

**Community Development
Block Grant Program**

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)



**City of Rochester, New Hampshire
July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020**

Prepared for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

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CR-05 - Goals and Outcomes

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

This Program Year (PY) 2019 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) summarizes the accomplishments and financial expenditures of Year 5 of the PY 2015-2020 Consolidated Action Plan (PY 2019 Annual Action Plan) of the City of Rochester. The Community Development Block Grant award for the City of Rochester for PY 2019 was \$259,943. For PY 2019, the median income for the Portsmouth-Rochester Metropolitan Fair Market Rent Area was \$94,300. Public service activities (non-construction funding for social service agencies) included funding for three of the region's three homeless shelters, rental assistance for low-income families and for residents with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities, and educational programs for low-income residents. Most of these activities were aimed at providing a suitable living environment or to provide decent and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents. Economic development activities included a new loan to a Rochester business through the CDBG-funded Job Opportunity Benefit (JOB) revolving loan fund, which promotes the retention and creation of jobs for low- and moderate-income residents. Several JOB Loan Program loan recipients from previous program years reported several jobs created that were made available to and occupied by lower income residents during PY 2019, as well. The JOB Loan Program is aimed at expanding economic opportunities.

Housing rehabilitation funding supported the Community Action Partnership for Strafford County's weatherization assistance program, which weatherizes the homes of low-income residents. This activity is aimed at providing decent, affordable housing. Public facilities funding was awarded to install a code-compliant fire sprinkler system at the Rochester Child Care Center, install a chairlift at the Rochester Opera House, repair the foundation and masonry at the East Rochester Library, install a kayak launch on the Cocheco River, renovate the recreation area near the city-owned Gonic Pool, provide façade and sign minigrants to downtown properties, and purchase land for a new homeless shelter for the Homeless Center for Strafford County.

In September 2019, the City of Rochester amended the PY 2019 Annual Action Plan to allocate \$5,000 in prior year funds for the installation of a back-up generator at My Friend's Place, a homeless shelter located in Dover, New Hampshire. In December 2019, the City of Rochester further amended the PY 2019 Annual Action Plan to allocate \$9,348 in prior years funds to the already-approved Rochester Opera House chairlift project. (After the Rochester Opera House chairlift project was put out to bid and the received bids were considerably higher than the original budget, it was determined that additional funding for the project was reasonable and necessary.)

This past program year also saw a number of new community development initiatives undertaken by the City of Rochester's Community Development Coordinator, as well as renewal of previous community development initiatives. These include continued formal approval of an updated Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing for the PY 2020-2025 program period; continued partnership with the Home for All coalition (formerly named the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness) to reduce homelessness in the Seacoast region; and participation in the Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force to address homelessness in the neighboring cities of Rochester, Dover, and

Somersworth.

Also, in March 2020, the state of New Hampshire declared a state of emergency in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. A stay-at-home order was in place from March 2020 to early June 2020, followed by a gradual, multi-stage reopening plan. The pandemic had profound impacts on the second half of the program year. While the New Hampshire unemployment rate was 2.6% in January 2020, unemployment skyrocketed to 15.4% by May 2020, according to New Hampshire Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Many non-profit agencies had to temporarily suspend services or quickly implement virtual service options, and our regional homeless shelters, already overcrowded, struggled to implement socially distancing precautions for homeless residents. Several PY 2019 public facilities projects, including the were postponed or delayed due to the state shut-down and are scheduled to resume in early PY 2020.

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)

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 for Homeless Persons	Affordable Housing Homeless	CDBG: \$20,000	Homeless Person Overnight Shelter	Persons Assisted	675	605	89.63%	105	114	108.57%
Affordable Housing for Homeless Persons	Affordable Housing Homeless	CDBG: \$50,000	Overnight/Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing Beds added	Beds	15	8	53.33%	0	0	0.00%
Improving the Safety/Livability of Neighborhoods	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$10,000	Facade treatment/business building rehabilitation	Business	0	0	0	1	3	300.00%

Increase Access to Affordable and Quality Housing	Affordable Housing Non-Homeless Special Needs	CDBG: \$5,991.45	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Households Assisted	1400	205	14.64%	15	19	126.67%
Increase Access to Quality Facilities and Services	Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$138,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	4720	1586	33.60%	9322	2089	22.4%
Increase Access to Quality Facilities and Services	Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$13,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	150	488	325.33%	761	792	104.07%
Public Services Concerned with Employment	Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development	CDBG: \$9,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	270	456	168.89%	195	193	98.97%
Retention of Affordable Housing Stock	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$68,261.02	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	200	192	96.00%	50	54	108.00%

Small Business Establishment and Expansion	Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development	CDBG: \$45,000	Jobs created/retained	Jobs	75	16	21.33%	4	4	100.00%
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Table 1 - Accomplishments – Program Year & Strategic Plan to Date

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

As in previous years, CDBG priorities favored public services and facilities projects serving homeless residents, rental assistance and housing rehabilitation to preserve affordable housing stock, and public facilities activities and projects serving extremely low and low income residents. PY 2019 funding reflected these priorities. The greatest amount of public service funding went to two of the region’s homeless shelters, Cross Roads House (\$12,000 for PY 19) and My Friend’s Place (\$8,000 for PY 19). In addition, CDBG funding in the amount of \$50,000 was awarded to the Homeless Center for Strafford County in PY 19 for the purchase of land to build a new, larger-capacity homeless shelter. For maintaining affordable housing for low-moderate income residents, \$3,991 was spent by the SHARE Fund to provide rental assistance to lower income residents and \$2,000.00 was spent by Community Partners to provide rental assistance for residents with mental illnesses and/or developmental disabilities. Such rental support represents an important affordable housing strategy of the city’s CDBG program, as the rental market remains a large provider of affordable housing for Rochester residents. Also in PY 2019, \$68,261 was spent by the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County to provide weatherization for homes owned by low-moderate income residents. For most residents, this greatly reduces energy costs for the home, thereby keeping the home affordable for the owner. Also, the majority of residents served by the weatherization program are low-income elderly residents seeking to “age in place,” and weatherization assistance is especially essential to this demographic for keeping their housing costs affordable.

Other priorities, aligned with the needs identified in the PY 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan and PY 2019 Annual Action Plan, focused on providing for the basic needs of low-income Rochester residents. Such activities included support for and High School Equivalency Testing assistance offered through the Dover Adult Learning Center, which provides for a basic level of education for low-moderate income residents; MY TURN, which provides vocational and supportive services for low-income young adults seeking to establish their careers; and Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels, which provides meal delivery services for low-moderate income seniors and adults with disabilities.

PY 2019 projects have included accessibility improvements, the installation of a chairlift at the Rochester Opera House, and projects focused on the revitalization of the city's downtown, including the Downtown Façade Improvements Program and the Riverwalk Committee kayak launch project. Accessibility improvements have become increasingly important as the city's and state's aging demographics mean a proportional increase in residents with mobility limitations and physical disabilities, and the downtown region of the city has been identified as a priority area for investment in both the PY 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan and city Master Plan.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which reached the state of New Hampshire in March 2020, most of the PY 2019 public facilities projects have been delayed or postponed and were incomplete at the end of PY 2019. The projects that have been completed are the Rochester Opera House chairlift installation, East Rochester Library building renovations, and Homeless Center for Strafford County land acquisition. Three individual projects under the Downtown Façade Improvements Program have been completed, but there are remaining funds that can be allocated to additional minigrants for other downtown properties.

CR-10 - Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted

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

	CDBG
White	1,070
Black or African American	21
Asian	20
American Indian or American Native	2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
Total	1,113
Hispanic	20
Not Hispanic	1,093

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

Narrative

During PY 2019, approximately 96% of the residents of the City of Rochester served were white, and approximately 4% of the residents served were of non-white races and/or ethnicities (predominantly Black/African-American and Asian). According to U.S. Census population estimates, the City of Rochester is 94.9% white, 0.6% Black or African-American, 0.1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.4% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2.2% Hispanic, and 2.8% two or more races. There have not been disproportionate services provided to white residents over residents belonging to racial/ethnic minorities. Please note that there may be slight discrepancies in the numbers provided, as several multi-racial categories were included in the demographic questionnaires provided to recipients of CDBG-funded public services. Many residents identified as belonging to two races/ethnicities or as "Other/Multiracial."

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	\$435,406	\$241,307.46

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

Narrative

In the adopted PY 2019 Action Plan, \$435,406 in CDBG grant funds (which includes the \$259,943 grant allocation for PY 2019, \$87,298 in unexpended prior year funds, and program income from the JOB Loan Program) were made available to the City of Rochester. The adopted PY 2019 Annual Action Plan and two minor plan amendments are available on the City of Rochester's website at <https://www.rochesternh.net/communitydevelopmentdivision/pages/action-plans>.

During PY 2019, \$190,933.14 was expended on programs and activities, and \$50,374.32 was spent on planning and administration of the CDBG program, for a total expenditure of \$241,307.46 for PY 2019. The remaining funds, which consist primarily of the funds allocated to delayed/postponed public facilities projects, will be expended in PY 2020. City-owned property that received CDBG funding for FY 2019 were the Rochester Opera House (which is co-located in the building that houses the Rochester City Hall), the Rochester Riverwalk kayak launch project, and the Gonic Pool recreation area renovations.

In the annual grant application developed by Community Development staff, CDBG applicants must state both the amount and the percentage of leveraged funds relative to the CDBG funds being requested. The percentage and amount of leveraged funds available are taken into account when grant applications are analyzed and funding decisions made.

Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
Rochester Low-Moderate Income Census Tracts	92	83	HUD-determined census tracts of 51% or greater low-moderate income residents

Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Narrative

In PY 2019, \$216,971.03 was spent on activities in >51% low-moderate income census tracts, and \$44,000.00 was spent on activities in non-LMI income census tracts. These activities, however, were based on served clients' actual low-income or presumed low-income status (*e.g.*, persons who are experiencing homelessness).

These activities were operational expenses at two of the region's homeless shelters, My Friend's Place and Cross Roads House; rental assistance provided by Community Partners, which serves clients with mental illnesses and development disabilities; and Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels, which provides meal delivery services for elderly residents and adult residents with disabilities. All of these activities,

although occurring in census tracts that are not majority low- to moderate income, serve some of the most vulnerable and neediest of Rochester's residents, including residents who are homeless and residents with mental illnesses and/or development disabilities.

Leveraging

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

During PY 2019, \$3,593,125 was also made available in leveraged funds provided by the public service agencies that received CDBG funding. The sources of these leveraged funds are various and includes non-CDBG federal grants, state grants, municipal-level funding, and private donations received by the public service agency CDBG subrecipients. The Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program, for example, receives leveraged funds through regional utility companies and the state Department of Energy. The United Way of the Greater Seacoast also provides significant funding for multiple public service agencies that receive Rochester CDBG funds, especially the three regional homeless services providers.

In the annual grant application developed by Community Development staff, CDBG applicants must state both the amount and the percentage of leveraged funds relative to the CDBG funds being requested. The percentage and amount of leveraged funds available are taken into account when grant applications are analyzed and funding decisions made.

Rochester CDBG Activity | Rochester CDBG Funding | Leveraged Funds

My Friends' Place | \$8,000 | \$95,912
Cross Roads House | \$12,000 | \$1,087,425
Community Partners | \$2,000 | \$10,000
SHARE Fund | \$3,991 | \$18,000
Dover Adult Learning Center | \$5,000 | \$1,260,056
Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels | \$2,000 | \$336,422
Tri-City Co-op | \$2,000 | \$184,608
MY TURN | \$4,000 | \$313,002
Rochester Child Care Center – Fire Sprinkler System | \$20,000 | \$36,700
Strafford CAP – Weatherization Program | \$68,261 | \$110,000
Rochester Opera House – Chairlift Project | \$23,000 | \$0
East Rochester Public Library – Building Renovations | \$10,000 | \$0
Rochester Riverwalk – Canoe/Kayak Launch Project | \$25,000 | \$0
Gonic Pool/Recreation Area Improvements | \$50,000 | \$50,000
Historic District Commission – Downtown Façade Improvements Program | \$10,000 | \$0
Homeless Center for Strafford County – Land Acquisition for New Shelter | \$50,000 | \$75,000
My Friend's Place – Backup Generator Project | \$5,000 | \$16,000

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	0	0
Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units	0	0
Total	0	0

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of households supported through Rental Assistance	0	0
Number of households supported through The Production of New Units	0	0
Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units	50	54
Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units	0	0
Total	50	54

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

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

Performance goals were slightly exceeded for the number of homeless households and individuals provided with homeless shelter services. The one-year goal was to provide emergency shelter beds for 105 homeless residents in PY 2019, while actual emergency shelter beds were provided to 114 homeless residents in PY 2019. In spring 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local homeless shelter providers struggled to create socially distanced bed spaces and quarantine/isolation spaces. The shelters have accomplished this through increased staffing hours and through hotel room rentals.

Performance goals were slightly exceeded for the rehabilitation of existing low-moderate income housing units. The goal for PY 2019 was the rehabilitation for 50 low-moderate income households, and the actual performance was the rehabilitation for 54 low-moderate income households. For home

rehabilitation, about 26% of households were extremely low income, about 43% of households were low income, and 31% of households were moderate income.

Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.

The Seacoast’s homeless shelters, including current subrecipients Cross Roads House, My Friend’s Place, and the Homeless Center for Strafford County, participate in the Balance of State Coordinated Entry system and have found it challenging to accurately estimate how many clients will be served within the any given year since homeless clients are now funneled through the same organizational point of contact. It is also difficult sometimes to establish what the most accurate residency for a homeless individual or family might be, as many of these individuals and families are frequently moving between various cities and towns in the Seacoast region. Thus, while a shelter may be serving the same or greater number of clients overall, the specific percentage of Rochester residents may decline.

It is anticipated, with the large spike in unemployment due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the end of eviction moratoriums, that there will be an increase in demand for homeless shelter services in PY 2020. Accordingly, funding for regional homeless services have been allocated out of both the regular grant allocation for PY 2020 and the special CARES Act CDBG funding. PY 2020 funds have also been allocated for rental assistance for low to moderate income Rochester families at risk for eviction and homelessness through funding for the SHARE Fund’s rental assistance program.

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	14	0
Low-income	23	0
Moderate-income	17	0
Total	54	0

Table 7 – Number of Households Served

Narrative Information

The overwhelming majority (99%) of Rochester residents assisted with public service agency CDBG funds during PY 2019 were extremely low or low income, with a significant majority of that percentage being extremely low income (77%). This includes 69% of Rochester residents receiving weatherization housing rehabilitation assistance. One non-low-moderate income residents was assisted as a new hire resulting from JOB Loan Program business loans.

For all PSA, housing rehabilitation, and public facilities activities for PY 2019, about 52% of all Rochester residents served with CDBG funds were extremely low or low income, with about 23% being extremely low income. This is due to the service area of the East Rochester Library building renovations project being based on the census tract in which it is located.

For CDBG purposes, “extremely low income” is defined as 30% of the area median income, “low income” is defined as 50% of the area median income, and “moderate income” is defined as 80% of the area median income. For PY 2019, the median income for the Portsmouth-Rochester Metropolitan Fair Market Rent Area was \$94,300.

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

Activities to address homelessness in PY 2019 included public service agency grants to two of the region's homeless shelters that provide services to Rochester residents (My Friend's Place and Cross Roads House), rental assistance for families who are threatened by homelessness via funding the SHARE Fund's rental assistance program and Community Partner's rental assistance program for residents with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities, and public facilities funding for a new backup generator for the My Friend's Place homeless shelter and for the Homeless Center for Strafford County to purchase land to construct a new, larger-capacity shelter. In addition, the Rochester Community Development Coordinator attended most New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care meetings, continued in a leadership role with the Home for All coalition (formerly known as the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness), participated heavily in the Fidelity Subcommittee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force, and engaged in extensive consultations with homeless services and allied providers.

The region's three homeless shelters, in partnership with other regional social service agencies and local welfare directors, provide individual assessment for each homeless person or family, or each person or family at risk for homelessness. Based on these assessments, the person or family is placed with a homeless shelter that best fits their needs, referred to an organization that can provide emergency rental assistance, or provided other relevant referrals. The implementation of the Coordinated Entry system for the entire New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care region has formalized this intake process and centralized it through the use of the services of 211. In addition, all of the regional shelters work with the Continuum of Care on the annual Point in Time count, which in recent years has focused especially on obtaining accurate counts and needs assessments of unsheltered persons not connected with shelter or other service providers.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

During PY 2019, CDBG public service agency operating grants were awarded to two of the region's homeless shelters (My Friend's Place and Cross Roads House) that provide services to Rochester residents, and public facilities funding was also provided to two homeless shelters (My Friend's Place and the Homeless Center for Strafford County). Over fifty percent of the available public service agency operating grant funds awarded for PY 2019 went to funding homeless shelters and their services. All three funded shelters (My Friend's Place, Cross Roads House, and the Homeless Center for Strafford County) provide emergency shelter and supportive services to residents, including financial counseling, educational and vocational training, child care, and health clinics. Two of the three shelters (My Friend's Place and the Homeless Center for Strafford County) have transitional housing units available. Cross Roads House, the regional homeless shelter with the largest capacity, also runs a Housing First program.

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

During PY 2019, CDBG funds supported two rental assistance programs for families who are threatened by homelessness, via public service grants to the SHARE Fund and Community Partners, and housing rehabilitation for low-income homeowners via funding for the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program. Without this assistance, it is likely that these Rochester residents would have been placed at risk of losing their current housing and becoming homeless.

In particular, Community Partners' rental assistance program provides assistance to residents with mental illnesses and/or developmental disabilities. This includes both direct funding (such as for security deposits) and ongoing case management for the Community Partners client. Ongoing supportive services have been identified by several agencies, such as Community Partners and Cross Roads House, as necessary for eviction prevention.

The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2019, including the Home for All coalition (formerly known as the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness) and the Fidelity Subcommittee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force. The Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force worked throughout 2018 and 2019 to draft a regional homelessness master plan that included housing and employment needs analyses for residents exiting mental health facilities and correctional programs. The Fidelity Committee successfully pushed for a new ordinance in the City of Rochester that waives fees for identification documents for homeless residents, a key barrier for homeless residents in accessing vital services that was identified in the Task Force's Master Plan on 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

During PY 2019, CDBG public services grants were awarded to two regional homeless shelters, My Friend's Place and Cross Roads House, which provide services to Rochester residents. These shelters have transitional housing units available and provide supportive services to residents, including financial counseling, educational and vocational training, child care, and health clinics. Cross Roads House also has implemented a Housing First initiative and established a housing stability/eviction prevention program to assist former shelter residents in maintaining housing once they have left the shelter. The post-housing case management has prevented several evictions for residents who are now in permanent housing.

The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2019, including the Home for All coalition (formerly known as the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness). The focus of the Home for All coalition's work during PY 2019 has been on

increasing supply and access to affordable housing for homeless residents through landlord outreach and education efforts. This has included successfully applying for private foundation funding for a regional risk mitigation fund aimed at increasing landlord acceptance of Section 8 vouchers. The risk mitigation fund will begin implementation in PY 2020.

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

Actions taken to address the needs of public housing

The most recent Five Year Plan prepared by the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) reports its goals and objectives as including reduction of public housing vacancies, increase in affordable housing units, the creation of workforce housing, and the promotion of economic opportunities and an increase in affordable healthcare access to low-income families. During PY 2019, CDBG funding supported two rental assistance programs for low-income residents, including residents with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities, via public service agency grants to the SHARE Fund and Community Partners. CDBG funding also helped fund housing rehabilitation for low-income homeowners via funding for the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program. One new Job Opportunity Benefit loan were also awarded to a local business with an anticipated two new jobs to be created for low-income Rochester residents.

In addition, Rochester Community Development staff has arranged to have all CDBG construction project bids posted at RHA housing units to encourage the hiring of public housing residents for CDBG-funded projects.

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

The Rochester Housing Authority maintains a Resident Advisory Board, including representatives from each of the RHA's housing locations, that meets to review the RHA annual and five-year plans. The Resident Advisory Board also provides input on general RHA operations. During the PY 2019 Annual Action Plan citizen participation plan and the PY 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan citizen participation process, the City of Rochester's Community Development consulted with the RHA Executive Director and the RHA Resident Advisory Board on identifying how to increase homeownership opportunities for lower-income residents, especially residents who are racial/ethnic minorities. This planning was duly incorporated into the PY 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan and updated Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. The Community Development Coordinator also forwards programs and funding opportunity regarding affordable homeownership to RHA staff, for distribution to RHA residents, as such information becomes available.

Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs

N/A. The Rochester Housing Authority is not designated as a troubled agency by HUD.

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

The City of Rochester's Community Development staff has assisted the Planning Department in planning projects funded through technical assistance grants. A Certified Local Government grant was awarded to the City of Rochester during PY 2019 for the updating of the downtown National Historic Register buildings list.

The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2019, including the Fidelity Subcommittee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force. The Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force worked throughout 2018 and 2019 to draft a regional homelessness master plan that included housing and employment needs analyses for residents exiting mental health facilities and correctional programs. The Fidelity Committee successfully pushed for a new ordinance in the City of Rochester that waives fees for identification documents for homeless residents, a key barrier for homeless residents in accessing vital services that was identified in the Task Force's Master Plan on Homelessness.

Actions taken to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

Some of the top underserved needs within the City of Rochester continue to be supportive services and affordable housing for residents with mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders. The main obstacles to serving these underserved needs are lack of funding and lack of organizational capacity.

These obstacles have been addressed through a variety of means. CDBG public service agency funding was awarded in PY 2019 to three regional homeless shelters (My Friend's Place, Cross Roads House, and the Homeless Center for Strafford County) who disproportionately serve residents with mental illnesses or substance use disorders. CDBG funds were also awarded to Community Partners, to provide rental assistance for lower-income clients with mental illnesses and/or developmental disabilities, and to Tri-City Coop, which provides peer to peer mental health supports for residents with mental illnesses. (In addition, in PY 2019 the City of Rochester provided general municipal funding support to SOS Recovery Center, which provides recovery services for residents with substance use disorders.)

Throughout PY 2019, the Community Development Coordinator has also continued to remain active in the Home for All coalition (formerly known as the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness), as the cofacilitator for its Housing Opportunities Workgroup, and with the Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force. The Housing Opportunities Workgroup worked throughout 2019 and 2020 to apply for private foundation funds for a risk mitigation funds program that would encourage landlords to accept chronically homeless persons, especially those with mental illness or substance use disorders, as tenants. These funds were awarded in late PY 2019. The Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force worked throughout PY 2019 to pass a new ordinance in the City of Rochester that waives fees for identification documents for homeless residents. Lack of identification documents, and the financial difficulties in obtaining copies of identification documents, have been identified in the Master Plan on Homelessness as a key barrier for homeless residents in accessing vital services.

Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards

In spring 2019, the City of Rochester was accepted into a statewide lead poisoning community project organized by New Hampshire Listens, the Conservation Law Foundation, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance. The City of Rochester assembled a project team comprised of staff from the Community Development Division; Planning Department; and Building, Zoning, and Licensing Services Department. Rochester Main Street, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County, and the Strafford County Public Health Network are also represented on the project team.

The Rochester team attended three all-day training sessions and then planned and held a landlord outreach forum in November 2019 with a presentation by the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services on the dangers of lead-based paint and resources for lead remediation. The forum was attended by over thirty people. Following the success of the forum and feedback from the landlord attendees, the Rochester team decided to pursue a partnership between Rochester's Community Development Block Grant program and the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority's lead hazard control program to increase the remediation of lead in Rochester homes. This has resulted in the allocation of \$20,000 in PY 2020 CDBG funds for the remediation of lead in homes owned/occupied by lower-income Rochester residents.

In addition, the Community Action Partnership for Strafford County's weatherization assistance program, which received \$568,261 in CDBG funding during PY 2019, provides weatherization assistance to low-income residents of the City of Rochester. This includes updating heaters and boilers, replacing inadequate insulation, and other related rehabilitation activities. While performing this rehabilitation work, the weatherization assistance program also provides lead evaluation, containment, and/or abatement services when circumstances, such as the age of the home in question, indicate the need for such. In PY 2019, a total of 54 housing units received housing rehabilitation assistance through Rochester CDBG funding, including 13 units constructed prior to 1978.

Actions taken to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The City of Rochester seeks to reduce poverty among city residents through a multi-pronged strategy. One prong of this approach is the provision of direct services aimed at addressing basic and immediate needs of our most vulnerable, lowest-income residents. This includes emergency housing assistance, in the forms of funding for the region's homeless shelters and for rental assistance provided by the SHARE Fund and Community Partners. The SHARE Fund's rental assistance helps low-income residents pay security deposits or back rent payments, and Community Partners' rental assistance program helps its clients with mental illnesses and/or developmental disabilities to pay security deposits and provides ongoing supportive services throughout the clients' tenancy. Other basic need services include meal delivery for elderly and disabled residents and mental health supportive services.

A second prong involves investment in activities and programs that will help prevent poverty and/or address poverty in the longer term. This includes funding for educational and vocational services, such as Dover Adult Learning Center and MY TURN. Dover Adult Learning Center provides High School Equivalency testing preparation services to lower-income residents, as well as English as a Second Language classes for Rochester's growing immigrant population. MY TURN provides vocational services, such as paid internships and certification courses, for lower-income young adults.

A third prong involves investing funds to create and broaden economic opportunities within the City of Rochester. The City maintains a revolving loan fund, the Job Opportunity Benefit loan program, to provide funding to local businesses that commit to retaining at-risk jobs or creating new jobs specifically for low- to moderate-income residents. One new loan was entered into during PY 2019, with an anticipated two new jobs to be created for low- and moderate-income residents.

Actions taken to develop institutional structure

The City of Rochester is a public entity that regularly plans and finances economic development projects, code enforcement, planning and zoning review, emergency financial relief assistance, and community development activities. Rochester's Community Development Division works with other city departments, including the Planning Department and Department of Public Works, and with many regional public service agencies, including agencies that receive CDBG funding subgrants and agencies that do not. This coordination has enabled the efficient provision of supportive services, housing rehabilitation, and public facilities improvements for low- and moderate-income Rochester residents. This coordination also identifies specific program and activity needs within the City, as well as other funding sources for city projects that may not qualify under CDBG.

In addition, the Community Development Coordinator regularly participates in the New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care as a Rochester representative, in the Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force as a Rochester staff liaison, and in a workgroup leadership position with the Home For All coalition (formerly named the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness) as a Rochester representative. The involvement of Community Development staff in these organizations and coalitions provides for the development and strengthening of cross-agency relationships and projects, especially those related to reducing and eliminating homelessness, one of the top community concerns.

The Community Development Coordinator also maintains regular communications with the Rochester Welfare Director, Rochester Housing Authority Executive Director, and Dover and Portsmouth Community Development staff, among others. The Community Development Coordinator shares news and updates with all of these persons, provides and receives information on funding opportunities, and coordinates regional community development activities.

Actions taken to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies

The City of Rochester's Community Development Division has engaged in a broad range of outreach and networking activities throughout PY 2019, which have included regularly relaying relevant HUD, New Hampshire Bureau of Homeless and Housing Services, New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, and other housing- and homelessness-related training opportunities to public service agencies and other regional contacts who might be interested. The Community Development Coordinator also participates as a member of the New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care, the Home For All coalition (formerly the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness), and the Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force.

In spring 2019, the City of Rochester was accepted into a statewide lead poisoning community project organized by New Hampshire Listens, the Conservation Law Foundation, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance. The City of Rochester assembled a project team comprised of staff from the Community Development Division; Planning Department; and Building, Zoning, and Licensing Services Department.

Rochester Main Street, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County, and the Strafford County Public Health Network are also represented on the project team.

The Rochester team attended three all-day training sessions and then planned and held a landlord outreach forum in November 2019 with a presentation by the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services on the dangers of lead-based paint and resources for lead remediation. The forum was attended by over thirty people. Following the success of the forum and feedback from the landlord attendees, the Rochester team decided to pursue a partnership between Rochester's Community Development Block Grant program and the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority's lead hazard control program to increase the remediation of lead in Rochester homes. This has resulted in the allocation of \$20,000 in PY 2020 CDBG funds for the remediation of lead in homes owned/occupied by lower-income Rochester residents.

Identify actions taken to overcome the effects of any impediments identified in the jurisdiction's analysis of impediments to fair housing choice

One of the key goals of the city's current Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) is to monitor city ordinances and policies that affect housing development (whether positively or negatively) and impact on housing availability and affordability for various residential demographics. Lack of housing affordability, in particular, has been identified as a key impediment to fair housing, and increasing access to quality affordable housing is the first listed goal in the current AI. The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in Home for All coalition (formerly known as the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness) as a leader of the Housing Opportunities workgroup. The focus of the Home for All coalition's work during PY 2019 has been on increasing supply and access to affordable housing for homeless residents through landlord outreach and education efforts. This has included successfully applying for private foundation funding for a regional risk mitigation fund aimed at increasing landlord acceptance of Section 8 vouchers. The risk mitigation fund will begin implementation in PY 2020.

The third listed goal for the current AI is to reduce housing discrimination against residents with disabilities. In PY 2019, CDBG funding supported Community Partners' rental assistance program for its clients with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities. The Community Partners program provides case management to its rental assistance clients, and this includes assisting clients in pursuing reasonable accommodations from landlords who participate in the rental assistance program.

CR-40 - Monitoring 91.220 and 91.230

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

The City of Rochester collects both quarterly and annual reports from its subrecipients. These reports include racial/ethnic, sex, income, and other demographical information of clients served, as well as expense details. In June 2020, the Community Development Coordinator performed annual site monitorings of all PY 2019 CDBG grant subrecipients, as part of its established policy to provide annual monitoring to all CDBG subrecipients. While usually these monitorings are conducted in-person at the subrecipients' offices, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PY 2019 monitorings were conducted via teleconference. (There are two monitoring checklists that the City of Rochester uses to facilitate these visits, and the checklists are attached to this report.)

During each visit, Community Development staff interviewed key agency personnel, reviewed program and financial documents, and discussed performance successes and challenges. Financial monitoring includes discussion and review of the subrecipient procurement policies, review of the audit trail report and CDBG trial balance report, review and discussion of the subrecipient's most recent audit or equivalent financial statements, review and discussion of the subrecipient's system of internal controls, review of CDBG expenditures on staff salary/benefits (as applicable), and review and discussion of cost allowability.

There were no significant performance issues identified during any of the PY 2019 subrecipient site visits. However, based on quarterly reports and annual site monitoring visits, the City of Rochester may identify deficiencies and formulate corrective action plans to remediate these deficiencies. Any concerns or findings are documented in a formal post-monitoring letter to the subrecipient.

Prior to the award of any CDBG funds, all potential subrecipients are subject to risk assessment during the grant application process. The City of Rochester CDBG grant application requires agencies to provide information on agency history, federal grant management experience, budget information, information on board of directors and administrator-level staff, whether the agency currently collects client demographics data and has a conflicts of interest policy, and whether and how the agency currently employs performance measures. A copy of the agency's most recent financial review and a description of any findings from the most recent financial review are also requested as grant application attachments.

Community Development staff also performed environmental reviews for all CDBG-funded projects and Davis-Bacon Act wage rate compliance monitoring for all CDBG-funded construction projects. For environmental reviews, this included field site visits to project sites and consultations with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources for projects not already covered under the Programmatic Agreement between the City of Rochester and the Division of Historical Resources. Community Development staff also discussed environmental review procedures with all PY 2019 CDBG subrecipients prior to the beginning of the program year to ensure that all subrecipients understood that work on the projects could not begin until the completion of the environmental review.

For Davis-Bacon Act compliance, this has included site visits to the East Rochester Library building renovations project and the Rochester Opera House chairlift project. No compliance issues were

identified during the site visits or in review of submitted payroll documentation. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Davis-Bacon monitoring for spring 2020 projects and those projects that have been delayed/postponed due to the pandemic has been (and will be) conducted remotely via laborer questionnaire forms, telephone interviews, and email communications. The Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program is currently exempt from Davis-Bacon Act requirements, as work occurs on single-family and duplex homes.

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

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

The final draft of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) is made available to the public through a variety of means. Hard copies of the report are provided for public viewing at City Hall, the Rochester Public Library, and the Office of Economic and Community Development. An electronic copy of the report is provided for public viewing and download on the City of Rochester's Community Development Division webpage at <https://www.rochesternh.net/communitydevelopmentdivision/pages/annual-reports>. Notice of the public comment opportunity on the draft CAPER is posted in a local newspaper of general circulation, *Foster's Daily Democrat*, as well as on the Community Development Division webpage. The notice also includes information in French on how to receive an oral interpretation of the plan, if needed, in accordance with the City of Rochester's Language Access Plan. Notice of the public comments period regarding the draft PY 2019 CAPER was posted on August 11, 2020, more than 30 days prior to the submission of this CAPER to HUD. No comments were received.

Summary of Public Comments Received

No comments were received.

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.

There have not been any changes in the City of Rochester's primary program objectives during PY 2019, but in spring 2020, due to the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic to the state of New Hampshire, programmatic focus for all PY 2019 subrecipients shifted to how to maintain safety while providing essential services. For the region's homeless shelters, this has involved reducing beds in the congregate shelters and placing residents in hotel rooms for isolation/quarantine purposes. For Dover Adult Learning Center, the center staff worked to change in-person classroom instruction to distanced learning instruction. Other social services providers had to scale back or temporarily suspend services during the New Hampshire stay-at-home order period.

The ongoing pandemic has also affected funding allocations for PY 2020. Focus has been placed on homeless shelter services, rental assistance to prevent evictions for low-income households, and healthcare services. These areas have been identified as the highest need priorities due to the pandemic's effects on unemployment, health care systems, and housing stability for lower-income residents.

The City of Rochester has changed its activities as a result of its experiences in implementing CDBG programs in the past, as well. For example, in PY 2015, the City of Rochester has discontinued CDBG funding to the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center due to ongoing performance issues and after counseling and other attempts to improve performance were unsuccessful. Also, in PY 2019, in minor plan amendments, unexpended prior year funds were allocated for the installation of a back-up generator at homeless shelter My Friend's Place and for the Rochester Opera House chairlift project already included in the PY 2019 Annual Action Plan. (After the Rochester Opera House chairlift project was put out to bid and the received bids were considerably higher than the original budget, it was determined that additional funding for the project was reasonable and necessary.)