



CITY OF NORTHAMPTON  
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Cedric Kam, Acting Deputy Director  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Community Planning and Development  
10 Causeway Street  
Boston, MA 02222

September 30, 2015

Dear Mr. Kam;

Please find enclosed two copies of the City of Northampton Massachusetts's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the CDBG program year covering July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

If you require any additional information or have any questions, feel free to contact me at the number listed above or via email at [pkeller@northamptonma.gov](mailto:pkeller@northamptonma.gov). We appreciate the technical assistance you have provided us this past year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Keller".

Margaret Keller  
Housing and Community Development Planner  
CDBG Administrator



City of Northampton Massachusetts

**CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE  
AND EVALUATION REPORT**

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

Federal Fiscal Year 2014

CDBG Program Year 31

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## INTRODUCTION

As a recipient of Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, the City is required to prepare a five year Consolidated Plan that identifies the most critical community development needs. Each successive year the City prepares an annual Action Plan that articulates how those needs will be addressed. This performance report summarizes the Annual Action Plan achievements for July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

This past year's programming addressed a majority of the high and medium priority needs identified. All CDBG funds programmed this past year, including all available funds remaining from prior years, were directed towards meeting the CDBG National Objective of benefiting persons with low and moderate incomes and to the elimination of slums and blight.

### High Priority Needs Addressed

- Homelessness Prevention
- Preservation of the Existing Shelter System
- Production and Preservation of Affordable Rental Housing
- Public Infrastructure to Support Neighborhood and Economic Revitalization
- Increase Business Development and Job Creation/Retention
- Housing Support Services
- Emergency Food Assistance
- Youth Programs
- Support Services for Special Needs populations

### Medium Priority Needs Addressed

- Elimination of Blighted Areas
- Improvement of Public Facilities
- Micro Businesses Assistance
- Skills & Training Development
- Homeownership Opportunities for First Time Homebuyers

The following charts summarize the Program Year funding availability and expenditures:

<b>Program Funds</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Prior Year Funding (committed/uncommitted)	\$ 336,939.74
FY14 Grant Award	\$ 618,768.00
Program Income Received	\$ 22,539.46
Total Funds Available	\$ 978,247.20
<b>Total Funds Expended</b>	<b>\$ 472,022.81</b>

<b>Funding Summary Breakdown</b>	<b>July 1, 2014 - June 30,2015</b>
Public Facilities/ Access Projects	\$145,613.00
Elimination of Slums and Blight	\$58,399.50
Economic Development	\$10,000.00
Housing	\$26,000.00
Public Services	\$108,814.60
Public Infrastructure Improvements	0.00
Planning and Administration	123,195.71
<b>Total Funds Expended</b>	<b>\$ 472,022.81</b>

Utilization of the Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, in addition to leveraged resources allowed the City of Northampton to accomplish the following objectives, as articulated in the 5 year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

**OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED**

**ACTION**

Assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing  
Assisting persons at risk of homelessness

CDBG support for the Inter-Faith Cot Shelter and the Grove Street Inn  
CDBG support for SRO Outreach, Manna Soup Kitchen, Survival Center, Highland Valley Elder Services , Community Legal Aid

Retaining the affordable housing stock

CDBG support for 129 Pleasant Street housing redevelopment project

Increasing availability of affordable permanent housing	Support for moving HAP , VCDC and Housing Authority projects forward
Providing affordable housing accessible to job opportunities	CDBG support for two Pleasant Street housing projects, located downtown.
Improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods	Past CDBG support for Three County Fairgrounds re-development project
Eliminating blighting influences and deterioration of properties and facilities	CDBG support for Grove Street Inn, Laurel Street and Fairgrounds projects
Increasing access to quality public and private facilities	CDBG support for the Senior Center
Reducing isolation of income groups through housing de-concentration	Encourage scattered site housing development projects in City/region
Restoring and preserving special properties	Past CDBG support for redevelopment of the Fairgrounds
Conserving energy resources	Past CDBG support for Senior Center construction
Creating and retaining jobs	CDBG support for Valley CDC Micro-Business Assistance Program
Expanding micro businesses	CDBG support for Valley CDC Micro-Business Assistance Program
Provision of public services concerned with employment	CDBG support for Literacy Project, Center for New Americans, Community Action, the James House Learning Center, Valley CDC Business Assistance Program, Grove Street Inn, Casa Latina
Availability of mortgage financing using non-discriminatory lending practices	CDBG support for the Valley CDC Homeownership Center
Access to capital and credit for economic development and asset building	CDBG support for Valley CDC Business Assistance Center & Homeownership Center

CDBG funding allocations were spread across a diverse array of projects and services, all of which were targeted to meet the City's high and medium priority needs. A detailed list of funded activities and annual accomplishments follows.

## Summary

CDBG funding was prioritized for programs that help low and moderate income residents address their basic needs. The Northampton Survival Center received funding for their emergency food pantry and Kid's Summer Food Program, which bridged the summer nutrition gap by distributing free groceries for breakfasts and lunches to children who rely on the meal programs during the school year. A meals program operated by the Manna Soup Kitchen in downtown was available to the homeless and other persons with limited means who may be choosing whether to pay their rent or eat.

CDBG funding was allocated to programs that assisted the homeless by supporting staffing at the City's homeless shelters (Grove Street Inn and Interfaith Cot Shelter). Homelessness prevention was addressed by Community Legal Aid who worked with families facing eviction; the SRO Outreach Project also worked to preserve tenancies by linking residents in the city's SRO's with support services; and Highland Valley Elder Services provided case management services to at-risk elders. Many of the public services grant recipients such as Manna Soup Kitchen and the Literacy Project's Passport to Success Program indirectly accomplish homelessness prevention.

For City residents who are renters, CDBG-funded activities included counseling for tenants who experienced discrimination. Efforts were made to inform real estate professionals and rental property owners of their rights and responsibilities to insure that a rental situation is beneficial for both parties. Additionally, the SRO Outreach program provided housing stabilization support to residents through food pantry access and linkages to other services. Community Legal Aid assisted households in publicly assisted rental units maintain their tenancies through intervention and mediation at housing court.

For those households able to afford homeownership, the Valley CDC Homeownership Center offered counseling, guidance and referral to HOME assisted units in the area. Financial Literacy workshops, fair housing workshops and First Time Homebuyer Sessions were also offered to insure that future homeowners received accurate information about the home buying and ownership process. Valley CDC and HAP, the regional housing agency, offered post purchase and foreclosure prevention assistance to help maintain stable housing once homeownership was obtained.

Economic development goals were furthered as work progressed on the Fairgrounds Redevelopment Project and through the Valley CDC's Micro Business Assistance Program.

The City implemented its FY14 CDBG Action Plan through the combined efforts of City departments, the Northampton Housing Authority, area non-profit social service agencies, economic development organizations and local and regional non-profit housing providers.

**Affordable Housing Expenditures**

The City of Northampton expended \$79,000 of its available CDBG funds for housing and homelessness activities. The components funded this past year were:

First Time Homebuyer Program & Down-payment Assistance Grants/ Valley CDC	\$20,000 \$ 6,000
Housing Support Services/ SRO Outreach	\$14,000
Homeless Shelter Staffing (Grove Street & Inter-Faith Cot Shelter)	\$28,000
Tenancy Preservation/ Homelessness Prevention (Community Legal Aid)	\$ 6,000
Elder Homeless Prevention (Highland Valley Elder Services)	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$79,000</b>

The City's efforts to create and preserve affordable housing units and support housing stabilization activities were supplemented by the following leveraged resources:

- HUD Self Help Homeownership Opportunity Funding (Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity)
- HUD McKinney Vento Supportive Housing Program funding
- Federal SAMHSA funds
- HUD VASH vouchers
- Federal Affordable Home Loan Bank Funding (Habitat for Humanity)
- MA Department of Housing and Community Development programs Such as Affordable Housing Trust funds, Housing Innovations Fund
- Mass Housing and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- Community Preservation Act funds dispersed locally

**Homeownership Housing Production**

A newer phase of housing development (pictured below) at Village Hill (formerly Northampton State Hospital) continued to make major headway this past year. This 27 lot subdivision is a neighborhood of market rate housing on small narrow lots. 24 lots have been purchased and many new houses have been built on those lots. The hope initially was that the

smaller lots would yield more affordable market rate housing. Due to demand in the community for newer housing in this New Urbanism development, lot sales prices and housing construction averages around \$350,000. It has addressed a market niche, but cannot be considered affordable.



The affordable rental units in the first and second phases of the State Hospital redevelopment have now been operational for several years. Wright Builders continued constructing the higher end market rate single family homes and townhouses this past year. A resident association is working to bring all Village Hill inhabitants together to achieve full communal integration of this mixed income village. The commercial components have also materialized. Kollmorgen, now L-3 KEO, a defense system contractor on the south campus is fully operational and a new retail building at the entrance to the north campus has been completed and occupied.

Christopher Heights of Northampton, the assisted living development on the former State hospital campus, broke ground in the spring and will be ready for occupancy this fall. 43 of the 83 units will be affordable to low and moderate income residents. There will be 71 studio apartments, and 12 one bedroom units in a three story building. A minimum of 17 units (20%) will be restricted to extremely low income residents earning less than 30% of the area median income while an additional 26 units will be restricted to residents earning less than 60% of AMI. These units will be affordable in perpetuity. Not only will it serve the special needs of the elderly senior population, but it contributes to multi-generational housing options offered at the site. This \$13,400,000 development will generate \$8,600,000 in construction spending resulting in 65 construction related jobs and create 40 new permanent jobs, introducing \$825,000 in payroll into the local economy. The project requested and received \$250,000 from the Community Preservation Committee.



Christopher Heights of Northampton

**Soldier On** continued its quest to construct transitional housing and limited equity coops for Veteran's on the Veteran's Administration Campus in Leeds. An enhanced use lease for 10 acres has been secured from the VA, Federal funds are in place and the closing for State funds occurred in the spring. Construction has commenced. The new development will create 60 units in two buildings. 44 of those will be units for frail/ elderly men with a limited equity cooperative form of ownership and the remaining 16 units will be transitional rental housing for women Veterans and their children.



Soldier On is partnering with the Department of Veterans Affairs, who will provide the bulk of the financing through their Innovation Initiative (VAi2) program. The project will feature highly effective modular construction and meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for sustainability.

Soldier On continued to participate in Continuum of Care meetings and attend Regional Network to End Homelessness committee meetings. The model they have implemented for developing and offering Veterans different housing options is now being replicated nationally.

### **Emerson Way Sub-Division**

Substantial progress was made this past year on the development of this 53 lot subdivision in the southwest corner of the City. As a condition of zoning relief, the original private developer agreed to provide 8 units of affordable housing on 6 lots with 2 accessory apartments. To date, 13 of the 24 lots in Phase 1 have been sold and homes built, but no affordable units have been constructed yet. The current developer spent last year meeting with the City and Valley CDC about how to finance, construct, market and monitor the affordable units and on the creation of an affordable housing restriction. Because there are no public funds involved, a mutually beneficial restriction is being negotiated.



Emerson Way

## Habitat for Humanity

Work was completed this past year on the fifth and final home at the Verona Garfield Habitat site. The city owned parcel was transferred several years ago to Habitat through a Request for Proposal process and two years ago a competition was held to select a design for the market rate lot that was retained by the City for sale. The Office of Planning and Sustainability conducted the competition and had a juried exhibit at a downtown art gallery to promote infill design. The event was a huge success. One of the Developers Forums sponsored by the Housing Partnership was conducted in the gallery, so in addition to the public foot traffic and the final design competition judging (on the evening of a downtown wide gallery walk) the forum participants also perused the 23 design submissions. The lot sold for \$78,000 and the proceeds were allocated to CDBG Program Income because CDBG had been used for site infrastructure costs at the development.

The small subdivision will include the energy efficient market rate home and the five Habitat for Humanity homes. This project achieves the vision of a small mixed income housing development on a donated municipal parcel. The owner of the market rate parcel will construct his home this fall and the project will be complete.

Habitat worked with the Building Program at Smith Vocational High School on all five units. The City will work to identify new sites for additional Habitat homes so this relationship, a stellar example of community partnership, can continue. Habitat staff and volunteers continued to support all the Habitat families during the year. With only a couple of exceptions all of the families living in Habitat homes in Northampton are the original families, going back to the 1990's. The photo below shows the Garfield site (land donated by the City). The unit on the far left was completed in June of 2010; the unit in the middle - June of 2011 and the handicap accessible unit on the right was completed in June of 2013. The newest unit and the market rate lot are across the street.



## Rental Housing Production

Valley Community Development Corporation's King Street SRO project completed in December of 2011 continues to operate successfully at full capacity. The project added 10 new SRO units to the inventory on a major entrance corridor near downtown and addressed a high priority of creating additional SRO units. Of the 10 enhanced SRO units, 5 were designated for formerly homeless individuals. The building has on-site laundry and a community room and each unit has a bathroom and kitchenette.

The Maple Avenue Gandara House also continues to operate smoothly. This project involved the acquisition of a duplex for 6 units of housing for formerly homeless individuals committed to sobriety. This was a Friends of Hampshire County Homeless Individuals initiative. Funding was secured from MassHousing CCRI's program, a Community Preservation Committee award and private fundraising. The property was purchased by the Friends and sold to the Gandara Center, who operates and manages the program. The house became fully rented in November 2011 and there has been minimal turnover since opening.

The Friends of the Homeless are continuing to raise funds and have begun discussions about acquiring a third residence. The models being considered based on community need are permanent supported housing for homeless youth, transitional housing for victims of domestic violence and housing first units for chronically homeless individuals. The FOH issued an RFP in early 2015 to identify a new development partnership and will be interviewing respondents this fall, with an application to the Community Preservation Committee to follow in 2016.

Valley CDC, being a multi-community organization (Northampton, Amherst and Easthampton) broke ground on a 38 unit affordable rental family development in Easthampton this past year. The ribbon cutting for Parsons Village is scheduled for September 25th and occupancy is underway! This will be a welcome addition to the region's affordable rental inventory and offer studios, one, two and three bedroom apartments. The project received 3.6 million dollars in tax credits and other State funding sources to build the 12 million dollar project.



HAP, the regional housing agency based in Springfield, broke ground on an 8.7 million dollar affordable rental housing development in Amherst in 2013. 42 units on a 13 acre parcel are now available for low income families and individuals. The apartments are available for those with incomes of 60% AMI or less; for Amherst that means households earning \$49,140 or less for a family of four. Rents are \$878 for one bedroom units, \$1,048 for two - bedroom units and \$1,205 for three bedroom units with heat and hot water included. Three units are fully handicapped accessible and three were set aside for tenants who are hearing impaired. \$1.72 million came from the Department of Housing and Community Development's Housing Stabilization and Investment Trust fund financing, Massachusetts Housing Equity Fund for a tax credit equity investment of \$8.4 million, eight project based federal Section 8 subsidies, a \$100,000 commitment from the local Interfaith Housing Corporation, \$4,000 in energy incentives per unit from the Western Massachusetts Electric Company and \$250,000 from Amherst CP Act funds.



Olympia Oaks in Amherst

LOCALLY, two critically significant affordable rental housing developments made substantial progress this past year.

### **Lumberyard/ 256 Pleasant Street      Mixed Use Redevelopment Project**

The **Valley CDC** renewed a purchase and sale agreement (secured last year) for a parcel located at 256 Pleasant Street, formerly the Northampton Lumber Yard. This is a 1.25 acre site located in the downtown, with frontage on a major entrance corridor. Valley CDC proposes to redevelop the site to create 55 units of affordable rental housing in a four story structure with 5,376 square feet of commercial space on the first floor. The units will be a mix of one, two and three bedroom apartments affordable to households earning at or below 30%, 50% and 60% of area median income. The total budget for the project is \$19.9 million dollars. Funding sources will include a variety of State programs, Federal CDBG for acquisition, the Smith College Affordable

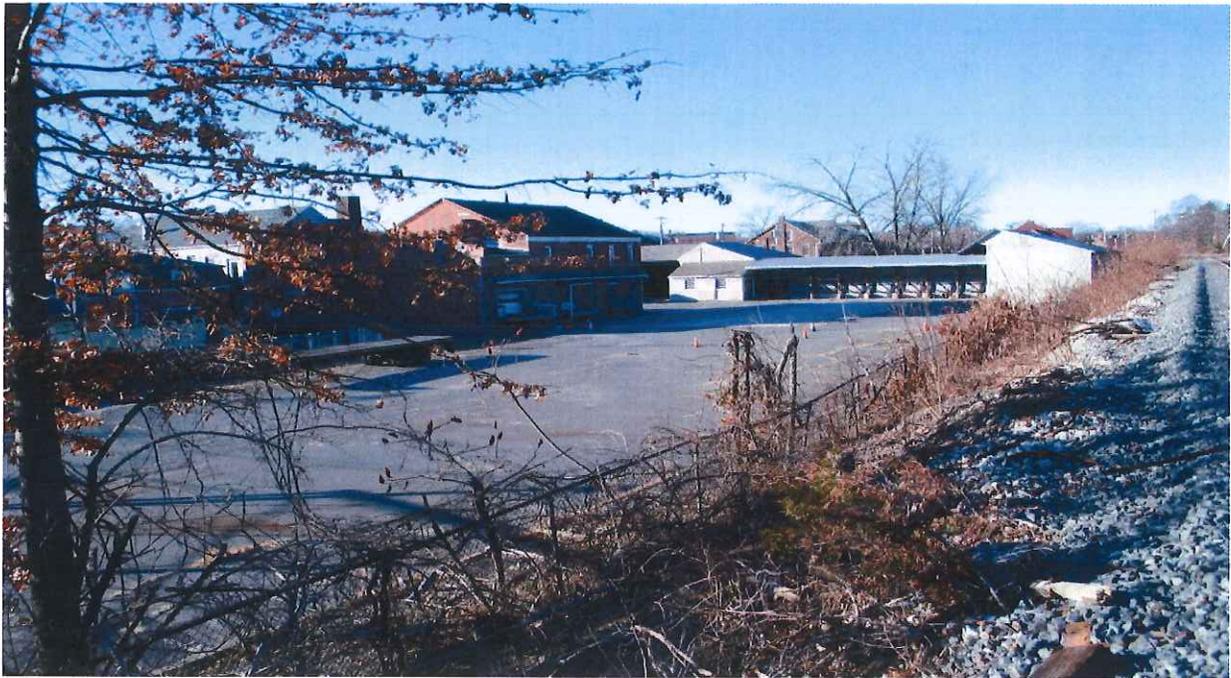
Housing Trust and Community Preservation funds. Completion is estimated for May of 2017 with 100% occupancy in August of 2017. The State and local CDBG allocation will ensure long term affordability for 99 years or in perpetuity through deed restrictions.



Existing Pleasant Street frontage



Proposed Pleasant Street frontage



Existing rear yard



Proposed Holyoke Street frontage and rear lumberyard

## Northampton Lodging Mixed Use/Mixed Income Redevelopment Project

**HAPHousing** secured an option to purchase an existing 58 unit SRO building at 129 Pleasant Street and closed on the property in July 2015. This 21 million dollar project involves the temporary relocation of the current tenants, demolition of the current building and new construction of a five story building. The new building will contain 72 rental apartments and 3,500 sq. ft. of ground floor retail space. The unit breakdown includes 48 affordable and 24 market rate studio and one bedroom apartments. 4 of the units will be fully accessible for people with physical handicaps and all units will be able to be visited by persons with physical handicaps. 5 units will be set aside for clients of the Department of Mental Health. HAP will employ an on- site Resident Services Coordinator as well as on site property management.



Existing Northampton Lodging SRO



### Veterans Rental Assistance

The VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Leeds. With 57 new vouchers issued in FY2014, and 84 in FY2015, it brings the total number in the region to 591. 500 are currently in use; 447 are Veterans housed and 53 are searching for units. The Northampton Housing Authority administers 285. DHCD administers 132 in Western MA and 25 in Central MA. 85 are in use in Berkshire County and 149 in Worcester. The program has continued to grow every year, but placements in Northampton proper are still limited by the fair market rent rates.

### HIV/Aids Rental Assistance

Aids Care of Hampshire County, now known as A Positive Place, implemented a McKinney funding award three years ago putting 10 new housing subsidies with support services for households impacted by HIV/Aids into the region. The subsidies remain fully utilized. Most placements have been made outside of Northampton, however, due to the high costs of housing and the unrealistic fair market rent limits.

The program currently has 22 subsidies; 11 from HOPWA and 11 McKinney Vento. Of the HOPWA vouchers, 5 are units in Northampton and 2 are in Easthampton. The remaining units are in Chicopee, Holyoke and Springfield. Of the McKinney vouchers only one is being utilized in Northampton. Program administrators' state that it is more difficult to use the McKinney vouchers in Northampton because there is a requirement the holders be chronically homeless and therefore most clients have no rental history and landlords are less inclined to rent to them.

## **Preservation of Existing Stock**

### New South Street Apartments

A CDBG expenditure of \$130,000 was made in 2013-14 on the New South Street apartments . This is an 18 unit affordable housing building located right downtown. The building has long provided affordable housing opportunities at a prime downtown location and with continued maintenance will continue to do so. The CDBG expenditure increased the affordability term from December 31, 2028 to December 31, 2053.



New South Street Apartments

Home City Housing website

### Need for Housing Rehab

Now that the senior center debt service CDBG obligation has concluded, Federal dollars are available to create a new program. The Mayor's Office receives several calls a month from residents looking for rehabilitation services. Referrals are made to HAP Housing, but a local program would be preferable. Discussions were held this past year with possible program administrators and to gauge the need for such an effort. A Request for Proposals will be disseminated in the fall of 2015 to locate a program administrator.

### **Homeownership Assistance**

The \*Homeownership Coordinator at Valley Community Development's Homeownership Center assisted 46 households this past year. All First Time Homebuyers were referred to the HOME funded units in the region and down payment and closing cost programs. Of the 46 served, 40 were first time homebuyers and 6 were existing homeowners facing or at risk of foreclosure. Pre-purchase households worked on debt reduction, credit score improvement and savings for down payments. 2 households successfully utilized the City of Northampton's Down-Payment Assistance grants (\$3,000 each). Post purchase counseling was also provided. Post purchase assistance is time intensive. The process involves negotiating with banks to accept repayment plans, submission of loan modification packages and working with households to reduce debt and increase income in order to sustain homeownership. Although foreclosure activity has lessened in the region, VCDC worked on 6 local cases and another 19 funded by the MA Division of Banks. Many households are still struggling.

One of the CDC's greatest accomplishments this program year was their work with a single mother of a young child living in Florence who had concerns about her buying power and her ability to stay in Northampton. She was told about the 2-bedroom condo unit on Turkey Hill Road for sale under \$150,000. She decided to purchase allowing her to affordably stay in Northampton. The closing was on August 12, 2015. She will be paying less than her current rent for the mortgage.

*\*The countless hours worked by Homeownership Coordinator Donna Cabana to get and keep people housed is hereby acknowledged.*

## **Homelessness Prevention**

The Tenancy Preservation Program, operating throughout the Pioneer Valley assisted 5 Northampton households this past year. Under the auspices of MassHousing and the Mental Health Association based in Springfield, the program worked to prevent homelessness among people with disabilities. TPP acts as a neutral party between landlord and tenant and provides clinical consultation services to the Housing Court. TPP operated in collaboration with a number of agencies and organizations:

- The Housing Court / Department of the Massachusetts Trial Court
- The Massachusetts Departments of Children and Families, Developmental Services, Housing and Community Development, Mental Health, Public Health, and Transitional Assistance
- The Executive Office of Elder Affairs
- Public housing authorities
- Private management companies
- Local legal service agencies

The program targets individuals and families where a disability is both present and directly related to the reason for eviction. TPP clinicians assess the reasons for the eviction, identify needed services, develop a treatment plan to maintain the tenancy, and monitor the case. If the tenancy cannot be preserved, TPP coordinates the tenant's transition to a more appropriate placement, preventing homelessness whenever possible. Of the 5 households assisted in Northampton, 4 tenancies were preserved and one case remains open. Additionally, there were 18 consultations conducted that involved less staff time than a full open case would merit.

SRO Outreach Project - The SRO Outreach Program saw a change in the staffing over this past year, but services were largely uninterrupted. The Coordinator continued to be present in several of the private and non-profit SRO's in the community, holding coffee hours and linking individuals with needed resources. A total of 285 people were served over this year, including 18 new individuals. All served were 30% or below of area median income. Transport to

appointments, help with securing mainstream resources, operation of an emergency food pantry are all services provided that preserve tenancies. This one person program focuses on housing stabilization and homelessness prevention and is an unsung provider in our local service network.

ServiceNet's Hampshire County Resource Center - The day program located at 43 Center Street is "command central" for serving homeless individuals and those at risk of homelessness. As the entry point for intake into our service system, the door opens every morning with case managers ready to help individuals plot a course for the future. With no dedicated funding source for this work, ServiceNet staffers, in addition to Health Care for the Homeless nurses and other service providers assist clients with housing search for those without homes and work to preserve tenancies for those already housed. Approximately 175 unduplicated people were served this year. Many enter the shelter system, either at the Winter Inter-faith Cot Shelter, or the Grove Street Inn year round shelter. But since both shelters are not open during the day, all the case management happens at the Resource Center during the day.

Three years ago an operational shift was made at the Resource Center. ServiceNet changed the model from "drop in" based to appointment based. Due to the high volume of clients, managing the breakfast, lunch, showers and laundry had become chaotic and cut into the time allotted for true case management functions. Clients are now encouraged to utilize the other meals programs in the community. The shift has been successful as now there is more staff time available for individualized attention and helping people move their lives forward.

Community Legal Aid - A part time attorney present in the Housing Court assisted 20 very low income households, benefitting 46 individuals during this past year. The attorney worked on eviction defense and housing voucher termination cases. Evictions were prevented and tenancy maintained in 11 cases, almost all involving households with housing subsidies. CLA negotiated two move-out agreements with substantial time for the tenants to relocate as a remedy for the case, one which gave the tenant money to assist with the move. They worked closely with HAP Housing and Community Action to help with arrearage payments and with TPP when tenants presented with disabilities.

According to CLA's application for funding...." 64% of renter households in the Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area are unable to afford the rent on a two bedroom apartment. ... a household earning minimum wage would need to work 88 hours each week to afford a two bedroom unit... For low-income tenants with rent subsidies... expert legal assistance at critical times in the eviction and subsidy termination processes can preserve a precious commodity, affordable rent - and can mean the difference between stability and homelessness."

The application also states that "the landlord in many public and subsidized eviction cases is often represented by an attorney. In 2012, the Western Division of the Housing Court had the second highest number of eviction cases in the state and only 6.3% of the tenants were

represented by counsel, compared to 50.6% of landlords. Also, a growing number of eviction and subsidy termination cases are related to disabilities and reasonable accommodation". In this year, CLA worked closely with the Tenancy Preservation Program, Community Action and HAP Housing to help families avoid homelessness and expanded their community collaborations to include caseworkers from Berkshire Children and Families, Service Net and the HUD VASH program.

*\* The work of Linda Driscoll of the Tenancy Preservation Program/Mental Health Association, Stephen Mendozzi of the Center for Human Development's SRO Outreach Project, Katie Miernecki and Mike Trembley of ServiceNet and Claudia Phillips/ Health Care for the Homeless & Jen Dieringer of Community Legal Aid should be acknowledged for their work day in and day out helping people move towards safety and stability.*

#### Community Housing and Support Services Project

In 2014, the Northampton Housing Partnership applied for and received an award from the Community Preservation Committee for a Community Housing Support Services Coordinator position. Partnership members had identified the need for a person in the community to focus on households at risk of homelessness. With at least 50% of the cases being addressed in Housing Court being households with subsidies, it became clear that the challenges related to life skills and payment issues, rather than lack of access to affordable units is a huge problem.

The grant award is for \$195,000 over a three year period. The vendor was selected after a competitive RFP process and the position was filled in the spring of 2015. The focus is two tiered. The Coordinator will have a caseload and work directly with households identified through agency and court referrals at Housing Court and will facilitate workshops for a broader population of households with low incomes. After surveying the largest multi-family affordable housing providers in Northampton, Housing Partnership members learned that non-payment of rent was the largest reason for notices to quit and evictions. As a result, the RFP required that the vendor selected had or would create an internal Rep Payee program. The Center for Human Development had such a program and also had extensive agency experience working with at risk and homeless families in the region. Three agencies responded to the RFP, but the Center for Human Development was selected for the reasons stated above.

Quarterly reports will be made to the Housing Partnership to gauge progress and success, with annual reports to the Community Preservation Committee. Linkages have already been made with the Northampton Survival Center, Casa Latina, Meadowbrook Apartments and the Coordinator is attending local meetings to develop additional collaborations.

This project is particularly important to our local service delivery system because the family emergency shelters are at capacity and there are still families in local hotels and motels. If a household is fortunate enough to secure a rental subsidy it is tragic if they lose it and have to cycle into the emergency shelter system. Losing a subsidy has serious repercussions so tenancy

preservation is critical. We look forward to monitoring this effort and providing support to insure program success.

### Housing and Homelessness Priority/Activity Chart

Need	Strategy	Objective	Outcome	Number to be served	Goal Met
Homelessness Prevention <b>High Priority</b>	Advocate for funding for the Tenancy Preservation Program	Assisting persons at-risk of becoming homeless	Sustainability of Decent Housing	10 EL 10 LI	Yes Funded by ESG and MassHousing
	Continue to support the SRO Outreach Program	Assisting persons at-risk of becoming homeless	Sustainability of Decent Housing	100 EL 50 LI	Yes 285 Served CDBG support \$14,000
	Collaborate with Highland Valley Elder Services to identify frail elders living alone	Assisting persons at-risk of becoming homeless	Sustainability of Decent Housing	10 EL	Yes 11 served by CDBG \$4,914.60
	Support self-sufficiency, life skills attainment programs	Assisting persons at-risk of becoming homeless	Sustainability of Decent Housing	100 EL	Yes 285 served by SRO - \$ 14,000 CDBG; 20 by Community Legal Aid \$6,000 CDBG CPC award for Com. Housing Support Services Project \$195,000
Provision of Emergency Shelter <b>High Priority</b>	Continue to support staff capacity for emergency shelter system	Assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing	Availability/Affordability	250 EL	Yes 100 Served at Grove; \$15,000 CDBG 206 at Cot \$13,000 CDBG
	Improve the	Provide safe		100 EL	Yes

	physical environment at the Grove Street Inn	and sanitary emergency shelter			Exterior Painting \$11,000 CDBG
Provide Rapid Re-housing services <b>High Priority</b>	Facilitate coordinated case management to re-house those who lose their housing	Assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing	Availability/ Affordability	20 EL  No formal RRH units in Northampton	Work done at Resource Center but no stats collected. No family shelter in City.
Increase Access to Housing <b>High Priority</b>	Continue first, last and security deposit funding For homeless	Assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing	Availability/ Affordability	10EL	Yes FOH \$6,000 for accessing housing
Preservation of Affordable Housing <b>High Priority</b>	Projects funded through the Community Preservation Act	Retention of the affordable housing stock	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing	18 EL	New South Street Apts. \$130,000 CDBG and \$250,000 CPC Completed
	Monitor and advocate as needed to protect expiring use properties	Retention of the affordable housing stock	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing	21 units Leeds Village expires in 2018 252 units Hathaway Farms 2014	Dialogue with Mass Housing & owners on going
	Re-establish a Housing Rehabilitation Program	Retention of the affordable housing stock, energy efficiency, housing quality	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing	0 units	No Will work with Hilltown CDC and PVPC after Senior Ctr. Debt service expires
	Sustain and improve existing Single Room Occupancy Units	Retention of the affordable housing stock	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing	58 EL	Yes HAP Housing acquired Northampton Lodging in the

					downtown area
	Support landlords who are providing market rate affordable units	Retention of the affordable housing stock	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing		On-going; but no specific activity during the year
	Provide assistance for rehabilitation activities/ preserve stock	Retention of the affordable housing stock	Sustainability of decent, affordable housing	18 units improved	Yes Completed New South St. apts.
Impact Affordability of Rental Housing <b>High Priority</b>	Support Northampton Housing Authority (local), HAP Housing & VASH (regional) rental assistance programs	Increase utilization of rental subsidies	Improved affordability	35 New VASH vouchers/ local utilization of subsidies/ FMR remains problem	Yes new VASH vouchers recvd. 411/450 housed in region
	Establish Task Force to increase exceptions rents and reconfigure the regional Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (Federal Congressional action required)	Increase utilization of rental subsidies in Northampton	Improved availability/ affordability	Est. new SMSA for Northampton	Provided public comment to HUD initiative for Small Area Fair Market Rent Changes
	Advocate for increased funding for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program	Increase availability of rental subsidies	Improved availability/ affordability	No info. On # of new vouchers issued locally, but increased statewide allocation.	Yes Program increased for new budget year.
Production of Rental Housing for Individuals	Identify suitable municipal land and make available for	Increase availability of affordable permanent	New availability/ a suitable living environment	0 units brought on line this year; But several parcels identified	No; but 3 Developer forums held April 23;

High Priority	housing	housing		& presented in power point show at forum	October 7, November 4 2014
	Pursue tax title property for affordable housing	Increase availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment	Will continue to monitor tax title list of properties.	Identified parcels on Rte. 5, Cook Avenue for possible projects
	Convert existing housing to affordable housing	Increase availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment/ Sustainability	0 units brought on line this year.	Developer's forums held to stimulate production. April, 2014 October, & November.
	Promote Infill development	Increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment/ Sustainability	0 units Created; Design competition held to stimulate ideas for construction options on small lots.	Property identified by Valley CDC at 256 Pleasant Street lot. 55 units
	Identify and implement Housing First, Safe Haven projects	Increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment	0 units	Friends of the Homeless issued RFP; 2 respondents will be interviewed.
	Examine adaptive reuse and mixed use possibilities for affordable housing	Increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment	Potential of 100+ units to be newly constructed in next 3 years - CDC to build 55/ mix of 1, 2, and 3-bdrm units & HAP to build 72 studio and 1-bdrm apts. 48 aff.	Two projects identified  VCDC to purchase 256 Pleasant St  HAP purchased 129 Pleasant St
	Examine, identify and implement enhanced SRO projects	Increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment	No units created this year, but Northampton Lodging project moving forward. Permits received. Funding app.'s	Redevelopment of largest remaining private SRO taking shape. 58 units

				made spring 2015	
Production of Rental Housing for Families <b>High Priority</b>	Examine locations and designs to accommodate smaller households/ cottage style, accessory apartments	Increasing the availability of suitably sized affordable housing	New availability/ a suitable living environment	Dividing unit mix between Valley CDC project & HAP project so as not to compete. Together, cover range from small to larger units.	256 Pleasant St. proposes ones, twos and three bdm. units; 129 to contain studios and ones.
	Convert existing housing to affordable housing	Utilize existing stock	New availability/ a suitable living environment	Utilization of existing site/ problematic property will be transformed, current tenants protected.	129 Pleasant Street SRO is not affordable by regulation; new project will be w/deed restrictions.
	Promote Infill development for smaller households	Protect undeveloped areas	New availability/ a suitable living environment	129 Pleasant Street/ Aka Northampton Lodging will be infill redevelopment.	129 Pleasant Street; option to purchase expires 11/14. Pre-dev. Has begun.
	Identify suitable municipal parcels for development	Keep developer costs down	New availability/ a suitable living environment	Oak Street parcel in Florence examined. Public tour and comment session scheduled for 2015 summer.	Options examined in Developers Forums.
Affordable Home ownership Opportunity <b>Medium Priority</b>	Continue to fund and support the First Time Homebuyer Program/	Increasing the availability of affordable housing for ownership	A suitable living environment and economic opportunity/	46 LM households served  2 down payment/closing cost grants	Yes 46 served CDBG \$20,000 Down-payment Grants \$6,000
	Support area foreclosure prevention programs/ efforts	Increasing the availability of affordable housing for ownership	A suitable living environment and economic opportunity/ neighborhood and economic	6 LM households served	Yes 6 LM served by Valley CDC

			stabilization		
	Support post-purchase counseling; budgeting and financial literacy programs	Increasing the availability of affordable housing for ownership	A suitable living environment and economic opportunity/ neighborhood and economic stabilization	46 LM households served	Yes 46 served by Valley CDC and 4 FTHB workshops at Florence Savings Bank Reached 110
	Continue to support Fair Lending and anti-discrimination practices and programs	Increasing the availability of affordable housing for ownership	A suitable living environment and economic opportunity/ neighborhood and economic stabilization	25 EL and LI households	Yes Served by Mass. Fair Housing Center thru regional HUD grant
Maintain and Provide Housing for At-Risk Populations. <b>High Priority</b>	Identify ways to continue the SAMHSA & Housing Plus programming success for housing chronically homeless	Increase the supply of supportive housing to enable homeless and special needs populations to live independently	Increase accessibility and availability/ a suitable living environment.	10 proposed for Burts Pit Road project / Dept. of Dev. Disabilities	0 units created. Housing Authority project still on hold/ no State funds available for new construction.
	Continue to assess the needs of the seriously mentally ill after the completion of the units at the former Northampton State hospital	Increase the supply of supportive housing for homeless and special needs populations	Increase accessibility and availability/ a suitable living environment.	0 units	0 units planned. No new resources through DMH
	Continue to assess the needs of the developmentally disabled after the completion of the Northampton Housing	Increase the supply of supportive housing to enable homeless and special needs populations	Increase accessibility and availability/ a suitable living environment.	10 EL units	Advocate for funding to move the NHA Burts Pit project forward/ 10 units for DDS/ all designed and

	Authority project on Burt's Pit Road				permitted; no state funds available
	Identify funding and locations for a third Yvonne's House and a Safe Havens Program	Increase the supply of supportive housing to enable homeless and special needs populations.	Increase accessibility and availability/ a suitable living environment.	4-6 EL needed Assessing Safe Havens for CH; PSH for Youth, PSH for single women or TH for DV victims as next housing models to pursue.	Not yet. Discussions & fund raising occurring thru Friends of Hampshire County Homeless for a third program.

\*EL = extremely low income LI = low income

## Housing and Homelessness Collaborative Efforts

### Northampton Housing Partnership

The Housing Partnership (active since 1990) continued to meet monthly throughout the past year. The Partnership advocates for affordable rental and homeownership units by working with non-profit agencies, private developers and others to create and preserve affordable housing. In addition to tasks associated with implementation of the Housing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan, it addressed the following this past year:

- Issued Request for Proposals, conducted interviews and selected vendor for the Community Housing Support Services Program.
- Supported Planning Dept. app. to State for PATH grant ( Pathways to Housing)
- Reviewed and revised Housing Trust Ordinance to expand powers/duties
- Conducted review of proposed zoning changes to include aff. Units in projects
- Monitored implementation of the Housing Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan
- Discussed fair housing activities and workshops/ outreach methods ( 4 meetings )
- Discussed strategies to reach landlords to support market rate aff. housing efforts
- Reviewed CPC applications and supported applicants by attending CPC meetings
- Monitored unit creation at the former State Hospital
- Monitored expiring use properties and the Subsidized Housing Inventory
- Received updates from the Western Mass. Network to End Homelessness
- Continued the series of OP ED columns in local paper to increase awareness about affordable housing issues
- Devoted a meeting to guest speaker on municipal fair housing responsibilities and revisions to the Law, reviewed Proposed Interim Rule

The Partnership serves as the City's fair housing committee. To actively further fair housing access and opportunity, it continued to work closely with the Massachusetts Fair Housing Center. (see update on activity in Fair Housing section.)

### Community Preservation Committee

By official City Charter, the Housing Partnership oversees funding recommendations for CDBG housing activities and reviews all applications made to the City's housing draw down fund. Funds for affordable housing projects have been limited due to the Senior Center debt repayment obligation and the ever diminishing total allocation from HUD. However, the Community Preservation Act fund has been able to support housing projects and has successfully done so for the past several years. The two groups continued to work closely together this year. The local Community Preservation Committee requires applicants coming before them for housing projects, to acquire an endorsement from the Housing Partnership. Through this review process, the Partnership can confirm for the CPC deliberation that the proposed project addresses (or not) the priority needs articulated in the Housing Plan.

The Housing Partnership continued to work on the Community Housing and Support Services Project funded in the spring of 2015. The program was designed to create a Community Housing Support Manager position in the community to provide supportive services and financial stability assistance to families and individuals at risk of eviction from subsidized housing. The Committee members recognized that having services to help people stay in their housing is as critical as having/using funds to create new units. \$195,000 over three years was awarded as requested.

The Housing Support Manager will coordinate community involvement for financial literacy and budget counseling workshops; make referrals to social service agencies; secure assistance for timely and regular payment of rent (i.e. wage assignment, electronic fund transfers, etc.) or provision of a rep payee service; and act as liaison with property managers of low income developments to identify residents at risk of eviction at all stages, as well as, assist with landlord/tenant mediation. The project will help to avoid undue stress (and cost) for tenants and management by preventing eviction and homelessness.

The Housing Partnership reviewed and approved the two applications for CPC funds from Valley CDC and HAPHousing for the Pleasant Street projects. Support letters were sent and members attended the public hearings held by the CPC to express support. Each was awarded \$300,000. The Committee review process was comprehensive and many neighborhood meetings were held with abutters to vet the designs. Permits were also secured from the Central Business Architecture Committee and Planning Board.

**Community Preservation Act Funding**

Project	CPA \$	Leveraged	Total Project Budget
Habitat for Humanity Garfield Avenue	\$120,000	\$579,975	\$699,975
Friends of the Homeless Straw Ave. Housing 1 <sup>st</sup>	\$220,000	\$175,000	\$395,000
Housing Partnership Strategic Plan	\$34,694	\$0	\$34,694
Valley CDC/ FTHB	\$26,161	\$0	\$26,161
Alliance for Sober Living/ renov.	\$37,540	\$8,000	\$45,540
Paradise Pond/HAP	\$26,627	\$0	\$26,627
Grove Street Inn	\$8,824	\$0	\$8,824
Valley CDC/ King Street SRO	\$225,000	\$1,885,000	\$2,110,000
Valley CDC Maple Street SRO	\$250,000	\$1,765,000	2,015,000
VCDC- Predev.Fund 1	\$10,000	\$0	10,000
VCDC- Predev.Fund 2	\$10,000	\$0	10,000
VCDC Development	\$80,000	\$0	\$80,000
Habitat Garfield 2	\$60,000	\$108,605	\$168,605
Habitat Garfield 2	\$60,000	\$108,604	\$168,604
Habitat Garfield 2	\$60,000	\$108,604	\$168,604
Grove Street Inn rehab	\$36,950	\$0	\$36,950
Friends of Homeless Sober House 1&2	\$150,000 \$30,000	\$185,000	\$365,000
Access to Housing Initiative	\$10,000	\$0	\$0
*Christopher Heights Assisted Living	\$120,000 *\$130,000	\$13,400,000	\$13,520,000
22-34 New South St	\$250,000	\$230,000	\$480,000
NHP Housing Support Services	\$195,000	\$0	\$195,000
*Lumberyard Affordable Housing	\$300,000	\$19,400	\$19,400,700
*Pleasant Street Affordable Housing	\$300,000	\$21,100	\$21,400,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,750,796</b>	<b>\$18,594,288</b>	<b>\$61,375,284</b>

\*This program year

### Next Step Collaborative

The Next Step Collaborative is the monthly gathering of all housing and homeless service providers in the City. This group, active since 1994, is charged with the creation and oversight of a coordinated and comprehensive care delivery system for the City's low and moderate-income individuals and families, with specific focus on the homeless. Facilitated by the City's Housing Planner, providers came together each month this last program year to share information about services provided, service gaps and identified issues that needed attention. This venue guaranteed that all participants were aware of existing resources and gave agency staff the opportunity to check in with each other and kept City staff informed about needs in the community.

Topics addressed last year included homeless outreach services, numbers and locations of unsheltered homeless, shelter capacity issues and coordination with the Amherst, Easthampton, Springfield and Westfield shelter programs.

### Three County Continuum of Care

The City of Northampton continued to serve as the lead agency for the Three County Continuum of Care until December 1, 2012. The Continuum included Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden counties with the exception of the City of Springfield. The City served as the lead for 16 years and was responsible for securing one million dollars plus annually for 14-16 programs in the region.

The decision was made during 2011-12 to relinquish the lead agency role to administer the McKinney Grant and oversee the Continuum. A Request for Expressions of Interest was issued in the spring of 2012. After a review of responses and an interview process, the Hilltown Community Development Corporation was chosen to move the Continuum forward. Work commenced and continued during 2012 to accomplish that transition process which concluded December 1st, 2012. The City's Housing Planner/CDBG Administrator continued to assist Hilltown CDC as needed and will be on the CoC Governing Board moving forward.

### Western Massachusetts Regional Network to End Homelessness

The City continued to participate in the Regional Network to End Homelessness this past year. The Housing Planner represented the City and Mayor at the Leadership Council meetings and attended Individual Services and Unaccompanied Youth committee meetings. She ceased attending the Steering Committee, Management Team and Governance Committee, after the City was no longer the Continuum lead for HUD McKinney program funding.

The Network has developed a stellar statewide reputation for consensus building and improving coordination among all stakeholders. In addition to effective advocacy, progress

continued on the paradigm shift from a shelter based solution to housing. The region continued to be challenged by the number of homeless families in motels in W. Springfield, Chicopee, Springfield and Greenfield. The family service providers continued to coordinate resources to serve and house ever increasing numbers of homeless families.

The Network secured funding through a State line item earmark and an additional award from the Fireman Foundation to support its Secure Jobs Connect project. Building on partnerships with regional businesses and workforce developers, 68+ placements have been made for families experiencing homelessness in the Valley. The retention rate has been highly successful due to support services from the Career Centers and other project partners such as Square One, a child care provider.

Additional funding sources (Pioneer Valley United Way, The Community Foundation of Western Mass,) have been secured to keep the Network Coordinator position funded. The first and only Regional Network Coordinator, Pamela Schwartz is also a Northampton City Councilor and the Co-Chair of the Leadership Council for the Network, Lynne Wallace, is a member of the Northampton Housing Partnership and a Commissioner on the Northampton Housing Authority Board. *The City acknowledges the tremendous efforts of both individuals.*

#### Western Massachusetts Inter-Agency Council on Housing and Homelessness

WMIC continued to meet quarterly this past year. This is a gathering of representatives of State agencies, service providers and representatives of the 3 (now 2) western Massachusetts Continuums of Care. This body initiated the Housing First/REACH pilot project in Springfield and has spawned extensive regional collaboration. The primary purpose of WMIC is to identify barriers to effective service delivery that result from the lack State agency coordination and works to break down those system silos. The Northampton Housing Planner served as defacto staff to WMIC the past few years. Her involvement ceased when the City relinquished Continuum lead agency status.

Each year the agenda is focused on particular topics. The problems are defined by the service providers and the obstacles that are caused by state agency silos are identified. Action plans are developed that often result in pilot projects to test new ideas and develop best practices. This year's topics were youth homelessness, family homelessness, employment and food security.

Four years ago, WMIC also created a pilot project called CRT - the Critical Response Team. A group of high level state agency representatives assemble when all standard paths have been exhausted and clients have fallen through all cracks. The State ICHH endorsed the pilot and designated agency representatives working in western Mass. to serve on the CRT. Jay Levy at Eliot Homeless Services, Jerry Ray from the Mental Health Association and Dave Modzewski, formerly DMH now with the Network, formulated this task force. It was activated a few times this past year. Referrals for CRT are made from the monthly REACH meetings (Regional

Engagement and Assessment of Chronically Homeless) where providers come together for coordinated case management for those facing the most challenges. With this approach, great headway has been made in housing the chronically homeless in the region. WMIC continues to meet and is co-chaired by representatives of the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Public Health and the Department of Transitional Assistance.

### Cot Management Committee

This highly successful program operated in partnership with the City, ServiceNet, Inc. the program administrator and a cadre of 400+ community volunteers that provided the evening meal and over-night support for paid staff. The program operated from November 1st to April 30th. The Housing Planner served as the City representative on the Management Committee that oversaw the operation of the Hampshire Inter-faith winter emergency shelter. The Housing Planner served as an overnight volunteer once a month to experience the program first hand.

## **Public Housing**

The City of Northampton has an established working relationship with the Northampton Housing Authority (NHA). CDBG funds have been committed to the NHA by the City for various public housing improvements over the past several years, including the Grace House kitchen this program year.

The Mayor of Northampton appoints four of the five NHA commissioners, with the fifth being appointed by the Governor. The NHA provides the City with copies of its annual report and meeting minutes and was involved in the consultation process undertaken for development of the 2010 Consolidated Plan and the annual Action Plan.

The City's CDBG Consolidated Plan and the NHA's five-year plan are designed to be consistent in their approach to meeting the housing and social service needs of the City's very low, low, and moderate income population. The City's Housing and Community Development Planner/CDBG Administrator worked with the Housing Authority to coordinate the goals and objectives of the City's CDBG Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plan with the NHA's five year strategy.

### Improvements

The most recent improvements and actions completed at NHA developments in FY2015 include the following:

- Florence Heights  
Sidewalk Repairs - \$9,750  
Unit Flooring - \$7,963

- Exterior Painting - \$10,790
- Forsander Apartments  
Retaining Wall Repairs - \$10,345
- Tobin Elderly Apartments  
Electrical Repairs - \$6,866  
Hallway Carpet - \$10,859  
Unit Carpet - \$4,750
- Cahill Apartments  
Replace Common Area Flooring - \$22,170  
Boiler Replacement - \$11,000
- Salvo House  
Replaced Main Breaker Electric Load Panels - \$244,660  
Concrete Repairs - \$2,100  
Replace Kitchen Door - \$3,185  
Exterior Lighting - \$9,650
- McDonald House  
Elevator Hoist Ropes - \$9,375  
Stairway Lighting - \$7,265  
Exterior Lighting - \$2,336  
Flow Control Valves - \$3,800
- Grace House  
Kitchen improvements completed 2013
- Hampshire Heights  
Kitchen and bathroom renovations 2004  
Furnace replacement with high efficiency units 2009  
Drainage improvements (buildings 3-6) planned for 2015
- State Street  
Water damage mitigation and repair \$64,950
- Bridge Street, Tobin Manor and Grace House  
Renovate Entry Ways - \$64,000
- Millbank  
Replace Flooring - \$6,725
- Laurel Street  
Demolition - \$30,000

*The long serving Executive Director of the Housing Authority retired at the end of this program year. We look forward to working with his replacement to advance the City's affordable housing goals and send best wishes to Jon Hite as he enters his next life chapter and our thanks for his dedication and commitment to the residents and staff of the NHA over the last two decades of service.*

## Priority Public Facilities Objectives and Activities

Objective	Strategy	Outcome	Goal Met
Physical rehabilitation and energy efficiency improvements on buildings utilized by the public to increase accessibility, usability <b>High Priority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handicapped accessibility prioritized</li> <li>Improvements to facilities for persons with special needs / homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, group homes</li> <li>Maintenance of existing facilities that offer programming for households with low and moderate incomes to increase economic self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>	Access, Sustainability Improved quality of life and environment	Yes; Grove Street Inn exterior painting \$11,000 done & James House Front porch work & painting \$35,365 Completed in 2013-4 Crosswalk signalization 2015
Removal of Architectural Barriers <b>High Priority</b>	<p>Survey public buildings, commercial buildings, public infrastructure and park facilities for opportunities to eliminate or lessen hardship for persons with physical disabilities. Installation of sidewalk curb cuts in eligible areas, ramps, elevator installations. Other City Dept. of Public Works Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-North Street: 3,000 linear ft. of roadway &amp; sidewalk reconstructed FY13 and FY14 one new curb cut, all ADA standards/Chapt. 90 funds</li> <li>-N.Elm Street 1,450 linear ft. new sidewalk with 2 handicap acc. curb cuts City funded.</li> <li>-Sheldon Field adj. to Old Ferry Rd. 275 linear ft. of sidewalk. City funded.</li> <li>Kennedy Rd. 10,000 linear ft. roadway reclaimed/Chapt. 90 funds</li> </ul>	Suitable living environment Increased access to public facility Educational workshops, computer access for job search	Yes; Forbes Library elevator construction underway CDBG 2013 \$14,000/ Design docs ***** 15 crosswalks and 30 ADA ramps completed in the downtown area from North Street (both sides) from Market St to Day Avenue
Senior Center <b>High Priority</b>	Debt service paid by CDBG approx. \$300,000 per year	Improved availability of services for elders/improved	Yes; Final CDBG Debt Payment of

		quality of life	\$145,613
Construction of public infrastructure to support neighborhood and economic revitalization. <b>Medium Priority</b>	Targeted neighborhood projects that address streets, sidewalks, curbs, water and sewer lines to improve access and usability.	Access, Sustainability	River Run sidewalk being considered by residents. \$45,000 CDBG
Streetscape improvements to support neighborhood and economic revitalization. <b>Medium Priority</b>	Challenging for these projects to qualify under CDBG Defer to Dept. of Public Works, Community Preservation Act, Business Improvement District	Access, Sustainability	No CDBG projects this program year.
Public Parks/Recreation Areas to support neighborhood and economic revitalization. <b>Low Priority</b>	Park, playground, recreation construction/improvement in income eligible neighborhoods or associated with eligible projects or to enhance handicap accessibility.	Access, Sustainability City can use CPC funds for these projects.*	No CDBG projects this program year.

\* From July 2013 to June 2014 the Community Preservation Committee funded a Connecticut River Greenway project, design for Pulaski park renovations, design for the Leeds Rail Trail extension, purchase of an additional 58 acres in the Saw Mill Hill conservation area, purchase of a 48 acre open space parcel on Sylvester Road and funds to serve as a local match for a state grant to create two playgrounds (Lampron Park adjacent to the Bridge Street school and Florence Fields)

## Public Facilities

The major CDBG funded public facility project continued to be the renovation of the James House, a municipally owned building, into a Community Learning Center. The bulk of the physical transformation has successfully concluded and programs have been operating for 3 years. In FY 11, the City hired an architect to prepare renovation design plans, put the project out to bid and hired a contractor to complete interior renovations which included: an upgrade of existing offices and common areas, creation of 5 new classroom spaces (from the former court room and basement holding cells), the HVAC system, made energy efficiency improvements and installed photo voltaic panels. The Center for New Americans and the Literacy Project moved in and are providing adult basic education, college readiness, job training and family literacy programs. A grand opening celebration was held in July of 2011. During exterior painting this past year, it was discovered that the large columns on the front porch were rotten. Repair of the four deteriorated column bases and repainting of the front porch was completed this year. There are no additional physical plant improvement projects planned with the exception of the door access/alarm system.

The Northampton Community Education Consortium membership worked to expand programming. There is hope that the two community colleges can increase their off-site course work to offset the lack of a local community college in Hampshire County. A class on sign language was taught this past year and various early childhood education agencies utilized the childcare room and adjacent conference room.

## Priority Economic Development Objectives and Activities

Objective	Strategy	Outcome	Goal Met
Increase business development and job retention/creation targeting low/mod residents. <b>High Priority</b>	Micro-business/small business technical assistance/entrepreneurial training to low/mod income residents and qualified businesses. Workshops offered to broaden outreach and one-on-one counseling	Access, Sustainability Economic self-sufficiency	Yes 26 counseled individually 3 workshop attendees 3 jobs created 22 jobs retained
	Literacy, adult basic education, English as a second language, workforce readiness to low/mod income residents, youth, un/underemployed, under-educated, non-English speaking residents.	Access, Sustainability Economic Self Sufficiency	Yes 27 served at Literacy Project \$9,000 47 at Center for New Americans
	Predevelopment assistance and small business loan program	Access, Affordability, Sustainability Economic Self-Sufficiency	Yes 25 served by Valley CDC's SB Program
Economic development projects and revitalization to targeted business development areas <b>High Priority</b>	Including but not limited to business incubators, building clearance, new construction, expansion, rehabilitation, brown-fields redevelopment, predevelopment and project planning activities, job training, energy efficiency and conservation, growing local markets, activities that improve access to services and opportunity by L/MI residents (such as use of electronic benefit Transfer (EBT) cards at local farmers markets to improve access to fresh fruits/vegetables).	Access, Affordability Sustainability Economic Self Sufficiency	Fairgrounds redevelopment activity on-going Engineering and drainage analysis work continued. No CDBG funds spent this year  EBT card usage at farmers markets Increased
Infrastructure to support business	Infrastructure improvements to targeted business development areas	Access, Sustainability	Progress made on drainage

development and job retention/creation. <b>Medium Priority</b>	and targeted business clusters including but not limited to sewer, water, drainage, roadways, sidewalk/traffic calming, parking, transit, telecommunications.		improvements at Fairground Blighted Area; passenger railway station funding secured.
Rehabilitation of deteriorated commercial or industrial property. <b>Medium Priority</b>	Targeted financial assistance for rehabilitation/renovation to address accessibility, deteriorated buildings, code violations, and energy efficiency.	Access, Affordability, Sustainability	Improvements to the James House Community Learning Center.

## Economic Development

The Valley Community Development Corporation assisted 26 people interested in starting micro-businesses. Counseling sessions were conducted and follow-up telephone and email support was provided. Assistance included information on starting a business, creating a business plan, governmental, financial and business requirements such as insurance, legal and accounting resources, developing financial projections, analysis of ways to increase revenue, structuring marketing and sales campaigns and referrals to credit counselors when necessary. 15 new business and 11 existing businesses were assisted resulting in the creation of 3 full time jobs and the retention of 22 full time jobs. The VCDC helped 3 of these clients obtain \$645,000 in financing; 1, a victim of the Hadley Fire, who was counseled under another grant, opened a business in Northampton; 1 purchased a Northampton business from her employer and 1 resident purchased a business in another town.

## Priority Public Services Objectives and Activities

Objective	Strategy	Outcome	Goal Met
Basic Needs <b>High Priority</b>	Support of funding applications targeted to assist households with basic needs: Emergency fuel assistance Emergency food assistance Access to health care	Sustainability of decent housing; Suitable Living Environment and economic opportunity	Yes CDBG support for Manna Soup Kitchen, SRO Food Pantry, Survival Center Casa Latina
Youth Programs <b>High Priority</b>	Support of funding applications targeted to assist youth After school tutoring Adult and peer mentoring; mediation skills	Sustainability of decent housing; Suitable Living Environment and economic opportunity	Yes CDBG support for Big Brothers Big Sisters and Community Action Youth Readiness Program

	Recreational programming		
Housing Support Services <b>High Priority</b>	Fund programs that provide housing support services to enhance stabilization and maintain tenancies.	Sustainability of decent housing; Suitable Living Environment and economic opportunity	Yes CDBG funding for SRO Outreach & Community Legal Aid
Services for Special Needs Populations <b>High Priority</b>	Support for Services for special needs populations including services to the following: Persons with drug / alcohol addictions; Homeless youth; homeless families with severe barriers to self sufficiency	Sustainability of decent housing; Suitable Living Environment and economic opportunity	Yes CDBG funding for Community Legal Aid, SRO Outreach
Skills Development, Training, Education & Counseling <b>Medium Priority</b>	Support applications for: Language and literacy skills, transitional education/workforce development, computer skills, employment and training skills, life skills, health/nutrition, energy conservation	Economic opportunity, Suitable living environment	Yes CDBG funding for The Literacy Project & The Center for New Americans & staff support to Northampton Community Education Consortium/ James House
Transportation services <b>Medium Priority</b>	Support of applications for improved transportation for end users/ from areas of low/mod households to work centers	Economic opportunity, access to health care, jobs, education	No  No projects undertaken this program year.
Handicap services <b>Medium Priority</b>	Support efforts to improve accessibility of disabled to the downtown, jobs, public buildings and services and apply funds for entrances, curb cuts & to improve interior public building access and flow	Economic opportunity; a suitable living environment; improved accessibility	Yes CDBG funding for construction documents for elevator project and DPW projects
Childcare services <b>Medium Priority</b>	Support preservation /creation of child care subsidies Improved ability of heads of households to pursue education and employment opportunities	Economic Opportunity	Yes Recruited users of child care room at the James House for use while parents attend classes.
Removal of Architectural Barriers	Survey public buildings, commercial buildings,	Suitable living environment	Yes

<p><b>High Priority</b></p>	<p>public infrastructure and park facilities Installation of sidewalk curb cuts Eliminate/lessen Hardships for persons with physical disabilities.</p>		<p>DPW completed 15 sidewalks and 30 ADA ramps – North Street (both sides) from Market Street to Day Avenue</p>
	<p>Work with Committee on Disabilities and Human Rights Commission to eliminate/lessen Hardships for persons with physical disabilities.</p>	<p>Suitable living environment</p>	<p>Meetings were held. Crosswalks in need of signalization for audio impaired identified.</p>
<p>Public Safety <b>Low Priority</b></p>	<p>Support public safety efforts including but not limited to DARE, crime prevention targeting LMI residents and neighborhoods</p>	<p>Suitable living environment</p>	<p>Worked with Police and service providers regarding panhandling issues.</p>

## Public Infrastructure

The Community and Economic Development Office works with the City of Northampton’s Department of Public Works to determine if the CDBG program can be utilized for City projects. New projects undertaken or completed in this program year are described in the chart above, although no CDBG dollars were expended on them. A \$20,000 CDBG allocation for two audio signalized crosswalks was put in the Action Plan for the program year. Activity was delayed until other funding sources were identified. Work is now scheduled for September 2015.

## Leveraged Resources

Agency	Source	Type	Amount
<i>Big Brothers Big Sisters</i>			
	Northampton CDBG	Federal	\$ 4,500
	United Way	Private	13,125
	Bowlathon	Private	13,000
	Donations	Private	24,775
	Winter Craft Fair	Private	6,000
	Daffodil Run	Private	10,000
<i>Casa Latina</i>			
	Northampton CDBG	Federal	\$ 14,000
	United Way	Private	15,000
	Misc. Grants	Federal/Local	78,428.60
	Administration Fee	C. Dickinson Hospital	19,080
	Interpreting Service Fee	Cooley Dickinson	11,059
<i>Center for New Americans</i>			
	Northampton CDBG	Federal	9,000
	Casa Latina (sub-contract)	State	20,000
	Dept. of Education	State	477,421
	Office of Refugee & Immigrants	State	12,000
	Foundation & Corporate Grants	Private	78,000
	Individual Gifts	Private	39,000
	Hampshire United Way	Private	25,000
	Franklin United Way	Private	13,000

<i>City of Northampton</i>					
	CDBG Allocation	Federal			618,768
Florence Fields Rec. Area	Grant #2	State			400,000
	Community Preservation Act	Local			1,000,000
<i>Ct. River Greenway</i>	Transportation Imp. Program	Federal	**FY18		6,000,000
<i>Leeds Park and Ride</i>	Transportation Imp. Program	Federal			1,000,000
<i>Broad Brook Gap</i>	Community Preservation Act	Local			150,000
<i>Rail Tail Underpass</i>	State transportation Bond	State	**FY16		1,500,000
<i>Rail Trail Extension</i>	Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund	*FY16	Federal		240,000
<i>Health / Planning Grant</i>	Cooley Dickinson Hospital	*FY16	Regional/Private		2,500
<i>Health / Planning Grant</i>	MA Dept of Public Health /Mass in Motion	*FY16	Regional/State		50,000
<i>Damon Road</i>	Transportation Improvement Grant	Federal/State			10,000
	Legislative Earmark	State			100,000
<i>N. King St/Hatfield St Roundabout</i>	Transportation Improvement Grant	*FY17	State		2,500,000
<i>Pleasant St/Conz St Roundabout</i>	Transportation Improvement Grant	*FY17	State		2,000,000
<i>Downtown Park abutting low income project</i>	Mass PARC Grant		State		400,000
			Application 2 <sup>nd</sup> grant FY16		400,000
<i>Riverfront park abutting low income project</i>	Mass PARC Grant	*FY17	State		400,000
<i>Conservation Preservation Area</i>	Mass Land Grant	*FY16	State		150,000
<i>High Speed Rail and Rail Trail Linkage</i>	High Speed Rail Funds		Federal ( W. Mass)		73,000,000
			Northampton		6,000,000
<i>King Street Bike Path Tunnel</i>	State Transportation Bond	State	*FY15		1,500,000
<b>Community Action/ Youth Employment Readiness</b>					
	Northampton CDBG	Federal			6,400
	Workforce Investment Act (WIA)	Federal			39,705
	Massachusetts Clean Energy Center	Federal			18,486
	Foundations	Private			7,500

<i>Community Legal Aid</i>		
Northampton CDBG	Federal	6,000
United Way	Private	119,847
MLAC	State	3,891,206
Federal Prime Recipient	Federal	1,877,899
Federal Sub-Recipient	Federal	390,933
Foundations	Private	376,000
Legal Services Organizations	Private	4,200
City of Pittsfield	City	12,750
Attorney General of Massachusetts	State	762,758
MA Exec. Office of Elder Affairs	State	32,300
Miscellaneous	Private	25,000
Miscellaneous	Private	219,400
<i>Highland Valley Elder Services</i>		
Northampton CDBG	Federal	5,000
Executive Office of Elder Affairs	State	14,200
<i>Literacy Project</i>		
Northampton CDBG	Federal	9,000
Ware CDBG	Federal	75,000
Beveridge Foundation	Private	9,500
Dept. of Education	State	526,375
DESE Career Pathways	State	80,034
Donations/fundraising	Private	101,597
Bete Foundation	Private	10,000
United Way Hampshire County	Private	12,500

United Way Franklin County	Private	10,000
Other Foundations	Private	83,058
Rental Income	Private	2,400
Department of Education	Federal	58,000
<i>MANNA Soup Kitchen</i>		
Northampton CDBG	Federal	3,000
Shelter Sunday	Private	6,927
Donations	Private	14,051
Religious Organizations	Private	6,552
Valley Gives	Private	2,312
Fundraising	Private	640
Businesses	Private	121
<i>Northampton Housing Authority</i>		
Capital Fund	Federal	160,656
Public Housing Subsidies	Federal	418,580
Section 8	Federal	3,811,281
Section 8 Mod Rehab	Federal	178,843
Public Housing Subsidies	State	546,210
Mass Rental Vouchers	State	25,082
Mix Population Grant	State	31,200
Modernization Program	State	592,595
VASH Section 8	Federal	1,169,613
<i>ServiceNet, Inc. / Inter-Faith Shelter</i>		
DHCD	State	78,699
EOHHS	State	601

Deferred Payment Loan	Federal	10,000
Northampton CDBG	Federal	13,000
Friends of the Homeless	Private	18,050
Hampshire United Way	Private	30,000
Private Donations	Private	50
<i>ServiceNet, Inc. / Grove Street Inn</i>		
DHCD	State	\$ 160,182
EOHHS	State	3,213
MA Shelter Alliance	Private	31,545
Project Bread	Private	2,500
Northampton CDBG	Federal	15,000
Shelter Sunday	Private	8,000
Private Donations	Private	15,324
<i>SRO Outreach</i>		
Northampton CDBG	Federal	\$ 14,000
United Way Hampshire County	Private	25,000
Hap Inc.	Non-Profit	5,000
Valley CDC	Non-Profit	5,000
Donations	Private	6,600
<i>Survival Center</i>		
Bread & Butter Club	Private	106,571
City of Easthampton	Federal/State	4,800
Northampton CDBG	Federal	10,000
Project Bread	Private	6,400
United Way	Private	41,232

Misc. Grants	Private	71,282
Transportation Fund	Private	1,230
Goshen Grant Income	Federal	3,471
Civic	Private	2,615
Business	Private	46,601
Religious	Private	6,983
Individual Donations	Private	365,862
Interest Income	Private	394
Misc Income	Private	336
Events	Private	19,920
Schools	Private	2,148
<i>Three County Fairgrounds</i>		
Project Development-USDA	Federal	\$20,000
Cultural Facilities	State	\$ 3,000,000
EDA	Federal	TBD
<i>Valley CDC</i>		
CDBG Northampton	Federal	\$ 39,000
Private Contributions	Private	\$62,000
Florence Savings	Private	50,000
TD Bank North	Private	2,500
United Way	Private	25,000
Easthampton Savings Bank	Private	5,000
Peoples Bank	Private	7,500
Mass Growth Com. Capital	State	20,000
Berkshire Bank	Private	5,000

Developer Fee	Private/State/Fed	198,358
Fundraising Event	Private	33,000
Homebuyer Workshop Fees	Private	10,000
Homeownership Marketing	Private	5,000
Foundations	Private	10,000
Division of Banks	State	23,104
Greenfield Savings Bank	Private	2,500
Freedom Credit Union	Private	5,000
MHP HomeSafe	Private	10,000
<b><i>Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity</i></b>		
<i>Garfield Avenue – 5 units</i>	Federal AHP	\$60,000
	Private (Lions Club)	20,000
	Local / State CPA	120,000
	Donation	25,000
	In-kind land donation	125,000

## **PROJECT SUMMARIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Infrastructure Improvements**

\$ 0.00 allocated/expended

### **Public Facilities Improvements**

Senior Center Debt Service - HUD #0596

Priority Need: High  
Project Objective: Create a suitable living environment  
Project Outcome: Utilization of a fully operational senior center  
Performance Measure: Final debt payment made, operation fiscally solvent, fully operating

Accomplishment: Utilization of a fully operational senior center with extensive programming, located downtown next to senior public housing  
CDBG Expenditure: \$ (\$96,922.50 Principal; \$48,690.50 Interest)

## **Elimination of Slums and Blight**

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### Fairgrounds Redevelopment Project – HUD #0808

Priority Need: Medium  
Project Objective: Redevelopment will improve public infrastructure, utility and road condition, sidewalks, drainage; accomplish demolition, renovation and new construction to rejuvenate a regional economic development driver/ Sustainability.  
Project Outcome: Redevelopment to eliminate deteriorated and blighted conditions to revitalize Three County Fairgrounds and increase site utilization to increase economic impact for related businesses and the provision of job opportunities.  
Performance Measure: Elimination of blighted buildings and improved public infrastructure  
Accomplishment: Carriage House demolished and debris removed; asbestos abatement and monitoring  
CDBG Expenditure: \$33,374

### Laurel Street/ Farmhouse Demolition – HUD #0793

Project Need: Medium  
Priority Objective: Removal of a dilapidated farmhouse on the 4<sup>th</sup> parcel deeded to the Northampton Housing Authority at the former State Hospital  
Project Outcome: Development for homeownership units  
Performance Measure: Elimination of blighted building for future housing  
Accomplishment: Building demolished and debris removed

## **Economic Development**

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### Micro-Business Development - HUD # 0794

Valley Community Development Corporation micro business development program provided assistance to eligible micro- enterprises; business plan development, marketing and access to capital.

Priority Need: High  
Project Objective: Create economic opportunity and increase earning potential for households with low and moderate incomes.  
Project Outcome: Increase and sustain economic self-sufficiency and housing stability for residents who will contribute to the local and regional economy  
Performance Measure: Provide services to 12 individuals interested in creating, preserving or expanding their own businesses and achieving economic self-sufficiency.  
Accomplishment: 1 workshop held.  
26 individuals counseled; initial needs assessment, review of government, financial and business requirements, business plans, marketing and sales strategies, development of financial projections. Assist existing businesses struggling with obtaining financing to weather economic downturn.  
15 new businesses assisted, 11 existing businesses assisted, 13 women owned. 3 full time jobs created, 22 full time jobs retained  
Expenditure: \$10,000 for workshops / one on one technical assistance.

## Housing

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### First Time Homebuyer Program - HUD # 0790

Valley Community Development Corporation program offering first time homebuyer assistance, direct referral to HOME assisted units available for homeownership and down-payment resources.

Priority Need: Medium  
Priority Objective: Provide support for City residents with low and moderate incomes to attain and maintain decent affordable housing.  
Project Outcome: An educated populace through pre and post purchase counseling, to increase access to housing opportunities, stability of homeownership and foreclosure prevention for sustainability.  
Performance Measure: Serve 36 households, 15 to attain homeownership within 12 months; 36 households have a better understanding of budgeting and debt management  
Accomplishment: Served 46 low/mod households: 4 very low income. 40 were first time homebuyers. Worked on action plans to purchase homes within

the year some working on debt reduction plans to improve credit, some saving for down payment. 10 purchased homes in Northampton; 8 are actively shopping; 2 of those are ready to make an offer; 6 struggle with affordability in Northampton; 10 continue to work on debt reduction and saving and; 4 decided not to purchase at this time due to current debt and income. Two 1<sup>st</sup> time buyers received a \$3,000 down payment Grant. 6 existing homeowners received counseling; 4 received loan modifications; 1 continues to work on a resolution and 1 wished to understand the refinancing process.

CDBG Expenditure: \$20,000/ expended for staffing  
 \$3,000 Down-payment grant HUD #0791  
 \$3,000 Down-payment grant HUD #0809

**Public Services**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Priority Need</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Performance Outcome/ Accomplishment</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Casa Latina	High	Economic Self Sufficiency Suitable living environment	Serve 120/ 157 served	HUD \$14,000
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	High Youth Services	Suitable living environment	Serve 20/ 47 served	HUD #0797 \$4,500
SRO Outreach	High Housing Support	Suitable living environment	Serve 125/ 285 served	HUD #0798 \$14,000
Center/ New Americans	High Skills Training	Economic Self Sufficiency	Serve 40/ 47 served	HUD #0796 \$9,000
Highland Valley Elder Services	High Basic Needs	Suitable living environment	Serve 10 / 11 served	HUD #0801 \$ 4,914.60
Grove Street Inn	High Housing Support	Suitable living environment	Serve 125/ 72 served	HUD # 0804 \$15,000
Cot Shelter	High Housing Support	Suitable living environment	Serve 175/ 206 served	HUD #0805 \$13,000
Manna Soup	High	Suitable living	Serve 400/	HUD #0803

Kitchen	Basis Needs	environment Economic Self Sufficiency	619 served	\$3,000
Community Action / Youth Employment	High - Youth Programs	Economic Self- Sufficiency Suitable living environment	Serve 35 / 99 served	HUD #0799 \$6,400
Survival Center	High - Basic Needs	Economic Self- Sufficiency Suitable living environment	Serve 2,400+/ Served 4,282	HUD #0806 \$10,000
Literacy Project	High - Skills training	Economic Self- Sufficiency Suitable living environment	Serve 28/ 27 served	HUD #802 \$9,000
Community Legal Aid	High Homelessness Prevention	Economic Self- Sufficiency Suitable living environment	Serve 10/ 20 households with 46 persons served	HUD #0800 \$6,000

### **Planning and Administration - HUD #0807**

Professional grants administration and community development planning and programming.

Priority Need: High  
Staff Capacity to administer CDBG program and conduct comprehensive community development and affordable housing work.

Project Objective: Create a suitable living environment for households with low and moderate incomes in the community

Project Outcome: Successful administration of the Federal grant and provision of community services

Performance Measurement: Federal audit with no findings, accessible staff, successful grants administration and progress made on Consolidated and Annual Action plan goals

CDBG Expenditure: \$123,195.71 expended

### **Geographic Distribution**

Allocation priorities were chosen consistent with the goals and objectives in the Consolidated Plan and in response to the needs identified in the annual solicitation, community outreach

process and the Housing Needs Assessment and Strategic Housing Plan. Public services were delivered citywide. There were no public infrastructure projects.

Census tracts with more than 25% minority population are defined as areas of minority concentration. Presently, there are no such areas in the city. Northampton defines census tracts with percentages of low income households that exceed the city average of 39% to be areas of low income concentration. Those tracts consist primarily of the more densely populated areas in and around the Central business district downtown. These tracts are: 8216.01, 8219.02, 8220 and 8221.

CDBG Target Areas by Census Tract / Block Group

Pursuant to program regulations the following census tracts/block groups were considered for CDBG funds based on income; more than 51% of the households in these areas have incomes below 80% of median income based on family size.

<u>Geographic Description</u>	<u>Census Tract, Block &amp; Group</u>
North King Street	8216 01 – 1
Florence	8216 02 – 5
Leeds Veterans Hospital	8217 00 – 3
Central Core / Downtown	*8219 02 – 2; 8219 02 – 3; 8220 00 – 1
Former State Hospital	8219 02 – 4

\*2010 Census Tract 821902 was split into 2: 821903 and 821904

All area benefit activities funded by the City are located within CDBG eligible census tracts. Direct benefit activities are funded throughout the City at locations, which meet direct benefit criteria.

## **Actions Taken to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing**

The Massachusetts Fair Housing Center conducted many workshops this past year in the region. Funding was provided by the Federal grant MFHC received from HUD. The Fair Housing Center did not apply to Northampton for CDBG funds this past year because the staff capacity to conduct the workshops was provided by the HUD grant. The Center continued to process complaints, conduct testing and make referrals that served Northampton residents.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization</b>		<b>Location</b>	
7/9/2014	Realtor Assoc. of Pioneer Valley		Springfield, MA	

7/15/2014	MASCAP	Worcester, MA	
7/16/2014	Hampshire Co Reg. HA	Cumington, MA	
10/8/2014	HAPHousing, Inc.	Springfield, MA	
10/20/2014	Providence Ministries	Holyoke, MA	
10/20/2014	HAPHousing, Inc.	West Springfield, MA	
10/23/2014	WNE University	Springfield, MA	
10/25/2014	Springfield Partners	Westfield, MA	
11/5/2014	HAPHousing, Inc.	Springfield, MA	
11/12/2014	Realtor Assoc. of Pioneer Valley	Springfield, MA	
12/18/2014	Family Outreach/Amherst	Amherst, MA	
12/19/2014	New England Farmworkers	Holyoke, MA	
1/6/2015	Enlace de Familias	Holyoke, MA	
1/14/2015	Realtor Assoc. of Pioneer Valley	Springfield, MA	
1/17/2015	HAP Housing	Westfield, MA	
2/7/2015	Chicopee Neighborhood Dev.	Chicopee, MA	
2/14/2015	Spr Neighborhood Partners	Springfield, MA	
2/21/2015	Holyoke Bound 2015	Holyoke, MA	
3/4/2015	Holyoke Housing Authority	Holyoke, MA	
3/11/2015	Realtor Assoc. of Pioneer Valley	Springfield, MA	
3/16/2015	Kate's Kitchen	Holyoke, MA	
5/4/2015	HAP Housing	West Springfield, MA	
5/5/2015	The Boulders	Amherst, MA	
5/6/2015	Realtor Assoc. of Pioneer Valley	Springfield, MA	
5/19/2015	Picknelly Adult & Family Ed.	Holyoke, MA	
6/3/2015	HAPHousing	Springfield, MA	
6/9/2015	Franklin Co. Service Providers	Greenfield, MA	

The regional discussion about Northampton being a “community of opportunity”, continued this past year. Four Housing Partnership meetings were devoted to the discussion of what activities to undertake locally, in order to achieve more regional mobility around housing choice. The Springfield MSA ranks extremely high in the nation for white/Latino segregation

and 22nd for black/white segregation. Holyoke has a 48% Latino population and Northampton has a 6% population. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's Regional Housing Plan Implementation Committee spun out another group focused on inclusive communities. Northampton's CDBG Administrator/Housing Planner is a member of that sub-committee. Work this year focused on strategies to increase integration across the three county region, engaging landlords to actively consider applications from people in protected classes, to help open up housing opportunities in expanded areas. Tandem with that effort was work with people to break down barriers of fear that would prevent them from moving north in the region, out of Hampden County. The effort is targeted to the Holyoke Housing Authority at this time.

Education with housing authorities was noted as a work area because despite the fact that the Section 8 mobile voucher program was designed to encourage mobility out of areas of high poverty concentration, the inadequate fair market rent rates in Hampshire County create a disincentive to area landlords to accept vouchers. Committee members submitted comments to HUD to support efforts to revise FMR's in small higher cost areas and offered that our region could serve as a pilot project for such an endeavor.

The Housing Partnership is going to offer workshops in the fall around reasonable accommodation issues, particularly medical marijuana usage and service animals. A session will be targeted to property managers and service providers in November, with a follow up for smaller landlords in February. An annual census letter offering resources and appreciation for smaller landlords offering market rate affordable housing will contain an invitation to the workshop. It will also make a plea for accepting VASH vouchers so we can end Veteran's homelessness in our area.

### **Lead Paint Abatement Activity**

There were no information requests received by the City during this program year. With the lack of CDBG resources to administer a Housing Rehabilitation program, there is no current link with property owners looking to abate their properties. When such inquiries are received, a referral to the Commonwealth's Get the Lead Out Program would be made, in addition to resources that may be available through HAP Housing. Assembling data on certificates for lead paint abatement is one of the recommendations in the Impediments to Fair Housing Analysis. That work will occur and a training session held in 2016 to disseminate information about resources to accomplish abatement. During the consultation period for the preparation of the Consolidated Plan, the Northampton Board of Health agreed to keep track of properties that have been abated and received certification.

## **Action Plan Amendments**

During the course of this CDBG program year, no public service sub-recipients requested budget adjustments. If the City determined that a change of priorities was necessary, or that the high, medium or low ranking of a priority need listed within the Consolidated Plan required adjustment, or a new project needed to be added in order to allocate CDBG funds, a substantial amendment of the plan would be undertaken and a public notice and hearing held.

## **Institutional Structure**

During this program year, the Housing and Community Development Planner/CDBG Administrator oversaw the overall management and coordination of the housing and community development activities and services outlined in the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The Office continued to interface with the other City departments, boards and commissions, (Department of Public Works, Council on Aging, Office of Planning and Sustainability, Assessor's Office, Treasurer's Office, Mayor's Office, Board of Health), with community based organizations, non-profit and for-profit housing developers, public service agencies and anti-poverty organizations. Staff support was provided to the Northampton Housing Partnership, the Interfaith Shelter Management Committee and the Next Step Collaborative.

The Community Development Block Grant Program Administrative Assistant was responsible for contract implementation, IDIS reporting and financial management. Monitoring was conducted by reviewing all project applications, contract scopes of services compared to quarterly reporting and on-going communication and technical assistance. On site monitoring is scheduled for this fall.

## **Section 3 Report**

Can be found in the attachments.

# APPENDICES

- 5 Year ConPlan Project Summary
- Section 3 Report
- Financial Report/ PR26
- Legal Ad for Comment Period
- HUD Checklist

**Accomplishments Year 26 – Year 31  
HUD Program Con Plan Years 2010 - 2015  
City Fiscal Years FY11 – FY15**

**Infrastructure**

2010 / FY11 – none

2011 / FY12 - Conz Street Improvements (sidewalk)

2012 / FY13 - none

2013 / FY14 - none

2014 / FY15 - none

**Public Facilities**

2010 / FY11

James House Learning Center construction began to create a community learning center  
Vernon Street Lead abatement  
Electric door openers at Tobin Manor and Walter Salvo House  
Design for accessible front entrance for Forbes Library  
Completed remaining work related to underground utility installation in Pulaski Park  
Senior Center Debt Service Payment

2011 / FY12

Work on James House continued: Literacy and Center for New Americans occupied building;  
bids for painting of building and design/repair of front entrance sent  
Forbes Library elevator design for front lobby  
Senior Center Debt Service payment

2012 / FY13

Work on James House continued: front porch design; front porch repairs; exterior painting  
Grace House kitchen renovation  
Senior Center Debt Payment

2013 / FY14

Work on James House continued: front porch repair; additional column repair  
Grove Street Exterior Painting (\$11,000 CDBG; \$20,000 donation)  
Senior Center Debt Payment

2014 / FY15

Final Senior Center Debt Payment

**Public Facilities: Blighted and Decadent Areas**

2010 / FY11 - none

2011 / FY12 – none

2012 / FY13

Fairgrounds: drainage analysis; conceptual design for new exhibition bldg; design of new electrical platform for tent pads and parking area in process

2013 / FY14 - none

2014 / FY15

Fairgrounds: demolition of Carriage Barn; removal of asbestos; fence installation; asbestos abatement design and monitoring services

NHA – Laurel Street Farmhouse demolition

**Economic Development**

2010 / FY11

Traffic mitigation bid awarded for River Valley Market / King St intersection  
Valley CDC assisted 21 micro-businesses

2011 / FY12

Valley CDC assisted 9 businesses – 2 new; 7 expanding  
11 FT jobs created/retained; 8 PT created/retained

2012 / FY13

Valley CDC assisted 14 businesses – 7 new; 1 expanding  
10 FT jobs created/retained; 8 PT created/retained

2013 / FY14

Valley CDC assisted 10 businesses – 5 new; 1 expanding (program funded July-Dec)  
8 FT jobs retained (3 FT retained for l/m); 54 total weekly PT *job hours*

2014 / FY15

Valley CDC assisted 15 new businesses; 11 existing businesses  
3 FT jobs created; 22 FT jobs retained

**Housing**

2010 / FY11

Council on Aging Home Repair Program assisted 4 households (2 loans, 2 grants)  
Valley CDC assisted 65 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers

2011 / FY12

Meadowbrook Apartments – replacement of sewer line for one building and new lighting on all buildings  
Valley CDC assisted 52 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers  
Council on Aging Home Repair Program assisted households (4 loans; 2 grants)

2012 / FY13

Valley CDC assisted 46 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers; two 1<sup>st</sup> time down pmt/closing assistance grants (\$3,000 each)  
Council on Aging Home Repair assisted 2 households (\$1,520 grant and \$4,999 loan)

2013 / FY14

Valley CDC assisted 45 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers; two 1<sup>st</sup> time down pmt/closing assistance grants (\$3,000 each)

2014 / FY15

Valley CDC assisted 46 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers; two 1<sup>st</sup> time down pmt/closing assistance grants (\$3,000 each)

**Public Services**

2010 / FY11

13 Public Service agencies provided the following services: emergency shelter, literacy, food pantry, sro outreach, job skills, mentoring, fair housing education and investigation, referrals and assistance accessing services

2011 / FY12

13 Public Service agencies provided the following services: emergency shelter, literacy, food pantry, sro outreach, employment assistance, mentoring, fair housing education and investigation, youth services referrals and assistance accessing services

2012 / FY13

14 Public Service agencies provided the following services: emergency shelter, literacy, food pantry, sro outreach, developmental writing, mentoring, fair housing education and investigation, youth services referrals and assistance accessing services; employment assistance

2013 / FY14

13 Public Service agencies provided the following services: emergency shelter, literacy, employment assistance, food pantry, youth services, fair housing education and investigation, legal assistance in housing court

2014 / FY15

12 Public Service agencies provided the following services: emergency shelter, literacy, employment assistance, food pantry, youth and elderly services, legal assistance in housing court

**Section 3 Report**

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Agency Name: CITY OF NORTHAMPTON

Address: 210 MAIN STREET, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 1060

Contact Information: Name: Margaret Keller, Phone Number: (413) 587-1286, Fax Number:  
, EMail Address: pkeller@northamptonma.gov.

**HUD Disbursement Summary: 07/01/2014 through 06/30/2015**

Program Code	Program Name	Total Draw-down Amount
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All Programs	All Programs	\$0.00
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**Agency Submission Summary for Fiscal Year Starting: 07/01/2014 - Reports Submitted**

**You have no grants to report on for this period.**

Nothing found to display.

**Submitted 9-30-2015**



**PART I: SUMMARY OF CDBG RESOURCES**

01 UNEXPENDED CDBG FUNDS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	336,939.74
02 ENTITLEMENT GRANT	618,768.00
03 SURPLUS URBAN RENEWAL	0.00
04 SECTION 108 GUARANTEED LOAN FUNDS	0.00
05 CURRENT YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	22,539.46
05a CURRENT YEAR SECTION 108 PROGRAM INCOME (FOR SI TYPE)	0.00
06 RETURNS	0.00
07 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL AVAILABLE	0.00
08 TOTAL AVAILABLE (SUM, LINES 01-07)	978,247.20

**PART II: SUMMARY OF CDBG EXPENDITURES**

09 DISBURSEMENTS OTHER THAN SECTION 108 REPAYMENTS AND PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	348,827.10
10 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL AMOUNT SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT	0.00
11 AMOUNT SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT (LINE 09 + LINE 10)	348,827.10
12 DISBURSED IN IDIS FOR PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	123,195.71
13 DISBURSED IN IDIS FOR SECTION 108 REPAYMENTS	0.00
14 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL EXPENDITURES	0.00
15 TOTAL EXPENDITURES (SUM, LINES 11-14)	472,022.81
16 UNEXPENDED BALANCE (LINE 08 - LINE 15)	506,224.39

**PART III: LOWMOD BENEFIT THIS REPORTING PERIOD**

17 EXPENDED FOR LOW/MOD HOUSING IN SPECIAL AREAS	0.00
18 EXPENDED FOR LOW/MOD MULTI-UNIT HOUSING	0.00
19 DISBURSED FOR OTHER LOW/MOD ACTIVITIES	290,427.60
20 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL LOW/MOD CREDIT	0.00
21 TOTAL LOW/MOD CREDIT (SUM, LINES 17-20)	290,427.60
22 PERCENT LOW/MOD CREDIT (LINE 21/LINE 11)	83.26%

**LOW/MOD BENEFIT FOR MULTI-YEAR CERTIFICATIONS**

23 PROGRAM YEARS(PY) COVERED IN CERTIFICATION	PY: 2012 PY: 2013 PY: 2014
24 CUMULATIVE NET EXPENDITURES SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT CALCULATION	1,519,122.44
25 CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURES BENEFITTING LOW/MOD PERSONS	1,519,122.44
26 PERCENT BENEFIT TO LOW/MOD PERSONS (LINE 25/LINE 24)	100.00%

**PART IV: PUBLIC SERVICE (PS) CAP CALCULATIONS**

27 DISBURSED IN IDIS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES	108,814.60
28 PS UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR	0.00
29 PS UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	0.00
30 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL PS OBLIGATIONS	0.00
31 TOTAL PS OBLIGATIONS (LINE 27 + LINE 28 - LINE 29 + LINE 30)	108,814.60
32 ENTITLEMENT GRANT	618,768.00
33 PRIOR YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	110,323.90
34 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL SUBJECT TO PS CAP	0.00
35 TOTAL SUBJECT TO PS CAP (SUM, LINES 32-34)	729,091.90
36 PERCENT FUNDS OBLIGATED FOR PS ACTIVITIES (LINE 31/LINE 35)	14.92%

**PART V: PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (PA) CAP**

37 DISBURSED IN IDIS FOR PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	123,195.71
38 PA UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR	0.00
39 PA UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	0.00
40 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL PA OBLIGATIONS	0.00
41 TOTAL PA OBLIGATIONS (LINE 37 + LINE 38 - LINE 39 +LINE 40)	123,195.71
42 ENTITLEMENT GRANT	618,768.00
43 CURRENT YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	22,539.46
44 ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL SUBJECT TO PA CAP	0.00
45 TOTAL SUBJECT TO PA CAP (SUM, LINES 42-44)	641,307.46
46 PERCENT FUNDS OBLIGATED FOR PA ACTIVITIES (LINE 41/LINE 45)	19.21%



Office of Community Planning and Development  
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
 Integrated Disbursement and Information System  
 PR26 - CDBG Financial Summary Report  
 Program Year 2014  
 NORTHAMPTON, MA

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**LINE 17 DETAIL: ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER IN DETERMINING THE AMOUNT TO ENTER ON LINE 17**

Report returned no data.

**LINE 18 DETAIL: ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER IN DETERMINING THE AMOUNT TO ENTER ON LINE 18**

Report returned no data.

**LINE 19 DETAIL: ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE COMPUTATION OF LINE 19**

Plan Year	IDIS Project	IDIS Activity	Voucher Number	Activity Name	Matrix Code	National Objective	Drawn Amount
2007	7	596	5743990	SENIOR CENTER DEBT SERVICE	03A	LMC	\$48,690.50
2007	7	596	5793145	SENIOR CENTER DEBT SERVICE	03A	LMC	\$96,922.50
					<b>03A</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$145,613.00</b>
2014	5	795	5758219	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5779970	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5819918	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5826979	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5758219	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5790753	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5813207	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5826979	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	802	5758219	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$599.32
2014	5	802	5779970	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$2,053.86
2014	5	802	5813207	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$2,540.16
2014	5	802	5826979	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$3,806.66
2014	5	803	5758191	Manna Soup Kitchen	05	LMC	\$1,449.06
2014	5	803	5798169	Manna Soup Kitchen	05	LMC	\$1,550.94
2014	5	804	5762647	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5779970	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5813207	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5826979	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	805	5779970	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$4,333.32
2014	5	805	5813207	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$6,499.98
2014	5	805	5826979	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$2,166.70
					<b>05</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$68,000.00</b>
2014	5	801	5798169	Elder Homelessness Prevention Program	05A	LMC	\$2,182.88
2014	5	801	5826979	Elder Homelessness Prevention Program	05A	LMC	\$2,731.72
					<b>05A</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$4,914.60</b>
2014	5	800	5758219	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5779970	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5813207	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5826979	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
					<b>05C</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>
2014	5	797	5758191	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5779970	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5813207	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5826979	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	799	5779970	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$2,260.04
2014	5	799	5813207	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$1,198.44
2014	5	799	5826979	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$2,941.52
					<b>05D</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$10,900.00</b>
2014	5	796	5758219	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,197.83
2014	5	796	5779970	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,442.18
2014	5	796	5813207	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,105.32
2014	5	796	5826979	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,254.67
					<b>05H</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$9,000.00</b>
2014	5	806	5758191	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00



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Plan Year	IDIS Project	IDIS Activity	Voucher Number	Activity Name	Matrix Code	National Objective	Drawn Amount
2014	5	806	5790753	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
2014	5	806	5813207	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
2014	5	806	5826979	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
					<b>05W</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>
2014	1	790	5779970	Homeownership Center	13	LMH	\$11,387.37
2014	1	790	5813207	Homeownership Center	13	LMH	\$5,012.65
2014	1	790	5826979	Homeownership Center	13	LMH	\$3,599.98
2014	1	791	5758222	1st Time Homebuyer - Hatfield Street	13	LMH	\$3,000.00
2014	1	809	5811907	1st Time Homebuyer - Pine Brook Curve	13	LMH	\$3,000.00
					<b>13</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$26,000.00</b>
2014	3	794	5779964	Micro-Business Assistance Program	18C	LMC	\$8,613.20
2014	3	794	5813207	Micro-Business Assistance Program	18C	LMC	\$1,386.80
					<b>18C</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>
<b>Total</b>							<b>\$290,427.60</b>

**LINE 27 DETAIL: ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE COMPUTATION OF LINE 27**

Plan Year	IDIS Project	IDIS Activity	Voucher Number	Activity Name	Matrix Code	National Objective	Drawn Amount
2014	5	795	5758219	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5779970	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5819918	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	795	5826979	"Puentes" Bridges for Latinos	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5758219	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5790753	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5813207	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	798	5826979	SRO Outreach	05	LMC	\$3,500.00
2014	5	802	5758219	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$599.32
2014	5	802	5779970	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$2,053.86
2014	5	802	5813207	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$2,540.16
2014	5	802	5826979	Passport to Success	05	LMC	\$3,806.66
2014	5	803	5758191	Manna Soup Kitchen	05	LMC	\$1,449.06
2014	5	803	5798169	Manna Soup Kitchen	05	LMC	\$1,550.94
2014	5	804	5762647	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5779970	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5813207	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	804	5826979	Grove Street Inn	05	LMC	\$3,750.00
2014	5	805	5779970	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$4,333.32
2014	5	805	5813207	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$6,499.98
2014	5	805	5826979	Interfaith Winter Shelter	05	LMC	\$2,166.70
					<b>05</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$68,000.00</b>
2014	5	801	5798169	Elder Homelessness Prevention Program	05A	LMC	\$2,182.88
2014	5	801	5826979	Elder Homelessness Prevention Program	05A	LMC	\$2,731.72
					<b>05A</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$4,914.60</b>
2014	5	800	5758219	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5779970	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5813207	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
2014	5	800	5826979	Homelessness Prevention Program	05C	LMC	\$1,500.00
					<b>05C</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>
2014	5	797	5758191	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5779970	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5813207	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	797	5826979	Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Program	05D	LMC	\$1,125.00
2014	5	799	5779970	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$2,260.04
2014	5	799	5813207	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$1,198.44
2014	5	799	5826979	Youth Employment Readiness Program	05D	LMC	\$2,941.52



Office of Community Planning and Development  
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Plan Year	IDIS Project	IDIS Activity	Voucher Number	Activity Name	Matrix Code	National Objective	Drawn Amount
					<b>05D</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$10,900.00</b>
2014	5	796	5758219	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,197.83
2014	5	796	5779970	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,442.18
2014	5	796	5813207	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,105.32
2014	5	796	5826979	Education & Career Services for Immigrants	05H	LMC	\$2,254.67
					<b>05H</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$9,000.00</b>
2014	5	806	5758191	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
2014	5	806	5790753	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
2014	5	806	5813207	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
2014	5	806	5826979	Emergency Food Pantry	05W	LMC	\$2,500.00
					<b>05W</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>
<b>Total</b>							<b>\$108,814.60</b>

**LINE 37 DETAIL: ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE COMPUTATION OF LINE 37**

Plan Year	IDIS Project	IDIS Activity	Voucher Number	Activity Name	Matrix Code	National Objective	Drawn Amount
2014	6	807	5757693	Planning and Administration	21A		\$244.62
2014	6	807	5758191	Planning and Administration	21A		\$1,175.69
2014	6	807	5758219	Planning and Administration	21A		\$3,192.33
2014	6	807	5762647	Planning and Administration	21A		\$553.98
2014	6	807	5773532	Planning and Administration	21A		\$49,168.01
2014	6	807	5798169	Planning and Administration	21A		\$846.25
2014	6	807	5811903	Planning and Administration	21A		\$2,817.14
2014	6	807	5813207	Planning and Administration	21A		\$765.84
2014	6	807	5814154	Planning and Administration	21A		\$35,689.56
2014	6	807	5819918	Planning and Administration	21A		\$2,401.61
2014	6	807	5824058	Planning and Administration	21A		\$510.00
2014	6	807	5826968	Planning and Administration	21A		\$287.16
2014	6	807	5826979	Planning and Administration	21A		\$833.34
2014	6	807	5831415	Planning and Administration	21A		\$8,708.39
2014	6	807	5831423	Planning and Administration	21A		\$16,001.79
					<b>21A</b>	<b>Matrix Code</b>	<b>\$123,195.71</b>
<b>Total</b>							<b>\$123,195.71</b>

**STATE SALE**  
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**Web Sites**  
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**Hampshire County**  
**840**  
**WINDSOR, MA.** Quiet country home. 4 BR on 4 ac. 45 mins. from downtown Hamp. \$232,000. (413)464-5101. Open House: 9/20, 1-3 p.m

**Legals**  
**0900**

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDDERS**  
Sealed proposals plainly endorsed "Modular/Prefabricated Building at Nonotuck Park" will be received by the Mayor's Office, in the Municipal Office Building, 50 Payson Avenue, Easthampton, MA 01027 until October 5th, 2015 10:00 am EST. at this time bids will not be opened publicly, but shall be opened in the presence of one or more witnesses. Project to "design, prefabrication, and assembly/installation of a new modular building at Nonotuck Park," located at 1 Daley Field Road, Easthampton, MA 01027. Specifications and bid sheet may be secured at the office of Parks and Recreation, 1 Daley Field Road Easthampton, MA or by email at parksandrec@easthampton.org on or after September 16th between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:30 PM Monday through Friday, legal holidays excluded. No proposal may be withdrawn within thirty (30) days, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays excluded, after the date of the bid opening. The City reserves the right to waive any informality in the proposal form and to reject any or all proposals or to accept the proposal deemed most satisfactory to the City, if it be in the public interest to do so. John Mason, Parks and Recreation Director  
3339582 September 16

**Legals**  
**0900**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
Docket No. HS15P0518EA  
**INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
Estate of: Barbara Ellen Taylor  
Also Known As: Barbara E. Taylor  
Date of Death: 07/15/2015  
Hampshire Division  
33 King Street

**Open House**  
**880**  
**OPEN HOUSE!**  
Pine Valley Plantation. 281 Chauncey Walker st lot # 189. Saturday and Sunday the 19th and 20th. From 1pm-3pm both days (413) 426-4480

**Legals**  
**0900**

**CITY OF NORTHAMPTON**  
Community Development Block Grant Program Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report  
**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY**  
The City of Northampton's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be available for public review and comment on September 16th, 2015 at the Community and Economic Development Office, 210 Main Street Northampton, Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Comments will be accepted until the end of day on September 30, 2015. The CAPER covers the program year July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2015. The report will also be available on line at the <http://www.northamptonma.gov>. Go to Housing/CDBG/ Mayor's Office, Consolidated/Action Plans, Performance Reports. Contact Peg Keller, CDBG Administrator, 413-587-1288 or pkeller@northamptonma.gov  
3339056 September 16

**Legals**  
**0900**

(SEAL)  
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**LAND COURT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT**  
Case No. 15 SM 006640  
**ORDER OF NOTICE**  
TO: Matthew D. Tibbetts  
Suzanne Tibbetts  
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. App. § 501 et seq.  
Nationstar Mortgage LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Plainville, numbered 14 Walnut Street, given by Matthew D. Tibbetts and Suzanne Tibbetts to "MERS", Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., a separate corporation that is acting solely as nominee for

**Legals**  
**0900**

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
The Community Preservation Committee will hold a public hearing for the purpose of disseminating information concerning the Community Preservation Act, to discuss priorities, and to receive projects for consideration.  
When: October 7, 2015  
Time: 7:00 P.M.  
Where: Southampton Town Hall  
Anyone unable to attend may send comments and suggestions to: Community Preservation Committee  
210 College Highway  
Southampton, MA 01073  
September 16, 19, 25  
3339841

**Legals**  
**0900**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
Docket No. HS15P0534EA  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
Estate of: Richard J. Sorbi  
Date of Death: 07/20/2015  
To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Peter J. Sorbi, III of South Hadley, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.  
The Petitioner requests that:  
Peter J. Sorbi, III of South Hadley, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in an unsupervised administration.  
Hampshire Probate and Family Court  
33 King Street, Suite 3  
Northampton, MA 01060  
(413)586-8500

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 10/21/2015. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection, followed by

**Legals**  
**0900**

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
The Amherst Zoning Board of Appeals will meet on \*Thursday, October 1, 2015\*, at 6:30 P.M. in the First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, to conduct the following business:  
**PUBLIC HEARING:**  
ZBA FY2016-00005  
- Truman Likens - For a Special Permit to formalize the use of the property as two dwelling units, as a non-owner occupied Converted Dwelling, under Section 3.3241 of the Zoning Bylaw, at 120 Belchertown Road (Map 15C, Parcel 30, R-N Zoning District)  
MARK PARENT, CHAIR  
AMHERST ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
3339713 September 16, 23

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
Docket No. HS15P0501GD  
**CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L.C. 190B §5-304**  
In the matter of: Brian R. LaClair  
Of: Hadley, MA  
RESPONDENT  
Alleged Incapacitated Person  
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Ronald LaClair of Hadley, MA  
Karen B. LaClair of Hadley, MA  
in the above captioned matter alleging that Brian R. LaClair is in need of a Guardian and requesting that  
Karen B. LaClair of Hadley, MA  
(or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond.  
Hampshire Probate and Family Court  
33 King Street, Suite 3  
Northampton, MA 01060  
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority. You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 10/07/2015. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date

**CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT  
REVIEW DOCUMENT  
Boston, August 2015**

*This Page is for HUD Use Only*

**Name of Grantee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Name of HUD Reviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of CAPER Receipt:** \_\_\_\_\_ Is this date within 90 days after the close of the grantee's program year? \_\_\_\_ If not, was last year's CAPER also late? \_\_\_\_

**Review Format and Requirements**

The following reports, as applicable, should be used to complete the review of the CAPER. Please print and attach them to this review document.

- CPD Grantee Performance Report ( In Microstrategy under CPD Reports)
- CPD Cross Program Funding Matrix (In Microstrategy under CPD Reports)
- IDIS: PR01 [all programs except HESG]; PR03 [current year only], PR23, PR26, PR59 and PR28 (States only) [CDBG]; PR22 [Open Activities/Activities Completed/Cancelled in the Last Year], PR23, and PR33 [HOME]; PR91 and 93 [HESG]; PR84 [HOPWA]; and PR14 [NRSA]
- HOME activities flagged on the HOME "Review Activities" page in IDIS

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

Once the review is complete and all regulatory determinations on the checklists are marked yes, prepare the annual performance review letter and forward it, together with this CAPER review document and attached reports, for the Program Manager's and Director's signatures. The letter must discuss any significant issues addressed and resolved as part of the review, including management of CPD funds; accuracy of performance reports; and progress towards meeting consolidated plan goals, especially affordable housing. It must also include a reminder that HUD's letter must accompany all copies of their CAPER.

**Date of Deficiency Letter [if any]:** \_\_\_\_\_ [If none, mark NA].

**Note:** Deficiency letter deadline is 60 days from date of CAPER receipt. A deficiency letter, signed by the Director, **must** be sent to the grantee's CD Director if the CAPER is not satisfactory [e.g., does not contain all of the required items].

**Comments:**

<b>Signatures:</b>	
Reviewer: _____	Date CAPER Determined Satisfactory: _____
Program Manager: _____	Date: _____
CPD Director: _____	Date: _____

**REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS 2014 REVIEW CHECKLIST**  
**Boston, August 2015**

Indicate Y or N and page # in space provided.

**Review Format and Requirements**

Name of Grantee: CITY OF NORTHAMPTON

**Regulatory Citations**

**91.520 (a) General: The jurisdiction shall**

1. Review and report on the progress it has made in carrying out its Consolidated and Action Plan. Y; pgs. 2-5 for Action Plan; Appendix Con Plan Summary
2. The CAPER **must include** a description of the resources made available, Y; pg. 3 CDBG
3. The investment of available resources, Y; pgs. 47-51. pgs. 41-47 LEVERAGED.
4. The geographic distribution and location of investments, Y; pg. 51-2
5. The families and persons assisted [including the racial and ethnic status of persons assisted],  
\_\_\_ IN THIS.
6. Actions taken to overcome the effects of any impediments identified in the jurisdictions analysis of impediments to fair housing choice, Y; pgs. 52-54.
7. and other actions indicated in the Consolidated Y and Action Plan Y.

Guidance: [1]. Check the PR03 [CDBG] PR92&93 [HESG], and PR22 [HOME] to see if there is a correlation between the funds spent on activities undertaken in the program year and the areas of high priority in the consolidated plan. [2]. Determine whether adequate progress is being made relative to the Con Plan. [3]. Is the required data in the PR03, PR22, PR91 and PR93? [4]. If they have an NRSA, is progress in meeting benchmarks described and also reported in the PR14?

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (a)?

Yes  No  Cite page numbers: ENTIRE SUBMISSION.

Comments:

**91.520 (b) Affordable Housing: The report shall include**

1. An evaluation of the jurisdiction's progress in meeting its specific objective of providing affordable housing, Y; pgs. 6-10.

2. The number and types of families served. This element of the report **must** include the **number** for each of the following: extremely low income (0-30% MFI), Low income (31-50% MFI), moderate income (51-80% MFI) and middle income persons served.

Guidance: Review the PR03, PR23 [CDBG and HOME] and PR22 [if applicable].

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (b)?

Yes Y No      Cite page numbers: 22-28; 35-40.

Comments:

**91.520 (c) Homelessness:** The report **must** include

1. An evaluation of the jurisdiction's progress in meeting its specific objectives for reducing and ending homelessness through:
  - a) Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs Y pg. 20
  - b) Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons Y pg. 20-23
  - c) 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 Y 22-33
  - d) Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially:
    - i. Extremely low-income individuals and families Y 22-33
    - ii. Those who are likely to become homeless after being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health-care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities and corrections programs and institutions) Y 22-33
    - iii. Those who are receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education or youth needs. Y 22-33

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (c)?

Yes Y No      Cite page numbers: 22-33

Comments:

**91.520 (d) CDBG:** Is the grantee a CDBG recipient? ✓ If yes, the report **shall** include

1. A description of the use of CDBG funds during the program year Y pg. 3
2. An assessment by the jurisdiction of the relationship of that use to the priorities and specific objectives identified in the plan, Y pg. 2
3. Giving special attention to the highest priority activities that were identified. Y pg. 22-28  
35-40.

This element of the report **must**

- Specify the nature of and the reasons for any changes in its program objectives NA
- Indicate how the jurisdiction would change its programs as a result of its experiences. Y pg. 55.

This element of the report **also must**

- Include the number for each of the following: extremely low income, low income, and moderate income persons served by each activity where information on income by family is required to determine eligibility of the activity. Y pg. 50-51.

Guidance: **This is not the same as (b); this is for non-housing activities.**

- Is the CDBG data in IDIS complete? Y

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (d)?

Yes Y No      Cite page numbers: ENTIRE SUBMISSION.

Comments:

#### Public Service Cap

Does the total amount of CDBG funds **obligated** for public services activities (**line 36 or the IDIS PR26 report**) exceed 15 percent of the annual grant allocation **plus** 15 percent of program income received during the prior fiscal year? (unless an approved exception grantee). N List percentage: 14.92%

#### Planning and Administration Cap

Does the total amount of CDBG funds **obligated** for planning and administration activities (**line 46 or the IDIS PR26 report**) exceed 20 percent of the sum of grant plus 20% of the program income that was received during the current program year? N List percentage: 19.21%

The PR26 is a required submission with the CAPER. Has the PR26 been submitted?           

**91.520 (e) HOME:** Is the grantee a HOME participating jurisdiction? NO If yes, the report shall

- Include the results of on-site inspections of affordable rental housing assisted under the program to determine compliance with housing codes and other applicable regulations,
- Provide an assessment of the jurisdiction's affirmative marketing actions and outreach to minority-owned and women-owned businesses,
- Include data on the amount and use of program income for projects,
- Include the number of projects and owner and tenant characteristics.
- Did the PJ submit the HOME Match Report (HUD-40107)?      If so, did they meet their match obligations as described on the PR33?

6. Is the HOME data in IDIS complete? \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance: Review the IDIS PR01 report to determine the amount of program income received and drawn during the program year.

**Planning and Administration Cap**

Has the PJ expended more than ten percent of their formula allocation plus ten percent of any program income received during the program year? \_\_\_\_\_ List percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHDO Set-Aside Requirement**

Has the PJ met the 15 percent CHDO set-aside? \_\_\_\_\_ List percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (e)?

N/A \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Cite page numbers:

Comments:

**91.520 (f) HOPWA:** Does the grantee receive a HOPWA formula allocation? NO

For jurisdictions receiving funds under the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS program, the report **must**

1. Include the number of individuals assisted \_\_\_\_\_
2. And the types of assistance provided. \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance: **Applies only to formula HOPWA.** Review PR82.

**Administration Cap**

Has the Grantee exceeded the 3% administrative cap for HOPWA or the 7% administrative cap by project sponsor? \_\_\_\_\_ List percentages: \_\_\_\_\_ Grantee \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor(s)

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (f)?

N/A \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Cite page numbers:

Comments:

**91.520 (g) Emergency Solution Grant:** Does the grantee receive an ESG formula allocation? NO

The Grantee must submit the ESG-only portion of the CAPER in IDIS and in a hard copy form (CPD Notice 13-06) and **must**

1. Include the number of persons assisted the types of assistance provided \_\_\_\_\_

2. Include the project or program outcomes data measured under the performance standards developed in consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is the ESG data in IDIS complete? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are ESG funds being spent in accordance with the Con Plan goals and priorities? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is there satisfactory information on the source and amount of match funds? \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance: Review the adequacy of data in the PR92 and PR93.

**Administration Cap**

Has the Grantee exceeded the 7.5% administrative cap for the ESG? \_\_\_\_\_ List percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

**Limitation on Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter Activities**

Does the amount of ESG funds for street outreach and emergency shelter activities exceed the greater of 60% of the jurisdiction's fiscal year ESG grant or the amount of the FY2010 ESG funds committed for homeless assistance activities? \_\_\_\_\_ List percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Determination: Does the CAPER satisfactorily respond to 91.520 (g)?

N/A \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Cite page numbers:

Comments:

**91.520 (j) Performance Measures:**

1. Does the Consolidated/Action Plan include performance measures? Y
2. If yes, does the CAPER include a comparison of the proposed versus actual outcomes for each outcome measure submitted with the Consolidated Plan? Y
3. And, if so, does it explain, if applicable, why progress was not made toward meeting goals and objectives? Y

Review Determination: Does the CAPER adequately respond to 91.520(i)? \_\_\_\_\_

N/A \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Cite page numbers: Comments:

**Section 3 Report:**

Has the grantee submitted their Section 3 Report (HUD Form 60002) for the period of 7/1/14 through 6/30/15 to [Paul.M.Connolly@HUD.gov](mailto:Paul.M.Connolly@HUD.gov). Date Submitted: 9/30/15

**IDIS:**

Is the IDIS portion of the CAPER satisfactory? \_\_\_\_\_ Comments:

**91.520 (i) Evaluation:**

Is the Regulatory Citation portion of the CAPER satisfactory? \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: