

## 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 City conducted a variety of activities in Program Year 45 (PY45 - May 1, 2019 - April 30, 2020) designed to meet the needs of our low- and moderate-income residents. Activities were focused on the following areas: rehabilitation of single-family, owner-occupied housing (13), accessibility ramps for at single-family housing units (6), rehabilitation on public housing units (13), demolition of blighted and deteriorated structures (1), public service projects (5), public facility improvements, (3) and Section 3 Job Training (1). The majority of the activities were conducted in the City's low- and moderate-income areas.

### **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
Creating Economic Opportunity - Job/Life Skills	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted						
Creating Economic Opportunity - Job/Life Skills	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	300	168	56.00%	50	37	74.00%
Decent Housing - Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Rental units rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	0	39		13	13	100.00%
Decent Housing - Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	100	104	104.00%	25	19	76.00%
Decent Housing - Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Housing for Homeless added	Household Housing Unit	0	0		0	0	
Decent Housing - Rehabilitation	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Housing for People with HIV/AIDS added	Household Housing Unit	0	0		0	0	
Suitable Living Environment - Infrastructure	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	5000	5523	110.46%	500	871	174.20%

Suitable Living Environment - Infrastructure	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Households Assisted	20	2	10.00%	0	0	
Suitable Living Environment - Public Facilities	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	2000	6183	309.15%	300	400	133.33%
Suitable Living Environment - Public Services	Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	10000	9978	99.78%	2550	1169	45.84%
Sustainable Living Environment - Continuum of Care	Homeless	CDBG: \$	Homelessness Prevention	Persons Assisted	3500	0	0.00%	0	0	
Sustainable Living Environment - Demolition	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Buildings Demolished	Buildings	30	13	43.33%	5	1	20.00%
Sustainable Living Environments - Emergency Grant	Affordable Housing Homeless	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	0	0	0	20	64	320.00%
Sustainable Living Environments - Emergency Grant	Affordable Housing Homeless	CDBG: \$	Homelessness Prevention	Persons Assisted	150	185	123.33%	0	0	0
West Bloomington Revitalization Project	Affordable Housing Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	4000	3376	84.40%	75	404	538.67%
West Bloomington Revitalization Project	Affordable Housing Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	25	17	68.00%	8	0	0.00%

**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.**

**Housing Rehabilitation**

The City utilized CDBG funding to support rehabilitation and accessibility improvements on 32 housing units during Program Year 2019. Nine of the projects were completed through the deferred loan program. Six homeowners received grants for accessibility improvements. Four homeowners received a grants through Habitat for Humanity's A Brush With Kindness program. Bloomington Housing Authority

received a grant to replace the roof at Irvin Apartments, a 13-unit multi-family public housing building. In total, \$237,402.28 in CDBG funding was expended on housing activities. The City exceeded its 5-year goal of 100 housing rehabilitation projects by four units.

### **Demolition Program**

Demolition costs through CDBG were much lower than anticipated for Program Year 2019. One demolition project at 811 W. Grove St was completed. Funding from the Illinois Housing Development Authority's Abandoned Property Program was utilized to complete a 2nd demolition and support maintenance expenses at more than 20 vacant/abandoned properties. In total, \$32,235 in CDBG funds and \$66,372 in IHDA funds were expended on demolition and clearance activities. The City continues to struggle with obtaining proper title to vacant/abandoned properties slated for demolition, resulting in fewer demolitions overall.

### **Public Facilities and Infrastructure**

The City completed three public facility and infrastructure projects in Program Year 2020. Two projects were focused on improvements to buildings owned by not-for-profits and the third was a sidewalk project in Dimmitt's Grove, located in the area designated as the Preservation Area in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Heartland Head Start received a grant for \$8,253 to support completion of an ADA-compliant entrance for the main office located on Stillwell. Mid Central Community Action (MCCA) received a \$8,189 grant to support the installation of a new exterior security system. Many of MCCA's programs are offered on nights and weekends when fewer staff are present. The system provides additional safety for MCCA clients, staff and surrounding businesses. MCCA saw nearly 6,000 individual clients at the Bloomington facility last year. The Dimmitt's Grove sidewalk project was completed for \$80,000 with 871 low-and-moderate income people benefitting from the infrastructure improvements.

### **Public Services**

Public service activities play a very important role in the City's goal to meet the needs of its most vulnerable citizens. Five public service projects were funded in Program Year 2019. Peace Meals served 63,537 meals to 480 individual Bloomington residents. Staff provided 676.75 hours of case management to 358 clients who received meals in the home rather than in the congregative setting. Nearly 100% of clients who responded to Peace Meal's annual survey reported service as good, very good, or excellent. The West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP) offered many services throughout the program year and reached many of its goals despite closing to the public on March 14 due to COVID-19. WBRP enrolled 144 new members in the Tool Library with 65% meeting low-and moderate-income guidelines. Twenty-seven Book Bike outreach events were conducted in LMI areas reaching 685 residents. Forty-three residents completed the Earn-a-Bike program through the Bike Co-op, volunteering their time in exchange for cash to purchase a bike. Of those who completed the program, 81% met income guidelines and 23% reported the primary purpose of use for the bike would be transportation to/from work. Volunteers assisted WBRP in building 94 beds for LMI children through

the Bed Blitz program. PATH provided provided homeless prevention services to 375 unduplicated individuals through the Homeless Services program. PATH reported an unusual decrease in numbers in March and April due to COVID-19. Many of the organizations to which PATH would refer clients for services were closed or operating on a very limited basis during those months. Additionally, PATH offers assistance with obtaining employment as a means of preventing homelessness. The Executive Order to shelter-in-place closed many businesses in the area, greatly reducing employment opportunities. PATH provided financial assistance to 19 individuals through the Emergency Assistance program. Emergency funds can be used to cover the cost of rent, utilities, temporary shelter, transportation, etc. not to exceed 3 months. Part of the Emergency Services program addresses self-neglect/hoarding concerns. PATH served 35 clients during Program Year 2019 through this effort, providing funds for dumpster rental, pest extermination, etc. Recycling Furniture for Families provided housewares and home furnishings to 314 residents despite being closed for the last six weeks of the program year. Of those served, 92% had an annual income at or below 30% of the AMI.

### **Administrative Programs**

The City kicked off a new partnership with Prairie State Legal Services during Program Year 2019. The program goal was to provide fair housing services to income-qualified Bloomington residents. PSLS staff completed ten client intakes for cases involving housing discrimination or other unlawful practices. Staff completed eight outreach, education and training events in an effort to reach clients and education non-profit agency staff. Plans to conduct training on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing best practices for City staff and program partners was moved to the Program Year 2020 due to COVID-19. The City partners with Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA) annually to provide job and life-skills training for its public housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs. BHA coordinated two trainings in Program Year 2019 reaching 37 program participants.

## CR-10 - Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted

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

91.520(a)

	CDBG
White	1,198
Black or African American	825
Asian	8
American Indian or American Native	6
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,037</b>
Hispanic	94
Not Hispanic	2,055

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

### Narrative

According to IDIS report PR-23, the actual number of families assisted by race should be 2149, not 2,037. The above table does not pull information for all race/ethnic categories available within HUD's reporting system. In addition to the race categories above, the following categories were represented on the PR-23: American Indian/Alaskan Native, American Indian/Alaskan Native and White, Black/African American and White, and Other-Multi-race.

One goal of the 2019 program year was to do a better job of capturing information on those served of Hispanic ethnicity. The 2018 CAPER reported zero individuals served, although we knew that to be inaccurate. In 2019, the City switched to an online grants management system that allowed for subrecipients to report on Hispanic ethnicity, whereas the previous reporting system did not. The results are above.

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

### Identify the resources made available

Source of Funds	Source	Resources Made Available	Amount Expended During Program Year
CDBG	public - federal	673,952	424,471

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

### Narrative

COVID-19 resulted in fewer projects being completed than anticipated. All housing rehabilitation and demolition projects were put on hold due to COVID-19 in mid-March. Several public service projects were forced to end services about 6 weeks prior to the end of the fiscal year. These and other factors resulted in fewer funds being spent than originally budgeted.

### Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
LMA Regeneration Area - Outside WBRP		28	
WBRP Service Area		28	

Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

### Narrative

The City does not estimate a percentage of resources distributed per service area when creating the Annual Action Plan. Eligibility for all CDBG-programs is income-based and, therefore, open to the entire city. During Program Year 2019, \$120,560 was spent on activities conducted within the WBRP service area and \$119, 011 in the City's Regeneration Area outside of the WBRP service area. In total, this represents 56% of total expenses going towards activities conducted in West Bloomington. These numbers do not include funds expended to serve clients in these areas through the public service activities as reporting on those activities is not broken down by target area.

Note: The Regeneration Area is defined in the City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan as the area bounded by Downtown Bloomington and Main St. (east), 1-55/74 (west) and Miller Park (south). The WBRP service area is a smaller target area within the Regeneration Area and is defined by the following boundaries: Locust St. (north), Roosevelt St. (east), Oakland Ave. (south), and Euclid St. (west).

## 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.**

The City's Community Development staff constantly looks for ways to leverage resources in an effort to maintain/increase the current level of service despite budget cuts. The Grants Coordinator continues to pursue non-CDBG funding sources and ways to create new partnerships and enhance those already in existence. During Program Year 2019, the City leveraged funding from several Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) grants to address the priorities identified within the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and, specifically, the 2019 Annual Action Plan. The City was awarded funds covering the 2019 program year in the following IHDA programs: Abandoned Property Program, Single Family Rehabilitation and Home Accessibility Program. In total, \$79,181.44 in IHDA funding was expended to support the goal to preserve the City's affordable housing stock.

The City expended \$1,950 through the General fund to provide two grants to low- and moderate-income homeowners for the removal of dead trees. City General Fund dollars were utilized for code enforcement activities, infrastructure projects and salary and benefits for staff administering the grant program as well. Program staff salaries and benefits total more than \$150,000 annually.

## CR-20 - Affordable Housing 91.520(b)

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

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	5	5
Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	33	21
Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of households supported through Rental Assistance	5	5
Number of households supported through The Production of New Units	0	0
Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units	46	34
Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

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

COVID-19 played a significant role in not meeting the one-year goals for the Number of Non-Homeless Households assisted and the Rehabilitation of Existing Units. Several projects were put on hold once Illinois was placed under Executive Order to shelter-in-place. This affected not only the City's program but also Habitat for Humanity's A Brush with Kindness program. After the 2019 Annual Action Plan was created, the West Bloomington Revitalization Project decided to discontinue it's Facade Program, as it was a duplication of Habitat's program. This resulted in 8 fewer projects for the year.

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

The City will continue to support housing rehabilitation projects with goals similar to those of the past. Had COVID-19 not been an issue, the majority of the affordable housing goals would have been



met. A Brush with Kindness will likely be funded at a higher level since WBRP is no longer offering a similar program. Despite not meeting the rehabilitation of existing units goal for the year, the City exceeded the 5-year goal by four units.

**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.**

<b>Number of Households Served</b>	<b>CDBG Actual</b>	<b>HOME Actual</b>
Extremely Low-income	21	0
Low-income	5	0
Moderate-income	5	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 7 – Number of Households Served**

**Narrative Information**

Although the City does not utilize CDBG funds to support the construction of new affordable housing directly, it does donate cleared lots to Habitat for Humanity for development of affordable housing. The City also dedicates a significant portion of the annual CDBG budget to preservation of affordable housing activities through housing rehabilitation. In 2020, the City will add to its affordable housing preservation strategy by providing rent/mortgage assistance through it's CDBG-CV funding.

**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**

PATH (Providing Access to Help) Crisis Center serves as the lead coordinating agency for the Central Illinois Continuum of Care (CICoC). Due the Continuum's large geographic space covered (11 counties), hubs have been implemented to best suit the needs of communities. As such, McLean County is one of the hubs and PATH leads these monthly meetings and the Continuum's bimonthly meetings. These meetings allow for effective planning regarding the CoC's ability to reduce and end homelessness.

Through its Homeless Services Program, PATH reaches out to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Through referrals from police departments, hospitals, social service agencies, churches, and truck stops, the outreach worker will make the initial contact and begin the process of assessing the needs of the client(s).

The outreach team regularly goes out into the field to known places unfit for human habitation to locate people, initiate relationships, assess needs and help clients navigate the network of resources available in the community.

The outreach worker also responds to people identified through the Coordinated Point of Entry, another role PATH plays in the effort to reduce homelessness. On a 24/7 basis, people on the streets, in shelters, or in transitional housing, can dial 211 and receive immediate support, assessment and are transferred to the Coordinated Point of Entry.

With a vast database, outreach staff can make referrals to obtain local and mainstream resources such as Social Security Income (SSI), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and employment. This connection process leads individuals and families into permanent housing. Outreach services productively meets the specific objectives for reducing and ending homelessness.

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

The Salvation Army Safe Harbor Shelter provides emergency shelter and services for adult women and men who are experiencing homelessness. Safe Harbor provides case management services, a day center, and meals. Showers, washer/dryers, and other amenities are offered to people through the day center when they may not meet the shelter's guidelines for bed space. The shelter also opens a warming center between October and March to provide indoor space when all beds are filled. Safe Harbor also has an employment program on site and provides transportation for job interviews. The Salvation Army's shelter is a strong partner in the Coordinated Point of Entry that helps move people from a

shelter setting into permanent housing.

Home Sweet Home Ministries, another member of the CoC, provides emergency shelter for adult women and men as well as families. There are limitations; families are generally separated to a men's side and a women's side but it is the result of the layout of the facility. The program has been in place for over a century. The shelter started providing Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) services and has enjoyed considerable success in moving people from the shelter into a home. RRH solves the problem of separating families in the shelter facility.

Neville House is a domestic violence shelter that has room for 13 women and children. They participate in the Coordinated Point of Entry.

Finally, there is crisis shelter for children under the age of 6 if there is no family units available and a parent is unable to procure any other housing suitable for young children. They receive children into the facility 24/7.

**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**

Avoiding homelessness reduces the stress on individuals, families and the homeless service sector. CDBG funds are used to support the Emergency Grant program. This grant is utilized to provide emergency rent/mortgage and utility assistance for individuals in imminent danger of becoming homeless. It also provides payment to local hotels for individuals experiencing homelessness. A portion of the grant assists the Self-Neglect Program by assisting with the rental of dumpsters for cleanup at properties of individuals and families in imminent danger of becoming homeless due to condemnation related to hoarding issues and other code violations.

Other sources for emergency rent or utility assistance that would prevent a family from losing housing are utilized. Townships are a part of the referral process although every Township has different guidelines. Community Action has financial assistance; they administer the LIHEAP program and other programs that address the root issues of the fiscal crisis that puts a family at risk of homelessness.

Policies do exist within the Continuum for people being discharged from institutions and systems of care. The community mental health agency is involved in the transition from a state mental health facility to the community. They provide transitional apartments, a staffed boarding house, and some permanent supportive units. A day center helps with social needs and helps the person build a support system after hospitalization.

Local hospitals work with the homeless outreach program when they release a person who does not have a home to return to.

For young adults aging out of foster care or who no longer have a family to support them, have options with the Continuum. Project Oz has a very successful transitional housing programs where youth are placed into apartments with strong supports and as skills and income increase, supports fade until the youth is no longer in the program but is still in their apartment. Project Oz has a program for homeless youth that provides options when youth are being discharged from any type of facility.

The county government has created programs to meet the needs of people coming out of corrections who were homeless before incarceration. The Frequent User System Engagement (FUSE) program provides intensive case management and funding for permanent supportive housing. The program targets people who meet HUD's definition of being chronically homeless. The CoC works with the county government in providing Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to identify those most in need of help (with the appropriate signed consent).

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Labyrinth House provides case management and transitional housing for women entering the community from the correctional system. The City has supported Labyrinth in the past by funding a part-time case manager and assisting with rehabilitation costs for housing units. Labyrinth can house up to ten women at two transitional housing units. Seeds of Hope is an organization focused on providing similar supportive services to men leaving corrections. Currently, the program provides case management only with the goal of offering transitional housing in the future.

Additionally, the Supportive Housing Project (SHP) supports staff positions at Salvation Army, PATH, Crisis Nursery, and Recycling Furniture for Families. These programs help both homeless and those in imminent danger of becoming homeless.

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

The main system and infrastructure we have in place to help people experiencing homelessness has been described above.

In terms of moving people to housing in the shortest amount of time, Rapid Re-Housing programs has been the avenue to success. The Coordinated Point of Entry keeps track of all the individuals on the Prioritization List on at least a monthly basis.

Outside of the Rapid Re-Housing Program, townships and Community Action may have the funds for first month's rent and deposit. The outreach worker keeps the listing of available housing up-to-date including the requirements of the landlords. This list is updated every other week and made available to everyone seeking a place to rent.

The Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA) has a prioritization policy for people experiencing homelessness. The BHA also has more flexibility with entrance requirements for people experiencing homelessness when it comes to prior evictions and landlord references. Other affordable housing complexes have an understanding of the great importance of housing people quickly and have been open to receiving referrals for homeless individuals and families.

The CCoC has been recognized as ending veteran homelessness, by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. This entails finding permanent placement within 90 days of being recognized as homeless. The CCoC works closely with all veteran organizations to meet this goal.

Another resource to move people quickly out of emergency shelter is Mid Central Community Action (MCCA) transitional housing program based in Bloomington-Normal that provides up to two years of housing and case management to individuals and families who are transitioning from homelessness and/or inadequate housing. Rent costs are based on the tenant's income, with a maximum cost of \$550 per month, and family members complete bi-weekly case management sessions with financial coaches to increase their knowledge and work toward financial stability. MCCA also serves 15 people coming from homeless at Mayors Manor Permanent Supportive Housing. These previously homeless or chronically homeless residents received short-term, medium-term, or long-term case management services, budget counseling, and self-sufficiency assessments. There are also 5 Shelter Plus Care beds, in conjunction with the Housing Authority, at the facility.

Chestnut Health System has Supportive Housing, Samaritan Housing, and Project Hope, all of which provide permanent supportive housing. This organization does work closely with Coordinated Point of Entry so we have the opportunity to move people into housing as quickly as possible.

Recycling Furniture for Families assists with household items that help make the new housing a home for free.

## **Strategies**

The City of Bloomington, in conjunction with the Continuum of Care, follows several strategies for helping low income families avoid becoming homeless:

- Refer clients to PATH's 24/7 information and referral line by dialing 211 to gain knowledge of services available and to access PATH Homeless Services if needed which can provide limited emergency funds to help families avoid eviction or home condemnation;

- Working with the Township office which provides emergency and general assistance;
- Utilizing homeless prevention funds from the State of Illinois;
- Providing Letters of Support for agencies seeking federal, state and private funding for homeless programs.

The CoC has three strategies to decrease the rate of individuals and families returning to homelessness. The first is to utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track the episodes of homelessness. Secondly, the Continuum works to reduce the number of people returning to homelessness by supporting the individual or family while working through the barriers to housing and transitioning people to affordable housing. This is done through the permanent supportive housing and the transitional housing opportunities available throughout the Continuum. Finally, Outreach is able to follow-up with services to people up to 6 months from their episode of homelessness. This is to assist them in maintaining housing.

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

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

In the 2019-2020 program year, the Housing Authority continued its reinvestment in Wood Hill Towers-North. This project is modernizing and enlarging units at this high-rise public housing site. Using annual Capital Fund grants, The Housing Authority has been merging and renovating obsolete efficiency apartments in the northeast quadrant of the North Tower.

In the fall of 2019, the Housing Authority entered into a contract for approximately \$420,000 to complete the third phase of this unit merger/renovation project, merging 8 efficiency units into four large one-bedroom units on the 7th and 6th floors. Construction took place in the winter and was nearly complete by the end of the 2019-20 program year. The Housing Authority intends to continue the project in following years completing work as funding allows. Ultimately the project is expected to eliminate the long-term vacancy problem associated exclusively with the obsolete efficiency units. In fall 2020 the Housing Authority plans to take bids to do the same type of unit merger and renovation of eight more efficiency apartments on the 5th and 4th floors. This round of work is expected to be complete by the end of program year 2020-21.

### **Capital Improvements**

Other important capital improvement projects during the program year include replacement of the roof on the south building at the Irvin Apartments, home to the Congregate Housing Services Program, a supportive housing program. This project was completed in the fall of 2019 at a cost of \$37,900, which was provided by City CDBG funds. Also during the 2019-20 program year, the dining room, kitchen and other common areas at the Irvin Apartments were renovated. Roofs were replaced at John Kane Homes in the fall of 2020 at a cost of approximately \$95,000. The Housing Authority completed a number of smaller-scale improvements, including expansions to the security camera system, attic insulation at Sunnyside Court, electrical improvements at Wood Hill Family apartments, and construction of a new storage shed to serve the Wood Hill complex.

In August of 2019 the Housing Authority demolished the vacant former daycare building at 315 N. Stillwell, which had presented a maintenance concern after it was vacated in 2014. Following demolition of the building, the site was graded and seeded to create an attractive greenspace adjacent to the 64-unit Holton Homes public housing site.

### **Other Public Housing Activities**

Section 3 job training efforts are an important way the Housing Authority helps its low-income housing program participants move toward economic self-sufficiency. Job skills training sessions and a job fair were held in 2019. Housing Authority staff also refers residents to a wide range of career and social

service resources throughout the year.

Demand for affordable income-based housing remains high. There are several groups/organizations continuing to work on the issue of affordable housing in the Bloomington area. The McLean County Regional Planning Commission facilitates a Regional Housing Advisory Committee that applies regional collaboration to address h

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

Each year the Housing Authority conducts a Resident Advisory Board meeting to review the proposed Annual PHA Plan. This year Housing Authority staff made a concerted effort to increase attendance and participation at the RAB meeting, which was held in September 2019. A public hearing was conducted the following week. These meetings provide an important opportunity for the residents to learn about the policies and management practices of the Housing Authority and have input on the agency's future direction.

The Housing Authority's Resident Services Department continues to offer numerous opportunities for public housing residents to improve the economic situation and enhance their quality of life. Examples include staffed on-site computer labs, an after-school tutoring program, a gardening program, and an annual Health Fair and Resource Fair, in which more than 60 public housing residents participated this past year.

The Housing Authority continues to administer a Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program for public housing residents. This voluntary program allows members of a household to save money in an escrow account when the family increases its income. This savings is paid into the account monthly as a part of the family's rent payment. Resident Services staff help the participants set self-sufficiency goals to be completed over a matter of years. The participant is allowed to tap into their escrow account for education, purchasing of a car, and even a down payment on a home. Many Housing Authority families have benefitted from this program over the years.

### **Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs**

The Bloomington Housing Authority is not categorized as troubled.



## **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)**

The City makes a concerted effort to keep all building permits/fees as low as possible. All approved contractors completing CDBG activities and not-for-profit agencies conducting housing activities are provided fee waivers. The City adopted a new zoning ordinance in early 2019 that takes affordable housing into consideration. The City also provides letters of consistency for local developers seeking tax credits for affordable housing development. Several new Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects have been approved for the area in recent years.

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

The City provided CDBG-funded rehabilitation loans to single-family, owner-occupied, income-eligible households. Nine households were assisted in the form of 0% interest deferred loans from CDBG funds in 2019-2020. These activities corrected many code violations and allowed the families to remain in their home while keeping the cost for necessary improvements at a minimum. Six homeowners received grants to cover the cost of materials for the construction of an accessibility ramp. This is nearly double the number of ramp projects completed previous year. The City received \$100,000 in funding in funding from the Illinois Housing Development Authority to support home accessibility improvements that will allow individuals to remain in their home. Unfortunately, the program was delayed due to COVID-19. Staff anticipate completing at least four projects before the program ends.

The City is allowed to expend up to 15% of it's annual allocation on public service projects. In Program Year 2019, \$68,683.03 was spent to support a variety of homeless prevention services, food distribution to the elderly, and neighborhood services in West Bloomington. Additionally, the City continues to serve as Trustee to the John M. Scott Health Trust. The John M. Scott Health Commission provided more than \$600,000 in grant funds to local agencies serving residents at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. All of the grants awarded focus on at least one of the Community Health Improvement Plan goals and connected services to the social determinants of health.

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

The City was awarded a technical assistance grant from the National League of Cities (NLC) in the fall of 2019. The grant is designed to assist the City in creating a framework to create a healthy housing strategy, that will address lead-based paint hazards as well as others. Through the work with the NLC, the City positioned itself to apply for the 2020 Lead-based Paint Hazard Control and Healthy Housing grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The City has been notified it will receive \$2.3 million in funding through these opportunities with lead-based paint identification and

abatement accounting for a significant portion of the funding.

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

The City of Bloomington's CDBG program focuses on reducing poverty in the community by focusing on stabilizing owner-occupied homes and increasing opportunities for homeownership among low- and moderate-income households. The CDBG housing rehabilitation loan program allows residents to increase the value of their homes by completing critical repairs without impacting their monthly budget. Homeowners can opt to pay the loan back at their own pace over time or pay it back all at once when they no longer occupy the home. In addition to the CDBG program, the City participates in the Illinois Housing Development Authority's (IHDA) Single Family Rehabilitation (SFR) and Home Accessibility Program (HAP). SFR provides up to \$45,000 in assistance through a 0% interest, five-year forgivable mortgage. HAP offers assistance under the same terms but the limit is lower at \$25,000.

Late in the program year, the City received notice that it would receive money for COVID-19 relief through the CARES Act. The City determined a need for housing assistance for both renters and owners and started working towards creating a plan to support the increased needs related to the pandemic. Staff spent a great deal of time in April working with representatives from local not-for-profits, churches, and government to create a Housing Assistance Coalition, working towards the goal of creating a coordinated entry process for residents to access housing assistance.

The City supports Section 3 training for public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher program participants. Two trainings are typically offered each year and focus on increasing job skills, resume writing, career exploration, interviewing, etc. Additionally, Bloomington Housing Authority provides a job fair for its residents. Section 3 training will continue to be a focus of the CDBG program. Job training and workforce development rose to the top of the priority needs during the community outreach process for the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. Future program proposals with a focus on job training/workforce development will be prioritized for funding during the 2020-2024 Con Plan period. The City will also utilize its Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control grant to create job opportunities for Section 3 residents.

Mid Central Community Action has served as a Financial Opportunity Center (FOC) since 2018. As an FOC, Mid Central plays a significant role in the community's efforts to raise families out of poverty. MCCA has added an employment coach to its staff and offers a variety of employment workshops. MCCA offers financial coaching services for all residents, helping those with a desire to increase their financial stability reach their goals. The financial coach provides education and tools to assist with budgeting, building cash reserves, and repairing/building credit scores. MCCA also offers home buyer education classes to ensure those wishing to purchase a home, especially first-time buyers, are financially ready to take on the responsibilities that come with owning a home.

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

The City applied for and received a healthy housing technical assistance grant through the National League of Cities (NLC) in the fall of 2019. Through this opportunity, the City and its partners are working with NLC and teams from five other cities across the country to develop a healthy housing strategy. Once completed, this strategy will recognize housing as a significant factor in one's health and life expectancy and begin directing programs and services towards a more holistic approach.

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

The City utilized past CDBG funding to support a regional housing study which was completed in 2017. As a result of the study, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) has implemented a Regional Housing Advisory Committee comprised of a Staff Committee, Affordable/Supportive Housing Group and Innovative Housing Solutions Group. The overall mission of the Regional Housing Advisory Committee is to provide a forum for housing stakeholders to interact on a regular basis, identify collaborative opportunities, and proactively address housing issues in the community. City staff currently participate on the Staff Committee and Affordable/Supportive Housing Group. Other members of the Staff Committee include representatives from MCRPC, Bloomington Housing Authority, Town of Normal and PATH (Providing Access to Help). The Affordable/Supportive Housing Group is comprised of social service agencies with a vested interest in quality, affordable housing opportunities for low income residents.

The City received CDBG-CV funding through the CARES Act late in the program year. The City responded quickly by surveying service providers regarding increased requests for services. Housing, health and food were the primary concerns initially. City staff worked with local not-for-profits, churches, housing providers, legal aid and other local governments to form the McLean County Housing Assistance Coalition. Through the coalition, a single, uniform application was developed, creating a no wrong door approach to the looming housing crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The application included authorization to share information among providers, allowing available resources to be maximized.

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

In Program Year 2019, the City funded its first grant to directly address fair housing issues. The City created a partnership with Prairie State Legal Services to support a staff attorney position dedicating a portion of her time to address fair housing complaints and training local officials and City staff on fair housing laws and practices. This program was well-received and will continue expand in Program Year 2020 to include a fair housing testing component.

Additionally, the City is addressing other impediments in the following ways:

1) Increased cost of residential development due to increased fees, building material and labor; low-income individuals have fewer affordable homes available:

The City attempts to maintain an equitable, fair list of development fees. The City will continue to monitor these fees and attempt to identify the balance between affordability and accessible City services and amenities. Additionally, the City offers permit waivers for not-for-profit organizations and all approved contractors working on CDBG projects. The City partners with several not-for-profit organizations dedicated to providing affordable housing through new construction and rehabilitation. Through these partnerships, low and moderate income households are able to purchase affordable housing that would not have been otherwise available.

2) Public Transportation: Limited bus routes and inconvenient hours of operation:

The City continues to work closely with Connect Transit to ensure residents have access to public transportation at the times and locations necessary for them to access employment, educational opportunities and other essential services. During COVID-19, Connect Transit suspended bus fares while reducing operations on certain lines to help offset the lost revenue.

3) Infrastructure: Deteriorating roads and sidewalks:

The City typically budgets a portion of the annual CDBG allocation for infrastructure projects in low and moderate income areas. The City completed two sewer projects in low and moderate income census tracts in PY44/2018. The first project was a carry-forward project from FY42. Both projects benefited low and moderate income households. A small sidewalk project was included in the PY44 Annual Action Plan. It did not come to fruition as the Parks Department felt it could complete it without CDBG assistance.

4) Accessibility for disabled persons; need for more Permanent Supportive Housing:

The City partners with AMBUCS to build accessibility ramps through the housing rehabilitation program. The City covers the cost of materials while AMBUCS provides volunteer labor to construct the ramps. As the administrator for several COC grants, the City supports rent subsidy for five units at Mayor's Manor, one of several HUD-funded Permanent Supportive Housing programs in McLean County. The need for more Permanent Supportive Housing is expected to be addressed through the Regional Housing Advisory Committee.

5) Lending practices; many payday lender and consumer installment loan licenses in Bloomington:

In 2011 the City passed a resolution to prohibit particularly dangerous types of payday and consumer loans.

6) Public perception of affordable housing; expensive rental units:

Through its partnership with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission's Regional Housing Advisory Committee, two white papers related to affordable housing were created in 2018. The first explains what affordable housing is and what it looks like in McLean County. The second goes into detail on the various types and quantities of income qualified housing in McLean County. The second was updated in 2019 to reflect current numbers. Both papers can be viewed at <https://mcplan.org/projects-and-programs/bn-home-/research>.

## **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**

The City of Bloomington's current monitoring plan is based on the standards and procedures included in the *CDBG Monitoring Handbook* published by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Monitoring activities included:

- Creating and implementing a tracking system to track progress of all projects;
- Preparing periodic reports and an annual report covering all activities;
- Providing funding to subrecipients on a reimbursement basis only;
- Monitoring for all sub-recipients, including reviewing the required annual financial audit, conducting site visits and/or desk audits and consulting on a regular basis;
- Securing an annual audit by an outside CPA firm for compliance with generally accepted practices and principals of accounting and compliance with federal statutes and regulations.

The City performed many of these activities in 2019 through a grants management software system. The Program Year 2019/FY2020 Single Audit has not been finalized at the time of this report but no findings are anticipated.

## **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.**

The City amended its Citizen Participation Plan to allow for waivers provided via the CARES Act. As a result, the public comment period for this performance report was reduced. Notice of the report's availability was published in the Pantagraph on Monday, October 20th, with the plan becoming available for review on the 23rd. The notice also included information about the public hearing, held on Monday, October 26th at 6 pm during the City Council meeting. The public comment period remained open until COB on the 30th.

**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.**

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

No

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

**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.**

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

No

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