Amendments to 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan

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Key Takeaways

- The City has a fiduciary responsibility to the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to effectively manage Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) & HOME funds in order to create transformative impact in Asheville, and improve the lives of all residents, especially those with low-and moderate- income levels.
- This public hearing brings forward three amendments to the City's 2020-2024 HUD Consolidated Plan:
    - Modifications to Helpmate's prior CDBG grant award
    - Modifications to Homeward Bound's prior HOME award
    - Reallocation of Non-Public Service CDBG funds for sidewalk and accessibility improvements at 108 Patton Avenue
- These proposed changes are in direct response to improving timely performance and expenditure of federal funds.
    - For Homeward Bound and Helpmate, these amendments will give greater flexibility and opportunity to serve the intended clientele and provide a greater chance for success.
    - The proposal regarding the 108 Patton Project allows for needed ADA improvements within a highly traveled corridor in downtown Asheville and is shovel-ready such that the City can achieve timely expenditure of funds.

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Amendment -
CDBG Jurisdiction Change for Helpmate, Inc.

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CDBG Jurisdiction Change for Helpmate, Inc

- Previous Annual Action Plans have granted CDBG Housing Services funds to Helpmate, to support survivors of domestic violence (housing-related intake and case management) that receive HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). These two funding sources work together to provide comprehensive housing support for Helpmate clients.
- HOME funds can currently be used outside of the City of Asheville but CDBG, even those used in conjunction with HOME TBRA funds, must be used within Asheville City limits, per the City's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan.
- Helpmate identified the requirement that CDBG Housing Services funds only be used within City of Asheville limits as a limitation to providing services to their clients.
    - Affordable housing options can be harder to find in City limits than in other parts of Buncombe County.
    - In addition, survivors of domestic violence require more choices regarding their housing placement to ensure their ongoing safety.
- **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**: To reduce constraints that only using CDBG funds within City limits poses, City staff recommend that an amendment be made to the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan such that CDBG Housing Services funds can be spent in Asheville City limits and also in areas of Buncombe County outside of Asheville City limits.

Amendment -
Homeward Bound Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)

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Homeward Bound Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Amendment

- In order to be good stewards of the funds, Homeward Bound met with City staff to discuss difficulties they are encountering while trying to spend HOME TBRA funds solely for Permanent Supportive Housing.
- The agency has seen a diminishing number of chronically homeless individuals who need long-term housing services (Permanent Supportive Housing) and an increasing number of individuals experiencing episodes of homelessness who do not need long-term supportive services (Rapid Rehousing).
- Recent recommendations from the National Alliance to End Homelessness point to a significant system gap in Rapid Rehousing capacity.
- **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**: City staff recommends modifying the activities of Homeward Bound's FY21/22 HOME TBRA programs to include both Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing in order to help spend down existing TBRA funds and to accommodate for new needs and changes in the homeless population.

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Amendment -
CDBG Reallocation to Accessibility Improvements at 108 Patton Avenue

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Background

- The City of Asheville has $300,000 in Non-Public Service Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding that needs to be reallocated and fully expended by April 2024 in order to meet Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) timeliness requirements.
- These funds come from previous years' (FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20) contracts that have either expired or have unspent balances that have now been returned.
- Using the funds on an eligible City project poses the highest chance for success to ensure timely use of the funds.
- Other opportunities were evaluated, however federal requirements (e.g. federal prevailing wage, environmental review requirements, etc.) for CDBG funds eliminated these options from consideration.
- Staff is recommending to use the funds to complete a downtown sidewalk accessibility project (108 Patton Avenue).
- This proposal would reaffirm the City's commitment to the Americans with Disabilities Act by undertaking activities that will remove architectural barriers, achieve compliance with HUD's timeliness requirements, and assist with the preservation of City facilities.

Expanding Accessibility - 108 Patton Ave

- The proposed accessibility improvements include sidewalk and curb ramp replacement on both sides of Patton Avenue (between Coxe Ave and Asheland Ave); construction can proceed as soon as the reallocation is approved.
- This project was identified as the highest priority ADA project in the City's Greenways, Accessibility, and Pedestrians (GAP) Plan.
- The use of CDBG funds will allow the Public Works Department to redirect those operational dollars to other critical sidewalk maintenance and accessibility projects.
- The project is located in an area that has access to multiple essential services that benefit low-moderate income individuals including: the Federal building, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, U.S. Post Office, financial institutions, and is less than a block away from the Asheville Rides Transit station.

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Expanding Accessibility - 108 Patton Ave





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Expanding Accessibility - 108 Patton Ave



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Major Drivers for 108 Patton Avenue Recommendation

- National Objective: Meets CDBG National Objective to benefit low and moderate income people
- Eligibility: Sidewalk replacement is CDBG eligible
- Timeliness:
  - City is best positioned to overcome cross-cutting federal requirements that often delay or complicate other projects.
    - As an example, the work can be completed by City's Public Works Department and therefore not be subject to federal prevailing wage requirements.
  - City can prioritize this work and initiate construction shortly after the approval is granted.

Timeliness

- HUD Timeliness Standard:
  - HUD's expressed intent is to see that funds are spent in the community.
  - HUD monitors this objective by checking the City's CDBG account balance each year through a process known as the Timeliness Test.
  - The City is not permitted to have more than 1.5x worth of funding annually in the CDBG account each year.

- On June 15, 2023, HUD notified the City that it had failed its timeliness requirement for the second consecutive year.

- The City identified opportunities and process improvements in order to achieve a timely expenditure of $300,000 in available Non-Public Service CDBG funds by April 2024.

Why are other options not recommended?

- Rental Assistance -
  - Rental assistance is an ineligible activity for CDBG funding

- Compass Pointe Village - Allocating CDBG funds to this project would have triggered prevailing wage requirements and environmental review.
  - With construction already underway or completed for the project, federal prevailing wage requirements could not have been satisfied. The project was deemed ineligible for this purpose.

CDBG Awards - FY23/24

Agency Name	Project / Program	Purpose	Award
Public Services (15% Cap)			
The SPARC Foundation	Domestic Violence Intervention Program & Strong Fathers	Public Services	$24,737
Helpmate	Emergency Shelter for Domestic Violence Survivors	Public Services	$23,736
Haywood Street Congregation	Haywood Respite	Public Services	$18,900
Pisgah Legal Services	Homelessness Prevention	Public Services	$35,750
OnTrack Financial	Housing and Financial Capabilities	Public Services	$25,000
Homeward Bound of WNC	Coordinated Entry	Public Services	$37,900
Non-Public Services			
Mountain BizWorks	Expanding Access	Economic Development	$162,500
Helpmate	Case Management for DV Survivors	Housing Services	$65,000
Carolina Small Business Development Fund	Opportunity Asheville	Economic Development	$135,000
Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina	Housing Services	Housing Services	$108,150
Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity	Affordable Home Repairs	Housing	$94,500
Community Center Contingency	City of Asheville Community Center Upgrades	Public Facilities	$154,281

Past CDBG Awards - FY22/23

Agency Name	Project / Program	Purpose	Award	Remaining $
Public Services (15% Cap)				
OnTrack	Housing and Financial Capabilities Program	Public Services	$22,932	$0
Pisgah Legal Services	Homelessness Prevention	Public Services	$32,932	$0
Helpmate	Emergency Shelter for Domestic Violence Survivors	Public Services	$21,932	$0
Homeward Bound of WNC	AHOPE Coordinated Entry	Public Services	$34,932	$0
SPARC Foundation	Domestic Violence Intervention Program	Public Services	$22,855	$0
Partners Unlimited	Academic Enhancement Program	Public Services	$30,000	$0
Non-Public Services				
Helpmate, Inc.	Housing Case Management for Domestic Violence Survivors	Housing Services	$55,000	$55,000
Mountain BizWorks	Expanding Access to Small Business Training, Coaching and Capital	Economic Development	$120,000	$0
Homeward Bound of WNC	CDBG Housing Services	Housing Services	$82,000	$24,000
*Stephens Lee Recreation Center**	*Facility Rehabilitation Request*	*Public Facilities*	$784,965	$632,000

Past CDBG-CV (COVID) Awards - FY19/20

Agency Name	Project / Program	Purpose	Award	Remaining $
No Public Services Cap for CDBG-CV				
Pisgah Legal Services	COVID-19 Eviction Prevention (CDBG-CV)	Public Services	$315,000	$32,000
Pisgah Legal Services	COVID-19 Eviction Prevention (CDBG-CV)	Public Services	$199,500	$0
Homeward Bound of WNC	Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Rehousing (CDBG-CV)	Public Services	$455,000	$132,000

Public Engagement

- Project Page
  - https://publicinput.com/pattonsidewalkupdates

- Targeted outreach
  - Met with WRES on October 6
  - Door to door outreach, October 4-9
  - Public meeting at Jack of the Wood, Oct. 17

- Public meetings
  - August 21 - Housing & Community Development Committee
  - September 21 - CDBG Public meeting
  - September 22 (virtual) - CDBG public meeting
  - October 3 - Urban Forestry Commission
  - October 17 - Housing & Community Development Committee



108 PATTON AVE. SIDEWALK/ADA IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

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PROJECT SCOPE & FUNDING

Improvements include **sidewalk and curb ramp replacement, fixing 25 defects and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) noncompliance issues**. 17 out of 18 affected trees will be replaced with larger tree grates.

Why this project was chosen:

- Access to essential services including: the Federal building, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, U.S. Post Office, banks, and Asheville Rides Transit station.
- Meets the goals and objectives of the CDBG program.
- Identified as a top priority project for ADA compliance upgrades in the City's GAP Plan.



The City of Asheville (COA) receives funds annually from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

CDBG funds various nonprofit agencies and other city depts. to implement services that benefit low to moderate income persons.

Unused CDBG funds totalling **$300,000** were identified this year. These funds have to be used within a certain timeframe, for specific activities and meet a number of federal standards.

The funds must be used by **Spring 2024.**

The excess funds can be put towards public facilities, public improvement, and projects that improve accessibility.

After reviewing all proposed projects for CDBG eligibility, benefit, and overall cost, **108 Patton Avenue** (between Coxe and Asheland) was selected for funding.

TREE REPLACEMENT DETAILS

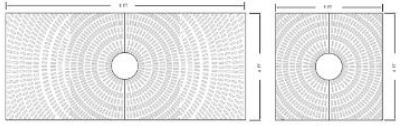
Mature trees will be removed, but care has been taken to select species that are more appropriate for the space. This will minimize conflicts between the trees and buildings and provide a longer sustainable canopy in this area.





The existing trees have outgrown their tree pits, causing the sidewalk and tree grates to heave and buckle.

Replaced trees will use a larger, 4ft x 9ft tree grate as opposed to the 4ft x 4ft grates in place currently. Soil capacity will increase and compaction will decrease, improving the overall health of the trees.



European Hornbeam
Carpinus betulus



Black Gum
Nyssa sylvatica

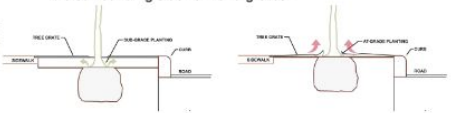


Littleleaf Linden
Tilia cordata





When replanted, trees will be installed lower to prevent the roots and lower tree trunks from heaving the surrounding sidewalk and grates.



Existing, noncompliant ADA ramps will be brought into compliance.

The crosswalk on the west side of the Patton/Coxe intersection doesn't connect to a ramp. A new, compliant ramp will be installed.

Replacement trees will be installed using 4ft x 9ft grates.





In order to create an accessible ramp, this tree won't be replaced due to its proximity. However, 17 of the 18 trees will be replaced.

Staff Recommendation

- The reallocation of $300,000 from recaptured prior years' Non-Public Service CDBG funds towards curbs and sidewalk replacements at 108 Patton Avenue for the purpose of expanding accessibility.
- This would reaffirm the City's commitment to the Americans with Disabilities Act by undertaking activities that will remove architectural barriers, achieve compliance with HUD's timeliness requirements, and assist with the preservation of City facilities.

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Key Takeaways

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Suggested Motions

- Move to approve amendments to the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for activities that were funded for the following Fiscal Years (FY) FY2018-2019, FY2019-2020, FY2021-2022, and FY2022-2023 to (1) allow CDBG funding previously awarded to Helpmate, Inc. to additionally be used outside of the jurisdictional limits of the City of Asheville, but within Buncombe County; (2) to allow the unused amount of $300,000 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to be used for an accessibility improvement project at 108 Patton Avenue; and (3) to allow a previous award to Homeward Bound of WNC for FY21/22 HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program to include both Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing; and to authorize the City Manager to sign all necessary documents and submit the amendments to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to give effect to these Amendment requests.

Questions?

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