Annual Action Plan 2023

Village of Oak Park

Development Customer Services

Oak Park

Village of Oak Park, IL

Draft PY 2023 Action Plan

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1. Executive Summary

Purpose of the Annual Action Plan

The Village of Oak Park is proud to present its 2023 Annual Action Plan, which represents the fourth year of our comprehensive 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. Our community is committed to improving living conditions through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, primarily for low- and moderate-income residents by addressing three key federal statutory goals: providing decent housing, creating a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities.

To achieve these goals, the Village has identified a range of eligible activities, including public services, housing rehabilitation and preservation, housing outreach, infrastructure improvements, code enforcement, public facility improvements, economic development, and planning and administration. These activities will be financed in part by federally funded CDBG dollars, which will have a PY 2023 budget of $1,539,187, running from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024. This is a decrease of 1% from PY 2022

As part of our commitment to transparency and community engagement, the Village has followed its Citizen Participation Plan by posting the draft Action Plan for a 30-day public comment period and holding a public meeting to solicit input from residents. This process ensures that our Action Plan reflects the priorities and needs of our community.

The Plan identifies activities that the Village of Oak Park plans to undertake through direct action or provision of funding to other entities. It is closely connected to the Village's Program Year (PY) 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, which guides our efforts to improve the quality of life for all Oak Park residents.

Overall, the Village of Oak Park is excited to continue our efforts to improve the lives of our residents through the implementation of our 2023 Annual Action Plan. We remain committed to working closely with our community partners to address the ongoing challenges faced by our residents and to create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Lead Agency

The lead agency for the Action Plan is the Administrative Division of the Development Customer Services Department of the Village of Oak Park, a general-purpose unit of municipal government. The Division has taken the lead in administering, organizing, and preparing the Action Plan, ensuring that it aligns with the Village's overall goals and priorities. The entire list of recommendations per agency is included in the table on page 10.

Basis for Allocating CDBG Investments

The Village of Oak Park's 2023 Annual Action Plan aims to implement the fourth year of the Village's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan using CDBG funds. The plan focuses on three federal statutory goals to improve living conditions for primarily low- and moderate-income residents: providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities. Eligible activities include public services, housing rehabilitation and preservation, housing outreach, infrastructure improvements, code enforcement, public facility improvements, economic development, and planning and administration.

The plan follows the five-year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (Con Plan), which is the Village of Oak Park's primary vehicle for identifying and prioritizing housing, community development, and economic needs and strategies to guide the use of its entitlement funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). During the 2023 program year, the Village will focus on addressing community priority needs and outcomes of affordable and decent housing, accessibility and availability of a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons.

After the Con Plan's citizen participation process and input from Village stakeholders, the highest priorities for CDBG funds were found to be public services, affordable housing, homelessness, creating livable communities through infrastructure improvements, administration and planning, economic development, and public facility improvements. Subcategories for the listed priorities are as followed:

- Public Services: mental health and substance use disorder counseling and treatment, parenting education, intellectual/developmental disability case management and respite, literacy education, mentoring, domestic violence supports, and emergency food provision and nutrition services. Homeless supports include prevention, street outreach, emergency shelter, and interim housing.

- Affordable Housing: Small Rental Rehabilitation Program, Single-Family Rehabilitation Loan Program, and code enforcement. The Small Rental Rehabilitation Program increases affordability for renters in multi-family buildings with 7 or fewer units, while the Single-Family Rehabilitation Loan Program provides zero percent loans deferred for 20 years for low- and moderate-income homeowners. Code enforcement enhances the health and safety of Oak Park's population by inspecting the local housing stock and ensuring that it is in good shape.

- Livable Communities and Infrastructure: alley improvements, water main and line improvements, street improvements, sidewalk and sidewalk ramp

improvements (including ADA-compliant sidewalks), and nonprofit public facility improvements.

Over five program years, 2020 to 2024, the Village has a strategy to prioritize proposed projects each of the five years that meet these high priorities. The plan identifies activities that the Village of Oak Park plans to undertake through direct action or provision of funding to other entities, with the lead agency for the Action Plan being the Administrative Division of the Development Customer Services Department of the Village of Oak Park, a general-purpose unit of municipal government. Additionally, the Village of Oak Park is also a member of the Cook County HOME Consortium and can potentially receive HOME Investment Partnership Program funds.

Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

The Village of Oak Park received $1,259,754 in CDBG-CV funds through the CARES-Act to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds were used to provide business assistance loans to Oak Park businesses, rental assistance, emergency shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, and public service supports to non-profit organizations. CDBG-CV funding went entirely to assist individuals of low- and moderate-income.

While the Village was successful in meeting many of its goals in PY 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact infrastructure development, causing delays and limitations in the process. The limited access to supplies, increased cost of the supplies that were available, and shortage in contractors resulted in an inability to fully expend funds and not meet timeliness requirements. Despite these challenges, Public Service, Public Facility Improvement, and Administration projects were able to spend down their allotment of funds.

The past performance of PY 2021 sub-recipients was evaluated in PY 2022, and agencies that underperformed were reported to the Community Development Citizen Advisory Committee (CDCAC), which makes funding-level recommendations to the Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees. These reports tend to make CDCAC members less likely to recommend a very high percentage of funding for such agencies. With 20,475 persons served with PY 2021 CDBG funds, the overall CDBG goals were exceeded.

In PY 2022, the Village allocated a relatively large amount of its CDBG funds to local non-profit subrecipients. The Village allocated $248,031 from the CDBG Program to fund 16 public service activities administered by various not-for-profit service providers and one handled by a Village department. Additionally, $75,000 in CDBG Administration funds were allocated to the Oak Park Regional Housing Center, $16,000 for the Oak Park Homeless Coalition, and $99,071 for facility improvements for UCP Seguin, Way Back Inn, and Y.E.M.B.A.

The Village received $1,539,187 in CDBG funds available in PY 2023, plus prior year returned funds, which will be used to further Con Plan objectives. The high-priority

activities, including Public Services, Affordable Housing, Infrastructure, Public Facility Improvements, and Code Enforcement, will receive special attention in PY 2023.

Overall, while the COVID-19 pandemic caused challenges and delays in infrastructure development, the Village was successful in meeting its goals in PY 2022 and exceeded its overall CDBG goals with PY 2022 funds. The Village's allocation of a relatively large amount of its CDBG funds to local non-profit subrecipients in PY 2022 shows a commitment to public service, and the prioritization of high-priority activities in PY 2023 indicates a continued focus on addressing the community's needs.

Coordination/Cooperation Between Agencies

The Village of Oak Park works collaboratively with public and private agencies to streamline the grant application and awarding process, reduce redundancy, and leverage resources to support local organizations. The Village is part of a funder collaboration group that aims to coordinate efforts to ensure services are not duplicated and needs are addressed effectively. The collaboration evaluates priorities and funding efforts in the community to provide the most coordinated funding structure that addresses the needs of the community, including persons experiencing homelessness (with an emphasis on chronically homeless individuals and families), families with children, veterans, unaccompanied youth, and persons at risk of homelessness.

The Village worked closely with sub-recipients and other service providers, including NAMI Metro Suburban and Thrive, to develop better coordination and collaboration to assist persons living with mental illness. The Village is also closely involved with Housing Forward, the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (Continuum of Care lead), and the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition, to develop a cohesive plan to end homelessness in the Village.

The Village's application process for 2023 CDBG Public Services focuses on funding priority needs of the community to encourage collaboration among community partners. The reporting and monitoring practices are unified to ensure clear and programmatic financial record-keeping, compliance, and transparency. By working collaboratively with other funding partners and agencies, the Village is able to identify clear and measurable outcomes that are requested by sub recipients to ensure effectiveness.

The goal of the collaboration is to provide a coordinated funding structure that addresses the needs of the community, with an emphasis on persons at risk of homelessness. Through these collaborative efforts, the Village is able to make the greatest impact with limited resources by providing a more streamlined and synchronized approach to addressing the needs of the community.

Citizen Participation

The Village of Oak Park started developing its PY 2023 Action Plan with the aim of identifying priority needs and engaging citizens, public agencies, and non-profit organizations. The process began in January 2023 with the publication of a Notice of

Federal Funding Availability in a newspaper and on social media. Two ads were also placed in the *Wednesday Journal* to advertise the mandatory Grants Workshop and encourage new non-profits to participate in CDBG funding opportunities. Over 55 participants attended the workshop, including eight new organizations that had not previously received CDBG funds. The Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC) held three hearings and conducted an in-depth review of each application. After the Commissioners collectively worked to determine funding recommendations they were presented to the Village President and Board of Trustees, and are now included in the Draft Action Plan. This Draft Action Plan was previously subject to a public notice and related public hearing and comment period, as published on June 21, 2023. The Village has revised the proposed PY2023 Action Plan as of July 12, 2023 – August 12, 2023 the Village of Oak Park Program Year (PY) 2023 Draft Annual Action Plan is available for public review and comment, the Plan can be reviewed during business hours Monday-Friday, effective July 12, to August 12, 2023, at the Oak Park Village Hall, Development Customer Services Department, 123 Madison Street; and on the Village Housing-Grants webpage https://www.oak-park.us/village-services/housing-programs/community-development-shelter-grants and at the Public Library, Main Branch, 834 Lake Street. Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking persons, as needed.

2. Expected Resources

The Village of Oak Park CDBG allocation for PY 2023 is $1,539,187, a 1% decrease from the PY 2022 allocation of $1,553,643. The Village will add $857,784 in the prior year's returned funds (funds that were previously returned by grant sub-recipients) for a PY 2023 CDBG amount of $2,396,971. Federal funding will leverage private, state, and local funds by enabling the Village of Oak Park to serve those with the greatest need at the highest capacity.

Every CDBG sub-recipient will be contributing private, local, state, and/or other federal funds to their respective activity. Additionally, federal funds will serve as funding for Village programs or service provider applications that require additional funding in order to have their program, project, or service meet a need in the community. The grant money provided by HUD will allow organizations and the Village to successfully meet the needs of the community's most vulnerable members. In PY 2021 the Village decided to de-obligate from the uncommitted Section 108 funds. For PY 2023, the Village will not receive Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program funds.

The total amount of CDBG funds obligated for public service activities must not exceed 15 percent of the annual grant allocation. The proposed PY 2023 funding amount for non-profit CDBG sub-recipients will be $230,878, which includes $12,000 allocated for the Oak Park Public Health Department, Farmer's Market's LINK Benefits program.

The total amount of CDBG funds obligated for administration activities must not exceed 20 percent of the annual grant allocation. The proposed PY 2023 funding amount for Administrative Activities is $307,837, which includes $60,000 for the

Oak Park Regional Housing Center, $40,000 for Housing Forward/Oak Park Coalition to End Homelessness, and $207,837 for the Village of Oak Park.

The proposed funding for Public Facility Improvements is $218,256. This includes public facility improvements for five (5) non-profit organizations, located in Oak Park and providing social services to Oak Park residents. Those organizations include UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, Y.E.M.B.A., Hephzibah Children's Association, Way Back Inn, and Thrive Counseling Center.

The remainder of the expected CDBG funding is proposed to be allocated as follows: $240,000 for Housing, including $75,000 for Code Enforcement. The Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation program will also begin the 2023 program year with $175,000 in repaid CDBG loans for its revolving loan fund. $1,400,000 for Infrastructure. Infrastructure will include alley improvements, water main line improvements, street improvements, and sidewalk and sidewalk ramp improvements, including ADA-compliant sidewalks.

For PY 2023, the Village will not receive Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program funds. In PY2021 the Village of Oak Park decided to de-obligate from the uncommitted Section 108 loan.

3. Annual Goals and Objectives

PY 2023 Priorities and Strategies

Through public participation and after consulting with community partners, annual funding allocation goals were determined and fell into six categories: public services, public infrastructure, public facility improvements, affordable and safe housing, homelessness assistance, and economic development.

- Public Services: Expanding availability and increasing access to public services is a continuing need for our community. The staff works with multiple area non-profits in order to address various barriers to availability and access. These services include but are not limited to, mental health, domestic violence, food provision, programs for persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities, homeless services, and child/youth programs.

- Public Infrastructure: Maintaining and improving the quality of the existing infrastructure is instrumental to ensuring that residents live in a safe, clean, and decent environment. Accessibility improvements are a large part of the work to be performed. Working with the Village's Public Works Department, including alley improvements, water main and line improvements, street improvements, sidewalk and sidewalk ramp improvements, and ADA-compliant sidewalks.

- Public Facility Improvements: Public facility upkeep is key in ensuring residents have access to safe, open, and decent facilities, and that special

needs populations are cared for. Non-profit agencies that own their facility are able to access grant funds for specific maintenance and rehabilitation needs.

- Affordable and Safe Housing: The Village of Oak Park aims to preserve and advance access to affordable housing. Oak Park's aging housing supply necessitates the need for the rehabbing of existing housing, occupied by both owners and renters. This priority also includes code enforcement, which similarly strives to ensure that properties are safe and sound.

- Homelessness Assistance: Support services to prevent homelessness and to assist those currently experiencing homelessness continue to be a community need. These services include but are not limited to, street outreach, prevention, rapid re-housing, and emergency shelter. Accomplishments and dollar amounts are listed under Public Service for CDBG. The Village will not receive ESG funds for PY 2023. The Housing Forward Homelessness Planning and Admin project is part of this Goal.

- Economic Development: Supporting equitable access to economic development continues to be a need for our community. Oak Park has recently deobligated from the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, which provided CDBG recipients with the ability to leverage their annual grant allocation to access low-cost, flexible financing for economic development, among other things. Staff is seeking methodologies for utilizing annual funding to help support economic development. This category also includes funding for the Village of Oak Park Grants Administration.

Additionally, Oak Park continues to work at addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. More residents are housing insecure than ever, experiencing ongoing challenges finding affordable housing, behavioral health supports, and other social services. Many of the nonprofit partners are overwhelmed and understaffed, and there is a continued shortage of qualified workers for all types of construction and human services jobs. In addition to supply chain problems and rapidly rising material costs, there is a continued delay in construction projects. As a result, achieving the goals in our Action Plan will continue to be challenging, specifically with our capital/construction projects.

All activities funded will primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons or households, either as a direct service or by making improvements in areas benefiting primarily low- and moderate-income persons.

4. Proposed CDBG Activities for PY 2023 – Funding

The proposed activities identified in the previous chart have been chosen by the Village to be implemented in PY 2023 to achieve the priorities, strategies, and goals listed in the Consolidated Plan.

PY 2023 CDBG Agency	Proposed Activity	Grant Amount
ADMINISTRATION Total (Capped at 20% of total award)		**$307,837.00**
Village of Oak Park (VOP)	VOP CDBG Administration	$ 207,837.00
Oak Park Regional Housing Center	Fair Housing Administration	$ 60,000.00
Housing Forward/OP Homeless Coalition	Homelessness Assistance Planning & Admin	$ 40,000.00
PUBLIC SERVICES Total (Capped at 15% of total award)		**$230,878.00**
Beyond Hunger	Direct Hunger Relief	$ 24,000.00
Community Support Services	Respite and Case Management	$ 12,000.00
Hephzibah Children's Association	Behavioral Health Services for Foster Children	$ 21,000.00
Housing Forward	Interim Housing Shelter	$ 32,000.00
Housing Forward	W.R.A.P.	$ 13,347.00
IWS Children's Clinic	Dental Care for Youth	$ 25,000.00
NAMI-Metro Suburban	Drop In Center	$ 11,000.00
New Moms, Inc.	Family Support	$ 18,500.00
North West Housing Partnership	Handyman Services for Seniors	$ 6,625.00
Our Future Reads	Literacy Program	$ 7,000.00
Sarah's Inn	Domestic Violence Services	$ 12,000.00
Easterseals	Parent Training and Education	$ 5,000.00
Way Back Inn	Substance Use Disorder Recovery Counseling	$ 10,406.00
Y.E.M.B.A.	Youth Mentoring	$ 21,000.00
VOP Public Health	Healthy Nutrition Incentives at Farmers Market	$ 12,000.00
PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS Total		**$218,256.00**
UCP Seguin Services	Public Facility Improvement	$ 46,800.00
Way Back Inn	Public Facility Improvement	$ 11,165.00
Y.E.M.B.A.	Public Facility Improvement	$ 10,000.00
Thrive Counseling Center	Public Facility Improvement	$ 50,000.00
Hephzibah Children's Association	Public Facility Improvement	$65,291.00
IWS Children's Clinic	Public Facility Improvement	$ 35,000.00
HOUSING Total		**$240,000.00**
VOP Housing Program	Lead Hazard Reduction	$ 50,000.00
VOP Housing Program	Small Rental Rehab Program	$ 50,000.00
VOP Housing Program	Project Implementation	$ 65,000.00
VOP Property Maintenance Program	Code Enforcement	$ 75,000.00
INFRASTRUCTURE Total		**$1,400,000.00**
VOP Public Works	ADA Sidewalks & Ramps	$ 400,000.00
VOP Public Works	Streets & Sidewalk Ramps	$ 200,000.00
VOP Public Works	Alleys	$ 700,000.00
VOP Public Works	Lead Water Lines	$ 100,000.00
GRAND TOTAL		**$2,396,971.00**

5. Geographic Distribution

The Village of Oak Park has identified priority areas for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding based on the percentage of low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons. An LMI census block group is one where 36.29% or more of the population have incomes of 80% or less of the Median Family Income (MFI). Fourteen of the Village's 53 census block groups qualify as LMI areas according to this criterion. The proposed Public Facilities Improvements projects are by UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, Hephzibah Children's Association, Thrive Counseling Center, IWS Children's Clinic, Y.E.M.B.A., and Way Back Inn. The Code Enforcement (Property Maintenance Inspections) activity will also be conducted in LMI areas.

The Village of Oak Park has identified priority areas for CDBG funding based on the percentage of LMI persons and areas of racial or ethnic concentration. The proposed Public Facilities Improvements projects and the Code Enforcement activity will be conducted in LMI areas. The Village also expects the Alley Improvement activity and/or the Street Improvement activity to be conducted in LMI areas that are also areas of racial concentration, and Property Maintenance Inspections may also be conducted in these areas. These efforts are in accordance with HUD regulations that allow exceptions for areas that meet the "upper quartile" criterion.

LMI Census Block Groups

Census Tract	Block Group	Number of LMI Persons	Universe of LMI Block Group	Percent of LMI Persons
8121	1	385	1000	38.50
8123.01	2	655	1805	36.29
8125	1	550	1145	48.03
8125	2	375	720	52.08
8125	3	380	785	48.41
8126	2	450	865	52.02
8126	3	470	1035	45.41
8128.01	1	1005	1935	51.94
8128.01	2	405	985	41.12
8128.02	3	520	1160	44.83
8130	1	300	680	44.12
8131	1	495	1000	49.50
8131	4	370	805	45.96
8132	4	330	845	39.05

Source: HUD

UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, Thrive, Hephzibah, IWS Children's Clinic, and Y.E.M.B.A. are agencies with proposed Public Facilities Improvements projects within an LMI Census Block Group. UCP Seguin is located in census tract 8131, block group 4; Thrive is located in census tract 8128.01, block group 1; Hephzibah is located in census tract 8123.01, block group 2; IWS Children's Clinic is located in census tract 8126, block group 2; and Y.E.M.B.A. is located in census tract 8125, block group 3.

Low- and Moderate-Income Areas

In Oak Park, African American residents comprised 19.8% of the population. Therefore, an area of racial concentration includes census tracts where the percentage of African American residents is 29.8% or higher. According to the latest American Community Survey five-year estimates, there are two census tracts that met the criteria for areas of racial concentration. These areas are:

- Census tract 8121 immediately to the north of census tract 8125 along the boundary of Chicago – 34.5%; and
- Census tract 8125 along the eastern boundary of Chicago in the central area of the Village – 31.6%.

There were no other areas of racial or ethnic concentration in the Village, as of the latest federal data.

6. Homeless Assistance Activities

In PY 2023, the Village will not receive Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program funds. More information regarding the Village's homelessness strategy can be found in the Consolidated Plan. Through CDBG funds, Housing Forward will provide two services that will assist persons experiencing homelessness: interim housing shelter and W.R.A.P. W.R.A.P., a new program with Housing Forward, is a comprehensive, personalized support and resource for individuals and families who are able to address the complex issues and challenges that often accompany homelessness and interfere with obtaining long-term housing stability. The team provides continuity of care across program areas from initial entry until a permanent destination is found. The team integration model is focused on areas of health, behavioral health, employment, income support, and other critical needs identified by the clients. Interim Housing provides individuals and families with accommodations for up to 90 days. Housing Forward maintains three destined housing facilities, totaling 70 beds. Additionally, Housing Forward is the fiscal agent of the Oak Park Coalition to End Homelessness and receives administration funds to assist with planning efforts to end homelessness in Oak Park.

The Village of Oak Park will continue to collaborate with the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County Continuum of Care in order to address the needs of homeless individuals and families in Oak Park. The Village regularly attends Continuum of Care Prevention Committee and West Suburban Council on Homelessness meetings.

7. Other Actions

Introduction

The Village of Oak Park plans to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs, foster and maintain affordable housing, reduce lead-based paint hazards, reduce the number of poverty-level families, develop institutional structure, and enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies.

Actions Planned to Address Obstacles to Meeting Underserved Needs

The Village of Oak Park faces a significant obstacle in meeting the needs of underserved communities due to limited financial resources. The cap on public service funding through CDBG is consistently lower than the amount needed to meet local goals, resulting in worthwhile projects being funded at lower levels. Additionally, municipalities often experience revenue reductions, further reducing available resources. The lack of available land for affordable housing construction and the limited availability of existing structures for purchase and rehabilitation also limits the Village's ability to expand affordable housing

To address these challenges, the Village collaborates with funding partners to reduce redundancy and streamline the grant application process. The goal is to leverage resources and ensure they are used efficiently in order to best support local organizations. The Village is also identifying new opportunities to increase the affordable housing inventory by coordinating with local agencies. The Administrative Division of the Development Customer Services Department is developing a replacement activity to meet economic development goals in line with the Consolidated Plan.

Overall, the Village of Oak Park is actively seeking solutions to overcome financial limitations and expand its capacity to serve underserved communities. Collaboration with funding partners and innovative approaches to affordable housing developments are key strategies for achieving this goal.

Actions Planned to Foster and Maintain Affordable Housing

Oak Park has been taking steps to maintain affordable housing through the use of CDBG funds to support housing rehabilitation programs. Although several policies that impact affordable housing are beyond the control of the Village government, they have implemented programs and initiatives to address barriers to affordable housing that can be supported by funds from different sources.

One such program is the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program, which provides federally funded home rehabilitation loans to low- to moderate-income Oak Park residents who own and live in single-family homes. The loans aim to improve the housing inventory of the Village by bringing structures into compliance with housing and building codes and eliminating health and safety hazards. The funds can also be used for weatherization and to provide accessibility for the disabled.

The Lead Hazard Reduction Grant program is primarily funded by CDBG and is also supplemented by a grant from Cook County called the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grant. This program aims to address the issue of lead poisoning by providing funding to identify and remediate lead hazards in homes.
The Small Rental Rehabilitation Housing Program is designed to help rental property owners rehabilitate their rental units. To be eligible for this program, the property must be a single-family detached rental dwelling or a multi-family rental building with fewer than eight units. The program provides forgivable loan funds to rental owners to correct code violations and serious housing quality deficiencies.

The owners must agree to rent 51% of their rental units to low- and moderate-income households at affordable rents.

Oak Park is taking steps to maintain and increase affordable housing through various programs and initiatives. The Village recognizes that affordable housing is critical to the sustainability of the community and is committed to addressing existing barriers to affordable housing. By collaborating with local agencies and implementing innovative solutions, the Village aims to ensure that all residents have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing.

Overcoming Barriers to Affordable Housing

Oak Park has been taking steps to maintain affordable housing through the use of CDBG funds to support housing rehabilitation programs. Although several policies that impact affordable housing are beyond the control of the Village government, they have implemented programs and initiatives to address barriers to affordable housing that can be supported by funds from different sources.

One such program is the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program, which provides federally funded home rehabilitation loans to low- to moderate-income Oak Park residents who own and live in single-family homes. The loans aim to improve the housing inventory of the Village by bringing structures into compliance with housing and building codes and eliminating health and safety hazards. The funds can also be used for weatherization and to provide accessibility for the disabled.

The Small Rental Rehabilitation Housing Program is designed to help rental property owners rehabilitate their rental units. To be eligible for this program, the property must be a single-family detached rental dwelling or a multi-family rental building with fewer than eight units. The program provides forgivable loan funds to rental owners to correct code violations and serious housing quality deficiencies. The owners must agree to rent 51% of their rental units to low- and moderate-income households at affordable rents.

The Village is committed to maintaining and increasing its stock of affordable housing through the implementation of these programs and other initiatives. They recognize that maintaining affordable housing is critical to the economic and social sustainability of the community. The Village is also working to identify new and innovative ways to increase affordable housing inventory by collaborating with local agencies to identify opportunities for development.

Oak Park is taking steps to maintain and increase affordable housing through various programs and initiatives. The Village recognizes that affordable housing is critical to the sustainability of the community and is committed to addressing existing barriers to affordable housing. By collaborating with local agencies and implementing innovative solutions, the Village aims to ensure that all residents have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing.

Actions to Evaluate and Reduce Lead Hazards

The Village of Oak Park is taking measures to reduce lead-based paint hazards in the

community, as all three of its ZIP codes have been identified as high-risk for pediatric blood lead poisoning by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The Village has an agreement with the IDPH to provide case management services for all children living in Oak Park. Public Health is also involved in public awareness and education campaigns, providing nursing lead case management and conducting environmental investigations when required.

The Lead Hazard Reduction Grant program is primarily funded by CDBG and is also supplemented by a grant from Cook County called the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grant. This program aims to address the issue of lead poisoning by providing funding to identify and remediate lead hazards in homes. The Village's Single-Family Rehabilitation (SFR) program and other housing projects funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) have adhered to HUD's requirements for lead hazard reduction. The SFR program will continue to incorporate lead hazard reduction in its activities for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied low- to moderate-income properties, using CDBG and Cook County funds.

Lead inspections and environmental reviews will be conducted on these activities. In addition to these efforts, the Village's Public Works Department will work to make water lines lead-free in 2023. These initiatives aim to mitigate the risk of lead exposure in Oak Park and promote the health and safety of its residents, particularly children.

Since the implementation of HUD's lead-based paint regulations in 2001, the Village's Single-Family Rehabilitation (SFR) program, and all other housing projects assisted with CDBG funding, have adhered to these requirements.

Housing Programs staff will continue to advise prospective loan recipients about lead-based paint issues and any required corrective action or construction. The SFR program will continue to incorporate lead hazard reduction in its applicable activities for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied LMI properties, using CDBG and Cook County dollars.

Staff will continue to keep current in asbestos and lead hazard reduction training opportunities, and in recruiting certified contractors to bid on this work. Village staff will also notify applicants who may receive CDBG funds of the requirements of lead-based paint hazard reduction and mandate compliance as a condition of funding housing activities. Activities will be closely monitored for adherence to the regulations.

The Village's process for lead paint hazard reduction will include hiring general contractors with licensed workers or subcontractors to perform the lead hazard reduction construction work. A specification-writing software system that includes lead reduction work is in place. If warranted, relocation assistance will be provided.

Lead inspections and environmental reviews will be conducted on the activities. The lead and general rehab specifications will be written and the jobs will be bid. Preconstruction meetings will be held and the work will be completed.

Actions to Reduce the Number of Poverty Level Families

To reduce the number of poverty-level families in The Village of Oak Park, a multi-pronged approach is necessary. The Village can make an impact by improving housing inventory, providing social services, creating employment opportunities, delivering public health services, and maintaining an excellent educational system. The programs run by the Village and its sub-recipients offer many social service programs in the Village to aid persons with incomes below the poverty level. For example, Housing Forward provides homelessness-preventative services that promote economic independence and create long-term change in the lives of persons experiencing homelessness.

The Village has an array of business services programs designed to enhance local business activity. The Village and the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation work on business retention and economic development expansion, including redeveloping vacant or underperforming commercial corridors. Developing a variety of businesses in Oak Park is critical to provide living wage jobs for a diverse population with multiple job skills and experiences.

Additionally, maintaining an excellent educational system is crucial to providing opportunities for upward mobility. The Village must work to ensure that all individuals are housed and healthy, with living wage employment available to them. Public health services, such as case management services for all children that live in Oak Park, are also necessary. The Village has an agreement with the Illinois Department of Public Health to provide such services.

The Village of Oak Park Single-Family Rehabilitation (SFR) program and all other housing projects assisted with CDBG funding have adhered to HUD's requirements. The SFR program will continue to incorporate lead hazard reduction in its activities for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied LMI properties, using CDBG and Cook County dollars. Lead inspections and environmental reviews will be conducted on the activities. Beyond the Village Housing Programs unit, through the Public Works Department, the Village will work to make water lines lead-free in PY 2023.

Overall, the multi-pronged approach provided by the programs run by the Village and its sub-recipients has the ability to reduce the number of households with incomes below the poverty level. However, it is critical to continue developing businesses in Oak Park to provide living wage jobs for a diverse population. By improving the housing inventory, providing social services, creating employment opportunities, delivering public health services, and maintaining an excellent educational system, the Village can work to reduce the number of poverty-level families in Oak Park.

Housing

Oak Park has been taking steps to maintain affordable housing through the use of CDBG funds to support housing rehabilitation programs. Although several policies that impact affordable housing are beyond the control of the Village government, they have implemented programs and initiatives to address barriers to affordable

housing that can be supported by funds from different sources.

One such program is the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program, which provides federally funded home rehabilitation loans to low- to moderate-income Oak Park residents who own and live in single-family homes. The loans aim to improve the housing inventory of the Village by bringing structures into compliance with housing and building codes and eliminating health and safety hazards. The funds can also be used for weatherization and to provide accessibility for the disabled.

The Lead Hazard Reduction Grant program is primarily funded by CDBG and is also supplemented by a grant from Cook County called the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grant. This program aims to address the issue of lead poisoning by providing funding to identify and remediate lead hazards in homes.

The Small Rental Rehabilitation Housing Program is designed to help rental property owners rehabilitate their rental units. To be eligible for this program, the property must be a single-family detached rental dwelling or a multi-family rental building with fewer than eight units. The program provides forgivable loan funds to rental owners to correct code violations and serious housing quality deficiencies. The owners must agree to rent 51% of their rental units to low- and moderate-income households at affordable rents.

Oak Park is taking steps to maintain and increase affordable housing through various programs and initiatives. The Village recognizes that affordable housing is critical to the sustainability of the community and is committed to addressing existing barriers to affordable housing. By collaborating with local agencies and implementing innovative solutions, the Village aims to ensure that all residents have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing.

Social Services

The Village supports other important services by allocating PY 2023 CDBG Public Services category dollars to local social service agencies.

The CDBG sub recipients offer many social service programs in the Village to aid persons with incomes below the poverty level. For example, the Village increases family self-sufficiency by funding New Moms, Beyond Hunger, and Housing Forward, which prevents, eliminates, or ameliorates homelessness.

The CDBG sub-recipients provide a variety of supportive services such as employment readiness, job placement, substance use disorder treatment, case management, education (G.E.D.), daycare, behavioral health services, independent living skills education, respite, case management, domestic violence supports, and the provision of basic needs. In addition, Housing Forward provides homelessness-preventative services that promote emotional and economic independence and create long-term change in the lives of persons experiencing homelessness.

The Village Health Department is a state-certified local health department that is responsible for protecting the community's health from preventable death, disease, illness, and injury. The Health Department identifies community health concerns and potential epidemics, develops health policies, enforces local ordinances, and links residents to a wide range of direct services. Programs include health education, prevention services, emergency preparedness, case management, counseling, and referral to other community health partners. The Health Department often provides consultation and referral services for low-income and uninsured residents. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Department was invaluable to the residents and businesses of Oak Park.

The Village's Public Health Department administers the CDBG-funded Healthy Nutrition Incentives project. This program provides incentives for LINK card users to purchase farm-fresh healthy products from the Oak Park Farmers Market.

Economic Development

The Village initiated an effort to promote new commercial development to ease the reliance on property taxes. Recognizing that property taxes can increase the cost of housing and affect the Village's ability to provide affordable housing.

The Village has an array of business services programs designed to enhance local business activity. Examples of these programs include the Village's efforts to increase the number of minority- and women-owned businesses in Oak Park. Moreover, the Village and the Village-funded Oak Park Economic Development Corporation both work on business retention and economic development expansion. The Oak Park Economic Development Corporation works diligently to grow the Village's economy, specifically by working to redevelop vacant or underperforming commercial corridors. The creation of good jobs locally will increase employment opportunities, giving low-income residents a chance to increase their incomes.

The Village of Oak Park no longer has a Section 108 loan through HUD. During PY 23, the Administrative Division of Development Customer Services Department, by way of community outreach, are developing a replacement activity to ensure the Economic Development goals, in accordance with the Con Plan, are met.

Developing a variety of businesses in Oak Park is critical to providing living-wage jobs for a diverse population with multiple jobs skills and experiences. Economic Development is accomplished by utilizing many different funding sources.

Actions Planned to Develop Institutional Structure

The Village of Oak Park works to increase institutional structure throughout the year by maintaining contact with partner agencies, offering referrals for funding and training opportunities, and participating in various coalitions and associations. Village staff participate on the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition to make homelessness rare, brief, and a one-time occurrence. The Village staff also participate in the National Community Development Association and a coalition of funders to better coordinate funding and leverage funds to collectively fund services that meet community needs and provide measurable outcomes. The Administrative

Development Customer Services Department of the Village of Oak Park works with the network of local organizations to carry out the Action Plan.

The Village contracts with non-profit agencies to deliver the community programs and services outlined in the draft Action Plan, and uses its annual budget process to coordinate and allocate funding. The Village's governing body, the Village Board of Trustees, receives public input from the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC) regarding the allocation of CDBG funds. Non-profit CDBG subrecipients are monitored based on a risk analysis, and previous performance is reported by Village staff to the CDCAC when agencies apply for funding.

The Village emphasizes coordination among agencies in the development and implementation of housing and community development programs and services to maximize the use of limited resources. The Village is committed to the close coordination of all of its programs with other agencies at a variety of levels. The Village's multi-pronged approach provided by the programs run by the Village and its subrecipients have the ability to reduce the number of households with incomes below the poverty level.

- ***Local Level:*** The Village participates in the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition, a local body with the purpose of helping persons experiencing homelessness and those at risk. The Village maintains relationships with private entities and local economic development agencies. The Village's primary means of coordination with non-profit partners is through yearly contracts with grant subrecipients. The proposal process, whereby the Village allocates funds to community partners, as well as the ensuing agreements, gives the Village a clear view of the provided services and related costs. The Village's extensive project performance review process also enhances coordination

- ***Regional level:*** The Village participates in the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (Continuum of Care lead agency). The Village also participates in a group of area funders in order to better coordinate services to non-profits and to increase the impact of west Cook County grants funding efforts.

- ***National level:*** The Village is affiliated with and implements best practices from the National Community Development Association and other organizations that support local governments.

Actions Planned to Enhance Coordination Between Public and Private Housing and Social Service Agencies

The Village of Oak Park is focused on enhancing coordination and collaboration between public and private housing. As identified through the Consolidated Plan consultation process, good coordination and collaboration were recognized as key priorities for the Village and its partners. The Village is taking steps to ensure that CDBG public service applicants report on their coordination with other social service organizations throughout the community. If the applicants do not have established

connections in the community, they outline plans and timelines for implementing a collaborative process. This approach aims to improve collaboration among awarded agencies and allows the Village to identify other areas for additional coordination.

Many of the funded agencies participate in the Continuum of Care and work closely with other non-profits to identify opportunities for persons in the community. The Village of Oak Park is committed to increasing community partnerships and investing in economic and neighborhood development.

The Village's commitment to enhancing coordination and collaboration is evident in its effort to improve community partnerships and invest in economic and neighborhood development. The Village is working with its partners to develop a coordinated approach to addressing issues related to public and private housing. The Village also recognizes the importance of collaboration in maximizing the use of limited resources.

The Village's focus on collaboration is expected to have a positive impact on the community by improving access to services and resources for residents. The Village is working to ensure that all public service applicants have established connections in the community and are working collaboratively with other organizations to address the needs of residents. By improving coordination and collaboration among its partners, the Village hopes to create a more interconnected approach to addressing issues related to public and private housing.

The Village recognizes the importance of collaboration in maximizing the use of limited resources and improving access to services and resources for residents. Through its continued efforts to improve community partnerships and invest in economic and neighborhood development, the Village hopes to create a more cohesive approach to addressing the needs of its residents.

8. Program Specific Requirements

Grant staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with all program specific requirements, as well as for program monitoring and reporting. In addition, staff ensures that federal cross-cutting requirements (such as Davis-Bacon and Related Acts) are met. A vital way to ensure compliance is by monitoring.

Monitoring of Activities

The Village of Oak Park has standards and procedures to evaluate its own performance in meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the Action Plan, as well as ensuring the adequate performance of subrecipients each program year.

Administrative Monitoring

The Village reports its performance in the Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The CAPER contains a summary of program year accomplishments, the status of activities taken to fulfill the strategic plan component of the Consolidated Plan, and an evaluation of progress made to address identified priority needs and objectives during the program year.

Subrecipient Monitoring

The Village of Oak Park has established a comprehensive compliance and monitoring system for its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) subrecipients. The monitoring process is multi-layered and covers project/program management, internal controls, beneficiary and service review, and financial records and tracking. The monitoring procedures are based on the guidelines set forth in the HUD monitoring handbooks and follow a risk-analysis approach.

Technical assistance and additional meetings are provided for subrecipients as needed or requested to ensure compliance and timely expenditure. Village staff also tracks the progress of projects and communicates directly with subrecipients if inconsistencies arise. Subrecipients are also reminded to spend and request funds in a timely manner throughout each program year.

Quarterly and annual reports are required for subrecipients to draw down funds. The reports require extensive documentation of project progress and beneficiaries, as well as items to be reported quarterly and annually in the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS). IDIS is a HUD-administered financial and programmatic grants information management system that has been mandatory since 1998.

If subrecipients fail to meet their target goals, they are required to provide a detailed reason. The reports also require subrecipients to list all other funding sources for the project. By analyzing these reports, the Village can assess how it is meeting the goals and objectives listed in each Action Plan more effectively and frequently.

In summary, the Village of Oak Park ensures responsible evaluation and has established a rigorous monitoring system for its CDBG subrecipients. The system ensures compliance with HUD guidelines and helps the Village assess its progress towards achieving its goals and objectives. Through the technical assistance provided to subrecipients, the Village helps them spend and request funds in a timely manner.