

Executive Summary

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

1. Introduction

The Consolidated Plan consists of the information required in 24 CFR Part 91, Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs. The Consolidated Plan serves as a planning document, application for Federal Funds, strategic plan in carrying out U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, and Annual Action Plan that provides the basis for assessing performance.

The City of Ocala and Marion County HOME Consortium Five Year Consolidated Plan covers the period from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2029. The Plan identifies community needs and details those initiatives that will address those needs and is structured in a format that will help to measure performance. This five-year planning document identifies priority housing, homeless, special populations, community development needs, and establishes general strategies for addressing those needs, and integrates the application, planning, and citizen participation requirements for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME).

The City of Ocala Community Development Services Department is responsible for administering the CDBG funding grant and other State funding grant. The Marion County Community Services Department is the lead agency designated to administer HOME funds on behalf of the Marion County HOME Consortium, of which the City of Ocala is a participating member. The City of Ocala receives CDBG funds directly from HUD. The City of Ocala Community Development Services Department is the entity responsible for approving the application of grant funds for various activities outlined in this Consolidated Plan and the One-Year Annual Action Plan.

2. Summary of the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan Needs Assessment Overview

Through a comprehensive process, the City of Ocala and Marion County have identified objectives and outcomes for the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan. The following goals and objectives are intended to be accomplished during the Consolidated Plan period and encompass goals established by both the City and County. Certain objectives will be accomplished through the County's CDBG, HOME, or ESG programs and other objectives will be accomplished with City CDBG and HOME funding. In some cases, both County and City will undertake similar activities to meet specific objectives.

Goal 1 - Owner Occupied Rehabilitation- by providing home repairs to low-income owner-occupied homes to include emergency repairs and ADA compliant accessibility.

- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Sustainability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** - 25 Homeowner Housing Units Rehabilitated
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- **Goal 2 – Clearance/Demolition** - demolition of abandoned-dilapidated, vacant housing.
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Affordability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Removal of 5 structures
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- **Goal 3- Acquisition** acquire property suitable for the development of affordable housing units.
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Affordability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Acquire 2 lots for the purpose of creating affordable housing units for rent or homeownership
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- **Goal 4 – Planning and Administration-** Program administration
- **Objective** - Provide Decent Affordable Housing
- **Outcome** - Sustainability
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – General Program Administration
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- **Goal 5 – Public Services-** provide assistance to a local non-profit to increase or maintain capacity to serve low-income residents.
- **Objective** – Low- to- Mod Individual Benefit
- **Outcome** – Quality of Life
- **Specific Outcome Indicator** – Assist organizations with repairs to their building that serves low-income families

3. Evaluation of past performance

The City of Ocala funds activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the 2019-2024 Consolidated Plan and activities also having the greatest impact on addressing community needs. As in previous years, the City funded various activities that continued to improve housing conditions and improve the living environment within the City of Ocala. The City primarily focuses its funding in the retaining of affordable housing units through its Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program.

Ocala continues to progress in meeting its Consolidated Plan goals and funding activities benefitting at least 70% low-to moderate-income persons as certified to in the 2019-2024 Consolidated Plan. There were no activities in the previous plan than did not go well or provide great impact to the community.

The City was able to preserve over 20 affordable housing units in the previous performance period. In the attempt to reduce the gap of affordable housing units needed, the City used CDBG funding to preserve units that otherwise would have been lost and added to the discrepancy of affordable units.

The City amended the previous five (5) year plan to receive CDBG-CV funding. The City was able to use the federal funding during the COVID-19 pandemic to conduct a micro business loan program to assist local small business in meeting their payroll and keeping afloat during that unprecedented time period. The City also provided funding to the local Meals on Wheels so that they could continue to provide meals to citizens during the pandemic. Lastly, the City provided funding to the local Boys & Girls Club so that they could provide safe interactive activities for low-income youth during the pandemic.

4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

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The Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) encourages public participation, emphasizing involvement by low and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in areas targeted for revitalization and areas where funding is proposed. In addition, it encourages the participation of all its citizens, including minorities, non-English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities. Written materials can be provided in Spanish, and the City makes all reasonable accommodations for persons with special needs that request assistance. The City has Spanish speaking staff to assist with translation upon request.

The City provides the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of all federally required documents and publications. The City also provides full and timely disclosure of program records and information for the preceding five years consistent with applicable Federal, State, and local laws regarding personal privacy and confidentiality.

On February 9, 2024, an advertisement was published in the Ocala Gazette notifying the public of a public hearing to assess the needs of the community in the development of the 2024-2028 CDBG Consolidated Plan and the 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan. Also, publication of an additional Public Needs Assessment public hearing was published in the Ocala Gazette on March 22, 2024.

For the development of the 2024-2028 CDBG Consolidated Plan and the 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan, draft documents with recommended uses of funding were made available for public review and an advertisement was published in the Ocala Star Banner on July 7, 2024. A public meeting was held via ZOOM, <https://zoom.us/j/98442851356?pwd=ZWRHOC9EaDBMVkNDSzYrbDBoMIY5Zz09>

July 9, 2024, during the Governor's West Ocala Neighborhood Revitalization Council, Inc.'s regular monthly meeting. This provided for the 30-day public comment period from July 8, 2024, through August 6, 2024. A copy of the Citizen Participation Plan was also made available for review.

5. Summary of public comments

The comments received from the citizenry through the plan process shows that the areas the citizenry wants to see the City improve in are housing, public services, public facilities, and infrastructure. When it comes to housing, the information gathered indicates a desire to see more affordable housing units, home buyer and rental assistance, affordable rental units and homeless shelters for families. The perceived negligible public service areas include health services, healthy food and nutrition programs, employment and job training, youth service, homeless supportive services, and services for people with disabilities. The citizenry indicated the desire to see improved infrastructure in the way of street and sidewalk improvements, improved drinking water and sewer systems, and improved stormwater management systems. Lastly the citizens of Ocala commented that their needs to be more health care facilities, mental health facilities, and homeless facilities.

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

There were no comments that were not accepted.

7. Summary

Citizen participation was solicited, no public comments have been received during the development of this document.

The Process

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

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

The following are the agencies/entities 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	OCALA	Community Development Services Department

Table 1– Responsible Agencies

Narrative

The City of Ocala is a CDBG Entitlement Community and receives its funds directly from HUD, which are reported under this Consolidated Plan. The City is also a HOME Participating Jurisdiction through the Marion County/Ocala HOME Consortium. Marion County is the lead agency responsible for reporting consortium activities, including the City of Ocala's HOME funds. The City's HOME funding, activities, and strategies are described under the Marion County 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan.

The City of Ocala's Community Development Services (CDS) Department is the lead agency responsible for the implementation of its federal CDBG grant program. The Community Programs Division oversees the administration of all housing and community development activities undertaken using CDBG funds and is the responsible agency in reporting accomplishments. The CDS director is responsible for the development of the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan (for the CDBG program), the Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. City Council ultimately approves the final version of the plans.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

The City of Ocala used public meeting information and surveys to assist in the development of funding priorities. The Community Programs Administrative Coordinator is responsible for collecting data and comments from the public and other stakeholders regarding the Consolidated Plan:

Natalia Cox, Administrative Coordinator Community Programs – City of Ocala, 201 SE 3rd Street, 2nd Floor, Ocala, FL 34471, Email: ncox@ocalafl.gov, Phone: 352-629-8322

PR-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.110, 91.200(b), 91.300(b), 91.215(I) and 91.315(I)

1. Introduction

As a CDBG Entitlement and a HOME Participating Jurisdiction in the Marion County/Ocala HOME Consortium, the consultation process for the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan is conducted in partnership between the City of Ocala and Marion County. The consultation process is one process for the purposes of this plan. As a result, certain information may overlap. Staff from the City and County conducted agency consultation with various social service providers, public service agencies, housing agencies, non-profit organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. Results of these consultations helped to provide the basis for the City's five-year strategy as outlined in the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan.

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)).

private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(I)).

The Community Development Services Department coordinates with various public, private, and non-profit agencies in carrying out its activities. Collaboration between and among local, county, and state agencies is critical for addressing community needs and achieving the goals and objectives identified in the Consolidated Plan. The City fosters and maintains partnerships with other public and private agencies for the successful delivery of its housing and community development programs.

Private entities effectively support the delivery of programs and services by offering additional resources that can be leveraged to supplement existing services or fill in gaps. The City of Ocala continues to seek additional funding sources for housing and community development activities whenever possible.

Several steps have been taken to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health, and service agencies. Each of these steps helps facilitate information exchange between the City and those providing public services. Ocala's housing and community development plan is carried out through a combination of public, private, and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process.

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

The City has created an Office of Homeless Prevention which is led by the Deputy Director of Community Development Services. She currently is a member of the Continuum of Care, conducts the annual PIT

count, administers additional periodic counts, coordinates the Outreach program, manages the Coordinated Entry Program, and serves on the board of the local Salvation Army.

Ocala/Marion County's CoC has established a strategy for addressing the needs of homeless individuals and families making Permanent Supportive Housing and low barrier shelter priorities for Marion County. The vision is to develop a collaborative community-wide effort to implement a system that addresses homelessness in Marion County, with every individual and family being self-sufficient and having safe, decent, affordable, permanent housing. The vision includes:

- Management of street outreach teams made up of formerly homeless persons and professionals, to identify and gain the confidence of unsheltered homeless individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse problems.
- Working to form partnerships in the community to create comprehensive case management for the chronically homeless, using the Housing First model. This includes working towards adding a "low barrier" type shelter and an "engagement (day) center" to work with unsheltered clients that have barriers that prevent them from entering our existing shelters. Regular case management has shown better success rates in homeless clients obtaining and maintaining permanent housing.
- Development of additional mental health and substance abuse treatment resources targeting the homeless based on best practices. Additional services have become available in our area to assist homeless clients with these services (non-emergency) for either no or low cost.
- Development of comprehensive employment and job training, and supportive services for the chronically homeless throughout the County. Staff has a close relationship with CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion, the community's local workforce board and Wear Gloves, an organization which offers entry level employment to those with employment barriers.
- Development of transitional and permanent housing in concert with those local agencies and organizations that have the capacity to develop housing programs and perform case management. At least one project will break ground in August/September of 2024 that will provide very low-income housing and permanent supportive housing to clients with housing barriers.
- City staff will administer an assessment tool to triage clients that meet the literally homeless criteria. This tool assesses the client's vulnerability and assigns them a score based on their responses. The score reflects the level of their vulnerability and that score, along with the length of time they have been homeless, form their Coordinated Entry placement score. They will then be placed on the Coordinated Entry list to obtain housing financial assistance.
- Aggressive member enrollment, training and monitoring of the Homeless Management Information System. The HMIS System in place is HUD Compliant and provides adequate security features to ensure client confidentiality. City staff will continue to encourage more agencies to utilize the system, as well as existing users to expand their use of the system to its full capabilities. Ongoing data quality improvement is a priority as well.

- Enhancement of current programs which provide financial assistance and counseling to people at risk of homelessness.

Marion service providers and local governmental agencies support and encourage the ongoing efforts of the CoC and have used the CoC as a basis for its strategies to address homeless needs planning.

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

The City of Ocala works with the Continuum of Care to constantly assess the need for homeless services in Marion County. The City of Ocala employs four (4) Outreach specialists that are constantly in the community working with the emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, permanent support housing programs, and the unsheltered homeless. They hear the concerns of all these different aspects of the community and can bring those concerns to the table. The Coordinated Entry manager works daily with the different social service agencies, law enforcement, fire rescue, hospital district, mental health facilities, substance use disorder treatment centers and food banks. The City of Ocala employs an HMIS Coordinator that can provide end users with statistics on services provided vs services requested.

The City of Ocala utilizes ESG funds to employ one of the Outreach and Referral Specialists. ESG also helps to fund the City's Ticket Home program that provides diversion services for homeless individuals. This program provides out of town bus tickets to homeless clients that have family or friends elsewhere that could provide stable housing for the client. These clients are assisted in reaching the destination by providing bus tickets if various program requirements are met. This gives the client a new start in stable housing and relieves our local homeless service provider system.

Throughout the year the City participated with the below organizations in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls

The Salvation Army---. It is anticipated that staff's relationships with the Salvation Army staff will increase coordination of services and provide better outcomes for our homeless population

Vets Helping Vets of America--. Veteran's agencies meet with City staff at least three times per month to discuss individual clients and changes in Veteran's services in our community

Interfaith Emergency Services--. The City works daily with Interfaith on HMIS and Coordinated Entry services.

SMA Health Ocala and Beacon Point--- It is anticipated that staff's relationships with these agencies will increase coordination of services for those needing mental health counseling and addiction services.

Shepherd's Lighthouse Inc-- Face to face, phone, email consultation on homeless needs

Casa Marion-This is the new victim service provider for Marion County for domestic violence survivors. Throughout the year these organizations participated with the city in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls.

Project Hope-.They provide transitional housing services for mothers with children.

Saving Mercy- This agency was providing transitional housing services to Marion County homeless, however they are expanding their services to a new 59-unit apartment building that will house very low income and permanent supportive housing clients.

Wear Gloves- This agency provides entry level employment to individuals with employment barriers and is expanding into transitional and emergency housing.

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

Table 2– Agencies, groups, organizations who participated

1	Agency/Group/Organization	OCALA HOUSING AUTHORITY
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing PHA Services - Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with the Ocala Housing Authority in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. The CEO of the OHA serves on the City of Ocala's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and the Director of Community Development Services of the City serves on OHA's PCC Board.
2	Agency/Group/Organization	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF MARION COUNTY
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with Habitat for Humanity in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. The President of the local Habitat serves on the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.
3	Agency/Group/Organization	The Salvation Army
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children

	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with the Salvation Army in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. It is anticipated that staff's relationships with the Salvation Army staff will increase coordination of services and provide better outcomes for our homeless population
4	Agency/Group/Organization	Vets Helping Vets of America
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homelessness Needs - Veterans
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Veteran agencies meet with City staff at least three times per month to discuss individual clients and changes in services in our community.
5	Agency/Group/Organization	Interfaith Emergency Services
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-homeless Services-Employment
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	The City works daily with Interfaith on HMIS and Coordinated Entry services. The two organizations meet directly with each other on a monthly basis, and they are represented in several other meetings together throughout the year.
6	Agency/Group/Organization	SMA Health Ocala
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-Health
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Mental and Substance Abuse Counseling

	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with SMA Health in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. The City's Office of Homeless Prevention partners with SMA to provide mental and substance abuse evaluations when conducting the VI-SPADAT.
7	Agency/Group/Organization	Shepherd's Lighthouse
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with Sheperd's Lighthouse in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls.
8	Agency/Group/Organization	Saving Mercy Corporation
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Housing Services - Housing Services-Elderly Persons Services-homeless
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with Saving Mercy in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. This agency was providing transitional housing services to Marion County homeless, however they are expanding their services to a new 59-unit apartment building that will house very low income and permanent supportive housing clients.
9	Agency/Group/Organization	Project HOPE of Marion County
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-homeless

	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with Project Hope in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. They provide transitional housing services for mothers with children.
10	Agency/Group/Organization	CASA Marion
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Housing Services-Victims of Domestic Violence
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homelessness Strategy Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	This is the new victim service provider for Marion County for domestic violence survivors. Throughout the year these organizations participated with the city in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls.
11	Agency/Group/Organization	Wear Gloves
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services-homeless Services-Employment
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Housing Need Assessment Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Throughout the year the City participated with Wear Gloves in face-to-face meetings, community meetings, through e-mails, and by phone calls. City staff and political leaders accompanied Wear Gloves founders to a model homeless housing community in Austin Texas to develop ideas for implementation in Ocala. This agency provides entry level employment to individuals with employment barriers and is expanding into transitional and emergency housing.
12	Agency/Group/Organization	Cox Communications
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Broadband Internet Service Providers Services - Narrowing the Digital Divide

	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Economic Development Market Analysis Broadband
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Completed the survey in SurveyMonkey.
13	Agency/Group/Organization	City of Ocala - Fiber Network
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Services - Broadband Internet Service Providers Services - Narrowing the Digital Divide
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Market Analysis Broadband
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	Monthly meetings
14	Agency/Group/Organization	City of Ocala-Water Resources
	Agency/Group/Organization Type	Agency - Managing Flood Prone Areas Agency - Management of Public Land or Water Resources
	What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?	Management Water Resources
	How was the Agency/Group/Organization consulted and what are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?	

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

Agency that serves those with HIV/AIDS, other than the local hospitals and health department, a local agency does not exist.

Lead-Based Paint - Environmental Protection Agency was not consulted. However, staff uses resources available on the EPA and DEP websites.

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	Joint Office on Homelessness	The Joint Office on Homelessness (JOOH) is a multi-jurisdictional organization composed of Marion County and the City of Ocala's Community Services Departments. The JOOH was formed from results of a local study on homelessness and the community dissatisfaction with the performance of the Marion County Homeless Council. The County serves as the Lead Agency and the City serves as the lead agency for HMIS and Coordinated Entry. The JOOH gets its direction from the Marion County Continuum of Care (CoC), the Marion County Board of Commissioners, Ocala City Council, Marion County Administrator, and the City of Ocala City Manager. It works closely with all the organizations that provide services to the homeless population. The overall goals of attacking the homeless pandemic are communicated through the CoC and because the agencies have bettered their efforts to work together on the issue, we often see the overlapping of goals. The City strategic plan overlaps the goals of several of the organizations in the community. This is a good thing, in that none of us have the resources to tackle the issues on our own.

Table 3– Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Describe cooperation and coordination with other public entities, including the State and any adjacent units of general local government, in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan (91.215(l))

The Community Development Services Department has an on-going relationship with Marion County Community Services, and uses their assistance, when necessary, to carry out goals and objectives of the Consolidated Plan. Community Programs staff regularly meets with representatives of public service agencies, is involved in strategizing to facilitate service, and participates, as needed on various boards. The City's creation of the Office of Homeless Prevention has created synergy between departments within the City and has enhanced relationships with local law enforcement and the judicial system. These newly formed relationships have provided additional avenues for communicating needs of our citizens. The City will endeavor to build relationships with state entities to strength housing and homeless programs in the community.

Narrative

PR-15 Citizen Participation - 91.105, 91.115, 91.200(c) and 91.300(c)

1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting

In the preparation of the 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan, City staff looked to broaden its communal reach to include various representation of the population. Staff conducted a total of six (6) meetings (three public meetings and three public hearings) in which it sought input from the citizenry concerning the plan. The additional meetings allowed staff to increase its interaction with the citizenry during the process and provide more responses and greater insight into how the citizenry views what the City is currently doing in its programs and what they would like to see the City do. The written responses and the verbal conversations during these meetings helped Staff formulate a set of goals based upon the expected funding levels, that will begin to address the concerns of the citizenry and opened staff to future ideas to work toward.

Citizen Participation Outreach

S o r t O r d e r	M o d e O u t r e a c h	T a r g e t O u t r e a c h	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Su m m a r y o f c o m m e n t s n o t a c c e p t e d a n d r e a s o n s	U R L (I f a p p l i c a b l e)
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1	Public Hearing	Location	<p>Marion County/City of Ocala Continuum of Care (FL-514) Board of Governors meeting on February 27, 2024. The mode of outreach was via Public Notice in the Ocala Gazette published on February 9, 2024. The target of the outreach was the countywide population</p>	<p>Marion County contracted the services of Cloudburst to conduct a countywide web-based survey as part of the Needs Assessment, that generated 127 responses in total. The questions focused on housing and community development needs. The major priorities, according to the survey responses, were affordable housing, economic development, and homeless housing & wrap-around services.</p>	<p>The requirements are reviewed in the comment period.</p>
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			<p>is with the purpose discussing the housing, community, and economic development needs of the City of Ocala. Attendance was at approximately 45 people to include Board members, local government representatives, community agencies and the public.</p>			
2	Public Meeting	Notice	<p>Governor's West Ocala Revitalization Council meeting on March 12, 2024. The mode of outreach was via email. This is a broad community meeting that takes places on the 2nd Tuesday of the month via Zoom. The meeting is with the heads of community organizations who provide services to low-income households.</p>	<p>Comments were made with an emphasis on infrastructure, ie, roadways, sidewalks and lighting, and a request for matching funds to help homeowners with roofing costs per insurance companies</p>	The	<p>re were no comments are</p>

3	Public Hearing	Notice/Board community	City of Ocala City Council meeting on April 2, 2024. The mode of outreach was via Public Notice in the Ocala Gazette newspaper published on March 22, 2024.	This is a broad community meeting that takes places on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month. The public hearing was an agenda item and a formal presentation of the intent of the City of Ocala The survey contained demographic information and addressed housing, public services, public facilities and infrastructure questions. The City received 26 responses (over 50%). Of the 26 responses, 14 were anonymous and 12 were non-anonymous. Responders were mostly located in the southwest quadrant of the City (50%), 85% were female, 61% were Black, 19% were White and	The re were no comments are view ws reject ed in the com ment per iod.	
4	Public Meeting	Minutes/Log	Fair Housing Community Event meeting on April 11, 2024. The City of Ocala Community Development Services Department (CDS) sponsored this broad community event to promote fair housing and gather input from the general public for the 5-Year Consolidated Plan Citizen Participation. There were 12 community agencies partners, 114 persons in	The survey contained demographic information and addressed housing, public services, public facilities and infrastructure questions. The City received 26 responses (over 50%). Of the 26 responses, 14 were anonymous and 12 were non-anonymous. Responders were mostly located in the southwest quadrant of the City (50%), 85% were female, 61% were Black, 19% were White and	The re were no com	

		Inc o m e	attendance, and 50 City of Ocala Community Needs Survey were shared.	15% were Hispanic. Most were in the 35-44 age range (35%), 58% were homeowners, and earned \$38K-\$59K (38%).The housing portion results indicated that the main concerns are affordable ownership housing (85%), home buyer & rental assistance (69%), and affordable rental housing & homeless shelters for families (62%). The public services category showed that healthy food and nutrition programs as well as health services are a priority (73%), as well as employment/job training and youth services (69%), followed by services with people with disabilities and homeless supportive services (62%). The highest ranked public facilities were healthcare facilities (65%), mental health facilities (62%), and homeless facilities (62%). Lastly, the top three infrastructure improvements were street improvements (69%), drinking water, sewer and sidewalks improvements (65%), and stormwater management system improvements (62%)	me nts are vie ws rej ect ed in the co m me nt per iod.
5	Pu bli c M ee tin g	Lo w- M od Inc o m e	Affordable Housing Advisory Committee meeting on July 31, 2024. The mode of outreach is via email, public notice and City of Ocala website. This is a broad community meeting.	There were 8 people in attendance. Information was shared about the need for comments by the general public. Two (2) surveys were received. The major focus of the response was the production of affordable housing units.	The re we re no co m me nts are vie ws

S o r t O r d e r	M o d e O u t r e a c h	T a r g e t O u t r e a c h	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Su m m a r y o f c o m m e n t s n o t a c c e p t e d a n d r e a s o n s	U R L (I f a p p l i c a b l e)
					rej ect ed in the co m me nt per iod.	

6	Public Hearing	Notice/Board Community	<p>City of Ocala City Council meeting on August 6, 2024. The mode of outreach was via Public Notice in the Ocala Star Banner newspaper published on July 7, 2024.</p>	<p>The public hearing was an agenda item, and a formal presentation of the City of Ocala's 5-Year HUD Consolidated Plan was shared. City Council unanimously approved the document. No comments were received.</p>	<p>The re we re no co m me nts are vie ws rej ect ed in the co m me nt per iod.</p>
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Table 4– Citizen Participation Outreach

Needs Assessment

NA-05 Overview

Needs Assessment Overview

The needs assessment process indicated areas in which the citizenry strongly felt there were gaps in services or facilities. When it comes to housing, the information gathered indicates a desire to see more affordable housing units, home buyer and rental assistance, affordable rental units and homeless shelters for families. In public service, the data concluded we need more health services, healthy food and nutrition programs, employment and job training, youth service, homeless supportive services, and services for people with disabilities. The citizenry indicated the desire to see improved infrastructure in the way of street and sidewalk improvements, improved drinking water and sewer systems, and improved stormwater management systems. Lastly the citizens of Ocala commented that their needs to be more health care facilities, mental health facilities, and homeless facilities.

If the PJ will establish a preference for a HOME TBRA activity for persons with a specific category of disabilities (e.g., persons with HIV/AIDS or chronic mental illness), describe their unmet need for housing and services needed to narrow the gap in benefits and services received by such persons. (See 24 CFR 92.209(c)(2) (ii))

NA-50 Non-Housing Community Development Needs - 91.415, 91.215 (f)

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Facilities:

The jurisdiction's highest public facility needs identified includes health care facilities, mental health facilities, and homeless facilities.

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank community needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need.

How important are the following needs on a scale from 1 to 5?

	# Responses per question					# Total Responses	Lowest Need → Highest Need				
	Lowest Need	1	2	3	4		Highest Need	1	2	3	4
Housing	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Affordable ownership housing	1	1	0	2	22	26	3.8%	3.8%	0	7.7%	85%
Owner-occupied housing rehabilitation	3	4	4	5	11	27	11.5%	15.4%	15.4%	19.2%	42.3%
Foreclosure prevention counseling	3	3	3	6	11	26	11.5%	11.5%	11.5%	23.0%	42.3%
Home buyer assistance	1	1	1	5	18	26	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	19.2%	69.2%
Affordable rental housing	1	2	2	5	16	26	3.8%	7.7%	7.7%	19.2%	61.5%
Rental housing rehabilitation	2	3	2	6	13	26	7.7%	11.5%	7.7%	23.0%	50%
Rental assistance	1	2	2	3	18	26	3.8%	7.7%	7.7%	11.5%	69.2%
Senior housing	2	2	6	5	11	26	7.7%	7.7%	23.0%	19.2%	42.3%
Housing for youth aging out of foster care	2	3	4	6	11	26	7.7%	11.5%	15.4%	23.0%	42.3%
Housing for people living with HIV/AIDS	5	2	6	6	7	26	19.2%	7.7%	23.0%	23.0%	26.9%
Home repairs/accessibility improvements for individuals with physical disabilities	1	1	1	9	14	26	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	34.6%	53.8%
Housing for people with physical disabilities	2	1	3	8	12	26	7.7%	3.8%	11.5%	30.8%	46.1%
Special needs housing for people with mental health diagnoses	1	1	6	5	13	26	3.8%	3.8%	23.0%	19.2%	50%
Special needs housing for people with substance abuse disorders	3	3	5	4	12	27	11.5%	11.5%	19.2%	15.4%	46.1%
Homeless shelters for men	2	2	3	6	13	26	7.7%	7.7%	11.5%	23%	50%
Homeless shelters for women	2	1	3	7	13	26	7.7%	3.8%	11.5%	26.9%	50%
Homeless shelters for families	2	1	2	5	16	26	7.7%	3.8%	7.7%	19.2%	61.5%
Public Services	1	2	3	4	5	# Total Responses	1	2	3	4	5
Senior services	1	0	2	8	15	26	3.8%	0	7.7%	30.8%	57.7%
Services for people with disabilities	0	0	1	9	16	26	0	0	3.8%	34.6%	61.5%
Legal services	0	0	3	9	14	26	0	0	11.5%	34.6%	53.8%
Youth services	1	0	0	7	18	26	3.8%	0	0	26.9%	69.2%
Transportation services	2	0	2	7	15	26	7.7%	0	7.7%	26.9%	57.7%
Employment/job training services	2	0	1	6	18	27	7.7%	0	3.8%	23.0%	69.2%
Health services	1	0	0	6	19	26	3.8%	0	0	23.0%	73%
Homeless supportive services	2	1	1	6	16	26	7.7%	3.8%	3.8%	23%	61.5%

Community Needs Survey Results 2024

2024 Community Needs

Please identify the area of Ocala in which you live

Quadrant	#	% of Total
Northwest	5	20%
Northeast	1	4%
Southwest	13	52%
Southeast	5	20%
Unanswere	1	4%
Total	25	

Sex	#	% of Total
Male	4	16%
Female	21	84%
Total	25	

Race	#	% of Total
Black	16	64%
White	4	16%

Asian		
American Indian		
Pacific Islander		
Hispanic	4	16%
Other Race		
Unanswere	1	4%
Total	25	

Age	#	% of Total
Under 18		0%
18-24		0%
25-34	2	8%
35-44	9	36%
45-54	5	20%
55-64	5	20%
65-74	2	8%
75 or older	2	8%
Total	25	

Housing	#	% of Total
Homeowne	14	56%
Renter	9	36%
Homeless	1	4%
Unanswere	1	4%
Total	25	

Salary Ran; #	#	% of Total
Below \$22,	5	20%
\$23,000 to	3	12%

Community Survey Results Demographics

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Improvements:

The jurisdiction's public facility and infrastructure needs identified include street and sidewalk improvements, and water/sewer infrastructure improvements.

The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies several infrastructure needs including sanitary sewer, solid waste, stormwater management, potable water, and natural groundwater aquifer. Public facility/infrastructure goals include:

- The City of Ocala shall secure adequate capacity for treatment and disposal of wastewater, install and maintain adequate wastewater collection and transmission facilities, take steps to conserve water, and maintain sufficient and equitable financing to provide services for the sanitary sewer customers
- To provide safe, efficient, and economical disposal of solid waste in a manner that protects public health and the environment
- To provide stormwater management facilities necessary to protect public and private property, health, and safety from potential flood damage and groundwater contamination
- The City of Ocala shall secure and maintain adequate potable water treatment, storage, and distribution facilities; maintain or reduce per capita demands; and maintain sufficient and equitable financial measures to provide services to potable water customers

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank public infrastructure needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need. Results indicate that the highest ranked need is for street improvements at 69.2% which is over a 25% increase over the results of the last plan. Drinking water system improvements and sewer system improvements at 65.4% increased 25% and 28% respectively over the last plan period. Side walk improvements also increased to 65.4% and stormwater management system improvements increased nearly 25% to 61.5%.

These results clearly show an alarming perception among the citizenry of the need to vastly improve our infrastructure.

Describe the jurisdiction's need for Public Services:

The jurisdiction's highest public facility needs identified includes health services, youth services, employment/job training, services for people with disabilities, and homeless supportive services.

How were these needs determined?

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank community needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need.

The City recently conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey and included results from agency consultation, public hearings, and inter-agency input to identify community needs. This assessment included distribution of surveys at various community meetings and using Survey Monkey. Respondents were asked to rank community needs on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest need and 5 indicating the highest need. Results indicate a slight shift in perceived needs from the previous plan period; however as with that the public improvements sector, there is a notable increase in need indicated. Highest ranked need in this plan period is health services at an astounding 73% which represents a 20% increase. This is in line with the citizenry's indication of there also being a lack of health care facilities in our community. Employment and job training services again ranked second at 69.2% but is joined by youth services as the second greatest public services need. Surprisingly, homeless supportive services dropped from first to third; joined at third by services for people with disabilities at 61.5%.

Based on the needs analysis above, describe the State's needs in Colonias

Housing Market Analysis

MA-05 Overview

Housing Market Analysis Overview:

Based on information available to the City, the Consolidated Plan must describe the significant characteristics of Ocala's housing market, including the supply, demand, condition and cost of the house, and the housing stock available to service persons with disabilities and other special needs. The Market Analysis will also touch on the following key points:

- The condition of the public and assisted housing;
 - A brief inventory of facilities, housing, and services that meet the needs of homeless persons;
 - Regulatory barriers to affordable housing;
 - The significant characteristics of jurisdiction's economy

MA-45 Non-Housing Community Development Assets - 91.410, 91.210(f)

Introduction

The following section outlines the employment, labor force, educational attainment data which informed the priorities in this plan.

Economic Development Market Analysis

Business Activity

Business by Sector	Number of Workers	Number of Jobs	Share of Workers %	Share of Jobs %	Jobs less workers %
Agriculture, Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	285	1,702	1	2	1
Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations	2,871	10,398	11	11	0
Construction	1,417	8,124	5	8	3
Education and Health Care Services	6,186	24,978	23	25	2
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1,767	3,503	7	4	-3
Information	267	502	1	1	0
Manufacturing	1,611	8,345	6	8	2
Other Services	1,421	7,207	5	7	2
Professional, Scientific, Management Services	3,184	4,298	12	4	-8
Public Administration	1,529	5,511	6	6	0
Retail Trade	4,212	15,440	16	16	0
Transportation and Warehousing	1,297	4,626	5	5	0
Wholesale Trade	704	4,245	3	4	1
Total	26,751	98,879	--	--	--

Table 5 - Business Activity

Data Source Comments: Florida DEO Summary of Employment, Demographics and Commuting Patterns and 2022 ACS 2405 Table

Labor Force

Total Population in the Civilian Labor Force	47,688
Civilian Employed Population 16 years and over	26,751
Unemployment Rate	3.60
Unemployment Rate for Ages 16-24	3.40
Unemployment Rate for Ages 25-65	3.80

Table 6 - Labor Force

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1811 Table, DP03 and Florida DEO Unemployment Table 2022

Occupations by Sector		Number of People
Management, business and financial	9,483	
Farming, fisheries and forestry occupations	285	
Service	5,222	
Sales and office	6,832	
Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair	2,080	
Production, transportation and material moving	2,815	

Table 7 – Occupations by Sector

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S2406 Table and Table 2405

Travel Time

Travel Time	Number	Percentage
< 30 Minutes	18,906	82%

Travel Time	Number	Percentage
30-59 Minutes	3,620	16%
60 or More Minutes	530	2%
Total	23,056	100%

Table 8 - Travel Time

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S0801 Table

Education:

Educational Attainment by Employment Status (Population 16 and Older)

Educational Attainment	In Labor Force		Not in Labor Force
	Civilian Employed	Unemployed	
Less than high school graduate	1,378	0	0
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	7,456	0	0
Some college or Associate's degree	12,764	0	0
Bachelor's degree or higher	8,688	0	0

Table 9 - Educational Attainment by Employment Status

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S2301 Table

Educational Attainment by Age

	Age				
	18-24 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-65 yrs	65+ yrs
Less than 9th grade	0	0	0	0	0
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	433	0	0	0	0
High school graduate, GED, or alternative	2,712	9,503	8,148	11,257	11,079
Some college, no degree	0	0	0	0	0
Associate's degree	1,980	0	0	0	0
Bachelor's degree	496	2,933	3,560	2,195	3,760

	Age				
	18–24 yrs	25–34 yrs	35–44 yrs	45–65 yrs	65+ yrs
Graduate or professional degree	0	0	0	0	0

Table 10 - Educational Attainment by Age

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1501 Table

Educational Attainment – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Educational Attainment	Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months
Less than high school graduate	30,552
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	36,299
Some college or Associate's degree	27,187
Bachelor's degree	46,731
Graduate or professional degree	46,472

Table 11 – Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months

Data Source Comments: 2022 ACS S1501 Table

Based on the Business Activity table above, what are the major employment sectors within your jurisdiction?

The City of Ocala has not seen a change in the top two employment sectors since the last Consolidated plan. The top employment sectors in the City continue to be Education and Health Services at the top, followed by Retail Trade. It is not surprising that Education and Health continue to lead the way in employment as Ocala is home to several top hospitals and three top nursing programs in the College of Central Florida, Rasmussen University, and Taylor College. Since the last Consolidated Plan period employment in the Education and Health industry has increased nearly 30% and employment in the Retail Trade industry has increased 25%. Supplanting Arts, Entertainment, and Accommodations as the third highest industry employer is Professional, Scientific, & Management Services. This change of the leader board can be contributed to the intentional work of the Ocala/Marion County Chamber of Economic Partners (CEP) to target and attract more professional and higher paying jobs to the Ocala area.

Describe the workforce and infrastructure needs of the business community:

Increasing economic opportunity is a key component to ensuring the viability of Ocala. The City is dedicated to sustaining existing businesses while encouraging new business opportunities that promote job creation. Employment is fundamental to providing financial independence for families and individuals and in providing a stable economic environment. With education and health care services being the top employers in Marion County, attaining a certain level of education is imperative to obtaining sustainable employment in this area. Further, as retail is a leading industry in Marion County, hourly rates must be increased for affordable living.

Describe any major changes that may have an economic impact, such as planned local or regional public or private sector investments or initiatives that have affected or may affect job and business growth opportunities during the planning period. Describe any needs for workforce development, business support or infrastructure these changes may create.

Focusing on the development of existing industries and on providing better educational opportunities and employment training is vital to Marion County's economic climate. Success in this area has allowed the Ocala area to land several, large, national employers in the past few years, including FedEx, Amazon, Dollar Tree, and Chewy as it becomes one of the largest distribution destinations in Florida.

The City included in its Comprehensive Plan that it will strive to sustain and enhance the economic health of the community by supporting economic activities that increase and diversify the economic base, create higher paying job opportunities, support the retention and expansion of current businesses, encourage the relocation of business and industry to and within the City of Ocala and provide a positive business environment which will allow residents to prosper.

How do the skills and education of the current workforce correspond to employment opportunities in the jurisdiction?

The City has made great strides since the last Con Plan period in closing the gap of education and desired skill levels of available workers. There has been an increase in persons in the local workforce with college degrees. Some of the growth is organic and some has occurred with the great influx of people moving to the area. There is still a larger gap than business leaders would like but through the efforts of several partnerships, the expectation is to continue to produce highly employable and promotable employees to fill the needs of local businesses and organizations.

Describe any current workforce training initiatives, including those supported by Workforce Investment Boards, community colleges and other organizations. Describe how these efforts will support the jurisdiction's Consolidated Plan.

The business community, and the Hospital District, and the CEP, work closely with CareerSource CLM, the College of Central Florida (CF), Rasmussen University, Taylor College, Marion Technical College (MTC), Marion County Public Schools, and local governments to implement the above strategy of alignment, seamless credential ladders, and recruitment. The target industries for the CEP are the same targets for CareerSource and the same areas of training for the three education providers. For example, each month there are approximately 1,000 open nursing positions in the Ocala Metro area. The healthcare sector continues to grow and expand creating more demand in this area. The school system, MTC, Rasmussen University, Taylor College, and CF, have created several programs to meet the demand with each taking a different area of focus so as to not duplicate efforts. High School students can be a part of dual-credit programs and earn certifications to allow them to be work ready upon graduation while continuing their education to higher levels degrees and credentials. This is a targeted high-demand occupation for CareerSource and the CEP works to provide employer support for growth and diversification in the sector. Additionally, the CEP maintains an active talent attraction effort to recruit existing nurses from similar size metros in the northeast which may not be experiencing the same level of growth and opportunity. Local governments are supportive of the efforts as they meet unified goals of job creation with higher wage positions and investment in the community.

Does your jurisdiction participate in a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

No

If so, what economic development initiatives are you undertaking that may be coordinated with the Consolidated Plan? If not, describe other local/regional plans or initiatives that impact economic growth.

Not in a significant manner. The CEP partners closely with both the City and local jurisdictions to provide a unified approach to economic growth. The strategy is built around the premise of a single source for a holistic approach to economic growth including business attraction, business retention, and business creation. The business attraction goal is to attract primary employers with higher wages and capital investment in key targeted sectors that will raise overall incomes in the community. A significant effort is put into assisting existing businesses and helping them remove barriers to growth. The effort to support and encourage entrepreneurship has seen the growth of a business incubator which has had over two dozen businesses graduate and has supported hundreds of others. The education providers and CareerSource are active partners with this overall initiative.

Discussion

Overall, Ocala/Marion County is experiencing tremendous growth in population and job opportunities. The Chamber & Economic Partnership continues to expand current business creation efforts through its Entrepreneurial Programming, Technical Assistance, Capital Access Initiatives, and the Power Plant Business Incubator. The Power Plant Business Incubator offers early-stage companies help to raise capital; hire employees; gain access to strategic partners, customers and mentors; provides resources; helps mitigate risks and cultivate results.

MA-50 Needs and Market Analysis Discussion

Are there areas where households with multiple housing problems are concentrated? (include a definition of "concentration")

The City has identified that neighborhoods in West Ocala and East Ocala as concentrated areas having a high-level of low-income citizens, slum and blighted conditions, older housing inventory, and crime. These areas have multiple housing problems and will be the focus of the City's rehabilitation funds in this plan period. For the purpose of this plan, "concentration" is defined as geographic areas where the percentage of a specific minority or ethnic group is 10 percentage points higher than the City's overall percentage. The definition of a low-income concentration is that the Area Median Income of a Block Group must be below 50% of the Area Median Income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Community Development outreach programs have performed several housing conditions surveys and have found that substandard housing is usually found in lower income neighborhoods within the City with older housing stock. Often the cost of rehabilitating these homes is prohibitive to the homeowner. This can lead to an increased amount of homelessness, degenerative living conditions, and gentrification.

Are there any areas in the jurisdiction where racial or ethnic minorities or low-income families are concentrated? (include a definition of "concentration")

HUD defines areas of racial or ethnic concentration as geographic areas where the percentage of a specific minority or ethnic group is 10 percentage points higher than the county's overall percentage. The definition of a low-income concentration is that the Area Median Income of a Block Group must be below 50% of the Area Median Income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average levels of minorities and/or low-income residents. These areas have high concentrations of minorities, low-income families, and high crime rates.

What are the characteristics of the market in these areas/neighborhoods?

The distressed neighborhoods in the identified census tracts have an older housing stock, higher vacancy rates, and are areas of low- and moderate-income concentration, as well as minority concentration. These communities also often have higher crime rates and quality of life issues like poor home maintenance, proliferation of dumping and litter, and an existing food desert.

Are there any community assets in these areas/neighborhoods?

The City recently completed a \$14 million community center in West Ocala in an area that was once crime ridden and undesirable. The center serves as point of pride and provides several programs that unites the community and brings neighbors from all parts of the City to this once degenerate neighborhood. It will serve as one of the anchors for revitalization of the area. Organizations such as the Marion County Children Alliance and Boys & Girls Club, promote after-school and tutoring activities in these areas for the youth. This helps to occupy their time when out of school and decrease chances of getting into criminal activity. The neighborhood is also served by the Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness Center, a neighborhood health clinic that provides health and wellness services focusing on the uninsured and the under insured. Other community assets include two magnet elementary schools and a magnet middle school.

Are there other strategic opportunities in any of these areas?

The City of Ocala has made a conscious effort to invest in the underserved neighborhoods of West Ocala. Currently, there is a 2,000-unit complex under construction of which 186 units are set aside for low-income neighbors. There is also a workforce project under construction that is planned to produce 300 housing units.

The City has also established a surplus properties list and is actively seeking proposals from non-profit and for-profit organizations to produce single family affordable units on the donated property.

Currently the City is installing the infrastructure for its Tucker Hill project that will be bid out for for-profit affordable housing developers to produce 12 homes in the Tucker Hill neighborhood across from the Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness Center.

The Aquifer Recharge Park that is across the street from the 2,000-unit development, has been deemed one of the top walking parks in the State of Florida.

MA-60 Broadband Needs of Housing occupied by Low- and Moderate-Income Households - 91.210(a)(4), 91.310(a)(2)

Describe the need for broadband wiring and connections for households, including low- and moderate-income households and neighborhoods.

It is critical for low and moderate-income households to have access to affordable broadband connections. The Digital Divide is a gap between low-income neighborhoods that typically have less access to reliable broadband compared to affluent areas that typically have access. Schoolwork and educational programs are increasingly moving to online platforms. Students without reliable broadband cannot participate in remote learning and online research for homework. Searching for employment opportunities often require going online to apply. Without broadband, residents would have to find transportation to apply in person, which can be a challenge to low-income households. Broadband will provide connectivity for telehealth, the distribution of health-related services and information. It will allow long-distance patient and clinician contact, care, advice reminders, education, intervention, monitoring, and remote admission.

Describe the need for increased competition by having more than one broadband Internet service provider serve the jurisdiction.

Increased competition amongst ISP's offer many benefits to residents within the jurisdiction.

- **Affordable:** Competition leads to lower prices for residents. If a particular ISP has a monopoly in an area, it typically doesn't have incentives to make its product affordable. Driving the cost down makes broadband access affordable to low-income residents.
- **Customer Service and Quality-** Competition will drive the ISPs to enhance the quality and reliability of their service. Also with competition, it should lead to better customer service to retain residence
- **Technology Improvement—**With multiple choices, ISPs will have to adopt the latest technology to compete for customers. Fiber optics is vastly superior to DSL or old copper wiring. Fiber optics would improve the user experience and future-proof the infrastructure in the jurisdiction.

The City of Ocala owns and operates an ISP, Ocala Fiber Network (OFN). HUD funding could be used for OFN to serve low—and moderate-income neighborhoods. This funding would support the local government's efforts to directly improve the quality of life of its residents and help bridge the Digital Divide Gap.

MA-65 Hazard Mitigation - 91.210(a)(5), 91.310(a)(3)

Describe the jurisdiction's increased natural hazard risks associated with climate change.

The City of Ocala is located in Central Florida. Because of its location and historical events, the main potential environmental risks are increasing temperatures, extreme heat, inland flooding, erosion, and drought. Extreme heat is a concern in the City of Ocala and the entire state. The average daily maximum temperature is 84.1(F) degrees, but historically extreme temperatures average 95(F) degrees according to the Climate Explorer data(1). The intensity is higher in urban areas, it takes a toll on buildings and creates the perfect setting for drought and potential fires. Droughts increase the chances of wildfires and has a higher occurrence during heat waves. Ocala averaged twelve (12) dry spells per year as indicated by the Climate Explorer data. Inland flooding is a concern, but most new construction will have to build according to the Land Development and Florida Building Code requirements by addressing impervious area thresholds or required mitigations if located in a flood zone. Inland flooding can also cause erosion.

Furthermore, Ocala intersects six (6) census tracts where vulnerabilities to climate change exceed the community median, namely Tracts 14.01, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 20.02. The proposal target area is located in Census Tract 15 with a population of 3,278 of which 67.3% are people of color and Hispanics. Areas of impervious surface total 14.9%, areas in 500-yr floodplain are 9.7% with 22.6% of properties with flood risk, and areas lacking tree canopy is 78%. (2)

As part of the proposed infrastructure improvements in low-and moderate-income target areas, with the appropriate funding in place, we will carefully choose building locations and materials, retrofit older buildings when possible, and promote Florida-friendly landscaping. When conducting housing rehabilitation or new construction, siting, proper building materials selection and practices, landscaping and energy efficient improvements will be enforced. When conducting acquisition and/or disposition of land for affordable housing development, we will consider properties' location, configuration, flooding designation, zoning, and land use in an effort to provide decent living areas that don't pose natural hazards or threats. The City requires that any new development requiring city site plan approval incorporates plans addressing tree and landscape planting, protection, and preservation.

Describe the vulnerability to these risks of housing occupied by low- and moderate-income households based on an analysis of data, findings, and methods.

Overall, the City of Ocala has a moderate risk from flooding. This is based on the level of risk the properties face rather than the proportion of properties with risk. Based on First Street flood-recreation

models, there has been one (1) major flooding event in Ocala, FL. There were 47 properties impacted by Hurricane Matthew in 09/2016.

The City of Ocala also has a moderate risk of wildfire over the next 30 years. There are 18,842 properties in Ocala that have some risk of being affected by wildfire over the next 30 years. This represents 75% of all properties in Ocala. How wildfire will impact a home depends on the vulnerability of that home to the fire's intensity and embers that reach it. The slope of the property, and distance to potential wildfire locations determine a property's risk from fire embers. The building materials such as the type of roof and siding, as well as the distance to fuel sources impact the building's likelihood of igniting.

Ocala has an extreme wind factor risk based on the projected likelihood and speed of hurricane, tornado, or severe storm winds impacting it. It is most at risk from hurricanes. There have been 301 recorded wind events in Ocala. The most severe event was a hurricane, which occurred in 1928. Average maximum wind speeds in Ocala are higher now than they were 30 years ago, and 100% of homes in Ocala have at least some risks. Dense neighborhoods or being nearby to commercial buildings results in higher debris vulnerability while sparser neighborhoods can have lower debris vulnerability.

Ocala has a moderate risk from air quality. The number of poor air quality days with an Air Quality Index (AQI) over 100 in Ocala will be higher in 30 years. Based on the the number of poor air quality days, Ocala has worse air quality than 93% of cities in Florida. Warmer and drier conditions promote the formation of ground-level ozone and result in larger, more frequent wildfires. Ocala is expected to experience 4 days this year with an AQI over 100 this year, and 4 days in 30 years.

Ocala has severe risk from heat. This is due to "feels like" temperatures increasing, and because 94% of homes in Ocala have a severe Heat Factor. A hot day in Ocala is any day above a "feels like" temperature of 108°F. Ocala is expected to experience 7 hot days this year. Due to a changing climate, Ocala will experience 21 days above 108°F in 30 years. Manmade materials such as asphalt, concrete, and glass trap and reflect heat, causing heat to radiate in areas that are densely built up with these materials even after sunset. One of the resulting effects of heat is the increase in energy usage that occurs as homes and businesses try to keep cool indoors. Based on heat projections for this year in Ocala, it is estimated that the use of air conditioning would cause an increase in energy consumption on 316 days annually. This risk may become even more pronounced in 30 years, as the number of cooling days is expected to increase to 320 days per year. This increase in need for cooling is expected to increase Ocala's electricity usage for cooling purposes by 6.60%. This directly effects the sustainability of low and moderate-income households.

Strategic Plan

SP-05 Overview

Strategic Plan Overview

This Strategic plan for the City of Ocala seeks to address needs identified for Community Development, Essential Housing and Homeless individuals and/or families. Details in this section outline how CDBG funds are proposed to be expended during the five-year period from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2029. These strategies have been developed in cooperation with the other consortium member, Marion County, with the intent of leveraging funds to meet the needs of the community. The priorities are based on Needs Assessment, Market Analysis, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study (completed 12/18/2018), citizen participation, and program eligibility requirements. The Five-Year Plan is intended to support the goals of the Ocala City Council to include:

- Public Service, Renovate existing housing for low to moderate income families, Clearance and Demolition of unsafe structures for public use or housing, Acquisition and Planning and Administration

The City focuses its priorities on those projects and programs that meet program requirements, meet the goals of the Department, have long-term impact on low-to-moderate income residents, and help address other federal priorities, such as fair housing and sustainability.

The Consolidated Plan priorities and goals will influence the programming of funds for each Annual Action Plan. It will also determine how funding decisions are made, will be reviewed annually, and adjusted as necessary.

SP-10 Geographic Priorities - 91.415, 91.215(a)(1)

Geographic Area

Table 12 - Geographic Priority Areas

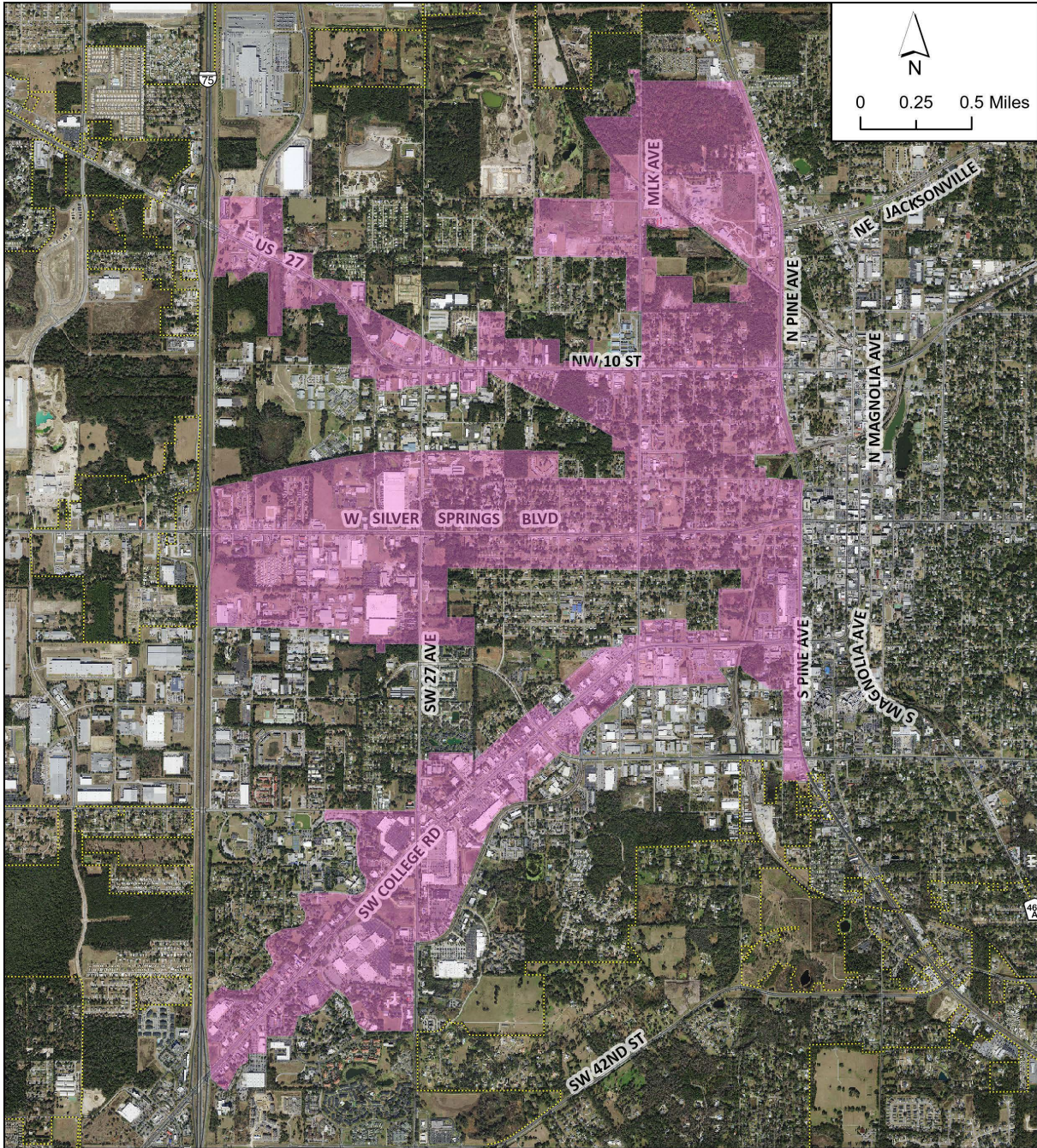
1	Area Name:	East Ocala CRA
	Area Type:	Local Target area
	Other Target Area Description:	
	HUD Approval Date:	
	% of Low/ Mod:	
	Revital Type:	
	Other Revital Description:	
	Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area.	
	Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area.	
	How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area?	
	Identify the needs in this target area.	
	What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area?	
Are there barriers to improvement in this target area?		
2	Area Name:	West Ocala CRA
	Area Type:	Local Target area
	Other Target Area Description:	
	HUD Approval Date:	
	% of Low/ Mod:	
	Revital Type:	Housing
	Other Revital Description:	
	Identify the neighborhood boundaries for this target area.	
	Include specific housing and commercial characteristics of this target area.	
	How did your consultation and citizen participation process help you to identify this neighborhood as a target area?	

	Identify the needs in this target area.	
	What are the opportunities for improvement in this target area?	
	Are there barriers to improvement in this target area?	

General Allocation Priorities

Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the state

The City utilizes HUD eligibility criteria for funding activities. The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average levels of minorities and/or low-income residents. The City routinely allocates funding city wide on a first come first qualified basis. However, during the period of this Con Plan, the City will give priority to housing rehabilitation projects that are in either the East Ocala CRA or the West Ocala CRA. Projects located in these CRAs will receive funding from the CRAs Weatherization Rehabilitation Program and will supplement CDBG funding on these projects.



West Ocala CRA

Legend

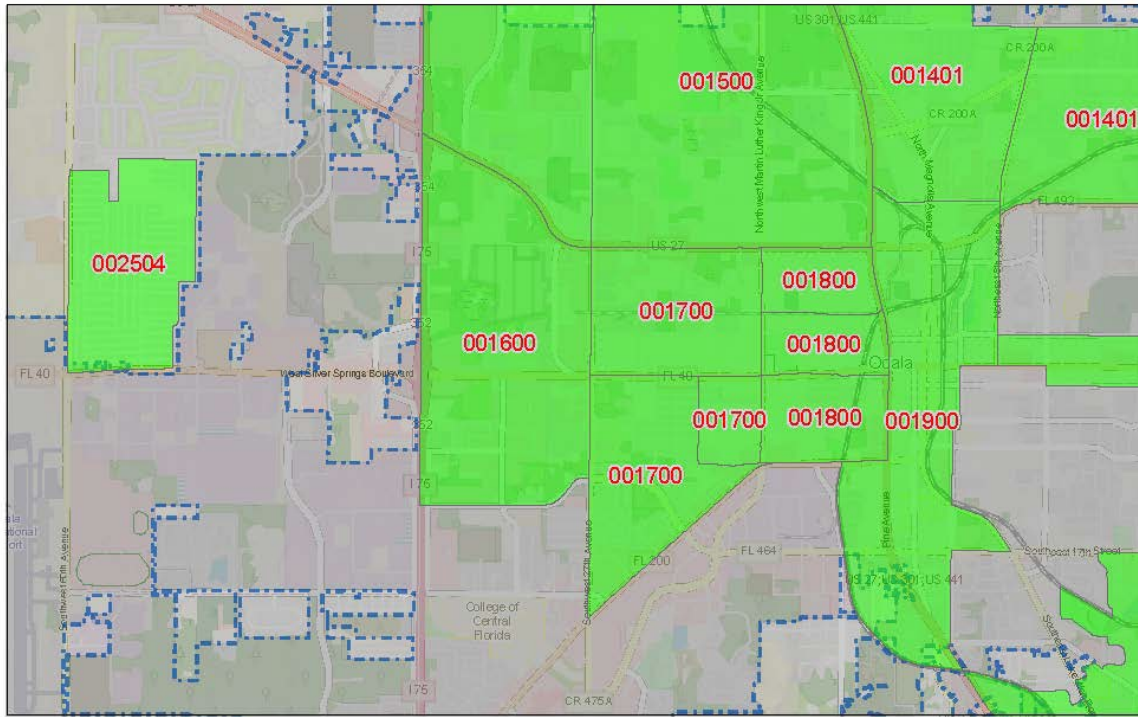
- City Limits
- West Ocala CRA



Prepared by the City of Ocala
 Growth Management Department
 by kwirthin on 5/15/2024 10:39 AM
 This information is provided as a visual representation only and is not intended to be used as a legal or official representation of legal boundaries.
 All GIS data which is provided by the City of Ocala should be considered a generalised spatial representation which may be subject to revisions.
 The feature boundaries are not to be used to establish legal boundaries.
 For specific information contact the appropriate City of Ocala department or agency.
 Path: M:\GIS\Department\Growth_Management\GIS\CRA\CRA.aprx

West Ocala CRA Map

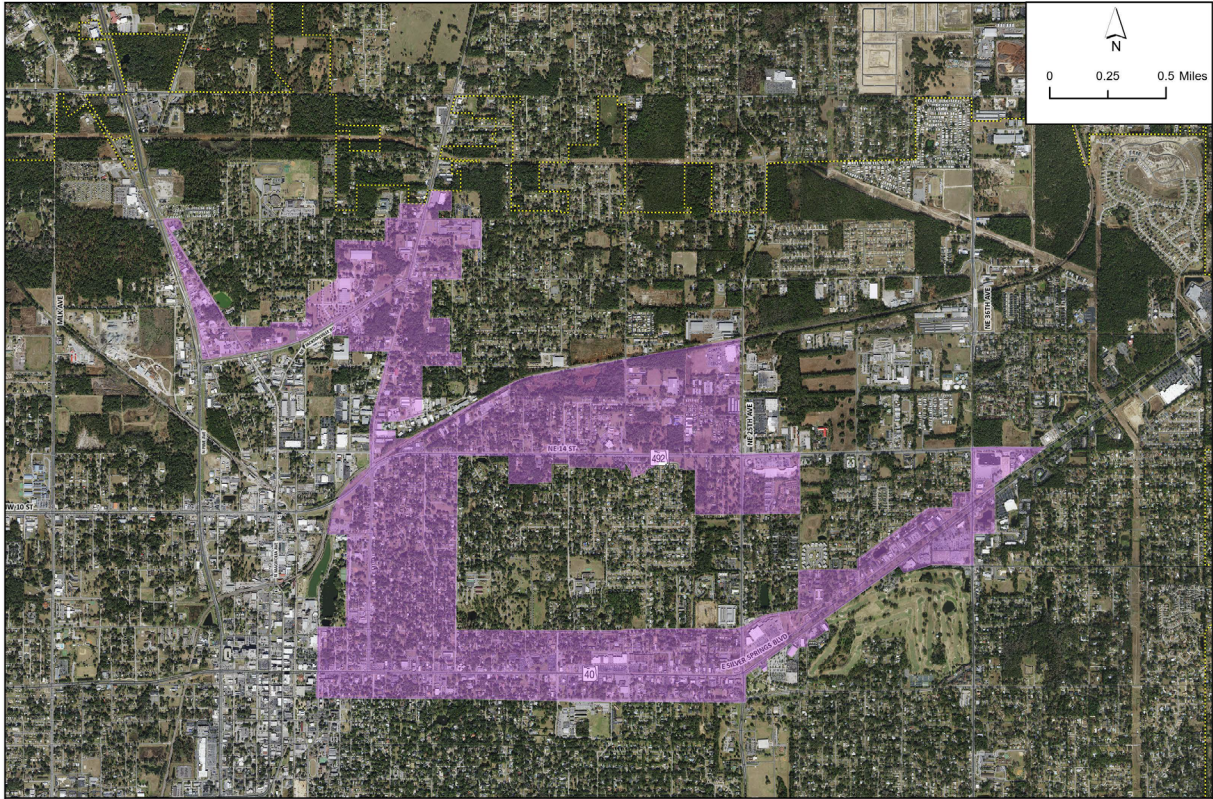
LowMod_PCT



7/12/2024

0 0.35 0.7 1.4 mi
0 0.5 1 2 km
1:47,397
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, Inc. and its affiliates, Esri Community Maps

City of Ocala Low Mod Map



East Ocala CRA



Prepared by the City of Ocala
 Growth Management Department
 by kwathlin on 5/16/2024 12:44 PM
 This information is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to be used as a legal or official representation of legal boundaries. All GIS data which is provided by the City of Ocala should be reviewed for general informational purposes which may be subject to revision. The data boundaries are not to be used to establish legal boundaries. For specific information contact the appropriate City of Ocala Department or agency.
 www.ocala.gov/growthmanagement/growthmanagement/2024/CRA.aspx

Legend

- North Magnolia CRA
- City Limits

East Ocala CRA Map

SP-25 Priority Needs - 91.415, 91.215(a)(2)

Priority Needs

Table 13 – Priority Needs Summary

1	Priority Need Name	Affordable Housing
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly
	Geographic Areas Affected	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Associated Goals	Planning and Administration Preserve Affordable Housing Units Produce Affordable Housing Units
	Description	Retention and creation of affordable housing units
	Basis for Relative Priority	The City currently has over 400 surplus lots that it is working to get back on the tax rolls and add affordable housing units. The City would still like to purchase property when the situation arises, for the purpose of creating affordable housing units. The City will commit CDBG funding to rehabilitating owner occupied homes of low-income residents to keep those units from falling out of the affordable housing stock.
	2	Priority Need Name
Priority Level		High
Population		Extremely Low Low Moderate Large Families Families with Children Elderly
Geographic Areas Affected		West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA

	Associated Goals	Planning and Administration Preserve Affordable Housing Units Produce Affordable Housing Units
	Description	Support the national objective of providing a suitable living environment through demolition and clearance of dilapidated structures that cause hazardous conditions.
	Basis for Relative Priority	The cost of rehabilitation can be prohibitive for some projects. For those instances, the City will demolish the home for the purpose of rebuilding a new affordable housing unit.
3	Priority Need Name	Public Services
	Priority Level	High
	Population	Extremely Low Low Moderate
	Geographic Areas Affected	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Associated Goals	Planning and Administration Public Services
	Description	Funding of Public Organizations That Service Low-Income Households
	Basis for Relative Priority	The City of Ocala plans to fund a non-profit organization who services low-income households.

Narrative (Optional)

SP-35 Anticipated Resources - 91.420(b), 91.215(a)(4), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan

The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include:

- CDBG - \$501,396 with \$2,005,584 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.
- The City has \$233,000 in CDBG-CV funding from its previous Consolidated Plan in which it has contracted with the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation (GOCDC) to carry out micro business loans for qualifying companies whose operations have been affected by COVID-19.

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 Public Improvements Public Services	501,396	0	523,745	1,025,141	2,005,584	This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan. The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include: CDBG - \$501,396 with \$2,005,584 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.

Table 14 - Anticipated Resources

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 leverages other sources of funding when possible, to supplement CDBG projects and provide maximum assistance in meeting community needs. The City’s State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program is used in many instances along with CDBG funding to carry out housing rehabilitation projects. In this plan period the City of Ocala will also use funds from its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA in conjunction with CDBG, SHIP and HOME funding to complete housing rehabilitation projects. Another funding source the City will use to leverage its CDBG dollars is funding from the Ocala Electrical Department’s Weatherization Program.

CDBG funds do not require a match

The HOME program requires a 25% local match for any HOME funds drawn. The State of Florida has the SHIP Program that local entitlement counties and cities are able to use as match for HOME. The City of Ocala has designated SHIP as their local match for HOME activities. SHIP Mortgage Loan Agreements provide for the recapture of funds in accordance with HOME requirements. Recaptured funds will be designated as HOME Funds for future expenditures.

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

The City has developed a surplus land disposition policy which outlines the way it will sell and donate surplus properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing units. The City has developed an Affordable Housing Initiative team that is focused on the redistribution of these lots. The City is issuing RFP’s for parties interested in obtaining lots to develop affordable housing units. The City also uses its Affordable Housing Fund as an incentive to affordable housing developers. This fund can reimburse developers for many of the development and impact fees associated with the development of affordable housing units.

Discussion

The regulatory cap for CDBG Administration is 20% of the total awarded allocation.

SP-40 Institutional Delivery Structure - 91.415, 91.215(k)

Explain the institutional structure through which the jurisdiction will carry out its consolidated plan including private industry, non-profit organizations, and public institutions.

Responsible Entity	Responsible Entity Type	Role	Geographic Area Served
City of Ocala	Government	Homelessness Ownership Planning public services	Jurisdiction
OCALA HOUSING AUTHORITY	PHA	Public Housing Rental	Jurisdiction
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY (OCALA)	Non-profit organizations	Ownership	Jurisdiction
Ocala/Marion County Joint Office on Homelessness	Continuum of care	Homelessness Rental	Jurisdiction
Career Source CLM	Regional organization	Economic Development	Region
COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES OF MID-FLORIDA	Regional organization	Rental	Region
Interfaith Emergency Services	Community/Faith-based organization	Homelessness Rental	Jurisdiction
Community With A Heart	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Ownership Rental	Jurisdiction
Volunteers of America	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Rental	Jurisdiction
Marion Senior Services	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Ownership Rental	Jurisdiction
Wear Gloves	Non-profit organizations	Homelessness Rental	Jurisdiction

**Table 15 - Institutional Delivery Structure
Assess of Strengths and Gaps in the Institutional Delivery System**

The Joint Office on Homelessness was formed in 2020 to address the issue of homelessness in Marion County. The Joint Office on Homelessness consists of The Office of Homeless Prevention (funded and operated by the City of Ocala) and Marion County Community Services (funded by grants and Marion County). Marion County Community Services operates the Continuum of Care 514, which serves the

citizens of Marion County and serves as the central point of funding for homeless service providers operating in the county.

The Continuum members coordinate consolidated planning efforts and establish the vision and priorities for the service area. The funds they distribute involve ESG and Challenge funding, as well as CDBG. This process allows applicants to complete one application to compete for multiple funding sources. They also complete monitoring for non-profit agencies that are funded to ensure they are meeting their benchmarks.

The City of Ocala operates a Homeless Information Management System which is a database that allows all participating agencies to share information on clients (with a signed release of information) ensuring clients are assisted quickly and eliminating duplication of services.

Referrals for services for clients can be made through this system allowing them to be tracked and allowing for enhanced reporting capabilities.

The HMIS software allows each member of the Continuum to use this database to complete their Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER).

The Continuum of Care Board of Governor's include representation from non-profit organizations, law enforcement, public housing, business organizations, legal services, and faith-based organizations. This board provides advice and input on the operations of the homeless services in Marion County.

A large system of non-profit agencies is in place to receive referrals for services such as rapid rehousing, rental assistance, employment assistance, childcare assistance, utility assistance, medical assistance, housing rehabilitation, mental health services, substance use disorder services, and programs to develop financial stability through education, skill, and career development (Strong Families Program, United Way).

The gaps in the institutional delivery system are as follows:

Overcoming some non-profit agencies desire to operate in a silo.

Keeping pace with continually rising rental pricing and construction/rehabilitation costs

Relatively low pay scale associated with non-profits leading to high staff turnover-this makes it necessary to be continually training new employees rather than focusing on client care. There is a concern about the long-term capacity of some of the non-profit agencies that do not have the resources to comply with the complex regulations required to implement and operate federally funded programs.

On an annual basis, the City’s Community Program staff meets with the approved contractors in its rehabilitation program. The goal is to keep an open line of communication between citizens, the contractors, and the City. It is an opportunity to discuss the program in an open forum and to receive suggestions from the contractor’s concerning continuous improvement, while remaining within the federal guidelines. These meetings contribute to fostering relationships between the City and its contractors, instill a sense of partnership in the program between the City, contractors, and citizenry, and reiterate the City’s high expectations of job performance from the contractors. These meetings have proven very valuable in breaking down stereotypes associated with low-income homeowners.

Availability of services targeted to homeless persons and persons with HIV and mainstream services

Homelessness Prevention Services	Available in the Community	Targeted to Homeless	Targeted to People with HIV
Homelessness Prevention Services			
Counseling/Advocacy	X	X	
Legal Assistance	X		
Mortgage Assistance	X		
Rental Assistance	X		
Utilities Assistance	X		
Street Outreach Services			
Law Enforcement	X		
Mobile Clinics	X	X	
Other Street Outreach Services	X	X	
Supportive Services			
Alcohol & Drug Abuse	X		
Child Care	X		
Education	X		
Employment and Employment Training	X	X	
Healthcare	X		
HIV/AIDS			
Life Skills	X		
Mental Health Counseling	X		
Transportation	X		
Other			

Table 16 - Homeless Prevention Services Summary

Describe how the service delivery system including, but not limited to, the services listed above meet the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth)

The Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA) Program is the only Federal program dedicated to the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. Under the HOPWA Program, HUD makes grants to local communities, States, and nonprofit organizations for projects that benefit low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. Our contact for HOPWA in our area is currently WellFlorida Council, Inc. in Gainesville, Florida. They assist us in finding funding opportunities for housing for our clients living with HIV/AIDS.

Describe the strengths and gaps of the service delivery system for special needs population and persons experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, the services listed above

The report on homelessness in Marion County, published in January 2019 by the Public Policy Institute of Marion County gave a list of recommendations for the community to improve service delivery and address the homeless needs. These recommendations are:

- Build capacity in the Continuum of Care lead agency to better coordinate the community effort- The number of agencies within the Continuum of Care has increased greatly since 2019. The CoC saw a need to assist survivors of domestic violence and increased capacity in this area.
- Build capacity of the CoC governing board-The CoC governing board now includes members of many factions within the community and those members are actively engaged in the vision and direction of homeless services in Marion County.
- Integrate outreach into the coordinated entry system-The City Outreach Team has four Outreach and Referral Specialists who interact with unsheltered homeless individuals and work to develop trust and rapport with them and assist them in accessing homeless services.
- Implement diversion practices-The City of Ocala provides the “Ticket Home” program which provides long distance bus transportation to literally homeless individuals who have family/friends who are willing to provide them stable housing in another area. This allows the client a new start and relieves our local homeless service system diverting them away from shelter and homelessness.
- Increase service agency participation in the coordinated entry system-All contracts involving ESG, Challenge, or HUD funding now require participation in the Coordinated Entry System
- Lower the barriers to entry for all emergency shelter and transitional programs-New programs are in process currently to provide shelter for individuals with criminal backgrounds, substance use issues, and mental health barriers.
- Focus services on permanent housing placement- Most of the ESG/Challenge/HUD funding is dedicated to rapid-rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing programs.
- Integrate shelter and transitional services into the coordinated entry system-Currently emergency shelter and transitional housing programs send referrals to Coordinated Entry to place their clients on the list for permanent housing.
- Limit use of motel vouchers-This program has been eliminated.

- Establish a targeted rapid re-housing program for scores on the VI-SPDAT-All scores above 3 are eligible for rapid rehousing, however the program targets scores between 4-9.
- Ensure use of best practices-All agencies are “graded” each year to measure their successes and failures.
- Invest in permanent housing units through scattered site leasing-This has not been implemented at this time.
- Increase permanent supportive housing for chronic and disabled homeless-This is a priority for the CoC. One project is currently in progress and should break ground in October of 2024 (Mercy Village).
- Services for special needs populations are limited. There are few providers and limited access of mental health and addiction counseling. Marion County was awarded funding from the Opioid Settlement. These funds will be used to reduce overdoses by implementing evidence-based programming and providing immediate access to evidence-based treatment models.

Provide a summary of the strategy for overcoming gaps in the institutional structure and service delivery system for carrying out a strategy to address priority needs

The Community Development Services Department coordinated with various public, private, and non-profit agencies in carrying out its activities. Collaboration between local, county, and state agencies is important in successfully carrying out the goals and objectives identified in the Consolidated Plan and addressing community needs. It is essential that the City foster and maintain partnerships with other public and private agencies for the successful delivery of its housing and community development programs.

The City believes that private entities can effectively support the delivery of programs and services by offering additional resources that can be leveraged to supplement existing services or fill in gaps. The City of Ocala continues to seek additional funding sources for housing and community development activities when possible and have partnered with the Marion County Community Foundation for grant writing assistance and grant research tools.

Several steps are taken to ensure coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies during the program year. Each of these steps facilitates information exchange between the City and those providing public services. The Administrative Coordinator monitors ongoing activities resulting in enhanced cooperation and coordination between the City and private and non-profit entities. Ocala’s program is carried out through a combination of public, private, and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process. In addition, the City’s Office of Homeless Prevention (a division of the City’s Community Development Services Department) works closely with all homeless service providers and is the lead agency of the Marion County’s Continuum of Care’s HMIS system and Coordinated Entry.

SP-45 Goals - 91.415, 91.215(a)(4)

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Planning and Administration	2024	2029	Planning and Administration	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing Public Services Quality of Life	CDBG: \$500,000	Other: 0 Other
2	Preserve Affordable Housing Units	2024	2029	Affordable Housing	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing Quality of Life	CDBG: \$1,736,980	Homeowner Housing Added: 0 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 25 Household Housing Unit
3	Produce Affordable Housing Units	2024	2029	Affordable Housing	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing Quality of Life	CDBG: \$250,000	Homeowner Housing Added: 2 Household Housing Unit Buildings Demolished: 10 Buildings
4	Public Services	2024	2029		West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Public Services	CDBG: \$20,000	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 250 Households Assisted

Table 17 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Planning and Administration
	Goal Description	Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant
2	Goal Name	Preserve Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Perform extensive rehabilitation projects that will extend the life of affordable housing units
3	Goal Name	Produce Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Acquire land with the purpose of creating affordable housing units; perform clearance and demolition to rebuild dilapidated structures with other grant funding
4	Goal Name	Public Services
	Goal Description	The City will look to provide funding for an organization that provides services for low mod-income families

Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing as defined by HOME 91.315(b)(2)

The City will look to purchase two lots over the Consolidated Plan period for the purpose of developing affordable housing.

SP-65 Lead-based Paint Hazards - 91.415, 91.215(i)

Actions to address LBP hazards and increase access to housing without LBP hazards

The City's CDBG program requires that structures constructed prior to 1978 be inspected for lead-based paint (LBP). Homeowners are notified of the possibility of lead, provided the requisite brochure, and asked to sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the brochure. If LBP is found, and funding is available to effectively mitigate, the City will hire the appropriate professionals to do the work. The City does not perform LBP inspection and uses certified environmental inspectors to provide inspection and documentation services. Certified contractors performing remediation work must do so in accordance with industry standards including posting of appropriate warning signs, restricting occupants from work areas, containing work areas to prevent dust and debris from spreading, conducting thorough cleanup, and verifying that cleanup was effective.

How are the actions listed above integrated into housing policies and procedures?

Policies and Procedures are as follows:

- The City's Rehabilitation Specialist will inspect rehabilitation projects where lead safe regulations are triggered by the home's age or scope of work.
- Contracts for rehabilitation where a home is pre-1978 will only be awarded to a contractor, or subcontractor with a Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting certification.
- When federal funds are being used, appropriate documentation is completed.
- The City Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation program provides the general rehabilitation necessary to bring the structure into compliance with applicable building codes, rehabilitation standards, and lead-based paint regulations.
- Costs of inspecting, testing, and abatement of lead-based paint and asbestos containing materials pursuant to applicable regulations are eligible program costs.
- Homeowners are provided with the requisite HUD approved brochure and homeowner(s) must sign a certification that they have received the lead-based paint information.

SP-70 Anti-Poverty Strategy - 91.415, 91.215(j)

Jurisdiction Goals, Programs and Policies for reducing the number of Poverty-Level Families

The City recognizes the interrelationship between housing and economic opportunities and the need to pursue both to assist households attain self-sufficiency. The City of Ocala recognizes while it has defined priority strategy areas, that they are not separate or isolated strategies. The City believes these strategies are inter-related and impact, reinforce, and contribute to each other to achieve the common goal of a viable, vibrant City. The health of the City, its special needs populations, and the community at large cannot be artificially separated as they are an integral part of the whole. The betterment and improvement of any part inevitably contributes to the betterment of the other segments of the community. The City believes the implementation of the housing and neighborhood revitalization activities outlined in the Consolidated Plan will help reduce the number of households in poverty. All the programs outlined in the Consolidated Plan are intended to provide benefits to Ocala residents that are considered low income and/or fall below the federal poverty line. The City of Ocala is committed to eliminating the effects of poverty among its residents. The City recognizes that it may not be possible to end poverty all together but is dedicated none the less to better understanding its causes and finding a way to reverse the cycle of privation. The City has an Economic Improvement Fund, financed from profits from the City's electric utility. Funds are provided to existing or incoming businesses, usually an industrial sector business, that will increase the number of jobs available in the community. The City, one of the major employers in Marion County, is participating in workforce development programs to reduce dependency on government funds. CDBG staff is participating in the Ocala Housing Authority's Self-Sufficiency Program and the Citrus-Levy-Marion Workforce Development Board One-Stop center. The City provides housing rehabilitation to assist in maintaining affordable housing and reduce household costs. The City coordinates programs when possible to assist in reducing poverty and continued to support subsidized housing providers incorporating programs and services that promote tenant transition to self-sufficiency.

How are the Jurisdiction poverty reducing goals, programs, and policies coordinated with this affordable housing plan

It continues to be a major goal of the City of Ocala to reduce and eventually eliminate the number of poverty level families in the City. This of course is no small task. Today the needs of families far exceed the resources the City has in which to satisfy those needs. Too many families in the City still do not have adequate housing, adequate transportation, access to basic nutritional needs (there is no major grocery store located in West Ocala), adequate educational and job opportunities, or adequate health care. There still exists a very large schism between the "haves and the have not's" and this divide appears to be widening by the day. City officials are aware of the existing problems and along with City staff; they continue to work diligently to find solutions to this most pressing issue. Using CDBG, HOME, SHIP, CRA, and local Affordable Housing funds, the City will strongly attack the slum and blighted conditions in neighborhoods by demolishing and removing buildings that contribute to slum and blight areas city wide. The City will help prevent impoverished conditions by conducting rehabilitation projects

and reconstruction projects on several houses that are currently below the standard building code. Applicants who are deemed to be low to moderate in income level will receive assistance from the pre-mentioned funding sources to aid them in bringing their homesteads to a safe and decent level. The City will partner with Habitat for Humanity, the Ocala Housing Authority, and the Neighborhood Housing & Development Corporation in aiding low-income residents in their efforts to become first time homeowners. The City is also seeking to positively affect the local poverty levels by aggressively seeking economic development opportunities that will bring increased job opportunities to the citizenry. Along with the housing and economic development initiatives, the City will continue to work closely with local organizations such as The Governor's West Neighborhood Revitalization Council, The Ocala Police Department, Work Force, the Estella Byrd Whittman Wellness Center, and other local organizations in dealing with social issues that contribute to high poverty levels. The City will work with these and other organizations as they address health, educational, and employment issues that highly contribute to Ocala's poverty level. The City's plan to reinvest and stabilize neighborhoods will be an assistance to public service organizations and those that will benefit from them being able to expand the reach of their services. The reinvestment and development activities of the City; combined with the programs of the city's public service organizations will serve to reduce the amount of poverty experienced in the City of Ocala.

SP-80 Monitoring - 91.230

Describe the standards and procedures that the jurisdiction will use to monitor activities carried out in furtherance of the plan and will use to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs involved, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements

The City of Ocala's Community Programs division of the Community Development Services Department is responsible for the overall administration and implementation of the City's CDBG and HOME programs. The Community Development Services Department ensures compliance with federal regulations through its review of grant application funding requests, recipient contracts, quarterly performance reports, and sub-recipient monitoring. Further, the City maintains records of program accomplishments, funding spent, people served, housing units rehabilitated, and other information to help ensure compliance with the federal regulations. All data will be submitted to HUD on a timely basis and will be entered in the IDIS reporting system monthly.

In the matter of funding sub-recipients, the City will comply with the requirements of 24 CFR Part 91.230. The City's guidelines require the monitoring of all CDBG sub-recipients to ensure that activities are carried out in furtherance of the Annual Plan and to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements. The City gathers relevant data through required reports and monitoring of these organizations as required by federal regulations.

The City conducts all monitoring in accordance with HUD regulations for the City's CDBG Entitlement program and for HOME funds received through the Ocala/Marion County Home Consortium. The City will monitor the progress of their rehabilitation projects through regular (typically weekly) inspections by the City's Rehabilitation Specialist. The Rehabilitation Specialist will work to ensure that all rehabilitations and associated activities are conducted in accordance with the Florida Building and under local building standards.

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources - 91.420(b), 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan

The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include:

- CDBG - \$501,396 with \$2,005,584 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.
- The City has \$233,000 in CDBG-CV funding from its previous Consolidated Plan in which it has contracted with the Greater Ocala Community Development Corporation (GOCDC) to carry out micro business loans for qualifying companies whose operations have been

affected by COVID-19.

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 Public Improvements Public Services	501,396	0	523,745	1,025,141	2,005,584	This section outlines CDBG funding the City of Ocala anticipates receiving on an annual basis for the 2024-2028 period covered by this Consolidated Plan. The City of Ocala's anticipated annual allocations include: CDBG - \$501,396 with \$2,005,584 available for the remainder of the Consolidated Plan.

Table 18 - 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 leverages other sources of funding when possible, to supplement CDBG projects and provide maximum assistance in meeting community needs. The City’s State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program is used in many instances along with CDBG funding to carry out housing rehabilitation projects. In this plan period the City of Ocala will also use funds from its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA in conjunction with CDBG, SHIP and HOME funding to complete housing rehabilitation projects. Another funding source the City will use to leverage its CDBG dollars is funding from the Ocala Electrical Department’s Weatherization Program.

CDBG funds do not require a match

The HOME program requires a 25% local match for any HOME funds drawn. The State of Florida has the SHIP Program that local entitlement counties and cities are able to use as match for HOME. The City of Ocala has designated SHIP as their local match for HOME activities. SHIP Mortgage Loan Agreements provide for the recapture of funds in accordance with HOME requirements. Recaptured funds will be designated as HOME Funds for future expenditures.

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

The City has developed a surplus land disposition policy which outlines the way it will sell and donate surplus properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing units. The City has developed an Affordable Housing Initiative team that is focused on the redistribution of these lots. The City is issuing RFP's for parties interested in obtaining lots to develop affordable housing units. The City also uses its Affordable Housing Fund as an incentive to affordable housing developers. This fund can reimburse developers for many of the development and impact fees associated with the development of affordable housing units.

Discussion

The regulatory cap for CDBG Administration is 20% of the total awarded allocation.

Annual Goals and Objectives

AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives - 91.420, 91.220(c)(3)&(e)

Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Planning and Administration	2024	2029	Planning and Administration	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing Public Services Quality of Life	CDBG: \$100,000	Other: 1 Other
2	Preserve Affordable Housing Units	2024	2029	Affordable Housing	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing Quality of Life	CDBG: \$331,396	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 5 Household Housing Unit
3	Produce Affordable Housing Units	2024	2029	Affordable Housing	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$50,000	Buildings Demolished: 2 Buildings
4	Public Services	2024	2029		West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA	Public Services	CDBG: \$20,000	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Households Assisted

Table 19 – Goals Summary

Goal Descriptions

1	Goal Name	Planning and Administration
	Goal Description	Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant
2	Goal Name	Preserve Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Perform extensive rehabilitation projects that will extend the life of affordable housing units
3	Goal Name	Produce Affordable Housing Units
	Goal Description	Acquire land with the purpose of creating affordable housing units; perform clearance and demolition to rebuild dilapidated structures with other grant funding.
4	Goal Name	Public Services
	Goal Description	The City Will Look to Provide Funding for an Organization That Provides Services for LOW-MOD Income Families.

AP-35 Projects - 91.420, 91.220(d)

Introduction

In the 2024 Annual Action Plan, the City of Ocala will look to accomplish the established goals in the Consolidated Plan, by carrying our various eligible projects to include land acquisition for the purpose of developing affordable housing units; clearance and demolition of dilapidated homes with the goal of rebuilding those affordable units with Federal (HOME) or State (SHIP) funding; and housing rehabilitation to preserve existing affordable housing units. The City will also look to partner with a local non-profit organization to support a referral system targeted at directing citizens to available community resources.

#	Project Name
1	Acquisition
2	Clearance/Demolition
3	Housing Rehabilitation
4	Planning & Administration
5	Community Referral Services

Table 20 – Project Information

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

Priorities were determined by review of Community Needs Survey Results and input from supporting agencies, city administration, and city council.

AP-38 Project Summary

Project Summary Information

1	Project Name	Acquisition
	Target Area	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Goals Supported	Produce Affordable Housing Units
	Needs Addressed	Affordable Housing Quality of Life
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000
	Description	Acquire Land for the purpose of developing affordable housing units
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	1
	Location Description	Land will be acquired within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA.
	Planned Activities	Plan to purchase a lot that will be added to the City's surplus land list and used in the City's infill program.
2	Project Name	Clearance/Demolition
	Target Area	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Goals Supported	Produce Affordable Housing Units

	Needs Addressed	Affordable Housing Quality of Life
	Funding	CDBG: \$25,000
	Description	Demolition and clearance of dilapidated structure
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	2
	Location Description	Dilapidated buildings will be demolished and cleared within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA.
	Planned Activities	City will look to demolish two structures nad rebuild them with other federal grant funding or state grant funding.
3	Project Name	Housing Rehabilitation
	Target Area	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Goals Supported	Preserve Affordable Housing Units
	Needs Addressed	Affordable Housing Quality of Life
	Funding	CDBG: \$332,396
	Description	Housing Rehabilitation of low-mod income households
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	5
	Location Description	Housing Rehabilitation within the jurisdiction with a special emphasis placed on the East Ocala CRA and the West Ocala CRA.

	Planned Activities	The City will conduct a city-wide, housing rehabilitation program focused on preserving affordable housing units.
4	Project Name	Planning & Administration
	Target Area	West Ocala CRA East Ocala CRA
	Goals Supported	Planning and Administration
	Needs Addressed	Affordable Housing Quality of Life Public Services
	Funding	CDBG: \$99,000
	Description	Planning and Administration Costs Related to the Managing of the CDBG Grant
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	
	Location Description	City of Ocala
	Planned Activities	Planning and administrative activities related to administering the City of Ocala's CDBG funded housing program.
5	Project Name	Community Referral Services
	Target Area	East Ocala CRA
	Goals Supported	Public Services
	Needs Addressed	Public Services
	Funding	CDBG: \$20,000
	Description	Referral of low-mod income households to organizations with available resources.

Target Date	
Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	250
Location Description	City of Ocala
Planned Activities	The City plans to help fund a non-profit organization that will provide resource referral services to low-mod income families.

AP-50 Geographic Distribution - 91.420, 91.220(f)

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

Activities are undertaken in HUD eligible areas that are primarily considered low-income/minority concentrations. The City uses HUD's definition for minority and low-income concentration. Citizens city-wide are eligible for the program and the City conducts projects in every quadrant of its jurisdiction. In this plan period, the City will specifically look to create projects in its East Ocala CRA and its West Ocala CRA to leverage the housing rehabilitation dollars available in those jurisdictions.

Geographic Distribution

Target Area	Percentage of Funds
West Ocala CRA	35
East Ocala CRA	30

Table 21 - Geographic Distribution

Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically

The City of Ocala primarily funds activities benefitting census block groups 14.01 (2) and (3), census tracts 17 and 18, and census tract 20.02, which have above average concentrations of minorities and low-income residents. However, there will be a special emphasis made on promoting the program in the East Ocala and West Ocala CRA's, to leverage the dollars provided for housing rehabilitation in those areas.

Discussion

AP-85 Other Actions - 91.420, 91.220(k)

Introduction

There are various elements that produce obstacles to meeting needs within the community. Addressing all housing, homeless, and community developments needs is a difficult task due to restricted funding. The City of Ocala receives less CDBG funding than it did ten years ago. The City utilizes all possible resources and continues to seek leveraging sources to meet as many underserved needs as possible. The current housing market and economic environment also serve as barriers to meeting needs. The most significant obstacle to addressing the needs of homeless citizens is the lack of available funding. The jurisdiction receives Supportive Housing Program funds, FEMA funds and financial resources from the Department of Families and Children to assist Marion residents with mortgage, rent and utility assistance. These funding sources can only address a small portion of the homeless needs in the County. Because of dramatic cuts in State funding and decreases in private donations, local non-profit homeless service providers are having a difficult time meeting the needs of the growing homeless population. In addition, programmatic requirements for other HUD competitive grants do not always coincide with determined local needs. Listed below are the actions planned to address the obstacles in meeting underserved needs, developing affordable housing, reducing lead-based paint hazards, reducing the number of families living in poverty, improving institutional capacity and structure and encouraging coordination between all housing and social service agencies.

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

The City continues to utilize its CDBG, HOME, and SHIP funds to the fullest extent to assist in meeting underserved needs. Leveraging efforts with public and private funding agencies were also made to supplement federal funds and increase the resources available to address community needs. The City has set aside a significant amount of local funding to help overcome the funding challenges in meeting the needs of the underserved. The City has an established Affordable Housing Fund that reimburses developers of affordable housing for fees associated with the production of affordable housing. This fund has been essential in helping the City develop large amounts of affordable rental units by providing the required local match for tax credit projects. The City recently developed and budgeted housing rehabilitation dollars in their East Ocala and West Ocala CRA funds. Community Programs will be able leverage \$250,000 of funding in the 2024 fiscal year toward housing rehabilitation projects within the jurisdiction. The Ocala Electric Utility department also is partnering with Community programs on a pilot weatherization program that will leverage another \$50,000 for rehabilitation projects.

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

It is the goal of the City of Ocala to foster and maintain affordable housing for citizenry in all quadrants. The City will use Affordable Housing, CDBG, HOME, SHIP, CRA, and other local funds to initiate rehabilitation projects that will bring as many sub-standard housing conditions as possible, up to building code. This will also include testing for asbestos, mold, and lead based paint where applicable to ensure the health and welfare of our citizenry. The City will also continue to partner with Habitat for

Humanity, Marion County Housing Finance Authority, and the Ocala Housing Authority; by providing purchasing assistance funds to aid qualified citizens realize their dream of becoming homeowners. In addition, the City will operate an infill program that will provide surplus lots to non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable housing units.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

A large amount of the homes in the City were constructed prior to 1979 which highly increases the likelihood of the occurrence of lead associated health hazards. The City currently contracts with PBO3 out of Deltona, Florida and DK Environmental & Construction Services, Inc. out of Kissimmee, Florida to conduct lead test on all structures built before 1979; that are scheduled for either, rehabilitation, demolition, or purchasing assistance, the City also performs asbestos testing on all properties and mold testing where it is applicable. The City only uses contractors that are lead trained and certified to carry out their rehabilitation and demolition projects. For all rehabilitation projects the City provides the applicant with a pamphlet explaining the nuisances of lead-based paint hazards.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

It continues to be a major goal of the City of Ocala to reduce and eventually eliminate the number of poverty level families in the City. Today the needs of families far exceed the resources the City has in which to satisfy those needs. Too many families in the City still do not have adequate housing, adequate transportation, access to basic nutritional needs (there is no major grocery store located in West Ocala), adequate educational and job opportunities, or adequate health care. There still exists a very large schism between the “haves and the have not's” and this divide appears to be widening by the day. City officials are aware of the existing problems and along with City staff; they continue to work diligently to find solutions to this most pressing issue. The city has formulated an Affordable Housing Initiative Tema that is focused on producing large scale multifamily affordable rental units and the development of scattered lot, single family homes for affordable and attainable homeownership. City staff continues to work with private investors to bring a grocery store to the West Ocala community to eliminate the existing food desert. City Staff is working with the Ocala/Marion County Chamber & Economic Partnership to develop a business incubator in West Ocala to create jobs and job training opportunities for the neighbors of West Ocala.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

The Community Programs Division of the City of Ocala’s Community Development Services Department is responsible for the implementation of the City’s neighborhood services program. This division is responsible for administering the CDBG and HOME dollars that are received from HUD and reinvesting those dollars back into needed areas of the City to improve overall living conditions and help reduce and eliminate slum and blighted conditions. The Community Programs Division works in conjunction with

the City's Office of Homeless Prevention and Growth Management Department in partnering to address housing needs of the City on various levels. The City of Ocala's Community Programs Division also works very closely with Marion County's Community Services. As part of the Marion County Consortium, the City collaborates with the County on funding projects, leveraging funds with private organizations, and training opportunities. The two entities have established a quarterly meeting with the United Way and other local lead agencies, where we will all meet to better understand the needs of the community, explore the resources available to meet those underserved needs, and better coordinate and understand the projects that are in motion so that we are not duplicating efforts. On a quarterly basis, the Community Development Services Department meets with the approved contractors in its rehabilitation program. The Director and Rehabilitation/Inspection Specialist of the department meet with representatives of companies of all of the trades that participate in the rehabilitation program. The goal is to keep an open line of communication between the citizenry, the contractors, and the City. It is an opportunity to discuss the program in an open forum and to receive suggestions from the contractors as to what they are experiencing and what ways can the City be easier to do business with, while remaining within the federal guidelines. These meetings contribute to fostering relationships between the City and its contractors, instill a sense of partnership in the program between the City, contractors, and citizenry, and reiterate the City's high expectations of job performance from the contractors. These meetings have proven very valuable in breaking down stereotypes of the City's rehabilitation program and have begun to reestablish the faith of the business community in the program.

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

Several steps are taken to ensure coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies during the program year. Each of these steps will help facilitate information exchange between the County, City, and those providing public services. The primary obstacle to meeting all the needs that have been identified is the lack of financial resources to both public and private agencies that serve the City's low and moderate-income residents. Another significant barrier to affordable housing in Ocala is the lack of affordable housing due to the housing market influencing rising rents. The City will continue to foster the existing partnership as well as collaborating with new agencies to bring added resources into our community. The following steps are taken to enhance coordination amongst agencies:

- A technical assistance workshop is held at the beginning of each grant year to educate nonprofit agencies on the grant funds, application process, eligible uses, additional requirements when utilizing these funds and long-term conditions on their use.
- Ocala/Marion County's housing and community development plan is carried out through a combination of public, private and non-profit organizations, many of which participate in the citizen participation process. With the addition of HOME funds and the formation of the consortium with the City of Ocala, the County works with the City to develop other housing

partners.

- The City will continue to work closely with the Ocala Housing Authority which serves the City of Ocala and Marion County. Over the last two years, the Office of Homeless Prevention worked hand in hand with Ocala Housing Authority to administer the Emergency Housing Voucher program. This program allowed 51 homeless individuals to obtain permanent housing.
- Both County and City staff continue to play active roles in the community alliance organizations dealing with homelessness (Joint Office on Homelessness), children's issues (Children's Alliance), and community issues (Community with a Heart) and mental health issues (SMA and Beacon Point).
- The City's development review guidelines work to ensure a streamlined project review process to remove barriers for development of affordable housing projects.
- The City will continue to focus on conserving and improving the condition of existing affordable housing stock in coordination with rehabilitation, rebuild, and other infrastructure improvement programs.
- The City will actively recruit developers to develop multi-family affordable housing units and it will carry out an infill plan of producing single family units on City owned surplus lots.
- The City will collaborate with various organizations to focus on ensuring equal access to rehabilitation assistance programs throughout the city, with a focus on ensuring equal access to the programs across all socioeconomic groups.

Discussion

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements - 91.420, 91.220(I)(1,2,4)

Introduction

The City of Ocala Community Development Services (CDS) Department makes funding awards through procurement processes called Invitations to Bid (ITB) and Requests for Proposals (RFPs). An ITB is an open and competitive opportunity that is awarded to the lowest, responsive bidder. An RFP is an open and competitive funding allocation process in which CDS will set the desired outcomes and agencies respond by submitting a proposal requesting an investment to achieve these outcomes by providing specific program or project services. The specific requirements for requests for proposals will be detailed in procurement materials. Requests for Proposals indicate the amount and type of funding anticipated for specific funding areas, funding outcomes, priorities for funding, and eligible activities for contracts awarded through the RFP. All agencies submitting proposals for funding through the competitive RFP will demonstrate their ability to deliver established outcomes for clients by providing specific services.

Funding is provided in the form of a contract between the recipient agency and the City. The contract contains terms and conditions of funding, reporting, and invoicing requirements, performance expectations and service delivery levels, record keeping responsibilities, and consent to on-site monitoring as requested by the City.

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	32,095
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:	32,095

Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	0
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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.

100.00%

Discussion

Historically the City has spent all its CDBG and HOME funding to benefit low- and moderate-income persons. This is anticipated to be the case in this plan period as well.

Appendix - Alternate/Local Data Sources

1	Data Source Name American Community Survey
	List the name of the organization or individual who originated the data set. US Census Bureau and US Department of Housing and Urban Development.
	Provide a brief summary of the data set. Housing, demographic, housing market, employment, education, income, population, ad economic data provided from the 2010 Census.
	What was the purpose for developing this data set? To collect important data relevant to the population in the United States.
	Provide the year (and optionally month, or month and day) for when the data was collected. 2006-2012
	Briefly describe the methodology for the data collection. Survey
	Describe the total population from which the sample was taken. United States
	Describe the demographics of the respondents or characteristics of the unit of measure, and the number of respondents or units surveyed. All demographics.