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## ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

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The Fayette County Housing Consortium is a collaborative effort among public, private, and non-profit organizations to address housing planning issues in Fayette County and promote and facilitate improved and fair housing opportunities for County residents. Membership is open to any public, private, or non-profit organization which is interested in Fayette County housing, including:

- Fayette County Office of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development
- Fayette County Redevelopment Authority
- Fayette County Housing Authority
- Fayette County Community Action Agency
- Fayette County Economic Development Council
- Uniontown Redevelopment Authority
- Connellsville Redevelopment Authority
- Threshold Housing Development, Inc.
- Fayette County Board of Realtors
- Fayette County Homebuilders Association
- Fayette Chamber of Commerce
- Area Mortgage Lenders

The specific goals of the Fayette County Housing Consortium include:

- Providing a forum to facilitate discussion of member agency activities, projects, and housing issues.
- Serving as the planning / advisory group designed to address housing issues in Fayette County.
- Establishment and promotion of public-private-non-profit housing partnerships.
- Maintaining the responsibilities of the County's Community Housing Resource Board (CHRB), which engages in efforts to promote Fair Housing opportunities.
- Development of a County-wide Housing Market Analysis.

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## HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

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During several planning meetings of the Consortium, member organizations discussed a myriad of housing issues which are integral to continuing the positive development of Fayette County. Based on these discussions, the Consortium realized that while several different member organizations maintained data and analysis of housing issues specific to their programs and activities, the County lacked an overall comprehensive evaluation of the current supply of housing in Fayette County. Further, no planning documents existed which analyze the current and future housing needs within Fayette County.

Particular attention was paid to the housing sections of the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. While these sections do contain some basic data regarding the County's housing stock, this data is based in large part on 1990 U.S. Census figures. The County's Office of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development indicated that the scope of this section was intentionally reduced due to the lack of funding for the overall plan. However, this reduction took place only in anticipation of the completion of a County-wide Housing Analysis. Once this analysis is completed by the Consortium, it is anticipated the study will be adopted by the County to comprise the housing portion of the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

## **GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

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Fayette County is located in southwestern Pennsylvania 45 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. Its boundaries include the Monongahela River to the west and the State of West Virginia to the south. As reported by the 2000 U.S. Census, Fayette County consists of approximately 60,000 households and has a total population of 148,644 (representing a 2.3 percent increase from 1990). The County consists of 42 separate municipalities - two (2) cities, sixteen (16) boroughs, and twenty-four (24) townships. The County is mostly rural in nature with the Cities of Uniontown and Connellsville being the major population centers. Only two other communities, North Union Township and South Union Township, have populations in excess of 10,000.

## **GENERAL SCOPE OF THE ANALYSIS**

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The general purpose of the Fayette County Housing Market Analysis is to provide a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the County's existing housing supply and to provide analysis of the County's current and future housing needs. The initial evaluation of the County's existing housing stock will include detailed documenting and review of the following:

- quantity and availability of housing units by housing type (public and assisted housing, single- and multi-family units, elderly housing (including assisted living and personal care facilities), etc.);
- location and general condition of existing housing stock within the County;
- housing market trends including homeownership rates, rent levels and vacancy rates, home sales prices, and new construction activities;
- area demographics, comparing 1990 Census figures, applicable projections, and 2000 Census figures;
- comparison of local data with regional (southwestern Pennsylvania / northcentral West Virginia), state, and national data;
- anticipated future economic growth and regional position issues which effect housing; and
- qualitative factors which influence housing (i.e. how stakeholders view the County's existing housing stock and future housing needs).

Following this initial evaluation, a housing market analysis will be conducted which identifies any housing needs within Fayette County (i.e. need for market rate rentals, low- moderate- and high-income homeownership opportunities, cooperative housing, elderly assisted housing and personal care facilities, etc.). In addition, this analysis will include identification of local, state, and federal barriers, including regulatory, which effect the positive development of housing in the County and relate the analysis to the County's existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

It is anticipated that this analysis will then be utilized to recommend leadership and resource policies that will address the County's current and future housing needs. (This specific component of the analysis will be completed by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) Nonprofit Clinic.)

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

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Certain components of the Analysis will be completed by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) Nonprofit Clinic. The components to be completed by GSPIA include:

- Technical advise relating to the evaluation, selection, and orientation of consulting firms responding to this Request for Proposals (RFP); and
- Design and implementation of an applied policy research study using the information generated from the Housing Market Analysis and other secondary data. This project component will result in a written document that will provide actionable policy-relevant information that may be used by the Consortium and other County officials in developing policies relative to future housing development in the County.