

DRAFT

2022 Annual Action Plan



**Community Development Block Grant,
Emergency Solutions Grant, and
HOME Investment Partnership Grant**

City of Niagara Falls

Expected Resources

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

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$	
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	2,300,000	135,000		2,435,000	Allocations based on final FFY 2022 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City Council.
HOME	public - federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership TBRA	488,000			488,000	Allocations based on final FFY 2022 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City Council.

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$	
ESG	public - federal	Conversion and rehab for transitional housing Financial Assistance Overnight shelter Rapid re-housing (rental assistance) Rental Assistance Services Transitional housing	208,000	0		208,000	Allocations based on final FFY 2022 HUD figures. Annual Action plan built via public participation and approved by the Niagara Falls City

Table 1 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

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

The City is administering \$10 MM through the New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for targeted investment in the City’s North End. Community Development programming will include investments within the North End to, along with DRI funds, leverage funding from the private sector, area foundations, CDFI’s, and other federal sources. Additionally, the City is working with the Niagara Orleans Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) to partner on the rehabilitation of residential units in the City’s South End.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Milling and Road Paving	2022	2023	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Infrastructure	CDBG: 400,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit
2	Targeted Demolition	2022	2023	Clearance and Demolition	City-Wide Target Area	Slum/Blight	CDBG: \$400,000	Structures Demolished
3	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation	2022	2023	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$300,000	Homeowners Assisted
4	Single Family Homeownership Initiatives	2022	2023	Affordable Housing	City-Wide Target Area	Affordable Housing	CDBG: 53,200 HOME: \$488,000	Homeowners Assisted
5	Youth Services and Programming	2022	2023	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Youth Programming	CDBG: \$94,820	Youth Assisted
6	Clean Neighborhood Program	2022	2023	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Slum & Blight	CDBG: \$200,000	

7	Homeless Assistance and Prevention (Outreach)	2022	2023	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide Target Area	Homeless Assistance	ESG: \$97,400 CDBG: \$91,180	Homeless Prevention Persons Assisted
8	Increase % of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing	2022	2023	Homeless	City-Wide Target Area	Rapid Rehousing/Street Outreach	ESG: \$95,000 CDBG: 89,145	Homeless Person Overnight Shelter Overnight/Emergency Shelter/Transitional Housing Beds added

Table 2 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Milling and Road Paving
	Goal Description	Repairing and replacing substandard roads servicing low-income neighborhoods and commercial areas
2	Goal Name	Targeted Demolition
	Goal Description	Undertake targeted demolition and clearance of buildings and land features which contribute to spot blight conditions
3	Goal Name	Owner Occupied Residential Rehabilitation
	Goal Description	Provide funding to eligible property owners for the purposes of rehabilitation
4	Goal Name	Single Family Homeownership Initiatives
	Goal Description	Construction of new single-family homes and assistance with closing costs

5	Goal Name	Youth Services & Programming
	Goal Description	Provide funding for multiple providers of youth summer and after-school programming
6	Goal Name	Clean Neighborhood Program
	Goal Description	Department of Public Works - Special Operations Project. Targeted clean-up task force that includes activities from both the Departments of Public Works and Code Enforcement.
7	Goal Name	Homeless Assistance and Prevention
	Goal Description	Provides housing assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of becoming homeless
8	Goal Name	Increase Percentage of Homeless Persons in Permanent Housing
	Goal Description	Rapid Re-housing provides services to homeless individuals through housing search, counseling and legal aid assistance

Table 3 – Goals Descriptions

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Projects

#	Project Name
1	YWCA – Homeless Prevention, Housing Relocation and Stabilization
2	Niagara Gospel Mission - Homeless Intervention, Rapid Rehousing, Mental Health
3	Pinnacle Community Service – Passage House-Emergency Shelter
4	Pinnacle Community Service – Casey House-Emergency Shelter
5	Heart Love & Soul - Outreach
6	Consumer Credit Counseling – Financial Counseling and Homeownership Program
7	Niagara Falls Housing Authority – Youth Summer & After School Programming
8	Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center Schoellkopf Park Improvements
9	Heart Love & Soul Project Daybreak Expansion
10	YWCA – Carolyn’s House Children’s Program
11	Niagara Gospel Mission- Women’s Shelter
12	Literacy Buffalo Niagara (LBN) – Adult Literacy Program
13	Field & Fork Network – City Market SNAP & Food Bucks
14	Niagara Habitat For Humanity – Acquisition of Vacant Land for New Home
15	Niagara Habitat for Humanity – Acquisition of Vacant Land for New Home
16	Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club- 716 United Youth Programming
17	Pinnacle Community Service – Casey House Renovations
18	Single Family Homeownership Initiatives-New Construction

Table 4 - Projects

AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)

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

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
City-Wide Target Area	100

Table 5 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

City-Wide Target Area: Since this program is to benefit low-moderate income persons, geography is not a factor in this target area.

Niagara Falls Community Development Area: Funds will go towards addressing deteriorated properties to alleviate conditions set forth in 24 CFR 570.208(b) through residential and commercial rehabilitation programs.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls will advance affordable housing by providing assistance for construction of, and the acquisition of land for, new single-family homes for low to moderate income households. The City of Niagara Falls will also provide housing to homeless or at-risk of homelessness families through rapid re-housing, housing relocation and stabilization, and homeless prevention grants to homeless service agencies.

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls collaborates with the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) to encourage public housing improvements and public housing resident involvement.

The City of Niagara Falls also manages a Section 8 program that supports Housing Choice Vouchers, Project Based Vouchers, and Homeownership programs.

The City of Niagara Falls 2020-2024 Strategic Plan supports the NFHA and City of Niagara Falls PHA Plans through expanding the supply of decent, affordable housing in Niagara Falls through use of CDBG and HOME funds. The Housing Choice Voucher program provides residents with housing choice, which is a way to deconcentrate areas of poverty. The City of Niagara Falls also funds youth services directed primarily towards NFHA residents.

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

The City of Niagara Falls will work with the Niagara Falls Housing Collaborative, comprised of NFNHS and CCNDC, using CHDO funds to renovate rental units for the purpose of Project Based Vouchers.

The City of Niagara Falls will also work with Belmont Housing for an adaptive re-use project that will convert an unused private school into mixed income housing that will also provide rental units for the purpose of Project Based Vouchers.

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

The City of Niagara Falls will market its Family Self-Sufficiency program to its current clients as well as

new clients expected through an opening of the Leased Housing Waiting List.

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

Neither PHAs in Niagara Falls are designated as troubled at this time.

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

Introduction

The City of Niagara Falls is committed to serving the needs of the homeless and at-risk of homelessness populations in Niagara Falls. The 2022 Annual Action Plan program year will serve as a means to increase understanding of the needs, create baseline data to measure against future years, and to develop strategies and best practices in serving homeless and at-risk of homelessness populations in a more pro-active fashion.

Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including

Goal: Improve Coordinated Entry Implementation in Niagara Falls

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls is working with HAWNY to develop a more pro-active Coordinated Entry approach that puts more resources towards street outreach and assessment. The City of Niagara Falls, the CoC, and other service agencies will work together to secure additional sources of funding for street outreach and assessment.

Goal: Create Performance Metrics and Standards Based on Need and Capacity

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls is working with HAWNY to develop goals, metrics, and strategies to address emergency shelter and transitional housing needs in Niagara Falls. The City of Niagara Falls routinely checks HMIS data and HAWNY quarterly performance reports to determine the need of emergency shelter and transitional housing needs in Niagara Falls. The work on improving Coordinated Entry will also address the needs of homeless or at-risk of homelessness persons that would typically use emergency shelter or transitional housing but may be better served through other programs or services.

Goal: Reduce Shelter Stays at ESG-funded Shelters

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls will work closely with ESG-funded Shelter subrecipients and HAWNY to develop a strategy to reduce shelter stays in Niagara Falls. The Rolling 12-Month Performance Report for the CoC 1/1/2021-12/31/2021 will be used as the benchmark metric for shelter stay reductions. The City of Niagara Falls will work with ESG-funded Shelter subrecipients to increase efficiencies and creating partnerships with other service organizations that may help alleviate or reduce the need to stay in shelters. The City of Niagara Falls will work with HAWNY to track performance and seek additional

technical assistance in increasing efficiencies and partnerships with other service organizations.

Goal: Develop an empirical risk model and a strategy to guide service providers in providing pro-active aid to families at-risk of homelessness.

Actions: The City of Niagara Falls, in collaboration with HAWNY, will research and develop an empirical risk model for families at-risk of homelessness and a strategy to reach families at-risk of homelessness before need of homeless services such as shelter or rapid-rehousing. Once developed, the City of Niagara Falls will work with service providers and other partner organizations to implement the strategy and create baseline data to inform performance tracking going forward.

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

The Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless is a significant step in the right direction in terms of outreach and needs assessment for homeless individuals and families. Community Missions of the Niagara Frontier, as well as Heart and Soul Food Pantry, YWCA Carolyn's House, The Niagara Action Program and Family and Children Services all actively interact with homeless persons.

The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York has identified the concern that there is a greater issue of unsheltered or street homelessness than the data shows. The Continuum of Care cannot fund street outreach, so the City and CoC will be looking at utilizing ESG funding to help identify the true scope of the problem. Additionally, the City and CoC work with the hospital system and Community Missions to identify repeat or chronic homelessness and to identify the needs of unsheltered individuals.

Additionally, the City created an ESG project review panel with the Homelessness Alliance of Western New York to find new and improved ways to increase participation and input. The panel reports to the Mayor and includes HAWNY, Department of Community Development and Niagara County Social Services Department staff. The members of the panel are organizations that do not receive ESG funds via the City of Niagara Falls annual action plan.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

HAWNY is seeking funding to create additional shelters and beds in Niagara Falls. Currently Pinnacle Community Services, Community Missions Inc, the YWCA, and Niagara Gospel Rescue Mission provide emergency shelter and/or transitional housing for homeless individuals. Additionally, the Niagara County Department of Social Services provides hotel and motel placement to meet emergency shelter and transitional housing needs. The homeless service providers have identified individuals and families fleeing domestic abuse as a significant issue in Niagara County. The YWCA and Pinnacle have shelters specifically designed to create a safe haven for victims of domestic abuse and to match individuals with services needed to gain independence and independent living.

Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families

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

The Homelessness Alliance of Western New York secured a \$3.6MM grant for a two-year Youth Homeless Demonstration Project, whereby Community Missions, Inc. and Pinnacle Community Services will receive funds to combat homelessness in youth or other at-risk populations. Pinnacle will provide intake services and will assign a caseworker to individuals and families to help meet specific needs including rapid re-housing, securing permanent housing, and being connected with social service providers as appropriate. Pinnacle currently provides homelessness prevention programming that provides skills to individuals in small groups, to help maintain housing. Heart Love and Soul recently opened their Daybreak Program to centralize access to the services provided to over 30 different agencies.

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

Niagara County is implementing HUD's Housing First approach and seeing positive results. Housing First is intended to eliminate barriers to permanent housing without preconditions such as sobriety, treatment, or service participation requirements. The broader intake is providing meaningful housing solutions without pushing the 'higher-risk' homeless individuals away. Once secure in housing, the focus turns to services and other support within the Continuum of Care. Relatedly, the CoC uses the Single Point of Access mental health referral systems to submit medical, hospitalization, treatment, and housing information to the relevant service providers.

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

Introduction:

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

The City of Niagara Falls provides housing rehabilitation funds to assist with the cost burdens associated with an older housing stock suffering from decades of disinvestment and is re-working the program to increase the amount of incentive available per unit in order to bring units up to appropriate Housing Quality Standards without increasing the rental or overhead burden on renters or homeowners.

The City is also working with non-profit developers to construct new affordable housing units. Specifically, the City is (i) investigating sites for infill development, (ii) making city-owned properties available for rehabilitation or redevelopment, and (iii) making CDBG and HOME funds available to leverage investment in the development of new units.

The City is partnering with the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) to provide housing rehabilitation to create or improve affordable units throughout the City and is exploring the possibility of gifting vacant City-owned properties to NORLIC and Habitat for Humanity for redevelopment.

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

The City of Niagara Falls plans to increase its role in strategic planning and fostering collaboration among various service agencies in Niagara Falls and the region to better serve the residents of Niagara Falls and to reduce duplicative programs that give rise to inefficiency in service to residents.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

The City of Niagara Falls will continue to offer a home ownership auction of City-owned residential properties. The City of Niagara Falls will also create more Project Based Voucher rental units to match the need of current and new Section 8 clients.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

The City of Niagara Falls will work closely with the Niagara County Department of Health to address homes that are found to have lead-based paint hazards through both City and County-led programs.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

The City of Niagara Falls will work with the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) and other partner organizations to reduce the number of poverty-level families by addressing root causes of poverty and developing strategies and initiatives to sustain poverty reduction programs and collaboration.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The City of Niagara Falls will continue to develop institutional structure by creating standard operating procedures, re-evaluating current plans and policies, and attending appropriate trainings for staff to gain a mastery over administering HUD CPD programs.

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

The City of Niagara Falls will study the best use of social service agencies' programs for public and private housing agencies and create the discussion to link these programs more closely to serve the housing needs of residents.

Program Specific Requirements

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

Introduction:

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(1)

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

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

Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	0
2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	75.00%

HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(2)

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

The City of Niagara Falls will dedicate 2022 HOME funds to single-family homeownership initiatives involving new home construction. CHDO funds have been awarded to the Niagara Falls Housing Collaborative, a partnership between Center City Neighborhood Development Corp, Niagara Falls

Neighborhood Housing Services Inc., and Niagara Falls Community Development, and Niagara Area Habitat for Humanity. For the first time in recent memory, the City will fund the creation of new (rather than rehabilitated), affordable housing units through the use of CHDO funding.

The use of the City's HOME funds will be dedicated to single-family homeownership initiatives involving new home construction.

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

Recapture provisions are based on 24 CFR 92.254 (a) (5) (ii) which stipulates the conditions for recapture of the HOME investment used to assist low-income families purchasing a home. Homebuyer recapture provisions are included in, or as a deed restriction rider, to the recorded deed of trust that secures HOME financing.

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

Recapture provisions are based on 24 CFR 92.254 (a) (5) (ii) which stipulates the conditions for recapture of the HOME investment used to assist low-income families purchasing a home. Homebuyer recapture provisions are included in, or as a deed restriction rider, to the recorded deed of trust that secures HOME financing.

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

Neither the City of Niagara Falls nor its subrecipients use HOME funds for refinancing.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Reference 91.220(l)(4)

1. Include written standards for providing ESG assistance (may include as attachment)

The annual competitive ESG application references HUD ESG guidelines for providing ESG assistance and applicable federal language. ESG subrecipients are required to follow the CoC Coordinated [?]

2. If the Continuum of Care has established centralized or coordinated assessment system that

meets HUD requirements, describe that centralized or coordinated assessment system. The CoC has established Coordinated Entry for Niagara County service providers . The City of Niagara Falls is working with HAWNY to increase efficiencies and fill gaps in our current Coordinated Entry model.

3. Identify the process for making sub-awards and describe how the ESG allocation available to private nonprofit organizations (including community and faith-based organizations).

Organizations may competitively apply for ESG funds during our annual application process. The application requires documentation of certificate of incorporation, most recent audited financial statements, IRS 501(c)3 tax exempt determination letter, board of directors membership list, board minutes from previous 3 meetings, verification of matching funds, and an authorization to submit application form. Applicants also provide narrative and budgets for their proposed projects. Applications are reviewed by City of Niagara Falls staff that works on the ESG program as well as HAWNY staff to determine the best use of annual ESG funds. A final determination is made and is presented in the Draft Annual Action Plan for public review. Once the Draft Annual Action Plan is approved, final funding is allocated based on final funding allocation determined by HUD.

4. If the jurisdiction is unable to meet the homeless participation requirement in 24 CFR 576.405(a), the jurisdiction must specify its plan for reaching out to and consulting with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering policies and funding decisions regarding facilities and services funded under ESG.

All ESG subrecipient applications must provide narrative describing homeless participation in board governance, other equivalent policy-making entity, or some other participation plan. The City of Niagara Falls reviews these homeless participation plans of all applicants as well as consulting HAWNY regarding policy and funding decisions.

5. Describe performance standards for evaluating ESG.

HAWNY provides quarterly performance reports for ESG and CoC funded agencies. The City of Niagara Falls uses these reports to evaluate performance standards of ESG subrecipients.