

CITY OF MARLBOROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2016-2019

BACKGROUND: Marlborough is a city of 38,499 residents settled in the 1650s by European immigrants. The community has prospered due to its location along Boston Post Road, initially as a noted shoe-manufacturing city and eventually as a thriving hub of high technology and service companies, attracted by access to interstate highways 495 and 290, superior municipal services, and proximity to major universities and research facilities. A large immigrant population, mainly of Brazilian descent, lives in an around downtown where they have also established many businesses. Governed by a Mayor and 11-member Council, the Marlborough Community Development Authority (MCDA) serves as the community development and public housing authority and is the lead department tasked with the development and implementation of this strategy for the FY17-FY19 three-year period.

CDBG PROJECT PRIORITIES: The City of Marlborough's CDBG joint application for program funding along with the Town of Hudson focuses on three project priorities:

- **Housing Rehabilitation of 1-4 Unit Homes:** To further the goal of rehabilitating housing stock for low and moderate income households that are cost burdened
- **Childcare Assistance:** To administer a childcare assistance program that will promote reliable and stable childcare and economic self-sufficiency for low- and moderate-income parental guardians.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** To advance revitalization, connectivity, and safety for households and businesses located in the slum/blight target area through improvements on Sumner Street in Marlborough and on South Street in Hudson.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TO DEVELOP THIS STRATEGY: Marlborough residents and stakeholders were invited to discuss community priorities at a public hearing on January 7, 2016. The strategy was subsequently reviewed and discussed by the Mayor and City Department heads. The City has reached out to residents through a variety of means including: bulletin board postings; newspaper advertising and media alerts; direct mail to households; flyers and letters delivered through public schools; e-mail distribution lists; publishing on cable television; website notices; and social media. Residents and stakeholders are also invited to a public hearing on February 4, 2016, when the full application for the Marlborough-Hudson CDBG grant will be presented for discussion and adoption by the Marlborough Community Development Authority Board.

TARGET AREA: The City's CDBG Target Area reflects the needs of the community and includes consideration of the following: household composition; household income; housing cost burden; and housing stock age. The Marlborough CDBG Central Target Area includes the downtown and older neighborhoods of the central city have been identified as the French Hill/Main Street Community area for the City's Community Development Activities; it incorporates Block Groups 01, 02, 03, 05, and 06 in Census Tract 3213 and Block groups 01 and 02 in Census Tract 3215. Included are areas which had previously received "slum/blight" designation from the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) as well as single-family homes, and DHCD state regulated elderly housing properties managed by the MCDA. The greater French Hill neighborhood and residential areas north of Main Street remain an important focus of community development efforts. The proposed activities for which CDBG funding is sought will benefit housing units and households located in the target area, where there are higher concentrations of low- and moderate income households and housing stock that was built in or before 1940. For more information about the target area, see *Attachment: CDBG Target Area. Characteristics.*

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE: The City has experience with undertaking planning studies and implementing infrastructure investments focused on enhancing housing, economic development, and quality of life. Below is a summary of plans, studies, and improvements undertaken in the last five years.

- MCDA conducted a 2016 survey of conditions in the "blighted" areas which includes over 100

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properties and documents housing, street and neighborhood conditions.

- MCDA surveyed needs for childcare assistance through a 2016 targeted mailing to families and individuals currently receiving assistance through the Marlborough Food Pantry and HUD programs.
- Marlborough and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) conducted a 2014 downtown parking analysis to improve downtown walkability and new residential development with active uses.
- The Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Downtown Working Group, City Council, city officials, and MAPC worked together in 2014 to review and amend downtown zoning to encourage mixed-use, new housing opportunities, and lower parking requirements.
- A 2013 city-funded housing needs analysis performed by MAPC to better understand unmet housing needs within the city and as the potential first phase to a larger Housing Production Plan.
- Over 200 residents, officials, and business owners participated in the 2011 completion of the Marlborough Economic Development Master Plan, an effort lead by MEDC.

The City also participates in regional planning processes conducted by MAPC. The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, the Department of Housing and Community Development, MassDOT, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Massachusetts Office of Business Development and other state agencies also assist the city, providing guidance and funding to help meet community needs and goals.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THEMES: The next section provides an update on the community development priorities for the City of Marlborough over the next three to five years. Priorities are grouped by theme, and each section includes highlights of implementation successes over the next three to five years that pertain to the CDBG slum/blight target area. The accompanying Community Development Strategy Matrix summarizes specific activities the city will undertake in the next three to five years which most align with Commonwealth's Sustainable Development (SD) Principles. Please see *Attachment: Marlborough Plans and Studies Excerpts* for a more extensive list of strategies.

Housing

Marlborough's housing goals are consistent with the Commonwealth's Principles #1 Concentrate Development and Mix Uses and #2 Expand Housing Opportunities by prioritizing the preservation and expansion of existing housing stock as well as the inclusion of housing

Housing goals articulated in recent plans and studies include: preserving the existing inventory of affordable housing and supporting development of a variety of housing types affordable to households across a broad range of incomes; creating an affordable housing trust fund; offering a housing rehabilitation program to assist low and moderate-income households make critical repairs to their homes; supporting new homebuyers with first time homebuyer education, down payment and closing assistance programs; improve the energy efficiency and accessibility of housing; and improving the quality of life for families and seniors by providing better access to job training programs and employment support networks through a dedicated position charged with coordination of these services. Below is a summary of recent investments the City has made to improve housing opportunity and housing quality for households in the city and in the target area:

- MCDA works with BayPath to administer a Supportive Housing Program that provides support services to senior housing developments. In 2014, the MCDA was awarded a Supportive Housing Initiative Award for all three of the city's senior public housing complexes.
- In 2015, the MCDA and the Action for Boston Community Development invested \$540,000 in the installation of 60 air source heat pump HVAC units for a public housing development for low-to-moderate income and disabled seniors on Bolton Street. The energy-efficient units have improved housing conditions for the residents as well as result in a \$130,000 electric energy cost savings.
- MCDA has recently applied for resources from the DHCD High Leverage Asset Preservation Program, which would match and double local housing authority funds.

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The City's housing priorities for FY17-FY19 include administering a Housing Rehabilitation Program to improve housing conditions and reduce housing rehabilitation costs for households earning at or below 80% of Area Median Income in the CDBG slum/blight target areas in each municipality. Administration and delivery of this program would be made possible through CDBG funding. For more information, see *Attachment: Marlborough-Hudson Housing Rehabilitation Program Overview and Application*.

Community and Economic Development

Marlborough's community and economic development goals are consistent with the Commonwealth's SD Principles #1 Concentrate Development and Mix Uses and #8 Increase Job and Business Opportunities by promoting the rehabilitation of existing downtown buildings and creating jobs in the Downtown.

Economic and community development goals articulated in recent plans and studies include: supporting rehabilitation of distressed and underutilized buildings in the downtown business district; improving gateway areas and directional signage to and from the downtown; expanding public wireless internet access in downtown to attract customers and investors; using the recent Cultural District designation as a marketing tool to bring visitors and customers to the downtown; continuing to use the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) to support private investment in difficult to develop sites; and continuing to use MGL chapters 40Q, 40R and 43D to establish smart growth zoning districts, funding mechanisms and expedited permitting to facilitate local redevelopment. Below are examples of recent investments the City has made to improve economic opportunity in the city and in the target area. Our community development strategy outlines actions that build on these recent investments to increase quality of life in the city and in the target area

- The recently adopted mixed use zoning district provides a mixture of uses in a walkable area with a high concentration of job opportunities. The 110 acre master planned site has more than 2,000 jobs situated at the site with 350 brand new housing units.
- The Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) along with four local financial institutions recently capitalized a revolving loan fund to help low and moderate income individuals looking for access to flexible capital.
- The Metro West Regional Transit Authority continues to provide low and moderate income neighborhoods connectivity to the community's job centers and an express bus that brings workers into Boston from downtown Marlborough.
- A new initiative underway through the regional vocational high school is connecting low and moderate income residents to the hospitality industry and providing workforce job training.
- Partnering with the MEDC to market the city to new prospects outside of the Commonwealth to increase jobs; over the last four years, approximately 5,000 jobs have been added.

Open Space, Recreation, Natural, and Historic Resources

Marlborough's open space, recreation, and natural resources goals are consistent with the Commonwealth's SD Principles #4 Protect Land and Ecosystems through the continued maintenance and use of existing City Recreation Areas and #5 Using Natural Resources Wisely by promoting open space preservation, and #9 Promote Clean Energy by promoting green technologies and energy efficiency.

Environmental goals articulated in recent plans and studies include: promoting the Assabet River Rail Trail by building a trailhead park and connecting the trail to downtown; developing a watershed plan to protect and enhance the city's recreational water resources; preserving critical open space lands through acquisition in fee or by obtaining development rights; aggressively pursue public and private funding for improvements to existing recreation facilities, construction of additional multi-purposes recreation fields, and for open space protection efforts; improving the energy efficiency of municipal buildings by investing in energy efficient features; and incorporating environmental standards in public projects and use incentives and regulations to support it in private projects. Below is a summary of recent investments the City has made to improve sustainability and the protection of natural and historic resources. Our community

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development strategy outlines actions that build on these recent investments to increase quality of life in the city and in the target area.

- Marlborough received Green Communities designation from the Commonwealth in 2010.
- Installation of recycling bins is encouraging high rates of recycling. Recycling rates have increased since new bins were put in place several years ago.
- In 2015, the MCDA selected BlueWave Capital as a provider for solar net-metering credits for Marlborough Public Housing.
- Many companies and residences have incorporated solar into their buildings. The city has a request for proposals out to evaluate the roofs of municipal buildings in order to determine suitability for solar.

Community Facilities, Health, and Human Services

The goals in this category are consistent with the Commonwealth's SD Principles #1 Concentrate Development and Mix Uses and #2 Advance Equity by supporting outreach programs for low-and-moderate income families.

Social services goals articulated in recent plans and studies include: senior wellness programs and support efforts improving access to services and programming for the mentally and physically impaired; supporting programs that address the needs of low and moderate-income families with children and at risk youth; providing resources for new immigrants to help them assimilate into the community; continuing to incorporate accessibility features in programs and facilities; and supporting economic security and self-sufficiency programs. Below is a summary of recent investments the City has made to improve health and wellness for households in the City and in the target area:

- The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, established in 2014, educates students and the community about substance abuse with an emphasis on the growing opioid epidemic in the region.
- The City's new Senior Center finished construction in 2015 at a cost of about \$3 million.

The City's social services priorities for FY17-FY19 include administering a Childcare Subsidy Voucher Program that Marlborough-Hudson will jointly administer. The program will provide childcare subsidies to low and moderate income households with children under the age of 18 who live in the CDBG slum/blight target areas in each municipality. Administration and delivery of this program would be made possible through CDBG funding. For more information about the proposed program, see *Attachment: Marlborough-Hudson Childcare Assistance Program Overview and Application*.

Infrastructure

Marlborough's infrastructure goals are consistent with SD Principles #1 Concentrate Development and Mix Uses by upgrading the existing infrastructure in the Target Area, #4 Protect Land and Ecosystems by upgrading the wastewater treatment plants, and #7 Provide Transportation Choice by investing in road and sidewalk improvements. Infrastructure goals articulated in recent plans and studies include: expand transportation choices to encourage use of more energy efficient options such as mass transit, carpooling, and bike lanes and encouraging multi-modal transportation by adopting a complete streets policy and encouraging access to shared bicycle options through public/private partnerships. Below is a summary of recent investments the City has made to improve conditions in the target area:

- In 2015, the MCDA developed a proposal to construct a much needed parking lot at Bolton Street Apartments this was successfully completed in the fall of 2015 at a cost of \$724,000.00.
- In 2015, a back-up generator was installed at the public housing development for elderly and disabled on 240 Main Street. Total project costs were just under \$240,000.
- Windsor Street's parking areas are currently under renovation with improvements including new curb, sidewalk, and landscaping and creation of ADA accessible handicapped parking spaces. The contract total for the improvements on Windsor St. are just over \$300,000 of which \$25,000 will

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come from the MCDA and remainder from the City of Marlborough.

- Repairs to the Newton Street parking garage to state standards. The contact total is \$983,000.

The City's infrastructure priorities for the CDBG slum/blight target area include the Sumner Street reconstruction project where pedestrian access is limited, curb ramps are not ADA accessible, and inadequate sidewalk curb heights fail to protect pedestrians. Please see *Attachment: Sumner Street Infrastructure Project Overview + Supplemental Materials* for details. The project includes installing granite curbs, 6-foot-wide cement concrete sidewalks, and curb ramps, and other utility improvements.

The project implements part of the City's Complete Streets policy, and builds upon other roadway/sidewalk reconstruction projects completed over the past five years totaling millions of dollars in investment. Previously restored roadways include Belmont St, Preston St, Washington St, Highland St, Brimsmead St, Tremont St, Howland St, Ellis Ave, Mountain Ave, Fay Court, Hudson St, and Bellevue Ave. Moreover, other reconstruction projects are planned over the next two years to complement these past projects and the Sumner Street Reconstruction project. The areas planned for improvements within the next two years include the following: portions of Elm St and Lincoln St and the entire lengths of Windsor St and Jefferson St. These streets have deficiencies in the water, sewer, and drainage systems that we will be corrected as well as planned improvements to curb, sidewalk, curb ramps, and pavement condition.

Management Capacity

Marlborough via the MCDA is the lead community for the Marlborough-Hudson joint CDBG application. MCDA operates as a unique agency with combined public housing and community development responsibilities. Unlike most public housing authorities, MCDA is not a stand-alone agency and operates as a department of city government, drawing upon other City agencies to increase its management and planning capacity including IT, Human Resources, Procurement, Financial Oversight, Project Development, and Management. In addition, the MCDA has on staff the Commissioner of Public Works who is able to assist the MCDA with management of projects and properties. This community development strategy will be implemented in partnership with other city departments and MCDA will hire and oversee a CDBG Program Administrator who will oversee implementation of the specific projects and program for which CDBG funding is sought. Please see *Attachment: CDBG Management Plan* for more information.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY MATRIX – CITY OF MARLBOROUGH

The following matrix summarizes community development action priorities in the City of Marlborough over the next three years from FY17 – FY19. The matrix profiles priorities in three categories: Housing, Infrastructure, and Social Services, which hold potential for advancing opportunities for low and moderate income households living in the CDBG slum/blight target area. Please see *Attachment: Marlborough Plans and Studies Excerpts* for the full list of goals that were identified in the Master Plan. **Activities we seek CDBG funding to enable are bolded and highlighted.**

Note: Each action in the strategy identifies the project or program's alignment with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development (SD) Principles. The numeric references refer to the following principles:

1. Concentrate Development and Mix Uses
2. Advance Equity
3. Make Efficient Decisions
4. Protect Land and Ecosystems
5. Use Natural Resources Wisely
6. Expand Housing Opportunities
7. Provide Transportation Choice
8. Increase Job and Business Opportunities
9. Promote Clean Energy
10. Plan Regionally

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Action Priority	Description	Potential Funding Sources	Time-frame	Alignment with SD Principles
Improve Main Street through programming and branding	Schedule seasonal events, develop a downtown identity logo for beautification banners, and establish a marketing plan	Local Option Tax, Hospitality Tax, private business Investments and DHCD technical assistance	2017-2019	#8
Improve blighted areas through remediation and redevelopment	Enhance vacant or blighted business establishments to improve the quality of life for workers and the residents in the neighborhoods in which they are located. Promote redevelopment opportunities and brownfields remediation.	DHCD Economic Development Grant, CDBG Sign and Façade, PWED, CDAG, EDIP, EDA and other funds through EOHEA, Federal Brownfields funds, EPA and MEPA.	2017-2019	#1, #8
Promote Marlborough as a center for the tech business	Attract tech jobs: continue organizing specialized summits, workshops and professional development programs. The jobs and tax base provided by this commercial development can reduce tax burden on residential taxes to support City services.	Private funding from local businesses, City funds from local Option Tax, Workforce Training funds, EDA grants	2017-2019	#8
Implement zoning study recommendations	Continue to implement the zoning recommendations outlined in the Marlborough Downtown Zoning study	City Council, Downtown Association, Marlborough EDC	2017-2019	#1, #2, #7, #8
Increase energy efficiency in City infrastructure	Implement improvements to municipal buildings by installing rooftop solar panels; improve efficiency of street lights - encourage NGRID to change 2,000 halide street lights to LED or purchase the lights from NGRID; implement a net metering program	City Council Funding, NGRID	2017-2019	#9
Improve permitting process	Streamline and improve the development site plan review process to promote redevelopment and advance energy and environment goals.	None	ongoing	#3
Deliver housing rehabilitation assistance to low- and moderate-income property owners	Support neighborhood revitalization by supporting the rehabilitation of housing structures owned by low- and moderate-income households earning at or below 80% of state median income. Administer the program regionally with the Town of Hudson.	CDBG	2017-2019	#2
Continue housing rehabilitation	Preserve and improve existing inventory of affordable Housing Stock; Purchase, improve and sell foreclosed properties to LMI households.	CDBG NSP, MHP	2017-2019	#2
Reduce the number of foreclosures in the City	Establish SUN (Stabilizing Urban Neighborhoods) Initiative in City	Boston Common Capital	2017-2019	#2
Continue Code Enforcement Impact Team	Continue to convene the team to control overcrowding of housing units and on street parking in residential neighborhoods	No cost	Ongoing	#6
Produce a Housing Production Plan	Plan will provide a path for identifying and meeting housing needs	MEDC funds	2017-2019	#2
Provide first-time homebuyer education	Expand homeownership opportunities, especially for Low and Moderate Income households	SMOC, MHP, Local banks	2017-2019	#2
Expand transportation to medical providers	Expand COA/FISH program - current volunteer driver pool is not sufficient to handle demand for services	CDBG Funds, City funding	2017-2019	#7

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Action Priority	Description	Potential Funding Sources	Time-frame	Alignment with SD Principles
Improve programming for children with developmental disabilities	Offer after school and out-of-school time for Marlborough children with developmental disabilities. These children are unable to attend regular after-school programs.	CDBG Funds, local fundraising, City funding	2017-2019	#2
Improve Supportive Housing services	Continue to implement the MCDA Supportive Housing Program for seniors in public housing	City funds, DHCD	2017-2019	#2
Administer childcare assistance program	Administer a childcare voucher program for low and moderate income families earning less than 85% of state median income, providing financial release and greater economic opportunity for families. Administer the program regionally with the Town of Hudson.	CDBG	2017-2019	#2
Incorporate Complete Streets into all roadway and street infrastructure projects	Focus on commercial area infrastructure; local businesses become safer and more welcoming to pedestrians, cyclists, and all citizens; increased walkability, safety, accessibility; strolling and shopping encouraged	PWED,CDBG funds, EOHEd, Ch. 90 Funds, MassWorks, City Funds	2017-2019	#1, #4, #7
Implement sidewalk analysis and management system	Assess the condition of all streets and sidewalks, determine the proper pavement preservation and rehabilitation methods, identify most cost effective strategy for street maintenance, and project the future condition	MassWorks, City Funds, Chapter 90		#7
Improve access to healthy recreational opportunities	Promote Assabet River Rail Trail. Construct Trailhead Park Way, finding signage & markings.	DCR, DPW (in-kind)	2017-2019	#7
Develop and implement a five-year capital plan for French Hill/Main Street areas	Develop five-year capital plan addressing necessary street and utilities repairs to Howland, Kirby, Sumner, Russell, Silver and other French Hill/ Main Street Community area residential streets in poor condition in the CDBG target areas	DPW, City Funds, Ch. 90	2017-2019	#7
Protect and enhance water resources	Install storm drain education & markers; closed drainage system for Rt. 20; Lake Williams sidewalk	DPW budget, Mass DOT	2017-2019	#4
Upgrade Kelleher Field	Develop master plan for renovations to Kelleher Field; improve recreational opportunities	City	2017-2020	#4, #5
Reconstruct Windsor Street	Reconstruction of Windsor St and the adjacent parking areas including the public parking lot and the Housing Development parking lot. New curb, sidewalk, and landscaping as well as drainage improvements and creation of ADA accessible handicapped parking spaces.	MCDA, City	2015-2016	#7
Repair and Maintain Newton Street Garage	Repairs and upgrades to the existing parking garage including additional control valves and extension of the fire protection system and the increase of pipe size for the drainage system ventilation per code.	City	2015-2016	#7
Improve Sumner Street sidewalks and roadway	Reconstruction including the installation of new granite curbs, six-foot wide cement sidewalks, and curb ramps – bringing the street to be ADA accessible and safer for all pedestrians and improving the look of the neighborhood.	CDBG, City	2016-2019	#7
Upgrade Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant	Upgrade Waste Water Treatment System	City, SRF	2017-2019	#1, #5