Congressman Clyde Holloway's Washington office announced Tuesday that the Housing Authority of Ville Platte has been awarded a $1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the modernization of 70 apartments and the construction of 25 new, low-rent housing units.

The Ville Platte grant is a significant portion of a $2.8 HUD housing development award. HUD also released $1.5 million to the Eunice Retirement Housing Corporation for the construction of 37 low-rent apartments for the elderly in that city, reports the Holloway staff.

Phil Lemoine, chairman of the Housing Authority's board of directors, says the board members and Wayne Vizena, executive director, have been working on the modernization effort for the past three years. Serving with Lemoine are Vice Chairman Freddie Dunn, Henry Welch, Ken Webb and Lee Burt Ardoin. The board is appointed by the Ville Platte City Council, but operates independently of city administration.

A portion of the $1,329,200 HUD award will be used to update and refurbish the 70 Parkview apartments, originally constructed in 1953. Twenty additional units were constructed in 1954.

The Housing Authority now supervises 200 low-rent apartments in Ville Platte, grouped into what are commonly called Parkview, Old Doctor Carver, New Doctor Carver, T.A. Thompson, North Chataignier and McArthur Drive apartments.

Vizena expects the modernization work to be done over a year and a half period, during which time specifications for each of the 70 apartments will be prepared by the staff and engineer Paul Fontenot. The plans must also be reviewed and approved by HUD before advertising and awarding of the work contracts, says Vizena.

Plans and the location of the 25 new apartments have not been finalized, adds the executive director.

"I'm very happy with the news from Holloway's office," remarks Mayor Hottell Fontenot. He commended the Housing Authority Board for its efforts in securing the HUD grant.

Cong. Holloway reports his Washington and district staffs worked closely with Ville Platte and Eunice officials over a period of several months in an effort to secure this grant money.

"This is an accumulation of considerable time and effort and the beneficiaries of this money will be the deserving citizens of Evangeline Parish," says Holloway.