

DRAFT

**2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and
2020 Annual Action Plan
of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan**



**Community Development Block Grant,
Emergency Solutions Grant, and
HOME Investment Partnership Grant**

City of Niagara Falls

City of Niagara Falls
2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan
of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Consolidated Plan

The purpose of the CP is to guide federal funding investments over the next five years. The CP is guided by three overarching goals that are applied according to a community's needs. The goals are:

- To provide decent housing by preserving the affordable housing stock, increasing the availability of affordable housing, reducing discriminatory barriers, increasing the supply of supportive housing for those with special needs, and transitioning homeless persons and families into housing.
- To provide a suitable living environment through safer, more livable neighborhoods, greater integration of low- and moderate- income residents throughout the City, increased housing opportunities, and reinvestment in deteriorating neighborhoods.
- To expand economic opportunities through more jobs paying self-sufficient wages, homeownership opportunities, development activities that promote long-term community viability, and the empowerment of low- and moderate- income persons to achieve self-sufficiency.

Focus of the Plan

As required by HUD, the identification of needs and the adoption of strategies to address those needs must focus primarily on low- and moderate-income individuals and households. The CP must also address the needs of special needs populations, e.g., the elderly, persons with disabilities, large families, single parents, homeless individuals and families, and public housing residents.

Structure of the Plan

The Consolidated Plan consists of three major sections: a housing and community development needs assessment, a housing market analysis, and a strategic plan that identifies those priority housing and community development needs and strategies that the City will use with available resources over the next five years. The CP was formulated using HUD's eCon Plan tool, which dictates the plan's structure and provides a series of pre-populated tables. In some cases, the HUD-provided tables have been updated with more accurate or relevant data.

2. Summary of the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan Needs Assessment

The City is committed to allocating funds that serve the needs of low-to-moderate income (LMI) residents. Households with incomes less than 50% of the area median income (AMI), particularly those with extremely low incomes (less than 30% of AMI), are priorities. Niagara Falls has also identified special needs individuals as among those who face the greatest challenges and who should receive high priority in the expenditure of federal funds, including low-income families, the homeless, persons threatened with homelessness, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

In order to achieve the greatest impact possible from the limited federal funds available, the City intends to allocate non-housing community development resources primarily to projects that will have a focused neighborhood impact, as opposed to infrastructure projects of more dispersed expected benefit. The priorities identified in the CP were developed by:

- Weighing the severity of the need among all groups and sub-groups
- Analyzing current social, housing, and economic conditions
- Analyzing the relative needs of low- and moderate-income families
- Assessing the resources likely to be available over the next five years, and
- Evaluating input from stakeholder meetings, interviews, community development need survey, local staff, and participants in public hearings.

Housing and homelessness are major components of the community development initiatives within this plan. The overwhelming housing problem is affordability, especially given the number and percent of households who are paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs and, within this category, those who are paying more than 50% of their income for rent. Like most other areas in the nation, Erie County continues to experience a significant shortage of affordable and available housing for extremely low and low-income households. Given the extensive need as well as the large and diverse nature of the population in the Consortium, funding allocations and program initiatives for housing are designed to address the needs of both family and elderly households in various income groups, rehabilitate substandard housing, and improve housing conditions in neighborhood target areas.

While the number of people experiencing homelessness has remained nearly the same in recent years, housing affordability is one of the greatest contributors to the rate of homelessness. Homelessness and homeless services are concentrated in the City of Buffalo; however, there is also need for services within the balance of the County.

Economic development is an important goal in Erie County. The primary goal of economic development is the expansion of economic opportunities that will protect existing jobs, facilitate the creation of new jobs and generate new investment in the community. The Consortium, and Buffalo Niagara Region as a whole, are continuing to trend toward more of a knowledge-based economy. Education, Health Care Services, Banking and Finance, and other Professional, Scientific and management Services professions comprise a significant and growing number of the employment opportunities in the Consortium. Stakeholder comments indicate that while an increase in educational attainment can be a positive trend, the needs of those without any College education are not being adequately met.

The Strategic Plan provides a framework to address the needs of the Consortia for the next five years using CDBG, ESG and HOME program funds. The three overarching objectives guiding the Consortia's proposed activities are:

- Providing Decent Affordable Housing
- Creating Suitable Living Environments
- Creating Economic Opportunities

Outcomes show how programs and activities benefit a community or the people served. The three outcomes that will illustrate the benefits of each activity funded by the CDBG, ESG and HOME programs are:

- Improve Availability/Accessibility
- Improve Affordability
- Improve Sustainability

The City will continue to focus on goals related to affordable housing, neighborhood revitalization, community and economic development, infrastructure improvements, facility upgrades and improved accessibility, removing blight, and combatting homelessness. All activities funded in the next five years will support at least one of the above objectives and at least one of the above outcomes consistent with the following goals.

Community and Economic Development Goals

To further Community and Economic Development Goals, the City will:

- Commit funds to assist residential repair or replace broken sewer laterals in order to provide access to quality affordable housing;
- Repair and replace substandard roads servicing low-low income neighborhoods and commercial areas;
- Improve infrastructure and vehicular access to areas of employment, recreation, and commercial activity located in low-income neighborhoods;
- Provide funding to service providers assisting all ages and at-risk populations within the City;
- Provide grants for the purpose of exterior repairs to improve the physical appearance of older commercial centers in order to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income people residing in the surrounding neighborhoods by enhancing the appearance of frequently visited retail structures;
- Develop and implement Microenterprise fund to assist microenterprise businesses and to complement the Small Business Support Program;
- Develop, expand, and rehabilitate park, recreation, and open space facilities that serve low/moderate income residents;
- Support community policing events in target neighborhoods; and
- Undertake targeted demolition and clearance of buildings and land features which contribute to spot blight conditions.

Housing Goals

To further Housing Goals, the City will:

- Provide funding to eligible property owners for the purposes of rehabilitating their home;
- Provide financial resources to non-profit groups that seek to develop rental housing for the low-income population; and

- Promote homeownership for low-moderate income households by providing purchasing assistance to first-time low to moderate income homebuyers who purchase an existing house.

Homeless and Special Needs Goals

To further Homeless and Special Needs Goals, the City will:

- Provide Rapid Re-housing Relocation and Stabilization services to homeless individuals through housing search, counseling and legal aid assistance; and
- Provide housing assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless.

3. Evaluation of past performance

The City's past performance in the administration and implementation of the CDBG and HOME programs has fulfilled the spirit and intent of the federal legislation creating these programs. The City projects and programs have facilitated affordability for decent housing, availability and accessibility of suitable living environments, sustainability of suitable living environments, and the accessibility of economic opportunities.

The City of Niagara Falls has not expended CDBG, ESG, and HOME funds at an ideal rate and has had to re-allocate un-utilized funding from prior program years. The City underwent the Substantial Amendment process in 2020 in order to both assign funds from prior program years to current projects and to incorporate funds received through the CARES Act into the 2019 Program Year spending. The City put out a call for projects and received a tremendous response in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and is in a position to increase the spending rate of remaining funds from prior program years, CARES funding, and 2020 Program Year funding.

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to increasing citizen awareness and involvement in the preparation and implementation of the CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs. Through the citizen participation process, the grantee will become more aware and sensitive to low-and moderate-income citizen's needs and the needs of people with disabilities and the organizations representing persons with disabilities. It will also afford the City an opportunity to better inform the public of the purpose of the CDBG, ESG and HOME grants and the funding allocation process, and ensure that selected projects are meeting the needs of City residents.

First Public Hearing

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, the Niagara Falls City Council held a public hearing on Thursday, June 25, commencing at 6:00 p.m. to provide information and allow citizen comment regarding the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and Program Year 2020 Annual Action Plan. While the hearing was physically closed to the public due to Covid-19 public gathering limitations, it was available via live stream on Youtube Channel: richmeranto. Written comment was also invited and accepted in advance of the hearing to be read during the Public Hearing. No comments were received.

Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, the Community Development Department convened three (3) virtual meetings with Community Stakeholders, as follows:

Health & Human Services Stakeholders	September 1, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.
Housing Providers & Stakeholders	September 1, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.
Youth, Education, and Workforce Development Providers	September 2, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

Substantial comment was received during the Stakeholder meetings and incorporated into the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, and meetings minutes are included in the Consolidated Plan as Appendices. Follow up comments were encouraged in writing and were additionally incorporated into the Consolidated Plan.

Public Comment Period and Final Public Hearings

Once draft materials were completed, a public comment period for the Annual Action Plan and Consolidated Plan opened Monday December 21, 2020 and concluded Wednesday December 30, 2020. Written comments were invited to be submitted in writing or in person throughout the Public Comment Period, or at any one of the three Public Hearings that were held on Tuesday, December 29, commencing at 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. to provide information and allow citizen comment regarding the draft 2020 Annual Action Plan and 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan prior to submittal of the Plans to the Common Council and to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

While the hearings were physically closed to the public due to Covid-19 public gathering limitations, they were conducted virtually via Zoom using [Meeting ID: 821 208 7193](#). No comments were received.

A summary table of all the meetings held during the citizen participation process is included on the following page. The Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages public participation and consultation, emphasizing involvement by citizens and the organizations and agencies that serve low/moderate-income person through the use of HUD federal grants and other public and private sector funds. See the Citizen Participation Appendix for all sign-in sheets, meeting summaries, comment sheets, and summary of the affordable housing needs survey.

As documented in the City's Citizen Participation Plan a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan will be required if there is a change in allocation priorities, a decision to carry out an activity not previously described in the action plan that amounts to more than 10% of the aggregate budget, or a substantial change in the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity. If any of these criteria are met, the City shall hold a public hearing to inform the public and receive comment.

5. Summary of public comments

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, a Housing Needs Survey was conducted and made available on-line and in hard copy formats. Unfortunately, participation was low and there was not much feedback related to housing needs. The survey results are compiled and summarized in memo format as part of the Appendix to this document.

The following identifies comments and responses made during the stakeholder meetings.

Programming/Facilities for youth

- Young youth, large variety of services, in and out of school, after school
- Services necessary, lots of programs for kids under the age of 10, miss the mark 13 and up
- Gap in the 8-12 years old range – left out of conversations
- Do a better job with early childhood
- Childcare desert in Niagara Falls – established
- Camps/programming, school district does a good job
- Fall off kinds in prep schools, attendance issues, engagement is key
- High School Program – Early Start Scholars, college course for credit, high success rate, challenge is engagement, show kids how it will benefit them.
- Boys & Girls Club – 1,400 kids a year, before/after school program, can't run pre-k programs, issues with licensing, staffing, high qualifications, lesser hours, degree in early childhood education, a real need in the area, if you lose qualified staff, have two weeks to replace, or class is shut down.
- Some training available, just takes time
- Conversation with Niagara University, cohort of high school seniors interested in childcare, once graduated, could come out and lead pre-k class
- Program being funded through the Niagara Area Foundation is attempting to turn students into “Community Developers” in order to increase community buy-in and engagement
- Need more programming for kids in 2nd/3rd grade
- What does future look like for kids? How to provide services?
- School may not have enough laptops to meet the need
- BOCES open 5 days, buses 2 days, parents can drop off, students can drive other days
- Boys & Girls club working on system to help kids with remote learning
- Can see a difference in kids who've had social interaction vs kids who've not
- Need for youth services, kids with disabilities, Boys & Girls club not really set up for this, not a conducive environment, sensory issues
- Kids for special needs, no plan for them, left out completely

Workforce Development

- Childcare is a significant challenge, BOCES programming involves more than 4,000 individuals
- Want to come back for training, need affordable, accessible childcare
- Transportation is a challenge, especially as it relates to childcare, dropping off kids, getting to work, picking up kids, getting home
- Training centers in Niagara Falls, Lockport, and Sanborn largely because of access to transportation
- BOCES had provided instructors to Isaiah 61
- BOCES got the largest grant in the Buffalo Billion, ESD/Ralph Wilson want to fund projects in Niagara County, need to show partnerships
- BOCES works with County IDA, NCCC, need to work collectively to organize attractive grants

- Habitat previously worked with Isaiah 61, maybe partnership with BOCES
- BOCES has 3,000 SF in space for learning trades

ESL Programming

- Everything is in Erie County, agencies are interested, real transportation challenges
- Forms can even be a challenge with language barrier
- Literacy Buffalo Niagara has ESL Classes, transportation issues, two drop-in centers, tutoring services
- More language barriers in Niagara County than Erie County, more than 50 languages spoken in the area.
- BOCES has literacy programs, instructors in migrant camps, throughout County, also English, math, science

Capital Projects

- Pinnacle is looking to grow youth services department, had to close crib location due to HHS funding, transitional housing for pregnant and parenting, Casey House is short term
- Heart Love & Soul street outreach program for homeless kids, not just kids couch surfing
- Niagara University is currently working with a private developer to purchase the First Congregational Church located at 822 Cleveland Avenue, to function as a hub of workforce development resources and community programming. NU would like to provide full-time staffing and will be seeking annual funding for operations
- 3D program (Dare, Dream, Drive) – Youth coaches/mentor up to 24 at risk homeless, work to stabilize housing, build life skills, 45 kids/year – location, space residences needed
- Youth missing life skills, stay in school, how to be successful in trades
- BOCES in Niagara Falls, want day care center nearby, starting LPN program next 30 days, job readiness position, then more jobs training program
- BOCES in Niagara Falls only occupying 50% of building, room to expand with partnership programs, control over future tenants, room to share
- Boys & Girls Club – Leadership Niagara assisting with project on side lot for new playground and minimarket, connection between 17th street and City Market, house has to be demolished
- Packard Court Community Center – no formal conversations about project, but there is a need for playground, Hyde Park not far away, but not safe/reasonable to expect kids to get there
- City parks are great, love the updates, in evening, around 6 or 7 bigger kids kind of takeover, littles have to play elsewhere
- Franciscan Center lease up in 2 years, kids can walk there from Niagara St. school, may need another building in the right location, proximity to people they serve

Service delivery network

- All participants are part of the Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless
- Many health and human service providers also provide housing resources
- Need more interdisciplinary outreach/communication to foster more collaboration (i.e. meetings)

Service delivery gaps

- Heart, Love & Soul - Daybreak program opens later this year, will involve 30 different agencies in a one stop service program. More services in one location
- Past 7- or 8-years access to services has been a problem. Daybreak will centralize access.
- Heart, Love & Soul is looking at new data management software.
- General lack of education programs including GED and literacy
- Great need for literacy programs – 25% of adults in Niagara Falls have reading levels less than 5th grade. Need to teach people how to speak – impacts employment
- Work placement training is needed
- Education/training - individuals need help getting jobs, and keeping jobs. Many lacking interpersonal skills necessary to keep jobs. Training to extend through employment, assistance dealing with employers and people, navigating transportation, keeping uniforms clean
- Lack of services available to young adults, need programming for kids 13-18, youth activities always the first to go
- Pinnacle Homelessness Program – skills to keep housing, small groups
- Youth with diagnosis get better access to services, if no diagnosis hard to get help
- Not investing in kids enough

Transportation

- Transportation in Niagara County is terrible, go to Lockport one day, return the next
- Some routes work, some don't, public transportation generally poor, rural areas barely served
- If connected by disability, better services – transportation almost nonexistent
- Schedules are bad
- Access to transportation in Erie County is great, not so much in Niagara County
- Did see uptick in bus usage in the City when there were no fees during pandemic
- Paying for bus transportation a real problem for unemployed, homeless, how do they afford, makes it difficult to find/keep work
- Transportation is a real barrier to food access, some have to pool money to take taxis to do grocery shopping
- Discover Niagara Shuttle has been used in years past to get teenagers around the City.
- Teen Center has about 10 bicyclist there each day, need for long-term bike programming
- Packard Court Community Center had a bike rodeo, program to teach kids bike repair
- Go Bikes have been a game changer in the city
- Users need help to know they need to advocate for services/change, comes down to empowerment
- Are kids afraid to go to certain areas? Not really. Don't want to go to mall, some unfamiliar with area. Poor bus schedules
- Some places transportation is an issue – need vans to transport, there are bus route issues
- Isaiah 61 had vans to pick up volunteers, no longer around

Affordable housing stock in Niagara Falls

- Belmont currently working on Old St. Mary's Complex – 42 new units, 1 and 2 bedroom, rent expected to be 45% of median, based on market analysis
- Market study showed the market was strong, a lot of need
- Existing rents are low
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services did a study showing great need for low income housing, economic empowerment needed, even though rents are low, still a challenge
- Belmont setting rents at 45% of median, also prevailing market rate
- A lot of poverty in Niagara Falls, need better quality units
- Existing housing stock is old, approx. 90% of the units were built prior to 1969
- Habitat gets lots of call, not a lot of services, demand exceeds supply of money/services available
- Habitat has other programs (i.e. neighborhood revitalization)
- In summary, poor stock, low rents, low returns
- Niagara County Section 8, no real problems, limited availability, long waiting lists
- HCR funded Rental Assistance Program, units leased right away
- People having a hard time paying rent, even in subsidized units, other economic justice issues
- NeighborWorks Community Partners looking at other resident services (i.e. daycare, substance abuse, etc.) These are hard to find
- Oishei Mobile Safety Net study – more than 60% of households paying more than 30% of household income on housing
- NF Study high percentage of people paying above 30%, urgent need for housing
- Not enough good affordable housing, causes spikes in homeless issues, need more good affordable units

COVID impact on housing

- Rental incomes from apartment have fallen off, moratorium on evictions
- Difficult to get people moved into affordable housing
- Limited part time income, a lot of hospitality workers
- Landlords willing to take chances, now less so – no supplemental income opportunities
- Keeping apartments empty better than not getting rent
- Rapid ReHousing, pre-COVID, 14 day average to permanent housing, limited slots, now takes twice as long, virtual tours, landlords reluctant

Fair Housing Discrimination

- Suggest to talk HOME (Housing Opportunity Made Equal)
- City of Buffalo – issues of gentrification – programs not there to support current residents, shifts poverty to other areas. Pittsburgh a good model, subsidies to encourage development with affordable units.

6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them

All comments or views were accepted.

7. Summary

In summary, the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan have been developed with community input and reflect the needs of the City of Niagara Falls.

The Process

PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies - 91.200(b)

1. Describe agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source

The following are the agencies/entities responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

Agency Role	Name	Department/Agency
CDBG Administrator	NIAGARA FALLS	Department of Community Development
HOME Administrator	NIAGARA FALLS	Department of Community Development
ESG Administrator	NIAGARA FALLS	Department of Community Development

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative:

The City of Niagara Falls Community Development Department is the Lead Agency responsible for development of the Consolidated Plan. The CD Department administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) on behalf of the City of Niagara Falls.

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PR-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.110, 91.200(b), 91.300(b), 91.215(I) and 91.315(I)

1. Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls reached out and consulted with public and private entities to develop the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan. In accordance with 24 CFR 91.100, these organizations provided a wide range of input and value to the planning process through coordinated meetings and public hearings. Outreach initiatives primarily focused on stakeholder meetings, one-on-one and group interviews, and an affordable housing needs survey submitted to city residents, government officials, non-profit organizations and business owners within the City.

Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction's activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(I)).

The City developed an outreach effort to maximize input from a large cross-section of stakeholders. This outreach effort included public meetings, published meeting notices, stakeholder meetings, in-person interviews, telephone interviews, and an affordable housing needs survey. In addition, the CD Department implements a range of affordable housing and community development activities, including administration of the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs; preparation of the Consolidated Plan (CP), the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), and the Annual Plan; technical assistance for and collaboration with non-profit and for-profit housing developers and social service agencies; and rehabilitation and other affordable housing projects.

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness

The City of Niagara Falls created an ESG project review panel with the Homelessness Alliance of Western New York to find new and improved ways to increase participation and input. The panel reports to the Mayor and includes HAWNY, Department of Community Development and Niagara County Social Services Department staff. The Mayor's panel coordinates with the Continuum of Care on efforts such as the \$3.6MM grant HAWNY recently received for a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Project, whereby Community Missions, Inc. and Pinnacle Community Services will receive funds to combat homelessness in youth or other at-risk populations. Pinnacle will provide intake services and will assign a caseworker to individuals and families to help meet specific needs including rapid re-housing, securing permanent housing, and being connected with social service providers as appropriate. Pinnacle currently provides homelessness prevention programming that provides skills to individuals in small groups, to help maintain housing. Heart Love and Soul is opening their Daybreak Program in 2020-2021 to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the jurisdiction's area in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards and evaluate outcomes, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the administration of HMIS

The performance standards for activities funded under the City ESG Program were developed by the Homeless Alliance for WNY, the Continuum of Care (CoC). Staff for the CoC meets with local government staff and homeless service providers to determine the performance standards for the homeless rapid re-housing programs and the homelessness prevention programs that will be administered in the five-county service region. Many of these homeless service providers are active in the provision of transitional, supportive, and permanent housing for previously homeless individuals.

The Mayor's ESG panel, along with the CoC, will evaluate the outcomes of activities assisted by the City's ESG funds. Data collected from HAWNY's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) will be used to determine if agencies funded with ESG funds are meeting their performance goals.

2. Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting

There were no types of agencies that the City of Niagara Falls did not consult, either through stakeholder meetings, personal interviews and/or questionnaires.

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
2019 Niagara Falls Annual Action Plan	City of Niagara Falls	Goals of the Strategic Plan relate to previous years efforts, adjusting based on previous outcomes to maximize benefit of CDBG, HOME, and ESG investments
2019 Community Snapshot City of Niagara Falls, Mobile Safety Net	University at Buffalo Regional Institute School of Architecture and Planning	Data presented in the report was used to identify priority needs and develop goals in the Strategic Plan.
2018 Niagara-Orleans Regional Alliance – Rural Broadband Initiative Report	Niagara County and Orleans County jointly	The report focuses largely on rural needs; however, some urban findings and recommendations were incorporated into the Strategic Plan
Mid-Term Review for “Opening Doors”: A Community Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness update for Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming Counties	Homeless Alliance of Western New York	The Strategic Plan’s homelessness strategy is consistent with the Continuum of Care recommendations.
2020 Niagara County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update	Niagara County	The Strategic Plan’s economic development strategy is designed to align with and complement the CEDS at the local level
2018 Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan	Creating a Healthier Niagara Falls Collaborative	Data presented in the report was used to identify priority needs and develop goals in the Strategic Plan.

Table 2 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Describe cooperation and coordination with other public entities, including the State and any adjacent units of general local government, in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan (91.215(l))

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, the City of Niagara Falls coordinated with Niagara County, the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation, and the Niagara County Industrial Development Agency. Coordination will continue throughout the Plan's implementation.

PR-15 Citizen Participation - 91.401, 91.105, 91.200(c)

1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to increasing citizen awareness and involvement in the preparation and implementation of the CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs. Through the citizen participation process, the grantee will become more aware and sensitive to low-and moderate-income citizen's needs and the needs of people with disabilities and the organizations representing persons with disabilities. It will also afford the City an opportunity to better inform the public of the purpose of the CDBG, ESG and HOME grants and the funding allocation process, and ensure that selected projects are meeting the needs of City residents.

Prior to the solicitation and selection of the 2020 Community Development projects, a series of meetings were held. The Community Development Department met with a broad group of stakeholders, including public and assisted housing providers and health and services agencies. Three stakeholder forums were held to discuss needs and goals of the community. The forums were used both to solicit information on needs and to provide information about the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs, the type of projects eligible for funding, and the project selection process. In addition, the City hosted multiple public hearings to further encourage citizen participation.

The formal public comment period on the Draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan extended from December 21 to December 30, 2020. Three (3) public hearings were held on December 29, 2020 to accept comments on the draft. All hearings were advertised in the Niagara Gazette and posted on the City of Niagara Fall's website.

A summary table of all the meetings held during the citizen participation process is included on the following page. The Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages public participation and consultation, emphasizing involvement by citizens and the organizations and agencies that serve low/moderate-income person through the use of HUD federal grants and other public and private sector funds. See the Citizen Participation Appendix for all sign-in sheets, meeting summaries, comment sheets, and summary of the affordable housing needs survey.

As documented in the City's Citizen Participation Plan a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan will be required if there is a change in allocation priorities, a decision to carry out an activity not previously described in the action plan that amounts to more than 10% of the aggregate budget, or a substantial change in the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity. If any of these criteria are met, the City shall hold a public hearing to inform the public and receive comment.

Citizen Participation Outreach

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons
1	Public Hearing	Non-targeted/broad community	The City held a public hearing on June 25, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. to inform the public that the City is preparing its Consolidated Plan Submission for 2020-2024.	No comments received.	N/A
2	Stakeholder Meeting	Health and Human Services	A stakeholder meeting was held via zoom on September 1, 2020. Representatives of 11 agencies attended.	Need interdisciplinary outreach and communication to foster more collaboration. Access to services has been a problem past 7-8 years. Daybreak program will centralize access to agencies and programming. Individuals need help getting and keeping jobs. Training needs to extend through employment. Lack of services to young adults. Public transportation is a problem for unemployed and homeless. Go Bikes have been a game changer.	All comments were accepted.

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons
3	Stakeholder Meeting	Housing Providers	A stakeholder meeting was held via zoom on September 1, 2020. Representatives of 9 agencies attended.	Not enough good affordable housing causes spike in homeless issues. Significant need for new affordable housing units in the City. Rents are low, need better quality units. Housing stock is old. Long waiting lists for Section 8. Lack of contractors is the biggest barrier in Niagara Falls. Housing rehab program needs to pay fast. City inspections can find 50-60 violations which makes it difficult to scope. COVID-19 has impacted availability of rental units and lengthened time to get into Rapid Rehousing units.	All comments were accepted.
4	Stakeholder Meeting	Youth, Education, and Workforce	A stakeholder meeting was held via zoom on September 2, 2020. Representatives of 8 agencies attended.	Significant gaps in services and programming for youth. Childcare desert in Niagara Falls. Transportation and access to childcare real obstacles to workforce training. More language barriers in Niagara County than Erie County. Needs are childcare, improved public transit, increased youth programming, and community facility improvements.	All comments were accepted.
5	Affordable Housing Needs Survey	Non-targeted/broad community	The Community Development Department solicited input from the public regarding the condition and availability of affordable housing in the City.	Received minimal response and are cautious about reaching conclusions based on the very small sample size.	All comments were accepted.

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons
6	Newspaper Ad	All community residents	Notice of availability of the FY 2020-FY 2024 Consolidated Plan and the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan for public review and comment was published in the Niagara Gazette	No comments received.	N/A
7	Public Comment Period	All community residents	The FY 2020-FY 2024 Consolidated Plan and FY 2020 Annual Action Plan were posted on the City of Niagara Falls Community Development Department's website on December 21, 2020.	No comments received.	N/A
8	Public Hearing	Public Hearing	The City of Niagara Falls held three (3) public hearings on December 29, 2020 to present and obtain comments on the FY 2020-FY 2024 Consolidated Plan and the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan.	No comments received.	N/A

Table 3 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Needs Assessment

NA-05 Overview

Needs Assessment Overview

The needs assessment is based on an analysis of housing problems within the City of Niagara Falls by income level among renters and owners, as well as households with special needs. Additionally, needs were identified through a comprehensive public outreach process that included stakeholder consultation, public hearings, and a review process designed to meaningfully engage citizens.

Data in this section was drawn primarily from HUD's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data set, which is a special tabulation of American Community Survey (ACS) data from the Census Bureau. The CHAS data describes housing problems, such as overcrowding or incomplete kitchen and/or plumbing facilities, as well as cost burden, which occurs when a household pays more than 30% of its gross income on housing costs. Extreme cost burden occurs when a household pays more than 50% of its gross income on housing costs.

Supplemental data were drawn from the 2011-2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates and other sources to provide additional context when needed.

The overall statistical highlights of housing needs are summarized in NA-10 - Housing Needs Assessments.

NA-10 Housing Needs Assessment - 24 CFR 91.205 (a,b,c)

Summary of Housing Needs

Data in the tables in this section provided by HUD apply to the jurisdiction of the City of Niagara Falls. AMI in the following text refers to Area Median Income, which includes the Buffalo Metropolitan Area – Erie and Niagara Counties

The 2015 estimate of population for the City is 49,435, a two percent decline since 2009. Over the same period of time, the number of households is down by seven percent and median income barely changed with an estimated one percent increase. As of 2015, the City of Niagara Falls had a total of 21,290 households, including 12,055 homeowners and 9,235 renters. Homeowners occupied 56.6% of the units and renters occupied 43.4% of the units.

Housing problems are identified by renter and owner households and include the following categories:

- Substandard Housing - Lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities;
- Severely Overcrowded - With >1.51 people per room (and complete kitchen and plumbing);
- Overcrowded - With 1.01-1.5 people per room;
- Housing cost burden greater than 50% of income; and
- Housing cost burden greater than 30% of income.

Data from the Housing Needs Summary Table shows that for 92 percent of low-moderate income renters (less than 80% AMI) and 96 percent of low-moderate income owners, the primary housing problem was having a housing cost burden which was in excess of 50% of income.

Overall low- and moderate-income households:

Occupied households with incomes under 80% of the AMI totaled 13,185 units. Overall renter households have a lower average income than homeowners. This is reflected in the percent of all renters, 84%, who are low-moderate income, compared to 45% of homeowners are low-moderate income.

Overall cost burden for all low- and moderate-income households:

The number of low-and-moderate income renters who are also cost burdened is higher than the number of similarly situated owners, both in absolute numbers and proportionately. Renter occupied units under 80% of the AMI and experiencing a cost burden above 30% of income totaled 5,148 units and 56% of all renters. The number of owners in this category was less than half the number of similarly situated the renters, at 2,288 units, constituting just 19% of all owner-occupied units.

Cost burden for elderly low- and moderate-income households:

Almost one-third of the households, 6,878, in the City contain at least one person who is age 62 or over. Of that number, 68% qualify as low and moderate income. Renter units occupied by elderly with income

below 80% AMI and a housing cost burden of above 30% of income equaled 17% of all renter households experiencing this cost burden. However, the owner-occupied units in this same category represented 39% of all owners experiencing a burden in excess of 30% of income for housing cost. The foregoing cost burden experienced by elderly homeowners is likely due to some degree to a significant number of elderly residents electing to age place (either by choice or due to a lack of other options) while also experiencing limited or fixed incomes.

Cost burden for small and large family low- and moderate-income households:

Forty-five percent of City households, 9,550, are comprised of small and large families. Of that number, 52% qualify as low and moderate income. A total of 2,230 renter households and 1,330 owner occupied households are experiencing a burden in excess of 30% of income for housing cost.

Demographics	Base Year: 2009	Most Recent Year: 2015	% Change
Population	50,193	49,435	-2%
Households	22,939	21,290	-7%
Median Income	\$31,336.00	\$31,560.00	1%

Table 4 - Housing Needs Assessment Demographics

Data Source: 2005-2009 ACS (Base Year), 2011-2015 ACS (Most Recent Year)

	0-30% HAMFI	>30- 50% HAMFI	>50- 80% HAMFI	>80- 100% HAMFI	>100% HAMFI
Total Households	5,210	4,095	3,880	1,990	6,115
Small Family Households	1,765	1,325	1,150	850	3,355
Large Family Households	150	335	235	120	265
Household contains at least one person 62-74 years of age	775	620	1,125	420	1,159
Household contains at least one person age 75 or older	520	890	750	215	404
Households with one or more children 6 years old or younger	860	785	355	239	339

Table 5 - Total Households Table

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Housing Needs Summary Tables

1. Housing Problems (Households with one of the listed needs)

	Renter					Owner				
	0-30% AMI	>30- 50% AMI	>50- 80% AMI	>80- 100% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30- 50% AMI	>50- 80% AMI	>80- 100% AMI	Total
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS										
Substandard Housing - Lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities	45	25	25	0	95	10	25	4	20	59
Severely Overcrowded - With >1.51 people per room (and complete kitchen and plumbing)	0	10	10	0	20	0	0	10	0	10
Overcrowded - With 1.01-1.5 people per room (and none of the above problems)	60	80	4	0	144	0	0	0	4	4
Housing cost burden greater than 50% of income (and none of the above problems)	2,490	320	4	0	2,814	665	245	85	0	995

	Renter					Owner				
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total
Housing cost burden greater than 30% of income (and none of the above problems)	680	1,240	290	20	2,230	230	555	505	40	1,330
Zero/negative Income (and none of the above problems)	295	0	0	0	295	90	0	0	0	90

Table 6 – Housing Problems Table

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

2. Housing Problems 2 (Households with one or more Severe Housing Problems: Lacks kitchen or complete plumbing, severe overcrowding, severe cost burden)

	Renter					Owner				
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS										
Having 1 or more of four housing problems	2,595	435	45	0	3,075	670	265	100	25	1,060
Having none of four housing problems	1,200	1,880	1,330	515	4,925	365	1,515	2,400	1,450	5,730
Household has negative income, but none of the other housing problems	295	0	0	0	295	90	0	0	0	90

Table 7 – Housing Problems 2

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

The housing problem tables identify only a very small percentage of households as having substandard conditions or overcrowding. It can be assumed that severe housing costs burden that are in excess of 50% of AMI is the predominant housing problem.

Households having an income that is 0-30% of AMI are the most impacted by severe housing cost burden. For renter households that had an income under 30% of AMI, 68% of the households had one or more of the four housing problems, which most likely included a housing expense greater than 50% of income. For owner households, the proportion was comparable, with 65% of the households within this income range having one or more of the four housing problems.

For households within 30-50% of AMI, 19% of both renter and owner households most likely were paying more than 50% of their income for housing. And for households within the 50-80% of AMI, the percentage likely experiencing severe housing cost burdens declines to 9% for renters and 4% for homeowners.

If data were available and presented for households paying in excess of 30% of their income for rent, the percentage of affected households would go up within all income categories.

	0-30% AMI		30-50% AMI		50-80% AMI		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Renter households								
Having 1 or more of four housing problems	2,595	68%	435	19%	45	9%	3,076	46%
Having none of four housing problems	1,200	32%	1,880	81%	515	91%	3,597	54%
Total	3,795	100%	2,315	100%	560	100%	6,673	100%
Owner households								
Having 1 or more of four housing problems	670	65%	365	19%	100	4%	1,136	21%
Having none of four housing problems	365	35%	1,515	81%	2,400	96%	4,280	79%
Total	1,035	100%	1,880	100%	2,500	100%	5,416	100%

Table 8 – Housing Problems: One or more severe housing problems, including cost burden >50%

Source: 2011-2015 ACS

3. Cost Burden > 30%

	Renter				Owner			
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS								
Small Related	1,340	705	124	2,169	230	275	205	710
Large Related	135	135	35	305	10	60	8	78
Elderly	550	234	65	849	330	265	300	895
Other	1,255	500	70	1,825	330	200	75	605
Total need by income	3,280	1,574	294	5,148	900	800	588	2,288

Table 9 – Cost Burden > 30%

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

4. Cost Burden > 50%

	Renter				Owner			
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS								
Small Related	1,185	115	4	1,304	210	80	30	320
Large Related	105	0	0	105	10	15	4	29
Elderly	415	59	0	474	190	110	55	355
Other	890	140	0	1,030	260	40	0	300
Total need by income	2,595	314	4	2,913	670	245	89	1,004

Table 10 – Cost Burden > 50%

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

5. Crowding (More than one person per room)

	Renter					Owner				
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	>80-100% AMI	Total
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS										
Single family households	60	90	10	0	160	0	0	10	4	14
Multiple, unrelated family households	0	0	10	0	10	0	0	0	0	0
Other, non-family households	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total need by income	60	90	20	0	170	0	0	10	4	14

Table 11 – Crowding Information

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Describe the number and type of single person households in need of housing assistance.

According to ACS data, a total of 8,102 householders within the City of Niagara Falls were living alone in 2015. That number accounted for 38% of all households within the City. Of all householders living alone in the City, 35% are 65 or older. Many of these elderly households would be among the 849 low-moderate income elderly renter-occupied households and 895 owner-occupied households who are paying 30% or more of their income on housing cost. It can be assumed that most of these households have aged in place and continue to live in their owner residential units. For such units that need repair, the City operates a housing rehabilitation program for eligible homeowners.

Estimate the number and type of families in need of housing assistance who are disabled or victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

In 2015 there were 7,805 persons living with a disability, comprising 16% of the total City of Niagara Falls noninstitutionalized population. Of this population, 33% were 65 years and older. The most common disability status was ambulatory difficulty, which was experienced by 58% of the disabled population. Thirty-seven percent, 2,920 persons, expressed an independent living difficulty. An additional 37%, 2,854 persons, expressed cognitive difficulty. Thirty-six percent of the population 65 and over report that they have some type of disability status.

The supply of housing that is affordable and accessible to persons with physical disabilities is extremely limited. In addition to ensuring that the growing number of elderly households that include a person with a disability can be accommodated by appropriate housing stock, stakeholders expressed a need to provide assistance and supportive services that will allow seniors to age in place. This would include accessibility retrofitting, transportation improvements, and other actions needed to address a variety of other needs.

Within the City of Niagara Falls, 29% of persons with a disability also live in poverty as compared with 27% of the population as a whole. Data for the City shows median earnings for the population with a disability at \$16,771, which is below that of the population without a disability. These figures underscore the struggle that many City households that include a person with a disability experience in finding and maintaining suitable affordable housing.

According to data published by the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, an average of 534 violent crimes were reported annually from 2014-2018 to the City of Niagara Falls Police Department. On average, 20 people per minute are victims of physical violence by an intimate partner in the United States.¹ Confidential emergency re-housing is generally a common need among this population.

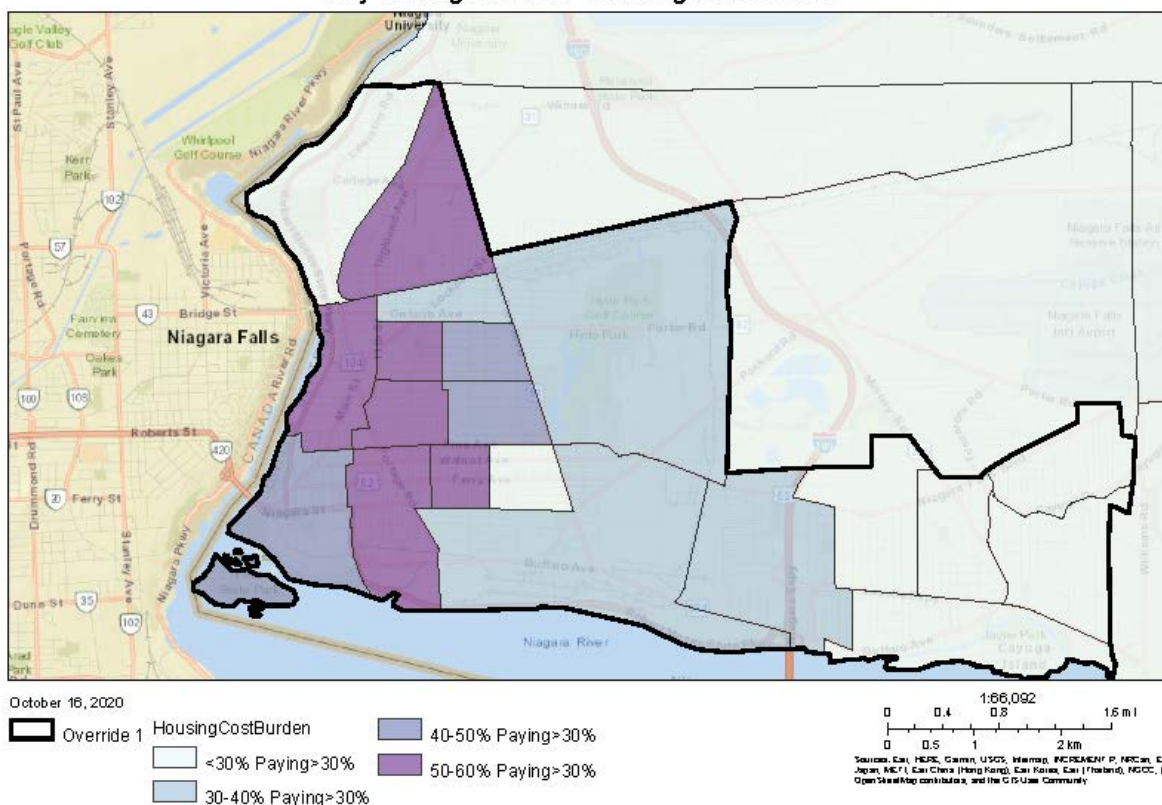
What are the most common housing problems?

The most likely problem experienced by renter households would be cost burden in excess of 30% of income. The map below illustrates census tracts within the City of Niagara Falls and the percentage of households paying greater than 30% of AMI on housing costs. Nine of the City's census tracts report greater than 40% of households experiencing cost burden in excess of 30%.

For low-moderate income renter households within the City of Niagara Falls, 5,148 were cost burdened, including 849 who were elderly. For homeowners, 2,288 low-moderate income households were cost burdened with housing costs in excess of 30% of income, including 895 elderly households.

¹ Black MC, Basile KC, Breiding MJ, Smith SG, Walters ML, Merrick MT, Chen J, Stevens MR. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2011.

City of Niagara Falls - Housing Cost Burden



Are any populations/household types more affected than others by these problems?

The cost burden is heaviest for very low-income renters. Of the low- and moderate-income small families with a cost burden of 30% or more of household income, 62% had incomes under 30% of the median income. Of the low- and moderate-income elderly households with a cost burden of 30% or more of household income, 65% had incomes under 30% of the median income.

Describe the characteristics and needs of Low-income individuals and families with children (especially extremely low-income) who are currently housed but are at imminent risk of either residing in shelters or becoming unsheltered 91.205(c)/91.305(c)). Also discuss the needs of formerly homeless families and individuals who are receiving rapid re-housing assistance and are nearing the termination of that assistance

The lack of affordable housing makes it difficult for low-income individuals and families with children to maintain a stable household. No data exists that would specifically enumerate or describe the at-risk or formerly homeless population or rapid-rehousing recipients nearing termination within the City of Niagara Falls.

If a jurisdiction provides estimates of the at-risk population(s), it should also include a description of the operational definition of the at-risk group and the methodology used to generate the estimates:

No estimate of at-risk populations is available.

Specify particular housing characteristics that have been linked with instability and an increased risk of homelessness

As previously noted, the lack of affordable housing makes it difficult for low-income individuals and families with children to maintain a stable household. High housing costs, physical deficiencies, unstable neighborhoods and overcrowding all contribute to local homelessness problems.

The Mid-Term Review for “Opening Doors”: A Community Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness update for Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming Counties (2016) identifies trends affecting homelessness including high levels of poverty, the distance between low-cost housing and employment opportunities, transportation, lack of affordable housing, and fewer homeless shelters in rural areas compared to their urban counterparts.

The Homeless Alliance for Western New York identified affordable housing as a critical need throughout Western New York and pointed to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition who estimates a deficit of 30,000 affordable and available rental units at or below extremely low income, and 17,000 units at or below 50% of area median income for the Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls area. Without affordable housing, it is difficult for low-income individuals and families with children to maintain a stable household.

Discussion

In 2019, the City of Niagara Falls participated in the Community Snapshot City of Niagara Falls. The report was prepared by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute and the John R. Oishei Foundation Mobile Safety-Net Team. The Community Snapshot presents findings on the community’s population that lives in or near poverty. Most notable the report identifies more than 23,700 individuals, 49% of the City’s population, that live in or near poverty in the City of Niagara Falls. It further notes that from 2011 to 2017 the number of residents living near poverty dropped by 10% but the number living in poverty increased by 23%. Poverty is particularly common among children, single parents, and refugees and immigrants. With low graduation rates and a prevalence of lower-paying jobs in the City, young adults are also at risk of poverty. Lower rents and home values make housing more affordable, however 68% of lower-income residents are still burdened by housing costs.

NA-15 Disproportionately Greater Need: Housing Problems - 91.205 (b)(2)

Assess the need of any racial or ethnic group that has disproportionately greater need in comparison to the needs of that category of need as a whole.

Introduction

HUD defines a disproportionately greater housing need as when a racial or ethnic group experiences housing problems at a rate over 10 percentage points more than that of corresponding income level as a whole. The data tables below summarize the percentage of each racial/ethnic group experiencing housing problems by HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) levels. Where the HUD table below reports AMI, they refer to HAMFI. Housing problems include the following: lacks complete kitchen facilities, lacks complete plumbing facilities, more than one person per room, and cost burden greater than 30%.

0%-30% of Area Median Income

Housing Problems	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	4,175	655	385
White	2,315	410	225
Black / African American	1,480	189	109
Asian	39	29	4
American Indian, Alaska Native	65	4	0
Pacific Islander	4	0	0
Hispanic	180	4	20

Table 12 - Disproportionally Greater Need 0 - 30% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS
Source:

*The four housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than one person per room, 4. Cost Burden greater than 30%

30%-50% of Area Median Income

Housing Problems	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	2,495	1,600	0
White	1,540	1,205	0
Black / African American	815	335	0
Asian	25	8	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	30	40	0

Table 13 - Disproportionally Greater Need 30 - 50% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

*The four housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than one person per room, 4. Cost Burden greater than 30%

50%-80% of Area Median Income

Housing Problems	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	940	2,940	0
White	630	2,400	0
Black / African American	275	420	0
Asian	0	4	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	4	75	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	4	30	0

Table 14 - Disproportionally Greater Need 50 - 80% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

*The four housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than one person per room, 4. Cost Burden greater than 30%

80%-100% of Area Median Income

Housing Problems	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	85	1,900	0
White	69	1,460	0
Black / African American	15	300	0
Asian	0	14	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	20	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	60	0

Table 15 - Disproportionally Greater Need 80 - 100% AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

*The four housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than one person per room, 4. Cost Burden greater than 30%

Discussion

Under HUD's definition, a disproportionately greater housing need exists when a racial or ethnic group experiences housing problems at a rate over 10 percentage points higher than that of a corresponding income level as a whole. In general, the percentage of households with a housing problem is high for the lowest income bracket (0-30% AMI) and decreases as income increases. According to the above definitions, the racial/ethnic groups in the City experiencing one or more housing problems at a disproportionate rate were:

- Asian households earning 30-50% AMI
- Black African/American households earning 30-50% AMI
- Black African/American households earning 50-80% AMI
- Pacific Islander households earning 0-30% AMI (small number of cases – only 4)

Racial/Ethnic Group	0-30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-100% AMI
White	85.0%	65.5%	20.8%	4.5%
Black African/American	88.7%	70.9%	38.6%	4.8%
Asian	57.4%	75.8%	0.0%	0.0%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	94.2%	0.0%	5.1%	0.0%
Pacific Islander	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	89.1%	43.8%	11.8%	0.0%
Jurisdiction as a Whole	86.4%	60.9%	24.2%	4.3%
*Cost Burden over 30%				

Table 16 - % Households With One Or More Housing Problems, Cost Burden over 30%

Source: CHAS 2011-2015

NA-20 Disproportionately Greater Need: Severe Housing Problems - 91.205 (b)(2)

Assess the need of any racial or ethnic group that has disproportionately greater need in comparison to the needs of that category of need as a whole.

Introduction

The tables below indicate, by income level and race or ethnicity, the number of households experiencing one or more of the following four severe housing problems: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than 1.5 persons per room, 4. Cost Burden greater than 50%. The subsequent table reflects, by percentage, the number of households within income and racial and ethnic groups which experience one or more housing problems as compared to the population as a whole, indicating where a disproportionately greater need exists.

0%-30% of Area Median Income

Severe Housing Problems*	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	3,265	1,565	385
White	1,705	1,010	225
Black / African American	1,255	410	109
Asian	39	29	4
American Indian, Alaska Native	65	4	0
Pacific Islander	4	0	0
Hispanic	109	75	20

Table 17 – Severe Housing Problems 0 - 30% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

*The four severe housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than 1.5 persons per room, 4. Cost Burden over 50%

30%-50% of Area Median Income

Severe Housing Problems*	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	700	3,395	0
White	485	2,260	0
Black / African American	195	950	0
Asian	4	30	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	70	0

Table 18 – Severe Housing Problems 30 - 50% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

*The four severe housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than 1.5 persons per room, 4. Cost Burden over 50%

50%-80% of Area Median Income

Severe Housing Problems*	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	145	3,730	0
White	100	2,930	0
Black / African American	40	650	0
Asian	0	4	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	80	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	4	35	0

Table 19 – Severe Housing Problems 50 - 80% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

*The four severe housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than 1.5 persons per room, 4. Cost Burden over 50%

80%-100% of Area Median Income

Severe Housing Problems*	Has one or more of four housing problems	Has none of the four housing problems	Household has no/negative income, but none of the other housing problems
Jurisdiction as a whole	25	1,965	0
White	25	1,510	0
Black / African American	0	315	0
Asian	0	14	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	20	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	60	0

Table 20 – Severe Housing Problems 80 - 100% AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS
Source:

*The four severe housing problems are: 1. Lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2. Lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3. More than 1.5 persons per room, 4. Cost Burden over 50%

Discussion

HUD defines a disproportionately greater housing need as when a racial or ethnic group experiences housing problems at a rate over 10 percentage points more than that of corresponding income level as a whole. The data table below summarizes the percentage of each racial/ethnic group experiencing severe housing problems by HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) levels. Where the HUD table below report AMI, they refer to HAMFI. Housing problems include: lacks complete kitchen facilities, lacks complete plumbing facilities, more than 1.5 persons per room, and cost burden greater than 50%.

Racial/Ethnic Group	0-30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-100% AMI
White	62.8%	17.7%	3.3%	0.2%
Black African/American	64.4%	17.0%	5.8%	0.0%
Asian	57.4%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	94.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pacific Islander	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	59.2%	0.0%	10.2%	0.0%
Jurisdiction as a Whole	67.6%	17.1%	3.7%	0.1%

Table 21 – % with one or more severe housing problems, cost burden over 50%

Source: CHAS 2011-2015

In general, the percentage of households with a housing problem is high for the lowest income bracket (0-30% AMI) and decreases as income increases. According to the above definitions, the racial/ethnic groups in the City experiencing severe housing problems at a disproportionate level were:

- American Indian/Alaska Native households earning 0-30% AMI
- Pacific Islander households earning 0-30% AMI. Sample is small – only 4

NA-25 Disproportionately Greater Need: Housing Cost Burdens - 91.205 (b)(2)

Assess the need of any racial or ethnic group that has disproportionately greater need in comparison to the needs of that category of need as a whole.

Introduction

Under HUD’s definition, a disproportionately greater housing need exists when a racial or ethnic group experiences housing problems at a rate over 10 percentage points higher than that of a corresponding income level as a whole. Cost burdened is defined as paying 30-50% of the household income for housing, and severely cost burdened is defined as paying greater than 50% of household income for housing. The table below summarizes the percentage of each racial/ethnic group experiencing cost burden by HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) levels. Where the HUD tables below report AMI, they refer to HAMFI.

Housing Cost Burden

Housing Cost Burden	<=30%	30-50%	>50%	No / negative income (not computed)
Jurisdiction as a whole	13,335	3,635	3,940	380
White	10,825	2,300	2,180	225
Black / African American	1,940	1,100	1,430	109
Asian	95	20	45	4
American Indian, Alaska Native	125	4	65	0
Pacific Islander	0	4	4	0
Hispanic	190	105	109	20

Table 22 – Greater Need: Housing Cost Burdens AMI

Data 2011-2015 CHAS

Source:

Discussion

HUD defines a disproportionately greater housing need as when a racial for ethnic group experiences housing problems at a rate over 10 percentage points more than that of corresponding income level as a whole. Cost burdened is defined as paying 30-50% of the household income for housing, and severely cost burdened is defined as paying greater than 50% of household income for housing. The table above summarizes the percentage of each racial/ethnic group experiencing cost burden by HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) levels. Where the HUD tables below report AMI, they refer to HAMFI.

Racial/Ethnic Group	Less than 30% (No cost burden)	Cost Burden 30-50%	Severe Cost Burden 50% or more	No negative income (not computed)
White	69.7%	14.8%	14.0%	1.5%
Black African/American	42.4%	24.0%	31.2%	2.4%
Asian	57.9%	12.2%	27.4%	2.5%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	64.4%	2.1%	33.5%	0.0%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	44.8%	24.8%	25.7%	4.7%
Jurisdiction as a Whole	62.6%	17.1%	18.5%	1.8%

Table 23 – % Households Experiencing Cost Burden

Source: CHAS 2011-2015

According to the above definitions, the following racial/ethnic groups in the City experience cost burden at a disproportionate level:

- Black African/American households paying 50% or more of household income
- Pacific Islanders paying 30-50% of household income and 50% or more. (small sample – only 4 households in each group)

For the City as whole, slightly more than one-third, 35.6%, have a cost burden of a housing expense which is 30% or more of income. However, the cost burden is significantly higher for African American household, 55.2% and Hispanic households, 50.5%, who have housing costs which are 30% or more of income. Since 63% of the households in the City are considered low and moderate income, the foregoing levels of housing cost burden are not surprising.

NA-30 Disproportionately Greater Need: Discussion - 91.205 (b)(2)

Are there any Income categories in which a racial or ethnic group has disproportionately greater need than the needs of that income category as a whole?

The impact of housing problems within the City varies primarily by income level and also by tenure. As shown on the previous tables on disproportionality, the following groups within an income tier and race/ethnicity category experienced problems at a rate, which was at least 10 percentage points higher than the City as a whole.

Housing need:

- Asian households earning 30-50% AMI
- Black African/American households earning 30-50% AMI
- Black African/American households earning 50-80% AMI
- Pacific Islander households earning 0-30% AMI (small number of cases – only 4)

Severe Housing Needs:

- American Indian/Alaska Native households earning 0-30% AMI
- Pacific Islander households earning 0-30% AMI. Sample is small – only 4

Cost Burden:

- Black or African American households paying more than 50% of household income.
- Pacific Islanders paying 30-50% of household income and 50% or more. (small sample – only 4 households in each group)

If they have needs not identified above, what are those needs?

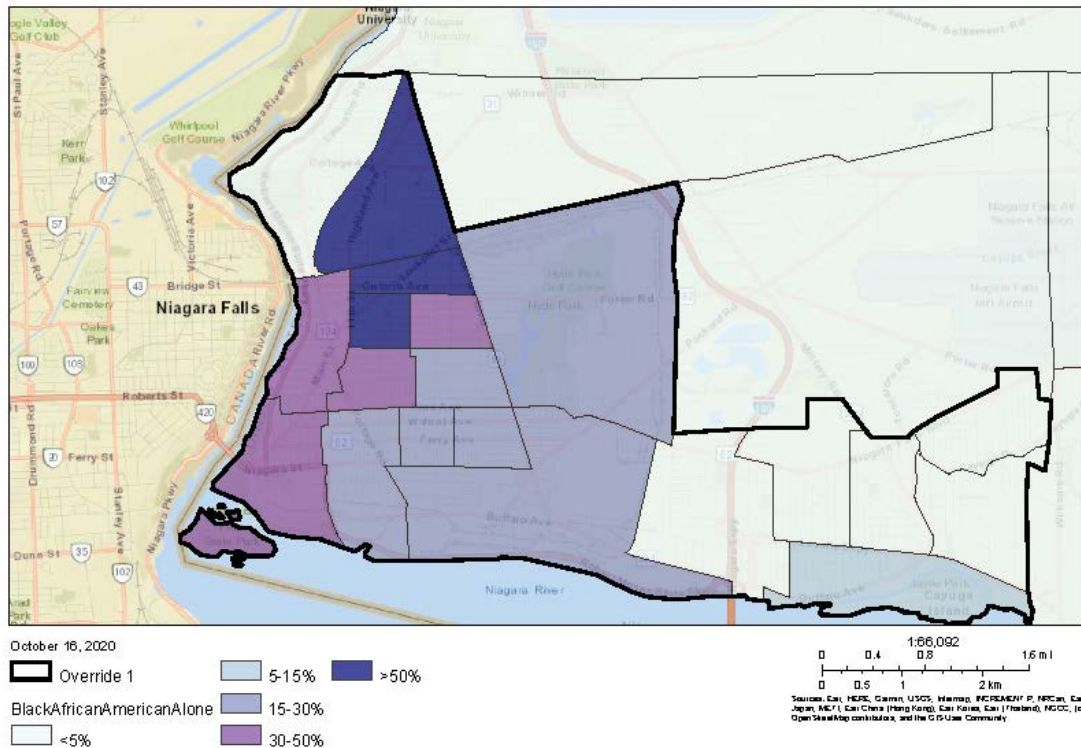
The number of households on which the above percentages are based is relatively small and their needs are considered as part of the general needs evaluation. However, the greatest need and concern is cost burden. The City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan seek to reduce the cost burden for all residents by providing housing renovation grants to lower the costs of maintaining and residing in units that meet Housing Quality Standards, and by incentivizing the creation of new, affordable units throughout the City, thereby providing broader opportunity and lower cost burden for a wide range of races and ethnicities.

Are any of those racial or ethnic groups located in specific areas or neighborhoods in your community?

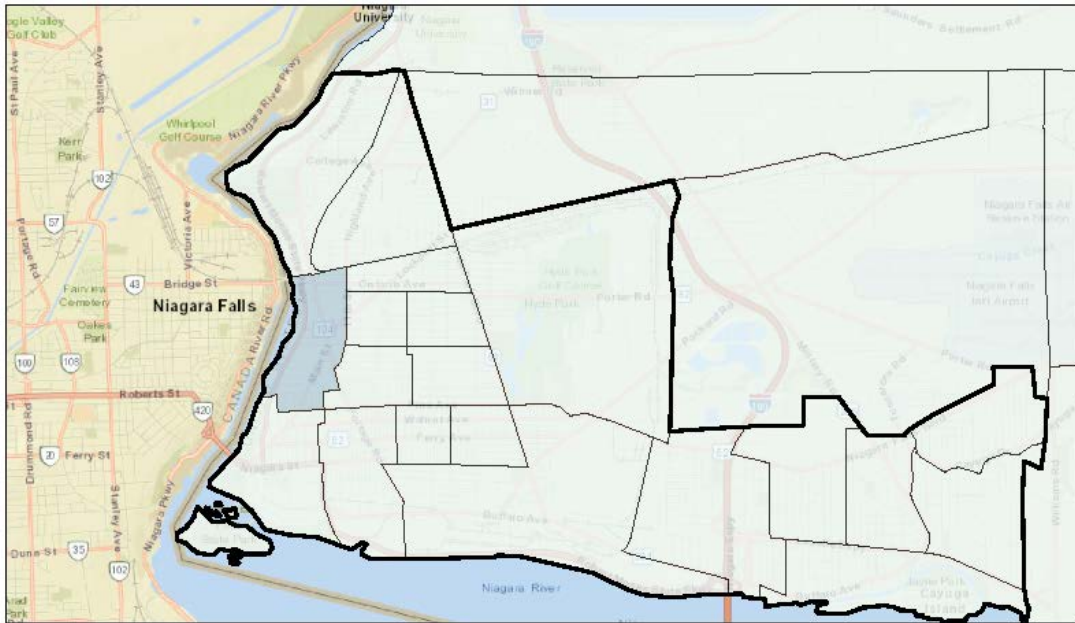
The following maps from HUD’s CPDMaps system illustrate concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities in Niagara Falls. The census tracts that make up the City of Niagara Falls are surrounded by a bold border on the maps. Census tracts that contain a percentage of Black or African American residents higher than 30% are predominantly the more densely populated areas of the City. These include Census Tracts 200, 400, 500, 600, and 1100. Deteriorating housing stock, blight, high poverty levels and relatively high vacancy rates generally characterize these areas and continue to demonstrate the need for revitalization efforts.

The waiting list for the City’s housing rehabilitation program for owners also demonstrates overall ongoing need for this type of investment. Most households on the list requested major projects, such as roof replacement, electric and/or plumbing system improvement, window replacement, etc. Households on the list represent only a small fraction of the lower-income households living in units that need such work.

City of Niagara Falls - % Population Black or African American alone (not Hispanic)



City of Niagara Falls - % Population American Indian/Alaska Native alone (not Hispanic)



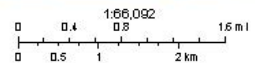
October 16, 2020

Override 1

5-10%

AmericanIndianAlaskaNativeAlone

<5%



Source: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Beijing), Esri Korea, Esri (India), NICTD, IGCC, IGO, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

NA-35 Public Housing - 91.205 (b)

Introduction

The Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) operates the affordable housing in the City of Niagara Falls. In existence for more than 75 years, the NFHA serves the low to very-low income population. The NFHA is responsible for over 900 affordable housing opportunities found in: Packard Court, Beloved Community, Harry S. Jordan Gardens, Anthony Spallino Towers and Henry E. Wrobel Towers. The NFHA also operates two community facilities – the Doris W. Jones Family Resource Building (3001 Ninth Street, Niagara Falls) and the Packard Court Community Center (4200 Pine Avenue, Niagara Falls).

The Niagara Falls Community Development Department administers the HUD sponsored leased housing program (Section 8). Community Development’s Section 8 Program is designed to achieve four major goals: provide improved living conditions for very low-income families while maintaining their rent payments at an affordable level; promote freedom of housing choice and a spatial de-concentration of lower income and minority families; provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for eligible participants; and provide an incentive to private owners to rent to lower income families by offering timely assistance payments. Community Development administers the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program for the City of Niagara Falls and Niagara County. Separate waiting lists are maintained for each program and applicants may apply to both waiting lists using one application.

Totals in Use

	Program Type								
	Certificate	Mod-Rehab	Public Housing	Vouchers			Special Purpose Voucher		
				Total	Project-based	Tenant-based	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	Family Unification Program	Disabled *
# of units vouchers in use	0	8	922	685	0	676	0	0	0

Table 24 - Public Housing by Program Type

**includes Non-Elderly Disabled, Mainstream One-Year, Mainstream Five-year, and Nursing Home Transition*

Data Source: PIC (PIH Information Center)

Characteristics of Residents

	Program Type							
	Certificate	Mod-Rehab	Public Housing	Vouchers			Special Purpose Voucher	
				Total	Project-based	Tenant-based	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	Family Unification Program
# Homeless at admission	0	0	49	1	0	1	0	0
# of Elderly Program Participants (>62)	0	0	409	107	0	106	0	0
# of Disabled Families	0	1	422	281	0	278	0	0
# of Families requesting accessibility features	0	8	120	685	0	676	0	0
# of HIV/AIDS program participants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# of DV victims	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 25 – Characteristics of Public Housing Residents by Program Type

Data Source: PIC (PIH Information Center)

Race of Residents

Race	Certificate	Mod-Rehab	Public Housing	Program Type					
				Vouchers			Special Purpose Voucher		
				Total	Project-based	Tenant-based	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	Family Unification Program	Disabled *
White	0	7	297	244	0	241	0	0	0
Black/African American	0	1	445	425	0	420	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	22	16	0	15	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 26 – Race of Public Housing Residents by Program Type

**includes Non-Elderly Disabled, Mainstream One-Year, Mainstream Five-year, and Nursing Home Transition*

Data Source: PIC (PIH Information Center)

Ethnicity of Residents

Ethnicity	Certificate	Mod-Rehab	Public Housing	Program Type					
				Vouchers			Special Purpose Voucher		
				Total	Project-based	Tenant-based	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	Family Unification Program	Disabled *
Hispanic	0	0	60	31	0	31	0	0	0
Not Hispanic	0	8	666	654	0	645	0	0	0

Table 27 – Ethnicity of Public Housing Residents by Program Type

**includes Non-Elderly Disabled, Mainstream One-Year, Mainstream Five-year, and Nursing Home Transition*

Data Source: PIC (PIH Information Center)

Section 504 Needs Assessment: Describe the needs of public housing tenants and applicants on the waiting list for accessible units:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that no qualified individual shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, service or activity receiving federal financial assistance; this applies to housing administered by a public housing authority.

The NFHA is committed to policies that provide access to all individuals, regardless of disability. The City of Niagara Falls is committed to the same policies in administration and supervision of the leased housing program.

What are the number and type of families on the waiting lists for public housing and section 8 tenant-based rental assistance? Based on the information above, and any other information available to the jurisdiction, what are the most immediate needs of residents of public housing and Housing Choice voucher holders?

The Niagara Falls Housing Authority operates 922 units. Two senior housing developments contain 431 units and four family housing developments contain 491 units. The current waiting list for seniors is 341 and for families is 522. Estimated annual turnover rate is five percent for senior housing developments as well as for family housing developments. The NFHA maintains a near 100% occupancy with minimal vacancies due only to turnover.

As shown in Table 29, the City of Niagara Falls administers a Section 8 vouchers program for 685 current voucher holders. The Section 8 voucher wait list is currently closed with anticipated processing times of 24 to 36 months. Turnover is approximately four vouchers per month. In conjunction with the Homeless Alliance of WNY, preference is given to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Since the HUD voucher funds that the City receives has remained somewhat static, with rising rents in available units, it is anticipated that the number of vouchers that can be funded will gradually diminish over the next five years. However, Section 8 admin funds and CARES Act funding are available for landlord recruitment as well as upgrades to IT, equipment, PPE and outreach for recertifications.

How do these needs compare to the housing needs of the population at large?

The population at large includes many households that share the needs of public housing residents and voucher holders. Resources available to housing authorities and voucher administrators are insufficient to meet local needs. The size of the wait list illustrates the greater financial distress of the area. Even more than the population, the size of the wait list speaks to the quality of the City's housing stock. There is a serious lack of housing units that are affordable, easily reachable and that meet basic housing quality standards. This creates an over-dependence on housing programs.

NA-40 Homeless Needs Assessment - 91.205 (c)

Introduction:

The Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY) is the lead agency for both the Continuum of Care (CoC) and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls and Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Wyoming, and Orleans Counties. The HAWNY publishes reports of homelessness in the five-county region served. The information contained in the reports is obtained from HMIS, departments of social services, and providers. HMIS serves as the primary data source and nearly all agencies in the five-county area who are not on HMIS provide aggregate counts. Increased coverage of HMIS has led to an improved understanding of homelessness. According to the 2019 Homelessness Summary Brief for Niagara County, 1,127 people experienced homelessness in 2019, a 3.1% increase from 2018. The concentration of that number was found in Niagara Falls. Where available, zip code data specific to Niagara Falls is used; however, the Niagara County numbers remain instructive due to the large percentage of the County's homelessness occurring in Niagara Falls. Stakeholder meetings, data, and feedback from HAWNY make it clear that there is a street homelessness issue in Niagara Falls that is not reflected in the data. However, there are people that can be either classified as sheltered or un-sheltered homeless without sustainable housing.

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Safe Haven		
Total Number of Households	70	25	0	0	95
Total Number of Persons	227	188	0	0	315
Number of Children (under age 18)	147	57		0	204
Number of Persons (18-24)	13	1		0	14
Number of Persons (over age 24)	67	30	0	0	97

Table 28– Households and Persons Homeless

Source: Homeless Alliance of Western New York – Point in Time Count – Niagara County

Following up with HAWNY re: Safe Haven data

If data is not available for the categories "number of persons becoming and exiting homelessness each year," and "number of days that persons experience homelessness," describe these categories for each homeless population type (including chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth):

The Homeless Alliance of WNY operates the local Homeless Management Information System, which collects information on all HUD- funded and voluntarily participating non-HUD-funded homelessness alleviation providers, including outreach, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing (including all housing first programs), rapid re-housing, and transitional housing providers. That information, other aggregate data shared by non-participating providers, and community demographic data from the

American Community Survey are used to inform this Summary Brief for Niagara County, which covers federal fiscal year 2019 (October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019).

Data specific to Niagara Falls describing persons entering and exiting homelessness and length of homelessness is unavailable. The following information is for the entire Continuum of Care.

According to the 2020 Point-in-Time Count (PIT), there were 29 chronically homeless individuals, none of which were children. Twenty-one (21) of the chronically homeless individuals were in emergency shelters, zero were in a Safe Haven arrangement, and 8 were unsheltered.

There were 18 unaccompanied youth according to the PIT, 13 of whom were in emergency shelters, with five in transitional shelters.

There also appears to be a range of situations that may be contributing to homelessness, including physical disabilities, mental health challenges, substance abuse, chronic health conditions, and/or domestic violence. According to the PIT, 154 adults had a serious mental illness, 71 adults had a substance use disorder, five adults had HIV/AIDS, and 127 adults were survivors of domestic violence.

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Safe Haven		
Adults with a Serious Mental Illness	105	41	0	8	154
Adults with a Substance Use Disorder	44	21	0	6	71
Adults with HIV/AIDS	4	0	0	1	5
Adult Survivors of Domestic Violence	60	67	0	0	127

Table 29– Additional Homeless Populations

Source: Homeless Alliance of Western New York – Point in Time Count – Niagara County

Estimate the number and type of families in need of housing assistance for families with children and the families of veterans.

The 2020 count identified 91 individuals in 28 homeless families with children. Further, 56 members of the homeless population in Niagara County were under 18. No families with children were unsheltered. No data was available regarding families of veterans within Niagara County.

Describe the Nature and Extent of Homelessness by Racial and Ethnic Group.

The homeless population within the CoC five-county service area is predominantly Black or African-American (46 percent) and White (43 percent). Multiracial individuals accounted for 53 (6 percent) of all homeless persons during the 2020 PIT. In contrast, the racial makeup of Niagara County was 86 percent white and 7 percent Black or African American according to the 2019 Census Estimates. In addition to race, 9 percent of the homeless population counted identified their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino. Few respondents identified as other racial ethnic groups.

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Safe Haven		
White	245	112	0	15	372
Black or African-American	307	78	0	16	401
Asian	7	9	0	0	16
American Indian or Alaska Native	20	7	0	0	27
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2	1	0	0	3
Multiple Races	40	11	0	2	53

Table 30– Race of Homeless Populations

*Source: Homeless Alliance of Western New York – Point in Time Count 1/29/2020
Buffalo, Niagara Falls/Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming Counties CoC*

	Sheltered			Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional	Safe Haven		
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	545	205	0	27	777
Hispanic/Latino	76	13	0	6	95

Table 31– Ethnicity of Homeless Populations

*Source: Homeless Alliance of Western New York – Point in Time Count 1/29/2020
Buffalo, Niagara Falls/Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming Counties CoC*

Describe the Nature and Extent of Unsheltered and Sheltered Homelessness.

According to the 2020 Point-in-Time Count, there were 205 sheltered homeless individuals (144 households) and 19 unsheltered homeless individuals (19 households), none of which were children, in Niagara County. Of the sheltered homeless reported, 123 individuals (84 households) were counted in emergency shelters and 63 individuals (35 households) resided in transitional housing facilities. Households living in emergency shelters included 66 without children, 14 households with at least one adult and one child, and four households with only children. Households living in transitional housing included 21 households without children, 14 households with at least one adult and one child, and zero household with only children.

Discussion:

Homelessness continues to be a persistent social problem, despite the slight decrease in the number of people who experienced it in the CoC service area. The HAWNY made the following conclusions in their 2019 Homelessness Summary Brief for Niagara County:

- There is a growing affordable housing crisis throughout Western New York. Rents are increasing at alarming rates and those living in poverty are getting priced out of housing altogether. *Note: the rental numbers are even more alarming in Niagara Falls. In 2019 48.2% of Niagara Falls renters were dedicating 35% or more of their income toward rent, compared to 33.9% in the rest of the County.*

- A report by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition states that the Buffalo-Niagara Falls metropolitan area has a shortage of 46,000 affordable housing units.
- Local, State and National leaders must recognize the affordable housing crisis and develop a plan to address the need.
- There is a need to fund the production of units for families that include units for large families
- New York State must implement the Home Stability Support (HSS) program to create a State-funded, long-term rent subsidy for households receiving public assistance who are homeless.

Additionally, representatives from HAWNY emphasized that it is incumbent upon the City to make sure that homeless service providers are supporting coordinated entry into the system. The COC monitors the providers but the City has necessary enforcement power

NA-45 Non-Homeless Special Needs Assessment - 91.205 (b,d)

Introduction

In the City of Niagara Falls, persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing include: elderly; persons with mental, physical, and/or developmental disabilities; and residents within the refugee community; and youth and young adults. With potential overlap between each special population and the homeless populations, it is essential to address the special needs characteristics in the City.

Describe the characteristics of special needs populations in your community:

Elderly

Comprising an estimated 19% of the total population, addressing the needs of those ages 62 and over is a critical consideration in developing a suitable living environment within the City of Niagara Falls. In addition, Census data from the American Community Survey (ACS) shows the City is aging, with an increase of 2% in the population ages 62 and over between 2010 and 2018. Therefore, the City is likely to face growing needs such as accessibility, affordable housing and healthcare as more community members reach this senior status.

	Base Year: 2010	2010 % of Total	Most Recent Year: 2018	2018 % of Total	2010 – 2018 % Change
Total Population	50,193		48,661		-3%
Population Ages 62 and over	9,322	19%	9,475	19%	2%
Population Ages 65 and over	7,759	15%	7,500	15%	-3%

Table 32– Elderly Population in the City of Niagara Falls

Sources: 2010 Census Summary File from the Decennial Census; and 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Housing for the elderly population within the City is characterized by primarily owner-occupied housing units, with 75% of the total housing units for the population 65 and older being owner-occupied. In addition, 14% of the householders 65 and older in the City live alone, compared to 38% of the total householders in the City. Another important consideration for housing and accessibility is that 33% of the civilian noninstitutionalized population 65 and older have a disability status. This status may include hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, or independent living difficulties. The most common disability status of those 65 years and over is ambulatory difficulty.

	Population 65 and Over	Total Population
Occupied Housing Units	5,348	21,474
% of Owner-occupied Housing Units	75%	57%
% of Renter-occupied Housing Units	25%	43%
% of Householders Living Alone	14%	38%
Disability Status – With any disability	33%	16%

Table 33– 2015 Social Characteristics of the Elderly Population in Niagara Falls

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Economic data for the elderly population shows that, although there is a smaller percentage of the 65 and older population living below the 100 percent poverty level than the total population, there is a higher percent of the population living at 100 to 149 percent of the poverty level. According to the 2015 ACS data, income in the past 12 months for the population 65 and older included social security for 89% of the population, retirement income for 52% of the population and earnings for 29% of the population. Data further shows that the mean of earnings at \$34,823 is substantially larger than that of the mean of social security income at \$18,556 or the mean of retirement income at \$19,921. Based on this poverty level data and income data, there is a need for affordability considerations for the elderly population.

Persons with mental, physical, and/or developmental disabilities

According to 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates, 16.1% of the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the City of Niagara Falls reported a disability. The likelihood of having a disability varied by age - from 4.8% of people under 18 years old, to 15.6% people 18 to 64 years old, and to 35.6% of those 65 and over. The most common disability status was an ambulatory difficulty. Over half the population with hearing difficulty is 65 years and older (60%). For those with cognitive difficulty 15% are under 18 years, 66% are 18 to 64 years and 19% are 65 years and older. For those with independent living difficulty 59% are 18 to 64 years and 41% are 65 years and older.

Economic characteristics of the population with a disability include a larger percentage of the population that is either below 100 percent of the poverty level or between 100 to 149 percent of the poverty level than that of the population with no disability. In addition, data shows the median earnings for the population with a disability at \$16,771, which is below that of the population without a disability at \$27,472.

Additional Special Population Needs

In addition to the special populations identified as part of the Consolidated Plan, several populations were discussed during the Stakeholder meetings including Limited English-Speaking Households , the Refugee Community, and the youth community. Providing preventative services and ensuring access to services to these populations is an important consideration in determining supportive housing needs.

What are the housing and supportive service needs of these populations and how are these needs determined?

Housing and supportive services needs for each of the populations described within this section were discussed during stakeholder meetings of the Consolidated Plan. In the meeting regarding Health and Human Services, needs and issues highlighted included limited housing, coordination of services, staffing difficulties, language and cultural sensitivity, transportation, housing quality and affordability, prevention services, removal of barriers to helping people, education for youth and childcare, senior housing and services, and the connection between employment, housing and transportation. This information combined with the characteristics outlined for each population provides insight into the needs of these complex groupings of individuals.

Discuss the size and characteristics of the population with HIV/AIDS and their families within the Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area:

New York State Department of Health data from the NYS Community Health Indicators Reports documents cases of HIV/AIDS across the state. In Niagara County, for the period of 2014-2016, the rate of newly diagnosed HIV cases is 22 per 100,000, or 3.4%. For the same period, the AIDS case rate is 18 per 100,000, or 2.8%. These rates are well below the average across counties in the Western New York Region.

Discussion:

The following provides an overview of the needs discussed.

- There is a need for additional housing opportunities for elderly and persons with developmental disabilities. Issues with existing housing such as affordability, safety, accessibility and quality were also raised. Specifically, for people with disabilities, issues of access and affordability are primary challenges to finding housing and there are waiting lists for places that meet the needs of many. In addition, any previous history may cause further difficulty, e.g. prison history, child support payments, etc.
- Transportation and access issues were identified for several different populations as a barrier to providing or accessing needed services. Specific needs identified included individuals out of work looking for employment or receiving job training, individuals in need of childcare services, access to food, and youth and young adult workers accessing employment opportunities.
- After school programs for youth were identified as limited and focused on behavioral issues and disabilities. For students without behavioral issues or disabilities, programs are even more limited. Also identified is the need for life skill training for youth to teach skills like money management, credit scores, public transportation, paying tickets, etc.
- Language and cultural sensitivity training for agencies and organizations is needed to provide support to limited-English speaking populations and refugee populations. Also discussed was the need for support and advocacy for refugee populations.

NA-50 Non-Housing Community Development Needs - 91.215 (f)

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Facilities:

CDBG funds can be used for the construction, rehabilitation, or installation of public facilities. Eligible public facilities include neighborhood facilities (such as educational centers, parks, recreation centers, and libraries) and facilities for special needs populations (such as homeless shelters, elderly facilities, or centers for disabled persons). The City of Niagara Falls plans to use CDBG funds to renovate and construct public facilities, with a focus on park and public space improvements consistent with the Niagara Falls Parks Master Plan.

How were these needs determined?

The City of Niagara Falls facilitated a series of stakeholder interviews and focus groups in which it requested feedback on needs across the community. The City also conducted an affordable housing survey that was made available to residents, government officials, non-profit organizations, and business owners. In addition, meetings were held with local officials to discuss specific needs in the community.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Improvements:

Historically, the City has not used CDBG funds for public improvements. However, there is a direct correlation between public improvements and the housing market. Addressing the following public improvement needs would motivate housing renovation and the construction of new housing units throughout the City:

- deteriorating residential areas with housing code violations and scattered blight
- streets and sidewalks in poor surface condition
- aging and inadequate infrastructure including sanitary sewer and storm drainage collection systems
- inadequate community facilities in need of repair
- lacking parks and recreation facilities or parks in need of rehabilitation

The City recognizes that it is difficult to encourage the scale of housing renovation that is needed. Public realm improvements can be of assistance.

How were these needs determined?

The City of Niagara Falls facilitated a series of stakeholder interviews and focus groups in which it requested feedback on needs across the community. The City also conducted an affordable housing survey that was made available to residents, government officials, non-profit organizations, and

business owners. In addition, meetings were held with local officials to discuss specific needs in the community.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Services:

Much of the discussion at the stakeholder meetings focused on the need for additional youth programming in the City of Niagara Falls. The City has traditionally used CDBG public services funds for youth programming. Any funds expended for public services, under CDBG regulations, are capped at 15% of the total CDBG annual allotment. There is a great need for youth services in the City.

In addition, public transportation needs are great in the City of Niagara Falls. The bus routes and frequency of service are not sufficient to meet the needs of the population in the City. Stakeholders indicated the needs have significant impact on workforce training and access to childcare.

How were these needs determined?

The City of Niagara Falls facilitated a series of stakeholder interviews and focus groups in which it requested feedback on needs across the community. The City also conducted an affordable housing survey that was made available to residents, government officials, non-profit organizations, and business owners. In addition, meetings were held with local officials to discuss specific needs in the community. The public services need for CDBG funded youth services is demand driven. Programs apply for CDBG funds via the nonprofit application. Requests typically exceed the amount allowed by the 15% cap.

Housing Market Analysis

MA-05 Overview

Housing Market Analysis Overview:

There are several observations and highlights cited in this overview that can be gleaned from the subsequent housing sections. The housing stock within the City of Niagara Falls was predominantly constructed before 1980 and is comprised of more than 60% single family units. Twenty three percent consist of 2-4-unit structures and only 16% consist of structures with five or more units. Of the 21,290 occupied units, 56.6% are owner occupied and 43.4% are renter occupied.

The estimated median home value in the City of Niagara Falls increased a modest six percent from 2009 to 2015. During the same period, median contract rent increased by 15%. In the City of Niagara Falls, 56% of renters pay less than \$500 per month and 42% of renters pay between \$500 and \$999. Approximately two percent of renters within the City pay more than \$1,000 per month in rent.

Only 2,245 rental units are identified as affordable to household below 30% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) and represent only 12% of the total rental inventory in the City. The supply of units does not come close to accommodating households earning less than 30% of the HAMFI, most of whom are likely to be renters. All presented data shows that there is not sufficient housing available for the extremely low- and low-income households within the City of Niagara Falls.

Renter occupied units have a significantly higher prevalence of housing units with at least one selected substandard condition. Over one-half of the renter-occupied units in the City experienced at least one selected condition, while only 20% of owner-occupied housing units experience one housing condition.

MA-10 Housing Market Analysis: Number of Housing Units - 91.210(a)&(b)(2)

Introduction

ACS estimates for 2011-2015 indicate that single family units, detached or attached, represent 62% of the residential units within the City. Two to four units structures, often doubles, represent 23% of the residential housing inventory. Only 13% of the inventory represent multi-family unit structures consisting of 5 or more units.

Of the 21,290 occupied units, 56.6% are owner occupied and 43.4% are renter occupied. In terms of size, 76% of the owner-occupied units, and 34% of renter-occupied units contain three or more bedrooms. Twenty-one percent of owner-occupied units and 40% of rental-occupied units have two bedrooms. In total, the City of Niagara Falls has 2,505 one-bedroom units.

All residential properties by number of units

Property Type	Number	%
1-unit detached structure	15,595	59%
1-unit, attached structure	825	3%
2-4 units	6,175	23%
5-19 units	1,795	7%
20 or more units	1,670	6%
Mobile Home, boat, RV, van, etc	300	1%
Total	26,360	100%

Table 34 – Residential Properties by Unit Number

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Unit Size by Tenure

	Owners		Renters	
	Number	%	Number	%
No bedroom	0	0%	225	2%
1 bedroom	310	3%	2,195	24%
2 bedrooms	2,600	21%	3,660	40%
3 or more bedrooms	9,145	76%	3,155	34%
Total	12,055	100%	9,235	100%

Table 35 – Unit Size by Tenure

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Describe the number and targeting (income level/type of family served) of units assisted with federal, state, and local programs.

The Niagara Falls Housing Authority owns and operates 922 public housing units. The City of Niagara Falls administers a Section 8 vouchers program for 685 current voucher holders. The City of Niagara Falls is working with Belmont Housing for an adaptive re-use project that will convert an unused private school into mixed income housing that will also provide rental units for the purpose of Project Based Vouchers. The project is anticipated to create 42 new 1 and 2-bedroom rental units. Rental rates are anticipated to be 45% of median.

Provide an assessment of units expected to be lost from the affordable housing inventory for any reason, such as expiration of Section 8 contracts.

There are no anticipated contract expirations that would change any residential access to Section 8 opportunities.

Does the availability of housing units meet the needs of the population?

No. There is a persistent lack of not just affordable, but quality rental housing reported consistently. Both the NFHA and the city's leased housing program have significant waiting lists. There is also a barrier between other units and the renting public.

Describe the need for specific types of housing:

The needs for specific types of housing reflect the objectives outlined in the most recent Annual Action Plan and CAPER. Affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents of the City of Niagara Falls is a major need in the community. There is a need for both ownership opportunities and better rental properties. This need covers both extremely low and low to moderate income residents. For both rentals and home ownership, multi-room units are needed to better accommodate families. All new units need to be serviceable by public transit.

More accessible housing is also needed to suit the growing needs of the elderly. Practical options are needed to ensure that the growing number of elderly households can either age in place or be accommodated in smaller, accessible and low-maintenance units.

Discussion

MA-15 Housing Market Analysis: Cost of Housing - 91.210(a)

Introduction

The following data provides an overview on the cost of housing in the City of Niagara Falls.

Cost of Housing

The estimated median home value in the City of Niagara Falls increased a modest six percent from 2009 to 2015. During the same period, median contract rent increased by 15%. As reported in 2015, there is not a large gap between fair market rents and affordable HOME rents. There is a misconception that subsidized rents, and the income limits required, are much different than market rate rents and renters. This, coupled with cost burden issues, show a greater need to provide additional affordable and accessible units.

In the City of Niagara Falls, 56% of renters pay less than \$500 per month and 42% of renters pay between \$500 and \$999. Approximately two percent of renters within the City pay more than \$1,000 per month in rent.

	Base Year: 2009	Most Recent Year: 2015	% Change
Median Home Value	63,600	67,400	6%
Median Contract Rent	416	477	15%

Table 36 – Cost of Housing

Data Source: 2005-2009 ACS (Base Year), 2011-2015 ACS (Most Recent Year)

Rent Paid	Number	%
Less than \$500	5,205	56.3%
\$500-999	3,835	41.5%
\$1,000-1,499	115	1.2%
\$1,500-1,999	55	0.6%
\$2,000 or more	33	0.4%
Total	9,243	100.0%

Table 37 - Rent Paid

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Housing Affordability

The HUD provided table below indicates the number of affordable units available to households at various income levels. Only 2,245 rental units are identified as affordable to household below 30% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) and represent only 12% of the total rental inventory in the City. The supply of units does not come close to accommodating households earning less than 30% of the HAMFI, most of whom are likely to be renters.

% Units affordable to Households earning	Renter	Owner
30% HAMFI	2,245	No Data
50% HAMFI	6,590	2,850
80% HAMFI	9,380	5,445
100% HAMFI	No Data	6,938
Total	18,215	15,233

Table 38 – Housing Affordability

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Monthly Rent

Wages have not adequately kept up with housing costs in the City. According to HUD, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) in the City for a two-bedroom apartment is \$799. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities – without paying more than 30% of income on housing – a household must earn \$2,663 monthly or \$31,956 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a “Housing Wage” of \$15.36. In New York, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$11.10. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 55 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Monthly Rent (\$)	Efficiency (no bedroom)	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Fair Market Rent	641	660	799	1,002	1,163
High HOME Rent	641	660	799	1,002	1,163
Low HOME Rent	641	660	799	971	1,083

Table 39 – Monthly Rent

Data Source: HUD FMR and HOME Rents

Is there sufficient housing for households at all income levels?

No. There is not sufficient housing at all income levels. All presented data shows that there is not sufficient housing available for the extremely low- and low-income households within the City of Niagara Falls.

The median household income in the City of Niagara Falls was \$31,560 in 2015 according to 2011-2015 ACS data. Extremely low-income residents (30% or less of the median family income) earn less than \$9,468. Although there are 5,215 renter households within the City of Niagara Falls earning between 0 and 30% of the median family income, there are only 2,245 renter housing units that are affordable to households earning 30% of the median income. Data on owner housing is not available, but the number of affordable units priced for households making 30% of median family income would likely not be sufficient to adequately address this housing gap.

	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	2,898	14%
\$10,000-14,999	1,980	9%
\$15,000-24,999	3,593	17%
\$25,000-34,999	2,958	14%
\$35,000-49,999	2,635	12%
\$50,000-74,999	3,697	17%
\$75,000-99,999	1,793	8%
\$100,000-149,999	1,233	6%
\$150,000-199,999	310	1%
\$200,000 or more	195	1%
	21,292	100%
Median Income	\$31,560	

Table 40 – Income – Households in Niagara Falls

Source: 2011-2015 ACS

A total of 7,436 households within the City of Niagara Falls are earning under 80% of the median income and are cost burdened (>30% of income). As a subset of that category, there is a total of 4,180 households, both renters, 3,280, and owners, 900, who have an income under 30% of the Area Median Family Income who are paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs.

How is affordability of housing likely to change considering changes to home values and/or rents?

Based on ACS data, median contract rents for Niagara Falls increased 15% from 2009 to 2015. During this same time frame, median home values in Niagara Falls increased 6%. However, median income increased just one percent during the same time frame. Affordability has been negatively affected since median contract rents have increased at a faster rate than the increase in median income.

Housing is anticipated to be less affordable because the continued cost burden for extremely and low-income residents is expected to persist, and any new market rate units being renovated or constructed will not be affordable to low income residents.

How do HOME rents / Fair Market Rent compare to Area Median Rent?

As noted above, median gross rent within Niagara Falls is \$477. This rent is significantly below the Fair Market Rent and HOME Rents for all size bedroom units. Given these rental rates and the significant concentration of low- and moderate-income households within the City, there would be a significant challenge in providing additional new rental housing which would be affordable.

How might this impact your strategy to produce or preserve affordable housing?

Market conditions make it clear that the City’s strategy needs to include a focus on lowering the housing cost burden for City residents and increasing the availability of quality, affordable housing units. As such the City of Niagara Falls is re-working the housing rehabilitation program to increase the amount of incentive available per unit in order to bring units up to appropriate Housing Quality Standards without increasing the rental or overhead burden on renters or homeowners.

The City is also working with non-profits developers such as Belmont Housing and Neighborworks to construct new affordable housing units. Specifically, the City is (i) investigating sites for infill development, (ii) making City-owned properties available for rehabilitation or redevelopment, and (iii) making CDBG and HOME funds available to leverage investment in the development of new units. Belmont is currently working on the former Sacred Heart Church and School to create 42 new units with rents at 45% of the median, based on a recent market study.

The City is partnering with the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) to provide housing rehabilitation to create or improve affordable units throughout the City and is exploring the possibility of gifting vacant City-owned properties to NORLIC and Habitat for Humanity for redevelopment.

MA-20 Housing Market Analysis: Condition of Housing - 91.210(a)

Introduction

The following data provides an overview on the condition of housing in the City of Niagara Falls.

Describe the jurisdiction's definition for "substandard condition" and "substandard condition but suitable for rehabilitation":

Substandard Condition: A housing unit is substandard if it: is dilapidated, does not have operable indoor plumbing, does not have a usable flush toilet inside the unit for the exclusive use of a family, does not have a usable bathtub or shower inside the unit for the exclusive use of a family, does not have electricity, or has inadequate or unsafe electrical service, does not have a safe or adequate source of heat, should, but does not, have a kitchen; or has been declared unfit for habitation by an agency or unit of government.

Substandard Condition but Suitable for Rehabilitation: The nature of the substandard condition makes rehabilitation both financially and structurally feasible.

Condition of Units

The U.S. Census Bureau outlines “selected” housing conditions, which are generally considered identifiers of substandard housing. These include: lacks complete plumbing facilities, lacks complete kitchen facilities, more than one person per room, cost burden (amount of income allocated to housing) is greater than 30%, and does not comply with applicable building code standards.

Renter occupied units have a significantly higher prevalence of housing units with at least one selected condition. Over one-half of the renter-occupied units in the City experienced at least one selected condition, while only 20% of owner-occupied housing units experience one housing condition. Very few owner-occupied units or renter-occupied units experience more than one housing condition. The one selected condition most likely experienced by most households is housing affordability which is a housing cost which exceeds 30% of their income.

Condition of Units	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	%	Number	%
With one selected Condition	2,450	20%	5,205	56%
With two selected Conditions	15	0%	125	1%
With three selected Conditions	8	0%	4	0%
With four selected Conditions	0	0%	0	0%
No selected Conditions	9,580	79%	3,905	42%
Total	12,053	99%	9,239	99%

Table 41 - Condition of Units

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Year Unit Built

The housing supply within the City of Niagara Falls is relatively old with 97% of owner units built prior to 1980 and 90% of renter units built prior to 1980. A total of 25 owner-occupied units and 395 renter-occupied units have been built in the City since 2000. The age of the housing stock within the City of Niagara Falls necessitates investment in housing rehabilitation as well as the construction of new housing units to replace an aging housing stock.

Year Unit Built	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	%	Number	%
2000 or later	25	0%	395	4%
1980-1999	245	2%	480	5%
1950-1979	4,995	41%	2,725	29%
Before 1950	6,795	56%	5,640	61%
Total	12,060	99%	9,240	99%

Table 42 – Year Unit Built

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Risk of Lead-Based Paint Hazard

Risk of Lead-Based Paint Hazard	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total Number of Units Built Before 1980	11,790	98%	8,365	91%
Housing Units build before 1980 with children present	299	2%	10	0%

Table 43 – Risk of Lead-Based Paint

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS (Total Units) 2011-2015 CHAS (Units with Children present)

Vacant Units

Within the City of Niagara Falls, the American Community Survey estimates that there were 4,925 vacant housing units in 2015. Homeowner vacancy rate is estimated to be 12.2% and rental vacancy rate 17.8%. No ACS data is available on Real Estate Owned (REO) properties, the condition of vacancies, whether they are abandoned and whether they might be suitable for rehabilitation.

	Suitable for Rehabilitation	Not Suitable for Rehabilitation	Total
Vacant Units	NA	NA	NA
Abandoned Vacant Units	NA	NA	NA
REO Properties	NA	NA	NA
Abandoned REO Properties	NA	NA	NA

Table 44 - Vacant Units

Describe the need for owner and rental rehabilitation based on the condition of the jurisdiction's housing.

Most of the housing units in the City of Niagara Falls were built before 1950. Given the age of the housing stock in the City, and that 20% of owner-occupied units and 56% of renter-occupied units are known to have one substandard housing condition, there is a great need for both owner-occupied and rental rehabilitation.

In the last few years, the City of Niagara Falls provided assistance to rehabilitate more than 50 properties, most of which were owner occupied. Virtually all the housing was built prior to 1980 and required mitigation of lead-based paint hazards. Overall, 47% of the properties rehabilitated were with incomes 50-80% of Area Median Income (AMI), 35% of the properties rehabilitated were with incomes 30-50% of AMI, and the remaining 18% of properties rehabilitated were with incomes 0-30% of AMI. The housing rehabilitation wait list is over 100 applicants dating back to 2016, with an even larger list of people on a call back list started when the waiting list was closed.

The City of Niagara Falls has identified housing rehabilitation as one of its high priority activities to preserve and maintain its affordable housing stock. The City has made it a priority to use CDBG funds and HOME funds to rehabilitate properties throughout the City.

Estimate the number of housing units within the jurisdiction that are occupied by low or moderate income families that contain lead-based paint hazards. 91.205(e), 91.405

Ninety five percent of the occupied units within the City were built prior to 1980 and those built prior to 1978 are considered at risk for containing lead-based paint. Without a sample of all homes built prior to 1978, it is difficult to estimate the number of units having lead-based paint hazards present. If properties are sufficiently maintained and paint is not disturbed, the presence of lead-based paint is not likely to be a risk hazard. What can be measured to some degree is the incidence of finding of the presence of lead-based paint hazards that have been reported. Below is a table showing an estimate of the presence of lead-based paint hazards.

	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Total Occupied
Total Occupied Units	12,060	9,240	21,300
Built Pre-1980	11,790	8,365	20,155
Percent of total occupied	98%	91%	95%
Est. Low-Mod Occupied	5,305	6,908	12,213
Percent low-mod occupied *	45%	80%	61%
Est. Low-Mod risk of LBP hazard	636	1,281	1,917
Est. % risk of LBP hazard **	12%	20%	16%

Table 45 - Estimate of Units at Risk with Lead-Based Paint Hazards

**Owner city percent, renter city percent less 4%*

***Assumption of higher potential hazard for renters than owners*

Homeowners tend to have an interest and incentive to maintain their properties, which is likely to result in a smaller percentage of such households having the potential presence of lead-based paint hazards. It is estimated that 12% of low/moderate-income owner-occupied units could have the presence of lead-based paint hazards. It is further estimated that approximately 20% of renter units occupied by low- and moderate-income household could have the presence of lead-based paint hazards present.

The Community Development Department's housing rehabilitation program tests all housing units that were built prior to 1980 for the presence of lead-based paint hazards, and if necessary, remediation of these hazards is required.

Discussion

Niagara Falls Community Development is focused on the city's aging housing stock and aging population. Housing that is affordable and well maintained is a top priority. Each year both CDBG and HOME programs incorporate closing cost payment assistance and home maintenance assistance into the annual plan. The City will continue to utilize these federal funds to better the housing stock via strategic investment.

MA-25 Public And Assisted Housing - 91.210(b)

Introduction

The Niagara Falls Housing Authority operates the affordable housing in the City of Niagara Falls. In existence for more than 70 years, the Niagara Falls Housing Authority serves the low to very-low income population. The Niagara Falls Housing Authority is responsible for over 900 affordable housing opportunities.

Totals Number of Units

	Program Type								
	Certificate	Mod-Rehab	Public Housing	Vouchers					
				Total	Project - based	Tenant - based	Special Purpose Voucher		
							Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	Family Unification Program	Disabled *
# of units vouchers available	0	8	887	795	0	795	0	0	0
# of accessible units									

Table 46 – Total Number of Units by Program Type *includes Non-Elderly Disabled, Mainstream One-Year, Mainstream Five-year, and Nursing Home Transition

Data Source: PIC (PIH Information Center)

Describe the supply of public housing developments:

Describe the number and physical condition of public housing units in the jurisdiction, including those that are participating in an approved Public Housing Agency Plan:

The NFHA owns and manages six housing developments, including two for senior citizens and three for families. In total, NFHA owns and operates 922 public housing units in Niagara Falls. As shown in the Public Housing Condition Table below, the average inspection score ranges from a high of 96 to a low of 75. The maximum score is 100. The NFHA is considered a Standard Public Housing Authority given that they own/manage more than 250 public housing units and any number of vouchers where the total combined units exceed 500, and was designated as a standard performer in the most recent assessment.

Name of Housing Development	No. of units	Year built	Type
Spallino Towers	181	1971	Senior
Wrobel Towers	250	1974	Senior
Packard Court	166	1943	Family
Jordan Gardens	100	1961	Family
Beloved Community - Phase 1	115	2010	Family
Beloved Community - Phase 2	110	2012	Family
Total number of units	922		

Table 47 – Public Housing Units

Public Housing Condition

Public Housing Development	Average Inspection Score
Spallino Towers	96
Wrobel Towers	75
Packard Court	80
Jordan Gardens	79
Beloved Community - Phase 1	83
Beloved Community - Phase 2	82

Table 48 - Public Housing Condition

Describe the restoration and revitalization needs of public housing units in the jurisdiction:

The NFHA receives an annual grant from HUD for repairs and renovations. Over the past several years, the annual amount has ranged between \$613,000 and \$1.2 million. The most recent grant of \$913,800 in 2019 was spent on bathroom rehabilitation in Wrobel Towers. Based on the assumption that amount may continue in the future, the NFHA has prepared an annual capital budget for the years 2020-2024. Proposed projects listed include: exterior masonry repairs, kitchen renovations, door replacements, floor renovations, upgrade and enhanced security features, and enhanced Emergency Pull Cords/Strobe Smoke/Exterior Audio Soundings. The capital budget is reassessed each year based on the actual HUD funding received for the year.

Describe the public housing agency's strategy for improving the living environment of low- and moderate-income families residing in public housing:

The NFHA currently operates and will continue to operate a variety of programs and services for improving the living environment of low and moderate-income families residing in public housing.

Summer Programs. The NFHA’s Doris W. Jones Summer Enrichment program is a comprehensive summer program that provides individualized educational, social, cultural, and recreational components geared to each individual child’s level of learning. Activities include: storytelling, music, etiquette

classes, arts and crafts, African-American dance and nature hikes/walks. Educational field trips enable children from low-income families to have exposure to the arts, museums, nature, and a host of cultural enrichment activities, such as the Underground Railroad. An average of 200 children are enrolled each year.

Educational Support. Currently 140 children are enrolled in the “Living Large” and “I Can Read” after-school tutorial programs. These are designed to increase the reading and comprehension skills of children and youth in grades K –12, as well as improve scores on standardized tests. Classes are held Monday – Friday from 2:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Doris W. Jones Family Resource Building and Packard Court Community Center. Students are instructed by NYS certified teachers, Niagara University and Niagara County Community College students, NFHA staff and community volunteers. In addition to tutoring, the program provides violence prevention and self-esteem building seminars, arts and crafts, math BINGO, college prep activities, educational movies, incentive awards and prizes.

Nutrition Programs. Held in conjunction with the NFHA tutorial programs, the Kid’s Café program provides a nutritionally adequate meal to children (primarily under the age of 17) who are at risk of hunger. The Kid’s Café program operated by the NFHA since 1999 has provided a nutritionally adequate meal to children at risk, educated children and their parents about nutrition, educated the public about childhood hunger, and offered solutions. The program is staffed by community volunteers, parents of children enrolled in the program, NFHA staff and chefs from local food service chains. Funding for the Kid’s Café program is provided by the New York State Department of Health’s Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Packard Court Community Center (PCCC). The 14,313 square foot community center was built in 2001, in a location void of public recreation space, grocery stores and community gathering space. The building has hosted a variety of community events, after school and summer camp programs for youth as well as providing a safe space and resource for all City residents. The center offers a focus dedicated to positive youth development, which is strongly associated with three outcomes of public significance: improved school achievement and graduation rates, decrease incidence of risk behaviors and, increased sense of efficacy and empathy. The PCCC also serves as a resource for families by staying up to date on and disseminating community information, activities, and resources.

Partnerships and Grants

In carrying out the foregoing initiatives, the NFHA seeks to partner with a variety of existing organizations. Examples include Niagara County Youth Bureau, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Office of Children and Family Services/Niagara Community Action Program. In addition, grants are sought from various programs and organizations.

Discussion:

There has been significant investment in new and renovated public housing units over the past ten years. There is a need to maintain these properties. The City also has a need for more infill housing within existing neighborhoods. The NFHA is always interested in pursuing new single and multi-family housing opportunities. As highlighted in other sections of this plan, the greater need is renovation of housing units outside of public housing footprints.

MA-30 Homeless Facilities and Services - 91.210(c)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to investing in proper and effective environments for homeless individuals and others who have special needs and require rapid, permanent and/or supportive housing options. Homeless and supportive housing adds stability to communities by bringing safe, stable permanent housing that offers a continuum of supportive services to victims of domestic violence, youth aging out of foster care, formerly homeless and homeless veterans, and others with special challenges.

The City of Niagara Falls does not directly operate homeless shelters or supportive housing. However, the city does show an annual commitment to investing in the community's care facility. Through the CoC, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program funds are dedicated to both rapid rehousing and emergency services at facilities like YWCA Carolyn's House, the Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Inc., Niagara Community Action Plan, Fellowship House, and Family and Children's Services.

The 2019 Housing Inventory Count (HIC) that follows displays data for the entirety of Niagara County, including the City of Niagara Falls. However, it is the most up-to-date and accurate data available.

	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Re-Housing	Transitional Housing	Emergency Shelter	Safe Haven
Beds for Households with Adult(s) and Child(ren)	2	54	52	71	58
Beds for Households with Only Adults	11	5	19	108	15
Total Year-Round Beds	13	59	71	179	73

Table 49 – Bed Count in Homeless Facilities

Source: Homeless Alliance of Western New York

Permanent supportive housing is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with supportive services to assist homeless persons with a disability or families with an adult or child member with a disability achieve housing stability. The 2019 Housing Inventory List identified 13 beds within permanent supportive housing directly servicing the City.

Rapid re-housing (RRH) emphasizes housing search and relocation services and short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless persons and families (with or without a disability) as rapidly as possible into permanent housing. The 2019 Housing Inventory List identified 59 beds within rapid re-housing.

Transitional housing is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. Transitional housing may be used to cover the costs of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services. Program

participants must have a lease (or sublease) or occupancy agreement in place when residing in transitional housing. The 2019 Housing Inventory List identified 71 beds within transitional housing.

Emergency shelter is any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements. The 2019 Housing Inventory List identified 179 beds within emergency shelters.

Safe Haven, as defined in the Supportive Housing Program, is a form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who come primarily from the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services. The 2019 Housing Inventory List identified 73 beds within Safe Haven facilities.

Facilities Targeted to Homeless Persons –

***Information not available for this table.**

	Emergency Shelter Beds		Transitional Housing Beds	Permanent Supportive Housing Beds	
	Year Round Beds (Current & New)	Voucher / Seasonal / Overflow Beds	Current & New	Current & New	Under Development
Households with Adult(s) and Child(ren)					
Households with Only Adults					
Chronically Homeless Households					
Veterans					
Unaccompanied Youth					

Table 50 - Facilities Targeted to Homeless Persons

Describe mainstream services, such as health, mental health, and employment services to the extent those services are use to complement services targeted to homeless persons

There are many social service agencies working in Niagara Falls and throughout Western New York that provide benefits to very low and low-income individuals and families in order to address the needs of homeless persons. These organizations provide many services to homeless or at-risk residents, including, but not limited to, life skills, alcohol and drug abuse treatment, mental health treatment, AIDS related treatment, education, employment assistance, childcare, transportation, counseling, parenting classes, and housing placement/assistance. The HAWNY identifies more than 10 partner agencies providing various services to the homeless populations within Niagara County.

In addition to special needs services, the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, the Orleans Niagara BOCES, the City of Niagara Falls John Duke Senior Center and the Niagara Community Action Program

and Child and Family services offer mainstream services that can be accessed by the homeless or those in danger of homelessness. The CoC meets on a monthly basis to coordinate the services of both homeless and non-homeless care providers. Additionally, the CoC has created a home ownership/ landlord subcommittee to specifically focus on quality housing to both improve quality of life and act as an economic driver.

A veteran experiencing homelessness in Western New York has access to additional shelter and permanent housing resources. Emergency shelter designated for veterans is available through the Veteran Affairs Medical Center, accessed by referral through the Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program. Access to some types of housing are dependent on being on active duty and/or discharge status; the VA Healthcare for Homeless Veterans program will verify eligibility. If a homeless Veteran is not eligible for services through the VA they will be referred to the mainstream homeless service system for assessment and services.

List and describe services and facilities that meet the needs of homeless persons, particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth. If the services and facilities are listed on screen SP-40 Institutional Delivery Structure or screen MA-35 Special Needs Facilities and Services, describe how these facilities and services specifically address the needs of these populations.

Facilities provide specialized assistance to chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth, but many service providers work with multiple homeless subpopulations rather than one specific population. In the City of Niagara Falls there are a number of facilities that meet the needs of homeless persons.

The following is a list of emergency shelters as identified in the HAWNY Guide to Niagara Falls and Niagara County: Pinnacle Community Services (Casey House Teen Shelter and PASSAGE House Domestic Violence and Homeless Shelter), Community Missions (Respite, Hiawatha, CMI Code Blue, and Re-Entry), Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission, and Niagara YWCA Alternative to Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter. The Niagara County Department of Social Services also provides emergency hotel and motel placements.

MA-35 Special Needs Facilities and Services - 91.410, 91.210(d)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to investing in proper and effective environments for individuals and others who have special needs and require rapid, permanent and/or supportive housing options. Homeless and supportive housing adds stability to communities by bringing safe, stable permanent housing that offers a continuum of supportive services to victims of domestic violence, youth aging out of foster care, formerly homeless and homeless veterans, and others with special challenges. A central characteristic of supportive housing is that the needs are broad, and the care providers are varied. Ensuring that each population can access information and services needed is critical to meeting the needs of the population.

Including the elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities (mental, physical, developmental), persons with alcohol or other drug addictions, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, public housing residents and any other categories the jurisdiction may specify, and describe their supportive housing needs

For elderly and frail elderly, the needs continue to grow as the population ages. Almost one-third of the households, 6,878, in the City contain at least one person who is age 62 or over. Of that number, 68% qualify as low and moderate income. This presents additional service needs as well as staffing needs as the overall population is growing at a lower rate than that of the population of 65 and over. One of the primary concerns is the need for access to services and transportation. For some seniors, their license has been taken away, limiting their ability to access basic needs and placing them at risk for isolation. Healthcare costs and waitlists for care are also a central issue with additional challenges for seniors with special needs. An increase in the number of older adults with addiction and health issues will have a major impact on health service utilization and costs, highlighting the need to integrate mental health into an affordable and accessible continuum of community-based health and long term care. These needs are compounded by a lack of public transit to get these individuals to effective and affordable supportive services.

For children and youth, needs identified include access to and affordability of childcare, before and after school programming for all youth, and adult living skills training. Comments provided at stakeholder meetings indicated a lack of services and programming for children and youth throughout the City. Specific emphasis was given to the need for childcare facilities in proximity to workforce training opportunities including the Orleans/Niagara BOCES.

Stakeholder comments also indicated that there are more language barriers in Niagara County, than in Erie County where most of the services are located. More than 50 languages have been identified in Niagara Falls. There are literacy programs, but access to these programs are limited due to the poor transportation options. For agencies and organizations who work with refugees and limited-English speaking populations, there is a need for training for cultural differences and language barriers.

For persons with developmental disabilities, there are limited options available and what does exist is limited as well. For those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), more people are living within the community, creating an increased need for support services. Coordination of services is a need for this and other disabilities, focusing on supporting the person rather than the disorder.

Describe programs for ensuring that persons returning from mental and physical health institutions receive appropriate supportive housing

NY Connects Niagara County offers information and assistance, education and screening to individuals, their families and/or caregivers, as well as people employed in helping service professions. They assist Niagara County residents in making informed choices regarding their long-term care needs by letting residents know who provides those services nearest to them and how to get in touch with service providers. Long term care includes medical and non-medical services that are provided in a variety of settings. This may include home health services, assisted living, personal care services, therapy services, such as physical, occupational or speech, nursing homes, transportation services, adult day care programs, and home delivered meals programs. The goal of NY Connects Niagara County is to assist Niagara County residents in identifying available long-term care options for them or their loved ones by providing accessible, coordinated, unbiased and person-centered information and assistance services. By providing these services, it the goal of NY Connects Niagara County to enable a person to remain in their home as long as possible.

Additionally, Independent Living of Niagara County provides transition from a nursing home or hospital and assists in providing information to individuals about “transitioning” or diversion from costly institutions, such as hospitals, nursing homes and/or psychiatric hospitals, through community based and independent living programs and skills. Specific services provided by Independent Living Niagara County include: transition services, developmental disability programs, independent living services, benefits advisement, and mental health and wellness coaching.

Beyond traditional rapid rehousing and emergency services, the City is investing in more effective permanent housing solutions, within walkable neighborhoods. While the expectation is that transit services will remain poor, the alternative is clustering housing, supportive services, and employment opportunities together through strategic planning and investment.

Specify the activities that the jurisdiction plans to undertake during the next year to address the housing and supportive services needs identified in accordance with 91.215(e) with respect to persons who are not homeless but have other special needs. Link to one-year goals. 91.315(e)—(not in prior plans)

As stated above, the City is committed to investing in clustered housing, supportive housing, and healthcare and employment investment. The City has seen decades of failed, scattered investment. Over the next five years the City of Niagara Falls will continue to request use of HUD funds for complete neighborhood investments, in consideration of special needs and transit dependent residents. The City

will not rely only on HUD funds alone, leveraging investment from New York State through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative and Main Street Programs, and partnerships with Habitat for Humanity, the Niagara Orleans Region Land Improvement Corporation, the YWCA, and Belmont Housing Resources for WNY.

For entitlement/consortia grantees: Specify the activities that the jurisdiction plans to undertake during the next year to address the housing and supportive services needs identified in accordance with 91.215(e) with respect to persons who are not homeless but have other special needs. Link to one-year goals. (91.220(2))

Linking to year one goals, the City of Niagara Falls will invest in a combination of rapid rehousing services via the YWCA of Niagara and Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, Inc. In addition, the City will invest in emergency shelter and outreach via the Niagara Community Action Plan, Fellowship House, and Family and Children's Services.

MA-40 Barriers to Affordable Housing - 91.210(e)

Describe any negative effects of public policies on affordable housing and residential investment

There are a number of existing barriers to the availability of affordable housing in Niagara Falls. Issues of market misalignment and economics may play the largest role, but there are certainly public policy barriers as well. Major barriers to access to affordable housing identified in the Stakeholder meetings conducted as part of the Consolidated Planning Process include (i) lack of supply, (ii) unaffordable housing costs (new units and rehab), and (iii) lack of available funding (new units and rehab).

Niagara Falls has a very old housing stock with 90% of the homes in the City having been built prior to 1969. The aging housing stock produces health hazards such as exposure to asbestos and lead paint, while increasing the overall costs to maintain a residential unit. High maintenance combined with insufficient supply to meet the increasing demand have led to a disproportionate market for affordable housing. As a result, in 2018 over 55% of Niagara Falls residents were paying 30% or more of their income on housing.

The City of Niagara Falls provides housing rehabilitation funds to assist with the cost burdens associated with an older housing stock suffering from decades of disinvestment. However the Community Development Staff is finding that the incentives are too low to have the needed impact in many cases. The City is considering increasing the cap on rehabilitation grants but is somewhat restricted by the lead paint requirements associated with the use of federal funds over certain thresholds.

Additionally, much of the public incentive that exists in Western New York is encouraging developers to create market rate residential units. The City is exploring means to subsidize development of affordable units in order to combat the market-rate shift in the development community. Projects with Belmont Housing and Neighborworks are being discussed to bring new affordable units on-line.

Strategies to address existing barriers to affordable housing and fair housing choice are summarized in the Strategic Plan (SP-55)

MA-45 Non-Housing Community Development Assets - 91.210(f)

Introduction

Niagara County is the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Region's second most populous county with over 213,000 people, nearly 73,000 jobs, and 4,800 firms. Niagara County's unemployment rate dropped 3.1% since 2009, one of the largest declines reported regionwide.

In determining priorities for the allocation of federal funds, the City of Niagara Falls recognizes the need to foster a competitive local economy that expands economic opportunities for present and future residents, addressing such pressing issues as high poverty and unemployment rates. More job training is needed in the City of Niagara Falls. There is a disconnect between emerging employment markets in the region and applicable job skills. The trades and manufacturing sector is a prime example. City residents need to be better prepared for living wage opportunities within those sectors. This section describes the local workforce, the nature of current employment, and activities that coordinate economic development efforts among local and regional agencies.

Economic Development Market Analysis

As of 2019, economic indicators suggest that the City of Niagara Falls continues to lag behind Niagara County as a whole, New York State, and the nation. The unemployment rate in the City in December 2019 was 6.8 %, compared to Niagara County's rate of 5.6% and the State unemployment rate of 3.7%, and was twice the national unemployment rate of 3.4%. Niagara Falls has experienced nominal growth in the total number of jobs. The number of jobs reflected in the table below (13,111) represents an increase of only 1.7% over the number of jobs in the City reflected in the 2007-2011 ACS. Job growth was seen in the Education and Health Care Services, Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate, and Manufacturing sectors, as compared to the number of sector jobs in the prior five-year period. However, declines from the prior five-year period were seen in Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations, Construction, and Retail (all of which would offer opportunities for younger, unskilled workers), and Professional, Scientific, Management Services, a sector which would attract better educated workers. The number of jobs in the other business sectors remained stable. Education and Health Care Services remains the top business sector employer, followed by Retail Trade and Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations. This is evidenced by the fact that the top three employers in the City are Seneca Gaming Corp., Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, and the Niagara Falls City School District.

Business Activity

Business by Sector	Number of Workers	Number of Jobs	Share of Workers %	Share of Jobs %	Jobs less workers %
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	27	0	0	0	0
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2,769	2,279	15	16	1
Construction	633	322	3	2	-1
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,890	3,204	21	23	2
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1,068	509	6	4	-2
Information	221	161	1	1	0
Manufacturing	2,339	2,188	13	16	3
Other services, except public administration	765	706	4	5	1
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	1,245	455	7	3	-4
Public administration	0	0	0	0	0
Retail trade	2,835	2,406	15	17	2
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	689	433	4	3	-1
Wholesale trade	671	448	4	3	0
Total	17,152	13,111	--	--	--

Table 51 - Business Activity

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS (Workers), 2015 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (Jobs)

Labor Force

Total Population in the Civilian Labor Force	23,350
Civilian Employed Population 16 years and over	20,735
Unemployment Rate	11.16
Unemployment Rate for Ages 16-24	30.44
Unemployment Rate for Ages 25-65	6.97

Table 52 - Labor Force

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Occupations by Sector	Number of People
Management, business and financial	3,075
Farming, fisheries and forestry occupations	1,080
Service	3,150
Sales and office	6,055
Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair	1,455
Production, transportation and material moving	1,275

Table 53 – Occupations by Sector

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Travel Time

Travel Time	Number	Percentage
< 30 Minutes	16,225	81%
30-59 Minutes	3,205	16%
60 or More Minutes	535	3%
Total	19,965	100%

Table 54 - Travel Time

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Travel time to work is not an issue for City residents. Over 80% of workers travel less than 30 minutes to work each day. This compares to just 52% of New York residents and 65% of Americans. This means that a majority of City residents do not have to travel far to find employment. These numbers have held steady over recent years, however, stakeholders' interviews cited transportation for low-income residents who do not have cars as being a major obstacle for them to obtain and keep jobs, and to access job training and employment-related services.

Education:

Educational Attainment by Employment Status (Population 25 to 64 years)

Educational Attainment	In Labor Force		Not in Labor Force
	Civilian Employed	Unemployed	
Less than high school graduate	1,130	235	1,540
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	5,955	785	3,340
Some college or Associate's degree	5,710	570	2,205
Bachelor's degree or higher	3,895	260	745

Table 55 - Educational Attainment by Employment Status

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Educational Attainment by Age

	Age				
	18–24 yrs	25–34 yrs	35–44 yrs	45–65 yrs	65+ yrs
Less than 9th grade	29	115	90	335	670
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	810	550	575	1,245	1,275
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	1,590	2,190	1,885	6,005	3,170
Some college, no degree	1,630	1,640	1,290	2,975	865
Associate's degree	295	555	480	1,580	425
Bachelor's degree	325	1,035	485	1,255	570
Graduate or professional degree	59	605	605	925	385

Table 56 - Educational Attainment by Age

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Educational Attainment – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Educational Attainment	Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months**
Less than high school graduate	16,653
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	24,769
Some college or Associate's degree	31,132
Bachelor's degree	36,823
Graduate or professional degree	55,800

Table 57 – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

**Data reported for all of Erie County

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Based on the Business Activity table above, what are the major employment sectors within your jurisdiction?

The Education and Health Care Services sector employs the largest number of workers, which represents 21% of individuals employed in the City, followed by Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations and the Retail Trade sector which each employ 15% of workers, and Manufacturing which employs 13% of individuals employed in the City of Niagara Falls. The city's top three employers are: the Niagara Falls Air Base, the Seneca Niagara Casino, and the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center.

Describe the workforce and infrastructure needs of the business community:

The educational attainment of the labor force in the City of Niagara Falls has seen some improvement, with the most growth seen among employed individuals with a Bachelor's degree or higher, which now constitute just under one-quarter of the employed population. However, there has also been a decline in the percentage of employed persons with Some College or an Associate's Degree, with those with a

High School diploma or equivalent now constituting the largest percentage of the employed population at 35.9%. In light of this, the need for skills development, particularly for workers without any College education, is critical. The lack of educational attainment directly impacts earning potential.

A comparison of median earnings by education level as reflected in the 2007-2011 ACS and the 2011-2015 ACS indicates that median earnings for those with less than a high school diploma and high school graduates or equivalent have declined, while those with some college or an Associate's degree, a Bachelor's degree, or a graduate or professional degree have seen their median earnings increase. Nearly half (49%) of City residents live in or near poverty, with incomes below Federal poverty levels or between 100% and 200% of poverty levels². Many residents lack the education or skills training needed to obtain good paying jobs and employers in such industries as manufacturing and clean energy report hard-to-fill higher paying jobs in the trades, many of which require skills and training beyond high school but not a four-year college degree. In addition, a lack of transportation creates a barrier to job training and employment, with about one in five residents not having a car.³ While commute time is not an issue for workers in the City of Niagara Falls, with 81% commuting less than 30 minutes, transportation for low-income residents who do not have cars is an obstacle to obtaining and keeping jobs, and to access job training and employment related services.

Describe any major changes that may have an economic impact, such as planned local or regional public or private sector investments or initiatives that have affected or may affect job and business growth opportunities during the planning period. Describe any needs for workforce development, business support or infrastructure these changes may create.

Within the past several years, the City of Niagara Falls has seen substantial investment of State and Federal funding to support two major infrastructure projects which have the potential to revitalize the City and set the stage for significant private investment. One project was the opening of a state-of-the-art \$43,000,000 International Intermodal Train Station on Main Street which was built primarily with Federal and State funds and serves as a new transportation hub for intercity rail between New York City and Toronto. The Station was one component of a three-part project, which included the renovation and rebuilding of infrastructure along Main Street, including the construction of a new rail bridge, and the renovation of the 1863 U.S. Customs House, which has been transformed into the new Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center which opened on May 4, 2018 and is a project of the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Commission, in cooperation with the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, a program of the National Park Service. A second transformational project is the Robert Moses Parkway Removal project, a \$42 million investment by the State of New York. Completed in the early 1960's, the Robert Moses Parkway has effectively cut off City neighborhoods from the Niagara Gorge for over 50 years. The project includes the demolition of the Robert Moses Parkway; reconstruction of City streets to absorb the rerouted traffic; restoration of the landscape and habitats along the reclaimed Niagara Gorge rim; the construction of a pedestrian/bicycle trail network along the

² Numbers in Need: Community Snapshot: City of Niagara Falls, October 2019

³ Numbers in Need: Community Snapshot: City of Niagara Falls, October 2019

Gorge rim connecting adjoining neighborhood; and the installation of sidewalks, lighting and other infrastructure.

On a regional level, implementation of New York State's Buffalo Billion Plan has had a significant impact over the Buffalo Niagara Region in terms of both creating economic opportunity and improving the workforce development infrastructure. Ongoing Buffalo Billion projects that are specific to the City of Niagara Falls include: restoration of the iconic Niagara Hotel; strategic acquisition of properties in downtown Niagara Falls by USA Niagara Development Corporation (a subsidiary of Empire State Development) to prepare them for redevelopment; restoration of the ecological health of the Niagara Gore and Rim; improved access to the waterfront in Niagara Falls State Park; and redevelopment of a portion of the Rainbow Centre Mall into a mixed-use development. These projects and other investments will create employment opportunities in the construction trades that will be inaccessible to many local residents due to the skills gap of many potential workers. This highlights the need for jobs training, particularly in the trades, which would create an immediate pathway to employment for extremely low and low to moderate income residents.

How do the skills and education of the current workforce correspond to employment opportunities in the jurisdiction?

There exists a disconnect between the skills possessed by job seekers and those required for many of the available employment opportunities. Investment in redevelopment of the City's infrastructure and many derelict properties is creating job opportunities in the construction trades which are not available to many City residents because of a lack of training in the building trades. In addition, new and ongoing public and private investments in advanced manufacturing, energy-related fields, and the technology sector are anticipated to only widen the existing skills gap. To address the skills gap, the City of Niagara Falls works with Orleans-Niagara BOCES and local trade unions to provide free training in the building trades, including an OSHA 10 certification. In 2018 Orleans Niagara BOCES opened a Workforce Training Center in Niagara Falls to provide a place for City residents to study and work toward future employment.

Describe any current workforce training initiatives, including those supported by Workforce Investment Boards, community colleges and other organizations. Describe how these efforts will support the jurisdiction's Consolidated Plan.

Niagara County Employment & Training (NCET), in partnership with the New York State Department of Labor's Division of Workforce Services and other community partners, operates Niagara's WorkSourceOne One Stop Career Center, which includes a location at 1001 Eleventh Street in the City of Niagara Falls. WorkSourceOne is the largest employment and training initiative in Niagara County and provides vocational/skills training and job placement assistance. Training is provided for on demand occupations (as determined by the Workforce Development Board) through approved training providers located in Niagara, Erie, Orleans, and Genesee Counties. Training providers located in Niagara County are:

- 1.) Niagara County Community College, located in Sanborn, New York, offers accelerated training and in-demand skills certifications through its workforce development and continuing education program. Its stated mission is to “provide innovative, customer-responsive training opportunities to lead the economic development of our community.” NCCC also partners with ProTrain, a virtual educational company, to provide on-line and physical classes in such fields as medical, information technology, business, human resources, project management, paralegal, customer service, and trades (Automotive Service Excellence and HVAC).
- 2.) Orleans Niagara Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), which has main campuses in the Town of Sanborn in Niagara County and in Medina in Orleans County, offers training in fields such as the building trades, electricity/electronics, computer technology, health sciences, culinary arts, welding, advanced manufacturing, automotive technology, and auto body repair. In 2018, Orleans Niagara BOCES opened a workforce training center in a once-vacant Niagara Falls City School District maintenance building located at 606 6th Street in the City of Niagara Falls, with the goal of providing City residents with an easily accessible place to study and work toward future employment. Training is provided to post-high school graduates. Vocational classes are offered in fields such as home health aide, nursing assistant, licensed practical nurse, construction trades, welding and auto repair. The Niagara Falls Literacy Zone, a network of community services, uses the training center to provide classes in math, science, computers, and social literacy skills, and to prepare students to take high school equivalency exams. Training in the building trades is also provided through apprenticeship programs run by local building trade unions.

Does your jurisdiction participate in a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

Yes

If so, what economic development initiatives are you undertaking that may be coordinated with the Consolidated Plan? If not, describe other local/regional plans or initiatives that impact economic growth.

Niagara County recently updated its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely impacted the local economy and resulted in an increase in the County-wide unemployment rate from 5.9% to a high rate of 21.9%, a regional loss of up to 23.3% of private sector jobs, and a drastic decline in sales tax revenues made worse by the devastating effect of the pandemic and resulting shutdown on the tourism and hospitality industries, which are critical to the County as a whole and Niagara Falls in particular. The Niagara County CEDS dated June 2020 identifies goals and objectives intended to build on the strengths, address the weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities and mitigate threats to the local and regional economy. Specifically, the CEDS has among its goals and objectives the following objectives which coordinate with the Consolidated Plan: (i) improve educational opportunities to ensure a highly skilled workforce; (ii) diversify Niagara County’s economic base to ensure resiliency; (iii) retain existing businesses and attract

new businesses; and (iv) provide the infrastructure necessary for growth and development. The CEDS also includes goals and objectives directed toward increasing the County's economic resilience which will coordinate with the objectives of the Consolidated Plan, including: investment in infrastructure; identify and fill skills gaps/educate and train the workforce; improve employment access (transportation); and encourage startups and microenterprises. Strategies to improve educational opportunities and advance workforce training include: continue collaboration between educational institutions, the Workforce Development Board and its resource partners and the private sector to identify skills gaps in key industry sectors; increase the variety and number of youth programs to provide soft-skills and other educational training to assist with filling entry-level and middle-skill job gaps; expand awareness of existing workforce development resources; seek state and federal funding opportunities to support the development of curriculum to meet the workforce needs of local business and growing industry sectors; increase the variety of short-term training opportunities to better match employee skills with employer needs; and develop and improve existing transportation services to better connect people with available jobs and job training centers.

In addition, the City of Niagara Falls would be included in recent regional planning and economic development efforts such as the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC) Strategy for Prosperity in Western New York and One Region Forward – A New Way to Plan for Buffalo Niagara. These planning efforts include among their primary strategic principles the preparation of a stronger workforce through, among other actions, expanding training and apprenticeship programs (and making them more inclusive), aligning skills training with the current and future job market, and promoting better connections between schools and job readiness.

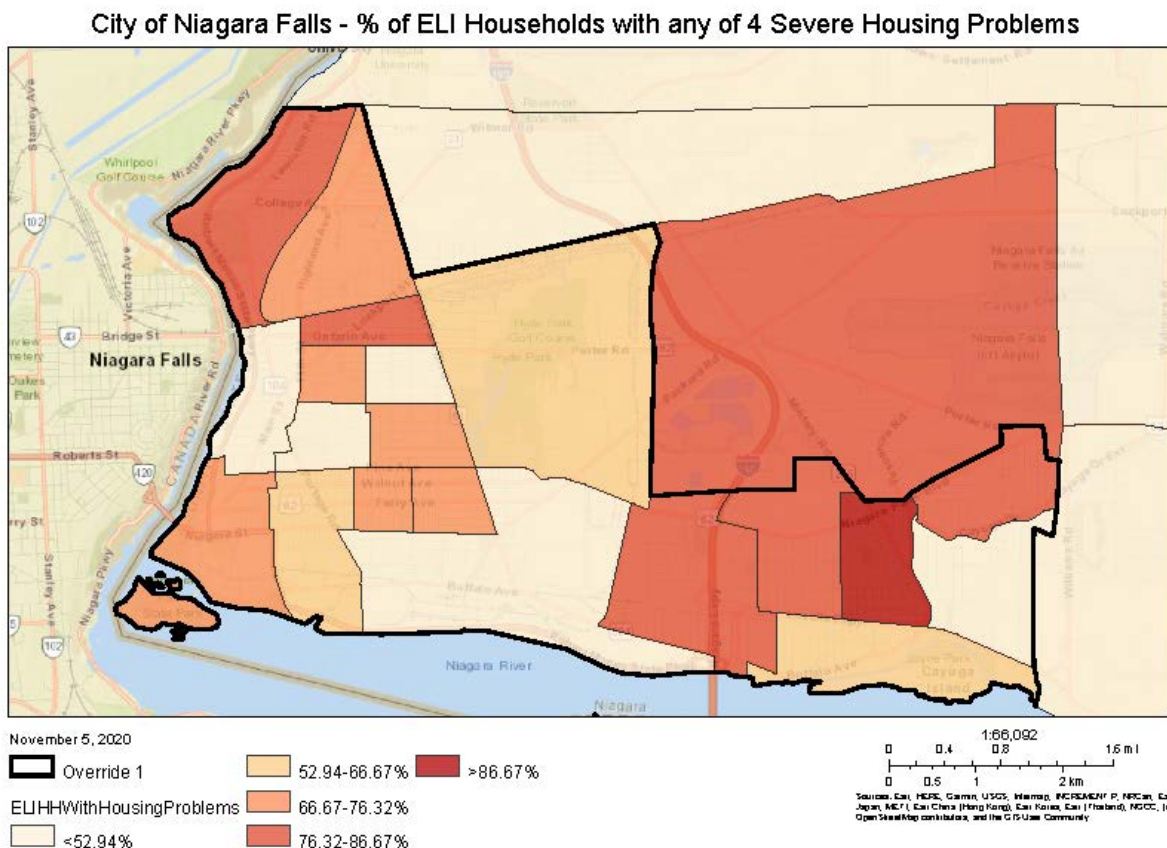
The One Region Forward sustainable economic development plan, which was adopted in 2015, sets forth a comprehensive economic development strategy for Erie County and Niagara County. One Region Forward incorporates recommended strategies and actions that support economic development, manage infrastructure costs, provide accessibility to jobs, education, and healthcare, and improve neighborhoods by offering more housing choices.

MA-50 Needs and Market Analysis Discussion

**Are there areas where households with multiple housing problems are concentrated?
(include a definition of "concentration")**

To look at housing problems, HUD CPD data was used to display the percentage of low-income households experiencing one or more housing problems. Housing problems include: housing units lacking complete kitchen facilities and/or complete plumbing facilities, overcrowding (more than 1.5 persons per room), and housing costs greater than 50% of household income

In this case, "concentration" is defined as having a value within the top two quintiles of the distribution, which in this case is a value over 76.32%. The map below shows the proportion of extremely low-income households facing severe housing problems (severe overcrowding, lack of plumbing, lack of heating, lack of kitchen, or severe cost burden). A total of six census tracts have concentrations of multiple housing problems within extremely low-income households. These include Census Tracts 201, 204, 220, 221, 223, and 225. The housing in these neighborhoods are often in need of extensive rehabilitation or removal. These neighborhoods are also where the lowest income households in the City live, in housing stock that is in poor condition.



Are there any areas in the jurisdiction where racial or ethnic minorities or low-income families are concentrated? (include a definition of "concentration")

Of the six Census Tracts with concentrations of ELI residents experiencing severe housing problems, just one, Census Tract 204, is comprised of more than 53% Black or African American residents. Each of the other Census Tracts are predominantly comprised of White residents.

The Community Snapshot City of Niagara Falls report prepared by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute and the John R. Oishei Foundation Mobile Safety-Net Team indicates that residents most likely to experience poverty live along commercial corridors, near industrial areas, and in neighborhoods east of downtown. Some of the highest rates are in the Highland and Hyde Park neighborhoods and in the area between Pine Ave and Buffalo Ave just east of Portage Road. Trends over time show poverty growing in these areas over the past several years.

What are the characteristics of the market in these areas/neighborhoods?

The housing market in the City of Niagara Falls has a deteriorating housing stock, largely due to the age of housing units. Where commercial markets exist, they often include many vacant former commercial storefronts, some of which have been converted into residential units. Commercial areas need physical and economic revitalization.

As a sample for analysis, Census Tract 204 is made up of a total of 610 households with an average size of 2.4 persons per household. In total, 56% of the units are owner-occupied and 44% of the units are renter occupied. The vacancy rate is 27%. Median value is estimated at \$47,800 and the median contract rent is \$481. A majority of the homes were constructed prior to 1949.

Are there any community assets in these areas/neighborhoods?

Many of these neighborhoods are home to public and social service assets that are located there due to high rates of poverty. The strategy of directing social services, social programming and traditional public housing to these neighborhoods has not increased the number of homeowner occupied units, market rate rental units, employment opportunities, or food access. All neighborhoods in the City of Niagara Falls are near the tourism district with access to extensive recreational resources. However, commerce and homeownership are not assets in these neighborhoods.

Are there other strategic opportunities in any of these areas?

Many strategic opportunities exist within the City of Niagara Falls.

The North End has an opportunity to transform into a vibrant mixed-use hub due to a new private developer buying properties within The Bridge District; a focus on revitalizing the 11th Street Corridor; Census Tract 205's inclusion in the Opportunity Zone Program; and significant investments in the

development of the Intermodal Train Station, the removal of the Robert Moses Parkway that cut the North End off from the Niagara Gorge, and the Public Safety Campus centrally located on North Main Street. These factors create tremendous opportunity to increase the quality of life, create job opportunities, and construct quality housing units.

Additionally, Niagara University is partnering with the City and the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation on the South End Housing Initiative, an effort to eliminate blighting influence, rehabilitate the large older structures, and see new infill investment to create residential units.

MA-60 Broadband Needs of Housing occupied by Low- and Moderate-Income Households - 91.210(a)(4), 91.310(a)(2)

Describe the need for broadband wiring and connections for households, including low- and moderate-income households and neighborhoods.

In 2015 The Niagara Falls International Airport Stakeholders Group commissioned Magellan Advisors to provide a Niagara County Broadband Assessment and Fiber-Optic Network Development Plan for the “Niagara Falls International Airport Focus Area”. While the footprint of the Niagara Falls International Airport is not within the City’s boundaries, the assessment included an overall assessment of Niagara County and sampled residential and commercial areas within the City.

Time Warner and Verizon are the main service providers in the City of Niagara Falls and broadband infrastructure provides service to most residential areas within the City, yet it is older, copper-based infrastructure that limits bandwidth. Time Warner offers equipment and infrastructure upgrades to increase bandwidth and service reliability, however upgrade costs are passed on to the user over a 36-60-month period that is generally prohibitive to low-and moderate-income households. Transportation issues prevalent within Niagara Falls increase the need for affordable broadband options for residents to have access to educational opportunities and many job training and employment-related services. Additionally, the impacts of COVID -19 increase the need for high-speed internet capabilities from home and the ability to work remotely in order to maintain employment in a growing number of industries.

Describe the need for increased competition by having more than one broadband Internet service provider serve the jurisdiction.

There are multiple broadband internet service providers that service the area but there is limited investment occurring in the equipment or infrastructure servicing the area. Increased competition to leverage new investment is essential for the residents of Niagara Falls to receive affordable service to meet today’s growing bandwidth needs. The 2015 Broadband Assessment noted that the cost for broadband service in Niagara Falls is not competitive with comparable urban areas throughout the Country.

In 2018 Niagara and Orleans County undertook a cooperative effort “The Niagara Orleans Regional Alliance” (NORA) to work with State and Federal elected officials to attract smaller Internet Service Providers to bring additional options to provide high-speed, dependable, and affordable service to every home and business in Orleans and Niagara Counties. In the more rural areas, the need is for infrastructure that doesn’t currently exist, while in Niagara Falls the need is for investments in equipment and infrastructure upgrades. NORA is working on behalf of all communities and attempting to find solutions to both problems.

MA-65 Hazard Mitigation - 91.210(a)(5), 91.310(a)(3)

Describe the jurisdiction's increased natural hazard risks associated with climate change.

In 2016 Niagara County Emergency Services undertook a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify vulnerabilities and mitigation measures for hazards. Niagara Falls was one of the featured jurisdictions and the Plan identified the following natural hazard risks associated with climate change as having a high probability of occurrence: flood, hailstorm, high wind, severe storm/thunderstorm, severe winter weather, and wildfire (grass).

Describe the vulnerability to these risks of housing occupied by low- and moderate-income households based on an analysis of data, findings, and methods.

The Hazard Mitigation Plan examined the City's exposure to these risks in a global manner however it is clear that low-and-moderate income households have a greater vulnerability than the population as a whole. Specifically, the Plan analyzed the financial burden of increased flood insurance rates within the City. The same increased vulnerability applies to the financial risks associated with property damage related to each of the natural hazard risks identified above.

With limited resources, the City has focused much of their hazard mitigation effort on public facilities, especially those that provide valuable services to residents of all income levels. Additionally, the City of Niagara Falls is the only Niagara County jurisdiction that participates in the State of New York Community Rating System. The City's Class 8 rating provides a 10% premium discount on National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies. The City also plans to develop a new website with multiple pages dedicated to floodplain management and mitigation in order to reduce both the risk of, and financial burden associated with, frequent flooding.

Strategic Plan

SP-05 Overview

Strategic Plan Overview

The City of Niagara Falls, New York prepares a five-year strategic plan in order to efficiently implement federal programs that fund housing, community development, and neighborhood-based services within the City. Public participation is essential to this process.

The end result of the process is a consolidated plan and annual applications for the use of federal entitlement funds available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program. The City of Niagara Falls submits this five-year strategic plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for approval.

The plan serves the following functions:

1. A management tool that focuses HUD investment on a comprehensive strategy rather than a series of isolated annual applications and projects.
2. An application for CDBG, HOME and ESG funds under HUD's formula grants.
3. An assessment tool to track annual spending and project-based performance.

Based on the FY 2020 allocation, the 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan will direct the following resources:

CDBG Annual: \$2,385,727 CDBG 5 Year Estimate: \$11,928,635

HOME Annual: \$458,130 HOME 5 Year Estimate: \$2,290,650

ESG Annual: \$202,920 ESG 5 Year Estimate: \$1,014,600

Annual Total: \$3,046,777 5 Year Total: \$15,233,885

Based on the Needs Assessment and Market Analysis for the City of Niagara Falls, the City's Strategic Plan focuses on furthering, either directly or through partner organizations, the following goals:

- Supporting businesses either owned by low- and moderate-income individuals or creating employment opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals through microenterprise grants and technical support
- Capitalizing physical investments in commercial properties and small business development projects.
- Supporting functional job training programs within the City of Niagara Falls with a focus on entry level trades and medical arts employment opportunities
- Funding needed infrastructure improvements in traditional commercial corridors

- Eliminating blighting influences throughout the City through targeted demolitions
- Funding residential rehabilitation of owner occupied and rental properties to increase the number of affordable, quality residential units
- Supporting the development of affordable housing units throughout the City
- Funding public infrastructure improvements in low- and moderate-income residential areas
- Supporting youth programming that focuses on the 12-17 age range
- Furthering public park improvements, consistent with the adopted Niagara Falls Parks Master Plan
- Supporting community policing strategies that both increase police visibility and make the police department accessible to residents
- A commitment to the sale and renovation of city owned vacant houses whenever financially feasible for the betterment of the surrounding area
- Investing in safety net stakeholders dedicated to rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention
- Creating more beds for homeless individuals

The City will attempt to utilize federal resources to leverage additional funds to support the aforementioned goals.

SP-10 Geographic Priorities – 91.215 (a)(1)

Geographic Area

Table 58 - Geographic Priority Areas

1	Area Name:	City-Wide Target Area
	Area Type:	Local Target area
	Other Target Area Description:	
	HUD Approval Date:	
	% of Low/ Mod:	
	Revital Type:	Housing
	Other Revital Description:	
	Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area.	NF Consolidated Plan (CP) Target Area. Census tracts: 202, 202, 203, 204, 206, 207, 209, 210, 212, 217, 220, 221 Physical boundaries: Northern: Highland Avenue. Western: The Robert Moses Parkway Eastern: 77th Street Southern: Buffalo Avenue
Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area.	Housing stock was primarily built between the 1880 and 1930. There is a mix of signal family house, two family, multi-unit residential buildings and mixed-use buildings. A majority of commercial districts are in mixed use buildings.	
How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area?	Target areas and community priorities were examined, and feedback was solicited, throughout the citizen participation process including stakeholder meetings, the housing needs survey, and the public meetings/hearings.	

<p>Identify the needs in this target area.</p>	<p>Renovation of owner-occupied housing units. Construction of owner-occupied housing units. Renovation of rental housing units. Construction of rental housing units. Improvement of aging infrastructure (roads, water, sewer). Increased police presence and foot patrols. Demolition of blighted structures. Youth services programming. Small business growth. Improvement in commercial districts. Creation of job training opportunities.</p>
<p>What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area?</p>	<p>Neighborhood revitalization through improved road conditions and infrastructure, the removal of blighting influences, improved safety and social service delivery, housing stock renovation and renovation of mixed-use buildings. The City's high vacancy rate provides an opportunity to renovate both residential and commercial units that are currently underutilized.</p>
<p>Are there barriers to improvement in this target area?</p>	<p>Affordability of renovations of old and dilapidated privately-owned residential and commercial structures will create a barrier, albeit not an insurmountable one.</p>

General Allocation Priorities

Heavily trafficked areas within the City will be a high priority for comprehensive investment. Additionally, the City will focus on the built environment in the South End, the North End, Third Street, Pine Avenue, Buffalo Avenue and Highland Avenue Corridors.

SP-25 Priority Needs - 91.215(a)(2)

Priority Needs

Table 599 - Geographic Priority Areas

1	Priority Need Name	Infrastructure (Community Development)
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low, Low, Moderate
	Geographic Areas Affected	
	Associated Goals	Repair Sewer Laterals, Milling & Paving Roads, Non-Housing Community Development
	Description	Improvements to sewer and water service, deteriorated roads – reconstruction and repair, sidewalks, bicycle and vehicular access, and storm drainage and flood protection facilities in targeted low-income neighborhoods and commercial corridors. Investments in sewer laterals to residential units.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Outdated and deteriorating infrastructure needs improvement, repair, or replacing.
2	Priority Need Name	Public Services
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low, Low, Moderate, Middle, Large Families, Families with Children Elderly, Public Housing Residents, Elderly, Frail Elderly, Persons with Mental Disabilities, Persons with Physical Disabilities, Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families, Victims of Domestic Violence, Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	
	Associated Goals	Social & Community Programming

	Description	Provide senior citizen services, recreation programs for all ages, transportation services for health, income and personal needs and nutrition, employment, supportive housing and transportation. Fill gaps in services, which support community revitalization and enhance the quality of life for low/moderate income residents.
	Basis for Relative Priority	The City continues to experience social service and safety net needs as identified by area providers.
3	Priority Need Name	Business Support and Workforce Development
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	
	Associated Goals	Micro-Loan Program, Residents Placed in Employment Opportunities, Small Business Support Fund, Small Business Incentives
	Description	Provide technical assistance and investment capital through business loan funds to assist businesses in preserving and creating new economic opportunities. Provide capital improvement grants for commercial structures. Provide technical assistance and counseling through business assistance directories and company site visits. Provide economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income people by sustaining appropriate workplace facilities and by providing access to workforce development programming.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Business Development through direct technical and business assistance are the catalyst for the retention and creation of new jobs and commercial properties are falling into disrepair, creating a more difficult retail/commercial environment, while making commercial areas less appealing for new investment. Additionally, job-seekers need additional skills and training to be more marketable.
4	Priority Need Name	Affordable Housing
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low, Low, Moderate
	Geographic Areas Affected	

	Associated Goals	Development of New Affordable Housing Units, Single Family Homeownership Initiatives, Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation
	Description	Provide healthy and affordable residential opportunities for low- and moderate-income households. Provide financial resources to Community Housing Development Organizations and non-profit groups that seek to develop housing for the low-income population.
	Basis for Relative Priority	There is insufficient housing for extremely low- and low-income households in the City. Despite historically low mortgage interest rates, many households who would normally be seeking to buy homes are unable to do so due to tighter lending standards and a high percentage of substandard housing units within the City. Increasing affordable housing units will address this need.
5	Priority Need Name	Slum/Blight
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	
	Associated Goals	Remove Slum/Blight, Targeted Demolition
	Description	Improve appearance, safety, and quality of life aspects of geographic areas suffering from slum and blight conditions. Undertake targeted demolition and clearance of buildings and land features which contribute to spot blight conditions and health and safety threats.
	Basis for Relative Priority	The large number of blighted properties detracts from the quality of life for neighboring properties and precludes achieving a suitable living environment.
6	Priority Need Name	Housing Rehabilitation
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Middle Large Families Families with Children Elderly

	Geographic Areas Affected	City-Wide Target Area
	Associated Goals	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation
	Description	Housing renovations are needed on a City-wide basis. The City has an older housing stock and a glut of substandard structures in most neighborhoods.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Older housing stock in the City leads to a heavy cost burden on homeowners
7	Priority Need Name	Homeless Assistance
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low, Low, Moderate, Middle, Large Families, Families with Children, Public Housing Residents, Elderly, Frail Elderly, Persons with Mental Disabilities, Persons with Physical Disabilities, Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families, Victims of Domestic Violence
	Geographic Areas Affected	
	Associated Goals	Homeless Assistance
	Description	Provide homeless assistance through rapid re-housing and prevention services. Projects will provide financial assistance to homeless individuals through payments of rental assistance, security deposits, utility payments, counseling and legal aid services. Emergency shelters for the homeless population will receive financial assistance for operational expenses. The service population is consortium wide for any homeless individual or an individual at risk of becoming homeless.
	Basis for Relative Priority	The homeless population in the consortium continues to rise. There is a high need for homeless assistance services.
8	Priority Need Name	Rapid Rehousing/Street Outreach
	Priority Level	High

	Population	Extremely Low Low Chronic Homeless Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abusers Veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth
	Geographic Areas Affected	City-Wide Target Area
	Associated Goals	Increase Percentage of homeless persons in permanent housing
	Description	Investment in safety net stakeholders dedicated to rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention.
	Basis for Relative Priority	There is an underreported need for assistance to the unsheltered homeless population.
9	Priority Need Name	Public Space Improvements
	Priority Level	Low
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Middle Large Families Families with Children Elderly Public Housing Residents
	Geographic Areas Affected	City-Wide Target Area
	Associated Goals	City Park/Public Space Improvement
	Description	Execute the Niagara Falls Parks Master Plan, to provide productive, free public spaces for the City's young people, focusing on the 12-17 year old age range.

	Basis for Relative Priority	City parks need to be improved to offer accessibility and productive use.
10	Priority Need Name	Community Policing
	Priority Level	Low
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Middle Large Families Families with Children Elderly Public Housing Residents
	Geographic Areas Affected	City-Wide Target Area
	Associated Goals	Community Policing
	Description	Support community policing strategies that both increase police visibility and make the police department accessible to residents.
	Basis for Relative Priority	There is a need to build police visibility outside of enforcement, making the police department more accessible to residents.

SP-30 Influence of Market Conditions – 91.215 (b)

Influence of Market Conditions

Affordable Housing Type	Market Characteristics that will influence the use of funds available for housing type
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	The City does not anticipate HOME or CDBG funded tenant-based rental assistance. Rental assistance is provided through section 8 leased housing vouchers.
TBRA for Non-Homeless Special Needs	The City has no plan to utilize regularly allocated HOME or CDBG for permanent based rental assistance for non-homeless special needs.
New Unit Production	There are a high percentage of vacant sites in the City for new infill construction on both a spot basis and as part of larger projects.
Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation of housing, both rental and owner-occupied, is the key to the City's consolidated plan. CDBG and HOME funds will be dedicated to rehabilitation.
Acquisition, including preservation	There are no plans to use any HUD funds on acquisition at this time. Building preservation is a top priority, leveraging HUD investment with application for state and federal historic tax credits.

Table 60 - Influence of Market Conditions

SP-35 Anticipated Resources - 91.215(a)(4), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	2,385,727	297,254		2,682,981	9,542,908	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City Council.
HOME	public - federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership TBRA	458,130		750,000	1,208,130	1,832,520	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
ESG	public - federal	Conversion and rehab for transitional housing Financial Assistance Overnight shelter Rapid re-housing (rental assistance) Rental Assistance Services Transitional housing	202,920	0	88,000	290,920	811,680	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City

Table 61 - Anticipated Resources

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied

The City has received a grant from Enterprise Community Partners for housing rehabilitation activities and the program is being used in concert with existing Community Development programming. Additionally, the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) will participate in some Community Development rehabilitations and demolitions.

In 2019 the City was awarded \$10 MM through the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for targeted investment in the City’s North End. Community Development programming will include investments within the North End to, along with DRI funds, leverage funding from the private sector, area foundations, CDFI’s, and other federal sources.

If appropriate, describe publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan

The City owns a number of blighted properties and vacant parcels that will be utilized in Consolidated Plan implementation. Specifically, publicly owned properties (i) will be demolished where they create a blighting influence, (ii) will be made available to private or non-profit developers for rehabilitation and the creation of affordable housing units, and (iii) will be available to private or non-profit developers for the purpose of land assembly and new construction to create affordable housing units and/or mixed-use developments.

SP-40 Institutional Delivery Structure – 91.215(k)

Explain the institutional structure through which the jurisdiction will carry out its consolidated plan including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions.

The following table lists many of the entities that assist the City of Niagara Falls in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan:

Responsible Entity	Responsible Entity Type	Role	Geographic Area Served
Niagara Falls Housing Authority	Government	Ownership	Jurisdiction
Center City Neighborhood Development Corporation	CHDO	Ownership	Jurisdiction
Housing Opportunities Made Equal	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region
Homeless Alliance of Western New York	Non-profit organization	Homelessness	Region
Belmont Housing Resources for WNY	Non-profit organization	Rental	Region
YWCA of WNY	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region
Community Missions, Inc.	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region
Pinnacle Community Services	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region
Neighborworks Community Partners	Non-profit organization	Rental Ownership Public Services	Region
Heart, Love & Soul	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region
Niagara Healthy Food Alliance	Non-profit organization	Public Services	Region

Table 62 - Institutional Delivery Structure

Assess of Strengths and Gaps in the Institutional Delivery System

The City of Niagara Falls Community Development Dept. has extensive experience managing federally funded projects and has a variety of partner agencies that are accustomed to working with federal funds and coordinating their efforts with the City.

The City is limited in terms of active CHDOs and, due to the shortage of affordable housing, would benefit from experienced CHDOs servicing the area.

Availability of services targeted to homeless persons and persons with HIV and mainstream services

Homelessness Prevention Services	Available in the Community	Targeted to Homeless	Targeted to People with HIV
Homelessness Prevention Services			
Counseling/Advocacy	X	X	X
Legal Assistance	X	X	X
Mortgage Assistance	X	X	X
Rental Assistance	X	X	X
Utilities Assistance	X	X	X
Street Outreach Services			
Law Enforcement	X	X	X
Mobile Clinics	X	X	X
Other Street Outreach Services	X	X	X
Supportive Services			
Alcohol & Drug Abuse	X	X	X
Child Care	X	X	
Education	X	X	X
Employment and Employment Training	X	X	
Healthcare	X	X	X
HIV/AIDS		X	X
Life Skills	X	X	
Mental Health Counseling	X	X	X
Transportation		X	
Other			

Table 63 - Homeless Prevention Services Summary

Describe how the service delivery system including, but not limited to, the services listed above meet the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth)

Homelessness Prevention Services	Description
Counseling/Advocacy	The City and its partners provide counseling and advocacy services that seek to identify the needs of the homeless and link with appropriate treatment and other supports, and assist in finding safe, affordable, permanent housing
Legal Assistance	Legal assistance benefits include a handful of services available to all eligible individuals, whether they qualify for on-going benefits or not. These Legal Assistance benefits cover help with utility shut-offs, back rent, temporary shelter for people who are homeless; and emergency

Homelessness Prevention Services	Description
	housing issues like help with emergency moving and storage costs and help getting a security agreement.
Education	Various organizations in the institutional structure offer educational and vocational training for low-income populations. These programs include GED or certificate programs, specific skill development, resume writing, interview training, and assistance with locating jobs through job boards and referrals.
Employment and Employment Training	Employment assistance and training are provided by Restoration Society, Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities, Workforce Investment Board, Niagara Frontier Vocational Training Center.
HIV/AIDS	The Planned Parenthood of Niagara County Mobile Outreach Unit screens clients for sexually transmitted diseases and other medical needs.
Life Skills	<p>The CASH coalition (Creating Assets Savings and Hope) continues to operate two “Hope Centers” that provide onsite access to financial management counselors, benefits counselors, and help with filing for the earned income tax credit.</p> <p>These additional programs provide financial management intervention, counseling services, advice on budgeting and financial problems, and other life skills. The programs include: Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Buffalo, Catholic Charities, Business and Professional Women of Buffalo, and Cornell Cooperative Extension.</p>

Table 64 - Homeless Prevention Services Description

Describe the strengths and gaps of the service delivery system for special needs population and persons experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, the services listed above

For Special Needs Populations there is a Single Port of Entry process. The Single Port of Entry process is widespread in Niagara County and the City of Niagara Falls and is used by several county departments. The purpose of the Single Point of Entry process is to have one shared record of each individual seeking some form of assistance through City and County programs. The tracking system utilizes a single data input process to obtain basic information on each person that can be used across program or departmental lines. Information is available to indicate what services have been or are being provided and tells service providers what other programs or departments are working with a particular individual. The system is also useful for services provided by organizations that are not part of Municipal government.

Provide a summary of the strategy for overcoming gaps in the institutional structure and service delivery system for carrying out a strategy to address priority needs

The Homeless Alliance of WNY has developed a 10-year plan for improving services to the homeless population. The plan is made up of fourteen goals, and is divided into four sections, Education and Empowerment, Continuum of Care Coordination, Community Supports, and System Change.

The plan highlights the need for wider awareness and use of mainstream resources and existing community services. It advocates educating consumers, service providers, and the local community to empower people to better access the benefits and services for which they or their clients are eligible.

As noted, there are a limited number of CHDOs serving the City. Taking into account the identified demand for additional multi-family affordable units within the City and the limited existing CHDO capacity, there is a need to establish and/or certify new CHDOs and to partner, as needed, to initiate multi-family affordable housing projects.

SP-45 Goals Summary – 91.215(a)(4)

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Repair Sewer Laterals to Residents	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: \$1,500,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
2	Milling and Road Paving	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: \$2,243,880	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
3	Improve Commercial Corridors	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: \$1,000,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
4	Social and Community Programming	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Public Services	CDBG: \$1,300,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
5	Residents Placed in Employment Opportunities	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Business Support & Workforce Development	CDBG: \$200,000	Jobs created/retained
6	Small Business Support Fund – Capital Improvements	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Business Support & Workforce Development	CDBG: \$500,000	Facade treatment/business building rehabilitation
7	Small Business Incentives	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Business Support & Workforce Development	CDBG: \$450,000	Businesses Assisted Jobs created/retained

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
8	Development of New Affordable Housing Units	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$700,000 HOME: \$1,100,000	New Housing Units Developed
9	Single Family Homeownership Initiatives	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$200,000	Homeowners Assisted
10	Targeted Demolition	2020	2024	Clearance and Demolition	City-Wide Target Area	Slum/Blight	CDBG: \$2,500,000	Structures Demolished
11	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$500,000 HOME: \$1,000,000	Homeowners Assisted
12	Homeless Assistance and Prevention	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Homeless Assistance	ESG: \$400,000	Homeless Prevention Persons Assisted
13	Increase % of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing	2020	2024	Homeless	City-Wide Target Area	Rapid Rehousing/Street Outreach	ESG: \$500,000	Homeless Person Overnight Shelter Overnight/Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing Beds added
14	City Park/Public Space Improvement	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Public Space Improvements	CDBG: \$200,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
15	Community Policing	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Community Policing	CDBG: \$50,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit

Table 65 - Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Repair Sewer Laterals to Resident
	Goal Description	Committing funds to assist resident repair or replace broken laterals in order to provide access to quality affordable housing
2	Goal Name	Milling and Road Paving
	Goal Description	Repairing and replacing substandard roads servicing low-income neighborhoods and commercial areas
3	Goal Name	Improve Commercial Corridors
	Goal Description	Improve infrastructure and vehicular access to areas of employment, recreation, and commercial activity located in low-income neighborhoods.
4	Goal Name	Social and Community Programming
	Goal Description	Provide funding to service providers assisting all ages and at-risk populations within the City
5	Goal Name	Residents Placed in Employment Opportunities
	Goal Description	Provide funding for technical assistance, adult and vocational education, and employment placement services
6	Goal Name	Small Business Support Fund – Capital Improvements
	Goal Description	Provide grants for the purpose of exterior repairs to improve the physical appearance of older commercial centers in order to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income people residing in the surrounding neighborhoods by enhancing the appearance of frequently visited retail structures.
7	Goal Name	Small Business Incentives

	Goal Description	Develop and implement Microenterprise fund to assist microenterprise businesses and to complement the Small Business Support Program.
8	Goal Name	Development of New Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Provide financial resources to non-profit groups that seek to develop rental housing for the low-income population
9	Goal Name	Single Family Homeownership Initiatives
	Goal Description	Promote Home Ownership for Low-Moderate Income Households by providing purchase assistance to first-time low-to-moderate income home buyers who purchase an existing house
10	Goal Name	Targeted Demolition
	Goal Description	Undertake targeted demolition and clearance of buildings and land features which contribute to spot blight conditions
11	Goal Name	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation
	Goal Description	Provide funding to eligible property owners for the purposes of rehabilitation
12	Goal Name	Homeless Assistance and Prevention
	Goal Description	Provides housing assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless
13	Goal Name	Increase Percentage of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing
	Goal Description	Rapid Re-housing provides services to homeless individuals through housing search, counseling and legal aid assistance
14	Goal Name	City Park/Public Space Improvement
	Goal Description	Develop, expand, and rehabilitate park, recreation, and open space facilities that serve low/moderate income residents
15	Goal Name	Community Policing

Goal Description	Community Policing events will be supported by CDBG funding in target neighborhoods
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Table 66 - Goal Descriptions

Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing as defined by HOME 91.315(b)(2)

We anticipate that at least 30 renovated units would be made available for extremely low income individuals. The estimated number of low to moderate income families assisted is dependent on participation. The plan's rapid-rehousing and emergency solutions programming will also provide temporary housing opportunities to extremely low income and homeless individuals.

SP-50 Public Housing Accessibility and Involvement – 91.215(c)

Need to Increase the Number of Accessible Units (if Required by a Section 504 Voluntary Compliance Agreement)

Overall, 87 or 9.4 percent of the Authority's 922 units meet Section 504 standards. At least 5 percent of the units in all projects meet Section 504 standards, including 15.5 percent in senior project Spallino Towers and 10.4 percent in senior project Wrobel Towers. There is no further requirement to increase that number.

Activities to Increase Resident Involvements

As described under MA-30, the Authority has a variety of programs and activities involving youth as well the broader residential community of the Authority. These are ongoing programs and activities which will continue going forward, including

- Continue job training efforts in partnership with the NFHA's ATTAIN LAB
- Seek partnerships with public/private entities for social and economic services to residents
- Conduct quarterly public meetings with residents
- Seek additional funding for current youth services program

Is the public housing agency designated as troubled under 24 CFR part 902?

The Housing Authority is not designated as a trouble housing authority.

Plan to remove the 'troubled' designation

Not applicable.

SP-55 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.215(h)

Barriers to Affordable Housing

Major barriers to access to affordable housing identified in the Stakeholder meetings conducted as part of the Consolidated Planning Process include (i) lack of supply, (ii) unaffordable housing costs (new units and rehab), and (iii) lack of available funding (new units and rehab).

Niagara Falls has a very old housing stock with 90% of the homes in the City having been built prior to 1969. The aging housing stock produces health hazards such as exposure to asbestos and lead paint, while increasing the overall costs to maintain a residential unit. High maintenance combined with insufficient supply to meet the increasing demand have led to a disproportionate market for affordable housing. As a result, in 2018 over 55% of Niagara Falls residents were paying 30% or more of their income on housing.

Additionally, much of the public incentive that exists in Western New York is encouraging developers to create market rate residential units. Without heavy subsidies, for-profit developers have shown that they will not pursue the creation of affordable housing units in Niagara Falls.

Strategy to Remove or Ameliorate the Barriers to Affordable Housing

The City of Niagara Falls provides housing rehabilitation funds to assist with the cost burdens associated with an older housing stock suffering from decades of disinvestment and is re-working the program to increase the amount of incentive available per unit in order to bring units up to appropriate Housing Quality Standards without increasing the rental or overhead burden on renters or homeowners.

The City is also working with non-profits developers such as Belmont Housing and Neighborworks to construct new affordable housing units. Specifically, the City is (i) investigating sites for infill development, (ii) making city-owned properties available for rehabilitation or redevelopment, and (iii) making CDBG and HOME funds available to leverage investment in the development of new units. Belmont is currently working on the former Sacred Heart Church and School to create 42 new units with rents at 45% of the median, based on a recent market study.

The City is partnering with the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) to provide housing rehabilitation to create or improve affordable units throughout the City and is exploring the possibility of gifting vacant City-owned properties to NORLIC and Habitat for Humanity for redevelopment.

SP-60 Homelessness Strategy – 91.215(d)

Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs

The Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless is a significant step in the right direction in terms of outreach and needs assessment for homeless individuals and families. Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, as well as Heart and Soul Food Pantry, YWCA Carolyn's House, The Niagara Action Program and Family and Children Services all actively interact with homeless persons. Heart Love and Soul is opening their Daybreak Program in 2020-2021 to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York has identified the concern that there is a greater issue of unsheltered or street homelessness than the data shows. The Continuum of Care cannot fund street outreach, so the City and CoC will be looking at utilizing ESG funding to help identify the true scope of the problem. Additionally, the City and CoC work with the hospital system and Community Missions to identify repeat or chronic homelessness and to identify the needs of unsheltered individuals.

Additionally, the City created an ESG project review panel with the Homelessness Alliance of Western New York to find new and improved ways to increase participation and input. The panel reports to the Mayor and includes HAWNY, Department of Community Development and Niagara County Social Services Department staff. The members of the panel are organizations that do not receive ESG funds via the City of Niagara Falls annual action plan.

Addressing the emergency and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

HAWNY is seeking funding to create additional shelters and beds in Niagara Falls. Currently Pinnacle Community Services, Community Missions Inc, the YWCA, and Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission provide emergency shelter and/or transitional housing for homeless individuals. Additionally, the Niagara County Department of Social Services provides hotel and motel placement to meet emergency shelter and transitional housing needs. The homeless service providers have identified individuals and families fleeing domestic abuse as a significant issue in Niagara County. The YWCA and Pinnacle have shelters specifically designed to create a safe haven for victims of domestic abuse and to match individuals with services needed to gain independence and independent living.

Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again.

The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York secured a \$3.6MM grant for a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Project, whereby Community Missions, Inc. and Pinnacle Community Services will receive funds to combat homelessness in youth or other at-risk populations. Pinnacle will provide

intake services and will assign a caseworker to individuals and families to help meet specific needs including rapid re-housing, securing permanent housing, and being connected with social service providers as appropriate. Pinnacle currently provides homelessness prevention programming that provides skills to individuals in small groups, to help maintain housing. Heart Love and Soul is opening their Daybreak Program in 2020-2021 to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

Help low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families who are likely to become homeless after being discharged from a publicly funded institution or system of care, or who are receiving assistance from public and private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education or youth needs

Niagara County is implementing HUD's Housing First approach and seeing positive results. Housing First is intended to eliminate barriers to permanent housing without preconditions such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. The broader intake is providing meaningful housing solutions without pushing the 'higher-risk' homeless individuals away. Once secure in housing, the focus turns to services and other support within the Continuum of Care. Relatedly, the CoC uses the Single Point of Access mental health referral systems to submit medical, hospitalization, treatment, and housing information to the relevant service providers.

SP-65 Lead based paint Hazards – 91.215(i)

Actions to address LBP hazards and increase access to housing without LBP hazards

The primary source of information for obtaining information and actions to address LBP hazards was contact with a representative of Niagara County Department of Health. Actions include:

NYS Lead Based Paint Prevention Program

This is a core program funded by the State for identification and mitigation of elevated lead paint.

Elevated blood levels (EBL) in children is the most critical issue in dealing with lead-based paint. The State requires the Niagara County Department of Health to respond to all cases with elevated blood levels. Prior to October 1, 2019, the threshold level for EBL referral was EBL of 15 mcg/dl or higher. In 2019, the Niagara County Health Department received and investigated 39 cases in Niagara County, which were at 15 mcg/dl or higher. On average, about two-thirds of the cases are usually within the City of Niagara Falls.

These referrals require case management with a nurse and follow-up referral to primary care physician to resolve the condition.

As of October 1, 2019, the threshold level for EBL referral was lowered by the State to an EBL of 5 mcg/dl or higher. The lower threshold level will no doubt increase the number of the referrals in the future.

Healthy Neighborhood Program

Funded by NYS grant, this program currently receives about \$230,000 per year.

The County Health Department has mapped out and identified high risk Lead-Based Paint areas with the City of Niagara Falls and conducts door-to-door surveys within these areas. Most of the units with LBP hazards present are renter occupied. Particular focus is on housing which have children under the age of 6. In addition to checking for lead-based paint hazards, the inspector also checks for indoor air safety, potential asthma problem and potential unintentional injury hazard. As needed County Health Department provide smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and provide general assessment of healthy living condition.

For renter occupied units, the landlord will be contacted and required to undertake necessary mitigation action to eliminate the lead-based paint hazard.

Lead-Based Paint Hazard Prevention Program

The County Health Department has received a three-year grant of \$2.5 million from HUD for lead-based paint hazard prevention. The County Health Department is in the first year of the program, which is targeted to assist 100 homes within the county over the term of the grant.

This is a direct marketing program as well as a referral program to target low income tenants with children under the age of 6 years old.

Work is contracted out to undertake necessary remediation work. Average cost is about \$15,000 per unit and most will be under \$20,000.

How are the actions listed above related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards?

Funds are used from the City's CDBG program to provide rehabilitation assistance to home owners. Housing occupied by applicants are checked to see if lead-based paint hazards are present and, if so, remediation is required as part of the financial assistance to the property.

How are the actions listed above integrated into housing policies and procedures?

The Niagara County Health Department undertakes various outreach efforts to both publicize potential presence of lead-based paints hazards and offer services to mitigate the hazard problem. The Department has prepared flyers which are well illustrated and easy to read. In terms of more direct outreach, flyers may be left door to door in high risk neighborhoods and mailings where appropriate are sent out by the County Office of Vital Statistics along with birth certificates.

All rehabilitation housing applications submitted to the City of Niagara Falls County Assistance are reviewed for the lead-based paint risk assessment. Compliance includes visual assessments, verbal questioning during the intake and written questions on the application form. All housing cases include a visual assessment for lead-based paint hazards, including peeling, cracking, chipping or flaking paint.

If the unit meets the LBP hazard threshold, the unit is then inspected by an outside contractor specialist to assess the condition in detail and specify remediation action required. Upon completion of remediation, the same contractor performs a clearance inspection.

SP-70 Anti-Poverty Strategy – 91.215(j)

Jurisdiction Goals, Programs and Policies for reducing the number of Poverty-Level Families

The City of Niagara Falls is utilizing a wholistic approach to combat poverty and reduce the number of Poverty-Level Families. Working with partners and service providers, the goal is to improve the economic conditions in the City; remove transportation barriers; improve public safety; reduce housing cost burdens; improve the market value and quality of life in City neighborhoods; provide youth education, childcare, and recreation opportunities; increase access to workforce training and adult education; and revitalize traditional commercial corridors.

How are the Jurisdiction poverty reducing goals, programs, and policies coordinated with this affordable housing plan

Specific programming coordinated with the plan include:

- A funding commitment to businesses either owned by low- and moderate-income individuals or creating employment opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals;
- A funding commitment to provide capital to small business development projects;
- Creation of a small business advocate program to better connect local small businesses with internet based advertising and promotional opportunities;
- A funding commitment to functional job training programs within the City of Niagara Falls with a focus on entry level trades and medical arts employment opportunities;
- A funding commitment to infrastructure improvements in traditional commercial corridors.
- A commitment to the housing renovation consortium between historic (HUD) funding subrecipients;
- A funding commitment to public infrastructure improvements in residential areas;
- A funding commitment to youth programming that focuses on the 12-17 age range;
- A funding commitment to public park improvements, consistent with the adopted Niagara Falls Parks Master Plan;
- A funding commitment to community policing strategies that both increase police visibility and make the police department accessible to residents;
- A commitment to the sale and renovation of City owned vacant houses whenever financially feasible. Sale and renovation of these structures prevent costly demolition and support tax base growth. Current tax foreclosure auctions perpetuate the cycle of disinvestment and unsuitable housing for low-income residents. In addition, these transformations increase the quality of life for surrounding residents; and
- Investment in safety net stakeholders dedicated to rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention.

SP-80 Monitoring – 91.230

Describe the standards and procedures that the jurisdiction will use to monitor activities carried out in furtherance of the plan and will use to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs involved, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements

The following describes the standards and procedures Niagara Falls uses to monitor its housing and community development activities. This ensures long term compliance with program and consolidated plan requirements. All monitoring activities are conducted with oversight from the Mayor's Office.

The Community Development Department is commencing detailed reviews of all subrecipient agreements with the assistance of a technical service consultant for year one. Community Development staff will measure outcomes against the scope and performance measures included within the agreements.

The Community Development Department will support the Continuum of Care efforts to monitor all service providers related to homelessness prevention and mitigation are supporting coordinated entry. The City is in a position to make funding decisions and to support CoC findings with any appropriate enforcement measures.

Additionally, the City will rely on existing monitoring resources such as (i) internal controls including individual draw reviews, annual audit review, and CAPER audit review, and (ii) maintaining Ex-Officio Board membership for participating sub-recipients.

DRAFT

2020 Annual Action Plan



**Community Development Block Grant,
Emergency Solutions Grant, and
HOME Investment Partnership Grant**

City of Niagara Falls

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

In addition to the expected resources for the 2020 Program Year articulated in the table below, the City of Niagara Falls has completed a substantial amendment to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and has recently received CARES funding, creating a unique opportunity to utilize federal resources for maximum impact in the recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	2,385,727	297,254		2,682,981	9,542,908	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City Council.

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
HOME	public - federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership TBRA	458,130		750,000	1,208,130	1,832,520	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City
ESG	public - federal	Conversion and rehab for transitional housing Financial Assistance Overnight shelter Rapid re-housing (rental assistance) Rental Assistance Services Transitional housing	202,920	0	88,000	290,920	811,680	Allocations based on final FFY 2020 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City

Table 67 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied

The City has received a grant from Enterprise Community Partners for housing rehabilitation activities and the program is being used in concert with existing Community Development programming. Additionally, the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) will participate in some Community Development rehabilitations and demolitions.

In 2019 the City was awarded \$10 MM through the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for targeted investment in the City's North End. Community Development programming will include investments within the North End to, along with DRI funds, leverage funding from the private sector, area foundations, CDFI's, and other federal sources.

If appropriate, describe publically owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan

The City owns a number of blighted properties and vacant parcels that will be utilized in Consolidated Plan implementation. Specifically, publicly owned properties (i) will be demolished where they create a blighting influence, (ii) will be made available to private or non-profit developers for rehabilitation and the creation of affordable housing units, and (iii) will be available to private or non-profit developers for the purpose of land assembly and new construction to create affordable housing units and/or mixed-use developments.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Repair Sewer Laterals to Residents	2020	2021	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: \$500,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
2	Milling and Road Paving	2020	2021	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: \$508,776	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
3	Small Business Support Fund – Capital Improvements	2020	2021	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Business Support & Workforce Development	CDBG: \$100,000	Facade treatment/business building rehabilitation
4	Development of New Affordable Housing Units	2020	2021	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	HOME: \$366,556	New Housing Units Developed
5	Targeted Demolition	2020	2021	Clearance and Demolition	City-Wide Target Area	Slum/Blight	CDBG: \$700,000	Structures Demolished

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
6	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation	2020	2021	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$100,000 HOME: \$200,000	Homeowners Assisted
7	Homeless Assistance and Prevention	2020	2021	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Homeless Assistance	ESG: \$87,701	Homeless Prevention Persons Assisted
8	Increase % of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing	2020	2021	Homeless	City-Wide Target Area	Rapid Rehousing/Street Outreach	ESG: \$100,000	Homeless Person Overnight Shelter Overnight/Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing Beds added

Table 68 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Repair Sewer Laterals to Resident
	Goal Description	Committing funds to assist resident repair or replace broken laterals in order to provide access to quality affordable housing
2	Goal Name	Milling and Road Paving
	Goal Description	Repairing and replacing substandard roads servicing low-income neighborhoods and commercial areas
3	Goal Name	Small Business Support Fund – Capital Improvements

	Goal Description	Provide grants for the purpose of exterior repairs to improve the physical appearance of older commercial centers in order to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income people residing in the surrounding neighborhoods by enhancing the appearance of frequently visited retail structures.
4	Goal Name	Development of New Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Provide financial resources to non-profit groups that seek to develop rental housing for the low-income population
5	Goal Name	Targeted Demolition
	Goal Description	Undertake targeted demolition and clearance of buildings and land features which contribute to spot blight conditions
6	Goal Name	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation
	Goal Description	Provide funding to eligible property owners for the purposes of rehabilitation
7	Goal Name	Homeless Assistance and Prevention
	Goal Description	Provides housing assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless
8	Goal Name	Increase Percentage of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing
	Goal Description	Rapid Re-housing provides services to homeless individuals through housing search, counseling and legal aid assistance

Table 69 – Goals Descriptions

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Projects

#	Project Name
1	Owner Occupied Rehabilitation
2	Small Business Support Fund
3	Sewer Lateral Repair for Owner Occupied Homes
4	Main St, DRI, Third St, Pine Ave Initiatives
5	Workforce Development Funding
6	Milling and Road Paving
7	Neighborworks (NHS) Single Family Homeownership Initiative
8	Habitat for Humanity CHDO
9	Support for YWCA
10	Support for Heart Love & Soul
11	Pinnacle Homeless Youth Counseling
12	Funding for Neighborhood Legal Services
13	Program Administration
14	HOME Administration

Table 70 - Projects

AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)

Description of the geographic areas of the entitlement (including areas of low-income and minority concentration) where assistance will be directed

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
City-Wide Target Area	100

Table 71 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

City-Wide Target Area: Since this program is to benefit low-moderate income persons, geography is not a factor in this target area.

Niagara Falls Community Development Area: Funds will go towards addressing deteriorated properties to alleviate conditions set forth in 24 CFR 570.208(b) through residential and commercial rehabilitation programs.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls will advance affordable housing by providing closing cost assistance and rehabilitation deferred loans to low to moderate income households. The City of Niagara Falls will also provide housing to homeless or at-risk of homelessness families through rapid re-housing and homeless prevention grants to homeless service agencies.

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls collaborates with the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) to encourage public housing improvements and public housing resident involvement.

The City of Niagara Falls also manages a Section 8 program that supports Housing Choice Vouchers, Project Based Vouchers, and Homeownership programs.

The City of Niagara Falls 2020-2024 Strategic Plan supports the NFHA and City of Niagara Falls PHA Plans through expanding the supply of decent, affordable housing in Niagara Falls through use of CDBG and HOME funds. The Housing Choice Voucher program provides residents with housing choice, which is a way to deconcentrate areas of poverty. The City of Niagara Falls also funds youth services directed primarily towards NFHA residents.

Actions planned during the next year to address the needs to public housing

The City of Niagara Falls will work with the Niagara Falls Housing Collaborative, comprised of NFNHS and CCNDC, using CHDO funds to renovate rental units for the purpose of Project Based Vouchers.

The City of Niagara Falls will also work with Belmont Housing for an adaptive re-use project that will convert an unused private school into mixed income housing that will also provide rental units for the purpose of Project Based Vouchers.

Actions to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership

The City of Niagara Falls will market its Family Self-Sufficiency program to its current clients as well as

new clients expected through an opening of the Leased Housing Waiting List.

The City of Niagara Falls will market its closing cost assistance grant and home ownership auction programs to residents of NFHA public housing.

If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance

Neither PHAs in Niagara Falls are designated as troubled at this time.

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to serving the needs of the homeless and at-risk of homelessness populations in Niagara Falls. The 2020 Annual Action Plan program year will serve as a means to increase understanding of the needs, create baseline data to measure against future years, and to develop strategies and best practices in serving homeless and at-risk of homelessness populations in a more pro-active fashion.

Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including

Goal: Improve Coordinated Entry Implementation in Niagara Falls

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls is working with HAWNY to develop a more pro-active Coordinated Entry approach that puts more resources towards street outreach and assessment. The City of Niagara Falls, the CoC, and other service agencies will work together to secure additional sources of funding for street outreach and assessment.

Goal: Create Performance Metrics and Standards Based on Need and Capacity

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls is working with HAWNY to develop goals, metrics, and strategies to address emergency shelter and transitional housing needs in Niagara Falls. The City of Niagara Falls routinely checks HMIS data and HAWNY quarterly performance reports to determine the need of emergency shelter and transitional housing needs in Niagara Falls. The work on improving Coordinated Entry will also address the needs of homeless or at-risk of homelessness persons that would typically use emergency shelter or transitional housing but may be better served through other programs or services.

Goal: Reduce Shelter Stays at ESG-funded Shelters

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls will work closely with ESG-funded Shelter subrecipients and HAWNY to

develop a strategy to reduce shelter stays in Niagara Falls. The Rolling 12-Month Performance Report for the CoC 1/1/2018-12/31/2018 will be used as the benchmark metric for shelter stay reductions. The City of Niagara Falls will work with ESG-funded Shelter subrecipients to increase efficiencies and creating partnerships with other service organizations that may help alleviate or reduce the need to stay in shelters. The City of Niagara Falls will work with HAWNY to track performance and seek additional technical assistance in increasing efficiencies and partnerships with other service organizations.

Goal: Develop an empirical risk model and a strategy to guide service providers in providing pro-active aid to families at-risk of homelessness.

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls, in collaboration with HAWNY, will research and develop an empirical risk model for families at-risk of homelessness and a strategy to reach families at-risk of homelessness before need of homeless services such as shelter or rapid-rehousing. Once developed, the City of Niagara Falls will work with service providers and other partner organizations to implement the strategy and create baseline data to inform performance tracking going forward.

Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs

The Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless is a significant step in the right direction in terms of outreach and needs assessment for homeless individuals and families. Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, as well as Heart and Soul Food Pantry, YWCA Carolyn's House, The Niagara Action Program and Family and Children Services all actively interact with homeless persons. Heart Love and Soul is opening their Daybreak Program in 2020-2021 to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York has identified the concern that there is a greater issue of unsheltered or street homelessness than the data shows. The Continuum of Care cannot fund street outreach, so the City and CoC will be looking at utilizing ESG funding to help identify the true scope of the problem. Additionally, the City and CoC work with the hospital system and Community Missions to identify repeat or chronic homelessness and to identify the needs of unsheltered individuals.

Additionally, the City created an ESG project review panel with the Homelessness Alliance of Western New York to find new and improved ways to increase participation and input. The panel reports to the Mayor and includes HAWNY, Department of Community Development and Niagara County Social Services Department staff. The members of the panel are organizations that do not receive ESG funds via the City of Niagara Falls annual action plan.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

HAWNY is seeking funding to create additional shelters and beds in Niagara Falls. Currently Pinnacle Community Services, Community Missions Inc, the YWCA, and Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission provide emergency shelter and/or transitional housing for homeless individuals. Additionally, the Niagara

County Department of Social Services provides hotel and motel placement to meet emergency shelter and transitional housing needs. The homeless service providers have identified individuals and families fleeing domestic abuse as a significant issue in Niagara County. The YWCA and Pinnacle have shelters specifically designed to create a safe haven for victims of domestic abuse and to match individuals with services needed to gain independence and independent living.

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The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York secured a \$3.6MM grant for a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Project, whereby Community Missions, Inc. and Pinnacle Community Services will receive funds to combat homelessness in youth or other at-risk populations. Pinnacle will provide intake services and will assign a caseworker to individuals and families to help meet specific needs including rapid re-housing, securing permanent housing, and being connected with social service providers as appropriate. Pinnacle currently provides homelessness prevention programming that provides skills to individuals in small groups, to help maintain housing. Heart Love and Soul is opening their Daybreak Program in 2020-2021 to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); or, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs

Niagara County is implementing HUD's Housing First approach and seeing positive results. Housing First is intended to eliminate barriers to permanent housing without preconditions such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. The broader intake is providing meaningful housing solutions without pushing the 'higher-risk' homeless individuals away. Once secure in housing, the focus turns to services and other support within the Continuum of Care. Relatedly, the CoC uses the Single Point of Access mental health referral systems to submit medical, hospitalization, treatment, and housing information to the relevant service providers.

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.220(j)

Introduction:

Actions it planned to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment

The City of Niagara Falls provides housing rehabilitation funds to assist with the cost burdens associated with an older housing stock suffering from decades of disinvestment and is re-working the program to increase the amount of incentive available per unit in order to bring units up to appropriate Housing Quality Standards without increasing the rental or overhead burden on renters or homeowners.

The City is also working with non-profits developers such as Belmont Housing and Neighborworks to construct new affordable housing units. Specifically, the City is (i) investigating sites for infill development, (ii) making city-owned properties available for rehabilitation or redevelopment, and (iii) making CDBG and HOME funds available to leverage investment in the development of new units. Belmont is currently working on the former Sacred Heart Church and School to create 42 new units with rents at 45% of the median, based on a recent market study.

The City is partnering with the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) to provide housing rehabilitation to create or improve affordable units throughout the City and is exploring the possibility of gifting vacant City-owned properties to NORLIC and Habitat for Humanity for redevelopment.

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

The City of Niagara Falls plans to increase its role in strategic planning and fostering collaboration among various service agencies in Niagara Falls and the region to better serve the residents of Niagara Falls and to reduce duplicative programs that give rise to inefficiency in service to residents.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The City of Niagara Falls will conduct a needs assessment and market analysis for its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan during the 2019 Annual Action Plan program year. This needs assessment and market analysis will identify obstacles to meeting underserved needs and a strategy to address obstacles will be developed,

adopted, and implemented.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

The City of Niagara Falls will continue to offer a home ownership auction of City-owned residential properties. The City of Niagara Falls will also create more Project Based Voucher rental units to match the need of current and new Section 8 clients.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

The City of Niagara Falls will work closely with the Niagara County Department of Health to address homes that are found to have lead-based paint hazards through both City and County-led programs.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The City of Niagara Falls will work with the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) and other partner organizations to reduce the number of poverty-level families by addressing root causes of poverty and developing strategies and initiatives to sustain poverty reduction programs and collaboration.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The City of Niagara Falls will continue to develop institutional structure by creating standard operating procedures, re-evaluating current plans and policies, and attending appropriate trainings for staff to gain a mastery over administering HUD CPD programs.

Actions planned to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies

The City of Niagara Falls will study the best use of social service agencies' programs for public and private housing agencies and create the discussion to link these programs more closely to serve the housing needs of residents.