

## **CR-05 - Goals and Outcomes**

### **Progress the jurisdiction has made in carrying out its strategic plan and its action plan. 91.520(a)**

This could be an overview that includes major initiatives and highlights that were proposed and executed throughout the program year.

This CAPER represents the last year of the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

As those public health directives have been eased slightly in some areas of our community, some program activities have moved forward, as others have been put on hold, until we have better health safety guidance. In terms of the housing rehabilitation/reconstruction program, since staff was unable to complete home inspections at the time, we were able to pivot to assisting citizens with emergency roof repairs, which in all cases made residents more habitable and safe for stay-at-home orders for citizens. The City's Great Promise Partnership Program was suspended first due to the shut-down of both our local government and schools (Valdosta City Schools), but also out of an urgent need to ensure the safety of the students who would be working with the City in area of public access. Although the City cannot offer formal training sessions, staff have adapted some of our public meeting processes to either Zoom or Facebook Live, but still being mindful to the fact that many citizens in our areas of focus have limited access to these services. The City was fortunate to have had the ability to complete its last Fair/Affordable Housing Summit in January 2020, just before the mandatory stay-at-home and public health mandates were issued.

### **Comparison of the proposed versus actual outcomes for each outcome measure submitted with the consolidated plan and explain, if applicable, why progress was not made toward meeting goals and objectives. 91.520(g)**

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

Goal	Category	Source / Amount	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Expected – Strategic Plan	Actual – Strategic Plan	Percent Complete	Expected – Program Year	Actual – Program Year	Percent Complete
Administration Strategy 1.1- Program Administration	Administration	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	5	5	100.00%	5	5	100.00%
Administration Strategy 1.2-Fair Housing		CDBG: \$	Other	Other	750	300	60.00%	150	50	33%
Affordable Housing Objective 1.2-Blight Removal		CDBG: \$	Other	Other	25	10	40.00%	5	0	0%
Affordable Housing Strategy 1.1 - Housing Rehab	Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Housing Unit	40	10	25%	6	7	110%
Non-Housing Community Development- Economic Develop	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG: \$	Other	Other	50	1	5%	10	0	0%

Table 1 - Accomplishments – Program Year & Strategic Plan to Date

**Assess how the jurisdiction’s use of funds, particularly CDBG, addresses the priorities and specific objectives identified in the plan, giving special attention to the highest priority activities identified.**

Staff has continued to work diligently to utilize the funding for community needs, while staying within timeliness compliance. Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were

forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

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## CR-10 - Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted

Describe the families assisted (including the racial and ethnic status of families assisted).

91.520(a)

	CDBG
White	0
Black or African American	26
Asian	0
American Indian or American Native	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
Hispanic	0
Not Hispanic	0

Table 2 – Table of assistance to racial and ethnic populations by source of funds

### Narrative

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

This number represents the individual families assisted through the single family residential rehabilitation/reconstruction activities (7) and (19) individuals who attended the Affordable/Fair Housing Summit held in January 2020. The majority of those we serve in the Designated Revitalization Area (DRA) are African American.

**CR-15 - Resources and Investments 91.520(a)**

**Identify the resources made available**

Source of Funds	Source	Resources Made Available	Amount Expended During Program Year
CDBG		668,771	568,242

**Table 3 – Resources Made Available**

**Narrative**

**Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments**

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
CDBG Eligible Block Groups	100	100	Areas for area benefit through CDBG Program

**Table 4 – Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments**

**Narrative**

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## Leveraging

**Explain how federal funds leveraged additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements were satisfied, as well as how any publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that were used to address the needs identified in the plan.**

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## CR-20 - Affordable Housing 91.520(b)

Evaluation of the jurisdiction's progress in providing affordable housing, including the number and types of families served, the number of extremely low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income persons served.

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	0	0
Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units	6	7
Number of Special-Needs households to be provided affordable housing units	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-Year Goal	Actual
Number of households supported through Rental Assistance	0	0
Number of households supported through The Production of New Units	2	1
Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units	4	6
Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 6 – Number of Households Supported

### Discuss the difference between goals and outcomes and problems encountered in meeting these goals.

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

### Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.

The City of Valdosta and the surrounding area will need to change the ways in which we reach our low-moderate populations and be a part of offer solutions to overcome the barriers we experienced due the this national pandemic. The need for safe, sanitary, and affordable

housing is an even more important goal for our community. The issues of housing instability, low wages, and the cost of decent housing have been brought to the forefront of our governmental concerns as an Entitlement Community. Staff is eagerly looking to local, state and national guidance on how to be able to continue the programs we have been fortunate enough to provide to our community for over ten years, but now with a new method of presentation.

We always plan projects with our annual CDBG allocation and resources in mind. Any additional projects that are able to be completed through those other resources just add to the overall efforts of the City to eliminate substandard housing and barriers to fair housing in our community.

**Include the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income persons served by each activity where information on income by family size is required to determine the eligibility of the activity.**

<b>Number of Persons Served</b>	<b>CDBG Actual</b>	<b>HOME Actual</b>
Extremely Low-income	0	0
Low-income	6	0
Moderate-income	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

**Table 7 – Number of Persons Served**

**Narrative Information**

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to complete the activities outlined in our FY2019 Annual Action Plan. Staff were forced to augment our housing rehabilitation/reconstruction, public service programs and infrastructure projects, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments.

The City continues to maintain a relationship with local organizations to provide opportunities for homeowner rehabilitation, emergency shelter as well as elderly and disabled housing in the Designated Revitalization Area. CDBG funds have been coordinated with local funds to assist with homeowner repairs. Staff continues to collaborate with local providers to implement steps to alleviate barriers to affordable housing that have been identified in our Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and through the new processes created to counteract the COVID19 pandemic.



## **CR-25 - Homeless and Other Special Needs 91.220(d, e); 91.320(d, e); 91.520(c)**

**Evaluate the jurisdiction's progress in meeting its specific objectives for reducing and ending homelessness through:**

### **Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs**

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to continue to complete homeless outreach in our community, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments. Over the last few months, processes have been changed to still complete community homeless outreach among our partnering organizations, but with public health safety protocols in mind.

The City of Valdosta is involved in the development and activities of the local Continuum of Care System (partners in the homeless coalition include: Georgia Housing Finance Administration (GHFA), LAMP/New Horizons, The Haven, Valdosta Housing Authority, the Salvation Army, Behavioral Health Services of South Georgia, South Georgia Homeless Task Force and the City of Valdosta). Due to the national pandemic – COVID19 the outreach portion of homelessness have be augmented to not only ensure service to citizens, but to make sure service workers are safe.

### **Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons**

Due to the national declared pandemic – COVID19, it has been difficult to continue to complete homeless outreach in our community, due to our initial governmental shut-down and the subsequent mandated public health directives from the federal, state and local governments. Over the last few months, processes have been changed to still complete community homeless outreach among our partnering organizations, but with public health safety protocols in mind.

GHFA will provide outreach, intake, assessment information and referrals, case management, follow up, and tracking homeless individuals and families. The City makes referrals to LAMP for eligible citizens to participate in the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) program, which has resulted in the prevention of the families referred from becoming homeless. LAMP/New Horizons now has the capacity to offer emergency shelter for homeless men within their facility.

### **Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: likely to become homeless after being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); and, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs**

Due to the national pandemic-COVID19 the need to assist individuals who are extremely low, low and moderate income with assistance has been challenging. The needs have far outweighed the resources available in our community. Through additional funding granted through the CARES Act to both state

and local governments has helped to address local needs. In cases such as this, the local organizations have tried to be as pre-emptive and proactive when individuals have sought assistance. But with limited resources, all who sought assistance were in some cases unable to access assistance. Those organizations and facilities who have assisted this population in the past have changed some of their intake processes to follow state and local public health mandates and to ensure proper outreach.

The Georgia Housing Finance Administration (GHFA), Coastal Plains, Lowndes Associated Ministries to People, the Salvation Army, and other agencies will continue to provide utility assistance to families at risk of becoming homeless if resources are available. The Valdosta Housing Authority (VHA) will give priority to homeless families in its public housing program. GHFA will coordinate the case management system that will allow each agency to participate in building a database on each homeless person as well as other special needs groups. The City makes referrals to LAMP for eligible citizens to participate in their Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) program, which has resulted in the prevention of the families referred from becoming homeless. The City will continue to work with agencies that provide supportive services to the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless.

**Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again**

The City will continue to identify and match at-risk persons with available services which can assist with housing and prevent homelessness. The City applied once again to DCA to become the local organization to coordinate and complete the area homeless count for our community. Valdosta completed the point-in-time (PIT) homeless count for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in January 2019 and each year since 2015. Staff are being advised on all new count protocols from both the federal and state level regarding the PIT count for 2021. All necessary precautions will be made to make sure our community has a complete count and have full consideration of all state and local public health safety mandates.

The Georgia Housing Finance Administration (GHFA) and South Georgia Homeless Task Force will continue to reach out to homeless individuals and families by making available its information and referral service, and advertising available services through different mediums such as radio and television advertisements, newspapers, and flyers. Each organization is using the new HMIS comprehensive case management system that will assess individual and family needs and connect them with the proper resources. A well-developed referral and case management system will allow most agencies to immediately assess the needs of homeless persons. Once an agency determines the need, the individual or family is promptly referred to the appropriate services. The City will also collaborate with homeless agencies to address the housing needs of recently released institutionalized persons.

## **CR-30 - Public Housing 91.220(h); 91.320(j)**

### **Actions taken to address the needs of public housing**

The Valdosta Housing Authority continues in its mission to provide affordable housing to the most vulnerable in our community. The Housing Authority has continued to modernize its housing stock through its Comprehensive Modernization Program, and continues to work with a local service provider to provide job/career training and after-school programs for its residents and their children.

Statistical information about the Valdosta Housing Authority public housing:

- 483 Households are headed by females
- 97 Households are headed by elderly persons
- 379 Households have incomes at or below 30% of the media area income

### **Actions taken to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership**

The physical improvements that the Valdosta Housing Authority is making to its public housing developments and the way in which the VHA and its residents maintain their housing should have a positive impact on neighborhoods that immediately surround public housing developments.

The Valdosta Housing Authority is in the various stages of repairing their single-family homes. These homes are located in subdivisions throughout the city. These units will provide affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for eligible housing authority residents and potentially other low to moderate-income residents in the community.

### **Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs**

The age of our oldest public housing development, Ora Lee West, makes this property a troubled property, but our public housing authority as a whole functions well. A think tank was formed in 2017 consisting of various community housing groups and is continuing to seek information to start the conversations and processes necessary to discuss the revitalization of Ora Lee West. Staff continues to collaborate with local providers to implement steps to alleviate barriers to affordable housing that have been identified in the recently completed Analysis of Impediments for the City of Valdosta. PHA is working with an outside consultant to come to Valdosta to assess our VHA properties and the opportunities available through the RAD conversion for revitalization purposes. The Valdosta Housing

Authority continues to use its Capital Improvement Funds to work towards completing the façade and community updates to the Hudson Docket community.

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## **CR-35 - Other Actions 91.220(j)-(k); 91.320(i)-(j)**

**Actions taken to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment. 91.220 (j); 91.320 (i)**

The City will continue to push for sensible relaxation of underwriting criteria used by banks and other financial institutions that participate in the City's housing partnership. Other barriers will be identified, analyzed, and where appropriate changed. The City, in partnership with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), will seek to host another Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) workshop in 2019 to bring awareness and to work with local financial institutions to encourage activities that contribute to Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) activities in our community. Staff continues to meet with focal financial institutions to work on community presentations to assist with increasing financial literacy among citizens.

Staff is moving forward in preparing and attending additional forums within the community to continue to present information on potential obstacles to meeting underserved needs, and to provide informational materials regarding the wealth of different community and faith-based housing, employment, educational and health related services that are offered in the City at no cost. Staff will continue to meet with local non-profit agencies in our community to inquire as to what they feel the needs of the underserved are and to solicit suggestions on how these needs can be best met and the gaps in services offered can be filled.

### **Actions taken to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The city continues to work with local community and faith-based organizations to identify and address potential obstacles to meeting underserved needs. The City of Valdosta formed a Fair Housing Committee based on recommendations from the Mayor and City Council to address the findings and barriers identified in the 2012 Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice. The responsibility of this committee was to collaborate on possible solutions to eliminate the barriers identified in the report, but to also provide the necessary information to our underserved populations in our community. The committee is no longer in existence, but the finding and resources found by the group are being utilized to still tackle the issues still present from the 2012 AI. Due to the recent changes to the AFFN regulations, staff will be working to create a RFQ have a new AI completed in the coming year with the City's new Consolidated Plan for FY2020 – 2024. Staff has continued to seek out partnerships with our local technical colleges and nonprofits organizations to continue to offer Workforce Development programs, testing and certifications to citizens interested in seeking employment. The City's partnership with Goodwill of the Southern Rivers provides an on-site career kiosk and career and job readiness training provided to citizens who visit the City's customer service and City Hall annex buildings. The City has offered Small Business Seed Loans to local small business owners with more relaxed funding requirements than traditional funding sources, which was identified as a barrier for small business

sustainability within the DRA.

**Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

**Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

For the residential rehabilitation component of the program, applicants were given a Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home booklet which informs homeowners of potential lead-based paint hazards. In the housing rehabilitation program, homes that were built prior to 1978 were tested for lead. In the homes that tested positive for lead, abatement practices were used by a licensed lead abatement contractor.

**Actions taken to reduce the number of poverty-level families. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The City continues to investigate and utilize various forums within the community for organizations to provide information regarding Fair housing/Fair lending practices, homebuyer counseling information, weatherization information and resources, utility billing assistance, homeless shelter information and resources, rental housing information, elderly and disabled individual housing resources and information regarding subsidized child-care programs, job/career training and workshops, job fairs and more affordable housing resources that would assist to provide decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing for the citizens of Valdosta.

**Actions taken to develop institutional structure. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

At the commencement of the City's Entitlement fund program, it was determined the most efficient methodology for delivery of some funds would be through partnerships with those organizations already providing the identified programs and projects. Staff also meets with local non-profit agencies to inquire and discuss the needs/gaps in the institutional structures. Suggestions are being solicited on how these needs can be met and the gaps that may be in some of the services offered in our community can be filled. For example, the City works with Habitat for Humanity to provide homebuyer education. The City utilizes its own Community Protection Division in the effort to demolish, clear dilapidated structures and alleviate unsafe conditions. The City currently partners with Goodwill and the Valdosta/Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce for job training and small business education and technical assistance services.

Staff has participated in numerous training opportunities as they have become available during the last year. Staff continues contact with our HUD Community Planning and Development Representative on a regular basis to ensure program compliance. Program files and procedures are reviewed periodically to ensure files are being maintained in compliance with program regulations throughout HUD. In June 2018, changes were made to the residential rehabilitation program and overall CDBG policies and procedures for the City's program to reflect suggestions gleaned from our 2018 CDBG Program Monitoring.

**Actions taken to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The progress in meeting priority needs and objectives is good. The home repair program administered through the City is seeing an increased number of requests for assistance, which were addressed through grant funding. Decent housing and a suitable living environment has been provided through referrals to Coastal Plains, Counsel on Aging, the Salvation Army, LAMP and the Georgia Housing Finance Administration. Fair Housing and Lending information, Residential Rehabilitation/Reconstruction, the Small Emerging Business program, and its partnerships with community organizations in the educational and labor markets are indicators that address the strategies and describe the results of the activities and strategies implemented. In the program activities, changes were made to better address the needs of homeownership/retention and housing rehabilitation and to create more educational and economic opportunities as well as affirmatively furthering fair housing initiatives within the City.

**Identify actions taken to overcome the effects of any impediments identified in the jurisdictions analysis of impediments to fair housing choice. 91.520(a)**

The City of Valdosta completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing in 2012. The report has listed the local barriers residents of Valdosta/Lowndes County face in regards to securing affordable, safe and sanitary housing in our community. The City continues to utilize the impediments set forth in the report as the basis for their housing goals in the 2019 Annual Action Plan. Funding will be allocated yearly to address Fair Housing education and activities in our Annual Action Plan. During the second quarter of the FY2019 program year, preparations will be made to have a new AI completed for the community. The Fair Housing Committee, which was formed through member recommendations from the Mayor and City Council after the 2012 report, has been disbanded, but the goals set forth by this group are being continued in other community affordable housing forums and groups. Our local Habitat for Humanity has been an important partner in continuing the work of the Fair Housing Committee by allowing the City to access to resources, such as the Success Measures program to inquire and track the housing needs throughout the City. One of two planned neighborhood canvasses to present a neighborhood assessment survey has been completed to attempt to match the actual needs of the citizens with the information reported in the Analysis of Impediments.

## **CR-40 - Monitoring 91.220 and 91.230**

**Describe the standards and procedures used to monitor activities carried out in furtherance of the plan and used to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs involved, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements**

Although the City currently does not have any subrecipients, when applicable, subrecipients will be required to turn in monthly/or quarterly reports with drawdown requests. The reports for reimbursement will be evaluated to ensure the activities for reimbursements are within the program parameters. When applicable, during the evaluation of monthly/quarterly reports, subrecipients would be asked to include or document detailed information in respect to the clients they provided services to (i.e., income verification of participants, race, gender, number of opportunities offered and to whom, the means of outreach to program participants, MBE,WBE, and Section 3 Business Entity status).

## **Citizen Participation Plan 91.105(d); 91.115(d)**

**Describe the efforts to provide citizens with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on performance reports.**

The City conducts conferences to apprise the public of funding availability and offer technical assistance to agencies, groups and individuals in completing the required applications for any particular program. Citizens are informed through newspaper articles, public notices, public hearings, the city's website, social media sites, and the city's public access channel concerning the CDBG objectives, changes in the use of funds, availability of the Annual Action Plan and other pertinent information as it relates to the CDBG Program.



**CR-45 - CDBG 91.520(c)**

**Specify the nature of, and reasons for, any changes in the jurisdiction’s program objectives and indications of how the jurisdiction would change its programs as a result of its experiences.**

Although affordable housing is a high priority for us, other needs in the areas of community & economic development, fair housing and small business education and retention were identified as emerging needs. Funding is being allocated to these activities yearly to move all these priorities forward. The progress made by the program in the area of eliminating substandard housing will not and cannot be sustained in the community unless funding is directed to other identified needs.

**Does this Jurisdiction have any open Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grants?**

No

**[BEDI grantees] Describe accomplishments and program outcomes during the last year.**

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