

Executive Summary

ES-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

The U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) requires entitlement communities like the City of Woonsocket to develop a Five-Year Consolidated Plan for the allocation of federal housing and community development funds. Initiated by HUD in 1995, the Consolidated Plan identifies housing and community development needs and priorities and strategies to address them. It is both a five-year plan of action and the City's application for funds from three formula block grant programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG).

The 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan is Woonsocket's strategic plan and guidance document for allocating federal funds and leveraging other resources in order to improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income people. Woonsocket has conducted a series of community conversations and other forms of public consultation in order to develop this Consolidated Plan. The City's priorities – Safe and Affordable Housing, Ending Chronic Homelessness, Economic Development, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Social Welfare – are consistent with HUD's priorities of Decent Housing, Economic Opportunities, and Suitable Living Environment.

HUD requires the City to complete two annual reports. First, Woonsocket prepares an Annual Action Plan that describes the City's proposed allocation of funds for the coming year. Each annual allocation plan must be consistent with the Consolidated Plan. The first-year Annual Action Plan for the 2020-2024 period is included in this Consolidated Plan. The second report is the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), which documents the City's federal fund expenditures and program accomplishments, and tracks the City's progress toward the goals described in the Consolidated Plan.

The City is periodically required to examine barriers to fair housing choice and develop a plan to mitigate them. As part of Rhode Island's statewide planning efforts under the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant, the State is currently preparing a Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) as an umbrella plan for all communities. It will eventually replace and update the City's existing AI. Once the new Regional AI is complete, Woonsocket will supplement this information with additional City-specific barriers.

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

The City of Woonsocket’s housing and non-housing community development needs were identified through a series of “community conversation” meetings, interviews with local housing and community development organizations and social service agencies, analysis of data from local, regional, state, and federal agencies as well as nonprofit organizations, and a variety of other sources, both statistical and anecdotal. It is important to note that the City maintains continuous contact with local community development organizations, many of which are involved formally or informally as the City’s partners for various community and economic development initiatives. Those contacts have helped to inform the needs assessment, too, regardless of whether the organizations directly participated in the consultation process for this Plan.

3. Evaluation of past performance

The City of Woonsocket is responsible for ensuring the compliance with all CDBG, HOME, and ESG regulations for activities directly administered by the City and activities carried out by subrecipients. The Annual Action Plans and CAPERs provide the specifics of projects and programs undertaken by the City. During the prior Consolidated Plan period (2015-2019), Woonsocket successfully invested federal and other resources to address priority needs and achieve anticipated outcomes. With CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds, the City has made a significant impact on the quality of life for Woonsocket residents and the vitality of the City’s base of small businesses.

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The Planning and Development Department (PDD) implemented a broad-based approach to encouraging participation by citizens and other stakeholders. Citizen participation efforts included two public hearings, several topic-oriented “community conversation” meetings open to the public, and two days of intensive interviews with housing and social service providers as well as City staff.

5. Summary of public comments

A summary of public comments is found within the Process Chapter, Section PR-15. In general, public comments focused on the critical housing needs – housing quality, affordability, and homeownership; homelessness; needs for family and youth services and help for victims of domestic violence; public

safety; economic development, especially job training and job placement supports; and continued efforts to improve the City's infrastructure and public facilities.

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

All comments were considered and accepted except for suggested activities that are ineligible for CDBG or HOME assistance or which otherwise fell outside the scope of a Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

7. Summary

This Five-Year Consolidated Plan is the outcome of a comprehensive effort to identify community needs and effective investment strategies to meet those needs. The City of Woonsocket has crafted a detailed strategic plan to achieve desired outcomes in each of their priority areas of decent housing, economic opportunities, and suitable living environments.

The Process

PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies 24 CFR 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	WOONSOCKET	Planning and Development
HOME Administrator	WOONSOCKET	Planning and Development
ESG Administrator	WOONSOCKET	Planning and Development

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative

As in the past, the Woonsocket Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has taken the lead in developing the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The DPD administers the City’s CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs and oversees planning, economic development, community development, housing, emergency shelter, and lead paint programs. Due to the DPD’s experience in community development, the staff is familiar with the public and private agencies that have a role to play in housing and community development in Woonsocket. The DPD will also act as one of several public and private agencies that will administer programs and activities under the plan. The City is a member of the Consolidated Homeless Fund Partnership (with the state of Rhode Island and the Cities of Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket) under the HEARTH Act and a member of the State of Rhode Island Continuum of Care.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

Department of Planning & Development

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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 DPD maintains a long-standing relationship with many agencies and organizations within the City that have knowledge of the housing needs, of the City's population and clients they serve. They also have knowledge of the City's economic development needs. Additionally, they have demonstrated a concern for the human service needs of the City's low-income population. Other major agencies and organizations involved in consolidated planning, program selection, and/or program delivery and oversight included public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services; local businesses; State or local health and child welfare agencies; adjacent units of general local government, including local government agencies with metropolitan-wide planning responsibilities, particularly for problems and solutions that go beyond a single jurisdiction, i.e. transportation, workforce development, economic development; and the public housing authority.

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 DPD maintains a long-standing relationship with many agencies and organizations within the City that have knowledge of the housing needs, of the City's population and clients they serve. They also have knowledge of the City's economic development needs. Additionally, they have demonstrated a concern for the human service needs of the City's low-income population. Other major agencies and organizations involved in consolidated planning, program selection, and/or program delivery and oversight included public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services; local businesses; State or local health and child welfare agencies; adjacent units of general local government, including local government agencies with metropolitan-wide planning responsibilities, particularly for problems and solutions that go beyond a single jurisdiction, i.e. transportation, workforce development, economic development; and the public housing authority.

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 Woonsocket is a member of the State of Rhode Island Continuum of Care (RI CoC) and Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) Partnership, which guides the state's programs to address the needs

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of the homeless population. The CHF has brought together various resources available to support homelessness programs into a single, coordinated effort. The CHF Partnership includes Woonsocket, Pawtucket, Providence, and State of Rhode Island Emergency Solutions Grants, Title XX Shelter/Homeless Service Funds, and Housing Resource Commission Shelter/Homeless Service Funds.

The purpose of the RICOc and CHF is to deliver a continuum of programs and services to reduce the number of homeless individuals and families in Rhode Island. Woonsocket's ESG funds support that effort by funding agencies and activities in Woonsocket that are aligned with the coordinated statewide strategy. The RICOc and CHF support activities that assist homeless populations and people at-risk of homelessness and determine funding priorities based on the needs of various population groups such as the chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth.

Woonsocket supports the goals of "Opening Doors Rhode Island: Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness," the state plan that shares the vision of "Opening Doors, the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness." The vision is that no one should experience homelessness and no one should be without a stable, safe place to call home.

Rhode Island is one of five states that joined the Zero: 2016 campaign with a goal of housing the chronic and veteran homeless by 2016. The City of Woonsocket supports this effort and participates through its partnership and engagement with the CHF and RI CoC.

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 Woonsocket DPD frequently meets with the RI CoC and the CHF to discuss funding. As a member of the RI CoC and CHF, the City works to align Woonsocket's ESG funds to meet the needs of the homeless population through a coordinated strategy. All partner organizations and agencies collaborate to evaluate programs and use a consistent set of performance standards and evaluation criteria to score programs.

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The Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless (RICH) is the lead agency for the policies, procedures, and maintenance of the HMIS system.

2. Describe Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and describe the jurisdictions consultations with housing, social service agencies and other entities

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

1	Agency/Group/Organization	Community Care Alliance
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-Persons with HIV/AIDS Services-homeless Services-Health Services-Education Services-Employment Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Anti-poverty Strategy
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
2	Agency/Group/Organization	HARVEST COMMUNITY CHURCH
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-homeless Services-Employment Faith Based Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.

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3	Agency/Group/Organization	SOJOURNER HOUSE
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Victims of Domestic Violence Services-homeless Services-Health Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
4	Agency/Group/Organization	Haven of Grace
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-Victims of Domestic Violence Services-homeless Services-Health Services-Education Services-Employment Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.

5	Agency/Group/Organization	YWCA RI
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-Victims of Domestic Violence Services-Health Services-Education Services-Employment Foundation
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Families with children Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy Education
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
6	Agency/Group/Organization	WOONSOCKET HEAD START
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Children Services-Health Services-Education Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Anti-poverty Strategy
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
7	Agency/Group/Organization	RiverzEdge Arts
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Children Services-Education Services-Employment Neighborhood Organization

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	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Education/Arts
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
8	Agency/Group/Organization	STADIUM THEATRE
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Education Business and Civic Leaders Arts Non-Profit Major Employer Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Performing Arts
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
9	Agency/Group/Organization	Blackstone Valley National Heritage Commission
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Agency - Management of Public Land or Water Resources Other government - Federal Regional organization Planning organization Business and Civic Leaders Community Preservation Major Employer Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Heritage Preservation

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	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
10	Agency/Group/Organization	Community College of Rhode Island
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Education Services-Employment Other government - State Regional organization Business and Civic Leaders Major Employer Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Education
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
11	Agency/Group/Organization	RHODE ISLAND HOUSING
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-homeless Service-Fair Housing Other government - State Civic Leaders Community Development Financial Institution Neighborhood Organization

	<p>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</p>	<p>Housing Need Assessment Lead-based Paint Strategy Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Non-Homeless Special Needs Economic Development Market Analysis Anti-poverty Strategy</p>
	<p>How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</p>	<p>Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Agency/Group/Organization</p>	<p>Housing Works @ RWU</p>
	<p>Agency/Group/Organization Type</p>	<p>Housing Service-Fair Housing Planning organization Civic Leaders Neighborhood Organization</p>
	<p>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</p>	<p>Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Economic Development Market Analysis Anti-poverty Strategy</p>
	<p>How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</p>	<p>Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.</p>

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13	Agency/Group/Organization	United Way of RI
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-Persons with HIV/AIDS Services-Victims of Domestic Violence Regional organization Planning organization Business and Civic Leaders Foundation Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Non-Homeless Special Needs Economic Development
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
14	Agency/Group/Organization	Citizens Bank
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Regional organization Business Leaders Economic Development Private Sector Banking / Financing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Economic Development Market Analysis

	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
15	Agency/Group/Organization	St Joseph Church
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Faith Based Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Non-Homeless Special Needs Anti-poverty Strategy
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
16	Agency/Group/Organization	Woonsocket Police Department
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Agency - Emergency Management Other government - Local City Department Grantee Department
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homelessness Strategy Anti-poverty Strategy Community Policing/Outreach
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
17	Agency/Group/Organization	Woonsocket Fire Department
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Agency - Emergency Management Other government - Local City Department Grantee Department

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	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Public Safety
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
18	Agency/Group/Organization	Woonsocket Housing Authority
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing PHA Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Other government - Federal Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Anti-poverty Strategy
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
19	Agency/Group/Organization	Department of Public Works
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Agency - Emergency Management Other government - Local Public Facilities Grantee Department
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Public Facilities

	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
20	Agency/Group/Organization	Woonsocket City Clerk
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local Liason to the Public Grantee Department
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Liason to the Public
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Agency participated in Community Conversation in December 2019 and January 2020; provided information in response to the Consolidated/Annual Action Plan NOFA; also participated in extended interview in January 2020. Discussed needs for stronger coordination of area social service providers.
21	Agency/Group/Organization	Rhode Island Office of Innovation
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Broadband Internet Service Providers Services - Narrowing the Digital Divide Other government - State Regional organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Anti-poverty Strategy Non-Housing Community Development Needs
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Consultation involved the resources available for broadband and wireless connectivity in the state for low-income residents as well as the state's Digital Equity Initiative.

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

All applicable agencies have been consulted.

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?
Continuum of Care	State of Rhode Island	The City works with the State, RI Housing, the City's of Providence & Pawtucket along with social services agencies to create strategies pertaining to homelessness.
Woonsocket Comprehensive Plan 2012	Department of Planning	The Comprehensive Plan is Woonsocket's overarching policy framework for land use, housing, economic development, and place-based planning. Throughout, it has been used as a guide for development of the Consolidated Plan.
WHA 5 year Plan 2020	Woonsocket Housing Authority	The Woonsocket Housing Authority recently completed a 5-Year Plan and Annual Plan with six goals and a needs assessment. The Plan is consistent with Woonsocket's Consolidated Plan.
Rhode Island Rising	Office of State Planning Division	This new statewide economic development plan articulates Rhode Island's goals and policies for economic development and sustainability. The plans focus on workforce development and targeting opportunities to underserved populations provide an important context for the City's Consolidated Plan.
2019 Housing Fact Book	Housing Works RI	The City reviewed and incorporated into this Consolidated Plan relevant data from Housing Works RI's City and Town Profiles.
2019 RI Kids Count Fact Book	RI Kids Count	The City reviewed and incorporated into this Consolidated Plan relevant data from RI Kids Count.
Ri Enterprise Renewal Application	NRI Economic Development Partnership Inc.	This plan provides information about Woonsocket's economy and economic development needs and opportunities. The City uses CDBG funds for small business loans.

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Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Woonsocket Main Street Livability Plan 2013	Department of Planning	This award-winning plan promotes downtown revitalization and economic development, both of which are important community development objectives in Woonsocket. The plan identifies opportunities for reuse of vacant downtown buildings and to improve downtown circulation and parking, including pedestrian and bicycle accommodation. In 2013, APA-Rhode Island recognized Woonsocket's Main Street Plan as an exemplary neighborhood planning effort.
Woonsocket capital Improvement Plan	Department of Planning	This Plan identifies capital improvement needs of all City Departments, including needs eligible for CDBG funding (low- and moderate-income area benefit, limited clientele benefit), e.g., street and sidewalk reconstruction, fire safety apparatus. The CIP helps to inform the rating and ranking of CDBG funding requests.
Workforce Board Biennial Employment Plan	RI Governors Workforce Board	This Plan can help to guide the City's economic development investments to benefit low- and moderate-income residents in the labor force.
NeighborWorks Strategic Plan	Neighborworks Blackstone River Valley	This Plan contains useful information about the CHDO's goals and strategies and is a useful guide for the City's thinking about its own approach to matching services with affordable and supportive housing. The plan includes a specific focus on Woonsocket's neighborhood revitalization needs.
Opening Doors RI Strategic Plan to Prevent Homeless	RI Housing ResourceCommission	Woonsocket coordinates its ESG funds with the RI CoC and CHF to address homelessness in Woonsocket and throughout Rhode Island. The City advocates for reduced use of shelters and transitional housing and favors a more holistic approach to prevention, rapid response, and services.
Woonsocket Opportunity Zones	Department of Planning and the Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket	This plan identifies the scattered site redevelopment areas in the City and the suggested goals and strategies for their redevelopment, all of which support neighborhood revitalization and blight remediation.

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Connecting Our Heritage: wayfinding Master Plan	Department of Planning	This plan also promotes downtown revitalization and economic development. It identifies signage improvements to strengthen tourism and improve connectivity between the Blackstone River and downtown businesses.

Table 3 – 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(I))

The Planning and Development Department reached out to all City Departments to inform them about the planning process for the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. These departments include the Building Official, City Clerk, Engineering/Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department, Woonsocket Housing Authority, Human Services Director, Recreation, Redevelopment Agency (staffed by the Planning and Development Department), School Department, Woonsocket Prevention Coalition and others. Collaboration among City staff is routine in Woonsocket and supported by both regular and as-needed department head and staff meetings. Although many City departments do not receive funding under the Consolidated Plan, their knowledge of Woonsocket will continue to inform the City’s thinking about targeting community development resources.

Narrative (optional):

On December 19, 2019, the DPD initiated a formal consultation process with other City Departments, nonprofit housing and social service agencies, state agencies, and the general public to discuss Woonsocket’s short-term and long-term housing and community development needs. The initial consultation process included a public meeting on December 19, 2019 and four “community conversation” meetings and a public hearing on the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan and the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the 2020-2024 Action Plan. The “community conversation” meetings were organized around the following topics:

January 7, 2020 Housing

January 9, 2020 Public/Social Services

January 14, 2020 Economic Development

January 16, 2020 Infrastructure and Public Facilities

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The Deputy Director of H & CD conducted face-to-face interviews and phone consultations with groups that had not participated in the “community conversation” meetings. The purpose of this outreach was to locate data and seek input about Woonsocket’s needs, housing market, and potential strategies to address the needs of low- and moderate-income residents. It is important to note that the City’s efforts to consult with other agencies and organizations about housing and community development needs are not limited to the formal meetings and scheduled interviews. The DPD has always maintained relationships with community organizations and regularly communicates with many of them. Because of these well-established relationships and ongoing communication, some organizations that work in housing and community development do not attend events for the Consolidated Plan. Their perspectives are nevertheless considered and, wherever appropriate, considered when the Consolidated Plan is developed.

PR-15 Citizen Participation – 91.105, 91.115, 91.200(c) and 91.300(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 Woonsocket implemented its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) to provide for and encourage citizen participation in developing the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and One-Year Action Plan. The City has continued to make reasonable efforts to encourage all residents and interested groups to participate during the plan development process. Efforts included public hearings, public meetings, community needs survey, direct contact to community partners and residents, and public notice of these efforts. **Citizens and representatives of participating agency were invited to participate in the initial kick-off meeting to share questions and answers. Everyone was invited back to participate in 4 separate meetings that focused on Housing, Public Services, Economic Development and Infrastructure/Neighborhood Improvements. During this time the CDBG Advisory Board was appointed by the Mayor. The Advisory Board held four (4) meetings along with a Public Hearing. The Public Comment period started on June 18, 2020 and end on July 21, 2020. There was an additional Public Hearing held on August 21, 2020 and the public comment period went from August 20 to August 25, 2020. The second public hearing was to allow the public to comment on changes to the proposed Annual Action Plan. There was no public comment submitted to the City.**

The City has presented ideas and past activities (projects) along with hand outs that describes the Consolidated Plan, background information about community concerns identified in outreach for previous Consolidated Plans, examples of eligible activities, what “national objective” means, and how the City decides which activities to include in each Annual Action Plan. Discussions with citizens centered on whether past goals and objectives remain relevant to conditions today and whether the City’s priorities have changed. It became clear that Woonsocket continues to wrestle with poverty, drug abuse, alcoholism, crime, domestic violence, prostitution, homelessness, and substandard housing. Since the scope of these problems far exceeds the resources available to combat them, the City had to set priorities.

The City encouraged attendees at the public meeting(s)/hearings and community conversation meetings to ask questions about the presentation and the City’s investment of HUD funds and other grants. Participants were asked to comment on what the City’s next five-year priorities should be, and what they wanted to see in Woonsocket. This provided the City with guidance on the areas of need and where to allocate resources to service those needs. Participants expressed strong support for job creation activities (especially creation of living wage jobs), reducing vacancies on Main Street, and homeownership incentives and supports. The first public meeting was held on December 19, 2019 in City Hall. The Public Hearing was held on June 30, 2020 via ZOOM. This was followed by a presentation to the Woonsocket City Council on Monday July 13,

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2020. The public was afforded another opportunity to share comments during the Good & Welfare portion of the City Council meeting. There was **no Public comment** made about the content of the Comprehensive Plan.

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	URL (If applicable)
1	Public Meeting	Minorities Persons with disabilities Non-targeted/broad community Residents of Public and Assisted Housing	An Advertisement was published in the Woonsocket Call for the initial meeting in December. Non-profit/community partners posted notices for the 4 community forums that were held in January 2020. General questions about the city's direction for the next 5 years. Staff of non-profits participated with residents	No comments were received	N/A	

Demo

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
2	Public Meeting	Minorities Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish Persons with disabilities Non-targeted/broad community Residents of Public and Assisted Housing Business Leaders	The Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB) was supposed to have their first meeting on March 19, 2020. Because of the Corona-19 virus outbreak the meeting was postponed and will be rescheduled. This initial meeting was posted on the RI Secretary of States web-site. There has been 4 meetings that have taken place (May 7, 14, 21, & June 4). the City held meetings and through tele-conferencing (ZOOM).	No comments have been received at this time	N/A	

Demo

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
3	Public Hearing	Minorities Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish Persons with disabilities Non-targeted/broad community Residents of Public and Assisted Housing City of Woonsocket	The second Public Hearing is scheduled for June 30, 2020. The public hearing has been advertised in the Valley Breeze and will be televised through ZOOM. A final time for the public to participate will be at the July 13, 2020 City Council meeting.	There are no comments to date	N/A	

Demo

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
4	Internet Outreach	Non-targeted/broad community Non-profits	Members of the non-profit community attending the initial public meeting in December 2019 and the four (4) community forums in January 2020. All CDAB meetings were posted on the city's web-site.	no comments received	N/A	

Demo

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
5	<p>Surveys given by non-profits</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Consolidated Plan</p>	<p>Minorities</p> <p>Non-English Speaking - Specify other language: Spanish</p> <p>Persons with disabilities</p> <p>Residents of Public and Assisted Housing</p> <p>Residents receiving services from social service providers</p>	<p>No Attendance required</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WOONSOCKET</p>	<p>Participants supported programs to create safe, decent affordable housing and funding for homelessness programs, economic development (job creation and entrepreneurship), and coordinated service delivery. City has poor reputation and serious financial problems; need to focus on schools and programs for youth; housing rehab important for residents and part of larger strategy to beautify Woonsocket; reduce or eliminate public services for immigrants.</p>	<p>Comments about housing rehab and youth programs considered; other ideas ineligible for CDBG or HOME funds.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29</p>	

Demo

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Needs Assessment

NA-05 Overview

Needs Assessment Overview

This section presents Woonsocket’s projected housing needs for the five-year period beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2025. In most cases, the data used to develop Woonsocket’s Needs Assessment come from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) and HUD’s 2012-2016 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data. While the numbers from the 2013-2017 ACS & 2012-2016 CHAS are not the same, the statistics supported by these sources present a consistent picture of needs in Woonsocket.

Woonsocket’s housing needs are pervasive across low- and very-low-income populations and all races as well. The City has some census block groups with higher concentrations of minorities and low-income people, Woonsocket is home to families and individuals priced out of the market in all of the nearby towns in northern Rhode Island. Needs have been determined through data analysis and consultations with housing providers and advocacy organizations in Woonsocket. The City intends to address the needs outlined in this section with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds.

Woonsocket’s **2017** population estimate is 41,186, including 9,175 racial and ethnic minorities (22.8 percent). The City’s population is concentrated in the neighborhoods oriented toward the Blackstone River, where immigrants first settled in Woonsocket to work in the mills. The majority of Woonsocket’s multifamily residences can be found in these neighborhoods along with most of the City’s vacant units. These are also the same neighborhoods that provide relatively affordable housing to extremely-low-income and very-low-income residents and also have the highest percentages of unaffordably housed people.

Housing and Homelessness Needs:

- Improving existing substandard housing to provide safe, decent, sanitary, affordable units for people at all market levels. “Substandard housing” means dwelling units that do not meet the Rhode Island Maintenance and Occupancy Code Standards or the Minimum Housing Code for the municipality in which the units are located. “Substandard Condition but Suitable for Rehabilitation” means dwelling units that do not meet standard condition but are both financial and structurally feasible for rehabilitation.
- Promoting construction of market-rate homeownership and rental units in order to achieve both economic diversity and income parity.
- Increasing the number of affordable units for low-income and minority residents, reducing the incidence of housing cost burden and disproportionate needs.

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- Maintaining and increasing support for permanent and supportive housing for homeless individuals and families, and people with special needs.

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

Summary of Housing Needs

Demographics	Base Year: 2009	Most Recent Year: 2015	% Change
Population	41,186	41,215	0%
Households	17,162	17,325	1%
Median Income	\$41,001.00	\$36,420.00	-11%

Table 5 - Housing Needs Assessment Demographics

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

Number of Households Table

	0-30% HAMFI	>30-50% HAMFI	>50-80% HAMFI	>80-100% HAMFI	>100% HAMFI
Total Households	4,600	2,640	3,250	1,440	5,390
Small Family Households	1,395	895	1,140	610	2,830
Large Family Households	285	230	145	55	315
Household contains at least one person 62-74 years of age	780	510	565	275	955
Household contains at least one person age 75 or older	690	550	345	125	300
Households with one or more children 6 years old or younger	980	485	500	184	469

Table 6 - 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	160	25	15	0	200	0	10	0	0	10
Severely Overcrowded - With >1.51 people per room (and complete kitchen and plumbing)	35	65	0	10	110	0	0	0	0	0
Overcrowded - With 1.01-1.5 people per room (and none of the above problems)	60	60	25	20	165	0	0	15	0	15
Housing cost burden greater than 50% of income (and none of the above problems)	1,725	370	45	0	2,140	340	370	220	90	1,020
Housing cost burden greater than 30% of income (and none of the above problems)	535	885	690	35	2,145	90	230	290	230	840

Demo

	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
Zero/negative Income (and none of the above problems)	440	0	0	0	440	105	0	0	0	105

Table 7 – 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	1,980	515	90	35	2,620	340	385	235	90	1,050
Having none of four housing problems	1,635	1,340	2,125	740	5,840	95	405	805	575	1,880
Household has negative income, but none of the other housing problems	440	0	0	0	440	105	0	0	0	105

Table 8 – Housing Problems 2

Data 2011-2015 CHAS
Source:

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	850	595	180	1,625	90	160	165	415
Large Related	220	150	0	370	4	65	40	109
Elderly	649	310	115	1,074	275	320	145	740
Other	725	340	444	1,509	65	65	175	305

Demo

	Renter				Owner			
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total
Total need by income	2,444	1,395	739	4,578	434	610	525	1,569

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	735	110	0	845	75	100	85	260
Large Related	210	75	0	285	4	65	15	84
Elderly	475	100	40	615	205	185	45	435
Other	475	125	4	604	55	20	90	165
Total need by income	1,895	410	44	2,349	339	370	235	944

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	95	80	25	25	225	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple, unrelated family households	0	4	0	4	8	0	0	15	0	15
Other, non-family households	0	40	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	0
Total need by income	95	124	25	29	273	0	0	15	0	15

Table 11 – Crowding Information – 1/2

Data 2011-2015 CHAS
Source:

	Renter				Owner			
	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total	0-30% AMI	>30-50% AMI	>50-80% AMI	Total
Households with Children Present	20	27	5	52	0	0	3	3

Table 12 – Crowding Information – 2/2

Data Source

Comments:

Analysis of 2011-2015 CHAS data and 2014-2018 ACS data

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

According to the 2013-2017 ACS, 6,180 Woonsocket householders lived alone, or **36.23 percent** of all households in the city. The ACS goes on to show that single person households are more likely to be female, over 65, renters, not in the workforce, and without an available vehicle.

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.

According to the Woonsocket arrest log for 2018, 391 domestic crime arrests were made; roughly one out of every 99 residents (not accounting for recidivism). In 2018, 23 of Woonsocket’s 302 homeless person population were victims of domestic violence and 91 homeless persons suffered from some sort of physical or mental disability.

What are the most common housing problems?

Cost-Burden

Housing cost burden greater than **41 percent** is the most common housing problem in Woonsocket. The 2019 Housing Works RI shows that 7,018 severely housing cost burdened households in Woonsocket; **70.16 percent** of these households are renters/49 percent of the total renters citywide. and 77 percent of the renters earn less than 30 percent (cost burden) of the HAMFI.

Lead-Based Paint

Based on 2013-2017 ACS data, nearly **88.2 percent** of the housing stock in Woonsocket (17,054 units) was built prior to 1979. These statistics suggest an increased likelihood of units containing lead based

paint. The prevalence of older housing stock suggests a major safety concern due to the additional likelihood of the presence of lead-based paint. The federal government did not ban lead paint from residential construction until 1978.

Data provided by the RI Kids Count shows a steady decrease in both the rate of new and pre-existing incidences. Since 2019 – 2020 children under six years old with (1) high blood lead levels (5 µg/dL) and (2) very high blood lead levels (10 µg/dL) has decreased to 4.3%. As of 2019, there have been only 23 new cases very high blood lead levels. The City of Woonsocket has been awarded from HUD a 2019 Lead Paint Hazard Reduction grant to address this challenge.

Poverty / Low-Income

The Housing Works RI and RI Kids Count statistics involving income characteristics show that renters making less than 50 percent of HAMFI are an area of concern. In Woonsocket, 1,150 renter households with one or more children age six years or younger live in units that were built before 1939, and 560 renter households with one or more children live in units that were built before 1979.

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

Renters making less than 30 percent of the HAMFI are especially affected by these problems, particularly severe cost burden. As of CHAS 2012-2016, 45 percent of extremely low-income renters have a housing cost burden greater than half of their 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

Rhode Island's Coalition for the Homeless reports that lack of adequate income and lack of affordable housing are the top two reasons why people become homeless in Rhode Island. Accordingly, those making less than 50 percent of the HAMFI and/or those with housing cost burden greater than 50 percent are at the most imminent risk. Within both subgroups, families with children bear additional fiscal responsibilities that increase the likelihood of homelessness.

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When comparing homeless point-in-time data with census disability counts, an asymmetrical relationship is evident; making this populace vulnerable to homelessness. The 2013-2017 ACS estimates that 6,811 Woonsocket residents have a disability, or **16 percent** of the population. CoC APR Homeless data for 2017 shows that 43 percent of those admitted have a physical or mental disability.

Extremely low income individuals and families spending more than half of their income on housing are at a particular risk of being homeless if they lose their support networks. In Woonsocket, as of the 2013-2017 ACS, a segment of the 350 homeowners and 1,650 renters are at risk of immediately becoming homeless.

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:

The City of Woonsocket does not have a specific estimate of the at-risk population.

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

There are several housing characteristics known to be correlated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness. These include the following characteristics and circumstances.

- Severe overcrowding – households that have more than 1.5 persons per room
- Doubled-up – households that have taken in other family members or individuals so that two or more adults or families are residing in the same housing unit
- Lacking complete kitchen or plumbing facilities
- One or more housing code violations that impact the health or safety of occupants
- Occupying an illegal housing unit not sanctioned by the City of Woonsocket
- Households with past-due rent payments, late fees on rental accounts, or past due utility bills
- Households experiencing utility shutoffs
- Households in receipt of a 5-day demand notice from property owner or manager
- Households that are currently in eviction proceedings

As such, any individuals, families, or households living with these specific housing conditions and characteristics are deemed to be at risk of homelessness, as defined by Title 24, Part 576.2.

Discussion

Demo

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

The forthcoming series of tables from CHAS 2011-2015 summarizes housing problems by tenure, race, and income group in an attempt to assess the need of any racial or ethnic group that has disproportionately greater needs in comparison to the category as a whole.

Housing Problems – There are four housing problems in the CHAS data:

- housing unit lacks complete kitchen facilities, housing unit lacks complete plumbing facilities household is overcrowded More than 1 person per room, Household are cost burdened monthly housing costs (including utilities) exceed 30 percent of monthly income

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	2,945	1,104	545
White	2,075	709	415
Black / African American	195	35	35
Asian	55	4	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	10
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	600	360	84

Table 13 - Disproportionally Greater Need 0 - 30% 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%

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	2,015	630	0
White	1,450	535	0
Black / African American	90	15	0
Asian	120	4	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	10	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	305	69	0

Table 14 - Disproportionally Greater Need 30 - 50% 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%

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	1,310	1,940	0
White	965	1,465	0
Black / African American	155	135	0
Asian	90	115	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	35	10	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	70	215	0

Table 15 - Disproportionally Greater Need 50 - 80% 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%

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	380	1,060	0
White	350	910	0
Black / African American	4	45	0
Asian	14	44	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	4	35	0

Table 16 - 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

Viewing the racial distribution of income classes and housing problems for renters shows that **61.27 percent** of minorities (Hispanic, Black, Asian, Native American, and Other) making less than or equal to 50 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems (**875 total**). Comparatively **60.37 percent** of the White population (**2,415**), in the same income group have one or more housing problems.

The specific populations that have disproportionately greater need in comparison to the needs of that income category are discussed below:

- **Sixty four (64) percent** of all Woonsocket households earning less than 30 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need include Asians (**93.22 percent** housing problem occurrence) and American Indian/Alaska Native (**0 percent** housing problem occurrence), although the total households of the latter is small (10). **Fifty seven (57) percent** of Hispanics have at least one housing problem occurrence.
- **Seventy- Six (76) percent** of all households earning between 30 percent and 50 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need include persons of Hispanic origin (**82 percent** housing problem occurrence) and African American (**85 percent** housing problem occurrence).
- Forty (40) percent of all households earning between 50 percent and 80 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need

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include Asian (43 percent housing problem occurrence), persons of Hispanic origin (24 percent housing problem occurrence), and African American (53 percent housing problem occurrence).

- Twenty six (26) percent of all households earning between more than 80 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need include Asian (24 percent housing problem occurrence) and African American (8 percent housing problem occurrence).

All income categories combined, racial or ethnic groups with a disproportionate rate of housing problems within their populations include Asian (**61 percent**), and persons of Hispanic origin (**56 percent**) African American (**94 percent**) when compared to **55 percent** of the jurisdiction as a whole.

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

Housing Problems – There are four severe housing problems in the CHAS data:

- housing unit lacks complete kitchen facilities, housing unit lacks complete plumbing facilities, household is severely overcrowded. More than 1.5 persons per room. household is severely cost burdened monthly housing costs (including utilities) exceed 50 percent of monthly income

A household is said to have a severe housing problem if they have any one or more of these four problems.

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	2,320	1,730	545
White	1,640	1,145	415
Black / African American	155	75	35
Asian	55	4	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	10
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	455	510	84

Table 17 – Severe Housing Problems 0 - 30% AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

*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	900	1,745	0
White	635	1,350	0
Black / African American	35	70	0
Asian	110	15	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	4	4	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	110	265	0

Table 18 – Severe Housing Problems 30 - 50% AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

*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	325	2,930	0
White	250	2,180	0
Black / African American	10	275	0
Asian	40	165	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	45	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	25	255	0

Table 19 – Severe Housing Problems 50 - 80% AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

*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	125	1,315	0
White	90	1,170	0
Black / African American	4	45	0
Asian	14	44	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Hispanic	4	35	0

Table 20 – Severe Housing Problems 80 - 100% AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

*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

Viewing the racial distribution of income classes and housing problems for renters shows that **28 percent** of minorities (Hispanic, Black, Asian, Native American, and Other) making less than or equal to 50 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems (**924 total households**). Comparatively **78 percent** of White households and **44 percent** of all City households earning less than or equal to 50 percent of HAMFI have one or more housing problems. While the incidence of severe housing problems does not disproportionately affect minorities overall, there are certain groups which are more impacted. Asian households exhibit the greatest impact, with **89 percent** of Asian households earning less than 50 percent of HAMFI having a severe housing problem; by comparison, the next closest racial group is African Americans (**56 percent**).

The specific populations that have disproportionately greater need, in regards to severe housing problems, in comparison to the needs of that income category are discussed below:

- **Fifty (50) percent** of all Woonsocket households earning less than 30 percent of the HAMFI have one or more severe housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need are Asians (**93 percent** housing problem occurrence), though the total households is small (59).
- **Thirty Four (34) percent** of all households earning between 30 percent and 50 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately

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greater need include Asians (88 percent housing problem occurrence). African American households exhibit the second highest incidence of severe housing problem (50 percent) when along with Native Americans though the total households is small (8).

- Severe housing problems decrease as income increases. Ten (10) percent of all households earning between 50 percent and 80 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need include Asian (20 percent housing problem occurrence) and persons of Hispanic origin (9 percent housing problem occurrence).
- Only 8 percent of all households earning more than 80 percent of the HAMFI have one or more housing problems. Comparatively, those with disproportionately greater need include Asian (24 percent housing problem occurrence), though again the total households is small (58).

All income categories combined, racial or ethnic groups with a disproportionate rate of severe housing problem within their populations include Asian (16 percent), African American (6 percent), and persons of Hispanic origin (16 percent) when compared to 31 percent of the jurisdiction as a whole.

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:

ACS 2013-2017 reports that Woonsocket is comprised of 17,054 occupied housing units, of which 6,277 are owner occupied (37 percent) and 10,777 units are renter occupied (63 percent). Subsequently 3,039 of the total housing stock qualify as long-term affordable.

Housing Cost Burden

Housing Cost Burden	<=30%	30-50%	>50%	No / negative income (not computed)
Jurisdiction as a whole	9,740	3,580	3,400	605
White	7,890	2,675	2,535	445
Black / African American	335	285	135	65
Asian	455	90	190	0
American Indian, Alaska Native	10	45	0	10
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	975	450	510	84

Table 21 – Greater Need: Housing Cost Burdens AMI

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Discussion:

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?

African-Americans have the largest proportion of households with severe housing cost burden. Asians and Hispanics are also disproportionately affected, but not to the same extent.

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

No other housing needs specific to race or ethnicity can be further extracted from the CHAS tables.

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

Census data shows a concentration of severely cost burdened households in the northwestern and central part of Woonsocket: Census Tracts 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 and 183. Of these, Tracts 176, 180 & 183 have somewhat larger percentages of racial minorities with housing problems than other groups in the same areas. Tract 183 has both the highest concentration (2.72 severely cost burdened household per acre) and high percentages of severely cost burdened households: 33 percent of all households in tract 183 are severely cost burdened, and 91 percent of these households are renters. It is important to note that Tract 183 also has a larger percentage of Hispanic residents than the percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents in the city as a whole. Census Tract 180 has 28 percent severely housing cost burdened households and Tract 174, 27 percent.

The incidence of substandard housing is fairly concentrated in Census Tracts 174, 179, 180, 181 and 182 along with the central city area. Nine percent of renters in tract 180 have inadequate kitchen and plumbing facilities and eight percent in tract 179. Most other tracts have no reported incidence of substandard conditions, but there are some indicators of housing quality problems in Tract 173 (3 percent), Tract 184 (2 percent), and Tract 185 (2 percent). The city's Hispanic residents also live in Tract 184.

Overcrowding in Woonsocket is mostly represented in Census Tract 178, with 10 percent of all units reported as over-occupied in the CHAS, and 91 percent of these units are renter-occupied (104 total). Census Tract 180 has the second highest rate of overcrowding, at 6 percent of total, and all are renters. Again, these tracts have larger-than-average percentages of racial minorities (Tract 178) and Hispanic minorities (Tract 180) than the city overall.

Demo

NA-35 Public Housing – 91.205(b)

Introduction

The Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) is one of the primary sources of subsidized housing in Woonsocket. The housing authority owns and operates two family household properties with 582 units and four elderly/disabled high-rise buildings with a total of 630 units, 50 of which are assisted living units. The housing authority also has supportive housing scattered throughout Woonsocket and administers both project-based and tenant-based Section 8 vouchers.

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	0	1,176	610	0	604	4	0	0

Table 22 - 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
Average Annual Income	0	0	14,448	13,324	0	13,310	11,969	0
Average length of stay	0	0	6	5	0	5	1	0
Average Household size	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	0
# Homeless at admission	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
# of Elderly Program Participants (>62)	0	0	516	88	0	88	0	0
# of Disabled Families	0	0	246	253	0	250	3	0
# of Families requesting accessibility features	0	0	1,176	610	0	604	4	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 23 – 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	0	1,101	542	0	537	3	0	0
Black/African American	0	0	51	65	0	64	1	0	0
Asian	0	0	22	2	0	2	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

Table 24 – Race of Public Housing Residents by Program Type

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	370	235	0	235	0	0	0
Not Hispanic	0	0	806	375	0	369	4	0	0

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

Table 25 – Ethnicity of Public Housing Residents by Program Type

Demo

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:

Woonsocket has a total of 41 accessible living units within its St. Germain elderly/disabled high-rise property. There are currently 11 households on the wait list for accessible units, indicating that households that qualify for accessible units and have low incomes, also need additional housing options. At this time, the Woonsocket Housing Authority does not track housing needs specific to this population. (Additional needs information not available.)

Most immediate needs of residents of Public Housing and Housing Choice voucher holders

Based on the goals outlined by the Woonsocket Housing Authority in their 5-Year Agency Plan, updating exterior and interior lighting in all elderly/disabled buildings is needed to help increase the overall quality of the public housing units for these households. Additionally, a needs assessment of the existing public housing properties for elderly and disabled households indicates that bathroom and kitchen upgrades are needed as well as ADA compliant signage in some areas of each property.

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

When compared to the population at large, the current housing needs for households within public housing are overall similar. Housing units that are in good condition and rental properties that meet ADA compliance are universal needs. However, from a more general perspective, households with at least one person with a disability often require additional amenities and accommodations that facilitate accessibility. Examples can be larger bathrooms with lower sinks and showers that accommodate sitting or ramps to access entrances or exits that are not ground level. These modifications often require additional costs. Paying for these added expenses can be more difficult for the low income households seeking and in public housing when compared to those with middle to high incomes within the larger population.

Discussion

Public housing units and Section 8 vouchers provide an important source for subsidized housing in Woonsocket. Households on the waiting list are in public housing are often families with children and/or those with disabilities and most have extremely low incomes. These households have the greatest need for subsidized housing and housing options that are safe, accessible and affordable.

NA-40 Homeless Needs Assessment – 91.205(c)

Introduction:

Due to the transiency of this subgroup and the statewide system of services, comprehensive and accurate data is especially difficult to aggregate. Most municipalities, including Woonsocket, view homelessness from a state-wide perspective. Some of the information herein is derived from Rhode Island reports in addition to municipality specific data. The Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission address the current state of homelessness in their report Opening Doors Rhode Island.

As of February 2019, the providers comprising the states homeless system had a total of 2,850 year round beds, 121 seasonal beds, 69 overflow beds, 57 beds for the chronically homeless, 249 beds for homeless Veterans, and 14 homeless youth beds. Of the 41 individual agencies in the state that provide shelter and housing of various types to the homeless population, three providers directly serve the City of Woonsocket. They are: Community Care Alliance, Sojourner House, and Haven of Grace Ministries.

RI-HMIS and RICADV Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing served a statewide total of 4,067 unduplicated clients in 2016, a rate of 3.85 people per 1,000. This number has decreased by 9 percent since 2016 and 19 percent since 2015. Recent trends suggest homelessness in Rhode Island is declining across all of the major population subgroups. Both male and female enrollment has lessened off in recent years, when adjusted for population homelessness has decreased an average of 5 percent for men and 12 percent for women since 2015.

Homeless Needs Assessment

Population	Estimate the # of persons experiencing homelessness on a given night		Estimate the # experiencing homelessness each year	Estimate the # becoming homeless each year	Estimate the # exiting homelessness each year	Estimate the # of days persons experience homelessness
	Sheltered	Unsheltered				
Persons in Households with Adult(s) and Child(ren)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Demo

Population	Estimate the # of persons experiencing homelessness on a given night		Estimate the # experiencing homelessness each year	Estimate the # becoming homeless each year	Estimate the # exiting homelessness each year	Estimate the # of days persons experience homelessness
	Sheltered	Unsheltered				
Persons in Households with Only Children	0	0	0	0	0	0
Persons in Households with Only Adults	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chronically Homeless Individuals	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chronically Homeless Families	0	0	0	0	0	0
Veterans	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unaccompanied Child	0	0	0	0	0	0
Persons with HIV	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 26 - Homeless Needs Assessment

Data Source Comments:

Indicate if the homeless population is: Has No Rural Homeless

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):

Not Applicable

Nature and Extent of Homelessness: (Optional)

Race:	Sheltered:	Unsheltered (optional)
White	1,916	581
Black or African American	669	197
Asian	16	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	23	17
Pacific Islander	7	0
Ethnicity:	Sheltered:	Unsheltered (optional)
Hispanic	635	137
Not Hispanic	2,268	718

Data Source
Comments:

The HUD Continuum of Care Annual Progress Report (HUD CoC APR) for the emergency and transitional programs of the Community Care Alliance in Woonsocket provides point-in-time homeless data for the analysis. According to the HUD CoC APR, as of 2018, Woonsocket's total homeless population is 292 people. Once adjusted for population, Woonsocket has a rate of 7.09 homeless residents per 1,000 residents; this is 84 percent higher than Rhode Island.

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

Families of Children

Of the 292 persons served in Woonsocket during the 2018 operating year, 184 were adults and 108 were children. For adults; seventy nine were female (50 with children) and 105 male (16 with children). Ages 25 to 34 accounts for the highest percentage of the homeless population (17 percent) followed by ages five to twelve (sixteen percent); ages 45 to 54 (16 percent); and under five and 35 to 44 (15 percent).

Woonsocket's HUD CoC APR reports that approximately 37 percent or 108 total admittees were children. In 2018, 45 children under five years of age and 48 between the ages of five and twelve stayed at a homeless or domestic violence shelter in Woonsocket.

Findings from the 2018 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook reported 4,013 or 39 percent of children in Woonsocket live in poverty and 1,919 or 19 percent live in extreme poverty. Woonsocket also had the highest child abuse and neglect victim rate in Rhode Island: 35.3 victims per 1,000 children compared to 14.0 for the State of Rhode Island.

Families of Veterans

According to the HUD CoC APR, only 15 of the 184 adults (8 percent) admitted to emergency or transitional shelters in 2018 identified as veterans. The HUD 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report

reports that, statewide, all homeless veterans were sheltered. The City supports the priority strategy of the Open Doors statewide plan to work with the Veteran’s Administration to eliminate veteran homelessness entirely.

Physical or Mental Health Conditions

Those who were admitted with “none” or “no” physical and mental conditions at entry describes the vast majority (67 percent) of clients. Such a high rate of homeless without a physical or mental disability suggests both the needs for affordable housing and the potential long term efficacy of permanent supportive housing.

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

The rate of homeless minorities in Woonsocket is especially disproportionate. Persons of Hispanic origin make up 14 percent of Woonsocket’s total population; therefore, the proportionate number of homeless should be around 14 percent. However 93 or (31 percent) of those admitted to emergency and transitional programs identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Similarly, those identifying as Black or African American represent 6 percent of Woonsocket’ total population yet 13 percent of the homeless populace.

Describe the Nature and Extent of Unsheltered and Sheltered Homelessness.

The rates of unsheltered and sheltered persons are presented above. It is worth noting that in 2018, Rhode Island had the lowest statewide rate of unsheltered homeless (1.7 percent) in the nation according to HUD’s Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

Discussion:

Woonsocket is an active participant in the state’s Continuum of Care and the Consolidated Homeless Fund. The City fully supports the Opening Doors Rhode Island strategic plan to transform the system of

homelessness services and to end chronic homelessness in the City and state. As stated in Opening Doors Rhode Island, “ending homelessness for those already homeless in Rhode Island and preventing homelessness for those who are precariously housed and at risk of homelessness will require a range of resources from permanent supportive housing for those with significant long term disabilities, service enriched permanent housing for those who will require occasional support in resolving crises and maintaining housing, transitional housing for those transitioning from institutional settings or in a transitional period in life; and rapid rehousing and prevention services for those imminently entering homelessness.”

The need to quickly re-house individuals and families that fall into homelessness is a critical issue. Combined with the lack of resources to provide the requisite support services, the homelessness issue is only compounded. To address these issues the City is committed to the Open Doors strategic plan to transform the system of homelessness services. Specifically, the City is focused on quickly responding to homelessness through rapid re-housing for those that fall into homelessness and the Housing First model of providing homeless individuals with permanent housing and the appropriate wrap around services as required for them to maintain their housing.

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

Introduction:

Low income and homeless populations are not the only residents in Woonsocket that can have housing and service needs that can be a challenge to meet. Populations such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS have housing and service needs that are unique to their situation. A portion of the Woonsocket population falls within these non-homeless special needs categories and both the City and community organizations described in the Market Analysis section of this Plan work to address their needs.

Describe the characteristics of special needs populations in your community:

Elderly & Frail Elderly

HUD defines an individual as elderly if they are 62 years of age or more. Frail elderly is someone 75 years of age or more and in some cases cannot perform at least three essential living activities (e.g., eating, bathing, grooming, dressing, and home management). National trends for this population indicate that the number of persons who are considered elderly or frail elderly will grow rapidly over the next several years as the Baby Boom Generation becomes elderly and/or frail elderly. This trend will certainly impact Woonsocket which has 9.5 percent of its population considered elderly and an additional 7.6 percent are frail elderly. The number of elderly and frail elderly persons within the population is likely to grow substantially through 2026 when the last of the Baby Boom Generation turns 62 years of age.

Persons with Disabilities

Based on American Community Survey 2013-17 5-Year estimates, approximately 17 percent or 6,811 of the 40,339 noninstitutionalized civilian residents have a disability. Disabilities tracked include hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care or independent living difficulties. In general, the portion of the population within each age group that has a disability grows as the age of the cohort increases. Therefore, approximately 11 percent of the population between 5 and 17 years of age has a disability, while approximately 41 percent or 2,219 persons 65 years or older have a disability.

Within the 5 to 17 year age cohort, cognitive difficulty (7.4 percent) is the largest disability. For persons between 18 and 64 years of age, ambulatory (7.9 percent), cognitive (6.4 percent) and independent living (4.9 percent) are the largest difficulties. For the population most prone to disability based on these metrics, the population 65 years and over has 28 percent with ambulatory difficulty,

approximately 19 percent with difficulty living independently, and more than 18 percent with hearing difficulty.

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

Elderly and Frail Elderly

Housing and supportive services for elderly persons often focus on efforts to keep housing affordable past retirement and facilitate aging in place. In some cases small modifications to the home are necessary to facilitate ease of mobility within the home. For those elderly persons who are able to live at home but find that leaving becomes difficult, services such as Meals on Wheels that bring food to homebound seniors can be beneficial. As illustrated in the table earlier in the section, frail elderly often have some form of disability and may find it difficult to live independently. Therefore, housing needs for the frail elderly focus on assisted living at a variety of levels of care depending on the severity of the disability. These facilities and services can be costly, therefore affordability is a concern for many individuals who no longer have a steady income.

Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility and affordability are often the greatest concern for persons with disabilities. While the Fair Housing Act requires all “covered multifamily dwellings” to provide accessible features and has increased accessibility in many buildings, this Act only impacts those buildings built after March 13, 1991. Given that much of the rental and ownership housing stock in Woonsocket was built before this time, finding accessible units can be a challenge. Other regulations, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Architectural Barriers Act all have elements that require accessibility. While these regulations help to increase the number of housing units that are accessible to persons with disabilities, finding funding to retrofit housing units – both rental and ownership – can be a challenge. The Woonsocket Housing Authority does have 50 accessible units; an additional 580 units meet the housing and service needs of the elderly and disabled. Depending on the extent of the disability, full-time employment that can support an individual or household may be a challenge. In these cases, affordable housing is particularly important. However, finding housing that is appropriately accessible and affordable can be an issue.

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

According to the 2012 Rhode Island Jurisdictional HIV Prevention Plan, in 2011, there were more than 3,500 people living with HIV in Rhode Island. The vast majority of these individuals, 72 percent, are male. The largest number of HIV cases, 41 percent, is to persons who are White, while African Americans account for 29 percent of cases and persons of Hispanic origin account for 27 percent of all cases. The largest single age group of persons with HIV are those falling between the ages of 40 to 49 (37 percent). Of those living with HIV, approximately 60 percent or 1,818 persons have AIDS.

Local-level data was unavailable. However, the Rhode Island Jurisdictional HIV Prevention Plan indicated that in 2010, 81 of the approximately 125 new cases of HIV were residents of Providence County. Providence County had a substantially higher number of cases than other Rhode Island counties between 2005 and 2010. This is likely due to the fact that the County includes the state's largest population center, the City of Providence.

Between 2007 and 2011, the overall number of new HIV cases in the State of Rhode Island declined from approximately 120 cases to approximately 90 cases annually, according to survey data collected by the Rhode Island Department of Health. During this same period, data indicates that the number of total new AIDS cases decreased from approximately 70 cases to approximately 50 cases annually. However, while the number of new cases may have declined overall, HIV/AIDS impacts the lives of all persons with the disease, particularly those who are marginalized may have even greater difficulty finding the treatment needed and housing. Additionally, according to the National Institutes of Health, HIV prevalence is highest among marginalized members of society such as homeless and minority populations.

Discussion:

Housing and service needs can vary by individual for those with HIV/AIDS. While a diagnosis of HIV positive may not substantially impact daily life, persons with HIV/AIDS require service and treatment. As discussed earlier in this section, HIV/AIDS can occur at a higher rate among marginalized populations. These populations, such as homeless persons, do not always have the means to afford care and housing. In the Woonsocket area, there are two licensed assisted living facilities to meet the care and housing needs for persons with AIDS, AIDS Care Ocean State and the Agape Center and assisted living residences through the Community Care Alliance. Service needs are primarily met through Thundermist Health Center.

Affordable housing and service options for non-homeless special needs persons is the greatest need of this population. Woonsocket has both public sector and nonprofit organizations focused on meeting the needs of this population. Based on discussions with both AIDS Care Ocean State and the Woonsocket Housing Authority, additional housing and services for special needs residents is needed but funding for improvements and maintenance of proper facilities can be a challenge.

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

Describe the jurisdiction’s need for Public Facilities:

Woonsocket’s public facility priorities include upgrading facilities to ensure their compliance with ADA/Section 504, public safety standards, and the building code. The City also needs to provide adequate fire protection facilities (apparatus). Woonsocket has the following needs for Public Facilities:

- Fire protection equipment and apparatus
- Demolition of blighted buildings that cannot be rehabilitated
- Improvements to public safety facilities, e.g., Fire/Police Station and facilities with architectural barriers
- New/Renovated senior center
- Improvements to privately owned facilities that house community services, e.g., Stadium Theatre
- Renovation of City parks, playgrounds, recreation and related facilities
- Commercial property improvements (façade restoration)

How were these needs determined?

These needs have been identified through consultation with local and regional social service agencies, City staff, and the general public. In addition, public facility needs have been identified by reviewing the City’s Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan and Comprehensive Plan, and consultation with the Community Development Advisory Board.

Describe the jurisdiction’s need for Public Improvements:

The City has identified the following needs for public improvements:

- Street reconstruction and associated utility upgrades
- Sidewalk reconstruction
- Aesthetic improvements in the Downtown area and adjacent neighborhoods

How were these needs determined?

These needs have been identified through consultation with local and regional social service agencies, City staff, and the general public. In addition, public facility needs have been identified by reviewing the City's Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and Main Street Livability Plan, and consultation with the Community Development Advisory Board.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Services:

The City has identified the following needs for public services:

- Substance abuse prevention
- Domestic violence prevention
- Community policing
- Code enforcement
- Children's mental and trauma health services
- Health & social services to seniors
- Health services to substance abuse/disabled
- Literacy training
- Supportive services for special needs and homeless populations

How were these needs determined?

These needs have been identified through consultation with local and regional social service agencies, City staff, and the general public, through recent and prior-year Requests for Proposals (RFP) for CDBG funding, and consultation with the Community Development Advisory Board.

Jurisdictions need for Economic Development

Woonsocket seeks to increase the ability and capacity of local trade and industry to create and sustain jobs and maximize equal employment opportunity for lower income residents. Toward these ends, the City plans to continue providing assistance such as small business loans and technical assistance. Access to capital is one of the most important issues for small businesses. The City works to assist marginal businesses that might have trouble obtaining conventional financing. The small business loan program enhances a small company's eligibility for bank loans, thereby helping businesses in securing much-needed capital.

Housing Market Analysis

MA-05 Overview

Housing Market Analysis Overview:

Housing in Woonsocket is greatly influenced by the City's industrial history and urban decline. Woonsocket urbanized rapidly when the economy expanded during the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The modest, multi-story wood frame tenements in the Social, Globe, Lower Bernon, Constitution Hill, and Fairmount neighborhoods echo Woonsocket's heyday as one of the key industrial centers situated on the Blackstone River. By contrast, the City's North End neighborhood still boasts many of the large single-family homes that were constructed for affluent mill owners. The environment shaped and built during this period remains largely intact in many inner-city neighborhoods.

Many of Woonsocket's historic nonresidential structures – former mills and historic storefronts – are concentrated in Woonsocket's central core, on the city's historic Main Street and along the banks of the Blackstone River. These historic buildings and structures are valuable resources for both the community and the greater Blackstone Valley region. Unfortunately, for several decades since the decline of the manufacturing industry, many of Woonsocket's historic resources sit idle or underutilized. Since the 1950s, housing construction in the outlying neighborhoods has provided more housing options for Woonsocket residents but also contributes to the over-supply of difficult-to-develop properties in the City's urban center.

Today, Woonsocket struggles as a weak-market community that has gradually lost population since deindustrialization of cities throughout the Northeast began in the postwar era. In 1950, the City had over 50,000 residents; in 2018, Woonsocket's population had fallen to 41,539 - a 17% decline in population.

As of 2018, there were a total of 19,186 housing units in the City, with 16,940 occupied and 2,246 unoccupied. This constitutes a 12% vacancy rate. The high vacancy rate has been persistent over the past several years, while investment in new housing in the City has been stagnant. Occupied housing units have been and continue to be primarily used as rental units. More than half of the occupied housing units were built prior to 1940, and a substantial portion of both renter-occupied and owner-occupied housing units have at least one problem: lack of complete plumbing, lack of complete kitchen, or more than one person per room, or the household is cost burdened. Since Woonsocket's housing is generally older, lead paint and substandard units are common, especially among renter-occupied units.

Ultimately, these factors indicate that Woonsocket's housing market is not meeting the needs of Woonsocket residents. While there are sufficient housing units for the total number of households in the City, many houses that are in poor physical condition, particularly for renter households with low

incomes. Focusing on rehabilitation and selective infill redevelopment projects have the potential to incrementally address housing affordability and housing quality concerns, while acknowledging that if the population continues to decline, vacancy will remain a critical issue within the City.

MA-10 Number of Housing Units – 91.210(a)&(b)(2)

Introduction

Over the last eight years, the total number of housing units in Woonsocket increased by 314 units, from 18,872 in 2010 to 19,186 in 2018, an increase of 1.6%. On average, Woonsocket has produced approximately 39 units per year. In 2019, there were 30 new construction permits issued by the City's building department. The City's population has remained consistent over the same period. There were 41,682 persons living in Woonsocket in 2010, and 41,539 persons in 2018, or a slight decrease of 0.3%.

The number of occupied units in Woonsocket totaled 16,940 in 2018, an increase of 338 units from 2010. In 2018, the vacancy rate stood at 11.7%, for a total of 2,246 vacant housing units. This equates to approximately 1 in 9 housing units being vacant in the city. The vacancy rate has been steady since approximately 2010 but is a dramatic increase from 2000 when only 5.4% of the housing units were vacant. The increase in vacancy is chiefly due to the impacts of the foreclosure crisis and Great Recession during the 2007-2009 time period. Woonsocket is one of the core urban areas in the city that still has not fully recovered from the foreclosure crisis.

Approximately two-thirds of the occupied housing in Woonsocket are renter-occupied, with 10,865 rental units compared to 6,084 owner-occupied units. This is a significant increase in the number of renters compared to owners from 2010 when 41% of units were owner-occupied (6,796 total unit) and 59% of units were rental units (9,806 total units). Renter households are most prominent in the City's downtown and historic industrial neighborhoods along the Blackstone River.

Single-unit homes account for 27.1% of the total number of housing units in the city. The most common housing type, comprising approximately 40% of the total housing units in Woonsocket, are duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. These structures are common throughout most urban areas in the state. Larger apartment buildings also exist in Woonsocket, as 1,977 units are in structures with 20 or more units, although these housing units only account for slightly more than 10% of the total housing in the city.

Much of the growth in housing units from 2010 to 2018 came from larger developments. There was a net decrease during this period in single unit detached housing and units in structures with 3-4 units of 334 and 316, respectively. Meanwhile the number of units in structures with 10-19 units grew by 433 and in structures with 20 or more units grew by 448 units.

All residential properties by number of units

Property Type	Number	%
1-unit detached structure	4,725	25%
1-unit, attached structure	473	2%
2-4 units	7,645	40%
5-19 units	4,311	22%

Property Type	Number	%
20 or more units	1,977	10%
Mobile Home, boat, RV, van, etc	55	0%
Total	19,186	100%

Table 27 – Residential Properties by Unit Number

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Unit Size by Tenure

	Owners		Renters	
	Number	%	Number	%
No bedroom	37	0%	1,157	11%
1 bedroom	697	11%	6,089	56%
2 bedrooms	6,165	99%	10,863	101%
3 or more bedrooms	5,830	89%	3,422	32%
Total	12,729	199%	21,531	200%

Table 28 – Unit Size by Tenure

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

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

According to HousingWorks RI's 2019 Housing Fact Book, there are 3,047 long-term affordable homes in the City of Woonsocket. This represents almost 16% of the total number of housing units in the city. While this is a significant portion of the total housing stock, these units are insufficient to satisfy the need for affordable housing in the city as 10,490 households are below the HUD 80% area median income threshold. There is a centralized waiting list that is managed by Rhode Island Housing for public housing and affordable housing units. As of January 2020, there were 33,786 households on various waitlists throughout the State of Rhode Island seeking access to affordable housing units. There are 10,553 households with a preference to live in Woonsocket, among them 1,286 are Woonsocket residents.

Woonsocket has a variety of housing that specifically targets low- and moderate-income households with varying needs. Based on an inventory of the subsidized housing in the City, family households earning 80 percent or less of area median income (AMI) have access to 578 units of public housing and 681 Housing Voice Vouchers to subsidize rental units. Elderly households earning less than 80 percent of AMI can apply for 628 units of public housing and 35 Housing Voice Vouchers to subsidize rental units. Persons with special needs can apply for 67 group home beds and 41 supportive units if they meet the facility income qualifications.

There are 10 affordable units for veterans managed by Operation Stand Down located at 492 South Main St., and Community Care Alliance manages three supporting housing developments for five single women, nine single men, and persons living with HIV/AIDS.

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

The City does not have an up-to-date list of subsidized units that may be lost from the affordable housing inventory due to expiring use restrictions. The National Housing Preservation Database contains robust information about the specific HUD subsidies that were used for developments throughout the country. Reviewing the information for Woonsocket shows that the following properties have subsidies that will be expiring between 2020 and 2024.

- Church Street 3 units
- Cumberland Street 4 units
- First Avenue 4 units
- John Street 8 units
- Seventh Avenue 6 units
- Wood Avenue 12 units

Based on the above, it is possible that up to 37 units of affordable housing could be lost; however, it is likely that the affordability restrictions may be retained for some if not all of these units. It is also important to note that Section 8 Fair Market Rents are higher than market rents throughout most of Woonsocket for most types of rental units because the city's rental market is so weak.

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

Among the 16,940 households in the City of Woonsocket, there are:

- 6,353 one-person households
- 5,251 two-person households
- 2,304 three-person households
- 3,032 four-or-more-person households

Table 32 above shows that there are 569 studio units, 3,441 one-bedroom units, 11,298 two or three-bedroom units, and 1,632 units with 4 or more bedrooms. There appears to be an insufficient number of smaller-sized units, with either zero or one-bedroom to suitably accommodate single persons living alone, or couples living together. These smaller units are generally priced lower than 2-bedroom units and allow small households to live more affordably.

Conversely, while overcrowding is not a considerable problem in Woonsocket, it does appear that there are limited housing options for larger-sized families, with over 3,000 four-or-more person households for 1,632 four-or-more bedroom housing units.

It is important to note that with a vacancy rate of 11.7%, there is a significant number of housing units in the city that are not currently occupied but potentially could be depending on the condition of the units and the rehabilitation cost to convert them to habitable units.

Importantly, the existence of sufficient housing supply to meet demand does not fully illustrate the housing need of Woonsocket. Issues such as housing condition and households that are cost burdened do exist and indicate that the existing supply does not fully meet the housing needs of residents. Additional information on housing cost burden is available in the Needs Assessment.

Finally, demand for affordable units is high as evidenced by the current public housing and Housing Choice Voucher waiting list maintained by the Woonsocket Housing Authority. This list shows demand for 10,553 housing units in the city. 2,828 disabled households, 562 elderly households, 4,134 family households, and 3,029 other households which include single persons. 8,477 of these households are extremely low-income, earning no more than 30% of the area median income.

Describe the need for specific types of housing:

Affordable housing is in desperate need in Woonsocket. As discussed in NA-10, the most pronounced housing problems are Cost Burden and Severe Cost Burden. Housing cost burden, as either greater than 30% or 50% of total income spent on housing, is the most significant housing problem in Woonsocket as with most other municipalities throughout Rhode Island. According to the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data, there are 4,285 renter households that pay more than 30% of their income on rent, and another 1,860 homeowners that pay more than 30% of their income on their housing. This accounts for 36% of all households in Woonsocket that are housing cost burdened. According to HousingWorks RI, 34% of all owner households are cost burdened while 49% of all renter households are cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

The most dramatic need for affordable housing units are for the lowest-income households earning up to 30% Area Median Income. There are 2,444 renters and 434 homeowners that experience a cost burden, and another 1,895 renters and 339 homeowners that experience extreme cost burden. Expanding the supply of safe, decent, suitable rental and homeownership units would be the most appropriate, long-term solution for extremely low-income people.

The City also needs to ensure that it has enough housing to accommodate those living with physical and cognitive disabilities, those experiencing self-care and independent living challenges, and those that may have additional mobility challenges as the City is expected to see its elderly population grow over the next several decades.

As the condition of some abandoned housing stock has deteriorated to a point where rehabilitation is not economically or financially feasible, this may present an opportunity to replace housing types no longer suited to the city with new housing options that meet the needs of the city today and in the foreseeable future, or eliminate underutilized units to lower residential density in certain neighborhoods. There is also a need to increase the availability of Supportive Housing, affordable housing with necessary support services on site, in the neighborhood, or otherwise provided in a coordinated way.

Discussion

Recognizing the continued need for rental housing assistance for the households with the lowest incomes in Woonsocket, the Woonsocket Housing Authority seeks to expand the Housing Choice Voucher Program and use Project-Based HCV for preservation and stabilization initiatives. The primary focus continues to be using project-based Section 8/Housing Choice Vouchers by converting existing assets such as Veteran's Memorial to a voucher-based system. Recognizing existing private rental housing assets within Woonsocket, the WHA is also focusing on expanding tenant-based vouchers, as well.

The specific housing needs outlined in this section do not all need to be met by additional units. Given the vacancy rate in Woonsocket, a surge in supply may be counterproductive to the broader housing market in the City. Meeting housing needs outlined above is possible through additional public housing units or vouchers, rehabilitation or reconstruction of vacant or abandoned properties, and some limited new development or conversion to improve the quality of housing stock in Woonsocket.

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

Introduction

While safe and affordable housing is a basic need, it represents the single largest expenditure for most households. The following section provides information on the cost of rental and owner-occupied housing in the City of Woonsocket, focusing specifically on housing affordability for low- and moderate-income households.

The housing cost data below shows that, according to the American Community Survey, there has been a decrease in the median home value of 31% over the past 8 years, declining from \$231,000 in 2009 to \$164,600 in 2018 (most recent data available). However, it is important to expand upon this information to fully reflect the changes in home values over time. The American Community Survey data does not tell the full story of the rapid change in home values as the data is smoothed by sampling over the 5-year period of 2014-2018.

Over the last eighteen years, the housing market in Woonsocket has seen two large increases in home values. First was during the runup to the 2007-2009 foreclosure crisis and Great Recession. In recent years, the city has again seen a large escalation of home prices, recovering much of the values lost during the housing market collapse. One primary consequence of the sharp increase and sudden decrease in home prices that occurred during the 2000s is that many households went into foreclosure and the household wealth of Woonsocket residents evaporated with the decrease in home values. Anyone that purchased homes at the peak of the market found themselves struggling to maintain payments and if they lost their homes during this time, being saddled with mortgage debt for a home they no longer owned or occupied.

Cost of Housing

	Base Year: 2009	Most Recent Year: 2018	% Change
Median Home Value	231,000	164,600	(29%)
Median Contract Rent	623	883	42%

Table 29 – Cost of Housing

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Rent Paid	Number	%
Less than \$500	2,314	26.2%
\$500-999	4,651	64.8%
\$1,000-1,499	3,298	8.3%
\$1,500-1,999	274	0.5%
\$2,000 or more	108	0.2%

Rent Paid	Number	%
Total	10,645	100.0%

Table 30 - Rent Paid

Alternate Data Source Name:
2014-2018 ACS
Data Source Comments:

Housing Affordability

% Units affordable to Households earning	Renter	Owner
30% HAMFI	1,970	No Data
50% HAMFI	4,290	530
80% HAMFI	8,390	2,065
100% HAMFI	No Data	2,835
Total	14,650	5,430

Table 31 – Housing Affordability

Data Source: 2011-2015 CHAS

Monthly Rent

Monthly Rent (\$)	Efficiency (no bedroom)	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Fair Market Rent	786	889	1,060	1,328	1,565
High HOME Rent	786	889	1,060	1,328	1,488
Low HOME Rent	717	768	922	1,065	1,188

Table 32 – Monthly Rent

Data Source: HUD FMR and HOME Rents

Is there sufficient housing for households at all income levels?

No. Throughout most neighborhoods in the City, the cost of housing is burdensome for far too many Woonsocket residents and households. While housing cost does not appear to be overly burdensome for the City’s higher-income population, there are limited options for low-cost or affordable units for low-income residents. As previously discussed, many of these low-income residents spend over 30% and 50% of their income for housing, have limited if any savings, and are at risk of losing their homes in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as job loss, large medical bills, or other financial emergency.

Data from NA-10 show that there are 4,600 total households earning between 0 and 30% of Area Median Income and only 1,970 units affordable at this income. There are 2,640 households at the 30% to 50% AMI income range and 4,820 units that would be affordable for this income level. While the lowest-income households struggle most with housing costs, every income group experiences housing cost burdens as described in NA-10.

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

Between 2009 and 2018, median rent in Woonsocket grew by over 41%. It is expected that rents will continue to grow as they have over the previous years. Similarly, the increasing costs of single-family homes being sold in Woonsocket will likely continue, however, year-over-year increases will likely become smaller. While this creates an increasing cost burden for new home buyers, it is generally beneficial for home sellers. However, in general, home sellers are either upgrading or downgrading homes based on the circumstances of their household changes. The trend over the past several years has been an increase in home sale costs. With the expected continued escalation of housing costs, both in terms of median home prices and median rental costs, and without a significant increase in wages earned by households, the housing cost burden for renters and homeowners, especially new home buyers and low-income households will grow.

How do HOME rents / Fair Market Rent compare to Area Median Rent? How might this impact your strategy to produce or preserve affordable housing?

The median contract rent for Woonsocket is \$883 per month. Given the nature of the rental housing stock in the city, this rental price is for a 2 to 3 bedroom apartment. Fair Market Rents in Woonsocket range from \$786 for an efficiency to \$1,565 for a four-bedroom unit. High HOME rent limits are the same as the FMR for all units except the four-bedroom units, which is \$1,488. Low HOME rent limits range from \$717 per month for efficiencies to \$1,188 for four-bedroom units. In virtually every case except for efficiencies and one-bedroom Low HOME rent limits, the median contract rent is less than the FRM and HOME limits.

The largest portion of rental units are 2-3 bedroom units which account for 62% of all rental housing available in the city. The majority of these rental units are likely to be priced lower than the FMR and HOME Rent limits. This is because the FMR and HOME rents are based upon the larger Providence-Fall River, RI-MA HUD Metro FMR area, in which the City of Woonsocket is located. Overall, Woonsocket's rental units are priced below the FMR for the larger FMR area which include surrounding municipalities that have stronger rental housing markets and thus increasing the FMR. The fact that the median gross rent is below FMR indicates that housing is likely more affordable in Woonsocket than the surrounding jurisdictions. It also indicates that there are other factors that are leading to a lower market rent, including vacancy and the condition of rental units in the City. Addressing these issues while not substantially increasing the median gross rent is part of the plan to preserve and expand affordable housing in Woonsocket.

Discussion

The primary takeaway from the data above is that the City is in short supply of affordable housing relative to the need, even though its rental market is weaker than many surrounding communities and housing costs in Woonsocket are comparably less expensive. The home values and rental prices have

grown considerably over the past several years since the housing market decline of the late 2000s and early 2010s. This escalation in housing costs will likely continue and comes without a corresponding increase in income levels for the residents and households of Woonsocket.

Overall, the cost of ownership units in Woonsocket is more affordable than rental units. This is particularly the case for low-income renters who are often pay more than 30 percent of their income toward housing in Woonsocket, even while rents remain below the Fair Market Rent for the area. Providing more opportunities for renters in Woonsocket through either subsidies or by providing a wider range of rental options has the potential to make housing more affordable to households renting in Woonsocket.

It should be noted that with the onset of COVID-19, and the unprecedented increase in unemployment, Woonsocket will likely see an increase in evictions and foreclosures unless there is meaningful support for mortgage and rental payment relief from the federal and state government.

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

Introduction

The condition of housing in Woonsocket is an important factor in understanding the housing market in the City. Many variables contribute to housing quality, including age, presence of hazardous materials such as lead-based paint, affordability, overcrowding, and basic physical conditions. While there may be enough housing units for Woonsocket residents, the condition and cost of those units affects their livability, affordability, and whether they can be considered safe, decent, and sanitary housing.

Definitions

For this Consolidated Plan, the City of Woonsocket defines a housing unit as standard if meets all HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and all state and local building codes, including the State of Rhode Island’s Property Maintenance Code. A housing unit would be considered substandard if it is not of suitable condition to provide safe and adequate housing, has one or more major defects, or a combination of minor defects to require extensive rehabilitation or repair. Further, any unit that does not have complete plumbing and kitchen facilities for use by the occupant(s) is considered to be substandard.

Condition of Units

Condition of Units	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	%	Number	%
With one selected Condition	2,340	35%	4,400	41%
With two selected Conditions	35	1%	270	3%
With three selected Conditions	0	0%	95	1%
With four selected Conditions	0	0%	0	0%
No selected Conditions	4,270	64%	5,915	55%
Total	6,645	100%	10,680	100%

Table 33 - Condition of Units

Data Source: 2011-2015 ACS

Year Unit Built

Year Unit Built	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	Number	%	Number	%
2000 or later	501	8%	182	2%
1980-1999	457	8%	912	8%
1950-1979	1,413	23%	2,467	23%
Before 1950	3,713	61%	7,295	67%
Total	6,084	100%	10,856	100%

Table 34 – Year Unit Built

Alternate Data Source Name:
2014-2018 ACS
Data Source Comments:

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	5,645	93%	9,640	89%
Housing Units build before 1980 with children present	300	5%	95	1%

Table 35 – Risk of Lead-Based Paint

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

Vacant Units

	Suitable for Rehabilitation	Not Suitable for Rehabilitation	Total
Vacant Units	2,246	0	2,246
Abandoned Vacant Units	0	0	0
REO Properties	0	0	0
Abandoned REO Properties	0	0	0

Table 36 - Vacant Units

Alternate Data Source Name:
2014-2018 ACS
Data Source Comments:

Need for Owner and Rental Rehabilitation

There is a direct correlation between the age of a home and the need for maintenance and rehabilitation. Typically, after a home reaches 30 or 40 years old it begins to require significant repairs and/or major rehabilitation. This becomes even more problematic if the home was not well-maintained throughout its occupancy. Further, homes in the northeastern United States suffer from additional weather-related problems due to icy weather, heavy snow, winter storms, and frigid temperatures.

The City of Woonsocket has a large stock of older housing units. As indicated above, 77% of owner-occupied and 91% of renter-occupied housing was built prior to 1980. In fact, the majority of owner- and renter-occupied housing, 11,008 units of housing, was built before 1960. This represents 65% of the total occupied housing in the city. Based on the age of these structures and normal wear and tear on housing, there is an ongoing need for housing rehabilitation throughout Woonsocket.

Vacant housing can present a particular public safety challenge for the community. Based on the 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimate, 11.7% of the total housing stock in Woonsocket was reported as vacant, for a total of 2,246 units. While vacancy can sometimes indicate a second home or vacation rental that was not occupied at the time of the American Community Survey numeration, it can also indicate housing

market and condition issues such as foreclosure, abandonment that can ultimately lead to deteriorated and blighted properties if left unaddressed for long periods of time.

Based on conversations with City Planning Department staff, a housing unit is considered vacant if it has been left uninhabited for six months or more. The City's Inspection Division tracks and monitors potential unsafe conditions due to dwellings being vacated. As of May 2020, there were 93 properties being monitored, representing 201 housing units. The list was created and is maintained through visual inspections of the premises by Division Staff and in certain instances, the properties have been cross referenced with known utility shut offs. The document constitutes an interpretation of conditions by Minimum Housing and Code Enforcement inspectors that indicate the property has remained unoccupied as of the date of designation.

Estimated Number of Housing Units Occupied by Low or Moderate Income Families with LBP Hazards

The age of the City's housing stock places its housing units at a greater risk of potential lead exposure. Lead-based paint was banned for residential use in the United States in 1978 by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. In Woonsocket, there are 14,888 housing units that were built before 1980, approximately 78% of the total number of housing units.

The City does not have an accurate accounting of the total number of units with lead-based paint; however, based on the total number of units built prior to 1980, we estimate there are approximate 5,126 owner-occupied units and 9,762 rental units that are at risk of lead-based paint hazard. Among these units, we can eliminate the 3,031 properties that have received a Certificate of Conformance with the State of Rhode Island's Lead Mitigation Act. These homes, unfortunately, are not identified as owner occupied or rental units. Also, the total number of units is not readily available. As a conservative estimate, approximately 4,600 units were made lead safe. As such, it is estimated that approximately 10,288 units of housing (rental and owner-occupied) are still at risk of lead-based paint hazard.

More concerning is the total number of housing units that have lead-based paint and are occupied by children under the age of 6. The toxins in lead paint are significantly more dangerous and may cause detrimental health problems to young children. It is calculated that there are 300 owner-occupied homes with children present at risk of lead-based paint hazard, and another 95 rental units. The 2020 RI Kids Count Fact Book identified that a total of 539 Woonsocket children entering kindergarten in the fall of 2021 were tested for lead poisoning. Among those tested, there were 23 children that had elevated blood lead levels, 4.3% of the total number of children tested. The incidence rate of elevated blood lead levels has been declining over the past 16 years, both in Woonsocket and throughout the state.

Discussion

To meet the need for rehabilitation throughout Woonsocket, the City has two rehabilitation programs. The 5 & 5 Program provides a 5-year declining tax break for a purchaser of a property on the City's

vacant property list that has received a certificate of occupancy once rehabilitated. For owner-occupied property, in the first year the tax abatement is 100% and declines by 20% per year until it is taxed at full value after the 5th year. If the property is not owner-occupied the new owner receives a two-year tax abatement receiving 100% the first year and 50% the second year.

The City also offers a Rental Rehabilitation Assistance Program. Funds for this program are made available through the City's annual HOME grants. The program offers partial loan forgiveness for code-related repairs and lead hazard mitigation. Property owners must meet income qualification and the property must meet Rhode Island Property Maintenance Code after the work has been completed. If ownership is maintained for 5 years after the work is completed, part of the loan is forgiven.

MA-25 Public and Assisted Housing – 91.210(b)

Introduction

Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) operates six public housing multi-family style apartment complexes. Morin Heights and Veteran’s Memorial are family apartments with 578 one- to five-bedroom apartment units. The remaining four high-rise apartment complexes provide units for the elderly and disabled. Parkview Manor, Kennedy Manor, Crepeau Court, and St. Germain Manor have a total of 628 units which are primarily one-bedroom units, with a small number of efficiencies and two-bedroom units in some of the buildings. St. Germain Manor also houses the Housing Authority’s 50 assisted living units.

Public housing in Woonsocket provides a much needed source of subsidized housing for the City. The existing supply of units and vouchers offers housing options for almost 2,000 households. However, wait lists exist for both public housing units and Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers indicating that there is a greater demand for affordable housing options than what is currently available in the City.

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			1,206	731	15	681	0	0	0
# of accessible units			50						

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

Table 37 – Total Number of Units by Program Type

Alternate Data Source Name:
Woonsocket Housing Authority
Data Source Comments:

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:

There are a total of 1,206 public housing units in Woonsocket in 6 housing development. Based on the most recent inspection scores for each development, all of the developments received passing scores. These scores range between 69 and 95 points.

- Morin Heights = 69
- Kennedy Manor = 84
- St. Germain Manor = 85
- Parview Manor = 88
- Veterans Memorial = 93
- Crepeau Court = 95

For 2020, the single development of most concern is the Morin Heights family development, with the lowest inspection score of 69. While this passes the 60 point threshold, it indicates that it has the largest rehabilitation need to ensure it is a high quality public housing development.

The rehabilitation projects that the Woonsocket Housing Authority has completed in the recent few years include:

- Morin Heights: 10 Roofs, New Security Entry Doors with hardware
- Veterans Memorial: 1 Roof
- Parkview Manor: Electrical Panel Replacement, Exterior Masonry Work
- Kennedy Manor: New Roof, Electrical Panel Replacement, Domestic Hot Water System Replacement
- Crepeau Court: New Roof

Several projects have been delayed due to COVID-19, but will likely be completed in 2020:

- Morin Heights, Veterans Memorial, Parkview Manor & Kennedy Manor: New Fire, Smoke & CO detection systems
- Crepeau Court & St. Germain Manor: New Domestic Heat & Hot Water Systems

- Morin Heights: Painting of Admin. Bldg. and Bldgs. 1, 2 & 3

All funding for repairs to WHA developments has been from the Capital Fund Grant Program. The three current programs put on hold will be applied to the 2018 CF Grant. The CF Grant Program money less our bond payments of approximately \$600K annually is as follows:

- 2018 CF = \$3,217,214
- 2019 CF = \$3,354,507
- 2019 LBPCF = \$1,000,000
- 2020 CF = \$3,361,894

Public Housing Condition

Public Housing Development	Average Inspection Score
Parkview Manor	88
Kennedy Manor	84
Crepeau Court	95
St. Germain Manor	85
Morin Heights	69
Veterans Memorial	93

Table 38 - Public Housing Condition

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

WHA provided a detailed breakdown of the restoration and revitalization projects included in the FY 2020-2024 Capital Fund Program. Over this period, there are \$16.7 million in significant improvements scheduled as funds are available to rehabilitate public housing to ensure units are safe, secure, and healthy. As with previous years the rehabilitation needs generally include all aspects of home repairs in multi-family complexes. These repairs include masonry and cement work for entry stairs, balcony and porch repairs, safety railings, hot water heaters, HVAC systems and associated piping and valves, kitech and bathroom repairs, exterior siding and painting, brink repointing, new flooring, lead abatement, roofs, gutters and downspouts, new doors and hardware, window replacements, elevator repairs and upkeep, sidewalks and walkways, parking lots, new stoves and refrigerators, and smoke, fire, and CO2 detectors.

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

The WHA focuses on the broader living environment as part of its overall rehabilitation program. While a majority of the repairs focus on improvement to housing units, additional considerations are made for recreational areas, basketball courts, new walkways and pathways, landscaping, and exterior and common area improvements to ensure that the living environment inside and outside of the units is pleasant.

Further, the city and WHA work with neighborhood associations and community-based organizations to ensure that services are made available for public housing residents and so that the surrounding neighborhoods see important improvements to increase livability and quality of life. As an example, Woonsocket is co-partnering with the NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley to utilize the Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant to begin the process of revitalizing the neighborhood.

Discussion:

N/A

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

Introduction

Over the last several years, the State of Rhode Island has made a concerted effort to reduce the number of homeless persons throughout the state. Recognizing the need to take action, the Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission completed a strategic plan in 2012 to change how homeless services are provisioned and substantially reduce the homeless population in Rhode Island. This plan, which shares the overall vision of the federal strategic plan (“Opening Doors, the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness”) that “No one should experience homelessness – no one should be without a stable, safe place to call home.” Goals for this strategic plan include ending chronic homelessness and prevent and end homelessness among veterans by 2018, prevent and end further homelessness for families, children and youth by 2023 and set a course for policy and services to end homelessness of all types.

According to a report card issued by the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless on the Open Doors Rhode Island plan, progress on public perception of homelessness, a shift to long-term affordable housing solutions and other system reforms are underway. However, there is continued need for funds to fully support implementation of the elements of the Plan to reach its ultimate goals for the homeless population in Rhode Island. As part of the larger state-wide effort, Woonsocket’s local shelter and service providers have an opportunity to impact the homeless population locally and in concert with efforts outlined in the Plan.

Facilities and Housing Targeted to Homeless Households

	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)	60	0	60	0	0
Households with Only Adults	40	0	31	26	0
Chronically Homeless Households	0	0	0	0	0
Veterans	9	0	0	9	0
Unaccompanied Youth	0	0	0	0	0

Table 39 - Facilities and Housing Targeted to Homeless Households

Data Source Comments: Data from RI Coalition for the Homeless, HMIS System. There is no data available for chronically homeless households or unaccompanied youth.

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

Community Care Alliance (CCA), a merger of Family Resources Community Action and NRI Community Services, is a large provider of services for a variety of populations in Woonsocket. This is particularly the case for homeless persons in Woonsocket. More mainstream services provided by CCA that can also help the homeless population include adult mental health and addiction treatment, employment and training services for veterans, and programs for persons with HIV/AIDS and those living with mental health issues or addiction.

Other local organizations that provide mainstream services that can benefit the homeless population in Woonsocket include Sojourner House and Haven of Grace, which focuses on providing support and services for victims of domestic violence along with Gateway Healthcare, a residential and therapeutic program for persons with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders. Additionally, Haven of Grace provides long term residential programs and education for persons seeking to change their lives in a variety of ways and Thundermist provides comprehensive care for persons with HIV/AIDS.

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.

City and regional social service and homeless prevention agencies provide the outreach and supportive services. The homelessness strategy will be carried out through the DPD with assistance from local non-profit institutions such as Community Care Alliance. Statewide agencies also play an integral role. These include the CHF Partnership; the Housing Action Coalition, which takes positions on a variety of housing and income related bills introduced into the General Assembly; the Rhode Island Emergency Food and Shelter Board; the Board of the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless; and the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH).

The City of Woonsocket has strong partnerships with agencies that provide housing for single adults (inclusive of Chronically Houseless individuals) and families with children. There are no existing facilities for unaccompanied youth in the City of Woonsocket. According to the 2019 Continuum of Care Housing Inventory Count Report, there are a total of 966 permanent supportive housing beds in Rhode Island for households with adults and children, 1,278 are for adults only, 925 are available for chronically homeless individuals, 403 for Veterans, and 11 are for unaccompanied youth.

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

Introduction

The special needs population in Woonsocket has housing and service needs that can be a challenge to meet. Populations such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and public housing residents have housing and service needs that are unique to their situation. A variety of organizations provide services for this population in Woonsocket. With the merger of Family Resources Community Action and NRI Community Services to create the Community Care Alliance, this new, larger organization provides many the housing options and social services for persons with special needs.

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

Elderly & Frail Elderly

Housing and supportive services for Elderly persons primarily focus on efforts to keep housing affordable past retirement and facilitate aging in place and facilitating. In some cases, small modifications to the home are necessary to facilitate ease of mobility within the home. For those elderly persons who are able to live at home independently but find that leaving becomes difficult, services such as Meals on Wheels and the Elderly Nutrition Program bring food to homebound seniors.

The frail elderly often have some form of disability and may find it difficult to live independently. Therefore, housing needs for the frail elderly focus on assisted living at a variety of levels of care depending on the severity of the disability. These facilities and services can be costly, and affordability is a concern for many individuals who no longer have a steady income.

Woonsocket Public Housing has more than 630 units for the elderly/disabled. CCA also has an additional 44 assisted living beds in two facilities, Evergreen House and Warren Manor. In addition to senior-oriented housing, Aging Well, Inc. (formerly Senior Services, Inc.) has an active center in Woonsocket. Aging Well provides a variety of supervised services and activities for elderly and disabled residents in the City that want to stay in their homes but need assistance during the day. Programming at the center includes meal preparation and service, adult alternative day care, wellness programs, fitness classes, games and crafts. Additionally, an on-site Community Information Specialist provides assistance with applications for local, state and federal assistance programs and health insurance.

People with HIV/AIDS

As with any other population group, affordable housing options are of urgent concern for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Stable housing is required to maintain a consistent medication regime. Individuals need a

place to take care of hygiene and their immune system. No one who lives on the street can be compliant with their medication treatment or care. When people have stable housing they are able to get the services they need.

HIV/AIDS can occur at a higher rate among marginalized populations. These populations, such as homeless persons, generally do not have the means to afford care and housing, particularly if the person is not employed. Therefore, affordable housing and care options are needed. In the Woonsocket area, there are two licensed assisted living facilities to meet the care and housing needs for persons with HIV/AIDS: AIDS Care Ocean State (ACOS) and the Agape Center. Additional assisted living residences are provided by Community Care Alliance (CCA).

Thundermist Health Center is a primary provider for a variety of care and services for uninsured persons with HIV/AIDS. They run one of two Ryan White Title III Early Intervention Services programs that focuses on comprehensively caring for HIV positive patients through specialty care affiliations with Brown University. Thundermist also provides other services including clinical trials, primary care and dental care. In addition to these services, Thundermist provides confidential HIV/AIDS testing at the Health Center and at local homeless shelters where they provide basic medical care.

Thundermist partners with a number of other community organizations to provide additional services for persons living with HIV/AIDS. The Agape Center run by the Community Care Alliance provides state residents and patients at Thundermist with a variety of services including transportation assistance, help securing benefits, identifying and assessing substance abuse and mental health treatment options, housing assistance, and advocacy, among others.

For persons with HIV/AIDS and struggling with homelessness, there are two primary options for supportive housing within Woonsocket. These options are often not only available to persons with HIV/AIDS, but also to other homeless persons with health concerns or disabilities. CCA offers permanent supportive housing (PSH) at locations throughout Woonsocket and northern Rhode Island. Persons applying for this housing options must meet certain requirements including being at least 18 years of age, maintaining a sober lifestyle and engaging in treatment and supportive services.

ACOS has a 10 bed assisted living facility and a 5 bed addiction support program called New Transitions which provides transitional housing for persons with HIV/AIDS and struggling with addiction. ACOS also has developed 19 properties throughout Rhode Island that house 127 clients in 48 apartments and an additional 76 clients in 47 apartments that are subleased by ACOS.

People with Alcohol or Other Substance Abuse Problems

As outlined by the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH) for the State of Rhode Island, there are six types of services provided by Rhode Island Substance Abuse Treatment Providers that meet the standards and guidelines set forth by the American Society of Addiction Medicine. Services available include detox, outpatient treatment, intensive

outpatient treatment, partial hospital or day treatment, residential treatment and continuing care/aftercare planning. Facilities providing these services throughout Rhode Island received grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

There are organizations in the city that provide housing and service for persons with alcohol or substance abuse problems. One of the primary providers is the Community Care Alliance which offers a range of services including an intensive outpatient program, partial hospitalization program (Rise to Recovery) and a residential substance use treatment program focused primarily on men with chemical dependency. CCA also has a recover house which is defined as a sober house with support services for those who recently completed a residential treatment program. In addition, CCA provides a variety of services for gambling issues and DUI court ordered treatment, among others.

Other local organizations that provide substance abuse services include the Tri-Hab a residential and therapeutic program for persons with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders through Gateway Healthcare and Haven of Grace which provides long term residential programs and education for persons seeking to change their lives in a variety of ways.

Public Housing Residents

As mentioned earlier in this section, Woonsocket Housing Authority provides housing specifically geared towards the needs of elderly and disabled persons. There are 628 elderly/disabled units in four properties: Parkview Manor, Kennedy Manor, Crepeau Court and St. Germain Manor. There are a total of 50 units designated as accessible in St. Germain Manor. St. Germain is an assisted living facility that provides residences with meals, transportation, activities and access to health and medical services, among other services. Currently all of these housing units are occupied. There is a wait list of 563 elderly persons and an additional 2,828 disabled individuals. This indicates that there is a great need within the Woonsocket community for additional special needs supportive housing.

People with Disabilities

Accessibility and affordability are often the greatest concern for persons with disabilities. The physical layout of housing units for those with physical disabilities require substantial modification to allow for accessibility. These modifications are based primarily on the needed assistance getting into, out of, and around their homes (i.e., ramps lifts, platforms, and modified stairs and hallways that allow for better access). There is also a need for glide chairs to allow individual to ascend and descend stairs, modified bathrooms, relocated laundry facilities to a more easily accessible area of the house, and kitchen upgrades to allow for easier access to counters, stovetops, and cupboards. These home modifications are much easier when the individual owns their home. Renters unfortunately are less able to implement modifications when the landlord is not interested in modifying the home.

While the Fair Housing Act requires all “covered multifamily dwellings” to provide accessible features has increased accessibility in many buildings, this Act only impacts those buildings built after March 13,

1991. Given that much of the rental and ownership housing stock in Woonsocket was built before this time, finding accessible units can be a challenge. Other regulations, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Architectural Barriers Act all have elements that require accessibility. While these regulations help to increase the number of housing units that are accessible to persons with disabilities, finding funding to retrofit rental and ownership housing units can be a challenge. The Woonsocket Housing Authority does have 50 officially accessible units, while there are an additional 580 units that focus on meeting the housing and service needs of the elderly and disabled.

Depending on the extent of the disability, full-time employment that can support an individual or household may be a challenge. In these cases, affordable housing is particularly important. However, finding housing that is appropriately accessible and affordable can be an issue due to the age of the city's housing stock.

The City of Woonsocket has prioritized funding for social services in this area in the past to fund the activities and programming for organizations such as the Arc of Northern Rhode Island – The Homestead Group which provides human services for persons with developmental disabilities, and Gateway Healthcare's Tri-Hab that addresses substance abuse for individuals with mental health disorder through residential and therapeutic programs.

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

As discussed above, the City of Woonsocket provides funding to many agencies and service providers that work in collaboration for those returning from mental and physical health institutions. Agencies providing services to persons with special needs have indicated that the greatest service needs for those with mental illness include maintaining affordable housing units and consistent mental health treatment. Affordable housing options are the most critical need in the City of Woonsocket.

The Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Development Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH) maintains a memorandum of understanding with the Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development to address the needs of persons returning from institutional stays to ensure that they have housing. This memorandum indicates that a patient cannot be discharged from a mental health institution and into homelessness. Therefore, BHDDH focuses on the Housing First model utilizing PATH and SAMSHA grants to provide permanent housing to those who refuse treatment. BHDDH also works to increase permanent supportive housing and community-based housing with the Office of Homelessness.

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)

Based on the programs and organizations recommended for funding by the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the upcoming year's priorities include funding for special needs facilities and services.

Additional programs that have been funded recently and will likely continue to be a priority over the next 5 years include Meals on Wheels for housebound senior citizens, adult day care and elderly nutrition and activities for seniors and disabled persons.

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))

Based on the programs and organizations recommended for funding by the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the upcoming year's priorities include funding for special needs facilities and services.

Additional programs that have been funded recently and will likely continue to be a priority over the next 5 years include Meals on Wheels for housebound senior citizens, adult day care and elderly nutrition and activities for seniors and disabled persons.

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

Negative Effects of Public Policies on Affordable Housing and Residential Investment

Earlier analysis in the Needs Assessment and Market Analysis sections of this Plan reveal that the cost of housing in Woonsocket, represented by median housing value and median gross rent, is generally less than the State median housing value and Fair Market Rents for the area. While housing costs are comparably low, the analysis of the number of cost burdened households in Woonsocket revealed that many low, very low and extremely low income households are paying more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs, particularly those in rental units. Additionally, the number of existing housing units with some level of housing condition issue (physical, financial, or occupancy-related) indicates that a notable barrier to affordable housing is ensuring that there is sufficient housing that is safe, decent and sanitary. This is particularly the case for lower income households with fewer housing choices.

As part of the development of the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Woonsocket’s Zoning and Land Use regulations were evaluated based on HUD’s Fair Housing Planning Guide. Impediments to affordable housing can take many forms and some policies, practices, and procedures may appear neutral on their face but adversely affect the provision of affordable housing. Based on this evaluation, there are five potential public policies that could impact affordable housing in the City.

- Ordinance does not define “family” inclusively, and places a cap on the number of unrelated persons that can live together in a single housekeeping unit. Defining family broadly advances non-traditional families and supports the blending of families who may be living together for economic purposes. Restrictions in the definition of family typically cap the number of unrelated individuals that can live together. This restriction can impede the development of group homes, effectively limiting housing choice for people with disabilities.
- Ordinance does not define “group home” or similarly named land use as “a single-family dwelling unit”
- Ordinance requires a special use / conditional use permit or public hearing before allowing up to 6 unrelated people with disabilities to reside in a group home
- Ordinance does not regulate group homes as single-family dwelling units and requires additional regulatory provisions
- Ordinance does not permit manufactured and modular housing on single lots like single family dwelling units

The lack of funding available for affordable housing development is one of the most significant barriers to creating more affordable housing units. Woonsocket’s receipt of CDBG and HOME funds is limited. The State’s Building Homes Rhode Island affordable housing program has been exhausted.

Woonsocket's residential real estate tax for owner-occupied property is the fifth highest in the state, set at \$124.08 per \$1,000 of valuation. The city's commercial tax rate is even higher, at \$35.94 per \$1,000, placing Woonsocket in third place in Rhode Island for commercial tax rate. The commercial tax rate applies to multi-family housing which could limit the development of market-rate rental properties.

A Homestead Exemption is given to any residential property with one, two, or three units as long as one of units is owner-occupied. Single family units receive a 30 percent tax reduction, two units receives a nine percent tax reduction and three units receives a three percent tax reduction. Tax exemptions are also available for qualifying homeowners who are Veterans, elderly or blind.

MA-45 Non-Housing Community Development Assets – 91.215 (f)

Introduction

The information contained in this section describes the City’s community and economic development assets. Non-housing community development efforts can add jobs, improve the capacity of the labor force and facilitate the revitalization of commercial centers. These assets can impact a housing market by increasing household income, adding demand for quality housing and encouraging additional revitalization efforts.

Woonsocket is the state’s sixth largest city, with a total population of 41,539 residents. Several of the state’s largest employers are headquartered in the city, including CVS Health, Landmark Medical Center, ARC of Northern RI, Woonsocket Prescription Center, and Summer Infant. Rhode Island’s small size makes the state a regional economy. With the ability to drive from one corner of the state to the other in less than an hour, every local area is generally accessible by car. While the RI Public Transit Authority serves Woonsocket, the public bus system does not provide substantial coverage throughout the city. RIPTA functions as a hub and spoke system, where Kennedy Plaza in downtown Providence is the central hub of the system and virtually all trips begin and end in the capital city. This creates challenges for Woonsocket residents accessing other areas of the state by bus as most trips require going into downtown Providence to then transfer to another bus. Further, several key employment areas in the city and the state are not located along a bus line.

The City sits at the northern border of the state, northeast of Rt. 146 and a short drive from Rt. 295. It takes approximately 25 minutes in good traffic conditions to drive from downtown Woonsocket to downtown Providence (the largest regional employment hub). Similarly, it takes approximately 40 minutes to drive from downtown Woonsocket to downtown Worcester with good traffic conditions allowing for accessibility for jobs in that employment area. This provides additional employment opportunities for city residents that are generally more accessible for Woonsocket residents than other RI residents.

Economic Development Market Analysis

Business Activity

Business by Sector	Number of Workers	Number of Jobs	Share of Workers %	Share of Jobs %	Jobs less workers %
Agriculture, Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	86	0	0	0	0

Business by Sector	Number of Workers	Number of Jobs	Share of Workers %	Share of Jobs %	Jobs less workers %
Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations	1,927	1,071	11	9	-2
Construction	1,406	329	8	3	-5
Education and Health Care Services	3,977	3,824	22	31	9
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1,102	253	6	2	-4
Information	276	31	2	0	-2
Manufacturing	2,713	964	15	8	-7
Other Services	777	743	4	6	2
Professional, Scientific, Management Services	1,649	2,944	9	24	15
Public Administration	0	0	0	0	0
Retail Trade	2,905	1,361	16	11	-5
Transportation and Warehousing	1,051	519	6	4	-2
Wholesale Trade	409	332	2	3	1
Total	18,278	12,371	--	--	--

Table 40 - Business Activity

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Labor Force

Total Population in the Civilian Labor Force	20,513
Civilian Employed Population 16 years and over	18,718
Unemployment Rate	8.70
Unemployment Rate for Ages 16-24	14.50
Unemployment Rate for Ages 25-65	8.00

Table 41 - Labor Force

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Occupations by Sector	Number of People
Management, business and financial	5,351
Farming, fisheries and forestry occupations	491
Service	3,924
Sales and office	3,960
Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair	1,267
Production, transportation and material moving	3,725

Table 42 – Occupations by Sector

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Travel Time

Travel Time	Number	Percentage
< 30 Minutes	11,411	64%
30-59 Minutes	4,916	28%
60 or More Minutes	1,397	8%
Total	17,724	100%

Table 43 - Travel Time

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Education:

Educational Attainment by Employment Status (Population 16 and Older)

Educational Attainment	In Labor Force		Not in Labor Force
	Civilian Employed	Unemployed	
Less than high school graduate	1,697	160	1,980

Educational Attainment	In Labor Force		Not in Labor Force
	Civilian Employed	Unemployed	
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	5,183	713	2,316
Some college or Associate's degree	5,161	329	1,486
Bachelor's degree or higher	3,296	130	609

Table 44 - Educational Attainment by Employment Status

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

Educational Attainment by Age

	Age				
	18–24 yrs	25–34 yrs	35–44 yrs	45–65 yrs	65+ yrs
Less than 9th grade	0	0	0	0	0
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	846	656	723	2,458	1,738
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	1,622	4,457	3,417	7,315	2,465
Some college, no degree	0	0	0	0	0
Associate's degree	1,086	0	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	198	1,652	911	1,473	1,473
Graduate or professional degree	0	0	0	0	0

Table 45 - Educational Attainment by Age

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments: The new data available from the U.S. Census Bureau is not nearly as robust to differentiate educational attainment by age. In the groupings above, the information in 9th to 12th grade includes those with less than 9th grade education; High School Graduate includes some college and associate degrees (except for the 18-24 year old age group; and Bachelor degree includes graduate and professional degree.

Educational Attainment – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Educational Attainment	Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months
Less than high school graduate	23,547
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30,974
Some college or Associate's degree	35,259
Bachelor's degree	45,380
Graduate or professional degree	72,951

Table 46 – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Alternate Data Source Name:

2014-2018 ACS

Data Source Comments:

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

The largest sector of Woonsocket's economy is Education and Health Care Services with 3,824 jobs. This single industry accounts for over 30% of the total available jobs in the city. This is primarily due to Landmark Medical Center which employs approximately 1,200 staff and the network of health-related business and private practices that are affiliated or support the Medical Center. The next largest industries are Professional, Scientific, Management Services with 2,944 jobs, Retail Trade with 1,361 jobs, Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations with 1,071 jobs, and Manufacturing with 964 jobs. In total, these five sectors comprise 82% of the total number of jobs in Woonsocket.

Several of the state's largest employers are headquartered in the city, including CVS Health, Landmark Medical Center, ARC of Northern RI, Woonsocket Prescription Center, and Summer Infant. However, there are more workers than jobs in every sector of the city's economy meaning that generally workers need to commute outside of the city to find adequate employment opportunities. There are 18,718 employed residents ages 16 and above living in the city while there are only 12,389 jobs available in Woonsocket, almost 1.5 times the number of employed workers for available jobs.

Based on an Inflow/Outflow analysis using 2017 employment data (the most recent data available), only 16% of all workers living in Woonsocket worked in the city. The other 84% of workers commuted outside of the city to their place of employment. Among all the jobs that were available in the city in 2017, 78% of them were filled by workers who commuted into the city for employment. Even though 78% of workers leave the city to get to work, most workers (68%) spend less than 30 minutes traveling to work. The average travel time for Woonsocket workers is approximately 25 minutes. The major employment hub in the area is the City of Providence which takes approximately 20-25 minutes to drive.

It is important to highlight that Woonsocket is an integral part of a much larger statewide and regional economy. Additional data from the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training shows the largest employment sectors in the state including; Health Care & Social Assistance (80,786 jobs); Professional, Technical, Administrative & Business Services (66,356 jobs); Accommodation & Food Services (48,075 jobs); Retail Trade (47,522 jobs); and Manufacturing (39,716 jobs). These five industries comprise almost 70% of all the jobs in the state with annual average salaries ranging from \$21,744 for Accommodation & Food Services to \$77,894 for Professional, Technical, Administrative & Business Services.

There are large employment sources throughout the state that benefit and are supported by workers in the City. These include the government and corporate offices throughout Providence, Cranston, and Warwick; the CVS Headquarters in Woonsocket is one of the largest employers in the state; similarly, the Fidelity campus in Smithfield employs over 1,500 workers; and the Quonset Business Park, in particular, is home to over 200 businesses, including General Dynamics Electric Boat Division, and 11,000 jobs and is accessible by car in about 45 minutes.

Describe the workforce and infrastructure needs of the business community:

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic everything about the city, state, and national workforce has changed. While at the writing of this Consolidated Plan the full effect of the economic impact is still unknown, it is likely that most employees within key employment sectors of the city have been laid off and it is unclear how long these layoffs will last. On March 9, 2020, Governor Raimondo declared a State of Emergency in response to COVID-19. In a little over 2 months that state received 220,000 new unemployment claims due to the pandemic (the state's total labor force in March 2020 was 566,605). For this analysis, the information currently available was used; however, the economic devastation on the state will be immense.

The largest employment sector in Woonsocket is Health Care and Social Assistance, with 3,496 jobs. This single industry accounts for 28.2% of the total available jobs in the city. This is primarily due to Landmark Medical Center which employs approximately 1,200 staff and the network of health-related business and private practices that are affiliated or support the Medical Center. Landmark Medical Center and other healthcare organizations highlight the need for a variety of professionals, including occupational and physical therapists, clinical and administrative medical staff, receptionists, maintenance workers and security officers, and other blue collar occupations in addition to more traditionally recognized positions of medical technician, nurse or doctor. Many of these positions do require some level of technical training, certification, or postsecondary degree.

To get a better understanding of the current labor market, an Indeed job search limited to the City of Woonsocket was conducted. This search found that there are 652 open positions as of May 2020. Most of these open positions (509) are entry level jobs requiring little to no previous work experience. Another 91 job openings are mid-level positions requiring some formal post-secondary education, up to a Bachelor's degree. There were four openings for senior level positions requiring significant experience and education. Regarding wages, 171 open positions (about 27%) paid more than \$20 an hour. However, almost half of the positions paid less than \$15 per hour. Most of the open positions are full-time (499), while the rest are generally part-time, with a few positions that are temporary, contracted or pay on commission.

Statewide, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Rhode Island as of February 2020 was 3.4%, the lowest level of official unemployment in over 30 years, and a significant decline from unemployment rates of over 10-11% from January 2009 through most of 2012. With the COVID-19 pandemic, it is expected that unemployment in Rhode Island will jump to almost 25%; however, official data is not yet available.

The four largest industries in Rhode Island are Healthcare and Social Assistance (16.8%), Professional & Business Services (13.7%), Government (12.2%), and Accommodation and Food Service (9.7%). These four industries make up over half the total jobs (52.4%) in the State of RI. The average annual wage for these industries range between \$21,000 and \$78,000; however, the vast majority of the positions within these occupations are low-wage.

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.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a profound increase in business closures and unemployment for the city and the state.

In May of 2020, Mayor Lisa Baldelli-Hunt announced that RESH Inc. will relocate its manufacturing operations from Franklin, MA to Woonsocket. The relocation will require construction of a new 65,000 square foot office and manufacturing facility on Park East Drive near the entrance to the Highland Corporate Park.

In January of 2020, two new businesses opened in the city, The Sneaker Outlet at 10 Main Street and Black Bar & Grille at 1697 Mendon Road. Black becomes the newest restaurant on the City's culinary circuit following the successful launches of Fazzini's Restaurant & Banquet Hall and Christopher's Kitchen and Bar within the past year. These are important additions to the city's small business community which generate additional employment opportunities for city residents.

The city's Blight and Density Reduction Program recently cleared two River Street structures that restored 15,682 sq. ft. of open space to the city with direct views of the Blackstone River. This program slowly but surely enabled Woonsocket's cityscape to morph into one that is less congested. Removing the River Street properties could very well lead to new possibilities for expanding tourism-based activities with organizations such as the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council which already launches its Explorer River Boat Tours from the city's Cold Spring Park.

There is a plan to alleviate traffic congestion at the Highland Corporate Park that has become an issue for employees and residents. A piece of property off Park East Drive was donated to the Woonsocket Redevelopment Agency in the hopes of creating an alternate access point. The parcel, located behind the Cumberland Farms gas station on Mendon Road, could potentially become an alternate exit to relieve afternoon traffic at the light at the bottom of Park East Drive.

In 2014, Woonsocket completed the Woonsocket Downtown Redevelopment Plan. This plan outlines strategies and potential policies to improve the look and feel of downtown by enhancing the existing structures through code enforcement and financially supporting property owner to incentivize building upgrades. The plan also outlines promoting then demolition of deteriorated and blighted buildings. The plan also outlines the need to highlight visitor attractions such as the Blackstone River Bike Path and designating downtown as part of the Woonsocket Arts District. The potential of creating a Main Street Zoning District and enhancing the existing Enterprise Zone also have the potential to further economic development and downtown revitalization.

Initiatives and programs related to the implementation of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan have the potential to attract new businesses to the downtown area. This, in turn, might lead to additional jobs and an increase in the quality of life for Woonsocket residents by providing a place to go for shopping, dining and entertainment. Additionally, should the plan be successful, revitalization downtown may encourage efforts to revitalize neighborhoods in the areas surrounding this newly designated district.

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

Unfortunately, occupational projections over the 2016-2026 decade (most recently available data) show that the jobs with the highest employment growth in the state are primarily low-wage, entry-level positions. The top five positions with the largest number of projected openings are: Retail Salespersons; Waiters and Waitresses; Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food; Cashiers; and Customer Service Representatives. While these five occupations will provide almost 96,000 job openings over the 10 year period, the starting wage for these positions is between \$11 and \$14 an hour. While these positions generally don't require any formal education above a high school diploma or GED, many of these positions also tend to be part-time and do not provide health insurance. Salaries this low make it incredibly difficult to be self-sufficient and also explains why so many households in Woonsocket are housing cost burdened.

Some other types of high-growth occupations include Registered Nurses, Bookkeepers and Accounting, General and Operations Managers, Secretaries and Administrative Assistants. The skill and education level for these types of occupations range from basic high school or GED to 4-year Bachelor degrees. While Woonsocket's labor force has educational attainment levels slightly lower when compared to the rest of the state, its workers have the skills and education necessary to be well-positioned to access higher-wage opportunities within these employment sectors. In a general sense the skills and education levels of Woonsocket residents do correspond with the employment opportunities in the city and throughout the larger economic region.

One challenge facing the city is the larger than average portion of the population aged 25 years and older than has not completed high school or has only completed high school or received a GED. 55% of the population in Woonsocket falls into this category, compared to only 40% of the state's population. Similarly, only 16.8% of Woonsocket workers have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 33% of the state's workers. Individuals with a higher level of education typically earn more, and with 55% of the population having a high school diploma or less, the income generated by these workers will typically be low. There is a need to increase workforce training and education efforts to meet the needs of the large private sector employers within Woonsocket, such as CVS Health.

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.

Woonsocket residents can take advantage of several state-wide workforce training initiatives. There are two Workforce Investment Boards in Rhode Island, The Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island (WPGRI) and Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston (WSPC). WPGRI helps jobs seekers determine if they qualify for training, services and grants provided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These programs include assistance with funding for on the job training for existing employees and a potential tuition subsidy for those seeking additional education. Education and employment training programs are available through the public workforce system, accessible at the American Job Centers located at the Woonsocket netWORKri Center (219 Pond Street). This center is part of the network of American Jobs Centers funded through the WIOA program and offers career services for unemployed and underemployed persons looking for assistance accessing new employment opportunities. These services include unemployment assistance, job searching, resume writing, labor market information, interviewing, and access to training programs.

The State Department of Labor and Training has developed the Real Jobs RI program. Real Jobs RI is a demand-driven, workforce and economic development initiative that is collaborative, flexible and business-led. It is designed to ensure that Rhode Island employers have the talent they need to compete and grow while providing targeted education and skills training for Rhode Island workers. There are a total of 44 partnerships statewide in a wide range of industries and sectors. The goal of Real Jobs RI is to develop Real Jobs Partnerships that convene industry employers, key stakeholders and groups in partnerships that build alliances to address business workforce demands. These Partnerships operate uniquely, based on the needs of the employers and partners, and work to place new employees into immediate job openings, upskill current employees to advance skills or remain competitive, help business owners and entrepreneurs advance their ventures, or create pipelines of talent for the future. The Real Jobs RI program is best practice in workforce development and the State of RI provides resources for these programs through a blending of WIOA funds, state Job Development Fund, and other federal grants in an effort to develop a skilled workforce.

The Real Jobs RI program supports the Consolidated Plan by providing Woonsocket job seekers with the skills, training, access and support needed to be successful in the workplace, for free. Additionally, the Partnerships create long-term pipelines of skilled, job-ready talent to meet the demand of the employer base throughout the state.

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

No

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.

Woonsocket is not part of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). However, as a municipality in the State of Rhode Island, it can be affected by the Rhode Island CEDS. In 2015, *Rhode Island Rising* was published. This is the Economic Development element of the State Guide Plan and it was approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the State's updated CEDS. While the vision and goals of this plan are long-range (2035), policies and initiatives centered on achieving them have the potential to impact economic growth in the State and Woonsocket. The primary goals of Rhode Island Rising are as follows:

- “Provide educational training opportunities to activate a 21st century workforce.
- Foster an inclusive economy that targets opportunities to typically underserved populations.
- Support industries and investments that play to Rhode Island’s strengths.
- Create great places by coordinating economic, housing and transportation investments.
- Create a stronger, more resilient Rhode Island.
- Make Rhode Island a state where companies, our workers, and the state as a whole can develop a competitive advantage.”

The policies and strategies to meet these goals that are relevant to Woonsocket and might encourage economic growth include creating a single, cohesive workforce training system for the State of Rhode Island, locating workforce training centers in the places they are most needed, reinvesting in urban communities and encouraging local business expansion through job training and access to resources. Additionally, the plan highlights the need for the State to support redevelopment efforts, particularly those that promote walkable and mixed-use development in the areas most in need of revitalization. These efforts could include strategies such as assisting with property assemblage and utilizing tax incentives for developers (Rhode Island Rising, 2015). If these action steps are implemented, Woonsocket has the potential to grow its labor force capacity through job training and take steps to revitalize its downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

Discussion

N/A

MA-50 Needs and Market Analysis Discussion

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

Housing problems include lack of complete plumbing and kitchen facilities, overcrowding, and cost burden. As previously discussed in Section NA-10, there are relatively few housing units that have more than one housing problem (see Table 7 – Housing Problems Table). Additionally, according to the 2014-2018 ACS, there were 133 units lacking complete plumbing facilities and 198 units lacking complete kitchen facilities. As a proportion of the total number of occupied housing units in the city, this accounts for less than 2% of the total. While this is a significant problem for the occupants of these units, this is not of widespread concern for the City. There are two Census Tracts (179 and 180) where housing units that lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities are concentrated, encompassing the Downtown, Social District, and Bernon District neighborhoods. While overcrowding is generally not an issue in the city, there are several Census Tracts that have higher than average overcrowding issues – 181, 176, 185, and 182.

The primary housing problem in the City of Woonsocket is housing cost burden which impacts virtually every neighborhood. The relatively few units that have multiple housing problems occur throughout the City. Woonsocket has many neighborhoods with low-income residents, so it is not surprising to find that housing problems as reported in the CHAS occur city-wide, with not many obvious “concentration areas.” The largest percentages of owner-occupied units with housing problems exist in Tracts 174 and 181, but clearly there are large percentages in Tract 173, 176, and 178. As for rental units, Tracts 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182 and 183 all have large shares of units with problems. Housing Works RI 2019 Fact book shows that Woonsocket has problems with housing affordability and housing quality in most locations.

For the purposes of this analysis a concentration of housing problems is understood as a census tract where over 50% of the households experience either substandard housing, overcrowding, > 30% cost burden or >50% cost burden.

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

For the purposes of this analysis, concentration is defined as a census tract where over 50% of the population is of a racial or ethnic minority group, or a Census Tract where more than 60% of the households earn less than the median income for the city.

Woonsocket’s overall population is as follows:

- White = 75%
- Black / African American = 9.2%

- American Indian and Alaska Native = 0.9%
- Asian = 6%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander = 0%
- Some other race = 4.2%
- Two or more races = 4.4%

In terms of racial concentration, the Census Tracts with the highest proportion of non-White population are #176 with 46.3%, #174 with 34.6%, and #183 with 32.2%. However, none of these Census Tracts are over 50% non-White.

Woonsocket has a large Puerto Rican population that adds a significant and important ethnic diversity to the city. The Hispanic / Latino population in Woonsocket accounts for 18.6% of the total population. Latinos primarily occupy housing in the following Census Tracts: #181 with 35.6%; #174 with 34.1%; #176 with 27.3%, and #183 with 25.7%. Again, none of these Census Tracts have over 50% Hispanic / Latino population.

In terms of income, there is a wide distribution of median income by Census Tract in Woonsocket. Census Tract #180 has the lowest median income at \$19,167. Conversely, the highest median income Census Tracts are #185 and #177, with median income of over \$59,000, over 3 times the income of the lowest income Census Tract and 50% higher than City median income.

Given the income distribution, we can calculate the total number and percentages of households that earn less than \$35,000 annually. Census Tract #180 has the largest portion of households earning less than \$35,000 with 74.4% of all households earning less than this amount, which 61% of the households in Census Tract #178 earn less than \$35,000 annually. In contrast, only 19% of the households in Census Tract #177 earn less than \$35,000.

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

Based on the census tracts listed above, the following neighborhoods in Woonsocket were identified as having some degree of low income concentration.

- Downtown District
- Social District
- Bernon District (Southern Half)

As noted in the 2012 Woonsocket Comprehensive Plan and earlier in the market analysis, older housing units are prevalent throughout the City. As the Comprehensive Plan outlines, concentrations of older units are greatest in and round downtown, likely affecting the Social District neighborhood. The Plan also indicates that newer housing is concentrated in the East Woonsocket neighborhood. Additionally, the Bernon District has a large portion of owner occupied units. While the concentrations vary, there

are particularly high concentrations of rental units in Fairmont, Oak Grove, and parts of the northern half of East Woonsocket.

As the population in Woonsocket declines, vacancy can also affect the housing market of these neighborhoods. According to data provided within the Comprehensive Plan, Fairmont has the greatest concentration of vacant units. Portions of the other neighborhoods do have some vacancy, but they in the southern half of the City and further away from the overall concentration of vacancy in and around downtown.

Are there any community assets in these areas/neighborhoods?

For this analysis, community assets will be considered the existence of open space and recreational areas within these neighborhoods as identified within the 2012 Comprehensive plan. The Fairmont neighborhood, southern part of Bernon District, and parts of East Woonsocket have the greatest amount of community asset areas in the form of parks and conservation land. Fairmont and parts of East Woonsocket also have a number of playgrounds for families and children.

Are there other strategic opportunities in any of these areas?

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Woonsocket includes an analysis of comprehensive opportunity in Woonsocket. For this analysis, a state-wide comprehensive scoring system was used that took into account education, economic, housing & neighborhood, transportation and mobility and health and environmental data to produce an overall opportunity score. Based on this analysis, only the southern half of the Globe District and Bernon District received a moderate opportunity score. East Woonsocket and the North End received a score of low opportunity, and Fairmont, Downtown, and part of Constitution Hill was considered to have very low opportunity.

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.

The City has contracted APEX Technology group for all electronic and telecommunications needs. Apex has and continues to work with the City, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, assisting in the tele-communications of public meetings such as the CDBG Advisory Board meetings/Public Hearing and the City Council meetings. The City also reached out to non-profits to work with Cox communications to delay possible shut offs of cable service due to the hardships brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The City of Woonsocket is working with community nonprofit providers to study the continued need for broadband, internet, and wi-fi connections for low- and moderate-income households. This has become a focus with an emphasis on the positive and negative effects of school children and the linkages to education and also for the general public on staying informed and public participation in community affairs/meetings.

The city, unfortunately does not have a clear understanding of the broadband needs of low- and moderate-income households. Over 83% of all households have a computer and approximately three-fourths have an active broadband internet subscription. This leaves 4,275 homes without high-speed internet. It is likely that low-income households and/or elderly households comprise the majority of households without broadband internet given they have more limited income.

One project of the State of Rhode Island's Office of Innovation, called ConnectRI, seeks to eliminate the digital divide and connect all Rhode Islanders to high-speed broadband in their home, especially targeting supports for residents in public housing authorities. In February of 2019, the RI Office of Innovation, RI Housing, T-Mobile, and Santander Bank launched a pilot program to connect residents to affordable, in-home broadband internet access. Participants in the program were selected by a random lottery drawing of Housing Choice Voucher Program tenants who identified as not having internet access in the home. Each received free T-Mobile tablets as well as two years of 4G mobile broadband, unlimited internet service underwritten by Santander Bank. After the two year pilot program, residents can choose to continue their internet plan at only \$10/month. The Woonsocket Housing Authority does not yet participate in this program; however, expansion of this program in the city could assist residents of Woonsocket public housing and holders of Housing Choice Vouchers access low-cost high-speed internet.

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

Verizon Fios and Cox Communications both serve the Woonsocket area with high speed internet with virtually 100% coverage throughout the city. Viasat and HughesNet both provide satellite internet with slower speeds than fiber or cable service. Finally, Verizon and Earthlink also offer DSL service in Woonsocket.

The need in the city is less about competition and more about affordability for low- and moderate-income households.

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

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

One of the most visible consequences of climate change is an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. As described in the City of Woonsocket's Hazard Mitigation Plan, the overview of past natural hazard occurrences verifies that the City is vulnerable to diverse events including Nor'easters, winter weather, and high wind. The discussion puts the likelihood of these events into historical perspective and recognizes that although the probability of lightning may be higher; the intensity and potential impacts from less likely events such as hurricanes or extreme heat can be far greater.

The Rhode Island 2016 Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and 2011 Woonsocket Hazard Mitigation Plan were used as a starting point for identifying hazards that pose the largest threat to the City. The following hazards were identified by the Woonsocket Hazard Mitigation Plan Working Group as part of the 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan:

- Severe Ice Storms and Snowstorms
- Extreme Cold
- Nor'easters
- Riverine and Urban Flooding due to water runoff
- Dam Failure
- High Winds
- Extreme Heat
- Lightning
- Hail Storms
- Urban Wildfires
- Drought
- Earthquakes
- Tornados

The risk assessment portion of the plan confirms that the City has much to lose from these events. The most vulnerable assets include flood prone drainage systems, water, dams, critical facilities, populations, businesses, schools, recreation facilities, and historic resources.

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 primary vulnerability risks described in the Hazard Mitigation Plan are citywide and therefore have the same level of risk for all households regardless of income level. The significant challenge is that low-

and moderate-income households generally do not have the resources necessary to adequately respond to a natural hazard induced financial shock which could possibly lead to instability in housing and homelessness.

The Woonsocket Flood Risk Management Program (WFRMP) consists of the Woonsocket Falls Dam, a concrete overflow dam as well as channel improvements, stone slope protection, earth dikes, concrete floodwalls, pressure conduit and pump stations. This project was built between July 1956 and April 1960 and ownership of the project transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2009 as part of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, Section 2875. The project protects about one-half of the industrial properties in the city, several homes, commercial establishments, transportation facilities, and public utilities. There are three LMI Census tracts (174, 179, & 180) that would be at risk of flooding due to increased water volume and dam failure.

Finally, there are several historic mill building throughout the City that could potentially be susceptible to mill fires similar to the Alice Mills building in 2011. However, when mills that undergo conversion from industrial use to residential use are fully compliant with all fire codes and are unlikely to pose any risk to occupants, including the mills converted to low- and moderate-income residential use.

Strategic Plan

SP-05 Overview

Strategic Plan Overview

The Community Development Block Grant program was established by Congress with three specific statutory objectives to create viable urban communities:

1. Provide Decent Housing
1. Create a Suitable Living Environment
1. Expand Economic Opportunities

In addition to eligibility requirements, each activity must meet one of three national objectives:

1. Benefit to low- to moderate-income individuals,
1. Elimination of slums or blight, or
1. Responding to an urgent need.

The primary goal of the CDBG program is to benefit low- to moderate-income people. As such, the City of Woonsocket focuses most of its annual allocations on improving the lives and living conditions of low- and moderate-income residents throughout the community. Based on the needs identified through the planning process – the meetings, interviews, independent research, and data analysis conducted for this Consolidated Plan – the City has created a place-based Strategic Plan to achieve Woonsocket’s vision to become a fair and inclusive community of active citizens, effective institutions, well-planned and maintained land use, and a healthy democracy.

Within the strategic plan, the City describes how it plans to provide new or improved availability, affordability, and sustainability of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunity, principally for extremely low-, low-income, and moderate-income residents. In order to achieve the central and priority goals of the community, Woonsocket will pursue programs that will not only benefit the continued housing needs of its residents, but also help achieve its important community development goals, which are centered on the provision of low-income homeownership opportunities and achieving a healthier balance between the City’s rental and homeownership housing stock.

According to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the City of Woonsocket's homeownership strategy involves preserving existing homeownership while increasing opportunities for low- and moderate income households to become homeowners.

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

Geographic Area

Table 47 - Geographic Priority Areas

1	Area Name:	Entire City Geographic Area
	Area Type:	Local Target area
	Other Target Area Description:	
	HUD Approval Date:	
	% of Low/ Mod:	
	Revital Type:	Comprehensive
	Other Revital Description:	
	Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area.	<p>Corresponds with Census Tracts 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 and 183. These tracts do not align directly with City neighborhoods, but include the downtown and immediately surrounding areas. Together, they contain approximately 1.6 square miles (sq. mi.) of land.</p> <p>The central part of the Target Area is the traditional home of Woonsocket’s Central Business District. This is an area of land about 60 acres traveling from Monument Square on the edge of the Social District to Market Square in the Woonsocket Falls area.</p>
	Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area.	
	How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area?	Business owners in the downtown area suggested that efforts be focused on revitalizing public resources in census tracts in and around the downtown. This is supported by recent planning activities, including the Main Street Livability Report and the Woonsocket Redevelopment Authority’s implementation strategy.
Identify the needs in this target area.	The needs in this target area are similar to the needs throughout the City and are described below in Section SP-25: Priority Needs. Additional emphasis is on economic development in the downtown core.	

	<p>What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the condition of the existing housing stock • Increase the availability of affordable housing • Promote upper floor residential development • Decrease business vacancy in the downtown • Improve the condition of downtown and provide more reasons to visit • Create more job opportunities • Reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness • Provide public services to meet the needs of the population <p>Improve the existing infrastructure</p>
	<p>Are there barriers to improvement in this target area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing condition / building condition • Age of housing stock / buildings • Age of infrastructure • Roadway network <p>Decline of employment and small business ownership</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Area Name:</p> <p>Area Type:</p> <p>Other Target Area Description:</p> <p>HUD Approval Date:</p> <p>% of Low/ Mod:</p> <p>Revital Type:</p> <p>Other Revital Description:</p> <p>Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area.</p> <p>Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area.</p>	<p>Woonsocket Target Area</p> <p>Local Target area</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>Comprehensive</p> <p></p> <p>The entire jurisdiction of the City of Woonsocket is the target area.</p> <p></p>

<p>How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area?</p>	<p>Aside from the focus on downtown and surrounding tracts, as identified above, the high priority concerns identified during the consultation and citizen participation process are applicable throughout many of the City’s neighborhoods rather than isolated in a narrowly defined geographic area.</p>
<p>Identify the needs in this target area.</p>	<p>Described in Section SP-25: Priority Needs</p>
<p>What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the condition of the existing housing stock • Increase the availability of affordable housing • Create more job opportunities • Reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness • Provide public services to meet the needs of the population <p>Improve the existing infrastructure</p>
<p>Are there barriers to improvement in this target area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing cost burden • High percentage of renters • Housing condition • Age of housing stock / buildings • Age of infrastructure <p>Decline of employment and small business ownership</p>

General Allocation Priorities

Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA)

Since a majority of Woonsocket’s population is low or moderate income, federally-funded activities do not need to be restricted to specific census tracts. Regardless, the City continues to identify priority areas based on individual neighborhood demographics. Areas with concentration of low-to-moderate income public housing residents or minorities will continue to be the priority of all program categories.

Woonsocket also has developed a strategy to expand homeownership opportunities to lower income households and to provide outreach targeted to minority and other underserved populations. Outreach is a central component of the homeownership strategy. Special efforts are made to reach minority and other traditionally underrepresented groups. Methods include newsletters, press releases, and poster

distribution. The City contacts churches and synagogues, community centers, personnel offices of businesses, hospitals, and other public service providers and forwards program information and posters.

The City will seek to continue its association with numerous neighborhood-based community centers and fund subgrantee service providers who serve low- and moderate-income clientele in low- to moderate-income census tracts and block groups. The City will continue to monitor agencies through the analysis of frequent reporting requirements and on-site monitoring visits to provide income verification of program participant eligibility, including income eligibility.

Description of Geographic Priority Areas

As described in the Housing Market Analysis, Woonsocket has several areas with large percentages of low- and moderate-income residents: neighborhoods (defined by census tracts) where the median household income is less than half that of the Providence-Warwick MSA. While useful for understanding housing market conditions, areas defined as low- and moderate-income concentration areas do not always translate into housing and community development target areas. Over the next five years, Woonsocket plans to focus its federal block grant resources in the following areas:

- The **Local Target Area (LTA)**, which consists of eight (8) census tracts with a combined LMI population of 66.26 percent
- The **City of Woonsocket** as a whole, with 57.53 percent low- and moderate-income population.

In addition, any of the census block groups identified by HUD as having a population composed of 51 percent or more low- or moderate-income people, the City's HUD/LMI areas, may be selected for neighborhood-level public improvements where the benefit of the activity is concentrated in a particular location rather than extended to the entire city.

As always, the City will attempt to address the highest public works priorities in the HUD/LMI areas and focus on new opportunities to enhance job creation for low- and moderate-income people. Economic development activities will continue to focus on Main Street and the adjacent riverfront area.

Racial/Minority Areas of Concentration

According to the ACS, 27.9 percent of the City's population identifies as a racial or ethnic minority. Minority concentration areas are described and quantified in the Housing Market Analysis. Two census blocks groups with high percentages of minority residents are included in the City's LTA.

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

Priority Needs

Table 48 – Priority Needs Summary

1	Priority Need Name	Neighborhood Revitalization
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly Public Housing Residents Chronic Homelessness Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abuse veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth Elderly Frail Elderly Persons with Mental Disabilities Persons with Physical Disabilities Persons with Developmental Disabilities Persons with Alcohol or Other Addictions Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families Victims of Domestic Violence Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	Entire City Geographic Area

	Associated Goals	Housing Rehabilitation Reduce Homelessness Local Business Assistance Youth Services Adult Services Public Infrastructure Equipment Public Infrastructure Roads Public Facilities
	Description	Characterized by a healthy real estate market, attractive public amenities, a sense of safety and security, a feeling of pride, and resident’s involvement in neighborhood concerns.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Need for community and economic uplift
2	Priority Need Name	Safe & Affordable Housing
	Priority Level	High

	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly Public Housing Residents Chronic Homelessness Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abuse veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth Elderly Frail Elderly Persons with Mental Disabilities Persons with Physical Disabilities Persons with Developmental Disabilities Persons with Alcohol or Other Addictions Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families Victims of Domestic Violence
	Geographic Areas Affected	Entire City Geographic Area
	Associated Goals	Housing Rehabilitation Affordable Home-Ownership Reduce Homelessness
	Description	Characterized by minimal code issues (including lead paint), decreased childhood lead poisoning, low housing cost to income ratios, and a range of housing choices including homeownership.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Neighborhood revitalization and removal of urban blight
3	Priority Need Name	Economic Development
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Non-housing Community Development

	Geographic Areas Affected	Woonsocket Target Area
	Associated Goals	Local Business Assistance Public Infrastructure Roads Public Facilities
	Description	Characterized by the ability of local trade and industry to create and sustain jobs.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Grow the commercial base and employment opportunities
4	Priority Need Name	Social Welfare
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly Public Housing Residents Chronic Homelessness Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abuse veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth Elderly Frail Elderly Persons with Mental Disabilities Persons with Physical Disabilities Persons with Developmental Disabilities Persons with Alcohol or Other Addictions Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families Victims of Domestic Violence Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	Entire City Geographic Area

	Associated Goals	Youth Sevices Adult Services Public Infrastructure Equipment Public Facilities
	Description	Social Welfare for youth, elderly, and special needs populations is characterized by independence, self-sufficiency, and a sense of general well-being.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Leveraging social service agencies to provide services for residents and to open up opportunities for economic uplift.
5	Priority Need Name	End Chronic Homelessness
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Large Families Families with Children Elderly Chronic Homelessness Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abuse veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth Elderly Frail Elderly Persons with Mental Disabilities Persons with Physical Disabilities Persons with Developmental Disabilities Persons with Alcohol or Other Addictions Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families Victims of Domestic Violence Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	Entire City Geographic Area
	Associated Goals	Reduce Homelessness Youth Sevices Adult Services

	Description	Characterized by the placement of homeless individuals in affordable and safe housing and continued supportive services to prevent homelessness to those at risk.
	Basis for Relative Priority	Providing financial resources to agencies to combat homelessness and distribute needed social services.
6	Priority Need Name	Program Administration
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Middle Large Families Families with Children Elderly Chronic Homelessness Individuals Families with Children Mentally Ill Chronic Substance Abuse veterans Persons with HIV/AIDS Victims of Domestic Violence Unaccompanied Youth Frail Elderly Persons with Mental Disabilities Persons with Physical Disabilities Persons with Developmental Disabilities Persons with Alcohol or Other Addictions Persons with HIV/AIDS and their Families Victims of Domestic Violence Non-housing Community Development
	Geographic Areas Affected	Entire City Geographic Area
	Associated Goals	Program Administration
	Description	Provide administrative and support services for the planning, management, and citizen participation necessary to properly formulate, implement, and rigorously evaluate the City's various Community Development programs.

Basis for Relative Priority	Must properly administer and critically evaluate all programs aimed at benefiting low- and moderate-income people to direct limited resources to the most impactful projects.
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Narrative (Optional)

Reasons for Setting Priorities for Allocating Investments

Because the primary national objectives of the Consolidated Plan programs are to benefit low- and moderate-income residents, Woonsocket’s block grant program funds will be targeted to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and activities that benefit the City as a whole, the majority of whose residents are low- or moderate-income. However, specific economic development-related priority needs, including business support services and public space improvements, will be geographically targeted in the Downtown. In fact, the Downtown forms the heart of Woonsocket’s strategic place-based planning and implementation for the next several years.

Guided by the eligibility requirements of the various Consolidated Plan programs and the collection of data through a formal needs assessment and public meetings, including the public participation activities involved in the development of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the City of Woonsocket recognizes the above-stated priority need categories for the five-year planning period. Priorities and target funding allocations were established through the analyses of the needs information obtained through the planning process described elsewhere in this document. An important component of preparing this plan was the consultation process because it helped the City prioritize a very long list of needs, given the limited amount of funding available through the Consolidated Plan programs and the human capacity to oversee the activities.

The prioritization of needs and related goals is based on financial resources as well as the capacity of service/assistance delivery. In the past, the City has weighted the allocations toward neighborhood revitalization and safe and affordable housing. Going forward, the City will continue to focus, give priority status, and respond to the needs in those two areas. Homelessness, social welfare, and economic development are important issues, but resources, program and administrative capacity, and leveraging potential are limited.

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)	<p>The City will consider providing tenant based rental assistance through the HOME program</p> <p>The City’s primary focus e is on first-time home-ownership.</p>
TBRA for Non-Homeless Special Needs	<p>The City will consider providing tenant based rental assistance through the HOME program</p> <p>The City’s primary focus e is on first-time home-ownership.</p>
New Unit Production	
Rehabilitation	
Acquisition, including preservation	<p>The City is not proposing the acquisition or preservation of existing housing units.</p>

Table 49 – Influence of Market Conditions

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

Introduction

Entitlement grantees are not able to predict their future federal funding because Congressional priorities change. If Congress provides less support for HUD programs in one or more of the years covered by this Consolidated Plan, Woonsocket may not be able to meet all of the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. The City has made substantial progress in addressing community needs, the magnitude of Woonsocket's housing, homelessness, social, and economic problems means that existing needs cannot be remedied without a substantial and sustained increase in federal funds.

In Program Year 2020-21, Woonsocket expects to receive the following funds from HUD:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): **\$1,335,960**

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME): **\$454,252**

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG): **\$115,777**

Total: \$1,905,989

The City's 2020-21 CDBG allocation is slightly higher than the previous year and City officials are assuming a level-funded allocation (no reduction and no significant increase) for the next five years. The City's planned use of CDBG funds is expected to leverage approximately \$1,500,000 in private, regional, or state funds. The City also leverages funds from other subrecipients including RI Housing, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), RI Department of Transportation (DOT), RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC), RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT), RI Council for the Arts, Statewide Planning grants and federal grants such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The City will continue to utilize CDBG (\$824,852) and HOME (\$320,431) prior year funding to continue initiating affordable housing/safe housing initiatives, Public Facilities projects, encourage Economic Development and support Social Services agency who provide outreach to the community.

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	1,335,775	855	824,852	2,161,482	5,200,000	Prior years funds are committed and available to drawdown. Projects/activities are ongoing with drawdowns to take place starting in mid-September 2020

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	454,184	650,508	320,431	1,425,123	1,600,000	Prior years funds will be committed to upcoming pending Housing Re-Hab and First time homebuyer projects. Program Income and Prior Year resources will be utilized for the Housing Re-Hab and First time homebuyer programs. The City will be working with the local CHDO to expand affordable housing units through first time homebuyer participation.

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	115,777	0	0	115,777	440,000	

Table 50 - 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 will financially support goal-related programs and projects through leveraging of three federal grants, specifically: CDBG, Home, ESG

Non-federal funds that will be used to further the goals of the Strategic Plan may include City resources and private foundations, organizations, and individuals, as well as state funds.

HOME projects leverage funds from conventional lenders, providing mortgages, and home equity loans. Owner contribution, as well as repaid and recaptured funds, provide additional financial support for affordable housing. The Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) Partnership leverages ESG funds into a statewide effort to reduce homelessness. The needs assessment process, coupled with the consolidated application review, assures (to the maximum extent possible) that homeless needs are met. CDBG funds are leveraged through private partnerships and other state, federal, local grants.

The following leveraged resources are anticipated during the Consolidated Plan: Section 8 Funds, Section 108 Guarantee Loans, City General Funds, Continuum of Care Funds, Affordable Housing Resources, Philanthropy

The City's HOME program requires recipient organizations to contribute at least 25 percent of the value of the HOME award as a contribution match as a condition of the award in order to satisfy HUD regulations without financial impact to the City. In previous years, the State had additional affordable housing funds through the Building Homes Rhode Island program. While this funding has since been exhausted, it is possible that another round of funding could be made available through another affordable housing bond initiative. In the absence of another affordable housing bond initiative, the City of Woonsocket's match will come from the leveraging and transfer of surplus property to the local CHDO for development or utilizing abandoned surplus property for HOME projects the City sponsors.

The City is a partner in the Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) Partnership which oversees a variety of homeless service funding grants including: City of Pawtucket ESG, City of Providence ESG, City of Woonsocket ESG, State of Rhode Island ESG, State of Rhode Island Housing Resource Commission Homeless Funds, Social Service Block Grant Funds

Due to this unique collaboration, the CHF Partnership is able to provide 100 percent matching funds without transferring the match responsibility to ESG subrecipients. The CHF Partnership uses the rules, regulations, and policies in the ESG regulations as the basis of the program design for all CHF programs (even those that are not directly funded under ESG). All activities that are funded under the ESG match allocations will be in accordance with the Interim Rule's new requirements and regulations (and will be monitored by the CHF Partnership as such). Only activities eligible under and in compliance with the ESG Interim rule will receive the match resources listed above.

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 Redevelopment Authority of Woonsocket (RAW) has the authority to designate redevelopment areas where resources and efforts will be employed for the purpose of economic development and neighborhood stabilization. Since the last Annual Action Plan, the RAW has officially designated six redevelopment areas and is finalizing an implementation plan currently. RAW will acquire private property, where appropriate, to pursue the goals of the redevelopment strategy. The DPD works closely with the RAW.

The City of Woonsocket, through the newly reconstituted RAW, at times becomes the owner of vacant lots and/or residential buildings through foreclosure for nonpayment of taxes. The City uses residential vacant lots for development of new homes and seeks new owners for ownership and management of multi-family buildings. In some instances, the City has simultaneously made buildings available with federal funds dedicated for rehabilitation, for the purpose of creating quality affordable homeownership units. Additionally, city-owned land can be used to fulfill neighborhood stabilization goals such as improvements to public parks and roadway infrastructure.

Additionally, city-owned land will be used for facility and infrastructure projects serving economic development and neighborhood revitalization needs.

Discussion

In addition to the annual allocations from HUD, the City of Woonsocket diligently looks for other funding opportunities to support its community development goals. DPD works with community organizations, state and federal officials and agencies, and foundations to identify additional resources to support the City's priorities, including priorities identified in the Consolidated Plan.

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.

Responsible Entity	Responsible Entity Type	Role	Geographic Area Served
Woonsocket Planning & Development Department	Government	Economic Development Homelessness Non-homeless special needs Ownership Planning Rental neighborhood improvements public facilities public services	Jurisdiction
Woonsocket Redevelopment Authority	Government	Economic Development Non-homeless special needs Planning neighborhood improvements	Jurisdiction
Woonsocket Building Department	Government	Ownership Rental neighborhood improvements public facilities	Jurisdiction
Department of Public Works		neighborhood improvements public facilities	Jurisdiction
Woonsocket Fire Department	Government	public facilities	Jurisdiction
Consolidated Homeless Fund Partnership	Government	Homelessness Non-homeless special needs public services	State

Responsible Entity	Responsible Entity Type	Role	Geographic Area Served
Community Care Alliance	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Non-homeless special needs Rental public services	Other
Housing Action Coalition	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Non-homeless special needs Ownership Rental public services	Other
NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley	Non-profit organizations	Economic Development Non-homeless special needs Ownership Rental neighborhood improvements public services	Other
Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Non-homeless special needs public services	Other
RiverzEdge Arts Project	Non-profit organizations	Economic Development Planning neighborhood improvements public services	Other
Woonsocket Housing Authority	PHA	Ownership Public Housing neighborhood improvements	Jurisdiction

**Table 51 - Institutional Delivery Structure
Assess of Strengths and Gaps in the Institutional Delivery System**

Strengths and Gaps in the Delivery System

The strength of the delivery system lies in the commitment, experience, and expertise of the staff. The planning, organizing, directing and controlling of the system is hampered by the time it takes to employ the state and federal regulations and the limitation on administrative expenses. Large communities with large budget have the advantage of economies of scale.

Strengths and Gaps in the Delivery System for Public Housing

The City has a public housing agency that is highly rated. The Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) FY 2019 Annual Plan is consistent with the City’s Annual Action Plan presented here.

WHA is working to address the housing needs of Woonsocket on a regional level rather than continuing to increase the supply of affordable housing within Woonsocket. One of the strategies is to expand the homeownership program with the Section 8 Certificate Homeownership option.

In accordance with 24 CFR Part M, the WHA offers homeownership options to those families that receive Housing Choice Voucher tenant-based assistance. The purpose of the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program is to promote homeownership opportunities, self-sufficiency training and support, and community advancement. To implement this option, the WHA will partner with City and State governmental institutions and local agencies to provide services, support, and expertise in a multitude of areas. These partnerships will significantly strengthen participants’ potential for success. Additionally, the WHA is committed to minimizing defaults, which negatively impact the family and neighborhood.

The WHA staff reports to the board of commissioners, which reports to the Mayor and City Council. The appointing authority for the commissioners, rests with the office of Mayor. Hiring, contracting and procurement occur at staff level with the WHA in accordance with OMB standard accounting practices. Capital improvements are reviewed with City officials, as are plans for demolition and disposition of housing developments. Demolition and disposition projects are reviewed on a state level, as well.

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	
Other Street Outreach Services	X	X	X
Supportive Services			
Alcohol & Drug Abuse	X	X	X
Child Care	X	X	X
Education	X	X	X
Employment and Employment Training	X	X	X
Healthcare	X	X	X
HIV/AIDS	X	X	X
Life Skills	X	X	X
Mental Health Counseling	X	X	X
Transportation	X		X
Other			

Table 52 - 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)

City and regional social service and homeless prevention agencies provide the outreach and supportive services described above. The homelessness strategy will be carried out through the DPD with assistance from local non-profit institutions such as Community Care Alliance. Statewide agencies also play an integral role. These include the CHF Partnership; the Housing Action Coalition, which takes positions on a variety of housing and income related bills introduced into the General Assembly; the Rhode Island Emergency Food and Shelter Board; the Board of the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless; and, the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH).

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

The strengths of the service delivery system are detailed above. The gaps in service are primarily related to the lack of resources to scale programs to meet the level of need of the homeless population. Day programming that engages homeless clients in workforce development and job preparation, GED and literacy training, substance abuse recovery programs, and mental health services, while available, can often become strained. As the homeless prevention system moves further into permanent supportive

housing, additional resources for rental assistance will likely be required. Better coordination on street outreach is necessary to avoid duplication.

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

Better tracking of the number of clients served, the level, sequencing, and blending of service provided, and measurement of outcomes will allow the City, the State, and providers themselves to better manage programs and prioritize services based on data-rich analysis. Constantly reviewing outcomes will improve compliance and monitoring, build capacity at providers, and facilitate the collaboration and coordination of services. Additionally, upon review of applications and before funding levels are assigned, the members of the CHF Partnership and the Continuum of Care Evaluation Committee are ensuring that organizational roles are clearly understood and that duplication of services, particularly for street outreach, is avoided.

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	Housing Rehabilitation	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$600,000 HOME: \$1,000,000	Rental units rehabilitated: 60 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 5 Household Housing Unit Housing Code Enforcement/Foreclosed Property Care: 500 Household Housing Unit
2	Affordable Home-Ownership	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	Entire City Geographic Area	Safe & Affordable Housing	HOME: \$200,000	Homeowner Housing Added: 20 Household Housing Unit
3	Reduce Homelessness	2020	2024	Affordable Housing Homeless	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing End Chronic Homelessness	ESG: \$555,777	Homelessness Prevention: 600 Persons Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
4	Local Business Assistance	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Economic Development	CDBG: \$1,000,000	Facade treatment/business building rehabilitation: 5 Business Jobs created/retained: 5 Jobs Businesses assisted: 5 Businesses Assisted
5	Youth Sevices	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Social Welfare End Chronic Homelessness	CDBG: \$200,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 500 Persons Assisted
6	Adult Services	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Social Welfare End Chronic Homelessness	CDBG: \$200,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 450 Persons Assisted
7	Public Infrastructure Equipment	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Social Welfare	CDBG: \$500,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
8	Public Infrastructure Roads	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development Public Facilities	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Economic Developement	CDBG: \$750,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted
9	Public Facilities	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Economic Developement Social Welfare	CDBG: \$500,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted
10	Program Administration	2020	2024	Administartion	Entire City Geographic Area	Program Administration	CDBG: \$1,150,000 HOME: \$200,000 ESG: \$35,000	Other: 41600 Other

Table 53 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Housing Rehabilitation
	Goal Description	The City will Utilize Home funds along with funding for the Code enforcement activity to initiate Housing Rehab projects. The City will preserve existing housing stock through code-related repairs and address and reduce exposure to lead hazards.

2	Goal Name	Affordable Home-Ownership
	Goal Description	Increase affordable homeownership by funding first-time homebuyer down-payment assistance and closing cost support.
3	Goal Name	Reduce Homelessness
	Goal Description	Prevent homelessness and support rapid rehousing. Increase transitional housing capacity; increase homeless shelter capacity; and increase resources for homeless prevention
4	Goal Name	Local Business Assistance
	Goal Description	Support and improve local businesses through the Micro-enterprise, small business loans and a commercial façade repair program
5	Goal Name	Youth Sevices
	Goal Description	Funding to support youth education and job skills
6	Goal Name	Adult Services
	Goal Description	Funding to support families who are in need of socila services and victims of domestic violence
7	Goal Name	Public Infrastructure Equipment
	Goal Description	Funding for programs to improve public safety and infrastructure in the City by upgrading and replacing public safety equipment
8	Goal Name	Public Infrastructure Roads
	Goal Description	Funding for programs to improve public safety and infrastructure in the City by upgrading and replacing the transportation network.
9	Goal Name	Public Facilities
	Goal Description	Funding for programs to improve public realm improvements promoting neighborhood stabilization and economic development

10	Goal Name	Program Administration
	Goal Description	Funding for the necessary and permitted operational costs related to administering the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs

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)

During the 2020 to 2024 Program Years, the City of Woonsocket expects to provide the following:

- Rehabilitated Low- and Moderate-Income Homeownership Units: **60**
- Downpayment Assistance for the purchase of Low- and Moderate-Income Homeownership Units: **10**
- Shelter, transitional housing, and homeless prevention: **600 persons served**

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)

The Woonsocket Housing Authority has no Section 504 Voluntary Compliance Agreement

Activities to Increase Resident Involvements

One of the goals of the WHA's five year plan is to develop a positive working relationship with its resident organizations. This includes the following activities:

- Work with resident organizations to establish a resident participation policy. Evaluate the availability of additional financial resources for the Resident Advisory Board and other resident associations. Review annually MOU's with social clubs and family development resident associations. Review RAB by-laws to conform terms of membership to 5-year annual plan cycle. At this time, all sites have active resident organizations engaged providing resident information and development. RAB meetings are held with a WHA representatives as a speaker to keep residents informed of on-going issues and process. The meetings will be intensified in the Veterans Memorial neighborhood as the planning grant develops.

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

No

Plan to remove the 'troubled' designation

NOT APPLICABLE

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

Barriers to Affordable Housing

Earlier analysis in the Needs Assessment and Market Analysis sections of this Plan reveal that the cost of housing in Woonsocket, represented by median housing value and median gross rent, is generally less than the State median housing value and Fair Market Rents for the area. While housing costs are comparably low, the analysis of the number of cost burdened households in Woonsocket revealed that many low, very low and extremely low income households are paying more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs, particularly those in rental units. Additionally, the number of existing housing units with some level of housing condition issue (physical, financial, or occupancy-related) indicates that a notable barrier to affordable housing is ensuring that there is sufficient housing that is safe, decent and sanitary. This is particularly the case for lower income households with fewer housing choices.

As part of the development of the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Woonsocket’s Zoning and Land Use regulations were evaluated based on HUD’s Fair Housing Planning Guide. Impediments to affordable housing can take many forms and some policies, practices, and procedures may appear neutral on their face but adversely affect the provision of affordable housing. Based on this evaluation, there are five potential public policies that could impact affordable housing in the City.

- Ordinance does not define “family” inclusively, and places a cap on the number of unrelated persons that can live together in a single housekeeping unit. Defining family broadly advances non-traditional families and supports the blending of families who may be living together for economic purposes. Restrictions in the definition of family typically cap the number of unrelated individuals that can live together. This restriction can impede the development of group homes, effectively limiting housing choice for people with disabilities.
- Ordinance does not define “group home” or similarly named land use as “a single-family dwelling unit”
- Ordinance requires a special use / conditional use permit or public hearing before allowing up to 6 unrelated people with disabilities to reside in a group home
- Ordinance does not regulate group homes as single-family dwelling units and requires additional regulatory provisions
- Ordinance does not permit manufactured and modular housing on single lots like single family dwelling units

The lack of funding available for affordable housing development is one of the most significant barriers to creating more affordable housing units. Woonsocket’s receipt of CDBG and HOME funds is limited. The State’s Building Homes Rhode Island affordable housing program has been exhausted.

Woonsocket's residential real estate tax for owner-occupied property is the fifth highest in the state, set at \$124.08 per \$1,000 of valuation. The city's commercial tax rate is even higher, at \$35.94 per \$1,000, placing Woonsocket in third place in Rhode Island for commercial tax rate. The commercial tax rate applies to multi-family housing which could limit the development of market-rate rental properties.

A Homestead Exemption is given to any residential property with one, two, or three units as long as one of units is owner-occupied. Single family units receive a 30 percent tax reduction, two units receives a nine percent tax reduction and three units receives a three percent tax reduction. Tax exemptions are also available for qualifying homeowners who are Veterans, elderly or blind.

Strategy to Remove or Ameliorate the Barriers to Affordable Housing

The City sponsors two rehabilitation programs to give property owners an incentive to rehabilitate their properties. The Rehab Assistance Program focuses on code-related repairs and lead poisoning hazard mitigation. It provides partial loan forgiveness for completion and maintenance of these efforts. Since January 2015, applicants for the program have declined due to an inability of applicants to meet new property condition standards put into effect at that time or building systems or failure to demonstrate that the updates will be functioning in five years. This indicates that either additional education on the new condition standards or a re-evaluation of the funds needed to meet these new standards may be necessary.

Finally, Woonsocket provides a Homestead Exemption to any residential property with one, two, or three units as long as one of the units is owner-occupied. Single family units receive a 30 percent tax reduction, two units receives a nine percent tax reduction and three units receives a three percent tax reduction. Tax exemptions are also available for qualifying homeowners who are Veterans, elderly or blind.

The 2014 Downtown Redevelopment plan proposes the Redevelopment Authority will negotiate potential tax stabilization agreements with potential new business and residential projects in an effort to ease the burden of housing and commercial property purchases and subsequently introduce much needed activity in the Woonsocket Downtown Area.

The Main Street Livability Plan calls for a number of strategies to improve the business and residential quality of life in downtown Woonsocket. One such recommendation, relative to this Strategic Plan, is to establish a zoning district along Main Street that would allow the City to permit additional uses in the

Main Street area that promote arts and entertainment. The proposed Main Street Overlay District should allow, for example, live/work units and outdoor café seating.

SP-60 Homelessness Strategy – 91.215(d)

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

There are several agencies that conduct outreach efforts in Woonsocket, such as Community Care Alliance. In collaboration with the Rhode Island Continuum of Care and the Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF), the City uses its Federal Emergency Shelter Grants to support outreach efforts and case management services to connect the unsheltered homeless population with emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent housing, and the supportive services necessary to maintain their housing. To better coordinate outreach efforts, the City has insisted that any agency that engages in outreach efforts coordinate those efforts with other agencies to avoid duplication and inefficiency.

As part of the broader efforts to eliminate chronic homelessness, the City supports agencies that engage hard-to-reach street homeless, individuals exiting the criminal justice system or aging out of the foster care system, homeless veterans, and individuals with substance abuse or mental health issues.

Addressing the emergency and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

The social service organizations in the City are key to meeting the emergency and transitional housing needs of the homeless population in Woonsocket. The two (2) primary agencies are: Community Care Alliance and Sojourner House.

Community Care Alliance (CCA) provides a range of housing stabilization and residential programs to address the emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing needs of individuals and families. The Woonsocket Shelter provides emergency housing and case management support for single women and families with children who are homeless. The shelter is open 24 hours/day, seven days a week and serves nearly 80 persons per night in two main buildings and six emergency apartments. In addition to emergency housing, residents are connected to programs to help them address their specific needs so they can transition to safe, permanent housing. Several CCA programs offer support to people with mental health and/or substance use concerns, including emergency services for persons experiencing a mental health crisis such as suicide.

Sojourner House provides both emergency housing (safe house) and transitional housing for women and children who are domestic violence victims. Sojourner House's Safe House is in an undisclosed location and serves as immediate, safe, temporary housing for abused women and their children. Advocates help residents work on their goals and provide emotional support and education for the duration of their stay, as well as follow-up care once they've moved to more permanent, safe housing. Residents participate in a number of programs designed to help them process the various effects of domestic abuse. Sojourner House's transitional housing program is available only to victims exiting the Safe House, those who are homeless or in need of transitional housing as a result of fleeing a situation

of domestic violence/dating violence, or those for whom emergency shelter services or other crisis intervention services are unavailable or insufficient.

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.

There are 1,702 permanent housing beds available in the state as of February 2019. Through intense case management and comprehensive housing placement strategies, the system of homeless providers focuses on transitioning families and individuals into stable housing as quickly as possible. Opening Doors Rhode Island, the state's strategic plan to end chronic and veteran homelessness, calls for "the continued expansion of permanent supportive housing units to serve chronically homeless persons. It will also call for an examination of the use of shelter and transitional housing services. To the maximum extent possible, shelter services for families will be supplanted by diversion from shelter through rapid rehousing. Transitional programs will be evaluated to assure that they are achieving outcomes in ending homelessness and effectively serving those in transition."

To bolster state efforts to end homelessness, the City places a priority on rapid re-housing services that quickly move individuals and families who are currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness into permanent supportive housing. By identifying housing, providing resources for rent and move-in assistance, and contextualized case management and housing maintenance services, the City helps individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing.

In addition to supporting the outreach and case management services listed above with ESG funds, the City facilitates the placement of individuals and families into subsidized rental units through partnerships with homeless agencies. By providing ESG-funded tenant based rental assistance, previously homeless individuals and families begin transitioning to permanent housing. Further, the city promotes the new construction or rehabilitation of rental units for extremely low-income persons through the provision of HOME funds.

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

Through the case management services funded by the City's allocation of ESG funds, many of these prevention services are supported. However, the State of Rhode Island's DCFY system does not provide the necessary services to youth who are about to exit the foster care system to live independently. Often times, these individuals fall into homelessness or are in precarious situations and are at imminent risk of homelessness. Similarly, for those exiting the criminal justice system, many are at-risk of homelessness.

Unfortunately, the State's DCYF system is difficult to engage. Nationally, over 24 percent of former foster children who "age out" of the system report being homeless, 47 percent report being unemployed one year after aging out, and a quarter of former foster youth will be incarcerated within the first two years after aging out of foster care. To address the potential homelessness of foster youth, Adoption Rhode Island, in partnership with Family Service of RI, Lucy's Hearth, and House of Hope Community Development Corporation has developed the Bridges to Hope Project, a collaboration to help disconnected youth who are at risk of aging out of the foster care system without permanency or who have aged out. This collaboration will continue to formalize working relationships between these organizations to provide comprehensive and outcomes-oriented services for youth who are or have been involved in the child welfare system who are facing barriers to stability as young adults. This collaboration will explore best practice models to streamline services in order to prepare youth in foster care for adulthood by providing opportunities for educational achievement and job readiness and to provide comprehensive housing stabilization services coupled with permanent supportive housing for young adults who have exited the child welfare system and require assistance in order to maintain housing, self-sufficiency, and improved quality of life.

OpenDoors operates a program called 9 Yards, a prisoner reentry program that works with clients recently released from prison to ultimately place them into permanent employment and housing. In the first phase of the program, clients participate in seven months of classes while in prison. These classes include college education, cognitive self-change, and vocational training. If they pass an initial screening test, they are moved into a second phase of the program after their release. Phase Two includes subsidized transitional housing, addiction treatment, employment placement, and case management services. This model helps successfully transition clients who would otherwise be homeless or living in highly unstable housing after release into stable, sustainable housing.

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

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

Over recent years, Woonsocket has seen a significant reduction in incidents of lead poisoning in its children. According to the 2020 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook, the percentage of lead poisoning in kindergarten-aged children is **4.3 %** which is slightly lower than the State average of **5.0%** and is significantly lower than the **7.5%** rate of lead poisoning found in the other Rhode Island core cities.

While any amount of lead poisoning in children is unacceptable, it is encouraging that Woonsocket, especially given the age of its housing stock, has succeeded in reducing the incidents of childhood lead poisoning. Most of this success is attributable to education and outreach, which are critical components to an effective lead hazard program. However, in order to completely eliminate incidents of lead poisoning, the City must continue with its lead abatement assistance programs to homeowners. With approximately **79%** of Woonsocket's housing stock being built before 1980, most units are likely to contain lead-based paint.

The City of Woonsocket, RI Department of Health (DOH), RI Housing Resources Commission (HRC), Childhood Lead Action Project, RI Housing, and multiple cities and towns across Rhode Island have discussed process and protocols to evaluate and control lead hazards in residential properties and decrease the number of EBL properties in our communities. Lists of certified lead abatement contractors are posted on the HRC and DOH State websites along with certified renovator/remodelers and inspectors.

In Rhode Island, identification of a child as significantly lead poisoned requires that a lead inspection of the child's home be offered. The Department of Health sends certified lead inspectors to determine whether lead hazards are present and to work with property owners to make the property lead-safe.

Certified Comprehensive Lead Centers provide a comprehensive package of services to lead poisoned children and their families, including non-medical case management, education, advocacy, window replacement and spot repair, referrals, support and assistance with housing.

In 2002, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Lead Hazard Mitigation Act, comprehensive legislation that places a strong emphasis on enforcement mechanisms for lead safety in housing and strengthens tenants' rights. The Lead Hazard Mitigation Act strengthens requirements and penalties for timely abatement by landlords, requires timely referral for prosecution in the event adequate abatement is not undertaken, and creates tenant remedies to enforce the provision of the Act through agency intervention or privately-initiated court action.

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

Living in neighborhoods of deteriorating and aging housing stock, many children suffer needlessly each year from lead poisoning and preventable housing-based illnesses and injury which affect their well-being, education potential, and life prospects. Low-income families are at risk for eviction, foreclosure, and homelessness and often lack the resources, income, support systems and connections needed to ensure safe and stable housing. Low-income communities of color also remain chronically unemployed or underemployed without the job skills or accreditations required to compete in the local economy.

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

The City will continue to make homes lead safe by providing lead hazard control (LHC) cost assistance to lower income homeowners and landlords of affordable rental properties. Funding for this initiative comes from the HOME Investment Partnership program and the Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Grant. Details of the home repair program are included under the housing section of this document.

The importance of education to tenants, owners, parents, and children is critical. Forging strong partnerships with schools, physicians, day care providers, and other public service entities is paramount to the goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning.

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Act as amended in the Lead Hazard Mitigation Act of 2002, is designed to prevent lead poisoning in children and pregnant women. Under this Law, the RI Department of Health's Environmental Lead Program must maintain certain public lists in order to alert the public about rental properties that pose a high risk for lead poisoning. The public lists, mandated by §23-24.6-23 Compliance and Enforcement, include:

- Highest Risk Premises
- Properties declared unsafe for habitation by children under age six
- Properties with Multiple Poisonings.
- Properties that have been the source of multiple lead poisonings and are not currently lead safe.
- Ongoing Violations
- Owners of property that have been cited with a 2nd Notice of Violation due to ongoing lead hazards

Additionally, in regard to lead hazard control work, the State of RI has stringent laws covering safe work practices and occupant safety.

The lack of certified contractors with the capacity to handle the magnitude of properties that require LHC, is a pressing issue. In Rhode Island, four or five contractors are bidding all the projects posted by government agencies. Some RI communities with LHC grants have targeted the clearance of hundreds of units. Without contractor capacity, these goals appear unrealistic.

Program success also requires a partnership with homeowners and tenants. A successful clearance examination is the final test for project completion; however, without continued housekeeping and maintenance efforts, the threat of property recontamination is real. As a project nears completion, contractors rush to have the clearance exam conducted and a certificate issued. They know that a paint nick from a chair or toy, or the swelling of a wooden door or window from wet weather, can once again create a lead paint hazard and render the property unsafe.

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

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

Goals for Reducing Number of Poverty Level Families

The City seeks to break the cycle of poverty by developing social competence and self-sufficiency while ensuring that basic services for survival are provided. Woonsocket will assist the homeless in obtaining appropriate housing, assist those homeless, and increase and retain the affordable housing stock for low- and very low-income families.

Results of Antipoverty Strategy

Most activities undertaken by the City with CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds are efforts to reduce persons in poverty and improve the quality of life for residents, either directly or indirectly. Programs that directly influence the poverty level include: job enrichment, development, and placement through education and economic development. Projects that indirectly affect poverty include those that upgrade the community and provide affordable housing. CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds are often used as matching funds for other grants that also reduce the number of poverty level families at risk of becoming homeless.

Beyond housing, the City works with social service agencies that provide job training, job placement, life skills training, and welfare to work programs. Agencies receiving program funding for these services include: Head Start, Institute for Poverty Awareness and Education, Socio-Economic Development Center, Connecting Children & Families and Community Care Alliance.

All federal contracts include a Section 3 clause, which helps low-income residents gain the skills and jobs needed to become self-sufficient.

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

The City continues to partner and collaborate with the local CHDO along with other agencies who hold capacity building in affordable housing unit development within the community. The City also partners and supports coordination with social services that provide homelessness/shelter services and the transition into more permanent supportive housing.

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

Monitoring and measurement activities are conducted in accordance with the HUD regulations for each program. These may include, but are not limited to, the following: Explanation and inclusion of inputs, outputs, and outcomes in sub-recipient program descriptions, contracts, and reports; Clarification of the requirements involving the timeliness of expenditures; Explanation of grant contract requirements and deadlines to all subrecipients; Field visits to monitor work in progress and completed projects; monitoring is also an excellent opportunity to explore local community development strategies and possibilities and place City assistance in a broader context for local officials. Ongoing consultation with HUD CPD regional office regarding program status, regulatory and reporting requirements, possible changes in program design, etc.; Suspension of grant activities where warranted. The City holds sessions with HOME, ESG, and CDBG subrecipients each year to review all contract goals, conditions, requirements, procedures for requesting payment, etc. CDBG also requires reports (at least on a quarterly basis) and year-end audits to track activity and progress and has developed a monitoring system that allows a representative staff person comprehensive knowledge of all funded activities in any one community. The aim of this effort is to assure the consistent application of program standards and requirements. City operational goals include program and project monitoring for progress, program compliance, fiscal management, and fiscal compliance. This process includes ongoing planning, implementation, communication and follow-up between the City and its subrecipients. The monitoring protocol considers internal controls and processes, use and maintenance of databases and the grant application review cycle. Each of these procedures provides the City and subrecipients with a set of assessment tools for a compliance check. Monitoring incorporates field visits and desktop reviews that consider progress indicators and submission requirements. The City identifies and completes a risk analysis of all active subrecipients. This risk analysis assigns a monitoring priority to a grantee. Based upon the assigned priority, staff develops a monitoring plan. Examples of factors that will increase a grantee's monitoring priority include status as new subrecipients; high risk/complex projects (such as economic development); and multiple projects/multiple grants. Specifically, for the HOME program, all rental units are inspected for lead hazards and code-related repair issues as required by federal regulations. Letters are sent to all tenants regarding the landlord's responsibility to maintain safe housing. The letters also reiterate the necessity for good housekeeping and awareness of what constitutes a lead hazard. Additionally, tenant income eligibility is reviewed at least every three years and according to HUD regulations. Proper income documentation is required of all landlords of assisted units. Rents and utility costs are assessed for compliance. Corrective action may include a notification to the City's minimum housing division for action and loan default determination and recapture

Expected Resources

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

Introduction

Entitlement grantees are not able to predict their future federal funding because Congressional priorities change. If Congress provides less support for HUD programs in one or more of the years covered by this Consolidated Plan, Woonsocket may not be able to meet all of the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. The City has made substantial progress in addressing community needs, the magnitude of Woonsocket's housing, homelessness, social, and economic problems means that existing needs cannot be remedied without a substantial and sustained increase in federal funds.

In Program Year 2020-21, Woonsocket expects to receive the following funds from HUD:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): **\$1,335,960**

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME): **\$454,252**

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG): **\$115,777**

Total: \$1,905,989

The City's 2020-21 CDBG allocation is slightly higher than the previous year and City officials are assuming a level-funded allocation (no reduction and no significant increase) for the next five years. The City's planned use of CDBG funds is expected to leverage approximately \$1,500,000 in private, regional, or state funds. The City also leverages funds from other subrecipients including RI Housing, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), RI Department of Transportation (DOT), RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC), RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT), RI Council for the Arts, Statewide Planning grants and federal grants such as the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The City will continue to utilize CDBG (\$824,852) and HOME (\$320,431) prior year funding to continue initiating affordable housing/safe

housing initiatives, Public Facilities projects, encourage Economic Development and support Social Services agency who provide outreach to the community.

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	1,335,775	855	824,852	2,161,482	5,200,000	Prior years funds are committed and available to drawdown. Projects/activities are ongoing with drawdowns to take place starting in mid-September 2020

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	454,184	650,508	320,431	1,425,123	1,600,000	Prior years funds will be committed to upcoming pending Housing Re-Hab and First time homebuyer projects. Program Income and Prior Year resources will be utilized for the Housing Re-Hab and First time homebuyer programs. The City will be working with the local CHDO to expand affordable housing units through first time homebuyer participation.

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	115,777	0	0	115,777	440,000	

Table 54 - 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 will financially support goal-related programs and projects through leveraging of three federal grants, specifically: CDBG, Home, ESG

Non-federal funds that will be used to further the goals of the Strategic Plan may include City resources and private foundations, organizations, and individuals, as well as state funds.

HOME projects leverage funds from conventional lenders, providing mortgages, and home equity loans. Owner contribution, as well as repaid and recaptured funds, provide additional financial support for affordable housing. The Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) Partnership leverages ESG funds into a statewide effort to reduce homelessness. The needs assessment process, coupled with the consolidated application review, assures (to the maximum extent possible) that homeless needs are met. CDBG funds are leveraged through private partnerships and other state, federal, local grants.

The following leveraged resources are anticipated during the Consolidated Plan: Section 8 Funds, Section 108 Guarantee Loans, City General Funds, Continuum of Care Funds, Affordable Housing Resources, Philanthropy

The City's HOME program requires recipient organizations to contribute at least 25 percent of the value of the HOME award as a contribution match as a condition of the award in order to satisfy HUD regulations without financial impact to the City. In previous years, the State had additional affordable housing funds through the Building Homes Rhode Island program. While this funding has since been exhausted, it is possible that another round of funding could be made available through another affordable housing bond initiative. In the absence of another affordable housing bond initiative, the City of Woonsocket's match will come from the leveraging and transfer of surplus property to the local CHDO for development or utilizing abandoned surplus property for HOME projects the City sponsors.

The City is a partner in the Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) Partnership which oversees a variety of homeless service funding grants including: City of Pawtucket ESG, City of Providence ESG, City of Woonsocket ESG, State of Rhode Island ESG, State of Rhode Island Housing Resource Commission Homeless Funds, Social Service Block Grant Funds

Due to this unique collaboration, the CHF Partnership is able to provide 100 percent matching funds without transferring the match responsibility to ESG subrecipients. The CHF Partnership uses the rules, regulations, and policies in the ESG regulations as the basis of the program design for all CHF programs (even those that are not directly funded under ESG). All activities that are funded under the ESG match allocations will be in accordance with the Interim Rule's new requirements and regulations (and will be monitored by the CHF Partnership as such). Only activities eligible under and in compliance with the ESG Interim rule will receive the match resources listed above.

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 Redevelopment Authority of Woonsocket (RAW) has the authority to designate redevelopment areas where resources and efforts will be employed for the purpose of economic development and neighborhood stabilization. Since the last Annual Action Plan, the RAW has officially designated six redevelopment areas and is finalizing an implementation plan currently. RAW will acquire private property, where appropriate, to pursue the goals of the redevelopment strategy. The DPD works closely with the RAW.

The City of Woonsocket, through the newly reconstituted RAW, at times becomes the owner of vacant lots and/or residential buildings through foreclosure for nonpayment of taxes. The City uses residential vacant lots for development of new homes and seeks new owners for ownership and management of multi-family buildings. In some instances, the City has simultaneously made buildings available with federal funds dedicated for rehabilitation, for the purpose of creating quality affordable homeownership units. Additionally, city-owned land can be used to fulfill neighborhood stabilization goals such as improvements to public parks and roadway infrastructure.

Additionally, city-owned land will be used for facility and infrastructure projects serving economic development and neighborhood revitalization needs.

Discussion

In addition to the annual allocations from HUD, the City of Woonsocket diligently looks for other funding opportunities to support its community development goals. DPD works with community organizations, state and federal officials and agencies, and foundations to identify additional resources to support the City's priorities, including priorities identified in the Consolidated Plan.

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	Housing Rehabilitation	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$570,000 HOME: \$1,198,503 ESG: \$0	Rental units constructed: 4 Household Housing Unit Rental units rehabilitated: 16 Household Housing Unit Buildings Demolished: 2 Buildings Housing Code Enforcement/Foreclosed Property Care: 900 Household Housing Unit
2	Affordable Home-Ownership	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$0 HOME: \$156,373 ESG: \$0	Direct Financial Assistance to Homebuyers: 5 Households Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
3	Reduce Homelessness	2020	2024	Affordable Housing Homeless	Entire City Geographic Area	End Chronic Homelessness	CDBG: \$7,500 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$107,094	Tenant-based rental assistance / Rapid Rehousing: 20 Households Assisted Homeless Person Overnight Shelter: 200 Persons Assisted Homelessness Prevention: 5 Persons Assisted
4	Public Infrastructure Roads	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development Public Facilities	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization	CDBG: \$745,489 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$0	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted
5	Youth Sevices	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Social Welfare	CDBG: \$70,576 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$0	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 400 Persons Assisted
6	Adult Services	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Social Welfare	CDBG: \$45,000 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$0	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Households Assisted
7	Public Infrastructure Equipment	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization	CDBG: \$61,372 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$0	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted
8	Public Facilities	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Neighborhood Revitalization Economic Development Social Welfare	CDBG: \$103,657 HOME: \$0 ESG: \$0	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
9	Local Business Assistance	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development	Entire City Geographic Area	Economic Development	CDBG: \$288,919	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted Facade treatment/business building rehabilitation: 2 Business Businesses assisted: 3 Businesses Assisted
10	Program Administration	2020	2024	Administartion	Entire City Geographic Area	Program Administration	CDBG: \$268,969 HOME: \$70,247 ESG: \$8,683	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 41600 Persons Assisted

Table 55 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Housing Rehabilitation
	Goal Description	
2	Goal Name	Affordable Home-Ownership
	Goal Description	
3	Goal Name	Reduce Homelessness
	Goal Description	

4	Goal Name	Public Infrastructure Roads
	Goal Description	
5	Goal Name	Youth Sevices
	Goal Description	
6	Goal Name	Adult Services
	Goal Description	
7	Goal Name	Public Infrastructure Equipment
	Goal Description	
8	Goal Name	Public Facilities
	Goal Description	
9	Goal Name	Local Business Assistance
	Goal Description	
10	Goal Name	Program Administration
	Goal Description	

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

In 2020-2021, the City of Woonsocket expects to receive approximately **\$1,335,775** in Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and **\$454,184** in the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds. The City will also receive **\$115,777** in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. The Annual Action Plan describes how these funds will be used. A listing of the projects to be funded in FY 2020-2021 is provided below.

Projects

#	Project Name
1	2020 CDBG Program Administration
2	HUD Lead Reduction Match
3	Code Enforcement
4	Fire Department Equipment - Replacement
5	Road Reconstruction
6	Sidewalk Reconstruction
7	Senior Center Improvements/ADA upgrades
8	Public Buildings Improvements - ADA upgrades
9	Woonsocket Police - Feet on the Beat
10	Commercial Facade Restoration program
11	Small Business Loan program
12	Micro-Enterprise grant program
13	Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket
14	Clearance & Demolition
15	City Parks/Playgrounds
16	Rental - Utility Assistance
17	Aging Well Inc.- Adult Alternative Care
18	Aging Well Inc.- Elderly Nutrition
19	Community Care Alliance
20	RiverzEdge Arts
21	Sojourner House
22	2020 HOME Program Administration
23	HOME First Time Homebuyer program
24	HOME Housing ReHab

#	Project Name
25	HOME CHDO
26	2020 ESG Program Admin/Shelter Ops/Rapid ReHousing

Table 56 – Project Information

Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

The City of Woonsocket prioritizes and allocates the CDBG/HOME/ESG and is based on the communities needs that are continually changing and evolving. This years allocations will focus on neighborhood revitalization and future affordable housing. The City will also focus on minimum housing standards along with utilizing CDBG funds to be coupled with the CITY's HUD Lead grant. The City will also focus on Public Facilities, Economic Development and community outreach. Ther City will still offer assistance to social service providers through the CDBG and ESG awards. Home funding will be utilizedfor neighborhood stabilization through the City's partnership with the local CHDO. other HOME funds, including remaining program income will be used for the First time homebuyer and housing re-hab programs.

AP-38 Project Summary
Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	2020 CDBG Program Administration
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Program Administration
	Needs Addressed	Program Administration
	Funding	CDBG: \$268,782
	Description	Funds to be utilized for the administration of the CDBG program
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	This is a City wide benefit for all residents
	Location Description	City wide
	Planned Activities	Administration of the CDBG program
2	Project Name	HUD Lead Reduction Match
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Safe & Affordable Housing
	Funding	CDBG: \$75,000
	Description	CDBG funds to be utilized as a match for the HUD Lead Paint Reduction Grant
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Benefits all City Residents
	Location Description	City wide
	Planned Activities	Advocacy and Testing for Lead Paint/Poisoning
3	Project Name	Code Enforcement
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing
	Funding	CDBG: \$235,000

	Description	Code Enforcement is to be used as a mechanism to help maintain minimum housing standards in the eligible census tracts of 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183. CDBG funds will be utilized for staff time and office supplies for the minimum housing staff along with preventive maintenance on the minimum housing vehicles.
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	The activity is limited to eligible census tracts only and thje estimated popoulation is 22,000
	Location Description	eligible census tracts of 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183
	Planned Activities	Enforcing minimum housing standards while linking property owners to the HOME/Housing Re-hab program. The City will also utilize the Police Bike/foot patrols to report on properties that may be potentially sub-standard.
4	Project Name	Fire Department Equipment - Replacement
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Public Infrastructure Equipment Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Social Welfare
	Funding	CDBG: \$61,372
	Description	Allocated funds to assist the Fire Department in needed equipment replacement and Station upgrades. The proposed amount for the Fire Department will be utilized for the final payment of the new Fire Rescue Vehicle.
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City Wide (41,600)
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Replacement of fire equipment and Station upgrades
5	Project Name	Road Reconstruction
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Public Infrastructure Roads

	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization
	Funding	CDBG: \$670,489
	Description	CDBG funds to be utilized with in census tract specific areas for road reconstruction. The eligible census tracts are 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Benefits all Woonsocket residents
	Location Description	Projects are being evaluated and are census tract specific (census tracts of 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183)
	Planned Activities	Road Repair and Reconstruction
6	Project Name	Sidewalk Reconstruction
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Public Infrastructure Roads Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization
	Funding	CDBG: \$75,000
	Description	Activity to support Sidewalk reconstruction/upgrades in the eligible census tracts of 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City benefit of 41600 residents
	Location Description	Projects will be census tract specific (census tracts of 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182 & 183)
	Planned Activities	Sidewalk reconstruction/upgrades
7	Project Name	Senior Center Improvements/ADA upgrades
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Social Welfare
	Funding	CDBG: \$50,000

	Description	CDBG funding will be utilized funding for upgrades at the Woonsocket Senior center along with improving ADA accessibility. Potential ADA accessibility upgrades will including new entry/exterior doors with hand pads, and new vestibules. ADA ramp improvements will also be taken into consideration.
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	The Facility benefits all of Woonsocket
	Location Description	The Facility is located at 80 Social Street in Census Tract 180
	Planned Activities	Funding will be utilized to initiate building improvements and ADA upgrades
8	Project Name	Public Buildings Improvements - ADA upgrades
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000
	Description	CDBG funding is to be utilized for Public Building Improvements and ADA upgrades to benefit the Public
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City wide Benefit (41,600)
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Public Building Improvements and ADA upgrades to benefit the Public
9	Project Name	Woonsocket Police - Feet on the Beat
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Youth Sevices
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Social Welfare
	Funding	CDBG: \$50,000
	Description	Community Policing and Engagement

	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	This is a City Wide Benefit
	Location Description	The Police Neighborhood Bike patrols are in selected census tract eligible areas of the City
	Planned Activities	The Woonsocket Police will conduct Bike Patrols and community engagement activities
10	Project Name	Commercial Facade Restoration program
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Local Business Assistance Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization
	Funding	CDBG: \$208,919
	Description	Program is to fund eligible Commercial Facade restoration projects on and within the surrounding area of Main Street along with being in eligible census tracts
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Two (2) - three (3) projects will be funded
	Location Description	Main Street, the Surrounding commercial area of Main Street and other locations within eligible census tracts
	Planned Activities	
11	Project Name	Small Business Loan program
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Local Business Assistance
	Needs Addressed	Economic Development
	Funding	CDBG: \$5,000
	Description	CDBG funding will be utilized to assist in economic development through small business loans
	Target Date	6/30/2021

	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	One (1) - Two (2) businesses will be assisted
	Location Description	City wide
	Planned Activities	To assist businesses with small business loans
12	Project Name	Micro-Enterprise grant program
	Target Area	Woonsocket Target Area
	Goals Supported	Local Business Assistance
	Needs Addressed	Economic Development
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000
	Description	CDBG funding will be utilized to assist small start up businesses with up to 5 employees
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Two Micro - Enterprise Businesses
	Location Description	Census Tract eligible areas within the City
	Planned Activities	
13	Project Name	Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Local Business Assistance
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Economic Development Social Welfare
	Funding	CDBG: \$50,000
	Description	The Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket (RAW) will utilize funding to assist in initiating economic development. RAW will be looking to initiate projects through the acquiring vacant/abandoned property for the purpose of stimulating economic development, affordable housing projects and neighborhood revitalization.
	Target Date	6/30/2021

	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	There will be a City Wide Benefit
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	RAW will be looking to initiate projects through the acquiring vacant/abandoned property for the purpose of stimulating economic development, affordable housing projects and neighborhood revitalization.
14	Project Name	Clearance & Demolition
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Public Facilities
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Social Welfare
	Funding	CDBG: \$260,000
	Description	CDBG funds to be utilized for the demolition and Clearance of future sites within the City to encourage and stimulate activity
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Two (2) to three (3) sites
	Location Description	City wide
	Planned Activities	Demolition and Clearance of Blighted properties for future use
15	Project Name	City Parks/Playgrounds
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	CDBG: \$28,844
	Description	CDBG funds to be used for park improvements
	Target Date	

	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City Wide (41,600)
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	City Park/Playground Improvements
16	Project Name	Rental - Utility Assistance
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	CDBG: \$7,500
	Description	CDBG funds to be used for Rental - utility
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	Two families will be assisted with funding
	Location Description	City wide
	Planned Activities	Assited residents in need with rental - utility payments
17	Project Name	Aging Well Inc.- Adult Alternative Care
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	:
	Description	Aging Well Inc. will utilize funding for their Adult Alternative care program
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	10 Seniors will receive Health Care and Assistance
	Location Description	80 Social Street, Senior Center
	Planned Activities	Health Care and Assistance will be provided

18	Project Name	Aging Well Inc.- Elderly Nutrition
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	:
	Description	Aging Well Inc. will utilize funding for meals at the Senior center and for cogitate care meals (Elderly High rises)
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	500 Seniors will be assisted with meals
	Location Description	80 social street Senior center
	Planned Activities	Meal Preparation for Seniors
19	Project Name	Community Care Alliance
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	CDBG: \$20,000
	Description	Housing Stabilization
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	2 families will be assisted with housing
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Assit families in stabilizing housing and avoiding homelessness
20	Project Name	RiverzEdge Arts
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	CDBG: \$20,576

	Description	Community Arts programing for local youth
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	150 youth are to be served during the school year and in the summer
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Community Arts projects and portfolio development for college bound youths
21	Project Name	Sojourner House
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	
	Needs Addressed	
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000
	Description	Shelter for victims of Domestic Violence
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	15 individula including children
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Supportive services with the shelter for victims of domestic
22	Project Name	2020 HOME Program Administration
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Program Administration
	Needs Addressed	Program Administration
	Funding	HOME: \$70,247
	Description	Funding to be utilized for administering the HOME Program
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City Wide 41600

	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Administartion of the HOME Program
23	Project Name	HOME First Time Homebuyer program
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Affordable Home-Ownership
	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing
	Funding	HOME: \$156,373
	Description	1st Time Homebuyer program
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	2 family to be assisted
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Assist Residents in first time homebuyer opportunities
	24	Project Name
Target Area		Entire City Geographic Area
Goals Supported		Housing Rehabilitation
Needs Addressed		Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing
Funding		HOME: \$903,239
Description		Assist property owners with Code related issues
Target Date		6/30/2021
Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities		Three (3) to Four (4) property owners will be assisted
Location Description		City Wide
Planned Activities		Assiting Property owners will Housing Rehab/Code related issues
25	Project Name	HOME CHDO
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation

	Needs Addressed	Neighborhood Revitalization Safe & Affordable Housing
	Funding	HOME: \$295,264
	Description	Funding will be utilized to assist the local CHDO to create affordable housing opportunities
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	The City is looking to assist on at least two (2) projects with Neighborworks Blackstone River Valley
	Location Description	City Wide
	Planned Activities	Create affordable housing/First time homebuyer opportunities within the City
26	Project Name	2020 ESG Program Admin/Shelter Ops/Rapid ReHousing
	Target Area	Entire City Geographic Area
	Goals Supported	Reduce Homelessness Program Administration
	Needs Addressed	End Chronic Homelessness Program Administration
	Funding	ESG: \$115,777
	Description	Funding for Administration Cost/Shelter Operations/Rapid ReHousing
	Target Date	6/30/2021
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	City Wide 41,600
	Location Description	City Hall 169 Main Street /176 & 184 Sayles Street/800 Clinton Street
	Planned Activities	Program Administration of the ESG program

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

Most neighborhoods in Woonsocket are home to low- to moderate-income people. Of the City’s thirty-six census block groups, twenty exceed the 51 percent threshold for area benefit activities in the CDBG Program. In most cases, the block groups that fall below 51 percent are nevertheless close, and this is why the City overall is 57.53 percent. Fundamentally, Woonsocket tries to focus its federal funds on strategies to benefit low- to moderate-income residents regardless of where they live.

Over the next five years, Woonsocket plans to focus most of its federal block grant resources in the following areas:

- The Downtown Redevelopment Target Area which consists of several census tracts with a combined LMI population of 67 percent;
- The City as a whole, with 57.53 percent low- and moderate-income population.

The City has some minority concentration areas. According to the ACS, 27.9 percent of the City’s population identifies as a racial or ethnic minority. . Two census blocks groups with high percentages of minority residents are included in the City’s Downtown Redevelopment Target Area.

The City anticipates expending 20 percent of its funds within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area. However, because the City overall exceeds the 51 percent low- and moderate-income population threshold, city-wide activities are also planned to improve public services and infrastructure, stabilize neighborhoods, and promote economic development. In total, the City plans to expend 100 percent of CDBG, HOME and ESG funding to serve low- and moderate-income populations.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
Woonsocket Target Area	20
Entire City Geographic Area	80

Table 57 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

The City continues to identify priority areas based on individual neighborhood demographics. Areas with concentration of low/moderate income residents or minorities will continue to be the priority of all program categories and the basis for allocating investments. For purposes of this Annual Action Plan, the City will focus on a set of census tracts that correspond with the highest percentages of low/moderate income residents according to HUD's LMI data. The DPD leverages other non-CDBG resources in the remaining areas of the City. As always, the City will also attempt to address the highest public works priorities in low- and moderate-income areas and will focus on new opportunities to enhance job creation for low- and moderate-income people. Over Program Year 2020-24, the City will seek to continue its association with numerous neighborhood-based community centers. Subgrantee service providers who serve low- and moderate-income clientele in low- and moderate-income census tracts and block groups are considered funding targets. The City will continue to monitor agencies through the analysis of monthly reporting requirements and on-site monitoring visits to provide income verification of program participant eligibility. Economic development activities will continue to focus on Main Street. Economic development strategies are enhanced by open discussions and involvement with private industry, businesses, developers, social service agencies, and other relevant outside agencies. The City Council approved the implementation of a program funded with local, state and federal monies, where available, which seeks to partner with, encourage and stimulate private investment to better the Woonsocket Downtown Redevelopment Area, and the community at large, with the aim of reestablishing it as a viable component of the business/commercial center of the City of Woonsocket. The Redevelopment Authority seeks to foster and encourage a positive approach to community rehabilitation, renewal, rejuvenation and revitalization which can infuse public funds where necessary and invites private capital to invest wisely and productively.

Discussion

Woonsocket has six block groups with a high concentration of minorities. With regard to minority homeownership, the City expects to serve a demographically comparable ratio of minorities through the homeownership and rehab programs. Outreach is a central component of the homeownership strategy. Special efforts are made to reach minority and other traditionally underrepresented groups. Methods include newsletters, press releases, and poster distribution. The City contacts churches and synagogues, community centers, personnel offices of businesses, hospitals, and other public service providers and forwards program information and posters.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

Woonsocket has developed a strategy to expand homeownership opportunities and lead hazard control cost assistance to lower income households and to provide outreach targeted to minority and other underserved populations. In regard to minority homeownership, the City expects to serve a demographically comparable ratio of minorities through the homeownership and rehab programs. Outreach is a central component of the homeownership strategy. Special efforts are made to reach minority and other traditionally underrepresented groups. Methods include newsletters, press releases, and poster distribution. The City contacts churches and synagogues, community centers, personnel offices of businesses, hospitals, and other public service providers and forwards program information and posters

One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported	
Homeless	145
Non-Homeless	2
Special-Needs	2
Total	149

Table 58 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement

One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through	
Rental Assistance	15
The Production of New Units	2
Rehab of Existing Units	10
Acquisition of Existing Units	0
Total	27

Table 59 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type
Discussion

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

The Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) Annual Plan is consistent with the City's Annual Action Plan presented here.

WHA is working to address the housing needs of Woonsocket on a regional level rather than continuing to increase the supply of affordable housing within Woonsocket. One of the strategies is to expand the homeownership program with the Section 8 Certificate Homeownership option.

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

The WHA is considering several medium and long-term strategies to stabilize the portfolio. The strategies fall into two approaches:

- Preserve a large portion of the portfolio through carefully planned redevelopment actions using mixed finance models; and
- Expand the Housing Choice Voucher Program and use these vouchers to promote mobility and access to employment for family public housing resident and to support private sector redevelopment in the downtown and proximate to transportation nodes and other key locations. Specific activities that may occur during the period covered by this Housing Agency Plan include:
 - Re-develop as many family units as financially possible to be safe/code compliant.
 - The Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) pursue Transforming Rental Assistance initiative and finally work with local non-profit groups to promote mixed financing for family units where possible, including pursuing state tax credit financing. Home-ownership programs are planned in collaboration with the City's Planning Department

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

Goal 6 of the Woonsocket Housing Authority Annual Plan states that they will continue to develop a positive working relationship with the resident organizations of the Woonsocket Housing Authority through the following actions:

- Work with resident organizations to establish a resident participation policy.
- Evaluate the availability of additional financial resources for the Resident Advisory Board and other resident associations.

- Review annually MOU's with social clubs and family development resident associations.
- Review Resident Advisory Board (RAB) by-laws to conform terms of membership to 5-year annual plan cycle.
- At this time all but one site has active resident organizations engaged resident information and development. The remaining site will be reactivated with election of officers over the next two months. All sites are represented in the Annual Planning process and informed as to the goals and objectives. Monthly RAB meetings are held with a WHA representative as a speaker to keep residents informed of on-going issues and process. The City will work with the Woonsocket Housing Authority (WHA) in its goal to move families to self-sufficiency and homeownership. Potential first-time homebuyers will be solicited from graduates of the WHA's Family Self-sufficiency program. The City will provide other program information to the WHA on a regulation basis and gather their input at the publicly held Community Development Forums.

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

The PHA is not designated as a troubled PHA.

Discussion

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

Introduction

The City of Woonsocket recognizes, along with other CHF partners that homelessness is a state-wide issue solvable only by state-wide cooperative efforts.

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

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

To lessen the need for emergency and transitional housing, the City recognizes the value of preventing homelessness. Emergency Solutions Grant funds will support the retooling of the Crisis Response by providing limited dollars for prevention. Community Care Alliance has received funds to divert those at risk of homelessness with cash assistance and intensive case management. 32.5% of ESG funds are utilized for rapid re-housing for those who are in shelter and need cash assistance and case management to sustain housing. Road Home Emergency Housing Assistance (RHEHA) (Rhode Island Housing funded) will continue to assist families and individuals who are at risk of homelessness, particularly for those who are renting. Funding for this resource has been cut, but it is anticipated that approximately over 300 clients have been assisted in 2018 with funds to remain in their housing or to move to more appropriate housing. Homelessness prevention is required even for those that own their homes. In 2017, foreclosures at a state level have decreased to 42% from the previous year. The City of **Woonsocket** saw a **decrease in foreclosures by 96% (2nd best in the state)**. Low wages, decreasing property values and persistent unemployment continue to put many in a precarious ownership position.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

Even with the steady reduction in the unemployment rate, the State continues to strain the emergency shelters and transitional housing as a temporary solution for those who find themselves without housing. The goal is to reduce the number of persons and families requiring the use of these beds, but with the onset of winter there is always an increased need. As part of the implementation of Opening Doors Rhode Island (a state-funded program) a crisis response committee has been created to have the state's response to families and individuals in need of temporary shelter to be respectful, helpful and provide the best solution for the household's circumstances. Consultants have been hired to help develop the coordinated assessment, and families in need of shelter now only need to call 211 to find assistance in locating immediate shelter. The continuum's successful winter planning includes close communication and coordination between street workers and shelters to make sure no one spends a

night unsheltered in severe weather. The need for transitional housing continues due to the large discrepancy in Rhode Island between the cost of private housing and wages.

The number of transitional housing units will remain stable as those who have employment, but not sufficient income, wait for subsidized housing. With no wait list for the HCVP open in the state, deeply subsidized housing opportunities remain very scarce.

In accordance with program regulations published relative to the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH), as amended, the CHF Partnership will distribute funds to private nonprofit organizations for the rehabilitation or conversion of buildings for use as emergency shelter for the homeless, for the payment of certain expenses related to operating emergency shelters, for essential services related to emergency shelters and street outreach for the homeless, and for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities.

The total amount that may be used for essential services and emergency shelter cannot exceed 60% of the fiscal year of FY 2020 grant funds committed for homeless assistance activities.

Any building for which emergency shelter grants are used for rehabilitation must be maintained as a shelter for the homeless for not less than a three year period or for not less than a 10 year period if the grant amounts are used for major rehabilitation or conversion of buildings. If funds are used or the provision of services, maintenance or operating costs, the building must continue to be used as shelter for the duration of the grant agreement.

Through consultation with client level data in HMIS and annual Point in Time counts, the importance of continued support of emergency shelters was realized. Last year over 4,200 persons utilized an emergency shelter statewide. While emergency shelters are not the ideal destination for any family or individual, they provide a needed emergency response, when no other resources are available (HPRP, family/friends, transitional housing, etc). During the input sessions providers reinforced the demand for operation expenses associated with emergency shelters.

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 lack of permanent, affordable housing is the largest gap faced by persons experiencing homelessness, as well as the low-income community in general. The top strategy being pursued to ensure that homeless individuals make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, is prioritizing safe and stable housing and making affordable housing options more accessible to homeless individuals. The CHFP operates on the premise that this issue requires a state-wide response and state-wide resources. ESG funding provides for rapid re-housing assistance.

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

To lessen the need for emergency and transitional housing, the City recognizes the value of preventing homelessness and addressing the housing and supportive service needs of persons who are not homeless (elderly, frail elderly, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with alcohol or other substance abuse problems) Emergency Solutions Grant funds will support the retooling of the crisis response by providing limited dollars for prevention. Community Care Alliance has received funds to divert those at risk of homelessness with cash assistance and intensive case management. The portion (32.5%) of ESG funds are utilized for Rapid Re-Housing for those who are in shelter and need cash assistance and case management to sustain housing. Road Home Emergency Housing Assistance (RHEHA) (Rhode Island Housing funded) will continue to assist families and individuals who are at risk of homelessness, particularly for those who are renting. Funding for this resource has been cut, but it is anticipated that approximately 300 clients will be assisted will be assisted with funds to remain in their housing or to move to more appropriate housing. Homelessness prevention is required even for those that own their homes. Foreclosures have decreased over the last year in Rhode Island. Low wages, decreasing property values and current unemployment put many residents in a precarious ownership position.

Discussion

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

Introduction:

A Planning Study “Affordable Housing for Rhode Island: Goals for Cities, Towns and Regions to *Build their Economy, Help their Neediest Neighbors, Support their Workforce & Grow Smart Deals*” was conducted for NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley (NWBRV) and the RI Housing Network. The report was made possible through the financial support of: The Rhode Island Foundation [www.RIFoundation.org] & The Fund for Community Progress [www.FundCP.org]. In the report, the City of Woonsocket was ranked as making an exemplary community effort to 1) create new affordable housing productions to meet household and economic growth since 2010; 2) create new market rate housing production to meet household and economic growth since 2010; and 3) Closing severe affordability gaps to help our neediest neighbors.

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 Housing Resources Commission is committed to providing housing opportunities for all Rhode Islanders, maintaining the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and coordinating and making effective the housing opportunities of the agencies and subdivisions of the State. They solicited applications for Building Homes RI (BHRI) Neighborhood Opportunity Program (NOP). Priority will be given to projects that include acquisition and/or rehabilitation of foreclosed properties.

Capital funds will be awarded to provide resources to finance the creation of affordable homes and apartments through Building Homes RI.

NOP operating funds will be awarded to assist in the operation of rental housing affordable to households/individuals working at or near minimum wage as part of the Family Housing Program, and to assist households for very low income individuals and families who have a determination of disability and who are homeless or at risk of being homeless as part of the Permanent Supportive Housing Program.

Discussion:

The term “fair housing choice” means: the ability of persons of similar income levels in the same housing market area to have a like range of choice available to them regardless of race, marital status, color, religion, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, or arbitrary characteristics, such as age or sources of income.

The City has reviewed the policies, procedures, and practices within the city that affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing and current residential conditions related to fair housing choice. Specifically, the City examined the new, relevant demographic information and data; sources of authoritative studies of housing discrimination, lending, and other fair housing issues; methods for obtaining diverse citizen participation in the development, implementation, and evaluation of fair housing planning; and correction actions and solutions. Information from the RI Kids Count Factbook in March 2020, provides important areas to review when looking at impediments to fair housing.

There are no court orders or consent decrees that affect the provision of assisted housing or fair housing in the City of Woonsocket.

No citizen fair housing complaints have been received by the City during FY 2018-2019 or during the first half of FY 2019-2020.

The state has mandated affordable housing units in each community must equal 10% of total community housing units. Currently, the state reports 8.3% (37,058 affordable units) of the total housing stock to be low/mod. Woonsocket’s affordable housing-to-total housing unit ratio is at 15.9% (3053 affordable units), the second highest in the state.

The RI Housing Resources Commission (HRC) plan includes the following guiding principles:

- Preserve Assets
- Minimize Costs
- Promote Economic Development
- Encourage Diversity
- Target Populations

The HRC office is charged with:

- Homeownership Connection:
- Passage of the Home Loan Protection Act:
- Predatory Lending:
- Foreclosure Prevention:
- RI Hardest Hit Fund:

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

Woonsocket identifies closely with the state obstacles as cited in the State of RI Annual Action Plan 2020. The lowest-income and other special-needs populations do not appear to have vastly different circumstances community to community. The geography of the state allows for state-wide problem-solving conversations and initiatives.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The need for funding continues to be the most significant obstacle to meeting underserved needs in the state. There was a \$50 million affordable housing bond that was approved by voters in 2016 which will have a positive impact, but additional state and federal resources are needed to meet the state's affordable housing needs.

Beyond the needs for funds, however, are the programs discussed in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan that discuss the needs of the underserved populations in the state, including veterans and those re-entering society from prison. While the state seeks to assist approximately 60 veterans achieving housing in the coming program year, it has no numeric goal for re-entry housing. However, the state continues to convene the Governor's Steering Committee on Prisoner Reentry on which numerous state agencies, including Rhode Island Housing.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

The City has identified three primary activities that meet the need, address the objectives, and move the City closer to the goal of sufficient, safe, and affordable housing. The program descriptions cover a one-year period.

1. First-time homebuyer assistance
2. Code-related repair and lead hazard control cost assistance to lower income homeowners and owners of affordable rental properties
3. Development of affordable housing through community housing development organization initiatives.

The City's "First-Time Homebuyer" down-payment assistance program provides qualified first-time Woonsocket home buyers with a loan in the amount of up to \$7,500 to assist with down payment and

an additional \$150 for a program-required visual assessment/inspection fee. The no-interest loan will be **partially forgiven (50% after 5 years)** and partially deferred (**50% after 5 years**). The deferred loan includes the \$150 program-required visual assessment/inspection fee. Repayment of the deferred loan is made at the time of sale, exchange or transfer of title. No portion of the forgivable portion will be prorated prior to expiration of the affordability period.

The City's repair program provides Up to **\$20,000** per unit (**\$80,000** maximum) to owners of owner-occupied affordable rental properties. Affordability is determined by occupant income and rent limits. For single-family low to-moderate income homeowners, the City provides up to **\$30,000** for code-related and lead hazard repairs. The City will also include up to 20% for unforeseen change orders.

For low to-moderate income owners/owner occupied, the assistance will be in the form of a no-interest 50% forgivable/50% deferred loan and 100% deferred for investor/developers/non-profits. The deferred portion of the loan is repayable when there is a sale, change, or transfer of title. The forgivable portion of the loan is forgiven after the affordability period expires. The affordability period is the period of time to which the owner agrees to maintain affordable units.

For investors and nonprofit investors of affordable rental units, the assistance will be in the form of a no-interest, deferred loan. The deferred portion of the loan is repayable when there is a sale, change, or transfer of title.

Within the repair program, the City's approach is one of energy efficient rehab and or coordination of other resources to increase energy efficiency and or weatherization of homes.

The "Affordable Housing" loan requirement is monitored annually by City staff. The process includes an assessment of tenant income eligibility and other lease requirements, as well as an on-site physical inspection for code compliance. After the initial inspection, inspections occur **every third year**.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

Over recent years, Woonsocket has seen a significant reduction in incidents of lead poisoning in its children. According to the 2020 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook, the percentage of lead poisoning in kindergarten-aged children is **4.3 %** which is slightly lower than the State average of **5.0%** and is significantly lower than the **7.5%** rate of lead poisoning found in the other Rhode Island core cities.

While any amount of lead poisoning in children is unacceptable, it is encouraging that Woonsocket, especially given the age of its housing stock, has succeeded in reducing the incidents of childhood lead poisoning. Most of this success is attributable to education and outreach, which are critical components

to an effective lead hazard program. However, in order to completely eliminate incidents of lead poisoning, the City must continue with its lead abatement assistance programs to homeowners. With approximately **79%** of Woonsocket's housing stock being built before 1980, most units are likely to contain lead-based paint.

The City of Woonsocket, RI Department of Health (DOH), RI Housing Resources Commission (HRC), Childhood Lead Action Project, RI Housing, and multiple cities and towns across Rhode Island have discussed process and protocols to evaluate and control lead hazards in residential properties and decrease the number of EBL properties in our communities. Lists of certified lead abatement contractors are posted on the HRC and DOH State websites along with certified renovator/remodelers and inspectors.

In Rhode Island, identification of a child as significantly lead poisoned requires that a lead inspection of the child's home be offered. The Department of Health sends certified lead inspectors to determine whether lead hazards are present and to work with property owners to make the property lead-safe.

Certified Comprehensive Lead Centers provide a comprehensive package of services to lead poisoned children and their families, including non-medical case management, education, advocacy, window replacement and spot repair, referrals, support and assistance with housing.

In 2002, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed the Lead Hazard Mitigation Act, comprehensive legislation that places a strong emphasis on enforcement mechanisms for lead safety in housing and strengthens tenants' rights. The Lead Hazard Mitigation Act strengthens requirements and penalties for timely abatement by landlords, requires timely referral for prosecution in the event adequate abatement is not undertaken, and creates tenant remedies to enforce the provision of the Act through agency intervention or privately-initiated court action.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The city seeks to break the cycle of poverty and reduce the number of persons below the poverty line by developing social competence and self-sufficiency while ensuring that basic services for survival are provided. Woonsocket will assist the homeless in obtaining appropriate housing, assist those homeless, and increase and retain the affordable housing stock for low- and very low- income families.

Most activities undertaken by the City with CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds are efforts to reduce persons living below the poverty line and improve the quality of life for residents, either directly or indirectly. Programs that directly influence the poverty level include: job enrichment, development, and placement through education and economic development. Projects that indirectly affect poverty include those that

upgrade the community and provide affordable housing. CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds are often used as matching funds for other grants that also reduce the number of poverty level families at risk of becoming homeless.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

Although there is a commitment to continual process improvement, no institutional changes are required to implement the FY 2020-24 Annual Action Plan.

As outlined above, the central responsibility for the administration of the Annual Action Plan is assigned to the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). This Department continues to coordinate among public and private organizations and housing and service agencies the activities and efforts to realize the prioritized goals of the Annual Action Plan. Extensive public-private partnerships have been established and organized to address the City's housing and community development needs. The Department of Planning and Development will access, facilitate, and coordinate resource linkages and draw from the immediate sources of expertise in the community to strengthen existing partnerships and develop enhanced and sustainable collaboration.

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

Public and assisted housing providers, private and governmental health, mental health, and service agencies are participants in the network described in this document. They are also the organizations with which the City worked to develop the Annual Action Plan, and they are expected to continue active participation in the upcoming years. The City will also continue to work with neighborhood groups to address their critical issues. Through the Department of Human Service (DHS) and the City's Housing & Community Development (HCD)/Minimum Housing Divisions (MHD), the City will better serve, coordinate, and address neighborhood concerns and problems. DHS and HCD/MHD staff support the City's outreach efforts for neighborhood participation by attending neighborhood meetings, disseminating information on city programs, coordinating meetings between city staff and neighborhood leaders, and assisting with the implementation of neighborhood improvement projects.

The City's Community Development Forum brings residents, social service providers, business leaders, and city staff together to discuss critical community issues. Forums are held at least every six (6) months and 4 sessions during two (2) weeks in December. If an urgent need arises, a forum will be called to develop the best and most expeditious response.

Discussion:

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.220(I)(1,2,4)

Introduction:

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income and carry over funds that are available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(1)

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

1. The total amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed	0
2. The amount of proceeds from section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the grantee's strategic plan.	0
3. The amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements	0
4. The amount of any grant funds returned to the line of credit for which the planned use has not been included in a prior statement or plan	0
5. The amount of income from float-funded activities	0
Total Program Income:	0

Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	0
2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	100.00%

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)
Reference 24 CFR 91.220(l)(2)

1. A description of other forms of investment being used beyond those identified in Section 92.205 is as follows:

HOME projects leverage funds from conventional lenders providing mortgages and home equity loans. Owner contribution and recaptured funds provide a contribution to affordable housing. The City is not planning to use HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing.

2. A description of the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HOME funds when used for homebuyer activities as required in 92.254, is as follows:

Recapture provisions shall be enforced in cases where HOME funds are provided as a direct subsidy to the homebuyers as down payment, closing costs and/or purchase price assistance. This allows the City to recapture the subsidy, subject to net proceeds, if the recipient decides to sell the unit within the period of affordability at whatever price the market will bear. The homebuyer may sell the property to any willing buyer. The sale of the property during the period of affordability triggers repayment of the direct subsidy, subject to net proceeds, to the HOME Investment Partnerships local account.

The recapture provision shall be enforced through a mortgage filed with the City Clerks' office, and a note filed at the offices of the Planning Department, Division of Housing and Community Development. The City elects to reduce the amount subject to recapture on a prorated basis for the time the homeowner has owned and occupied the home measured against the required affordability period. Net proceeds are the sales price minus the superior non-HOME loan and closing costs. Upon receipt of recaptured funds the City shall prepare a discharge of mortgage document for the original homebuyer to record with the City Clerks' office.

However, if there are no net proceeds from the sale, or the net proceeds are insufficient to repay the HOME investment due, 24 CFR Part 92 Interim Rule revised 92.254 clarifies that recaptures are limited to the amount of net proceeds (sale price minus superior loan repayment (other than HOME funds) and any closing costs).

Based on a maximum \$7,500 in HOME down payment direct subsidy assistance, the homebuyer affordability period is five years. If the assisted owner elects to sell prior to the expiration of the affordability period, the entire amount of HOME direct subsidy assistance becomes due. Only the direct subsidy is subject to recapture. The down payment direct subsidy assistance, (loan) is partially forgiven (50%) after the 5 year affordability period ends and the remaining 50% will be deferred.

Homeowners must maintain a minimum five-year affordability period. If the owner elects to sell prior to the expiration of the minimum affordability period, the entire amount of HOME assistance becomes due. The forgivable portion of the HOME assistance only begins to reduce upon the expiration of the minimum affordability period. After the initial five-year period, reduction of the forgivable loan occurs on a pro-rated basis until the end of the assigned affordability period.

3. A description of the guidelines for resale or recapture that ensures the affordability of units acquired

with HOME funds? See 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4) are as follows:

WPDD has no plans for using HOME funds for the acquisitions of units.

4. Plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds along with a description of the refinancing guidelines required that will be used under 24 CFR 92.206(b), are as follows:

WPDD has no plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Reference 91.220(l)(4)

1. Include written standards for providing ESG assistance (may include as attachment)
 - **PLEASE SEE the Grantee Unique Appendices for addition information**
Homelessness Prevention Services/Shelter Operations/Rapid Re-housing – To best assist this population, intensive case management, financial literacy, and budgeting shall be provided to clients on a regular basis, to ensure housing stability once assistance ends. It is anticipated that most clients served under this activity will receive an average of 3-6 months of financial assistance and up to 9 months of case management and financial counseling. However, individual assistance will be determined on a case-by-case basis and shall be subject to 3-month re-certifications of eligibility.**Rapid Re-Housing Services** – To best assist this population, intensive case management, financial literacy, and budgeting shall be provided to clients on a regular basis, to ensure housing stability once the client exits the program. It is anticipated that most clients served under this activity will receive an average of 6-9 months of financial assistance and up to 12 months of case management and financial counseling. However, individual assistance will be determined on a case-by-case basis and shall be subject to yearly re-certifications of eligibility.**Standards for determining the type, amount and duration of housing stabilization and/or relocation services to provide a program participant, including limits on the HPRP assistance each participate may receive.**The CHF Partnership will limit the Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services in accordance with the Interim ESG regulations, including:Housing Stability Case ManagementHousing Search and Placement AssistanceLandlord Mediation or outreach to property ownersLegal services related with eviction defense and preventionCredit repair or financial counseling services.**The Universal Intake Form must be completed during intake in order to collect required data for the state MIS system. In addition each program has an intake form specifically designed for that program that is to be used to gather intake information. An assessment is done at the time of admission. The intake and assessment process involves demographic information and taking history in the following**

areas: (See attachment for additional information Pages 3 & 4)

Medical/ Medical Care/ HIV StatusPsychological/ Mental Health HistorySubstance UseHousing HistoryEmploymentEducationFinancialDentalSupport NetworkLegal issues/ criminal background

2. If the Continuum of Care has established centralized or coordinated assessment system that meets HUD requirements, describe that centralized or coordinated assessment system.
- **PLEASE SEE the Grantee Unique Appendices for addition information (page1 of the attachment)**

Rhode Island has a single CoC which guides the state’s homelessness programs and policies, as well as administers federal and state homeless funds. The continuum includes a broad range of state agencies, community partners, and individuals all working together to build a statewide system to prevent and end homelessness.

The CHF Partnership coordinates its program and distribution methods with State homeless funds and federal Title XX funds.

The Rhode Island Interagency Council on Homelessness is closely aligned with the CHF Partnership and is working to help the Partnership coordinate with and access other federal and state resources for homelessness and social services.

3. Identify the process for making sub-awards and describe how the ESG allocation available to private nonprofit organizations (including community and faith-based organizations).
 - Increased emphasis on performance and client outcomes,
 - Prioritizing funding for HPRP type activities, &
 - Increased collaboration between providers and other mainstream resources.
4. If the jurisdiction is unable to meet the homeless participation requirement in 24 CFR 576.405(a), the jurisdiction must specify its plan for reaching out to and consulting with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering policies and funding decisions regarding facilities and services funded under ESG.

N/A

5. Describe performance standards for evaluating ESG.

The process for making sub-awards starts with the application process. The application process is submitted to the Office of Housing & Community Development and through the Continuum of Care Partnership (State, along with Woonsocket and two other municipalities) collectively evaluate the applications to avoid duplication, while streamlining the evaluation process. All applications are vetted for responsiveness, experience and capacity to their respective communities.

The CHF Partnership started including performance standards in the funding contracts with sub-recipients since the 2011 ESG program year. To develop these standards the CHF Partnership held workshops and met with each ESG funded grantee and worked with them to create individual performance standard plans that typically included:

- Increasing permanent housing
 - Reducing length of stay
 - Increasing average household income at exit
- These performance standards are reviewed periodically by the CHF Partnership and sub-recipients. Performance with regards to their standards is also an important component of the following years review committee, when allocating funds.
- Operation and Administration of the Homeless Information Management System (HMIS):** One continuum covers all of Rhode Island, with one agency, the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless (RICH) acting as the lead HMIS agency. RICH oversees the HMIS system, trains users, provides troubleshooting, and serves as the central portal for collection and dissemination of data. RICH is overseen by its funders who include: RI Housing (Lead COC applicant) and the CHF Partnership. The CHF Partnership considered all comments received during the input session when developing the final draft of the 2016 CHF Request for Funding and the ESG Substantial Amendment. In the future, additional HMIS input sessions will be held as policies are added and refined.

Appendix - Alternate/Local Data Sources

1	Data Source Name 2014-2018 ACS
	List the name of the organization or individual who originated the data set.
	Provide a brief summary of the data set.
	What was the purpose for developing this data set?
	How comprehensive is the coverage of this administrative data? Is data collection concentrated in one geographic area or among a certain population?
	What time period (provide the year, and optionally month, or month and day) is covered by this data set?
	What is the status of the data set (complete, in progress, or planned)?
2	Data Source Name Woonsocket Housing Authority
	List the name of the organization or individual who originated the data set.
	Provide a brief summary of the data set.
	What was the purpose for developing this data set?
	How comprehensive is the coverage of this administrative data? Is data collection concentrated in one geographic area or among a certain population?
	What time period (provide the year, and optionally month, or month and day) is covered by this data set?
	What is the status of the data set (complete, in progress, or planned)?

