

Executive Summary

ES-05 Executive Summary – 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

The Consolidated Plan consists of the information required in 24 CFR Part 91, Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs. The Consolidated Plan serves as a planning document, application for Federal Funds, strategic plan in carrying out U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, and Annual Action Plan that provides the basis for assessing performance.

The City of Ocala and Marion County HOME Consortium Five Year Consolidated Plan covers the time period from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2029. The Plan identifies community needs and details those initiatives that will address those needs and is structured in a format that will help to measure performance. This five-year planning document identifies priority housing, homeless, special populations, community development needs, and establishes general strategies for addressing those needs, and integrates the application, planning, and citizen participation requirements for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME).

The City of Ocala Community Development Services Department is responsible for administering the CDBG funding grant and other State funding grant. The Marion County Community Services Department is the lead agency designated to administer HOME funds on behalf of the Marion County HOME Consortium, of which the City of Ocala is a participating member. The City of Ocala receives CDBG funds directly from HUD. The City of Ocala Community Development Services Department is the entity responsible for approving the application of grant funds for various activities outlined in this Consolidated Plan and the One-Year Annual Action Plan.

2. Summary of the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan Needs Assessment Overview

Through a comprehensive process, the City of Ocala and Marion County have identified objectives and outcomes for the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan. The following goals and objectives are intended to be accomplished during the Consolidated Plan period and encompass goals established by both the City and County. Certain objectives will be accomplished through the County's CDBG, HOME, or ESG programs and other objectives will be accomplished with City CDBG and HOME funding. In some cases, both County and City will undertake similar activities to meet specific objectives.

Goal 1 - Owner Occupied Rehabilitation- by providing home repairs to low-income owner-occupied homes to include emergency repairs and ADA compliant accessibility.

- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Sustainability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** - 25 Homeowner Housing Units Rehabilitated
- **Goal 2 – Clearance/Demolition** demolition of abandoned-dilapidated, vacant housing.
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Affordability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Removal of 5 structures
- **Goal 3- Acquisition** acquire property suitable for the development of affordable housing units.
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Affordability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Acquire 2 lots for the purpose of creating affordable housing units for rent or homeownership
- **Goal 4 – Planning and Administration-** Program administration
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Sustainability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – General Program Administration
- **Goal 5 – Public Services-** provide assistance to a local non-profit to increase or maintain capacity to serve low-income residents.
- **Objective** – Low- to- Mod Individual Benefit
- **Outcome** – Quality of Life
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Assist organizations with repairs to their building that serves low-income families

3. Evaluation of past performance

The City of Ocala funds activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the 2019-2024 Consolidated Plan and activities also having the greatest impact on addressing community needs. As in previous years, the City funded various activities that continued to improve housing conditions and improve the living environment within the City of Ocala. The City primarily focuses its funding in the retaining of affordable housing units through its Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program.

Ocala continues to progress in meeting its Consolidated Plan goals and funding activities benefitting at least 70% low-to moderate-income persons as certified to in the 2019-2024 Consolidated Plan.

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) encourages public participation, emphasizing involvement by low and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in areas targeted for revitalization and areas where funding is proposed. In addition, it encourages the participation of all its citizens, including minorities, non-English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities. Written materials can be provided in Spanish, and the City makes all reasonable accommodations for persons with special needs that request assistance. The City has Spanish speaking staff to assist with translation upon request.

The City provides the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of all federally required documents and publications. The City also provides full and timely disclosure of program records and information for the preceding five years consistent with applicable Federal, State, and local laws regarding personal privacy and confidentiality.

On February 9, 2024, an advertisement was published in the Ocala Gazette notifying the public of a public hearing to assess the needs of the community in the development of the 2024-2028 CDBG Consolidated Plan and the 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan. Also, publication of an additional Public Needs Assessment public hearing was published in the Ocala Gazette on March 22, 2024.

For the development of the 2024-2028 CDBG Consolidated Plan and the 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan, draft documents with recommended uses of funding were made available for public review and an advertisement was published in the Ocala Star Banner on July 7, 2024. A public meeting was held via ZOOM, <https://zoom.us/j/98442851356?pwd=ZWRHOC9EaDBMVkNDSzYrbDBoMIY5Zz09>

July 9, 2024, during the Governor's West Ocala Neighborhood Revitalization Council, Inc.'s regular monthly meeting. This provided for the 30-day public comment period from July 8, 2024, through August 6, 2024. A copy of the Citizen Participation Plan was also made available for review.

5. Summary of public comments

N/A

6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them

N/A

7. Summary

N/A

The Process

PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies - 91.200(b)

1. Describe agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source

The following are the agencies/entities responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

| Agency Role | Name | Department/Agency |
|--------------------|-------|---|
| CDBG Administrator | Ocala | Community Development Services Department |

Table 1– Responsible Agencies

Narrative

The City of Ocala is a CDBG Entitlement Community and receives its funds directly from HUD, which are reported under this Consolidated Plan. The City is also a HOME Participating Jurisdiction through the Marion County/Ocala HOME Consortium. Marion County is the lead agency responsible for reporting consortium activities, including the City of Ocala's HOME funds. The City's HOME funding, activities, and strategies are described under the Marion County 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan.

The City of Ocala's Community Development Services (CDS) Department is the lead agency responsible for the implementation of its federal CDBG grant program. The Community Programs Division oversees the administration of all housing and community development activities undertaken using CDBG funds and is the responsible agency in reporting accomplishments. The CDS director is responsible for the development of the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan (for the CDBG program), the Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. City Council ultimately approves the final version of the plans.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

The City of Ocala used public meeting information and surveys to assist in the development of funding priorities. The Community Programs Administrative Coordinator is responsible for collecting data and comments from the public and other stakeholders regarding the Consolidated Plan:

Natalia Cox, Administrative Coordinator Community Programs – City of Ocala, 201 SE 3rd Street, 2nd Floor, Ocala, FL 34471, Email: ncox@ocalafl.gov, Phone: 352-629-8322

PR-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.110, 91.200(b), 91.300(b), 91.215(l) and 91.315(l)

1. Introduction

As a CDBG Entitlement and a HOME Participating Jurisdiction in the Marion County/Ocala HOME Consortium, the consultation process for the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan is conducted in partnership between the City of Ocala and Marion County. The consultation process is one process for the purposes of this plan. As a result, certain information may overlap. Staff from the City and County conducted agency consultation with various social service providers, public service agencies, housing agencies, non-profit organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. Results of these consultations helped to provide the basis for the City's five-year strategy as outlined in the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan.

Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction's activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(l)).

private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(l)).

The Community Development Services Department coordinates with various public, private, and non-profit agencies in carrying out its activities. Collaboration between and among local, county, and state agencies is critical for addressing community needs and achieving the goals and objectives identified in the Consolidated Plan. The City fosters and maintains partnerships with other public and private agencies for the successful delivery of its housing and community development programs.

Private entities effectively support the delivery of programs and services by offering additional resources that can be leveraged to supplement existing services or fill in gaps. The City of Ocala continues to seek additional funding sources for housing and community development activities whenever possible.

Several steps have been taken to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health, and service agencies. Each of these steps helps facilitate information exchange between the City and those providing public services. Ocala's housing and community development plan is carried out through a combination of public, private, and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process.

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness

The City has created an Office of Homeless Prevention which is led by the Deputy Director of Community Development Services. She currently is a member of the Continuum of Care, conducts the annual PIT

count, administers additional periodic counts, coordinates the Outreach program, manages the Coordinated Entry Program, and serves on the board of the local Salvation Army.

Ocala/Marion County's CoC has established a strategy for addressing the needs of homeless individuals and families making Permanent Supportive Housing and low barrier shelter priorities for Marion County. The vision is to develop a collaborative community-wide effort to implement a system that addresses homelessness in Marion County, with every individual and family being self-sufficient and having safe, decent, affordable, permanent housing. The vision includes:

- Management of street outreach teams made up of formerly homeless persons and professionals, to identify and gain the confidence of unsheltered homeless individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse problems.
- Working to form partnerships in the community to create comprehensive case management for the chronically homeless, using the Housing First model. This includes working towards adding a "low barrier" type shelter and an "engagement (day) center" to work with unsheltered clients that have barriers that prevent them from entering our existing shelters. Regular case management has shown better success rates in homeless clients obtaining and maintaining permanent housing.
- Development of additional mental health and substance abuse treatment resources targeting the homeless based on best practices. Additional services have become available in our area to assist homeless clients with these services (non-emergency) for either no or low cost.
- Development of comprehensive employment and job training, and supportive services for the chronically homeless throughout the County. Staff has a close relationship with CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion, the community's local workforce board and Wear Gloves, an organization which offers entry level employment to those with employment barriers.
- Development of transitional and permanent housing in concert with those local agencies and organizations that have the capacity to develop housing programs and perform case management. At least one project will break ground in August/September of 2024 that will provide very low-income housing and permanent supportive housing to clients with housing barriers.
- City staff will administer an assessment tool to triage clients that meet the literally homeless criteria. This tool assesses the client's vulnerability and assigns them a score based on their responses. The score reflects the level of their vulnerability and that score, along with the length of time they have been homeless, form their Coordinated Entry placement score. They will then be placed on the Coordinated Entry list to obtain housing financial assistance.
- Aggressive member enrollment, training and monitoring of the Homeless Management Information System. The HMIS System in place is HUD Compliant and provides adequate security features to ensure client confidentiality. City staff will continue to encourage more agencies to utilize the system, as well as existing users to expand their use of the system to its full capabilities. Ongoing data quality improvement is a priority as well.

- Enhancement of current programs which provide financial assistance and counseling to people at risk of homelessness.

Marion service providers and local governmental agencies support and encourage the ongoing efforts of the CoC and have used the CoC as a basis for its strategies to address homeless needs planning.

Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the jurisdiction's area in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards and evaluate outcomes, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the administration of HMIS

The City of Ocala works with the Continuum of Care to constantly assess the need for homeless services in Marion County. The City of Ocala employs four (4) Outreach specialists that are constantly in the community working with the emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, permanent support housing programs, and the unsheltered homeless. They hear the concerns of all these different aspects of the community and can bring those concerns to the table. The Coordinated Entry manager works daily with the different social service agencies, law enforcement, fire rescue, hospital district, mental health facilities, substance use disorder treatment centers and food banks. The City of Ocala employs an HMIS Coordinator that can provide end users with statistics on services provided vs services requested.

The City of Ocala utilizes ESG funds to employ one of the Outreach and Referral Specialists. ESG also helps to fund the City's Ticket Home program that provides diversion services for homeless individuals. This program provides out of town bus tickets to homeless clients that have family or friends elsewhere that could provide stable housing for the client. These clients are assisted in reaching the destination by providing bus tickets if various program requirements are met. This gives the client a new start in stable housing and relieves our local homeless service provider system.

Throughout the year the City participated with the below organizations in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls

The Salvation Army---. It is anticipated that staff's relationships with the Salvation Army staff will increase coordination of services and provide better outcomes for our homeless population

Vets Helping Vets of America--. Veteran's agencies meet with City staff at least three times per month to discuss individual clients and changes in Veteran's services in our community

Interfaith Emergency Services--. The City works daily with Interfaith on HMIS and Coordinated Entry services.

SMA Health Ocala and Beacon Point--- It is anticipated that staff's relationships with these agencies will increase coordination of services for those needing mental health counseling and addiction services.

Shepherd's Lighthouse Inc-- Face to face, phone, email consultation on homeless needs

Casa Marion-This is the new victim service provider for Marion County for domestic violence survivors. Throughout the year these organizations participated with the city in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls.

Project Hope-.They provide transitional housing services for mothers with children.

Saving Mercy- This agency was providing transitional housing services to Marion County homeless, however they are expanding their services to a new 59-unit apartment building that will house very low income and permanent supportive housing clients.

Wear Gloves- This agency provides entry level employment to individuals with employment barriers and is expanding into transitional and emergency housing.

2. Describe Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and describe the jurisdictions consultations with housing, social service agencies and other entities

Table 2– Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Agency/Group/Organization | OCALA HOUSING AUTHORITY |
| | Agency/Group/Organization Type | Housing PHA Services - Housing |
| | What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation? | Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth |
| | How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination? | |

Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting

Agency that serves those with HIV/AIDS, other than the local hospitals and health department, a local agency does not exist.

Lead-Based Paint - Environmental Protection Agency was not consulted. However, staff uses resources available on the EPA and DEP websites.

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

| Name of Plan | Lead Organization | How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan? |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Continuum of Care | Joint Office on Homelessness | |

Table 3– Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Describe cooperation and coordination with other public entities, including the State and any adjacent units of general local government, in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan (91.215(l))

The Community Development Services Department has an on-going relationship with Marion County Community Services, and uses their assistance, when necessary, to carry out goals and objectives of the Consolidated Plan. Community Programs staff regularly meets with representatives of public service agencies, is involved in strategizing to facilitate service, and participates, as needed on various boards. The City's creation of the Office of Homeless Prevention has created synergy between departments within the City and has enhanced relationships with local law enforcement and the judicial system. These newly formed relationships have provided additional avenues for communicating needs of our citizens. The City will endeavor to build relationships with state entities to strength housing and homeless programs in the community.

Narrative

PR-15 Citizen Participation - 91.105, 91.115, 91.200(c) and 91.300(c)

- 1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation**
Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting

Citizen Participation Outreach

| Sort Order | Mode of Outreach | Target of Outreach | Summary of response/attendance | Summary of comments received | Summary of comments not accepted and reasons | URL (if applicable) |
|------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| | | | | | | |

Table 4– Citizen Participation Outreach

Needs Assessment

NA-05 Overview

Needs Assessment Overview

As of 2022, the population of the City of Ocala was 65,498 a 13% increase over the 2010 census (2022 American Community Survey). There are 24,206 households in the City. The average household size is 2.60 people. *Age:* The median age in Ocala is 34.7 years. An estimated 29 percent of the population is under 20 years old , 28 percent 20 to 39 years, 19 percent 40 to 59 years, and 25 percent is 60years and older. For Ocala's population reporting one race alone, 58 percent are White; 20 percent are Black or African American; 0.5 percent are American Indian and Alaska Native; 3 percent are Asian; 0.0 percent are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 0.9 percent are some other races. An estimated 3.1 percent report two or more races. An estimated 16 percent of the people in Ocala are Hispanic. *23 percent of the residents live below the poverty line, which is nearly double the rate of the State of Florida (censusreporter.org).*

If the PJ will establish a preference for a HOME TBRA activity for persons with a specific category of disabilities (e.g., persons with HIV/AIDS or chronic mental illness), describe their unmet need for housing and services needed to narrow the gap in benefits and services received by such persons. (See 24 CFR 92.209(c)(2) (ii))

NA-50 Non-Housing Community Development Needs - 91.415, 91.215 (f)

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Facilities:

The jurisdiction's public facility and infrastructure needs include street and sidewalk improvements, street lighting improvements, broadband internet access services, public safety improvements, community centers, water/sewer infrastructure improvements, and parking lots and garages.

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank community needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Improvements:

The jurisdiction's public facility and infrastructure needs include street and sidewalk improvements, street lighting improvements, broadband internet access services, public safety improvements, and water/sewer infrastructure improvements.

The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies several infrastructure needs including sanitary sewer, solid waste, stormwater management, potable water, and natural groundwater aquifer. Public facility/infrastructure goals include:

- The City of Ocala shall secure adequate capacity for treatment and disposal of wastewater, install and maintain adequate wastewater collection and transmission facilities, take steps to conserve water, and maintain sufficient and equitable financing to provide services for the sanitary sewer customers
- To provide safe, efficient, and economical disposal of solid waste in a manner that protects public health and the environment
- To provide stormwater management facilities necessary to protect public and private property, health, and safety from potential flood damage and groundwater contamination
- The City of Ocala shall secure and maintain adequate potable water treatment, storage, and distribution facilities; maintain or reduce per capita demands; and maintain sufficient and equitable financial measures to provide services to potable water customers

To preserve and maintain aquifer water quality and quantity.

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and through the use of Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank public infrastructure needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need. Results indicate that the highest ranked need is for drinking water system improvements at 47.59%; followed by street improvements at 43.29%; sewer system improvements at 40.61%; flood drainage improvements at 39.63%, stormwater management system improvements at 36.36% and sidewalk improvements at 33.13%.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Services:

There is a great need for public services in the City of Ocala ranging from senior services, youth services, domestic violence services to educational and employment services. The lack of CDBG funding limits priority needs the City can fund, and since affordable housing is a higher need, the City focuses its funding on housing activities. The City takes the best approach to revitalizing target areas to provide a suitable living environment and focusing on expanding economic opportunities. These needs are best met through housing and community development activities such as homeownership programs and infrastructure improvements. Historically, it has been demonstrated that directly funding public service activities does not serve the greatest benefit as it often does not provide a connection between beneficiaries and the community. The City is confident that through its community revitalization efforts, low-income residents will receive the greatest benefit. The City offers many public service programs funded through local resources that will directly benefit low-income residents and provide the services needed. In this plan period the City will look to fund an organization that will provide resource referrals to low-mod income persons and families.

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank community needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need.

Based on the needs analysis above, describe the State's needs in Colonias

Housing Market Analysis

MA-05 Overview

Housing Market Analysis Overview:

Based on information available to the City, the Consolidated Plan must describe the significant characteristics of Ocala's housing market, including the supply, demand, condition and cost of the house, and the housing stock available to service persons with disabilities and other special needs. The Market Analysis will also touch on the following key points:

- The condition of the public and assisted housing;
- A brief inventory of facilities, housing, and services that meet the needs of homeless persons;
- Regulatory barriers to affordable housing;
- The significant characteristics of jurisdiction's economy

MA-45 Non-Housing Community Development Assets - 91.410, 91.210(f)

Introduction

Economic Development Market Analysis

Business Activity

| Business by Sector | Number of Workers | Number of Jobs | Share of Workers % | Share of Jobs % | Jobs less workers % |
|---|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Agriculture, Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction | 285 | 1,702 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations | 2,871 | 10,398 | 11 | 11 | 0 |
| Construction | 1,417 | 8,124 | 5 | 8 | 3 |
| Education and Health Care Services | 6,186 | 24,978 | 23 | 25 | 2 |
| Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate | 1,767 | 3,503 | 7 | 4 | -3 |
| Information | 267 | 502 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Manufacturing | 1,611 | 8,345 | 6 | 8 | 2 |
| Other Services | 1,421 | 7,207 | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| Professional, Scientific, Management Services | 3,184 | 4,298 | 12 | 4 | -8 |
| Public Administration | 1,529 | 5,511 | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Retail Trade | 4,212 | 15,440 | 16 | 16 | 0 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 1,297 | 4,626 | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Wholesale Trade | 704 | 4,245 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Total | 26,751 | 98,879 | -- | -- | -- |

Table 5 - Business Activity

Data Source Comments: Florida DEO Summary of Employment, Demographics and Commuting Patterns and 2022 ACS 2405 Table

Labor Force

| | |
|--|--------|
| Total Population in the Civilian Labor Force | 47,688 |
| Civilian Employed Population 16 years and over | 26,751 |
| Unemployment Rate | 3.60 |
| Unemployment Rate for Ages 16-24 | 3.40 |
| Unemployment Rate for Ages 25-65 | 3.80 |

Table 6 - Labor Force

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1811 Table, DP03 and Florida DEO Unemployment Table 2022

| Occupations by Sector | | Number of People |
|--|-------|------------------|
| Management, business and financial | 9,483 | |
| Farming, fisheries and forestry occupations | 285 | |
| Service | 5,222 | |
| Sales and office | 6,832 | |
| Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair | 2,080 | |
| Production, transportation and material moving | 2,815 | |

Table 7 – Occupations by Sector

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S2406 Table and Table 2405

Travel Time

| Travel Time | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| < 30 Minutes | 18,906 | 82% |

| Travel Time | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 30-59 Minutes | 3,620 | 16% |
| 60 or More Minutes | 530 | 2% |
| Total | 23,056 | 100% |

Table 8 - Travel Time

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S0801 Table

Education:

Educational Attainment by Employment Status (Population 16 and Older)

| Educational Attainment | In Labor Force | | Not in Labor Force |
|---|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| | Civilian Employed | Unemployed | |
| Less than high school graduate | 1,378 | 0 | 0 |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 7,456 | 0 | 0 |
| Some college or Associate's degree | 12,764 | 0 | 0 |
| Bachelor's degree or higher | 8,688 | 0 | 0 |

Table 9 - Educational Attainment by Employment Status

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S2301 Table

Educational Attainment by Age

| | Age | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| | 18–24 yrs | 25–34 yrs | 35–44 yrs | 45–65 yrs | 65+ yrs |
| Less than 9th grade | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9th to 12th grade, no diploma | 433 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| High school graduate, GED, or alternative | 2,712 | 9,503 | 8,148 | 11,257 | 11,079 |
| Some college, no degree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Associate's degree | 1,980 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bachelor's degree | 496 | 2,933 | 3,560 | 2,195 | 3,760 |

| | Age | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| | 18–24 yrs | 25–34 yrs | 35–44 yrs | 45–65 yrs | 65+ yrs |
| Graduate or professional degree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 10 - Educational Attainment by Age

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1501 Table

Educational Attainment – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

| Educational Attainment | Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Less than high school graduate | 30,552 |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 36,299 |
| Some college or Associate's degree | 27,187 |
| Bachelor's degree | 46,731 |
| Graduate or professional degree | 46,472 |

Table 11 – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1501 Table

Based on the Business Activity table above, what are the major employment sectors within your jurisdiction?

The City of Ocala has not seen a change in the top two employment sectors since the last Consolidated plan. The top employment sectors in the City continue to be Education and Health Services at the top, followed by Retail Trade. It is not surprising that Education and Health continue to lead the way in employment as Ocala is home to several top hospitals and three top nursing programs in the College of Central Florida, Rasmussen University, and Taylor College. Since the last Consolidated Plan period employment in the Education and Health industry has increased nearly 30% and employment in the Retail Trade industry has increased 25%. Supplanting Arts, Entertainment, and Accommodations as the third highest industry employer is Professional, Scientific, & Management Services. This change of the leader board can be contributed to the intentional work of the Ocala/Marion County Chamber of Economic Partners (CEP) to target and attract more professional and higher paying jobs to the Ocala area.

Describe the workforce and infrastructure needs of the business community:

Describe any major changes that may have an economic impact, such as planned local or regional public or private sector investments or initiatives that have affected or may affect job and business growth opportunities during the planning period. Describe any needs for workforce development, business support or infrastructure these changes may create.

Focusing on the development of existing industries and on providing better educational opportunities and employment training is vital to Marion County's economic climate. Success in this area has allowed the Ocala area to land several, large, national employers in the past few years, including FedEx, Amazon, Dollar Tree, and Chewy as it becomes one of the largest distribution destinations in Florida.

The City included in its Comprehensive Plan that it will strive to sustain and enhance the economic health of the community by supporting economic activities that increase and diversify the economic base, create higher paying job opportunities, support the retention and expansion of current businesses, encourage the relocation of business and industry to and within the City of Ocala and provide a positive business environment which will allow residents to prosper.

How do the skills and education of the current workforce correspond to employment opportunities in the jurisdiction?

The City has made great strides since the last Con Plan period in closing the gap of education and desired skill levels of available workers. There has been an increase in persons in the local workforce with college degrees. Some of the growth is organic and some has occurred with the great influx of people moving to the area. There is still a larger gap than business leaders would like but through the efforts of several partnerships, the expectation is to continue to produce highly employable and promotable employees to fill the needs of local businesses and organizations.

Describe any current workforce training initiatives, including those supported by Workforce Investment Boards, community colleges and other organizations. Describe how these efforts will support the jurisdiction's Consolidated Plan.

The business community, and the Hospital District, and the CEP, work closely with CareerSource CLM, the College of Central Florida (CF), Rasmussen University, Taylor College, Marion Technical College (MTC), Marion County Public Schools, and local governments to implement the above strategy of alignment, seamless credential ladders, and recruitment. The target industries for the CEP are the same targets for CareerSource and the same areas of training for the three education providers. For example, each month there are approximately 1,000 open nursing positions in the Ocala Metro area. The healthcare sector continues to grow and expand creating more demand in this area. The school

system, MTC, Rasmussen University, Taylor College, and CF, have created several programs to meet the demand with each taking a different area of focus to not duplicate efforts. High School students can be a part of dual-credit programs and earn certifications to allow them to be work ready upon graduation while continuing their education to higher levels degrees and credentials. This is a targeted high-demand occupation for CareerSource and the CEP works to provide employer support for growth and diversification in the sector. Additionally, the CEP maintains an active talent attraction effort to recruit existing nurses from similar size metros in the northeast which may not be experiencing the same level of growth and opportunity. Local governments are supportive of the efforts as they meet unified goals of job creation with higher wage positions and investment in the community

Does your jurisdiction participate in a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

If so, what economic development initiatives are you undertaking that may be coordinated with the Consolidated Plan? If not, describe other local/regional plans or initiatives that impact economic growth.

Not in a significant manner. The CEP partners closely with both the City and local jurisdictions to provide a unified approach to economic growth. The strategy is built around the premise of a single source for a holistic approach to economic growth including business attraction, business retention, and business creation. The business attraction goal is to attract primary employers with higher wages and capital investment in key targeted sectors that will raise overall incomes in the community. A significant effort is put into assisting existing businesses and helping them remove barriers to growth. The effort to support and encourage entrepreneurship has seen the growth of a business incubator which has had over two dozen businesses graduate and has supported hundreds of others. The education providers and CareerSource are active partners with this overall initiative.

Discussion

Overall, Ocala/Marion County is experiencing tremendous growth in population and job opportunities. The Chamber & Economic Partnership continues to expand current business creation efforts through its Entrepreneurial Programming, Technical Assistance, Capital Access Initiatives, and the Power Plant Business Incubator. The Power Plant Business Incubator offers early-stage companies help to raise capital; hire employees; gain access to strategic partners, customers and mentors; provides resources; helps mitigate risks and cultivate results.

MA-50 Needs and Market Analysis Discussion

Are there areas where households with multiple housing problems are concentrated? (include a definition of "concentration")

The City has identified that neighborhoods in West Ocala and East Ocala as concentrated areas having a high-level of low-income citizens, slum and blighted conditions, older housing inventory, and crime. These areas have multiple housing problems and will be the focus of the City's rehabilitation funds in this plan period. For this plan, "concentration" is defined as geographic areas where the percentage of a specific minority or ethnic group is 10 percentage points higher than the City's overall percentage. The definition of a low-income concentration is that the Area Median Income of a Block Group must be below 50% of the Area Median Income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Community Development outreach programs have performed several housing conditions surveys and have found that substandard housing is usually found in lower income neighborhoods within the City with older housing stock. Often the cost of rehabilitating these homes is prohibitive to the homeowner. This can lead to an increased amount of homelessness, degenerative living conditions, and gentrification.

Are there any areas in the jurisdiction where racial or ethnic minorities or low-income families are concentrated? (include a definition of "concentration")

HUD defines areas of racial or ethnic concentration as geographic areas where the percentage of a specific minority or ethnic group is 10 percentage points higher than the county's overall percentage. The definition of a low-income concentration is that the Area Median Income of a Block Group must be below 50% of the Area Median Income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average levels of minorities and/or low-income residents. these areas have high concentrations of minorities, low-income families, and high crime rates.

What are the characteristics of the market in these areas/neighborhoods?

The distressed neighborhoods in the identified census tracts have an older housing stock, higher vacancy rates, and are areas of low- and moderate-income concentration, as well as minority concentration. These communities also often have higher crime rates and quality of life issues like poor home maintenance, proliferation of dumping and litter, and an existing food desert.

Are there any community assets in these areas/neighborhoods?

The City recently completed a \$14 million community center in West Ocala in an area that was once crime ridden and undesirable. The center serves as point of pride and provides several programs that unites the community and brings neighbors from all parts of the City to this once degenerate neighborhood. It will serve as one of the anchors for revitalization of the area. Organizations such as the Marion County Children Alliance and Boys & Girls Club, promote after-school and tutoring activities in these areas for the youth. This helps to occupy their time when out of school and decrease chances of getting into criminal activity. The neighborhood is also served by the Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness Center, a neighborhood health clinic that provides health and wellness services focusing on the uninsured and the under insured. Other community assets include two magnet elementary schools and a magnet middle school.

Are there other strategic opportunities in any of these areas?

The City of Ocala has made a conscious effort to invest in the underserved neighborhoods of West Ocala. Currently, there is a 2,000-unit complex under construction of which 186 units are set aside for low-income neighbors. There is also a workforce project under construction that is planned to produce 300 housing units.

The City has also established a surplus properties list and is actively seeking proposals from non-profit and for-profit organizations to produce single family affordable units on the donated property.

Currently the City is installing the infrastructure for its Tucker Hill project that will be bid out for for-profit affordable housing developers to produce 12 homes in the Tucker Hill neighborhood across from the Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness Center.

The Aquifer Recharge Park that is across the street from the 2,000-unit development, has been deemed one of the top walking parks in the State of Florida

MA-60 Broadband Needs of Housing occupied by Low- and Moderate-Income Households - 91.210(a)(4), 91.310(a)(2)

Describe the need for broadband wiring and connections for households, including low- and moderate-income households and neighborhoods.

Describe the need for increased competition by having more than one broadband Internet service provider serve the jurisdiction.

MA-65 Hazard Mitigation - 91.210(a)(5), 91.310(a)(3)

Describe the jurisdiction's increased natural hazard risks associated with climate change.

Describe the vulnerability to these risks of housing occupied by low- and moderate-income households based on an analysis of data, findings, and methods.

Strategic Plan

SP-05 Overview

Strategic Plan Overview

This Strategic plan for the City of Ocala seeks to address needs identified for Community Development, Essential Housing and Homeless individuals and/or families. Details in this section outline how CDBG funds are proposed to be expended during the five-year period from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2029. These strategies have been developed in cooperation with the other consortium member, Marion County, with the intent of leveraging funds to meet the needs of the community. The priorities are based on Needs Assessment, Market Analysis, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study (completed 12/18/2018), citizen participation, and program eligibility requirements. The Five-Year Plan is intended to support the goals of the Ocala City Council to include:

- Public Service, Rehabilitate existing housing for low to moderate income families, Clearance and Demolition of unsafe structures for public use or housing, Land Acquisition, and Planning and Administration

The City focuses its priorities on those projects and programs that meet program requirements, meet the goals of the Department, have long-term impact on low-to-moderate income residents, and help address other federal priorities, such as fair housing and sustainability.

The Consolidated Plan priorities and goals will influence the programming of funds for each Annual Action Plan. It will also determine how funding decisions are made, will be reviewed annually, and adjusted as necessary

SP-10 Geographic Priorities - 91.415, 91.215(a)(1)

Geographic Area

Table 12 - Geographic Priority Areas

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 1 | Area Name: | East Ocala CRA |
| | Area Type: | Local Target area |
| | Other Target Area Description: | |
| | HUD Approval Date: | |
| | % of Low/ Mod: | |
| | Revital Type: | |
| | Other Revital Description: | |
| | Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area. | |
| | Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area. | |
| | How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area? | |
| | Identify the needs in this target area. | |
| | What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area? | |
| | Are there barriers to improvement in this target area? | |
| 2 | Area Name: | West Ocala CRA |
| | Area Type: | Local Target area |
| | Other Target Area Description: | |
| | HUD Approval Date: | |
| | % of Low/ Mod: | |
| | Revital Type: | Housing |
| | Other Revital Description: | |
| | Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area. | |
| | Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area. | |
| | How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area? | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | Identify the needs in this target area. | |
| | What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area? | |
| | Are there barriers to improvement in this target area? | |

General Allocation Priorities

Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the state

The City utilizes HUD eligibility criteria for funding activities. The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average levels of minorities and/or low-income residents. The City routinely allocates funding city wide on a first come first qualified basis. However, during the period of this Con Plan, the City will give priority to housing rehabilitation projects that are in either the East Ocala CRA or the West Ocala CRA. Projects located in these CRAs will receive funding from the CRAs Weatherization Rehabilitation Program and will supplement CDBG funding on these projects.

SP-25 Priority Needs - 91.415, 91.215(a)(2)

Priority Needs

Table 13 – Priority Needs Summary

| | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Priority Need Name | Affordable Housing |
| | Priority Level | High |
| | Population | Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly |
| | Geographic Areas Affected | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA |
| | Associated Goals | Preserve Affordable Housing Units Produce Affordable Housing Units |
| | Description | Retention and creation of affordable housing units |
| | Basis for Relative Priority | The City currently has over 400 surplus lots that it is working to get back on the tax rolls and add affordable housing units. The City would still like to purchase property when the situation arises, for the purpose of creating affordable housing units. The City will commit CDBG funding to rehabilitating owner occupied homes of low-income residents to keep those units from falling out of the affordable housing stock. |
| 2 | Priority Need Name | Quality of Life |
| | Priority Level | High |
| | Population | Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly |
| | Geographic Areas Affected | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA |

| | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|--|
| | Associated Goals | Preserve Affordable Housing Units Produce Affordable Housing Units |
| | Description | Support the national objective of providing a suitable living environment through demolition and clearance of dilapidated structures that cause hazardous conditions. |
| | Basis for Relative Priority | The cost of rehabilitation can be prohibitive for some projects. For those instances, the City will demolish the home for the purpose of rebuilding a new affordable housing unit. |
| 3 | Priority Need Name | Public Services |
| | Priority Level | High |
| | Population | Extremely Low Low Moderate |
| | Geographic Areas Affected | |
| | Associated Goals | Public Services |
| | Description | Funding of Public Organizations That Service Low-Income Households |
| | Basis for Relative Priority | The City of Ocala plans to fund a non-profit organization who services low-income households. |

Narrative (Optional)

SP-35 Anticipated Resources - 91.420(b), 91.215(a)(4), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan

The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include:

- CDBG - \$495,000 with \$1,018,745 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.
- The City has \$233,000 in CDBG-CV funding from its previous Consolidated Plan in which it has contracted with the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation (GOCDC) to carry out micro business loans for qualifying companies whose operations have been affected by COVID-19.

Anticipated Resources

| Program | Source of Funds | Uses of Funds | Expected Amount Available Year 1 | | | | Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$ | |
|---------|------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---|--|
| | | | Annual Allocation: \$ | Program Income: \$ | Prior Year Resources: \$ | Total: \$ | | |
| CDBG | public - federal | Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Developm ent Housing Public Improvem ents Public Services | 495,000 | 0 | 523,745 | 1,018,745 | 1,018,745 | This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis. The funding will be used for the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of property for the new city hall. Admin and Planning for the new city hall. Economic Development for the new city hall. Housing for the new city hall. Public Improvements for the new city hall. Public Services for the new city hall. |

Table 14 - Anticipated Resources

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied

The City leverages other sources of funding when possible, to supplement CDBG projects and provide maximum assistance in meeting community needs. The City's State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program is used in many instances along with CDBG funding to carry out housing rehabilitation projects. In this plan period the City of Ocala will also use funds from its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA in conjunction with CDBG, SHIP and HOME funding to complete housing rehabilitation projects. Another funding source the City will use to leverage its CDBG dollars is funding from the Ocala Electrical Department's Weatherization Program.

CDBG funds do not require a match

The HOME program requires a 25% local match for any HOME funds drawn. The State of Florida has the SHIP Program that local entitlement counties and cities can use as match for HOME. The City of Ocala has designated SHIP as their local match for HOME activities. SHIP Mortgage Loan Agreements provide for the recapture of funds in accordance with HOME requirements. Recaptured funds will be designated as HOME Funds for future expenditures.

If appropriate, describe publicly owned land or property located within the state that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan

The City has developed a surplus land disposition policy which outlines the manner in which it will sell and donate surplus properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing units. The City has developed an Affordable Housing Initiative team that is focused on the redistribution of these lots. The City is issuing RFP's for parties interested in obtaining lots to develop affordable housing units. The City also uses its Affordable Housing Fund as an incentive to affordable housing developers. This fund can reimburse developers for many of the development and impact fees associated with the development of affordable housing units.

Discussion

The regulatory cap for CDBG Administration is 20% of the total awarded allocation.

SP-40 Institutional Delivery Structure - 91.415, 91.215(k)

Explain the institutional structure through which the jurisdiction will carry out its consolidated plan including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions.

| Responsible Entity | Responsible Entity Type | Role | Geographic Area Served |
|--|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| City of Ocala | Government | Homelessness Ownership Planning public services | Jurisdiction |
| Ocala HOUSING AUTHORITY | PHA | Public Housing Rental | Jurisdiction |
| HABITAT FOR HUMANITY (OCALA) | Non-profit organizations | Ownership | Jurisdiction |
| Ocala/Marion County Joint Office on Homelessness | Continuum of care | Homelessness Rental | Jurisdiction |
| Career Source CLM | Regional organization | Economic Development | Region |
| COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES OF MID-FLORIDA | Regional organization | Rental | Region |
| Interfaith Emergency Services | Community/Faith-based organization | Homelessness Rental | Jurisdiction |
| Community With A Heart | Non-profit organizations | Homelessness Ownership Rental | Jurisdiction |
| Volunteers of America | Non-profit organizations | Homelessness Rental | Jurisdiction |
| Marion Senior Services | Non-profit organizations | Homelessness Ownership Rental | Jurisdiction |
| Wear Gloves | Non-profit organizations | Homelessness Rental | Jurisdiction |

Table 15 - Institutional Delivery Structure
Assess of Strengths and Gaps in the Institutional Delivery System

The Joint Office on Homelessness was formed in 2020 to address the issue of homelessness in Marion County. The Joint Office on Homelessness consists of The Office of Homeless Prevention (funded and operated by the City of Ocala) and Marion County Community Services (funded by grants and Marion County). Marion County Community Services operates the Continuum of Care 514, which serves the

citizens of Marion County and serves as the central point of funding for homeless service providers operating in the county.

The Continuum members coordinate consolidated planning efforts and establish the vision and priorities for the service area. The funds they distribute involve ESG and Challenge funding, as well as CDBG. This process allows applicants to complete one application to compete for multiple funding sources. They also complete monitoring for non-profit agencies that are funded to ensure they are meeting their benchmarks.

The City of Ocala operates a Homeless Information Management System which is a database that allows all participating agencies to share information on clients (with a signed release of information) ensuring clients are assisted quickly and eliminating duplication of services.

Referrals for services for clients can be made through this system allowing them to be tracked and allowing for enhanced reporting capabilities.

The HMIS software allows each member of the Continuum to use this database to complete their Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER).

The Continuum of Care Board of Governor's include representation from non-profit organizations, law enforcement, public housing, business organizations, legal services, and faith-based organizations. This board provides advice and input on the operations of the homeless services in Marion County.

A large system of non-profit agencies is in place to receive referrals for services such as rapid rehousing, rental assistance, employment assistance, childcare assistance, utility assistance, medical assistance, housing rehabilitation, mental health services, substance use disorder services, and programs to develop financial stability through education, skill, and career development (Strong Families Program, United Way).

The gaps in the institutional delivery system are as follows:

Overcoming some non-profit agencies desire to operate in a silo.

Keeping pace with continually rising rental pricing and construction/rehabilitation costs

Relatively low pay scale associated with non-profits leading to high staff turnover-this makes it necessary to be continually training new employees rather than focusing on client care. There is a concern about the long-term capacity of some of the non-profit agencies that do not have the resources to comply with the complex regulations required to implement and operate federally funded programs.

On an annual basis, the City's Community Program staff meets with the approved contractors in its rehabilitation program. The goal is to keep an open line of communication between citizens, the contractors, and the City. It is an opportunity to discuss the program in an open forum and to receive suggestions from the contractor's concerning continuous improvement, while remaining within the federal guidelines. These meetings contribute to fostering relationships between the City and its contractors, instill a sense of partnership in the program between the City, contractors, and citizenry, and reiterate the City's high expectations of job performance from the contractors. These meetings have proven very valuable in breaking down stereotypes associated with low-income homeowners.

Availability of services targeted to homeless persons and persons with HIV and mainstream services

| Homelessness Prevention Services | Available in the Community | Targeted to Homeless | Targeted to People with HIV |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Homelessness Prevention Services | | | |
| Counseling/Advocacy | X | X | |
| Legal Assistance | X | | |
| Mortgage Assistance | X | | |
| Rental Assistance | X | | |
| Utilities Assistance | X | | |
| Street Outreach Services | | | |
| Law Enforcement | X | | |
| Mobile Clinics | X | X | |
| Other Street Outreach Services | X | X | |
| Supportive Services | | | |
| Alcohol & Drug Abuse | X | | |
| Child Care | X | | |
| Education | X | | |
| Employment and Employment Training | X | X | |
| Healthcare | X | | |
| HIV/AIDS | | | |
| Life Skills | X | | |
| Mental Health Counseling | X | | |
| Transportation | X | | |
| Other | | | |
| | | | |

Table 16 - Homeless Prevention Services Summary

Describe how the service delivery system including, but not limited to, the services listed above meet the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth)

The Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA) Program is the only Federal program dedicated to the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. Under the HOPWA Program, HUD makes grants to local communities, States, and nonprofit organizations for projects that benefit low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Our contact for HOPWA in our area is currently WellFlorida Council, Inc. in Gainesville, Florida. They assist us in finding funding opportunities for housing for our clients living with HIV/AIDS.

Describe the strengths and gaps of the service delivery system for special needs population and persons experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, the services listed above

The report on homelessness in Marion County, published in January 2019 by the Public Policy Institute of Marion County gave a list of recommendations for the community to improve service delivery and address the homeless needs. These recommendations are:

- Build capacity in the Continuum of Care lead agency to better coordinate the community effort-The number of agencies within the Continuum of Care has increased greatly since 2019. The CoC saw a need to assist survivors of domestic violence and increased capacity in this area.
- Build capacity of the CoC governing board-The CoC governing board now includes members of many factions within the community and those members are actively engaged in the vision and direction of homeless services in Marion County.
- Integrate outreach into the coordinated entry system-The City Outreach Team has four Outreach and Referral Specialists who interact with unsheltered homeless individuals and work to develop trust and rapport with them and assist them in accessing homeless services.
- Implement diversion practices-The City of Ocala provides the “Ticket Home” program which provides long distance bus transportation to literally homeless individuals who have family/friends who are willing to provide them stable housing in another area. This allows the client a new start and relieves our local homeless service system diverting them away from shelter and homelessness.
- Increase service agency participation in the coordinated entry system-All contracts involving ESG, Challenge, or HUD funding now require participation in the Coordinated Entry System
- Lower the barriers to entry for all emergency shelter and transitional programs-New programs are in process currently to provide shelter for individuals with criminal backgrounds, substance use issues, and mental health barriers.
- Focus services on permanent housing placement-The majority of the ESG/Challenge/HUD funding is dedicated to rapid-rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing programs.
- Integrate shelter and transitional services into the coordinated entry system-Currently emergency shelter and transitional housing programs send referrals to Coordinated Entry to place their clients on the list for permanent housing.
- Limit use of motel vouchers-This program has been eliminated.

- Establish a targeted rapid re-housing program for scores on the VI-SPDAT-All scores above 3 are eligible for rapid rehousing, however the program targets scores between 4-9.
- Ensure use of best practices-All agencies are “graded” each year to measure their successes and failures.
- Invest in permanent housing units through scattered site leasing-This has not been implemented at this time.
- Increase permanent supportive housing for chronic and disabled homeless-This is a priority for the CoC. One project is currently in progress and should break ground in October of 2024 (Mercy Village).
- Services for special needs populations are limited. There are few providers and limited access of mental health and addiction counseling. Marion County was awarded funding from the Opioid Settlement. These funds will be used to reduce overdoses by implementing evidence-based programming and providing immediate access to evidence-based treatment models.

Provide a summary of the strategy for overcoming gaps in the institutional structure and service delivery system for carrying out a strategy to address priority needs

The Community Development Services Department coordinated with various public, private, and non-profit agencies in carrying out its activities. 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. It is essential that the City foster and maintain partnerships with other public and private agencies for the successful delivery of its housing and community development programs.

The City believes that private entities can effectively support the delivery of programs and services by offering additional resources that can be leveraged to supplement existing services or fill in gaps. The City of Ocala continues to seek additional funding sources for housing and community development activities when possible and have partnered with the Marion County Community Foundation for grant writing assistance and grant research tools.

Several steps are taken to ensure coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies during the program year. Each of these steps facilitates information exchange between the City and those providing public services. The Administrative Coordinator monitors ongoing activities resulting in enhanced cooperation and coordination between the City and private and non-profit entities. Ocala’s program is carried out through a combination of public, private, and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process. In addition, the City’s Office of Homeless Prevention (a division of the City’s Community Development Services Department) works closely with all homeless service providers and is the lead agency of the Marion County’s Continuum of Care’s HMIS system and Coordinated Entry.

SP-45 Goals - 91.415, 91.215(a)(4)

Goals Summary Information

| Sort Order | Goal Name | Start Year | End Year | Category | Geographic Area | Needs Addressed | Funding | Goal Outcome Indicator |
|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Planning and Administration | 2024 | 2029 | Planning and Administration | | | CDBG: \$495,000 | Other: 0 Other |
| 2 | Preserve Affordable Housing Units | 2024 | 2029 | Affordable Housing | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA | Affordable Housing Quality of Life | CDBG: \$1,630,000 | Homeowner Housing Added: 0 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 25 Household Housing Unit |
| 3 | Produce Affordable Housing Units | 2024 | 2029 | Affordable Housing | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA | Affordable Housing Quality of Life | CDBG: \$250,000 | Homeowner Housing Added: 2 Household Housing Unit Buildings Demolished: 10 Buildings |
| 4 | Public Services | 2024 | 2029 | | | Public Services | CDBG: \$20,000 | Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 250 Households Assisted |

Table 17 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | Goal Name | Planning and Administration |
| | Goal Description | Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant |
| 2 | Goal Name | Preserve Affordable Housing Units |
| | Goal Description | Perform extensive rehabilitation projects that will extend the life of affordable housing units |
| 3 | Goal Name | Produce Affordable Housing Units |
| | Goal Description | Acquire land with the purpose of creating affordable housing units; perform clearance and demolition to rebuild dilapidated structures with other grant funding. |
| 4 | Goal Name | Public Services |
| | Goal Description | The City Will Look to Provide Funding for an Organization That Provides Services for LOW-MOD Income Families. |

Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing as defined by HOME 91.315(b)(2)

The City will look to purchase two lots over the Consolidated Plan period for the purpose of developing affordable housing.

SP-65 Lead-based Paint Hazards - 91.415, 91.215(i)

Actions to address LBP hazards and increase access to housing without LBP hazards

The City's CDBG program requires that structures constructed prior to 1978 be inspected for lead-based paint (LBP). Homeowners are notified of the possibility of lead, provided the requisite brochure, and asked to sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the brochure. 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 inspection and uses 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.

How are the actions listed above integrated into housing policies and procedures?

Policies and Procedures are as follows:

- The City's Rehabilitation Specialist will inspect rehabilitation projects where lead safe regulations are triggered by the home's age or scope of work.
- Contracts for rehabilitation where a home is pre-1978 will only be awarded to a contractor, or subcontractor with a Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting certification.
- When federal funds are being used, appropriate documentation is completed.
- The City Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation program provides the general rehabilitation necessary to bring the structure into compliance with applicable building codes, rehabilitation standards, and lead-based paint regulations.
- Costs of inspecting, testing, and abatement of lead-based paint and asbestos containing materials pursuant to applicable regulations are eligible program costs.
- Homeowners are provided with the requisite HUD approved brochure and homeowner(s) must sign a certification that they have received the lead-based paint information.

SP-70 Anti-Poverty Strategy - 91.415, 91.215(j)

Jurisdiction Goals, Programs and Policies for reducing the number of Poverty-Level Families

The City recognizes the interrelationship between housing and economic opportunities and the need to pursue both to assist households attain self-sufficiency. The City of Ocala recognizes while it has defined priority strategy areas, that they are not separate or isolated strategies. The City believes these strategies are inter-related and impact, reinforce, and contribute to each other to achieve the common goal of a viable, vibrant City. The health of the City, its special needs populations, and the community at large cannot be artificially separated as they are an integral part of the whole. The betterment and improvement of any part inevitably contributes to the betterment of the other segments of the community. The City believes the implementation of the housing and neighborhood revitalization activities outlined in the Consolidated Plan will help reduce the number of households in poverty. All the programs outlined in the Consolidated Plan are intended to provide benefits to Ocala residents that are considered low income and/or fall below the federal poverty line. The City of Ocala is committed to eliminating the effects of poverty among its residents. The City recognizes that it may not be possible to end poverty all together but is dedicated none the less to better understanding its causes and finding a way to reverse the cycle of privation. The City has an Economic Improvement Fund, financed from profits from the City's electric utility. Funds are provided to existing or incoming businesses, usually an industrial sector business, that will increase the number of jobs available in the community. The City, one of the major employers in Marion County, is participating in workforce development programs to reduce dependency on government funds. CDBG staff is participating in the Ocala Housing Authority's Self-Sufficiency Program and the Citrus-Levy-Marion Workforce Development Board One-Stop center. The City provides housing rehabilitation to assist in maintaining affordable housing and reduce household costs. The City coordinates programs when possible to assist in reducing poverty and continued to support subsidized housing providers incorporating programs and services that promote tenant transition to self-sufficiency.

How are the Jurisdiction poverty reducing goals, programs, and policies coordinated with this affordable housing plan

It continues to be a major goal of the City of Ocala to reduce and eventually eliminate the number of poverty level families in the City. This of course is no small task. Today the needs of families far exceed the resources the City has in which to satisfy those needs. Too many families in the City still do not have adequate housing, adequate transportation, access to basic nutritional needs (there is no major grocery store located in West Ocala), adequate educational and job opportunities, or adequate health care. There still exists a very large schism between the "haves and the have not's" and this divide appears to be widening by the day. City officials are aware of the existing problems and along with City staff; they continue to work diligently to find solutions to this most pressing issue. Using CDBG, HOME, SHIP, CRA, and local Affordable Housing funds, the City will strongly attack the slum and blighted conditions in neighborhoods by demolishing and removing buildings that contribute to slum and blight areas city wide. The City will help prevent impoverished conditions by conducting rehabilitation projects

and reconstruction projects on several houses that are currently below the standard building code. Applicants who are deemed to be low to moderate in income level will receive assistance from the pre-mentioned funding sources to aid them in bringing their homesteads to a safe and decent level. The City will partner with Habitat for Humanity, the Ocala Housing Authority, and the Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation in aiding low-income residents in their efforts to become first time homeowners. The City is also seeking to positively affect the local poverty levels by aggressively seeking economic development opportunities that will bring increased job opportunities to the citizenry. Along with the housing and economic development initiatives, the City will continue to work closely with local organizations such as The Governor's West Neighborhood Revitalization Council, The Ocala Police Department, Work Force, the Estella Byrd Whittman Wellness Center, and other local organizations in dealing with social issues that contribute to high poverty levels. The City will work with these and other organizations as they address health, educational, and employment issues that highly contribute to Ocala's poverty level. The City's plan to reinvest and stabilize neighborhoods will be an assistance to public service organizations and those that will benefit from them being able to expand the reach of their services. The reinvestment and development activities of the City; combined with the programs of the city's public service organizations will serve to reduce the amount of poverty experienced in the City of Ocala.

SP-80 Monitoring - 91.230

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

The City of Ocala's Community Programs division of the Community Development Services Department is responsible for the overall administration and implementation of the City's CDBG and HOME programs. The Community Development Services Department ensures compliance with federal regulations through its review of grant application funding requests, recipient contracts, quarterly performance reports, and sub-recipient monitoring. Further, the City maintains records of program accomplishments, funding spent, people served, housing units rehabilitated, and other information to help ensure compliance with the federal regulations. All data will be submitted to HUD on a timely basis and will be entered in the IDIS reporting system monthly.

In the matter of funding sub-recipients, the City will comply with the requirements of 24 CFR Part 91.230. The City's guidelines require the monitoring of all CDBG sub-recipients to ensure that activities are carried out in furtherance of the Annual Plan and to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements. The City gathers relevant data through required reports and monitoring of these organizations as required by federal regulations.

The City conducts all monitoring in accordance with HUD regulations for the City's CDBG Entitlement program and for HOME funds received through the Ocala/Marion County Home Consortium. The City will monitor the progress of their rehabilitation projects through regular (typically weekly) inspections by the City's Rehabilitation Specialist. The Rehabilitation Specialist will work to ensure that all rehabilitations and associated activities are conducted in accordance with the Florida Building and under local building standards.

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources - 91.420(b), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan

The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include:

- CDBG - \$495,000 with \$1,018,745 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.
- The City has \$233,000 in CDBG-CV funding from its previous Consolidated Plan in which it has contracted with the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation (GOCDC) to carry out micro business loans for qualifying companies whose operations have been

affected by COVID-19.

Anticipated Resources

| Program | Source of Funds | Uses of Funds | Expected Amount Available Year 1 | | | | Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$ | |
|---------|------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---|---|
| | | | Annual Allocation: \$ | Program Income: \$ | Prior Year Resources: \$ | Total: \$ | | |
| CDBG | public - federal | Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services | 495,000 | 0 | 523,745 | 1,018,745 | 1,018,745 | This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis. The funding will be used to include: Acquire, construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate, or improve public facilities, including but not limited to: streets, bridges, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, libraries, community centers, senior centers, day care centers, health centers, public housing, public works, and other public facilities. The funding will also be used to provide technical assistance to public housing agencies, and to carry out other activities that are in the public interest. |

Table 18 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how

matching requirements will be satisfied

The City leverages other sources of funding when possible, to supplement CDBG projects and provide maximum assistance in meeting community needs. The City's State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program is used in many instances along with CDBG funding to carry out housing rehabilitation projects. In this plan period the City of Ocala will also use funds from its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA in conjunction with CDBG, SHIP and HOME funding to complete housing rehabilitation projects. Another funding source the City will use to leverage its CDBG dollars is funding from the Ocala Electrical Department's Weatherization Program.

CDBG funds do not require a match

The HOME program requires a 25% local match for any HOME funds drawn. The State of Florida has the SHIP Program that local entitlement counties and cities are able to use as match for HOME. The City of Ocala has designated SHIP as their local match for HOME activities. SHIP Mortgage Loan Agreements provide for the recapture of funds in accordance with HOME requirements. Recaptured funds will be designated as HOME Funds for future expenditures.

If appropriate, describe publically owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan

The City has developed a surplus land disposition policy which outlines the way it will sell and donate surplus properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing units. The City has developed an Affordable Housing Initiative team that is focused on the redistribution of these lots. The City is issuing RFP's for parties interested in obtaining lots to develop affordable housing units. The City also uses its Affordable Housing Fund as an incentive to affordable housing developers. This fund can reimburse developers for many of the development and impact fees associated with the development of affordable housing units.

Discussion

The regulatory cap for CDBG Administration is 20% of the total awarded allocation.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives - 91.420, 91.220(c)(3)&(e)

Goals Summary Information

| Sort Order | Goal Name | Start Year | End Year | Category | Geographic Area | Needs Addressed | Funding | Goal Outcome Indicator |
|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| 1 | Planning and Administration | 2024 | 2029 | Planning and Administration | | | CDBG: \$99,000 | |
| 2 | Preserve Affordable Housing Units | 2024 | 2029 | Affordable Housing | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA | Affordable Housing Quality of Life | CDBG: \$326,000 | Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 5 Household Housing Unit |
| 3 | Produce Affordable Housing Units | 2024 | 2029 | Affordable Housing | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA | Affordable Housing | CDBG: \$50,000 | Buildings Demolished: 2 Buildings |
| 4 | Public Services | 2024 | 2029 | | | | CDBG: \$20,000 | Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Households Assisted |

Table 19 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------|--|
| 1 | Goal Name | Planning and Administration |
| | Goal Description | Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant |
| 2 | Goal Name | Preserve Affordable Housing Units |
| | Goal Description | Perform extensive rehabilitation projects that will extend the life of affordable housing units |
| 3 | Goal Name | Produce Affordable Housing Units |
| | Goal Description | Acquire land with the purpose of creating affordable housing units; perform clearance and demolition to rebuild dilapidated structures with other grant funding. |
| 4 | Goal Name | Public Services |
| | Goal Description | The City Will Look to Provide Funding for an Organization That Provides Services for LOW-MOD Income Families. |

AP-35 Projects - 91.420, 91.220(d)

Introduction

In the 2024 Annual Action Plan, the City of Ocala will look to accomplish the established goals in the Consolidated Plan, by carrying out various eligible projects to include land acquisition for the purpose of developing affordable housing units; clearance and demolition of dilapidated homes with the goal of rebuilding those affordable units with Federal (HOME) or State (SHIP) funding; and housing rehabilitation to preserve existing affordable housing units. The City will also look to partner with a local non-profit organization to support a referral system targeted at directing citizens to available community resources.

| # | Project Name |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Acquisition |
| 2 | Clearance/Demolition |
| 3 | Housing Rehabilitation |
| 4 | Planning & Administration |
| 5 | Community Referral Services |

Table 20 – Project Information

Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

Priorities were determined by review of Community Needs Survey Results and input from supporting agencies, city administration, and city council.

AP-38 Project Summary

Project Summary Information

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Project Name | Acquisition |
| | Target Area | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA |
| | Goals Supported | Produce Affordable Housing Units |
| | Needs Addressed | Affordable Housing Quality of Life |
| | Funding | CDBG: \$25,000 |
| | Description | Acquire Land for the purpose of developing affordable housing units |
| | Target Date | |
| | Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities | 1 |
| | Location Description | Land will be acquired within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA. |
| | Planned Activities | Plan to purchase a lot that will be added to the City's surplus land list and used in the City's infill program. |
| 2 | Project Name | Clearance/Demolition |
| | Target Area | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA |
| | Goals Supported | Produce Affordable Housing Units |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | Needs Addressed | Affordable Housing Quality of Life |
| | Funding | CDBG: \$25,000 |
| | Description | Demolition and clearance of dilapidated structure |
| | Target Date | |
| | Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities | 2 |
| | Location Description | Dilapidated buildings will be demolished and cleared within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA. |
| | Planned Activities | City will look to demolish two structures and rebuild them with other federal grant funding or state grant funding. |
| 3 | Project Name | Housing Rehabilitation |
| | Target Area | West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA |
| | Goals Supported | Preserve Affordable Housing Units |
| | Needs Addressed | Affordable Housing Quality of Life |
| | Funding | CDBG: \$326,000 |
| | Description | Housing Rehabilitation of low-mod income households |
| | Target Date | |
| | Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities | 5 |
| | Location Description | Housing Rehabilitation within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA. |

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| | Planned Activities | The City will conduct a city-wide, housing rehabilitation program focused on preserving affordable housing units. |
| 4 | Project Name | Planning & Administration |
| | Target Area | |
| | Goals Supported | Planning and Administration |
| | Needs Addressed | |
| | Funding | CDBG: \$99,000 |
| | Description | Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant |
| | Target Date | |
| | Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities | |
| | Location Description | City of Ocala |
| | Planned Activities | Planning and administrative activities related to administering the City of Ocala's CDBG funded housing program. |
| 5 | Project Name | Community Referral Services |
| | Target Area | |
| | Goals Supported | Public Services |
| | Needs Addressed | Public Services |
| | Funding | CDBG: \$20,000 |
| | Description | Referral of low-mod income households to organizations with available resources. |
| | Target Date | |
| | Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities | 250 |

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| | Location Description | City of Ocala |
| | Planned Activities | The City plans to help fund a non-profit organization that will provide resource referral services to low-mod income families. |

AP-50 Geographic Distribution - 91.420, 91.220(f)

Description of the geographic areas of the entitlement (including areas of low-income and minority concentration) where assistance will be directed

Activities are undertaken in HUD eligible areas that are primarily considered low-income/minority concentrations. The City uses HUD's definition for minority and low-income concentration. Citizens city-wide are eligible for the program and the City conducts projects in every quadrant of its jurisdiction. In this plan period, the City will specifically look to create projects in its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA to leverage the housing rehabilitation dollars available in those jurisdictions.

Geographic Distribution

| Target Area | Percentage of Funds |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| West Ocala CRA | 35 |
| East Ocala CRA | 30 |

Table 21 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average levels of minorities and/or low-income residents. However, there will be a special emphasis made on promoting the program in the East Ocala and West Ocala CRA's, to leverage the dollars provided for housing rehabilitation in those areas.

Discussion

AP-85 Other Actions - 91.420, 91.220(k)

Introduction

There are various elements that produce obstacles to meeting needs within the community. Addressing all housing, homeless, and community developments needs is a difficult task due to restricted funding. The City of Ocala receives less CDBG funding than it did ten years ago. The City utilizes all possible resources and continues to seek leveraging sources to meet as many underserved needs as possible. The current housing market and economic environment also serve as barriers to meeting needs. The most significant obstacle to addressing the needs of homeless citizens is the lack of available funding. The jurisdiction receives Supportive Housing Program funds, FEMA funds and financial resources from the Department of Families and Children to assist Marion residents with mortgage, rent and utility assistance. These funding sources can only address a small portion of the homeless needs in the County. Because of dramatic cuts in State funding and decreases in private donations, local non-profit homeless service providers are having a difficult time meeting the needs of the growing homeless population. In addition, programmatic requirements for other HUD competitive grants do not always coincide with determined local needs. Listed below are the actions planned to address the obstacles in meeting underserved needs, developing affordable housing, reducing lead-based paint hazards, reducing the number of families living in poverty, improving institutional capacity and structure and encouraging coordination between all housing and social service agencies.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The City continues to utilize its CDBG, HOME, and SHIP funds to the fullest extent to assist in meeting underserved needs. Leveraging efforts with public and private funding agencies were also made to supplement federal funds and increase the resources available to address community needs. The City has set aside a significant amount of local funding to help overcome the funding challenges in meeting the needs of the underserved. The City has an established Affordable Housing Fund that reimburses developers of affordable housing for fees associated with the production of affordable housing. This fund has been essential in helping the City develop large amounts of affordable rental units by providing the required local match for tax credit projects. The City recently developed and budgeted housing rehabilitation dollars in their East Ocala and West Ocala CRA funds. Community Programs will be able leverage \$250,000 of funding in the 2024 fiscal year toward housing rehabilitation projects within the jurisdiction. The Ocala Electric Utility department also is partnering with Community programs on a pilot weatherization program that will leverage another \$50,000 for rehabilitation projects.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

It is the goal of the City of Ocala to foster and maintain affordable housing for citizenry in all quadrants. The City will use Affordable Housing, CDBG, HOME, SHIP, CRA, and other local funds to initiate rehabilitation projects that will bring as many sub-standard housing conditions as possible, up to building code. This will also include testing for asbestos, mold, and lead based paint where applicable to ensure the health and welfare of our citizenry. The City will also continue to partner with Habitat for

Humanity, Marion County Housing Finance Authority, and the Ocala Housing Authority; by providing purchasing assistance funds to aid qualified citizens realize their dream of becoming homeowners. In addition, the City will operate an infill program that will provide surplus lots to non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable housing units.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

A large amount of the homes in the City were constructed prior to 1979 which highly increases the likelihood of the occurrence of lead associated health hazards. The City currently contracts with PBo3 out of Deltona, Florida and DK Environmental & Construction Services, Inc. out of Kissimmee, Florida to conduct lead test on all structures built before 1979; that are scheduled for either, rehabilitation, demolition, or purchasing assistance, the City also performs asbestos testing on all properties and mold testing where it is applicable. The City only uses contractors that are lead trained and certified to carry out their rehabilitation and demolition projects. For all rehabilitation projects the City provides the applicant with a pamphlet explaining the nuisances of lead-based paint hazards.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

It continues to be a major goal of the City of Ocala to reduce and eventually eliminate the number of poverty level families in the City. Today the needs of families far exceed the resources the City has in which to satisfy those needs. Too many families in the City still do not have adequate housing, adequate transportation, access to basic nutritional needs (there is no major grocery store located in West Ocala), adequate educational and job opportunities, or adequate health care. There still exists a very large schism between the “haves and the have not's” and this divide appears to be widening by the day. City officials are aware of the existing problems and along with City staff; they continue to work diligently to find solutions to this most pressing issue. The city has formulated an Affordable Housing Initiative Tema that is focused on producing large scale multifamily affordable rental units and the development of scattered lot, single family homes for affordable and attainable homeownership. City staff continues to work with private investors to bring a grocery store to the West Ocala community to eliminate the existing food desert. City Staff is working with the Ocala/Marion County Chamber & Economic Partnership to develop a business incubator in West Ocala to create jobs and job training opportunities for the neighbors of West Ocala.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The Community Programs Division of the City of Ocala’s Community Development Services Department is responsible for the implementation of the City’s neighborhood services program. This division is responsible for administering the CDBG and HOME dollars that are received from HUD and reinvesting those dollars back into needed areas of the City to improve overall living conditions and help reduce and eliminate slum and blighted conditions. The Community Programs Division works in conjunction with the City’s Office of Homeless Prevention and Growth Management Department in partnering to address housing needs of the City on various levels. The City of Ocala’s Community Programs Division also works

very closely with Marion County's Community Services. As part of the Marion County Consortium, the City collaborates with the County on funding projects, leveraging funds with private organizations, and training opportunities. The two entities have established a quarterly meeting with the United Way and other local lead agencies, where we will all meet to better understand the needs of the community, explore the resources available to meet those underserved needs, and better coordinate and understand the projects that are in motion so that we are not duplicating efforts. On a quarterly basis, the Community Development Services Department meets with the approved contractors in its rehabilitation program. The Director and Rehabilitation/Inspection Specialist of the department meet with representatives of companies of all of the trades that participate in the rehabilitation program. The goal is to keep an open line of communication between the citizenry, the contractors, and the City. It is an opportunity to discuss the program in an open forum and to receive suggestions from the contractors as to what they are experiencing and what ways can the City be easier to do business with, while remaining within the federal guidelines. These meetings contribute to fostering relationships between the City and its contractors, instill a sense of partnership in the program between the City, contractors, and citizenry, and reiterate the City's high expectations of job performance from the contractors. These meetings have proven very valuable in breaking down stereotypes of the City's rehabilitation program and have begun to reestablish the faith of the business community in the program.

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

Several steps are taken to ensure coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies during the program year. Each of these steps will help facilitate information exchange between the County, City, and those providing public services. The primary obstacle to meeting all the needs that have been identified is the lack of financial resources to both public and private agencies that serve the City's low and moderate-income residents. Another significant barrier to affordable housing in Ocala is the lack of affordable housing due to the housing market influencing rising rents. The City will continue to foster the existing partnership as well as collaborating with new agencies to bring added resources into our community. The following steps are taken to enhance coordination amongst agencies:

- A technical assistance workshop is held at the beginning of each grant year to educate nonprofit agencies on the grant funds, application process, eligible uses, additional requirements when utilizing these funds and long-term conditions on their use.
- Ocala/Marion County's housing and community development plan is carried out through a combination of public, private and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process. With the addition of HOME funds and the formation of the consortium with the City of Ocala, the County works with the City to develop other housing partners.
- The City will continue to work closely with the Ocala Housing Authority which serves the City of

Ocala and Marion County. Over the last two years, the Office of Homeless Prevention worked hand in hand with Ocala Housing Authority to administer the Emergency Housing Voucher program. This program allowed 51 homeless individuals to obtain permanent housing.

- Both County and City staff continue to play active roles in the community alliance organizations dealing with homelessness (Joint Office on Homelessness), children's issues (Children's Alliance), and community issues (Community with a Heart) and mental health issues (SMA and Beacon Point).
- The City's development review guidelines work to ensure a streamlined project review process to remove barriers for development of affordable housing projects.
- The City will continue to focus on conserving and improving the condition of existing affordable housing stock in coordination with rehabilitation, rebuild, and other infrastructure improvement programs.
- The City will actively recruit developers to develop multi-family affordable housing units and it will carry out an infill plan of producing single family units on City owned surplus lots.
- The City will collaborate with various organizations to focus on ensuring equal access to rehabilitation assistance programs throughout the city, with a focus on ensuring equal access to the programs across all socioeconomic groups.

Discussion

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements - 91.420, 91.220(I)(1,2,4)

Introduction

The City of Ocala Community Development Services (CDS) Department makes funding awards through procurement processes called Invitations to Bid (ITB) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs). An ITB is an open and competitive opportunity that is awarded to the lowest, responsive bidder. An RFP is an open and competitive funding allocation process in which CDS will set the desired outcomes and agencies respond by submitting a proposal requesting an investment to achieve these outcomes by providing specific program or project services. The specific requirements for requests for proposals will be detailed in procurement materials. Requests for Proposals indicate the amount and type of funding anticipated for specific funding areas, funding outcomes, priorities for funding, and eligible activities for contracts awarded through the RFP. All agencies submitting proposals for funding through the competitive RFP will demonstrate their ability to deliver established outcomes for clients by providing specific services.

Funding is provided in the form of a contract between the recipient agency and the City. The contract contains terms and conditions of funding, reporting, and invoicing requirements, performance expectations and service delivery levels, record keeping responsibilities, and consent to on-site monitoring as requested by the City.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(1)

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. The total amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed | 32,095 |
| 2. The amount of proceeds from section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the grantee's strategic plan. | 0 |
| 3. The amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements | 0 |
| 4. The amount of any grant funds returned to the line of credit for which the planned use has not been included in a prior statement or plan | 0 |
| 5. The amount of income from float-funded activities | 0 |
| Total Program Income: | 32,095 |

Other CDBG Requirements

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. The amount of urgent need activities | 0 |
|---|---|

| | | |
|-------------------|-------|----|
| Consolidated Plan | Ocala | 64 |
|-------------------|-------|----|

2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan. 100.00%

Discussion

Historically the City has spent all of its CDBG and HOME funding to benefit low and moderate income persons. This is anticipated to be the case in this plan period as well.

Appendix - Alternate/Local Data Sources

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Data Source Name American Community Survey |
| | List the name of the organization or individual who originated the data set. US Census Bureau and US Department of Housing and Urban Development. |
| | Provide a brief summary of the data set. Housing, demographic, housing market, employment, education, income, population, and economic data provided from the 2010 Census. |
| | What was the purpose for developing this data set? To collect important data relevant to the population in the United States. |
| | Provide the year (and optionally month, or month and day) for when the data was collected. 2006-2012 |
| | Briefly describe the methodology for the data collection. Survey |
| | Describe the total population from which the sample was taken. United States |
| | Describe the demographics of the respondents or characteristics of the unit of measure, and the number of respondents or units surveyed. All demographics. |
| | |