

**CITY OF PORTAGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)  
FY 2020-21 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN – SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT**

**Introduction**

The FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan, Strategy for Housing and Community Development Needs, includes activities and programs to fulfill identified needs outlined in the 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan. The five-year Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan element are required in order to apply for and receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement program funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which have been awarded to the city since the mid-1970s.

The FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan was approved by City Council on May 12, 2020, and subsequently submitted to the Detroit HUD Field Office on May 9, 2020 for review and approval. Activities and expenditures of CDBG funds must meet three national objectives: 1) benefit low and/or moderate income persons, 2) aid in the prevention or elimination of blight, and 3) meet urgent community development needs. In order to meet these national objectives, the approved FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan includes five inter-related activities to be carried out during the program year. The table below lists the program activity, an activity description, and the planned objectives and outcomes.

Goal Name	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
Affordable Owner Housing	Affordable Housing	City-wide	Affordable Owner Housing	CDBG: \$192,896	- Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation: 12 Household Housing Unit - Direct Financial Assistance to Homebuyers: 3 Households Assisted
Neighborhood Improvement	Non-Housing Community Development	Low-moderate income neighborhoods	Neighborhood Improvement	CDBG: \$64,366	Housing Code Enforcement/For eclosed Property Care: 350 Household Housing Unit
Public Services	Homeless, Non-Homeless Special Needs	City-wide	Public Services	CDBG: \$44,618	Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 4000 Households Assisted

The approved FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan also allocated \$44,914 towards Grant Planning/Administration, which includes preparation of HUD-required plans and reports, Environmental Review, Fair Housing education and enforcement activities and update of the 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan.

## **Proposed Amendment to the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan**

In response to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has notified the City of Portage that it will receive an allocation of \$130,474 of Community Development Block Grant Program – Coronavirus Response funds (CDBG-CV) to be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. This allocation was authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136, which was signed by President Trump on March 27, 2020, to respond to the growing effects of this historic public health crisis.

As noted above, the City of Portage's federal Annual Action Plan details the funding strategy for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program each year. The Annual Action Plan implements a jurisdiction's multi-year Consolidated Plan and is developed through significant citizen participation, analysis, and planning. The CDBG-CV funds will be incorporated into the City's 2020 Annual Action Plan through a Substantial Amendment.

## **Funding Requests – Amendment to the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan**

Below is a summary of the proposed budget. Through a Substantial Amendment process the City proposed including the following activities into the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan:

### Project Name: Housing Resources, Inc. (\$100,000)

National Objective: Low- and Moderate-Income populations (LMI - Limited Clientele)  
CDBG Eligible Activity: Public Service (24 CFR 570.207(b)(4))  
Project Description: Enter into an agreement with Housing Resources, Inc, (HRI) which will act as a subrecipient to disburse funds to assist low- and moderate-income households with eviction and foreclosure prevention who have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Project Name: Portage Community Center (\$27,174)

National Objective: LMI – Limited Clientele  
CDBG Eligible Activity: Public Service (24 CFR 570.207(b)(4))  
Project Description: Utility and other emergency assistance to provide aid for low- and moderate-income households who have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Project Name: Planning & Administration (\$3,300)

National Objective: Not Applicable  
CDBG Eligible Activity: General Administration  
Project Description: Planning and Administration of CDBG-CV funding.

## **Amendment to the Public Participation Plan**

The proposed changes to the City's Public Participation Plan are as follows:

### Citizen Involvement During Emergency Situation

In the event that the conditions or urgent needs of a national, state, or local emergency limit the City's ability to carry-out the citizen participation process outlined in this Public Participation Plan (such as a natural disaster, infectious disease outbreak such as COVID 19, or other event that is declared an emergency by local, state, or federal officials); the City hereby establishes expedited procedures for citizen involvement. These expedited procedures may apply to all HUD-related plans and reporting documents, including the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, Fair Housing reports, and substantial amendments and are explained below.

1. Any required public notice and comment period may be reduced to five (5) days in duration, or the minimum number of days advised by any HUD waiver of citizen participation requirements. HUD has approved a 5-day public comment period.
2. If in-person public hearings are not allowed for health and safety reasons cited by national, state, or local authorities, public hearing requirements may be met with virtual public hearings if such virtual hearings provide:
  - Reasonable notification and access for citizens,
  - Timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and
  - Public access to all questions and responses.
    - Documents and reports should be made available for public review as defined within the City's current Public Participation Plan. A copy of the Substantial Plan Amendment is available for review at Portage City Hall, Portage Community Center, Portage District Library and on the City of Portage website (<https://www.portagemi.gov/180/Human-Services-Board>). The city will also make the materials available upon request.

HUD may issue further or alternative guidance for citizen participation during a national, state, or local emergency event, in which case such guidance from HUD will supersede and replace the expedited process outlined herein.

### **Public Process**

The City of Portage held two public meetings regarding a proposed use of CDBG-CV funds with the Human Services Board on June 25, 2020 and on July 16, 2020. The purpose of said meetings was to receive input from Board members and citizens about the proposed amendment involving the use of CDBG-CV funds. Both meetings were held using an online virtual platform. Comments received at both public meetings focused on providing housing assistance (rent, mortgage, utility) to households that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A copy of the June 25, 2020 and on July 16, 2020 meeting minutes are attached as Appendix A. Please call 269-329-4477 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm for instructions on providing additional public comment.

The City of Portage Human Services Board will hold a public hearing on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers, Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, Michigan to receive comments on the proposed amendment to the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan.

The City of Portage will provide a public notice advertising a 5-day public comment (Appendix B) period as part of the Public Participation Plan requirements. In order for timely response to the COVID-19 emergency, HUD has reduced the required public comment period to 5 days.

The City of Portage will accept public comment during the five (5) day public comment period beginning on October 8, 2020 through October 14, 2020. Citizens are asked to provide comment on the Substantial Amendment to the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan, the proposed use of CDBG-CV funds, and the proposed amendment to the Public Participation Plan.

A copy of the FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan CDBG-CV Substantial Amendment Summary and Public Participation Plan will be made available for review and posted on the City's website beginning on October 2, 2020.

The draft document is available for review at the following locations:

- Department of Community Development, City of Portage, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002
- Portage District Library, 300 Library Lane, Portage, MI 49002
- Portage Community Center, 325 East Centre Avenue, Portage, MI 49002
- City of Portage web site (<http://www.portagemi.gov/180/Human-Services-Board>)

Public comments can be e-mailed to the Department of Community Development at [forthc@portagemi.gov](mailto:forthc@portagemi.gov) or can be mailed to the City of Portage Department of Community Development, located at 7900 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002. For more information call 269-329-4477.

It is anticipated the Portage City Council will take action on the proposed Amendments to the 2020 Annual Action Plan and Public Participation Plan at a meeting scheduled for October 20, 2020. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, two options are available to participate in the City Council discussion:

1. Attend the meeting in City Council Chambers, Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. If you choose to attend the meeting in person, you will be required to wear a mask and adhere to the Centers for Disease Control social distancing guidelines in an effort to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The maximum number of people allowed in the chambers at any one time is 10.
2. Participate remotely by watching the meeting on cable channel 995 for Spectrum and channel 99 for AT&T. If you want to ask a question or make a comment, please call (844) 854-2222 and enter Access Code 529853#. When prompted, press \*6 to enter the queue.

For more information on how to access this meeting please contact the Department of Community Development at 269-329-4477.

The City will provide technical assistance to citizens and groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in the review of program activities and program amendments. In addition, the City will make adequate and reasonable provisions to assist non-English speaking residents in interpreting program opportunities and provisions on a case-by-case basis, as well as provide auxiliary aides and services for individuals with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations must contact the City Clerk's Office at 269-329-4511.

## Appendix A

## CITY OF PORTAGE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

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Minutes of the Virtual/In Person Meeting – July 16, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER:** The City of Portage Human Services Board meeting of July 16, 2020 was called to order by Chairperson Spalvieri at 6:00 p.m. Pursuant to Michigan Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order, this meeting was held in-person with a maximum capacity of 10 persons in Council Chambers, along with the continued option for Board members, staff and the public to participate remotely via a phone-in option. Two Board members and two staff members were present in Portage City Hall Council Chambers at the start of the meeting.

**MEMBERS PRESENT\*:** Alice Mwanda, Fi Spalvieri, Effie Kokkinos, Tim Henson, Brooke Kolodzieczyk, Stephanie Upshaw

- \* Board member Kathryn Hanfland submitted her resignation effective immediately from the Board via email to Chairperson Spalvieri and staff prior to the meeting. Upon receiving this information, Kokkinos moved and Henson supported a motion to accept her resignation. Motion passed 6-0. The Chair requested that staff prepare a thank you letter to be signed by the Board and furnished to Hanfland for her service.

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Nadeem Mirza

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Diane Durian

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chris Forth, Interim Director Community Development, Tom McCoy, Neighborhood Program Specialist

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Upshaw moved and Kolodzieczyk supported a motion to approve the June 25, 2020 minutes. Motion passed 6-0.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Discussion of CDBG-CV Funding Recommendation:** McCoy opened the discussion with a review of the staff memo to the HSB regarding potential disposition of the \$130,474 awarded to the city as part of the CARES act to assist individuals who have been adversely affected by the COVID -19 pandemic. The Board had previously concluded that the funds would be best utilized by directing a majority toward housing needs and the remainder toward emergency assistance through agency partners. Housing Resources and Portage Community Center were identified as those agencies best equipped to administer the funds. Board members inquired of Portage Community Center Executive Director Chris Buckley, who was in attendance, whether the agency could increase the amount of emergency assistance for utilities and Mr. Buckley stated that PCC would be able to adjust limits and increase assistance based on individual circumstances. Staff conveyed that upon inquiry, HRI Director Michelle Davis confirmed that any and all funds awarded to HRI would be utilized to assist Portage residents with eviction and foreclosure prevention within the established 2-year time period. Spalvieri asked the Board if \$75,000 to HRI with the balance to PCC would be appropriate or if the Board wanted to increase the amount to HRI. A suggestion was made to increase the amount to \$100,000 with the balance of \$30,474 going to PCC. Kolodzieczyk moved and Henson supported a motion to recommend to City Council that \$100,000 of the CDBG-CV funding be awarded to Housing Resources, Inc. for housing assistance with the balance of

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\$30,474 awarded to Portage Community Center for emergency utility assistance during the 2-year time period. Motion passed 6-0.

**STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:** None Received

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further discussion to come before the Board, a motion was made by Kolodzieczyk and seconded by Mwnada to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Motion was approved 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom McCoy, Neighborhood Program Specialist

**CITY OF PORTAGE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD**

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting – June 25, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER:** The City of Portage Human Services Board meeting of June 25, 2020 was called to order by Chairperson Spalvieri at 6:05 p.m. Pursuant to the “Remote Attendance Rules for Meetings” and Michigan Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order 2020-42, this meeting was held remotely with board members, staff, and the general public participating via video/telephone call-in.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Alice Mwanda, Fi Spalvieri, Effie Kokkinos, Tim Henson, Kathryn Hanfland, Brooke Kolodzieczyk, Nadeem Mirza, Stephanie Upshaw

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Diane Durian

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chris Forth, Interim Director Community Development, Tom McCoy, Neighborhood Program Specialist

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mirza moved and Henson supported a motion to approve the April 30, 2020 minutes. Motion passed 8-0.

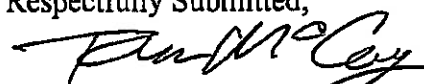
**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Discussion of CDBG-CV Funding Recommendation:** McCoy opened the discussion with a summary of the staff memo to the HSB regarding potential disposition of the \$130,474 awarded to the city as part of the CARES act to assist individuals who have been adversely affected by the COVID -19 pandemic. The Board concluded that the funds would be best utilized by directing a majority toward housing needs and the remainder toward emergency assistance through area agency partners. Housing Resources and Portage Community Center were identified as those agencies best equipped to administer the funds. Board members inquired of Portage Community Center Executive Director Chris Buckley, who was in attendance, whether the agency could increase the amount of emergency assistance for utilities as well as any other emergency expenses and Mr. Buckley stated that PCC would be able to adjust limits and increase assistance if necessary based on individual circumstances. Mwanda inquired about the existence of other programs that are designed to assist individuals. Kolodzieczyk also questioned staff whether reimbursement or payment of direct medical expenses would be an allowable activity and staff agreed to research and report back at the next meeting. Spalvieri suggested that up to \$70,000 could be allocated to HRI with the balance to PCC as an option. Forth commented that there was a two-year time period in which the funds were expected to be utilized. The Board agreed to continue the discussion at the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:** None Received

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further discussion to come before the Board, a motion was made by Kolodzieczyk and seconded by Kokkinos to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion was approved 8-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McCoy, Neighborhood Program Specialist



## Appendix B



## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The City of Portage Human Services Board will hold a public hearing on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers, Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, Michigan to receive comments on an amendment to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program FY 2020-21 Annual Action Plan. The amendment proposes to allocate \$130,474 from the CDBG-CV Grant received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This allocation was authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) to prevent, prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the \$130,474, \$100,000 is proposed to be allocated to Housing Resources, Inc. to aid in eviction/mortgage foreclosure prevention, \$27,174 to the Portage Community Center for utility shut-off prevention and related financial assistance and \$3,300 for administration. The draft document is available for review at the following locations:

- Department of Community Development, City of Portage, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002
- Portage District Library, 300 Library Lane, Portage, MI 49002
- Portage Community Center, 325 East Centre Avenue Portage, MI 49002
- City of Portage web site (<http://www.portagemi.gov/180/Human-Services-Board>)

All interested persons are encouraged to attend. Comments can be submitted in writing on or before October 8, 2020 to the City of Portage, Department of Community Development, or may be presented in person at the public hearing. Subsequent to the public hearing, an additional 5-day public comment period will be provided beginning October 8, 2020 and ending October 14, 2020. Citizens desiring additional information should contact the City of Portage Department of Community Development, (269) 329-4477 for additional information.

Department of Community Development  
Christopher Forth, Interim Director

Dated: September 30, 2020