



National Association for County
Community and Economic Development

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR COUNTY
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Success Story Submission

County/Organization County of Bergen Office of Community Development

Project/Program Name RAMBO HOUSE - Fort Lee Assistance & Support Housing Corp.

Point of Contact:

Name Terrence Corriston Title Executive Director

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State New Jersey Zip 07024

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1. **BRIEF SUMMARY:** Briefly describe the problem and solution for the project or program.
2. **RESULTS:** Describe the tangible results of the project or program. Describe how the project or program will be sustained over the long term. If the project or program is not currently operating, please explain why not.
3. **PARTNERS:** List the names of the agencies and organizations involved in the project or program.
4. **COSTS AND SOURCES OF FINANCING:** Describe the source(s) and use(s) of funds to construct the project or start up the program, as well as the sources and uses of ongoing operating funds if applicable. Please indicate which agency or organization secured the source of funding.
5. **PICTURES:** Please include any relevant pictures of the project or program—especially before and after pictures.

Please submit forms and questions to:
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Summary – Rambo House

The Borough of Fort Lee has been recognized as the birthplace of the motion picture industry. In the early 20th century, the historic Palisades along with the borough's forests, fields, farms and waterfalls, attracted filmmakers who established the first movie studios in the borough. A saloon on First Street which was known as "Rambo's Hotel," served as a location for several silent films as well as dressing rooms and for hiring movie extras. During film shoots in the area, meals for film crews were served on the Rambo's Hotel grounds. After the film industry moved to California, the property continued to serve as a saloon until the 1980s when it was used solely as a residential property.

By 2013 the property had been sold and was slated to be demolished. At the urging of the Fort Lee Film Commission, the Mayor and Council recognized the significance of the building as a symbol of the borough's place in film history. The borough made an innovative plan to dedicate the property for use as affordable rental housing for veteran families and to preserve this symbol of the borough's motion picture heritage.

The borough transferred the property to the Fort Lee Assistance and Support Housing (FLASH) Corp. which is a non-profit development partner of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Fort Lee. By the time FLASH Corp. acquired the property it was in disrepair. Moreover, in anticipation of demolition, the prior owner had scavenged the building, removing the copper piping, appliances and fixtures and destroying many of the ceilings and walls in doing so.

Initial efforts by the FLASH Corp. to find funds to rehabilitate the property proved futile. Recognizing the value of the project, the County of Bergen, Office of Community Development awarded CDBG funds for both the site work and the interior rehabilitation of the property.

After approximately five months of renovation, in October 2016 Rambo House welcomed two families whose head of household are combat veterans.

This project was the result of a partnership between public and private agencies which, through their commitment to historic and cultural preservation as well as ending veteran homelessness, found an innovative solution to preserve a community asset and provide new affordable housing opportunities. We are so grateful for the contribution of the County of Bergen, Office of Community Development, without which the project could not have been completed.

Sources of Funding

Acquisition	Borough of Fort Lee	
Engineering & Soft Costs	FLASH Corp.	\$ 20,000.00
Building Rehabilitation	County of Bergen Office of Community Development	\$240,000.00
Hardscape/landscaping	County of Bergen Office of Community Development	\$ 40,000.00