

CITY OF AUBURN, NEW YORK  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
FIFTH ANNUAL ACTION PLAN  
PY2014

DRAFT

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# Fifth Program Year Action Plan

The CPMP Fifth Annual Action Plan will include the [SF 424](#) and Narrative Responses to Action Plan questions that CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG grantees must respond to each year in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations. The Executive Summary narratives are optional.

## Narrative Responses

### GENERAL

#### Executive Summary

The City of Auburn 2014 Action Plan is the Fifth Program Year Action Plan of the PY2010-PY2014 Consolidated Planning Strategy. As the Federal Budget is still in limbo, HUD has not released funding amounts for entitlement communities. The City of Auburn Office of Planning & Economic Development is hopeful that funding levels will remain flat and that we will not see further cuts to the CDBG Entitlement Program. As a basis for developing this Action Plan, the City assumes an entitlement allocation equal to \$814,792, for the upcoming 2014 program year. The City of Auburn has devised a plan for each scenario of an increase in entitlement and a decrease in entitlement. These scenarios are discussed in the budget narrative.

All activities that the City intends to deliver during PY2014, regardless of CDBG funding source, are included in this plan. The budget incorporates four (4) CDBG funding methods: 1) Anticipated 2014 CDBG Entitlement Funds, 2) Current Entitlement Funds, 3) Anticipated 2014 RLFs to be received, and 4) Available RLF Balances.

This plan outlines the planning process and the objectives, projects, and activities for the 2014 CDBG Program. The City will continue to partner with agencies, which can provide additional funding to meet the objectives of the upcoming year, which include:

- Improve the quality of existing housing stock, both owner-occupied and rental, through the Home Repair Assistance Program
- Increase the availability and/or affordability of quality, safe affordable housing.
- Reduce the number of vacant and abandoned housing using the Distressed Property Program.
- Increase the accessibility of existing housing stock through the installation of handicap/accessible ramps or other home modifications.
- Increase the percentage of homeless staying in permanent housing.
- Improve the quality and livability of existing neighborhoods by replacing substandard sidewalks and improving neighborhood parks.

- Provide funding to support various public services that foster a suitable living environment.
- Assist businesses wishing to create or retain jobs for through the Small Business Assistance Program.

The City of Auburn has consistently and competently delivered the CDBG Program, meeting applicable federal requirements. The CDBG Program has enabled the City of Auburn to successfully rehabilitate houses for low to moderate income residents through the Home Repair Assistance Program, remove blighting and unsafe structures through demolition, improve our existing neighborhoods, create and retain affordable housing, and create opportunities to promote and enhance the local economy. The CDBG Program is essential to the health of our community.

As with all community development, public participation is a key component in the preparation of the Annual Action Plan. In preparation of the 2014 Action Plan the City facilitated a public meeting, two (2) Public Hearings, and conducted a community wide survey.

The comments and input received continues to be very similar to that of previous years. The need for homeless services, affordable housing, small business assistance, and clean-up of abandoned lots/home (demolition) have been identified as high importance for our community. Also discussed is the need for continuing sidewalk and park improvements and to continue support of public services that assist city residents.

## General Questions

1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low income families and/or racial/minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed during the next year. Where appropriate, the jurisdiction should estimate the percentage of funds the jurisdiction plans to dedicate to target areas.

According to 2000 Census data, nearly half of the census block groups within the City of Auburn are comprised of at least 51% low to moderate income households. Within these low to moderate income census block groups, the City will be targeting public infrastructure, park improvements, and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Specifically, the City will continue to deliver programming in census tracts 418 and 419, the City's most distressed tracts, and adjacent census tracts, as appropriate.

On a city-wide basis, the City will also continue to provide assistance to income eligible City residents through "Direct Benefit" programs and public services funding.

2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) during the next year and the rationale for assigning the priorities.

The City will continue to target census tracts 418 and 419 with its infrastructure upgrades, playground improvements, and the distressed property program. In looking at areas with the greatest needs, identified through community involvement, these areas are continually mentioned by city residents and public service providers. In addition census tract 419 is approximately 77% low to moderate income and identified as a Federally Distressed area.

Depending on project costs and available funding, it may be desirable to complete projects, such as park and playground improvements or other public infrastructure improvements, in eligible areas adjacent to census tracts 418 and 419.

3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

Limited funding remains a major obstacle in meeting the underserved needs in the City of Auburn. Through the CDBG Program, the City simply does not have enough funds to address all of the neighborhood revitalization needs, fund agencies serving low to moderate income residents, and provide all needed grant resources to assist businesses in the current economic climate.

To address this, the City will continue to partner with agencies, who can provide additional funding to accomplish a project or deliver a program. Furthermore, the City continues to make application for other competitive sources of funding that can be used to create affordable housing or provide economic opportunity.

4. Identify the federal, state, and local resources expected to be made available to address the needs identified in the plan. Federal resources should include Section 8 funds made available to the jurisdiction, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and competitive McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds expected to be available to address priority needs and specific objectives identified in the strategic plan.

To address Community Development, Housing, and Homelessness related priorities, the City anticipates funding to be available through: HUD Notice of Funding Availability for Homeless Assistance, CSBG, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, Allyn Foundation, Columbian Foundation, French Foundation, Metcalf Foundation, and FEMA EFSP.

To address Housing related priorities, Homsite Fund, Inc. has applied for \$50,000 of NYS RESTORE Program funding through NYS Homes and Community Renewal to assist with emergency home repairs. Cayuga County Homsite Development Corporation submitted an application for \$500,000 of funding assistance through NYS Affordable Housing Corporation for the rehabilitation of homes in Cayuga County, including the City of Auburn.

Housing Visions is continuing the S.E. Payne Cornerstone Project, which will continue through the 2014 program year. The project includes approximately \$7M in private equity investment from \$770,000 in Annual LIHTC, \$2.4M from the Housing Trust Fund, and \$250K from the Allyn Foundation.

Lakewood Development has made application to the NYS Housing Trust Fund Program (\$2.2M), the NYS HOME Program (\$2.2M), and the 9% LIHTC Program (\$514,531) to complete Cottage Cove, a 36-unit special needs housing project.

The Auburn Housing Authority and Cayuga County Homsite Development Corporation both receive Section 8 funds. These funds do not come directly to the City of Auburn.

Whenever possible the City will be supportive of grant applications for funds that will help further the objects and goals outlined in the 2014 Action Plan. The City will support Cayuga County Homsite Development Corporation and Home HeadQuarters as they pursue funding sources to offer home rehabilitation and neighborhood stabilization grant funds.

## **Managing the Process**

1. Identify the lead agency, entity, and agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.

The City of Auburn's Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) is responsible for the development and delivery of the Annual Action Plans and the CAPER. Additionally, the OPED is also responsible for oversight of the program and monitoring subrecipients.

The OPED is able to draw on the expertise of other departments to help deliver programs and see the delivery of identified outcomes. The Engineering Department assists with the public infrastructure and demolition projects. The Department of Public Works assists the Engineering Department with the City's demolition projects and park improvements. The Comptroller and Treasurer's office assists with the CDBG Program financials.

Further the City works with a variety of community based organizations to assist with the delivery of programs and services. For the 2014 Action Plan, the City is recommending subrecipient agreements with thirteen (13) human service agencies for the delivery of the public services component and select administrative services.

2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.

The City facilitated a public meeting, held two public hearings, and conducted a community wide survey specifically for the development of the 2014 Action Plan.

Agencies generally represented in the planning process included:

- Human Services Coalition
- Options of Independence
- Home HeadQuarters, Syracuse
- Homsite Fund, Inc.
- Childcare Solutions

- Boyle Senior Center
- Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency
- Rescue Mission Alliance of Syracuse, NY
- Auburn Housing Authority
- Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department

The following public meeting was held:

- Auburn Public Theater (10/16/13)

Two public hearings were held:

- December 3, 2013 at a City Planning Board meeting
- January 30, 2014 at a City Council meeting

CDBG Community Priorities Survey:

- Online format via the City's website and the Citizen *newspaper* website
- Survey link sent via e-mail to Cayuga County Human Service Agencies
- Hardcopy format at County's Health and Human Services Department and distributed at the CDBG public meeting.
- Forty (40) respondents

3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to enhance coordination between public and private housing, health, and social service agencies.

Staff from OPED participate in a variety of community meetings, task groups and coalitions to help foster collaboration and coordination among diverse groups all of which are focused on community development efforts in assisting the low to moderate income populations in the City of Auburn.

The City will continue to fund the coordination efforts of the Human Services Coalition and OPED staff will attend the Cayuga County Human Services Coalition's Coordinating Council whose primary focus is to bring human services agencies together to collaborate in addressing community issues. Also, OPED will continue to fund The Rescue Mission for the facilitation of the City of Auburn/ Cayuga County Homeless Task Force Committee. The City of Auburn is a member of the Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Task Force and the Homeless Auburn/ Cayuga County Task Force Executive Committee.

## **Citizen Participation**

1. Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.

The formal citizen participation process for this year's action plan included a public meeting, and two (2) public hearings. In addition, the City gathered public input from a short community participation survey that was distributed to Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department and found online at the City of Auburn as well as The Citizen website.

The citizen participation meeting was held in October to solicit public input. This meeting was hosted in a neutral location, Auburn Public Theater, to encourage members of the community to attend. Attendees included current and past CDBG program participants as well as community agency representatives, neighborhood association members and the general public.

Both public hearings were held at City Hall: The first meeting was held in early December at the Planning Board meeting and the second was held in late January at a City Council meeting.

2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.

Comments received this year continue to be very similar to past years. Below is a summary of comments received.

Please note that the comments received during the Public Hearings are attached at the end of the narrative.

**City Infrastructure (Sidewalks, Parks and Playgrounds)**

- Concern regarding the curbing and sidewalks on Franklin Street. Sidewalks on Franklin Street from South Lewis to Foote Street would be a start on the sidewalks needing to be replaced on Franklin Street. Dunning and Chapman not as great of a need as Franklin Street is as it goes to the middle school. Even if all of Franklin Street isn't done, maybe if some work was done it would motivate someone else.
- Interest in Owasco River Greenway Trail and utilizing CDBG funding for the construction of the trail.
- Current downtown redevelopment is exciting and needs to be supported
- Mary Street curbing needed.
- Orchard Street curbing needed– Housing Visions is installing curbs in front of new and renovated houses. Now is the time to install the rest of the curbs on Orchard Street. We need a grant to do it. Then it would be the time to pave the street.
- Support for an urban forestry program. Incorporate an educational component.
- The Arterial, gateway into the City, needs asphalt removed and grass and trees planted

**Human Services Funding**

- Need for affordable transportation for seniors. Arriving to Dr. appointments have been a challenge for many seniors.
- Case management services for individuals in need of mental health, drug and alcohol and rental history problems.
- Childcare grants make a huge difference since childcare is so expensive. They can help pull families out of poverty by making it possible for a parent to work.

### **Housing Programs**

- Need for housing including the rehabilitation of existing housing and new construction
- Need for housing low income single individuals
- Need for housing low income high risk individuals and families.
- Need for quality, affordable housing for all low to moderate income residents
- Home Repair program for minor repairs is a need
- Assist with development of new rental units for low to moderate income residents.
- Increase funding for the Home Repair Assistance Program to provide opportunity for more substantial residential rehabs.

### **Neighborhood Efforts**

- West Street, Venice Street areas are a neighborhood where a concentrated effort similar to Orchard Street needs to take place to clean up the area
- On Franklin Street around Cayuga Street, there are 5-6 houses that make it a desolate area, houses are not taken care of and don't fit into the neighborhood

### **Other**

- Funding for photoelectric smoke detectors for low to moderate income families
- Funding for Safe-T-Element equipment and program that would engage low to moderate housing units such as Auburn Housing Authority and college student housing.

3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.

The City advertised the public meetings in the newspapers of local circulation. Paid advertisements were published in *The Citizen* (the City's paper of record) and online at the *Post Standard*. Public meetings were also advertised on the City of Auburn website and through flyers distributed to local agencies.

The Human Services Coalition has a large list-serve which reaches a diverse group of agencies located in Auburn, Cayuga County and the region. The list-serve was used to announce the public meetings to not only encourage participation of agency staff but also the constituents they serve. The agencies that received this information included groups which serve minorities, individuals with low literacy, seniors and persons with disabilities.

Additionally, when the plan was ready for review and comment the list-serve was used to announce that the plan was available and how to access it.

As mentioned, the public meeting was held at a convenient and accessible location for community members. The meeting was held Auburn Public Theater. This location was selected because it is centrally located in downtown Auburn and has convenient parking both in front of the building on the street and a parking garage located right around the corner of the building.

All meeting notices identified that the meeting was held in a physically accessible location. Further, the City advertised the availability of materials in an alternate format and sign language interpreters if needed.

To reach people who typically do not participate in community meetings, the City of Auburn developed and circulated a CDBG Community Survey. Surveys were distributed to individuals who visited the County's Health and Human Services Department. Since this agency typically assists individuals of low to moderate income, it can be presumed that the majority of these individuals would meet HUD's low to moderate income guidelines. In addition, the survey was available online through survey monkey at the City's main website as well as The Citizen newspaper website homepage.

Surveys were available to the public for a four week period. Within that time 40 surveys were collected. Below is a summary of survey responses:

According to survey results, 84.6% of participants lived within the City of Auburn, while 7.7 % lived within Cayuga County.

4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.

All comments were accepted during the public comment period.

\*Please note that citizen comments and responses may be included as additional files within the CPMP tool.

## **Institutional Structure**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to develop institutional structure.

The City of Auburn's Office of Planning and Economic Development will be responsible for the overall planning and administration of the Action Plan and its components.

The City utilizes many partners in meeting the objectives and goals of the Action Plan. Private industry will continue to be primarily involved as borrowers, or in leveraging the economic development activities related to the Action Plan. CDBG funds are used for "gap" financing or loan guarantees,

borrowers will need to have approvals for financing from banks or other lending institutions, as well as a commitment to equity injection.

Nonprofit housing developers such as Homsite Fund, Inc., Home HeadQuarters, and/or Options for Independence will be involved with the construction management and administration of housing programs administered by the City. For housing activities, private contractors will be responsible for performing the home repair, accessibility, or demolition projects.

The City is utilizing a request for proposals to solicit applications of non-profit programs that will be considered for funding from the public services line. A variety of human service providers will be responsible for delivering the public services activities, with City staff monitoring expenditure and performance.

Additionally, there are other City departments which are involved in the delivery of the Action Plan. The Engineering Department manages the Sidewalk Replacement Program, from measurement of proposed sidewalks and curbs, packaging contract bid packages, awarding contracts, overseeing contractors, and preparing payment requests. The Finance Department receives and posts all Community Development loan payments, generates delinquency letters, prepares all checks to pay project expenses, assists in tracking Entitlement grant expenditures, and tracks interest payments to HUD. The Office of Corporation Counsel reviews and approves all loan documents, and advises on all legal matters related to the program. The Director of Capital Projects and Grants and Department of Public Works may assist the OPED with the planning and delivery of capital related projects, such as park and playground improvements.

The OPED also has organized loan committees to review and approve economic development loans and housing loans to investors. The loan committees consist of bank representatives, attorneys, accountants, and representatives from other City Departments (City Manager, Finance Department, Mayor).

## **Monitoring**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.

The Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) is responsible for monitoring activities undertaken with CDBG funds.

The OPED monitors active revolving loan funds, including Housing, Small Business, and Special Development Projects. For loans to owner-occupants who have participated in the Home Repair Assistance Program or Mortgage Assistance Program the office will prepare a letter and a self-addressed stamped envelope, requesting that the homeowner sign the letter verifying that the property is still the principal place of residence. Investor-owners assisted through the HRAP or housing-related Special Development Projects will be required to provide information on rents and tenant income, to ensure that no more than fair market rent is charged to eligible low or moderate income tenants during the term of the loan.

Those assisted through the Small Business Assistance Program loan or business-related Special Development Projects will also be monitored by OPED in the 2014 Program Year. Businesses will be required to provide income information on employees that have been hired to meet the job creation requirements and verify that collateral for the loan is in place. Once job creation requirements are met, the OPED will discontinue monitoring.

Subrecipient contracts for housing, economic development and public service activities will be monitored for timely expenditures and program performance by OPED staff. Subrecipients will be required to submit expense and program reports regularly in order to track program progress. A formalized visit will be conducted to review 2013 PY records. Staff will discuss program performance, spending, and any program concerns. Concerns will be reported back to the organization in writing.

## **Lead-based Paint**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing lead-based paint hazards in order to increase the inventory of lead-safe housing available to extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families, and how the plan for the reduction of lead-based hazards is related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards.

The City will continue to fund the Home Repair Assistance Program, which will test each property for lead-based paint hazards to comply with lead based paint regulations. Generally, the requirements include:

- Conduct paint test, with the option of foregoing testing and establishing a presumption of presence of lead on all painted surfaces;
- Performing a Risk Assessment in the dwelling units receiving federal assistance, in common areas serving those units, and exterior painted surfaces, before rehabilitation begins; and
- Performing interim controls or abatement, depending on the level of assistance, of all lead-based paint hazards identified in the risk assessments and any hazards created as a result of the rehabilitation work.

Program experience maintains that, for most projects, abatement is more cost-effective than the labor-intensive interim controls. For example, it is more often less costly to replace a window than perform the specialized cleaning, wet scraping, temporary containment, painting, ongoing maintenance, etc. involved with interim controls. A grant, up to 25% of project costs, will continue to be a component of the HRAP funding. The intent of this is to offset costs associated with properly addressing lead issues, while maintaining project affordability.

## HOUSING

### Specific Housing Objectives

Priority 1: Improve the quality of existing housing stock.

- Assist eight (8) owner-occupied properties through the Home Repair Assistance Program each year.
- Support non-profit and for-profit housing development that will put underutilized and distressed property back into productive use.
- Provide construction financing for CHDO projects and other housing developers who will improve the housing in distressed neighborhoods. Property rehabbed will be made available to low to moderate income families. Provide financing options for at least one (1) Special Development housing projects.

Priority 2: Improve the quality of existing rental units.

- Provide funding to assist landlords to improve their rental units, which will be available for low to moderate income tenants.
- Assist at least one (1) investor owner who will rent to low and moderate income tenants through the Home Repair Assistance Program each year.

Priority 3: Increase the availability and/or affordability of quality, safe affordable housing.

- Provide up to six (6) grants, through the Mortgage Assistance Program, to first time homebuyers who have gone through a certified home buyers program. Grants to be \$3,000 and used for closing costs and/or down payment assistance for owner-occupied homes.
- Continue collaboration with Homsite and Home Headquarters to deliver the neighborhood and housing improvements.

1. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

The City of Auburn has been awarded a 2010 NYS Main Street Program grant, which is close to completion. This grant is for the rehab of four (4) properties in our downtown on State Street. A component of these projects includes the development of seven (7) units of affordable housing. As a condition, property owners accepting these funds to assist with rehab will be required to establish affordable units in accordance with the grant application and NYS Main Street

Program guidelines. These units are required to remain affordable for a period of five (5) years.

The S.E. Payne Cornerstone Project represents a significant infusion of resources into the City during the next program year (2014-2015). This \$10M project is funded by approximately \$7M in private equity investment from \$770,000 from Annual LIHTC, \$2.4M from the Housing Trust Fund and \$250K of foundation funding.

Lakewood Development has made application to the NYS Housing Trust Fund Program (\$2.2M), the NYS HOME Program (\$2.2M), and the 9% LIHTC Program (\$514,531) to complete Cottage Cove, a 36-unit special needs housing project.

In partnership with non-profit housing developers, the City will continue to look for additional Federal, State, and private sources to further the goals and objectives outlined above. Specifically, the OPED will support, as appropriate, an application to NYS Homes and Community Renewal for the State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

## **Needs of Public Housing**

1. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake during the next year to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership.

The City of Auburn does not manage Public Housing.

The Auburn Housing Authority manages two Public Housing sites: Melone Village and Brogan Manor. Brogan Manor is currently undergoing rehabilitation. The City of Auburn was and continues to be a supporting organization of the Auburn Housing Authority for their funding applications. The Auburn Housing Authority has recently approached the City in regards to supporting an application for homeless transitional housing. This project aligns with the City's goals in regards to homeless housing. The City of Auburn will continue to work with AHA to better understand the needs of public housing and support, as appropriate, funding applications to State, Federal, and Private sources.

2. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation during the next year.

The Auburn Housing Authority is not designated as "troubled" by HUD.

## **Barriers to Affordable Housing**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to remove barriers to affordable housing.

In addition to the goals outlined about specific housing objectives, the City will continue to develop both public and private partnerships to eliminate and create affordable housing options available to the residents of the City of Auburn. The City has been, and will continue to work with developers on LIHTC projects and other private projects, which have an affordable housing component.

The City will continue to offer programs like the Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP) to investors who want to undertake rehabilitation projects at their investment properties. In turn for favorable lending rates, investors agree to rent to low and moderate income tenants and will be monitored to ensure that the units assisted are made available to these tenants.

When applicable, the City will consider the use of CDBG funds to assist in larger affordable housing projects that will meet the needs of the residents of the City of Auburn.

## **HOME/ American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI)**

This section is not applicable to the City's 2014 Action Plan.

## **HOMELESS**

### **Specific Homeless Prevention Elements**

\*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Sources of Funds—identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.

Sources of homeless funding for 2014 included HUD Notice of Funding Availability for Homeless Assistance, CDBG, CSBG, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, Allyn Foundation, Cayuga Community Fund, HPNAP, Veteran's Administration, United Way, Women's Fund and FEMA EFSP. Funding is being used for housing, services, and food for homeless and at-risk persons.

2. Homelessness—in a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.

The 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness has identified six objectives:

- Homeless Prevention
- Rapid Re-housing
- Increase Employment, Income, and access to services
- Increase the availability of safe affordable housing
- Reduce the number of chronically homeless persons
- Planning for Outcomes & Increase Accountability

The greatest challenge in implementation of this plan is the loss of over one million dollars in Federal and State funding (\$600,000 Homeless Prevention and Rapid re-housing, \$330,000 at-risk homeless youth services, and across the board state cuts to human service providers) and lack of safe quality affordable housing for low income persons on public assistance and fixed incomes. Great emphasis has been placed on providers rapidly re-housing homeless persons within 30 days.

3. Chronic homelessness—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2015. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.

The Cayuga County/City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce (HTF) with the help of stakeholders, homeless advocates and formerly homeless through outreach efforts have connected and built relationships with chronically homeless persons. In 2014 the HTF is looking to create a single point of access system for at-risk and homeless households located at the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services but staffed by private agencies and community volunteers. Under the new homeless definition of homelessness families can now be considered chronically homeless. The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services has funded a case manager position to work with chronic TANF households to provide additional supports to these at-risk families. The HTF supported the Homsite 3.5 million dollar tax credit application for 35 new permanent housing units with supportive services for single individuals that serve special need populations that chronically homeless men and women can access. In the spring of 2014 the HTF will be supporting the Auburn Housing Authority NYS Homeless Housing and Assistance Program application for more than 5 million dollars to create 28 new permanent housing units with 66 new homeless beds that chronically homeless families can access.

4. Homelessness Prevention—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The City of Auburn/ Cayuga County Homeless taskforce has identified Homeless Prevention as the number one priority. Great emphasis has been placed on stakeholders working together sharing information and limited resources to keep households in permanent housing. The reality is this year our community has lost more than one million dollars in Federal and State funding over the past few years (\$600,000 Homeless Prevention and Rapid re-housing, \$330,000 at-risk homeless youth services and across the board state cuts to human service providers).

Local school districts have been identifying at-risk homeless households and partnering with HTF partnering agencies to prevent homeless episodes and stabilize families.

In 2014 the HTF is looking to create a single point of access system for at-risk and homeless households located at the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services but staffed by private agencies and community volunteers.

Led by the Cayuga County United Way greater emphasis has been placed on using 211 for at-risk households to identify and access resources to prevent homelessness.

The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services in some cases will pay rental arrears for households with children to prevent eviction. Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes has limited utilities assistance funds as well.

There has been increased emphasis on teaching life skills including financial literacy in homeless programs.

In 2013 The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services funded a Rapid Re-Housing Case Management position to assist homeless and at-risk homeless families and ongoing case management and supportive services is available to those households after placement in permanent housing to help ensure that the households with children do not become homeless again. In 2014 the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services is looking to contract with a private organization to provide Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services to homeless and chronically homeless individuals.

5. Discharge Coordination Policy—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.

The 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness established a discharge planning work group. The work group met eight times in 2012, starting in March and Continuing through October. The group discussed challenges, barriers, and solutions facing discharge planners. The following areas of discharge planning will be discussed at the meetings:

- Hospitals
- Emergency Psychiatric
- Jail and Prisons

- Runaway Homeless Youth (including youth aging out of foster care and local school districts)
- Emergency Shelter
- Seniors
- Veterans
- Persons with disabilities

All populations will have a focus on how to increase income, access to services and safe affordable housing.

Stakeholders from the following agencies will be invited to participate: Cayuga County Mental Health, Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency, Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, Auburn Memorial Hospital, Cayuga County Jail, NYS Parole, Chapel House, Options for Independence, Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes, Rescue Mission, McKinney-Vento School Liaisons, Veteran's Administration, Grace House, Cayuga Counseling Services and Unity House.

The discharge planners group hopes to establish universal discharge policies and procedures with the goal to discharge everyone to appropriate housing.

## **Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)**

(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.

This section is not applicable to the City's 2014 Action Plan.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Community Development**

\*Please also refer to the Community Development Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), public facilities, public improvements, public services and economic development.

The City of Auburn CPS outlined a two prong approach to addressing community development needs: 1) Address the needs of low and moderate income residents on a direct benefit basis and 2) Improve the quality of the City's Neighborhoods through a targeted neighborhood revitalization effort. The 2014 Action Plan will continue on this path as the City's addresses the following non-housing community development priorities:

- Public Facilities & Improvements
  - 03F Parks, Recreational Facilities
  - 03L Sidewalks
  - 03T Operating Costs of Homeless/AIDS Patients Programs

Public Services

- 05A Senior Services
- 05B Handicapped Services
- 05C Legal Services
- 05D Youth Services
- 05E Transportation Service
- 05L Childcare Services

Business Assistance

- 18A ED Direct Financial Assistance to For-Profits
- 18B ED Technical Assistance

2. Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Proposed Accomplishment</b>	<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Year</b>
03L	Replace existing substandard sidewalks	1000-1500 people	1 year	5 <sup>th</sup>
03F	Improve Benton Street Park and add playground equipment	1 Neighborhood Park	4 years	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>
03	Improve/replace Columbia Playground Equipment	1 Neighborhood Park	2 years	4 <sup>th</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>
03F	Provide funding assistance for the Owasco Riverfront Trail	1 Neighborhood Park	2 years	5 <sup>th</sup> - 1 <sup>st</sup>
03F	Improve/replace St. Francis Park and playground equipment	1 Neighborhood Park	2 years	5 <sup>th</sup> - 1 <sup>st</sup>
05	Continue to provide funding to support various public services that foster a suitable living environment	TBD based on funded programs/see "Other Narrative"	5 years	1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>
18A 18B	Provide low interest loans to assist businesses create or retain jobs	Provide assistance to 5 businesses/create or retain 25 jobs	5 years	1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>

### Antipoverty Strategy

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to reduce the number of poverty level families.

The City of Auburn antipoverty strategy is not a separate strategy on its own, but instead manifests itself in the activities the City offers or supports through the CDBG Program, including economic development, housing, and public services.

The availability and retention of jobs is a critical component of the City's antipoverty strategy. To this extent the City will continue to fund the Small Business Assistance Program and Economic Development Special Development Projects. The primary purpose of these initiatives is to retain

and create jobs for low and moderate income residents of the City. Together with the availability of jobs, the affordability of childcare is another factor affecting an individual's ability to work; therefore, the City will continue to fund the Child Care Scholarship Program offered through Child Care Solutions.

The City will continue to fund housing activities that support the City's antipoverty strategy by ensuring that housing stock in the City, both owner-occupied and rental, remains affordable, maintained, and available to low and moderate income residents. These CDBG funded programs include MAP, HRAP, HAP, and Housing Special Development Projects.

Finally, the City will continue to support public services that assist the homeless and services intended to prevent or reduce homelessness. For the 2014PY, CDBG funding will be provided to Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Task Force, which coordinates the annual CoC application, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's Homeless Services Program, and the Rescue Mission Alliance of Syracuse, NY Family Transitions Program.

All these programs are described in greater detail in the Other Narrative section of the Action Plan.

## NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

### **Non-homeless Special Needs (91.220 (c) and (e))**

\*Please also refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve for the period covered by the Action Plan.

The following goals are planned for the 2014 Action Plan:

- The City will commit to \$20,000 to assist with the installation of 4 handicap/accessible ramps or other home modification in order to increase a person's independence. Options for Independence will be the City's Subrecipient in the 2014 Program Year to do this work.
- The City has prepared its 2014 Budget with the following agency programs in it that will serve those with special needs:
  - AURORA of CNY: Outreach services to seniors who are experiencing hearing or vision loss.
  - Scat Van: Transportation for the elderly and disabled
  - Boyle Senior Center: Recreational and Social activities for seniors.
  - Legal Services of Mid-NY: Legal representation for women who are victims of domestic violence.
  - Freedom Recreational Services: Freedom Camp

2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

The funds committed through CDBG are only a portion of the funds needed to run the programs outlined later in the "Other Narrative" section. Each agency

is leveraging additional Federal, State and Private funds to fully realize the programs where CDBG funds were requested. The City encourages diversification of funds to support agency programming. Without the addition of "non-CDBG" funds, many of these programs would not exist.

## **Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS**

This section is not applicable to the City's 2014 Action Plan.

## **Specific HOPWA Objectives**

This section is not applicable to the City's 2014 Action Plan.

## **Other Narrative**

The following sections describe, in detail, the CDBG programs and activities the City of Auburn intends to fund and/or undertake during the 2014 CDBG Program Year. As shown in the budget, these programs are funded from either Entitlement Funds or Revolving Loan Funds (RLF). The budget includes: 1) Anticipated 2014 CDBG Entitlement Funds, 2) Current Entitlement Funds, 3) Anticipated 2014 RLFs to be received, and 4) Existing RLFs.

### **Housing and Neighborhood Programming**

The OPED continues to hear, from residents, that issues affecting the quality of the City's neighborhoods and housing are of highest concern. To address these issues the City plans to commit CDBG resources to increasing home ownership, improving the quality and accessibility of housing, removing vacant and deteriorated housing, and improving the quality of our neighborhood through sidewalk replacement, and park improvements.

### **Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP)**

The MAP will be used to assist first-time homebuyers with a grant of \$3,000 for down payment and closing cost assistance for income qualified, first-time homebuyers of an owner-occupied single-family, two-family, or three-family home. Participants must have gone through a certified homebuyers class or training and provide a certificate of completion.

### **Smoke Detector Demonstration Program**

Through the City's Fire Department, a new combination smoke and carbon monoxide detector will be installed in the homes of low to moderate income families. The Fire Department will approach homeowners and advertise the program. If a family applies and is low-moderate income, the Fire Department will install the combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

In the previous smoke detector demonstration program, ionization detectors were installed. The detectors that will be installed in the 2014 Program Year are

photoelectric detectors. The photoelectric sensor may detect visible particles (associated with smoldering fires) sooner than ionization alarms.

The need for these smoke detectors in our community has been demonstrated by the death of a two year old girl and her godmother in 2012 in a house fire at a low-moderate income housing complex. While the house fire was relatively small and not a fire where one would expect fatalities, it ended in the loss of two lives from smoke inhalation. This was a type of fire that was smoldering and may have been detected sooner if the home had photoelectric alarms installed instead of ionization detectors. This fire has led to the grassroots efforts to have Averyana's law passed in NYS regarding photoelectric alarms.

### **Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP)**

The HRAP will continue to focus on the rehabilitation of existing housing stock for occupancy by low and moderate income persons. The program will provide low interest loans to low and moderate income owner-occupants. It is the policy of the program to ensure that the funds distributed through the HRAP are returned to the housing rehabilitation revolving loan fund to the maximum extent possible.

Due to escalating project costs, staff reorganization, and a continued desire to ensure the long term viability of the HRAP, it is necessary to re-evaluate the structure of the HRAP. The City and Homsite, our non-profit community based housing development partner, will evaluate program structure. Proposed improvements to the program will minimize City risk, maximize CDBG leverage, and ensure affordability for the participant. New loan terms will be considered that better match the life expectancy of the improvements while maintaining affordable payments for the low or moderate income participant. CDBG funded grant portions of the projects will be leveraged with other available sources to ensure HRAP sustainability. This will translate into a higher percentage of grant funding for a project, while only minimally impacting, on average, the existing CDBG funded loan (75%) to grant (25%) ratio.

Staff will determine, using underwriting criteria developed for the program, what repayment options will be offered to program participants. The lowest income home owners, whose monthly income does not fit the standard underwriting criteria, may be eligible for loans without monthly payments, but will be required to reimburse the City upon sale of the house.

In addition to providing funding for repairs of owner-occupant homes, the HRAP is available to investors wishing to rehab buildings with four (4) or less rental units. A minimum of 51%, or 50% in the case of a duplex, of the rehabbed rental units will be made available to low- and moderate-income tenants. To ensure the greatest level of transparency, cost reasonableness, and compliance, all HRAP projects must utilize the formal bid process and eligible contractor(s). In general, owner-contractors will not be eligible for HRAP funding.

The HRAP will make \$25,000 available (limit \$5,000 per property) for emergency home repair needs of owner occupied, income eligible property owners. The grant source would only be used for an emergency repair such as an emergency roof repair, furnace, or hot water heater replacement and would not be used in conjunction with the HRAP loan program for bigger home repair projects. This fund is a "fund of last resort" and the applicants must have exhausted all other available

funding sources. If necessary, these funds can be partnered with those grant sources if additional resources are needed for emergency repairs.

### **Home Access Program (HAP)**

The Home Access Program provides ramps and/or accessibility modifications for physically disabled low and moderate income persons living in the City of Auburn. The City of Auburn will contract with the local Independent Living Center, Options for Independence, as a Subrecipient to implement the HAP.

### **Distressed Property Program**

The Distressed Property Program will identify underutilized property in areas targeted for revitalization. The current target area is Census Tract 419 and Census Tract 418 and areas adjacent. Combined with Housing Special Development Project funding and Home Repair Assistance Program funds, this fund will allow for the substantial rehabilitation and/or the demolition of housing that is deteriorating a neighborhood and that if not for this program the neighborhood could be faced with declining assessed values and depressed self-image. Property identified will, whenever possible, be located within areas where playground and public infrastructure improvements are planned to produce the maximum impact in the neighborhood. When appropriate the City of Auburn will work with Home Headquarters, Homesite, and/or the City's Department of Engineering Services to implement this program.

### **Housing Programs Delivery**

Administration and delivery of the MAP, HRAP, including the Emergency Repair Grant Fund, HAP, and Distressed Property Program will be provided through a partnership between the City of Auburn, non-profit agencies, and contractors. Policies and procedures for each program will follow the guidelines set forth in the appropriate "policy and procedures manuals" (to be available in the Office of Planning and Economic Development).

With the exception of the HAP and HRAP programs, the OPED will perform the marketing, intake, underwriting, and coordination of each program as appropriate. The City of Auburn Engineering Department and Code Enforcement Office will be consulted for technical assistance, as needed. Through Subrecipient agreements, one or more housing agencies will handle the inspection and construction monitoring portions of the programs, as appropriate.

For the HAP, the City will enter into a Subrecipient agreement with Options for Independence for implementation of the program. Options for Independence will conduct a range of activities to implement the program, including marketing, intake, assessment and verification of client income and disability, oversight of the contractor bidding process, and monitoring and evaluation of the awarded contractor's work.

The City of Auburn will continue to contract with Homsite Fund, Inc. (HFI) to assist with the delivery of the Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP). As in prior program years, HFI will provide project delivery services including initial site visits, property condition reviews, preparation of work scopes, bid specifications, and contacts, facilitate project bidding and bid award, monitor rehabilitation work

progress, and submit contractor payment requests. In addition to these project delivery services, HFI will also assist the City by providing the following program administration related functions: HRAP marketing and outreach, application distribution and in-take, application processing, loan/grant structuring, mortgage preparation, project set-up and reporting, and project close-out. The City will remain responsible for the approving the underwriting, awarding the loan/grant, filing the mortgage, and issuing contractor payments.

Brief descriptions of the HRAP administrative functions to be provided by HFI are as follow:

- The HRAP will be marketed alongside HFI's housing repair programs on "Homsite's" new website, which is presently being updated
- Outreach materials for local service providers will include information on both the City's program and HFI's programs, as appropriate.
- A single comprehensive housing repair application will be developed that collects participant information needed for each potential funding source.
- HFI will accept and process the applications on a first-come, first-serve basis and will assist applicants by directing them to sources of the information needed.
- HFI will provide the City with a recommended funding/financing structure, based on available funding, for each project that minimizes the City's risk, maximizes CDBG leverage, and provides an affordable project for the participant.
- With the City's approval of the funding, HFI will prepare the Mortgage on behalf of the City.
- HFI will, as a City assigned subrecipient, set-up and report-on the project in IDIS.
- To ensure proper oversight within IDIS, HFI will prepare a project close-out form and submit it to the City. This form will provide the City with the information necessary to review and close-out the project in IDIS.

For all housing programs involving Subrecipient agreements, the OPED will monitor and evaluate the Subrecipient's progress, and coordinate payment drawdowns for completed construction or demolition.

### **Sidewalk Replacement Program**

The City of Auburn will continue to implement a sidewalk replacement program in income eligible neighborhoods. The purpose of this program is to ensure that all residents, regardless of their ability, are provided with a safe and accessible pedestrian network of sidewalks within the City.

In consultation with the City's Department of Engineering Services, sidewalks that are in poor condition will be replaced in the areas identified. All sidewalks will be reviewed and replaced on a comprehensive manner to ensure an interconnected network of sidewalks.

The City of Auburn City Council has given specific direction to focus on the replacement of existing sidewalks and not the installation of new sidewalks where none presently exist. Due to this direction, the installation of new sidewalks where none presently exist will only be considered when an appropriate connection between existing sidewalks can be made and by approval of the City Council.

The 2010-2014 CPS outlines the priorities for sidewalk replacement. As part of 2014 Action Plan, it is the City's intent to continue following those priorities and address areas within Census Tract 418, as funding allows:

- Clymer Street (North Side only from South Street to Dunning Avenue)
- Auburn Avenue
- Dunning Avenue from Clymer Street to Genesee Street
- Chapman Avenue (from Garrow Street to Dunning Avenue)
- Genesee Place
- Sherwood Street
- Warren Avenue
- Van Patten Street
- Dexter Avenue

As part of this program, the City will review the condition of existing street trees that are adjacent to sidewalks slated for replacement. Trees that are found to be diseased, in decline, and/or dead may be removed and replaced.

### **Playground Improvements**

Because neighborhood residents have repeatedly expressed the importance of maintaining quality neighborhood parks and playgrounds, the City of Auburn is committed to providing quality recreational opportunities and green spaces within neighborhoods. Neighborhood parks are vital to a City's quality of life.

Using the existing Neighborhood Plans and Playground Safety Audits, the OPED in coordination with the Department of Public Works, will continue implementing the recommendations of the Neighborhood Plan and audits.

Depending on the park or playground, improvements may include the installation of new playground equipment, replacing broken or unsafe equipment, rehabbing sports courts, and installing lighting, pathways, landscaping, etc.

The parks and playgrounds targeted for improvements are located in low to moderate income neighborhoods. The 2010-2014 CPS established a general priority list. Based on comments that the OPED received during the last program year and this year's public meetings, the City intends to address the following parks and playgrounds:

- Benton Street Playground
- Columbian Playground
- The Owasco River Greenway Trail Project
- St. Francis Park

#### The Owasco River Greenway Trail Project

The Owasco River Greenway Trail is a 12 mile shared use trail system that extends from trailhead, Wadsworth Park in the northwest quadrant of the City southward along the Owasco River to Emerson Park at Owasco Lake. The purpose and goal of the Owasco River Greenway Trail is to augment the existing non-motorized transportation system that connects the City's low-to-moderate income residential neighborhoods, specifically Census Tracts 417 and 419, to Auburn's Central Business District, employment centers and recreational opportunities. The Owasco

River Greenway Trail will increase mobility, improve safety, provide accessibility, create economic opportunities and improve visibility of the Owasco River.

Using trail design documents, City of Auburn staff in coordination with consultants, will construct the downtown section from Nodes 7 to 12 of the Owasco Riverway Trail over a three year period. During the 2014-2015 program year CDBG will allocate approximately \$50,000 for final trail design and initial construction.

Improvements that will be made include parking, seating, overlooks of river, picnic facilities, trash receptacles, interpretive and directional signage. The off-road portion of the trail, located only on publically owned property will be constructed for continued connectivity and to allow trail users to get closer to the Owasco River. The off-road trail will be 10 feet wide with 2-foot wide graded shoulders on either side. The off-road trail will be constructed of a crushed stone sub-base and an asphalt top course. The on-road portion of the trail will be located within city streets' right-of way as a shared use lane, a wide curb lane or exclusive bike lane for bicycles with sidewalks used for pedestrians.

### **Public Services**

The City of Auburn utilizes a portion of the Community Development Block Grant funding annually to provide program support to human services agencies and the activities they administer. This year, \$116,500 was available which represents approximately 14% of the anticipated PY2014 entitlement allocation.

Specific funding allocations for human services programs were identified through a presentation and review process centered on an application review committee consisting of five individuals active in, and representative of, the community including two members of City staff. The review committee made its recommendations based largely on demonstrated need of the program, both social and financial, past and projected outcomes, and past agency performance and reporting. To that effect, the review committee recommended funding for eleven (11) public service programs.

### **Programs Recommended for Funding**

AURORA of CNY – Outreach to Seniors with Vision/Hearing Loss

Funding was requested to provide 1:1 counseling to seniors with hearing and vision loss so that they can remain independent in their homes. The program also provides for a small equipment stipend should the individual need adaptive equipment.

Boyle Senior Center – Senior Center Programming

This funding is used to provide health and social/recreational programming to seniors who live at the Boyle Center to decrease the rates of isolation and depression.

Calvary Food Pantry – General Support for the Purchase of Food

Funds were requested for the purchase of nonperishable food items for the Pantry's regular food basket give away.

Cayuga Counseling Services – Children's Crisis Services Initiative

Assist 30-40 families with children between the ages of 5-18 years of age who have risk factors for out of home placement because of their emotional and/or behavioral

difficulties. The agency provides case management, therapeutic and parent partner support to both the families and children.

**Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency – Homeless Intervention Program**

This program is for the intervention of families and individuals who may find themselves homeless. Funds are used to pay first month's rent and/or security deposit. On a limited basis, these funds may also shelter a family/individual if the homeless shelter is not an appropriate housing solution.

**Child Care Solutions – Child Care Scholarship Program**

This is a child care subsidy program for parents who are working full time or going to school full time but are in need of registered or licensed child care. Scholarships are provided to parents based on income.

**Freedom Recreational Services – Freedom Camp**

Funding will support a summer day camp experience for special needs youth between the ages of 4-21 years of age who reside in the City of Auburn. Camp is held for 4 weeks at Casey Park and accommodates approximately 100 campers each year.

**Legal Aid of Mid-NY – Legal Services for Victims of Domestic Violence**

Funding for this program serves women who are victims of domestic violence and are in need of legal assistance and representation as a result of the violence. The program works in conjunction with the local domestic violence shelter.

**Rescue Mission Alliance of Syracuse, NY– Family Transitions**

The program will provide transitional and permanent housing, case management, permanent housing search and placement, employment services, clothing, and other basic needs to families low income homeless families and single women.

**Transportation Project of Cayuga County – SCAT Van**

Funding is for the SCAT Van, which is a specialized, fully accessible demand-respond transportation service for seniors over 60 and disabled citizens who might otherwise not be able to access critical community services.

**Chapel House- Supportive Housing**

Funding for this program will provide rental assistance and case management services for Chapel House Homeless Shelter clients. These individuals are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

**Administration of Community Development Public Services**

The OPED is responsible for the general management and administration of the community development public services, including monitoring and processing reimbursement requests. To facilitate the administration and day-to-day operation of these programs and activities, approval of the Action Plan authorizes the City Mayor to enter into agreements with Subrecipients to provide the community development public services listed earlier. These contracts will be prepared by the OPED in cooperation with the Subrecipient agencies and reviewed by the Corporation Counsel prior to execution.

## **Business Assistance**

The Office of Planning and Economic Development continues to make available the Small Business Assistance Program to support new business development and business retention/expansion. The overall business assistance strategy requires a pool of flexible funding that can be used to meet the needs of larger economic development projects that may develop at any time. This is accomplished through the continuation of the Special Development Projects (described in a later section).

### **Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP)**

The SBAP provides a revolving loan fund that utilizes the revolving loan fund income as an ongoing funding source. This program line capitalizes the program at the anticipated levels required for the coming program year. The funding allocation will utilize revolving loan fund income (as opposed to Entitlement Funding) for the capitalization. Repayments from this loan program will be put back into a revolving loan fund and utilized for economic development activities.

The SBAP will continue to offer flexible gap financing to small businesses and developers. The City has successfully administered the SBAP for nearly 20 years and the program often plays a catalyst role in the business community. Working cooperatively with local lending institutions, the City supports economic activity that would otherwise not occur without SBAP subordinate lending.

SBAP loans are used to create or retain jobs with a required focus on job creation for low and/or moderate income individuals. Loan funds may be used for permanent working capital, inventory, property acquisition, and/or the purchase of machinery and equipment.

Application intake and underwriting for the SBAP is performed under the direction of the Office of Planning and Economic Development. Potential borrowers must provide a complete application and supporting documentation including financials. Underwriting is completed to review each application for credit-worthiness, sufficient cash flow, and collateral coverage. Analysis of the application is done to facilitate a recommendation to the SBAP loan committee for approval as is, modification or denial.

Following approval, closing documents, including the promissory note, HUD commitments, personal guarantees, and collateral security documents which may include collateral mortgages or UCCs, are prepared. Appropriate actions are then taken to record security documents, as necessary and loan payment coupons for the repayment of the loan(s) are generated.

The City of Auburn has started discussions with Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA), the local one-stop economic development agency for Cayuga County, regarding the delivery and administration of the SBAP. The City anticipates a subrecipient agreement with CEDA during the 2014-2015 program year, the scope of which would include the responsibilities as outlined above.

### **Special Development Projects**

This allocation represents a mixture of anticipated revolving loan fund income (program revenue generated through the repayment of prior year project loans,

mortgages and/or fees) and entitlement program funding (part of the annual grant award to the City from HUD). A portion of this, \$180,000, is allocated to the City's 108 Loan Repayment and the remaining portion of revolving loan fund income is allocated to Special Development Project loans.

### **SDP: 108 Repayment**

The City of Auburn borrowed \$1,744,331 through a HUD Section 108 Loan allocation for comprehensive public improvements in the City's Downtown. This loan is to be repaid over 20 years at Treasury rates and is secured by future CDBG funds. This allocation is to provide for the loan payments during the program year. Projects related to the use of the funds were part of the Section 108 Loan application submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as identified in the Synthesis Auburn Downtown Design Study.

If the full budget amount is not required for payment on the Section 108 loan during the 2014 program year, remaining funds will be reprogrammed to an eligible activity.

### **Special Development Loans**

The Special Development Projects line is similar in scope and scale to the HUD 108 Loan programs, in that the funding can provide for fixed asset financing of larger economic development projects that anticipate significant low and moderate income job creation and/or retention, or larger housing projects. These funds, used to leverage private financing, will be used for loans and low-interest financing or equity injection where there is at least an equal amount of private funds for the project(s). Maximum loan amounts will be determined by the scope of the project and the amount and/or type of collateral available.

Activities that will utilize Special Development Program funding for targeted infrastructure and economic development initiatives within the downtown area will be reviewed by OPED staff with regard to compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and, additionally, for compliance with HUD requirements.

The Action Plan provides for the administration of loans generated through the Special Development Project budget line by authorizing the City Manager to administer Special Development Project Loan Commitments which have been recommended by the OPED and that have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate loan review committees. Rate, term, and return in investment for the loans and/or equity injection will be negotiated relative to an evaluation of the borrower's needs and the anticipated economic/community development impacts and relative risk of the proposed project. Loans and equity injection will be reviewed by the OPED staff and appropriate loan committees (such as the SBAP or Investor HRAP loan committees), using underwriting criteria similar to that used by the SBAP Loan Program.

The administration and delivery of Special Development Projects is anticipated to be included in the subrecipient agreement with Cayuga Economic Development Agency (CEDA).

## **Administration**

This budget allocation is used for the personnel and non-personnel costs associated with the administration of the CDBG Entitlement Program for the City of Auburn. The activities and staff functions covered under this allocation include: general administration; planning, including housing, economic development, public improvement, capital improvement, and neighborhood planning; performance reporting; fair housing and equal opportunity compliance and programming; the implementation of the public outreach and citizen participation for the CPS planning process as well as the dissemination information and public participation needed to further the goals and objectives of the current CPS and Action Plan. Additionally this allocation helps to cover costs associated with the Continuum of Care and other homeless services, as appropriate.

All administration and planning activity costs are included within this line item. In addition to salary reimbursement for staff, this administration allocation also includes other costs related to the implementation of the CDBG program such as computer hardware/software, office supplies, support materials and staff training.

The following sections describe the program activities covered under this budget allocation line.

- Program administration, planning and capacity building activities include:
  - Providing technical assistance to local not-for-profit community service and development agencies for project and program development and implementation
  - Feasibility studies for housing and economic development projects as they become available
  - The process of preparing the five-year Consolidated Planning Strategy (CPS) and related annual Action Plans including the public participation process, and offering it for public review and comment
  - Preparing and maintaining the annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), as required by HUD
  - Implementing and monitoring City-staffed CDBG activities
  - Negotiating, preparing and monitoring contracts for CDBG program subrecipients and contractors
  - Documenting the program benefits for all CDBG funded activities
  - Providing for Fair Housing Enforcement and outreach activities
  - Other administration activities as they become necessary during the Program Year

Although reviewed as part of the Public Services applications, the Human Services Coalition of Cayuga County is funded as an administration activity. Funding will be used to support the Coalition's coordination of area human service agencies. The Coalition prepares an annual community directory, updates a community website, provides opportunities for human services agencies to collaborate and network and offers opportunities for professional development among human service professionals.

The Rescue Mission Alliance of Syracuse, NY will be responsible for coordinating and implementing the Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Task Force and Continuum of Care Lead Agency program. The scope of work funded as an administration activities includes but is not limited to supporting the Homeless Task Force and Executive

Committee, grant writing and technical support in response to HUD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), and Consolidated Plan and reporting support to the City.

The Action Plan line items associated with program delivery in the Housing and Economic Development sections of the Plan are not related to this budget line, and are related to specific programs that lead to a direct benefit to a program participant, targeted area, or client.

**Budget**

CITY OF AUBURN						
Community Development Block Grant Program						
2014 Annual Action Plan - Proposed Budget						
	Anticipated 2014 PY Ent.	Current Entitlement Funds	2014 Revolving Loan Fund	Available RLF	Total	
<b>Housing &amp; Neighborhood Programming</b>						
H1	Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP)	\$ 18,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,000
H2	Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP)	\$ -	\$ 166,979	\$ 66,439	\$ 371,597	\$ 605,015
H3	Home Access Program (HAP)	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000
H4	Distressed Property Program	\$ -	\$ 148,850	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 148,850
H5	Housing Programs Delivery	\$ 65,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 65,000
H6	Sidewalks Replacement Program	\$ 100,000	\$ 98,218	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 198,218
H7	Neighborhood Playground Improvements	\$ 150,292	\$ 28,642	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 178,934
H8	Smoke Detector Demonstration Program	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000
<b>Total Housing &amp; Neighborhood Improvement</b>		<b>\$ 358,292</b>	<b>\$ 442,689</b>	<b>\$ 66,439</b>	<b>\$ 371,597</b>	<b>\$ 1,239,017</b>
<b>Public Services</b>						
P1	Aurora of CNY	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
P2	Boyle Senior Center	\$ 12,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,000
P3	Cayuga Counseling	\$ 14,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,000
P4	Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000
P5	Rescue Mission	\$ 18,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,000
P6	Childcare Solutions	\$ 7,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000
P7	Freedom Recreation	\$ 7,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,500
P8	Legal Aid	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
P9	Calvary Food Pantry	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
P10	Scat Van	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
P11	Chapel House	\$ 13,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,000
<b>Total CD Support Services</b>		<b>\$ 116,500</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 116,500</b>
<b>Business Assistance</b>						
E1	Small Business Assistance Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 79,689	\$ 861,967	\$ 941,656
E2	Economic Development Program Delivery	\$ -	\$ 22,042	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 22,042
<b>Total Economic Development</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 22,042</b>	<b>\$ 79,689</b>	<b>\$ 861,967</b>	<b>\$ 963,698</b>
<b>Special Development Projects</b>						
S1	SDP: 108 Repayment	\$ 180,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 180,000
S2	Special Development Loans	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26,938	\$ 372,972	\$ 399,910
<b>Total Special Development Projects</b>		<b>\$ 180,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 26,938</b>	<b>\$ 372,972</b>	<b>\$ 579,910</b>
<b>Administration</b>						
A1	Planning and Administration	\$ 140,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 140,000
A2	Homeless Task Force Administration	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
A3	Human Services Coalition	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
<b>Total Planning and Administration</b>		<b>\$ 160,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 160,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ALL PROGRAMS</b>		<b>\$ 814,792</b>	<b>\$ 464,731</b>	<b>\$ 173,066</b>	<b>\$ 1,606,536</b>	<b>\$ 3,059,125</b>

## **Budget Narrative**

The City of Auburn Office of Planning & Economic Development is hopeful that funding levels will remain flat and that we will not see further cuts to the CDBG Entitlement Program. As a basis for developing this Action Plan, the City assumes an entitlement allocation equal to that of previous program years, or \$814,792, for the upcoming 2014 program year. Any additional funds that we receive will be allocated to be park and playground improvements. Any decrease in allocation will result in a decrease across all budget categories.

To provide the most complete picture possible this budget incorporates all four (4) CDBG funding methods: 1) Anticipated 2014 CDBG Entitlement Funds, 2) Current Entitlement Funds, 3) Anticipated 2014 RLFs to be received, and 4) Available RLF Balances. A description of each is below.

- Anticipated 2014 CDBG Entitlement Funds: Anticipated funding that the Federal Government, administered through HUD, will allocate to the City, as an Entitlement Community, for the delivery of the City Fourth (PY2014) Annual Action Plan.
- Current Entitlement Funds: In general, this is Entitlement Funding that is not anticipated to be expended during the current program year and will be carried into the 2014PY.
- Anticipated 2014 Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) to be received: This is a projection of funding to be available based on anticipated repayment of loans from the SBAP, HRAP, and SDP.
- Available RLF Balances: These are Revolving Loan Funds available as of 1/23/14.

This budget follows similar formatting as that prepared for the PY2013 budget, which attempts to represent all information in location.

Of the programming areas listed in the budget, HUD regulations set a 15% cap on funds to be obligated to Public Services and a 20% cap on the expenditure of Administration funds.

***Public Hearing Comments***

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## **Record of Public Hearing Comments Received**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Public Hearing for CDBG 2014 Action Plan City of Auburn Planning Board Meeting Memorial City Hall Tuesday, December 3, 2013, 6:30 pm**

Present: Sam Giangreco, Anne McCarthy, Tim Baroody, Crystal Cosentino, Frank Reginelli

Absent: Sheli Graney

Staff: Jennifer Haines, Director, OPED; Andrew Fusco, Corporation Counsel; Brian Hicks, Code Enforcement Officer

Chair excuses himself from the meeting.

Acting Chair, Anne McCarthy is seated. Meeting resumes.

Other Matters:

Public Hearing regarding the City of Auburn's 2014 Community Development Block Grant Action Plan. Applicant: OPED Staff.

Acting Chair asks for staff to introduce project.

Jennifer Haines- As you may know, the Planning Board has accommodated us in one of the required public hearing for the Community Development Block Grant Program. The other public hearing is held in front of City Council, typically in January. Tonight we would like to make a short presentation to you and hold the public hearing to receive any comments.

Acting Chair opens public hearing.

Tiffany Beebee, OPED Senior Planner- Displays maps for Board members and audience. With the CDBG Program 70% of the allocations that we receive needs to benefit low to moderate income households. We have to meet one of three objectives when spending this money: 1. Direct or area wide low to moderate income benefit, which we have to follow income guidelines listed (refers to displayed income chart) 2. Elimination through slum and blight 3. Urgent need (flood or hurricane).

Displays map with past entitlement amounts 2002-2012. A spike in funding occurred in 2009 because of CDBG-R funding which was stimulus money. Otherwise we continue to see a decrease in funding. This year we did have a slight increase of \$49,000 but we are not expecting the same amount next year.

Tonight we would like to hear from the public on where the needs are in the community.

One of the ways we spend CDBG money is by funding human service agencies. We can spend up to 15% of our allocation on funding these agencies. Currently we fund Cayuga Counseling Services, Calvary Food Pantry, and Rescue Mission Family

Transitions program. We are currently in the RFP process to determine funding agencies for the upcoming year.

We also have housing programs including: home repair assistance, which is a low interest loan program for eligible households; Home access program is ran through Options for Independence and does home modifications for households that need handicap ramps or modifications; and the mortgage assistance program is relatively new but has shown a lot of success.

The area wide benefit programs include the sidewalk program. This past year we completed Garfield Place, Brookfield Place, Hobart Street, McMaster Street, and Clymer Street. Playgrounds that we have worked on in the past year include Benton Street Playground and Columbian Playground, near Tops Super Market.

Stephen Selvek, 39 Grover Street- I am a resident of the City of Auburn and am the Director of Homsite Fund Inc., a local not-for-profit organization engaged in housing services. The need for quality housing remains a significant need within our City. This need is common with all of our low to moderate income individuals. I understand with limited resources often tough decisions have to be made as to where to spend these resources. In the case of housing there is not one person not affected by housing and I believe that it should remain a top priority in the CDBG Action Plan. I would like to point out a couple of things with the CDBG program and housing. For many years the City has coordinated and contracted with Homsite to deliver the home repair assistance program. This is a vital program that has significant impacts within the community but from the City's perspective it also has significant impacts on Homsite itself, which spurs more investment into the community. Homsite is able to leverage the dollars that the City spends on home repair through the Home Repair assistance program, and provide additional resources from State and Federal funds to the community. The leveraging partnership we have had over a number of years is critical and I asked that the City continue to invest in the Home Repair assistance program. The other component that is part of the Home Repair Assistance program is the Loan program. It is becoming increasingly difficult to serve individuals at the level of repairs that they need, the cost of repairs that they need and still maintain a loan program. I ask that the City consider revising its program guidelines to potentially allow deferred loans to a greater number of participants, allowing the money to get out there quicker and seeing the repairs happen that much quicker.

The other item is the emergency home repair. In the past I know this has been a difficult program to coordinate but it is an important program. We often find ourselves in situations where someone is need of an emergency repair like a furnace and the dollars at the State level are drying up very quickly. So, at the State they are reducing they funding levels and I request that the City remain to fund this program.

The Cottage Cove project, a project that was actually presented to the Planning Board last year about this time for a senior housing complex on Cottage Street. Unfortunately the application was not funded. However, Homsite and a partnering agency two plus four construction is applying for that project. The project has changed slightly in scope and instead of it being solely a senior housing complex we are looking at doing a supportive services complex, opening the age restrictions and partnering with County Health and Human Services to provide housing and services for their client base. The reason why I mention that is not necessarily that I am

seeking funding at this moment but to have that mentioned within the action plan as being an important project to the City.

As a resident of the City with small kids, we have seen great improvement with a few of our parks and playgrounds and this is attributed specifically to the CDBG program. I know with Osborne Park and Benton Street and now driving past the Columbian Playground, seeing those improvements are dramatic within the neighborhoods. A lot of time we hear no one uses those playgrounds, why invest in them, but living kiddy corner to Osborne Park Playground, I can speak from firsthand experience that yes, it was unused and now it is always used. Give the kids a reason to be there and they enjoy themselves.

I would also like to support the CDBG sidewalk program. This funding is improving the walkability of our community and ask that the City continue to invest in the City sidewalks.

Tim Baroody- The Cottage Street Project, there was initially a lot of residents up in arms until they heard it was for the elderly. If this was changing to a reduced income there will be some objections. I received 10 or 11 calls on that project last year. Residents were saying that they are too many assisted income living places now.

Andrew Fusco- When that matter was presented to the ZBA, no one spoke out in opposition. It was published ahead of time but may have had some publicity after, which could have prompted the phone calls. If that comes about again it would be beneficial to define that this is for low income and for people that have some type of disability issue and can include elderly as well.

Crystal Cosentino- I work in the same line of work as Mr. Selvek. I am going to speak specifically to the Orchard Street project, which is hopefully going to wrap up soon. Two years ago it was in front of this board discussing the development of it. It looks wonderful and I think the park improvements enhance the quality of life. Several years ago sidewalks went in. So when you are looking at how these limited resources can be specifically targeted to a particular neighborhood and can show the ripple effect of how a neighborhood can be reborn. Orchard Street like West Lake is a good example of how these funds can really turnaround a neighborhood and perception. This is in part due to the investment/ funding that the City gave with the CDBG program.

Tim Baroody- A very positive change has been made there.

Acting Chair closes Public Hearing.