

# **2015 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016

Community Development Block Grant

HOME Investment Partnerships

Emergency Solutions Grant

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS



**CITY OF BUFFALO**

Byron W. Brown, Mayor

July 9, 2015

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview .....	1
CDBG .....	2
HOME .....	8
ESG .....	8
HOPWA .....	9

### Appendices:

Maps .....	10
HUD exhibits .....	15

## OVERVIEW

The City of Buffalo is required by HUD to prepare an Annual Action Plan that outlines its use of funds under four entitlement programs: Community Development Block Grant, Home Investment Partnerships, Emergency Solutions Grant, and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS. The city will receive approximately \$16.7 million in grant funding for the 2015 program year, which will be combined with \$1.4 million in program income generated from loan repayments. This funding leverages millions of dollars from state, local, and private sources.

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,169,702</b>
CDBG grant	12,635,721
CDBG program income	1,150,000
HOME grant	2,398,152
HOME program income	280,000
ESG grant	1,159,066
HOPWA grant	546,763

Funds from the four entitlement programs will be directed to the following activities: housing, clearance, community facilities, infrastructure, public services, economic development, and administration.

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,169,702</b>
Housing	4,365,900
Clearance	810,000
Community facilities	2,800,000
Infrastructure	2,400,000
Public services	3,497,600
Economic development	1,168,296
Administration	\$3,127,906

The city encourages residents to provide input on the Annual Action Plan. The preparation and adoption schedule is posted on the city’s website and distributed to over 850 block clubs, non-profits, and individuals; and public hearing notices are sent to the distribution list and published in the Buffalo News, Buffalo Criterion, and La Ultima Hora. An initial public hearing was held on March 25, 2015 to obtain input from residents on the city’s community development needs. This was followed by an April 2 workshop to review the availability and uses of public service funding. The Annual Action Plan approved by Council is posted on the city’s website, and presented at a second public hearing on July 9. The city also provides for a 30-day comment period after each public hearing to allow residents who are unable to attend to share their comments in writing.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT**

CDBG grant funding and program income is used for a variety of activities, including emergency home repairs; demolition of abandoned structures; improvements to public facilities such as community centers, parks, streets, and sidewalks in HUD-eligible neighborhoods (see maps); and support for non-profits providing various public services. Funding for program delivery and administration covers the costs for community-based organizations and the city to provide these services.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,785,721</b>
Housing	1,955,500
Clearance	810,000
Community facilities	1,950,000
Parks	850,000
Street resurfacing	1,250,000
Sidewalk replacement	1,150,000
Public services	1,895,000
Section 108 loan repayment	1,168,296
Planning and administration	2,756,925

### **Housing**

The Emergency Loan Program helps low- and moderate-income homeowners to replace roofs, furnaces, and hot water tanks; or to repair water, sewer, and electrical systems. Belmont Shelter and seven community-based organizations assist with this program by providing loan originations, work write-ups, and property inspections. At an average loan of \$11,920, the city anticipates assisting 99 homeowners during the 2015 program year.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,955,500</b>
Rehab loans	1,180,000
Program delivery: CBOs	243,000
Program delivery: Belmont	346,500
Program delivery: City	186,000

### Clearance

Funding is used to demolish vacant and abandoned residential, commercial, and industrial properties that are having a negative impact on their neighborhoods. This supplements funding that has been secured from the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, the state Attorney General's Office, and the city's capital budget and general fund. At an average cost of \$20,000 per demolition, the city anticipates clearing 30 structures during the 2015 program year.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$810,000</b>
Demolitions	600,000
Program delivery: City	210,000

### Community Facilities

In 2014, the Department of Public Works provided a list of \$11.1 million in repairs and upgrades needed at 14 city-owned community centers: Asarese-Matters, Autumnwood, CRUCIAL, Dulski, Hennepin, JFK, Matt Urban Hope Center, North Buffalo, Northwest Buffalo, Old First Ward, Gloria Parks, Pratt-Willert, Edward Saunders, and Schiller Park. After confirming that these facilities serve HUD-eligible neighborhoods, the city prepared a six-year capital plan to address all repairs, starting with the most critical needs. This is the second year of the plan, and repairs will be made at six community centers: Autumnwood, Dulski, Hennepin, Northwest Buffalo, Pratt-Willert, and Saunders.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,950,000</b>
Improvements	1,900,000
Program delivery: City	50,000

## Parks

DPW provides an annual list of improvements needed at city parks. For those that serve HUD-eligible neighborhoods, the city attempts to address as many as funding will allow. For the 2015 program year, improvements will be made to three parks: Davey, JFK, and MLK.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$850,000</b>
Improvements	800,000
Program delivery: City	50,000

## Streets

DPW provides an annual list of streets that require resurfacing. Based on HUD guidelines, the city conducts a three-part review to determine eligibility. The first step is a check to ensure that each street segment is located within a HUD-eligible neighborhood. The second step requires counting the individual parcels on both sides of the street, and confirming that at least 51 percent are currently in residential use. The final step takes the estimated cost of resurfacing each segment and divides it by the number of residential parcels to eliminate any segments that have an unusually high cost per unit. After conducting this analysis, 23 street segments were determined to be eligible for CDBG funding.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,250,000</b>
Street resurfacing	1,200,000
Program delivery: City	50,000

<i>Street</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Bird	Grant	Richmond	Edson	Seneca	City line
Blum	Military	Grove	Eugene	Hinman	Kenmore
Bridgeman	Amherst	Chandler	Fairchild	Hertel	Linden
Bruce	Merrimac	Englewood	Felix	St. Marys	Poplar
Carl	East Delavan	East Ferry	Hinman	Military	Elmwood
Colfax	Grider	Wyoming	Layer	Military	Clayton
Cornell	Englewood	Tyler	Lester	Seneca	North end
Deshler	Broadway	Amity	Lonsdale	East Ferry	Northland

Peck	Broadway	Amity
Roosevelt	Bailey	Suffolk
Schutrum	Broadway	North end
Shirley	Bailey	Orleans

Shirley	Parkridge	Bailey
Stewart	Walden	North end
Wick	Broadway	Railroad

## Sidewalks

DPW provides an annual list of sidewalks in need of replacement. Based on HUD guidelines, the city conducts a three-part review to determine eligibility. The first step is a check to ensure that each street segment is located within a HUD-eligible neighborhood. The second step requires counting the individual parcels on both sides of the street, and confirming that at least 51 percent are currently in residential use. The final step takes the estimated cost of sidewalk replacement for each segment, and divides it by the number of residential parcels to eliminate any segments that have an unusually high cost per unit. After conducting this analysis, 22 sidewalk segments were determined to be eligible for CDBG funding.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,150,000</b>
Sidewalk replacement	1,100,000
Program delivery: City	50,000

<i>Street</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Altruria	Hopkins	South Park
Brinkman	Doat	Walden
Bush	Amherst	Grote
Crystal	Hopkins	South Park
Dodge	Masten	Michigan
Germain	Amherst	Grote
Hillery	Mineral Spring	South end
Homer	Hertel	Tacoma
Howell	Amherst	Grote
Langmeyer	Olympic	Bailey
Peter	Amherst	Grote

<i>Street</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Rawlins	Doat	Genesee
Stevens	Ferry	Delavan
Tioga	Delaware	Fairchild
Urban	Fillmore	Kehr
Virgil	Hertel	Tacoma
Weiss	Clinton	Casimer
Weston	Bailey	Suffolk
Weston	Hazelwood	Edison
Weston	Newburgh	Hazelwood
Weston	Suffolk	Newburgh
Wyoming	Sussex	Delavan

## Public Services

A total of 45 applications were submitted to provide public services, including submissions from seven new programs. All applications were rated using a HUD-approved evaluation form by a team of four reviewers. Applications were initially assessed for meeting a set of threshold requirements addressing organizational strength. Once this review was passed, each application was rated based on the program's benefit to low- and moderate-income persons and neighborhoods, along with the need for the proposed activity.

The city is able to direct up to 15 percent of its CDBG award to public services. With the funding reduction for the 2015 program year, the public service portion of the budget required a 10 percent cut.

To meet this target, the review committee made the following recommendations:

- Cap individual program awards at \$100,000, since agencies receiving more than this amount are generally successful at securing other funding;
- Maintain current funding levels for agencies that began collaborations over the past year, such as West Side Community Services, Los Tainos, and CEM seniors; Gloria Parks and FLARE seniors; and Schiller Park and Seneca Babcock seniors;
- Maintain funding for youth programs at 2014 levels;
- Reduce funding for senior programs by five percent;
- Reduce funding for crime prevention and employment programs by 10 percent; and
- Reduce funding for housing programs by 15 percent.

CDBG funding will assist 15 agencies that offer youth programming at 21 facilities. These programs are either located in eligible low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, or income-qualify participants to make sure that at least 51 percent are from low- or moderate-income households.

<b>Youth</b>	<b>\$791,200</b>		
African American CC	54,700	Northwest Buffalo CC	100,000
Belle Center	60,000	Old First Ward CC	21,500
Computers for Children	39,200	Police Athletic League	88,400
Delavan Grider CC	49,100	Pratt Willert / CAO	39,700
Gloria Parks CC	59,300	Seneca Babcock CC	20,700
King Urban Life Center	31,900	West Side CS	78,500
Matt Urban	77,300	RFP for CRUCIAL service area	34,200
North Buffalo CC	36,700		

CDBG funding will assist 16 agencies that offer senior programming. Although seniors automatically qualify as a low- or moderate-income population, most of these programs are located in eligible low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

<b>Seniors</b>		<b>\$680,100</b>	
Delavan Grider CC	24,600	Pratt Willert / CAO	15,300
Friends to Elderly	22,200	Schiller Park CC	80,000
Gloria Parks CC	56,200	Seneca Babcock CS	20,000
Hispanics United	19,100	South Buffalo CA	100,000
Matt Urban	52,600	Valley CC	19,100
North Buffalo CC	41,100	West Side CS	61,500
Northwest Buffalo CC	84,300	William Emslie YMCA	31,700
Old First Ward CC	22,200	RFP for ABLEY service area	30,200

CDBG funding will assist eight programs that provide a variety of services to city residents. Most of these agencies income qualify their participants, to ensure that they are from low- or moderate-income households. Services include crime prevention, employment training, fair housing, and foreclosure prevention.

<b>Other</b>		<b>\$423,700</b>	
City of Buffalo Citizen Services	142,300	Crime prevention	
West Side Community Services	18,000	Crime prevention	
Belle Center	58,000	Employment	
Center for Employment Opportunities	54,000	Employment	
Buffalo Urban League	30,400	Fair housing	
Housing Opportunities Made Equal	50,400	Fair housing	
Legal Aid Bureau	46,900	Foreclosure prevention	
Neighborhood Legal Services	23,700	Foreclosure prevention	

## HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS

HOME funding is used to support new construction or the substantial rehabilitation of owner-occupied and rental housing for low- and moderate-income individuals and families; and to assist with the work of Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).

HUD requires that the city allocate at least 15 percent of its HOME grant to assist CHDOs for the acquisition and rehabilitation of housing, and up to five percent to cover their operating expenses.

The city distributes the balance of its HOME funding through an RFP process. Awards are made based on proposals to build, rehab, or convert structures for affordable housing. Proposal ratings consider the development team's qualifications and experience, M/WBE participation, an analysis of the market, and the amount of outside funding being leveraged.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,678,152</b>
Construction/rehab: City	1,468,400
Program delivery: City	482,000
Construction/rehab: CHDOs	360,000
Program delivery: CHDOs	100,000
Administration	267,752

## EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT

ESG funding provides support for street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, prevention, and rapid rehousing to assist the homeless and other special needs populations. Applications for ESG funding are reviewed and rated by the Continuum of Care Committee, which has been designated by HUD to coordinate homelessness efforts in the region.

Outreach funding to locate homeless persons and secure appropriate services and case management will be provided to the Matt Urban Center. Funding will be directed to five emergency shelters (City Mission, Compass House, Hope House, Jericho Road/Vive, and Salvation Army); and four transitional housing providers (Gerard Place, Saving Grace Ministries, Teaching & Restoring Youth, and YWCA) for operating expenses and support services.

Prevention funding will be provided to Neighborhood Legal Services to assist tenants facing eviction to avoid homelessness. Both Code Blue and Rapid Rehousing funds will be distributed via an RFP process once the program year begins; and the Homeless Alliance of WNY will receive funding to manage the HUD-mandated Homeless Management Information System that collects data on program participants.

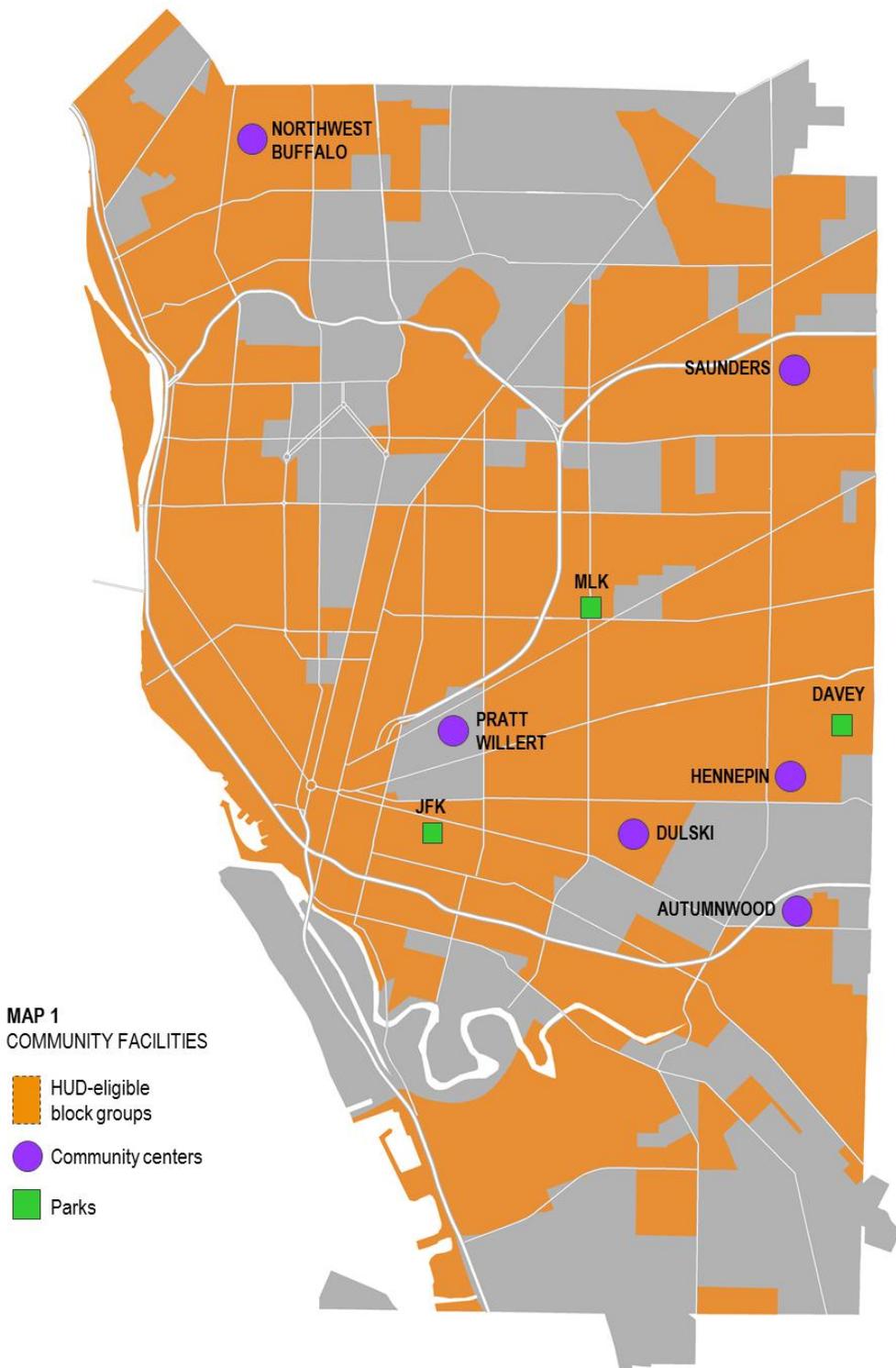
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Shelter</i>	<i>Prevention</i>	<i>RR</i>	<i>HIMS</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,159,066</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>	<b>\$435,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$357,200</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>
City Mission	60,000		60,000			
Compass House	63,000		63,000			
Gerard Place	33,500		33,500			
Homeless Alliance	60,000					60,000
Hope House	40,000		40,000			
Jericho Road/Vive	30,000		30,000			
Matt Urban Center	160,000	160,000				
NLS	60,000			60,000		
Salvation Army	65,000		65,000			
Saving Grace	35,000		35,000			
TRY	33,500		33,500			
YWCA	20,000		20,000			
Code Blue RFP	55,000		55,000			
Rapid rehousing RFP	357,200				357,200	
Administration	86,866					

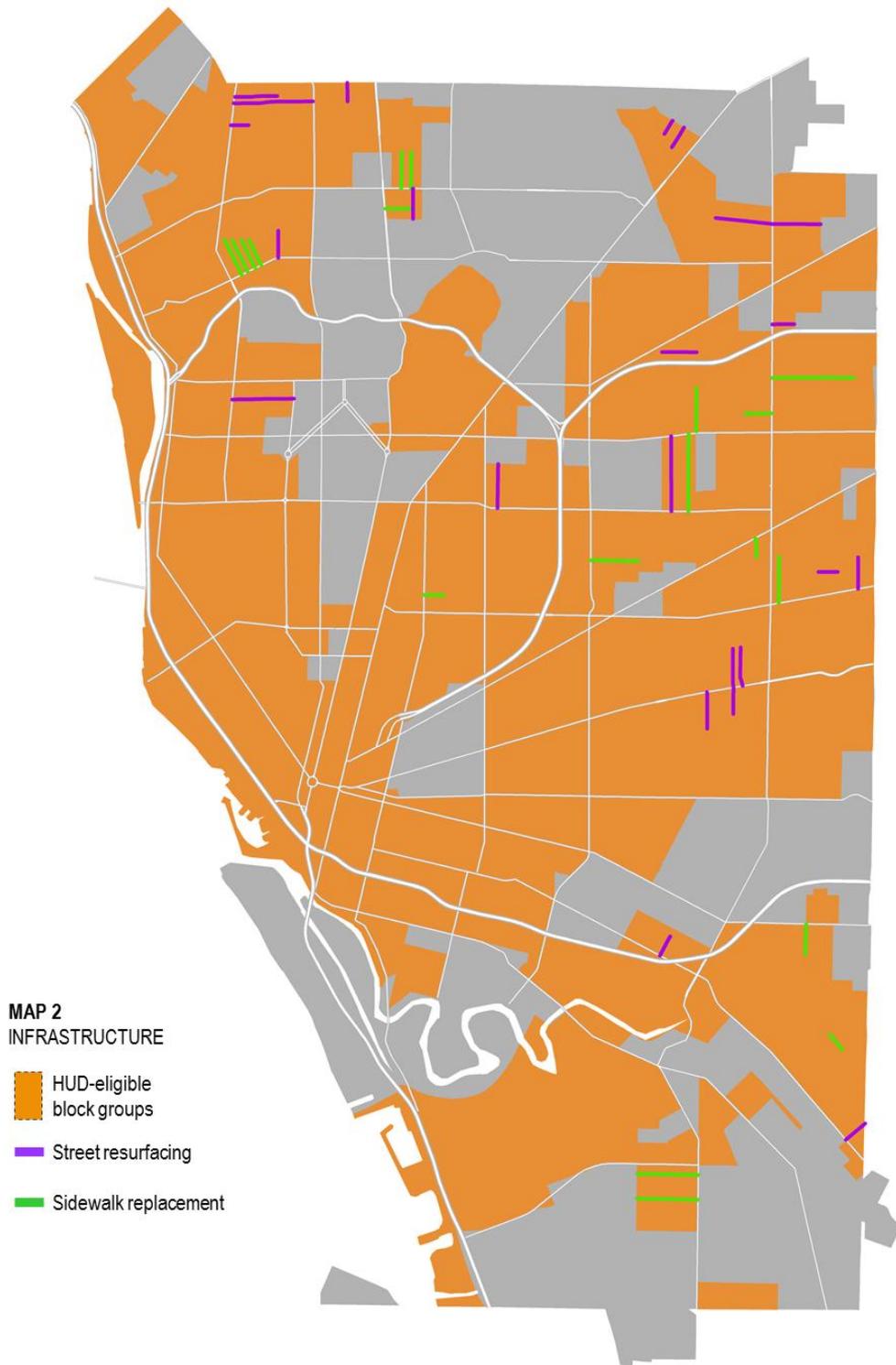
## HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS

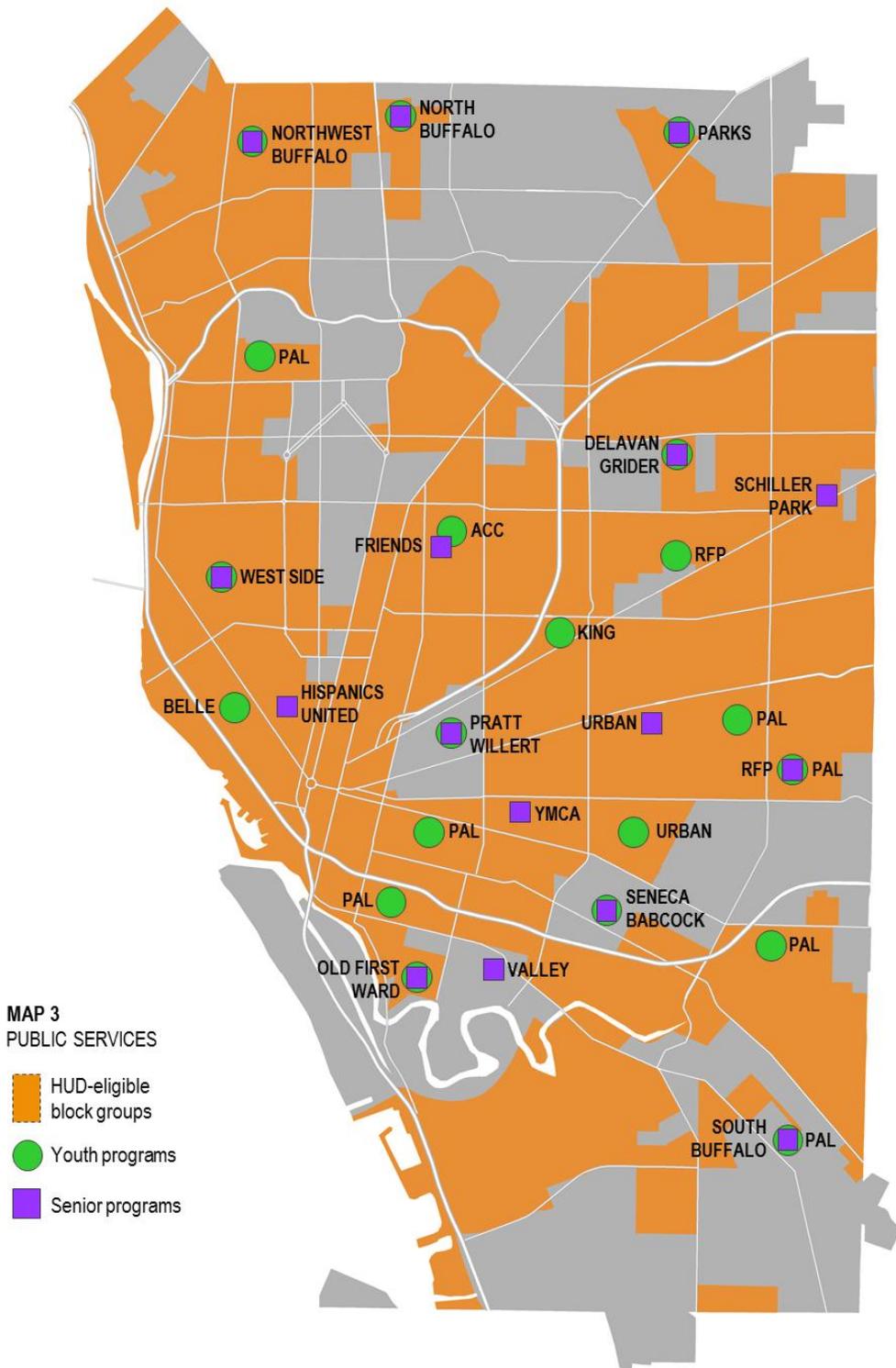
HOPWA funding is used to assist individuals and families who are either HIV-positive or living with AIDS. As the only HOPWA grantee in the region, HUD requires that the city support providers who offer services to all residents of Erie and Niagara Counties. The city will provide HOPWA funds to Evergreen Health Services for delivering housing placement, housing assistance, and supportive services; and to the Homeless Alliance of WNY to manage the HUD-mandated Homeless Management Information System that collects data on program participants.

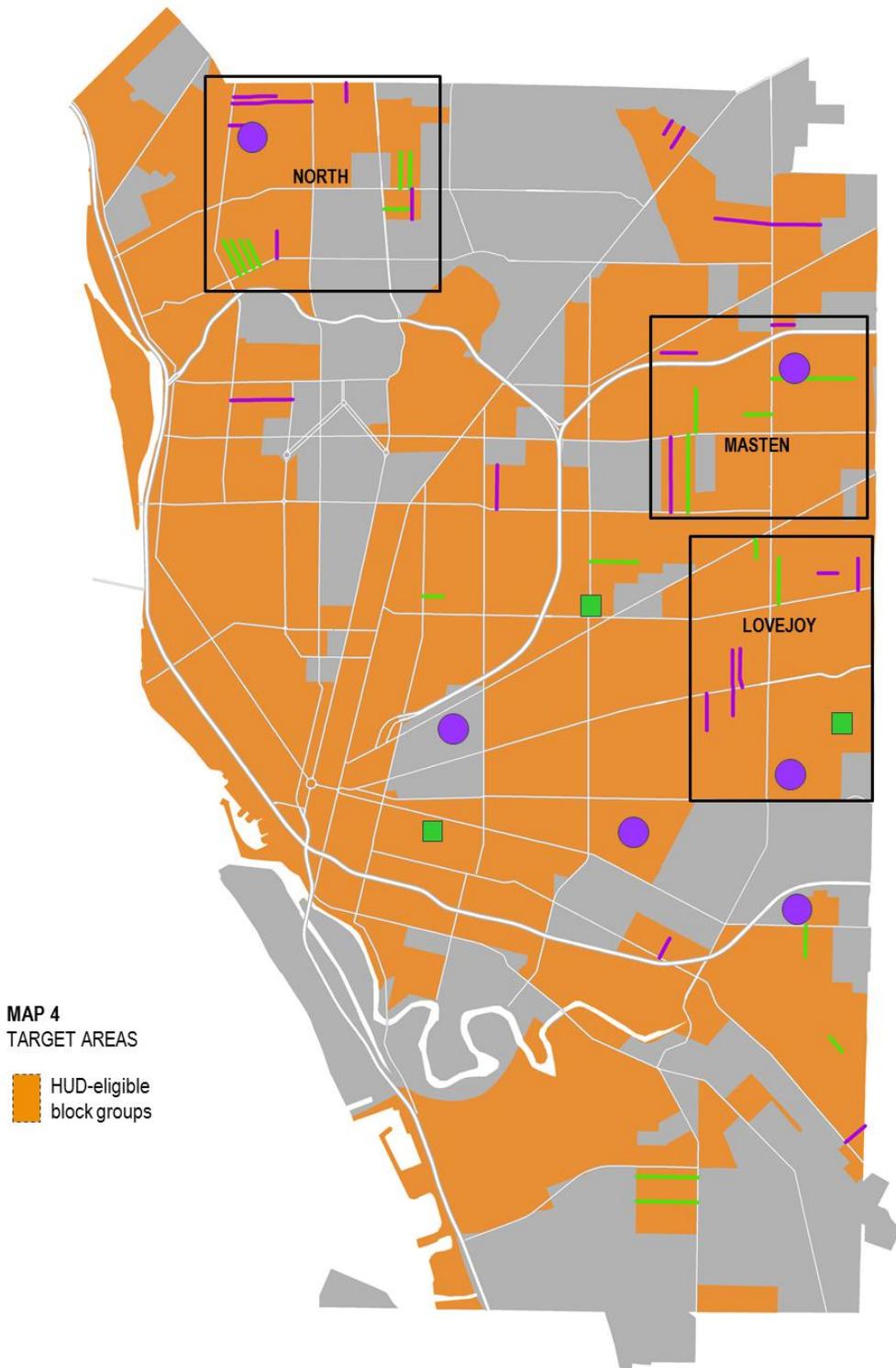
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$546,763</b>
Evergreen Health Services	520,400
Homeless Alliance	10,000
Administration	16,363

# APPENDIX A: MAPS









## **APPENDIX B: HUD EXHIBITS**

## **AP-05: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Buffalo is required to submit an Annual Action Plan in order to receive HUD funding under four entitlement programs: Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Solutions Grant, and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS.

The 2015 AAP covers the period from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016, and identifies projects that address critical needs within the city. CDBG funds are used to assist with the development of viable neighborhoods by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. HOME funds support the construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income renters and homeowners. ESG funds help to prevent homelessness, and address the housing and supportive service needs of homeless individuals and families. HOPWA funds provide housing assistance and related supportive services for persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families.

### **Objectives and outcomes**

The city takes a balanced approach to investing the \$18,169,702 in entitlement funds that it will receive:

**Housing:** \$4,365,900 million in CDBG and HOME funding will be used for up to 99 loans to owner-occupants for emergency repairs; to renovate, convert, and construct up to 36 units of affordable rental housing; and to provide for program delivery by non-profit partners and Community Housing Development Organizations.

**Clearance:** \$810,000 in CDBG funding will support the remediation and demolition of up to 30 vacant and abandoned residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

**Community facilities:** \$2,800,000 in CDBG funding will be used to upgrade six community centers and three parks, serving approximately 9,800 persons annually.

**Infrastructure:** \$2,400,000 million in CDBG funding will be used to resurface up to 23 streets, and replace sidewalks on up to 22 streets, serving roughly 3,800 persons.

**Public services:** \$1,895,000 million in CDBG funding will be used to support 28 non-profits that provide programming for youth, seniors, crime prevention, employment training, and legal assistance, serving approximately 16,400 persons.

**Homeless:** \$1,072,200 in ESG funding will be used to assist non-profits who provide street outreach, emergency shelter, prevention, and rapid rehousing to over 7,600 persons.

**Special needs:** \$530,400 in HOPWA funding will be used to provide housing assistance, placement, and supportive services for persons with HIV/AIDS, serving over 300 households.

**Economic development:** \$1,168,296 will be used to repay Section 108 loans.

**Planning and administration:** \$3,127,906 million will be used to administer these four programs.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Residential rehabilitation	DH-2	\$1,955,500	CDBG	99 units
Housing production	DH-1	\$2,410,400	HOME	36 units
Clearance	DH-3, SL-3	\$810,000	CDBG	30 buildings
Public facilities	SL-3	\$5,200,000	CDBG	13,630 persons
Public services	SL-1	\$1,895,000	CDBG	16,440 persons
Street outreach	SL-1	\$160,000	ESG	300 persons
Emergency shelter	SL-1	\$435,000	ESG	6,360 persons
Prevention	DH-2	\$60,000	ESG	950 persons
Rapid rehousing	DH-2	\$357,200	ESG	70 households
Housing assistance	DH-2	\$302,400	HOPWA	105 households
Housing placement	DH-2	\$58,800	HOPWA	60 households
Supportive services	DH-2	\$147,950	HOPWA	150 households
Section 108 repayment	NA	\$1,168,296	CDBG	NA
Planning/administration	NA	\$3,127,906	Various	NA

## **Evaluation of past performance**

The most recent Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, covering the period between May 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014, includes the following accomplishments:

### Repair existing housing

- CDBG and HOME funds were used to rehabilitate 217 owner occupied structures, with a total of 310 units.

### Develop affordable and market rate housing

- HOME funds supported two major rental projects with a total of 146 units, including 33 HOME-assisted units.
- HOME, HUD Replacement Housing Factor Program, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit equity funds, bond financing, property revenues, and deferred developer fees were used to rehabilitate 138 one and two bedroom apartments at Hertel Park apartment's senior units at Walden Park.
- CDBG funds were used to weatherize 12 existing properties.

### Encourage new homeowners for existing structures

- CDBG funds provided 12 homebuyers with closing cost assistance.

#### Remove the blighting influence of dilapidated structures

- CDBG, General Fund, NYS Grant Funds and Capital Funds were used to demolish 457 properties.

#### Support neighborhood revitalization efforts to improve public facilities and infrastructure

- CDBG funds improved 24 community centers.
- CDBG funds improved 6 parks and playgrounds.
- CDBG funds resurfaced streets and replaced sidewalks along 39 streets.

#### Expand employment opportunities for residents

- CDBG funds supported commercial loans that created 26 employment opportunities 19 full-time and 7 part-time jobs; of which five full-time and 13 part-time jobs were held by low- and moderate-income residents.
- BURA staff provided technical assistance to the eight permanent Broadway Market tenants, and helped implement strategies to benefit their businesses located in the Market. Over 60 small business vendors had the opportunity to sell their merchandise during different seasonal festivals held at the market.

#### Provide necessary public services

- CDBG funds provided counseling, legal, and fair housing services to more than 6,284 persons
- CDBG funds were distributed to 35 CBOs who provided human services to more than 13,000 persons.

#### Assist homeless families with housing and supportive services

- ESG funds provided outreach services to over 671 individuals and families.
- ESG funds provided prevention services to over 3,400 individuals and families.
- ESG funds provided emergency shelter and transitional housing to over 6,058 individuals and families.
- ESG funds provided rapid re-housing to 188 individuals and families.

#### Provide housing assistance and related services to persons with AIDS

- HOPWA funds provided assistance to 200 individuals or families living with HIV/AIDS.

#### Improve program management and administration

- Community Housing Development Organization performance was improved through training and capacity building.
- Accounting and project management were enhanced through better project monitoring.
- Targeted neighborhood investments increased the impact of dwindling funds.

### **Citizen participation and consultation process**

The city has provided many opportunities for citizens to offer input regarding the Annual Action Plan. The preparation and adoption schedule was posted on the city's website, and over 850 notices were mailed or e-mailed to block clubs, non-profits, and other interested parties. A public hearing was held on March 25, 2015 to encourage citizen input at the start of the process. A draft of the Annual Action Plan was posted on the city's website, and presented at a public hearing on July 9, 2015. A 30-day comment period that concluded on August 10 gave citizens an opportunity to submit written comments.

The city also meets regularly with a wide range of stakeholders to receive on-going input on community development needs. Consultations take place with housing CBOs; non-profits that provide public services to youth, elders, and special needs populations; block clubs, neighborhood groups, and business associations; educational institutions; and other local governments. These meetings provide an opportunity to build upon the extensive consultation that took place during preparation of the city's 2013/17 Consolidated Plan.

### **Public comments**

To be completed upon closure of public comment period.

## **AP-10: CONSULTATION**

The city meets regularly with various stakeholders to receive on-going input on community development needs. Consultations take place with housing CBOs; non-profits that provide public services to youth, elders, and special needs populations; block clubs, neighborhood groups, and business associations; educational institutions; and other local governments. These meetings provide an opportunity to build upon the extensive consultation that took place during preparation of the city's 2013/17 Consolidated Plan.

Input from the community, including comments received from individual citizens as well as agencies, contribute to the city's establishment of housing and community development goals. This is particularly true regarding input received from human service agencies, since statistics and data are limited. The city also relies on the input of community-based organizations to help identify housing and community development needs in various neighborhoods.

During the development of its 2013/17 Consolidated Plan, the city employed a more formal process to obtain input from community development stakeholders. Focus group meetings were held early in the process with affordable housing providers, fair housing advocates, business associations, homeless and special needs providers, community-based organizations, and health and human service agencies. Surveys were also distributed to these organizations to obtain more detailed information on community needs.

### **Coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health, and service agencies**

The city coordinates with leadership of the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority on items of mutual interest. Much of this has centered on the BMHA's preparation of a grant application for implementation of its Perry Choice Neighborhood initiative. While this was not funded during the past round, the BMHA intends to revise and resubmit its proposal.

The city meets with local Community-Based Organizations and Community Housing Development Organizations to assess housing needs within various neighborhoods, and discuss approaches for targeting investments.

The city also consults with foundations, research institutions, and the Department of Social Services regarding the human service needs of low-income persons, and attends meetings of the poverty coalition.

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

The city works closely with the Continuum of Care to identify homeless needs, using its 10-year plan to end homelessness as a guide. As a result of this consultation process, the city has begun to focus ESG funding on street outreach, emergency shelter, prevention, and rapid rehousing.

City representatives attend monthly meetings with homeless providers that the Continuum of Care sponsors. These providers are active in all phases of the ESG program, and allow the city to better understand how this funding fits into the larger picture, and where program improvements can be made. The city has also worked closely with a consortium of groups that are attempting to develop transitional and permanent housing options for veterans.

**Consultation with the Continuum of Care in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards for and evaluate outcomes of projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, and develop policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS**

The Continuum of Care Review Committee is provided with the applications for ESG funding that the city receives, and rates each using a scorecard developed by TDA, Inc., HUD’s technical assistance provider. The committee then meets to discuss the merits of each application, and provides funding recommendations to the city.

The city has also worked with the Continuum of Care to develop written policies and procedures for coordinated entry, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, rapid rehousing, and supportive services.

The city provides ESG funding to the Continuum of Care to license and manage the HMIS, which includes training users, enforcing security policies and data quality standards, and providing reports to HUD.

**Agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process and the jurisdiction’s consultations with housing, social service agencies, and other entities**

BUFFALO MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
Public Housing Needs
Regular meetings; better coordination.
ELLICOTT DISTRICT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Services: Housing; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.
FILLMORE-LEROY AREA RESIDENTS, INC. (FLARE)
Services: Housing; Elderly Persons; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.

MATT URBAN CENTER
Services: Housing; Children; Elderly Persons; homeless; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment; Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless, Families with children
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.
OLD FIRST WARD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Services: Housing; Children; Elderly Persons; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
Services: Housing; Children; Elderly Persons; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.
WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES
Services: Housing; Neighborhood Organization
Housing Need Assessment
Regular meetings; targeted housing efforts.
HOMELESS ALLIANCE OF WESTERN NEW YORK
Services: Homeless
Homeless needs and homelessness strategies
Regular meetings with all homeless providers to obtain input on homeless needs.

## **AP-12: PARTICIPATION**

The city encouraged residents and other stakeholders to provide input throughout the process of preparing its 2015 Annual Action Plan. Notices for public hearings are published in the Buffalo News and Buffalo Criterion; and bi-lingual notices are published in La Ultima Hora and mailed to over 600 addresses, emailed to over 250 persons, and posted on the city's website. The locations of the public hearings were ADA accessible, and the notices provided contact information for anyone needing special accommodations.

The city held an initial public hearing at the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County on March 25, 2015. The meeting outlined the adoption process, provided background information on the city's goals and objectives, and asked residents to share their thoughts on housing and community development needs, to be provided either at the meeting or within a 30-day comment period.

Project proposals for the AAP are evaluated by staff for eligibility with program regulations and performance measures, and funding recommendations are provided to the Mayor. Proposals for ESG funding are reviewed by the Continuum of Care Committee, with recommendations made to the city. The Mayor reviews these recommendations and submits a proposed AAP to the Common Council. The Council then reviews the AAP before it is released for public comment.

A second public hearing was held at the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County on July 9, 2015. This meeting reviewed the draft AAP, which was also posted on the city's website. Those attending were given the opportunity to comment on the draft AAP, and a 30-day comment period ran through August 10. Residents, community-based agencies, or other interested stakeholders wishing to comment on the AAP could do so by email or postal mail.

### **March 25, 2015**

Type: Public hearing

Targeted outreach: Minorities, Spanish-speaking, persons with disabilities

Attendance: 41

Oral comments: Stephanie Simeon, Executive Director of Heart of the City Neighborhoods, asked if the Target/Focus Program is centered around streets with high rates of homeownership; or if the city has considered using this program to concentrate efforts on more distressed/challenged blocks with blighting influences/problem properties? Yvonne McCray, BURA Housing Director, responded that the Target Program is focused on streets with high concentrations of owner occupants and is not geared toward investors. Target streets are identified by the contracted CBO's and carry with them focused requirements such as: the CBO seeking supplemental funds, or the CBO having a particular initiative or program also in place for those streets. Streets with vacancy and blighting issues, absentee landlords or other challenges are better handled through the Problem Property reporting form, 311, and engagement of Community Policing Representatives or Citizens Services for Clean Sweep consideration.

Brian Pilarski from Seneca Babcock Community Association asked whether agencies can use public service funding to pay utilities in city-owned buildings. Brendan Mehaffy, OSP Executive Director, responded that the city would allow this and that agencies should include utilities in their budgets.

Written comments: None received

**July 9, 2015**

Type: Public hearing

Targeted outreach: Minorities, Spanish-speaking, persons with disabilities

Attendance: TBD

Oral comments: TBD

Written comments: TBD

**AP-15: EXPECTED RESOURCES**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Uses</i>	<i>Year 3 Allocation</i>	<i>Year 3 Prog inc</i>	<i>Year 3 Total</i>	<i>Years 4 to 5 Total</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$16,739,702</b>	<b>\$1,430,000</b>	<b>\$18,169,702</b>	<b>\$36,300,000</b>
CDBG	Housing repairs Clearance Public facilities Public services Economic development Admin/planning	\$12,635,721	\$1,150,000	\$13,785,721	\$27,600,000
HOME	Housing repairs Substantial rehab New construction	\$2,398,152	\$280,000	\$2,678,152	\$5,300,000
ESG	Street outreach Emergency shelter Transitional housing Prevention Rapid re-housing HMIS	\$1,159,066	\$0	\$1,159,066	\$2,300,000
HOPWA	Housing assistance Housing placement Supportive services	\$546,763	\$0	\$546,763	\$1,100,000

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

CDBG

Funding to community-based organizations for the delivery of housing programs leverages additional resources from state and private sources. The funding spent on clearance activities leverages additional money from the city’s general fund and capital improvement budget. Agencies that receive funding for public services bring in additional funding from federal, state, county, foundations, and other private sources.

HOME

Proposals for funding to rehabilitate, construct, or convert structures for affordable housing will consider the amount of matching funds being provided as a criteria for award.

### ESG

These funds require a minimum one-to-one match on the part of the city. The current match, coming from other federal, state, county, and private sources that have been secured by sub-recipients, is over \$2,700,000.

### HOPWA

This program is exempt from matching requirements; however the sub-recipients receiving funds have identified over \$1,396,000 in additional federal, state, county, and private sources to assist with the services being provided.

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

Whenever feasible, the city will consider the use of publicly-owned land for the construction of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.

## AP-20: ANNUAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

<i>Project</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Need addressed</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Emergency repairs - owners	AH	Citywide	Affordable housing	99	units
Substantial rehab - owners	AH	Citywide	Affordable housing	18	units
Substantial rehab - renters	AH	Citywide	Affordable housing	18	units
Clearance	NHCD	Low-mod	Community development	30	units
Public facilities	NHCD	Low-mod	Community development	9,800	persons
Public infrastructure	NHCD	Low-mod	Community development	3,830	persons
Public services	NHCD	Low-mod	Community development	16,440	persons
Street outreach	Homeless	Citywide	Homelessness	300	persons
Emergency shelter	Homeless	Citywide	Homelessness	6,360	persons
Prevention	Homeless	Citywide	Homelessness	950	persons
Rapid rehousing	Homeless	Citywide	Homelessness	70	households
Housing assistance	NHSN	Citywide	Special needs	115	households
Housing placement	NHSN	Citywide	Special needs	60	households
Supportive services	NHSN	Citywide	Special needs	150	households
Economic development	NHCD	Low-mod	Economic development	NA	
Section 108 repayment	NHCD	Low-mod	Economic development	NA	
Planning and admin				NA	

### **Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing**

It is estimated that 135 extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income families will receive assistance.

## AP-35: PROJECT SUMMARY

The AAP outlines projects under four entitlement grants: CDBG funds will be used for housing rehabilitation, clearance of abandoned properties, community center and park repairs and upgrades, street and sidewalk improvements, public services, economic development assistance, program delivery, and planning and administration; HOME funds will be used for substantial rehabilitation and new construction, CHDO activities, program delivery, and administration; ESG funds will be used for street outreach, emergency shelter and transitional housing, prevention, rapid rehousing, HMIS reporting, and administration; and HOPWA funds will be used for housing assistance, permanent housing placement, supportive services, and administration.

<i>Project</i>	<i>CDBG</i>	<i>HOME</i>	<i>ESG</i>	<i>HOPWA</i>	<i>Total</i>
Emergency repairs - owners	\$1,955,500				\$1,955,500
Substantial rehab - owners		\$1,205,200			\$1,205,200
Substantial rehab - renters		\$1,205,200			\$1,205,200
Clearance	\$810,000				\$810,000
Public facilities	\$2,800,000				\$2,800,000
Public infrastructure	\$2,400,000				\$2,400,000
Public services	\$1,895,000				\$1,895,000
Street outreach			\$160,000		\$160,000
Emergency shelter			\$435,000		\$435,000
Prevention			\$60,000		\$60,000
Rapid rehousing			\$357,200		\$357,200
Housing assistance				\$302,400	\$302,400
Housing placement				\$58,800	\$58,800
Supportive services				\$147,950	\$147,950
Section 108 repayment	\$1,168,296				\$1,168,296
Planning and admin	\$2,757,121	\$239,752	\$86,866	\$16,363	\$3,100,102

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

The plan attempts to allocate funding across a range of projects, to ensure that community development efforts are comprehensive. These neighborhoods have diverse needs, and funding must be dedicated to many different types of projects to begin making a difference.

CDBG funding is used for emergency home rehabilitation; homeownership counseling; park and recreational facility improvements; street resurfacing and sidewalk replacement; public facility repairs and upgrades; public services, and economic development assistance.

HOME funding is used for owner-occupied rehabilitation; acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale of housing; and multi-family rehabilitation and new construction. ESG funding is used for street outreach, emergency shelter and transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and prevention. HOPWA funding is used for housing assistance, permanent housing placement, and support services.

### **Emergency home repairs (owners)**

The Emergency Loan Program provides CDBG funding for repairs to ensure safe conditions for low- and moderate-income owner occupants. Program funds are used to address major deficiencies, including roof replacement, heating, electrical, and plumbing system repairs, and interim controls to alleviate lead-based paint hazards. Funds may also be used for minor repairs to correct a single code violation or hazard. It is anticipated that up to 99 homeowners will be served. Program delivery funding supports the efforts of city staff, the loan administrator, and community-based organizations that deliver housing programs in eligible neighborhoods.

### **Substantial rehabilitation (owners)**

The Owner-Occupied Rehab Program provides HOME funding for the rehabilitation of existing owner-occupied, one- to four-family units, to ensure the availability of decent, safe and affordable housing for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Program funds will be used for rehab expenses in targeted neighborhoods, or as matching funds for other targeted programs, including interim controls to alleviate lead-based paint hazards. The city distributes funding through an RFP process. Proposals are rated based on market analysis, cost effectiveness, development team experience and qualifications, M/WBE participation, and the amount of outside funding being leveraged. It is anticipated that up to 18 units will be assisted, although it is difficult to project the exact number of units before proposals are submitted. The RFP process allows the city to prioritize projects that provide the greatest number of housing units for the lowest HOME investment, in order to maximize program benefits.

### **Substantial rehabilitation (renters)**

The Multi-Family Rehab/Construction Program provides HOME funding for the rehabilitation of investor-owned structures (or identified problem properties), or for the construction of new rental units to ensure the availability of decent, safe, and affordable housing for very low-, low-, and moderate-income renters.

Program funds will be used for rehab expenses in targeted neighborhoods that bring assisted units into compliance with building codes, including interim controls or abatement to alleviate lead-based paint hazards. The city distributes funding through an RFP process. Proposals are rated based on market analysis, cost effectiveness, development team experience and qualifications, M/WBE participation, and the amount of outside funding being leveraged. It is anticipated that up to 18 units will be assisted, although it is difficult to project the exact number of units before proposals are submitted. The RFP process allows the city to prioritize projects that provide the greatest number of housing units for the lowest HOME investment, in order to maximize program benefits.

### **Clearance**

The city will use CDBG funding to demolish blighted residential, commercial, and industrial properties in targeted neighborhoods. The city works from a list of vacant properties that have been abandoned and fallen into public ownership, or that were added through a court order to be demolished. Prior to demolition, all properties are approved by the State Historic Preservation Office, and city-owned properties are also reviewed by the Buffalo Preservation Board. The city then prioritizes the list of eligible properties by identifying those that are an imminent threat to the surrounding community. Before demolition begins, the city will attempt to ensure that any salvageable materials are removed for reuse. Structures are tested for asbestos, and abated if necessary. It is anticipated that up to 30 structures will be demolished, although work on commercial and industrial properties often costs significantly more than on residential ones, and thus lowers the ultimate number of demolitions.

### **Public facilities**

Many of the public services provided to youth and seniors take place at city-owned community centers. The city works from a list of repairs that is prepared and maintained by the Department of Public Works. The city has developed a plan that will allow repairs for various community centers to be addressed over six program years. Structural repairs such as roofs, walls, and foundations will be taken care of first; followed by plumbing, HVAC, and electrical; and finally interior finishes and fixtures. This will allow the most serious building issues to be addressed before they become larger problems. The city will use CDBG funding to make repairs to six community centers and three parks located in eligible low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

### **Public infrastructure**

The Department of Public Works provides an annual list of streets that require resurfacing and sidewalks that require replacement. Based on HUD guidelines, the city conducts a three-part review for each to determine eligibility. The first step is a check to ensure that each segment is located within an eligible low- to moderate-income neighborhood. The second step requires the city to count the individual parcels on both sides of the street, and confirm that at least 51 percent are currently in residential use; not vacant, commercial, industrial, or institutional. The final step takes the estimated cost of resurfacing the street or replacing sidewalks for each segment, and divides it by the total number of residential parcels,

to allow the city to rank improvements from most to least cost effective. There are 23 segments on the street resurfacing list and 22 on the sidewalk replacement list; these will be completed as funding allows.

### **Public services**

The city will provide CDBG funding to support 14 non-profits that provide services to youth; 15 non-profits that provide services to seniors; and seven non-profits that provide a variety of other services to low- and moderate-income households and neighborhoods. Funding has been set aside to issue two RFPs to support senior and youth programs in underserved neighborhoods.

### **Homeless**

The city will distribute ESG funding to assist the homeless and other special needs populations. Applications are submitted to the city, and then reviewed, rated, and recommended for funding by the Continuum of Care steering committee, a group that has been designated by HUD to coordinate homelessness efforts in the region. City representatives sit in on the review panel discussion, but do not rate applications. Street Outreach funding is used to locate homeless persons in shelters, soup kitchens, and on the street; and to secure appropriate services and case management for them. Shelter funding will be directed to five emergency shelter operators and four transitional housing providers for operating expenses and support services. Since persons in poverty are the most susceptible to becoming homeless, prevention funding will be provided to assist tenants facing eviction. The Rapid Rehousing Program helps homeless individuals and families reclaim permanent housing. A Request for Proposals will be distributed to solicit interest in delivering this service. Finally, the Homeless Alliance of Western New York will receive funding to oversee the HUD-mandated Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

### **Persons with HIV/AIDS**

The city will distribute HOPWA funding to assist persons with HIV/AIDS and their families in Erie and Niagara counties. Funding will be used for housing assistance, permanent housing placement, and supportive services.

### **Economic development**

The city will use CDBG funding to repay Section 108 loans.

### **Planning and administration**

The City of Buffalo and the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency will use CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA funds to administer these programs.

## **AP-50: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**

### **Geographic areas where assistance will be directed**

The city will fund efforts located within HUD-eligible low- and moderate-income block groups; but will target public facility and infrastructure improvements on three neighborhoods: North, Masten, and Lovejoy.

<i>Target Area</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
North	15
Masten	15
Lovejoy	15
Other HUD-eligible block groups	55

### **Rationale for allocating investments geographically**

In order to generate the greatest impacts from declining entitlement funds, the city will focus efforts on neighborhoods that exhibit the following characteristics:

- Are near emerging employment and economic development engines that can serve as a stabilizing influence;
- Have developed a cohesive network of community-based and institutional support; and
- Have secured and leveraged funding to support their efforts.

Targeting and leveraging entitlement funding represents the best opportunity to accomplish the city's community development goals.

## AP-55: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The city will provide affordable housing to the homeless, non-homeless, and special needs populations through rental assistance, the construction of new housing units, and the rehabilitation of existing units.

### Affordable Housing Goals by Household Type

<b>Total</b>	<b>520</b>
Homeless	70
Non-Homeless	135
Special-Needs	315

### Affordable Housing Goals by Support Type

<b>Total</b>	<b>520</b>
Rental Assistance	385
Production of New Units	36
Rehab of Existing Units	99
Acquisition of Existing Units	0

## **AP-60: PUBLIC HOUSING**

The city will address the needs of its public housing and encourage residents to become more involved in its management and homeownership.

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

The Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority operates approximately 3,940 units in 27 developments. It meets the needs of its tenants through regular physical, operational, and management improvements, which are listed in its annually updated Five-Year Agency Plan.

BMHA is engaged in efforts to improve its housing stock and the overall living environment for its residents by creating mixed-income communities and alleviating concentrated poverty. The Perry Choice Neighborhood program is an example of this approach. The project has successfully concluded its planning phase, and applied for a \$30 million implementation grant under the Choice Neighborhoods program. Its initial application was not selected for funding, but BMHA intends to reapply for this grant.

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

BMHA's Resident Services Division works to engage, educate, and empower residents by providing opportunities for personal development, economic stability, education, health, and fostering family and community life. The Division organizes resident councils at each development, as well as a citywide council; assists the Resident Advisory Board in its mission to review and comment on BMHA's Annual Plan; educates and consults with the Resident Review Board regarding applicants; and helps to establish and educate residents regarding disaster preparedness through BMHA Citizen Corps.

BMHA also conducts annual resident information meetings at each of its developments. These meetings are designed to inform residents of current and future plans such as lease changes, modernization projects, human resource programs, and available training.

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

NA

## **AP-65: HOMELESS AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS ACTIVITIES**

The city will support street outreach, emergency shelter and transitional housing, prevention, and rapid rehousing to assist the homeless and other special needs populations.

### **Describe actions to reach out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assess their individual needs**

The outreach strategy promoted by the Homeless Alliance is to simplify and broaden efforts to assist more clients in receiving benefits and services. The city will provide funding to the Matt Urban Center to support efforts to locate homeless persons in shelters, soup kitchens, and on the street; and link these persons with appropriate services and case management.

### **Describe actions to address the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons**

The Homeless Alliance has been working with providers to develop a coordinated entry system using a common assessment form. This will ensure that placements are made based on the needs of the homeless individual or family, rather than on where there might be an empty bed. The city will provide ESG funding to five emergency shelters – City Mission, Compass House, Hope House, Salvation Army, and Vive; and four transitional housing providers – Gerard Place, Saving Grace Ministries, Teaching and Restoring Youth, and YWCA, for operating expenses and support services. The city will also distribute an RFP for the provision of Code Blue services, which offer intensive street outreach and shelter when temperatures dip into the teens.

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

The lack of permanent, affordable housing is the largest gap faced by persons experiencing homelessness as well as the low-income community in general. The strategy being pursued to ensure that homeless individuals make the transition to permanent housing and independent living is prioritizing safe and stable housing and making affordable housing options more accessible to homeless individuals. The city will continue its Rapid Rehousing Program to help homeless individuals and families to reclaim permanent housing.

### **Describe actions to help low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless,**

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

Since persons in poverty are the most susceptible to becoming homeless, reducing financial vulnerability is the key to helping low-income families and individuals from becoming homeless. The city will provide ESG funding to Neighborhood Legal Services to help tenants avoid eviction.

## AP-70: HOPWA GOALS

The city will use HOPWA funding to assist individuals and families who are either HIV-positive or living with AIDS. The need for these services has been increasing along with the number of HIV-positive individuals. There are an estimated 2,300 persons in Erie and Niagara counties who are known to be HIV-positive, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that up to 600 more are undiagnosed. Although most are single men and women, a growing number are single mothers with young children.

The trends that the city will face in the coming years are based on the facts that the AIDS/HIV virus continues to spread, and up to 27 percent of persons with AIDS/HIV are unaware that they are infected. There is an obvious need for further education and testing. The city will encourage sub-recipients to increase their efforts to educate the community about the services available for persons with HIV/AIDS, and to attempt to ensure that every person in need of services is linked to the appropriate provider.

Affordable housing remains a critical issue in stabilizing the health of persons with HIV/AIDS. In a survey conducted by the AIDS Network of WNY, 23 percent of the respondents had spent time on the streets or in an emergency shelter. The city directs ESG funding to a number of emergency shelters, which in turn serve many persons with HIV/AIDS.

The city will provide HOPWA funds to Evergreen Health Services and the Homeless Alliance to deliver housing assistance, permanent housing placement, supportive services, and HMIS reporting. These sub-recipients will leverage almost \$1.4 million in additional funding from a range of private and public sources, including in-kind contributions.

HOPWA funding will allow these agencies to assist 315 persons, including 60 through short-term rent, mortgage, or utility support; 45 with tenant-based rental assistance; 60 through permanent housing placement (first month's rent, security and utility deposits); and 150 with supportive services that include housing.

### Households assisted

<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>
Short-term rent, mortgage, utility assistance (STRMU)	60
Tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA)	45
Permanent Housing Placement (PHP)	60
Supportive Services	150

## **AP-75: BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The city will act to address barriers to affordable housing by updating its land use and zoning, participating in a regional land bank, investigating the impacts of fees and charges, and implementing its Analysis of Impediments study.

**Actions 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.**

### Land Use and Zoning

The city's zoning code was developed in the early 1950s, based on a popular model at the time that sought to separate different uses – residential, commercial, employment – with the car as a means of travelling among them. This attempt to compete with the expanding suburbs has proven largely unsuccessful, and features such as large residential lot requirements and prohibitions against mixed-use developments have made housing more costly and difficult to build. The city's 2006 Comprehensive Plan embraced smart growth as a means of focusing revitalization and redevelopment in its existing neighborhoods. This effort to reverse decades of city abandonment and suburban sprawl depends upon key investments of federal, state, and local funds to restore livability, economic potential, and social cohesion in targeted neighborhoods. Central to this strategy is the proposed Green Code – an updated land use plan and zoning ordinance that will be presented to Council later this year, and support the development of walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods built on an urban scale.

### Land Banking

The demolition of thousands of abandoned and deteriorated buildings has created many vacant lots that could be used to develop affordable housing and neighborhood amenities. Blueprint Buffalo, a 2004 plan for reclaiming vacant properties, identified a land bank as the ideal entity to transform vacant properties into assets. While the city has engaged in informal land banking activities for many years, the Buffalo, Erie, Niagara Land Improvement Corporation was created in May 2012 in response to the state's approval of land bank legislation. Through this corporation, the city will be able to work regionally to address vacant properties.

### Fees and Charges

The city has employed state guidelines in its Soils Policy in order to address environmental toxicity standards and soil contamination of lots being used in its development and grant assistance programs. This policy requires removal of two feet of soil, installation of a permeable environmental fabric, and

restoration of imported, certified soil. The cost of implementing this policy ranges from \$20,000 to \$40,000 per buildable lot. While this is a significant cost, it ensures that decades of environmental hazards are rectified and subsequent housing development is safe for its occupants.

### Analysis of Impediments

The city's updated *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice* outlined additional barriers to affordable housing, including the poor condition of the existing housing stock; declining availability of affordable rental units; concentration of voucher holders; lack of transit connections; persistence of housing discrimination; and growing needs among the non-English speaking population.

With the recent Supreme Court ruling in *Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs vs. Inclusive Communities Project*, HUD has asked entitlement communities to replace their existing Analysis of Impediments documents with a new Assessment of Fair Housing. The city will abide by the deadlines established by HUD for submitting this assessment.

## **AP-85: OTHER ACTIONS**

The city will take other actions to address obstacles to underserved needs, foster and maintain affordable housing, reduce lead-based paint hazards, reduce the number of poverty-level families, develop institutional structure, and enhance coordination among agencies.

### **Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs**

The greatest obstacle that the city faces remains the limited community development dollars available from federal, state, local, and private sources. The overwhelming needs in Buffalo make it impossible to address everything that city leaders would like to improve. In response, the city has taken two approaches. The first is to target investments geographically to areas that can best benefit from an infusion of public support. The second is to be proactive in leveraging dollars and combining funds from various sources in order to achieve project goals.

### **Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing**

The city has embraced smart growth as an approach for focusing revitalization and redevelopment in its existing neighborhoods. This ongoing effort to reverse decades of urban abandonment and suburban sprawl depends upon key investments of CDBG, HOME, state, and local funds to restore livability, economic potential, and social cohesion in targeted neighborhoods.

Central to this strategy is the Green Code – an updated land use plan and zoning ordinance for the entire city that is currently wrapping up. The goal is to use land use planning to support affordable housing by encouraging the development of dense, walkable neighborhoods with access to goods, services, and public transportation. Zoning is also a critical element in the provision of affordable housing, by removing barriers such as minimum lot sizes and prohibitions against mixed-use development that unnecessarily add to costs.

### **Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards**

LBP hazards are very extensive across Buffalo. Roughly 95 percent of the city's housing stock was constructed before 1980, so most housing units have the potential for LBP hazards. A 2006 report indicated that one-third of all lead-based poisoning cases in the state originated in six Buffalo zip codes, with about 300 cases identified annually.

The city does not have the resources to address all LBP hazards, so efforts are targeted in the most-affected areas through the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative. This is a collaborative effort to bring together organizations to combat LBP hazards, asthma-related issues, and provide weatherization for lower-income families. Various funding sources have been identified, including the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, the Attorney General's Office, and HUD.

GHHI is concentrated in the six zip codes mentioned above. Every year a four- to six-block area within each zip code is selected for concentrated inspections. About 900 units receive exterior assessments, and 300 of these units where a child is present will also receive interior inspections. While this effort does not include inspections of every home with the potential for LBP hazards, areas with the highest concentration of elevated blood lead level cases are being inspected regularly.

The city recently passed legislation to allow LBP hazards to be cited as a violation, and coordination between the city and the county allow housing and health code violations to be cited simultaneously. The city also requires that all of its rehabilitated units are lead-safe, and provides funding to CHDOs and CBOs for lead-hazard remediation and toxic soil removal.

### **Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families**

Federal, state, and regional policies on welfare, health care, housing choice, transportation, and the minimum wage are all critical components in reducing poverty. While the city has little control over these factors, it will continue to assist in this effort by providing incentives to retain, expand, and attract business; to advocate for affordable housing and public transportation; and to support organizations and programs that provide job training, literacy, and placement services.

### **Actions planned to develop institutional structure**

The city is continuing to adjust to the recent shift of program administration from the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency. While this has required a tremendous amount of work in setting up systems, it also offers an opportunity to revisit past practices and make improvements moving forward. BURA staff will continue to assist the city in administering its entitlement programs; and the city has established a relationship with the New York State Business Development Corporation to administer its CDBG loan portfolio.

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

Four of the seven CBOs that receive funding for housing programs also provide social services: Fillmore-Leroy Area Residents, Matt Urban Center, Old First Ward Community Association, and University Heights Community Development Association. Given the on-going reductions in funding, consolidating overhead and management expenses in this manner appears to be a trend that will continue to grow. The city will also aggressively encourage public service agencies to work collaboratively in addressing the broader range of needs that families looking for assistance may need to begin the journey out of poverty.

## AP-90: PROGRAM SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

The city has prepared program specific requirements for the use of CDBG program income, HOME resale and recapture, and ESG performance standards.

### Community Development Block Grant

Projects planned with CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in AP-35. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

<b>Total Program Income</b>	<b>\$1,150,000</b>
Amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed	\$1,150,000
Amount of proceeds from Section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address priority needs and specific objectives	\$0
Amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements	\$0
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
Amount of income from float-funded activities	\$0

### Home Investment Partnerships

#### **Describe other forms of investment being used beyond those identified in Section 92.205**

The city uses no other form of investment beyond those identified in Section 92.205. Under 92.205, a participating jurisdiction may invest HOME funds as equity investments, interest-bearing loans or advances, non-interest-bearing loans or advances, interest subsidies consistent with the purposes of the HOME program, deferred payment loans, grants, or other forms of assistance that HUD determines to be consistent with the purposes of the program. Each participating jurisdiction has the right to establish the terms of assistance, subject to the requirements of this part. The city generally invests HOME funds as interest-bearing loans or advances, non-interest-bearing loans or advances, deferred payment loans, or conditional grants.

### **Describe the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HOME funds when used for homebuyer activities**

The city has two options for controlling the resale of homebuyer property during the affordability period: the "Recapture Option" and the "Resale Option." The Recapture Option is based on the level of primary lender financing that the homebuyer is able to obtain, or the need for closing cost assistance. The following guidelines apply:

The option will be used whenever a development subsidy has been provided to a developer, CHDO, or other qualified entity for the construction of affordable housing; and

A homebuyer is unable to obtain sufficient financing through a private lender or other approved subsidy source for the full amount of the listed fair market purchase price. A direct subsidy will be provided as gap financing up to the limits described in the HOME Agreement with the project developer; or

A homebuyer has obtained sufficient financing through a private lender or other approved subsidy source for the full amount of the listed fair market purchase price, but does not have sufficient resources to fund the closing costs associated with the purchase. A direct subsidy up to \$5,000 will be provided to finance reasonable and necessary costs, including but not limited to costs to process and settle the financing for purchase of the home, such as private lender origination fees, credit report fees, fees for title evidence, fees for recordation and filing of legal documents, attorney's fees, and private appraisal fees.

In the event that it is determined to be appropriate to use the Resale Option, the city will submit proposed resale terms consistent with the HOME regulations to the local HUD Office, and seek authorization to proceed.

The Recapture Option is used to collect all or a portion of the HOME subsidy in the event the recipient decides to sell the property within the affordability period, or to otherwise violate the affordability provisions of the owner's agreement. The homebuyer may sell the property to any willing buyer, but the sale of the property during the affordability period triggers the repayment of the direct HOME subsidy. In the event that the proceeds from the sale are less than the repayment amount due, the homebuyer must petition the city to accept partial repayment. If sufficient documentation is presented to verify that the net proceeds are insufficient to repay the HOME investment as required, the amount to be repaid will be reduced.

All entities that receive HOME funding for the creation of affordable homebuyer housing – including developers, CHDOs, and Community Based Organizations – will use these recapture provisions.

If a purchaser receives funding under the HOME program for a direct subsidy to support the purchase a HOME-assisted property, the full amount of the direct subsidy assistance provided is due and payable if the property is sold during the period of affordability.

### **Describe the guidelines for resale or recapture that ensures the affordability of units acquired with HOME funds**

See above – only the Recapture Option is used.

**Describe plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multi-family housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds, along with a description of the refinancing guidelines required that will be used**

No existing debt will be refinanced with HOME funds.

Emergency Solutions Grant

**Include written standards for providing ESG assistance**

The Homeless Alliance is working to create coordinated assessment tools, policies, and procedures for clients to access services more efficiently. The following standards are being developed:

**Eligibility:** Planning is currently underway to develop a coordinated entry system for homeless services that will include the design of a common assessment form. The model will eventually determine the most efficient and effective means of access to all homeless programs. Regardless of how a family or individual makes contact for assistance, a common assessment form should be used to determine the initial eligibility of the client. If the client is eligible, a follow-up assessment may be conducted to confirm eligibility and formally initiate assistance with the appropriate agency. Once a household or individual is qualified to receive assistance, they will be referred to a case manager for consultation and evaluation to determine the type of assistance or services needed to become stably housed. Case managers will be responsible for entering information into HMIS.

**Street Outreach:** Outreach programs focus primarily on placing chronically homeless persons into emergency shelters or transitional housing, in an effort to reduce the number of individuals who are living on the streets. Case managers coordinate services and make placements in drop-in centers, safe havens, soup kitchens, stabilization beds, and shelters. Many of these placements also provide homeless individuals with meals, counseling, medical and psychiatric services, showers, laundry facilities, clothing, employment referrals, assistance in applying for benefits, and other social services. All persons who accept assistance are entered into HMIS, and their progress tracked by case managers.

**Emergency Shelter:** The city is currently working with the Homeless Alliance to establish performance standards for emergency shelters and transitional housing providers that will seek to reduce the average length of stay in these facilities, and increase exits to permanent housing. HMIS data will be used to identify current performance and establish a baseline for each metric. Shelter providers will be engaged regarding benchmarks for goals and expected outcomes, which will become part of their contracts. The common assessment form being developed will be used to assess, prioritize, and reassess individuals' and families' needs for essential services related to emergency shelter. Agencies providing this service are required to have written policies and procedures for admission, diversion, referral, and discharge that have been approved by the city.

**Rapid Rehousing:** The common assessment tool will be used at the initial intake to determine both eligibility and the type of assistance applicants will receive. Program participants will be required to pay a portion of their household income for rent and utilities while receiving rapid rehousing assistance. The majority of households in the rapid rehousing program will receive financial assistance for three to six months, and average around \$2,000. Case managers working with applicants will develop a housing plan

for each program participant. These plans will include the elements participants will need in order to be stably housed when the program term concludes. Housing plans will also include benchmarks and goals that participants must achieve.

### **Describe the centralized or coordinated assessment system established by the Continuum of Care**

The Homeless Alliance is currently developing a coordinated assessment system to implement during the upcoming program year.

### **Identify the process for making sub-awards and describe how the ESG allocation is available to non-profit organizations**

All ESG program funding is distributed to non-profit organizations that provide services to the homeless. Organizations apply for ESG funding using an application that assembles information on the type of services performed, the target population, and the amount of funding requested. Applications are reviewed and rated by the Continuum of Care Review Committee, which also provides funding recommendations to the city.

### **Specify the plan for reaching out to and consulting with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering policies and funding decisions regarding facilities and services funded under ESG**

The city uses the Homeless Alliance's Continuum of Care Review Committee to assess and rate applications for ESG funding. This committee includes a formerly homeless person. The Homeless Alliance is frequently consulted regarding program issues and decisions.

### **Describe performance standards for evaluating ESG**

In 2010, the Homeless Alliance initiated a detailed analysis to develop new outcome measures and benchmarks for homeless programs. Since then, work has continued on evaluating outcomes and developing benchmarks for the homeless population. The emphasis on improving the quality of data collection to reduce the number of "unknown" outcomes system-wide was clearly identified.

The HEARTH Act's emphasis on rapid rehousing brings the opportunity for new programming to accompany the new funding. As there is not a significant history of rapid rehousing activity, the city will be developing a set of performance standards that all service providers will be expected to meet.

The following preliminary performance standards were developed after consultation with the Homeless Alliance:

- Reduce the number of persons entering homeless shelters.
- Reduce the number of persons returning to homelessness.

- Access mainstream income resources.
- Return 65 percent of participants to permanent housing.
- Stably house 75 percent of participants for at least six months after exiting the program.
- Reduce the length of shelter stays to less than 20 days, or by 10 percent of the current length of stay.