

## **CR-05 - Goals and Outcomes**

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

This could be an overview that includes major initiatives and highlights that were proposed and executed throughout the program year.

The Town of West Hartford continues to maintain programs identified in its CDBG strategic and action plans in order to enhance suitable living environments in West Hartford.

The Town of West Hartford also received and incorporated Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding (CDBG-CV funds), which are described in this annual report.

Fair Housing activities and Neighborhood Stabilization include numerous provisions for extremely low- and very low-income persons in the community. The West Hartford Housing Authority, a quasi-governmental agency, oversees all public housing (Section 8 vouchers) and provides qualified renters access to clean, affordable, and appropriate low-income housing. The CDBG West Hartford Housing Rehabilitation Program (HR), together with the West Hartford Building Code Department and the West Hartford Bloomfield Health District (WHBHD), also supports the maintenance of good housing stock suitable for a healthy living environment.

The Town continues to work with external agencies to facilitate supports for those in the community. The Community Renewal Team (CRT) provides case management for Energy Assistance. Greater Hartford Legal Aid supports those who may need housing counseling or other legal supports. Social workers complete referrals to Operation Fuel to assist families with heating and fuel payments and budgets. Social workers facilitate the Renters Rebate program for elderly and disabled persons providing a rebate when rent exceeds 30% of annual income. Social workers also collaborate with the CT Fair Housing Center (and with other agencies, when needed) for questions regarding Fair Housing rights and other housing issues, including COVID-19 and moratorium information. Given the rent and mortgage moratoriums that have developed due to the pandemic during the last fiscal year, this partnership is vital for an increased number of community residents.

The Food Pantry is a vital program that contributes to the reduction of food insecurity in West Hartford. This program works in conjunction with Foodshare's Hunger Action Team to coordinate food provisions. Coordination of efforts has especially been vibrant since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020.

The Town continues to utilize funding for its infrastructure to support services to persons with disabilities, American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, support of youth, seniors, and/or substance abusers. The town participates in numerous boards and commissions such as the Clean Energy Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Fair Rent Commission, and the Substance Abuse Prevention Council, etc. As well, the Town continues its priority to maintain and improve existing public facilities and to encourage the development of upgraded facilities, particularly with regard to parks/recreation facilities and parking facilities serving low-income populations.

A list of accomplishments is in the chart below.

### **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 |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| CDBG Administration     | Administration   | CDBG: \$        | Other  | Other               | 0                         | 0                       |                  | 0                       | 0                     |                  |
| Fair Housing Activities | Fair Housing   | CDBG: \$        | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted    | 125                       | 1976                    | 1,580.8%         | 25                      | 2                     | 8%               |
| Fair Housing Activities | Fair Housing   | CDBG: \$        | Other  | Other               |                           | 0                       |                  |                         |                       |                  |
| Food Pantry             | Non-Housing Community Development                            | CDBG: \$        | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted    | 3625                      | 3971                    | 109.54%          | 950                     | 981                   | 103.26%          |
| Food Pantry             | Non-Housing Community Development                            | CDBG: \$        | Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit        | Households Assisted | 0                         | 0                       |                  |                         |                       |                  |
| HANOC                   | Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$        | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted    | 1750                      | 2311                    | 132.06%          | 90                      | 85                    | 94.44%           |
| HANOC                   | Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$        | Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit        | Households Assisted | 0                         | 0                       |                  |                         |                       |                  |

|                                      |   |             |   |                              |      |      |        |     |     |        |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|---|------------------------------|------|------|--------|-----|-----|--------|
| Housing & Neighborhood Stabilization | Affordable Housing<br>Non-Housing<br>Community<br>Development | CDBG:<br>\$ | Housing Code<br>Enforcement/Foreclosed<br>Property Care   | Household<br>Housing<br>Unit | 3500 | 4676 | 133.6% | 700 | 273 | 39.00% |
| Housing Rehabilitation Program       | Affordable<br>Housing   | CDBG:<br>\$ |   | Household<br>Housing<br>Unit | 0    | 0    |        |     |     |        |
| Housing Rehabilitation Program       | Affordable<br>Housing   | CDBG:<br>\$ | Homeowner Housing<br>Rehabilitated  | Household<br>Housing<br>Unit | 100  | 44   | 44.00% | 10  | 4   | 40.00% |
| Public & Private Partnerships        | Non-Housing<br>Community<br>Development                       | CDBG:<br>\$ | Public Facility or<br>Infrastructure Activities<br>other than<br>Low/Moderate Income<br>Housing Benefit | Persons<br>Assisted          | 10   | 14   | 140%   | 2   | 1   | 50.00% |
| Public & Private Partnerships        | Non-Housing<br>Community<br>Development                       | CDBG:<br>\$ | Other   | Other                        | 0    | 0    |        | 2   | 0   | 0%     |
| Volunteer Services                   | Non-Housing<br>Community<br>Development                       | CDBG:<br>\$ | Public service activities<br>other than<br>Low/Moderate Income<br>Housing Benefit                       | Persons<br>Assisted          | 0    | 0    |        | 330 | 321 | 97.27% |
| Volunteer Services                   | Non-Housing<br>Community<br>Development                       | CDBG:<br>\$ | Public service activities<br>for Low/Moderate<br>Income Housing Benefit                                 | Households<br>Assisted       | 1125 | 1269 | 112.8% |     |     |        |

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

**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.**

The Town of West Hartford continues to mirror HUD's mission to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. While CDBG funding received from HUD does not directly and explicitly fund housing options for the community its CDBG efforts support and compliment housing efforts, including providing safety, quality of life, and other resources to members of the community with limited income, special needs, and the elderly.

During the fiscal period July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021, the Building Department conducted 250 Building Code violation inspections in low-mod income areas of town, the HR Program financed improvements to four low-income or elderly housing units and the WHBHD conducted 46 inspections relating to health concerns and living conditions for those in low-mod areas. Rectification of violations, whether for health or safety, is a priority in the community. This work continues to see increases, especially since housing stock in the community is older and well established and a third of the community is comprised of elderly residents who may see decreases in income sustainability. In the coming year, it is the objective of the Housing Rehabilitation Program to market resources to those community members, in particular the elderly.

Due to the pandemic, the Food Pantry experienced an increased demand for persons experiencing food insecurity. By June 30, 2021, the Food Pantry served 981 households or 2278 individuals. In addition, 71 Households received food assistance in their homes. At the Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC), 1080 breakfasts and 1094 lunches were served for low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents. In partnership with Foodshare Program, 1596 food visits were made. Through Volunteer Services Program, 321 residents were served. Additional contributions from the Town That Cares Fund (a fund maintained by the Town of West Hartford for donations to help those in need) temporarily supplied the funding shortfall. During the next fiscal year, the town has budgeted and utilized COVID-19 CARES Act funding through CDBG to maintain this surge of food demand during the remainder of the pandemic. Extreme care to document needs will be maintained.

One ongoing CDBG funded project from 2018, the Eisenhower Park restroom replacement to meet ADA standards, was completed during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Five (5) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects were underway or in design during 2021-2022 FY: reconstruction of Fairview St., Lowell Rd. and Warrenton Ave; Irrigation system replacement at Kennedy Memorial Park; installing ADA compliant ramp at Westmoor Park's Hunter House at 119 Flagg Rd; fence installation at Southwood Park at 54 Southwood Drive; and the reconstruction of basketball courts at Kennedy Memorial Park. The Director of Leisure Services and Social Services will lead this department to ensure that goals and priorities align with CDBG goals and the strategic plan to better utilize funding in this area. The Town of West Hartford continues to utilize CDBG funding to address ADA needs within the Town and Board of Education, as evidenced by data later explained in this report.

**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)**

|   | <b>CDBG</b>   |
|---|---------------|
| White                                     | 25,260        |
| Black or African American                 | 2,968         |
| Asian                                     | 2,701         |
| American Indian or American Native        | 30            |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>30,959</b> |
| Hispanic                                  | 4,397         |
| Not Hispanic                              | 26,562        |

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

**Narrative**

The Town of West Hartford use CDBG funding based on the HUD guidelines National Objectives for low-to-moderate income persons and in low-to-moderate income areas. The table above represents the Town of West Hartford residents based on their race, who benefited from the CDBG funds during the program year of 2020-2021.

**CR-15 - Resources and Investments 91.520(a)**

**Identify the resources made available**

| <b>Source of Funds</b> | <b>Source</b>    | <b>Resources Made Available</b> | <b>Amount Expended During Program Year</b> |
|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| CDBG                   | public - federal | 2,932,582.30                    | 976,174.19                                 |

**Table 3 - Resources Made Available**

**Narrative**

The CDBG funding available was \$1,969,538.30, from which \$775,061.07 was expended. The CDBG-CV funding available was \$ 963,044, from which \$201,113 was expended.

**Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments**

| <b>Target Area</b>            | <b>Planned Percentage of Allocation</b> | <b>Actual Percentage of Allocation</b> | <b>Narrative Description</b> |
|-------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|
| Hillcrest Avenue Neighborhood | 75                                      | 12.65                                  |                              |
| HUD-approved LMI areas        |   | 73.15                                  |                              |
| West Hartford Housing Rehab   | 25                                      | 14.20                                  | Municipality                 |

**Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments**

The CARES Act provided funding (CDBG-CV) to enable our community to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus by providing quality subsidized housing and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs. The CDBG-CV funding available was \$963,044, of which \$201,113 was expended.

The Town of West Hartford utilized some CDBG-CV funding to meet urgent needs during the pandemic, including opening an Information Line to help residents get the information they needed for vaccination stations; vaccinating homebound residents that were unable to leave their homes; and setting up vaccination sites in various locations for residents to be vaccinated. Ongoing support was directed to the Food Pantry to cover the increased need for food from residents.

The table below shows projects, residents served, and costs associated with these projects that the Town of West Hartford implemented to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

| <b>Nr.</b> | <b>CV-Projects</b>              | <b>Residents Served</b> | <b>Expenditure</b>  |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>CV-Information Line</b>      | <b>1089</b>             | <b>\$42,000.00</b>  |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>CV-Homebound Vaccination</b> | <b>87</b>               | <b>\$653.85</b>     |
| <b>3</b>   | <b>CV-Mobil vaccination</b>     | <b>676</b>              | <b>\$110,300.00</b> |
| <b>4</b>   | <b>CV-Food Pantry</b>           | <b>250</b>              | <b>\$64,830.85</b>  |

As shown in the table above, 1,089 residents called the information line set up to respond to coronavirus and received the information they needed regarding vaccination sites, registration or other questions. The budget for this activity was underestimated because the need for this support program was unknown. As a result of the underestimation, the Town of West Hartford submitted a substantial amendment to increase funding for this activity. To comply with HUD requirements the Town of West Hartford collected timesheets for all the employees who worked in this activity. A call log of each person who called the information line was compiled for audit purposes.

Eighty-seven residents were vaccinated in their homes through a special Homebound Vaccination activity. Based on the age of the population in the Town of West Hartford, we estimated that more people would request to be vaccinated in their homes. Our estimate was incorrect. Therefore, the substantial amendment approved by HUD reduced funding for this activity as well. For this activity, we collected timesheets and the number of the residents who got vaccinated. Their names are maintained by the West Hartford/Bloomfield Health Department.

Six hundred and seventy-six residents got vaccinated through our activity funded by CDBG-CV funding in low- or moderate-income (LMI) areas in the Town of West Hartford. Names of these residents are maintained in the West Hartford/Bloomfield Health Department. We collected all the timesheets for the employees who implemented this activity.

The West Hartford Food Pantry documented the increased need for food in the Town of West Hartford since COVID-19 started. Compared with food pantry patrons in 2019, 250 more families came to the Town Food Pantry to get help as a result of the pandemic.

## **Narrative**

For the program year 2020-2021, the Town of West Hartford distributed its CDBG Entitlement funds to all residents living in the low-to-moderate income areas. Three public service programs were administered:

- Hillcrest Avenue Neighborhood.
- HUD-approved LMI areas.
- West Hartford. (Municipality)

The Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC) is a collaborative effort among the Town of West Hartford, the West Hartford Public Schools, and the West Hartford Housing Authority. Other community agencies also provide services such as SNAP. HANOC serves a culturally diverse, low-income population in the southeastern section of West Hartford. Programs and services assist families of limited economic means to become more financially independent and integrated into the schools and community by coordinating resources to meet their needs. Youth and adult programs provide residents with the opportunity to enhance the quality of their lives through self-determination, responsibility, commitment, and collaboration. Total CDBG funding to the Hillcrest Avenue Neighborhood area represents 11.23% of all CDBG funding.

CDBG funds are invested in the Town of West Hartford based on the LMI and ADA compliance. 73.15% of total CDBG funding was allocated for HUD-approved LMI areas in the Town of West Hartford.

Also, CDBG funds are used for public services in the amount of 12.65%. Services include support for HANOC, Volunteer Services, and the Food Pantry.

The municipality itself is another recipient of CDBG funding with 14.20 % apportioned for administering the CDBG allocated money based on and for HUD requirements.

Given the percentages above, West Hartford continues to prioritize the needs of its lowest income census tracts and target areas. Over 70% of all CDBG funds are utilized for low-income residents or persons who need ADA assistance.



## 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.**

During the reporting period using Federal funds, West Hartford leveraged other funding sources as follows:

- West Hartford typically leverages \$5,000 from the Town of Bloomfield to support the placement of a West Hartford social worker for one-day each week in the Hartford Community Court. This social worker provides counseling, crisis intervention, and other brief and general social services to defendants arrested in West Hartford and Bloomfield for adjudication in that court. In 2020-21, Hartford Community Court was closed due to the pandemic, and the service to Bloomfield was suspended. It resumed at the end of the fiscal year.
- The CDBG funded Housing Rehabilitation Program continues to offers flexible funding opportunities to income eligible property owners (including grants and extremely low-interest loans). West Hartford utilizes \$7,000 of CDBG Funds for Greater Hartford Legal Aid (GHLA). GHLA provides free legal services to low-income persons whose assets or resources meet the attached GHLA guidelines for eligibility. GHLA abides by the provisions of nondiscrimination under Title VI of The Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- The Town of West Hartford coordinates and offers several transportation services to the community. Dial-a-Ride provides transportation assistance to West Hartford residents who are age 60+ OR who are over 18 years old and have a qualifying disability. Residents can use this service up to three times per week for medical appointment, grocery shopping and social activities. West Hartford subsidizes the cost of this service with a state transportation grant. The fee for residents is limited to \$50 per year. Those with ongoing or urgent medical treatment can utilize the Medical Assistance Program (MAP) Program. There is a separate application for this program, including a physician's statement but there is no additional charge for current Dial-A-Ride clients.
- The West Hartford Social Services Department continues to prioritize the needs of low income and elderly residents. Social workers address their needs, such as mental health needs, substance abuse issues, food insecurity, lack of resources for heat, energy, and rent, etc.
- The West Hartford's Engineering Division, Building Division, and the Public Works Department prioritizes Capital Improvements Program projects based on community needs. These departments work integrally with the Administrator of CDBG activities to assure CDBG compliance with the Town of West Hartford goals.
- The West Hartford Bloomfield Health District (WHBHD) works in conjunction with the Building and Engineering department to assure code compliance, whether it be health or structure in nature.

**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.**

|  | <b>One-Year Goal</b> | <b>Actual</b> |
|--|----------------------|---------------|
| Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units      | 0                    | 14            |
| Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units  | 41                   | 0             |
| Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units | 11                   | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>   | 52                   | 14            |

**Table 5 – Number of Households**

|  | <b>One-Year Goal</b> | <b>Actual</b> |
|--|----------------------|---------------|
| Number of households supported through Rental Assistance             | 590                  | 575           |
| Number of households supported through The Production of New Units   | 41                   | 0             |
| Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units       | 20                   | 4             |
| Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units | 0                    | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>   | 651                  | 579           |

**Table 6 – Number of Households Supported**

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

As with other state and federal agencies and private-sector owners, it is the separate Mission of the West Hartford Housing Authority to create, preserve, revitalize and pursue affordable housing and serve a diverse mix of households. The Housing Authority and its affiliate, Trout Brook Realty Advisors, currently manages approximately 345 non-homeless affordable housing units in the community. It is not known the approximate number of the private sector and other agencies that provide affordable housing units to those in West Hartford.

One of the Town of West Hartford's mission is to create community development opportunities especially in the low- to moderate-income earners when CDBG money is been used. For the last fiscal year, the West Hartford Housing Authority had only one CDBG and two other private partnership projects project ongoing. The pandemic situation has played its part in the results/achievements of these projects. The objective for West Hartford Housing Rehabilitation (HR), derived from the consolidated plan, is to rehabilitate 20 housing units per year with a total of 100 units rehabilitated throughout the five-year plan. In this current year, 4 units (four single-family) were rehabilitated.

The decrease in units rehabilitated can be attributed to a change in how this program is operating. A construction consultant now oversees the construction administration portion of a housing rehabilitation project. Also, the pandemic situation hampered the program.

**Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.**

The number of housing units served will impact the need for either increased or decreased funding in future years. The realignment of the Housing Rehabilitation Program administrative needs will also enable the CDBG Coordinator to pursue those LMI individuals or families who qualify for services.

In addition, the residual impact of COVID-19 will affect how future funds will be allocated. It is unknown how recovery from the pandemic, coupled with anticipated job opportunities, will affect CDBG spending in the short and long term. It is up to the WHHA and the Town of West Hartford to institute and prioritize community development and spending needs.

**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        | 1           | 0           |
| Low-income                  | 1           | 0           |
| Moderate-income             | 2           | 0           |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>4</b>    | <b>0</b>    |

**Table 7 – Number of Households Served**

**Narrative Information**

The Housing Rehabilitation Program assists qualified owners to reduce and abate hazardous materials (e.g. lead-based paint and asbestos), eliminate health and safety concerns, remove handicapped barriers, and improve the energy efficiency of the structure. Funding is provided in a combination of grants and a low-interest loan, with a \$25,000.00 cap for a single-family home. All programs require that the gross household income is at or below 80% of median income (e.g. family of 3, \$71,950.00 family of 4, \$79,900) for Hartford PMSA as prescribed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In fiscal year 2020-2021, the Housing Rehabilitation Program (HR) fully functioned in the Division of Community Partnership, Department of Social Services. Because of the previous year's reorganization, the CDBG Coordinator conducts intake for Housing Rehabilitation applications and corresponding responsibilities. In addition, The Town of West Hartford hired two consultants, one for lead related projects, and an architect for emergency replacement. These individuals work closely with the CDBG Coordinator to identify lead and emergency replacements, write the scope of work for emergency replacements and lead remediation, conduct walkthroughs with contractors, propose any additional work authorization, change orders, and approve work completed from the contractors. Since March 2020, COVID-19 has affected HR restrictions and protocols. Consultations with both consultants were delayed and rescheduled. In general, projects took longer to be completed or were still in process at the end of the fiscal year.

**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**

The Town of West Hartford has no emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or permanent housing for homeless persons and/or families within its municipal borders. West Hartford relies upon the Coordinated Access Network (CAN) through the United Way 211 system.

When West Hartford social workers receive referrals from the Police Department, Fire Department, and community members, the social worker does an assessment of overall needs, including an intake, to determine the person or family's needs. Social workers will assist with all possible resources. If there is no other recourse, these persons or families are directed to the 211 system to speak to a Diversion Counselor. This 211 process may include guiding the person or families to homeless facilities and services in the City of Hartford to meet the needs of the homeless population within West Hartford. That said, West Hartford social workers continue to support and respond with assistance, including providing other resources to help address the needs of the person or family.

However, social workers may not know the extent of the issue if a call to the office is not made; thus, data collected by the Hartford Coalition to End Homelessness is vital for tracking all persons. This non-profit organization takes the lead on Point In Time Count, Connecticut Counts, The Coordinated Access Dashboard. West Hartford has access to the Greater Hartford Area Data, but obtaining data specifically for West Hartford can be challenging.

West Hartford is focusing on a homeless prevention philosophy. In addition to fair housing programs and access to Greater Hartford Legal Aid, when needed, West Hartford Social Services works to avert evictions every year. West Hartford Social Workers work collaboratively with CT State Marshals and the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District and families when evictions are scheduled. All persons facing evictions in West Hartford this year have been advised, assisted and diverted from utilizing homeless shelters. For the last year period, all evictions were postponed by the federal moratorium.

**Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons**

The regional approach to address homelessness is to centralize access to shelters through United Way 211 rather than each municipality managing placements of homeless in shelters. This approach helped with sheltering on time, bed assignments, and improving the distress of the homelessness.

To ensure that the homeless will get the service promptly, West Hartford Social Services joined the Coordinated Access Network (CAN), a network of homeless service providers. Under CAN Leadership / Sub-Continuum of Care, four workgroups meet throughout the year: CAN Operations, Housing Matching for Individuals, Housing Matching for Families, Homeless Outreach, and Youth Engagement Team Initiative (YETI).

The coordination of this effort prioritizes the attainment of permanent housing and self-sufficiency by previously homeless persons or families who desire the goal of all service providers. The need for

permanent housing relates to the homeless population in general. Permanently affordable housing options are needed for persons or families to transition toward self-sufficiency and independence. The rental housing stock is the primary prerequisite to achieving this objective. For some families, the move to affordable homeownership models may also be a potential option. West Hartford addresses the needs of the homeless and near-homeless population through active participation in the Continuum and, wherever feasible, through the support of programs and projects within its borders; thus, meeting the objectives of its Consolidated Plan.

In addition, West Hartford is taking steps within the various departments to address the needs of potentially homeless or homeless individuals. The West Hartford Police Department works closely with the Social Services Department to find new methods to address needs. Annually, the Social Services Department provides training to all police on various measures to help the neediest populations. Palm-sized handouts have also been made available to patrol officers, which indicates services available to all persons in the community. As previously stated, police and social workers refer persons to the United Way 211 Connecticut system (centralized point of access for homeless persons) in Greater Hartford, and offer one-on-one support in helping to resolve the situation as quickly as possible.

**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**

West Hartford provides a full-service social services office. Residents are given the opportunity to work one-on-one with licensed professional social workers to resolve crisis situations and receive on-going case management services. Often, individuals, families with children, and seniors who come to WHSS need help with energy bills, emergency food, rent, or other urgent needs. West Hartford Social Services has a variety of resources (Operation Fuel, WH Food Pantry, The Commodities Program, The Town That Cares charity fund, Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, Rental Rebate, etc.) to assist in meeting the needs of these clients, many of whom subsist on a month-to-month basis, who barely earn enough to survive in their existing living situations.

**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**

West Hartford's efforts in this area have continued to focus on prevention. Through its fair housing program, and its referral process with West Hartford Social Services Department, Police, and Fire Departments, which serves to prevent dozens of evictions per year, and through its ongoing network building with the region's shelters for homeless persons.

As previously stated, when West Hartford Social Workers are made aware of persons who face homelessness, either through a referral or an eviction or ejection notice, they offer resources and supports. If all else fails, persons are encouraged to contact 211 for a Diversion intake. The social worker continues to assist the family or persons until a move or transition is complete. Data for these individuals are tracked with internal systems.

Due to COVID-19, a joint effort between Social Services, the WHPD, and Fire Department was activated. This program, Community Life Safety and Support Program (CLASP), unfolded in March 2020 to ensure that residents who were closed in their homes had access to food, heat, and other necessary services, including rent. This joint team made weekly calls to individuals in need. The structure and operations of this program are refreshed annually, and is an initiative that will continue to be maintained if other catastrophes arise in the coming years.

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

### **Actions taken to address the needs of public housing**

As stated previously in West Hartford's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, and CAPERs (submitted since July 1, 2011), West Hartford Housing Authority (WHA) operates as a quasi-governmental agency in conjunction with the Housing and Urban Development Public Housing Program. The Town of West Hartford no longer owns any housing units.

However, the West Hartford Housing Authority (WHA) currently has five properties under their management: Elm Grove Apartments, The Goodwin, Alfred E. Plant, The Faxon Apartments, and 616 New Park, thus providing a total of 345 units.

- Elm Grove Apartments have 40 garden-style units for the elderly and people with disabilities. The complex has a community room, on-site parking, laundry facilities, and a garden. A Resident Services Coordinator is onsite three days a week and provides information and referrals, assistance in linking clients to programs and coordinates onsite resident activities. The waitlist for units is currently closed.
- Alfred E. Plant underwent a renovation of the existing 137 units. The building is located less than one mile from Blue Back Square, and a CT Transit bus stop is located in front of the property. The waitlist for units is currently closed.
- The Goodwin property opened for residency in June 2015. There are 47 units available, with 32 market-rate units (estimated rents of \$1,400) and 15 affordable units (estimated rents of \$1,000).
- 616 New Park, situated on New Park Avenue (on the Hartford/West Hartford border), opened for residency in 2018. This 54-unit transit-oriented development provides 11 units to homeless veterans, 30 units for supportive housing, and 11 units at market value. The development features mostly one-bedroom apartments, with a handful of two bedrooms, on the building's second, third and fourth floors. The first floor houses a community space, workout rooms, and 3,000 square feet of commercial space.
- The Faxon Apartments have 67 units which 53 of which are affordable units.
- Of all 345 units available 290 units or 83.47% are affordable units.

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

WHA operates a Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program. It is designed to establish more financially stable families who can contribute financially and socially to the West Hartford community. Self-sufficient families add to the economic base of the community at large. They become customers to local businesses and stakeholders in their neighborhoods.

Families who participate in the Housing Choice Voucher FSS program are provided opportunities for education, job training, and other forms of social service assistance. The FSS program links families to needed services in order to meet individual goals. These services include:

- Financial literacy
- English as a Second Language (ESL) classes

- Job preparedness and job search assistance
- Career assessment and career development

**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)**

West Hartford has adopted an ordinance to permit residential dwellings within the General Industrial (IG) and Restricted Industrial (IR) Districts to enhance and provide ability for "Mixed Use" projects. These projects promote housing opportunities that have not been currently available to the community. Such projects provide residents with transit opportunities and development, proximity to goods and services and better quality of life.

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

The Hillcrest neighborhood is West Hartford's lowest income area. West Hartford operates a neighborhood community center, Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC) in the heart of the neighborhood. HANOC is the result of a collaborative partnership between the Town of West Hartford, The West Hartford Housing Authority and the West Hartford Board of Education. Programs provided include a homework center for students, food distribution programs, case management services, crisis intervention, Parents Group, Adult Computer Basics classes, other adult education programs, Camp Hillcrest, educational field trips, and more. The community center is owned by the West Hartford Housing Authority and is leased and operated by the Town of West Hartford. Programming at the center is facilitated through the Town of West Hartford Social Services' Community Partnerships Division, and the West Hartford Board of Education.

The West Hartford Food Pantry is available to all residents who qualify. Supplementing this program is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) through the Department of Agriculture (The CSFP Program is a federal food program for income-eligible seniors age 60 and older). Food is distributed monthly at a local church. The West Hartford Social Services Department/Community Partnership Division/Food Pantry Coordinator administers part of this service.

For the fiscal year 2020-2021, 67 households and 97 individuals benefited from this program. This program is not limited to West Hartford residents only; however, delivery is only available in West Hartford.

Through CDBG funded programs, including Volunteer Services and Volunteer Medical Escort Program, transportation services are provided to those who are unable to use the Dial-A-Ride program. Volunteers provide transportation to local routine medical appointments and escort clients in and out of the buildings. Before the first ride, a West Hartford social worker will assess to determine eligibility for the program. Two weeks' notice is required for scheduling and is dependent upon the availability of volunteers. This program is administered by Social Services' Community Partnerships Division.

In addition, before the pandemic, a SNAP Benefits counselor was available to West Hartford residents at the West Hartford Public Library and in West Hartford Social Services through Foodshare, the regional food bank. Foodshare provides perishable and non-perishable items to those in need in the community. Counselors meet confidentially with applicants to screen and apply for benefits. Since March 2019, these services are suspended as residents cannot enter town buildings. Instead, the library and social services inform residents of how to apply. Information is posted on the West Hartford Public Library website. It is

the intention to introduce in-person services when the pandemic subsides.

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

The Community Programs Coordinator in the Housing Rehabilitation Program works with residents to ameliorate their needs. Information on these services is on the West Hartford town website under Town Departments/Housing Rehabilitation. In addition, the Community Programs Coordinator directs residents in need of lead remediation to other institutions in Statewide as; Connecticut Children Healthy Homes Program to get the help they need.

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

West Hartford continues to work toward meeting needs of the underserved by the following:

- Support the continuance and/or expansion of existing public service programs including those which provide services to persons with disabilities, youths, seniors and/or substance abusers or which offer transportation services and employment training.
- WHHA provides affordable rental housing opportunities for extremely low and very- low income renters by increasing the supply and maintaining the availability of affordable rental housing in the Town.
- Increase the level and delivery of support services to the homeless and those at-risk of becoming homeless. West Hartford Social Services is the proactive first line service provider.
- Work to expand existing efforts to meet the needs of the Town's physically disabled population by supporting projects designed to make current facilities accessible or to provide new ADA compliant facilities/equipment.
- Maintain and improve existing public facilities and encourage the development of upgraded facilities, particularly with regard to parks/recreation facilities and facilities serving low-income populations.
- Support the continued maintenance and improvement of the Town's infrastructure, particularly with regard to street and sidewalk improvements, as well as storm drain improvements.
- Enhance and expand other community development efforts, particularly with regard to lead-based paint remediation/education and code enforcement activities.
- Continue existing administrative and planning activities necessary for the implementation of the objectives, actions and programs outlined in this Strategic Plan, including fair housing counseling, tenant-landlord counseling and/or public awareness.
- Provide Energy Assistance through CRT and Emergency Fuel and Emergency Utility assistance to LMI residents in town. During the last year, 693 LMI homeowners benefitted from this assistance with a total benefit of \$346,978.09.
- Assisted 638 LMI individuals with rebate funds for rent payments totaling over \$305,262.61. Social workers met with residents to complete applications.
- Operation Fuel was able to help 41 residents with a total of \$15,614.01 for the last FY.
- Emergency Utilities was able to serve 4 residents with a total of \$1,585.55.

- Emergency Fuel was able to help five residents with a total of \$1,133.57.

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

West Hartford is fortunate to have a comprehensive and effective delivery system of well-established programs and services. Continuous efforts to organize, maintain and enhance West Hartford's role and its responsibility to remain in compliance with state and federal ADA regulations. Continued efforts are made to streamline the administration of CDBG services. This effort is fluid and will continue into the new year with a focus on COVID-19 CARES Act funding expenditures.

Several ADA improvements were made throughout the town. West Hartford continues to implement improvements to parks, and facilities in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods, increasing access to parks and facilities for people with disabilities. Also, community-wide, The West Hartford Board of Education made several ADA related school improvements throughout the year.

The Town of West Hartford Website is ADA compliant, and includes an "audio eye." This device converts audio capabilities into text for those who are hearing impaired.

To ensure the program implementation process continues to meet the needs of the Town's low and moderate-income constituents, the Department of Leisure and Social Services and its staff continue to monitor best practices, including reporting procedures and development of new actions aimed at eliminating any gaps that may occur in the Town's service delivery system. This helps to ensure that current service levels could be enhanced if an unfulfilled need or service gaps was identified.

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

The Town West Hartford works closely with the West Hartford Housing Authority (WHHA). Staff members of WHHA, The Town, and West Hartford Social Services continuously work to build trust, social capital and to enhance efficiencies. There is constant communication on an as-needed basis between Town staff and WHHA personnel to resolve cases of shared clients. West Hartford Social Services also monitors the WHHA process and protocols regarding tenant selection of units and other areas of concern and need.

West Hartford supports its commitment to fair housing education through its CDBG funding. Annually, the Social Services Department hosts two fair housing events (in order to meet its five-year goal), which are designed to inform the community of their rights and help the department determine the needs of the community in regard to housing. The overall goal is to develop a strategy to allow for more consensus-based resolutions to problems that could arise between landlords and their tenants. This strategy allows parties involved to avoid going to court or to the West Hartford Fair Rent Commission. An informational session on Fair Housing practices by the CT Fair Housing Center was facilitated by the Town Planner on July 20, 2020, through a virtual meeting. This discussion was about the Affordable Housing and Housing Choice: historical roots, current data, and zoning with guests from CT Fair Housing Center and Partnership for Strong Communities.

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

Specific Fair Housing-related activities completed during the reporting period include:

- The Town of West Hartford continued to be a supporting partner to the West Hartford Housing Authority in all its development activity.
- Greater Hartford Legal Assistance provided legal services free of charge (housing-related matters) to 99 LMI West Hartford households (1 extremely low, 7 very low).

The Department of Social Services is notified of evictions or ejections by the State Marshal. The purpose is to provide immediate (crisis) intervention services to families in need at this final stage. A social worker contacts the individual or family to offer the following: counseling, referrals to other sources of housing, boxes for possessions, a storage unit paid by the Town of West Hartford for 15 days (if needed), and financial assistance through funding from the Town that Cares to either store their items or for other necessities. During last Fiscal Year 2020-2021 all evictions were postponed by federal Moratorium.

In situations calling for more technical or sophisticated consultation of a fair housing nature, West Hartford continues its financial support of Greater Hartford Legal Aid. During the last year, Greater Hartford Legal Aid served 56 LMI residents. The WH Social Services Department continues to assist residents in this area by offering alternative resources. The department also utilizes Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut and consultation with the CT Fair Housing Center. The Town's relationships with various organizations has provided the community with the services of expert housing advocates and attorneys for quick and informative consultations.

#### **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**

During the reporting period, West Hartford continued its practice of closely monitoring all CDBG-funded activities and programs, including the following:

- Comprehensive sub-recipient agreement with Greater Hartford Legal Aid. An annual on-site monitoring visit to the agency along with quarterly monitoring of internal CDBG programs and its corresponding activities and compliance occurred. This year, the visit occurred virtually due to following COVID-19 constraints and social distancing measures.
- Sub-recipient organizations completed and submitted to the Town of West Hartford formal documentation and reports which detailed the year's results for the CDBG funded programs.
- The Town's Housing Rehabilitation, Engineering and Planning and Zoning Departments adheres to strict compliance with applicable state and federal regulations in the area of procurement standards, hiring practices/affirmative action, prevailing wage requirements, hazardous material disposal and applicable zoning and building codes.
- The West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District (WHBHD) identifies property maintenance code violations in all areas of West Hartford and Bloomfield CT, including in low-and-moderate income neighborhoods, and tracks resolutions. As with other town departments, the WHBHD adheres to local ordinances establishing minimum standards for the maintenance of all premises. Buildings are inspected to assure that lighting, ventilation, electricity, heating and plumbing are installed correctly and properly maintained. WHBHD provides quarterly reporting on dwellings in the low mod districts in West Hartford. The WHBHD functions under the realm of town government and state standards.
- The Town's Leisure & Social Services and Financial Services Departments worked collaboratively to ensure that, in managing the accounting functions related to the use and expenditure of CDBG funds, quality financial records are kept in accordance with Standard Governmental Accounting Principles.
- West Hartford prepared and submitted to HUD performance reports as required including the CAPER reporting year-end performance.

#### **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.**

All public hearings and milestone actions, such as submission to HUD of West Hartford's CAPERs and Annual Action Plans and Consolidated Plans are announced in the local newspaper (Hartford Courant) and posted in various locations on the Town's website prior to submission. For community members who have registered for the town Listserve, receipt of notice in that format is also provided. Public comment is

encouraged, in accordance with the Town’s Citizen Participation Plan. West Hartford submits a public notice 15 days in advance of submission of all CDBG reports. This year, the Annual Action Plan and public notice of public hearings were published 30 days in advance. Due to COVID-19, the hearings were held virtually. The CAPER submission this year was published 23 days before submission. The CAPER for 2020 was published in the Hartford Courant on October 26, 2021. On the same day, it was published on the Town of West Hartford’s website. On Thursday, November 4, 2021, one public hearing was conducted, but no one from the public participated. On November 18, 2021, the Town of West Hartford submitted the 2020 CAPER to HUD. The 2020 CAPER was further edited to cover CDBG Cares Act Funding (CDBG-CV. For that reason, the 2020 CAPER was submitted to the Hartford Courant on November 29, 2021, and published on the Town of West Hartford website. On Friday, December 10, 2021, one public hearing will be conducted. On or about December 23, the Town of West Hartford will re-submit the 2020 CAPER to HUD.

**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.**

No such changes have been made.

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

No

**[BEDI grantees] Describe accomplishments and program outcomes during the last year.**