

DUTCHESS COUNTY/CITY OF POUGHKEEPSIE

2013-2017 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ANALYSIS: Dutchess County is an attractive place to live and work with numerous transportation options, easy access to major highways, and varied educational and employment opportunities.

Dutchess County has a mix of industries, including service related sectors, state and local governments, manufacturing, agriculture and retail trades. IBM is the largest single employer. The other top employers include Health Quest, Vassar and Marist Colleges, and Central Hudson Gas & Electric.

The annual average unemployment rate in Dutchess County for 2011 was 7.4%. While quite a bit higher than the 10-year average from 2001-2011 of 4.9%, it was well below the national 2011 average of 8.9%.

There is a need to attract, retain, and expand for-profit and not-for-profit businesses for the benefit of the County and City and develop industry clusters to enhance our attractiveness to businesses, including the creation of viable commercial properties.

Dutchess County's economic development loans must be large enough for revitalization projects to assist with renewing neighborhoods and business districts to assist with the redevelopment of abandoned, idled and underused industrial and commercial facilities where environmental contamination is evident.

The physical linkages from the Main Street areas to train stations and waterfronts must be analyzed as an integrated and seamlessly connected set of issues. Dutchess County and the City of Poughkeepsie should promote the public/private partnership of the redevelopment of abandoned buildings to create street level retail space and affordable rental units on upper floors. The City of Poughkeepsie will continue to use its Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund to encourage business creation and expansion.

PRIORITIES: Improve coordination and usage of economic development programs available through the Community Development Block Grant Program to promote business expansion and job creation.

- Make use of the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.
- Promote linkages from the Main Street districts to the train station/waterfront.
- Support economic development loan funds and façade improvement programs, and encourage development in central business districts.

- Support the activities of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation, including activities for business expansion and job creation.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

ANALYSIS: A major challenge is the repair of aging infrastructure or construction of new infrastructure to meet future needs in municipalities throughout Dutchess County and in the City of Poughkeepsie. Public infrastructure includes sidewalks and crosswalks, roads, recreation areas including handicapped accessibility improvements, transportation, and water and/or wastewater improvements.

Handicapped sidewalk improvements and handicapped accessible crosswalks are of particular importance, especially sidewalk systems accessible to people with disabilities, including older adults, persons with vision impairments, and children. It is important to support the work of Dutchess County Planning Department and the City of Poughkeepsie Engineering Department to assess existing sidewalk facilities and promote improvement of the sidewalk system and reinforce pedestrian connections.

Handicapped accessibility improvements at park and recreation facilities, including playground equipment and accessible restroom facilities will be a community development funded activity.

Local roads maintained by the County's municipalities form the majority of road systems. Lack of localized infrastructure data is a huge impediment to assessing and planning infrastructure in the region.

The Dutchess County municipal and City of Poughkeepsie needs include infrastructure improvements for emergency sewer line collapses and for preventive maintenance with an aging sewer system and good functioning sanitary lines.

Both the City of Beacon and Poughkeepsie will support infrastructure improvements to connect their waterfronts to the central business districts, encouraging tourism and the resulting economic benefits.

PRIORITIES: Encourage infrastructure that promotes the Greenway-inspired Centers and Greenspaces approach and central business districts through improving handicapped sidewalks, crosswalks, parks and recreation areas.

- Improve infrastructure to strengthen centers, including handicapped accessibility improvements.
- Promote infrastructure improvements that encourage tourism and economic benefits.
- Support improvements to municipal parks and recreation areas, including playground equipment and handicapped accessible improvements.

TRANSPORTATION

ANALYSIS: Transportation is the second largest expenditure in the average American household budget, well above food, clothing or health care. A way to decrease transportation costs is to promote infrastructure that supports Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs) that are pedestrian friendly, containing a mixture of uses, incomes, building types and public places.

Transportation issues expressed during Consolidated Plan public meetings included comments that transit services are not universal or evenly distributed across the County and City, trip length, confusing schedules, and inconvenient or infrequent service times. These opinions may lead many people to opt not to use transit. There was discussion and understanding that providing fixed-route transit in areas of low population density is both difficult and expensive.

PRIORITIES: Support Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs) efforts and programs that expand the availability of transportation options.

- Promote infrastructure that supports Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs) that are pedestrian friendly.
- Support projects that have site plans with the best TOD potential, including waterfront sites in the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie.
- Support transportation options that address the issue of limited service to some rural areas and outlying large employers.
- Support and fund alternative transportation options for seniors.

WATER & SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

ANALYSIS: Water and wastewater infrastructure is important in addressing many community development and housing needs, including the strengthening of centers and downtown areas; more affordable housing options; higher density transit-oriented development; and new economic development opportunities.

Ways to meet these needs include supporting projects where water districts are drawn tightly to prevent sprawl, encourage infill, and make for more efficient service. To do this, it is necessary to support concentrated infill or adjacent development to help fund new capacity in centers without existing systems or to make improvements in more developed urban areas.

It is important for consideration to be given as to whether a municipality is properly setting user charges (i.e., water and sewer rates) to fund the system, including necessary maintenance and repair and replacement of short-lived assets. Also key is addressing challenges such as lack of federal and state funding to assist municipal projects.

There is a need to reduce the costs of sanitary sewer connections; on-site wastewater treatment systems; water supply connections; and the establishment of a public water supply.

It is also important to look for opportunities and remove obstacles to the use of alternative wastewater systems in existing and emerging centers, cluster subdivisions, small or substandard lots or lots in environmentally sensitive areas.

The City of Poughkeepsie must maintain a century old infrastructure that includes unexpected collapses. The City's priority is to fund the preventative maintenance of the water system components to avoid these emergency situations.

PRIORITIES: Support and fund projects that improve water and wastewater infrastructure and promote the strengthening of centers and downtown areas, more affordable housing options, higher density transit-oriented development, and economic development.

- Support central water and/or wastewater systems so that municipalities can expand economically, for both business and housing.
- Encourage activities that promote Greenway Connections principles and guides that require compatible wastewater solutions including strengthening community centers as primary growth centers.
- Encourage the development of a central database to map existing water and sewer systems and provide information about capacity.
- Encourage municipalities to develop appropriate user charges that include necessary maintenance and repair and replacement of short-lived assets.
- Fund improvements to aging sewer systems to provide good functioning sanitary lines through scheduled preventative maintenance.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The human service needs in Dutchess County and the City of Poughkeepsie are extensive. Though the CDBG program can fund human services activities, it is limited by federal requirements to no more than 15% of the annual allocation. To complicate the 15% cap, the annual program allocation has been decreasing substantially and there are limited funds available. It is necessary, therefore, to prioritize the use of CDBG funds to priority human service areas in this five-year Consolidated Plan.

We have prioritized the use of CDBG human service program services funds for activities that address the issues of housing and homelessness; youth and job mentoring, substance abuse, educational/after-school programs; and services to senior citizens. Available funding will determine the potential for annual funds for the remaining priorities of basic needs, prevention of child abuse, child care, domestic violence and literacy services.

HOMELESSNESS

ANALYSIS: The Housing information within this Consolidated Plan demonstrates the need to address homelessness in Dutchess County and the City of Poughkeepsie. From 2011 to 2012, there has been an increase in both the number of homeless households and the number of homeless individuals.

Homelessness, including youth homelessness, is a high-risk human service need. Annually, shelters in Dutchess County house approximately 150 youth and provide crisis services to 900 youth. The total unduplicated number of youth served by programs is estimated to be 1,000 per year.

PRIORITIES: Support programs that provide emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing and services for homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless.

- Support existing shelters and programs for the homeless, including emergency housing and short-term/respite housing.
- Support programs that provide counseling and assistance in addressing immediate needs and in locating suitable housing, employment, educational/vocational training, therapy, medical assistance, financial support, and other services.
- Support programs for homeless and runaway youth including shelters and counseling and assistance in addressing immediate needs.
- Encourage programs that assist youth in developing independent living skills and provide food and household supplies for youth.

YOUTH

ANALYSIS: Throughout the Consolidated Plan process, issues related to youth were raised a number of times. Human service providers spoke of the need for programs that provide general counseling, juvenile delinquent diversion, services to youth and youth outreach. Job mentoring is a critical part of improving the lives of low to moderate income young adults. The agencies encouraged the support of partnerships with schools and business and job internship programs for at-risk teenagers.

There has been a gap in services as a result of the closure some youth programs which provided after school and job mentoring programs.

PRIORITIES: Support programs that encourage job mentoring and internship programs.

- Support programs that provide job mentoring and internships, partnerships with schools and business, workforce readiness skills technology training services to youth, and juvenile delinquent diversion.
- Encourage programs and agencies attempting to address the gap in services left by the closure of some youth agencies.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

ANALYSIS: In 2011, approximately 50 percent of individuals entering a Dutchess County substance abuse crisis center were homeless upon admission. The greatest need is for residential services that facilitate the recovery of chemical dependent individuals and families.

This includes emergency housing for individuals with active chemical dependency problems and individuals who may not be intoxicated, but are at risk of relapse and homelessness.

Accidental fatal drug overdoses have soared in the past ten years, mostly due to the abuse of prescription painkillers. Those greatest at risk of fatal overdoses are teenagers and young adults. A 2010 services needs profile indicates there is an unmet need for services for individuals age 12-17.

PRIORITIES: Support services for chemical dependency prevention, recovery, relapse and homeless prevention. Encourage programs that address the unmet need for substance abuse services for individuals age 12-17.

- Promote residential services and emergency housing for chemical dependent individuals and families.
- Support emergency housing for individuals with active chemical dependency and those at risk of relapse and homelessness.
- Support programs that address the accidental fatal drug overdoses, mostly due to the abuse of prescription painkillers.
- Support and fund programs to address the unmet need for services for individuals age 12-17 and the high incidence of alcohol and other drug abuse in the schools.

SENIOR CITIZENS

ANALYSIS: Dutchess County's total population grew 6.6% between 2000 and 2010, and the age 60 and over population grew by 27.8%. The age 75 and over population grew 22.8% and the age 85 and over population grew 36.4% during the same period.

Not only has the growth in the senior population far outpaced the growth in the overall Dutchess County population, but the growth of the older senior population has been remarkable as well.

Top problems expressed by seniors themselves include understanding health insurance/Medicare; keeping up with medical costs; and knowing where to obtain information about services and benefits.

PRIORITIES: Support programs that address the needs expressed by seniors and the individuals working with seniors.

- Support programs that assist seniors with understanding health insurance/Medicare; keeping up with medical costs; knowing where to obtain information about services and benefits; transportation; loneliness and isolation; and insufficient money for food, shelter or clothes.

OTHER HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS

BASIC NEEDS

ANALYSIS: There is a considerable economic divide in Dutchess County when it comes to making ends meet, particularly for the working poor and young adults. Those with low incomes and those attempting to find employment often have difficulty affording basic necessities. A substantial number of people in the region are going without basic needs, such as regular meals or medical treatment due to lack of income.

PRIORITIES: Support and fund programs that assist residents living in households with low incomes that experience difficulties paying for food, housing costs, utility bills or medical treatment.

- Support meal programs and soup kitchens that operate daily.
- Support programs that provide emergency needs such as paying for prescriptions, utility bills, and rent particularly to prevent homelessness.

CHILD ABUSE & CHILD CARE

ANALYSIS: The rate of child abuse in Dutchess County is above the state average, and reported child abuse was often highest in the region. There is a need for programs that serve abused and at-risk children and provide support and education services to adults. The support of after school and child care through the non-profit agencies is a priority in the City of Poughkeepsie.

PRIORITIES: Support programs to address the high reported incidences of child abuse. Support after school and child care programs.

- Support programs that serve abused and at-risk children and provide support and education services to the involved adults.
- Encourage after-school and child care provided by City of Poughkeepsie non-profit agencies.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ANALYSIS: In recent years, there has been an increase in domestic violence emergency calls which Dutchess County has attributed to the state of the economy and the resulting stress.

PRIORITIES: Support emergency shelters and transitional housing complexes and services for domestic violence victims.

- Support existing emergency shelters and transitional housing complexes and counseling sessions and in-house trainings.
- Support programs to that provide support and services to the victims of Domestic violence.

LITERACY

ANALYSIS: Literacy programs during the critical early years of cognitive development help impoverished children have opportunities to build their literacy skills. Literacy programs help prevent youth from becoming involved in dropping out of school, drug abuse, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, poor academic achievement and crime.

Literacy skills of Latinos are significantly lower than those of other racial and ethnic groups. Student achievement among Latinos in public schools is substantially below the average for the country.

PRIORITIES: Support literacy programs that help during the critical early years and for youth and Latinos.

- Support literacy programs that help prevent youth school dropouts, drug abuse, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, poor academic achievement and crime.
- Provide support to programs that improve the literacy skills of Latinos.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

ANALYSIS: Cost burden is the most serious housing issue facing residents of Dutchess County and the City of Poughkeepsie. For homeowners, senior citizens had the highest level of cost burden in both the County and City. Surveys suggest that many senior households wish to remain in their homes, which demonstrates the need for programs to help lower their cost burden. Some households may want or need to move to more affordable rental opportunities as the burdens of homeownership become overwhelming. For renters, small-related families and single individuals (the dominant group in the “other” category) had the highest level of cost burden. These patterns held for both the 30% and 50% cost burden levels.

PRIORITIES: Increase and improve housing affordability through:

- Creation of new affordable rental housing
- Reduction of housing costs for existing homeowners, particularly cost burdened senior citizens
- Promotion of inclusionary zoning and mixed-income housing.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ANALYSIS: The Dutchess County and City of Poughkeepsie Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice identified numerous impediments to affordable housing. They include: a cumbersome land use approval process; limited water and wastewater infrastructure outside of the City of Poughkeepsie; limited transportation infrastructure; local opposition to new development; limited fair housing resources; limited subsidized housing outside of the City of

Poughkeepsie; limited housing development assistance programs; high taxes; and high land cost and limited availability.

PRIORITIES: Decrease barriers to housing access and reduce/eliminate discrimination in housing choice including:

- Improving the land use approval process
- Improving access to water and wastewater infrastructure
- Improved coordination with transportation systems
- Increased education related to NIMBY (Not-in-My-Backyard) issues
- Increased fair housing resources
- Maximization of existing housing resources and improved information availability

Full details for each impediment and action are available in the [Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#).

HOMELESSNESS

ANALYSIS: The most recent Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) completed in late 2011 estimates that 1,796 people in Dutchess County used emergency, transitional and permanent support housing for the homeless between October 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011. The County's 2012 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count showed an 11.7% increase in the number of homeless households and an 8% increase in the number of homeless individuals from the 2011 PIT. A look at the composition of these households showed several trends. Individual men use emergency shelter more than women, but homeless families are much more likely to be headed by women. Blacks/African Americans are disproportionately represented in the homeless population. The ethnic Hispanic distribution of the homeless is closer to the County average. Household size data shows that, contrary to popular belief, large families are not over-represented in the homeless population. Only the percentage of three-person households significantly exceeds the County average. The prior living situation shows that both individuals and families who enter the emergency shelter system rarely come from their own housing or the street. Most come from staying with friends and families. This data shows that most individuals are homeless less than 1 month, while the highest percentage of families are homeless 1-3 months.

PRIORITIES: Support the Dutchess Housing Consortium and Dutchess County Continuum of Care's efforts to end chronic homelessness and reduce all other forms of homelessness.

Particularly:

- Fund housing which addresses the needs of the homeless or set aside a portion of their development for hard-to-serve special needs populations.
- Continue a leadership role in the Dutchess County Housing Consortium (DCHC) and Dutchess County Continuum of Care.

ANTI-POVERTY

ANALYSIS: The poverty rate in Dutchess County is 7.5% but increases to 12.5% for persons over 65 and 24.5% for minorities. The highest level of poverty is found in the City of Poughkeepsie with a rate of 22.5% for the overall population and 56.5% for its minority population. The causes of poverty are numerous and interrelated and include but are not limited to: lack of educational attainment; limited employment opportunities; breakdown of family structures; and special needs such as a mental illness and substance abuse.

PRIORITIES: Reduce the number of families living in poverty through:

- Supporting public housing agencies and housing choice voucher programs
- Funding affordable, sustainable rental housing with a focus on providing housing for the homeless and hard-to-serve special needs populations.

LEAD-BASED PAINT

ANALYSIS: Exposure to lead can cause health and developmental difficulties, especially in young children. Older homes may contain lead-based paint and/or household plumbing made with lead materials. Although lead-based paint was banned for use in residential structures built after 1978, many older homes still contain lead hazards. Almost 70% of homes in Dutchess County were built prior to 1980, and almost 90% of the homes in the City of Poughkeepsie were built prior to 1980. Unfortunately, many lower income families often reside in at-risk older homes in part because of lower housing costs, thus increasing lower income populations' exposure to lead hazards. The Dutchess County Health Department has been collecting data on children with confirmed elevated blood lead levels (EBLL), and has determined that the 12601 zip code in the City of Poughkeepsie was identified by the New York State Department of Health as the zip code with the highest annual incidence of EBLL in Dutchess County.

PRIORITIES: Reduce lead based paint hazards in the City of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County and increase the amount of new affordable housing without lead based paint. Focus on compliance with HUD and EPA requirements and working with the DC Health Department to identify areas with high incidences of lead poisoning in children and assist with identification of remedies.