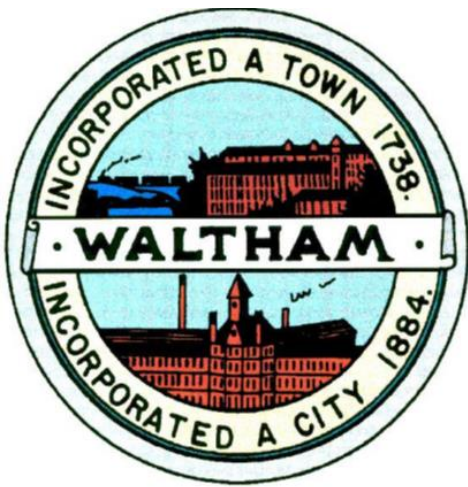


CITY OF WALTHAM COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT



ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2018 - 2019

PREPARED BY

City of Waltham
Planning Department
119 School Street
Waltham, MA 02451
781-314-3370

PREPARED FOR

United States Department
of Housing and Urban
Development

RELEASED APRIL 2018



Photo: Peter Gilmore Playground | Photo Credit: Green Acres

THIS DOCUMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY IS A DRAFT

The contents within this document are not to be considered FINAL until notice of approval is received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Comments will be accepted through May 5, 2018 via the Planning Department CDBG webpage.

www.city.waltham.ma.us/planning-department/pages/community-development-block-grant-program

Paper based comments can be sent to:

Planning Department
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Executive Summary

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

Introduction

In accordance with Title 24 Code of Federal Regulations (24 CFR) Part 91, each community in receipt of Community Development Block Grant funding must complete an Annual Action Plan no less than forty-five (45) Days from the start of the community's program year. Waltham's program year begins July 1, 2018 and runs through June 30th, 2019.

The City of Waltham's FY2018 Annual Action Plan presents a series of initiatives to be accomplished during that time period. The purpose of the Action Plan is to ensure that public services, economic development, and housing services are delivered in an efficient and effective manner. The Annual Action Plan identifies various programs administered and subsidized with the use of federal CDBG funds. Most importantly, the Annual Action Plan is a reflection of the annual goals and objectives set-forth in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan including:

Affordable Housing

- Rehabilitation of Existing Units for Renters
- Rehabilitation of Existing Units for Homeowners

Non – Housing Community Development

- Public Facilities Accessibility Improvements
- Public Facilities Sustainable Capital Improvements
- Public Services Low Income Individuals and Families
- Economic Development Career Opportunities

Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

In order to fulfill these priorities, this Plan will focus on funding the following categories:

- **Social Services:** organizations providing social services to underserved populations;
- **Public Facilities:** providing upgrades and sustainable improvements to public facilities;
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** providing interest free loans to homeowners and nonprofit organizations for rehabilitation of housing;
- **Economic Development:** providing assistance to new and existing business owners
- **Program Administration:** general administration costs for staff administering CDBG

Evaluation of past performance

The Planning Department in partnership with numerous non-profit organizations, the Housing Authority and the Housing Division continues to monitor and evaluate the performance of the City's HUD Programs while ensuring regulatory compliance. The following list highlights the largest accomplishments achieved during FY2017:

- The social service organizations served 5,145 individuals with unmet needs;
- The South Community Cultural Center was able to reconstruct the rear handicapped accessible entrance and parking lot;
- Twenty-one low income households were served by the Housing Divisions rehabilitation program for existing affordable units.
- Peter Gilmore Playground was completed and Waltham's lowest income neighborhood is now able to benefit from a redesigned, updated and ADA accessible neighborhood park.

The Planning Department was also able to perform 10 onsite monitoring visits during FY2017, ensuring complicate with the CDBG program as well as identifying areas where organizations are in need of technical assistance. This review of past performance, has provided insight into the areas where funded organizations are struggling, allowing the Planning Department to focus on greater technical assistance in the upcoming year.

The City's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPER) also provides, in greater detail, the innovations, projects and programs completed by the City in prior years through the CDBG program. The CAPER and prior Action Plans may be viewed and/or downloaded from the City of Waltham's Planning Department's CDBG website.

Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process

The City made a concerted effort to identify and meet the needs in the community when developing the 2018-2019 Annual Action Plan. The Planning Department spent several months speaking with service providers, non-profit organizations, the Waltham Housing Authority, local businesses, neighboring governments, and internal City departments.

The goal of the consultations was to identify any needs not being adequately addressed by the CDBG program. The needs identified through citizen participation allow the CDBG program to coordinate resources and leverage funds to meet those needs.

The City worked attentively to obtain citizen project idea input and their views on potential projects. A wide variety of mediums were used to outreach to citizens in an attempt to get input from residents of all demographics. The types of outreach used included:

- **Online Input Survey;** The survey was web-based and available year round for public input and comments. There were 34 responses collected from the survey.
- **Public Meeting;** On January 18, 2018 the Planning Department held the first of five public meetings for the 2018 – 2019 Annual Action Plan. Invitations were sent to 125 service providers and interested individuals in the Waltham area. The meeting was also posted to Twitter, Facebook, in the News Tribune and Instagram. The meeting was well attended and identified unmet needs in the community.
- **Technical Assistance Trainings (2);** The Planning Department held two Technical Assistance trainings during the week of January 22, 2018, where interested parties were able to attend and gain a better in-depth understanding of the CDBG program and applicable funding matrix codes.
- **Public Meeting;** On February 15, 2018 the Planning Department held another public meeting where 125 service providers were invited as well as members of the community. This meeting focused on the projects requesting funding and how each project would meet an unmet need previously identified.

- **Public Hearing;** The final public input session was held on April 3, 2018 by the Waltham City Council to introduce the selected projects to the public and City staff members. The projects were discussed, then sent to the Economic and Community Development Committee for further discussion and eventual approval.

Summary of public comments

As noted in the City of Waltham's Citizen Participation Plan, each public meeting held by the City of Waltham includes the following components:

- 1) Housing and Community Development Needs Discussion
- 2) Annual Consolidated Strategy
- 3) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

These topics spark comments and conversations amongst the attendees. During this year's public meetings, the conversation was focused on capital improvements to existing structures for the purpose of program expansion and ADA accessibility. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the lack of progress with the economic development projects being completed. As with prior years, concern also surrounded the ever-decreasing public service cap and how the cap impacts the number of clients each social service organization can serve.

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

All comments were accepted by the Planning Department and the City Council.

Summary

The City found the greatest asset to be the online public input survey. The Planning Department will continue to manage the survey and accept responses year-round.

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

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

The following are the agencies/entities responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

| Agency Role | Name | Department/Agency |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| CDBG Administrator | WALTHAM | Planning Department |
| HOME Administrator | WALTHAM | Planning Department |

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

Narrative

The Planning Department is responsible for preparing and submitting the Annual Action Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of the City of Waltham and the Mayor. The Planning Department administers the CDBG program. The following City entities also fall under the Planning Department's umbrella: The Housing Division, The Historic Commission, Conservation Commission and Community Preservation Committee. These entities aid the Planning Department in successful administration of the CDBG program from year to year.

Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

Questions directly related to the CDBG program or the contents of this plan may be directed to walthamcdbg@gmail.com at any time. Additionally, written comments can be sent to:

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119 School Street Suite 25
Waltham, MA 02451
walthamCDBG@gmail.com

AP-10 Consultation - 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)

Introduction

Development of the Annual Action Plan relies on consultation and communication with multiple partners. Many consultation meetings are held in a round table format where ideas are exchanged for the purpose of strategizing and leveraging resources. Discussions occurred between the City of Waltham and The Waltham Housing Authority, City of Newton, The Waltham Homeless Task Force, the Balance of State Continuum of Care and the Waltham HOME program. In addition to participation with the above mentioned public organizations, the Planning Department consulted with multiple social service organizations to be listed below.

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(l)).

Through participation in the Balance of State Continuum of Care, the City of Waltham works closely with Brookline Mental Health Center and the public housing authorities to connect homeless and low-income individuals with the resources available throughout the Brookline Newton Waltham and Watertown areas.

The new coordinated entry system requirements, put in place by HUD in January 2017, have also allowed for a more streamlined approach for assessment of the housing first model. The new coordinated entry system quickly assesses individuals and families at entry points and connects them with public and assisted housing providers along with government health, mental health and service agencies. The City of Waltham often refers individuals to the coordinated entry points.

Waltham Committee Inc., a non-profit organization in Waltham also provides affordable housing while providing support services for individuals with a wide range of intellectual disabilities, including physical, sensory, autism & acquired brain injury.

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 Balance of State is responsible for submitting the CoC Consolidated Application for McKinney-Vento funds for homeless assistance programs each year. The City of Waltham supports the Balance of State application for funding and strives to coordinate CDBG funding goals with attainable goals laid out by the CoC.

Waltham allocates CDBG funds for homelessness prevention through the Emergency Assistance Program, this program provides emergency payments for families and individuals at risk of becoming homeless. Referrals are made to the City's Housing Division from CoC funded providers without the ability to make emergency payments.

For the second year in a row, the Waltham Housing Authority continues to run a Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program with Community Preservation Act funding. The TBRA program funds 50 homeless or at-risk Waltham families at or below 60% AMI. The project is anticipated to last for another two years.

Two agencies, Brookline Community Mental Health Center in Brookline and Bristol Lodge in Waltham, assign clinical staff to conduct street outreach. The Waltham Police and a Bristol Lodge Street Outreach Specialist reach out to unsheltered individuals in the cities and wooded areas. Bristol Lodge Outreach Specialist works 19 hours/week with a 6-person Police Task Force, which reaches out to unsheltered people and works to get them off the street and connected to services

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

Waltham does not receive ESG funds however, is an active participant in the Continuum of Care and supports the ESG grant activities, standards and consultation processes. The Balance of State has developed standards for providing Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) assistance. A representative from the City of Waltham Housing Division attends regular meetings with the Balance of State and provides input on Waltham's unmet needs and strategies for funding.

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

The City of Waltham through collaboration with the Continuum of Care attempted to consult with a wide variety of agencies serving the Waltham area. There were not any organizations that were intentionally left out of the consultation process however, if an organization would like to be involved in the consultation process, that was not involved during this round, they should reach out to walthamcdbg@gmail.com

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

| Name of Plan | Lead Organization | How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan? |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Continuum of Care | Newton | Homeless Assessment |
| Analysis of Impediments | Waltham Housing Division | Barriers to affordable and fair housing |
| Emergency Case Plan | DHCD | Homeless Assessment and Housing Needs |
| WHA Annual Plan | Waltham Housing Authority | Public Housing Needs Assessment |
| Open Space & Recreation Plan | Waltham Planning Department | Public needs assessment / accessibility study |
| Transportation Master Plan | Waltham Planning & Engineering Department's | Public needs assessment / public transportation evaluation |

Narrative

Although the City of Waltham Planning Department administers the CDBG program, other City departments are involved throughout the entire process. Collaboration between the Waltham Housing Authority, Parks & Recreation, Consolidated Public Works, Transportation, Building, Law, Purchasing and Auditing allows the Planning Department to ensure all projects move smoothly and on schedule.

The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) works closely with the Waltham Housing Authority when CDBG funding is involved and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) provides guidance to Recreation and Consolidated Public Works on maintenance and expansion of open spaces in the City. Working with the Commonwealth Department of Capital Asset Management Maintenance (DCAMM) allows the City to plan for reuse of surplus publicly owned buildings.

AP-12 Participation - 91.401, 91.105, 91.200(c)

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

All meetings held by the Planning Department are open to the public. City staff along with partner agencies, such as the Housing Commission and the County, receives feedback from the public and other community stakeholders regarding the implementation of its HUD funded programs through presentations and attendance at various public meetings.

An important part of developing the Annual Action Plan each year is the input received directly from citizens and beneficiaries of the program. The Planning Department utilized the online survey tool to gather feedback from community members, business owners, residents and youth from around the community. Due to the volume of input generated the survey is open year-round to gain continual feedback and input from the community. Individuals with limited computer access are able to use the library, the Waltham Community Cultural Center and the Farmer's Market to complete the survey.

At each individuals request, we add emails to the Planning Department CDBG listserv, which provides updated information on funded projects, public meetings and open discussions. This year during the comment period, 30 unduplicated individuals asked to be added to the list.

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

With respect to affordable housing projects, federal HOME dollars may be used along with CDBG if the City receives HOME funding from the HOME Consortium. CDBG funds will be complemented with City Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. The Community Preservation Committee sets 10% of the annual revenue aside for housing projects. Additionally an anticipated \$50,000 will be received in program income in the form of homeowner rehabilitation loan payoffs, which is reflected in the expected resources section of this Action Plan.

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

In Year 44, the City has decided to leverage publicly owned land and property for all of the proposed capital improvement projects, with the exception of the Boys and Girls Club. Many of the capital improvement projects are multi-use playgrounds, structures and Housing Authority properties. Selecting contractors through the public procurement process ensures the City will get the best value for each project completed. This also ensures all City residents are able to access the improvements made with CDBG funding.

AP-35 Projects - 91.420, 91.220(d)

Introduction

The Consolidated Plan sets goals and strategies to be achieved over the FY 2015 – 2019 period and identifies a list of funding priorities. Five areas were funded with program resources, those program areas were:

- Social Services: nonprofit organizations providing social services to underserved populations of Waltham.
- Public Facilities: to provide upgrades and sustainable improvements to public facilities requiring rehabilitation
- Housing Rehabilitation: to provide interest free loans to homeowners and nonprofit organizations for rehabilitation of housing.
- Economic Development: to the Downtown Waltham Partnership to provide grants for business owners seeking façade improvements.
- Program Administration: general administration costs for staff administering the CDBG Program.

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

The consistent decrease in funding is an obstacle, especially when funding public service organizations. There are many underserved needs in Waltham, as identified by the Community Vision Survey conducted each year. The greatest need lies with the families experiencing poverty. This year the CDBG program has proposed to fund two new programs which, will assist the families experiencing poverty, come self-sufficient.

The City also placed a priority on allocated funding to capital improvement projects in order to update infrastructure and ensure ADA accessibility in projects funded with CDBG.

2018-2019 DRAFT Budget

| Organization | Program | 2019 DRAFT |
|--|---|----------------------|
| Public Services (139,560 Cap) | | Award |
| Chesterbrook Community Foundation | Dana Court & Chesterbrook Learning Center | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Prospect Hill Community Foundation | Prospect Hill Community Center | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Greater Waltham Arc | Inclusive Supports | \$ 22,432.00 |
| WATCH | Breaking Barriers | \$ 3,632.00 |
| Waltham Partnership for Youth | NEW Youth Employment Program | \$ 8,859.00 |
| Middlesex Human Service Agency | Bristol Lodge M&W Shelter | \$ 25,555.00 |
| Middlesex Human Service Agency | Bristol Lodge Soup Kitchen & Pantry | |
| Middlesex Human Service Agency | Mary's House Family Shelter | |
| The Salvation Army | Utility Assistance | \$ 6,051.00 |
| The Salvation Army | Hope Kitchen | \$ 3,067.00 |
| The Salvation Army | Kids Feast | \$ 2,502.00 |
| Community Day Center of Waltham | Enhanced Case Management Services | \$ 13,202.00 |
| Healthy Waltham | Let's Move Youth | \$ 4,000.00 |
| Healthy Waltham | Let's Eat Right & Keep Fit for Seniors | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Healthy Waltham | NEW Waltham Market | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Waltham YMCA | Whittemore After School Program | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Waltham Family School | Family School | \$ 6,260.00 |
| Latinos En Accion de Waltham | ESL Classes | \$ 6,000.00 |
| Housing Division | Emergency Assistance | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Total | | \$ 139,560.00 |
| Capital Improvements | | |
| The Boys and Girls Club | ADA Elevator | \$ 100,000.00 |
| City of Waltham Recreation Dept. | Waltham Community & Cultural Center | \$ 100,000.00 |
| City of Waltham Recreation Dept. | Thompson Playground | \$ 75,000.00 |
| City of Waltham Recreation Dept. | McDonald Playground | \$ 75,000.00 |
| Waltham Housing Authority | Chesterbrook Learning Center | \$ 75,000.00 |
| Waltham Housing Authority | Dana Court Spray Park | \$ 90,000.00 |
| Total | | \$ 515,000.00 |
| Economic Development | | |
| Downtown Waltham Partnership | Storefront Improvement | \$ 25,000.00 |
| Total | | \$ 25,000.00 |
| Housing Division | | |
| Housing Division | Housing Rehab Loan Fund | \$ 60,000.00 |
| Housing Division | Administrative Costs | \$ 35,848.00 |
| Total | | \$ 95,848.00 |
| Administration (Cap \$197,980) | | |
| Planning Department | Administrative Costs | \$ 195,000.00 |
| | | |
| | | |
| Total Budget (\$920,408 Estimated HUD Allocation + \$50,000 Program Income) | | \$ 970,408.00 |

AP-50 Geographic Distribution - 91.420, 91.220(f)

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

Six census tracts are included in Waltham's Southern Neighborhood District, which is where 98% of all public service organizations funded, are located. The focus of the geographic area is the Southern Neighborhood District based on the total percentage of low to moderate income residents. The Southern Neighborhood District has the largest concentration of foreign born citizens and multi-family dwellings. Further, a majority of the City's affordable housing and public housing units are located within this diverse, multi-family district.

Geographic Distribution

| Target Area | Percentage of Funds |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| | 90% |

55% of the total population in the area is considered low-moderate income, an overwhelming majority of residents also living below the poverty line. 59,125 people live in the City of Waltham, 10,648 of those people live within the Southern Neighborhood District boundaries

The City of Waltham has invested in the Southern Neighborhood District over the past seven years. The neighborhood was established as a local target area for Community Development Block Grant funds in 2000 and since, the following projects have increased the quality of life and morale in the Southern Neighborhood District:

- 2000 - The City created a skateboard area in a small space adjacent to the landfill;
- 2010 - The former South Middle School transitioned into a Neighborhood Community Center;
- 2016 – All sidewalks were replaced in front of the landfill property 2016 – New street lights were installed on the Moody Street side of the landfill property;
- 2016 & 2017 - The Downtown Partnership provided grants to 11 business owners for façade improvements and code violation corrections.
- 2017 – The Peter Gilmore neighborhood park restoration completed and opened to the public

Discussion

Meeting the underserved needs of the community is important because those populations are the most vulnerable to other issues such as homelessness, unstable living environments and adverse health factors. Through the CDBG program, the City is able to serve these needs to the best of the budget's ability. The greatest need in the City of Waltham are ESL courses and self-sufficiency training, especially for the working population and single parent households with school age children. In Year 44 the CDBG program proposes to fund two new programs promoting self-sufficiency.

DRAFT

AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing -91.420, 91.220(j)

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

With the institution of the Assessment of Fair Housing component of the CDBG program, the Housing Division and the Planning Department are fortunate enough to have a working relationship with the local Housing Authority. Discussions are in the works with the Executive Director and the Housing Authority board to determine how the AFH will impact residents and the Housing Authority's structure. Input was secured from the Housing Authority for the priorities of both this plan and the upcoming AFH. When the City and the Housing Authority are due to update the current AFH, we intend to gather focus groups to include residents of the Housing Authority.

Currently with regards to the AFH, the Housing Authority and the City continue to collaborate on yearly Fair Housing trainings with the local Fair Housing organizations and non-profits in the area.

AP-85 Other Actions - 91.420, 91.220(k)

Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs

13% of Waltham's lowest income census tract is Non-English speaking creating a barrier between service providers, potential employers, potential landlords and the Waltham residents. Housing cost burden, foreclosure and a lack of tenant rights knowledge put families at imminent risk of losing their home. The language barrier and lack of self-sufficiency in Waltham is significant; miscommunications between tenants and landlords have the ability to lead to eviction or tenants leaving out of fear.

This year, Latinos En Accion, Healthy Waltham and WATCH Inc., are committed to providing critical self-sufficiency classes for Adults in Waltham. The Waltham Family School, a nonprofit with offices within the Waltham Community Cultural Center provides comprehensive family literacy to families, adults and children with very little English literacy or formal education..

Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing

In order to foster and maintain the existing affordable housing stock in Waltham, the CDBG program will continue to fund the housing rehabilitation program, offering zero interest loans to current affordable housing owners. This will continue to preserve the current housing stock. The Housing Division will also work closely with the Waltham Housing Authority to update existing affordable units. The City does not have the resources to produce affordable housing at this time with CDBG funds however, the Housing Division works closely with developers in the area to ensure all new developments contain affordable housing units.

Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards

\$10,000 of the homeowner rehabilitation loans will be set aside for the abatement of lead paint hazards.

Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families

Healthy Waltham serves clients through outreach and engagement. Healthy Waltham conducts cooking classes and demonstrations geared towards children and senior citizens in an effort to curb obesity and educate families on fresh foods. The Salvation Army HOPE Kitchen will also assist Waltham in reducing the number of poverty-level families through food access.

Actions planned to develop institutional structure

After 8 months of vacancy, The Planning Department was able to hire an Assistant Director to assist with the CDBG, HOME and City projects. The Assistant Director position aids the Planning Department with procurement of capital projects, monitoring progress of projects and meeting with designers/architects of potential projects. This position is not funded with CDBG, allowing for more flexibility of the position and more funding in the CDBG budget for projects and programs.

Additionally, the City has added a Principal Planner position to the CDBG administration budget line, this planner will manage the CDBG capital improvement projects and David Bacon compliance. The City has not hired for the position yet, but the individual hired will begin by coordinating with City and State departments to ensure the best use of the CDBG capital improvement dollars.

The Planning Department continues to work with the Law Department to determine how the City can achieve a minimum of 1.5% of the total land area dedicated to affordable housing. The state Department of Housing and Community Development keeps a list of affordable properties in Waltham, through analysis of this list, the City will be better able to allocate resources and strategically plan for affordable housing development.

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

Affordable housing providers in the City of Waltham are scarce and through collaboration with the Housing Authority and Waltham Committee Inc., a non-profit providing services to disabled populations, the City will expand affordable housing options and collaboration with social service providers. The Housing Authority will also continue to work with the Middlesex Human Service Agency to focus on homeless individuals and increasing accessibility of affordable housing options.

Through collaboration with the Balance of State, the new coordinated entry system will allow for real time updates from both public and private housing providers, allowing a much quicker turn around for housing homeless or at-risk of homeless households.