



Oak Park

# ANNUAL

Consolidated  
Performance  
& *Evaluation Report*

*October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022*

Village of Oak Park  
**CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT  
 (CAPER) FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2021  
 October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022**

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## Second Year CAPER

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for program year two (PY 2021) of the Consolidated Plan includes Narrative Responses to CAPER questions that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grantees, such as the Village of Oak Park, must respond to each year in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations. The program year ran from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022.

### GENERAL

#### Introduction

The Village operates under the Village Manager form of government. An elected legislative body of a President and six Trustees hire a professional Manager to oversee the day to day administration of government programs and services. The President and Board approve all HUD-funded projects. The Development Customer Services Department is the designated agency administering HUD funds on behalf of the Village. The Village currently receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement funds and is a member of the Cook County HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Consortium. In Program Year 2021, the Village of Oak Park chose to de-obligate from, Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.

The Village’s Development Customer Services Department oversees building permits, inspections, code enforcement, business services and licensing, planning, historic preservation, zoning, housing, parking and the aforementioned federal grants. This management structure is designed to streamline Village Hall processes and enhance customer service to deliver quicker response times and a speedy resolution of issues that can affect a property improvement project or investment opportunity.

The Development Customer Services Department consults with a number of agencies throughout the year, including the: Continuum of Care members, community representatives, subrecipients, and public service agencies. These agencies provide input into the Department’s plans for HUD funding in on-going consultations and collaborations.

#### Goals & Accomplishments

##### 1. PY 2021 Goals and Accomplishments

Table A below provides information on PY 2021 Oak Park CDBG activities and includes goal accomplishment totals and notes.

**Table A: PY 2021 Consolidated Plan/Action Plan Goal Descriptions – Summary of Accomplishments Table**

1	Goal Name	Public Services	Goal	Actual	Notes
	Goal Description	Expanding the availability of and increasing access to needed services is a key goal. Services include, but are not limited to, mental health services, fair housing, and emergency food provision and nutrition services. The Village also determined COVID-19 as a highest priority to prevent,	21,045 persons	25,633 persons	Goal exceeded by 22%

VILLAGE OF OAK PARK PY 2021 CAPER

		prepare for, and respond to as well as to facilitate assistance to eligible persons economically impacted by COVID-19.			
2	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Public Infrastructure</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Creating livable communities through improvements to public infrastructure. Maintaining and improving the quality of Oak Park's existing infrastructure is instrumental to ensuring that residents live in a safe, clean, and decent environment.	2,500 persons	500 persons	Goal at 20%
3	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Oak Park aims to support services that prevent homelessness and to assist those currently experiencing homelessness. These services include, but are not limited to, homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, street outreach and HMIS.	Facilitate assistance to persons impacted by homelessness	3,325 persons	Facilitated by Housing Forward
4	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	The Village of Oak Park aims to maintain and improve affordable housing, both renter-occupied and owner-occupied. The highest priorities were the Small Rental Rehab Program, the Single-Family Rehab Loan Program, and code enforcement. The Small Rental Rehabilitation Program increases affordability for renters in multi-family buildings having 7 or fewer units, and 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 condition.	8 Rehab housing units	4 housing unit	Goal at 50%
5	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Public Facilities</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Maintaining and improving the quality of Oak Park's existing public facilities is instrumental to ensuring that residents have access to safe and accessible facilities.	17 persons	29 persons	Goal exceeded by 70%
6	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Economic development will promote the vitality of Oak Park's economy in depressed areas of the community. Fostering growth in these areas will, in turn, provide greater opportunities for the Village's low-and moderate-income residents. The Oak Park Section 108 Loan Program is a business loan fund focused on the expansion of businesses.	Facilitate loans to eligible businesses supporting a National Objective	0 applicants	See housing section for comments.
7	<b>Goal Name</b>	<b>Administration and Planning</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Goal Description</b>	Administration of the CDBG Program by Village staff, homelessness assistance administration and planning, and fair housing administration.	Does not report	N/A	N/A

**2. Affordable Housing Summary**

*Single Family Housing Rehab (SFR) Program/Lead Hazard Reduction*

In PY 2021, there were 7 SFR activities completed (Rehab and Lead Reduction) within 4 households. The households assisted a mix of low-moderate-income household.

Funds spent/loaned - \$88,439 in Revolving Loan funds

Grant Funds spent - \$34,610 for lead-based paint hazard reduction

Housing goals were not met in PY 2021. The Village of Oak Park's PY 2021 Action Plan goal was to rehab 8 housing units and 4 housing unit rehabilitations was completed, utilizing 2 CDBG funded programs; SFR Rehab and Lead Reduction. Workforce and supply shortages caused major delays in this program. The Housing department has been working with the Communications department to grow community participation.

### **3. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing:**

In 2010, the Village of Oak Park approved a newly conducted Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study for Oak Park. Oak Park is a leader in fair housing and diversity as evidenced by historic programs that were enacted in the 1970s to promote racial and economic integration. The following are observations to consider, based on current data, to eliminate any new potential impediments to fair housing in Oak Park:

Minority households and other members of the protected classes have difficulty securing affordable housing in Oak Park; there is an inadequate supply of handicapped accessible housing in Oak Park; members of the protected classes are under-represented on appointed citizen boards and commissions; affordable housing developers don't have access to local HOME Program funds; any prospective developer of new single-room occupancy (SRO) units would require a parking variance for their project, resulting in the need for a public hearing; more than half of the housing complaints filed in Oak Park involved rental transactions; only one of the seven Oak Park CTA transit stations is handicapped-accessible; rental real estate advertisements in local newspapers that prohibit or limit pets may discourage persons with service animals from considering these units; and mortgage loan denials and high-cost lending disproportionately affect minority applicants.

In response to the findings above, Oak Park organized and is carrying out an Action Plan to best address the concerns. The actions that are being undertaken are found in the Analysis of Impediments document. These actions are being carried out through an in-house staff Fair Housing Action Plan Initiative Problem Statement, which identifies potential problems, action items, staff involved in the steps to resolution, and timelines for carrying out the action items.

In addition to the above suggestions, Oak Park continues ongoing actions to encourage fair housing. One specific component of Oak Park's fair housing and diversity efforts involves investigation, which is the monitoring and enforcement mechanism for the provision of the Fair Housing Ordinance and diversity policy of the Village. The Oak Park Community Relations Department conducts thorough investigations into charges of racial discrimination brought by persons seeking housing in Oak Park. Conciliation meetings are conducted when necessary and records are maintained of all case files. If complaints are received, rental market-housing tests are initiated by the Village to ascertain that the Fair Housing Ordinance is being followed.

In January 2013, the Village hired HOPE Fair Housing as a fair housing testing coordinator. HOPE Fair Housing had previously conducted hundreds of rental, sales, insurance and mortgage lending tests. Over the summer and fall of 2013, HOPE Fair Housing conducted several paired tests. The testing results showed evidence of discrimination based on race and disability.

HOPE recommended an extensive fair housing training program for building owners and managers, future testing after the training, promotion of the Community Relations Commission and complaint process, and utilization of customer service reporting for building owners so that they can ensure agents are treating renters equally. Additionally, HOPE has utilized the

Community Relations Commission complaint process to specifically address the reasonable accommodation testing results. In response, the Village created the Fair Housing Task Force, comprised of community members and leaders. The task force focused on improvement in three key areas: enforcement of existing laws and ordinances, community education, and oversight for housing-related agencies in Oak Park. The Village feels that it is making an excellent effort to encourage compliance with Fair Housing laws by funding the Oak Park Regional Housing Center at a high level each year. In PY 2021, this agency received \$122,500 in CDBG funds, and even more funding from Village units besides CDBG Programs.

Educational programs were conducted and focused on community relations and diversity for realtors, educators, school staff, building owners, building managers, Village staff and representatives from community groups. Specific neighborhood problems were addressed and block conflicts were facilitated.

#### *Oak Park Regional Housing Center's Fair Housing Outreach and Administration Program*

For PY 2021, the Oak Park Regional Housing Center (Housing Center) received \$122,500 in CDBG administration and public service funds to partner as the Village's Fair Housing Program provider. This program promoted long-term racial diversity in Oak Park's rental housing market through counseling, outreach, and affirmative marketing. During PY 2021, the Housing Center assisted 3,723 persons.

The Housing Center was established in 1972 for the purpose of promoting Oak Park as a community that welcomes integration and to act as a placement agent for renter households seeking non-traditional moves. Since its founding, it has encouraged home seekers to make pro-integrative moves, to eliminate discrimination, and to promote open housing opportunities in previously segregated communities in the region.

#### *Oak Park Residence Corporation*

The Oak Park Residence Corporation was founded in 1966 in cooperation with the Oak Park Housing Authority, the Village of Oak Park, and the State Housing Board. The 1973 Village of Oak Park Housing Task Force recommended that the Oak Park Residence Corporation change its focus to buying and rehabilitating multi-family buildings. In 1975, the Oak Park Residence Corporation began purchasing multi-family buildings.

The Oak Park Residence Corporation continued to collaborate with the Village and the Housing Center to promote fair housing initiatives in Oak Park, and its management practices are in keeping with the Village's policy of upgrading housing stock and promoting racial diversity. By investing in the purchase, rehabilitation and management of large rental buildings, the Oak Park Residence Corporation has helped preserve the quality of housing in the Village.

#### **4. Other Actions in Strategic Plan or Action Plan taken to address obstacles to meet underserved needs.**

The primary obstacle in the past to meeting the needs of underserved persons was the difficulty of identifying and supporting the greatest needs in Oak Park. This was addressed through the Village's Consolidated (Con) Plan development process, that occurs every five years. The most recent for being the 2021-2024 Con Plan (and the PY 2021 Action Plan). The Con Plan was the primary vehicle to serve low-to moderate-income persons in the Village of Oak Park. This Con Plan provided a strategy to determine the needs in the Village, and to distribute federal funding to the areas and persons affected the persons in the community. The 2021 program year was the second year of the 2021-2024 Con Plan. For PY 2021, these chosen Priorities provided

direction for the distribution of Federal funds to best meet the needs of the underserved in the community. The Priorities reflect the needs in Oak Park, as determined through the participatory process, data and studies, survey results, and expertise of the participating agents.

In Program Year (PY) 2021, the Village of Oak Park received \$1,653,543 in entitlement funds. The amount of CDBG funds obligated for public service activities must not exceed 15 percent and for administration must not exceed 20 percent of the annual grant allocation.

The Village chose to allocate the full 15 percent of funds to public service large to local non-profit subrecipients to help support the needs of the Oak Park community. In the 2021 Program Year, an allocation of \$248,031 from the CDBG Program funded 15 public service activities administered by various not-for-profit service providers and one Village department. Additionally, the Village allocated \$80,000 in CDBG Administration funds to the Oak Park Regional Housing Center and \$11,000 to Housing Forward for the Oak Park Homeless Coalition. These projects ended up supporting the growth and well-being of teenage and young-adult parents; assisting troubled parents; helping persons with physical, mental and developmental disabilities and their caregivers; assisting survivors of domestic violence; feeding the hungry; improving nutrition of low-income persons; increasing housing counseling and fair housing services; expanding homeless assistance, including job readiness; providing case management to persons living in low-income housing; assisting seniors; and providing dental care for low-income youth.

In addition, an allocation of \$38,862 from the CDBG Program funded a facility improvement activity administered by 2 not-for-profit service providers to improve two group homes, UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago and the Way Back Inn.

In PY 2021, there were Single-Family Rehabilitation Program activities and Lead Hazard Reduction activities that were funded through CDBG, all of which improved Oak Park housing stock inhabited by low to moderate income persons and met the needs of underserved persons.

Finally, to facilitate better community awareness about what programs and services are available to underserved persons within the community, the Village posted important information on the Federal Grants page of its website, and advertised the availability of the PY 2021 grant applications in a local newspaper and social media, as well as sending this information to all persons on the community development mailing list.

## **5. Leveraging Resources**

Oak Park leverages its formula grant funds with a number of other local, state, federal and private resources. Each CDBG subrecipient reports the amount of other funding leveraged for the activity undertaken. Oak Park also requires proportional matching funds to cover services provided to other communities' beneficiaries when subrecipients provide regional services.

In PY 2021, the Village did not receive Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program funds due to a change in the funding formula. HUD informed the Village of Oak Park that an ESG would not be provided, and the allocation would be shifted to the State of Illinois to disburse to non-profits. Though ESG funds have not been allocated to the Village of Oak Park, it is possible that the funds could be allocated to the Village in future years if the funding formula were to change again. Historically, the Village allocated funds to two organizations: Housing Forward and the Alliance to End Homelessness. The Village of Oak Park has shown support by requesting that the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) fund Village ESG recipients at the same level as if Oak Park had received the ESG funding from HUD. The ESG program

provides funding to: (1) engage homeless individuals and families living on the street; (2) improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families; (3) help operate these shelters; (4) provide essential services to shelter residents, (5) rapidly rehouse homeless individuals and families; and (6) prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless.

## **Managing the Process**

*Actions taken during the last year to ensure compliance with program and comprehensive planning requirements*

Ensuring compliance with program and planning requirements is an ongoing activity for the Village of Oak Park. The Village followed HUD rules and regulations while administering the CDBG Program. HUD performed their annual financial timeliness test on all CDBG Grantees in late August 2021 and at that time, the Village did not meet the requirements for Program Year 2021. The Village has until August 2, 2023 to meet the timeliness standard. The Village is working with HUD to rectify and spenddown the unused funds beginning this Program Year 2022 to ensure compliance moving forward.

The Village continued its Subrecipient monitoring efforts in PY 2021 by checking all CDBG Subrecipients for compliance with HUD rules, regulations and timeliness of expenditure requirements. Compliance was checked through examination of submittals of requested documentation including billing and required reports, and also by considering Village-Subrecipient communication and meetings throughout the program year. The HUD-recommended risk assessment approach to monitoring was used by the Village. Each Subrecipient submitted quarterly reports describing activities of the previous quarter, as well as a final annual report which summarized all the accomplishments and progress throughout the year. The reports were required in order to drawdown funds.

The monitoring standards and procedures used by the Village of Oak Park followed the standards and procedures as set forth in HUD monitoring handbooks, guidelines, and technical assistance publications.

## **Citizen Participation**

*The PY 2021 Action Plan and the PY 2021 CAPER*

The development of the Village of Oak Park 2021 Action Plan began on April 7, 2021 when a Notice of Federal Funding Availability was published in the *Wednesday Journal* newspaper. In addition, all agency representatives on the Housing & CDBG Programs mailing list were sent a notice with all of the details. After soliciting applications, the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC) held a series of hearings and conducted an in-depth review of each application. A notice of meetings was published in the *Wednesday Journal* newspaper. On April 17, 2021, the first of three public meetings were held by the CDCAC. Then, two more public meetings were held: April 29 and May 7, 2021.

The Village of Oak Park CDCAC reviewed proposals, heard applicant presentations and made funding recommendations to the President and Board of Trustee for the Village's PY 2021 CDBG entitlement funds. All of these recommendations were accepted. The Village Board then released the draft PY 2021 Annual Action Plan on June 21, 2021, for a 30-day public comment period that began June 23, 2021. The Notice of Document Availability for the draft PY 2021 Action Plan was published in the *Wednesday Journal* on June 23, 2021, and was advertised on

the Village website, with the 30-day comment period running from June 23, 2021 to the close of business on July 23, 2021. No comments from the public were received during this period.

The Village of Oak Park had two substantial amendments for the period of PY 2021. The first was in the amount of \$278,500 and was allocated from Program Year 2019 returned funds. The Village of Oak Park Public Works had identified three projects to utilize these funds. Those projects are as follows: 1) An additional \$26,000 granted to the already approved \$400,000 PW Fiscal Year 2022/CDBG PY 2021 Public Works Alley's Project, increasing the total to \$426,000; 2) \$97,500 granted to the PW FY 2022/CDBG PY 2021 Sewer and Roadway Project. The project replaces the failing combined sewer main and rebuilds the existing deteriorated roadway on Kenilworth from Lake Street to Ontario St which is along the edge of a Low-/Mod-income area. The total construction cost is \$650,995.60 with a 15% CDBG contribution; and 3) \$155,000 granted to the PW FY 2022/CDBG PY 2021 Roadway, Lighting and Landscaping Project. The project resurfaces the deteriorated roadway, improves crossings for pedestrians for safety concerns, replaces older street lights with new LED lighting, adds landscaped medians to slow traffic, and enhances the neighborhood with landscaping and decorative elements. Forest and Ontario are along the edge of a Low/Mod-income area. The total construction cost is \$787,202 with a 20% CDBG contribution.

On April 13, 2022, notice was given of a proposed substantial amendment to the Program Year 2021 Action Plan for a revised scope of work for the Village of Oak Park's Public Works Infrastructure projects, Alleys, Street Resurfacing, and Sewer Project. A legal ad was placed in the *Wednesday Journal* newspaper. The proposed substantial amendment was available for public review and comment from April 13, 2022 to close of business on May 13, 2022. No comments were received.

The second substantial amendment identified two projects: 1) An amount of \$136,000 was allocated from Program Year 2020 returned funds. The Village of Oak Park Public Works had identified additional Low-to-Moderate Income areas to complete street resurfacing. This \$136,000 was added to the \$400,000 originally allocated at the beginning of the program year for a total of \$536,000; and 2) On June 21, 2022 the Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees approved a release of mortgage in the amount of \$135,663.00, to the Oak Park Residence Corporation at 7 Van Buren Street, Oak Park, Illinois. The mortgage was scheduled for repayment on October 25, 2024, after Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Revolving Loan Funds were used to mortgage the property in October 2004. Funds utilized for this mortgage was set aside by the Village for the improvement of the multi-family buildings by the Oak Park Residence Corporation (OPRC) and if repaid, the funds would go back into the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) dedicated for the OPRC's use for subsequent projects. Since the funds were used for an eligible CDBG program and population, HUD does not require that the Village request re-payment of the loan.

On August 17, 2022, notice was given of a proposed substantial amendment to the Program Year 2021 Action Plan for a revised scope of work for the Village of Oak Park's, Public Works Infrastructure Projects and the Release of Mortgage for 7 Van Buren. A legal ad was placed in the *Wednesday Journal* newspaper. The proposed substantial amendment was available for public review and comment from August 17, 2022 to 5 p.m. September 16, 2022. No comments were received.

## Furthering Consolidated Plan Objectives

The amount of PY 2021 Federal funds available was \$1,653,543 in CDBG, plus \$945,167 in returned funds, all used in accordance with Action Plan objectives. The amount of funds used for returned funds includes the two substantial amendments.

## Geographic Distribution and Location of Expenditures

### *Geographic Distribution*

Priority CDBG funding areas in the Village of Oak Park include areas where the percentage of low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons is 36.29% or higher. While the general rule is that an area benefit activity must serve an area where the concentration of LMI persons is at least 51% of the total population within the geographical boundary, Section 570.208(a)(ii) of the HUD regulations allows the "exception criteria," also referred to as the "upper quartile."

A grantee qualifies for this exception when less than one quarter of the populated block groups in its jurisdictions contain 51% or more LMI persons. HUD assesses the grantee's census block groups to determine whether a grantee qualifies to use this exception and identifies the alternative percentage the grantee may use instead of 51% for the purpose of qualifying activities under the LMI Benefit Area category. HUD uses the following steps in computing the upper quartile for a given community:

- Identifies the total number of block groups in the grantee's jurisdiction;
- Subtracts the block groups with zero persons to determine the net number of block groups in the jurisdiction;
- Arranges the remaining block groups in descending order, based on LMI residents in the block group;
- Computes the last block group in the upper quartile by multiplying the net number of block groups by 25% ; and
- Applies the "exception criteria" if the percentage of LMI persons in the last census block group in the top quartile is less than 51%.

HUD determines the lowest proportion a grantee may use to qualify an area for this purpose and advises the grantee accordingly. Oak Park, as an exception jurisdiction, has been allowed 36.29%.

These areas also include areas of racial and ethnic concentration where the percentage of a specific racial or ethnic group is at least 10 percentage points higher than the Village's rate overall. The following narrative describes the characteristics of these areas.

### *Low-and Moderate-Income Areas*

The following table presents information regarding low and moderate income (LMI) persons in Oak Park. LMI persons, as determined by HUD, have incomes at or below 80% of the median family income (MFI). In fairly recent estimates, HUD determined that there were 13,580 LMI persons in Oak Park, equivalent to 26.34% of the population for whom this rate is determined.

HUD defines an LMI census block group in the Village of Oak Park as one in which 36.29% or more of the population have incomes of 80% or less of MFI. According to these criteria, 14 of the Village’s 53 census block groups qualify as LMI areas.

**Table B: LMI Census Block Groups**

<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Block Group</b>	<b>Number of LMI Persons</b>	<b>Universe of LMI</b>	<b>Percent of LMI Persons</b>
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 is an agency with a Public Facilities Improvements project at one Oak Park sites that is in an LMI area – census tract 8125, block group 1.

*Concentrations of LMI Persons and Minority Persons*

Eight Oak Park census tracts contained block groups identified as LMI areas. 2 of these LMI block groups were also areas of racial concentration. These areas were census tracts 8121 and 8125.

1 UCP Seguin Facility Improvement activity location was in areas of racial concentration that were also LMI areas. One group home was in census tract 8125, block group 1.

The above narrative covered Low- and Moderate-Income Areas (LMA) CDBG activities. With regard to Low-to-Moderate Client (LMC) CDBG activities, many clients served live in locations that were in areas of racial concentration and/or were LMI areas.

**Institutional Structure**

*Actions taken during the last year to overcome gaps in institutional structures and enhance coordination*

Some gaps exist in the Oak Park institutional structure. The coordination of local partnerships and networks has enabled the Village of Oak Park to reduce gaps. Village staff works throughout the year to increase institutional structure, both within the Village and with our partner agencies. Staff maintains contact with partner agencies throughout the year, offering referrals for funding and training opportunities. Staff also attends relevant training and conferences on all aspects of grant and project management.

The Village government landscape is shared with Oak Park Township, School Districts 97 and 200, the Park District of Oak Park, the Oak Park Library, and the Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township. These governmental units meet to coordinate their plans and programs. While the Village delivered many services, the Village also contracted with the non-profit sector to deliver services.

The Village participated in Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County (Continuum of Care lead agency) meetings throughout the program year. The Village also collaborated with neighboring municipalities in several efforts. Along with the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation, the Village continued to join forces with a group of area funders in order to better coordinate services to non-profits and to increase the impact of west Cook County grant funding efforts.

The Village participated, in and supported financially, the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition, a local body that focuses to make homelessness rare, brief, and one time. Participants include, but are not limited to, persons with lived experience, non-profits, Oak Park Township, Oak Park Housing Authority, Oak Park Residence Corporation, the Oak Park Public Library, the Park District of Oak Park and the local school districts.

Many of the Village's community partners received funding from a variety of sources. The Village has also identified new and innovative ways to increase the affordable housing stock by becoming a member of the Cook County HOME Consortium.

Strong links were maintained with the private sector through the Village's liaison membership on the Board of Directors of the Oak Park-River Forest Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Oak Park Special Service Area, the Business District Area Liaison Council, the Oak Park Area Visitors Bureau and individual business districts.

Finally, as part of the PY 2021 budget process, the Village Board received input from the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC) on the allocation of CDBG funds. The Village budget process was used by elected officials and staff to coordinate and allocate funding for community programs and services.

Thus, the Village of Oak Park maintaining that the network of agencies, organizations, programs, resources and activities operating within the Village has shown the existence of comprehensive efforts to meet the needs of Oak Park residents. Between all the efforts of the existing providers within the Village, there appears to be few gaps in the service delivery toward the realization of the priorities, goals, and objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan and in the PY 2021 Action Plan.

## **Monitoring**

### *Method and Frequency of Oak Park's Monitoring Efforts*

The Village continued its Subrecipient monitoring efforts in PY 2021 by checking all CDBG

Subrecipients for compliance with HUD rules, regulations and timeliness of expenditure requirements. Compliance was checked through examination of submittals of requested documentation, including billing and required reports, and also by considering Village-Subrecipient communication and meetings throughout the program year. The HUD-recommended risk assessment approach to monitoring was used by the Village. Each Subrecipient submitted quarterly reports describing activities of the previous quarter, as well as a final annual report, which summarized all the accomplishments and progress for that year. The reports were required in order to draw funds down.

The monitoring standards and procedures used by the Village of Oak Park followed the standards and procedures as set forth in HUD monitoring handbooks, guidelines, and technical assistance publications.

### *Self-Evaluation*

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the Village of Oak Park in many ways but primarily by workforce shortages, limited materials, and increased prices for materials to complete work. The PY 2021 CDBG activities supported through HUD funding consistently met or exceeded annual goals, except for two that were impacted by COVID-19:

1) Public Infrastructure: Some Public Infrastructure activities cover more than one program year and have not been closed out yet, leading to fewer than anticipated accomplishments for the PY 2021. 2) Affordable Housing: Although the COVID-19 pandemic continued the Village and Subrecipients put in the effort to meet goals anticipated for Program Year 2021. All remaining PY 2021 Goals have been exceeded.

Overall, the Village of Oak Park continues to move reliably toward meeting the community's vision by providing almost all the services that were identified as crucial to this population, with the goal of meeting the need foremost in the Village's plans. The ability of Oak Park to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and economic opportunity to Oak Parkers is illustrated in detail in this CAPER.

Oak Park may have had a few barriers to success, including the cost of living, the recovering economy, and the reduction of State and donated funding to the non-profit service organizations, but overall the Village nearly fulfilled all of its projected goals, with several PY 2021 Subrecipients even greatly surpassing their stated goals.

## **Lead-based Paint**

### *Actions taken during the last year to evaluate and reduce lead-based paint hazards*

Lead based paint is an extremely serious hazard that can negatively affect the central nervous system in children less than six years of age. In addition to children getting lead-poisoned by eating paint chips, persons of any age can get lead poisoning from ingesting or inhaling lead dust created when paint is deteriorating, or when it is removed or disturbed.

Lead is a highly toxic substance that was banned for use in paint in 1978. Not only does the existence of lead-based paint create public health risks, it also increases the cost of rehabilitating older homes.

The housing stock in Oak Park consists primarily of homes built before 1978. Approximately 95% of the existing 23,723 housing units were constructed in eras when using lead-based

paint was the norm. This suggests that most of the homes and apartment buildings that have not been recently renovated, or have not been built in the last 36 years, contain some lead-based paint.

Since the new lead-based paint regulations were implemented by HUD, the Village has stepped up its lead awareness, prevention and abatement efforts. During PY 2021, the Village continued to reduce lead-based paint hazards in Oak Park homes and assist those exposed to the hazard. The following are activities that the Village conducted to evaluate and reduce lead paint hazards.

#### *VOP Housing & CDBG Programs Department*

There were four Single-Family Rehabilitation (SFR) Program activities that performed interim controls for lead-based paint hazards in PY 2021 with the use of CDBG funds. During PY 2021, through a Cook County lead abatement grant was used to assist low income families who are at risk of elevated blood levels. The rehab activity was funded by CDBG through our SFR housing rehab program is still in process. These activities benefited moderate-income households.

#### *VOP Public Health Department*

The Illinois Department of Public Health has identified all three of Oak Park's ZIP codes as high-risk ZIP codes for pediatric blood lead poisoning. High-risk ZIP codes are based on housing data and family economic status obtained from the latest census. Given the older housing stock in Oak Park and the corresponding probability that many of the Village's children are exposed to lead, the Village has committed to strong efforts in lead education, prevention and abatement. As a result, Oak Park children with elevated blood levels receive local professional case management services through the Oak Park Public Health Department. The following activities constitute the Village's strategy to minimize exposure to and damage from lead-based paint.

- The Village of Oak Park Department of Public Health is committed to eliminating elevated levels of lead in children in Oak Park. The Village has an agreement with the Illinois Department of Public Health to provide case management services for all children that live within the boundaries of the Village. The Health Department is considered the State's "delegate agency" for childhood lead. The Health Department participates in public awareness and education campaigns, provides nursing lead case management and will conduct environmental investigations when required under the Illinois Lead Poisoning Prevention Act and the Illinois Lead Poisoning Prevention Code.
- Due to the age of the Village of Oak Park housing stock, all of Oak Park's ZIP codes are defined as high risk for pediatric blood lead poisoning. As a result, every physician licensed to practice medicine is required to provide annual testing of children from 6 months of age through 6 years of age. In addition, child care facilities must require that all parents or guardians of a child 6 months through 6 years of age provide a statement from a physician or health care provider as proof that a blood test occurred prior to admission. Physicians are required to submit lead sampling results to the Illinois Department of Public Health, where the sampling data is then entered into a data surveillance system called *HHL PSS (Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Surveillance System)*. The Health Department is responsible for reviewing blood lead sample test results using the *HHL PSS* data management system. Staff review lead results to determine whether case management is required and/or whether a childhood

lead case should be referred to the Environmental Health Division for an environmental investigation of the child's dwelling.

- The Health Department is responsible for managing and maintaining *HHPSS*. In PY 2022, the Health Department will manage childhood blood lead test results through *HHPSS*.

Nursing Case Management – Case management of children begins at 5 µg/dl on all children six years of age and under. Children with a lead level at or above 5 µg/dl are at risk of decreased IQ, behavior problems, poor grades in school and growth delays. The case manager is responsible for contacting the parent and providing case management, including:

- Interviewing the parent or guardian regarding the child's behavior, habits and general health;
- Emphasizing the importance of follow-up lead screening to make sure levels do not increase;
- Providing the parent with educational brochures from the "Get the Lead Out" series;
- Referring all cases for a developmental screening;
- Routine case follow-up until the child's lead levels reach a safe level; and
- Referring the case to the Health Department's Environmental Health Division for environmental investigation/assessment.

Environmental Investigation/Assessment: An environmental investigation is conducted under the following circumstances:

- A child six years of age or younger with a confirmed lead blood lead level of 5 µg/dl or above.

Environmental investigations are conducted by one or more of the Health Department's Licensed Lead Assessors. Dwelling investigations are conducted in accordance with the Illinois Lead Poisoning Prevention Code and the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act. Each investigation includes a visual assessment, a dwelling diagram, an interview of the parent and, if applicable, collecting dust and/or wipe samples to determine if any lead hazards exist. The results of the investigation are shared with the parent and the property owner. If lead hazards are found, the property owner is required to submit a plan to mitigate and/or abate all lead hazards. Case follow-up is conducted to determine compliance with State laws. Cases will be closed if the lead hazards are mitigated or abated. If lead hazards are not mitigated or abated within specific time frames, the case will be referred to the Illinois Attorney General and/or the Cook County State's Attorney for prosecution.

## HOUSING

### Housing Needs

*Actions taken during the last year to foster and maintain affordable housing*

In PY 2021, the Village allocated CDBG dollars to the Housing Programs unit of the Oak Park government to support the Lead Hazard Reduction Program, the Single-Family Rehabilitation Program, and the Small Rental Rehabilitation Program. It is the Village's policy to fund these housing programs each program year. The Village also funded CDBG Subrecipients that eliminated barriers to affordable housing.

The Village also identified new and innovative ways to increase the affordable housing stock by making the move to become a member of the Cook County HOME Consortium. PY 2021 was the 3<sup>rd</sup> official year of this partnership.

In cooperation with the Village, the West Cook Homeownership Center partnered with the Oak Park Regional Housing Center to conduct 18 First Time Homebuyer Seminars that included 26 persons. The seminars were widely promoted, however, the agency reported that participation was lower than typical and attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

The Village also encouraged developers to build affordable housing units in new housing developments within the Village.

## **Specific Housing Objectives**

### **1. Evaluate progress in providing affordable housing**

Housing goals were not met in PY 2021. The Village of Oak Park's PY 2021 Action Plan goal was to rehab 8 housing units and 7 housing unit rehabs were completed, utilizing 2 CDBG funded programs: SFR Rehab and Lead Reduction. This is attributed to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (lack of contractor availability after the shut-down was lifted) and staff shortages resulting in a lack of the program's marketing implementation.

- 7 Housing Unit rehabs were completed, utilizing 2 CDBG funded programs: SFR Rehab and Lead Reduction. Funding to homeowners was provided through loans and some grants (for interim control of lead paint hazards) to eligible low/moderate-income single-family homeowners to correct code violations and other housing deficiencies. Repaid loan funds will continue to fund the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund account. These projects are also described in the specific accomplishment sections of this CAPER.
- PY 2021 was the eleventh year of operation of the Village's Small Rental Property Rehabilitation program, a CDBG-funded rehab loan program for income-eligible buildings under eight units. In the Small Rental Housing Program, no beneficiaries were served.

### **2. Efforts to address "worst-case" housing needs and housing needs of persons with disabilities.**

The Village funded the Housing Forward Emergency Shelter and Interim Housing CDBG activities, which provided basic shelter to 148 homeless persons in PY 2021. This activity also provided food, case management, mental health services and referral services to homeless persons, which gave clients the ability to get out of seriously substandard housing for the long term. The Village also funded the Housing Forward Employment Readiness CDBG activity, that helped individuals to develop workforce skills to better secure employment opportunities. A total of 19 persons became employed due to this project, with a grand total of 65 persons being assisted. Combined, the projects assisted 213 persons in PY 2021.

In order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities and improve accessibility, the United Cerebral Palsy-Seguín (UCP-Seguín) spent \$32,000 in CDBG funds to serve 2 adults with

developmental disabilities at one Oak Park Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) group home.

In PY 2021, Sarah's Inn used CDBG funds to help employ a domestic violence advocate and counselor to ensure that information, referrals, support and crisis intervention were immediately available to battered spouses and their children. A total of 1,215 victims of domestic violence were served in PY 2021 (460 Oak Park persons).

## **Public Housing Strategy**

*Actions taken during the last program year to improve public housing and resident initiatives*

The Oak Park Housing Authority (OPHA) is an Illinois municipal corporation established in 1946 to provide very-low income households and families of all ages, races and backgrounds with affordable, safe, and sanitary housing while complying with HUD Federal Regulations and working within the Village of Oak Park's housing values, policies and standards.

OPHA is governed by a seven-member board of commissioners appointed by the Village President. The commissioners all must be residents of Oak Park. The commissioners have sole authority over policy and finances and operate the Authority within the legal framework created by Congress and the governing regulations formulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

OPHA has been categorized by HUD as a high-performer and is not designated as "troubled." An executive director and staff manage the operations of OPHA, which shares some management and financial staff with the non-for-profit Oak Park Residence Corporation (the Residence Corporation manages the 74-unit Oaks Building and the 21-unit Ryan Farrelly Apartments). Under 24 CFR 903, OPHA is considered a small public housing agency due to the fact that it owns less than 250 public housing units.

During PY 2021, OPHA continued the ongoing operation and maintenance of the 198-unit Mills Park Tower and the ongoing administration of the Federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. The Federally-funded HCV program provided rent subsidies that enabled income-qualified participants to lease privately-owned rental housing. OPHA managed the 198 one-bedroom units in Mills Park Tower, a residence building comprised of 188 elderly persons and 10 persons with disabilities. The units are in good condition, and OPHA does not expect any units to be lost from the inventory. The results from the Section 504 Needs Assessment of Mills Park Tower determined that the building is accessible.

Mills Park Tower's remodeled ground floor contains laundry facilities, a community room, computer lab and a library. Recently, OPHA added a protective awning to the rear entrance to protect the seniors from the poor weather conditions when entering and exiting the building. OPHA also modernized 21-unit bathrooms with new showers, sinks, medicine cabinets, mirrors, water-saving toilets, grab bars, and lighting fixtures. Even more recently, OPHA was able to complete two additional accessible units to meet HUD's Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards. Also, the replacement of all roofing materials was conducted this year on the main roof, roof over the community room and two canopies.

OPHA also conducted several actions for resident involvement in the management of public housing. OPHA received direction from two Resident Advisory Boards: one for Mills Park Tower and one for the HCV Program. OPHA provided regular commitments with the elected council of Mills Park Tower. Building management solicited advice from this group for future facility improvements, coordination of OPHA subsidized entertainment, and policies concerning

tenant-managed entertainment and other operational aspects of the facility. OPHA budgeted funds in support of these key tenant initiatives.

## **Barriers to Affordable Housing**

*Actions taken during PY 2021 to eliminate barriers to affordable housing*

Oak Park's higher real estate costs and property taxes continue to create economic barriers to low- and moderate-income persons coming into Oak Park, especially for single households and persons with disabilities. In PY 2021, the Village funded CDBG Subrecipients that eliminated barriers to affordable housing.

The Village has also identified new and innovative ways to increase the affordable housing stock by making the move to become a member of the Cook County HOME Consortium. PY 2021 was the first official year of this partnership.

A survey of six other municipalities with CDBG single family rehabilitation programs was conducted: Berwyn, DeKalb, Elgin, Hoffman Estates, Mt. Prospect and Waukegan. The purpose of the survey was to gauge how Oak Park compares to other communities and to determine how these communities market their program. The positive take-aways from the other communities are the referrals from a weatherization program and referrals from local contractors. These are two areas that were unexplored in Oak Park. The energy program has gained momentum and is useful in referrals to the Single-Family Rehabilitation program. Using local contractors as a source of referral is an untapped resource worthy of exploring.

The Single-Family Rehabilitation and Small Rental Rehabilitation programs have an added energy component grant that is in process of being publicized. The add-on grant provides an increased benefit to using the programs.

## **Homeless**

### **Homeless Needs**

*Overall actions taken to address the needs of homeless persons*

The Village funded the Housing Forward Emergency Shelter and Interim Housing CDBG activities, which provided basic shelter to 148 homeless persons in PY 2021. This activity also provided food, case management, mental health services and referral services to homeless persons, which gave clients the ability to get out of seriously substandard housing for the long term. The Village also funded the Housing Forward Employment Readiness CDBG activity, that helped individuals to develop workforce skills to better secure employment opportunities. A total of 19 persons became employed due to this project, with a grand total of 65 persons being assisted. Combined, the projects assisted 213 persons in PY 2021.

*Actions to help homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living*

During PY 2021, The Village-funded Housing Forward Emergency Shelter/Interim Housing activity also used CDBG funds to help homeless persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. By working closely with supportive Housing Programs, and the agency's partnership with the Housing Authority of Oak Park, 54 clients were transitioned to permanent housing.

## Specific Homeless Prevention Elements

### *Actions taken to prevent homelessness*

The Village funded the Housing Forward Emergency Shelter and Interim Housing CDBG activities, which provided basic shelter to 148 homeless persons in PY 2021. This activity also provided food, case management, mental health services and referral services to homeless persons, which gave clients the ability to get out of seriously substandard housing for the long term. The Village also funded the Housing Forward Employment Readiness CDBG activity, that helped individuals to develop workforce skills to better secure employment opportunities. A total of 19 persons became employed due to this project, with a grand total of 65 persons being assisted. Combined, the projects assisted 213 persons in PY 2021.

### *Continuum of Care Discharge Planning: Foster Care*

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and The Youth Housing Assistance Program (YHAP) provides housing advocacy services and cash assistance to youth under the age of 21 who are aging out, or have aged out, of DCFS care. The program intends to prevent youth from becoming homeless after leaving DCFS care, and some assistance is provided to youth under the age of 21 who have a previously closed case to prevent the youth from re-entering foster care. The Department has collaborated with local homeless Continuums of Care (CoCs) which are networks of community agencies that serve and house homeless individuals and families (including youth who have aged out of care). There are twenty CoCs in Illinois, and DCFS is currently working with three local CoCs to apply for Federal funding to end youth homelessness. The program will provide funding for housing and services to homeless youth, including youth who aged out of DCFS care. The biggest obstacle facing DCFS is that the contracted Youth Housing Assistance Program coordinator contract is not being renewed in FY 20. Because of changes to FUP and the decision to allow DCFS to use Independence Facilitation Grant funding after the youth turns 21, it is likely that the number of 21 and 22-year-old youth served through the program will increase.

### *Continuum of Care Discharge Planning: Health Care*

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) operates under eight State administrative rules that govern the facilities it licenses or regulates, including hospitals, assisted living, skilled nursing, intermediate care, sheltered care, veteran homes, and community living facilities. All eight administrative rules include discharge procedures. Alliance members participate in Illinois' Coordinated Care Entity (CCE) projects that involve hospitals, housing, and service providers as vital partners. Designed to streamline and improve care for high users of health care, hospitals will notify the CCE of patients during emergency room visits, thereby reducing admissions and releasing individuals to their care coordination team. Emergency shelters have strong relationships with their local hospitals and connect clients to services immediately to avoid serious complications that may arise and require hospitalization. Many have registered nurses who visit weekly to offer these services.

### *Continuum of Care Discharge Planning: Mental Health*

The Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health (DMH) has a long-standing policy that persons are not to be discharged into homelessness, if possible. In extended care facilities, stable housing and benefits are reliably in place before discharge. In acute treatment facilities where the length of stay is 12 days or less and where 30% of persons admitted were homeless at entry, the facility staff relies on their relationships with local homeless-serving

organizations to create linkages to other resources. Alliance members work with community hospital social work staff to inform them of resources for avoiding homelessness for persons discharged from psychiatric departments. DMH has an initiative to prevent persons in crisis with a serious mental health problem from being discharged or sent to a nursing home if housing resources are not available. Specialized Mental Health Rehabilitation Facilities (SMHRF) Comparable Service Program pays for crisis stabilization as an alternative to psychiatric hospitalization. It will pay for housing and services while securing other benefits in order to transition to other community housing and services. This policy applies to state-run hospitals both acute and extended treatment facilities and to other state-funded treatment programs. While community hospitals mainly served private pay and Medicaid patients, Medicaid has increased low- and moderate-income persons' access to these private resources, offering new partners in the effort to prevent the discharge of persons into homelessness.

#### *Continuum of Care Discharge Planning: Corrections*

The Alliance works with Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) programming to ensure successful re-entry. This programming begins at intake and extends throughout incarceration, working to obtain appropriate housing before release. Offenders at risk of homelessness or who have special needs are assigned Parole Reentry Group caseworkers to work on discharge plans in the 90 days prior to release. Post release, parolees are evaluated for vulnerability. IDOC refers the chronic cases to the Alliance network for community linkages. Cook County Jail has received Second Chance Grants designed to reduce the risk of re-incarceration and homelessness among juvenile offenders.

The Sheriff's Re-Entry Council develops community partnerships through homeless resource fairs and cooperative projects like Datalink, which integrates mental health service data in order to reconnect detainees to their previous service provider. The Sheriff has entered into cooperative agreements with a coordinated health care entity to house persons in IMD facilities as an alternative to jail for persons with serious mental illnesses who are homeless. The Alliance partners with IDOC, Veteran Affairs, Social Security Administration, Illinois' Division of Mental Health, Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, Illinois Health Care and Family Services, and the Illinois Department of Human Services to assist in identifying community resources and housing prior to prison release. IDOC stakeholders conduct onsite prison screenings to determine eligibility for community housing and support services. There are health care delivery mechanisms and initiatives that include members of the Continuum of Care, criminal justice departments, local government, and emergency health care providers as partners.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### **Community Development Assessment of Relationship of CDBG Funds to Goals and Objectives**

CDBG funds enabled the Village to meet or exceed its goals in almost all areas. In the areas that were below goals, explanations for the shortfalls were provided (See the Self Evaluation above).

The CDBG funds were the main force behind being able to provide the services with the outcomes that are being reported. Several organizations relied solely on Village CDBG funds to provide services. With larger organizations that cover several communities, the Village CDBG funds provided access to services for Oak Park residents which may not have been provided otherwise. State funding reductions to non-profits impacted the range and number

of services that could be provided and CDBG was able to assist. The use and application of CDBG enabled the Village to meet the needs and goals in most high priority activities.

As identified earlier, the Housing Programs division of Oak Park began a second major CDBG-related housing program in 2011. The first program, the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation (SFR) program, was re-designed and re-opened in 2008. This program has been carried out and enhanced over time, and is nearly always accompanied by a Lead Hazard Reduction Grant for the homeowner. As the expertise grew in delivering this service, a retired rental rehab program was reinstated due to community need. This second housing program is the Small Rental Property Rehabilitation (SRP) program.

Both the SFR and SRP programs are considered successful overall.

*How CDBG funds were used for activities benefiting low- and moderate-income persons*

Every completed Village of Oak Park PY 2021 CDBG activity was targeted to LMI families or persons, or met the LMI objective for facilities, housing units and infrastructure. Thus, 100% of the PY 2021 activities covered this primary National Objective.

The following is a listing of the completed PY 2021 low-to-moderate income CDBG activities: Beyond Hunger Hunger Relief, Hephzibah Children’s Association Family Support Program, Housing Forward Emergency Shelter/Interim Housing, Housing Forward Employment Readiness, NAMI Metro-Suburban Drop-In Center, New Moms Teen and Adult Parenting, Oak Park Regional Housing Center Fair Housing Outreach, Oak Park-River Forest Infant Welfare Society Children and Youth Dental Clinic, Sarah’s Inn Domestic Violence Services, Thrive Counseling Center Psychiatric Services for Medicaid Clients, UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago Facilities Improvements, Village of Oak Park Public Works Infrastructure Improvements, Village of Oak Park Housing Rehab and Lead Hazard Reduction, Village of Oak Park Code Enforcement, Village of Oak Park Public Health Healthy Nutrition Incentives, Way Back Inn Childcare for Parents with Addictions and West Cook YMCA Single Resident Occupancy Residence Case Management Program. Two activities indirectly served low to moderate income persons: Oak Park Regional Housing Center Fair Housing Administration and Village of Oak Park CDBG Administration, though neither report accomplishments. All of these activities are more fully described in other sections of the CAPER.

The low- and moderate-income Limited Clientele and Housing CDBG activities require that 51% or greater of participant’s income be at or below 80% of the area median income. The majority of participants were low and very low-income persons, documented through Federal tax returns, SSI records, signed personal income certifications, and other means of income verification and documentation collected, as prescribed by HUD. In addition, several activities listed above were Presumed Benefit low and moderate income CDBG activities. These are: Beyond Hunger, Community Support Services, Hephzibah Children’s Association Family Support Program, Housing Forward Emergency Shelter CDBG and Employment Readiness, NAMI Metro-Suburban Drop-In Center, New Moms, INC., OP Regional Housing Center, Oak Park-River Forest Infant Welfare Society Children’s Clinic, Sarah’s Inn Domestic Violence Services, Thrive Counseling Center Psychiatric Services for Medicaid Clients, UCP Seguin Facilities Improvements, Way Back Inn, and West Cook YMCA.

**Anti-Displacement and Relocation**

The Village ensures that rehabilitation work does not displace anyone when rehabbing rental units and keeps single family housing rehabilitation costs under \$25,000 and localized to one

secured area at a time. This includes when performing lead hazard reduction activities. No persons were permanently or temporarily displaced in PY 2019 by rehabilitation work, and no properties were acquired or demolished in PY 2019. If future rehabilitation and relocation ever occurs, steps taken to notify households will be in keeping with the notification and displacement requirements of the Uniform Relocation Act or Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

## **Anti-Poverty Strategy**

*Actions taken during the last year to reduce the number of persons living below the poverty level*

Housing of poor quality, lack of education, unemployment, low income, and ill health are the primary factors in the cycle of poverty. The Village directly affected these factors by utilizing its resources, including social services and the local educational system.

The Village's school system is nationally recognized for its high educational standards and special programs. All residents can send their children to public schools in the Village. Lower income renters must find affordable rental units in order to reside in Oak Park and allow their children to attend the schools. In PY 2021, many affordable units were available in Oak Park, which encouraged more families with fewer resources to reside in the community, and afforded them an opportunity to receive the educational benefits of the Oak Park school system.

Throughout the year, the Village continued its efforts to promote economic development, which resulted in additional employment opportunities, even in this troubled economic time. Job creation was encouraged for local retail ventures. Efforts to increase both employment opportunities and affordable housing led to an enhanced household income for many. A Section 108 Loan program was approved and is now being offered. Furthermore, recognizing that property taxes increase the cost of housing and affect the Village's ability to provide affordable housing, the Village continued its major effort to cut costs and promote new commercial development to ease the reliance on homeowner property taxes.

The Village's Public Health Department provided information and programs to assist persons of lower income with health issues. In PY 2021, the Village's Department of Public Health Community Health Services Division provided immunizations, emergency response, general referral, vision and hearing, surveillance and control of infectious diseases, HIV testing, counseling and prevention, inspection of long-term and child care facilities, school health services, and senior health services. The department also transferred their Healthy Initiative Program to Development Customer Services which had a PY 2021 CDBG activity that improved the nutrition of low- and moderate-income persons. All of these programs helped low-income persons obtain basic health care and quality of life services.

The social service programs that the Village funded with CDBG dollars in PY 2021 provided assistance to many persons with incomes below the poverty level. These services were aimed at improving the lives of those persons and very likely assisted in reducing short- and long-term costs for many individuals and families. Specifically:

- The Children's Clinic used CDBG funds to provide low-cost or free dental services to low-income youth, which enabled their parents to avoid the exorbitant current and future dental costs that can financially cripple a family. 4,519 young persons were served in PY 2021.

- Community Support Services used CDBG funds to provide respite services for 289 individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members. These services provide families with the tools they need to create a stable and nurturing home environment so that children with developmental disabilities can grow up to lead independent and fulfilling lives.
- Housing Forward used CDBG funds to supply emergency shelter and a job readiness program to assist 213 homeless persons.
- NAMI Metro Suburban used CDBG funds to provide psycho-social services to 122 low-income mentally ill persons, which gave some clients the ability to overcome social and financial barriers.
- Beyond Hunger, the Oak Park-River Forest Food Pantry, used CDBG funds to feed low-income persons which enabled persons in poverty to avoid hunger. For 1,697 Oak Park persons, this activity provided this essential human need. Regionally, the Hunger Relief program fed 10,520 persons.
- New Moms used CDBG funds to operate the Parenting and Family Support program. A total of 53 mothers were served in PY 2021.
- Sarah's Inn used CDBG funds to help employ a crisis line counselor to ensure that information, referrals, support and crisis intervention was immediately available to survivors of domestic violence and their children. A total of 5,715 survivors were served in PY 2021 (351 Oak Parkers).

### **CDBG-Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES ACT) Funding Used in PY 2021**

The COVID-19 pandemic made funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES ACT) in the form of Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds, to the Village of Oak Park, in the amount of \$1,259,754. The amount of \$980,107 was received for the first CARES Act CDBG-CV allocation (CV-1) and \$279,647 was received for the second CARES Act CDBG-CV allocation (CV-3). In PY 2021, the Village Board relocated funds from the Business Assistance Loan Program (\$57,515) and Administration (\$80,000) to Public Service (\$137,515). The funds were divided amongst the organizations that originally qualified for funding. The HUD mandate was that each proposed project should prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Of course, every proposed project also needed to meet the CDBG National Objective of primarily serving low- and moderate-income persons, and needed to be an eligible CDBG project. Although the COVID-19 pandemic continued hindering the Village and Subrecipients in the effort to meet goals anticipated for Program Year (PY) 2021, the PY 2019 allocated CDBG-CV funding helped make with guidance and approval from the Village Board, Oak Park allocated the CDBG-CV funds to three categories of funding.

#### *Public Services CDBG-CV*

Public Services comprises one of the top needs of the hardships that Oak Park residents have experienced due to COVID-19. On May 27, 2021, a notice of funding availability was advertised and the Village grants mailing list was notified of the funding, with a due date of June 10, 2021. Numerous agencies submitted an application to use these funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Of these applicants, most agencies stood out as fully meeting the criteria of the request for proposals. These agencies are Beyond Hunger, Hephzibah, New Moms, Oak

Leyden Developmental Services, the Oak Park-River Forest Infant Welfare Society Children's Clinic, Thrive Counseling Center, UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago, the Way Back Inn, and the West Cook YMCA. These agencies were awarded funding, which totaled \$162,107 in CDBG-CV funds, to provide Public Services and assistance to persons who have been affected by the pandemic. In PY 2021, the Village Board relocated funds from the Business Assistance Loan Program (\$57,515) and Administration (\$80,000) to Public Service (\$137,515). The funds were divided amongst the organizations that originally qualified for funding. With these two allocations, the Public Service category received a total of \$299,622 and was provided to the organizations listed above.

#### *Housing CDBG-CV*

Housing is among the top needs of the hardships that Oak Park residents have experienced due to COVID-19. As an agency that has ably provided for Oak Park residents that experience or are at risk of homelessness, Housing Forward is well equipped to assist persons in need with excellent leadership and staff. Housing Forward was awarded \$400,000 in CDBG-CV funds to provide rental, mortgage and/or utility assistance to persons who have been affected by the pandemic. Housing Forward has reported that with the use of the CDBG-CV funds they have assisted 69 participants with rental assistance during PY 2021.

#### *Business Assistance CDBG-CV*

Economic development and job retention is among the top needs of the hardships that Oak Park residents have experienced due to COVID-19. Oak Park staff administered a Business Assistance Loan Program that provided up to \$10,000 to small businesses who are able to create and/or retain jobs for Oak Park persons with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Each loan has a three-year term at a 0% interest rate. At least one low-to-moderate income employee must be retained in order for the loan to be completely forgiven. The total amount of the Business Assistance Loan Program for the first round of CDBG-CV funding is \$300,000. For Round 3 of CDBG-CV funding (CDBG-CV part II for Oak Park; CV-3 according to HUD), the Village received an additional \$250,000 to go to the business assistance program. In PY 2021 84 businesses were awarded CDBG-CV Business Assistance Funds. The Business Assistance Loan Program had a remaining balance of \$57,515. These funds were reallocated to the Public Service Program. The nine organizations selected were part of the Public Service CDBG-CV funds during the previous award period and expressed their current need of reimbursement assistance for PPE.

#### *Administration CDBG-CV*

As with regular CDBG funds in which each year the Village uses CDBG Administration funds to run the program, the Village set up a CDBG-CV Administration activity in the amount of \$147,647. The amount of \$118,000 was taken from the first CARES Act CDBG-CV allocation (CV-1) and \$29,647 was taken from the second CARES Act CDBG-CV allocation (CV-3). Village staff utilized CDBG-CV funds to implement and process the Business Assistance Loan Program. The Administration Program had a remaining balance of \$80,000. These funds were reallocated to the Public Service program. The nine organizations selected were part of the Public Service CDBG-CV funds during the previous award period and expressed current need of reimbursement assistance for PPE.

## NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS

### **Actions Taken to Address the Special Needs of Persons Not Experiencing Homelessness**

*Actions taken to improve the quality of life for persons with mental illness through the provision of public services*

There was one Public Services activity in PY 2021 that improved the quality of life for persons with mental illnesses. NAMI Metro Suburban's Drop In Center increased the social involvement (psycho-social rehabilitation) of 122 clients with mental illnesses.

*Actions taken to assist with the provision of permanent supportive housing for persons with special needs*

United Cerebral Palsy Seguin of Greater Chicago (UCP Seguin) spent \$32,000 in CDBG funds to serve 2 persons, making modifications to one Oak Park Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) group home to benefit adults with developmental disabilities.

*Actions taken to improve the quality of life for persons living with HIV/AIDS*

Housing Forward has sent several staff persons to training on HIV and also provided individual consultation to staff working with clients that are living with HIV. In addition, Housing Forward has MOUs with several agencies that provide services to people living with HIV. One of their housing partners is Heartland Health Outreach, which provides housing to people living with HIV.