real explosive time in the heart of this city and this community. Thank you very much.

Dollie Bristow: On behalf of Deborah Livingston, who is the director of community development, I would like to welcome you here. My name is Dollie Bristow and I am the CD Administrator. I will be conducting the meeting on this evening. The purpose of this meeting is really to give you an idea of the process that we go through for entitlement grants. The city receives federal entitlement every year and it's not a competitive grant it's an entitlement which means that it's a formula grant and so we are allocated based on different factors of our demographics the amount that HUD deems eligible for our area so, with that, the fiscal year 2016-17 we do, by regulation, have to draft an action plan which is actually our budget to tell HUD what we are going to do for the next year. So what you have in front of you is a draft of the plan.

We go through the process, the annual action process identifies how the City Of Columbia along with collaborations of our partners, our neighborhoods and our stakeholders the purposes and how we are going to utilize the funds for the upcoming fiscal year. We use those to address our community development, housing, public services as well as economic development goals and priorities. Now, as far

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as priorities and goals, if you look on page 7 of your action plan you will see, the city has 4 priorities and 13 goals that support those priorities and so if you look at page 7 you'll see the list there, our priority needs, and those have been established through our consolidated plan process and that process is a process we go through, it's a strategic plan for a 5 year period and so we have just started our 5 year plan in 2015 so 2015-2019 is our 5 year strategic plan year. We're now in the 2nd year. This funding that we are talking about tonight will be into our 2nd year of that 5 year plan. So the priority needs are improving affordable housing options, expanding economic opportunities, providing for suitable living environments and improving the capacity of area housing and community service providers so those are the overarching priorities that the city has set through this strategic plan process and then as you see to support those priorities there are 13 goals. All of the activities that we fund must support those goals and priorities so everything that we fund must support that. And all of those feed into HUDs national objectives. There are only 3 national objectives that HUD has and that is to benefit those that are low/mod income, also to eliminate slum or blight and in addition to that to meet an urgent need. So those are HUDs 3 objectives and everything we do must fit under those objectives.

If you have any questions as I am going through please feel free to ask.

We have 3 entitlement grants that the action plan covers and those grants that we receive from HUD annually are the Community Development Block Grant, the HOME Investment Partnership Program and the HOPWA program, which is Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. Now, the community development block grant is the most flexible that meets the needs of the community. So that block grant program can be used in a number of ways, but the primary objective of that program is to develop viable urban communities through the provision of improved living environments, expansion of economic opportunity and decent housing,. So these funds are intended to serve those that are low and moderate income. By HUD regulation, 70% of funds that we receive must benefit those that are low/moderate income. The city normally uses about 98% of their funds for those that are low and moderate income.

Audience Question/Comment: ok, can you give me a range of what is low/moderate income?

Response from Nancy Stoudemire: \$34,000 is 80%; \$24 is your low, which is \$50 for a single person. For a family of 4, \$61,000 is the median income so 80% is going to be like \$49,000 and 50% is going to be like \$34,000.

Audience Question/Comment: So if that's the case, how many total households are there in Columbia and of those, how many qualify as low and moderate.

Response from Dollie Bristow: That information I would have to get. I will get that for you before the end of the night.

Any other questions? (none)

So, that's Community Development Block Grant. The other programs are HOME Investment Partnership and those funds are specifically dedicated to increasing the availability as well as access to affordable

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housing and that's basically what HOME dollars are used for. The HOPWA funds are basically for those persons that are eligible. They can use it for a wide range of housing, social, case management services and planning and development, as well as affordable housing. So those are the options that we have for HOPWA folks. This year our expected amount of award from HUD for CDBG is \$940,783 and that is CDBG, for HOME the amount is \$426,913 and for HOPWA \$1,154,666. So those are the dollars that we have to work with. So as you can see for a city of our size that is not a lot of money so we do have a process that we go through. For tonight, CDBG is what we are going to focus on. CDBG funding, because of the event of the flood, normally we would have a NOFA process, a notice of funds available, and we put a notice out and we say how much money is available for community based organizations and nonprofits to apply for. Because of the flood this year we did not do that. We did a substantial amendment to HUD requesting that these funds be used to support the needs of the flood. So those funds were not put out on the street. So the activities that you see there are the activities that will help support, whether it be housing needs, service needs, public service needs or economic development needs that help support those that are recovering or are affected by the flood. So I just wanted to make you aware that that process was altered for this year only. We do intend to go back to our normal NOFA process coming up in October for the next fiscal year.

Audience Question/Comment: These numbers seem a lot lower than last years. Do you have what last year's numbers were in comparison to this years?

Response from Dollie Bristow: They are not much different from last year. They are almost the same. Last year, I believe we received, in CDBG we received, right around \$950k.

Audience Question/Comment: If we have homes within the targeted areas that were affected by the flood, can they also receive or have access to those funds that you were just speaking of.

Response from Dollie Bristow: For these funds, we have not obligated any of the funds, our regular entitlement funds that we are talking about tonight, for the reconstruction or rebuilding or acquisition for the flood. Now that is something that is being discussed and talked about with the DR funds (disaster recovery). So that would be a plan that the city is putting together to assess the housing and the unmet needs that came out of the flood.

Audience Question/Comment: So will you be announcing when those funds become available?

Response from Dollie Bristow: Yes, that is going to be a separate meeting for those funds. And they have an outreach and an action plan and public hearing and community participation. It is a process, just like our normal process, but it's a process within itself. So there will be public hearings, there will be many outreach sessions for the community to come and give their input.

Audience Question/Comment: Has the committee already been put together to address this pot of money, the DR money.

Response from Dollie Bristow: No, there has not been, that I am aware of, a committee to assess that.

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Audience Question/Comment: And just to be clear, the 3 resources, CDBG, HOPWA and HOME, those funds are not going to be utilized for the flood victims or anything to do with the reconstructions from the flood.

Response from Dollie Bristow: That is correct. They are to be used to support the needs that came out of the flood. We are trying to be a little proactive. For instance, one of the items on the activities on this year's regular money is mold remediation. We know that that's going to be an issue. We don't want to wait. Because the DR process is going to take some time to get through but we know that there are going to be individuals who are going to have an issue sooner than that. As the weather gets warm, we are going to see that. So we are trying to meet that need. So one of the projects that we are funding is mold remediation. So it's indirectly impacting from the flood.

Audience Question/Comment: You mentioned that you changed the process, it was changed this year. So the benefit of these funds and these neighborhoods that you have allocated, I hear you say one of them is mold remediation. By not doing it the way you normally do it, what is the other benefit to the people that these funds are supposed to (help).

Response from Dollie Bristow: The other benefit to those who are low to moderate income, Autos for Opportunities. For those persons who are low to moderate income who may have lost their vehicles in the flood, that have jobs and need to get to their jobs, they have a lack of transportation. That is a program that is already in place but we are helping to fund that. And that is citywide; it's not just one particular area.

Audience Question/Comment: Are you going to announce that? That program?

Response from Dollie Bristow: It is in the action plan. It is being recommended.

Audience Question/Comment: So no one has actually received those funds yet?

Response from Dollie Bristow: That is correct. These funds won't be received until July 1.

Audience Question/Comment: Unfortunately, I am in an area, Lyon Street, St. Anna's, that was affected by floods of different kinds prior to the flood in October. And I'm interested in knowing if you all have decided out of which one of these pots or how much of all 3 pots do you expect you will be allocating to deal with the Gonzalez Gardens Redevelopment Area, House Street, Manning, McDuffie, Gervais Street Corridor, because I am sure you all have already done the work on what number or percent of what low and moderate incomes exist in that area. Have y'all given any consideration to that yet?

Response from Dollie Bristow: We are always working in that area and, as a matter of fact, we do have Ms. Gloria Saeed here, the Columbia Housing Development Corporation, who addresses that area as well as, we are partnering right now with CHA to help with the demolition of Gonzales Gardens so yes, we are giving consideration and we have thought about it. Now, CDBG is not being used for that project, that is

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a different pot of money. But we are partnering with CHA, with the development corporation, as well to do a comprehensive plan for that area and I am sure that since it's a choice neighborhood that that has been done.

Audience Question/Comment: I pastor the Friendship Church in that area and I am so proud to be sitting with my councilman tonight, I feel so special. I would really like to be sure that we can form some type of partnership with what you are trying to do to be sure that we not only meet the housing needs but the social, economic, psychological and other needs by means of programs. We would like to assist in not only the replacement of bricks and mortar but the building of lives.

Response from Dollie Bristow: I'm sure that that is a big part of the redevelopment. You can't have brick and mortar and not change the socioeconomic attitude of a community and expect it to flourish so I am certain that the housing authority as well as CHDC have that in their perspectives.

Audience Question/Comment: Thank you.

Audience Question/Comment: What are the primary indicators of need for low to moderate income housing? So one, for instance, might be the number of families on a list at the housing authority but what are some other indicators? Do you have a sense of what percentage of households are paying more than 30% of their monthly income?

Response from Dollie Bristow: In our consolidated plan, which is on the city's website, it lists that information. All of that information is in the consolidated plan. I don't know what page it is on but you are welcome to either look at this tonight or go to our website and get that information.

Audience Question/Comment: And in the plan, because CDBG has been around for a long time, I wonder how much we have a sense of how the need has gone up, gone down or plateaued. It occurs to me that, I've read things that low income housing or reasonably priced housing, however you choose to describe it, is from a national thing...so it begs the question of how effective we have been over the years, with the limited amount of funding that we are given.

Response from Dollie Bristow: One of the, what makes us unique in the City Of Columbia is that we have a housing program within the city that we actually administer. So we do have the opportunity to offer low interest loans and make housing affordable for individuals. In the information, it does talk about how the cost burden is 30% or more so we know there is a need, a greater need than there has been, now, because of the economic situation. So we do try to gauge that through the housing authority because we are in partnership with them, we gauge it through our development corporations who specialize in housing, that's what they do. So, we do look to them to help us seeing where the need is and that's how we are able to utilize our HOME dollars for affordable housing, whether it be homeownership or rental, we do use them as our gauge through community development.

Audience Question/Comment: I think it would have been helpful if in the executive summary if this is reachable, if there can be an estimate the level of need in the low to moderate target population,

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so that there is a sense of “this is the universal number that we track”. I think that would make it easier for Joe Citizen to understand how we have done over time and how great the need is still.

Response from Dollie Bristow: Well that certainly is good information. We will take that under consideration and make sure that we try to get some of that information upfront. We do summarize that information in our CAPER which is our annual progress report that is done at the end of the year so it would certainly be easy for us to get some of that information and just carry it forward to the next year.

Dollie Bristow: Any other questions (none).

Ok, at this point, we do have certain areas that we really want to hear from you about your needs. You’ve heard our process, you’ve heard how much money we have, you’ve heard how we do business, now we want to hear from you as far as the needs of your community and what you feel is important to the growth for the City Of Columbia. So under decent and affordable housing, if you have comments on that, what you think decent and affordable housing to you, in your area, what do you need and what do you consider decent and affordable housing.

Audience Question/Comment (Regina Williams – Booker Washington Heights): I’ve never had the privilege of being at one of these meetings so I thank you for having me but mine is a comprehensive discussion that I’d like to have about our neighborhood and I can’t just go in and pick out, its comprehensive. I have a presentation. I want to read what I have. I have a presentation for you. I did not know what the format was so I would appreciate it if you would allow me to present my presentation. I would like to say it tonight so that it can be included in the record tonight.

I’m Regina Williams and I’m with the Booker Washington Heights neighborhood and if our people would just raise their hands. We cancelled our community meeting tonight because we saw the need to be here. I also have with me our Bishop from Bibleway and our Councilman and we have a row filled with people who see the need also.

The Booker Washington Heights neighborhood is more than 100 years old. Our neighborhood is one which produced doctors, lawyers, judges, bankers and teachers, such as myself. The neighborhood produced athletes, craftsman, carpenters, plasterers, many of which left their mark on millions of homes and businesses not just in Columbia, not only in South Carolina but across the nation. Our young men and women also left the boundaries of our village, our neighborhood, in order to serve and protect our nation by enlisting in various arms of service. Our parents, grandparents and other ancestors would work long days in the homes of persons across Columbia. Come home, cleanse themselves of the dirt from the homes of others and then walk a carpool to PTO meetings to make sure that their children were being good representations of not only their homes but also of our proud neighborhood, Booker Washington Heights.

As I study the Annual Action Plan of the Community Development department, I found it disheartening to see that while we are mentioned in this plan, there is not a comprehensive plan in

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place which would specifically address the needs of our beloved neighborhood, which has become dismally blighted and a crumbling disheveled eyesore to the City Of Columbia. Booker Washington Heights is a federally targeted area and we have been for a number of years. When asked about the monies that were said came to our area we are continuously told that it went to the Bellfield center. Once again, I see the Bellfield center listed as a possible recipient of funding. While we appreciate what has happened at the center, it will do no good as a center of the community, if the community has collapsed. Therefore, it is with great desire that we make the following requests and that our requests be placed in the official documents for HUD, which distributes these federal dollars. We would like:

- **Infrastructure:** Our water is yellow throughout the neighborhood. This is an immediate need. We have pictures and a few city council meetings ago, money was allocated but it's not supposed to come to our neighborhood until July. We have a daycare, which serves 100 children in that neighborhood and nothing has been done yet.
- **Housing repairs particularly for seniors.** These houses have fallen into further disrepair as a result of the flood, thus my questions about who would receive these monies from the new flood allocation.
- **Lighting for safety**
- **Infill housing and funding for new housing construction**

We also request that in order to impact and change the deteriorating housing pattern in our community, that you specifically give, to the Booker Washington Heights neighborhood, funding from the CDBG and HOME funds. We also request that any other agencies that partner with you, and receive any federal monies, be required to direct and use their monies specifically in the Booker Washington Heights neighborhood.

Thus, this is the request of our neighborhood and I thank you for listening.

Dollie Bristow: Thank you. Okay, do we have any more questions or comments?

Audience Question/Comment: What do you mean when you ask what, to me, is affordable...?

Response from Dollie Bristow: What are the needs for your community when it comes to affordable housing? Is it infill housing, is it rental housing, is it home repair? Those are the types of items.

Audience Question/Comment: Could we address the issue of permitting and maybe stronger enforcement of the rules of whatever happens when people want to refurbish housing...and haphazard repairs and additions and the types of construction that doesn't seem to be made to endure?

Response from Dollie Bristow: Code Enforcement, certainly.

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Audience Question/Comment: Can we address trashcans? Making some of those available so that there wouldn't be so much trash in the yards and on the street. Simple things. Sidewalks would be good. And bike paths.

Audience Question to the Audience Member: What neighborhood?

Audience Question/Comment: I don't know that it has a name. Two streets behind Eau Claire High School. So between Columbia College Drive and Monticello Road.

Audience Question to the Audience Member: Seminary Ridge?

Audience Question/Comment: If you go further down there's a sign that says Dale Drive but I'm not certain that applies to my neighborhood.

Inaudible Audience Conversation regarding the area.

Audience Question/Comment: There's lots of random dumping so, yes, code enforcement.

Dollie Bristow: Anyone else? Any further questions on housing?

Audience Question/Comment: As Regina mentioned I am the Pastor of Bibleway. What we are dealing with is a lot of boarded up houses and we know that if we allow those houses to remain they are going to be used for other things, which increases crime. We have built this beautiful stadium but, on the way to the stadium, they see some less desirable, undesirable things. So I think that if you're going to do this, and set the backdrop for this kind of wonderful stadium, on the way to the stadium what are we saying about the people that live in this community? We can walk from here to the Booker Heights area. The traffic that comes down this road basically comes off of 277 and passes the Booker Heights area. So certainly in consideration of just, making this a destination spot, you can't get to a destination unless you on the journey and if you're on the journey you're going to pass some things along the way. The iconic to represent the Booker Heights community is certainly one that we see people standing on the corner and all types of things. We have a destination spot but we aren't doing our homework. So, would it be safe to travel here if we don't fix what we got. We've got houses that are boarded up. We've got community homes that are falling apart. We have to let out our baptismal water each week, that I think it critical to me because that's an internal thing, because the water is brown. The rim in our pool is brown. The children in our church can't drink the water because the water is rusted. So we went out and bought a water fountain from Lowe's or Home Depot and we supply it with water each week. This is a critical issue. What they do is they flush the fire hydrant. A Band-Aid for cancer. These things are nice, but what about the infrastructure.

Audience Question/Comment (Nancy Stoudemire): I would just like to speak specifically to the affordable housing issue and to your comment that a lot of data in the report is a lot of data from the housing authority, I would like to say that most people don't know that the Columbia Housing

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Authority and the City Of Columbia, we are independent government agency and we are not a part of the City so when I say this I am not speaking as a city staff person, we are completely different agency, and so we fight for affordable housing all the time. Having said that, one of the issues that I think is a growing issue within Columbia is the availability of one bedroom unit housing. The City's effort to get all this college housing is great but, just to show you how bad the situation has become, the person that we moved into housing today in our one bedroom unit, he applied in 2009. So it's taking 7 years right now if you're a one bedroom person to apply. We still have over 4,200 people on the waiting list right now. And that is just for the public housing. In terms of section 8, I want you to know, and Dollie already knows all of this of course, we are talking about the need for affordable housing and what we are trying to fight for, when we opened up our waiting list on September 15—19, 2014, only a year and a half ago, most people do not realize that we accepted 31,266 applications in that week. So when you're asking about the need for affordable housing, this is why we applaud the City's efforts and all they are trying to do. Yes, we are great partners, we do a lot of stuff together, but right now affordable housing, which is people who are paying more than 30% of their monthly income are there, but one bedroom housing is becoming very hard to find in the City Of Columbia right now.

Audience Question/Comment: Is someone recording these comments?

Response from Dollie Bristow: Yes

Audience Question/Comment: Just want to get it on the record there because I say it all the time.

Audience Question/Comment (Diane Sumter): I'd like to put on the record too, my office is on Richland Street, the homeless, in a huge manner live behind the office. Not only my office at night, they use the cubicle of the next door building, they put their soap on the ledges. And we continually call the city, trying to get some help, but they have no place to sleep. And many of them are mentally ill. So when you're looking at doing this plan and we are looking at the area we need to acknowledge that Columbia has a huge mentally ill homeless population that we need to try to find housing for other than behind the commercial business buildings, which then leads to hazards for some of its employees. And the area around it is very unclean.

Response from Dollie Bristow: Ok. Anyone else?

Audience Question/Comment: To your comment about numbers, I'm with Trinity Housing and St. Lawrence Place, which is Jones-McDonald neighborhood, we have 55 families on our waiting list right now and these are families who are working with one or more children under the age of 18, who are doubled up living in cars or elsewhere. And to Booker T. Washington Neighborhoods point what we are going to do is take the houses that are boarded up and dilapidated and try to reinvent/reinvest and give these families places to live that is affordable. They are working. It's just that they are working 20-30-40 hours minimum wage and are single and have 4 children, so you cannot afford a \$1,000 apartment, or a \$900 apartment. So I think what we all have to do is

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work in partnership, let it just be a city for a change. Use the fill in, use the mindset of using what we have that may be vacant, may be boarded up, may be falling in and putting it to good use. Using these funds and then finding the right, deserving people to be in them. Cause I can tell you I have 54 who if I looked at them and said “pay rent” they would pay rent. They aren’t looking for a free house to stay in. So when we talk about the affordable housing piece, the numbers are there to support it as far as the need, as far as who can go in it and as far as the systems in place to make sure that it’s being used for what it’s for. So there is the input on that, as far as the neighborhoods working together. I live in a whole different neighborhood from where I work and I consider (inaudible).

Audience Question/Comment: Who is responsible for Section 8 housing standards? I ask because my other hat, I see people who are seeking assistance for rent and utilities and when they start describing the houses they are living in and when I talk to the landlords that they are renting from, the rent seems to be disproportionate for the quality of the house in general, and then they pile on, the landlord piles on by not providing things like insulation, double pane windows, things that would help keep the costs down. And actually just being more responsible and making the houses better to live in. Is there any requirement anywhere that would give them incentive to do that?

Response by Nancy Stoudemire: First off let me say that the misnomer of the Section 8 program is it is a rental assistance program. It’s kind of like food stamps. When you go to the grocery store and you need help paying for groceries you get SNAP to help pay for grocery. The same thing with Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, it helps you pay your rent every month. Second thing is, before we go and issue a check for anything under the Housing Choice Voucher program we have to do an inspection. It has to comply with city code. So even though you may feel like the apartment may not be up to standard I can tell you that every unit under a housing choice voucher does meet code and does meet housing quality standards. Those units are inspected once yearly. If there’s a complaint about a unit we can do midterm inspections at any time. One of the things I like to tell people is that section 8 housing choice vouchers improve your neighborhoods in a way because they are mandated that those units stay up to code. Guess what, if you don’t keep the house up to code we stop the rent payment. So it’s not an incentive to the landlord, they won’t get their rent checks at the beginning of the month. And just for the record, we send their rent checks every month, direct deposited, so there is an incentive for the landlords to go do that. The biggest thing about section 8 right now is that the cost of housing is really going sky high here in Columbia. Most people don’t realize that for a 4 bedroom unit, the fair market rent is \$1,254 a month, and that includes rent and utilities. That’s a lot of money. A 3 bedroom is I think \$1,059 or something like that. I’m not in that area so I can’t speak to those numbers exactly but I can tell you, that’s one of the problems people are having right now, do you know how many section 8 vouchers we have in Richland County? The number is 4,000. We are helping 4000 families in Richland County right now. So that’s a lot of people and a lot of people looking for affordable housing. What happens sometimes is they go above those rents, and you can’t rent those units or whatever. So, there is an incentive to the landlords to participate in the programs. If you have a unit that you feel like something’s going on, first of all, its owned by a landlord and you can complain to that landlord. It’s listed in the Richland county tax. The city

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councils efforts to go and try and get the landlords to be responsible for the houses they rent is (inaudible) but I can tell you on the housing authorities efforts, if they're not meeting code we stop the case.

Audience Question/Comment: But there is some tension there though, because you can complain but doesn't that ultimately do the client a disservice because now the landlord may want to get rid of that person. We can't be certain that there won't be retribution and we know that there's no place else for them to go. So we really do have to tread carefully and that's why I was just wondering if you... (Cut off by next talker).

Response from Nancy Stoudemire: Can I just say one thing. Everybody thinks that every house that isn't being taken care of is a section 8 unit. And it's just amazing when people call in and we have to protect the confidentiality of our clients, but at the same time, not every poorly management unit is section 8.

Audience Question/Comment (Councilman Davis): I think that your challenge is, in terms of confidentiality, you cannot determine, unless you really know, if someone is on section 8 or any other rent subsidy program. But this week we passed the new ordinance, landlord tenant (inaudible). If there is a concern about the condition of a house in the neighborhood and report that. Get the address and so forth and send the code enforcement out there. The law says, just because a person complains about the conditions you provide for them, you don't automatically have the right to put them on the street. The tenant has a right also. And the tenant has some responsibility also, that's in the ordinance.

Audience Question/Comment: I think that there's some tremendous infrastructure needs in this area. We can be very specific. Booker Washington is one of those areas. But there are many areas that are infrastructurally insufficient. The idea, the whole notion, of affordable homes, says that me that, and I think we have to draw a delineating line, are we talking about affordable homes as it relates to property, purchasing a property, building up from the ground, single residence or are we looking for basic and trying needs, that will say to the community, we want to do something in Columbia that will provide housing. I want to shy away from "affordable housing", "low income housing". Folks need someplace to live, and that living space should be in service. Where it's infrastructurally sound. Where we don't have brown water or blue water or polka dot water but water and sidewalks. I think that we're going to have to look at this thing holistically. And I want to say housing. And I'd like to see persons, in houses, where they work hard every day and they get to come home and its home for them. But it can't just be houses it has to be home for them. Does that make sense?

Response from Dollie Bristow: Yes sir, one of the projects on the plate with HOME projects coming up and, Ms. Saeed, you may want to speak towards Workforce Housing, I think we called it Workforce Housing. Housing that is for those that work every day and making it livable and having those very things that you talked about, the infrastructure, comprehensively, those things that are appealing that everyone wants in their neighborhood. So Ms. Saeed would you like to chime in on that.

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Audience Question/Comment (Gloria Saeed): Just briefly, and I was listening instead of doing all the talking, but what Councilman McDowell is speaking of is what a lot of people grapple with, and it's the word affordable. When you say affordable housing, oftentimes it has a negative connotation, in terms of what that means, as if it's something that, if it's in your neighborhood it's going to bring it down. That's really not the case. We start calling it different things whether that's workforce housing. I agree with you I wish we could just call it housing. Whether its rehab or new construction or single family homeownership or whether it's simply rental, we just need housing. And at the end of the day it just needs to be decent, safe and sanitary housing. And if it's in neighborhoods and its well-kept and its quality then that's an asset, in my opinion, now when you get to landlords and things of that nature, that's a whole 'nother story. Because everyone is responsible, to some degree, whether it's the tenants or the landlord, of maintaining the property and being held accountable for how it looks. I mean, I take care of my house. And I'm buying it. But neighbor doesn't do such a good job. So for me, I don't see the difference whether its rental or single family homeownership, as long as it's decent and it's well kept is what's important, and it's just quality housing.

Audience Question/Comment: I was just wondering. I had the privilege, some 25 years ago, when they redeveloped Lyon St./ St. Anna's that we ended up doing something in that area and then we were finished in that area we moved to a different area. What I'm looking at with these funds here, are you going to be able to do something City-wide with, and the gentleman asked earlier as to what the effectiveness of what you've been doing been measured, because if you're doing the Lyon street neighborhood and the booker Washington and another neighborhood, how long are these funds going to last to make a real difference and what does the word Block Grant mean? Can you help me with that?

Response from Dollie Bristow: I can. Projects, redevelopment, is not done overnight, it's done in phases. We will take the Lyon Street, for instance, neighborhood, the investment that has gone into that area, the 6 houses that Ms. Saeed just developed. The housing authority is getting ready to do some houses in that area too. Couple that with Gonzalez Gardens which is about to come down. Now you see, comprehensively, it didn't happen overnight but those funds came from different pots, different sources of funding. Some of that funding, the infrastructure, the roads have been done on Lyon Street with CDBG funds but Ms. Saeeds houses they were done using HOME funds. So it takes comprehensively and over time. And that didn't happen overnight. Even St. Anna's park which has been renovated, that was done with CDBG funds. So there's been investment piece by piece. But you see, over time, that neighborhood is changing, and it will change, just as it did with some of the other examples.

Audience Question/Comment: And my statement was not to be critical but to help people in this room understand that it is phases. And you get to expect that all this change is going to happen in your neighborhood at one time and it's not. And I empathize with you. It sounds like big numbers but when you spread it out over what I heard the housing authority say their needs were and their waiting list, where does all this money go? (Rhetorical)

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Audience Question/Comment (Councilman Davis): I think the bottom line, what he's saying (inaudible), with all that, no matter how large the area is you still can make comparisons in the city and the perception really about where the resources going, but the bottom line is you have to get started everywhere, you don't put one area on hold. There's enough that you can do in every area of the city. Other than that, you'd still have portions or part of the city wasting and that's not the way to do it. You've got to plant seeds and do things in every part of the city.

Audience Question/Comment: my question is, since we have Ms. Stoudemire in here and folks from the city and the housing authority, since I live in the Allen Benedict court community, I'd like to know what's the future for Allen-Benedict court.

Response from Nancy Stoudemire: You know we're tearing down Gonzalez Gardens. I can tell you in this room I guess that we are already, we are very fortunate; we are developing a plan, for Gonzalez Gardens already to get housing back there. We have 280 apartments at Gonzalez Gardens. We have already moved 101 families in just a month and a half, which I think is tremendous but it's taken a lot of hard work on a lot of people to do this. So we have about 160 more to go. A lot of them are going to be absorbed. We're not moving anyone off of public housing. You should see Gonzalez Gardens demolished by the end of the year. And we've already got two funding possibilities for phase 2 of Gonzalez Gardens which will be single family homes and an elderly high-rise. After we finish Gonzalez Gardens, we have already put in a request to tear down Allen Benedict court. And like Councilman Davis said, these things take time, it took us 4 years to get approval for Gonzalez and get coordinated but when we got the word on December 18 we didn't waste any time. So, Allen-Benedict court is there, it's coming, it's the last one. And when you talk about development communities, I don't think anyone complains about the new Celia Saxon homes, with Drew Wellness center in there. We get phone calls all the time; everyone wants to move in there. And there's all levels of housing and diversity in there which is why I think it works. Rosewood Hills, that's the same way it is, and that's exactly what we are going to do for Allen Benedict Court and Gonzalez Gardens and you will see that, after I am gone and retired from the Housing Authority (laughter).

Audience Question/Comment (Councilman Davis): The old model stigmatized you. You are either poor and in a poor area. Low income is a derogatory term. The most successful ones are where we had mixed income.

Audience Question/Comment: Those structures that you are demolishing, you are not replacing them with good sound structures. Yes they look good but people can just push the doors in. I'm living in a house where I had a break in and the person just pushed the door in. I know you're tearing down those structures but they are sound structures.

Response by Nancy Stoudemire: I agree that Gonzalez Gardens was built like fort knocks but look for, in the media; in June we are going to have an open house. Ill be there, come talk to me, and see if you don't agree that those need to be torn down.

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Dollie Bristow: We talked about housing, heard some infrastructure needs, neighborhood sustainability, public facilities is one, is there any comment on economic development?

Audience Question/Comment: Well, I'm not going to miss that opportunity. If we could look at the neighborhoods that's already designated and decide that for those neighborhoods we are going to do 2 things:

- Hire people from those neighborhoods to work in the projects around. That's going to help job creation and it's going to give revenue and funds
- The 2nd thing, we are going to mandate and put in every contract that they use a person from district one or district two as their employees. They are going to hire employees if they are going to renovate, do housing infill, we need to mandate that employees be hired. And we need to use local, minority owned businesses. That's going to create economic development in a huge way and begin to build a city with the people who are receiving the benefit so everybody benefits.

Audience Question/Comment: You know this goes back to the gentleman's question about what would happen with Gonzalez Gardens. There was an Effay Johnson plan that I went to the presentation of the plan. As I recall it was populated with senior high-rises and single family homes and there may have been live/work situations where there were businesses below and living up top. Especially in situations where people don't have transportation it's important to have opportunities for work close by. There seem to be two distinct needs that I've heard and one is the opportunity to have feedback about what the communities needs are on a regular basis and whether that's an annual survey of neighborhoods or neighborhood leaders, so that's one. The other thing is especially a master plan of what the vision is for the area. No one wants to be in the dark about what's happening so as much information as people know, this is what we are proposing. It would be nice for people to know, "ok, if it's not happening today it will happen in a year or two or it will be phased in". So those are just two things that I think would be nice.

Response by Dollie Bristow: and I appreciate that comment and that feedback. That's one of the things I would like to recommend to neighborhoods if they are really interested in the planning process. The city is going through its land use development process right now, they are re-writing that. So if you're interested in what's going on then I would suggest that that would be a good vehicle for our neighborhoods to access our planning and zoning departments.

Audience Question/Comment: one of the issues, I attend almost every city council meeting and if I hadn't been at that meeting I wouldn't know about this land use plan. And when I asked city people about it they will say it's on the website. Well I work all day and I don't do city business on Richland Ones time. So I don't know if there's a better way to get that information out. I know you send it to CCN and neighborhood presidents; maybe my name isn't on it. I didn't even know about this meeting, someone told me about it. Thank you for that recommendation that's one thing I did not say, in the Booker Washington Heights neighborhood, when we are funded or when a plan

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is put in place I hope that we would get periodic updates on the status of what's happening in our community, because this plan has already been done. This master plan or consolidated plan that's already in place. (The consolidated plan). If you don't look and research and dig...

Response by Dollie Bristow: That plan also goes through the same process that we're doing. It went through it in 2015.

Audience Question/Comment (Councilman Davis): You're right. (inaudible). Of this group we can counter areas or neighborhoods as representatives. This is not a representative group. But you do have the right to request that one of the councilmembers or even the staff come to your neighborhood and present. The rewrite, right now, is going on on the zoning. The codes. Those codes haven't been revised. They've been kind of amended but not revised, in 30 years. So that's going to change again how you deal with infill housing, sidewalks and all that, which is really going to impact the neighborhood. So before that is finalized, ask the staff to come out and present it. We have the obligation to come to a neighborhood. Everyone may not have access to the internet but they do have concern over their property, for construction going on. So, bottom line, request it.

Audience Question/Comment: Because before we can do anything in the neighborhood some of those zoning things may have been changed. And we would not know that a house has been changed from residential 1 to RC2 and all of that, and the homeowners don't often know that. And I know it's not supposed to be like that. And that changes how you all are going to come into Booker Washington Heights. You know, some of those places we thought we could put homes, may be commercial now.

Response by Dollie Bristow: And that's why I stated making sure that you do your, as a neighborhood, if you're seeking to do a plan and you have a comprehensive vision, those are the areas that you need to consult. They will come to your community.

Audience Question/Comment: Yes, we spoke with Mr. Phelps and he is going to.

Audience Question/Comment (Councilman McDowell): May I just make a statement? I think where we are right now, in order to ascertain the information, or get some of the information that we need to make a plan do-able. We need the kind of conversation in our communities. You have a good resource person right back here, Diane Sumter. And Ms. Saeed and you Dollie. There are resources there that can help communities put together plans that could very well collaborate themselves each to the other. And we walk away with something for every community that is doable. And we just don't continue to talk about what we want to do. There are resources, and I think the most valuable resources, of course is that, when a village comes together, we come together in a way that we want our area, our different, Sam has a number of communities in his district, I have 23 in mine, there are issues in each one of those districts. How do we come together, sit down as a community meeting with a facilitator perhaps, not everybody doing them on the same day or at the same time? But everyone coming together and doing this together and coming up with

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a plan that is very palatable and very doable. I think for us to just continue to talk about it. You know I've heard so many acronyms tonight I just want to raise my hand and say "what is GDOT" or whatever it is. I just think it's very needful. I think, particularly, while there are needs in Edgewood, while there are needs in Booker Washington, while there are needs in Pinehurst, all over the city, and Sam can do the same thing. We need a plan for all over the city that's applicable, doable and that has a time parameters because if we don't set time parameters we are just going to continue to talk, water is going to continue to get brown, houses are going to continue to be dilapidated and the housing issue will just be a housing issue and not something being done about it. So I think it would be in our interest to talk to presidents in reference to their community groups and let's do some prioritizing in those areas.

Audience Question/Comment: This speaks to economic development, when the city is negotiating its contracts with Time Warner and AT&T if consideration could be given to their infrastructure so that the service can be better for those of us who work from home. It seems like a small thing but the service really is not up to snuff. Internet service goes out regularly. And as a grant writer when you're trying to upload a grant.

Audience Question/Comment: My recommendation or request has to do specifically with HOPWA, I was looking at the scope of services for individuals that will be presented as a recommendation and I only see one entity that would be dealing with what I would define in the scope of emergency. In the past two weeks alone, I have been addressed by individuals with HIV/AIDS who have lost the roof that was over their head, and I don't say home, I say the roof that was over their head that day. There is nowhere that I have identified just yet within the opportunities that are being funded for any of these funded entities to provide emergency, not emergency as defined here as short term emergency (STRMU). A short term emergency is when I'm stopped outside of a restaurant by a person living with HIV who just lost their housing two hours ago. And there's nowhere I can send them. No one I can refer them to within the cadre of providers that are here. If they come in during the day there might be some assistance but I know, nowhere in this city, for those who are funded with HOPWA to provide a unique opportunity for people who are un-housed to find an emergency place to be at night. And the reason that's important is because those people are usually on medication, and they lose their housing and then they are on the street. They lose access to their property, which includes medicine. Then they move into survival mode. Then they act in a way that could put the community at risk because then they start trying to leverage "how am I going to get a roof over my head tonight" and in too many cases they end up acting out in risk ways that puts the community in jeopardy so I am requesting, for those entities that are funded for HOPWA that they seriously look at, beyond just what's comfortable for them, during the hours that's comfortable for them, that they create a program or a funding stream out of what you have allocated to them that is specifically for individuals that present to one of our organizations so that we can get them at least a bed, until we can triage them during the day to one of these providers who can provide some kind of stable situation, even if it's just short term.

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Response by Dollie Bristow: So you're looking for some kind of hotline situation?

Audience Question/Comment: Not just a hotline but a hotline that leads to a bed. Because they are coming out of hospitals, hospitals are putting them out and they are just out. They are coming out of prison settings and they are just out. They are living with someone, they are really homeless they are just living on someone's couch and they end up displaced and now they are out on the street.

Response by Nancy Stoudemire: You may not realize that, the City Of Columbia funds the Columbia Housing Authority, 15 units for persons with AIDS and we work 8:30-5 but I'm usually there till 7 o'clock. I have 5 openings right now.

Audience Question/Comment: I need your card but the 2nd thing I'd say is that after 5 is what I am referring to. After 5 and until the housing authority opens up is when they barter and they put the community at risk at night. And there's no one that I can call and get that person help for the night.

Response by Dollie Bristow: right now as it stands the only place that does, for any person that is homeless, is transitions. We do fund them. For this year, it's for case management.

Audience Question/Comment: and I might be ignorant but when I filled out this survey, one of the things I wrote is that if we had designated places for people with disabilities, HIV being one of the disabilities that would qualify. I know when I asked one entity if they have units specifically for HIV, I don't know if that was the intent. What I don't know about transitions is if they have a specific number of spaces, that I could have called at 5, and say "I have this person that has been displaced..."

Response by Dollie Bristow: And I think that's a conversation that needs to happen. And we at the city can help facilitate that.

Audience Question/Comment: can you elaborate on the funds that the city has for rental property. My daughter went to apply for a loan from the city and she was told she had to pay \$1,000 on up before she could even get a loan. Why is that? The city wants you to fix up the property but when you want to get money from the city you have to pay before you can borrow money.

Response by Dollie Bristow: ok, so your daughter owns the property and she's renting it out?

Audience Question/Comment: Yes.

Response by Dollie Bristow: Ok, the P.E.A.R. program. It's a rental repair program. We require investors to have investment into the property. It is a loan but it's a very low interest loan. If you're an investor you're making money on the property and you need to have some investment and I think it's only 5% of the loan.

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Audience Question/Comment: I understand what you are saying but you aren't making any money off the property until it's the property is renovated and it's rented out so why are they wanting the money up front.

Response by Dollie Bristow: Because you have to have investment in the property.

Audience Question/Comment: Ok.

Audience Question/Comment: You know, just sitting here, it feels like we are talking about millions and millions of dollars that we have to distribute among all the agencies that need this money. It also feels like the agencies that already got this money, they are at the top of the list. But the young lady here that she is referring to, and the other neighborhoods, they aren't getting anything because this little bit of money here is going to ones that's already established. We all want a piece of this money and it doesn't even come close to \$2 million so it seems like we will all get a dollar each and then we can rebuilt our housing? It seems like we have to have a plan and we have to know what's going on in order to make a plan. It's all good that people are throwing things out at you and that's all good but when we leave here tonight, what really has been accomplished but there's not a lot of funds and it seems hard. I'm not understanding.

Response by Dollie Bristow: that's the issue. Because everyone wants the best things for your community. And you have the right to say what you want. You pay taxes and you live here. Everyone wants to have a livable, safe community. But funds are limited. So therein lays the issue. How do we come up with a plan? How do we take this little bit of money and leverage other dollars? There are resources in your communities. One of the tasks that I have had, doing community assessments. What's in your own resources? You have lots of things that are there. You have businesses. You have the faith community. You have all types of resources in your own neighborhood. You started off, Ms. Williams, with all of the people in your neighborhood. So learning to leverage all of the resources within your community and then developing a plan and then coming to the city with "This is what we want to do, how are you going to help us?"

Audience Question/Comment (Ms. Williams): I preferenced by comments to tell you that we came from a thriving community. We are no longer thriving so we no longer have those resources. Those people are dead and gone but they were there and we were a thriving community at one point.

Reponses from Dollie Bristow: Everyone in your community has a circle of influence. You do business with banks, with laundry, with grocery stores... You have a circle of influence so using your influence with your community will build your community resources, I promise you. It does work. We want these communities to be sustainable. If we give you \$100,000,000 and you do what you want to do, 20 years from now what happens. If you're not sustainable and you don't learn how and you're not self-sufficient, how do you sustain your communities?

Audience Question/Comment: I totally agree with you. And we are going to work with you to make that happen.

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Audience Question/Comment (Councilman McDowell): that's why it's crucially important that communities sit around the table, during community meetings. I wish we had \$100million and we wouldn't have to go through this little penny annie stuff. We have resources in Columbia. In my district and, of course, in Sam's district, that can help facilitate that kind of conversations within communities. It's not going to happen tomorrow, but incrementally it's going to happen. What's going to happen is you're going to be an investor in whatever takes place in that community. But we need a meeting place, every community, there ought to be some conversation about prioritizing. And presidents oughtta get together and put that together with a facilitator and present it to the city.

Audience Question/Comment: Let me say how pleased I am with what you are doing. And I know others say you get paid to do what you do, but I understand that what you are doing here tonight is trying to be in compliance with what the federal government is asking you to comply with so that you can continue to get funds. And it's important to me that I be able to say that because sometimes we come expecting to get funds and not understand that you made a larger request than what you were given and they wanted to make sure that you informed the community and the better informed we are and the better plan we bring back, when you go back to appeal for next year then we have an opportunity to appeal for greater resources. And I just think you've done a fantastic job tonight and in many other meetings that I've seen you in, doing what it is that you do, trying to comply. This is a mandate from the federal government that you, the City, make sure you have these public hearings otherwise you don't get the little bit that you are trying to get and I just want to say kudos to you and your staff.

Audience Question/Comment: As a matter of next step, and with the next step also identifying how those funds can be used in district one and two so we can begin to see the turn. Now we know you've been doing a lot of things for a long time, it's just hard to see. And I know Booker Washington Heights, Ms. Bellfield raised me there, I know it backwards, so it's my heart's desire that we see some of these funds not just with the name, not just with the center, but we do some of those things that Ms. Williams was speaking about but we take some of this money now, while we are planning, we can go ahead and make some of those changes.

Response by Dollie Bristow: I certainly thank everyone for coming on tonight. In conclusion of this meeting, all of your comments will be a part of the official action plan that goes in, and it is an official record and that's what we want. We want to hear from you. We want your comments.

There will be another public hearing. It will be at the City Council meeting and it will be held on May 3rd at 6pm.