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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Hamden is an entitlement community in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The primary objective of the CDBG Program (24 CFR 570) is to develop "viable urban communities, by providing decent housing and suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income."

The Town receives an annual allocation of CDBG entitlement funds. The annual allocation for Program Year 40 (2014-2015) was \$379,299.00.

The purpose of this report, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), is to document and evaluate the Town's progress in achieving its Housing and Community Development Goals and Objectives. Specifically, it is to evaluate these achievements in comparison to the goals and objectives outlined in the Town's Five-Year Consolidated Plan of Housing and Community Development (2010-2014) and the Program Year 40 Annual Action Plan. The report covers all activities conducted and expenditures made during Program Year 40, the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. This CAPER also includes narrative statements addressing:

- An assessment of the Town of Hamden's progress toward meeting the Five Year Goals and Objectives identified in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan and the relationship between activities undertaken and citizen-driven priorities;
- How the Town of Hamden has affirmatively furthered fair housing;
- An assessment of the development of increased affordable housing stock, including units equipped for disabled access and "worst-case need" housing;
- The Town of Hamden's participation in the Continuum of Care and efforts to end chronic homelessness;
- How the Town of Hamden has leveraged resources in pursuing CDBG goals and objectives;
- Citizen comments received regarding Town of Hamden programs as well as this CAPER;
- Self-Evaluation of progress in achieving goals and improving efficiencies, including how the Town of Hamden anticipates modifying programs in the future.

All activities undertaken as part of this program have met at least one of the following three "National Objectives" established by HUD:

- 1) principally benefit low- to moderate- income persons;
- 2) aid in the prevention or elimination of slum or blight;
- 3) meet other urgent community needs

The total amount that the Town expended during Program Year 40, as indicated in the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS) reports included, was \$409,080. Additional funds were expended as a result of using prior funds available. Program Income for the year was zero. The Town maintains its commitment to providing assistance to its residents and communities in a timely and efficient manner. All activities undertaken during Program Year 40 addressed needs and goals established in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan and 20.24% of the expended funds were used for program administration (primarily to fund and support 1 full-time employee, who provides direct programmatic assistance to local residents) and funds for a consulting firm Milone and McBroom to assist in the Consolidated Plan 2015-2019, a level slightly higher than the previous 2 years and at the 20% administrative cap. The Town expended funds for specific IDIS activities, emphasizing the completion of activities identified in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan.

The Town is also pleased to report that, as in prior years, 100% of Hamden's total expenditure of CDBG funds have been used for activities that offer direct programs, services, and assistance to low- to moderate-income individuals or provide area-wide benefit in Census Block Groups with a low- to moderate-income population percentage greater than 47.8%.

During PY 40, OHND and the Town of Hamden made encouraging progress in a number of arenas, including: recruiting new contractors for rehabilitation work, including Section 3, and minority or woman owned; continuing previous arrangements with two of the local non-profit housing agencies to rehabilitate properties for affordable housing in the target area and now working with a third Beulah Land Development for PY41; and increased cooperation with other Town commissions and community groups.

In PY36, OHND partnered with the State of CT Judicial Mediation Group for foreclosure prevention for residents in risk of losing their homes. Additionally at the end of PY36 and through all of PY38, PY39 and PY40, the Community Development Manager is part of a working group that assists residents in preventing foreclosure. The R.O.O.F. Project (Real Options Overcoming Foreclosure) in a collaboration with the Greater New Haven Community Loan Fund, Neighborhood Housing Services, and the South Central Regional Council of Governments.

In evaluating its accomplishments during Program Year 40, the Town is especially pleased with its continued implementation of the HUD regulation regarding the notification, evaluation, and reduction of lead-based paint hazards in the properties assisted by the Residential Rehabilitation and Downpayment Assistance programs. Since the rule's implementation, the Town of Hamden has continued to aggressively pursue rehabilitation opportunities while maintaining strict adherence to both the letter and the spirit of the regulation. Additionally with the new lead regulations enacted by the Environmental Protection Agency in Spring of 2010, OHND has worked with residents and contractors to

ensure proper compliance and licensing for lead-safe work in residential rehabilitation projects and first-time homebuyer acquisitions.

During Program Year 40, the Town has continued its program of citizen-based performance assessment to ensure that the delivery of services and the programs offered truly meet the needs and desires of program participants.

## **Assessment of Performance in Relation To One-Year and Five-Year Goals and Objectives**

During Program Year 40 as the 5<sup>th</sup> and final year of the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development, the Community Development Advisory Commission, and the Legislative Council identified the following items as prioritized needs of the community:

### **Priority Needs and Allocation Priorities**

Based upon citizen input, previous housing and community development initiatives, an assessment of current needs, consultations with various agencies, departments, organizations and individuals as well as an analysis of available resources, the Town of Hamden, in conjunction with the Community Development Advisory Commission and based upon data included in this report as well as citizen input regarding neighborhood issues, has established its priority needs and allocation priorities. These priorities are consistent with the mission statement of Hamden's Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development:

- To principally benefit persons of low- and moderate-income by eliminating blighted and deteriorated property and other conditions which may be detrimental to the health, safety and public welfare through the use of code enforcement, rehabilitation, and/or demolition.
- To expand access to affordable housing for renters and owners in Hamden.
- To affirmatively promote Fair Housing opportunities and conserve housing stock in order to provide a suitable living environment for all persons, but principally those of low- and moderate-income.
- To expand and improve the quantity and quality of community services which affect the quality of life, including the elimination of physical barriers which limit the participation of disabled individuals in their community and are in accordance with the principles of sound community development.
- To encourage the elimination of deteriorated property and economic decline in the community by stimulating private investment in cooperation with community revitalization.
- To provide overall comprehensive planning in order to achieve a viable plan of community development.

These goals are consistent with the primary objectives of the National Affordable Housing Act which are to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate- income persons.

These goals will be achieved by providing direct CDBG assistance for the rehabilitation of homes and the provision of homeownership assistance as well as through various activities by the Hamden Housing Authority. CDBG funding activities in neighborhoods will include the elimination of blighted properties, streetscape and public infrastructure improvements, commercial improvements and improvements to neighborhood facilities and community centers. These physical improvements will be coordinated with supportive services and programs for those segments of the community in need. Neighborhood revitalization efforts will be coordinated with community groups, faith-based organizations, various civic associations and community development corporation activities and projects. This multi-faceted program for housing and community development will allow a holistic program for meeting community needs that effectively leverages available resources.

As part of the citizen participation process undertaken during the Consolidated Plan development process, citizens at-large and the agencies, organization and departments contacted provided a generalized list of priority activities as well as comments on existing priorities. The general priorities established include:

1. Community Facilities
  - Libraries
2. Community Services
  - Youth Activities
3. Special Needs Services
  - Neglected/Abused Children Services
4. Neighborhood Services
  - Cleanup of abandoned lots & buildings
5. Infrastructure
  - Street Improvement
6. Businesses & Jobs
  - Job Creation & Retention
7. Housing
  - Energy Efficient Improvements
  - Residential Rehabilitation
  - Affordable Rental Housing

### **Specific Objectives and Strategies**

AS PART OF ITS ONGOING PLANNING AND CONSOLIDATED PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS THE TOWN HAS DEVELOPED SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES UNDER WHICH IT WILL IMPLEMENT IT HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. THESE OBJECTIVES WILL GUIDE THE TOWN'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDING ALLOCATION PROCESS DURING THE STRATEGY PERIOD. THE TOWN'S OBJECTIVES FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE:

#### **Housing Objectives**

- Increase affordable homeownership opportunities.

- Combat cost burden and housing problems of the extremely low- to moderate-income populations.
- Reduce the number of households paying more than 30% of their household income for housing.
- Improve and increase the supply of housing for extremely-low to moderate-income households.
- Provide "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households with children.

### **Homeless Objectives**

- Provide emergency shelter assistance and/or supportive services to homeless families and individuals using a continuum of care approach.
- Promote the creation of short-term transitional housing to house families and individuals who have become homeless while they look for permanent housing.
- Provide transitional short term "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by families while their homes are being abated

### **Special Needs Housing Objectives**

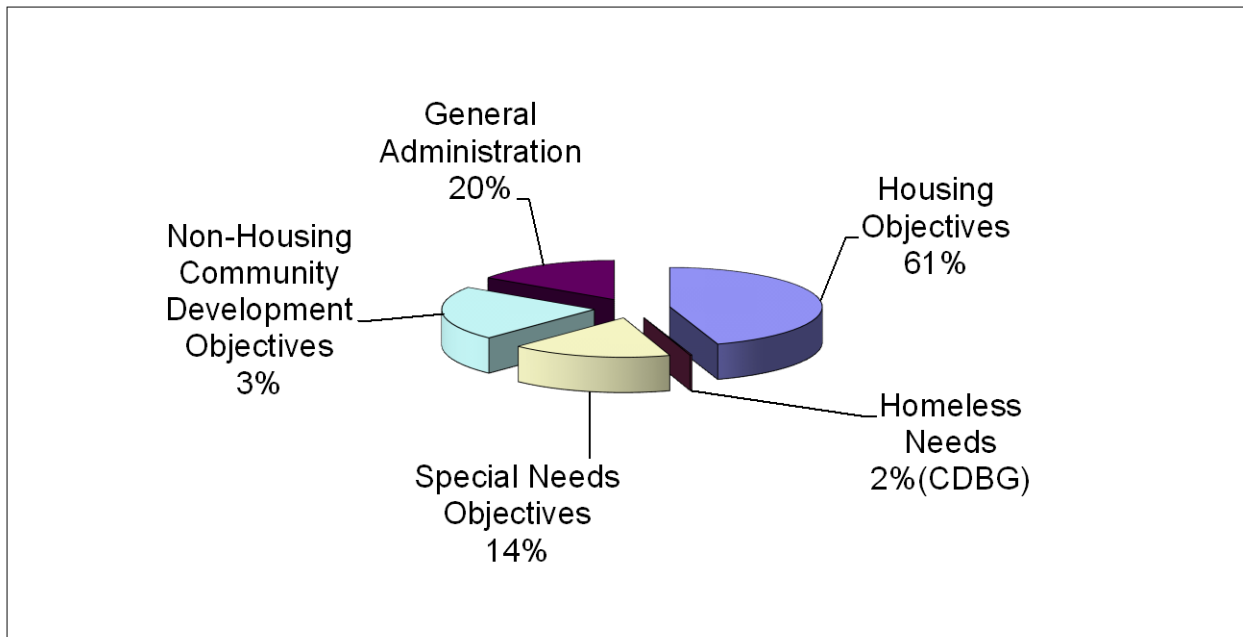
- Provide housing and support services to meet the needs of the disabled and the elderly.
- Support the provision of supportive housing and services to meet the needs of the special needs population such as victims of domestic violence and children, individuals with substance abuse problems, persons with mental health issues and/or persons living with HIV/AIDS.

### **Non-Housing Community Development Objectives**

- Provide infrastructure and facility improvements in support of neighborhood revitalization in community development target areas.
- Provide improvements to public facilities serving low- and moderate-income populations, the elderly and the disabled.
- Undertake activities to eliminate blighting influences in the community.
- Provide commercial district improvements in CD-eligible target areas.
- Promote economic development activities that benefit low- and moderate-income areas and/or create or retain employment positions for low- and moderate-income individuals.
- Provide employment and job skill training to unemployed and underemployed individuals.
- Support child care and youth programs.
- Provide public service programs that benefit low- and moderate-income households, homeless, elderly, youth, disabled and other special need populations.

The total expended in all line items in PY 40 was \$409,080. The following chart identifies Program Year 40 expenditures in each of these program areas, as well as General Program Administration:





During Program Year 40, the Town effectively used CDBG funds to address each of these items, as identified in the following:

### General Administration

TOTAL PY40 EXPENDITURES: \$74,964  
 20% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES

WITH THE FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS, OHND HAS REDUCED THE STAFF FROM 3 IN PY35 TO 2 IN PY36 AND NOW ONLY THE PROGRAM MANAGER AS A STAFF OF ONE IN PY 38, PY39, PY40 AND GOING FORWARD.

### Housing Objectives

TOTAL PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 263,205 (INCLUDES DAVENPORT-DUNBAR REHAB-\$25,000)  
 61% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES

In 2014-2015, there was a slight increase in the cost of Hamden’s housing; in the rental market as well as the homeownership market. However, due to wage declines and layoffs, the working class low-to moderate-income people working in the Town’s service and retail economies find it difficult to obtain safe, decent, and sanitary housing in Hamden without incurring an ever increasing cost burden.

During Program Year 40, the Town of Hamden utilized CDBG funds to combat cost burden and address housing issues of low- to moderate-income individuals. The 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan identified "the predominant cause of housing need is cost burden," and the Town of Hamden's CDBG programs reflect this reality, not only as it relates to obtaining homeownership and rental opportunities, but also in assisting residents maintain their homes and become long-term, stable members of the community.

During PY 40 approximately \$ 263,205 or 61 % of the Town's annual CDBG expenditures, were used for **direct** housing-related activities for low- to moderate-income residents. Activities included residential rehabilitation, emergency rehabilitation, housing authority renovations, homebuyer assistance, environmental assessment, code enforcement, and fair housing/fair rent activities and emergency housing. Housing investment through these programs, as well as "continuum of care" referrals to other government and non-

profit programs, allows residents to improve the conditions of their homes and assists the Town in increasing the availability of safe, affordable housing for low- to moderate income and elderly residents.

The Town offers housing rehabilitation, downpayment, and environmental assessment assistance to income-eligible residents residing in Census Tracts 1655, 1656, and portions of the State Street Revitalization Zone (Census Tract 1651- Block Groups 3 and 4). Emergency housing assistance is offered on a town-wide basis as long as applicants meet HUD determined income guidelines. Access to the Fair Rent and Fair Housing Officer, and Housing Code Enforcement is offered to all Town residents.

The Town also has a relocation plan in place that is strictly implemented to all State and Federal guidelines by the Community Services Department to minimize displacement of residents and disruption of their lives.

OHND continued to meet with numerous Town agencies during PY 40 to ensure full compliance with the Town’s relocation policies. A “Relocation Seminar” was held as in previous program years to discuss future practices and “best procedures”. The Town’s Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development and Community Services Department hosted staff from all affiliated internal departments to discuss legal, funding, and all related topics of relocation.

During PY 40, OHND’s Lead-Safe Housing Unit was no longer in the budget for relocation and displacement due to severe budget cuts. An agreement has been negotiated with a local hotel for temporary relocation. However, OHND and Community Services continue to work closely with faith-based organizations, non-profits, and homeless shelters in Hamden and New Haven to obtain additional units for those with transitional needs, and expects these units to be under consideration during PY 41as well.

Each of these programs serves to address one or more of the Housing Objectives identified in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan:

*Residential Rehabilitation/Single and Multi Family Ownership/ Emergency Rehabilitation*

**PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 132,750**

**PY 40 GOAL: 12 SINGLE FAMILY AND 3 MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING UNITS**

**PY 40 ACHIEVEMENTS: 26 HOUSING UNITS ( 19 SINGLE AND 7 MULTI-UNITS)**

Statistical Summary: Rehabilitation Programs							
Low –Mod Income:			Non-Moderate Income:			Low-Mod %	
# of Households			# of Households				
26			0			100%	
<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>American Indian</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Female Head of Household</b>	<b>Elderly Head of Household</b>
10	8		1	0	1	11	13

**Goals Addressed:**

- Combat cost burdened housing problems of the extremely low- to moderate-income populations.
- Improve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low- to moderate-income households.
- Provide "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households with children.

The Town offers residents a Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Grant/Loan to low- to moderate-income residents in three forms:

1) Owner-Occupied Single Family Rehabilitation Assistance, 2) Multi-Family Rehabilitation Assistance, and 3) Emergency Rehabilitation (Both Single and Multi-Family).

In delivering these programs, the Town is able to increase the number of decent, safe and affordable housing units available to residents of low- to moderate- income. It also allows the Town to address the emergency needs of its low income population.

During Program Year 40, the Town offered the above-referenced assistance programs to families residing in Census Tracts 1655 (Highwood) and 1656 (Hamden Plains) and the lower State Street/East Ridge area (CT 1651).

Emergency Rehabilitation projects were conducted on a Town-wide basis, with income-eligibility and need as the primary qualifiers. Primary examples of Emergency assistance include repairing or replacing inoperable furnaces and roof repairs when roof leaks immediately threaten the stability of the residence. Each of these programs serves to address one or more of the Housing Objectives identified in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan.

The single family rehabilitation program provided rehabilitation assistance up to \$15,000 per unit to owner occupied single family homeowners of low/moderate income. Rehabilitation work frequently includes roof replacement, furnace replacement, vinyl siding, window replacement, lead paint remediation, painting, porch repairs, doors and other repairs related to violations of code compliance.

The multi-family rehabilitation program provided rehabilitation assistance up to \$15,000 per housing unit to owner-occupied and/or tenant-occupied multi-family structures. Rehabilitation work performed is identical to that of the single family rehabilitation program.

The multi-family program has improved the quality of housing for rental tenants in the CDBG target area as well as allowing the Town to positively influence the availability of affordable rental units. The assistance agreement requires that any rental unit in a multi-family home be rented to residents of low- to moderate-income for a minimum of five (5) years. In addition, Landlords are not allowed to increase the rental rates charged to tenants as a result of the repairs conducted with CDBG funds beyond the Fair Market rate established by HUD.

The multi-family program differs from the single-family program in that it requires non-owner occupied Landlord owners to also be income qualified and 100% of costs in excess of \$15,000 per unit. The only exception to this guideline is if the owner is of low- to moderate-income, as well as all tenants.

#### *Downpayment Assistance/First-Time Homebuyer*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$35,000 (\$15,000 FROM PY40, \$20,000 FROM PRIOR YEARS AND BUDGET ADJS.)

PY 40 GOAL: 5 FIRST TIME BUYERS

PY 40 ACHIEVEMENTS: 8 HOUSEHOLDS/8 HOMES PURCHASED, 13 APPROVED APPLICANTS IN PY40  
SOME CLOSINGS IN PY40 WERE PY39 APPLICANTS

#### Goals Addressed:

- Increase affordable homeownership opportunities.

- Combat cost burdened housing problems of the extremely low-to moderate-income populations.
- Improve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low to moderate-income households.
- Plan to provide "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households with children.

The Town of Hamden administers a First-Time Homebuyer Assistance Program, funded through CDBG, called the Hamden Homeownership Initiative. The program assists low- to moderate-income homebuyers purchase their first home with the assistance of a down payment/closing cost grant/loan. In addition, the Town can pay for some legal fees, lead clearance sampling and related repairs associated with the purchase.

The program is targeted toward three geographic areas in Hamden, the Highwood Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (Census Tract 1655 - CD Target Area for Area-Wide Benefit Activities), the State Street Neighborhood Revitalization Zone and the Hamden Plains area (Census Tract 1656).

Home sales prices continue to be high, despite the housing downturn during PY 37, 36, and 35, limiting the ability of applicants to find homes within their price range. Applications remain active as long as applicants maintain income eligibility. Through both homebuyer training and counseling, applicants are also encouraged to avoid making a hasty decision in selecting a home for their families, instead weighing such factors as long-term affordability and lead-safe conditions.

The slight leveling of home sale prices during PY40 did allow more eligible applicants the ability to purchase homes. This is primarily the result of lenders being much stricter on criteria to be approved for mortgages. 8 purchases with the down-payment assistance program was an increase from PY39, still however reflecting the continuing difficulty in finding affordable housing and obtaining mortgages.

#### *Fair Rent/ Fair Housing*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$323 (OTHER FUNDS ARE SALARY OF CD MANAGER THROUGH ADMIN)  
 FUNDS WERE USED FOR ANNUAL DUES AND ANNUAL MEETING FOR CT FAIR HOUSING COALITION  
 PY 40 GOAL: 10 RESIDENTS  
 PY 40 ACHIEVEMENTS: 2 APPLICANTS, 16 CASES INFORMALLY MEDIATED

#### Goals Addressed:

- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing
- Improve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low to moderate-income households.
- Reduce the number of households paying more than 30% of their household income for housing.
- Provide "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households with children.

In a concerted effort to affirmatively further fair housing in Hamden, OHND is working with the CT Fair Housing Center to provide workshops at the Keefe Community Center for tenants and landlords. The first workshop was in June 2010, and was presented in spanish by Attorney Marcia Escobedo of the CT Fair Housing Center. Additional workshop scheduled in PY39 was not held due to staffing cuts at the CT Fair Housing Center. OHND will attempt to schedule additional sessions in PY41. Additionally, the Community Development Manager will continue to attend HUD sessions, when available, dedicated to affirmatively furthering fair housing. The Community Development Manager also attends many CT Fair housing events and Board Meetings.

The Community Development Program Manager also serves as the Fair Rent/Fair Housing Officer for the Town of Hamden. The Fair Rent Officer serves as the primary staff person for the Town of Hamden Fair Rent Commission, a volunteer citizen board. This commission is governed by a Hamden Town Ordinance that authorizes rent control when increases are determined to be unreasonable or unconscionable. The Commission is also empowered to order housing, health and other such improvements to rental units, should such conditions be deemed unfit, unsafe or in any way uninhabitable.

The Town of Hamden provided formal (resolved) Fair Rent assistance to 2 households and informal assistance to significantly greater numbers. This number reflects a sharp decline in official complaints processed, due in large part to successful pursuit of complaints in previous years. Prior to Program Year 39, the largest number of complaints emerged from two large local properties. In PY 39, the Fair Rent Officer met again with the new local property manager of one property to streamline the negotiated settlement of fair rent complaints. This streamlined approach has yielded successful negotiation or mediation of all complaints filed against landlords.

In PY40, **no** formal Fair Housing complaints were filed with the office. The office continues to promote Fair Housing through resident awareness such as pamphlets and posters at the Keefe Community Center, libraries, and other Town locations.

The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development often refers low to moderate-income residents to Legal Assistance and/or the New Haven Housing Court should those venues be of better use to tenants.

An analysis of housing patterns in Hamden indicates greater diversity in each of its neighborhoods. While Fair Housing continues to be a critical component of OHND's mission, as noted no fair housing complaints were submitted to the Fair Housing Officer in PY 40. Even so, OHND works closely with the Connecticut Fair Housing Coalition and will continue to update its Analysis of Impediments. The most recently completed 5-Year Plan (2015-2019) provided an updated Analysis of Impediments approved by the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In PY 33, the Town approved its Fair Housing Action Plan that is administered by the Community Development Manager and Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development.

### *Code Enforcement*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 449

PY 40 GOAL: 10 RENTAL UNITS

PY 40 ACHIEVEMENTS: 1 HOUSING UNIT ( REPORTED IN RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION/FUNDED CARBON MONOXIDE AND SMOKE DETECTORS= UPGRADES AT 4-FAMILY HOUSING UNIT)

### Goals Addressed:

- Improve and increase the supply of housing for extremely low to moderate-income households.
- Provide "Lead Safe" housing for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households with children.
- CDBG funds are used to support Housing Code Enforcement in the CD Target areas.

Code enforcement activities help to address unsafe housing conditions and blighting influences caused by housing code violations. Addressing such violations improves living environments for residents of our community development target areas.

OHND works in conjunction with the Quinnipiack Valley Health District and the Housing Session of the Superior Court to conduct housing code enforcement activities. The office received no direct complaints from tenants regarding code violations that were not resolved by QVHD working with landlords.



due to the relocation of families ordered out of their homes. Additionally, the Department assisted 21 families in avoiding eviction at an est. cost of \$27,000 and helped prevent utility shutoffs for 100+ households at an est. cost of \$25,000. The Department processed 19 evictions for a total est. cost of \$19,000

The Community Services Department operates a Food Bank to assist families in need with 3-day emergency food bags. During the 2014-2015 Program Year, 4,000+ families were assisted through this service. Hamden's Food Bank provided more than 50,000 meals last year. A Fuel Assistance Program, in cooperation with the Hamden Clergy Fuel Bank assisted 40+ families in 2014-15 while processing 300+ applications for State and Federal energy assistance programs, including Greater New Haven Fuel Bank. The Elderly Services Dept. also provides Emergency Fuel Assistance to those 62 years old and older.

### **Special Needs**

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 61,886

15% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES

The following CDBG-funded activities achieved Special Needs goals and objectives during Program Year 40:

#### *ADA Improvements*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$5,157

PY 40 GOAL: 1 PUBLIC FACILITIES/ ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2 ADA RAMPS CONSTRUCTED AT INCOME-QUALIFIED OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES

#### Goals:

Support the provision of supportive housing and services to meet the needs of the special needs population such as victims of domestic violence, children, persons with disabilities, individuals with substance abuse problems, persons with mental health issues and/or persons living with HIV/AIDS.

OHND has continued to work closely with the Town's ADA Coordinator and Public Works' Buildings Superintendant to prioritize projects of real impact to low-income and/or elderly residents. OHND's PY 40 funds allocated to ADA improvements were used to meet the demand of residential emergency rehabilitation projects such as leaking roofs and replacement furnaces.

### **Public Service Agency Assistance**

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 56,729

#### Goals Addressed:

- Provide housing and support services to meet the needs of the disabled and the elderly.
- Support the provision of supportive housing and services to meet the needs of the special needs population such as victims of domestic violence and children, individuals with substance abuse problems, persons with mental health issues and/or persons living with HIV/AIDS.
- Promote economic development activities that benefit low- to moderate- income areas and/or create or retain employment positions for low- to moderate- income individuals
- Provide employment and job skills training to unemployed and underemployed individuals.
- Support childcare and youth programs.
- Provide public service programs that benefit low- and moderate-income households, homeless, elderly, youth, disabled and other special needs populations.

The following Public Service Agency activities achieved Special Needs goals during PY 38:

### **Birmingham Group/Domestic Violence Services**





1075	878	370	999	0	562	1654	325
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The program benefitted low to moderate income families that need food assistance and summer camp scholarships through the Food Bank. Funds provided for necessary staffing to distribute food.

**H.C.L.C. (REACH/STEPS Program)**

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$3,000.00  
 PY 40 GOALS: 60 SPECIAL NEEDS YOUTH  
 PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 60 SPECIAL NEEDS YOUTH

Statistical Summary: REACH / STEPS							
Low/Mod Income-13			Very Low Income-17			Low-Mod %	
Extremely Low-30			Non Low Mod-0			100%	
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
41	19	0	14	0	0	37	4

The REACH Program is an alternative education program for special education students whose disabilities make it difficult or impossible to be educated successfully in a larger school environment. The program focuses on students in grades 7, 8 and 9 who exhibit social, emotional or educational disabilities. The program provides counseling to students and includes community service as a program component. Its philosophy focuses on behavior modification through positive reinforcement, student accountability and opportunity to improve self worth. The program prevents expensive out-of-district placements.

**Hamden Elderly Servies**

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$7,000.00  
 PY 40 GOALS: 97 ELDERLY RESIDENTS  
 PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 97 ELDERLY RESIDENTS

Statistical Summary: Hamden Elderly Services							
Low /Mod Income-13			Very Low Income-51			Low-Mod %	
Extremely Low-33			Non Low Mod-0			100%	
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
27	70	0	6	0	0	37	97

The Town's Elderly Services Department functions as the central resource for information on programs, activities, and services for the Town's senior residents as well as families requiring assistance in caring for an elderly relative. The Elderly Telephone Outreach Program provides telephone calls to homebound elderly residents. Frequently, this call may be the only daily outside contact for residents. The Reassurance Worker informs the Elderly Outreach Counselor if intervention is required in any case or should there be a change in the status of a senior citizen.

**Partnerships Adult Day Care**

PY 40 Expenditures: \$9,000.00  
 PY 40 Goals: 25 Special Needs Residents

PY 40 Accomplishments: 25 Special Needs Residents

Statistical Summary: Partnerships Adult Day Care							
Low/Mod Income-2		Very Low Income-6				Low-Mod: 100 %	
Extremely Low-17		Non Low Mod-0					
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
6	19	0	2	0	0	10	19

Partnerships Center for Adult Day Care is a care facility for the frail elderly, and mentally or physically disabled individuals. The program's goal is to promote dignity, self-esteem and independence among the population served, allowing residents the opportunity to stay living in the community for as long as possible. Funds from the Hamden CDBG program were used to support the cost of hot lunches, which are served daily to participants. Lindley Food Service provides hot, full course noon meals meeting USDA requirements at the cost of \$5.29 per meal.

**Young Audiences of CT**

PY 40 Expenditures: \$3,000.00  
 PY 40 Goals: 250 Special Needs Residents  
 PY 40 Accomplishments: 250 Special Needs Residents

Statistical Summary: Young Audience of CT							
Low/Mod Income-28		Very Low Income-270				Low-Mod: 100 %	
Extremely Low-120		Non Low Mod-0					
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
200	36	0	59	0	14	181	19

Young Audiences of CT provides international cultural enhancement nights at the Keefe Community Center. Music, Craft Making , and other events.

**DESTINED TO SUCCEED**

PY 40 Expenditures: \$4,000.00  
 PY 40 Goals: 40 Families  
 PY 40 Accomplishments: 26 Families

Statistical Summary: DESTINED TO SUCCEED							
Low/Mod Income-8		Very Low Income-13				Low-Mod: 100 %	

Extremely Low-5			Non Low Mod-0				
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
18	8	0	5	0	0	15	4

DESIGNED TO SUCCEED is a non-profit that provides a summer camp for middle school students “Biz4kids” which teaches financial literacy and entrepreneur skills.

**Hamden Youth Services Bureau**

PY 40 Expenditures: \$5,996.00

PY 40 Goals: 38 Families

PY 40 Accomplishments: 38 Families

Statistical Summary: Hamden Youth Services Bureau							
Low/Mod Income-6			Very Low Income-8			Low-Mod: 86%	
Extremely Low-25			Non Low Mod-6				
Blac k	White	Asian	Hispanic	American Indian	Other	Female Head of Household	Elderly Head of Household
29	9	0	7	0	0	23	11

The Youth Service Dept. provided scholarships for low-income families/children in the daycare program.

**Non-Housing Community Development Objectives**

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$8,867.00

3% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES

The following CDBG-funded activities achieved non-housing community development goals and objectives during Program Year 40:

*Public Facility/Infrastructure Improvements*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$6,150

PY 40 GOALS: PEOPLE (GENERAL)

PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: COMMUNITY-WIDE BENEFIT: 100% LMI

OHND THROUGH THE CDBG FUNDING COMPLETED THE DRAINAGE SYSTEM NECESSARY TO INSTALL THE NEW PLAYGROUND IN PY41

Goals Addressed:

- Provide infrastructure and facility improvements in support of neighborhood revitalization in community development target areas.
- Provide improvements to public facilities serving low- to moderate-income populations, the elderly and the disabled.

During Program Year 40, the Town funded infrastructure improvements in the Community Development Target Areas as a method of providing much-needed community enhancement, target area public benefit, and improvements to the business corridor. Additional business projects were also funded under Commercial Corridor Revitalization which is discussed in this section below.

### *Anti-Blight Programs*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$767.00

PY 40 GOALS: COMMUNITY-WIDE BENEFIT: 100% LMI/ 3 PROJECTS

PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: COMMUNITY-WIDE BENEFIT: 1 PROJECT –

#### Goals Addressed:

- Undertake activities to eliminate blighting influences in the community.

During Program Year 39, the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development administered a program of anti-blight activities, which focus on the Community Development Target Areas. The Town funded activities that included: Materials/Supplies/Grass seed purchased in PY40 were used to assist in developing a picnic area overlooking a pond at the former landfill in the Target Area with oversight by the Community Development Manager whose time is paid under General Administration.

### *Commercial Corridor Revitalization*

PY 40 EXPENDITURES: \$ 1,950

PY 40 GOALS: 1 BUSINESS

PY 40 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 1 SIGN FOR NEW BUSINESSES IN TARGET AREA

#### Goals Addressed:

- Provide commercial district improvements in CD-eligible areas.
- Promote economic development activities that benefit low- to moderate- income areas and/or create or retain employment positions for low- to moderate- income individuals

During Program Year 40, the program saw continued interest and activity including: facade improvements, sidewalk/streetscape assistance (under infrastructure above), sign design and installation assistance for local businesses, including 1 sign. The sign grants program funds new business sign grants in the Dixwell Avenue and State Street Revitalization Target Areas.

The program, now titled the Commercial Corridor Revitalization Program, offers grants of up to \$10,000. In PY40 going forward, the grants are an interest free- no monthly payment loan/ lien on the property with the same repayment requirements as the Residential Rehabilitation Program, which is repayment upon sale or transfer of the property. The new program includes infrastructure improvements, facade and code improvement work offered in the original program (exterior only). Also included in this activity is the signage improvement program. Sign grants are up to \$2,000 for businesses in the target revitalization zone.

## **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**

The Town of Hamden continues to remain active in the promotion of Fair Housing within the community. The 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan includes an updated Analysis of Impediments and new goals and objectives to affirmatively further fair housing. In a concerted effort to affirmatively further fair housing

in Hamden, OHND is working with the CT Fair Housing Center to provide workshops at the Keefe Community Center for tenants and landlords. The first workshop was in June 2009, and was presented in Spanish by Attorney Marcia Escobedo of the CT Fair Housing Center. Additional workshops were scheduled in PY37. However due to staffing cuts at the Fair Housing Center, no workshops were completed in PY 39 or PY 40 (2012-2013, 2013-2014). The Office will attempt to re-schedule workshops in PY41. Additionally, the Community Development Manager attended HUD/CFHACT sessions in Hartford in 2014-2015 dedicated to affirmatively furthering fair housing. If additional trainings become available in PY41, the Community Development Manager will attend.

While the coordination of Fair Rent activities by the Community Development Program Manager remains the most significant activity, several municipal departments, local non-profits, and the independent Hamden Housing Authority offer programs and services that further Fair Housing opportunities. In PY33, the Town of Hamden approved its Fair Housing Action Plan which is implemented through the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development and the Community Development Manager. Citizen participation is encouraged through the Community Development Advisory Commission, which has a role in plan implementation.

The community's primary obstacle to achieving its fair housing goals of increased housing diversity and the elimination of discriminatory practices is a focus of the current 5-year Consolidated Plan. The Town revised and updated its Local Impediments Analysis that takes into account the changing housing landscape. This analysis will assist in the strategic development of programs, goals, and benchmarks for the next 5 Program Years. PY41 is year 1 of the new 5-year plan.

#### *Fair Rent Process*

The Fair Rent Commission receives complaints, inquiries, and other communication regarding charges of excessive rent or dangerous conditions in housing accommodations within the Town. The Fair Rent Commission can conduct hearings on complaints or requests for investigations submitted to it by aggrieved persons. If, after a hearing, the Fair Rent Commission determines rent for a housing accommodation is excessive or "unconscionable", it can order a reduction of excessive rent to an amount that is "fair and equitable", or make other such orders as authorized.

During PY40 as in PY39, the Fair Rent Officer utilized, with great success, a more comprehensive and aggressive counseling strategy with Fair Rent complainants. Reflecting the renewed focus on individual attention, Fair Rent/Fair Housing complainants receive individualized counseling by the Fair Rent Officer, which has led to a dramatic decrease in matters requiring the attention of the full Fair Rent Commission. The OHND received 2 formal complaints and assisted 16+ households in resolving Fair Rent issues in PY 40. No cases required a formal hearing as all were resolved through informal mediation by the Fair Rent Officer and the Fair Rent Commission Chair. The Fair Rent Commission and the Fair Rent/Fair Housing Officer will hold a meeting in November, 2015 to discuss programmatic understanding and to educate 2 new commissioners.

#### *Residential Rehabilitation Program*

This program has improved 26 housing units (19 Single family and 7 Multi-Units) for residents of low- to moderate-income, increasing the number of safe, decent housing units available to Hamden residents. The Residential Rehabilitation program increases the affordable housing stock and increases the number of affordable housing units available to rent.

Further details regarding the accomplishments of this program are listed under the Residential Rehabilitation Program review section of this report and in the IDIS reports attached.

#### *Hamden Homeownership Initiative & Homebuyer/Homeowner Training*

This program assists income-eligible citizens to purchase their first home in Hamden. In addition, the Town required Pre-Purchase Homeownership Training and in-office Homebuyer Counseling as a part of the

Downpayment Assistance Program during PY 40. Training was offered in partnership with the New Haven Homeownership Center, a NeighborWorks network member and Neighborhood Housing Services. This is an important component of the overall program in that it trains new homebuyers on anti-discrimination laws in homebuying and mortgage lending, how to fix their credit, how to understand what homes they can afford, the importance of identifying lead hazards (particularly for families with young children), and what applicants can expect at closing.

## **Other Actions and Accomplishments**

The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development is a division of the Town's Department of Economic and Community Development. The Department of Economic and Community Development has numerous economic development initiatives underway that address objectives listed in the 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan and address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

The Economic Development Commission has established a long-term Economic Development Plan and business incentive strategy that includes funding for several beneficial activities, including: infrastructure improvements grants, tax incentives, neighborhood revitalization project funding, small business loans, workforce development and job training and marketing.

Programs offered by the Department of Economic and Community Development that impact the CDBG target districts include:

### **Micro Loan Program**

The Town offers low interest loans of up to \$25,000 for the purchase of machinery and equipment, interior and / or exterior renovations and property improvements. The program is available in all areas of Hamden. Interest rates for loans up to a maximum of 5 years (60 months) float based on the Wall Street Journal Prime rate.

### **Downpayment Assistance Loan Program**

The Town offers loans for the purchase of commercial and mixed-use properties in all areas of Town. The maximum loan is \$50,000 and can be used for down-payment and/or related closing costs. The loan rate is prime rate plus one percentage point. Each loan is amortized for a 15 year period.

### **Building Permit Fee Waivers**

Most business throughout Hamden that newly construct or make improvements to real property can receive local building permit fee waivers of up to 100%. These waivers do not apply to HVAC, plumbing, and electrical permits.

### **Property Improvement Grant Program**

The Town offers Property Improvement grants throughout Town for most types of property improvements including but not limited to site improvements and building improvements such as structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, security, etc, with the purpose of expanding the size or the upgrade of the use of the property. The focuses of the grants are on properties that are manufacturing or located in the Neighborhood Revitalization Zones.

### **Contaminated Sites/ Remediation Initiatives**

The Town offers significant tax abatements to manufacturers, warehousing and distribution companies, and certain service businesses locating to, or expanding in, Hamden's Enterprise Zone in the Highwood neighborhood and in the Town's Railroad Depot Zone if they make real property improvements that increase

the property's assessed value. Some benefits for manufacturing may be offered in the State Street Neighborhood Revitalization Zone and the Urban Jobs Program. The types of eligible businesses (SIC codes #2000 - 3999 inclusive with some additional codes) are predetermined by the State Department of Economic and Community Development and Office of Housing.

The Department of Economic and Community Development will continue to administer State grants that the Town secures for development activities in the State Street and Highwood areas of Town, including: the remainder of the Highwood Urban Act Grant for area revitalization activities and a Municipal Development implementation Grant. These funds are discussed above in the “infrastructure improvements” in a previous section.

During PY 40, The Department of Economic and Community Development spearheaded a number of activities designed to bring jobs to target district residents and offer improvements to the quality of life. The Department also administers the Town's Neighborhood Assistance Act program, Brownfield Remediation Program and several redevelopment initiatives. 400 Goodrich St, a highly contaminated former metal-finishing building in the Dixwell Street Target Area. In PY40 and going forward the Department secured State Bond Funds to remediate the former Newhall Community Center, renovate and transfer the property to the Hamden Economic Development Corporation (HEDC). The property will become a business incubator creating jobs in the CDBG Target Area. Remediation will be completed in PY41 and funds have been secured to complete the rehabilitation with an opening scheduled in Fall 2016. An architect has been hired and subcontractors are currently being interviewed. This project, in the heart of the Target Area will create numerous short term construction jobs and long-term opportunities for businesses to work together and expand their businesses.

## Leveraging Resources

The Town of Hamden leverages additional resources to address the priority needs and program objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan in a variety of ways and has found continued success in this area during PY 40. Hamden's greatest obstacle to meeting its community development needs is limited financial resources, and the leveraging of other community resources is critical to providing the variety of services demanded by the residents of Hamden. In addition, OHND has been working with various non-profit agencies and the Town's dedicated grantwriter to bring additional resources into Hamden to specifically address Housing and Community Development needs. As in PY37, OHND spearheaded and worked with Town offices, including the Mayor, to identify a Town-owned property, for acquisition by Habitat for Humanity. The home was purchased by Habitat in PY 37 and was completed in PY38. This project allowed a low-income family to purchase the home at a price below market value, with a deed-restriction for affordability. The house is energy star rated and restored to historic standards as it was a former turn-of-the-century farmhouse. OHND also worked with Neighborhood Housing Services to acquire a blighted vacant 2-family property in the target area in PY36. CDBG rehab. funds were used in PY37 to leverage \$260,000 to complete the rehabilitation. Once again, this project allowed a low-income family to purchase the home at a price below market value, with a deed-restriction for affordability in PY38. In PY39, the Town sold vacant properties to Beulah Land Development to build affordable housing units in the Newhall neighborhood as a result of the Consent Order that remediated contaminated soil and purchased and demolished homes that were damaged as a result of the contamination settling. They are scheduled to break ground in PY41. In PY40, the Town had begun to foreclose on vacant properties to allow these properties in the Target Area to be rehabilitated and in most cases sold to first-time homebuyers or those at low-mod income levels.

The Town received **HOME CT** funds to analyze the housing and commercial densities in the CDBG target area with the hope of increasing densities in the target area to add affordable housing. The study was completed in PY37. Currently the Planning and Zoning Dept. is completing its 5-Year Plan of Conservation

and Development. They worked with the Community Development Manager to assist in increasing opportunities in the Target Area. For example Zoning changes along the Dixwell and State Street corridor which call for affordable housing units above new businesses that seek to open in these areas. The Community Development Manager also secured Capital Funds bonded by the Town to assist in CDBG budget shortfalls for rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements. Additionally, Neighborworks New Horizons purchased the vacant old Hamden Middle School in the Target Area and will build 90 units of affordable housing.

As part of its Consolidated Planning process the Town determined that it would seek resources with which to provide rehabilitation activities; support efforts to increase homeownership opportunities; secure additional tenant-based rental assistance resources; assist in the creation of transitional housing; and support local Community Development Corporations, non-profit and for-profit developers working to create affordable housing for families and individuals identified as having a critical housing need. Partnerships such as those with Neighborhood Housing Services and Neighborworks/New Horizons were discussed in more detail earlier in this report.

With declining federal CDBG funding, the Town changed its declining lien structure for PY38. The lien is no longer declining and will be required to be repaid upon sale or transfer, assuming there are funds available after the first mortgage.

## Managing the Process

The Town of Hamden's Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development is charged with managing the Community Development Block Grant funds in their entirety and ensuring that appropriate benchmarks are achieved.

Each project undertaken by OHND proceeds according to a detailed checklist of activities which ensures that program participants meet income eligibility requirements, work sites fall within appropriate geographic boundaries (where applicable), environmental and historic preservation reviews are accomplished, and National Objectives are achieved. Responsibility for performing this work is in the hands of the Community Development Program Manager or the Director of Economic & Community Development. **Additionally, the Town was monitored by HUD in PY35 and July PY39 and no significant findings were discovered with management, programs, bookkeeping, and all other facets of program implementation.**

As the recipient of one of Connecticut's smallest entitlement grant, Hamden relies on established operational efficiencies to obtain positive, measurable results.

## Citizen Participation

The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development follows an approved Citizen Participation Plan, as prescribed by HUD, to encourage citizen input and participation in the CDBG program. As with all OHND documents, a clear, concise narrative summary of this CAPER report was made available for public review for fifteen days prior to its submission to the Department of Housing & Urban Development.

The Town committed to increase community outreach and citizen participation. As participation in Public Hearings and Community Forums has been historically low, OHND used extensive outreach through a survey to obtain information and feedback for the Consolidated Plan 2010-2014. PY40 was year 5 of this Plan. OHND is committed to continuing to meet the needs of all community stakeholders and incorporated its citizen-based performance assessment plans in the recently completed 5-Year Consolidated Plan (2015-2019). Graphs in the plan clearly show the citizen based analysis and how it will impact future direction of CDBG expenditures and needs determination.



The Community Development Advisory Commission, a group of citizen volunteers appointed to oversee and offer guidance to OHND from a community perspective, has been very successful in providing the program with a regular opportunity to solicit feedback on programs and philosophical direction for the program. The Commission meets on a monthly basis.

In addition, the Town has been making its plan documents and reports available to the community in locations throughout Town and has started posting information about Community Development programs and accomplishments on the internet on Town's official website, [www.hamden.com](http://www.hamden.com) and its Community Development web site [www.hamdencommunitydevelopment.com](http://www.hamdencommunitydevelopment.com). This website offers not only information on OHND programs, but also access to valuable information on home improvements, fair housing issues, links to partner websites, and more. .

The Town advertised the availability of the Draft Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) on October 16, 2015 and October 23, 2015. No public comments were received for the required fifteen (15) day period.

## Monitoring

The Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development (OHND), a division of the Town of Hamden Department of Economic and Community Development is the lead local agency charged with administering the Town's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation.

The Office employs a Community Development Program Manager, who is responsible for the coordination, oversight and general monitoring of all program activities.

OHND staff keeps detailed records and requires careful documentation for each of programs, especially with regard to low- to moderate-income status.

### *Procurement*

All financial and purchasing transactions are conducted through the Town of Hamden Finance and Purchasing Departments. OHND follows the Town's purchasing procedures, and in doing so, complies with 24 CFR 85.36.

In instances where HUD regulations present additional purchasing requirements, OHND requests such from the Purchasing Department. All purchase orders utilized to conduct program activities are signed by the OHND Program Manager, the Purchasing Agent, the Finance Director and the Mayor. These layers of oversight ensure compliance with municipal fiscal and purchasing policies. All financial transactions are also subject to the annual audit of the Town's municipal finances.

### *Public Service Agency Oversight*

**OHND conducted random on-site monitorings for new and past funded agencies receiving CDBG funding in PY40.** (and previously all PSA's in PY35) to ensure compliance with program regulations and to review progress toward goals outlined in their application for funding. At the end of PY40 and in the beginning of PY 41, OHND will again revise the reporting process to make it more user-friendly and more directly in line with HUD accomplishment reporting requirements; thus being more effective for both the agencies and our office.

The Community Development Program Manager reviewed reports submitted by the Public Service Agencies to ensure proper documentation of expenditures. Additionally, agencies are provided availability electronically to OMB Circular A-122 to review allowable cost principles.

### *Additional Oversight*

The Community Development Advisory Commission (CDAC), made up of resident volunteers, work in cooperation with the OHND to ensure the success of the program and to provide citizen oversight. The group assists the OHND by identifying needs, advising on program guidelines, ensuring compliance with HUD regulations and overseeing activities funded by the CDBG program. They also review applications, and interview all applicants seeking Public Service Agency funding. As a Commission, they then make recommendations on which agencies to fund and how much they should be funded.

The CDAC reviews and approves the budget contained in the Annual Action Plan prior to its submission to the Hamden Legislative Council and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The CDAC has nine (9) citizen members of mixed political affiliation, who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Legislative Council.

The CDAC meets monthly with the Community Development Program Manager and the public to conduct their business, and also meet regularly in smaller sub-committees to work on specific duties.

## **Lead-based Paint**

The Town of Hamden has aggressively implemented the Lead-Safe Housing Rule and has established itself as a model for effective program administration under current regulations and new EPA Rules implemented in Spring of 2010. All properties considered for Downpayment Assistance undergo both a visual lead assessment and, if necessary, a lead clearance test by a certified lead contractor prior to approval for assistance (with the exception of properties built after 1978). Residential rehabilitation work conducted in homes built before 1978 is performed in a lead-safe fashion according to the standards of the Lead-Safe Housing Rule and EPA's "Renovate Right". All rehab. projects receive a complete Lead Assessment by OHND's certified Lead Assessment Firm prior to drafting and incorporating into a scope of work. OHND's Rehabilitation Architect and approved Lead Contractors are both trained and certified in Lead-Safe practices, which allows for greater oversight of contractor work. OHND also requires inspection of barriers and lead clearance testing in residential rehabilitation projects by a certified lead inspector.

The Town of Hamden has, and will continue, to offer lead-safe work practices training information for contractors working in the Town. The Town will continue to collaborate with local vendors certified by the State to provide the trainings. This course helps extend lead-safe practices beyond the scope of CDBG-funded projects, and therefore serves all families of the region, particularly those with young children.

As part of Hamden's Fair Housing/ Fair Rent process, inspections of rental units in which children under six reside include an evaluation for lead-based paint hazards by the Quinnipiac Valley Health District.

Hamden has also continued the practices of the former Hamden Healthy Homes program to help families develop plans to reduce environmental risks in their homes, including lead-based paint hazards. Detailed environmental records are maintained for each project file.

## **Self Evaluation**

The 2014-2015 Program Year was another productive one for Town of Hamden's Housing and Community Development Program.

Goals were accomplished or exceeded, new programs were implemented, and the Community Development target area's physical appearance continues to improve. Improved relations with Town offices, local non-profits, statewide organizations, and neighborhood groups yielded excellent results during PY 40.

OHND continued to fund many public service agencies that provide essential services to the Town's low- to moderate-income residents and limited clientele and also provided technical support to individuals, agencies, and organizations seeking to make a difference in the community. Additional outreach was extended to public service agencies late in PY 39 to seek applicants for the PY 40 funding. This, in large part, is the result of identified needs related to the homeless, sub-prime mortgage crisis, unemployment and other consequences of the economic downturn and its impact on Hamden residents and neighborhoods. Specifically, the increase in potential homelessness was addressed by approving funding in PY36, and additional funding in PY37, PY38 , PY39, and PY40 to Columbus House of New Haven, whose homeless shelters house Hamden residents. In PY41 an additional homeless shelter has been funded

Programs funded and activities undertaken during PY 40 (last year of old plan) were consistent with the Town's Consolidated Plan and met its stated housing and community development goals and objectives. For the tenth consecutive year, the Town met the spending ratio maximum established by HUD. This accomplishment comes after several years where the Town had a significant problem with its spending ratio.

The Town's spending ratio at the May 2, 2015 HUD established deadline was .21, well below the 1.5% maximum rate, and slightly below PY39. OHND has committed itself to the timely expenditure of funds. The Hamden program is effectively expending CDBG funds in the delivery of activities, programs and services to Hamden's low- to moderate- income population. The Town has increased its outreach to the community and encouraged citizen participation in the community development process.

The result of the program success, and in large part the depressed economy, and extended outreach has developed waiting lists for nearly all CDBG-funded programs, including Residential Rehabilitation and Commercial Corridor Revitalization.

The Community Development Advisory Commission, a group of citizen volunteers appointed to two-year terms to oversee and give guidance to the program management from a community perspective has been very successful in guiding the program with a community focus.

As previously mentioned, the Town has been making its plan documents, reports, applications, maps and more available to the community in locations throughout Town and is posting information about Community Development Programs and Accomplishments on the internet at [hamdencommunitydevelopment.com](http://hamdencommunitydevelopment.com) .

The Town's Community Development web site has allowed the department to provide 24-hour information to the public. The site links to the Town's main website for purposes of providing information and application documents for Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development programs directly over the web. This link will also be used to better inform the public of program accomplishments and upcoming meetings and events.

As in previous years, the Town strives to improve the financial management of the program's records, in order to better reconcile the Town's financial information with the official information contained within HUD's IDIS system.

The annual accomplishments outlined in the various IDIS reports included in this CAPER reflect those efforts as all activities from prior funding years have been completed and their accomplishments documented accordingly.

## Program Changes Based on PY 40 Experiences

Over the past year, the Town of Hamden's CDBG-funded programs have continued to evolve based on the needs and priorities of the program applicants and the community at large. The most notable programmatic changes as a result of Program Year 37 cuts occurred in the following areas for PY40 and going forward:

**With declining federal CDBG funding, the Town changed its declining lien structure in PY38. The current lien is required to repaid upon sale or transfer, assuming there are funds available after the first mortgage.**

### *Citizen Service Center*

The Town will continue to use the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Development as a Citizen Service Center, where applicants receive individualized attention and counseling through structured meetings and follow-ups. During Program Year 40, the Town continued with this approach in the Fair Rent and Downpayment Assistance programs, resulting in a higher level of satisfaction on the part of program participants. No changes were made in PY40 as a result of PY37 successes.

### *Emergency Rehabilitation*

OHND has worked closely with the Town Purchasing Office to streamline the successful completion of emergency rehabilitation; most prominently roof repairs and furnace repairs. OHND has used the bidding process to select an on-call furnace repair vendor, and by doing so, can respond to emergency furnace outages nearly as swiftly as an individual making direct contact with their own service carrier. A new bid was issued in PY36 for the on-call furnace vendor for services through PY39. PY40 also saw a continued successful process for roof repairs based on a bid waiver that was extended an additional year and approved at the start of the previous year by Hamden's Legislative Council. Multiple approved roofing vendors bid each individual project in a streamlined process to expedite the emergency replacement. Women and minority owned businesses are encouraged to bid. 1 new minority/women owned businesses, and 1 Section 3 were approved in PY39, and 1 new minority owned business in PY40.

### *Cooperative Efforts*

OHND has continued to extend its network further across the Town, the region and the state. Through active participation in organizations including the CT Community Development Association (CCDA) and the Connecticut Housing Coalition (CHC), OHND has increased its participation in large-scale housing-related efforts as well as identified "best practices" in the housing industry. Additionally, cooperation with local groups like the Human Rights Commission (which promotes safe, decent housing as a universal right) and the Disabilities Commission, OHND anticipates the emergence of housing as a major local issue in the coming years. Additionally, coordinated efforts with non-profits like NeighborWorks New Horizons, New Haven Home Recovery, Leeway, Beulah Land Development and Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven yielded tangible housing results in Hamden during PY 40 and moving forward into PY 41.

### **Benchmarks: Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA):**

In 2004, the Highwood Community was named as an NRSA. Its benchmark goals were to:

1. Increase the amount of residential units completed.
2. Complete economic development activities under area-wide benefit.
3. Increase the percentage of expenditures under the Public Service Agencies.

The Town will seek to re-establish an “active” NRSA in PY41 as we were not successful in P40, which follows outreach completed in PY40, in the Highwood/Newhall Community as participation in the original group has declined or changed. The Director of Economic and Community Development, the Town Planner, the Mayor, the Community Development Manager, and business and resident stakeholders met in late PY38 to formalize a process going forward. It was expected that in PY38 a formal plan would be established. However it was not completed, therefore PY 41 is the new goal

In the current area that encompasses the inactive NRSA, the following progress was made in PY40:

1. Residential Rehab: We have completed additional units in PY 40 focusing on the NRSA area. (see data in Rehab section above). The need for rehabilitation has continued to increase, with our waiting list continually growing. A renewed emphasis has been to improve the neighborhood housing in the NRSA. The section of the NSRA known as Newhall had been under a State of CT Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Consent Order to remediate contaminated soil on the properties of over 200 homes. Remediation was completed in PY38. As a result, environmental reviews of these properties are now within HUD approved guidelines allowing for residential rehabilitation to improve the homes in this neighborhood. It is anticipated that the vacant parcels will become affordable housing units in PY41. There are 6 parcels that were purchased by Beulah Land Development.
2. Down Payment Assistance: We assisted 5 families in PY40 purchasing a home for the first time in the Highwood NRSA. 3 others were within close proximity.
3. Economic development activities such as business facade improvements, sign grants, and infrastructure improvements occurred in PY 39 as noted in previous sections. PY40 yielded 1 sign grant and minor infrastructure improvements
4. While the Office of Housing of Housing and Neighborhood Development continue to seek partners in establishing a homeless shelter or transitional housing in the NSRA, negotiations have yet to find an adequate location or partnership. However the Office funded Columbus House of New Haven again in PY40 to provide homeless sheltering for Hamden residents. **This Public Service Agency grant was reduced due to funding cuts from \$9,000 to \$8,000 in PY40 as they have provided the necessary sheltering for homeless Hamden residents.** However they were funded \$10,000 in PY41 and Emergency Shelter Management also received \$7,500.
5. Outreach to non-profit agencies providing public services identified the Newhallville Housing Development Corporation in Highwood as an agency seeking funds to initiate a HUD approved First-time Homebuyer Training Program. They were funded with PSA funds in PY38 however they did not complete HUD certifications. They were not funded in PY39. OHND will continue to assist agencies directly serving Hamden target area families. Neighborworks New Horizons and Neighborhood Housing Services are the primary referrals for homeownership counseling.