



# **Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Communities Program**

## **Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report Program Year 2022**

**Prepared by the City of Watertown  
Planning & Community Development Department  
245 Washington Street  
Watertown, NY 13601**

**Draft September 1, 2023**

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

**Progress the jurisdiction has made in carrying out its strategic plan and its action plan.**

### **91.520(a)**

Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023) was the ninth year the City of Watertown (the City) participated as an Entitlement Community in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was also the second year of our 5-year Consolidated Plan that covers Program Years 2021-2025. Staff made significant accomplishments this year in carrying out the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan as a number of projects were completed. Environmental reviews for most of the Program Year (PY) 2022 projects have been completed as well.

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

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

Staff made significant accomplishments in carrying out our Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan in addition to completing projects from previous program years. Two ADA Ramp Replacement Projects were completed in addition to two target area tree planting projects. Design work for the Seward Street and Grant Street Reconstruction Project was also finished. The Point-In-Time Count Outreach and Education Initiative program was completed for another year, helping low-income families with homelessness prevention. Significant progress continues to be made on the owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program, as well as the first-time homebuyer program, addressing the City's goal of providing decent affordable housing for low-income residents. Further discussion on the City's progress in each of the programmatic areas is below. Projects and accomplishments are listed by program year.

### **Goal 1. Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization**

To accomplish the goal of Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization, the City identified several projects in several of our recent, as well as our current Annual Action Plan. Many of the projects from our previous plans were completed in previous program years, however, the narrative below outlines the projects that were completed in Program Year 2022.

During Program Year (PY) 2022, the City continued work on the North Side ADA Ramp Replacement Project Phase 2, which was a project identified in our **PY 2020 Annual Action Plan**. This project involves public infrastructure improvements consisting of ADA sidewalk ramp construction. The project scope involves the construction of 31 new accessible ramps in locations where either none currently exist or where the existing ramps do not comply with the current ADA PROWAG requirements. A majority of the ramps are proposed for Census Tract 614, in the northwest quadrant of the City, which has an estimated Disability Rate of 21.9 percent, the highest of any Census Tract in the City according to 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates. During PY 2021, seven new ramps were constructed along Meadow Street South. In PY 2022, Contractors constructed 20 ramps along Mill Street and Gale Street. There is still funding remaining in this project for additional ramps to be constructed, which will occur in PY 2023.

The City also completed the Seward Street Reconstruction Design Project in Program Year 2022, which was a project identified in our **PY 2021 Annual Action Plan**. This project involved the completion of design drawings and specifications for the reconstruction of Seward Street, located in the City's Northeast Target Area. After the plans were finished, the bidding process was completed, and a contractor was selected to complete the work. Construction began in late June and is expected to be complete by the end of PY 2023. The construction phase of the project will be funded in part from CDBG funds programmed in the City's 2022 Annual Action Plan. The Seward Street Reconstruction Project will include the complete reconstruction of Seward Street including sidewalk and curbing replacement, replacement of various utilities and repaving the road.

Work also began on two other design projects during PY 2022, the Franklin Street ADA Ramp Replacement Project and the Burlington Street Reconstruction Design Project. Both projects were identified in our **PY 2022 Annual Action Plan**. The design and specifications for the Franklin Street project will be completed in the Fall of 2023 after which the project will be advertised for bids. Construction will occur in the spring of 2024. The design for the Burlington Street Reconstruction Project will be completed in early 2024, followed by bidding and a spring construction start. The Burlington Street Reconstruction Project consists of a full reconstruction of the street and will include improvements such as new pavement, new sidewalks, the replacement of various utilities such as water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer as well as green infrastructure and tree planting.

## **Goal 2. Affordable Housing Rehabilitation**

To accomplish the goal of Affordable Housing Rehabilitation, the City identified several projects in our Annual Action Plans, including Owner-Occupied and Rental Housing Rehabilitation Programs.

During **Program Year 2022**, the City completed a total of six (6) units of owner-occupied rehabilitation, working with Neighbors of Watertown (NOWI), the City's sub-recipient for this program. The units completed were from projects identified in **PY 2020** (4 units), and **PY 2021** (2 units). Due to delays in contractor availability, project completions were not as high as previous years. However, the City is confident that with additional contractor outreach, production will pick up in the next year.

At report time, there are three (3) additional projects underway for the owner-occupied assistance program, which are expected to be complete before the end of the calendar year. Additionally, there are two (2) rental rehabilitation projects underway totaling four (4) additional units. Both projects are expected to be complete in the fall of 2023.

The City has completed all owner-occupied rehabilitation projects up to and through Program Year 2019. The City expects to close out the owner-occupied grant funds from 2020, 2021 and 2022 within the next eight (8) months, prior to the end of the 2023 program year.

A total of \$161,409.50 in CDBG funds were spent on affordable housing rehabilitation for low- and moderate-income residents within the City.

Since becoming an entitlement community in PY 2014, the City has used CDBG funding to rehabilitate eighty (80) units of affordable housing, sixty-two (62) which have been owner-occupied units and eighteen (18) which have been rental units.

### **Goal 3. Homeownership Assistance**

In PY2022, the City was able to use CDBG grant funds to assist three (3) qualified low-to-moderate income individuals or households with down payment assistance toward the purchase of a new home along with funds for minor rehabilitation of the home after closing. A total of \$75,388.13 in CDBG funding was spent during PY2022 for homeownership assistance.

At report time, three (3) additional projects are underway for the homeownership assistance program and all funds prior to PY 2022 are expected to be expended by the spring of 2023.

Since becoming an entitlement community in PY 2014, the City has provided homeownership assistance for the purchase of twenty-two (22) units.

### **Goal 4. Environment and Quality of Life Enhancement**

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

The City included several projects in our 2021 and 2022 Annual Action Plans aimed at supporting this goal including the Seward Street Reconstruction Design, the Northeast Target Area Tree Planting Project, the Northeast and Near East Target Area Tree Planting Project and the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project. As noted above, the Seward Street Reconstruction Design was successfully completed, the bidding phase was conducted and construction began on the project late in PY 2022.

The Northeast Target Area Tree Planting Project and the Northeast and Near East Target Area Tree Planting Project were completed this year. The Northeast Target Area Tree Planting Project and the Northeast and Near East Target Area Tree Planting Project were completed this year. The Northeast Target Area Tree Planting Project was included in our **PY 2021 Annual Action Plan** and resulted in the planting of 26 trees in various locations throughout the target area. Streets where trees were planted include Main Avenue, Moulton Street, Addison Street, and Lillian Street. The Northeast and Near East Target Area Tree Planting Project was part of the City's **PY 2022 Annual Action Plan** and resulted in the planting of 40 trees in various locations in the two target areas such as Lansing Street, Lincoln Street, Mundy Street, Parker Street, Boyd Street, Academy Street, and Rutland Street N.

The City also began the planning and design phases for two playground enhancement projects, the North Hamilton Playground Basketball Court Project, which was included in the PY 2021 Annual Action Plan and the North Star Playground Enhancement Project, which was part of the PY 2022 Annual Action Plan. Although construction did not begin on these projects, much of the design work, specification development and product selection work was completed, it is anticipated that these projects will be complete by the end of the 2023 Program Year.

#### **Goal 5. Fair Housing Education**

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

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

To address that goal, the City has included fair housing education projects in many of our annual action plans. In December 2021, the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CNY Fair Housing to act as the City's qualified Fair Housing Enforcement Agency and to conduct the Fair Housing Education 2021 project that the City included in its PY 2021 Annual Action Plan.

The original contract period ran from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The scope of services included Fair Housing Education and Marketing as well as complaint intake. The City and CNY Fair Housing mutually agreed to extend the contract period to May 31, 2023 to allow CNY Fair Housing extra time to expend all of the funds programmed for advertising.

CNY Fair Housing conducted training session geared toward landlords on November 16, 2022 and a training session geared towards service providers and tenants on November 17, 2022, both online via Zoom, to complete the education component. Both sessions were later published on Facebook Live. CNY Fair Housing reported that the total reach was nine (9) people for the Service Provider session and six (6) for the Landlord session.

CNY Fair Housing also conducted in-person table outreach at two live events in the City of Watertown in 2022; the Watertown Farmers Market on August 24, 2022 and the Watertown Local Arts Fall Festival on October 10, 2022. CNY Fair Housing reported that the total reach was 17 for the Farmers Market and 100 for the Local Arts Fall Festival.

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

In December 2022, the City and CNY Fair Housing entered into an MOU for the Fair Housing Education 2022 project (calendar year 2023). As of June 30, 2023, CNY Fair Housing had spent \$618.76 from this MOU on billboard advertising.

### **Goals 6 and 7. Homeless Assistance and Public Services Support**

Another goal of the City's Strategic Plan was to provide homeless assistance to the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care. The City utilized CDBG funding to assist the PNHC with its annual Point-In-Time (PIT) study of the homelessness in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties, New York.

For the 2023 Point-In-Time Count, the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC) worked with local providers and agencies in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties to assist with the homelessness surveys.

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

To make the Homeless No More events as successful as possible, the PNHC and the City of Watertown implemented the 2023 Point-In-Time Count Outreach and Education Initiative. Utilizing CDBG funding, a sixty second radio campaign was created. The commercials were aired on the radio stations owned by Stephens Media group and Intrepid Broadcasting. There was a total of 232 pre-recorded sixty-second spots that were on the air between January 12 and January 26, in addition to live DJ mentions of the events and social media postings by both stations.

The commercials' message targeted the region's non-traditional homeless population and provided an opportunity to raise awareness and educate the general North Country population, so they could inform family and friends about this opportunity.

The Homeless No More open house held in Jefferson County helped twenty-nine people that day. Additional events have been held since to continue to identify and serve the homeless population in the City of Watertown.

### **Goal 8. Economic Development**

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

### **Goal 9. Planning and Administration**

As one can conclude from the various project descriptions noted above, the City has been actively implementing a variety of programs and projects during the last program year from several previous Annual Action Plans. The City expended a total of \$65,528.34 administering the various CDBG grants during the Program Year. In addition to the project management for the various initiatives described above, Staff developed the City's 2021 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) and 2023 Annual Action Plan during the program year.

The City also continued work on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Project that was included in both the **PY 2019 and PY 2020 Annual Action Plans**. This project was identified as a priority project in the City's first ever Comprehensive Plan, which was completed using CDBG funding in December, 2019. The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite represents the primary means to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The project was substantially completed in PY 2022 as the City Council adopted the new Zoning Ordinance on February 21, 2023. The project is not officially complete as City Planning Staff is still working with the consultant that assisted us with the project. The project is expected to be completed with accomplishments reported by December 31, 2023.

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

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

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

During the 2022 program year, Staff worked with four food pantries including the Watertown Urban Mission (WUM), the Community Action Planning Council (CAPC), the Salvation Army and with the United Way for the Watertown City School District Food For Families Program and a mobile food pantry, Urban Mission's Pantry 2 You to continue to implement the programs established with each agency. A total of approximately \$92,835 was expended in PY 2022 on the various food pantry projects.

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

The grant provided funding for the establishment of a front-line case management position at the Anchor Recovery Center of Northern New York to appropriately bridge the individual to the services offered by all three agencies, connect the individual to employment, and case manage the individual to successful and sustained employment by ensuring all services between the three agencies and the employer are appropriately coordinated and managed.

A total of \$10,000 in CDBG-CV funding was deployed to one local business during PY 2022 through the Small Business Emergency Relief Program, marking the final business assisted under the program, with all the prior businesses receiving CV funds during PY 2021. The program's goal was to aid locally owned small businesses that demonstrated hardships or revenue loss that the business experienced because of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The program assisted locally owned businesses that demonstrated these hardships and revenue loss and helped to retain jobs. Staff worked with the Watertown Local Development Corporation to review and approve applications and then developed Grantee Commitment Agreements for each business.

At the back end of the project, Planning Staff verified employment and payroll data and demographic data for persons assisted for each business. The City successfully closed 32 businesses' CARES Act Grants under this program during PY 2022.



The City has been actively implementing the various CDBG-CV programs and projects noted above during the last program year. The City expended a total of \$7,838.24 on Planning and Administration for CDBG-CV projects during the Program Year.

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

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

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

| Goal                                       | Category                          | Source / Amount | Indicator   | Unit of Measure        | Expected – Strategic Plan | Actual – Strategic Plan | Percent Complete | Expected – Program Year | Actual – Program Year | Percent Complete |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Affordable Housing Rehabilitation          | Affordable Housing                | CDBG: \$        | Rental units rehabilitated  | Household Housing Unit | 4                         | 2                       | 50.00%           |                         |                       |                  |
| Affordable Housing Rehabilitation          | Affordable Housing                | CDBG: \$        | Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated   | Household Housing Unit | 37                        | 9                       | 24.32%           | 6                       | 0                     | 0.00%            |
| Economic Development                       | Economic Development              | CDBG: \$        | Jobs created/retained   | Jobs                   | 5                         | 0                       | 0.00%            |                         |                       |                  |
| Environment and Quality of Life Enrichment | Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$        | Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted       | 4250                      | 0                       | 0.00%            | 1000                    | 0                     | 0.00%            |

|   |                                   |          |   |                        |      |      |         |     |     |        |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|---|------------------------|------|------|---------|-----|-----|--------|
| Fair Housing Education                        | Fair Housing                      | CDBG: \$ | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit                    | Persons Assisted       | 0    | 0    |         | 25  | 0   | 0.00%  |
| Fair Housing Education                        | Fair Housing                      | CDBG: \$ | Other   | Other                  | 125  | 184  | 147.20% |     |     |        |
| Homeless Assistance                           | Homeless                          | CDBG: \$ | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit                    | Persons Assisted       | 0    | 14   |         |     |     |        |
| Homeless Assistance                           | Homeless                          | CDBG: \$ | Homeless Person Overnight Shelter   | Persons Assisted       | 0    | 0    |         |     |     |        |
| Homeless Assistance                           | Homeless                          | CDBG: \$ | Homelessness Prevention   | Persons Assisted       | 50   | 14   | 28.00%  | 60  | 0   | 0.00%  |
| Homeownership Assistance                      | Affordable Housing                | CDBG: \$ | Homeowner Housing Added   | Household Housing Unit | 25   | 7    | 28.00%  | 6   | 0   | 0.00%  |
| Homeownership Assistance                      | Affordable Housing                | CDBG: \$ | Direct Financial Assistance to Homebuyers   | Households Assisted    | 25   | 7    | 28.00%  |     |     |        |
| Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization | Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$ | Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted       | 6250 | 1728 | 27.65%  | 825 | 548 | 66.42% |

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

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

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

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

|   | CDBG          |
|---|---------------|
| White                                     | 18,578        |
| Black or African American                 | 2,061         |
| Asian                                     | 450           |
| American Indian or American Native        | 449           |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>21,538</b> |
| Hispanic                                  | 26            |
| Not Hispanic                              | 21,512        |

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

### Narrative

The total families assisted during the 2022 Program Year was 21,512. The most direct assistance to families is clearly through the various housing rehab programs. However, the greatest number of families assisted come from projects with larger service area footprints, such as ADA ramp and tree planting projects. The City's Fair Housing Education projects are aimed at assisting families that are in Protected Classes. The full racial and ethnic breakdown is as shown above in Table 2.

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

### Identify the resources made available

| Source of Funds | Source           | Resources Made Available | Amount Expended During Program Year |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CDBG            | public - federal | 905,080                  | \$517,846.27                        |

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

### Narrative

### Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

| Target Area | Planned Percentage of Allocation | Actual Percentage of Allocation | Narrative Description |
|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Downtown    | 12                               | 4                               |                       |
| East        | 8                                | 0                               |                       |
| Near East   | 9                                | 10                              |                       |
| Near West   | 8                                | 0                               |                       |
| Northeast   | 47                               | 28                              |                       |
| Northwest   | 9                                | 0                               |                       |

Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

### Narrative

The City spent a collective \$112,340.38 in the Northeast Target Area in PY 2022, representing just over a quarter of its total CDBG spending in that Program Year. This sum includes expenditures on the Burlington Street Reconstruction – Design project, two tree planting projects as well as five locations across the Rental Rehab, Owner-Occupied Rehab and First-time Homebuyer programs. There were more rehab locations in the Northeast Target Area than any other Target Area.

The City also spent a collective \$38,361.26 in the Near East Target Area, representing 10 percent of its spending in PY 2022. This included three rehab locations and a tree planting project.

The remainder of the City's Target Area spending in PY 2022 was in the Downtown Target Area, where the City spent a collective \$17,502.25 on the 535 Olive Street Demolition project and the Franklin Street Area ADA Ramp Replacement Project.

The City spent a total \$231,307.36 on projects outside of target areas, the majority of which was spent Owner-Occupied Rehab and Homebuyer project locations. The two exceptions include \$70,433.33 spent on of the Thompson Park ADA Ramp Replacement Project, which replaced 14 previously substandard ramps, with ADA compliant ramps, and \$15,000 spent on the Pine Street SRO project, which provides financial support to a single room occupancy (SRO) facility that provides safe, supervised transitional housing to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Finally, the City spent a collective \$52,806.68 on the following projects that had a citywide impact: the 2022 Point-In-Time Outreach and Education, the 2020 Zoning Re-Write Phase 2, Fair Housing Education PY 2021 and 2022 projects.

The remainder of the City's spending in PY 2022 was on Planning and Administration.

PY 2022 marks the third consecutive year that the City has focused its CDBG spending on the Northeast Target Area, driven primarily by the highest concentration of housing rehab projects. The City anticipates this will continue for at least two more program year as the Burlington Street Reconstruction Project, Seward Street Reconstruction Project, North Side ADA Ramp Project Phase 3 and Black River Trail Extension all enter construction in the upcoming years.

## **Leveraging**

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

Leveraging in PY 2022 included other state and federal funding used as match on the housing rehabilitation and homeownership programs.

The Thompson Park ADA Ramp Replacement Project occurred entirely on publicly owned parkland, making that parkland more accessible to all. The two tree planting projects included plantings on City-owned street margins in Target Areas to improve the quality of life in those neighborhoods and help meet Goal 4: Environment and Quality of Life Enhancement.



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

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

|  | One-Year Goal | Actual   |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units      | 0             | 0        |
| Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units  | 6             | 3        |
| Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units | 0             | 0        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>6</b>      | <b>3</b> |

Table 5 – Number of Households

|  | One-Year Goal | Actual   |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Number of households supported through Rental Assistance             | 0             | 2        |
| Number of households supported through The Production of New Units   | 0             | 0        |
| Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units       | 6             | 6        |
| Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units | 6             | 3        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>12</b>     | <b>9</b> |

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

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

Program Year 2022 was the ninth year that the City participated as an Entitlement Community in the CDBG Program administered by HUD. While rehabilitation work picked up in 2021 after falling behind due to the COVID pandemic, during PY2022 contractor availability became a challenge. Due to this constraint, the city fell behind on the number of units assisted this program year. The City assisted three (3) qualified low-to-moderate income households in purchasing a home and completing minor rehabilitation work after the purchase of the property. During the same timeframe, six (6) units of owner-occupied housing were rehabilitated helping the City accomplish its goal of providing more affordable and quality housing for its residents.

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

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

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

| Number of Households Served | CDBG Actual | HOME Actual |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Extremely Low-income        | 1           | 0           |
| Low-income                  | 4           | 0           |
| Moderate-income             | 4           | 0           |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>9</b>    | <b>0</b>    |

**Table 7 – Number of Households Served**

**Narrative Information**

The City completed the rehabilitation of six (6) units of owner-occupied rehabilitation and three (3) units of first time homebuyer assistance. The majority of the income levels were split between the moderate and low income brackets, as projects of this type would make it difficult for someone below that income level to maintain their own household.

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

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

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

Another goal of the City's Strategic Plan was to provide homeless assistance to the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care. The City utilized CDBG funding to assist the PNHC with its annual Point-In-Time (PIT) study of the homelessness in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties, New York.

For the 2023 Point-In-Time Count, the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC) worked with local providers and agencies in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties to assist with the homelessness surveys.

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

To make the Homeless No More events as successful as possible, the PNHC and the City of Watertown implemented the 2023 Point-In-Time Count Outreach and Education Initiative. Utilizing CDBG funding, a sixty second radio campaign was created. The commercials were aired on the radio stations owned by Stephens Media group and Intrepid Broadcasting. There was a total of 232 pre-recorded sixty-second spots that were on the air between January 12 and January 26, in addition to live DJ mentions of the events and social media postings by both stations.

The commercials' message targeted the region's non-traditional homeless population and provided an opportunity to raise awareness and educate the general North Country population, so they could inform family and friends about this opportunity.

The Homeless No More open house held in Jefferson County helped twenty-nine people that day. Additional events have been held since to continue to identify and serve the homeless population in the City of Watertown.

While it is difficult to track attendees' movements once they leave the open house and therefore difficult to determine those who were provided Continuing Access to a Service or Benefit or Improved Access to a Service, this report assumes that the attendees who filled out a PIT Count survey were able to access new or existing services as they were provided information on how to do so.

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

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

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

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

PNHC, the local Continuum of Care, and its member agencies assist low-income and extremely low-income individuals and families in avoiding becoming homeless. The PNHC has developed a discharge plan to assist those who are likely to become homeless after being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions. Additionally, the PNHC has a Discharge sub-committee that actively works with public institutions on discharge procedures to ensure that individuals have housing upon release. Progress continues to be made to institute policies and procedures at area institutions to help combat post-release homelessness.

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

PNHC, the local Continuum of Care, and its member agencies assist homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. This includes shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again.

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

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

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

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

While no specific projects were completed this year, Staff has developed an ongoing dialogue and relationship with the WHA so that we can be in a good position as new project ideas arise in the future, such as the one noted above for PY 2023.

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

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

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

Not applicable.

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

**Actions taken to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment. 91.220 (j); 91.320 (i)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

During PY 2022, the City undertook several activities aimed at assisting poverty level families such as providing funding for the implementation of the Points North Housing Coalition's Point-In-Time Outreach and Education Initiative as described above. In addition, the City prepared bid specifications for several infrastructure projects including the Franklin Street ADA Ramp Project, the North Hamilton Basketball Court Improvement Project, and the Seward Street Reconstruction Design Project. In an effort to encourage and provide employment and training opportunities for very-low income residents, the specifications and bid documents for the Seward Street Reconstruction Project included the City's Section 3 Plan as required by HUD. The documents state that the project is considered a Section 3

covered contract and that the contractor must comply with Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended. region surrounding Watertown that includes Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence and Oswego Counties.

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

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

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

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

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

In an effort to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies, Planning Staff regularly attends quarterly meetings of the Points North Housing Coalition (PNHC), the local Continuum of Care. In addition, Staff participates in monthly conference calls of PNHC's Point-In-Time Committee.

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

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

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

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

In PY 2022, the City continued to address Impediments Nos. 1 and 4 via progress on its owner-occupied and rental housing rehabilitation programs. During PY 2021, Neighbors of Watertown, as a subrecipient, rehabilitated six owner-occupied units using project funds from various program years. The homeownership program placed three first-time homebuyers in new homes.

The City addressed Impediment No. 5 through its ongoing Fair Housing Education program, which CNY Fair Housing administers as a subrecipient, and includes both an education and marketing component. CNY Fair Housing conducted training sessions, one geared towards landlords and the other geared towards service providers/tenants on November 16-17, 2022. CNY Fair Housing also hosted tables at the Watertown Farmers Market on August 24, 2022 and the Local Arts Fall Fest on October 8, 2022 to complete the education component. CNY Fair Housing reported that the total reach across all four events was an aggregate 132 people. The marketing component consisted of billboards and other advertisements that CNY Fair Housing purchased in the greater Watertown metropolitan region.



## **CR-40 - Monitoring 91.220 and 91.230**

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

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

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

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

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

First, at its regular meeting held on August 21, 2023, the City Council scheduled a public hearing for September 18, 2023 at 7:15 p.m.

On September 2, 2023, a notice of the public hearing was published in the local newspaper, the *Watertown Daily Times*. In addition to advertising the date of the public hearing, the legal notice stated that the City's draft CAPER was available for review and public comment from September 2, 2023 through September 18, 2023.

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

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

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

Also, on September 1, 2023, Staff issued a separate notice via email to all constituency groups and organizations identified in our Citizen Participation Plan, notifying them that the CAPER was available for review and comment.

The City Council will convene the public hearing in the City Council Chamber, Room 303, Watertown City Hall, 245 Washington St., Watertown, NY on September 18, 2023, at 7:15 p.m.

### **CR-45 - CDBG 91.520(c)**

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

During Program Year 2022, the City of Watertown did not make any changes in the program objectives of our CDBG Program.

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

No

## CR-58 – Section 3

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

| Total Labor Hours                     | CDBG | HOME | ESG | HOPWA | HTF |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|-----|-------|-----|
| Total Number of Activities            | 0    | 0    | 0   | 0     | 0   |
| Total Labor Hours                     | 0    |      |     |       |     |
| Total Section 3 Worker Hours          | 0    |      |     |       |     |
| Total Targeted Section 3 Worker Hours | 0    |      |     |       |     |

**Table 5 – Total Labor Hours**

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

**Table 6 – Qualitative Efforts - Number of Activities by Program**

**Narrative**

The City of Watertown did not have any CDBG-funded projects with expenditures in excess of \$200,000 during the 2022 PY which would explain why the tables above are blank.