



COLUMBUS CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

2023 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

MAY 2023

Executive Summary

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

1. Introduction

The City of Columbus’s 2023–2024 Annual Action Plan outlines the City’s strategy for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the 2023 program year. The Annual Action Plan (AAP) details the CDBG and HOME projects anticipated to be completed during the program year, along with funding levels, related activities, and anticipated beneficiaries for each. The 2023 program year is the third program year covered under Columbus’s 2021–2025 Five Year Consolidated Plan, which identified priorities for and provided guidance on the investment of HUD funds over a five-year period. During 2023, Columbus will work toward addressing priorities related to housing affordability, public services, public facility and infrastructure improvements, fair housing, and program administration.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

Priority needs for the 2021 through 2025 planning period were developed based on citizen participation, stakeholder consultation, and analysis of the city’s top housing, homeless, special needs populations, and non-housing community development needs. These priorities included:

Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply

Development of new single-family and multifamily affordable housing units for both homeownership and rental, to include elderly housing units and units produced by qualifying Community Housing Development Organizations.

Housing Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of homeowner housing to benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Housing Assistance and Navigation

Supportive programs and services to increase housing access and safety, including accessibility modifications to existing homes, down-payment assistance, tenant-based rental assistance, and lead-based paint testing.

Infrastructure and Public Facility Improvements

Promote quality of life and neighborhood revitalization through improvements to current public infrastructure and facilities.

Public Services

Services provided by nonprofit organizations that benefit low-income residents such as homeless, youth, disabled, elderly, and other special populations.

Fair Housing

Provide services to residents and housing providers to advance fair housing.

COVID-19 Response

Funding to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 such as temporary rent, mortgage or utility assistance; financial assistance to small businesses, and other pandemic-related community support.

Program Administration

Plan and administer funding for community development and housing activities with transparency, community involvement, and full compliance with federal regulations.

3. Evaluation of past performance

Each year, the City of Columbus reports its progress in meeting its five-year and annual goals by preparing a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER). The CAPER is submitted to HUD within 90 days of the start of a new program year. Copies of recent CAPERs are available for review at Columbus's Community Reinvestment and Real Estate Department or online at: <https://www.columbusga.gov/communityreinvestment/Planning/CAPER>.

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The City of Columbus conducts a variety of public outreach activities to garner input from city staff, government agencies, non-profit agencies, affordable housing developers, local service providers, and Columbus residents in planning its CDBG and HOME programs throughout the program year. During the preparation of this Annual Action Plan, the City held a formal public hearing to gather input from interested stakeholders. This input is summarized in the Participation section of this document. Public comments on the draft Annual Action Plan were received throughout a 30-day public comment period from April 4, 2023 to May 5, 2023.

5. Summary of public comments

The City did not receive any comments relevant to the 2023-2024 Annual Action Plan during the Public Comment Period or at the Public Hearing held on April 3, 2023.

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

Not applicable; the City did not receive any comments.

7. Summary

During the 2023-2024 program year, the City of Columbus will use its CDBG and HOME fund to address priorities identified in its 2021-2025 Five-Year Consolidated Plan. Specifically, Columbus will fund affordable housing creation, public services and public facility and infrastructure improvements, (including ADA improvements to playgrounds and park restrooms), fair housing and program administration.

The Process

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

1. Agency/entity responsible for preparing/administering the Consolidated Plan

Describe the 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	COLUMBUS	The Community Reinvestment Department
HOME Administrator	COLUMBUS	The Community Reinvestment Department

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative

Columbus is an entitlement community under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s CDBG and HOME programs. The Annual Action Plan discusses specific projects to be funded during the 2023 program year which begins July 1, 2023 and ends June 30, 2024.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

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AP-10 Consultation – 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(i)

1. Introduction

During the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan planning process, the City of Columbus engaged 94 residents and stakeholders through community-wide meetings, focus groups, interviews and a community-wide survey. The results of these outreach efforts were summarized in the Community Participation section of the Consolidated Plan.

The City of Columbus will hold a 30-day public comment period and a public hearing to receive input from residents and stakeholders on the draft Annual Action Plan prior to approval by the City Council and submission to HUD.

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(i)).

The City of Columbus partners with local medical providers (including mental health providers) and housing providers to coordinate activities among these organizations. Mercy Medical, one of the city’s partners, provides mental health counseling to low- and moderate-income households. The City also works with NeighborWorks, Habitat for Humanity and the Land Bank Authority to create new housing units and repair existing housing in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods. Through its ongoing relationship with these and other agencies, the city plays a critical role in the coordination of housing and mental health service provision for low-to-moderate income households.

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 of Columbus is represented on the executive committee of the Columbus-Muscogee/Russell County Continuum of Care. Through monthly participation on the committee, city staff help decide strategies to address homelessness in the region. The City also supports several homelessness agencies, including the Homeless Resource Network, Home for Good, and the Open Door Community House as they provide direct services to the chronically homeless and families transitioning out of homelessness.

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

The City of Columbus is not a direct recipient of ESG funds. However, in its role on the Columbus-Muscogee/Russell County Continuum of Care, the City helps to determine the allocation of ESG funds according to the city's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness and the 5-Year Consolidated Plan. During the City's tenure on the executive committee, the CoC has also updated its Data Quality Management Plan with the HMIS Committee and has introduced system performance measures to lower error rates during data collection.

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

	Agency/Group/Organization Name	Type	Section of the Plan Addressed
1	Chattahoochee Valley Libraries	Services - Education	Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
2	City of Columbus, City Council	Other - Elected Officials	Economic Development Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
3	City of Columbus, Community Reinvestment	Other - City Staff	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
4	City of Columbus, Fire & EMS	Agency - Emergency Management	Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
5	City of Columbus, Parks and Recreation	Services - Children	Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
6	City of Columbus, Planning Department	Other - City Staff	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis
7	Coldwell Banker KPDD	Housing	Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
8	Columbus 2025	Business and Civic Leaders	Economic Development Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs
9	Columbus-Phenix City MPO	Other - Transportation	Market Analysis Non-homeless Special Needs

10	Habitat for Humanity	Services - Housing	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis
11	Home for Good	Services - Homeless	Homeless Needs – Families with Children Homeless Needs – Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness Strategy Market Analysis
12	Homeless Resource Network	Services - Homeless	Homeless Needs – Families with Children Homeless Needs – Unaccompanied Youth Homeless Needs - Veterans Homelessness Strategy Market Analysis
13	Hope Harbour	Services – Victims of Domestic Violence	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis
14	Housing Authority of Columbus, GA	Public Housing Authority	Public Housing Needs
15	MercyMed	Health agency	Housing Needs Assessment Market Analysis Non-Homeless Special Needs
16	NeighborWorks	Services - Housing	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis
17	Paz Amigos	Services - Homeless	Homelessness Strategy Non-homeless Special Needs

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

Identify any agency types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting

During the Consolidated Plan process, a wide variety of community stakeholders throughout the City of Columbus were consulted. A total of 61 professionals were invited to participate in a stakeholder interview. Invitations to participate were emailed to stakeholders or offered by phone. Stakeholders invited to participate represented the following fields: housing developers, real estate agents, public housing authorities, colleges and universities, homeless services, domestic violence services, school districts, non-profit organizations, health service providers, workforce development organizations, businesses, faith-based coalitions, ethnic group organizations, mental health providers, senior services, transit authorities, elected

officials, city staff, libraries, emergency management agencies, legal services providers and regional planning organizations. No agency types were excluded from outreach efforts.

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?
10 Year Plan to End Homelessness	Columbus Consolidated Government	The 10 Year Plan aims to make homelessness “atypical, temporary, and non-recurring” through the collaboration of service providers across the city. Eliminating homelessness corresponds with the strategic plan’s public services and affordable housing goals.
2019 Annual Moving to Work Report	Housing Authority of Columbus, GA	Goals of the 2019 Annual MTW Report include converting public housing units to PBV, as well as implementing several activities to expand access to housing for low-income families. These goals overlap with the Strategic Plan goal to expand affordable housing supply.
2022 Annual Moving to Work Plan	Housing Authority of Columbus, GA	Goals of the 2022 Annual Moving to Work Plan include the completion of RAD conversion/demolition for its remaining public housing developments. The creation of additional units for low-income households overlaps with the Strategic Plan goal to expand affordable housing supply.
Columbus 2025 Plan	Greater Columbus, GA Chamber of Commerce	The guiding principles of the Columbus 2025 Plan include “increasing prosperity, improving quality of life and reducing poverty.” Quality of life goals described in the Columbus 2025 overlap with the Strategic Plan’s goals of infrastructure and public facility improvements and expansion of affordable housing supply.
Columbus Consolidated Government 2038	Columbus Consolidated Government	Some of the goals highlighted in the 2038 Comprehensive Plan include expanding opportunities for walking, biking and transit, growing and expanding businesses, and improving access to affordable, quality housing. These goals, along with others listed

Comprehensive Plan		in the Comprehensive Plan, align with the Strategic Plan goals to rehab housing, expand affordable housing supply, provide public services, and improve infrastructure and public facilities.
Columbus – Muscogee County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, 2017–2022	Columbus Consolidated Government	Goals of the city’s Hazard Mitigation Plan include reducing/eliminating community exposure to natural and manmade events and reducing loss to public and private property. These goals indirectly relate to the Strategic Plan’s overall goals of maintaining and expanding affordable housing and protecting and improving infrastructure and public facilities.
River Valley Regional Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	River Valley Regional Commission	The goals of the CEDS Plan include assisting the workforce of the region, improving infrastructure and improving housing stock – which align with the Strategic Plan goals of housing rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements.

Table 3 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Narrative (optional):

N/A

AP-12 Participation – 91.105, 91.200(c)

1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation

The City held a workshop on January 17, 2023 to review the city’s 2021–2025 Consolidated Plan priorities, described eligible activities, provided an estimate of PY 2023 funding, and explained the city’s subgrantee application process. A formal public hearing was held on Monday, April 3, 2023 to discuss the proposed activities to be funded in the program year.

Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting

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)
1	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/Broad community	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Internet Outreach	Non-targeted/Broad community	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Public Hearing	Non-targeted/Broad community	No comments received	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Public Comment Period	Non-targeted/Broad community	No comments received	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

Expected Resources

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

Introduction

The City of Columbus receives annual allocations of CDBG and HOME funds for housing construction, rehabilitation initiatives, public services, economic development, and other eligible activities. These funding sources are expected to remain available over the five-year term of the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan. The table below shows the City’s CDBG and HOME allocations for the 2023 program year, including prior year resources.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	Public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing	\$1,660,399	\$0	\$145,390.86	\$1,805,789.86	\$4,884,834.14	Block grant from HUD to address housing, community development and economic development needs in the City.

		Public Improvements						
		Public Services						
HOME	Public - federal	Acquisition	\$1,071,257	\$0	\$0	\$1,071,257	\$2,873,299	Grant from US Department of Housing and Urban Development to address affordable housing needs in the City.
		Homebuyer rehabilitation and down payment assistance						
		Multifamily rental new construction						
		Multifamily rental rehab						
		New construction for ownership						

Table 2 - 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 nonprofit organizations receiving CDBG and HOME funds from the City as subrecipients have additional financial capacity through foundation support and fundraising campaigns. These external resources extend the reach and scale of City-funded programs. In addition, the City proactively encourages applicants and subrecipients to seek out other public and private resources that address the needs and goals identified in the Consolidated Plan. Federal funds provide these organizations with the opportunity to expand their services to benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

HUD's HOME Program requires a 25% match from non-federal fund sources. Per these requirements, the City requires organizations who receive HOME funding to provide a 25% match using non-federal funds, which is verified through a report submitted to the City on an annual basis.

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

The City continues to identify properties in its portfolio that can be surplus and conveyed as affordable housing or other beneficial uses for the community. Additionally, the Columbus Land Bank Authority has a stated goal of providing land to be used in the creation of affordable housing and jobs for LMI citizens through residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply	2023	2024	Affordable Housing	Citywide South Columbus NRSA	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply	CDBG: \$350,000 HOME: \$964,132	Rental units constructed: 2 housing units Homeowner Housing Added: 6 housing units
2	Housing Rehabilitation	2023	2024	Affordable Housing	Citywide South Columbus NRSA	Housing Rehabilitation	CDBG: \$149,390.86	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 12 housing units
3	Blight Removal	2023	2024	Affordable Housing	Citywide South Columbus NRSA	Blight Removal	CDBG: \$325,000	Buildings Demolished: 4 buildings

4	Infrastructure and Public Facility Improvements	2023	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	Citywide South Columbus NRSA	Infrastructure and Public Facility Improvements	CDBG: \$400,261	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/ Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 5,074 persons assisted
5	Public Services	2023	2024	Non-Housing Community Development Homelessness Non-Homeless Special Needs	Citywide South Columbus NRSA	Public Services	CDBG: \$249,059	Public service activities other than Low/ Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 2,367 persons assisted Businesses assisted: 0 businesses assisted
6	Fair Housing	2023	2024	Other: Fair Housing	Citywide	Fair Housing	CDBG: \$0	Public service activities other than Low/ Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 0 persons assisted
7	COVID-19 Response	2023	2024	Other: COVID-19 Response	Citywide	COVID-19 Response	CDBG: \$0	Public service activities other than Low/ Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 0 persons assisted
8	Program Administration	2023	2024	Other: Program Administration	Citywide	Program Administration	CDBG: \$332,079	N/A

							HOME: \$107,125	
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Table 2 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

Goal 1: Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply

Development of new single-family and multifamily affordable housing units for both homeownership and rental, to include elderly housing units and units produced by qualifying Community Housing Development Organizations.

Goal 2: Housing Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation of homeowner housing to benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Goal 3: Housing Assistance and Navigation

Supportive programs and services to increase housing access and safety, including accessibility modifications to existing homes, down-payment assistance, tenant-based rental assistance, and lead-based paint testing.

Goal 4: Infrastructure and Public Facility Improvements

Promote quality of life and neighborhood revitalization through improvements to current public infrastructure and facilities.

Goal 5: Public Services

Services provided by nonprofit organizations that benefit low-income residents such as homeless, youth, disabled, elderly, and other special populations.

Goal 6: Fair Housing

Provide services to residents and housing providers to advance fair housing.

Goal 7: COVID-19 Response

Funding to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 such as temporary rent, mortgage or utility assistance; financial assistance to small businesses, and other pandemic-related community support.

Goal 8: Program Administration

Plan and administer funding for community development and housing activities with transparency, community involvement, and full compliance with federal regulations.

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

The projects listed below represent the activities Columbus plans to undertake during the 2023 program year to address the goals of providing decent safe and affordable housing, promoting a suitable living environment and encouraging investment in infrastructure.

Projects

#	Project Name
1	CDBG Administration
2	Public Service Grants
3	Demolitions
4	Infrastructure and Public Facilities
5	Property Acquisition/Disposition
6	Accessibility Home Compliance Program
7	Housing Rehabilitation
8	Lead-Based Paint Testing Program
9	HOME Administration
10	Affordable Housing Development
11	Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Reserve

Table 3 – Project Information

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

The City's allocation priorities reflect its focus on several needs identified through data analysis, community member input, consultation with City staff and other public agencies, and reviews of relevant plans and studies, such as the 2038 Comprehensive Plan. A key priority that emerged from the Consolidated Plan was the need for urgent public facility and infrastructure improvements to improve both safety and access for disabled residents. The City will also provide funds to help develop new affordable housing units for purchase.

The City does not anticipate any obstacle to completing the projects it has identified for the 2023-2024 program year.

AP-38 Project Summary

Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	CDBG Administration
	Target Area	Citywide
	Goals Supported	Program Administration
	Needs Addressed	Program Administration
	Funding	\$332,079
	Description	CDBG Program Administration
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	
	Location Description	Department of Community Reinvestment and Real Estate, 420 10 th Street, Columbus, GA 31901
	Planned Activities	Salaries, office supplies, advertising, travel, appraisals, printing, cost allocations, etc.
2	Project Name	Public Service Grants

	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Services
	Funding	\$249,059
	Description	Provision of broad public services covering health, education and homelessness.
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	2,367 persons assisted
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Education and career development, healthcare programming, rapid re-housing, financial and wealth building, mentoring, virtual learning programs, CoC and homeless programs, tutorial program, trade-skill training, and similar programs and services designed to benefit LMI persons
3	Project Name	Demolitions
	Target Area	Citywide

	Goals Supported	South Columbus NRSA
	Needs Addressed	Blight Removal
	Funding	\$325,000
	Description	Demolition of dilapidated structures
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	4 household housing units
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Demolition
4	Project Name	Infrastructure and Public Facilities
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Infrastructure and Public Facilities Improvements

	Needs Addressed	Infrastructure and Public Facilities Improvements
	Funding	\$400,261
	Description	Improvements to recreational facilities in low-to-moderate income census tracts.
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	5,074 persons assisted
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Sidewalks, Street Improvements, Public Facility Improvements
5	Project Name	Property Acquisition/Disposition
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply
	Needs Addressed	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply
	Funding	\$100,000

	Description	Acquisition/Disposition
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	1 unit
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Acquisition/Disposition
6	Project Name	Accessibility Home Compliance Program
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Housing Rehabilitation
	Funding	\$101,950.10
	Description	Provision of accessibility upgrades to income eligible households
	Target Date	June 30, 2024

	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	4 household housing units
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Provision of accessibility upgrades to income eligible households
7	Project Name	Housing Rehabilitation Program
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Housing Rehabilitation
	Funding	\$46,440.76
	Description	Rehabilitation of homeowner housing to benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income households.
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	8 household housing units

	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Rehabilitation of homeowner housing to benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income households.
8	Project Name	Lead-Based Paint Testing Program
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Housing Rehabilitation
	Funding	\$1,000
	Description	Provision of lead-based paint testing to income eligible households.
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	1 household housing unit
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Provision of lead-based paint testing to income eligible households.

9	Project Name	HOME Program Administration
	Target Area	Citywide
	Goals Supported	Program Administration
	Needs Addressed	Program Administration
	Funding	\$107,125
	Description	HOME Program Administration
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	N/A
	Location Description	Department of Community Reinvestment and Real Estate, 420 10 th Street, Columbus, GA 31901
	Planned Activities	Salaries, office supplies, advertising, travel, appraisals, printing, cost allocations, etc.
10	Project Name	Affordable Housing Development
	Target Area	Citywide

	Goals Supported	South Columbus NRSA
	Needs Addressed	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply
	Funding	\$1,053,444 (CDBG: \$250,000; HOME: \$803,444)
	Description	Development of affordable single-family rental and elderly units
	Target Date	June 30, 2024
	Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	8 household housing units
	Location Description	Citywide
	Planned Activities	Development of affordable single-family rental and elderly units
11	Project Name	Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Reserve
	Target Area	Citywide South Columbus NRSA
	Goals Supported	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply

Needs Addressed	Expansion of Affordable Housing Supply
Funding	\$160,688
Description	Acquisition and/or rehabilitation of homebuyer properties
Target Date	June 30, 2024
Estimate the number and type of persons that will benefit from the proposed activity	1 household housing unit
Location Description	Citywide
Planned Activities	Acquisition and/or rehabilitation of homebuyer properties

AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)

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

The City directs its CDBG and HOME funds into two geographic areas: a Citywide target area and the South Columbus NRSA. The Citywide target area encompasses the entirety of the City of Columbus, allowing the City to direct CDBG and HOME funds to eligible activities throughout the city. Within the Citywide target area, neighborhoods where the percentage of LMI persons is 51% or higher will be prioritized for CDBG funding. The South Columbus NRSA is a smaller area within the city limits, which is home to approximately 10.8% of the city's total population. An estimated 72% of the residents in the South Columbus NRSA have low or moderate incomes. Eligible activities within both the South Columbus NRSA and Citywide target area include community facilities and improvements, housing rehabilitation and preservation, affordable housing development activities, public services, economic development, planning, and administration.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
South Columbus NRSA	20%
Citywide	80%

Table 4 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

In keeping with the intent and regulations of the federal CDBG and HOME Programs, the City of Columbus will focus its funding in neighborhoods that are predominately composed of low- and moderate-income households and that have substantial needs related to housing quality and affordability, public facilities and infrastructure, and economic development.

The system for establishing the priority for the selection of these projects in Columbus is predicated upon the following criteria:

- Meeting the statutory requirements of the CDBG program
- Meeting the needs of LMI residents
- Prioritizing investment in the South Columbus NRSA
- Focusing on LMI areas or neighborhoods
- Coordination and leveraging of resources
- Response to expressed needs

- Sustainability and/or long-term impact
- The ability to demonstrate measurable progress and success

Priority CDBG funding areas include areas where the percentage of LMI persons is 51% or higher.

Discussion

The South Columbus NRSA is located west of Interstate 185 roughly bound by Brown Avenue and Lumpkin Road on the west, State Spur 22 in the north, and Fort Benning in the south. The portion of the NRSA east of Interstate 185 is bound generally by Old Cusseta Road on the north and east and by Fort Benning in the south. The area is comprised primarily of residential neighborhoods and neighborhood commercial shopping centers. Neighborhoods in the NRSA include Wynnton, Willett, and Avondale Heights. According to HUD's low/moderate income data based on the 2015 ACS, nearly three quarters (72.0%) of residents in the South Columbus NRSA have low or moderate incomes. Residents with low or moderate incomes comprise a significantly larger share in the NRSA compared to the overall population of the city where roughly a third of all residents have low or moderate incomes (39.9%).

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

Over the next program year, the City of Columbus plans to assist 6 homebuyers through the production of affordable for-sale units.

One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported	
Homeless	0
Non-Homeless	6
Special-Needs	0
Total	6

Table 3 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement

One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through	
Rental Assistance	0
The Production of New Units	6
Rehab of Existing Units	0
Acquisition of Existing Units	0
Total	6

Table 4 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type

Discussion

The estimates in the tables above are derived from the anticipated PY 2023 HOME and CDBG projects and activities.

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

Founded in 1938, the Housing Authority of Columbus, Georgia (HACG) provides publicly supported housing options for Columbus residents. The HACG also manages and maintains (but does not own) the Harris County, Elleville, and Buena Vista Housing Authorities. In 2013, the HACG became one of 39 initial Moving To Work agencies. Having shown success with this designation, the HACG has expressed its long-term plans to become a regional Moving To Work agency.

Actions planned during the next year to address the needs to public housing

During its 2023 Moving To Work Plan Year, the HACG plans to continue the RAD conversion process for 590 public housing units throughout the city. Under this conversion process, the remaining 427 conventional public housing units at Warren Williams/Rivers Homes and Elizabeth F. Canty Homes will become project-based Section 8 voucher units. Another 163 public housing units located at Chase Homes, Patriot Pointe and Columbus Commons will also convert to project-based Section 8 voucher units.

The HACG is currently constructing 174 new mixed-income housing units. The Banks at Mill Village – a 102-unit, mixed-income LIHTC development – will contain 91 units for low-income families earning no more than 60% AMI. A second development called Warm Springs Senior Village will contain 72 mixed income units for seniors. Of the 72 units, 50 units will be reserved for project-based Section 8 voucher holders earning no more than 50% AMI. Another 14 units will be available to seniors earning 60% AMI or less. The 8 remaining units will be offered to seniors at market rate.

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

Public housing residents are encouraged to become involved in management with the HACG. The housing authority provides a placement for an HACG resident to serve as a commissioner on the HACG leadership team. Residents are also invited to participate in hearings regarding its Annual Moving To Work Plan and year-end report. The HACG collects and replies to resident comments to these plans. Resident comments are recorded in the final version of the annual plan.

To encourage public housing residents to participate in homeownership, the HACG offers a voluntary Family Self-Sufficiency program to help residents achieve increased financial stability over a 5-year period. The program offers career counseling, job readiness programs, and money management courses. Childcare and transportation assistance are provided.

If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance

Not applicable.

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

Introduction

The City of Columbus is a member of the Columbus-Muscogee Continuum of Care, which is designed to promote community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. The CoC consists of partner agencies working together to promote access to and utilization of their programs. The City of Columbus will continue to partner with the CoC and local homelessness service providers to achieve the city's homelessness goals.

Describe the jurisdiction's one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including:

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

One of the City's priorities for the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan was to expand the availability of homeless services and housing. Activities funded under this priority may include outreach to unsheltered homeless persons. Local homelessness service providers include the United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley and The Salvation Army. These organizations may offer outreach to people experiencing homelessness by providing food, clothing, and other resources.

Actions to address homeless outreach needs in the 2023 program year include:

- Supporting the Continuum of Care by providing funding for homeless outreach services.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

Through the City's HOME-ARP funding (slated for implementation beginning July 1, 2023), Columbus will contribute \$1,167,947 toward the development of 17 family shelter units to be operated by the Columbus Salvation Army. The City will also contribute \$50,000 in HOME-ARP to Hope Harbour, the region's domestic violence emergency shelter. During PY 23, the City of Columbus may fund services provided by emergency or transitional housing providers, such as the United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, and The Salvation Army. These providers will continue to offer emergency and transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness.

Actions to address emergency shelter and transitional housing needs in the 2023 program year include:

- Funding through HOME-ARP to support development of 17 new family shelter units
- Supporting the PATH Stability Program
- Funding supportive services for victims of domestic violence
- Conducting rapid re-housing for homeless families

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

The City of Columbus and the Columbus-Muscogee CoC support a Housing First model that prioritizes permanent housing and offers case management and other supportive services. The Housing First model supports one of the CoC's priorities, which is to increase access to affordable and permanent supportive housing.

Actions to assist residents experiencing homelessness in making the transition to permanent housing in the 2023 program year include:

- Supporting the PATH Stability Program
- Funding supportive services for victims of domestic violence
- Conducting rapid re-housing for homeless families

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

Housing and service providers in Columbus work together to prevent homelessness in populations who are vulnerable to or at risk of homelessness. At-risk populations include extremely low-income individuals and families, people discharged from institutions, and persons receiving direct assistance with housing, health, social services, education or youth needs. Local service providers such as The Salvation Army offer rent and utility assistance in the city.

Actions to prevent homelessness in the 2023 program year include:

- Conducting rapid re-housing for homeless families

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.220(j)

Introduction:

Stakeholders identified the city's property tax structure as a major barrier to affordable housing in Columbus. Under the current property tax structure, homeowners receive a homestead exemption based upon the year of purchase. The assessed value of the home is "frozen" from the year of purchase, producing a fixed tax payment for the entirety of the owner's tenure in the home. Using this tax structure, property taxes only

increase on a residential property when the property is sold or improved, or when the overall tax rate is adjusted. The property tax “freeze” has been in effect since 1983.¹ In 2016, Columbus citizens voted against a proposition to “Thaw the Freeze.”

Actions it planned to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment

In lieu of pursuing any further proposals on property taxes, Columbus proposed a 1% sales tax increase. Voters approved the sales tax increase in November 2021, raising the local sales tax from 8% to 9%. Taxes generated from the new SPLOST will cover the cost of a new judicial building and increase the city’s public safety budget. The SPLOST will remain in place for 9 months.²

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

This section details the City of Columbus’s plans to ensure safe and affordable housing for its residents, meet underserved needs, reduce poverty, develop institutional structure, and enhance coordination between public and private sector housing and community development agencies.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

Residents and stakeholders that participated in the Consolidated Plan planning process stated that the greatest unserved need is affordable housing that is in good condition. The obstacles to meeting underserved housing needs include:

- High costs of new development,
- Need for subsidies for the development of new affordable housing, and
- Loss of existing affordable housing due to factors such as increasing rents and aging housing stock in need of rehabilitation.

Residents and stakeholders also emphasized a need for additional facilities and services for low-income residents and people experiencing homelessness. These services may include job creation, workforce training, support for entrepreneurs, childcare and case management. The City of Columbus plans to fund a variety of projects to support these underserved housing, service and infrastructure needs.

¹ Wright, Ben. “Two sides of ‘Thaw the Freeze’ considered at forum.” (September 20, 2016) Columbus Ledger-Enquirer. <https://www.ledger-enquirer.com/article103074897.html>

² Jones, Dajhea. “Muscookee County passes SPLOST; sales tax to increase 1%” (November 2, 2021). WTVM.com. <https://www.wtvm.com/2021/11/03/muscookee-county-passes-splost-sales-tax-increase-1/>

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

To maintain and expand the current affordable housing stock, the City will work to develop partnerships with non-profit housing organizations and private agencies with the goal of increasing the affordable housing supply. Partnering agencies may include LIHTC or other developers considering housing projects in the city. The City will also look at pursuing funding or grants that can be leveraged to bring in new dollars for affordable housing or housing for the homeless. The City will continue to increase housing affordability through several existing programs: the homebuyer down payment assistance program, tenant-based rental assistance, the Home Access Program (offering residential ADA modifications), and the Continuing Hope Program (which provides critical repairs and/or installations, including heating and air conditioning systems, roofing, flooring, plumbing, electrical updates and repairs, windows, and exterior doors).

In addition to specific programs designed to foster and maintain affordable housing, the City will review its zoning ordinance for prospective barriers to affordable housing development and make amendments as needed. During its review of the zoning ordinance, city staff can identify ways to decrease costs or risk for multifamily and other affordable housing developments. A review may also help to identify zoning districts where multifamily and other affordable housing types, such as accessory dwelling units, may be permitted by right.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

An important initiative emanating from HUD in the last decade is the reduction of lead-based paint hazards. Many jurisdictions around the country have focused on reaching this goal. The federal Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 (Title X of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992) amends the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 1971, which is the law covering lead-based paint in federally funded housing. These laws and subsequent regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (24 CFR, part 35) protect young children from lead-based paint hazards in housing that is financially assisted or being sold by the federal government.

Should the City of Columbus undertake any property rehabilitation projects, the City will assess whether lead-based paint might be present and, if so, follow the guidelines set forth in the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992. The City of Columbus is committed to testing and abating lead in all pre-1978 housing units assisted with federal grant funds in any of the housing programs it implements.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The City of Columbus's anti-poverty strategy focuses on helping all low-income households improve their economic status and remain above the poverty level. Currently, programs to reduce poverty through education and employment are offered by the Lower Chattahoochee Workforce Development Board and

WorkSource Georgia, Columbus State University, Columbus Technical College, and nonprofit organizations in the city.

Working collaboratively with local partners, the City is exploring the establishment of a “Poverty Czar” who would be responsible for forming strategic relationships across the region and creating a 10-year actionable poverty reduction strategic plan, with stakeholder input, for Columbus and the greater Chattahoochee Valley region. The Chattahoochee Valley Poverty Reduction Coalition is spearheading the effort to raise \$1 million in start-up funding to support the position and its related work for an initial three-year period during which permanent funding streams will be developed.

Economic development plans for the city and region address poverty and support economic and workforce development in the city. A primary goal of the River Valley Regional Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (updated in 2017) is to help the region’s workforce gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for jobs in the 21st Century. Objectives related to this goal include:

- Maintain connections with local employers to ensure that skills needed are addressed in workforce training initiatives (Employer Committee, Technical College, Dept of Labor);
- Facilitate and encourage programs within the local school systems – Dual Enrollment/Move On When Ready;
- Support the transition from military to civilian jobs; and
- Encourage apprenticeships and internships for businesses to teach high school and college aged students; develop region-wide mentoring programs to include internships and apprenticeships.

A primary goal of the Columbus 2025 plan (Regional Prosperity Initiative: A Vision for a Greater Columbus) is to build a skilled and educated workforce to remain competitive. Objectives related to this goal include:

- Create a comprehensive cradle-to-career (C2C) partnership to align education, training, business, and social services around increasing talent levels in Greater Columbus.
- Ensure that three- and four-year-olds have access to high-quality early childhood education.
- Ensure that infants, toddlers, and expecting parents have access to comprehensive child development and family support services.
- Expand efforts to introduce students to education and career possibilities from a young age.
- Leverage existing programs to coordinate a community-wide mentoring program for at-risk K12 students.
- Launch a broad-based adult education campaign to connect individuals who did not complete high school or college coursework with opportunities for advancement and employment.
- Connect business and education providers to develop post-secondary programs and high school curricula that support target business growth and introduce young people to job opportunities.
- Challenge the region’s business community to leverage, expand, and develop internship and apprenticeship opportunities for high school and college students.

- Develop a formal retention program for individuals retiring from or exiting the military.
- Welcome and engage new residents who move to Greater Columbus with a relocating family member.

Emergency assistance is also provided by several nonprofit organizations in the city.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

In November 2022, the Community Reinvestment Department held a mandatory training for all CDBG Public Service sub-recipients. The training covered the department's new CDBG-PS policy manual, and included such topics as client eligibility, eligible activities, reimbursements, beneficiary information, monthly reports, and monitoring. The department has also updated its HOME policies and internal financial management and procurement policies. The department will intensify its sub-recipient monitoring in PY 23, including on-site monitoring for the highest risk sub-recipients. Finally, starting in PY 23, the department will implement its "first in, first ready, first out" process for CDBG Public Facilities. Using this process, the department will accept public facilities applications on a rolling basis. Currently, many projects are facing significant material and construction delays, which makes it difficult to select and implement CDBG-PF projects within the Action Plan year. The alternative process will allow us to plan for construction projects over longer and more realistic timeframes.

In the 2023 program year, the City will continue to work within existing partners and coalitions, such as the Continuum of Care, to meet homeless service needs. The Community Reinvestment Department will work closely with state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other service providers to coordinate delivery of services to city residents. Columbus Consolidated Government will also continue to consult with various housing, homelessness, social service, elderly and disability resource agencies to gather data and identify service gaps.

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

The City of Columbus will continue to be an active participant in the Columbus-Muscogee Continuum of Care. The Continuum of Care brings together nonprofit, government, and business leaders to provide a shared approach to goals of ending homelessness. Membership includes emergency, transitional, and permanent housing providers; nonprofit social service organizations; and government agencies.

Program Specific Requirements

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

Introduction:

This section describes program specific requirements for CDBG and HOME funds. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income over the 2023 Program Year period is 70.00%.

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	\$0
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	\$0

Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	\$0
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2a. 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.	70%
2b. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	2023 Program Year

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(2)

1. A description of other forms of investment being used beyond those identified in Section 92.205 is as follows:

No other forms of investment are contemplated for the use in the HOME Program beyond those identified in 92.205.

2. A description of the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HOME funds when used for homebuyer activities as required in 92.254, is as follows:

The City’s Home Program Resale/Recapture Provisions are included in the Grantee Unique Appendices attached to this plan document.

3. A description of the guidelines for resale or recapture that ensures the affordability of units acquired with HOME funds? See 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4) are as follows:

The City’s Home Program Resale/Recapture Provisions are included in the Grantee Unique Appendices attached to this plan document.

4. Plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds along with a description of the refinancing guidelines required that will be used under 24 CFR 92.206(b), are as follows:

The City does not have any plans to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing and therefore does not have any refinancing guidelines for that activity.