

CR-05 - Goals and Outcomes

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

This could be an overview that includes major initiatives and highlights that were proposed and executed throughout the program year.

The Program Year 2023 CAPER evaluates the progress towards achieving the goals and strategies established in the City's 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan and Program Year 2023 Annual Action Plan. It also addresses the affordable housing, human service, and employment needs of low and moderate-income households in our community, as outlined in CR-05-Goals and Outcomes identifying the adopted Priority Needs, Housing Strategies, and Community Development Strategies, including specific measures of progress and numeric five-year goals as established for each strategy. The CDBG funded activities covered in this report primarily benefited low- and moderate-income residents and lower income communities within the jurisdiction and addressed affordable housing development needs.

A notice regarding the CAPER was published on the City of Ocala website on Monday November 18, 2024. A notice regarding this CAPER was published in the Ocala Gazette newspaper on November 17, 2024, for the required 15-day comment period. The comment period was open from November 19th to December 16th, exceeding the required fifteen (15) days.

The City of Ocala's CDBG goals for program year 2023 included the rehabilitation of twelve (12) low-to- moderate income housing units; the demolishing of two (2) low-to-moderate income housing units and acquiring one (1) vacant lot for the purpose of developing an affordable housing unit.

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

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

Goal	Category	Source / Amount	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Expected – Strategic Plan	Actual – Strategic Plan	Percent Complete	Expected – Program Year	Actual – Program Year	Percent Complete
CV - 3 Public Service	Non-Housing Community Development Public Service	public federal CDBG CV-3: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	250	293	117.20%			
CV - Economic Development	Non-Housing Community Development Economic Development	Public - Federal CDBG CV 1: \$	Businesses assisted	Businesses Assisted	8	8	100.00%			
CV - Public Service	Non-Housing Community Development Public Service	Public - Federal CDBG CV 1: \$	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	254	7286	2,868.50%			
Housing Improvements	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	25	36	144.00%	12	16	133.33%
Housing Improvements	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Buildings Demolished	Buildings	0	0		2	3	150.00%

Housing Improvements	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	0	0		1	0	0.00%
Planning and Administration	Non-Housing Community Development Planning and Administration	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	1	1	100.00%			
Public Facilities/Infrastructure	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit	Households Assisted	250	0	0.00%			
Quality of Life	Affordable Housing Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Buildings Demolished	Buildings	10	7	70.00%			
Quality of Life	Affordable Housing Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	0	0				

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.

Funds were allocated in alignment with the priorities identified in the Consolidated and Annual Action Plan. CDBG or HOME funds were used in these projects to support our efforts to meet HUD's mandate and improve housing accessibility and affordability, and the overall quality of life for low-to-moderate income residents.

The City of Ocala allocated CDBG, SHIP, HOME, and Affordable Housing Grant funds based on a first come, first qualified basis to provide housing rehabilitation assistance to thirty-seven (37) low to moderate income families which addresses its priority of renovating existing housing of low-to-moderate income persons. Sixteen (16) of the homes were assisted with CDBG funds. Also, with CDBG funding, the City demolished three (3) dilapidated homes that will be rebuilt with HOME funding. In addition, the City used SHIP funding to provide rental assistance to thirty-nine (39) low-mod income families to assist them in moving into housing and/or keeping them from becoming homeless. The City did not carry out any public facility projects.

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	12
Black or African American	53
Asian	0
American Indian or American Native	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
Total	65
Hispanic	6
Not Hispanic	59

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

Narrative

Much of the City's most unsuitable living conditions are found in its low-income neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are the focus of the programs spending to stabilize and revitalize these neighborhoods and preserve the low-income housing stock that exist in these areas. Three (3) of the lowest income census tracts exist in neighborhoods that are predominantly African American. The City has identified the Tucker Hill Community, which is 75% African American, as a target area in one such census tracts in which it looks to devote resources to rehabilitate, preserve, and develop low-income housing units. However, the City's housing program is a city-wide program that operates on a first come first qualified basis and assistance is provided to all citizens that qualify regardless of the community in which they live.

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	496,815	466,948
Other	public - federal	1,895,834	1,473,117

Table 3 - Resources Made Available

Narrative

The allocation of CDBG resources is targeted to best meet the priority needs of low- and moderate-income persons based on a variety of planning studies and community input in the preceding years. Considering the small amount of federal funding received, the City is focusing most of its efforts in housing rehabilitation activities to preserve its affordable housing stock. Ocala has a great need for affordable housing units but also, we must focus on maintaining the current houses occupied by low- and moderate-income persons. This strategy also bolsters the local economy in that it provides construction jobs that otherwise would not exist because the persons that are assisted with this funding do not have the means to contract for these repairs themselves.

Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
City of Ocala	100	100	

Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Narrative

During this period, 100% of the homes rehabilitated were located in the City of Ocala.

Leveraging

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

The City of Ocala Housing Rehabilitation program is funded using a combination of its CDBG, HOME Grant, State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Grant, Florida Municipal Power Agency (FMPA) funds and the City's Affordable Housing Fund. This leveraging of federals, state and local funding enables the City to maximize the number of families it can assist on annual basis.

In addition, the City works closely with the Community Action Agency to maximize the amount of assistance provided to housing rehabilitation applicants reducing the rehabilitation costs and allowing the programs to assist more families. This local agency, when funds are available, provides additional funding to City rehab projects by paying for the weatherization aspect of the project.

The City sold seven (7) surplus lots to a for profit developer to produce seven (7) new affordable housing units. These units are expected to be completed in 2025. All property that was rehabbed during this period was privately owned by the homeowners.

To meet the HOME grant match requirements, the City uses its annual allocation of SHIP funding as matching dollars.

CR-20 - Affordable Housing 91.520(b)

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

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	5	5
Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	42	70
Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units	2	4
Total	49	79

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of households supported through Rental Assistance	30	46
Number of households supported through The Production of New Units	0	0
Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units	12	29
Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units	0	0
Total	42	75

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

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

The City was able to far exceed its local housing program goals for the 2023 Program Year. The City was able to bring twenty-nine (29) total homes from sub-standard to standard conditions. The City also assisted forty-six (46) households with rental assistance to provide stable housing solutions in its volatile market.

Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.

The City will continue to have a high focus on investing its allocation towards affordable housing projects. There will be a high premium on rehabilitating substandard housing conditions to keep units from leaving the affordable housing inventory. The City will also continue to look for ways to leverage funds to increase its abilities to create and preserve affordable housing in its service area. The City is also actively seeking other housing grants to fund new construction and rehabilitation projects for those seeking affordable housing options. The City has put together the framework for a Zero Interest Home Ownership program that if funded, will be a huge impact on providing affordable and assessable units to the community. The City is also actively searching for grants and funding opportunities to provide rental assistance to the community.

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	5	0
Low-income	4	0
Moderate-income	9	0
Total	18	0

Table 7 – Number of Households Served

Narrative Information

The City of Ocala has engaged in additional activities and partnerships to address worse case housing needs in its community. Through its Office of Homeless Prevention, the City has partnered with the Ocala Housing Authority in issuing and administering Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) for homeless families and individuals in Marion County. The City functions as the lead in distributing the applications and entering the applicants into the Marion County Continuum of Care (CoC) through its coordinated entry process. City staff performs a vulnerability assessment of the residents and maintains the CoC By Name List to ensure the most vulnerable citizens are offered housing first. To date, 100% of the vouchers have been used to house previously homeless families and individuals.

The City's OHP division also serves as the lead agency for the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Coordinated Entry (CE).

The City has also included in its Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP), provisions and funding to assist renters who face eviction and/or in need of rental subsidies because they are expending 50% or greater of their gross income on rent. The City's LHAP allows for up to twelve (12) months of rental assistance. The City assisted forty-one (41) families with its SHIP funding with deposits, first month's rent, and rent in arrears.

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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

Through its Office of Homeless Prevention, the City of Ocala provides outreach to and identifies persons who are experiencing homelessness. The Outreach Specialist performs a housing assessment to determine appropriate housing and services options for the residents. Once the household is assessed, the City facilitates a By Name List and prioritizes the contacted residents for housing services. The City then refers those residents to organizations in the community best able to serve the resident's needs.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

Needs that have been identified in the community, such as Permanent Supported Housing (PSH), are highlighted at grant workshops, and agencies providing that service are encouraged to apply for grant funds. Identified needs and grant applications supporting the identified need are ranked during the annual funding recommendation meetings by the review committee to bridge an identified gap in services. The Joint Office on Homelessness is working with non-profit organizations to produce additional PSH units. Currently, the City is actively assisting with a project that will produce fifty-nine (59) new PSH units by the end of 2025. There are on-going conversations with non-profit organizations, law enforcement, and local political leaders, to create, fund, and operate a low-barrier shelter. This has been identified by the Marion County Continuum of Care as its highest priority. A low-barrier shelter will enable the community to provide needed sheltering opportunities for individuals who currently don't meet the guidelines of other shelters in the community. Currently there is an agreement in place to bring on a twelve (12) bed, low-barrier shelter by the end of 2025.

During this reporting period the City also partnered with the Ocala Housing Authority (OHA) to complete the implementation of an Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program. OHA received fifty-one (51) vouchers designed to assist the County's most vulnerable citizens in attaining housing. To date all voucher holders have leased up and are housed for the next nine (9) years.

The housing needs of the homeless in the City of Ocala/Marion County cannot be met entirely by emergency shelters and transitional housing due to the lack of capacity. The Marion County CoC receives funds to provide homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, and emergency shelter using the Housing First Program to assist homeless persons/families.

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

The following list of public and private agencies help address housing, health, social services, employment, education, and youth needs:

Faith based organizations and churches provide emergency food and financial assistance.

- Community Legal Services provides representation in eviction, foreclosures, and public housing proceedings.
- Ocala Housing Authority (OHA) provides consumer credit counseling and housing re-modification to existing mortgages, as well as emergency housing vouchers for the County's most vulnerable residents.
- Phoenix House Florida Addiction Treatment Center for men and women for substance abuse and mental health problems. The center is often used as a transitional housing from prison facilities after discharge with medical and mental health issues.
- CareerSource of Citrus, Levy, Marion provides job development and counseling; assists with employment searches; identifies job skills and provides education and guidance with writing resumes and interviewing.
- Kids Central and its partners provide Independent living services to youth and young adults in the foster care system after being discharged. These services prepare the youth for adulthood and life after foster care. For youth aging-out of the system (those turning 18 years old without returning to the care of their parents or being adopted) it is a requirement to have the basic life skills to function successfully on their own. Training includes but is not limited to financial literacy training, household management, educational and career planning. They help youth and young adults build a strong foundation for their lives and provides Independent living and extended foster care work to help youth and young adults build a strong foundation for their lives. Their Independent Living and Extended Foster Care provide young adults with the life skills and services that they need to make a successful transition to the responsibilities of adulthood.
- Interfaith Emergency Services provides funding for outreach staff, diversion costs, and needs of the unsheltered homeless (medical, mental health, identification, and transportation). During this reporting period, they have begun construction on a new state of the art Engagement Center which will serve as a centralized location for homeless persons and families to come and receive serves and assistance in securing resources. Currently four (4) different agencies, including the City of Ocala, have signed MOU's to work out of the engagement center multiple days per week. The center will also conduct Shower and Laundry Ministries that will allow homeless neighbors to come in and take a hot shower and to wash their clothes.

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

The City of Ocala has access to rapid rehousing and homeless prevention programs administered through the Joint Office on Homelessness and Marion County Community Services, which are funded through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). There are two local veteran assistance programs with Supportive Services for Veteran Families Funds (SSVF). Marion County helps fund rapid rehousing and homeless prevention programs through Shepherds Lighthouse, and Interfaith Emergency Services to assist the chronically homeless to transition into permanent housing. The City conducts coordinated entry and manages the HMIS information for these services.

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

Actions taken to address the needs of public housing

The Ocala Housing Authority (OHA) continued its evaluation of HUD's Public Housing Repositioning initiative for converting its public housing units to project-based or tenant-based vouchers. Currently the City is collaborating with a private investor and OHA to produce an apartment complex that will include sixty (60) affordable units that will be provided project-based vouchers by OHA.

OHA continued to administer the Resident Opportunities and Self Sufficiency (ROSS) grant to increase its focus on individual case management and providing more resources to aid low to moderate income families achieve self-sufficiency. Their Family Self Sufficiency Grant (FSS) funding focused on assisting Housing Choice Voucher families to be free of government assistance. OHA operated two duplexes from the Continuum of Care for providing housing and supportive services to four eligible families that are homeless with minor child(ren) and at least one family member is disabled. They continued to partner with the City of Ocala and Marion County Community Services to acquire vacant lots and grant funding to produce the most needed affordable housing units (1 and 2-bedroom units). OHA implemented recruitment strategies designed to increase the number of families participating in the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program and ROSS programs. OHA also has leased up 51 of 51 Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) to assist individuals or families who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, or families fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, sexual assault or human trafficking, individuals or families who are at-risk of being homelessness and individuals or families who are recently homeless. OHA continues to operate the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers program to assist homeless veterans. Additionally, consistent discussion and planning for problematic cases were identified and addressed with local Continuum of Care (CoC) membership and committee meetings, monthly and biweekly for VASH.

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

The Ocala Housing Authority (OHA) has collaborated with the City of Ocala to participate in the City's planned Zero Interest Home Ownership Program. OHA plans to have persons in its Sec 8 Homeownership Program purchase homes that will be built on city surplus lots and sold with a fifteen (15) year zero interest mortgage.

OHA is a HUD certified housing counseling agency with two HUD Certified Housing Counselors on staff. OHA provides homeownership, foreclosure, credit repair, and rental housing counseling. The agency also provides information on how to become a homeowner, fair housing rights, credit counseling, and foreclosure prevention. OHA also provides the following counseling services:

- Homebuyer Education Programs
- Loss Mitigation

- Money Debt Management
- Mortgage Delinquency and Default Resolution Counseling
- Post-Purchase Counseling
- Pre-Purchase Counseling
- Renter's Assistance

OHA also offers the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, Resident Opportunities and Self Sufficiency Program, Homebuyer's Club and Homeownership counseling programs. These programs assist Section 8 participants and residents of the public housing communities with becoming economically self-sufficient and attaining homeownership.

OHA has an increased focus on case management and provide classes that center on becoming employable through education and job skills training, obtaining employment, homeownership, credit rebuilding, safety, voter awareness, and budgeting. OHA is working on partnerships that will aid staff with helping residents remove barriers to transportation, education, and employment.

OHA maintains ongoing resident initiatives. The Ocala Housing Authority has been working diligently to promote activity and interested in Resident Council/Resident Advisory Board in each of the OHA's Public Housing communities to include guest speakers keep residents informed of new programs and opportunities.

Residents receive a monthly newsletter/calendar that includes vital OHA information, updates from HUD and local community information. OHA staff walks through each community several times a month to maintain a visible presence on-site and to increase customer service.

Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs

N/A

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

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

The City of Ocala has established public policy regarding affordable housing. The City continually evaluates policies to ensure they do not interfere with affordable housing efforts. In addition, the City of Ocala's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) meets to update and review barriers that may affect affordable housing. The AHAC committee has developed a reporting matrix that helps with accountability of completing the tasks that will eliminate or reduce the barriers to affordable housing.

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

The City undertook activities to address the obstacles to meeting underserved housing needs. The City of Ocala developed an Affordable Housing Initiative (AFHI) Team consisting of the Chief of Staff, the CFO, City Attorney, Community Development Services Director, Procurement Director, Planning Director, Real-Estate Manager, and related staff. Along with the AHAC Committee, the AFHI Team has taken actionable steps to identify and remove obstacles to developing affordable housing units. A great focus has been placed on the surplus lands currently owned by the City. The City has established its initial list of surplus lands to be redistributed and used for the development of affordable housing and is actively soliciting bids through its Procurement Department from for profit and not-for-profit developers of affordable housing.

The City continues to work toward bettering its expedited permitting process. The Community Programs Division and Growth Management Department implemented weekly meetings to discuss the permitting process. The Community Programs Division developed an affordable housing application that will help identify and fast track the permitting of affordable housing projects and incentivize the production of affordable housing units by making the City's Affordable Housing Fund available to developers to offset specific permitting costs. The Community Programs Division continued to work with the City's Public Relations Department to develop literature to distribute in the community to bring greater awareness of funding that can be used to offset impact fees when developing affordable housing units.

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

The City has implemented a housing rehabilitation program and continues to operate the program within the HUD Lead-Safe Housing regulations. The rehabilitation program offered through the City is reducing lead hazards by focusing on code compliance. The City also ensured that staff is appropriately trained in lead-based paint, pamphlets are distributed, inspections and assessments are conducted when required, and that contractors trained in lead safe practices are used. All rehabilitation activities constructed prior to 1978 are inspected for lead-based paint (LBP). The City also performs asbestos

testing on all rehabilitation projects and it tests for mold as needed.

The first step is counseling, informing the rehabilitation client of the danger of lead-based paint, providing the requisite brochure, and signing an acknowledgement of receipt of the brochure when clients apply for assistance. CDBG staff determines at this interview whether there is heightened risk due to young children in the household. If LBP is found, and funding is available to effectively mitigate, the City will hire the appropriate professionals to do the work. The City does not perform LBP inspections. The City hires certified environmental inspectors to provide inspection and documentation services. Certified contractors performing remediation work must do so in accordance with industry standards including posting of appropriate warning signs, restricting occupants from work areas, containing work areas to prevent dust and debris from spreading, conducting thorough cleanup, and verifying that cleanup was effective.

The City has guidelines that are written for lead-based paint policies and procedures. All contracts/agreements with contractors/inspectors include the required regulatory language enforcing the requirements that must be met and followed. The City also monitors lead-based paint projects to ensure the provisions are being applied.

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

The City of Ocala has an aging housing stock in several low-income neighborhoods. Using CDBG, HOME, SHIP, CRA, Florida Municipal Power Authority (FMPA) and the local Affordable Housing Fund, the City's strategy is to continue to revitalize these neighborhoods to provide a better quality of life to the residents, while preserving the housing through rehabilitation. The City continues to attempt to reduce the poverty level by providing funds to reduce the blighted conditions city wide. In addition, the City commits funding for business improvement grants in low-income areas. The City, along with the local Chamber and Economic Partnership, continues to work with local business to provide job opportunities for all residents and attract new business to the area. The City and the CEP are currently working on creating a business incubator in West Ocala. The City continually works with local organizations such as the Marion County Continuum of Care, CareerSource, and Governor's West Ocala Neighborhood Revitalization Council to resolve social issues that may contribute to high poverty levels.

The City has applied for HUD's PRO Housing grant, which if awarded will fund the City's Zero Interest Home Ownership Program as well as provide \$2,000,000 of additional housing rehabilitation for the City's Tucker Hill community, which is one of the City's most underserved areas.

The City of Ocala has established sufficient public policy regarding affordable housing. However, the City continually re-evaluates policies to ensure they do not interfere with affordable housing efforts. In addition, the City of Ocala's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) meets to update and review barriers that may affect affordable housing.

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

City of Ocala staff participates with community organizations specializing in homelessness (Interfaith, St. Theresa), children's issues (Kimberly's Center, ELC), mental health (SMA Healthcare and FREEdom Clinic), veterans services (Veterans of America, Vets Helping Vets), senior services, and community issues (Community with a Heart). The Community Programs Division consulted with Ocala Housing Authority concerning public housing needs and any planned program activities. Consultation helped ensure that all proposed activities directed towards increasing affordable housing, neighborhood improvement, and/or any resident programs and/or services funded by Ocala Housing Authority will increase the quality of life of all participating parties.

The City of Ocala Community Programs Division coordinates with various public, private, and nonprofit agencies. Collaboration between local, county, and state agencies is important in successfully carrying out the goals and objectives identified in the Consolidated Plan and addressing community needs. Areas of coordination included broadband and Wi-Fi access to underserved areas; evaluation of flood prone areas; emergency evacuation routes; availability of fire/rescue services; and determination of effect on natural and environmental resources.

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

The City uses a Coordinated Entry (CE) model to coordinate housing activities among social agencies. The office of Homeless Prevention serves as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) lead agency for the Marion County Continuum of Care. They are the point of contact with the community's most vulnerable citizens, and they initiate the process of routing those individuals to available services.

The City also works with private sector developers to produce affordable housing projects. These projects are both rental and homeownership and are designed to create more affordable and suitable units to the community's housing stock. In the reporting period, the City is currently reviewing applications to commit \$460,000 of its Affordable Housing Fund in the form of a loan, that will enable a partnering developer to secure a 9% tax credit from the State of Florida that will lead to the production of no less than sixty (60) affordable units.

The Community Programs Division is also actively soliciting for profit and not for profit affordable housing developers, to develop single family affordable housing units on surplus lots owned by the City. The city plans to have fifteen (15) lots transferred to the private sector by the end of 2025.

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

The 2019 AI identified four (4) impediments to fair housing that affect the citizens of Marion County. The first being an insufficient supply of affordable rental housing. To help eliminate this barrier the City of Ocala collaborates with the Marion County Housing Finance Authority, Ocala Housing Authority (OHA), and private sector developers to develop affordable rental housing units. The City in Program

Year 2022 brought 90 affordable units online on property that was once a City golf course. The City has also worked with OHA in locating and recruiting new landlords who will assist in bringing affordable units online in the community. To strengthen relationships with private landlords, OHA has hired a Housing Locator that works with community housing providers and the City to actively recruit, retain, and incentivize landlords. The collaboration also works to educate landlords to some of the benefits of renting too low to moderate income persons and families.

Insufficient support of affordable home ownership was the second identified impediment. To help eliminate this barrier the City of Ocala collaborates with the Marion County Housing Finance Authority, Ocala Housing Authority (OHA), Marion County Habitat for Humanity, and private sector developers to develop affordable housing units for home ownership. The City is currently working on an infill plan that is geared to facilitate the development of affordable housing units throughout the City but particularly in historically low/mod income neighborhoods on surplus properties owned by the City. The City is partnering with for-profit and non-profit developers to develop suitable units at affordable prices. The City has worked with OHA in assisting participants of the Sec 8 Homeownership Program with assistance in purchasing homes with their HUD issued vouchers. OHA and the City also partner in providing home buyers education classes to perspective homeowners. These classes help low/mod citizens prepare for homeownership and help give them the skills to be successful long-term homeowners.

The next impediment identified in the 2019 AI was a lack of awareness by residents of Fair Housing laws. The City continues to collaborate with Marion County, OHA, and Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida – Ocala to provide training material, resources, and events to educate the housing community on fair housing laws. The City prominently advertises on their website and other publications during fair housing month and makes presentations to local community groups to help spread fair housing knowledge throughout the community.

The final identified impediment in the AI is poor credit history and inadequate access to employment opportunities. The City does not have a program to address the impediment of poor credit. Instead, it collaborates with OHA and the local United Way to recommend citizens to the OHA's Family Self Sufficiency Program and United Way's Strong Families initiative. The City is one of the largest employers in Marion County. The City has been pro-active in developing various programs to attract low/mod income employees, minority employees, and small business. The City collaborates with the County and the Ocala/Marion Chamber & Economic Partners to attract national and regional business. This collaboration has been effective in attracting new community partners who have brought in new and higher paying employment opportunities.

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 Ocala provides direct benefit to low-income households through housing rehabilitation, rental assistance, and direct financial assistance to first time homebuyers. Progress and compliance with program requirements are monitored throughout the entire process and all households are income qualified prior to services rendered. Files are maintained for each household for five years after the liens are released.

The City ensures long term compliance with applicable program requirements as follows:

- Collaboration between departments occurs to keep expenditure of CDBG funds within the City's vision.
- Minority Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise (MBE-WBE) outreach is made available through the City's procurement process and this data is entered through the City's Trakit system. MBE-WBE reports are submitted to HUD.
- The City solicits for Section 3 business through the procurement process.
- The SF425 is reported quarterly by the City of Ocala to HUD.
- Timely expenditure of grant funding

Additionally, the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan program goals and objectives are monitored at least quarterly through the review of IDIS comprehensive data reports. The City analyzes expenditures and determines if adjustments are needed based on results. The City has a written monitoring policy in place outlining the standards to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

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 Program Year 2023 CAPER was advertised November 17, 2024, in the local newspaper noticing a comment period of November 18, 2024, to December 16, 2024. A community meeting was held

December 10, 2024, during the monthly Governor’s West Ocala Neighborhood Revitalization Inc. meeting and a public hearing was held on December 17, 2024, at the City of Ocala’s regularly scheduled City Council meeting at City Hall. A draft of the CAPER was made available on the City of Ocala website and was also made available for review at the City of Ocala Community Development Services Department and placed on the City Council agenda for December 17, 2024. 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 were no changes to the program objectives in the 2023 program year.

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

Yes

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

Background and Grant Expenses

In 2022, the City of Ocala received an EPA community-wide assessment grant (4B02D28522) in the amount of \$500,000. To date, \$284,940.25 has been spent on activities included in the Work Plan.

From October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, total funds spent on brownfields activities totaled \$242,354. Of the total amount spent, \$8,888 was paid to minority-owned and women-owned businesses for services provided.

Outreach and Community Involvement

May 10, 2024 – The City of Ocala held a Reeds Place - Vision 2050 Focus Group meeting to brainstorm the potential plans for Reeds Place. The participants provided conceptual land use layouts for the study area taking into consideration the areas identified for future remediation, interconnectivity to surrounding points of interest and needs of the wider community.

Site Inventory

GIS Brownfields Tool Update: The Site Inventory map is continually updated as more sites assessed with grant funds are added to the GIS Map made available to the public.

Assessment

- Number of Phase I Assessments completed: 10
- Number of Phase II Assessments completed: 5

Planning Brownfields Revitalization Plan: The City has created a draft conceptual plan for the revitalization of the Reed Place community in West Ocala.

Resources Leveraged

On August 20, 2024, FL TBC, LLC, represented by Joshua Clarke, received approval for a West Ocala CRA New Construction Incentive grant, in an amount not to exceed \$172,688. EPA funds were used to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment at the location. The grant request was made to support the construction of a quick service restaurant (Culver's Ocala) at 3637 West Silver Spring Boulevard (Parcel ID: 2260-228-000). Project details:

- The proposed building will be approximately 4,443 square feet in size.
- The estimated capital investment for construction of the project is \$2,878,138.
- Approximately 80 full-time jobs will be created with annual salaries ranging from \$29,000 to \$54,000.
- The project is scheduled to be completed by June 2025.

343 NE 1st Ave Construction of the Forge at Madison Commons. A Phase I assessment of this site was done through the grant program.

- The estimated cost of this project is \$4,000,000.
- Project to be completed by December 2024.
- Approximately 40 jobs during construction.

SW 10th Street - Housing Finance Authority of Marion County This project will add housing for households with income between 60% and 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The intent is to build affordable senior and workforce, one- and two-bedroom multifamily housing units. This project is expected to save tenants up to \$2,500 per month. EPA funds were used to conduct one Phase I assessment and two Phase II Environmental Site Assessments at this property.

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CR-58 – Section 3

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

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

Table 8 – Total Labor Hours

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

Other.					
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Table 9 – Qualitative Efforts - Number of Activities by Program

Narrative

The City didn't do any projects over the \$200,000 threshold that would trigger Sec 3 for municipalities. However, through its procurement department Small and Minority Business Program, the City actively seeks Sec 3 business concerns. Also, through its Office of Homeless Prevention, City Staff refers and connects potential Sec 3 workers with supportive services and provides direct referrals to the local Career Source Agency.

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