

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Telephone: (716) 286-4310

January 11, 2021

The City Council
Niagara Falls, New York

*RE: Adoption of 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan
Department of Community Development*

Council Members:

The City of Niagara Falls Department of Community Development has prepared a five year Consolidated Plan in order to implement federal grant programs efficiently. These grant programs fund housing, community development and neighborhood based services within the City. The Consolidated Plan provides a framework for the annual applications for federal entitlement funds available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program. The City is required to submit this five year strategic plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for approval.

The 2020–2024 Five Year Consolidated Plan is the end result of a well advertised citizen participation process. Public participation is essential to this process. A summary of the participation process is included hereafter.

The proposed 2020-24 Consolidated Plan is on file in the Community Development Office and in the City Clerk's Office and is also posted on the Community Development Department's website. An important part of the Consolidated Plan is the Strategic Plan. An excerpt from the Strategic Plan portion of the Consolidated Plan follows:

Strategic Plan Strategic Plan Overview

The City of Niagara Falls, New York prepares a five-year strategic plan in order to efficiently implement federal programs that fund housing, community development, and neighborhood-based services within the City. Public participation is essential to this process.

The end result of the process is a consolidated plan and annual applications for the use of federal entitlement funds available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program. The City of Niagara Falls submits this five-year strategic plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for approval.

The Plan serves the following functions:

1. A management tool that focuses HUD investment on a comprehensive strategy rather than a series of isolated annual applications and projects.

2. An application for CDBG, HOME and ESG funds under HUD's formula grants.

3. An assessment tool to track annual spending and project-based performance.

Based on the FY 2020 allocation, the 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan will direct the following resources:

CDBG Annual: \$2,385,727 CDBG 5 Year Estimate: \$11,928,635

HOME Annual: \$458,130 HOME 5 Year Estimate: \$2,290,650

ESG Annual: \$202,920 ESG 5 Year Estimate: \$1,014,600

Annual Total: \$3,046,777 5 Year Total: \$15,233,885

Based on the Needs Assessment and Market Analysis for the City of Niagara Falls, the City's Strategic Plan focuses on furthering, either directly or through partner organizations, the following goals:

- Supporting businesses either owned by low- and moderate-income individuals or creating employment opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals through microenterprise grants and technical support
- Capitalizing physical investments in commercial properties and small business development projects.
- Supporting functional job training programs within the City of Niagara Falls with a focus on entry level trades and medical arts employment opportunities
- Funding needed infrastructure improvements in traditional commercial corridors
- Eliminating blighting influences throughout the City through targeted demolitions
- Funding residential rehabilitation of owner occupied and rental properties to increase the number of affordable, quality residential units
- Supporting the development of affordable housing units throughout the City
- Funding public infrastructure improvements in low- and moderate-income residential areas
- Supporting youth programming that focuses on the 12-17 age range
- Furthering public park improvements, consistent with the adopted Niagara Falls Parks Master Plan
- Supporting community policing strategies that both increase police visibility and make the police department accessible to residents
- A commitment to the sale and renovation of city owned vacant houses whenever financially feasible for the betterment of the surrounding area
- Investing in safety net stakeholders dedicated to rapid re-housing and homelessness prevention
- Creating more beds for homeless individuals

- The City will attempt to utilize federal resources to leverage additional funds to support the aforementioned goals.

Will the Council so approve the aforementioned 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and authorize the Mayor to take such actions as are necessary to implement the same?

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT M. RESTAINO
Mayor

Kennedy _____ Spanbauer _____ Touma _____ Voccio _____ Tompkins _____

2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan Citizen Participation Summary

Background

The City of Niagara Falls (City) has prepared a draft 2020 Action Plan and Consolidated Plan for 2020-2024. The document outlines the City's goals and objectives relative to housing, economic development, community development, and homeless issues with specific attention given to the needs of low/moderate income households within the City.

The Action Plan for 2020 provides a basis for assessing performance against the Consolidated Plan and identifies specific projects for the 2020 program year. It also serves as a combined application for federal funds under three (3) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) formula grant programs, including CDBG, HOME, and ESG.

First Public Hearing

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, the Niagara Falls City Council held a public hearing on Thursday, June 25, commencing at 6:00 p.m. to provide information and allow citizen comment regarding the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and Program Year 2020 Annual Action Plan. While the hearing was physically closed to the public due to Covid-19 public gathering limitations, it was available via live stream on Youtube Channel: richmeranto. Written comment was also invited and accepted in advance of the hearing to be read during the Public Hearing. No comments were received.

Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the Consolidated Planning process, the Community Development Department convened three (3) virtual meetings with Community Stakeholders, as follows:

Health & Human Services Stakeholders	September 1, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.
Housing Providers & Stakeholders	September 1, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.
Youth, Education, and Workforce Development Providers	September 2, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

Substantial comment was received during the Stakeholder meetings and incorporated into the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, and meetings minutes are included in the Consolidated Plan as Appendices. Follow up comments were encouraged in writing and were additionally incorporated into the Consolidated Plan.

Public Comment Period and Final Public Hearings

Once draft materials were completed, a public comment period for the Annual Action Plan and Consolidated Plan opened Monday December 21, 2020 and concluded Wednesday December 30, 2020. Written comments were invited to be submitted in writing or in person throughout the Public Comment Period, or at any one of the three Public Hearings that were held on Tuesday, December 29, commencing at 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. to provide information and allow citizen comment regarding the draft 2020 Annual Action Plan and 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan prior to submittal of the Plans to the Common Council and to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

While the hearings were physically closed to the public due to Covid-19 public gathering limitations, they were conducted virtually via Zoom using **Meeting ID: 821 208 7193**. No comments were received.