



UNION COUNTY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM



2022 Annual Action Plan

Adopted date: June 20, 2022

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The 2022 Annual Action Plan is presented to you in a format that is prescribed by HUD. Data and narrative are entered into a federal database system called the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS) and the Annual Action Plan report is then downloaded into a Word format. The Annual Action Plan template in IDIS has a series of prescribed questions that align with the CDBG Consolidated Plan program regulations. The report you are reviewing is the result of that data entry process and is the prescribed and recommended format by HUD. If you have any questions about this format, please do not hesitate to contact Clayton Voignier at clayton.voignier@unioncountync.gov. Thank you for your interest and time spent reviewing this report.

Prepared for
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Executive Summary

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

1. Introduction

Union County became an Entitlement Grantee in 2016 and began receiving an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In accordance with federal regulations of HUD, Union County must prepare an Annual Action Plan (AAP) for the proposed use of CDBG funds and must ensure that activities and projects funded with these federal funds meet one of the three statutory objectives:

1. Benefit low/moderate income residents/areas;
2. Prevent or eliminate slum and blight either on an area or spot basis; and
3. Meet an urgent need (for example, in the case of a natural disaster).

Additionally, as part of being a CDBG recipient, the County is required to prepare a five-year long term strategic plan, the Consolidated Plan, which describes community needs, resources, priorities, and proposed activities to be undertaken to assist low- and moderate-income residents of Union County, the City of Monroe, and the Towns of Marshville, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wingate, Stallings, Fairview, Indian Trail, Mineral Springs, and Wesley Chapel under the County's CDBG program. The most current Consolidated Plan was submitted in 2021 and this Annual Action Plan represents year two covering the time period beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023.

This plan describes the funding levels and activities to be undertaken during program year (PY) 2022-2023 (PY 22-23) for the CDBG program to address the priority needs and objectives as outlined in the Consolidated Plan. Union County will receive \$1,115,096 for this upcoming program year.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This year's goals are reflected through projects listed below that are planned to be funded with CDBG dollars:

- FY23 Turning Point Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program
- FY23 Union County Crisis Ministries Housing Stability Project
- FY 23 Council on Aging In-Home Assistance for Seniors to Remain Independent
- FY 23 Common Heart Economic Empowerment & Development Program
- FY23 Union Anson Habitat for Humanity East Village Scattered Site Paving and Street Infrastructure Installation Project
- FY23 Housing Support - Septic Tank Repair Program
- FY23 Jesse Helms Park Project

3. Evaluation of past performance

Union County is continuously evaluating past performance to guide in the process of setting goals or determining which projects to fund with limited CDBG resources. At the end of each program year, the County submits a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), which helps evaluate the County's progress, performance and accomplishments regarding projects that were funded with CDBG funds, and

goals established in the Consolidated Plan.

During Program Year 2021 the following projects/activities were completed and met their required goals:

Planning and Administration:

- Development of the 2021-2025 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing document
- Several CDBG Fair Housing trainings through Legal Aid of North Carolina
- Maintenance of the CDBG Subrecipient Manual
- CDBG Subrecipient oversight and project management

Projects

- Concord Avenue Sidewalk Improvement Project Phase II: the project consisted of constructing 3,890 linear feet of pedestrian sidewalk that are ADA accessible. (CDBG)
- Senior Nutrition Program: The program provides meals to food insecure seniors living in Union County. (CDBG and CDBG-CV)
- Heart for Monroe: The program provides food and supplies on a regular basis to more than 29,000 adults, children, and seniors in our community. During COVID there was an increased demand of food requests. CDBG-CV funds allowed the agency to keep up with the demand. The H4M Rapid Response team continued to provide food, supplies and resources and modified the drive-thru events during the summer and fall. The agency also continued services in the summer which continued into the fall called Project 704. (CDBG-CV)
- Loaves and Fishes: Loaves and Fishes of Union County is a 501(c)3 non-profit community pantry organization that provides food, at no charge, for a weeks' worth of nutritional meals for each Union County household having been screened and referred by social service agencies as having a crisis situation. (CDBG-CV)
- Human Services Crisis Assessment: The program assists adult only households with rental assistance during the COVID pandemic. (CDBG-CV)
- Crisis Assistance Ministries: the agency used CDBG_CV funds to help fund its existing Crisis Intervention Program to benefit low- and moderate-income individuals impacted by COVID-19. Funds requested are for eviction/foreclosure prevention, staffing, technology, emergency food and protective equipment. (CDBG-CV)
- Council on Aging Union County Coronavirus Relief Project: The agency provided supplies and equipment to older adults and appropriate personal protective equipment for staff and volunteers to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. (CDBG-CV)
- Turning Point Domestic Violence Program: The agency purchased personal protective equipment and contracted a professional cleaning service to sanitize the Domestic Violence Shelter to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. (CDBG-CV)
- Union County Xmas Bureau Food Drive Program: The organization provided food to school aged children, who are typically on free or reduced meals at school, during the school closures due to the COVID pandemic. The organization also provided food to more than 300 seniors throughout Union County who are on a fixed income).

Past performance and limited CDBG funds have emphasized the need to leverage additional funding and initiatives to have the largest impact on the community.

4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process

The County understands the importance of citizen consultation in order to set its long-term goals and priorities under the Consolidated Plan, and short-term goals under the Annual Action Plan. The Citizen Participation Plan, which describes the policies and procedures for involving citizens in the critical planning issues and funding recommendations related to the CDBG program, was created as a guide to help with this process. The County also engages citizens and other public and non-profit agencies in consultation efforts throughout the program year and those efforts are incorporated into the County's Annual Action Plan.

Based on the Citizen Participation Plan, outreach included a public meeting for consultation with public and private agencies and organizations to gain public input. Furthermore, private consultation included elected and appointed government officials and neighborhood organizations. Three public meetings were held during the planning and development of the 2022 AAP. The first meeting was a FY 22-23 CDBG Kick Off event to talk about the CDBG program, the application process and revisit the priorities of the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan. The second meeting was held on April 25, 2022 at 6 pm to receive comments in preparation of the plan. In addition, the Union County CDBG Coordinator along with Centralina Regional Council staff were spearheading the County's Analysis of Impediment to Fair Housing process which has included consultation with a six-person Fair Housing Advisory Committee, a nine-person focus group composed of four local non-profit housing providers, four organizations working with the disabled population and the United Way of Central Carolinas. The process also included two public engagement events with the community from July 2021 to February 2022, along with a community survey. The third public event took place on May 25, 2022, at 6 pm, prior to the submission of the 2022 AAP to HUD for CDBG Entitlement funding. The primary purposes of these public forums/hearings were to assess community needs and problems in an effort to determine the most critical needs to be addressed by the CDBG program, and to present for public comment and review the program activities, which have been selected by Union County to resolve the identified needs.

5. Summary of public comments

Union County makes it a priority to engage citizens and other public and non-profit agencies in consultation efforts throughout the program year. These efforts are reported in the Annual Action Plan. The first public hearing was advertised and held on April 25, 2022, to receive comments in preparation of this plan. The following comments were received during the public hearing:

- Infrastructure projects must continue to be prioritized. Current infrastructure is failing in certain parts of the County (especially on the east side). CDBG is instrumental in helping with infrastructure improvements. The eastern part of the County does not have the tax base and resources.
- More focus on North Carolina Opportunity Zones regarding economic development and housing is necessary. Street improvements in qualified census tracts (QCT) should be prioritized.
- Housing needs to be a priority, especially overcoming impediments to fair and affordable housing in the County.
- More affordable rental properties for Union County residents are imperative. The east side of the County does not have the resources, and it is lacking support.
- The lack of affordable housing and adequate transportation are major issues in the County. The roads need to be improved as well.
- Seniors are being displaced at an alarming rate. Solutions need to be found for rental opportunities for seniors. The elderly population is the fastest growing segment of the community in homeless services.

- There is a need for voucher system for seniors, affordable tax credits, and creation of inclusionary zones in the County.
- Affordable dental care benefits for low-income residents is needed.
- Businesses need to invest in their employees and shift their mind set. Minimum wage must be raised.

During the 30-day public comment period, which began on May 13, 2022, and ended on June 14, 2022, the following comment was received in writing from Teresa Campo, City of Monroe, Planning and Development Department, Community Development Division:

“The Union County Community Development Block Grant Consortium of Cities provides an organizational structure to promote interaction and communication among local governments for the benefit of the organizations and their residents. The City of Monroe is a member of the consortium since its beginning. As a member of the inter-jurisdictional body, our legislative officials make funding decisions that allow public service agencies and other community development programs possible for our citizen’s here in Monroe and have an impact on countywide projects. The City of Monroe considers the awards and applications for Community Development Block Grant funds through the County as a factor in the awards made through our outside agency funding process and may make decisions to support various service applications directly to the County. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Union County and our sister cities as we work together to make Union County a destination place with an emphasis on community.”

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

All received comments were accepted by Union County.

7. Summary

Union County appreciates the opportunity to be able to receive CDBG allocations on an annual basis to benefit the low- and moderate-income residents in the community. CDBG projects were evaluated carefully in order to meet priority goals and objectives identified in the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan and recommended for funding for the 2022 program year. Input from County residents and service providers were considered, and the public will continue to be informed and invited to participate in the CDBG process to ensure projects meet the community needs. Union County submitted the 2022-2026 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice document in May 2022 and will continue to address the identified barriers to affirmatively further fair housing through the projects selected for funding as well as other means.

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

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

Describe the agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

Agency Role	Name	Department/Agency
CDBG Administrator	UNION COUNTY	County Manager's Office

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative (optional)

Union County as an entitlement community under the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is required to submit a Five-Year consolidated Plan and an Annual Action Plan. The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for authorizing the submission to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The County Manager's Office is the lead entity charged with preparing the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan (AAP) and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). In this capacity, the County works in cooperation with other key government agencies, non-profit agencies and for-profit agencies addressing affordable housing, and other community development issues. Collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders are indispensable to the community's success in addressing the needs of low and moderate-income residents and improving the quality of life for all the residents. These partnerships help to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, gender, age, income level or disability, have equal access to affordable housing, community development resources, jobs and services available in the county.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

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

1. Introduction

Union County recognizes the importance of community input when it comes to preparing the Annual Action Plan. Discussions and consultations with many diverse groups, organizations, and agencies are essential for Union County to make sure the right projects will be funded to reflect community needs. While it is difficult to consult with every organization within the community, considerable efforts were made to be as inclusive as possible and obtain input from a cross section of the community. During the planning process for this Annual Action Plan, the County organized public and individual meetings with the community. County staff and the County's consultants met with service providers, community groups, nonprofit agencies, and municipalities within the County that have chosen to participate in the CDBG program to discuss and gather input on the community development needs identified in the County. A significant focus of consultation efforts included social service agencies that serve low-income individuals and families with housing and other basic needs. Consultation is carried out throughout the program year. Additionally, significant consultation was completed during the 2021 Program Year through the Analysis

of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Study.

Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction’s activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(I))

To be inclusive of various agencies and organizations, the County compiled an outreach list that included the following agencies:

- Nonprofit service providers that cater to the needs of low and moderate-income households and persons with disabilities or special needs;
- Housing professionals;
- Public agencies;
- Economic development and employment organizations;
- Government staff of participating jurisdictions; and
- Community and neighborhood groups.

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness.

Union County is not a Continuum of Care County; rather local providers are members of the North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care. The regional committee is the Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care (PRCC) which encompasses five counties, including Union County. The Union County Community Shelter is the lead local Coordinating Agency for Union County. The PRCC recently developed a regional homeless strategy, which was utilized in this planning process to provide information on homelessness and resources available within Union County. Union County Community Shelter was consulted to gather information and data on the County’s Continuum of Care efforts.

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

Not applicable; the County currently does not receive ESG funding. The Union County Community Shelter is a direct recipient of ESG funds.

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

Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

1	Agency/Group/Organization	City of Monroe
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within their jurisdiction.
2	Agency/Group/Organization	Town of Mineral Springs
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within their jurisdiction.
3	Agency/Group/Organization	Town of Stallings
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within their jurisdiction.
4	Agency/Group/Organization	Town of Fairview
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within

		their jurisdiction.
5	Agency/Group/Organization	Town of Wesley Chapel
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within their jurisdiction.
6	Agency/Group/Organization	Town of Indian Trail
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Other government - Local
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This member government was consulted regarding the full spectrum of community development needs within their jurisdiction.

Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting

The Annual Action Plan process provided an opportunity and invited participation and comments from all relevant organizations and agencies. There were no specific agency types that were purposely not consulted during the development of the Annual Action Plan; however, it is difficult to consult with every agency within a community. Union County will be continuing to outreach to agencies within the program year as the Annual Action Plan is implemented.

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Continuum of Care	Union County Community Shelter	Assist persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice	Union County	Affirmatively further fair housing.

Table 3 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Narrative

Union County has completed its 2022-2026 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing document, which was submitted to HUD in May 2022. During the outreach process, the County had great success in reaching out and consulting with a wide variety of stakeholders and community agencies/organizations to discuss fair housing barriers and community development needs and priorities of the community. The County is committed to continue building on the momentum and fostering community outreach to gain input on how to better serve the needs of the low- and moderate-income community.

AP-12 Participation – 91.105, 91.200(c)

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

In order to be sensitive to COVID-19 protocols and social distancing, Union County conducted a virtual public meeting on April 25, 2022, to solicit input from local citizens on community development needs. The public hearing notice was published in the local newspaper, Enquirer Journal, on April 12, 2022, thirteen days preceding the public meeting. The meeting notice was also posted on the Union County and Centralina Regional Council

websites. At the virtual public meeting, a presentation including an overview of the CDBG Entitlement Program, purpose of the Annual Action Plan, anticipated funding allocation amount was conducted for meeting attendees.

A draft 2022 Annual Action Plan was released to the public on May 12, 2022, for a 30-day public comment period, which started on May 13, 2022, and ended on June 14, 2022. The second public meeting took place on May 25, 2022 to give residents and service providers an opportunity to comment on the list of proposed CDBG funded programs selected by the County.

Citizen Participation Outreach

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons
1	CDBG Kick Off Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community/Other: previous and current subrecipients	The virtual meeting was held on March 31, 2022 as the result of the NOFA and to kick off the FY 22-23 CDBG program and application process.	None.	N/A
2	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	A notice was placed in the local newspaper on April 12, 2022 notifying residents of the upcoming public hearing to discuss the development of the 2022 AAP.	N/A	N/A
3	Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community	A virtual public hearing was held on April 25, 2022 to gain input from residents on the development of the 2022 AAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • NC Opportunity Zones • Elderly • Fair and affordable housing • Health services for the poor (especially dental) • Minimum wage increase • Inclusionary zone, voucher system for seniors, affordable tax credits, transportation 	N/A

4	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	A notice was placed in the local newspaper, on May 12, 2022 notifying local residents of an upcoming public hearing and the availability of the draft 2022 AAP for a 30-day comment period (May 13-June 14).	See comment under: AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b) section 5. Summary of public comments	N/A
5	Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community	A virtual public hearing was held on May 25, 2022 to allow members of the community to provide comments on the 2022 AAP.	N/A	N/A

Expected Resources

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

Introduction

Union County will be receiving \$1,115,362 in CDBG funding for FY 2022-2023. These funds can be used for a wide range of activities, including housing rehabilitation, economic development, public improvements, and social services, but are restricted in location to the unincorporated areas of Union County and participating Towns within the County. There is an opportunity for additional funding for the County through a federal initiative related to the ARPA program. Union County will start the 2022 program year, and year two of the Consolidated Plan with continuation to focus on its key priorities program areas listed in its five-year strategic plan, which include:

- Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure (high priority)
- Support Delivery of Public Services (high priority)
- Promote Affordable Housing (high priority)
- Support Growth and Economic Development (low priority)

The following table outlines the expected resources from the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, that Union County is planning on having available for PY 22. The expected amount “Available Remainder of ConPlan” shows a projected dollar amount for the remaining year three to five of the ConPlan based on PY22 estimated dollar amount.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing	1,115,096	0	135,638.42	1,223,905.69	3,600,000	The \$3,600,000 includes the estimated amount for year 3-5 of the Consolidated Plan based on the estimates dollar amount of annual allocation shown for PY 22.

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

Unlike some other federal grant programs, CDBG regulations do not require matching funds on behalf of the Grantee. While there are no federal match requirements for CDBG funds, Union County highly recommends that organizations provide matching funds, if possible. Match fund sources include contributions derived from other eligible federal and nonfederal sources and the value of third-party in-kind contributions, (i.e., volunteers, personnel, office space, materials, equipment, and supplies). However, while matching funds are not required, applications will receive favorable scoring based on leveraging funds. Leveraging is a way to increase project efficiencies which often come with combining sources of funding. Union County will continue encouraging subrecipients to use matching funds in order to stretch CDBG dollars.

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

Not applicable.

Discussion

Union County's 2022 Action Plan covers the time period from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. The County's FY22 entitlement amount is \$1,115,096. While HUD's CDBG allocations are critical, they are not sufficient to overcome all barriers and address all needs that low-income individuals and families face in attaining self-sufficiency. The County will continue to leverage additional resources and partnerships to successfully provide support and services to the populations in need.

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	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure	2021	2025	Non-Housing Community Development	Unincorporated Union County Monroe	Public Facilities and Infrastructure	CDBG: \$968,651.05	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 4,865 Persons Assisted 2 Households Assisted
2	Support Delivery of Public Services	2021	2025	Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs Elderly	Marshville Mineral Springs Wesley Chapel Indian Trails Monroe Stallings Weddington Waxhaw Fairview Union County ETJ	Public Services	CDBG: \$653,746.95	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 2,472 Persons Assisted
3	Promote Affordable Fair Housing	2021	2025	Affordable Housing	Union County	Fair Housing		Two fair housing trainings were held by Legal Aid of NC. The County will continue with the training opportunities. Creation of a Union County Fair Housing Council.

Table 6 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	Goal Description	Provide and maintain accessible public utility systems (water/sewer) capable of accommodating and helping to direct future growth.
2	Goal Name	Support Delivery of Public Services
	Goal Description	Continue ongoing County support for community and supportive services, with special emphasis on code enforcement, services for the homeless, seniors, at-risk youth, the disabled, veterans and other persons with special needs.
3	Goal Name	Promote Affordable Fair Housing
	Goal Description	Increased learning opportunities and coordination about fair housing issues with member governments, and other local organizations within service area or potential service area.

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

Union County utilizes CDBG funds to support a variety of county wide projects and programs aimed to benefit low- and moderate-income individuals. These activities are consistent with the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan priorities. The 2022 Annual Action Plan describes how Union County will use formula funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to meet the County’s community development needs in the second year covered by the Consolidated Plan. Public service, housing and infrastructure projects were considered for selection after soliciting proposals from local non-profit agencies and local municipalities. The following table provides an outline of the projects being selected for PY 22-23.

Projects

#	Project Name
1	FY23 Administration
2	FY23 Turning Point Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program
3	FY23 Union County Crisis Ministries Housing Stability Project
4	FY 23 Council on Aging In-Home Assistance for Seniors to Remain Independent
5	FY 23 Common Heart Economic Empowerment & Development Program
6	FY23 Union Anson Habitat for Humanity East Village Scattered Site Paving and Street Infrastructure Installation Project
7	FY23 Septic Tank Repair Program
8	FY23 Jesse Helms Park Project

Table 7 - Project Information

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

The selected projects’ primary objectives are to strengthen neighborhoods, improve quality of life and provide needed public services to low- and moderate-income individuals.

Factors that contributed to targeting funds for specific activities are:

- Stated needs, analysis, and objectives in the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan;
- The severity of the need;
- The availability of other funds to ensure project viability;
- Experience in working with federal funds;
- How the project met national CDBG objectives and goals;
- How well the project addressed local needs;
- How large the impact will be for residents, i.e. number of beneficiaries;
- Project readiness in qualified census tracts with low- and moderate-income households.

1. All Projects – Project is an eligible activity under CDBG
2. All Projects – Project meets Consolidated Plan goals and priorities (projects meeting higher priority areas receive greater consideration)
3. Public Services – Project meets an increasingly underserved need in the community, which was likely exacerbated by the pandemic
4. Public Services – Project or Grantee has a high-performing track record with utilization and administration of CDBG funds
5. Public Services – Project or Grantee does NOT receive funding from more than ONE (1) source of Union County funding
6. Non-Public Services – Project or Grantee did NOT receive CDBG funding last year

AP-38 Project Summary

Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	FY23 Administration
	Target Area	County wide
	Goals Supported	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure Support Delivery of Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Facilities and Infrastructure Public Services Fair Housing
	Funding	CDBG: \$223,019
	Description	General program administration and planning.
	Target Date	6/30/2023
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	N/A
	Location Description	N/A
	Planned Activities	General administration and planning.
2	Project Name	FY23 Turning Point Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Program
	Target Area	Union County
	Goals Supported	Support Delivery of Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Service
	Funding	CDBG: \$44,000 Other: \$45,440
	Description	Turning Point is a domestic violence shelter that provides support services for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. They will serve approximately 90 LMI persons.
	Target Date	6/30/2023

3	Project Name	FY23 Union County Crisis Ministries Housing Stability Project
	Target Area	Union County
	Goals Supported	Support Delivery of Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Service
	Funding	CDBG: \$38,264 Other: \$386,736
	Description	CDBG funds will be used to provide financial assistance to cost-burdened Union County residents who face unexpected hardships that place them at risk of becoming homeless. CDBG funding will aid in supporting case management services and financial assistance.
	Target Date	6/30/2023
4	Project Name	FY23 Council on Aging In-Home Assistance for Seniors to Remain Independent
	Target Area	Union County
	Goals Supported	Support Delivery of Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Services
	Funding	CDBG: \$60,000 Other: \$568,466
	Description	Council on Aging will provide additional in-home assistance services for approximately 230 LMI seniors in Union County.
	Target Date	6/30/2023
5	Project Name	FY23 Common Heart Economic Empowerment & Development Program
	Target Area	Union County
	Goals Supported	Support Delivery of Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Services
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000 Other: \$165,196
	Description	The Common Heart Economic Empowerment Program will utilize CDBG funds to allow for increased services to low to moderate income residents. The program provides clients with the tools they need to build economic stability and self-sufficiency.

	Target Date	6/30/2023
6	Project Name	FY23 Union Anson Habitat East Village Scattered Site Paving and Street Infrastructure Installation Project
	Target Area	East Village
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Infrastructure
	Funding	CDBG: \$90,000 Other: \$360,000
	Description	Installation of sidewalk, driveways and curbing that is required by the City of Monroe in order to construct infill housing units. Two low/mod income households have been selected.
	Target Date	6/30/2023
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	2 low/mod income households will benefit from the project.
	Location Description	Project is in the NC Opportunity Zone area.
	Planned Activities	Installation of sidewalk, driveways and curbing.
7	Project Name	FY23 Union County Septic Repair Program
	Target Area	Union County
	Goals Supported	Housing Rehabilitation
	Needs Addressed	Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	Funding	CDBG: \$270,000
	Description	Union County will provide assistance to income eligible low/mod income residents with septic repair needs.
	Target Date	6/30/2023
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	7 low/mod income households will benefit from the Septic Repair Program.
	Location Description	County-wide
	Planned Activities	Union County's Septic Repair Program will be available for income eligible households within the county.
8	Project Name	FY23 Jesse Helms Parks Project

Target Area	Monroe
Goals Supported	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
Needs Addressed	Public Facilities and Infrastructure
Funding	CDBG: \$364,813 (FY22-23 CDBG funds) \$5,809.90 (FY17-18 CDBG funds – unallocated) \$103,086.52 (FY20-21 CDBG funds – unallocated) \$26,742.00 (FY21-22 CDBG funds – unallocated)
Description	Union County Parks and Receptions will develop and improve the Jesse Helms Park in the Town of Wingate. The park improvements will serve approximately 3966 persons.
Target Date	6/30/2023

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

Union County is home to fourteen municipalities. Ten municipalities have chosen to participate in the CDBG program: Marshville, Monroe, Stallings, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wingate, Fairview, Indian Trail, Mineral Springs, and Wesley Chapel along with unincorporated areas in the county.

Union County has not established specific target areas to focus the investment of CDBG funds. In terms of specific geographic distribution of investments, infrastructure improvements and public facilities will be focused primarily in areas with concentrations of low-to-moderate income population.

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

Geography was not used to determine funding allocation priorities for the county. There are no blighted areas in specific geographical areas that have disproportionate needs. Allocations and use of funds is determined through a competitive application process open to all eligible organizations.

Affordable Housing

AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

Introduction

Union County’s CDBG Grant Program area consists of Marshville, Monroe, Stallings, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wingate, Fairview, Indian Trail, Mineral Springs, and Wesley Chapel and unincorporated areas. In accordance

with the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, each entitlement community must “affirmatively further fair housing”. The County has just completed its 2022-2026 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing process to identify any barriers to fair/affordable housing choice for protected classes and to develop recommendations Union County can implement to address barriers that exist for affordable and fair housing choice for residents.

In the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan affordable housing has been identified as a high priority for the CDBG program and the County recognizes that gaps do exist within the affordable housing realm. In the past, the main focus was placed on updating existing, and creating new infrastructure and public facilities to serve housing units across the County. In this program year, the focus will begin shifting to help the community with affordable housing needs. Current institutional delivery systems with dedicated resources currently exist that provide for increasing and sustaining affordable housing units in Union County. However, these existing resources are not sufficient to address the affordable housing needs across the county and a more unified and holistic approach will need to be sought out in the future.

Discussion

The population in Union County has increased by twelve percent between 2015 and 2020, and by eighteen percent over the last decade. The population is projected to continue growing in the next three decades by another sixty percent. The demand to live in the county increases the pressure on the local housing, and one of the biggest challenges is the huge disparity between housing costs and what individuals with low- and moderate-incomes can afford to pay.

Almost half of the residents currently renting have rent costs that are 35 percent or more of their total household income. The median rent has increased by eighteen percent from 2015 to 2019, and it is at \$1,030 a month, while median home value increased by twenty-two percent, and it is currently at \$241,400 within the same time period.

Fostering and maintaining the existing supply of affordable housing continues to be of importance for the County, who will continue to develop policies that help foster the development of new affordable housing units. Additionally, Union County and its municipal partners will continue to support the efforts of local non-profit housing providers who carry out strategies to retain and create affordable housing options throughout the region.

There are 16 low-income housing apartment communities offering 619 affordable apartments for rent in Union County, which are broken down into three categories:

1. Income Based Apartments: 559 apartments. Tenants typically pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent and utilities.
2. Low Rent Apartments: 60 apartments that do not provide direct rental assistance but remain affordable to low-income households in Union County.
3. Housing Choice Vouchers: On average, Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers pay Union County landlords \$700 per month towards rent. The average voucher holder contributes \$400 towards rent in Union County.

As previously stated, there are 619 public, safe, and affordable rental units available for eligible low-income families and individuals. There was an estimated total of 61,177 families in Union County in 2019, with an approximate 3,354 families living below the poverty level. There are significantly more families living below

the poverty level than the 619 safe, affordable rental units available in the County. (Source: ACS 2019 5-Year Estimates)

AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)

Introduction

Union County does not maintain nor support any public housing. The Monroe Housing Authority (MHA) is the local entity with the sole responsibility for management and maintenance of public housing. MHA was established under the State of North Carolina General Statute 157 (Housing Authority Law) through a cooperation agreement with the City of Monroe, North Carolina on June 28, 1966. MHA administers the Public Housing (PH) and Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Programs funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the City of Monroe and Union County.

Public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families and individuals with a total number of 206 units. Monroe Housing Authority (MHA) has four Public Housing communities:

- West Ridge - 33 units (Family Site)
- Serenity Place - 44 units (Elderly and Disabled Site)
- Grace Gardens - 83 units (Family Site)
- Willow Oaks - 46 units (Family Site)

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

Not applicable.

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

The Monroe Housing Authority (MHA) offers a number of resident programs and supportive services designed to foster self-sufficiency and improve quality of life. The Monroe Housing Authority also partners with several community organizations that provide resources to assist clients.

The MHA's Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program offers supportive services to its Public Housing residents to increase their income, enhance their life goals, or overall become self-sufficient. Through ongoing one-on-one case management, the ROSS Coordinator assists ROSS Program participants in assessing barriers that may hinder self-sufficiency and helping them create goals to achieve success in career advancement, furthering education, or basic life skills.

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

Not applicable.

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

Introduction

Homeless prevention resources are available in Union County. However, these services are concentrated within the City of Monroe. The resources available fall short of providing adequate services to meet the growing needs of both the emerging homeless population and residents who are at risk of becoming homeless. While gaps do exist, there are strong non-profit organizations working in coordination to ensure this population is served.

Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs

The County will continue to work with and support the Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care, to reach the local homeless populations and assess their needs and identify resources to support the need. Union County also partners with the Community Shelter of Union County to reach homeless persons across the County.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

Union County does not receive federal funding nor carry out shelter activities. Local non-profit organizations operate shelters and are working to find ways to obtain much needed resources to expand shelter space and homeless prevention programs.

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

Homeless needs are addressed in the community through other organizations, including but not limited to the Union County Community Shelter. Union County also has representation on the Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care. The Community Shelter's continuum of care includes emergency shelter, food, rehousing, economic mobility, and post-housing services.

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.

The Union County Community Shelter and Community Link operate several programs that provide

support to people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Their work includes a focus on several special populations, such as veterans and people with a serious mental illness. The services provided through these programs include:

- Adult Emergency Shelter
- Emergency Family Shelter
- Soup Kitchen
- Hope Pantry
- Amazing Grace Program for Seniors
- Case Management
- Homeless to Rental Housing
- Travelers Aid for those recently released from jail
- Homeless to Housing for Veterans
- Homeownership Programs

Discussion

The Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care has developed a Regional Committee Plan that details a systematic approach for providing referrals to support resources to ensure clients are connected to community services that will assist them in addressing their current housing needs. This includes stabilizing housing for persons with developmental disabilities and providing transportation.

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

Introduction:

Providing affordable housing is a very complex issue to solve not just in Union County but nationwide as well. There are several current barriers to increasing the affordable housing stock in the County. The list below highlights some of the current affordable housing issues:

- Land costs have been driven up by developers and speculators;
- Rising construction costs are a factor in the development of affordable housing;
- Scarce supply of construction and housing rehabilitation workforce;
- Lack of partnerships and support between public and private partners to efficiently leverage resources to build affordable housing or create mixed-income communities;
- Inadequate public transportation options that match appropriately priced housing options in specific communities.

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 County has just completed its 2022-2026 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing document and looking at new ways to address the affordable housing shortage countywide. The County also recognizes the

importance of educating county residents about fair housing issues and is committed to providing fair housing trainings on a regular basis with the help of Legal Aid of North Carolina.

Union County will be using CDBG funds in FY 22-23 to start a septic tank repair program and will also start fostering a partnership with Anson County Habitat for Humanity in a hope to lay the foundation of a robust county-wide critical home repair program.

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

Introduction:

Providing affordable housing options and/or creating socioeconomically integrated communities are very complex tasks to work towards and achieve. In neighborhoods with pockets of racial and ethnic poverty the affordable housing stock is made up of mostly older units, that are more likely to be substandard and the cost of improvements is usually beyond the homeowners' means. There is a lack of transportation options between areas offering affordable housing and available jobs, along with a lack of services in these areas. Local governments face the option of either looking into ways of transforming racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into resource-rich areas or trying to create integrated mixed-income communities mainly through inclusionary zoning.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The County will continue to work with area agencies, the Piedmont Regional Continuum of Care agency, and other public and governmental agencies to find solutions that leverage the resources available and to efficiently and effectively meet program goals.

Whenever possible, the County will work to leverage CDBG funds and continue to work to identify additional opportunities.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

Union County is lacking in the development of new affordable housing. The County will begin by initiating partnerships with public and private housing developers and advocating for the development affordable and mixed-income housing. Union County is also looking into starting a septic tank repair program with a goal of assisting between ten and fifteen homes in the county in program year 2022-2023 as a way of help maintaining affordable housing units in the community. The goal is to work towards building up a robust county-wide critical home repair program, using CDBG funds, and other available grant funds over the upcoming years. The County also plans on actively seeking out potential partnerships with existing local Community Housing Development Organizations to partner with. Additionally, Union County will continue being involved in discussions about local and regional public transportation initiatives.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

Union County ensures the reduction of adverse health effects on area residents caused by rehabilitation of lead-based paint surfaces by providing educational materials to all housing contractors and citizens receiving housing rehabilitation assistance. The Union County Children's Environmental Health Childhood Lead Prevention Program protects and improves the health of children from the harmful effects of lead through the implementation of the North Carolina Rules Governing Lead Poisoning Prevention in Children, 15A NCAC 18A .3100. Union County Children's Environmental Health coordinates and assists in the environmental investigation of a child who has lead poisoning.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

Union County is dedicated to working with local agencies and units of local government to aid in reducing the number of poverty level families in the county. This will be done by educating and assisting impoverished families in becoming self-sufficient. There are various local organizations who provide essential support services for families living in poverty. CDBG funding will be allocated to support these local organizations to help achieve their public service goals.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

Union County manages the institutional delivery structure surrounding the acceptance and allocation of federal grant funds for Consolidated Plan programs. The goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan could not have been developed without residents' informed assistance.

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

As part of the 2022-2026 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing process, the county reached out to various numbers of local non-profit agencies and local municipalities to discuss current housing and community development issues in the community and start a dialogue on how to coordinate resources and build a more robust partnership among local public and private housing and social service agencies within the county.

- Union County is in the beginning phase of creating a Fair Housing Advisory Council. The role of the Council will be to research affordable and fair housing methods, concepts and ideas that have the potential of being implemented in the future.
- Creating a virtual platform as a one stop shop for housing tools and resources for both residents and service providers.
- Initiating conversation with Affordable Housing Developers.
- The County will continue working with the State of North Carolina and regional and local transportation organizations to overcome transportation related barriers.

Discussion

Even though CDBG funding is limited, the County will continue working with local agencies, units of government, and other local partners. The goal of Union County's CDBG program is to continue the conversation on how to increase the quality of life of residents, especially those who live in poverty. The County will continuously look for opportunities to improve existing programs or create new ones.

Program Specific Requirements

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

Introduction:

The following provides details on program specific requirements for the Community Development Block Grant.

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	100