

**Institutional Structure**

Human Relations Commission- The City reactivated the Commission, hired Fair Housing Specialist, and completed new Analysis of Impediments. In addition, a five-year plan to address impediments identified almost completed. The City approached Allegany County concerning development of County-wide Commission. Many employment and housing related contacts are received from County residents. The County to date is not willing to join with the City in this effort. The County feels that their current system of referrals to State Human Relations Commission is sufficient. City staff and Commission members will work on this issue during next year as to possibilities of changing minds at the County level.

City staffing gaps- The new Economic Development Strategic plan calls for addition of Economic Development staff and includes the need for a City planner. This position would provide for coordination of planning needs and provide better direction related to City long-term direction. The City Comptroller also sees need for a fiscal grants staff person as the City receives many grants and current tracking is sometimes difficult as to financial requirements.

Infrastructure planning needs- The City has a need to develop a coordinated planning structure related to infrastructure needs. A process needs to be developed to insure targeting of highest priority needs within the City related to conditions, costs, and funding source requirements. A mechanism is needed to complete a City-wide prioritization process and more efficiently utilize available resources.

Fair Housing Impediments Implementation Committee- A coordinating mechanism is needed to undertake needed actions related to increased homeownership for minorities and to identify accessibility issues related to housing and infrastructure. This group could assist with project development, increase lender involvement, and to undertake educational and marketing activities to the disabled and minority populations.

Organizational Relationship with Cumberland Public Housing Authority - the PHA is a semi-autonomous organization with its own board of directors. Directors are appointed by the Mayor and City Council. Directors have a wide range of autonomy and hire the Executive Director. PHA operates independently related to all personnel issues to include compensation, hiring, and firing. PHA complies with all consistency requirements related to the con plan, requests and undertakes CD projects, and participates on CHSC. City of Cumberland in the past has funded playground and the EXCEL program. City Section 8 has supported summer youth activities when offered.

Over the next five years, the City will assist related to planned initiatives for the potential proposed Benjamin Banneker project which would include demolition of the structure and provision of new or renovated replacement housing. In addition, the PHA wishes to replace the Fort Cumberland homes facility and provide scattered housing in the Gay and Glenwood Street areas. This will require acquisition, demolition, and construction of new housing. All of these projects mentioned must be carefully done as areas impacted are areas of minority concentration. In addition, relocation, displacement issues, acquisition, and historic issues are present related to these activities. PHA is in initial development process at this point. Also, funding approvals for substantial funding requests will be necessary to support projects of this size.