



Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Communities Program

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report Program Year 2023

**Prepared by the City of Watertown
Planning & Community Development Department
245 Washington Street
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CR-05 - Goals and Outcomes

Progress the jurisdiction has made in carrying out its strategic plan and its action plan. 91.520(a)

Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024) was the tenth year the City of Watertown (the City) participated as an Entitlement Community in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was also the third year of our 5-year Consolidated Plan that covers Program Years 2021-2025. Staff made significant accomplishments this year in carrying out the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan as a number of projects were completed. Environmental reviews for most of the Program Year (PY) 2023 projects have been completed as well.

The City's strategic plan identifies several high priority needs, including provisions for decent affordable housing, homeownership, public infrastructure improvements and blight elimination. It also includes a medium priority need of environment and quality of life enrichment and several lower priority needs including fair housing education, support of public services, economic development and homeless prevention. These needs are addressed by several goals including neighborhood stabilization and revitalization, affordable housing rehabilitation, homeownership assistance opportunities, environment and quality of life enrichment, fair housing education, homeless assistance, supporting public services, economic development and planning and administration.

Assess how the jurisdiction's use of funds, particularly CDBG, addresses the priorities and specific objectives identified in the plan, giving special attention to the highest priority activities identified.

Staff made significant accomplishments in carrying out our Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan in addition to completing projects from previous program years. Two activities related to the Grant Street Reconstruction Project, which were funded with CDBG funds from 2019 and 2021, were completed. The North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project was also completed in addition to the Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project. Design work for the Burlington Street Reconstruction Project was also finished. The City provided support for the homeless by granting funds to Transitional Living Services for the 518 Pine Street Transitional Housing Single Room Occupancy Project. Significant progress continues to be made on the owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program, as well as the first-time homebuyer program, addressing the City's goal of providing decent affordable housing for low-income residents. Further discussion on the City's progress in each of the programmatic areas is below. Projects and accomplishments are listed by program year.

Goal 1. Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization

To accomplish the goal of Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization, the City identified several projects in several of our recent, as well as our current Annual Action Plan. Many of the projects from our previous plans were completed in previous program years, however, the narrative below outlines the activities that were completed in Program Year 2023.

During Program Year (PY) 2023, the City continued work on the North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project Phase 2, which was a project identified in our **PY 2020 Annual Action Plan**. This project involves public infrastructure improvements consisting of ADA sidewalk ramp construction. The project scope involves the construction of 31 new accessible ramps in locations where either none currently exist or where the existing ramps do not comply with the current ADA PROWAG requirements. A majority of the ramps are proposed for Census Tract 614, in the northwest quadrant of the City, which has an estimated Disability Rate of 21.9 percent, the highest of any Census Tract in the City according to 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates. During PY 2021, seven new ramps were constructed along Meadow Street South. In PY 2023, contractors constructed 20 ramps along Mill Street and Gale Street. There is still funding remaining in this project for additional ramps to be constructed, which will occur in PY 2024.

The City also completed the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project and a portion of the Grant Street Reconstruction Project in Program Year 2023, both of which were projects identified in our **PY 2021 Annual Action Plan**. The North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project involved public infrastructure improvements consisting of the construction of a small children's basketball area, a new walkway, and other amenities at the North Hamilton Street Playground. The improvements complemented a previous playground replacement project that utilized 2015 CDBG funds. The new basketball area replaced an existing dirt court, and the project also included approximately sixty-five (65) feet of sidewalk on the interior of the playground property. The new sidewalk provides an ADA accessible connection from the existing City sidewalk network directly to the playground equipment.

In addition to PY 2021, the Grant Street Reconstruction Project was also funded in PY 2019. Project funding from PY 2019 and 2021 for Grant Street was completely drawn down during PY 2023 while work on the overall project made significant progress. The City's contractor for the project began work in June of 2023 and reconstruction of the first block of Grant Street, from Henry Street to Lincoln Street, was substantially completed by the end of the calendar year. Utility replacement also began along the remaining section of the street. Work on the project resumed in Late June of 2024 with completion expected in October 2024.

During PY 2023, the City completed Burlington Street Reconstruction Design Project which was identified in our **PY 2022 Annual Action Plan**. The design for the Burlington Street Reconstruction Project was completed in April of 2024, and the City put the project out to bid. Unfortunately, the City only received one bid for the project, and it was significantly higher than the overall project budget. The City Council, on the recommendation of City Staff, rejected the bid in May. It was decided to look at the design and identify areas where the project could be value engineered to potentially save costs. The project will be put out to bid again in late 2024 or early 2025 with the hope of receiving additional and more competitive bids. Construction should begin in the Spring of 2025. The Burlington Street Reconstruction Project consists of a full reconstruction of the street and will include improvements such as new pavement, new sidewalks, the replacement of various utilities such as water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer as well as green infrastructure and tree planting.

Work also began on two other construction projects during PY 2023, the Franklin Street ADA Ramp Replacement Project and the Seward Street Reconstruction Project. Both projects were also identified in our PY 2022 Annual Action Plan. The Franklin Street ADA Ramp Replacement Project involves public infrastructure improvements consisting of ADA sidewalk ramp reconstruction. During PY 2023 the City was able to complete the reconstruction of 14 ramps along and near Franklin Street. The area is in Census Tract 621, which has an estimated Disability Rate of 25 percent according to 2016-2020 Five-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, almost double the estimated nationwide Disability Rate. In addition, ACS data also estimates that approximately 29 percent of occupied housing units in Census Tract 621 do not have access to a vehicle, making pedestrian trips more likely. The existing ramps did not comply with the current ADA PROWAG requirements. While the project was substantially completed, there were a few remaining items that need to be completed before final payment is made and the project is closed out.

The Seward Street Reconstruction Project involves the complete reconstruction of Seward Street including sidewalk and curbing replacement, replacement of various utilities and repaving the road. Seward Street intersects Grant Street and the reconstruction of both streets were packaged together as one project. Work on Seward Street has followed a similar timeline to Grant Street with work beginning in June of 2023. While the work on Seward Street will conclude during PY 2024, the City's contractor for the project was able to make significant progress on the project during PY 2023. Work completed this year included the installation of new water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer lines.

Finally, under the Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization goal, the City completed two projects and began several others that were identified in our **PY 2023 Annual Action Plan**. The Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project, consisting of the planting of 39 trees in the northwest section of the City was completed in the fall of 2023. In addition, the City completed the 542 Cooper Street Demolition Project in the spring of 2024. This project involved the demolition of a blighted structure located in the City's Northeast Target Area in an effort to prevent blight from spreading to adjacent properties in the neighborhood.

The City also began the Watertown Housing Authority (WHA) Meadowbrook Sidewalk Reconstruction Project by entering into a grant agreement with the WHA for the project and began to develop conceptual design ideas for the North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project.

Goal 2. Affordable Housing Rehabilitation

To accomplish the goal of Affordable Housing Rehabilitation, the City identified projects in several of our recent, as well as our current Annual Action Plan, including Owner-Occupied and Rental Housing Rehabilitation Programs. The narrative below outlines the housing rehabilitation activities that were completed in Program Year 2023.

During **Program Year 2023**, the City completed a total of six (6) units of owner-occupied rehabilitation, working with Neighbors of Watertown (NOW), the City's sub-recipient for this program. The units completed were from projects identified in **PY 2021** (3 units), and **PY 2022** (3 units). Due to delays in

contractor availability, project completions were not as high as previous years. However, the City is confident that with additional contractor outreach, production will pick up in the next year.

Additionally, the City completed a total of two (2) units of rental rehabilitation during PY 2023. The units completed were from the Rental Rehabilitation Project identified in the PY 2018 Annual Action Plan.

At the time of this writing, there are seven (7) additional projects underway for the owner-occupied rehabilitation program. Additionally, there is one (1) rental rehabilitation project that is nearing completion which totals four (4) additional units. The project is expected to be complete in the fall of 2024.

The City has completed all owner-occupied rehabilitation projects up to and through Program Year 2019. The City expects to close out the owner-occupied grant funds from 2020, 2021 and 2022 within the next eight (8) months, prior to the end of the 2024 program year.

A total of \$286,322.13 in CDBG funds were spent on affordable housing rehabilitation for low- and moderate-income residents within the City.

Since becoming an entitlement community in PY 2014, the City has used CDBG funding to rehabilitate eighty-seven (87) units of affordable housing, sixty-two (62) which have been owner-occupied units and nineteen (19) which have been rental units.

Goal 3. Homeownership Assistance

In PY2023, the City was able to use CDBG grant funds to assist five (5) qualified low-to-moderate income individuals or households with down payment assistance toward the purchase of a new home along with funds for minor rehabilitation of the home after closing. A total of 7 housing units were included in those homes. A total of \$190,618.25 in CDBG funding was spent during PY2023 for homeownership assistance.

At the time of this writing, one (1) additional project is underway for the homeownership assistance program and all funds through PY 2022 are expected to be expended by the spring of 2024.

Since becoming an entitlement community in PY 2014, the City has provided homeownership assistance for the purchase of twenty-seven (27) units.

Goal 4. Environment and Quality of Life Enhancement

During the development of the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan, the City added an Environment and Quality of Life Enhancement goal that aimed to improve environmental conditions by addressing environmental equity and environmental justice issues in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods by constructing physical improvements such as parks, playgrounds, trails, rain gardens and other green infrastructure, implementing renewable energy initiatives, eliminating combined sewer overflows, narrowing streets to provide increased greenspace, tree planting, tree pit expansion and enhancements, and other urban forestry initiatives such as hazardous tree removal and invasive species management.

The City included several projects in our 2021, 2022 and 2023 Annual Action Plans aimed at supporting this goal including the Seward Street Reconstruction Project, the Northeast Target Area Tree Planting Project, the Northeast and Near East Target Area Tree Planting Project, the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project and the Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project. As noted above, the Seward Street Reconstruction Project is underway and is expected to be completed early in PY 2024.

The Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project was completed this year. The Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project was included in our **PY 2023 Annual Action Plan** and resulted in the planting of 29 trees in various locations throughout the target area. Streets where trees were planted include Main Avenue, Moulton Street, Addison Street, and Lillian Street.

The City also completed the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project, which was included in the **PY 2021 Annual Action Plan**. The project included the construction of a small children's basketball area, a new walkway, and other amenities at the North Hamilton Street Playground. The new basketball area replaced an existing dirt court and included approximately sixty-five (65) feet of sidewalk on the interior of the playground property that provides an ADA accessible connection from the existing City sidewalk network directly to the playground equipment.

The North Star Playground Enhancement Project, included in the City's **PY 2022 Annual Action Plan** was started during the 2023 Program Year. The playground equipment was purchased and awaits installation by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. It is anticipated that this project will be completed by the end of the 2024 calendar year.

Goal 5. Fair Housing Education

During Program Year 2020, CNY Fair Housing completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) for the City of Watertown in advance of the City's 2021 Consolidated Plan. One of the prominent impediments to Fair Housing Choice identified in the plan in the Watertown-Jefferson County area housing market was that housing discrimination and lack of knowledge of fair housing rights continues to limit housing opportunities.

To address that impediment, the City included a Fair Housing Education goal in our Consolidated Plan that aimed to reduce barriers to fair housing by increasing knowledge in the community of fair housing rights through education, marketing, outreach, training and technical assistance.

To address that goal, the City has included fair housing education projects in each subsequent Annual Action Plans in this consolidated planning cycle.

In December 2022, the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CNY Fair Housing to act as the City's qualified Fair Housing Enforcement Agency and to conduct the Fair Housing Education 2022 project that the City included in its PY 2022 Annual Action Plan. The contract period ran from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The scope of services included Fair Housing Education and Marketing as well as complaint intake.

To complete the education component, CNY Fair Housing conducted two in-person training sessions on November 9, 2023 at the Watertown Urban Mission, one geared towards landlords and one geared towards service providers and tenants. CNY Fair Housing reported that the total reach was four (4) people for the Service Provider session and six (6) for the Landlord session.

The marketing component consisted of billboards and other advertisements that CNY Fair Housing bought in the greater Watertown metropolitan region. Finally, CNY Fair Housing is also acting as the City's Qualified Fair Housing Enforcement Agency and has the authority to investigate complaints and provide legal representation to victims of discrimination in any case where CNY Fair Housing determines that discrimination has occurred.

In December 2023, the City and CNY Fair Housing entered into an MOU for the Fair Housing Education 2023 project (calendar year 2024). As of June 30, 2024, CNY Fair Housing had spent \$932.19 from this MOU on social media marketing on Facebook and Instagram. CNY Fair Housing reported a year-to-date (YTD) reach of 8,635 for this online advertising.

Additionally, CNY Fair Housing has supplied educational materials such as brochures and informational magnets to the Watertown Urban Mission for distribution to the Urban Mission's clientele.

Finally, CNY Fair Housing conducted one design and construction test on a property in the City of Watertown. The target was chosen based on a complaint the agency received. The case has been referred to the agency staff attorneys to review for possible legal action.

Goals 6 and 7. Homeless Assistance and Public Services Support

Another goal of the City's Strategic Plan was to provide homeless assistance by supporting the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care and other local agencies that are working to prevent homelessness in the community. For the first two years of the City's 2021-2026 Consolidated Plan, the City utilized CDBG funding to assist the PNHC with its annual Point-In-Time (PIT) study of the homelessness in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties, New York. For the 2022 and 2023 Point-In-Time Counts, the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC) worked with local providers and agencies in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties to assist with the homelessness surveys. In an effort to continue to develop innovative strategies to address homelessness in the region and specifically expand and improve its outreach and methodology for counting the homeless, PNHC organized fourteen "Homeless No More" Open Houses in the three counties on the date of the PIT Count. The open houses were an opportunity for those struggling with homelessness to connect with resources to secure housing and other needs, as well as participate in the PIT survey.

To make the Homeless No More events as successful as possible, the PNHC and the City of Watertown implemented the Point-In-Time Count Outreach and Education Initiative. Utilizing CDBG funding, small advertising campaigns were developed prior to the Point-In-Time counts. Commercials were developed with a message targeted toward the region's non-traditional homeless population which

provided an opportunity to raise awareness and educate the general North Country population, so they could inform family and friends about this opportunity.

For the **PY 2023 Annual Action Plan**, the City changed its focus from the educational campaign that it had completed previously to granting funds to North Country Transitional Living Services, Inc. (NCTLS) NCTLS partnered with the Jefferson County Department of Social Services (JCDSS) on the 518 Pine Street Transitional Housing Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Project. The 18-bed facility provides safe, supervised transitional housing to individuals experiencing homelessness. On-site Case Managers link and refer individuals to supportive services which may include but not be limited to treatment for mental illness and/or addiction, employment and/or mainstream benefits. The program identified an individual's need not only for housing but also securing other resources needed to maintain housing stability (food security, health insurance, vocational and educational support, medical treatment, transportation, clothing, social connectedness, etc.). CDBG funding provided case-management to assess individuals' needs and barriers relative to independent housing in the community and helped develop a plan of service to assist them to achieve it.

Goal 8. Economic Development

The City's 5-year strategic plan also identified an economic development goal aimed at supporting the efforts of the Watertown Local Development Corporation (WLDC), the Jefferson County Job Development Corporation and the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency. While there were no CDBG projects during the program year that were identified to allow the City to partner with these agencies to attract business or create new jobs, the City nonetheless continues to work with these agencies throughout the year. The City's Mayor, Sarah V. C. Pierce and Planning and Community Development Director, Michael A. Lumbis, both serve on the WLDC Board of Directors. Future projects and funding commitments will be determined for future program years as opportunities for projects and programs arise.

Goal 9. Planning and Administration

As one can conclude from the various project descriptions noted above, the City has been actively implementing a variety of programs and projects during the last program year from several previous Annual Action Plans. The City expended a total of \$71,094.51 administering the various CDBG grants during the Program Year. In addition to the project management for the various initiatives described above, Staff developed the City's 2022 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) and 2024 Annual Action Plan during the program year.

The City also completed work on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Project that was included in both the **PY 2019 and PY 2020 Annual Action Plans**. This project was identified as a priority project in the City's first ever Comprehensive Plan, which was completed using CDBG funding in December, 2019. The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite represents the primary means to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The project was substantially completed in PY 2022 as the City Council adopted the new Zoning Ordinance on February 21, 2023. The project was officially completed during PY 2023 as City Planning Staff finished working with the consultant that assisted us with the project.

CDBG-Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis, Congress enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). As part of the CARES Act, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) received funds to allocate to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement communities to prevent, prepare and respond to the COVID-19 health crisis. HUD allocated \$541,672 in Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funding to the City of Watertown in Round 1 and \$280,910 in Round 3 for a total of \$822,582.

During Program Year 2020, the City adopted an amendment to the 2020 Annual Action Plan that detailed how the City planned to utilize the CDBG-CV funding to address the community wide impacts of COVID-19. The City Council decided to utilize the funds on two main initiatives that include economic development in the form of a Small Business Emergency Relief Program and public services which includes support to four local food pantries. Funding was also allocated to establish an employment training program aimed at assisting those struggling with substance abuse with obtaining employment and for program administration.

During the 2023 program year, Staff worked with three food pantries including the Watertown Urban Mission (WUM), the Community Action Planning Council (CAPC), and with the United Way for the Watertown City School District's Food For Families Program to continue to implement the food pantry programs established with each agency and reimburse them for expenses incurred during the program year. Staff also worked with the WUM on the Urban Mission's Pantry 2 You Program, a mobile food pantry. A total of approximately \$35,650.84 was expended in PY 2023 on the various food pantry projects.

In Program Year 2023, Staff completed the Frontline Employment Partnership Program. This program was a collaboration between the Anchor Recovery Center of Northern New York, The Workplace - Jefferson County, and the Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County. As many community members were, and still are, struggling with substance use and recovery and finding it difficult to reconnect with old employers or find new employment, the Frontline Employment Partnership Program was created to match clients with potential employers and manage the challenges between the employee and employer germane to recovery from substance use. After establishing a grant agreement for the project and a Memorandum of Understanding between the three partner agencies, the project began in February of 2022 and continued through PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The grant provided funding for the establishment of a front-line case management position at the Anchor Recovery Center of Northern New York to appropriately bridge individuals to the services offered by all three agencies, connect the individuals to employment, and case manage the individual to successful and sustained employment by ensuring all services between the three agencies and the employer are appropriately coordinated and managed. Over the course of the program, 291 individuals received services through the Anchor Recovery Center of NYT with a total of 155 finding employment as a result of the program. A total of \$4,064.63 was expended in PY 2023 on this project.

The City returned \$20,000 to HUD in the form of two \$10,000 Committed funds adjustments during PY 2023 due to the lack of accomplishments for two businesses that the City assisted as part of the Small Business Emergency Relief Program.

The program's goal was to aid locally owned small businesses that demonstrated hardships or revenue loss that the business experienced because of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The program assisted locally owned businesses that demonstrated these hardships and revenue loss and helped to retain jobs. Staff worked with the Watertown Local Development Corporation to review and approve applications and then developed Grantee Commitment Agreements for each business.

One of the two businesses in question filed for bankruptcy and was unable to provide documentation of LMI job retention. The other business failed to maintain its pre-award staffing level and therefore was also unable to provide documentation of LMI job retention. These circumstances left the City with no accomplishments to report to HUD for either activity.

The City continues to work with our various partner agencies on the remaining CDBG-CV related projects noted above and expects that all of them will be complete by the end of the current program year.

Comparison of the proposed versus actual outcomes for each outcome measure submitted with the consolidated plan and explain, if applicable, why progress was not made toward meeting goals and objectives. 91.520(g)

Comparison of the proposed versus actual outcomes for each outcome measure submitted with the consolidated plan and explain, if applicable, why progress was not made toward meeting goals and objectives. 91.520(g)

Categories, priority levels, funding sources and amounts, outcomes/objectives, goal outcome indicators, units of measure, targets, actual outcomes/outputs, and percentage completed for each of the grantee’s program year goals.

Goal	Category	Source / Amount	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Expected – Strategic Plan	Actual – Strategic Plan	Percent Complete	Expected – Program Year	Actual – Program Year	Percent Complete
Affordable Housing Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$0	Rental units rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	4	2	50.00%	0	0	100%
Affordable Housing Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$161,409	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	37	15	40.54%	6	6	100%
Economic Development	Economic Development	CDBG: \$0	Jobs created/retained	Jobs	5	0	0.00%	0	0	100%
Environment and Quality of Life Enrichment	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$0	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	4250	858	20.18%	1000	708	70.08%

Fair Housing Education	Fair Housing	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	125	184	147%	25	16	64.00%
Fair Housing Education	Fair Housing	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	0	0	0%	0	0	100%
Homeless Assistance	Homeless	CDBG: \$0	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	0	14	0	0	0	100%
Homeless Assistance	Homeless	CDBG: \$	Homeless Person Overnight Shelter	Persons Assisted	0	0				
Homeless Assistance	Homeless	CDBG: \$	Homelessness Prevention	Persons Assisted	50	14	28.00%	60	29	48.33%
Homeownership Assistance	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Homeowner Housing Added	Household Housing Unit	25	7	28.00%	6	3	50.00%
Homeownership Assistance	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Direct Financial Assistance to Homebuyers	Households Assisted	25	7	28.00%	6	3	50.00%

Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	6250	1728	27.65%	825	548	66.42%
Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Buildings Demolished	Buildings	5	0	0.00%	0	0	100%
Planning and Administration	Planning and Administration	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	1	0	0.00%	1	1	100%
Public Services Support	Non-Homeless Special Needs	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	850	866	101.88%	90	0	0.00%
Public Services Support	Non-Homeless Special Needs	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	850	866	101.88%	90	0	0.00%

Table 1 - Accomplishments – Program Year & Strategic Plan to Date

CR-10 - Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted

Describe the families assisted (including the racial and ethnic status of families assisted). 91.520(a)

	CDBG
White	19,878
Black or African American	1,955
Asian	428
American Indian or American Native	407
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
Total	22,668
Hispanic	330
Not Hispanic	22,338

Table 2 – Table of assistance to racial and ethnic populations by source of funds

Narrative

The total families assisted during the 2023 Program Year was 19,878. The most direct assistance to families is clearly through the various housing rehab programs. However, the greatest number of families assisted come from projects with larger service area footprints, such as ADA ramp and tree planting projects. The City’s Fair Housing Education projects are aimed at assisting families that are in Protected Classes. The full racial and ethnic breakdown is as shown above in Table 2.

CR-15 - Resources and Investments 91.520(a)

Identify the resources made available

Source of Funds	Source	Resources Made Available	Amount Expended During Program Year
CDBG	public - federal	\$913,462	\$1,311,412.53

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

Narrative

Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
Downtown	1	10	
East	11	0	
Near East	8	3	
Near West	8	2	
Northeast	45	52	
Northwest	18	2	

Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Narrative

The City spent a collective \$641,198.34 in the Northeast Target Area in PY 2023, representing just over half of its total non-Planning /Administration CDBG spending in that Program Year. This sum includes expenditures on the Grant Street Reconstruction Project, Seward Street Reconstruction Project, Burlington Street Reconstruction – Design, the North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project Phase 2, the 542 Cooper Street Demolition Project as well as four locations across the Rental Rehab, Owner-Occupied Rehab and First-time Homebuyer programs. There were more rehab locations in the Northeast Target Area than any other Target Area.

The City also spent a collective \$129,113.62 in the Downtown Target Area, representing 10 percent of its non-Planning/Admin CDBG spending in PY 2023. This included the Franklin Street Area ADA Ramp Replacement Project Final Design and Construction and the 535 Olive Street Demolition.

The Near East Target Area received \$40,764.27 of CDBG spending on the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project and two Owner-Occupied Rehab projects. The City spent \$21,457.47 in the Northwest Target Area on the Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project, North Star Playground Enhancement and an Owner-Occupied Rehab project. Finally, the only spending in the Near West Target Area was \$19,529.38 on one Owner-Occupied Rehab Project. The spending in each of these target areas represented less than 4 percent of the City’s non-Planning/Admin CDBG spending in PY 2023. The City did not spend any CDBG money in the East Target Area in PY 2023.

The percentage in the table only sum to 69 percent, as the remaining spending was on projects outside of target areas and on projects that had a citywide impact.

The City spent a total \$351,259.33 on projects outside of target areas, the majority of which was spent on Owner-Occupied Rehab and Homebuyer project locations. The lone exceptions were the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project and the North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project Phase 2, both of which had service areas spanning target area and non-target area Block Groups. Therefore, the City divided the money spent on these projects in half between the applicable target areas and the non-target area sums for the purposes of calculating distribution of investments.

Finally, the City spent a collective \$36,995.61 on the following projects that had a citywide impact: the 2020 Zoning Re-Write Phase 2, WCSO Food 4 Families 2023, both the Fair Housing Education PY 2022 and 2023 projects, and the 518 Pine Street SRO – 2023 project, which provides financial support to a single room occupancy (SRO) facility that provides safe, supervised transitional housing to individuals experiencing homelessness.

The remainder of the City's spending in PY 2023 was on Planning and Administration.

PY 2023 marks the fourth consecutive year that the City has focused its CDBG spending on the Northeast Target Area, driven primarily by the highest concentration of infrastructure projects and housing rehab projects. The City anticipates this will continue for at least two more program years as the Burlington Street Reconstruction Project and Black River Trail Extension both enter their construction phases in the upcoming years.

Leveraging

Explain how federal funds leveraged additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements were satisfied, as well as how any publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that were used to address the needs identified in the plan.

Leveraging in PY 2023 included other state and federal funding used as match on the housing rehabilitation and homeownership programs. The Grant Street Reconstruction Project - PY 2019, Grant Street Reconstruction Project - PY 2021, Seward Street Reconstruction Project and the Burlington Street Reconstruction – Design all leveraged other local, state and/or federal funding sources.

The North Star Playground Enhancement and North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project both occurred entirely on publicly owned parkland, improving those parks for residents in their service areas. The Northwest Target Area Tree Planting Project included plantings on City-owned street margins, helping to improve the quality of life in those neighborhoods and help meet Goal 4: Environment and Quality of Life Enhancement.

CR-20 - Affordable Housing 91.520(b)

Evaluation of the jurisdiction's progress in providing affordable housing, including the number and types of families served, the number of extremely low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income persons served.

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	0	0
Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	7	6
Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units	0	0
Total	7	6

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of households supported through Rental Assistance	0	0
Number of households supported through The Production of New Units	0	0
Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units	7	6
Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units	0	0
Total	7	6

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

Discuss the difference between goals and outcomes and problems encountered in meeting these goals.

Program Year 2023 was the tenth year that the City participated as an Entitlement Community in the CDBG Program administered by HUD. While rehabilitation work picked up in 2021 after falling behind due to the COVID pandemic, during PY2022 contractor availability became a challenge, and due to this constraint, the city fell behind on the number of units assisted. During PY2023, work has pick up slightly since PY2022. The City assisted six (6) qualified low-to-moderate income households in purchasing a home and completing minor rehabilitation work after the purchase of the property. During the same timeframe, six (6) units of owner-occupied housing were rehabilitated. The City has come very close to accomplish its goal of providing more affordable and quality housing for its residents in PY 2023.

Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.

These outcomes are not expected to impact our future annual action plans significantly, although we may reduce the amount allocated to these programs if contractor availability issues persist.

Include the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income persons served by each activity where information on income by family size is required to determine the eligibility of the activity.

Number of Households Served	CDBG Actual	HOME Actual
Extremely Low-income	5	0
Low-income	4	0
Moderate-income	3	0
Total	12	0

Table 7 – Number of Households Served

Narrative Information

The City completed the rehabilitation of six (6) units of owner-occupied rehabilitation and six (6) units of first-time homebuyer assistance. The majority of the income levels were split between the moderate and extremely low income brackets, as projects of this type would make it difficult for someone below that income level to maintain their own household.

CR-25 - Homeless and Other Special Needs 91.220(d, e); 91.320(d, e); 91.520(c)

Evaluate the jurisdiction's progress in meeting its specific objectives for reducing and ending homelessness through:

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

Another goal of the City's Strategic Plan was to provide homeless assistance to the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care. For the first two years of the City's 2021-2026 Consolidated Plan, the City utilized CDBG funding to assist the PNHC with its annual Point-In-Time (PIT) study of the homelessness in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties, New York. For the 2022 and 2023 Point-In-Time Counts, the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC) worked with local providers and agencies in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties to assist with the homelessness surveys

In an effort to continue to develop innovative strategies to address homelessness in the region and specifically expand and improve its outreach and methodology for counting the homeless, PNHC organized fourteen "Homeless No More" Open Houses in the three counties on the date of the PIT Count. The open houses were an opportunity for those struggling with homelessness connect with resources to secure housing and other needs, as well as participate in the PIT survey.

To make the Homeless No More events as successful as possible, the PNHC and the City of Watertown implemented the Point-In-Time Count Outreach and Education Initiative. Utilizing CDBG funding, a sixty second radio campaign was created. The commercials were aired on the radio stations owned by Stephens Media group and Intrepid Broadcasting. The commercials' message targeted the region's non-traditional homeless population and provided an opportunity to raise awareness and educate the general North Country population, so they could inform family and friends about this opportunity.

In addition, the City has continued to attend quarterly meetings of the PNHC and attends monthly PNHC PIT Committee conference calls.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

Emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons in the area are addressed by the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care, who works with the Department of Social Services as well as area non-profits. A few years ago, a Homeless Task Force was also formed to address emergency shelter and transitional housing needs within the City. As a result, the City committed FY2022 and FY2023 CDBG funds to a Single Room Occupancy project within the City. City Staff attends quarterly meetings of PNHC continue to stay engaged on the strategies being used to combat homelessness in the City and surrounding areas.

Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: likely to become homeless after 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); and, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs

PNHC, the local Continuum of Care, and its member agencies assist low-income and extremely low-income individuals and families in avoiding becoming homeless. The PNHC has developed a discharge plan to assist those who are likely to become homeless after 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. Additionally, the PNHC has a Discharge sub-committee that actively works with public institutions on discharge procedures to ensure that individuals have housing upon release. Progress continues to be made to institute policies and procedures at area institutions to help combat post-release homelessness.

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

PNHC, the local Continuum of Care, and its member agencies assist 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. This includes 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.

CR-30 - Public Housing 91.220(h); 91.320(j)

Actions taken to address the needs of public housing

Staff from the City Planning and Community Development Department are regularly in touch with the Watertown Housing Authority (WHA) and representatives from other local agencies such as the Development Authority of the North Country, Neighbors of Watertown and the Thousand Islands Area Habitat for Humanity to discuss housing issues within the City and potential ways to collaborate in the future to address substandard housing in the City.

In addition, the City has collaborated with the WHA during past program years during the development of our Annual Action Plans to discuss how the City could help address the needs of public housing, such as a sidewalk project that was completed in PY2017 at a WHA apartment complex. The City is collaborating with the WHA again in PY 2023, providing \$30,000 in funding to assist with the WHA's planned Meadowbrook Apartment Complex Sidewalk Project.

Staff has developed an ongoing dialogue and relationship with the WHA so that we can be in a good position as new project ideas arise in the future.

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

The City is in touch regularly with the Watertown Housing Authority, doing outreach for comments on the Annual Action Plan and to discuss housing issues facing the City.

Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs

Not applicable.

CR-35 - Other Actions 91.220(j)-(k); 91.320(i)-(j)

Actions taken 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. 91.220 (j); 91.320 (i)

During PY 2022, the City adopted a new Zoning Ordinance, which was a project in the PY2019 and PY2020 Annual Action Plans. The updated Ordinance allows for a more expanded list of housing types allowed in the Residential District, making housing more affordable for all populations. These changes to the structure of our residential zoning districts should have a positive impact and reduce barriers to affordable housing.

The City has included a Homebuyer Program in its Annual Action Plans for PY 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, which aims at assisting qualified low-to-moderate income individuals or households with down payment assistance toward the purchase of a new home. During PY 2023, the City assisted five qualified low-to-moderate income individuals in purchasing a home and completing minor rehabilitation work.

Actions taken to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)

During PY 2022, the City continued work on our Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation and Rental Rehabilitation programs. Both programs help to address the primary goals of our Strategic Plan to provide decent affordable housing for the underserved population. The City plans to continue the housing rehabilitation efforts in successive years as well in order to provide decent and affordable housing for the underserved populations.

Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)

As noted above, the City is rehabilitating owner occupied and renter occupied houses in the City. For each of the houses, the City took actions to reduce lead-based paint hazards including testing for lead-based paint in each of the units, conducting a risk assessment and implementing lead-safe work practices during rehabilitation work.

Actions taken to reduce the number of poverty-level families. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)

During PY 2023, the City undertook several activities aimed at assisting poverty level families as noted above. In addition, the City prepared bid specifications for several infrastructure projects including the Franklin Street ADA Ramp Project, the North Hamilton Basketball Court Improvement Project, and the Grant Street and Seward Street Reconstruction Project. In an effort to encourage and provide employment and training opportunities for very-low income residents, the specifications and bid documents for the Grant Street and Seward Street Reconstruction Project included the City's Section 3 Plan as required by HUD. The documents state that the project is considered a Section 3 covered

contract and that the contractor must comply with Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended.

Actions taken to develop institutional structure. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)

The City of Watertown Planning and Community Development Department remains responsible for the administration of the CDBG Program. Effective delivery of the CDBG Program requires constant communication and coordination with numerous City departments and agencies. Within the Planning and Community Development Department, CDBG duties and program areas (housing, public improvements and public services) have been divided among our five staff members. This provides staff the ability to provide assistance in all program areas as the workload dictates. Additionally, an effort has been made to involve multiple staff members in each program area so that the Department is not left in a difficult position in the event of staff changes.

As is noted above, the City has been an entitlement community for the past ten years. During that time, Staff has worked tirelessly to learn about the program and continues to gain expertise and experience which makes the implementation of projects much more efficient. We expect to continue to implement and complete projects in a timely fashion during the coming year.

Throughout the year, Staff participates in various training and educational opportunities such as conference calls, webinars and in person trainings that are offered by HUD, the local HUD field office and others.

Actions taken to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)

In an effort to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies, Planning Staff regularly attends quarterly meetings of the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care.

Last year, the city created a Vacant Homes Redevelopment Initiative to redevelop tax-foreclosed homes in the City of Watertown. The hope is that the homes will be redeveloped and potentially provide a safe and affordable place to live for families living in poverty. Additionally, a Jefferson County Homeless Task Force was formed recently that brings together local officials from across the County, public agencies, and not-for-profit partners to work together to help find transitional and emergency housing for those most in need. As a result of this partnership, the City awarded PY2022 and PY 2023 funds to a local not-for-profit to assist in the administrative costs of a new single room occupancy project within the City of Watertown.

Identify actions taken to overcome the effects of any impediments identified in the jurisdictions analysis of impediments to fair housing choice. 91.520(a)

CNY Fair Housing previously researched and wrote an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) on behalf of the City of Watertown during PY 2020. The AI identified four major impediments to fair housing in the City including the following:

1. Lack of quality, affordable housing limits housing options for protected class members.
2. Vacant housing and zombie properties undermine neighborhood stability and revitalization efforts.
3. There are significant disparities in homeownership rates by race and ethnicity, limiting the ability of people of color to build household wealth.
4. A large percentage of the population has disabilities, particularly ambulatory difficulties, which creates a need for accessible housing.
5. Housing discrimination and lack of knowledge of fair housing rights continues to limit housing opportunities.

In PY 2023, the City continued to address Impediments Nos. 1 and 4 via progress on its owner-occupied and rental housing rehabilitation programs. During PY 2022, Neighbors of Watertown, as a subrecipient, rehabilitated six owner-occupied units using project funds from various program years. The homeownership program placed five first-time homebuyers in new homes.

The City addressed Impediment No. 5 through its ongoing Fair Housing Education program, which CNY Fair Housing administers as a subrecipient, and includes both an education and marketing component. CNY Fair Housing conducted two in-person training sessions on November 9, 2023 at the Watertown Urban Mission, one geared towards landlords and one geared towards service providers and tenants. CNY Fair Housing reported that the total reach was four (4) people for the Service Provider session and six (6) for the Landlord session.

The marketing component consisted of billboards and other advertisements that CNY Fair Housing bought in the greater Watertown metropolitan region. Finally, CNY Fair Housing is also acting as the City's Qualified Fair Housing Enforcement Agency and has the authority to investigate complaints and provide legal representation to victims of discrimination in any case where CNY Fair Housing determines that discrimination has occurred.

CR-40 - Monitoring 91.220 and 91.230

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

Staff has developed an on-going monitoring program in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the CDBG program. The monitoring process includes requiring subrecipients to meet regularly with City Staff and submit quarterly or semi-annual reports that detail the progress made toward implementing the program and review of those reports by the City. The City also conducts on-site monitoring visits to review case files and program files to ensure compliance with all federal regulations.

Citizen Participation Plan 91.105(d); 91.115(d)

Describe the efforts to provide citizens with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on performance reports.

In an effort to provide citizens with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on our CAPER, the City completed several tasks according to the process outlined in our Citizen Participation Plan.

First, at its regular meeting held on August 19, 2024, the City Council scheduled a public hearing for September 16, 2024 at 7:15 p.m.

On August 30, 2024, a notice of the public hearing was published in the local newspaper, the *Watertown Daily Times*. In addition to advertising the date of the public hearing, the legal notice stated that the City's draft CAPER was available for review and public comment from August 30, 2024 through September 16, 2024.

Full copies of the CAPER were available for public viewing at the City Clerk's Office or the City's Planning and Community Development Department located at 245 Washington St., at the Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library located at 229 Washington St., and at the Watertown Housing Authority Offices located at 142 Mechanic St. A copy was also available on the City's website at:

<https://www.watertown-ny.gov/CDBGPublicCommentOpportunities>

The notice also stated that any interested person was able to request that a free copy of the report be mailed to them.

Also, on August 30, 2024, Staff issued a separate notice via email to all constituency groups and organizations identified in our Citizen Participation Plan, notifying them that the CAPER was available for review and comment.

The City Council will convene the public hearing in the City Council Chamber, Room 303, Watertown City Hall, 245 Washington St., Watertown, NY on September 16, 2024, at 7:15 p.m.

CR-45 - CDBG 91.520(c)

Specify the nature of, and reasons for, any changes in the jurisdiction’s program objectives and indications of how the jurisdiction would change its programs as a result of its experiences.

During Program Year 2023, the City of Watertown did not make any changes to the program objectives of our CDBG Program.

Does this Jurisdiction have any open Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grants?

No

CR-58 – Section 3

Identify the number of individuals assisted and the types of assistance provided

Total Labor Hours	CDBG	HOME	ESG	HOPWA	HTF
Total Number of Activities	1	0	0	0	0
Total Labor Hours	3726.5				
Total Section 3 Worker Hours	423				
Total Targeted Section 3 Worker Hours	0				

Table 5 – Total Labor Hours

Qualitative Efforts - Number of Activities by Program	CDBG	HOME	ESG	HOPWA	HTF
Outreach efforts to generate job applicants who are Public Housing Targeted Workers	X				
Outreach efforts to generate job applicants who are Other Funding Targeted Workers.	X				
Direct, on-the job training (including apprenticeships).	X				
Indirect training such as arranging for, contracting for, or paying tuition for, off-site training.					
Technical assistance to help Section 3 workers compete for jobs (e.g., resume assistance, coaching).					
Outreach efforts to identify and secure bids from Section 3 business concerns.					
Technical assistance to help Section 3 business concerns understand and bid on contracts.					
Division of contracts into smaller jobs to facilitate participation by Section 3 business concerns.					
Provided or connected residents with assistance in seeking employment including: drafting resumes, preparing for interviews, finding job opportunities, connecting residents to job placement services.					
Held one or more job fairs.	X				
Provided or connected residents with supportive services that can provide direct services or referrals.					
Provided or connected residents with supportive services that provide one or more of the following: work readiness health screenings, interview clothing, uniforms, test fees, transportation.					
Assisted residents with finding child care.					
Assisted residents to apply for, or attend community college or a four year educational institution.					
Assisted residents to apply for, or attend vocational/technical training.					
Assisted residents to obtain financial literacy training and/or coaching.					
Bonding assistance, guaranties, or other efforts to support viable bids from Section 3 business concerns.					
Provided or connected residents with training on computer use or online technologies.					
Promoting the use of a business registry designed to create opportunities for disadvantaged and small businesses.					
Outreach, engagement, or referrals with the state one-stop system, as designed in Section 121(e)(2) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.					
Other. Advertised in the HUD Opportunity Portal and WHA Apartments	X				

Table 6 – Qualitative Efforts - Number of Activities by Program

Narrative

The only CDBG-funded project that the City of Watertown has been working on during PY 2023 with expenditures in excess of \$200,000 was the Grant Street Reconstruction Project. This project is part of the City's 2022 Annual Action Plan, which the City Council adopted on June 20, 2022, and for which the City received its grant agreement from HUD on May, 13, 2022.

The 3,726.5 total labor hours represent the cumulative hours from all payroll reports that the prime contractor submitted to the City. There was one subcontractor on the project, but due to the subcontractor falling under the professional services category, land survey work, their total labor hours do not get calculated for the project.

The prime contractor for the project completed multiple qualitative efforts including posting job positions on the HUD Opportunity Portal, searching the HUD Opportunity Portal for available Section 3 workers, participated in a job fair, direct on-the-job training, and posted job listing in Watertown Housing Authority Apartment building lobbies.