

FFY 2019
DRAFT ACTION PLAN and BUDGET
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT/HOME PROGRAM

The City of Auburn is preparing to submit its 2019 Action Plan with request of funding to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Action Plan describes the fourth-year budget and proposed activities for the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs to carry out the goals and objectives of the Consolidated Plan.

This Draft 2019 Action Plan process provides for a 30-day comment period. All comments received by the public will be included in the package that is submitted to the City Council. Oral or written comments may be submitted to Zachary Lenhart, Community Development, 60 Court Street, Auburn, ME 04210, tel. 333-6601 ext. 1336, e-mail zlenhart@auburnmaine.gov Comments may also be made during the public comment period to be held on April 1 during the City Council meeting. A second public hearing is to be held on May 6, 2019. Both meetings will be at 7 pm at Auburn Hall.

2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

In 2015 the City of Auburn adopted the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan identifies many of the community's issues, establishes priorities, and describes how Community Development resources will address these needs. This Consolidated Plan sets forth goals, objectives, and performance benchmarks for measuring progress, and establishes a framework for assessing the programs and projects Auburn will make available for revitalization.

GOALS OF THE 2015 TO 2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

These are what the Auburn Community Development program intends to work towards and the measurable outcomes that will be accomplished in this five-year period:

- Goal 1: Promote Jobs and Development
 - Assist 20 businesses
- Goal 2: Prevent Deterioration of Housing Stock
 - 90 home owner units rehabilitated
 - 100 owner and rental housing made lead safe
 - 40 rental units rehabilitated with exterior improvements
 - 500 target area buildings inspected with 170 units improved
- Goal 3: Improve Parks and Establish Community Gardens
 - 1 park upgraded and 1 newly constructed
 - 3 community gardens
- Goal 4: Make Neighborhood Streets Safer and More Walkable
 - 3,000 linear feet of repaved sidewalks
- Goal 5: Support People in their Efforts to Transition out of Poverty
 - 1,000 persons assisted
- Goal 6: Prevent Homelessness

- 200 homeless persons assisted with case management
- 125 at-risk persons assisted with security deposits
- Goal 7: Increase Owner Occupancy
 - 25 renters assisted to purchase a home
- Goal 8: Support Housing Construction of Affordable Units
 - 60 new affordable rental units
- Goal 9: Support Fair Housing and Increase Housing Choice
 - 4 landlord and tenant fairs
 - 4 Fair Housing poster contests

In March 2019 the City Council approved an amendment to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan, adding a tenth goal.

- Goal 10: Improve the quality of life for Senior Citizens
 - 1 Senior Center Expansion

2019 FUNDING

This plan is built on a budget based on previous year funding levels until allocations are announced by HUD. Funding for the Community Development Program is primarily from two sources, Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds. These are entitlement grants which means the City will receive these each year.

The following is a summary of anticipated resources for the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. *Congress has approved the FFY2019 Appropriations Bill and HUD anticipates that the Grantee allocations will be announced on or before May 23. HUD advises grantees not to submit the Annual Action Plan until after FFY2019 allocations are announced. An affected grantee may delay submission of its action plan to HUD by up to 60 days after the date allocations are announced. In order not to delay the beginning of its 2019-2020 program year any more than necessary the City of Auburn is following this plan:

- Adhere to normal schedule through May 15, 2018;
- Build the plan on flat funding from previous year allocation. An increase to funding is anticipated and the Citizen Advisory Committee voted to add additional funding for Public Service Agencies to the Auburn Rec Department for more scholarships up to the CAP; Administration of CDBG Program up to the CAP. Additional funds will be used to increase funding for the Housing Rehab Program. Additional funding for HOME Program will be shared with Lewiston and all programs will be proportionally increased.

Community Development Block Grant Funds: The proposed budget for FFY2019 is \$1,247,707 from the following sources of Community Development funds:

<i>Proposed</i> Community Development Grant	\$556,643
Anticipated Program Income	\$200,000
Carry Over Funds	\$491,064

Auburn HOME Funds: The proposed budget for FFY2019 is \$989,194 from the following sources of HOME funds:

<i>Proposed HOME Grant</i>	\$270,879
Anticipated Program Income	\$54,000
Carry Over Funds	\$664,315

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR ADOPTION
2018 ACTION PLAN/BUDGET**

Citizens Advisory Committee Review	March 12
City Manager Budget Review	March 12
City Council Budget Review	March 18
30-day Comment Period	March 18 – April 18
1 st Public Comment Period/City Council Meeting	April 1
Final Public Hearing/Adoption of 2018 Action Plan	May 6
<i>Deadline Submission to HUD</i>	<i>Mid May (TBD)</i>

AUBURN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Source of Funds: U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Program Objective: Development of Viable Urban Communities

- Provide decent housing
- Suitable living environment
- Expand economic opportunities

Eligible Activities

- Acquisition
- Relocation
- Demolition
- Public improvements
- Rehabilitation—commercial and residential
- Public services
- Homeownership assistance
- Lead-based paint reduction
- Fair housing activities
- Planning

70% of expenditures must benefit low-income households

FFY2019 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BUDGET DESCRIPTIONS

STRATEGY: SUPPORT FAIR HOUSING AND INCREASE HOUSING CHOICE

Build a Fair Housing Website Page to disseminate information to landlords and tenants about the rights and responsibilities of each party and the means for assistance in the event of a problem.

1. Fair Housing Proposed Budget: \$2,000

Description: Update the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) and implementation of identified Fair Housing strategies identified in the report.

The Cities of Auburn and Lewiston will be undertaking fair housing activities to raise awareness of Fair Housing Laws. The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Report (AI) completed in 2013 identified activities to be undertaken in first four years. In 2018 the Cities were to begin work on the Fair Housing Assessment Planning Tool (FHP) however HUD has delayed this requirement until 2020. The Cities need to be pro-active and in lieu of the more extensive FHP updating the current AI is advised. The cost can be shared by both Auburn and Lewiston Community Development and the Housing Authorities.

Anticipated Outputs: Update to the 2013 Impediments to Fair Housing Plan and identify Fair Housing Activities to be undertaken in the next 4 years.

STRATEGY: PROMOTE JOBS AND DEVELOPMENT

Assist small businesses to start up, succeed and grow through

- *Loans to support job creation for low-income people anywhere in the City.*

2. Economic Development Programs Proposed Budget: \$100,000

STAR Program (Storefront Traffic Accelerates Revitalization)

Description: Funds will be used to provide loans to businesses and property owners for building renovations in Auburn. This program helps to create jobs and will encourage the redevelopment of vacant storefront properties. Funds will be used to provide forgivable loans to expanding businesses or to business start-ups. Funds can be used for working capital, equipment or inventory purchase, or building improvements. The program will help to create jobs in the community, primarily benefiting low- and moderate-income persons.

Anticipated Outputs: 3 Business Loans

STRATEGY: PREVENT DETERIORATION OF HOUSING STOCK

- *Provide grants, deferred loans, and low-interest loans for the rehabilitation of owner and rental housing that is occupied by low and moderate-income households;*
- *Provide matching funds to the 3-year federal grant to reduce childhood lead poisoning;*
- *Provide Community Development staff support to the Lewiston-Auburn Lead Subcommittee to assist with implementation of the 5-Year Strategic Action Plan for the Reduction of Childhood Lead Poisoning in the Cities of Auburn and Lewiston.*
- *Financially support code enforcement activities that result in improvements to the housing stock*
- *Provide financial assistance to encourage exterior as well as health and safety improvements.*

3. Rehabilitation Loan Program

Proposed Budget: \$148,627

Project Delivery Costs: \$93,000

Description: Funds will be used to provide loans under the Rehabilitation Loan Program to upgrade residential buildings, increase curb appeal, address code violations, weatherize homes, and to provide a loan match to the Lead Hazard Reduction Grant. The Rehabilitation Program helps to maintain and upgrade the quality of housing, particularly in targeted areas and assists low-income property owners and investors to address housing problems. The program also helps to increase or stabilize the tax base, provides an economic stimulus for contractors and suppliers, eliminates lead hazards, and prevents properties from becoming blighting influences in the more densely populated neighborhoods.

The Project delivery costs covers staff salaries, benefits, supplies and equipment to implement the program. This does not count against the Administrative Cap.

Anticipated Outputs: 4 units: health and safety repairs
3 units: with whole house/curb appeal improvements
2 units: with lead paint problems eliminated
4 units: repairs of code enforcement violations

4. Lead Testing and Clearance

Proposed Budget: \$5,000

Description: Funds will be used to cover the cost of performing lead clearances in buildings that have been rehabilitated with federal funds. These funds will be used only for projects where there are no Lead Grant funds involved. One of the requirements imposed by Title X is that a property that is rehabilitated with federal funds must be lead safe that is documented through a clearance test. These funds pay for the contractor to take samples and have the sample analyzed by a certified lab.

Anticipated Outputs: 15 lead tests

5. Code Enforcement
Proposed Budget: \$50,000

Description: Funds will be used to cover salary costs for a Code Enforcement officer of the City of Auburn. Code enforcement efforts will be directed in three target areas, Downtown, New Auburn and Union Street. The focus of the code enforcement effort is to control vacant and dangerous buildings, nuisance complaints, and to expand code enforcement efforts to improve the overall condition of the housing stock. This will include coordinating building improvements, some of which will come through the City's Rehabilitation Program.

Anticipated Outputs: 100 buildings inspected
25 buildings with health/safety violations repaired/private funds
3 buildings with health and safety violations repaired/public funds

STRATEGY: IMPROVE PARKS AND ESTABLISH COMMUNITY GARDENS

- *Enhance physical infrastructure of key in-town parks;*
- *Improve lighting at Union Street;*
- *Extend the Riverwalk into New Auburn;*
- *Improve walkways to and from parks;*
- *Provide opportunities for growing fresh healthy foods by establishing community gardens in the Downtown, Union Street and New Auburn target areas.*

6. Community Gardens
Proposed Budget: \$8,000 (2019 growing season)
\$21,980 (Construction of New Garden)

Description: Funds will be used to support a garden coordinator and a neighborhood garden champion for the Webster Street and the Newbury Street gardens for the season beginning in April 2019. Community gardens encourage people to improve their health, stretch their food dollars, learn about growing vegetables, and provide a place where neighbors can meet to engage in a positive way. The garden coordinator will be supervised by St. Mary's Nutrition Center which will be considered an in-kind match. This allocation will count towards the Public Service Cap in the 2019 budget. Infrastructure funds will be used to create a new Community Garden on Whitney St.

Anticipated Output: Support for Webster Street and Newbury Street Gardens and creation of a 3rd community garden.

STRATEGY: MAKE NEIGHBORHOODS STREETS SAFER AND MORE WALKABLE

Provide grants to Neighborhood Organizations and groups for projects that will enhance a neighborhood. The funds will be used for public infrastructure projects. This activity may also meet the previous strategy to improve parks and greenspaces.

7. Neighborhood Challenge Grants Proposed Budget: \$30,000

Description: Funds will be used in increments of \$1,000 up to \$10,000 to provide funding for projects that will enhance neighborhoods. Increased safety, beautification and improved parks are the goals. The budget amount of \$25,000 will be awarded to applicants for projects of \$1,000 or more. One \$10,000 grant may be awarded. City staff will assist the applicants with the development of the projects.

Anticipated Output: dependent on the applications received
Up to 3 - \$10,000 grant
Up to 8 grants of \$1,000 - \$5,000

8. Chestnut Street Traffic Control and Parking Proposed Budget: \$50,000

Description: Chestnut Street is the home to the Auburn Pal Center, the athletic fields directly behind the center and the basketball courts/playground area across the Street known as the gully. It is a pass through for vehicular traffic between Webster and Winter Street. Given the pedestrian/child traffic at the PAL Center and the increased speeding motorists the safety of the pedestrians and children are a great concern. The funds will be used to install a raised crosswalk in front of the PAL Center and a pedestrian friendly access to the "gully". It will also provide additional parking. Timeline for the project is the summer of 2019.

Anticipated Output: 1 improved greenspace/park

9. Downtown Walkability Project Proposed Budget: \$135,000

Description: Reconstruction of Library Avenue to include new curbing, sidewalks, crosswalks and street lights. The goal is to provide safe, comfortable, attractive and convenient access and travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit users of all ages, abilities and preferences in the downtown area. This project will be leveraged with TIF Funds and Public Services Budget.

Anticipated Output: 570 ft. of street reconstruction
800 ft. new sidewalks and curbing
4 new streetlights
13 parking spaces on Library Avenue

STRATEGY: SUPPORT PEOPLE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO TRANSITION OUT OF POVERTY

Focus on helping young people growing up in poverty to get the personal and educational skills needed to live a healthy and productive adult life.

- *Expand programming for at-risk teenagers that helps them learn work skills, graduate from high school*
- *Create youth apprenticeship opportunities with local businesses*

Support low-income adults to successfully provide for themselves and their families through education and development of employment skills including mentoring, work readiness, and job training.

**10. Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care
Promise Early Education Extended Care Program
Request: \$10,000
Proposed Budget: \$10,000**

Project Description: Funds would provide social services for families enrolled in head start at Webster School and other sites. Services are available to economically disadvantaged children whose parents are working or in job training. These services assist families in meeting their basic needs, provide parent training, provide information and referrals, develop a strategy to maintain or attain economic independence, and provide crisis intervention. These services facilitate families' efforts to maintain or obtain financial independence from assistance and help children achieve school readiness.

Anticipated Output: 23 Auburn families

**11. Literacy Volunteers of America/Androscoggin
Literacy Services for Adults & Families
Request: \$8,895
Proposed Budget: \$8,895**

Project Description: Funds will be used to help recruit, train and support volunteers to provide tutoring to illiterate adults and families. The Adult Literacy Program provides one-on-one tutoring for reading, writing, and basic math for adults and families in Androscoggin County who are at the lowest two literacy levels. They also offer one-on-one tutoring for English speakers of other languages. The focus is to help adults with low literacy skills and immigrants gain critical reading, writing, and math skills that will help with employability. 90% of their students' primary goal is to obtain a job, pass a job-related test, or participate in career training.

Anticipated Output: 90 Auburn residents

**12. Auburn Police Department
Work with Me
Request: \$90,621
Proposed Budget: \$47,105**

Description: Auburn Police Department will work collaboratively with Auburn School Department, Central Maine Community College, and Community Concepts, Inc. Bridges Out of Poverty initiatives to provide case management for at-risk youth ages 15-19. Funds will be used to cover the program coordinator's salary, student intern and PAL summer intern stipends, and College Mentor Stipends.

Anticipated Output: 40 Auburn youth

**13. Auburn Recreation Department
Recreation Scholarships
Request: \$50,000
Proposed Budget: \$18,000**

Description: Support families who are involved in education or working by providing summer day care for their children. Families will be required to enroll in an education or training program for their children to qualify. Funds will pay for grants to 30 children. Funds will pay for scholarships, approximately \$500 per child.

Anticipated Output: 25 households (40 children)

STRATEGY: PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Support homeless people first with housing, then with services to help them provide for themselves and their families through work readiness training and job skill development.

- *Provide staff support to Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH) to improve access to services and housing for persons who are homeless or at risk.*
- *As a first step towards helping the homeless or at-risk households re-integrate into the community provide a City-sponsored Security Deposit Program as well as other "housing first" approaches.*

**14. Safe Voices
Request: \$12,000
Proposed Budget: \$11,000**

Project Description: Funds will be used to pay the shelter worker salaries to provide services to families experiencing domestic violence and homelessness to develop skills for self-sufficiency. The shelter serves women and children who are victims of domestic violence. The shelter is open 24 hours, 365 days each year with day and evening staff.

Their clients are usually forced to leave behind most of their possessions and many lose their jobs when they come to the shelter. The ongoing case management services and connections to community resources help them to increase their income and non-cash benefits for overall housing stability which helps to prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness. The shelter advocate will assist the family by developing self-sufficiency skills, connect them with resources such as work ready training and job skills.

Anticipated Output: 70 Auburn residents

15. Tedford Housing

Request: \$7,000

Proposed Budget: \$7,000

Description: Funds will be used to pay for case management services for a supportive housing project in Auburn. Tedford Housing operates a permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless single adults. Services will help these individuals to improve quality of life and remain living independently. Without these services, many formerly homeless families fail to maintain housing. Tenants tend to have been homeless two or more times for an extended period. They typically have a disability and have frequent physical health challenges. Each person will be evaluated and have a plan of care. Additionally, the plan will identify opportunities to move towards a volunteering activity, academic courses or training.

Anticipated Output: 7 formerly chronically homeless persons

STRATEGY: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SENIORS

Focus on helping senior citizens living in the Auburn area get the services and infrastructure needed to continue to live a healthy and productive lives.

- *Expand services for senior citizens*
- *Provide accessible infrastructure that improves the quality of life for seniors*

16. Catholic Charities of Maine

Senior Wrap program

Request: \$10,000

Proposed Budget: \$5,000

Description: The Senior Wrap program will provide wrap-around services to fill the gap in services experienced by seniors who are enrolled in the state-funded Independent Support Services (ISS) Program. Often seniors have needs which exceed the scope of ISS. The funds will support a part-time coordinator to help identify and obtain the services needed to meet these additional needs.

Anticipated Output: 35 households

- 17. SeniorsPlus**
Meals on Weals/Education Center
Request: \$10,000
Proposed Budget: \$5,000

Description: SeniorsPlus provides the basic human needs of food and social interaction. The funds would be used to cover staffing costs for the Meals on Wheels program as well as education classes at the Education Center. Besides the basic sustenance of food, these programs provide social interaction which is often the only interaction that some of the seniors have.

Anticipated Output: 228 MOW/233 Ed

- 17. Senior Center Expansion**
Proposed Budget: \$350,000

Description: Funds will be used to complete the expansion of the Senior Center in Pettengill Park. The City of Auburn has multiple senior groups and lacks a center with the capacity to hold them all. An expanded Senior Center will be able to offer more programs to improve the quality of life of seniors.

Anticipated Output: Expanded Senior Center

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Source of Funds: U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Objective: Housing

- Expand supply of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing
- Strengthen public-private partnerships
- Development of rental housing

Eligible Activities

- Rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing
- Rental housing development
- Homebuyer assistance
- Tenant-based rental assistance

100% of these funds must be spent on housing activities that benefit low-income households

FFY2019 BUDGET DESCRIPTIONS

STRATEGY: INCREASE OWNER OCCUPANCY

- *Make it easier for renters to become homeowners;*
- *Financial help for down payments and financial counseling for low-moderate income renter households seeking to purchase a first home in Auburn;*
- *Find alternative mortgage financing for New Americans and other residents to be able to move up to homeownership, and work with Auburn Housing Authority to identify potential owners.*

1. Homebuyer Assistance

Proposed Budget: \$40,000

Project Description: Funds will be used to provide a 5 to 1 grant for down payment assistance and an interest-free amortized loan to make home purchase affordable for income eligible applicants.

Anticipated Output: 4 households assisted to purchase a home

2. Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Project

Proposed Budget: \$200,000

Project Description: HOME requirements are to set-aside 15% of allocation for a CHDO project. A CHDO project is sponsored by an organization that meets HUD

definition of a CHDO. In the past several years Auburn Housing Authority has partnered with Auburn in this capacity. The goal is to increase homeownership or affordable rental opportunities. No specific project has been identified. Staff proposes utilizing these funds to increase homeownership opportunities by purchasing a vacant property, renovation of the property and resale to an income qualified household(s).

Anticipated Output: 1 homeowner assisted

STRATEGY: PREVENT DETERIORATION OF HOUSING STOCK

- *Provide grants, deferred loans, and low-interest loans for the rehabilitation of owner and rental housing that is occupied by low and moderate income households;*
- *Provide matching funds to implement the 3-year federal grant to reduce childhood lead poisoning;*
- *Provide Community Development staff support to the Lewiston-Auburn Lead Subcommittee to assist with implementation of the 5-Year Strategic Action Plan for the Reduction of Childhood Lead Poisoning in the Cities of Auburn and Lewiston.*
- *Financially support code enforcement activities that result in improvements to the housing stock*
- *Provide financial assistance to encourage exterior as well as health and safety improvements.*

3. Homeowner Rehabilitation

PROPOSED BUDGET: \$362,044

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Funds will be used to provide interest-free amortized loans and forgivable loans for housing improvements of owner-occupied income-eligible households.

Anticipated outcome: 8 households assisted with whole house/curb appeal improvements

STRATEGY: PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

- *Support homeless people first with housing, then with services to help them provide for themselves and their families through work readiness training and job skill development.*
- *Provide staff support to Lewiston-Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH) to improve access to services and housing for persons who are homeless or at risk.*
- *As a first step towards helping the homeless or at-risk households re-integrate into the community provide a City-sponsored Security Deposit Program as well as other “housing first” approaches.*

4. **Tenant Based Rental Assistance/Security Deposit Program**
Proposed Budget: \$25,000
Project Description: Funds will be used to provide interest-free loans to pay the security deposit for income eligible households who are homeless or at risk of homeless and will receive a housing voucher from Auburn Housing Authority.

Anticipated Outcome: 33 households

5. **Tenant Based Rental Assistance/Staying Home Rental Assistance Program**
Proposed Budget: \$80,000
Project Description: Funds will be used to provide rental subsidies to income qualified renters who have been identified by the Auburn School Department at risk of homelessness due to housing affordability issues. Tenants will contribute a fixed percent of their income towards the rent. The subsidy payment will not exceed 12 months. Participants will be encouraged to apply for the Section 8 Voucher Program and participate in the Bridges Out of Poverty Program.

Anticipated Outcome: 8 households

STRATEGY: SUPPORT NEW HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Provide financial assistance to developers of high-quality affordable mixed income housing in the target areas of Auburn.

6. **Development of Rental Housing**
Proposed Budget: \$220,000

Project Description: \$110,000 of HOME funds has been committed to the development of the 477 Minot Avenue workforce housing project. 2 units which will remain subject to HOME restrictions for 30 years. The \$6.3 million project will produce a total of 36 low income housing units.

\$110,000 of HOME Funds has been committed to the 41 Hampshire Street/Troy Street workforce development housing project. 2 units which will remain subject to HOME restrictions for 30 years. The \$9.6 million project will produce a total of 53 residential of which 42 will be low income housing units and 11 market rate units.

Anticipated Outcome: 4 HOME units