

# **FY 2026 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

## **HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA**



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## Executive Summary

### AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

#### 1. Introduction

The City of Hazleton has been a designated entitlement community by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for over 40 years. For Fiscal Year 2026, the City Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation from HUD is \$650,000. During 2026, the City of Hazleton will fund activities which provide suitable living environments.

#### 2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This could be a restatement of items or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis or the strategic plan.

In FY 2025 the City created a new Five -Year consolidated Plan. This plan outlined the following goals which will be implemented through the 2026 program funding:

Public Infrastructure and Facilities

Reduce Slum/Blight in the City Neighborhoods

Public Services

Administration

#### 3. Evaluation of past performance

This is an evaluation of past performance that helped lead the grantee to choose its goals or projects.

The following highlights of past performance are based on the 2024 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) submitted to HUD in March 2025. The next CAPER for FY 2025 will be prepared for submission to HUD by March 2026. The contract for funds for FY 2025 was received in September 2025 even though the City has a January 1 start date.

During FY 2024, the City continued to make progress on various public infrastructure improvements. The

City will complete a multi-year streetscape improvement project along Wyoming Avenue using the

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remaining 2023 and 2024 Street Improvement funds. This project went to bid in August 2025. The City

continued a multi-year effort to replace a traffic signal on Diamond and Vine and it was substantially

completed in 2024; punch list items remain but the project will be completed in full in 2025.

Another

traffic signal on Alter and 15<sup>th</sup> Street will commence construction in 2025; bids were awarded in December 2024. Additionally, the City also served 238 individuals experiencing homelessness in 2024.

Projects funded with the CDBG-CV funds include the development of an outdoor recreation space that

facilitates social gathering in accordance with public health guidance. Construction for this project was

substantially completed in 2024.

#### **4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process**

Summary from citizen participation section of plan.

The City of Hazleton's goal for citizen participation is to ensure a broad participation of City residents and housing, economic, and service providers in the planning and implementation of the community development program. Citizen participation takes the form of advertised community meetings and public hearings.

The public hearings were advertised in a local newspaper of general circulation, the *Hazleton Standard Speaker* and the Spanish language newsletter El Mensajero. Participation and applications for funding were solicited from local agencies by letter directed to those agencies. The public was invited to comment on the needs of the community through the two public hearings.

The City of Hazleton included language in the English newspaper advertisement to indicate that the plan could be made available in alternative languages or formats upon request to meet the needs of non-English speaking or disabled individuals. Local community agencies that serve low-income persons that also provide services to non-English speaking persons, low-income persons and persons with disabilities were sent the Action Plan with a request for comments.

A public needs hearing was held on September 15, 2025. A second public hearing was held on October 7, 2025. Both hearings were held through virtual platforms. The public hearings were

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advertised in the *Hazleton Standard Speaker* and Spanish language publication, *El Mensajero Magazine*. Notification of both hearings was distributed within the community through letters, flyers and the City's website and posted at the City Clerk's Office in City Hall.

In agreement with 24 CFR 91.100(4), the City of Hazleton notified the adjacent units of government that it was completing this Annual Action Plan. A copy of the completed Annual Action Plan will be sent to the Luzerne County as well.

A summary of the Annual Action Plan was published in *Hazleton Standard Speaker* and *El Mensajero Magazine* on September 29, 2025, alerting interested persons as to the availability of the Annual Action Plan. The Annual Action Plan was available from October 3, 2025, to November 5, 2025 for a 30-day comment period and available for citizen review at the City Hall, Office of Community Development, 40 N. Church Street, and at the Hazleton Public Library at 55 N. Church Street. In addition, the document was placed on the City's web-site: <http://www.hazletoncity.org/Community-Development-Office/community-development-block-grant.htm>

**5. Summary of public comments**

This could be a brief narrative summary or reference an attached document from the Citizen Participation section of the Con Plan.

No public comments were received.

**6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them**

No public comments were received.

**7. Summary**

**PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies – 91.200(b)**

**1. Agency/entity responsible for preparing/administering the Consolidated Plan**

Describe the agency/entity responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

<b>Agency Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Department/Agency</b>
CDBG Administrator	HAZLETON	Department of Community and Economic Development

**Table 1 – Responsible Agencies**

**Narrative (optional)**

**Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information**

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## **AP-10 Consultation – 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(I)**

### **1. Introduction**

The City of Hazleton actively consulted with a variety of non-profits, social service providers, community citizens, and other governmental agencies throughout the year. Invitations to the first public hearing were sent to different agencies and organizations to solicit participation. Additionally, meetings were held throughout the year with affordable/special needs housing providers, business associations, homeless providers, and health and human service providers.

**Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction’s activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies (91.215(I))**

The Housing Development Corporation of NEPA offers several Programs and services for Luzerne County communities. Programs include homebuyers counseling and supporting housing service as well manages the development of affordable housing projects. The Hazleton Housing Coalition is comprised of a wide range of agencies involved in human services that meet regularly to discuss housing issues and immediate social needs in the community. Additionally, The Hazleton Housing Authority (HHA) oversees three public housing complexes and the Housing Choice Voucher program. The City is an active participant with the Coalition and HHA. This informal group is chaired by the United Way and is open to all stakeholders in the community.

**Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness.**

The Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO) takes the lead agency role with the Luzerne County Continuum of Care (COC). Representatives from the City of Hazleton, specifically Catholic Social Services, participate in the process. During preparation of the Consolidated Plan, the City discussed the COC goals with the COC Coordinator and incorporated the goals of the COC in the Plan. A copy of the draft plan was provided to the COC for review and comment.

**Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the jurisdiction's area in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards for and evaluate outcomes of projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS**

The City of Hazleton is not a HUD Entitlement recipient of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding. The City has pursued competitive ESG funding through the PA DCED and as such participates in the HMIS, but does not participate in decision making related to performance standards or outcomes. The City participates in the public participation process for the CoC NOFO to ensure consistency with the City's Consolidated Plan.

**2. Describe Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and describe the jurisdiction's consultations with housing, social service agencies and other entities**

**Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated**

1	<b>Agency/Group/ Organization</b>	Hazleton Housing Authority
	<b>Agency/Group/ Organization Type</b>	PHA
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/ Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	The PHA needs and housing needs in the community were discussed with the Director of the Hazleton Housing Authority by telephone.
2	<b>Agency/Group/ Organization</b>	Catholic Social Services

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	<b>Agency/Group/ Organization Type</b>	Services - Housing Services-homeless
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homelessness Strategy Anti-poverty Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/ Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	Homeless needs and housing needs in the community were discussed with the Director of the Catholic Social Services. CSS coordinates with the regional COC. CDBG funds will continue to support the operations and services at the homeless shelter.

**Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting**

There were no agencies intentionally not consulted.

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**Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan**

<b>Name of Plan</b>	<b>Lead Organization</b>	<b>How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?</b>
Continuum of Care	Commission on Economic Opportunity	The COC through the CEO ensure that the goals of the COC and the City's goals are consistent.

**Table 3 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts**

**Narrative (optional)**

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**AP-12 Participation – 91.105, 91.200(c)**

**1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation  
Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting**

The City of Hazleton actively consulted with a variety of non-profits, social service providers, community citizens, and other governmental agencies throughout the year. Invitations to the first public hearing were sent to different agencies and organizations to solicit participation. Additionally, meetings were held throughout the year with affordable/special needs housing providers, business associations, homeless providers, and health and human service providers.

**Citizen Participation Outreach**

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
1	Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community	There were no participants in the public hearing.	No comments were received.	No comments were received.	
2	Newspaper Ad	Non-targeted/broad community	The public hearing notices were run in the Spanish Language newspaper.	No comments were received.	No comments were received.	

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of response/attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
3	Public Meeting	Non-targeted/broad community	There were no participants in the public hearing.	No comments were received.	No comments were received.	

Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach

## Expected Resources

### AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.220(c)(1,2)

#### Introduction

#### Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1			Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$	
CDBG	Public - federal	Acquisition, Administration and Planning, Economic Development, Housing, Public Improvements, and Public Services	\$650,000	\$0	\$0	\$650,000	Funds will be used for eligible activities. This is the second year of the Consolidated Plan cycle.

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**Table 5 - Expected Resources – Priority Table**

**Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied**

The City will use CDBG funds whenever possible to leverage other grants and funds from State and Federal sources. The City has received funding from the State’s Local Community Account, set up to distribute the proceeds throughout the County from gambling establishments. The City also has been successful at leveraging state funds for recreation area and transportation improvements.

**If appropriate, describe publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan**

The City does not have any land or property resources that will be used for CDBG needs.

**Discussion**

## Annual Goals and Objectives

### AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives

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## Goals Summary Information

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Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	E n d Y e a r	Category	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure	2025	2029	Non-Housing Community Development	Public Facility and Infrastructure Improvements	CDBG: \$456,275.00	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 2,890
2	Remove Slum/Blight	2025	2029	Other – Blight Reduction	Reduce Blight	CDBG: \$21,725.00	Buildings Demolished: 1
3	Provide Public Services	2025	2029	Non-Housing Community Development	Public Services	CDBG: \$42,000.00	Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 300

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**Table 6 – Goals Summary**

**Goal Descriptions**

	<b>Goal Description</b>
<b>1</b>	Improve streets, parks, water, sewer, fire-fighting capacity, and facilities that serve the low-income community. Repayment of Section 108 loan that will be used for street improvements.
<b>2</b>	The City has numerous vacant and abandoned properties that are unsuitable for rehabilitation. The City will demolish these as needed.
<b>3</b>	Provide funding to support services that encourage economic self-sufficiency.
<b>4</b>	On-going oversight and management of the program and community outreach.

## Projects

### AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

#### Introduction

The City intends to assist in the implementation of four activities including street improvements, park improvements, demolition of one property and fund homeless services. 2026 funding will also allow the City to continue repayment on a Section 108 loan and CDBG program administration.

#### Projects

#	Project Name
1	Clearance/Demolition
2	Streetscape-Variou Streets to Be Determined
3	DCNR Match/Pine Street Park
4	Section 108 Loan Repayment
5	Homeless Services - Catholic Social Services
6	Hazleton Housing Authority Safety Improvements
7	Administration

Table 7 - Project Information

#### Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

The allocations were selected based on eligibility of the activity, its ability to meet a national objective and the evidence of need in the community. In an effort to address blight in the community, the need for public infrastructure improvements, and increasing public services, more emphasis has been placed on sidewalk and street lighting improvements, park improvements, clearance and demolition activities to improve blighted neighborhoods, and public services including services for persons experiencing homelessness, and safety improvements for public housing communities.

The City of Hazleton allocated its entitlement funds to provide assistance with activities that meet the

underserved needs of the communities participating in the program. For public services activities, the City requested applications from interested parties and selected eligible activities based upon alignment with the priority needs and goals of the strategic plan.

## AP-38 Project Summary

### Project Summary Information

1	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Clearance/Demolition</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Remove Slum/Blight
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Remove Slum/Blight
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$21,725.00
	<b>Description</b>	Removal of blighted, vacant buildings that pose a threat to health and safety.
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	One property is proposed to be demolished.
	<b>Location Description</b>	Scattered Site, Citywide
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	Demolition of vacant and blighted properties Matrix Code 04
2	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Streetscape- Various Streets to Be Determined</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$155,525.00

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	<b>Description</b>	Replacement of sidewalks and upgraded streetlight installation as funding allows.
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	N/A
	Location Description	Various Streets to Be Determined
	Planned Activities	Sidewalk improvements and street lighting Street improvements with curb ramps constructed at intersections as needed. Matrix Codes 03L and 03K
<b>3</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Public Facility &amp; Improvement – DCNR Match/Pine Street Park</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$150,000.00
	<b>Description</b>	Improvements to Pine Street Park
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	2,890 residents are expected to benefit, which includes all those residing in CT 217.50
	<b>Location Description</b>	N Pine St. & E Hemlock St., Hazleton
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	Improvements to the park will include improvements to a soccer field, basketball court, playground, and a paved access walk. Matrix Code 03F

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4	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Public Facility &amp; Improvement – Section 108 Loan Exempt</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$150,750.00
	<b>Description</b>	Repay principal and interested owed to HUD for \$1 million loan to reconstruct City-wide streets
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	Not applicable
	<b>Location Description</b>	City-Wide
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	Annual repayment of Section 108 loan. Matrix Code 19F
5	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Public Service - Homeless Services - Catholic Social Services</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Provide Public Services
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Provide Public Services
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$30,000.00
	<b>Description</b>	Case Manager and Operations for Homeless shelter.
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026

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	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	Approximately 30 people will be provided homeless shelter beds during the year.
	<b>Location Description</b>	200 W. Chapel Street
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	Case Manager and Operations for Homeless shelter. Matrix Code 03T
<b>6</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Public Service – Safety Improvements- Hazleton Housing Authority</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	City-wide
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Provide Public Services
	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Provide Public Services
	<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$12,000.00
	<b>Description</b>	Security cameras for public housing buildings.
	<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
	<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	Approximately 299 low-income households residing in public housing will benefit.
	<b>Location Description</b>	Various sites
	<b>Planned Activities</b>	Installation of safety equipment at three public housing complexes, including security cameras, to increase the safety of the residents and neighborhood. Matrix Code 05Z
<b>7</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Administration</b>
	<b>Target Area</b>	N/A
	<b>Goals Supported</b>	Planning/Administration

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<b>Needs Addressed</b>	Planning/Administration
<b>Funding</b>	CDBG: \$130,000.00
<b>Description</b>	Ongoing program oversight and management and Citizen outreach
<b>Target Date</b>	12/31/2026
<b>Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities</b>	N/A Admin
<b>Location Description</b>	40 N. Church St. Hazleton
<b>Planned Activities</b>	On-going program oversight and management and Citizen outreach Matrix Code 21A

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## **AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.220(f)**

### **Description of the geographic areas of the entitlement (including areas of low-income and minority concentration) where assistance will be directed**

While Hazleton’s population size has stayed roughly the same since 2000, its ethnic composition has shifted dramatically. Hispanic and Latino residents represented less than five percent of the City’s population in 2000. In 2020, the Hispanic/Latino community is an estimated 18,898 and now represents over half of Hazleton’s total population.

The growing Latino population coincided with a shrinking number of White, non-Hispanic residents. In 2016, White residents represented 48 percent of the population. As of 2020, a little more than 11,000 White residents make up only 38 percent of the city population.

Census Tract 2174 meets the threshold as an R/ECAP. As of the 2020 decennial census, census tract 2174 was home to 607 residents, 36.6 percent of whom were non-White. Census data indicates that just over half of the tract’s population live below the poverty line. The area is also characterized by lower incomes, a higher proportion of renters, and a larger supply of multi-family housing.

As of 2018, Census tracts 2173 and 2175 were added to the list of areas that meet the R/ECAP threshold. According to the ACS 2020 5-year estimates, Census tracts 2173-2175 house 7,509 (30%) of Hazleton’s population. The majority who live in these three tracts are Hispanic (55%). A total of 25.7% earned an income below the poverty level in the last 12 months. Almost 75% of the population who earned below the poverty level were Hispanic.

Census tracts 2173, 2174, and 2175 are part of the Federal Opportunity zone.

### **Geographic Distribution**

<b>Target Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Funds</b>
City-wide	<b>100</b>

**Table 8 - Geographic Distribution**

**Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically**

Assistance is not directed to any specific geographic area in the City. The City is largely low income and racially and ethnically diverse. The City will address the highest priority needs on a year-by-year basis.

## Affordable Housing

### AP-55 Affordable Housing – 91.220(g)

#### Introduction

The City completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in 2018. The plan identified impediments due to language barriers, education of fair housing, inadequate supply of housing and lack of public transportation. To mitigate these negative effects; action items include fair housing education and outreach; updates to the City’s Language Access Plan; expanding affordable housing opportunities for members of protected classes; and advocacy for public transit systems that connect lower income neighborhoods to major employment centers and education facilities.

The City is working to improve employment opportunities so that residents can better afford housing. The LEP will be updated when updated data is available. The latest data, 2016 continues to under-represent the Hispanic population. However, the 2016 LEP does reflect the need to do outreach in Spanish which the City has started to do by advertising in a local Spanish newspaper publication. The City is looking to partner with a developer to provide expanded housing opportunities. Further, the City is working to improve employment opportunities so that residents can better afford housing.

Public policies have not been identified that have a negative effect on housing affordability. The City has land use policies and investment strategies that do not limit or impede private investment. The most significant barrier to affordable housing in the City of Hazleton is lack of income. Despite the comparatively low rents and low-cost housing for sale, households in the City of Hazleton are still cost- burdened.

<b>One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported</b>	
Homeless	0
Non-Homeless	0
Special-Needs	0
Total	0

Table 9 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement

<b>One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through</b>	
Rental Assistance	0
The Production of New Units	0

<b>One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through</b>	
Rehab of Existing Units	0
Acquisition of Existing Units	0
Total	0

**Table 10 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type**

## **AP-60 Public Housing – 91.220(h)**

### **Introduction**

The Hazleton Housing Authority continues to be an important asset in the community and has requested CDBG funds in the past for security, infrastructure and recreation improvements. The HHA has partnered with a developer to create new affordable housing and may do so again in the future. There are no specific plans for 2026.

### **Actions planned during the next year to address the needs to public housing**

The Hazleton Housing Authority (HHA) is allocating Capital Funds to rehabilitate public housing. Specifically, Hazle Twins plans to replace gas boilers, hot water heaters, replace kitchen ranges and refrigerators. Vine Manor plans to upgrade elevators and replace kitchen ranges and refrigerators. Vine West plans to upgrade kitchens, replace kitchen ranges and refrigerators, and replace power washers. The City will allocate FY 2026 CDBG funds to complete necessary safety improvements to all three public housing developments, including installation of security cameras to increase safety for the public housing communities and surrounding neighborhoods.

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

HHA is developing a resident council (Hazleton Coalition of Resident Councils) that reviews agency plans and provides input on any planned capital improvements and services. The HHA is encouraging the creation of a resident council or a resident advisory committee through distributing flyers to all residents. While a resident council is not currently in place, HHA holds meetings with residents to discuss management and modernization needs.

HHA has administered a ROSS Grant for homeownership utilizing Catholic Social Services to provide financial literacy and self-sufficiency. HHA has created a partnership with Catholic Social Services, Pennsylvania Association of Resident Councils, Commission on Economic Opportunity, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, and many other community agencies to promote homeownership for public housing residents. In addition, HHA is administering a Homeownership Program utilizing its Housing Choice Vouchers.

### **If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance**

The HHA is not designated as troubled and is a Standard Performing agency.

## **AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)**

### **Introduction**

The City is part of the Luzerne County Continuum of Care (CoC).

### **Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including**

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

The Give Hope team at the VOAPA performs Street Outreach activities for the CoC, including all of Luzerne County and the Cities of Hazleton and Wilkes Barre. Outreach efforts are targeted to community "hot spots"—areas known to have large or small populations of unsheltered individuals such as “tent cities,” under bridges, along the railroad tracks, abandoned buildings, and community parks - to locate and then engage with any person they meet. Through conversations with the people encountered, VOA’s trained outreach workers identify if the person is unsheltered and homeless; complete a thorough assessment of the individual’s physical, behavioral, and mental health needs; housing and employment status; and other needs. The outreach staff then works to connect the individual to the relevant community-based services for shelter or service offered in our partner network. Outreach staff maintains contact with the person to provide extensive case management, including follow-up and individualized support. For persons experiencing homelessness who may be least likely to request assistance, the Give Hope street outreach workers are trained to provide trauma informed care and remain aware of the many co-occurring conditions the individuals they encounter experience.

Efforts are coupled with the CoC coordinated assessment process in which the agency that is first approached by a homeless household will conduct an intake and screening to determine the household’s needs. Referrals to appropriate providers will direct the household to the provider that can best meet those needs. Outreach is conducted by a number of agencies, including mental health providers and an HIV/AIDS provider.

In 2026, the City will continue to participate in the Hazleton Housing Coalition (HHC) to better represent Hazleton on the Luzerne County CoC and to coordinate services locally. The HHC meets periodically to discuss current homelessness issues.

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

The Luzerne Co. CoC has in place mechanisms to work with the service providers in the county to improve outcomes and stability upon leaving shelter, reducing the time that individuals and

families are homeless, and preventing homelessness. The coordinated assessment process helps move those that are homeless or seeking prevention services to connect to the appropriate provider. Individual service and shelter providers are working at improving family stability through identification of barriers to stability that are identified in the assessment process.

Catholic Social Services will provide case management at the homeless shelter and transitional housing to help homeless persons find jobs and housing and stay housed within the community. CDBG funds are allocated to support this case manager.

The CoC prioritizes permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing, both of which offer services to help homeless individuals and households achieve and maintain stability once housed.

**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 Luzerne Co. CoC has in place mechanisms to work with the service providers in the county to improve outcomes and stability upon leaving shelter, reducing the time that individuals and families are homeless, and preventing homelessness. The coordinated assessment process helps move those that are homeless or seeking prevention services to connect to the appropriate provider. Individual service and shelter providers are working at improving family stability through identification of barriers to stability that are identified in the assessment process.

Catholic Social Services will provide case management at the homeless shelter and transitional housing to help homeless persons find jobs and housing and stay housed within the community. CDBG funds are allocated to support this case manager.

The CoC prioritizes permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing, both of which offer services to help homeless individuals and households achieve and maintain stability once housed.

**Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: 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); or, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs.**

Additional funding for prevention is needed to keep families and individuals from becoming homeless. The Hazleton Housing Coalition will continue to work on developing funding streams and coordination that will maximize the funding that is available. The Coalition has several key initiatives: prepare a City housing plan, create better connections to local services, increase case management and counseling services needed to prevent homelessness and reduce the number of persons who return to homelessness. Discharge planning to create a housing plan, connection to local services, case management and counseling is used to prevent homelessness and a return to homelessness.

## **AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.220(j)**

### **Introduction:**

Hazleton is facing an ongoing housing problem - not enough housing inventory to keep up with the growing population.

### **Actions it planned 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**

The City completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in 2018. An action plan identified impediments due to language barriers, education of fair housing, inadequate supply of housing and lack of public transportation. To mitigate these negative effects; action items include fair housing education and outreach; updates to the City's Language Access Plan; expanding affordable housing opportunities for members of protected classes; and advocacy for public transit systems that connect lower income neighborhoods to major employment centers and education facilities.

The City is working to improve employment opportunities so that residents can better afford housing. The LEP will be updated when updated data is available. The latest data, 2016 continues to under-represent the Hispanic population. However, the 2016 LEP does reflect the need to do outreach in Spanish which the City has started to do by advertising in the two local Spanish newspaper publications. The City is looking to partner with a developer to provide expanded housing opportunities. Further, the City is working to improve employment opportunities so that residents can better afford housing.

Public policies have not been identified that have a negative effect on housing affordability. The City has land use policies and investment strategies that do not limit or impede private investment. The most significant barrier to affordable housing in the City of Hazleton is lack of income. Despite the comparatively low rents and low-cost housing for sale, households in the City of Hazleton are still cost burdened.

The City completed an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in 2018. The AI identified four impediments:

1. Lack of knowledge among landlords and residents about what constitutes discrimination and reasonable accommodation obligations
2. Persons with limited English proficiency may not be able to fully access the City's housing and community development services and programs due to language barriers

3. An inadequate supply of affordable housing exists as evidenced by high demand for accessible units, cost burden borne by renter households, disproportionately greater need among Black and Hispanic households with incomes greater than 50% AMI
4. The public transportation system in Hazleton restricts housing choice and access to employment and education opportunities for residents who are transit-dependent

Along with the AI, the City developed an action plan to mitigate these negative effects. Action items include fair housing education and outreach; updates to the City's Language Access Plan; expanding affordable housing opportunities for members of protected classes; advocate for public transit systems that connect lower income neighborhoods to major employment centers and education facilities.

## **AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)**

### **Introduction:**

The City is limited by what can be accomplished by the limited resources at its disposal to address the scope actions outside of the projects funded by CDBG and other grants. We are working to improve living conditions in the city through improved jobs, public improvements, blight reduction and communication among residents.

### **Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs**

The City of Hazleton will work with social service agencies and the County of Luzerne to identify and develop strategies to meet the needs of underserved populations. The City is not a social service delivery agency and does not address social service needs directly. However, should specific funding requests for programs that address such needs be recommended to the City of Hazleton, City Council will consider those requests. This includes providing funding to CSS for homeless case management.

### **Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing**

A majority of the City's housing stock is affordable, but often in poor condition. The City of Hazleton recognizes the need to enforce the current codes and ordinances pertaining to housing maintenance. While not implemented by the City, Luzerne County is the recipient of Whole Home Repair Program funds through PA DCED. Funds will be used to make repairs to eligible homeowner and renter-occupied properties to help improve the County's housing stock. Properties located in the City of Hazleton would be eligible to receive assistance. In addition, the City will support security improvements at the City's public housing developments.

### **Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards**

As of April 22, 2010, all contractors in the nation who work in homes constructed prior to 1978 must have an EPA Certification and have at least one person on each job site that has taken the EPA Certification 8-hour class on lead-based paint safety. The City will make available through the Building Code office the EPA Paint, Renovate, Repair, and Painting booklet available for interested residents.

The City's housing rehabilitation guidelines provide for the administration of the housing program in a manner consistent with the regulations. The City incorporated the EPA Paint and Renovation guidelines into its program as well. While the program is currently not active, if reinstated, Lead-based paint will be part of it.

### **Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families**

The City of Hazleton will continue to invest in job-creating activities with an emphasis on the hiring of low-income residents. The City will continue to pursue economic development in all forms to increase the supply of good-paying jobs available to City residents.

The City will support applications to HUD and other agencies for funding such programs. While not implemented by the City, Luzerne County is the recipient of Whole Home Repair Program funds through PA DCED. Award of these funds includes a workforce development component aimed at providing education in the construction and rehabilitation trades. Such program is designed to provide low-income workers with job training, education, and experience.

In the award of contracts, the City will continue to implement the Section 3 Plan which promotes the utilization of firms owned by low-income persons.

### **Actions planned to develop institutional structure**

The City of Hazleton Office of Community Development (OCD) is the facilitator for the activities described by the Consolidated Plan (CP). The City of Hazleton has the authority to apply for and administer CDBG funds and other grants. The City will also support other activities by providing certifications of consistency with the CP.

The CDBG funds are administered by Director of Community Development. The Director is able to effectively and efficiently coordinate community development activities in the City of Hazleton. The staff of the OCD will continue to avail themselves of HUD training and technical assistance to provide more efficient and comprehensive program management and oversight.

The Hazleton Housing Authority is another public entity in the community that utilizes funding from HUD. HHA's board is appointed by the Mayor. HHA's board hires its executive director and is responsible for managing its funds.

**Actions planned to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies**

During FY 2026, the City will continue to work with shelter organizations, affordable housing development groups, CoC and Hazleton Housing Coalition and local non-profit agencies to coordinate services and funding for important social programs and physical improvements in the City. The City funds and coordinates with Catholic Social Services as well as the Commission on Economic Opportunity on the needs of homeless and near homeless in the City and other special needs populations.

## Program Specific Requirements

### AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.220(l)(1,2,4)

#### Introduction:

#### Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Reference 24 CFR 91.220(l)(1)

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

1. The total amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed	0
2. The amount of proceeds from section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the grantee's strategic plan	0
3. The amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements	0
4. The amount of any grant funds returned to the line of credit for which the planned use has not been included in a prior statement or plan.	0
5. The amount of income from float-funded activities	0
Total Program Income	0

#### Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	0
2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	96%

