

Post-Purchase Educational  
Counseling  
Program for the City of Lowell,  
Massachusetts

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Approved by:

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## Table of Contents

I.	Abstract.....	3
II.	Executive Summary.....	5
III.	Community Needs Assessment.....	7
IV.	Statement of the Problem.....	10
V.	Project Design/Logic Model.....	20
VI.	Project Implementation.....	25
VII.	Monitoring & Evaluation.....	31
VIII.	Conclusions & Recommendations.....	41
IX.	Tables and Appendices.....	43
X.	Bibliography.....	63

## **I. Abstract**

### **Post-Purchase Educational Counseling Program for the City of Lowell, Massachusetts**

**Elkin Montoya**

One of the biggest investments for an individual or a family is the purchase of their first home. The purchase of a home has two major benefits. One, it provides the homeowner shelter for the family, and second, the house provides the homeowner an opportunity to build wealth. Lowell has seen a substantial increase of foreclosed properties and an unemployment rate of over 10 percent. There are many factors contributing to the increase in the delinquency and the foreclosure rates among low-to moderate-income residents of Lowell has become a major problem in the city.

This project report presents the argument that the Post-Purchase Educational Counseling is beneficial to first time buyers. Post-Purchase Education helps homeowners manage their new asset, and it assists homeowners in making decisions that helps them to be more financially astute, thus preventing delinquency and foreclosure.

In a series of seminars, lectures will be presented by professionals in the fields of personal finances, home improvement, insurance, and asset building. They will teach new homeowners how to maintain their home and will share financial management information, and become responsible homeowners. Lectures will be divided into two sessions per month and the participants will be awarded a certificate upon completion. Classes will be held on a monthly basis, and participants will be provided with pertinent handouts and homework.

Post-purchase education counseling studies have shown that the delinquency rate is reduced and the risks of foreclosures are minimized significantly among low-moderate income communities. This program is an intervention for preventing delinquency and foreclosures in the inner-city communities.

In conclusion, one of the short-term goals of this proposal is to make Post-Purchase Education an extension of the pre-purchase program. Another goal is to show that Post-Purchase Education is beneficial to homeowners in Lowell, teaching them how to preserve their new assets. In addition, this program will benefit the City of Lowell by preventing the devaluation of properties in the city, and minimizing the delinquency and the foreclosure rates. Lastly, the long-term goal of this proposal is to demonstrate to the City of Lowell the benefits of the Post-Purchase Program and to have the city adopt the Post-Purchase Education.

## **II. Executive Summary**

The City of Lowell is a city that has gone through many ups and downs since the industrial revolution. The city has been able to survive many economic down turns and has learned to reinvent itself. From the loss of the textile industry in early 1900's to the southern states, the loss of other manufacturing base such as the shoe industry and the high tech industry led by Wang laboratories, the City of Lowell, through the vision of many of its civic leaders and elected officials, has shown the ability to rebound from tough economic times and thrive. Today the City of Lowell is a National Park and has many economic activities ongoing, making the city a model for similar size cities in the U.S. The latest national and state economic crisis led by the housing crisis, has affected Lowell as it has affected most cities in the U.S. with increased foreclosures and unemployment leading the way.

In tough economic times, financial education becomes crucial for the survival of low- and moderate-income families. Homeowners are particularly affected as employment opportunities are either nonexistent, or due to downsizing, their income is diminished. Post-Purchase Education allows the homeowners to learn new skills and acquire knowledge that will help them make sound financial decisions that will help them navigate through turbulent financial times.

Research in homeownership indicates that the City of Lowell has a pre-purchase program and also a foreclosure prevention program but it lacks a post-purchase educational program. While the pre-purchase program teaches the participants about the complicated purchasing process, it does not provide enough information to manage what will most certainly be the biggest asset in their lives. The foreclosure prevention program is an educational program that is helping people after they already have a financial problem and have suffered long-term damage to their credit standing. The post-purchase educational program, however, is a preventive program that will help the homeowner stay free of financial problems.

After literature review, consulting with city officials and other non profits, Post-Purchase Education was clearly identified as a need in the City of Lowell. The Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA) through its Home Preservation Center agreed to partner with this program. The first workshop started on July 13, 2010. The goal was to have individuals primarily come to the workshops, but families were never turned away. If they needed help to maintain their home, the program educated them on how to prevent financial hardship, delinquency and foreclosure.

The Coalition for Better Acre (CBA) sent counselors to be trained at Neighbor Works America (NWA). The NWA is a national organization created many years ago by the United State Congress to help families obtain the “American Dream.” Now, they are working through organization affiliates like CBA to deal with this economic crisis. The NWA provided funding to member affiliates to train their staff and board members in how to take initiatives and create educational programs to help families in crisis. Rasy An and Elkin Montoya were sent to get the proper training and certification to run the Post-Purchase Program.

The program now has completed four workshops and sixty-two individual and families have been instructed in how to avoid delinquency and foreclosure. Outcomes and measured results are moderate because the program is in its early stages, but responses to post participation surveys have been very positive and encouraging. The goal is to have many more families graduating in the future. Sustainability is a challenge for the program as funds are scarce and the economic conditions throughout the country continue to be less than desirable. But the Coalition for a Better Acre is a nationally recognized community development corporation and its track record brings the credibility needed to obtain the necessary funds to maintain the program while the statistics needed are collected to demonstrate the importance and the impact of such a program in the City of Lowell.

### **III. Community Needs Assessment**

#### **Community Context**

Lowell is a city located 25 miles north of Boston, Massachusetts. The total population at the end of 2010 was 106,519. The population has increased when compared to the 2000 US Census, which reported the population of Lowell to be 105,167.

Lowell has gone through a transformation in population in the last 30 years. The change in demographics and diversity has been an asset to the city and the people of Lowell: Immigrants from other countries have brought a variety of ethnicity and cultures that has enriched Lowell's way of life.

The City of Lowell has gone through economic development in the last decade and is still changing. Now, the city has a baseball team, a hockey team, a repertory theater, several museums and galleries. Another change is the diversity of this community. Table 1.1 shows the different nationalities. This table indicates that diversity is increasing in Lowell. The new census track record indicates that the population of Lowell has increased by 1,352 people. The above information is different since 2010 census came out. The modest data obtained from the census report shows a different picture of Lowell. For instance, the numbers for Anglo are down from 72,145 to the new number of 64,240, a decrease of 7,905 or about 11 percent. The Black or African American population went from 4,423 in 2000 to 7,238 in 2010. The increase was about 64 percent. The Asian population went from 17,371 in 2000 to 21,513 in 2010, an increase of about 24 percent. The Latinos went from 14,734 in 2000 to 18,396 in 2010, an increase of about 25 percent. The other groups are up just a little, according to the 2010 census.

Table 2.1 indicates that the population of Lowell is increasing in all the age brackets. Growth has occurred in the ages between 25 and 44 with a total of 30,896. This data is not available in Census 2010 as of this final report. This statistic also points out that the population is getting a little older, as the median years show. Median age in the year 2000 was 31.4, and in 2008 the median age was 34.4. The population is getting older by 3 years. Table 3.1 indicates that the family's households are decreasing by about 7.75

percent and married-couple families are also declining. The table 3.1 in the Appendix gives an indication that the non-family households increased by over 4 percent. The family size is also declining in Lowell as indicated on the same table. The reasons are complex, and more research is needed.

Table 4.1 shows the income distribution in the City of Lowell in 2000, with a “median household income (dollar) at \$39,192” (U.S. Census Bureau 2000 American Factfinder, 2000, p. 2). “The median family income (dollars) was \$45,901” (U.S. Census Bureau 2000 American Factfinder, 2000, p.2). The new figures show that “the median income of households in Lowell was \$50,944” (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, 2006 -2008 American Community Survey 3- Year Estimates). The income for some residents of Lowell is up by about \$5,043.00. This data was not available on the census 2010 at the time of this report.

In 2006-2008, the poverty level in Lowell was “18 percent of people” (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, 2006 -2008 American Community Survey 3- Year Estimates). “Twenty-four percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level compared to 14 percent of people 65 years old and over” (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, 2006 -2008 American Community Survey 3- Year Estimates.) The data also stated that the 37 percent of female householders with no husband are below the poverty level. Families under the poverty level are 16 percent. This data was not available on the census 2010 at the time of this report.

In summary, Lowell is changing for the better. Lowell’s population is more diverse. Lowell High School has about 45 different nationalities. Four years ago, Lowell had the first Asian elected to the city council. There are more immigrants buying homes for the first time and several candidates, who were born outside United States, are running for councils. In addition, Lowell also has several non-profit organizations that are working with City Hall to eliminate poverty in Lowell, and create affordable homeownership or rental units at affordable cost. Some of these organizations are: The Coalition for a Better Acre, Community Team Work, Lowell Housing Authority and several more. Lowell has a Small Business Center that assists people in starting their own



business, and the Lowell Development Financial Corporation that helps big businesses in relocating to Lowell. This organization provides low interest rate loans for capital improvements for businesses. The new non-profit organization, Mill City Financial Investment, was created to help new homeowners with a second loan, technical assistance to maintain the home, and in some cases avoid private mortgage insurance. The city and its non-government partners offer many plans to make the city attractive to individuals and businesses that are planning to relocate to Lowell.

### **Community Profile**

Lowell has a 20-year city master plan it began implementing in the early 1990's. The City of Lowell is on target with all the developments the city had planned. In down town the city redeveloped the old shoe factory and old mill building for malls and lots for arties and galleries. The City and other investors were able to create homeownership for about 1,000 young families, and some affordable rental units for low-moderate income families. The City along with the state delegation and the University of Massachusetts in Lowell (UMASS-Lowell) has transformed the City in a 'must destination', with its many sports, social and cultural events. The City of Lowell even brought Hollywood to film the movie the "Fighter."

In its quest to make the Lowell a destination, the City used economic development as a tool to help bring new businesses and consequently more people to live in the City. The educational portion of this plan is already working as UMASS Lowell Campus and the Middlesex Community College have expanded by purchasing other buildings in the down town area. Lowell has the second largest high school in the state. The percentage of high school graduates is around 80 percent, according to the last census.

The census reported in 2000 that Lowell had about 39,500 housing units with about a little more than 40 percent of homeownership. The City of Lowell has all the tools for growing, but with the economic crisis of 2008 through 2010, the homeownership dream has been transformed, for many families, into their biggest

nightmare. The foreclosure epidemic that has affected the entire country has also hit Lowell very hard. Six non-profit organizations, led by the Coalition for a Better Acre and Community Teamwork came together to create the Home Preservation Center, a center that helps homeowners, at no charge, to try to avoid foreclosures.

#### **IV. Statement of the Problem**

The high incidence of foreclosure in the Merrimack Valley is affecting many individuals, families, businesses, and the community: Foreclosures bring losses, not only to homeowners and their family, but also to banks and other business as well. The number of foreclosures in the City of Lowell has increased by 78 percent from 225 to 401 only during the first seven months of 2010 (Merrimack Valley Housing Report, 2010). Lowell is the city with the fifth most foreclosures in the state of Massachusetts right after Brockton, Springfield, Lawrence and Fitchburg (Understanding Foreclosure in Massachusetts, 2007). When comparing August 2009 with August 2010, Lowell went from 16 foreclosures to 37, which represents an increase of 131 percent in the same month (Merrimack Valley Housing Report, 2010). In the Merrimack Valley only the City of Lawrence has higher numbers than the City of Lowell. Even so with these high numbers Lowell never received funding for a post purchase or foreclosure prevention program.

By addressing this problem Lowell would bring stability to residents, business would become more stable and the city would prosper at a faster pace.

<b>Problem Statement</b>	
<b>Elements</b>	
Target population	First-time home buyers and homeowners at risk of foreclosure
Community name	Lowell and the neighboring cities
Undesirable behavior or state of inaction that the project intends to address	Undesirable behavior in overspending Lack of a family budget Lack in financial literacy that may lead to financial instability or even loss of the home Homeowners with mortgages that may put them at risk of losing their homes
Nature and magnitude of the undesirable behavior; include source	Rate of foreclosures, increase of credit use, increase in delinquent credit, increase in bankruptcy, increase on short sales, increase in homelessness

### **Causes of the problem**

There are different causes to this problem. Among them are lacks of knowledge on budget, income losses, and lack of education after purchasing. The City of Lowell has a downpayment assistance program, which requires participants to take a pre-purchase workshop. There has not been post purchase education in the city. New homeowners face numerous challenges trying to keep up their property, such as:

1. Type of Mortgage: Most of the foreclosures are driven by the subprime loans (Interim Report to Congress on the Root Causes of Foreclosure Crisis, 2009).
2. Job losses: Job losses have also played a role in this crisis (Understanding Foreclosure in Massachusetts, 2007).
3. Housing Market: Many owners owe more than what their property is worth and therefore, are not able to sell their property and are faced with foreclosure (Understanding Foreclosure in Massachusetts, 2007).
4. Financial management: Many owners lack financial education.

5. Maintenance and repairs: As time passes, owners face challenges they did not face as renters. It is now more difficult for them to keep up their property.

These are only some of the issues a post-purchase program is helping to address.

### **Effects of the problem**

The problem has multiple impacts in the community. Values go down, taxes revenues declines, city services are reduced and the downward cycle continues. The downward cycle affects families, communities, and the City negatively. Among the negative impacts are:

1. Reduced capability to keep up with the mortgage and other expenses: Living in their property, new owners face challenges they did not face when renting. This makes it harder to keep up with finances and to increase personal capital.
2. Financial mismanagement: Many homeowners are not educated on how to manage their finances. It is very difficult for many of them to balance their books.
3. Loss of property value: As foreclosures go up, properties values go down. In Lowell, property values went down about 45 percent (Merrimack Valley housing Report, 2010).
4. Increase in crime: Abandoned and vacant homes are magnets for thieves to hide and criminalize the property and the area.
5. Minorities are impacted disproportionately: Blacks and Latinos were much more likely to receive a high-APR loan than their counterpart Whites and Asians. In addition, home purchase and lending was highly concentrated in small towns and cities (Changing Partners XVI, 2010).
6. Community members are more vulnerable to scams: The rise in foreclosure has increased the “foreclosure rescue” business. These companies, who are promising their clients help with their foreclosure situation, are charging upfront fees, cutting off contact with their lenders, making paperless agreements, and even requesting to hand over their deeds. Poor, military and less educated people are more vulnerable (Seven Ways Foreclosure Impacts Communities, 2008).

A post purchase program reduces these impacts in the City of Lowell.

## Stakeholders

Name	Affiliation and/or Relationship to Planned Project
Homeowners	Families who are First-Time Home Buyers,
Home Prevention Foreclosure Center (Rasy An)	Foreclosure prevention coordinator at HPFC. Coordinates workshops, follow up with class participants, part of the marketing team by referring people to the program
Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership (Jim Wilde)	Executive director at MVH. Part of the marketing team providing information about first-time homebuyers who received down payment assistance from the City of Lowell
Mill City Community Investment (Frank Carvahlo)	Executive Director at MCCI. Part of the marketing team. Requires first- time home buyers to take the Post Purchase classes
Coalition for Better Acre (Emily Rosenbaum)	Executive Director at CBA. Provides advice on strategic planning and program implementation
Lawrence Community Work (Juan Bonilla)	Director of Housing at LCW. Part of the marketing team, an advisor of the program
UMASS Lowell (Dave Turcotte)	Professor at UMASS Lowell, presenter at the workshops, Program Advisor
City of Lowell	First year funder of the Post-Purchase Program
This post-purchase counseling program for the City of Lowell is already helping to decrease the number of delinquencies and foreclosures in the city, stabilizing the housing market in the area, and decreasing the number of owners facing foreclosure in the city.	

## **SWOT Analysis**

In this analysis there are different strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Among the strengths of this program is the hosting organization, which is the Coalition for Better Acre (CBA). This organization has been working for the Lowell community for about 28 years. It is well known in the community and has a high credibility.

Among the weakness of the program are lack of funding to hire staff to run the program, and the lack of interest by new homeowners to participate in the Post-Purchase Program after they become homeowners. This program will require diverse staff to reach out to other nationalities in the City of Lowell. Another weakness is the lack of support from financial institutions and insurance companies.

There are new opportunities also. Among these is the opportunity to partner with the City of Lowell and the Commonwealth to bring this program to the communities around Lowell. In addition, partnerships with local banks would lower the delinquency and foreclosure rates, and prevent revenue losses for the bank.

Lastly, there are threats. Other organizations may obtain funding to start a post-purchase program. This could potentially duplicate the same service with less funding available.

## **Literature Review**

Delinquency and foreclosure are two words dreaded in many communities. The high rate of delinquency and foreclosure are concentrated in areas where low-to-moderate income homeowners live. Families are going from what used to be called “The American Dream” to what now is called the American Nightmare.

The impact of early intervention programs like post-purchase counseling and foreclosure prevention, after the initial 30 days delinquency on mortgages has been studied by several researchers. This literature review analyzes the studies and comments of practitioners’ work for the past two decades. They have studied the impact of having

pre-purchase and some post-purchase programs provided to first-time buyers in the areas where low-to-moderate income loans are made (Ding, Quercia, Ratchliffe, 2007). The article also talks about the other factors that explain why delinquency occurred. For instance, economic conditions, environment, type of loan the families were given at the time and the little saving opportunity the homeowner will have after the big investment. One other important factor that this article allows the reader to understand is that the post-purchase program should effectively measure the payment shock by educating the first time buyer on how to minimize the impact by creating saving techniques.

A similar case study done by Todd and Grove in 2005 entitled “Emerging Markets Homeownership Initiative (EMHI)”, explains how this program was created to increase homeownership among the minorities and low-income citizens in Minnesota (Todd & Grove, 2005). The major burden factors for new homeowners were the financial aspects of the home along with the maintenance of the household. Again, the article points out the challenge of these low-income families in having to cope with payment shock. It is believed that the introduction of some educational component to help them deal with the anxiety of the new payment along with the demand to maintain a particular life style would be extremely advantageous. The benefit of not stopping at the pre-purchasing counseling program is an indication that it will reduce the default rate. The author also explored other factors that the homeowner can encounter and how these factors were mitigated by taking the post-purchasing counseling program. This program was especially developed to prepare the homeowners to minimize the impact of maintaining payments of a home. The article provides evidence that post-purchase counseling does work in other cities in the United States. It can also work in the city of Lowell.

The Community Affairs Report 2005-1 provided information on “emerging markets,” it’s the population who wants to be homeowners, but need to learn the skills and the knowledge to buy the first home, and also delved into how Minnesota is trying to improve the homeowner rate in their communities. It explains how the strategy of the post-purchase support program (PPSPs) was developed and how it was implemented to

help reduced the common barriers of sustainable homeownership (Todd & Grove, 2005). This report furnishes details about how immigrants can prevent some delinquency and how they can sustain their home for a long time, even if they do not get involved in a support program early in the homeownership process (Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, dba NeighborWorks America, 2009: *About Post-Purchase Programs and Services*, 2009). The city of Lowell is also a metropolitan city that was impacted by delinquency and foreclosures. One of its major problems was that the order of notice, the first step in the foreclosure process, was increasing by about 58 percent compared to last year. In the city the increase was 121 percent compared to 2008. The report stated that “The time period between the order of notice and foreclosure for Lowell between January and June of 2009 was 148 days (about 4.9 months)” (Howe, Turcotte & Vaillancourt. 2009, p.1). This is an indicator that the rate of delinquency for homeowners was on the rise also in the later part of 2009. While there currently is a first-time home buying educational program established by the Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership, there is no post-purchase program available in Lowell and the adjacent towns. The closest post-purchase program is offered in Lawrence, Massachusetts. One way to improve the Lowell’s undesirable high foreclosure and delinquency rates is to expand on pre-purchase counseling by adding a post-purchase counseling program in the city. Lowell along with non-profit organizations needs to establish more effective programs. The post-purchase program is for those families that are having difficulty making their mortgage payment. The other part of the program is sustainability of the mortgage payment before the homeowner falls into the first time delinquency statistics. This is the way it is presented in the study by Quercia, Gorham and Roche (2006) in "Sustaining Homeownership: The Promise of Post Purchase Services." These authors feel that the post-purchase programs should be providing a fundamental service by helping homeowners to sustain their household especially in communities where immigrants are the majority.

All the readings and research on the subject of post-purchase programs focus on other communities outside Massachusetts, and the way they impact their own State. In trying to find information specifically about Lowell, it was revealed that there are



currently no post-purchase programs offered to new homeowners. However, Lowell does have a Home Preservation Center, but only offers some sort of help to those families that are already having difficulty making their mortgage payments. Several cities in Massachusetts have post-purchase programs funded by Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP). There were however, no solid data in regards to how beneficial the post-purchase programs were. The post-purchase program was a requirement if they felt behind schedule on their payment for the soft second loan program. The MHP is a provider of a soft second loan to the first time home buyer to avoid private mortgage insurance. The establishment of a new post-purchase program in the city of Lowell and the creation of a measurement data output will help other cities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts who have established similar programs. The Home Preservation Center is helping to gather data on the families they have counseled and have taken the post-purchase program with the center. The key for this program to be successful is to keep in contact with the graduates of the post-purchase program. Similar to this, there was a study conducted by the state of Minneapolis and The Saint Paul Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program. The organization was keeping data on the households they were able to help for the previous two years and the data kept included: race/ethnicity, income, purchase price, date of purchase, value at the time of default or foreclosure, date of purchase, type of the mortgage, interest rate, balance, if the individual(s) took pre-purchase counseling, and the situation that lead to a default. The authors of the Minneapolis and Saint Paul Mortgage study also believed that clients were able to utilize both methods of education and come up with a solution. First, they were provided with educational counseling and support services and creative sustainable home ownership. Secondly, they were taught to maintain the value of the home by keeping the neighborhood healthy, beautiful and to keep it revitalized by offering education before, during and after as well as working out problems (if any arise) with the lender (Moreno, 2007).

Working with a national organization like NeighborWorks America, that is funding the type of research that studies the impact of foreclosures on local communities, is an advantageous partnership. The organization also provides funding to Community

Development Corporations and other organizations that are members of their network. This funding goes towards training individuals to get certified in counseling for pre-purchase, post-purchase and mediation to prevent foreclosures in local communities. Two other organizations, Middlesex North Registry of Deeds, and UMass Lowell, are providing a short article on keeping the data on foreclosures up to date in local cities and towns. This is beneficial as the data provided is current and, at worst, only a few weeks old. It provides data from a primary source, The Middlesex North Registry of Deeds, and UMass Lowell. These organizations put together these reports every month for the communities and for all parties interested in these, and in many other economic factors. These factors can then be compared with the state and national trends. The National League of Cities comes out with report promoting what they call “A City Practice Brief” which talks about the negative factors affecting many cities in United States. These negative factors are for instance, the local economy, the loss of jobs, creative loss of income in the household, and perhaps what has affected the majority of communities the most is the loss of home value. All these negative effects have given “challenge to the well-being of communities and neighborhoods and to the fiscal stability of city governments” (A City Practice Brief, 2008, p.1). The report also provides the name of the organizations and the contact information for the representative of each city. This is a valuable resource for homeowners in distress and for first-time homeowners.

Quercia, Cowan and Moreno (2005) developed one of the most significant studies done in the past five years of how organizations should be improving their foreclosure prevention programs. The future of a particular community, like the one in Lowell, depends on a well designed and managed foreclosure prevention program. Quercia, Cowan and Moreno (2005) point out the mistakes of past foreclosure prevention programs and analysis of these pitfalls will help in addressing the issue. The researchers point to the lack of key information and other factors that make the homeowners relapse. The researchers also point out what future studies should address.

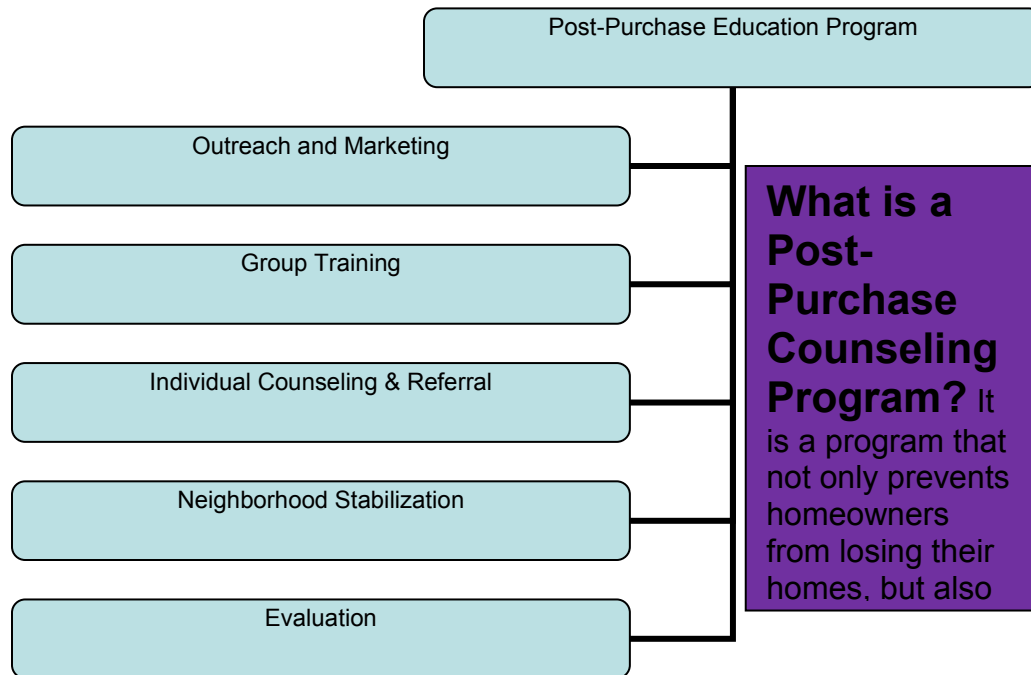
Another recent study is “The Growth of Earnings of Low-Income Households and the Sensitivity of Their Homeownership Choices to Economic and Socio-Demographic

Shocks” done for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research by Donald R. Haurin from Ohio State University and Stuart S. Rosenthal (2005) from Syracuse University. The researchers made several interesting findings. One is that "household earnings among new homeowners typically rise at a relatively rapid rate [...] Families that expect their income to increase are more likely to select into homeownership, and homeownership also may cause households to increase their work effort and income", (p.3). The study even provided an increased percentage of income among new homeowners. The increase came from the new households made up of college graduates and the newly married. Another finding was that there were other factors outside the household, which were uncontrollable. For instance, the two uncontrollable factors were the lack of income opportunities and the decrease in equity of the homes. These were the major challenges of low-to-moderate income new homeowners and their ability to stay in their homes or go back to renting. The researchers were able to conclude that the percentage of sustainability of homeownership increased by the seventh year. This means that the risk of new homeowners losing their first home is less as the years go by and they are able to survive the microeconomic and macroeconomic changes.

The conclusions developed through analyzing each of these works are that the post-purchase program is a necessary element of the educational process for new homeowners. Low-to-moderate income communities and should be strongly encouraged attend such training. The government should make funding available for community-based organizations. Some studies also found inconclusive evidence that the post-purchase program is the only program that will make the homeowner pay on time. A post-purchase education should be viewed as a necessary follow on to the pre-purchase program. The combination of the two programs plus additional individual financial counseling will help reduce the delinquency rate. The new homeowner should be educated about the value of partnering with a community based organization.

## V. Project Design

The program as it was proposed for the City of Lowell has the following components:



**Outreach and Marketing:** This is one of the key components of the program. The sustainability of the program depends on homeowner participation. This component informs the homeowners about the benefits of participating in the program and creates a value for the participant.

**Group Training:** Homeowners can benefit from a range of options outlined in the Appendix. Group training not only encourages hands-on participation but is very effective in utilizing scarce resources to benefit as many participants as possible. For example, homeowners can learn about home safety, home maintenance, financial management and more while helping each other understand the basic concepts being taught.

**Individual Counseling and Referral:** This program provides follow up to class participants in order to improve the sustainability of homeownership in Lowell. This is delivered in a one-on-one format.

**Neighborhood Stabilization:** This component of the program represents the area that encourages program participants to get involved in their community to bring a sense of ownership and to improve the quality of life.

**Evaluation:** This is a very important component that helps the program director and staff to keep their program moving in the right direction. The following aspects of this program should be evaluated: goals, marketing, funding sources, and sustainability.

### **Project Design/Logic Model**

The project will be designed based on the gaps in the process of obtaining a home and maintaining personal financial behaviors. The families who purchased their first homes need to understand that life changes for the better, if they can modify their habits. The goal is to provide knowledge and skills. An additional attribute is something that cannot be taught and will need to come from within each person who wants to save and maintain his/her home. Below are the Logic Model and the outcomes.

#### **LONG-TERM OUTCOME (Change in Condition)**

The goal is to decrease the foreclosure rate for the new homeowners in Lowell, thus reducing the delinquency rate on first time buyers in Lowell.

#### **INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME (Change in Behavior)**

The goal is to increase the skills and the knowledge on how to preserve the home.

#### **SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (Change in Knowledge and Skills)**

The goal is to learn how to create a home budget and develop a better decision making process regarding home finances, and to learn the importance of doing home maintenance. New homeowners should get involve in their neighborhood organizations.

**SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES** (Change in availability, of resources)

Classes are available afternoons two days per week; other option is two Saturdays mornings per month. The resource will be at the Home Preservation Center Agency at 450 Merrimack St., Lowell.

**OUTPUTS** (“things we produce”)

Class size will consist of 12 families attending two four hours sessions with a break of 15 minutes in between. Sessions will be scheduled for a total of 8 to 10 hours of training. There will be three seminars a month starting with one in English, followed by one in Spanish, and finally one in Khmer.

**ACTIVITIES** (“things we do”)

Go through the financial management assessment of a new homeowner with the participants, and interact by creating case studies to help them understand the process of making financial decisions. Introduce the most common little jobs around the home, external and internal do-it-yourself projects, e.g. what tools a homeowner needs around the home, and how to make a home more secure.

Research the stakeholders in the new neighborhood and the community, and teach how to get involved as a volunteer, for example, in neighborhood cleanup day.

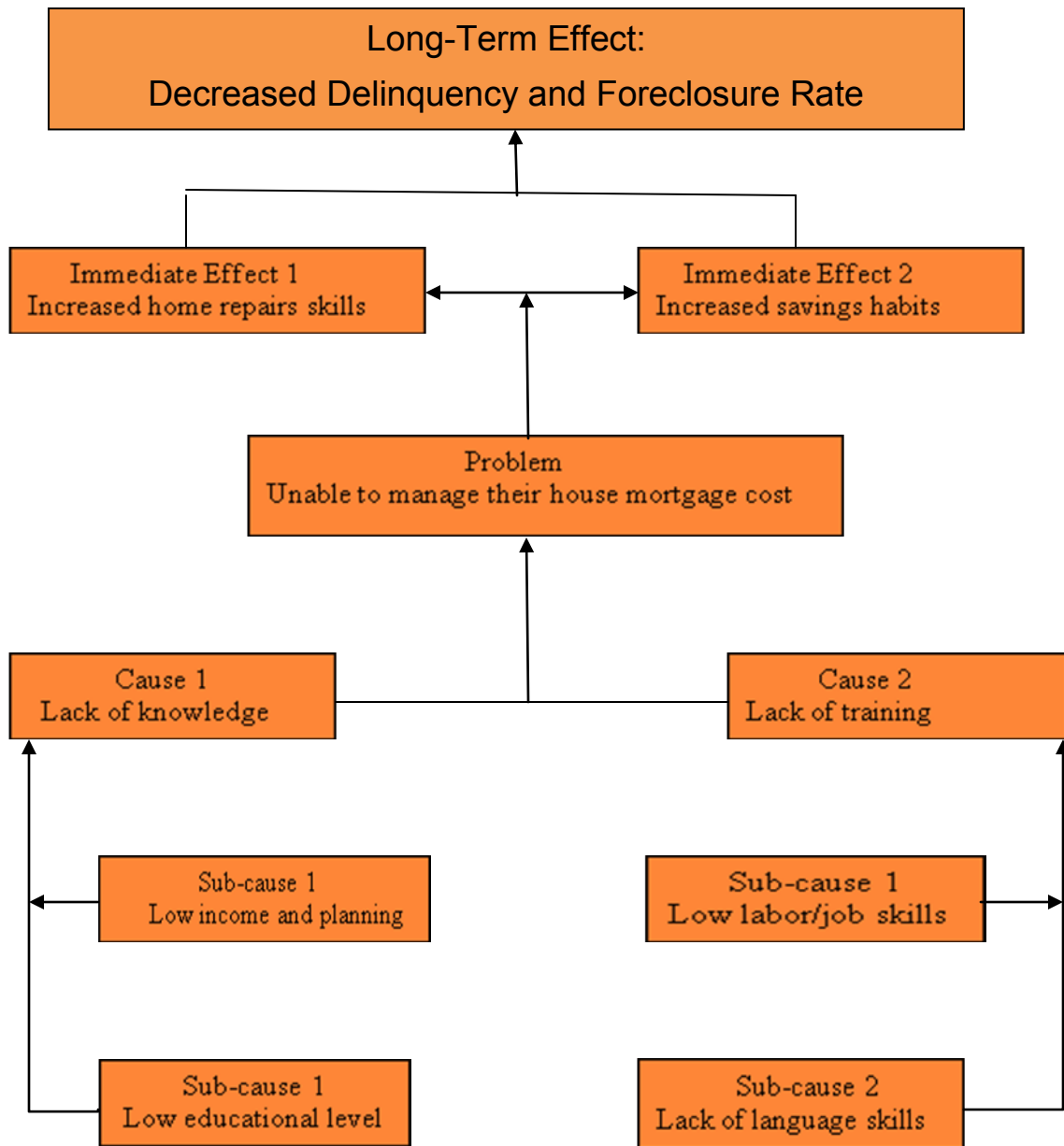
**INPUTS** (“things we utilize”)

Computer, projector and office supplies, staff certification for Post-Purchase counseling, phone system, day care, and training space and food.

## Logic Model

INPUTS	Outputs		Outcome-Impact		
	Activities	Participants	Short	Medium	Long term
What we invest	What we do	Who we reach	What results		
Computer Office supply Staff certifications Phone system Day care Training space Food	Financial Management assessment Home Improvements Home safety Saving tips Community Involvement	First time buyers	Better financial management decisions Increase home improvement skills Better knowledge of the community resources	Increase asset preservation skills Increase saving capacity	Reduce delinquency rate Prevent foreclosures

## Project Design





## **VI. Project Implementation**

The methodology is to secure the participation of the various stakeholder organizations to promote the program in the city and the towns around Lowell. The key is to make the officials believe in the program and to support it. As more families graduate and experience positive outcomes, the program will grow. Positive publicity is the job of the counselor and the participants in the program. The implementation plan will get better from the first workshop to the next. The Post-Purchase Program will start in English. Later, the team will decide when to implement it in Spanish and Khmer. More participants demanding such a program in their language will influence that decision.

### **The Host Organization**

The host organization is the Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA), and the workshops are given at the Home Preservation Center located at 450 Merrimack St., Lowell, MA 01854. The center is a branch of Coalition for a Better Acre. The center was established as the result of the foreclosure crisis in Lowell. The Coalition for a Better Acre is a joint effort with the Foreclosure Task Force and has committed resources and a venue to establish the Home Preservation Center with the help of NeighborWorks America.

## Implementation Schedule

These are the following activities that took place when implementing this program:

Starting date	How many participants	Location of Classes	Who are Instructors	What Language	Times	Evaluation of the classes and instructor
Tuesday First class part 1 July 13, 2010	10 Families	450 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA 01854	Mr. Rasy/Mr. Montoya	English	5:30pm to 9:30 pm	At the end of the two classes
Tuesday Second class Part 2, July 27, 2010	10 Families	450 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA 01854	Mr. Rasy/Mr. Montoya	English	5:30pm to 9:30pm	At the end of the two classes
Tuesday class Part 1, Sept. 14, 2010	10 Families	450 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA 01854	Mr. Rasy/Mr. Montoya.	English	5:30 AM to 9:30 PM	At the end of the two classes program.
Tuesday Class Part 2, Sept. 28, 2010	10 Families	450 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA 01854	Mr. Rasy/Mr. Montoya.	English	5:30 AM to 9:30 PM	At the end of the two classes program.
Five new classes are scheduled for now to June 2011	10 Families	450 Merrimack St. Lowell, MA 01854	Mr. Rasy/Mr. Montoya.	English	5:30 AM to 9:30 PM	At the end of the two classes program.

## Marketing Plan

The Post-Purchase Program will focus on recent homebuyers defined as homeowners with two years or less of homeownership and homeowners who are experiencing financial difficulties meeting their monthly obligations. In order to market the program, a four-pronged approach will be utilized which will include:

- ✚ Personal contact
- ✚ Written materials, local papers
- ✚ Local television and local radio programming

## Established institutions and city database

One Home Preservation Center (HPC) employee will be in charge of the implementation with the help of two volunteers who are trained on the program specifics. The personal contact approach will be implemented one-on-one during counseling sessions at the HPC or by personal conversations in the social or business circle.

Written materials in the form of flyers will be designed targeting potential participants. The flyers will be distributed to the community groups described in the graph that follows and PSA's to the local media. Flyers will be posted at the different businesses described in the graph as well.

The City of Lowell and other municipalities will be asked to place an insert promoting the program when the tax bill or any other municipal bill is sent to the homeowners in each municipality. Utility companies will also be asked to send a flyer in their monthly bills. Local banks, credit unions, other lenders and the City of Lowell Down Payment assistance program will be asked to refer potential clients to the center and are encouraged to make the post-purchase program mandatory for participation in their First Time Home Buying Programs. Existing organizations that train first time home buyers will also be asked to promote the HPC Post-Purchase Program, through a mailing list, or at the end of their programs.

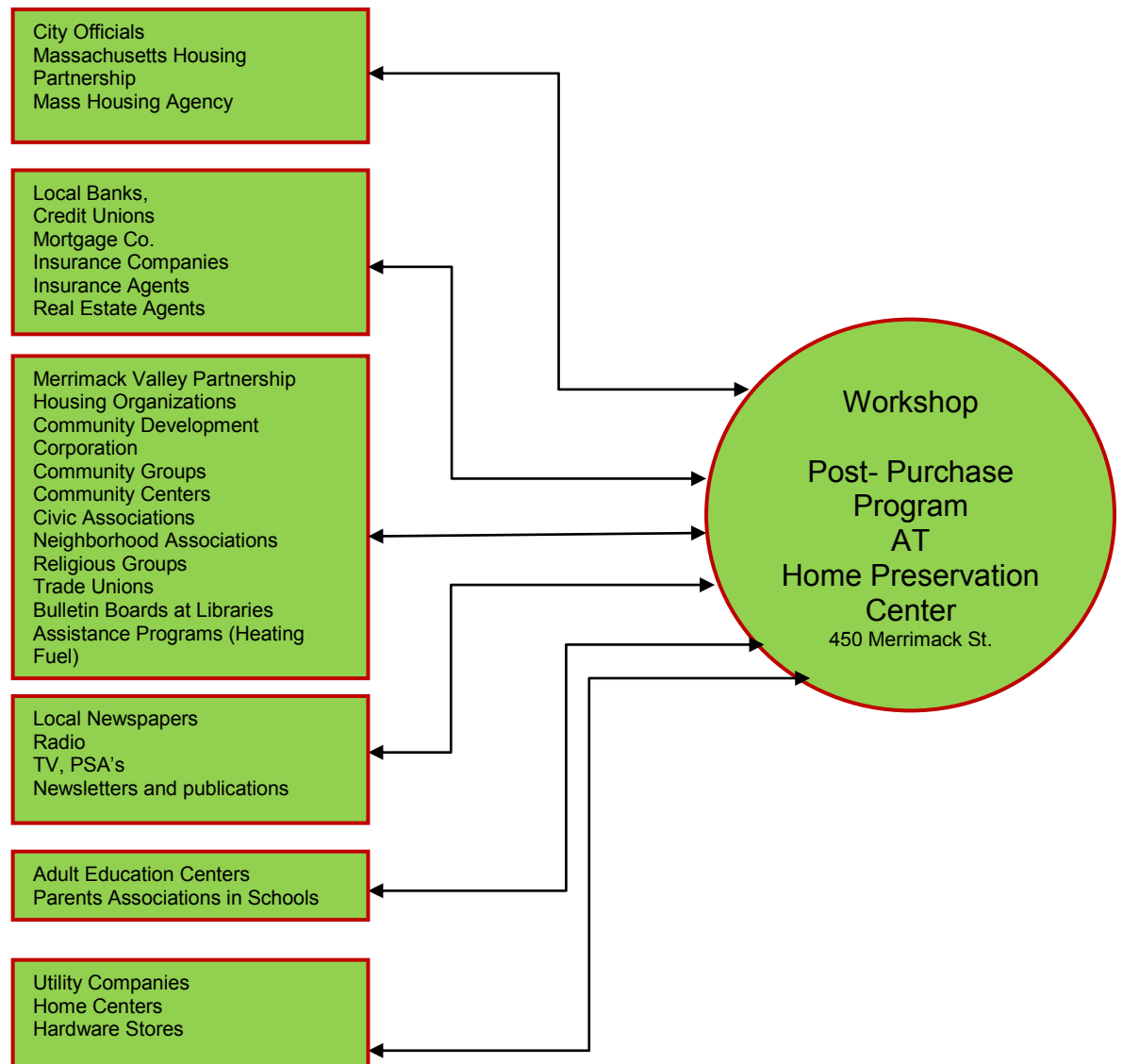
The HPC and the trained volunteers will participate in local television and local radio programs. Furthermore, on an ongoing basis, volunteers will make presentations at neighborhood organizations and other community groups.

The marketing plan is very important for the Post-Purchase Program to other stakeholder and partners in the community for two reasons. One is that the partners will refer families to the program. The second reason is that some of the partners will be able to give discount services to families who attended the program. The graph below show the potential partners, for instance, the City of Lowell can provide additional funds if they

make the Post-Purchase Program mandatory for those First Time Buyers who utilize the Down Payment program that the city offers to people buying in Lowell. The CDBG funding for the pre-purchase classes can allocate some of the funds to the Post-Purchase Program. There are other partners that could offer discounts and help promote the program in their businesses.

The following graph shows the marketing strategy for the future of this program:

## Marketing Strategy for the Lowell Post-Purchase Program



## Budget

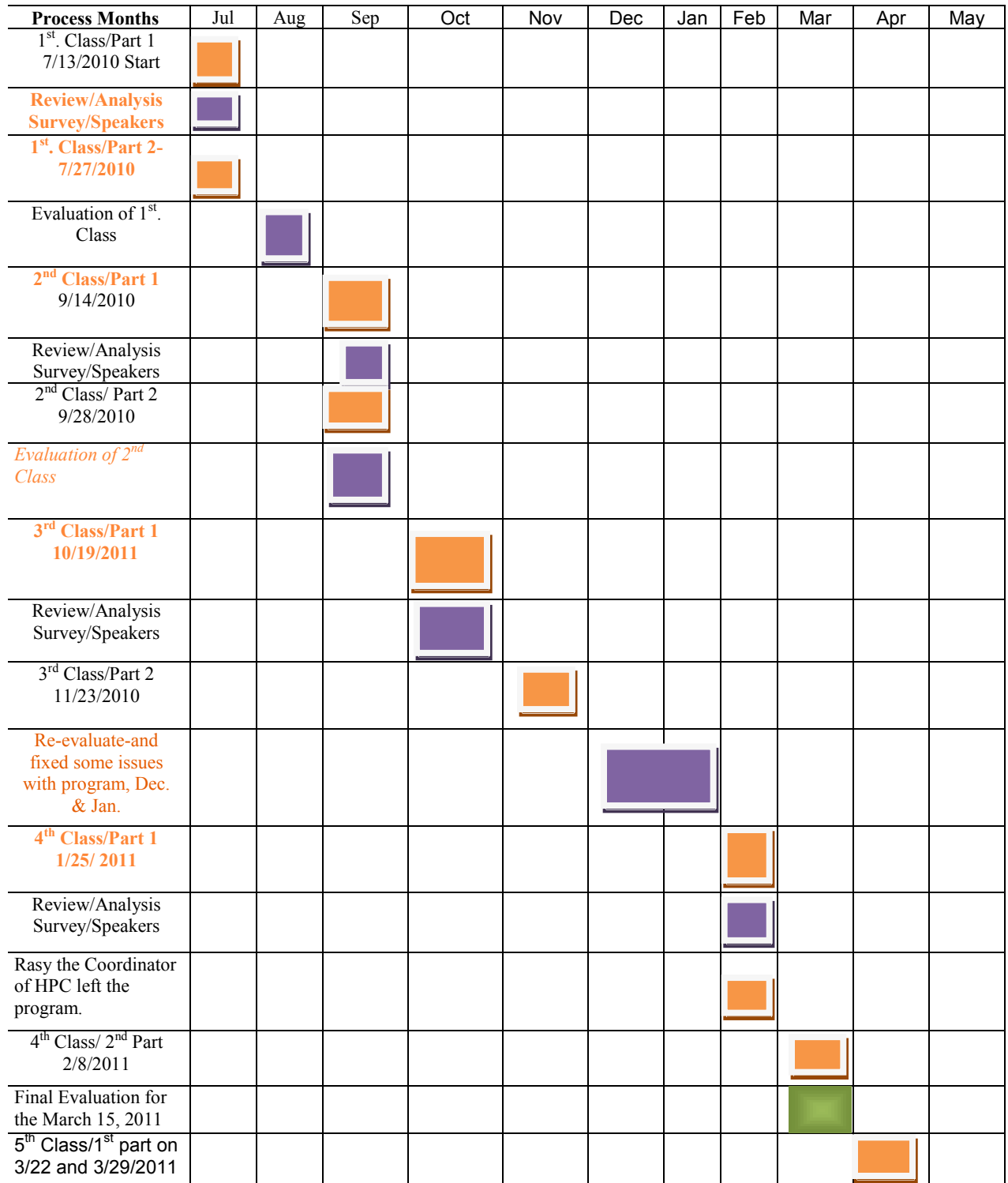
This budget was for the first three classes. The program started with a counselor, who was paid for the administration and presentation of two of the classes in Khmer and English. The Spanish class was done by a Elkin Montoya, Program Director, who was also trained by NeighborWorks America. Mr. Rasy was a foreclosure prevention counselor at the Home Prevention Center. The budget was as of the first six months of the fiscal year starting July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011. The team will be getting more up-to-date budgeting information as soon as the calendar year ends.

Description	Budget	Actual	+/-
Salaries: Mr. Rasy	\$4,500	\$4,500	Will be adding \$ 4,500 (Added another staff part-time).
Counselor/Volunteer	\$ 0.0	0.00	Elkin & Jose are volunteers
Admin Support	\$ 720	0.00	The program will use a Vista Volunteer (Esther)
Rent	\$1,500	\$1,500	Still used the basement of the 450 Merrimack St. at HPC
Office Supplies	\$ 500	\$200	Only for half of the year.
Text books & Materials	\$1,500	0.00	Order enough books for the year.
Other:	\$ 285	0.00	No need to spend until now.
Refreshments	\$ 500	\$250	Only for three workshops.
Software	\$ 495	0.00	We have not spent until now.
Outreach Materials	\$1,500	\$1,000	We need to market the program more for the rest of the year.
Total Budget	<b>\$11,500.00</b>	\$7,450	

## **VII. Monitoring Report**

This program started the implementation back in July 2010. As of December 31, 2010 four classes has been completed, 28 people has graduate from the program, and followed up with them. All these graduates are only from the classes in English. All activities were completed as planned with no delays. In our implementation we have meetings with different speakers who agreed to present in our seminars. The program coordinator met with representatives from UMASS-Lowell to come to speak about healthy homes and how to prevent asthma and pulmonary disease from chemicals we keep in the homes. For additional information please refer to the monitoring report in the appendix of this report.

Gantt chart 2010 (Each square of the grid = 1 Week) 2011



First Class = 12 Participants  
Reviews

Second Class = 15 Participants

Third Class = 10 Participants

Fourth Class = 3

Fifth Class =

Plan/Promote

Evaluation

Final Thesis



## Evaluation plan

The evaluation plan was based on a Formative Evaluation. The primary function of this evaluation was to make the necessary changes in the Post-Purchase Program in order to make the process better and to improve the outcome. The four areas the formative evaluation did focus on were workshops, short-term outcomes, funding, and marketing. The framework utilized by the formative evaluation was the feedback of internal and external groups.

The feedback was obtained in the form of an interview and a survey. The internal group consisted of the committee team members and who conducted a focus discussion at one meeting. The members of the team were the Project Coordinator of the Home Preservation Center (HPC) (Rasy An), financial counselor from HPC, presenter (Wenceslaus Farina), Deputy Director Coalition for Better Acre, (Suzanne Frechette), stakeholder (Frank Carvahlo), and Project Director (Elkin Montoya).

The external groups consisted of the sixty-two (62) participants who attended the workshops. The sixty-two participants who attended one or two of the workshops were given a survey at the end of every class regarding the substance of the seminars since the beginning of the Post-Purchase Program in July 2010. The results were posted later in the evaluation. The external group used the services of Mr. Jose Paulino, a student of the Masters in Community Economic Development (CED) Program at Southern New Hampshire University, to evaluate the results. Mr. Paulino gave his report on the observations he made at the September 14 and 27 workshops. His evaluation and observations will bring improvements to future workshops.

The internal group met on Thursday, January 6 2011. The group determined the three most important goals and the areas of the program that needed improvement. Among these areas are: Workshop, goals, funding, and marketing. The goals are as follows:

First, the internal group talked about the achievements and the success of the first Post-Purchase Program in Lowell, with a starting date on July 13, 2010. The program had three complete workshops by the end of December of 2010. The program graduated 28 families with a very positive feedback from the participants. The seminars were held in English. The books were handed out to the participants as graduation gifts with a certificate of completion. The book is “Keeping the American Dream, A Manual for Homeowners/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition,” purchased at a cost of \$15 from Neighborworks America. The book covers all the subjects and in more detail than what was discussed in the Post-Purchase Program. The participants were assured that the Home Preservation Center and the staff were there to be utilized as resources and to answer any questions and meet any needs they had in the future. The workshop made maximum use of the book; therefore, no changes were needed in the materials.

Second, the internal group talked about the location of the classes deciding to keep them at the same location, 450 Merrimack Street in Lowell. This location was a place people were able to find easily because it was near the Lowell City Hall. The size of the room was fine for a small group of 10 to 15 people. The room gave the individuals a better sense of being comfortable and the participants were engaged by participating in discussions and activities. The cost was very low. The location will change only if the number of participants increases in the coming year and if the funding increases.

Third, the internal group discussed the possibility of bringing different speakers including a financial planner, an insurance agent, and a home improvement representative from Home Depot, Lowes, a local Hardware store, and a guest speaker from the local neighborhood organization. The idea was to utilize speakers from different companies for each workshop, thus giving the participants the opportunity to meet and learn from the best experts in the different fields. The internal group sensed that each participant should come out of the workshop feeling that there are more people who can help with the sustainability of their home and not just the Home Preservation Center’s staff. The speakers will be also being valuable resources for the future. Bringing new companies

will create more exposure and can bring other homeowners to the Post-Purchase Program.

The internal group concurred that the following aspects of the program need improvements: first, the option of workshops in Spanish and Khmer because the participants who had registered for the program were able to understand the English language. Thus, workshops in these languages have not been yet tested. The Home Preservation Center is trying to purchase books in Spanish and Khmer from Neighborworks America as soon as there is additional funding. Second, the Post-Purchase Program is not getting referrals from other agencies, because the program is currently being filled with families that only come through the Home Preservation Center. Other agencies should also be providing referrals. Third, the program is not being promoted outside the Home Preservation Center. The outreach effort needs to be done by word of mouth by the participants and the Home Preservation Center needs to get the word out to the community by marketing the Post-Purchase Program, and its benefits to the families of Lowell. Later in this evaluation, the marketing plan will be introduced.

The internal group also talked about the initial, current and future goals of the Post-Purchase Program. The initial goals were to have a workshop every month with about 12 families. The evaluating committee needed to change this goal to a workshop every other month. The workshop was changed to every other month, because the recruitment of new participants was taking longer, and as the organizing team was also doing evaluations every time there was a new workshop, time consuming was an issue. Setting up new staff with volunteer speakers was taking longer than planned. Some of the volunteer speakers were unable to commit themselves to an hour at night, and again they were doing the speaking for exposure for the business or community engagement. The importance of this goal was that the committee needed to graduate 50 to 90 families in 12 months. This was the estimate in the grant proposal given to the City of Lowell CDBG grant, who gave the \$6,500.00 for the first year. The goal is to have more workshops every month, if the sources of funding are available, and if the Home Preservation Center can hire more trained counselors. Another initial goal was to include only families that

had purchased a home within 24 months, but the Post-Purchase Program also served families that had owned their home for more than 24 months. They were welcomed as well, because families need to save their homes from foreclosure by learning more about what to do if their bills were not paid on time. These families are learning how to prevent delinquency and are getting help as a group and through individual counseling.

The internal group additionally discussed the need to seek other sources of funding, because the program should have two or three sources of funds not just the City of Lowell. The internal group came up with several other resources, for instance, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) from Boston. The MHP offers a soft second loan for first time buyers in low and moderate income areas, and Lowell is one of these areas. MHP pays a fee for all the first time buyers that are counseled every time the family goes 30 day delinquent on their soft second loan. The family is sent to a Post-Purchase Program near their home. The Home Preservation Center wants to be the organization providing the Post-Purchase Program in Lowell for MHP. The internal group also felt that the program should be the primary organization in Lowell, and that all the banks and credit unions who offer soft second loans be sent by referral, if the families are delinquent for the first time on the loan.

The internal group also discussed the marketing strategies plan and the chart below gives a picture of who the program marketing partners are. Here is a list of all the partners spreading the word about the Post-Purchase Program: city officials, financial and insurance institutions, housing organizations, media, adult education centers, and utility companies. In addition to utilizing the new partnership with the above organization, the internal group will recommend to some of the new partners discounts to those families that have completed the Post-Purchase Program. For instance, Home Depot should offer a 10 percent discount to families with a card member of completion of the program. This will give the participants an opportunity to go shopping at the nearest Home Depot because they will be getting a discount. Flyers can be placed in their store every time the Home Preservation Center offers the Post-Purchase Program. The participants will be more comfortable asking for the person who made the presentation at the workshop and

will go back to the store for more resources and materials. The same concept will work for insurance agencies that came to the workshop and explained homeowner insurance. People have the tendency to go back to the people and businesses they have already met and that have given educational information. They will now be trusted.

Below are the results of the survey administered to the external groups. The external groups are the participants that have come to the Post-Purchase Program. These data gave the evaluating committee an outcome. The overall information is valuable for homeowners in Lowell. People are getting tools and the know how to prevent delinquency and more importantly to avoid foreclosure. The comments provided by participants, listed below, are significant in their overall positive regard of the program. The evaluating committee feels that the overall data gathered after each class has giving a strong indication that the program needs to continue in the future by making it sustainable.

Post Purchase Workshop Survey & Comments from 7/13/2010 to 11/9/2010					
	5 stars	4 stars	3 stars	2 stars	1 star
Did the workshop meet your expectations?	77%	21%	2%	0%	0%
I learned a great deal about the benefits of homeownership	73%	24%	3%	0%	0%
I learned a great deal about money saving tips	73%	24%	3%	0%	0%
The presenters were very knowledgeable in the subject area	82%	16%	2%	0%	0%
The logistics for the workshop were well executed	77%	19%	3%	0%	0%
The workshop gave me many resources to help me with my situation	74%	21%	5%	0%	0%
The handouts covered in the workshop were very helpful	76%	23%	1%	0%	0%
The HPC's Post Purchase Program is what every homeowner needs	81%	16%	3%	0%	0%
I would recommend this workshop to others	87%	11%	0%	2%	0%
<u>Rating Scale:</u>					
1 Star =Strongly Disagree, 2 Star = Disagree , 3 Stars = Satisfied, 4 Stars = Agree, Stars =Strongly Agree					
<u>Comments:</u>					
"I hope they keep doing this great work." "This was great help, very informative."					
"I am very happy I came tonight. I learned a lot that I didn't know and I've been a homeowner now 10 months so I am glad, Thank you!"					

"This is an excellent way to save your home & also meet income expectations."  
 "Keep up the good work."  
 "Great Night, great speakers, good people, Thank you."

"I did learn a lot tonight, I didn't know a few things, especially the workshops. Also where to turn my water off."

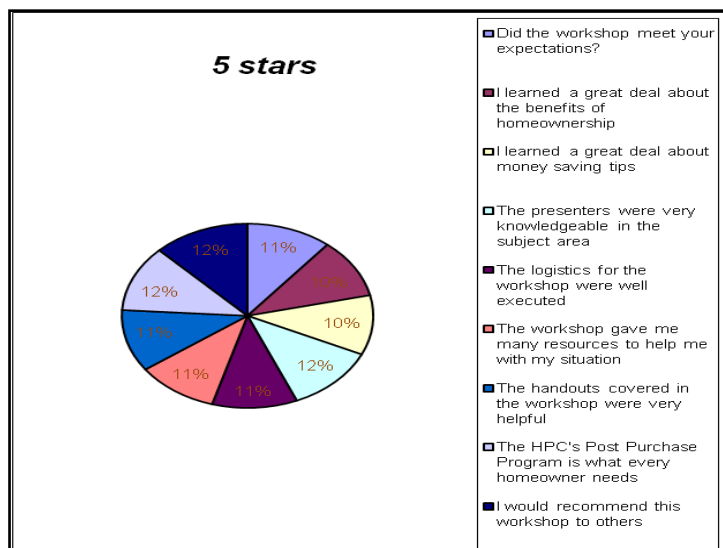
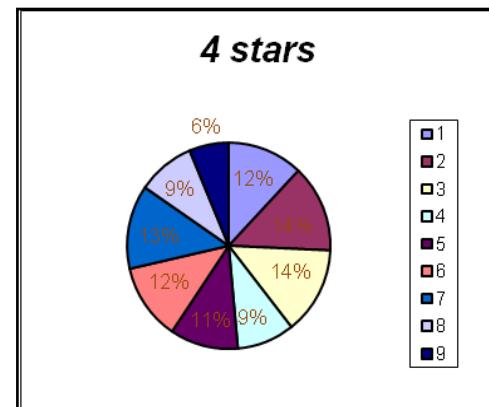
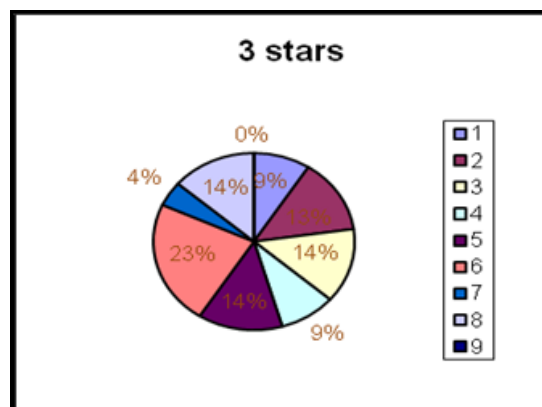
"Was excellent!"  
 "Very good and well spent time."  
 "All presenters were very knowledgeable."

"Having Home Depot representatives was a great opportunity to find out some of the things we could take care of in our home."

"Material too vague."  
 "I feel better about my situation. I think I can get the help I need."

"I was very impressed with the knowledge of the presenters and the comprehensive way they explained many subjects."

"Everything said during the workshop were well presented and clear."  
 "We will need more of this kind of a meeting in the community."



Questions	5 stars stars	4 stars	3	2 stars	1 stars	
<b>Did the workshop meet your expectations?</b>	48	0	1	0		0
	77%	0%	2%	0%	0%	
<b>I learned a great deal about the benefits of homeownership</b>	45	0	2	0		0
	73%	0%	3%	0%		0%
<b>I learned a great deal about money saving tips</b>	45	0	2			0
	73%	0%	3%	0%		0%
<b>The presenters were very knowledgeable in the subject area</b>	51	0	1			0
	82%	0%	2%	0%		0%
<b>The logistics for the workshop were well executed</b>	48	0	2			0
	77%	0%	3%	0%		0%
<b>The workshop gave me many resources to help me with my situation</b>	46		3			0
	74%	0%	5%	0%		0%
<b>The handouts covered in the workshop were very helpful</b>	47	0	1			0
	76%	0%	2%	0%		0%
<b>The HPC's Post Purchase Program is what every homeowner needs</b>	50	0	2			0
	81%	0%	3%	0%		0%
<b>I would recommend this workshop to others</b>	54	0	0	1		0
	87%	0%	0%	2%		0%

A large percentage of the participants gave the program a high rating since the score of three to five stars is close to 98 percent satisfaction. At the workshop, the participants were encouraged to utilize the Home Preservation Center and also the volunteers as a resource for the future, if they felt the need for a second opinion on major decisions. There will be continued phone contact with the graduates by the counselors to monitor the achievements of the goals in keeping to their financial and home improvement plans.

Mr. Paulino gave a very good evaluation of the program and here are some of his suggestions. First, Mr. Paulino suggested that the committee should develop a pre-assessment survey before starting the first workshop and post assessment questions. This data will be able to measure the valuable information the participants obtained from the workshop. Second, Mr. Paulino made a couple observations on the two workshops he attended back on September 14 and September 27, 2010. He was very impressed with how engaged the participants were with all the speakers. Some of the participants asked very inquisitive questions, and even discussed personal issues about their insurance

agents. Participants also confessed how little they knew about the possibility of saving money on the insurance policies for their homes and cars.

In summary, a formative evaluation is necessary in this project because we are still refining the curriculum and the structure of the program in terms of location, time of day and the time of the week as well as the frequency of trainings. The project manager strongly recommended continuing with the formative evaluation so the committee and the host organization can reach a sustainable program level even if someone from the internal group leaves the project. In this case, the group will continue improving the program until the Post-Purchase Program is mastered by the Home Preservation Center.

Outcomes	Indicators	Data source	Collection method	Who
Completion of the Post-Purchase Program	Participants in attending classes, and tests	Instructor attendance sheets, grade the tests	Signing sheets	Instructors, and at the end of the seminars evaluated with the Executive Director of the CBA

### **Sustainability Plan**

The partnership with the Coalition for a Better Acre, a nationally recognized community development corporation with over twenty-five years of a positive track record, will assist in the sustainability of this program. The organization has the infrastructure in place and it also has the personnel to seek operational funds that are critical to sustain this project. As the Post-Purchase Program obtains and documents the outcomes from pre- and post-program surveys, and the changes on behavior from the homeowners, the new post-purchase program will demonstrate not only the need but the benefits of the program, hence, creating value for the stakeholders and creating a positive environment for the continuation of the program. While the foreclosure crisis will eventually go away, the need for post-purchase education will endure for many years to come and it will be



one of the tools that will help local communities avoid a repeat of the negative impacts caused by the effects of foreclosures.

## **VIII. Conclusion and Recommendations**

There is not a projected end to the delinquency and foreclosure crisis, because there are signs indicating that in 2011 it will get worse before it starts to get better (CNNMoney.com, May, 2011). While the government concluded that the recession is over, many areas of the country, including Massachusetts, are still affected by slow economic growth and job losses. To add to the misfortune of the devaluation of properties in major cities in the nation, the unemployment rate is increasing. There are also indications that the delinquency and foreclosure effect is getting into urban and upper income communities. While pre-purchase education and foreclosure prevention programs exist in Lowell and do their best to help first-time homebuyers in purchasing their first home and help homeowners in distress, the City of Lowell is missing a key educational component to assist homeowners to protect the biggest investment they will make in their life: their home. One of the recommendations is that the Post-Purchase Education Program becomes mandatory for anyone obtaining a home mortgage with Down Payment assistant or a second loan from the City of Lowell. The second recommendation is to have the private mortgage insurance companies adopt the Post-Purchase Program for those first-time home buyers who put less than twenty percentage down payment for their home. Another recommendation is to have the Mass-Housing Program that provides low down payments to make the Post-Purchase Program mandatory, since the organization currently makes first-time buyers take pre-purchase educational classes. The program will work best if it is embraced by all stakeholders and supported by the private and public sector.

The program strategically started in partnership with the Coalition for a Better Acre and its Home Preservation Center for sustainability reasons. A key for the program will be the positive outcomes that it generates. A successful program will improve the quality of life in many of Lowell's neighborhoods and create stability in neighborhood life that has been negatively impacted by the current crisis. The Post-Purchase Program

will not only assist the city and the homeowners during this crisis, but it will be an invaluable tool in preventing similar crises in the future as homeowners will have the knowledge and skills to manage their financial affairs and preserve their investments.

## IX. Tables and Appendixes:

### List of Tables & Figures

Table 1.1

Sources: U.S. Census 2000.

<b>Races</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2006-2008</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>+/-, %</b>
White	72,145	61,687	-10,458	-14.49%
Black or African American	4,423	5,957	+1,534	+34.69%
American Indian & Alaska Native	256	226	-30	-11.71%
Asian	17,371	17,651	-280	- 1.61%
<b>Native Hawaiian and other</b>				
Pacific Islander	38	16	-22	- 57.89%
Some other race	6,813	11,319	+4,506	+66.14%
Two or more races	4,121	1,910	- 2,211	- 53.65%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	14,734	15,694	+ 96	+ 6.51%

Table 2.1

Sources: U.S. Census 2000.

<b>Demographic:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2006-2008</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>+/- %</b>
<b>Age supply</b>				
Over 18 years	76,826	75,125	-1,701	- 2.21%
Over 21 years	71,273	69,801	-1,47	- 2.06%
Over 62 years	13,116	12,772	-389	-2.96%
Over 65 years	11,313	10,487	-826	-7.30%

Table 3.1

Sources: U.S. Census 2000.

<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2006-2008</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>%</b>
Total households	37,887	36,463	-1,424	-3.75%
Family households (families)	23,982	22,122	-1,860	-7.75%
With own children under 18 years	12,894	11,261	-1,633	-12.66%
Married-couple family	15,202	13,498	-1,704	-11.20%
With own children under 18 years	7,627	6,098	-1,529	-20.04%
Female household, no husband present	6,602	6,369	-233	- 7.05%
With own children under 18 years	4,210	4,030	-180	- 4.27%
Nonfamily households	13,905	14,341	436	3.13%
Householder living alone	10,969	11,423	454	4.13%
Householder 65 years and over	3,522	2,900	622	-17.66%
Households with one or more people under 18	14,166	12,582	-1,584	-11.18%
Households with one or more people 65 years or over	8,005	6,959	-1,046	-13.06%
Average household size	2.67	2.59		
Average family size	3.35	3.31		

Table 4.1

Sources: U.S. Census 2000.

	2000	2006-2008
Total households	37,992	36,463
Less than \$10,000	4,858	3,738
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2,733	2,419
\$15,000 to \$24,999	4,572	3,877
\$25,000 to \$34,999	4,900	3,070
\$35,000 to \$49,999	6,519	4,819
\$50,000 to \$74,999	7,743	7,118
\$75,000 to \$99,999	3,587	5,747
\$100,000 to \$149,999	2,259	4,033

\$150,000 to \$199,999	512	1,203
\$200,000 or more	309	439
Median household income (dollars)	39,192	50,944
Mean household income (dollars)		59,716
With earnings	29,837	28,622
Mean earnings (dollars)	50,626	65,276
With Social Security	8,801	8,796
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	9,491	12,530
With retirement income	4,874	4,642
Mean retirement income (dollars)	14,020	16,979
With Supplemental Security Income	3,129	3,351
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	6,600	8,777
With cash public assistance income	2,194	1,336
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	4,688	4,615
With Food Stamp benefits in the past 12 months		5,460
Families	24,247	22,122
Less than \$10,000	2,079	1,719
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1,256	946
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2,708	2,332
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2,972	1,957
\$35,000 to \$49,999	4,265	2,817
\$50,000 to \$74,999	5,673	4,140
\$75,000 to \$99,999	2,812	3,845
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,840	3,203
\$150,000 to \$199,999	425	841
\$200,000 or more	217	322
Median family income (dollars)	45,901	56,878
Mean family income (dollars)		65,739

## WORKSHEET: Community Profile

Date: 10/14/2009	Completed By: Elkin Montoya	Community / Neighborhood Name  Lowell, Massachusetts.
<p><b>Age Distribution (% of Population):</b> Estimated by U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder.</p> <p>2005 -2007 American Community Survey 3- Year Estimates – what’s this?</p> <p>Data Profile Highlights:</p> <p style="color: #E74C3C;">6,914</p> 0-5 years <span style="color: #E74C3C;">6,137</span> 5-9 years <span style="color: #E74C3C;">6,350</span> 10-14 years <span style="color: #E74C3C;">7,658</span> 15-19 years <p style="color: #E74C3C;">39,344</p> 20-44 years <span style="color: #E74C3C;">23,372</span> 45-64 years <span style="color: #E74C3C;">10,284</span> 65 and older <p>Median Age (years) 34.1</p>		
<p><b>Total Population: <span style="color: #E74C3C;">100,659</span></b></p>		
<p>Educational Attainment:</p> <p>Percent High School Graduate or Higher <span style="color: #E74C3C;">77.1%</span> and Bachelor’s Degree or Higher <span style="color: #E74C3C;">21.1%</span>.</p>		
<p>Ethnic Mix (<i>List significant ethnic subpopulations that live or work in the community</i>):</p> <p>White: 57,890.</p> <p>Black or American: 5,287.</p> <p>American Indian and Alaska Native: 192.</p> <p>Other Asian: 19,219.</p> <p>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 16.</p> <p>Some other race: 1999.</p> <p>Two or more races: 1,181.</p> <p>Hispanic or Latino (of any race): 14,875.</p>		
<p>Gender Distribution (% of Population):    <span style="color: #E74C3C;">50,649</span> Female                      <span style="color: #E74C3C;">50,010</span> Male</p>		
<p>Languages Read:</p> <p>The language most read in the City of Lowell is English.</p>		
<p>Languages Spoken in Area:</p> <p>English only 52,485.</p> <p>Language other than English 41,260.</p> <p>Speak English less than “very well”: 19,899.</p> <p>Spanish: 12,179.</p> <p>Speak English less than “very well”: 4,917.</p>		

<p>Other Indo-European Languages: 11,722.  Speak English less than “very well”:5,668.  Asian and Pacific Islander Languages: 15,178.  Speak English less than “very well”: 8,540.  Other Languages: 2,181.  Speak English less than “very well”: 774.</p>									
<p>Racial Mix (% of Population):</p> <table> <tr> <td><b>57.51%</b> White, not of Latino Origin</td><td>.0015% Native Hawaiian</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>5.25%</b> Black, not of Latino Origin</td><td>3.3% Pacific Islander</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>14.78%</b> Latino. <i>Specify</i></td><td>19.10% Asian. <i>Specify</i></td></tr> <tr> <td>.0019 Native American/Alaskan Native</td><td></td></tr> </table>		<b>57.51%</b> White, not of Latino Origin	.0015% Native Hawaiian	<b>5.25%</b> Black, not of Latino Origin	3.3% Pacific Islander	<b>14.78%</b> Latino. <i>Specify</i>	19.10% Asian. <i>Specify</i>	.0019 Native American/Alaskan Native	
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<p>Religious Affiliations: (possible source of information - local ministerial council)  The population of Lowell has many religious affiliation, for example, catholic, Greek, and Budi</p>									
<p>Socioeconomic Status: (e.g. Median family income)  \$53,357.00</p>									
<p>Designation of Target Populations:  Unknown, need more time to look at other sources.</p>									
<p>Inventory of Local Business (source – Local Yellow Pages).Unknown, need other sources. Up to date of the yellow Pages and Chamber of Commerce.  Number of personal survey businesses (e.g. beauty parlors, barbershops, etc)  Number of professional service providers (attorneys, tax preparers, etc.)  Number of health service providers (doctors, dentists, chiropractors, etc)  Number of eating establishments  Number of liquor stores / package storage  Number of national / regional franchised outlets (e.g. McDonald’s)  Number of warehouse / distribution operations  Number of manufacturing / assembly operations  Number of vacant commercial properties</p>									

## Target Population Profile

Date: 11/15/2009	Completed By: Elkin Montoya	Site Name: Foreclosure Prevention Center.
Total Population Designation: Lowell Homeowners.		
Proximity of Residences or Workplaces to Project Site: The proximity of the residences or workplaces to the project site is within five to six miles.		
<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF TARGET POPULATION</b>		
Age Distribution: 20 to 60 years old		
Education Levels and Literacy Rates: High School and College Graduates. Reading Capacity.		
Ethnic Mix: All type of Mix Ethnic.		
Languages Spoken ( <i>indicate dominant language</i> ): English Only		
Racial Mix: All racial mix.		
Religious Affiliations of Target Population ( <i>indicate dominant religions, if applicable</i> ): All affiliation.		
Socioeconomic Status: Employed for not less than 2 years.		
Other Characteristics of Target Population: Desired to be a homeowner for live.		
<b>PRACTICES OR BEHAVIORS THAT MAY PLACE INDIVIDUALS OR POPULATIONS AT RISK</b>		
Lack of knowledge on how to manage a budget or their personal financial for their family.		
<b>SOCIAL CONDITIONS THAT MIGHT PLACE INDIVIDUALS OR POPULATIONS AT RISK</b>		
Crime rate: Unknown, I need to go to another sources. (a source - <a href="http://bjsdata.ojp.usdoj.gov/dataonline/">http://bjsdata.ojp.usdoj.gov/dataonline/</a> )		



<p>Housing availability:</p> <p>Lowell has available house in the market.</p>
<p>Level of social services</p> <p>Adequate social services.</p>
<p>Mass transportation:</p> <p>Yes, Local and Municipal.</p>
<p>Poverty rate:</p> <p>19% People.</p> <p>28% Children under 18 years old.</p> <p>13% Over 65 year old.</p> <p>16% Of all families.</p> <p>35% Families with a female householder.</p> <p>No husband present had income below the poverty level.</p>
<p>Prevalence of HIV/STDs:</p> <p>Unknown need more sources.</p>
<p>Quality of education:</p> <p>Unknown need more sources.</p>
<p>Unemployment rate: 9.7% or higher.</p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOLOGIC CONDITIONS THAT MIGHT PLACE INDIVIDUALS OR POPULATIONS AT RISK</b>  <b>(COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF RELEVANT TO YOUR PROJECT)</b></p>
<p>Air quality: Good.</p>
<p>Water quality: Great.</p>
<p>Environmental regulation: Good.</p>
<p>Green space: The green space is limited and the little Lowell has as green space is being preserved.</p>
<p>Land use/zoning: Most of the land is been utilized for housing, commercial and industrial usage.</p>

<p>Level of industrial activity:</p> <p>Manufacturing 21%.</p> <p>Educational Services, Health Care, and Social assistance 21%.</p> <p>Retail Trade 10%.</p> <p>Professional Scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management Services 10%.</p> <p>Art entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 8%.</p>
Level of sanitation: Public Sewer.
<p>Number of brown fields in the affected area:</p> <p>Unknown need more sources.</p>
<p>Number of smokestacks in the affected area:</p> <p>Unknown need more sources.</p>

Possible source of information – local zoning board / commission

<b>AREAS OF COMMONALITY WITH OTHER TARGET POPULATIONS</b>
No applicable
<b>OTHER CHARACTERISTICS</b>
<p>Access to Medical Care:</p> <p>Two hospitals.</p>
<p>Community and Family Structure:</p> <p>Mix</p>
<p>Community Groups and Leaders:</p> <p>Many need time to name all.</p>
<p>Methods by Which Community Members Receive Information (<i>radio, TV, newspapers, etc.</i>):</p> <p>Local telecommunication center, local radio station. local newspaper, etc.</p>
<p>Target Population Density:</p> <p>Lowell First Time Home Buyer, who has been a homeowner for the past 12 months or more.</p>

## Survey

1. Is this the first property you have purchased, either in the United States or elsewhere?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. If not in the United States, please list where your property was purchased.

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2. Who did you purchase the property with?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yourself  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your spouse  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your companion  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other family members  
\_\_\_\_\_ A business associate  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

3. Did all parties complete a home buyer training class?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think you would benefit from attending a few workshops about post – purchase home ownership?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Have you heard about Post-Purchase classes before?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. The topics under consideration are listed below.

Please check any topics that interest you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Household Budgeting  
\_\_\_\_\_ Maintaining good credit  
\_\_\_\_\_ Building and protecting your equity  
\_\_\_\_\_ Home Safety (fire, security, health issues: lead paint, mold, and asthma)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Maintaining proper insurance coverage  
\_\_\_\_\_ Condominium ownership  
\_\_\_\_\_ Landlord/Tenant issues

6. If you are interested in attending workshops, how many total hours are you willing to participate?

1. 2 – 4 hours \_\_\_\_\_

2. 4 – 6 hours \_\_\_\_\_

3. 6 – 8 hours \_\_\_\_\_

4. 8 – 10 hours \_\_\_\_\_
5. More than 10 hours \_\_\_\_\_

7. How would you rate your general knowledge of money management and household budgeting?

1 = least knowledgeable                      5 = very knowledgeable

Please circle

You \_\_\_\_\_                      1            2            3            4            5

Your partner \_\_\_\_\_            1            2            3            4            5

8. How would you rate your knowledge of credit scores and your ability to maintain good credit?

1 = Least knowledgeable                      5 = Very knowledgeable

Please circle

You \_\_\_\_\_                      1            2            3            4            5

Your partner \_\_\_\_\_            1            2            3            4            5

9. How would you rate your ability to maintain your property and plan for improvements?

1 = Least Knowledgeable                      5 = Very knowledgeable

Please circle

You \_\_\_\_\_                      1            2            3            4            5

Your partner \_\_\_\_\_            1            2            3            4            5

10. What percentage of your salary were you saving before you purchased your home?

1%      to      2% \_\_\_\_\_

3%      to      5% \_\_\_\_\_

6%      to      8% \_\_\_\_\_

9%      to      11% \_\_\_\_\_

12%     to      higher \_\_\_\_\_

11. How much did you put down for your down payment?

0%      to      3% \_\_\_\_\_

3%      to      5% \_\_\_\_\_

5%      to      10% \_\_\_\_\_

10%     to      15% \_\_\_\_\_

15%     to      20% \_\_\_\_\_

20%     to      higher \_\_\_\_\_

12 Now that you are a homeowner, are you able to continue saving money?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, why?

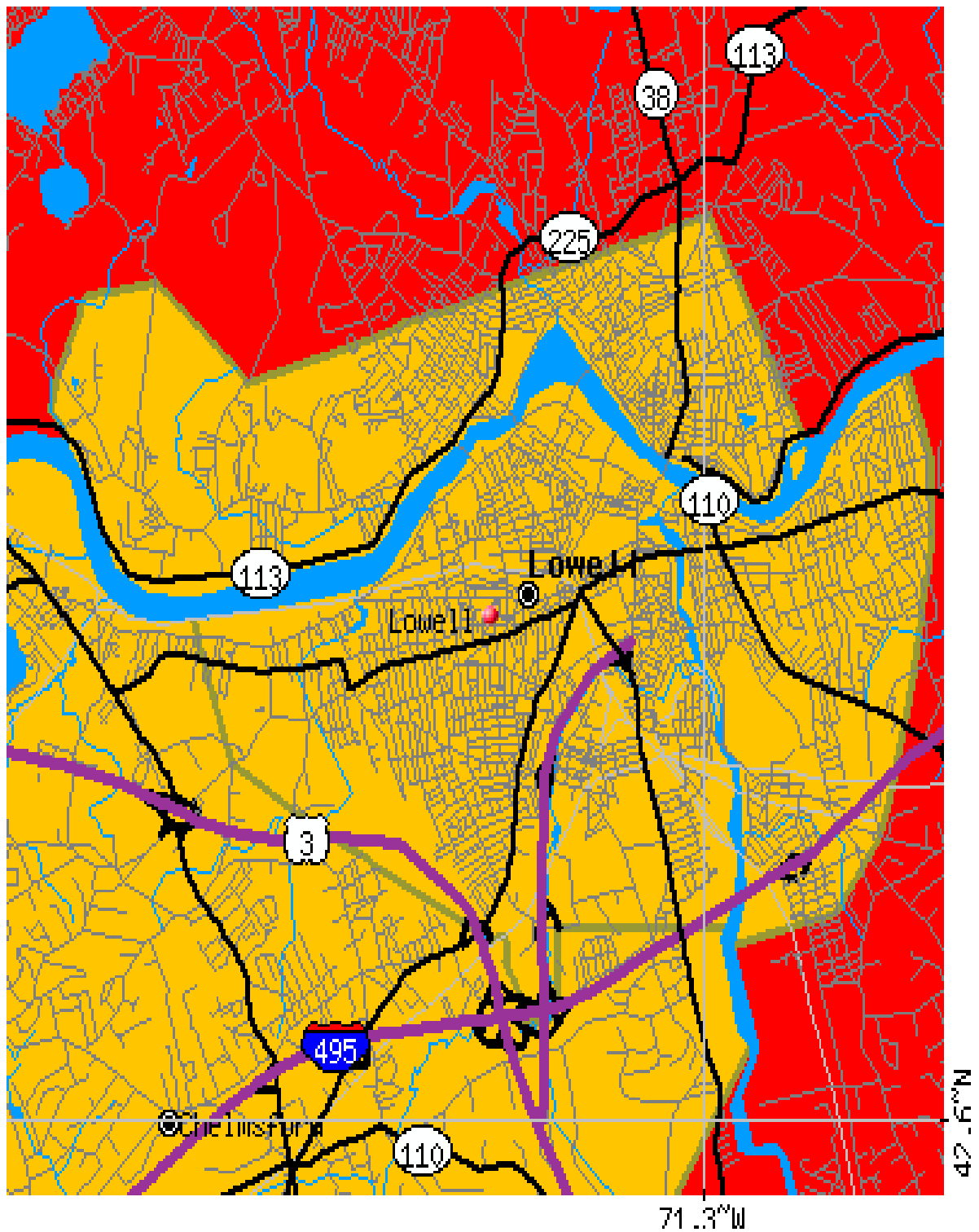
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### **Demography Questioner**

#### **Average Stats (Based on Study)**

Age	20-30 yrs old	18
Gender	Female	22
Veteran Status	No	33
Disabled	No	34
Head of Household	Yes	28
Ethnicity	Non Latino/Hispanic	27
Race	White	29
First Language	English	33
Relatives owned home in U.S.?	Yes	31
Native Country	U.S	35
Highest Education	HS/GED	15
Household Size	2	12
Income	51,000 to 70,000	16
Property Purchased	Single Home	23

Map of the City of Lowell



## **Class curriculum for the Post-Purchase Program:**

### **I. Financial planning**

- Setting goals and objectives and priorities
- Develop a savings arrangement
- Develop a homeowner budget
- Develop a long-term saving emergency fund
- How to maintain a great credit report

### **II. Develop a great record keeping system**

- A filing system
- Demonstrate how to maintain a good filing system at home.
- Tax returns obligation as homeowners

### **III. The important of building equity**

- What is the meaning of equity?
- How to build equity?
- What are the facts between equity line of credit vs. home equity loans?
- What to look when you refinance you first mortgage?

### **IV. Foreclosure prevention**

- What is foreclosure?
- What to do before difficult times start
- What to do after falling behind
- What options you have after falling behind?
- Where to go for help

### **V. Building neighborhood and community**

- What is a community?
- Getting involved in your community
- Neighborhood networking e.g. Community Development Corporation

### **VI. Home safety and security**

- Prevention of fire and theft

### **VII. Home maintenance and repairs**

- Preventing maintains
- Home repair and replacements

Home improvements vs. repairs

Working with a contract and getting the right permits

Energy efficiency, weatherization, and rehab program

#### **VIII. Insurance policy**

What's covered under you homeowner's insurance

What is not covered?

Types of insurance policies

Tips on ways to lower your homeowners insurance cost

How to file a claim

#### **IX. Condominium ownership (help separately)**

What is a condominium vs. single home?

Ownership structure

Finding the association that's rights for you

Buying a condominium and the concerns

What is a co-operative?

#### **X. Multi-family ownership (help separately)**

Being a landlord

What are the tenancies rights?

Tenant selection

Security deposit and last month's rent

Termination of Tenant contract

Lead paint and other hazard materials



## Monitoring Report

Met with Mr. Rasy to finalize the agenda for July 13 <sup>th</sup> and July 27 <sup>th</sup> .	June 21, 2010	Completed in an hour and half.	As planned	No delay	N/A	Mr. Rasy got George from Lowes to speak about home improvements and David Turcotte, from UMASS. He will speak about keeping a home healthy from chemicals. Elkin will speak about personal finances, benefits of good credit and community involvements.
Started of the first class.  Part 1.	July 13, 2010	6:00 PM to 9:00PM	All the speakers were on time	On schedule	At end giving a survey and evaluation of the speakers.	12 families attended and they all got a chance to introduce themselves and what cities they were from. They had a chance to engage.
Met with Rasy, Frank and Susanne, and went over the surveys individual comments of the speakers.	July 19, 2010	Completed in an hour and half.	As planned	No delay	Too much material to cover in such a little time. Try to stick to the agenda and the power point presentation.	Good positive comments from everyone in the meeting. The testimonial from the participants. The questions made by several about the insurance, the credit history, and the effects on the cost.
Part 2 of the first class.	July 27, 2010	6:00 PM to 9:00 PM	David the only outside speaker come in half way to the class, as scheduled. Other speakers were Rasy, and Elkin.	No delay	We change the order of the speakers to accommodate David Turcotte, from UMASS Lowell.	Once again a lot of questions by the participants and only 10 families graduated by coming to Part 2. The other two were missing in action and not called. They did confirm they were coming. Gave all the participants the opportunity to evaluate the whole Post-Purchase Program and the respond was positive.
Met with Rasy and	August 9,	Complete	As planned	No delay	No to have class in	Next classes will be held on September 14 <sup>th</sup>

Susanne to plan the second class for September 2010.	2010	d 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM			August 2010.	and September 28 <sup>th</sup> . New speakers, insurance company will be Fred Church Co. George from Lowes, and David from UMASS Lowell.
Second class  Part 1 started.	September 14, 2010	Completed 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM	As planned	No delay	N/A	Participants were 15 families. All were engaged in the presentation by asking good questions to all the speakers. Again, given survey to answer.
Met with Jose to go over the class and to see if he can give us and evaluation of the class as an outsider.	September 27, 2010	Completed in an hour and half.	As planned	No delay	N/A	The idea is to have an outside observer and give us their opinion on how the classes are run. In other words can we improve the class? Jose gave us a great feedback.
Part 2 of the second class.	September 28, 2010	Completed 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM	As planned	No delay	N/A	Only 10 families came back for the second part of the program. The four families gave a different reason, but valid. All participants were engaged and even talking about their own personal stories. Some stayed longer asking more questions.
Rasy and Elkin met to set the third class.	October 4, 2010	Completed in an hour.	As planned	No delay	Now we have another certified counselor to do the training: He is Wen and works for the Home Preservation Center.	We have 12 families signed up for the classes and some of the families who could not make it last time will be coming in to complete the program. We are inviting Mike Conway Insurance Co. and Home Depot to the program. The classes will be held October 19 <sup>th</sup> and November 9 <sup>th</sup> .
Met with Jorge Casas from MAHA in Dorchester,	October 18, 2010	Completed in two hours.	As planned	I was late, because traffic in	Called Jose and asked him if he can start the	Interview went well we found out, who, when how and what to do to get future funding for

Jose and I want to interview him.				Boston.	interview and I will get there when I can.	our program.
Part 1 third class start	October 19, 2010	Completed 6:00 PM To 9:00 PM	As planned	No delay	Wayne another speaker how to build a budget and wealth on your new home	Participants were 14 with lot energy and wanted to learn. Home Depot had an Anglo man and Latina woman full of knowledge. The UMASS Lowell representative was not here today.
Set a meeting with Juan Bonilla to go over the funding and how he promotes the Post-Purchase Program.	October 29, 2010	Completed in two hours	Jose, Rasy and I as planned	No delay		Juan Bonilla provided information on how the funding comes from MHP as soon as they have 10 or more families are 30 day late they get a report to call them and set time to come to the post – purchase classes is a required by the soft second loan.
Met with Kelley Maloy from Massachusetts Housing Partnership, in Boston	November 9, 2010	Completed in an hour and half.	As planned	No delay	N/A	MHP provides a soft second loan to first time buyers in Massachusetts. They have participating banks in Lowell and they have RFP early this year for and non-profit organization to provide Post-Purchase classes for families that go 30 days delinquent on their mortgages. Community Team Work got the contract, but they do not have a program running yet. We cannot apply for the funding for three years.
Part 2 third Class	November 9, 2010	Completed 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM	As planned	No delay	Wayne and Elkin only two speakers	There were only 8 participant's roll call and there were two individuals from previous classes that needed to complete the second class part.

Set meeting with Rasy, Susanne, Wayne and Frank	November 29, 2010	Completed in an hour and half.	As planned	No delay	Need a plan to get more first time buyer in the program.	Come up with a system to get the first time buyers who has purchase in the last 24 months. One option is to get the register of deeds to provide us with a list of the families who got the down payment assistant from the City. Contact those local banks and credit union on how we can send our flyers to the one getting delinquent.
Meeting with Rasy, Frank, Jose, Susanne, Esther, and Elkin.	January 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2011	Completed in an hour and half. It started at 4:00PM.	As planned	No delay	Strategy for the coming months	Evaluated the past three classes and what we need to improved and how we are evaluating the outcomes. The participants have been engaged in classes and they have responded to the post survey. We need to implement a pre-assessment before starting the 1 <sup>st</sup> class, and post assessment measure the knowledge of the participants, then a survey of to evaluate the classes, and a month or two later phone surveys on how the participants are utilizing the knowledge of the material they learned in the program. Offer the participants the ability to come in to the HPC as a resource for the financial questions. We also planned the best way to measure two short outcomes of the program, improve credit scores, reduced debts, increase savings, and become more financially savvy.

Program goals Evaluation	January 15, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	Re-assess the program goals	Meet with Elkin to evaluate the goals that have been achieved by the program so far.
Funding Evaluation	February 19, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	Re-assess funding sources to find other alternatives	Meet with Elkin to evaluate funding sources
Partners and Sustainability Evaluation	March 18, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	To increase benefits to attract homeowners	Meet with Elkin to evaluate the partners network and the sustainability of the program
Marketing Evaluation	March 31, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	Find alternative means to reach more homeowners	Meet with Elkin to evaluate the marketing efforts of the program
Class Evaluation	March 31, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	Improve the class, overall performance, speakers, materials, assessment forms, intake forms, and other	Meet with Elkin to evaluate the class presentations, speakers, materials, assessments, follow up forms, etc.
Class participants follow-up evaluation	April 9, 2010	Not complete	As planned	No delay	Improve the way we are following up with class participants	Meet with Elkin to evaluate efforts to follow up with class participants.

## SWOT Analysis:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✚ The Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA) is an already established and well known community organization. This organization runs the Home Preservation Center program.</li><li>✚ Experienced and qualified workforce dedicated to mission. Employees feel part of the organization.</li><li>✚ The community will retain and increase its residents and homeownership in the future.</li><li>✚ Funding may be raised from different founders and stakeholders.</li><li>✚ This would increase the number of participants in the Post-Purchase classes at Home Preservation Center.</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✚ Opportunity to start a small fee service with participants.</li><li>✚ Opportunities to partner with other community organizations around the neighborhood would increase the possibilities of obtaining more funds.</li><li>✚ This would increase the opportunity to increase the sustainability housing inventory.</li><li>✚ Funds may be raised from local employers and/or banks.</li><li>✚ This program could potentially enhance the Pre-Purchase program through local employers and state government.</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✚ Lack of funds may decrease the growth of the program.</li><li>✚ Lack of jobs may decrease new buyers demand and may halt the program.</li><li>✚ Program may compete with the Lawrence Community Works and Community Team Inc. Post-Purchase Program who begun their program after Coalition for Better Acre started.</li><li>✚ Lack of marketing in the community.</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✚ State and city budget constrains may impose cut funding for post-purchase program.</li><li>✚ Dependency on when the political decisions are made.</li><li>✚ The program losses a key staff in the middles of the project.</li><li>✚ Institutional expansion may cause the increase of student population and may decrease the possibilities of obtaining funds.</li><li>✚ Program would be vulnerable to competing with Lawrence's Post-Purchase programs.</li></ul>
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