

**City of Hickory**

**2021-2022**

**Community Development**

**Block Grant Program**

**ANNUAL ACTION**

**PLAN**



Life. Well Crafted.



# Executive Summary

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

### 1. Introduction

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines the City of Hickory as an entitlement community due to status as a principal city within the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton Metropolitan Statistical Area. As an entitlement community, the City of Hickory receives an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The City is required to submit a five-year Consolidated Plan identifying community needs and funding priorities in order to receive annual funding. The Consolidated Plan was most recently adopted in May 2020. Each subsequent year, it is required to submit an Annual Action Plan to HUD. The City of Hickory values the importance of strategic planning to ensure good stewardship of public funds. This year the City anticipates receiving \$324,535 as its annual allocation. The City also anticipates receiving approximately \$85,000 in program income from repayments of loans made with CDBG funds. This Annual Action Plan covers program year 2021 which runs from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. While the funding amount of the 2021 program year is a bit lower than the 2020 allocation, it remains extremely important that the City identify and prioritize the most critical needs to be addressed with CDBG funds.

### 2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This could be a restatement of items or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis or the strategic plan.

The one year Annual Action Plan provides funding to support the following projects. Specific details can be found in the projects section of this plan.

**1. Housing Rehabilitation/Purchase (\$146,000)** - Provide funds to purchase and rehabilitate existing housing units.

**2. Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements (\$140,000)** - Provide funds to construct curbs, gutters and sidewalks. In addition, funds may be used for street resurfacing, installing street lights, planting street trees or building or rehabilitating facilities including City parks for public use in low to moderate income areas.

**3. Small Business Assistance Program (\$5,000)** – Provide assistance for small business owners through a micro-enterprise grant to low/mod income business owners or small business loan program to incentivize business owners to create jobs for low/mod income individuals.

**4. Public Service Activities (\$48,500)** - Provide funds to support local non-profits including but not limited to those that assist with homelessness, food scarcity, HIV/Aids assistance and youth programs.

**5. Program Administration and Planning (\$65,000)** - Provide funding to administer the CDBG program.

**6. Fair Housing Activities (\$1,000)** - Provide support to raise awareness of fair housing rights and affirmatively further fair housing.

**7. Contingency (\$4,035)** - Provide funding for cost overruns related to CDBG projects.

### **3. Evaluation of past performance**

This is an evaluation of past performance that helped lead the grantee to choose its goals or projects.

The City's past Community Development programs have focused on similar projects and funding categories. The City is maintaining many of these programs and is also adjusting its funding priorities to match new priority needs identified by the public, such as additional funding for programs focused on youth. Estimated costs are also associated with each goal to ensure that goals are realistic and achievable. While the funded amount of the 2021 program year is slightly less than the funding received in most recent years, it remains extremely important that the City identify and prioritize the most critical needs to be addressed with CDBG funds.

### **4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process**

Summary from citizen participation section of plan.

The City of Hickory undertook an extensive citizen participation and consultation process in the development of the 2020-2024 Consolidated plan and subsequently this plan. Two public hearings were held on January 27, 2021 at the Ridgeview Recreation Center and on February 3, 2021 at Hickory City Hall. The final public hearing was held on May 4, 2021 in the City Council Chambers at Hickory City Hall. These meetings were advertised in the Hickory Daily Record, as well as on the City of Hickory website

and posted at both meeting locations. In addition, Community Development staff continuously have conversations throughout the year with local non-profit and community organizations. Staff also provides program updates at monthly Continuum of Care meetings, which are attended by nearly all organizations in the community that work with homeless and low income individuals and families. The comments provided during the public meetings and consultation sessions inform the goals and strategies contained in the plan. The citizen participation process will continue throughout the implementation of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and this Annual Action Plan.

## **5. Summary of public comments**

This could be a brief narrative summary or reference an attached document from the Citizen Participation section of the Con Plan.

The issues discussed at the public meetings and discussions with local nonprofit organizations included increased opportunities for homeless programs and programs focused on workforce development for low to moderate income individuals. Organizations also identified affordable owner occupied and rental housing and more comprehensive services to the homeless as high priority needs.

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

There were no comments or views not accepted.

## **7. Summary**

Significant efforts were made to obtain public input through public meetings, meetings with nonprofit organizations, and individual conversations. The public input process was used to identify priority needs to be addressed with CDBG funds. All of the objectives and goals contained in the plan address a specific priority identified by the public. The City of Hickory will continue to obtain public input annually to ensure the plan is up to date and activities undertaken with grant funds address current community needs.

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

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

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	Hickory	Office of Business Development

**Table 1 – Responsible Agencies**

**Narrative**

The City of Hickory's Office of Business Development, Business Services Division, manages the City's Community Development Block Grant allocation.

**Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information**

Comments can be submitted to the Office of Business Development between 8:30AM and 5:00PM at Hickory City Hall (Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building)

Written comments can be submitted to:

Karen Dickerson  
Community Development Manager  
City of Hickory  
PO Box 398  
Hickory, NC 28603



## **AP-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)**

### **1. Introduction**

During the 2020 Consolidated Plan Development Process, City of Hickory Staff spoke with numerous housing and human service agencies to determine the greatest needs in the community. The City has continued to consult with these organizations on an ongoing basis to ensure that their needs are addressed to the greatest extent feasible as the City develops the 2021-2022 Annual Action 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(l)).**

The Community Development Division of the Office of Business Development is responsible for administering the CDBG program and developing the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Annual Action Plans. Community Development staff consulted with numerous public service agencies and the Hickory Public Housing Authority during development of the Consolidated Plan. Consultation took place at both public meetings and through individual meetings and phone conversations. This Annual Action Planning Process continued that effort.

**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 Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care meets monthly at the Catawba County United Way offices. The City's Community Development Manager serves on the committee, which includes representatives from organizations that serve the homeless in Catawba County. This group makes decisions on the allocation of Emergency Solutions Grant funding and also provides a forum for member organizations to discuss their needs. The Salvation Army Shelter of Hope and the Family Care Center have each received ESG funding in recent years. Both of these organizations are located within Hickory. In the past, the City has funded homeless serving activities at the Family Care Center, Exodus Homes, and the Hickory Soup Kitchen using CDBG funds.

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

The Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care participates in the North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care, which applies for ESG funds (Emergency Solutions Grants) for non-entitlement communities throughout the state. The Salvation Army Shelter of Hope and the Family Care Center have each received funding in recent years. Both of these organizations are located within Hickory. These applications are made through the Continuum of Care, which makes recommendations on which organizations to support annually. City staff serves on this committee.

**2. Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and consultations**

**Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated**

1	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF CATAWBA VALLEY 1
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Services - Housing
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development Staff meet frequently with the executive director to discuss the organization's specific needs and housing needs in the community in general. Staff talks with organization staff regularly to determine ways to improve partnership and coordination between the organizations. Habitat has indicated a need for additional affordable rental housing in the community. The City and Habitat are exploring ways that their partnership could increase affordable rental housing options and home ownership including possible land conveyance of city owned property for construction of affordable housing. The City and Habitat are continuing to partner to provide enhanced housing rehabilitation services for owner occupied properties in the city.
2	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Hickory Soup Kitchen
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-homeless
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy

	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development Staff has regular meetings with Hickory Soup Kitchen staff to review the organization's specific needs and other service gaps related to the City's homeless and hungry population. Community Development Staff also participates as a steering committee member for the HOPE Project which is a transportation program organized by the Hickory Soup Kitchen to help those in need secure steady employment.
3	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Western Piedmont Council of Governments
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing PHA Services - Housing Services-Employment Regional organization Planning organization
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development staff consulted with staff for the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board to determine gaps in workforce skills and development programs within the area. Community Development Staff are working in conjunction with NC Works to develop a Workforce Development Initiative in a predominantly minority low-mod census tract. The WPCOG also administers HOME funds for the area's consortium. Community Development and WPCOG staff speak regularly to coordinate program activities.
4	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Exodus Homes
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-homeless

	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development Staff has regular phone and in person meetings with the executive director to discuss the organization's specific needs related to providing supportive housing to homeless, recovering people returning to the city from treatment centers, hospitals, jails, and prison. The organization currently works with residents to obtain employment and has expanded its services to include a new work location and thrift store. Staff talks with organization staff regularly to determine ways to improve partnership and coordination between the organizations and to determine any service gaps related to the homeless population in the City.
5	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Family Guidance Center
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Services - Housing
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment

	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development staff continue to consult with the staff of the Family Guidance Center to discuss the organization's specific needs and its ability to serve potential home buyers/homeowners with financial, credit and housing counseling. Community development staff has recently increased collaboration with this organization to assist with housing, credit and financial counseling for potential homebuyers of the affordable housing constructed by the City. The Family Guidance Center also manages the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency Community Partners Loan Pool funds for down payment assistance for this area. These funds will be used as down payment assistance for City constructed affordable housing.
6	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Family Care Center
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Services-homeless
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development staff continue to meet with the organization's Executive Director about the services offered by the organization and the needs of homeless families with children. Areas of improved coordination exist between the City and the agency through the opportunities surrounding permanent housing and the housing counseling offered by the agency. Opportunities also exist to continue to review the other service gaps related to the homeless population in the City. It is hoped that this consultation leads to improved communication and services for homeless families with children. The Family Care Center was the agency selected to disperse the HOPE Program funds from the CARES act. They assisted more than 550 households.
7	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	ALFA
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-Persons with HIV/AIDS

	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Non-Homeless Special Needs HOPWA Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development staff continues to meet with ALFA;s Executive Director to discuss the organization's needs. Regular communications with the City maintain awareness about the needs of persons living with HIV and AIDS in the region. This effort between City and Agency will continue to assist those living in need in the area with the expansion of their PReP Program and their continued success with their needle exchange program to reduce the occurrence of HIV/Aids.
8	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	NAACP
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-Education Civic Leaders Neighborhood Organization
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Economic Development Anti-poverty Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development Staff met with staff of the organization to review the organization's needs and other service gaps related to issues within the City's African American population. This agency focuses on serving this population with education, anti-poverty and civil rights issues. This consultation should continue to improve coordination and relationships with the African American population. Community Development staff also participate in the local Racial Justice and Reconciliation Group that meets twice monthly.
9	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	City of Hickory Public Housing Authority
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	PHA
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Public Housing Needs

	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Community Development Staff discussed with the Executive Director of the Hickory Housing Authority the organization's status and future needs. It is anticipated that through increased coordination and communication, the City and the Housing Authority will be able to work together to increase the supply of affordable housing in the community. Staff anticipates there will be coordination of assistance with infrastructure between the Hickory Housing Authority and the City related to possible projects.
10	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Catawba Science Center
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-Education Foundation
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Science Education
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is offering the Portal to Science program specifically to children that are considered low to moderate income to increase overall educational outcomes. Their program offers free access to children and their families to explore technology, life sciences, astronomy, live animals and planetarium experiences to increase interest and knowledge in science.

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

The City conducted an extensive outreach process in 2020 during its Consolidated Plan development process. It is not anticipated that the needs have changed significantly since the Consolidated Plan was adopted.

**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	North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness Balance of State	The Continuum of Care oversees application for ESG and Continuum of Care funds. The City of Hickory works with the Continuum of Care by providing funds to many public service agencies that work with the homeless.

**Table 3 - Other local / regional / federal planning efforts**

**Narrative**

Community Development staff meet regularly with the staff from local housing and human service agencies to ensure an understanding of needs within the community. Community Development staff also attend the monthly Continuum of Care meetings to learn what is happening among the local agencies that provide support services to the homeless and those in need and to give updates on the planning process at monthly Continuum of Care meetings. Nearly all nonprofit public service providers that work with the homeless or within anti-poverty programs attend these meetings. In addition, the City of Hickory’s Community Navigator works specifically with the homeless population in the area. His role as an experienced leader of a local homeless shelter gives him the unique opportunity to assist those that are homeless in getting services they need and to attempt to find them supportive housing.

## **AP-12 Participation - 91.401, 91.105, 91.200(c)**

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

During the annual planning process, the City of Hickory encouraged citizen participation, especially among residents of low to moderate income communities. Comments were solicited from citizens, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies during neighborhood meetings, public hearings, and other commission meetings. Three public hearings were conducted to obtain input on the plan. Additional discussions were held individually with nonprofit organizations. These were discussed in the previous section.

The comments received at public meetings are summarized below. Complete notes from the public meetings are included as an appendix.

The City's Citizen Participation Plan is also attached to this plan as an appendix. This provides a more comprehensive description of the activities the City will undertake during plan implementation to encourage citizen participation.

**Citizen Participation Outreach**

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
1	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	People did attend public meetings/hearings based upon advertisements in local newspapers describing the CDBG program.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	
2	Public Meeting	Minorities Non-targeted/broad community	No citizens were in attendance at this meeting at the Ridgeview Library on January 27, 2021.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	No comments rejected nor accepted.	
3	Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community	This meeting was attended by one individual on February 3, 2021 at City Hall.	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	
4	Public Hearing	Non-targeted/broad community	A public hearing was held on May 4, 2021. There were ___ citizens who spoke	See Citizen Participation Outreach Appendix 2 for full details.	All comments were accepted.	

**Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach**

## Expected Resources

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

#### Introduction

The City of Hickory intends to apply to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for CDBG funds for each of the five years covered by this plan.

#### 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	324,535	85,000	0	409,535	1,170,000	The City anticipates receiving approximately \$300,000 per year as its entitlement grant and roughly \$90,000 per year in program income from the repayment of loans made with CDBG funds and proceeds from the sale of property.

Table 5 - 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 of Hickory continuously works to identify matching funds that will help leverage additional resources to spur redevelopment in its economically distressed neighborhoods. The City plans to supplement its housing rehabilitation efforts by continuing to apply for Urgent Repair funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. These funds are disbursed as forgivable loans to pay for urgently needed home repairs for low income homeowners with special needs. In addition, the City has hopes to continue its partnership with the Unifour Consortium's HOME Funds to consistently develop affordable housing while also encouraging future homeowners to use the Unifour Consortium's Downpayment Assistance Program and potential funding from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency to assist with mortgage costs.

**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 of Hickory owns lots located within residential neighborhoods in the SE and SW sections of the City. The City will continue to investigate potential uses for these properties. The first two of these lots are being developed into affordable single-family homes with the use of the Unifour Consortium's HOME Funds. If this program is successful, the City hopes to replicate it in other areas on city owned property to assist with affordable housing and infill development.

**Discussion**

The anticipated resources discussed in this section will be used to address the goals outlined within this strategic plan. While the amount of funding anticipated will not be enough to address all of the City's housing and community development needs, the City plans to work continuously to identify additional resources in order to stretch these dollars further.

## 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	Preserve the City's Housing Stock	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock	CDBG: \$146,000	Homeowner Housing Added: 1 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 4 Household Housing Unit
2	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements	CDBG: \$140,000	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 4000 Persons Assisted
3	Support Homeownership	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Support Homeownership	CDBG: \$10,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Persons Assisted
4	Homeless Services and Prevention	2020	2024	Homeless	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Homelessness Services	CDBG: \$21,500	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 400 Persons Assisted
5	Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS	2020	2024	Non-Homeless Special Needs	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS	CDBG: \$10,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 75 Persons Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
7	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Small Business and Entrepreneurship	CDBG: \$5,000	Jobs created/retained: 1 Jobs Businesses assisted: 2 Businesses Assisted
9	Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness	2020	2024	Affordable Housing	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide	Fair Housing Outreach and Education	CDBG: \$1,000	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 150 Persons Assisted
10	Youth Services	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development	City-Wide	Youth Services	CDBG: \$7,000	Other: 50 Other

Table 6 – Goals Summary

## Goal Descriptions

1	<b>Goal Name</b>	Preserve the City's Housing Stock
	<b>Goal Description</b>	The City aims to help preserve the City's housing stock by acquiring and rehabilitating housing units. The units rehabilitated may be owner occupied units or vacant units that are purchased for resale to low and moderate income homeowners or rental housing purchased for rehabilitation by nonprofit affordable housing providers. The City also constructed affordable housing on City owned lots with Unifour Consortium HOME Funds and these homes are currently for sale to income eligible homebuyers.

2	<b>Goal Name</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	<b>Goal Description</b>	It is anticipated that at least 4000 persons living in low to moderate income neighborhoods will benefit from improvements to public infrastructure through funding provided by this Annual Action Plan. These public infrastructure improvements may include but are not limited to facility improvements, park improvements, and street and sidewalk improvements.
3	<b>Goal Name</b>	Support Homeownership
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Increased homeownership through homebuyer education, counseling and preparatory programs (target of 50 homeowners assisted) and construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing units.
4	<b>Goal Name</b>	Homeless Services and Prevention
	<b>Goal Description</b>	This plan will provide funding to Exodus Homes for a Transportation and Employment Coordinator and to the Hickory Soup Kitchen to support their staff operating expenses. This funding will also assist the Family Care Center with funding to support their case manager position.
5	<b>Goal Name</b>	Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS
	<b>Goal Description</b>	This annual action plan will provide funding to ALFA in order to provide support for a case manager position that will assist persons living with HIV and AIDS to ensure that they receive necessary health care and other needed services.
7	<b>Goal Name</b>	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
	<b>Goal Description</b>	The city will provide grants to low/mod income business owners. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment, inventory, marketing or other similar expense. The City also operates a small business loan program that provides funds to businesses that create jobs for low/moderate income persons. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment and for working capital.
9	<b>Goal Name</b>	Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Conduct fair housing outreach and education activities for citizens and housing professionals.

<b>10</b>	<b>Goal Name</b>	Youth Services
	<b>Goal Description</b>	The City plans to provide funding to support education initiatives for at-risk school age students.

## AP-35 Projects - 91.420, 91.220(d)

### Introduction

This section details the projects that will be undertaken with CDBG funding in the 2021-2022 program year.

#	Project Name
1	Housing Rehabilitation and Purchase
2	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
3	Small Business Assistance Programs
4	Grants to Non Profit Public Service Agencies
5	Program Administration and Fair Housing Activities
6	Contingency

**Table 7 – Project Information**

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

The Small Business Assistance projects are funded at a lower amount than in previous years due to the fact that the City anticipates carrying over unspent funds from a prior year.

**AP-38 Project Summary**  
**Project Summary Information**

<b>1</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	Housing Rehabilitation and Purchase
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Preserve the City's Housing Stock
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$146,000
	<b>Description</b>	The City aims to help preserve the City's housing stock by acquiring and rehabilitating housing units. The units rehabilitated may be owner occupied units or vacant units that are purchased for resale to low and moderate income homeowners or rental housing purchased for rehabilitation by nonprofit affordable housing providers. The City also plans to assist low and moderate income homeowners with home repairs through its Housing Rehabilitation Program
	<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	It is estimated that four low and moderate income homeowners will benefit from the proposed activities.
	<b>Location Description</b>	These funds will be available city-wide to eligible homeowners and projects.
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	These funds will be used for the purchase and rehabilitation of housing to income eligible owner or rental households. Funding may also be used to provide loans for the rehabilitation of housing occupied by low and moderate income homeowners.
<b>2</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$140,000
	<b>Description</b>	This project involves improvements to public infrastructure and facilities in low and moderate income neighborhoods.
	<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022

	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	It is estimated that all families living within the neighborhood will benefit from the public infrastructure and facility improvements.
	<b>Location Description</b>	This project will include public infrastructure and facility improvements in low and moderate income neighborhoods.
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	This project will include public infrastructure and facility improvements in low and moderate income neighborhoods. Improvements may include resurfacing of existing streets, installation of sidewalks, street trees, or other necessary public infrastructure or facilities including the rehabilitation of city parks.
<b>3</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	Small Business Assistance Programs
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Small Business and Entrepreneurship
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$5,000
	<b>Description</b>	This project will provide continued funding to micro-enterprise businesses through the city's micro-enterprise grant program. The project also provides funding in the form of a forgivable loans to small businesses.
	<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	It is estimated that three families could benefit from these microenterprise grants and small business forgivable loans.
	<b>Location Description</b>	This funding will be available city wide to qualified business owners.
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	The city will provide grants to low/mod income business owners. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment, inventory, marketing or other similiar expense. Since 2018 , the City has also had a small business loan program that provides funds to businesses that create jobs for low/moderate income persons. Funds can be used to purchase business equipment.
<b>4</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	Grants to Non Profit Public Service Agencies
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide

	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Support Homeownership Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Support Homeownership Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$48,500
	<b>Description</b>	This project will involve the provision of funding to nonprofit public service agencies that serve low and moderate individuals.
	<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	It is anticipated that at least 500 individuals will benefit from the public services grant program.
	<b>Location Description</b>	These activities will take place throughout the city at six local non-profit agencies that serve low and moderate income individuals.
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	This project will involve the provisions of grants to six public service agencies
5	<b>Project Name</b>	Program Administration and Fair Housing Activities
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Support Homeownership Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness

	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Support Homeownership Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Small Business and Entrepreneurship Removal of Dilapidated Structures Fair Housing Outreach and Education
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$66,000
	<b>Description</b>	Provide funding to support administration of the CDBG program along with funding for Fair Housing outreach activities.
	<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	These general administrative activities should benefit all of the citizens of Hickory.
	<b>Location Description</b>	These activities will take place city wide wherever CDBG funds are allocated.
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	This project will include funding for the administration of the CDBG program along with funding for fair housing outreach activities and additional community planning funds as necessary.
<b>6</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	Contingency
	<b>Target Area</b>	CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA City-Wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Support Homeownership Homeless Services and Prevention Provide Services to Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Increase Entrepreneurship Opportunities Increase Fair Housing Outreach and Awareness

<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Preservation of the City's Housing Stock Public Infrastructure and Facility Improvements Support Homeownership Homelessness Services Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS Youth Services Small Business and Entrepreneurship Removal of Dilapidated Structures Fair Housing Outreach and Education
<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$4,035
<b>Description</b>	This project will be used to set up a small contingency fund to assist with cost overruns on other projects in this Annual Action Plan.
<b>Target Date</b>	6/30/2022
<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	These funds will be used for cost overruns on other eligible community development projects.
<b>Location Description</b>	These funds will be used to supplement the budgets of the projects described earlier in this action plan.
<b>Planned Activities</b>	These funds will be used to supplement the budgets of the projects described earlier in this action plan.

## **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**

The City of Hickory's CDBG funds for owner occupied housing rehabilitation will be allocated city-wide to income eligible homeowners. The majority of funds will be allocated for area benefit activities, which include areas where a majority of the households are low and moderate income.

### **Geographic Distribution**

<b>Target Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Funds</b>
CDBG ELIGIBLE AREA	70
City-Wide	30

**Table 8 - Geographic Distribution**

### **Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically**

Area benefit activities are required to take place in areas where a majority of the households have incomes below 80 percent of the area median income. The City targets its public infrastructure activities to low and moderate income areas. Specific projects are chosen based on community input and existing city plans.

### **Discussion**

The City of Hickory does not have a specific target area for CDBG funds. Allocating housing rehabilitation funding city wide is one of the City's methods for affirmatively furthering fair housing. Public infrastructure improvements are generally targeted towards low and moderate income neighborhoods in order to ensure that these activities meet a HUD national objective.



## **AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing -91.420, 91.220(j)**

### **Introduction**

In recent years, the City has greatly reduced many of the barriers to multi-family and affordable housing development. The City's current Land Development Code now permits multi-family housing in all commercial districts by right and increased the allowable density of residential units in medium and high density residential zoning districts. This significantly reduces the regulatory burden for potential affordable housing developers by increasing the amount of land on which they can build affordable housing. The City has further increased the allowable density in its central business district so as to assist affordable housing developers looking to build in the downtown area.

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

The City's Land Development Code has greatly reduced many of the barriers to affordable housing development. Multi-family housing development is now permitted by right in all four quadrants of the city. There do not appear to be additional structural barriers to the construction of affordable housing. Until recently, the slowdown in the housing market in general and the tightening of the credit market have probably had the largest effect on affordable housing construction.

### **Discussion**

One of the largest barriers to affordable housing development is the fact that demand for affordable housing tax credits continues to vastly outstrip supply. The fierce competition for these tax credits makes it difficult for more than one project in the county to be funded each year. Fortunately, the City has had three multi-family tax credit projects approved, with one recently completed, one under construction with a targeted completion date of late summer/early fall 2021, and the third multi-family project yet to begin construction. The City plans to continue working with Habitat for Humanity to identify locations where the two organizations can partner in the development of new affordable housing

units. The city will plan to invest in affordable housing city-wide as a means to affirmatively further fair housing. Investing city-wide should help reduce poverty concentration. As part of the city's investment in affordable housing, the city partnered with the HOME Consortium through the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to construct two homes on city-owned property. These homes were recently completed in the Ridgeview area which is part of census tract 109 and are currently for sale to qualified homebuyers at 80% of area median income.

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

### **Introduction**

This sections identifies additional actions that the City will take as part of its annual action plan.

### **Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs**

The City plans to continue working with local organizations that serve the homeless population to determine ways that services to homeless individuals and families can be improved. The city plans to work with these agencies to improve transportation coordination for the homeless. Additional actions will include working with agencies to provide more extensive day shelter programs that will assist homeless individuals to find transitional housing and employment opportunities.

### **Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing**

The City plans to continue working with Habitat for Humanity to identify locations where the two organizations can partner in the development of new affordable housing units. The City has begun a development process to construct affordable housing on city owned property. With the success of this first initiative, the City hopes to continue this effort on other lots to assist in the development of affordable housing and to promote infill development. The City is also discussing these options with outside developers who can more houses at an increase pace while still keeping the affordability model. The goal is to build more affordable housing as quickly as possible.

### **Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards**

The City will use portions of available CDBG funds to remedy lead-based paint hazards through its housing rehabilitation program. Homes will be rehabilitated in accordance with HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule. The level of rehabilitation will determine the specific lead hazard reduction activities in accordance with program requirements.

### **Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families**

The City will continue to participate with local agencies, faith-based or church groups, and nonprofit organizations that provide shelter and transitional housing opportunities that benefit homeless and transient families and individuals. Funding is provided in this annual action plan to organizations that provide health and case management services, transitional housing, educational programming and food support for poverty level families. The City will continue to investigate additional partnerships to provide additional services aimed at decreasing the number of poverty-level families. The City will also continue to participate in the Continuum of Care to stay informed of issues that relate to families in poverty.

### **Actions planned to develop institutional structure**

The City will continue to work with local nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to local nonprofits to ensure that they are aware of federal requirements and to increase their organizational capacity. In addition to annual monitoring, Community Development staff plans to work with agencies to determine priority needs in the community and develop partnerships to address those needs.

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

The City plans to continue working with the Catawba County Housing Visions Continuum of Care to foster effective communication amongst agencies. City staff will continue to attend monthly Continuum of Care Meetings to provide updates on the City's Community Development activities and provide opportunities to discuss new initiatives.

### **Discussion**

CDBG funds will not be sufficient to address all of the needs identified in this Consolidated Plan. However, it is the City's hope that through increased coordination and partnerships, it will be able to stretch these dollars as far as possible to have the greatest impact on the community possible.

## Program Specific Requirements

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

#### Introduction

This section details program income that has been received but not yet reprogrammed. It also details the estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used to benefit low to moderate income individuals. It is anticipated that all funds will be used to benefit low to moderate income individuals.

#### Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

##### Reference 24 CFR 91.220(I)(1)

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

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

#### Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	0
2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	100.00%

## **Discussion**

All the program income that has been received to date has been reprogrammed as part of this Annual Action Plan.



## Appendix 1 – Citizen Participation Plan



Life. Well Crafted.

### **Citizen Participation Plan**

**City of Hickory, North Carolina.**

#### **Participation**

The City of Hickory provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan and any subsequent amendments, Action Plans and performance reports. Particular emphasis is placed on participation by persons of low and moderate income who are residents of low and moderate income neighborhoods and/or slum and blighted areas, and residents of public housing.

#### **Access to Information**

The City of Hickory provides citizens with reasonable and timely access to local information and records related to the City's proposed and actual use of funds. This is done through public meetings of the City, which are advertised in a local newspaper of general circulation. Meetings are held within the City limits in or near areas identified as slum and blighted and areas of predominantly low and moderate income persons. All meetings of the City are accessible to persons with disabilities.

#### **Anti-displacement**

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the City of Hickory intends to minimize any displacement resulting from any HUD activities. However, should any displacement occur as a result of a HUD activity, the City intends to follow the regulations for displacement and relocation as described in 24 CFR 570.606. Should any real property acquisition result because of a HUD assisted activity, the guidelines of 49 CFR part 24 subpart b will be followed.

#### **Publishing the Plan**

A summary of the plan was published in the Hickory Daily Record in April 2020. Copies of the full Consolidated Plan were made available for public inspection at libraries, government offices and public housing authority offices within the City. Copies of the Plan were made upon request in accordance with City policies regarding making copies. The City considered any and all comments or views in writing or

orally received at the public hearing in preparing the Consolidated Plan, and such comments will be attached to the final plan to be submitted to HUD.

### **Public Hearings**

The City of Hickory provides for a minimum of two public hearings per year to obtain citizen's views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the Consolidated Plan, including its development, substantial amendments, Annual Action Plans and Annual Performance Reports. Public hearings are advertised twice in a newspaper of general circulation ten days prior to the hearings and the day of the public hearings. The City of Hickory will provide a translator for non-English speaking residents in the case of public hearings when the City is notified that a non-English speaking resident will be in attendance. An interpreter will be provided for hearing-impaired residents as needed. Such requests must be made to the City Clerk's office no later than 48 hours prior to the public hearing. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted if approval is given by US Housing and Urban Development. In May 2020, this expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the consolidated plan, annual action plan, plan amendments and amended citizen participation plan. Public hearings during emergency situations will not be required to substantially amend Consolidated Plans and/or Annual Action Plans, provided an exception is given by HUD. In May, 2020 this exception has been given and the expedited procedure will not include public hearings.*

### **Notice of Hearings**

A public notice of the plan was published in a newspaper of general circulation in January 2020 for hearings held January 23, 2020 and January 29, 2020. A third public hearing was held in May 2020. Copies of the full Consolidated Plan were available for public inspection at libraries, government offices and public housing authority offices within the City. Copies of the entire plan are available upon request in accordance with City policies regarding making copies. The City considered all comments or views in writing or orally received at public hearings in preparing the Consolidated Plan, and such comments are attached to the final plan to be submitted to HUD. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted if approval is given by US Housing and Urban Development. In May 2020, this expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the consolidated plan, annual action plan, plan amendments and amended citizen participation plan. Public hearings during emergency situations will not be required to substantially amend Consolidated Plans and/or Annual Action Plans, provided an exception is given by HUD. In May, 2020 this exception has been given and the expedited procedure will not include public hearings.*

### **Access to Meetings**

The City of Hickory held three meetings in identified low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and City Hall during the development of the Plan. All public meetings and hearings were advertised ten days prior to their date and the dates of the meetings. These notices are published in the Hickory Daily Record. All locations of public meetings are handicapped accessible. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted if approval is given by US Housing and Urban Development. In May 2020, this expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the consolidated*

*plan, annual action plan, plan amendments and amended citizen participation plan. Public hearings during emergency situations will not be required to substantially amend Consolidated Plans and/or Annual Action Plans, provided an exception is given by HUD. In May, 2020 this exception has been given and the expedited procedure will not include public hearings.*

### **Comments**

There will be a 30-day comment period prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans beginning April 5, 2020. Comments will be considered and incorporated in the final approved Plan submitted to HUD. The availability of the Plan will be advertised in the Hickory Daily Record detailing where the Plan can be reviewed. The Plan will be available at the City Planning and Development Department of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, 76 N. Center Street, Hickory. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted if approval is given by US Housing and Urban Development. In May 2020, this expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the consolidated plan, annual action plan, plan amendments and amended citizen participation plan. Public hearings during emergency situations will not be required to substantially amend Consolidated Plans and/or Annual Action Plans, provided an exception is given by HUD. In May, 2020 this exception has been given and the expedited procedure will not include public hearings.*

### **Amendments to the Consolidated Plan**

A public hearing will be conducted whenever amendments are proposed which add, delete or substantially change the adopted Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans. Proposed amendments to the plans will be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation for two consecutive weeks at least 10 days prior to the public hearing, stating the time, date and place. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive public comments. A change to the Consolidated Plan is considered substantial whenever a budget line item is changed 25% or more, if an objective is deleted or added to the Plan, or if an activity within an annual Action Plan is added or deleted. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted if approval is given by US Housing and Urban Development. In May 2020, this expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the consolidated plan, annual action plan, plan amendments and amended citizen participation plan. Public hearings during emergency situations will not be required to substantially amend Consolidated Plans and/or Annual Action Plans, provided an exception is given by HUD. In May, 2020 this exception has been given and the expedited procedure will not include public hearings.*

### **Performance Reports**

The City of Hickory will perform a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to report the use of CDBG funds. Further, an independent audit will be performed annually to examine the use of CDBG funds. Such reports will be available for public inspection and review. A notice will be published stating where and when the CAPER will be available to the public for inspection. The CAPER will be made available for public inspection for at least 15 days prior to its submission to HUD. Further, a public hearing will be held to receive citizen comments, input and questions regarding the CAPER prior to its submission. All comments, written or oral, received at the public hearing will be considered and a summary of those comments will be attached to the CAPER.

**Availability to the Public**

The City of Hickory will make available to the public the Consolidated Plan, substantial amendments and the CAPER will be made readily available to the public both upon request at the City Office of Business Development and on the City's website. Copies will be provided according to the City's policies of making copies for the public. Translated copies into specific languages will be provided upon request to non-English speaking city residents. Access to Records -- The City will make available to anyone during normal business hours access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan and use of funds for programs in previous years.

**Technical Assistance**

The Hickory Community Development Office provides technical assistance to groups providing services to low and moderate income persons. Those groups must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) national objectives and providing programs and activities consistent with this Consolidated Plan. Further, participation by residents of public and assisted housing is expressly encouraged. Notices of upcoming meetings and public hearings are mailed to and posted at public housing sites and posted in areas known to be predominantly low and moderate income.

**Complaints**

The City will be responsible for receiving and responding in writing to written complaints and grievances related to the Consolidated Plan activities. All complaints will be reviewed by the Citizens Advisory Committee at their next regularly scheduled monthly meeting. City staff will respond to written complaints and grievances in writing within 15 days of their receipt, where practical, based on the Citizens Advisory Committee's finding if the complaint(s) is (are) justified.

## Appendix 4 – Fair Housing Plan Activities

The City of Hickory is committed to affirmatively further fair housing, increasing awareness of Fair Housing laws. There are three components of Fair Housing planning. The first was the development of an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, which the City completed in 2013. Now the City is committed to addressing the issues identified in that analysis and will continue to implement its plan to affirmatively further Fair Housing opportunities. Since education and awareness of Fair Housing laws were identified as the primary impediment to fair housing choice, education and awareness efforts are at the core of the Fair Housing activities for FY 2014 as identified in the Fair Housing Plan activities listed below.

The City of Hickory Community Development Department has determined a list of actions that will assist in affirmatively furthering fair housing in its jurisdiction. The City will take an active role through the following activities as it strives to meet its Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan goals:

- The City of Hickory will continue to explore options to create affordable housing on current city owned vacant properties.
- The City of Hickory will continue to serve on the Catawba Valley Board of Realtors Equal Opportunity in Housing Committee. This committee works to ensure equal housing opportunity in the region.
- The City of Hickory will continue to serve on a regional bank's Community Reinvestment Act advisory committee. This committee works to inform communities within the region of possible opportunities to create affordable housing.
- City staff will partner with the City's Community Relations Council on an annual basis to discuss fair housing issues and plan additional events to promote fair housing the community. This council is tasked with furthering good human relations in the community.
- City staff will also discuss fair housing issues with the Hickory International Council and the Citizen's Advisory Committee on at least an annual basis. The Hickory International Council promotes positive relations among different nationalities residing within the city. The Citizen's Advisory Committee provides input to city council on various issues related to housing and community development.
- The City of Hickory staff will provide information to various neighborhood associations or groups about local housing programs offered throughout the area. Staff will make available printed materials designed to inform citizens of their fair housing rights as outlined in state and federal fair housing laws. Information will be translated into Spanish for our Hispanic population.
- City of Hickory will observe April as "Fair Housing Month." The Hickory City Council will adopt a fair housing resolution each April to recognize and support fair housing. The City of Hickory will sponsor public service announcements regarding fair housing and promote "Fair Housing Month" in local newspapers and/or radio.
- The City of Hickory will work with the Catawba Valley Hispanic Ministry, better known as "Centro Latino." Centro Latino is a non-profit organization offering a wide variety of programs including: health, social and educational services, community building, and advocacy for the Latino community of the region. Written material will be provided in Spanish and English.
- Fair Housing brochures and other material supplied by HUD and the North Carolina Human Relations Commission will be made available at the City of Hickory Municipal Building for citizens. The City of Hickory will order supplies of fair housing materials in English and Spanish.

- The City of Hickory will participate semi-annually in community meetings in predominately African-American neighborhoods in order to present information about various local housing programs and to make available printed materials designed to inform citizens of their fair housing rights as outlined in state and federal fair housing laws.
- The City of Hickory will use its utility bills and utility bill inserts to inform citizens of their rights to fair housing. These will include articles in the city's utility bill newsletter on a semi-annual basis.
- The City of Hickory will use its social media channels to promote fair housing and information about all local housing programs offered throughout the area.
- The City of Hickory will supply informational posters, brochures and/or flyers to historically African-American churches and community centers to inform citizens about their fair housing rights.
- The City of Hickory will continue to promote down-payment assistance for first-time low to moderate income homebuyers through the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. Staff will make a concerted effort to ensure that this program is affirmatively marketed to minority populations, especially African Americans and Hispanics.
- The City of Hickory will look to partner with local radio station to air public service announcements related to Fair Housing.
- The City of Hickory will make public improvements related to low income housing tax credit projects that will be developing affordable housing for low to moderate income families, older adults and disabled persons. Examples of this include sidewalks and landscaping in city rights of way directly adjacent to properties being developed as affordable housing.
- The City of Hickory will continue to partner with Habitat for Humanity to assist in the provision of housing to low to moderate income families. Recent partnership efforts have included the development of an eleven-lot single family subdivision to provide affordable housing units in the city's Green Park neighborhood and a 20-lot single family development of mixed income (affordable and market rate homes) in the Falling Creek area of the City. The city also provides grant funding to support the Habitat Repairs! Program that assists with rehabilitation of existing housing units.
- The city will continue to provide grants and loans to low- and moderate-income homebuyers in order to assist in the rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing units.

# City of Hickory 2021 Annual Action Plan

## Appendix 2 - Citizen Participation Outreach

During the Annual Action Planning process, the City of Hickory encouraged citizen participation, especially among residents of low to moderate income communities. Comments were solicited from citizens, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies during neighborhood meetings, public hearings, and other commission meetings. Three public hearings were conducted to obtain input on the plan. Additional discussions were held individually with nonprofit organizations. These were discussed in the previous section.

1. **Mode of Outreach:** New Paper Ad

**Targeted Outreach:** Non-targeted/broad community

**Summary of Response/Attendance:** There weren't any direct comments received from the ads describing the plan and upcoming public hearings. People did attend public hearings based upon seeing in advertisements in the local newspaper.

**Summary of Comments Received:** There weren't any direct comments received from the ads describing the plan and upcoming public hearings. People did attend public hearings based upon seeing in advertisements in the local newspaper.

**Summary of Comments not accepted and reasons:** All comments were accepted.

2. **Mode of Outreach:** Public Meeting

**Targeted Outreach:** Non-targeted/broad community

**Summary of Response/Attendance:** There were no citizens in attendance at the meeting held on January 27, 2021 at the Ridgeview Recreation Center.

**Summary of Comments Received:** There were no comments received from citizens at this public meeting.

**Summary of Comments not accepted and reasons:** No comments were accepted because no comments were received.

3. **Mode of Outreach:** Public Meeting

**Targeted Outreach:** Non-targeted/broad community

**Summary of Response/Attendance:** There was one (1) citizen in attendance at the meeting held on February 3, 2021 at City Hall.

**Summary of Comments Received:** Mr. Austin Pierce is with the Hickory Soup Kitchen. He explained that when the pandemic started the Soup Kitchen did not close. The need was greater at this time than it ever has been and they were only doing to-go meals. Churches stepped up to assist during this time. They are currently looking at investing in a new fire suppression system for the building. They have become innovative with their staff to make sure they were using them to the best of their abilities. Housing is a big problem in Hickory. They are looking to start a newsletter to let the public know what is happening at the Soup Kitchen. The need to provide meals have grown over the last year but the support they receive has as well. They are asking for \$10,000.00 to provide hot nutritious meals daily at no cost to the hungry in our area.

**Summary of Comments not accepted and reasons:** All comments were accepted.

4. **Mode of Outreach:** Public Hearing

**Targeted Outreach:** Non-targeted/broad community

**Summary of Response/Attendance:** A public hearing was held on May 4, 2021 at City Hall.

**Summary of Comments Received:** No comments were received from citizens although several questions were asked by members of City Council. Specifically, Mayor Hank Guess asked about the source of program income. The process for receiving program income from rehabilitation loans and small business loans were described in detail. Alderman Tony Wood asked if there was a great difference in this year's funding versus 2020. It was explained that the funding from year to year has remained fairly stable and that funding in the past several years has been really similar with the exception of the amount of program income received. It was explained that the amount of program income is decreasing because they City only offers deferred loans for housing rehabilitation and the number of homeowners with outstanding loans is decreasing each year. The 2021 CDBG Annual Action Plan was passed unanimously by Hickory City Council.

**Summary of Comments not accepted and reasons:** All comments were accepted.