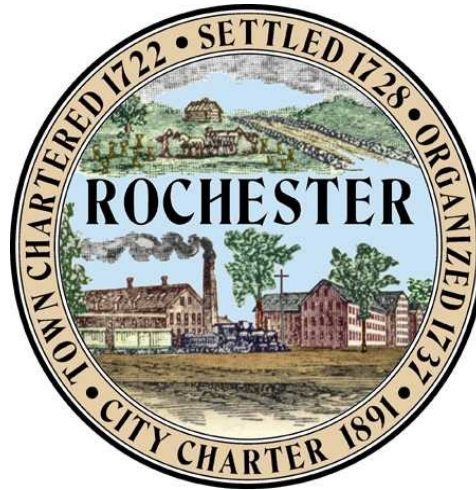


**Community Development
Block Grant Program**

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)



**City of Rochester, New Hampshire
July 1, 2020—June 30, 2021**

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

This Program Year (PY) 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) summarizes the accomplishments and financial expenditures of Year 1 of the PY 2020-2021 Consolidated Action Plan (PY 2020 Annual Action Plan) of the City of Rochester. The Community Development Block Grant award for the City of Rochester for PY 2020 was \$254,462. In addition, in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the City of Rochester two separate rounds of CARES Act CDBG (CDBG-CV) funding, in the amounts of \$149,714 and \$146,576, for a total of \$296,290 in CDBG-CV funds.

For PY 2020, the median income for the Portsmouth-Rochester Metropolitan Fair Market Rent Area was \$101,950. Public service activities (non-construction funding for social service agencies) included funding for two of the region's homeless shelters, rental assistance for low-income families and for residents, supportive services for mental illnesses or developmental disabilities, and educational programs for low-income residents. 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 doors at the Rochester Child Care Center, a new kitchen for the Homeless Center for Strafford County, land acquisition for HAVEN to construct a new domestic violence shelter, electrical upgrades for the Triangle Club and its recovery services, and matching funds for New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority's lead remediation program.

PY 2020 CDBG-CV funding was allocated to homeless shelter and domestic violence shelter quarantine and social distancing efforts, telehealth programs, emergency food pantry assistance and meal delivery services, transportation services for elderly and disabled residents, and other essential social services impacted by the pandemic. These funds were allocated through formal amendment processes that occurred in July 2020 for the first CDBG-CV funds allocation and in December 2020 for the second CDBG-CV funds allocation.

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 partnership with the Home for All coalition (formerly named the Greater Seacoast Coalition to End Homelessness) to reduce homelessness in the Seacoast region; 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; and partnership with New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority on residential lead remediation work.

In March 2020, the state of New Hampshire declared a state of emergency in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had profound impacts throughout the program year. Many non-profit agencies have had to temporarily suspend services or quickly implement virtual service options, and our regional homeless shelters, already overcrowded, have struggled to implement socially distancing precautions for homeless residents. Several PY 2020 public facilities projects were postponed or delayed due to the state shutdown and continuing effects of

the pandemic, such as labor shortages and costs of construction materials.

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

| Goal | Category | Source / Amount | Indicator | Unit of Measure | Expected – Program Year | Actual – Program Year | Percent Complete |
|--|---|-------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Affordable and Quality Housing for All Residents | Affordable Housing Non-Homeless Special Needs | CDBG: \$4,000.00 | Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Households Assisted | 30 | 21 | 70.00% |
| Affordable Housing for Homeless/At-Risk Persons | Affordable Housing Homeless | CDBG: \$21,169.30 | Tenant-based rental assistance / Rapid Rehousing | Households Assisted | 700 | 322 | 46.00% |
| Affordable Housing Stock Creation/Retention | Affordable Housing Public Housing | CDBG: \$80,410.04 | Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated | Household Housing Unit | 25 | 35 | 140% |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|--|------------------|------|------|---------|
| Emergency Situations Aid to LMI Residents | Affordable Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG-CV: \$76,075.80 | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted | 1576 | 2446 | 155.20% |
| Emergency Situations Aid to LMI Residents | Affordable Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG-CV: \$185,271.20 | Homeless Person Overnight Shelter | Persons Assisted | 205 | 866 | 422.44% |
| Emergency Situations Aid to LMI Residents | Affordable Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG-CV: \$5,000.00 | Overnight/Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing Beds added | Beds | 25 | 25 | 100.00% |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|---|------------------|-----|-----|---------|
| Establish/Stabilize/Expand Small Businesses | Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development | CDBG: \$98,198.16 | Jobs created/retained | Jobs | 2 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Increase Access to Quality Facilities/Services | Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$85,000.00 | Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted | 640 | 5 | 0.78% |
| Increase Access to Quality Facilities/Services | Non-Homeless Special Needs Non-Housing Community Development | CDBG: \$13,500.00 | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted | 118 | 676 | 572.88% |
| Public Services Concerned with Employment | Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development | CDBG: \$9,000.00 | Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit | Persons Assisted | 195 | 141 | 72.31% |

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

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 2020 funding reflected these priorities. The greatest amount of public service funding went to two of the region's homeless shelters, Cross Roads House and My Friend's Place, each receiving \$10,000 in PY 20 funds. In addition, CDBG funding in the amount of \$50,000 was awarded to the Homeless Center for Strafford County in PY 20 for the installation of kitchen equipment in the agency's new, larger-capacity homeless shelter. For maintaining affordable housing for low-moderate income residents, \$4,000 was allocated by the SHARE Fund to provide rental assistance to lower income residents. 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 2020, a little over \$60,000 was allocated to 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.

CDBG priorities identified in relation to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic focused on supporting Rochester's most vulnerable residents, such as homeless residents, with their highest-priority needs, such as housing and health care. Cross Roads House was allocated over \$15,000, My Friend's Place was allocated \$45,000, HAVEN was allocated \$50,000, the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County was allocated \$40,000, and the Homeless Center for Strafford County was allocated \$7,000, all to support emergency shelter activities for homeless residents and domestic violence survivors. Telehealth and other health services were addressed through allocations of \$5,000 to Community Partners, \$2,000 to the Strafford County Public Health Network, and a bit over \$19,000 to Easter Seals New Hampshire. Other activities supported through CDBG-CV funds include food pantry services, meal delivery services, and educational supportive services.

PY 2020 housing rehabilitation and public facilities projects have included the homeless shelter renovations for the Homeless Center for Strafford County, updated fire doors for the Rochester Child Care Center, electrical system upgrades for the Triangle Club, residential lead remediation, and residential weatherization of single-family homes. Lead remediation has been a long-term identified need, as the City of Rochester is one of eight New Hampshire communities identified by the state as "high risk" in regards to lead poisoning.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which reached the state of New Hampshire in March 2020, many PY 2020 public facilities projects were delayed or postponed. The projects that have been completed are the Triangle Club electrical system upgrades, Community Action Partnership

of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program work, and the lead remediation program work. The Homeless Center for Strafford County's kitchen project and Rochester Child Care Center's fire doors project are in progress and estimated to be completed in early PY 2021.

CR-10 - Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted

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

| | CDBG |
|---|--------------|
| White | 4,605 |
| Black or African American | 63 |
| Asian | 45 |
| American Indian or American Native | 5 |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 2 |
| Total | 4,720 |
| Hispanic | 51 |
| Not Hispanic | 4,669 |

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

Narrative

During PY 2019, approximately 97.6% of the residents of the City of Rochester served were white, and approximately 2.4% 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 94.2% white, 0.7% Black or African-American, 0.1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.9% Asian, 0.2% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 2.7% Hispanic, and 2.6% two or more races. There have not been highly disproportionate services provided to white residents over residents belonging to racial/ethnic minorities, although the demographics of families served should be closely monitored in future years to ensure that a disproportionality does not develop.

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

Identify the resources made available

| Source of Funds | Source | Resources Made Available | Amount Expended During Program Year |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CDBG | public - federal | 373,751 | 347,268 |
| Other | public - federal | 296,290 | \$246,318 |

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

Narrative

In the adopted PY 2021 Action Plan, \$362,170 in CDBG grant funds (which includes the \$254,462 grant allocation for PY 2020, \$9,509.74 in unexpended prior year funds, and program income from the JOB Loan Program) were made available to the City of Rochester. The adopted PY 2020 Annual Action Plan, one minor plan amendment (to reflect the HUD award correction), and two substantial plan amendments (to allocate CDBG CARES Act funds) are available on the City of Rochester's website at <https://www.rochesternh.net/communitydevelopmentdivision/pages/action-plans>.

During PY 2020, \$347,268 was expended on regular programs and activities, and \$246,318 was expended on activities to prevent, prepare for, or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of \$30,349.22 of the entitlement CDBG grant (8%) was expended on planning and administration activities, and a total of \$12,056.02 (4%) of the COVID-19 grant was expended on planning and administration activities. A total of \$25,671.86 was expended on regular public services (10% of the PY 20 grant allocation), and a total of \$246,318.40 was expended on CARES Act related public services (69% of the grant allocation). Other funding subcategories included housing rehabilitation and public facilities projects.

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 |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Citywide | 55 | 36 | Other areas of the city |
| Rochester Low-Moderate Income Census Tracts | 45 | 64 | 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, \$342,248.00 was spent on activities in >51% low-moderate income census tracts, and

\$111,630.58 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 the region's homeless shelters, My Friend's Place, the Homeless Center for Strafford County, New Generation, and Cross Roads House; mental health services provided by Community Partners; domestic violence services provided by HAVEN; Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels, which provides meal delivery services for elderly residents and adult residents with disabilities; telehealth services provided to low-income medical patients by Strafford County Public Health Network; and supportive services for elderly residents and adults with disabilities provided by Easter Seals. 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, elderly residents, 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 2020, \$5,985,754 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 Friend's Place | \$10,000 | \$100,000
Cross Roads House | \$10,000 | \$1,129,561
SHARE Fund | \$4,000 | \$19,000
Dover Adult Learning Center | \$5,000 | \$1,325,289
Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels | \$2,000 | \$352,956
Tri-City Co-op | \$1,000 | \$192,778
MY TURN | \$4,000 | \$313,002
CASA of NH | \$1,000 | \$1,265,147
HAVEN | \$1,175 | \$213,521
Homeless Center for Strafford County – New Shelter Kitchen | \$50,000 | \$760,000
Rochester Child Care Center – Fire Doors | \$10,000 | \$37,500
HAVEN – New Facility Land Acquisition | \$25,000 | \$0
Triangle Club – Electrical System Upgrades | \$9,500 | \$127,000
Community Action Partnership of Strafford County – Weatherization Program | \$60,434.74 | \$150,000
Lead Remediation – Matching Funds for State Program | \$20,000 | \$0

CR-20 - Affordable Housing

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 | 35 | 21 |
| Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 35 | 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 | 25 | 35 |
| Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 35 | 0 |

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

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

Performance goals were significantly 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 205 homeless residents in PY 2020, while actual emergency shelter beds were provided to 866 homeless residents in PY 2020. This large increase is mostly due to the fact that a significant portion of the city's CDBG-CV funds were allocated toward homeless shelter resources.

Regarding the number of non-homeless households provided with affordable housing units, the eviction moratoria enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic likely affected the need for emergency rental assistance during PY 2020, and it is anticipated that the need will increase in PY 21 as the moratoria end. Regarding the number of households supported through the rehabilitation of existing units, performance goals were slightly exceeded. The goal for PY 2020 was the rehabilitation for 35 low-moderate income households, and the actual performance was the rehabilitation for 38 low-moderate income households. For home rehabilitation, about 74% of households were extremely low income, about 21% of households were low income, and 5% 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.

However, it is anticipated, with the end of pandemic-related rental eviction moratoriums, that there will be an increase in demand for homeless shelter services in PY 2021. Accordingly, a significant percentage of PY 2021 CBDG funds have been allocated for regional homeless services and for public facilities improvements to homeless shelters. PY 2021 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 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Extremely Low-income | 1,356 |
| Low-income | 667 |
| Moderate-income | 30 |
| Total | 2,053 |

Table 7 – Number of Households Served

Narrative Information

The overwhelming majority (99%) of Rochester residents assisted with public service agency CDBG funds during PY 2020 were extremely low or low income, with a significant majority of that percentage being extremely low income (66%). This includes 74% of Rochester residents receiving weatherization housing rehabilitation assistance.

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

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 2020 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), a CDBG-CV grant to a third homeless shelter (New Generation), rental assistance for families who are threatened by homelessness via funding the SHARE Fund's rental assistance program, and public facilities funding for the kitchen installation at the Homeless Center for Strafford County's new, larger-capacity shelter. In addition, the Rochester Community Development Coordinator attended most New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care meetings (held virtually via Zoom during the pandemic), continued in a leadership role with the Home for All coalition and assisted in preparing grant applications for homeless housing programs, 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 primary 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 2020, 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, as well as CDBG-CV funding for the homeless shelter New Generation, and public facilities funding was also provided for the kitchen installation at the Homeless Center for Strafford County's new, larger-capacity shelter. In addition, both public service agency funding and CDBG-CV funding was allocated to HAVEN to provide emergency shelter services for domestic violence survivors who experience homelessness while leaving their abusive partners.

Two of the three shelters (My Friend's Place and the Homeless Center for Strafford County) have transitional housing units available. In addition, new Generation's entire program is structured in a transitional framework that slowly builds client capacity to seek and obtain permanent housing outside the program. 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 2020, CDBG funds supported the SHARE Fund's rental assistance programs for families who are threatened by homelessness via a public service grant 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. Cross Roads House, which also received PY 20 public service funding, runs a housing stabilization program that provides case management for clients who have obtained permanent housing to ensure they maintain that housing.

In addition, public service agency funding was allocated to Tri-City Co-op, which provides peer to peer mental health supportive services for residents with serious mental illnesses; public service agency funding to Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Hampshire, which provides legal services and other support for youth involved in the DCYF system; and public facilities funding for the Triangle Club, which provides recovery meetings for residents with substance use disorders. While these activities do not directly address homelessness, anecdotal reports from the organizations indicate that their supportive services assist their clients in maintaining the stability required to obtain and keep adequate housing.

The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2020, including the Home for All coalition and the Fidelity Subcommittee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force.

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 2020, 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, as well as CDBG-CV funding for the homeless shelter New Generation, and public facilities funding was also provided for the kitchen installation at the Homeless Center for Strafford County's new, larger-capacity shelter. Cross Roads House, specifically, runs a housing stabilization program that provides case management for clients who have obtained permanent housing to ensure they maintain that housing. In addition, both public service agency funding and CDBG-CV funding was allocated to HAVEN to provide emergency shelter services for domestic violence survivors who experience homelessness while leaving their abusive partners.

The Community Development Coordinator has also been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2020, including the Home for All coalition. The focus of the Home for All coalition's work

during PY 2020 has been on increasing supply and access to affordable housing for homeless residents through landlord outreach and education efforts. The goal of the program is to increase landlord acceptance of Section 8 vouchers held by chronically homeless residents. So far, several landlords and multiple rental units have been enrolled in the program.

CR-30 - Public Housing

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 2020, CDBG funding supported the SHARE Fund's rental assistance program for low-income residents and housing rehabilitation for low-income homeowners performed by the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's weatherization assistance program. In addition, access to affordable healthcare was increased in PY 20 via CBDG-CV funding of Strafford County Public Health Network's telehealth program serving low-income patients.

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 2021 Annual Action Plan citizen participation plan 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 2021 Annual Action Plan. 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

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 Community Development Coordinator has been active in multiple coalitions and groups through PY 2020, 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, and is in the process of evaluating potential ordinance amendments to encourage landlords to provide individualized analysis of potential tenants' applications.

In addition, in December 2020 and January 2021, the City of Rochester City Council took under consideration a "disorderly residence" amendment to the city ordinances that would have penalized property owners and tenants of housing deemed to be engaged in "disorderly" activities. The Community Development Coordinator reviewed the draft ordinance amendment and contacted the City Manager and Mayor with concerns about the affordable housing and fair housing implications of the ordinance, especially for domestic violence survivors. At the January 2021 City Council meeting, the City Council voted not to adopt the ordinance amendment (<https://www.rochesternh.net/sites/g/files/vyh1if1131/f/minutes/cc20210105regmin.pdf>, p.57).

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 2020 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-CV funds were also awarded to Community Partners, to provide mental health supportive services for lower-income clients with mental illnesses and/or developmental disabilities, and CDBG public service agency funds were awarded to Tri-City Coop, which provides peer-to-peer mental health supports for residents with mental illnesses. In addition, in PY 2020 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 2020, the Community Development Coordinator has also continued to remain active in the Home for All coalition, 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 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. In 2021, several landlords and multiple rental units

were enrolled in the program.

Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards

In 2019, the City of Rochester participated in a statewide lead poisoning community project organized by New Hampshire Listens, the Conservation Law Foundation, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance. In 2020, 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. PY 2020 CDBG funds in the amount of \$20,000 were allocated for the remediation of lead in homes owned/occupied by lower-income Rochester residents, and the funds were expended on the remediation of a multi-unit building primarily occupied by low-income households.

In addition, the Community Action Partnership for Strafford County's weatherization assistance program, which received over \$60,000 in CDBG housing rehabilitation funding during PY 2020, 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 2020, a total of 38 housing units received housing rehabilitation assistance through Rochester CDBG funding, including seven 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 emergency one-time rental assistance provided by the SHARE Fund. 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. No loan applications were received during PY 20, likely due to most of Rochester's small businesses focusing on survival during the pandemic rather than expansion. However, the City of Rochester made available forgivable loans, using New Hampshire Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery funding, to struggling small businesses in early PY 20 that allowed them to remain open and retain their workforces.

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 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, Rochester McKinney-Vento school district liaison, and other New Hampshire entitlement community CDBG 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 2020, 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 regular member of the New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care, the Home For All coalition, and the Fidelity Committee of the Tri-City Mayoral Homelessness Task Force.

In particular, as a member of the leadership team of the Home for All coalition, the Community Development Coordinator has worked to build connections between private property owners and social service agencies. The Housing Opportunities Workgroup worked throughout 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. In 2021, several landlords and multiple rental units were enrolled in the program, and the participating landlord meets with and coordinates with various homeless service agencies to place the tenant and to address any housing issues post-placement.

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. In December 2020 and January 2021, the City of Rochester City Council took under consideration a “disorderly residence” amendment to the city ordinances that would have penalized property owners and tenants of housing deemed to be engaged in “disorderly” activities. The Community Development Coordinator reviewed the draft ordinance amendment and contacted the City Manager and Mayor with concerns about the affordable housing and fair housing implications of the ordinance, especially for domestic violence survivors. At the January 2021 City Council meeting, the City Council voted not to adopt the ordinance amendment (<https://www.rochesternh.net/sites/g/files/vyhlif1131/f/minutes/cc20210105regmin.pdf>, p.57).

The third listed goal for the current AI is to reduce housing discrimination against residents with disabilities. In PY 2020, CDBG funding supported Tri-City Co-op’s peer-to-peer mental health supportive services for residents, primarily those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, with mental illnesses. CDBG-CV funding was also awarded to Community Partners to provide supportive services for low-income residents with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities. In addition, in spring 2021 the Rochester Community Development Coordinator provided brochures on fair housing rights for disabled persons to Tri-City Co-op for distribution to its members.

CR-40 - Monitoring

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 May and June 2021, 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 2020 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 2020 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 whether the agency currently collects client demographics data and has a conflicts of interest policy. 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 includes field site visits to project sites and consultations with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources for projects not already covered under the existing Programmatic Agreement between the City of Rochester and the Division of Historical Resources. Community Development staff also discussed environmental review procedures with all PY 2020 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 interviews with laborers and review of payroll documentation for the Triangle Club's electrical system upgrades project. No compliance issues were identified from the interviews or in review of submitted payroll documentation. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Davis-Bacon monitoring for PY 2020 projects and those projects that have been

delayed/postponed due to the pandemic were 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

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 2020 CAPER was posted in *Foster's Daily Democrat* on August 18, 2021, more than 30 days prior to the submission of this CAPER to HUD. The notice was also posted on the city website, at City Hall, and at the Rochester Public Library on August 17, 2021. No comments were received.

Summary of Public Comments Received

No comments were received.

CR-45 - CDBG

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 2020. The ongoing pandemic, however, strongly impacted funding allocations for PY 2020. Focus was 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.

It should be noted that the City of Rochester has changed its activities as a result of its experiences in implementing CDBG programs in the past. 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.)

It is anticipated that unexpended PY 2020 CDBG funds will be reallocated in PY 2021 for existing PY 21 activities and/or newly identified community needs.