

City of Hickory

2024-2025

Community Development

Block Grant Program

ANNUAL ACTION

PLAN



Executive Summary

AP-05 Executive Summary - 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines the City of Hickory as an entitlement community due to status as a principal city within the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton Metropolitan Statistical Area. As an entitlement community, the City of Hickory receives an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The City is required to submit a five-year Consolidated Plan identifying community needs and funding priorities in order to receive annual funding. The Consolidated Plan was most recently adopted in May 2020. Each subsequent year, the city is required to submit an Annual Action Plan to HUD. The City of Hickory values the importance of strategic planning to ensure good stewardship of public funds. This year the City anticipates receiving \$340,621 as its annual allocation. The City also anticipates receiving approximately \$25,000 in program income from repayments of loans made with CDBG funds. This Annual Action Plan covers program year 2024 which runs from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. It is extremely important that the City identify and prioritize the most critical needs to be addressed with CDBG funds.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This could be a restatement of items or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis or the strategic plan.

The one-year Annual Action Plan provides funding to support the following projects. Specific details can be found in the projects section of this plan.

1. Housing Rehabilitation/Purchase (\$125,000) - Provide funds to purchase and rehabilitate existing housing units for low- and moderate-income homeowners.

2. Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements (\$115,000) - Provide funds to construct curbs, gutters and sidewalks. In addition, funds may be used for street resurfacing, installing street lights, planting street trees or building or rehabilitating facilities including City parks for public use in low to moderate income areas.

3. Public Service Activities (\$60,000) - Provide funds to support local non-profits including but not limited to those that assist with homelessness, food scarcity, HIV/Aids assistance, and youth programs.

4. Program Administration and Planning (\$51,900) - Provide funding to administer the CDBG program.

5. Fair Housing Activities (\$1,800) - Provide support to raise awareness of fair housing rights and affirmatively further fair housing.

6. Small Business Assistance Program (\$4,000) – Provide assistance for small business owners through a micro-enterprise grant to low/mod income business owners or small business loan program to incentivize business owners to create jobs for low/mod income individuals.

7. Contingency (\$7,921) - Provide funding for cost overruns related to CDBG projects.

3. Evaluation of past performance

This is an evaluation of past performance that helped lead the grantee to choose its goals or projects.

The City's past Community Development programs have focused on similar projects and funding categories. The City is maintaining many of these programs and is also adjusting its funding priorities to match new priority needs identified by the public, such as additional funding for programs focused on youth and increasing entrepreneurship opportunities. Estimated costs are also associated with each goal to ensure that goals are realistic and achievable. It remains extremely important that the City identify and prioritize the most critical needs to be addressed with CDBG funds.

4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process

Summary from citizen participation section of plan.

The City of Hickory undertook an extensive citizen participation and consultation process in the development of the 2020-2024 Consolidated plan and subsequently this Annual Action Plan. Two public hearings were held on January 25, 2024 at the Ridgeview Library and on February 1, 2024 at Hickory City Hall. The final public hearing was held on June 18, 2024 in the City Council Chambers at Hickory City Hall. These meetings were advertised in the Hickory Daily Record, as well as on the City of Hickory website and posted at both meeting locations. The public was invited to comment on the draft Annual Action

Plan from May 17, 2024-June 18, 2024. Advertisements for comments were placed in the newspaper, the City website, and at the local libraries. In addition, Community Development staff continuously have conversations throughout the year with local non-profit and community organizations. Staff also provides program updates at monthly Continuum of Care meetings, which are attended by nearly all organizations in the community that work with homeless and low-income individuals and families. The comments provided during the public meetings and consultation sessions inform the goals and strategies contained in the plan. The citizen participation process will continue throughout the implementation of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and this Annual Action Plan.

5. Summary of public comments

This could be a brief narrative summary or reference an attached document from the Citizen Participation section of the Con Plan.

The issues discussed at the public meetings and discussions with local nonprofit organizations included increased opportunities for homeless programs, programs focused on youth for low to moderate income individuals and families. Organizations also identified affordable owner occupied and rental housing, more comprehensive services to the homeless, and more emphasis on educational opportunities for at risk youth as high priority needs.

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

There were no comments or views not accepted.

7. Summary

Significant efforts were made to obtain public input through public meetings, meetings with nonprofit organizations, and individual conversations. The public input process was used to identify priority needs to be addressed with CDBG funds. All of the objectives and goals contained in the plan address a specific priority identified by the public. The City of Hickory will continue to obtain public input annually to ensure the plan is up to date and activities undertaken with grant funds address current community needs.

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

1. Agency/entity responsible for preparing/administering the Consolidated Plan

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	Hickory	Office of Business Development

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative

The City of Hickory's Community Development Department, part of the Office of Business Development, Business Services Division, manages the City's Community Development Block Grant allocation.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

Comments can be submitted to the Office of Business Development between 8:30AM and 5:00PM at Hickory City Hall (Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building)

Written comments can be submitted to:

Anna Beth Walker
Community Development Specialist
City of Hickory
PO Box 398
Hickory, NC 28603

AP-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)

1. Introduction

During the 2020 Consolidated Plan Development Process, City of Hickory Staff spoke with numerous housing and human service agencies to determine the greatest needs in the community. The City has continued to consult with these organizations on an ongoing basis to ensure that their needs are addressed to the greatest extent feasible as the City develops the 2023-2024 Annual Action Plan.

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(l)).

The Community Development Department of the Office of Business Development is responsible for administering the CDBG program and developing the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Annual Action Plans. Community Development staff consulted with numerous public service agencies and the Hickory Public Housing Authority during development of the Consolidated Plan. Consultation took place at both public meetings and through individual meetings and phone conversations. This Annual Action Planning Process continued that effort. Additional conversations are happening around equity and inclusion in housing. The City's Community Development Manager is serving for a 2nd year on the Hickory NAACP Equity and Inclusion Task Force's Housing Committee. The goal of this committee is centered around education of housing opportunities (including both homeownership and rentals) specifically in minority communities. These efforts included a community housing fair to help educate potential homebuyers about the process of homeownership including credit scores, mortgage processes and even basic home maintenance. This housing fair also focused on the rental component and the assistance that is available from agencies in the area.

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 Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care meets monthly via zoom. The City's Community Development Manager serves on the committee, which includes representatives from organizations that serve the homeless and those in need in Catawba County. This group makes decisions on the allocation of Emergency Solutions Grant funding and also provides a forum for member agencies to discuss their needs. The City regularly funds public service organizations that serve the homeless community with CDBG funds. Examples of these organizations are the Family Care Center, Exodus Homes, and the Hickory Soup Kitchen. The Family Care Center provides transitional housing to families who are homeless or facing the threat of homelessness due to domestic issues. The Hickory Soup

Kitchen assists those in need by providing hot meals every day. Exodus Homes provides shelter and job opportunities to homeless people recovering from addiction and returning to the city from treatment centers, hospitals, jails, and prisons. The City also supported Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries with the CDBG funding in 2022. By supporting this agency's housing counselor, the City assisted citizens with housing needs and therefore helped reduce the chances of those most in need becoming homeless. Additionally, Exodus Homes, a non-profit the City supports has a representative that is serving on the NC Department of Health and Human Services Strategic Stakeholder Leadership Committee. This group was recently formed to create a strategy to address housing needs of people with disabilities who are homeless or living in congregate living programs.

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

The Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care participates in the North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care, which applies for ESG funds (Emergency Solutions Grants) for non-entitlement communities throughout the state. The Salvation Army Shelter of Hope and the Family Care Center have each received funding in recent years. In 2022-2023 funding year the Family Guidance Center applied and received \$26,796 for emergency shelter services. All of these organizations are located within Hickory city limits. These applications are made through the Continuum of Care, which makes recommendations on which organizations to support annually. City staff serves on this committee and supports the Continuum of Care in their decisions surrounding ESG funds.

2. Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and consultations

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

1	Agency/Group/Organization	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF CATAWBA VALLEY 1
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development Staff meet frequently with the executive director to discuss the organization's specific needs and housing needs in the community in general. Staff talks with organization staff regularly to determine ways to improve partnership and coordination between the organizations. Habitat has indicated a need for additional affordable rental housing in the community. The City and Habitat are exploring ways that their partnership could increase affordable rental housing options and home ownership including possible land conveyance of city owned property for construction of affordable housing as well as the recent City funding to Habitat for Humanity for the reconstruction of two affordable homes. With additional funding for Habitat for Humanity of Catawba Valley from MacKenzie Scott, there may be additional opportunities to not only develop single-family homes but also multi-family complexes for renters. Most recently this organization has partnered with the City and other organizations in the area to develop a Housing Resource Fair to promote housing inclusivity in the City. Plans are already underway to host another Housing Resource Fair in June 2023.
2	Agency/Group/Organization	Hickory Soup Kitchen
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-homeless

	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development Staff has regular phone and in-person meetings with Hickory Soup Kitchen staff to review the organization's specific needs and other service gaps related to the City's homeless and hungry population. Community Development Staff also participates as a steering committee member for the HOPE Project which is a transportation program organized by the Hickory Soup Kitchen to help those in need secure steady employment.
3	Agency/Group/Organization	Western Piedmont Council of Governments
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing PHA Services - Housing Services-Employment Regional organization Planning organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Economic Development

	<p>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</p>	<p>Community Development staff consulted with staff from the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board to determine gaps in workforce skills and development programs within the area. Community Development Staff continue to work in conjunction with NC Works to promote a Workforce Development Initiative in a predominantly minority low-mod census tract. This initiative included survey data from residents of the community and ultimately a satellite career center in this low-mod census tract. In addition to incorporating career counseling services, City staff and NC Works staff planned and hosted a job fair at the library within this census tract. Community development staff has recently increased collaboration with this organization to assist with income qualifying potential homebuyers who are interested in purchasing affordable housing promoted by the City. The WPCOG also administers HOME funds for the area's Unifour Consortium. Community Development and WPCOG staff speak regularly to coordinate program activities. The WPCOG also has a staff member serving on the NAACP Equity and Inclusion Housing Task Force along with City Community Development Staff. Last year this group partnered with the City and other organizations in the area to develop a Housing Resource Fair to promote housing inclusivity in the City. Plans are already underway to host another Housing Resource Fair in June 2023.</p>
4	<p>Agency/Group/Organization</p>	<p>Exodus Homes</p>
	<p>Agency/Group/Organization Type</p>	<p>Services-homeless</p>
	<p>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</p>	<p>Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Strategy</p>

	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development Staff has regular phone and in person meetings with the executive director to discuss the organization's specific needs related to providing supportive housing to homeless, recovering people returning to the city from treatment centers, hospitals, jails, and prison. The organization works with residents to obtain employment and provides transitional housing and transportation to its residents. It also supports residents with job education and training programs. The organization recently expanded its location and now includes a thrift store where residents may also work. Staff talks with organization staff regularly to determine ways to improve partnership and coordination between the organizations and to determine any service gaps related to the homeless population in the City.
6	Agency/Group/Organization	Family Care Center
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children

	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development staff continue to meet with the organization's Executive Director about the services offered by the organization and the needs of homeless families with children. Areas of improved coordination exist between the City and the agency through the opportunities surrounding permanent housing and the housing counseling offered by the agency. Opportunities also exist to continue to review the other service gaps related to the homeless population in the City. It is hoped that this consultation leads to improved communication and services for homeless families with children. The Family Care Center was the agency selected in 2021 to disperse the HOPE Program funds from the CARES act. They assisted more than 550 households. This organization also received the ESG -CV funding for this area specifically to assist those most in need during the pandemic.
7	Agency/Group/Organization	ALFA
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Persons with HIV/AIDS
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Non-Homeless Special Needs HOPWA Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development staff continues to meet with ALFA's Executive Director to discuss the organization's needs. Regular communications with the City maintain awareness about the needs of persons living with HIV and AIDS in the region. This effort between City and Agency will continue to assist those living in need in the area with the expansion of their PReP Program and their continued success with their needle exchange program to reduce the occurrence of HIV/Aids. Recently a large portion of their work centers around syringe exchange with approximately 400 individuals participating monthly with each person receiving 100 syringes. They also offer free HIV, Hepatitis C, STI screenings and are now serving as a COVID testing site.

8	Agency/Group/Organization	NAACP
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Education Civic Leaders Neighborhood Organization
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development Staff maintain consistent contact with staff of the organization to review their needs and other service gaps related to issues within the City's African American population. This agency focuses on serving this population with education, anti-poverty and civil rights issues. This consultation continues to improve coordination and relationships with the African American population. The City's Community Development Manager participates in the local Racial Justice and Reconciliation Group that meets twice monthly and serves on the NAACP Equity and Inclusion Task Force Housing Committee. This organization hosted a Housing Resource Fair in June 2022 to promote housing inclusivity in the City in terms of both rental units and single family homes. Plans are underway for another Housing Resource Fair in June 2023.
9	Agency/Group/Organization	City of Hickory Public Housing Authority
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	PHA
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Public Housing Needs

	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development Staff discussed with the Executive Director of the Hickory Housing Authority the organization's status and future needs. It is anticipated that through increased coordination and communication, the City and the Housing Authority will be able to work together to increase the supply of affordable housing in the community. Staff anticipates there will be coordination of assistance with infrastructure between the Hickory Housing Authority and the City related to possible projects.
10	Agency/Group/Organization	Catawba Science Center
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Education Foundation
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Science Education
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This organization features the Portal to Science program specifically to children that are considered low to moderate income to increase overall educational outcomes. Their program offers free access to children and their families to explore technology, life sciences, astronomy, live animals and planetarium experiences to increase interest and knowledge in science. Accessibility to STEM education is very important to the development of low- and moderate-income youth.
11	Agency/Group/Organization	SALVATION ARMY HICKORY
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Education
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Summer Camp Education

	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	The program director for the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Clubs attended one of the public meetings to discuss their needs. This organization is offering summer camps specifically to children that are considered low to moderate income to provide positive enrichment resources to at risk youth. It allows working parents to have an affordable and safe environment for the life of their child to be enriched. The campers get to participate in educational trips like the Catawba Science Center, Lazy 5 Ranch and the Hickory Aviation Museum.
12	Agency/Group/Organization	Greater Hickory Cooperative Ministries
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Community Development staff has regular phone and in-person meetings with the staff of Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries to discuss their needs and potential gaps in services. The City also supported Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries with the CDBG funding in 2022. By supporting the housing counselor of this agency, the City assisted citizens with housing needs and therefore helped reduce the chances of those most in need becoming homeless.

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

The City conducted an extensive outreach process in 2020 during its Consolidated Plan development process and has consistent contact with partner organizations throughout the development process of each year's annual action plan. It is not anticipated that the needs have changed significantly since the Consolidated Plan was adopted.

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	North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness Balance of State	The Continuum of Care oversees application for ESG and Continuum of Care funds. The City of Hickory works with the Continuum of Care by providing funds to many public service agencies that work with the homeless.

Table 3 - Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Narrative

Community Development staff meet regularly with the staff from local housing and human service agencies to ensure an understanding of needs within the community. The Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care participates in the North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care, which applies for ESG funds (Emergency Solutions Grants) for non-entitlement communities throughout the state. Community Development staff also attend the monthly Continuum of Care meetings to learn what is happening among the local agencies that provide support services to the homeless and those in need and to give updates on the planning process at monthly Continuum of Care meetings. Nearly all nonprofit public service providers that work with the homeless or within anti-poverty programs attend these meetings. In addition, the City of Hickory’s Community Navigator continues to work specifically with the homeless population in the area. His role as an experienced leader of a local homeless shelter gives him the unique opportunity to assist those that are homeless in getting services they need and to attempt to find them supportive housing. In the first six months of program year 2023, he received 19 referrals of homeless individuals and was able to assist a total of 14 individuals with homeless services.

AP-12 Participation - 91.401, 91.105, 91.200(c)

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

During the annual planning process, the City of Hickory encouraged citizen participation, especially among residents of low to moderate income communities. Comments were solicited from citizens, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies during neighborhood meetings, public hearings, and other commission meetings. Three public hearings were conducted to obtain input on the plan. Additional discussions were held individually with nonprofit organizations. These were discussed in the previous section.

The comments received at public meetings are summarized below. Complete notes from the public meetings are included as an appendix.

The City's Citizen Participation Plan is also attached to this plan as an appendix. This provides a more comprehensive description of the activities the City will undertake during plan implementation to encourage citizen participation.

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	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	People did attend the two public meetings based upon advertisements in local newspapers describing the CDBG program.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
2	Public Meeting	Minorities Non-targeted/broad community	One citizen attended this meeting at Ridgeview Library on January 25, 2024.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	
3	Public Meeting	Minorities Non-targeted/broad community	This meeting was attended by four individuals on February 1, 2024 at Hickory City Hall.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	
4	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	People had opportunities to make comments on the plan from May 17, 2024 through June 18, 2024 from advertisements in local newspapers and in the two city libraries and City Hall describing the CDBG program.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
5	Internet Outreach	Non-targeted/broad community	People had opportunities to make comments on the plan from May 16, 2024 through June 18, 2024 from advertisements on the City website.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	https://www.hickorync.gov/legal-notices

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources - 91.420(b), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

The City of Hickory intends to apply to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for CDBG funds for each of the five years covered by this plan.

In this 2024 plan year the city has a decreased budget for program income as compared to 2023. The City had budgeted to receive program income that was not received in program year 2023 but will be received in program year 2024.

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: \$		

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	340,621	25,000	0	365,621	365,621	The City anticipates receiving approximately \$300,000 per year as its entitlement grant and roughly \$90,000 per year in program income from the repayment of loans made with CDBG funds and proceeds from the sale of property.

Table 5 - 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 of Hickory continuously works to identify matching funds that will help leverage additional resources to spur redevelopment in its economically distressed neighborhoods. The City plans to supplement its housing rehabilitation efforts by continuing to apply for Urgent Repair funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. These funds are disbursed as forgivable loans to pay for urgently needed home repairs for low income homeowners with special needs. In addition, the City has partnered with a developer to consistently develop affordable housing while also encouraging future homeowners to use the Unifour Consortium's Down Payment Assistance Program and potential funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency to assist with mortgage costs.

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

The City of Hickory owns lots located within residential neighborhoods in the SE and SW sections of the City. The City will continue to investigate

potential uses for these properties. The first two of these lots were developed into affordable single-family homes with the use of the Unifour Consortium's HOME Funds and funding from the NCHFA and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments for down payment assistance for prospective homeowners. This program was so successful that they City entered into a partnership with a local developer by selling them lots on which they will construct affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. In October, 2022 these homes were sold to qualified low-moderate-income homeowners. In March of 2023 the City sold 10 additional lots to this developer in order to construct the next phase of the affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. This allows the City to assist with affordable housing and infill development faster as the developer can construct up to 10 houses at a time. There are approximately six additional lots available for the construction of affordable single-family homes with phase III being planned for late 2024-early 2025.

Discussion

The anticipated resources discussed in this section will be used to address the goals outlined within this strategic plan. While the amount of funding anticipated will not be enough to address all of the City's housing and community development needs, the City plans to work continuously to identify additional resources in order to stretch these dollars further.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives - 91.420, 91.220(c)(3)&(e)

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Preserve the City's Housing Stock	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock	CDBG: \$125,000	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 4 Household Housing Unit
2	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements	2015	2019	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements	CDBG: \$115,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 4000 Persons Assisted
3	Homeless Services and Prevention	2015	2019	Homeless	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Homelessness Services	CDBG: \$32,500	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 350 Persons Assisted
4	Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS	2015	2019	Non-Homeless Special Needs	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS	CDBG: \$7,500	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Persons Assisted
5	Youth Services	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Youth Services	CDBG: \$20,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 92 Persons Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
6	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Small Business and Entrepreneurship	CDBG: \$4,000	Businesses assisted: 1 Businesses Assisted
7	Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness	2015	2019	Affordable Housing	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Fair Housing Outreach and Education	CDBG: \$1,800	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 150 Persons Assisted

Table 6 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Preserve the City's Housing Stock
	Goal Description	The City aims to help preserve the City's housing stock by acquiring and/or rehabilitating housing units. The units rehabilitated may be owner occupied units or vacant units that are purchased for resale to low- and moderate-income homeowners or rental housing purchased for rehabilitation by nonprofit affordable housing providers. The City also constructed affordable housing on City owned lots with Unifour Consortium HOME Funds. These homes were sold to income eligible homebuyers in 2021. This program was so successful that they City entered into a partnership with a local developer by selling lots on which they will construct affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. In October, 2022 these homes were sold to qualified low-moderate-income homeowners. In March of 2023 the City sold 10 additional lots to this developer in order to construct the next phase of the affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. This allows the City to assist with affordable housing and infill development faster as the developer can construct up to 10 houses at a time. There are approximately six additional lots available for the construction of affordable single-family homes with a potential phase III being planned for late 2024-early 2025.

2	Goal Name	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	Goal Description	It is anticipated that at least 4000 persons living in low to moderate income neighborhoods will benefit from improvements to public infrastructure through funding provided by this Annual Action Plan. These public infrastructure improvements may include but are not limited to facility improvements, park improvements, and street and sidewalk improvements.
3	Goal Name	Homeless Services and Prevention
	Goal Description	This plan will provide funding to Exodus Homes for a Transportation and Employment Coordinator; to support the Hickory Soup Kitchen staff as they serve hot meals to those in need; and to also assist the Family Care Center with funding to support their case manager position as they help families transitioning from homelessness into their housing program.
4	Goal Name	Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS
	Goal Description	This annual action plan will provide funding to ALFA in order to provide support for a case manager position that will assist persons living with HIV and AIDS to ensure that they receive necessary health care, housing, and other needed services.
5	Goal Name	Youth Services
	Goal Description	The City plans to provide funding to support education initiatives for at-risk school age students.
6	Goal Name	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
	Goal Description	The city will provide grants to low/mod income business owners. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment, inventory, marketing or other similar expense. The City also operates a small business loan program that provides funds to businesses that create jobs for low/moderate income persons. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment and for working capital.
7	Goal Name	Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness
	Goal Description	Conduct fair housing outreach and education activities for citizens and housing professionals.

AP-35 Projects - 91.420, 91.220(d)

Introduction

This section details the projects that will be undertaken with CDBG funding in the 2024-2025 program year.

#	Project Name
1	Housing Rehabilitation and Purchase
2	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvement
3	Grants to Non-Profit Public Service Agencies
4	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
5	Program Administration and Fair Housing Activities
6	Contingency

Table 7 – Project Information

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

AP-38 Project Summary
Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	Housing Rehabilitation and Purchase
	Target Area	City-Wide
	Goals Supported	Preserve the City's Housing Stock
	Needs Addressed	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock
	Funding	CDBG: \$125,000
	Description	The City aims to help preserve the City's housing stock by acquiring and/or rehabilitating housing units. The units rehabilitated may be owner occupied units or vacant units that are purchased for resale to low- and moderate- income homeowners or rental housing purchased for rehabilitation by nonprofit affordable housing providers. The City also plans to assist low- and moderate-income homeowners with home repairs through its Housing Rehabilitation Program.
	Target Date	6/30/2025
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	It is estimated that at least four low-and moderate-income homeowners will benefit from the proposed activities.
	Location Description	It is estimated that at least four low-and moderate-income homeowners will benefit from the proposed activities.
Planned Activities	These funds will be used for the purchase and rehabilitation of housing to income eligible owner or rental households. Funding may also be used to provide loans for the rehabilitation of housing occupied by low- and moderate-income homeowners.	
2	Project Name	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvement
	Target Area	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA
	Goals Supported	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	Needs Addressed	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	Funding	CDBG: \$115,000
	Description	This project involves improvements to public infrastructure and facilities in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.
	Target Date	6/30/2025

	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	It is estimated that all families living within the neighborhood will benefit from the public infrastructure and facility improvements.
	Location Description	This project will include public infrastructure and facility improvements in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.
	Planned Activities	This project will include public infrastructure and facility improvements in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Improvements may include resurfacing of existing streets, installation of sidewalks, street trees, or other necessary public infrastructure or facilities including the rehabilitation of city parks.
3	Project Name	Grants to Non-Profit Public Service Agencies
	Target Area	
	Goals Supported	Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services
	Needs Addressed	Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services
	Funding	CDBG: \$60,000
	Description	This project will involve the provision of funding to nonprofit public service agencies that serve low- and moderate-income individuals and families.
	Target Date	6/30/2025
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	It is anticipated that at least 350 individuals will benefit from the public services grant program.
	Location Description	These activities will take place throughout the city at local non-profit agencies that serve low- and moderate-income individuals and families.
	Planned Activities	This project will involve the provisions of grants to public service agencies to assist low and moderate income youth; those that are homeless or are under threat of becoming homeless; as well as persons living with HIV/AIDS.
4	Project Name	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
	Target Area	City-Wide

	Goals Supported	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
	Needs Addressed	Small Business and Entrepreneurship
	Funding	CDBG: \$4,000
	Description	This project will provide continued funding to micro-enterprise businesses through the city's micro-enterprise grant program. The project also provides funding in the form of partially forgivable loans to small businesses through the Small Business loan Program.
	Target Date	6/30/2025
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	It is estimated that up to one business or family could benefit from these microenterprise grants and small business forgivable loans.
	Location Description	This funding will be available city-wide to qualified business owners.
	Planned Activities	The city will provide grants to low/mod income business owners. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment, inventory, marketing or other similar expense. The City has also had a small business loan program that provides funds to businesses that create jobs for low/moderate income persons. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment.
5	Project Name	Program Administration and Fair Housing Activities
	Target Area	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	Goals Supported	Preserve the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness
	Needs Addressed	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Small Business and Entrepreneurship Fair Housing Outreach and Education

	Funding	CDBG: \$53,700
	Description	Provide funding to support administration of the CDBG program along with funding for Fair Housing outreach activities.
	Target Date	6/30/2025
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	These general administrative activities should benefit all of the citizens of Hickory.
	Location Description	These activities will take place city-wide where ever CDBG funds are allocated.
	Planned Activities	This project will include funding for the administration of the CDBG program along with funding for fair housing outreach activities and additional community planning funds as necessary.
6	Project Name	Contingency
	Target Area	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	Goals Supported	Preserve the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness
	Needs Addressed	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Small Business and Entrepreneurship Fair Housing Outreach and Education
	Funding	CDBG: \$7,921
	Description	This project will be used to set up a small contingency fund to assist with cost overruns on other projects in this Annual Action Plan.
	Target Date	6/30/2025

	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	These funds will be used for cost overruns on other eligible community development projects
	Location Description	These funds will be used to supplement the budgets of the projects described earlier in this action plan.
	Planned Activities	These funds will be used to supplement the budgets of the projects described earlier in this action plan.

AP-50 Geographic Distribution - 91.420, 91.220(f)

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

The City of Hickory's CDBG funds for owner occupied housing rehabilitation will be allocated city-wide to income eligible homeowners. The majority of funds will be allocated for area benefit activities, which include areas where a majority of the households are low- and moderate-income.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA	70
City-Wide	30

Table 8 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

Area benefit activities are required to take place in areas where a majority of the households have incomes below 80 percent of the area median income. The City targets its public infrastructure activities to low- and moderate-income areas. Specific projects are chosen based on community input and existing city plans.

Discussion

The City of Hickory does not have a specific target area for CDBG funds. Allocating housing rehabilitation funding city wide is one of the City's methods for affirmatively furthering fair housing. Public infrastructure improvements are targeted towards low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in order to ensure that these activities meet a HUD national objective.

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing -91.420, 91.220(j)

Introduction

In recent years, the City has greatly reduced many of the barriers to multi-family and affordable housing development. The City's current Land Development Code now permits multi-family housing in all commercial districts by right and increased the allowable density of residential units in medium and high-density residential zoning districts. This significantly reduces the regulatory burden for potential affordable housing developers by increasing the amount of land on which they can build affordable housing. The City has further increased the allowable density in its central business district so as to assist affordable housing developers looking to build in the downtown area. The City is supporting efforts to build additional market rate housing by making the planning approval process as simple and easy as possible. This has attracted several national tract builders and the city currently has more than 3500 housing units at some phase of the planning or construction process.

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

The City's Land Development Code has greatly reduced many of the barriers to affordable housing development. Multi-family housing development is now permitted by right in all four quadrants of the city. There do not appear to be additional structural barriers to the construction of affordable housing. Since the fall of 2021, the rising costs and the total supply of housing has been a barrier. Families that could afford a more expensive home are choosing to stay in those that would be affordable to families at or below 80% of area median income due to lack of supply of market rate housing. The City is supporting efforts to build additional market rate housing by making the planning approval process as simple and easy as possible. This has attracted several national tract builders and the city currently has more than 3500 housing units at some phase of the planning or construction process.

Discussion

One of the largest barriers to affordable housing development is the fact that demand for affordable housing tax credits continues to vastly outstrip supply. The fierce competition for these tax credits makes it difficult for more than one project in the county to be funded each year. Fortunately, the City recently had three multi-family tax credit projects approved, with the final one completed in 2022.

As part of the city's investment in affordable housing, in 2020 the city partnered with the Unifour HOME Consortium to construct two homes on city-owned property in the Ridgeview area which is part of census tract 109. These homes were completed and sold in 2021 to qualified homebuyers at 80% of area median income. This program was so successful that the City entered into a partnership with a local developer by selling them lots on which they will construct affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. In October, 2022 these homes were sold to qualified low-moderate-income homeowners. In March of 2023 the City sold 10 additional lots to this developer in order to construct the next phase of the affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. This allows the City to assist with affordable housing and infill development faster as the developer can construct up to 10 houses at a time. There are approximately six additional lots available for the construction of affordable single-family homes with a potential phase III being planned for late 2024-early 2025.

AP-85 Other Actions - 91.420, 91.220(k)

Introduction

This section identifies additional actions that the City will take as part of its annual action plan.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The City plans to continue working with local organizations that serve the homeless population to determine ways that services to homeless individuals and families can be improved. The city plans to work with these agencies to improve transportation coordination for the homeless. Additional actions will include working with agencies to provide more extensive day shelter programs that will assist homeless individuals to find transitional housing and employment opportunities.

The City's Community Development Specialist is serving on the Hickory NAACP Equity and Inclusion Task Force's Housing Committee. The goal of this committee is centered around education of housing opportunities (including both homeownership and rentals) specifically in minority communities. These efforts included a community housing event to help educate potential homebuyers about the process of homeownership including credit scores, mortgage processes and even basic home maintenance. This housing event also focused on the rental component and the assistance that is available from agencies in the area. A third housing event is scheduled for June 2024 with a number of minor changes from previous years.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

The City plans to continue working with Habitat for Humanity to identify locations where the two organizations can partner in the development of new affordable housing units. The City has begun a development process to construct affordable housing on city owned property. With the success of this first initiative, the City hopes to continue this effort on other lots to assist in the development of affordable housing and to promote infill development.

As part of the city's investment in affordable housing, in 2020 the city partnered with the Unifour HOME Consortium to construct two homes on city-owned property in the Ridgeview area which is part of census tract 109. These homes were completed and sold in 2021 to qualified homebuyers at 80% of area median income. This program was so successful that they City entered into a partnership with a local developer by selling them lots on which they will construct affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. In October, 2022 these homes were sold to qualified low-moderate-income homeowners. In March of 2023 the City sold 10 additional lots to this developer in order to construct the next phase of the affordable housing with deed restrictions to maintain affordability to future home buyers. This allows the City to assist with affordable housing and infill development faster as the developer can construct up to 10 houses at a time. There are approximately

six additional lots available for the construction of affordable single-family homes with phase III being planned for late 2024-early 2025.

The City's Community Development Specialist is serving on the Hickory NAACP Equity and Inclusion Task Force's Housing Committee. The goal of this committee is centered around education of housing opportunities (including both homeownership and rentals) specifically in minority communities. These efforts included a community housing fair to help educate potential homebuyers about the process of homeownership including credit scores, mortgage processes and even basic home maintenance. This housing fair also focused on the rental component and the assistance that is available from agencies in the area.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

The City will use portions of available CDBG funds to remedy lead-based paint hazards through its housing rehabilitation program. Homes will be rehabilitated in accordance with HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule. The level of rehabilitation will determine the specific lead hazard reduction activities in accordance with program requirements.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The City will continue to participate with local agencies, faith-based or church groups, and nonprofit organizations that provide shelter and transitional housing opportunities that benefit homeless and transient families and individuals. Funding is provided in this annual action plan to organizations that provide health and case management services, transitional housing, educational programming and food support for poverty level families. The City will continue to investigate additional partnerships to provide additional services aimed at decreasing the number of poverty-level families. The City will also continue to participate in the Continuum of Care to stay informed of issues that relate to families in poverty.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The City will continue to work with local nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to local nonprofits to ensure that they are aware of federal requirements and to increase their organizational capacity. In addition to annual monitoring, Community Development staff plans to work with agencies to determine priority needs in the community and develop partnerships to address those needs.

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

service agencies

The City plans to continue working with the Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care to foster effective communication amongst agencies including the Hickory Public Housing Authority. City staff will continue to attend monthly Continuum of Care Meetings to provide updates on the City's Community Development activities and provide opportunities to discuss new initiatives.

Discussion

CDBG funds will not be sufficient to address all of the needs identified in this Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. However, it is the City's hope that through increased coordination and partnerships, it will be able to stretch these dollars as far as possible to have the greatest impact on the community possible.

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements - 91.420, 91.220(I)(1,2,4)

Introduction

This section details program income that has been received but not yet reprogrammed. It also details the estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used to benefit low to moderate income individuals. It is anticipated that all funds will be used to benefit low to moderate income individuals.

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%

Discussion

All the program income that has been received to date has been reprogrammed as part of this Annual Action Plan.

