

**LEWISTON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING &
WORKSHOP AGENDA**

Thursday, April 9, 2015

City Council Chambers

6:00 pm Special Meeting

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
Moment of Silence.

SPECIAL MEETING

1. Resolution to Support LD 368 - An Act to Integrate the State's General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs.
2. Adjourn

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Fire	pgs. 102-117
Social Services	pgs. 162-165
TIFF	pgs. 38-40
CDBG	see attached

LEWISTON CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF APRIL 9, 2015

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET:

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1

SUBJECT:

Resolution to Support LD 368 - An Act to Integrate the State's General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs.

INFORMATION:

The Mayor is requesting the Council review a bill that is being presented in the Legislature regarding welfare reform efforts. The bill is LD 368 - An Act to Integrate the State's General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs.

A summary of the LD is as follows: "The bill provides that a person who has exhausted the 60-month lifetime limit on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program benefits is ineligible to receive municipal general assistance program benefits."

A copy of the LD is attached and the Resolve will be distributed at the meeting.

APPROVAL AND/OR COMMENTS OF CITY ADMINISTRATOR:

The City Administrator recommends approval of the requested action.

EAB/KMM

REQUESTED ACTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M
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To approve the Resolve Supporting LD 368 - An Act to Integrate the State's General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs.



127th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2015

Legislative Document

No. 368

S.P. 136

In Senate, February 12, 2015

An Act To Integrate the State's General Assistance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs

Reference to the Committee on Health and Human Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Heather J.R. Priest'.

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator BRAKEY of Androscoggin.
Cosponsored by Senator: MASON of Androscoggin, Representatives: BLACK of Wilton,
CRAFTS of Lisbon, GUERIN of Glenburn, VACHON of Scarborough.

Economic and Community Development

Lincoln Jeffers

Director



To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Lincoln Jeffers
RE: CDBG Budget and Action Plan
Date: April 7, 2015

Background

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federal program created in 1974 to help states and communities combat poverty and assist in the development of viable urban communities. It is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The overarching goals of the program are to help provide the following, principally for persons of low and moderate income:

- Decent housing
- A suitable living environment
- Expanded economic opportunities

To achieve these goals, CDBG regulations set forth eligible activities and the national objectives that each activity must meet. As a recipient of CDBG funds, Lewiston is charged with ensuring that these requirements are met.

Lewiston has been a CDBG Entitlement Community since 1974. Entitlement Communities annually receive a funding allocation directly from HUD based on a formula established by Congress. Other communities in Maine designated as Entitlement Communities are Portland, Bangor, Auburn, Biddeford, and Cumberland County. The State of Maine also receives a funding allocation that is distributed by the state to other non-entitlement communities on a competitive, per project basis each year.

Since 2010 Lewiston's allocation has diminished 25%, from \$1,040,235 in FY 2010 to \$777,025 in FY 2016. Over the last several years funding allocations have been relatively steady, hovering around \$780,000 annually.

Planning and Goals

As an Entitlement Community Lewiston has significant administrative and reporting requirements to HUD. Among those requirements is the drafting of a 5 year strategic plan, known as the *Consolidated Plan*, which outlines how CDBG funds will be utilized over the term of the plan.

Public participation is an essential component of the development of a Consolidated Plan. Lewiston has a mayor appointed 7 member CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) that last fall, along with staff and consultant, held six public meetings and interviews with stakeholder groups to identify the most critical eligible needs to which Lewiston's CDBG funds should be targeted.

The draft Consolidated Plan was presented to the City Council on March 17th. It has been posted on the city's website since then for public comment. My memo from that Council meeting is attached, which summarizes the recommendations of the Consolidated Plan. Following is a very brief outline of how Lewiston has historically invested the money, some rules we must abide by, and goals for the coming five years, the first of which is this funding cycle.

The bulk of Lewiston's CDBG funds are invested in or to benefit the residents of a Target Area, Census Tracts 201 -204 (map attached). Historically the city has used its funds primarily on housing improvements, economic development, infrastructure improvements in the Target Area, and social services. So long as the broad national goals of the program are met - *developing viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low and moderate income* – there is considerable flexibility in how the funds are spent. HUD rules limit spending to 20% for administration of the program and no more than 15% for social service agency funding.

The 2015 -2019 Consolidated Plan has 4 high priority, 3 medium priority and 1 low priority goals. They are:

High Priority

- A. Support people in their efforts to transition out of poverty
- B. Prevent homelessness
- C. Improve the safety and energy efficiency of the housing stock
- D. Reduce lead hazards in housing

Medium Priority

- A. Increase neighborhood pride through investment in infrastructure
- B. Promote jobs and economic growth
- C. Create more stable and diverse mixed income neighborhoods

Low Priority

- A. Support Fair Housing and increase housing choice.

Citizen Advisory Committee FY 2016 Funding Recommendations

In January this year the City issued a Notice of Funding Availability and invited social service providers and others to submit requests for CDBG funds. The CAC goes through an exhaustive review of the applications, and interviews those with new programs or which they have questions about. The CAC then score those applications based on how well each application meets the following criteria:

- a) Supports the 5 Year Strategic Plan and its goals (can score up to 35 points)
- b) Meets a critical unmet need (can score up to 35 points)
- c) Is within the applicants capacity to carry out (can score up to 20 points)
- d) Is cost effective (can score up to 10 points)

The scoring process has evolved and been fine-tuned by the CAC over the last few years to improve its objectivity. The integrity of the process has been maintained in each funding cycle, with improvements identified implemented in the following budget year.

Attached is the budget showing the Citizen Advisory Committee's recommendations for the city's CDBG spending in FY 2016. The City received 16 social service agency applications requesting \$279,642 in funding. CAC recommends spending \$140,220 on eleven social service agencies/programs including \$57,000 to fund one full time position with benefits in Lewiston's General Assistance Office. Lewiston's GA office provides front line assistance to help very low income residents meet their most basic needs, meeting the national objectives of providing decent housing and a suitable living environment.

The CAC developed their funding recommendations for the other 10 agencies based on the following formulas:

For those agencies that scored 79 or above:

Amount requested X score expressed as a % X 84%

For those agencies that scored 75 -78:

Amount requested X score expressed as a % X 50%

HUD calculates the 15% social service agency cap on the allocation plus the prior year's program income. The program income is estimated, and accordingly, staff does not recommend funding all the way up to the cap. If loan repayments are less than projected the cap could be exceeded, which would cause compliance and possible repayment issues with HUD. The recommended level of funding is 3.3% below the cap.

Administration

HUD regulations have a 20% cap on CD Office Administration and Planning. The recommended budget has \$175,017 to fund staff salaries and cost of operations for the Community Development office, and \$8,062 to fund a planning initiative lead by Community Concepts that will develop strategies to more broadly and deeply incorporate the Bridges Out of Poverty program in the area. Combined the two programs are 7% (\$13,926) below the HUD cap. It should be noted Economic and Community Development Department staff salaries and benefits are paid from a variety of federal grants and do not affect the General Fund.

Housing

Lewiston and Auburn received a three year, \$3.4 million lead and healthy homes grant. Lewiston is administering the grant. Those funds will be spent in both Lewiston and Auburn. Properties that have received an abatement order for lead hazards from the State of Maine will be given priority for funding, after which projects will be funded on a first come, first served basis. Lewiston needs to provide a match of \$70,000 annually for that grant. In this round of funding \$25,000 is needed to meet the first year's match requirement with the other \$55,000 being carried forward from previous allocations.

For the city rehabilitation loan program no new funds are requested. The program currently has \$220,000 available and receives approximately \$80,000 each year in program income, which helps keep the loan program capitalized. The CAC recommends that Community Concepts receive \$100,000 in funding to capitalize a grant program they administer that provides grants to very low income individuals for replacement of roofs, upgrading of electrical systems or other improvements that must be made to allow weatherization grant funding to be invested in these owner occupied properties. This program benefits Lewiston's most needy homeowners, many of who are elderly.

Rehab Office Administration funds staff salaries and construction management services provided by Community Concepts for rehabilitation projects. The Community Concepts work is best farmed out. They work with city code enforcement to identify issues in buildings, then write the scope of services for improvements to be made, manage the bidding process, and ride herd during construction. Code enforcement personnel sign off that improvements have been made prior to the release of CDBG funds.

Also recommended for funding under Housing is \$64,164 for Enhanced Code Enforcement in the target area. Over the last several years this position has been focused on identifying properties that needed to be demolished as well as working with property owners to bring their buildings into code compliance. In the coming year it is expected that demolition work will play a diminishing role and that efforts to improve the remaining housing stock will increase.

Infrastructure

Public Works has a plan to retrofit the 577 decorative s lights on Lisbon, Canal and Lincoln Streets, replacing metal halide lamps with LED lamps at a cost of \$240,000. All of these lights are in the CDBG target area. At any given time there are between 30 and 50 lights out. Replacing them will improve the lighting, safety, and quality of place in the downtown. The life expectancy of LED lamps is 29.1 years vs. 2.3 years with metal halide.

Conclusion

The CAC takes considerable time and care in developing their recommendations for the City Council. Their deliberations are always engaged and spirited with many viewpoints expressed. Their challenge is significant. This year, the total funding requests were 125% of the funds available. Agency requests were 193% of the funds available. The CAC's goal is to make recommendations to invest these scarce dollars in ways that will provide the most benefit to the city and its low to moderate income residents, following the guidelines of the *Consolidated Plan*.

While the CAC makes recommendations, the final decision on how CDBG dollars are invested is the City Council's.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
LEWISTON FY 2015-2016 BUDGET

	(CFY2015)		(CFY2015)	(CFY2015)	(CFY2016)		(CFY2016)	(CFY2016)		
	FFY2014	SCORES	FFY2014	FFY2014	FFY2015		FFY2015	FFY2015		
	Amount		Review Com.	City Council	Amount	CDBG CAC	Review Com.	Council		
TAB	Requested		Recommend	Recommend	Requested	Score	Recommend	Approved		
PUBLIC SERVICE AGENCIES										
16	Trinity Jubilee Center-Warming Center	\$15,000	85	\$7,676	\$5,757	\$22,000	82	\$14,973		
1	Androcoggin Head Start & Child Care	\$30,900	82	\$15,110	\$11,333	\$18,467	80	\$12,262		
15	Trinity Jubilee Center-Food Pantry	\$5,000	82	\$2,447	\$1,835	\$9,000	80	\$5,976		
4	Community Concepts, Inc - Bridges out of Poverty	\$5,000		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$12,500	79	\$8,196		
7	Lewiston Adult Education-Workready Training	\$14,300	81	\$6,938	\$5,203	\$21,500	79	\$14,098		
14	Tree Street Youth	\$16,015	84	\$8,085	\$6,064	\$20,000	78	\$7,800		
13	Tedford Housing-Low. Supp. Housing	\$10,000	75	\$4,470	\$3,353	\$8,250	77	\$3,176		
10	Safe Voices (formerly AWAP)	\$7,000	85	\$3,570	\$2,678	\$8,000	76	\$3,040		
9	New Beginnings, Inc.-Outreach Program	\$6,536	81	\$3,193	\$2,395	\$11,530	75	\$4,324		
12	Seniors Plus	\$25,000	80	\$11,979	\$8,984	\$25,000	75	\$9,375		
8	Literacy Volunteers	\$5,000	77	\$2,314	\$1,736	\$5,000	74			
6	LearningWorks	\$7,395	78	\$3,479	\$2,609	\$7,395	73			
11	St. Mary's Nutrition Center-Lots to Gardens	\$45,000	77	\$20,880	\$15,660	\$45,000	70			
2	Catholic Charities - SEARCH	\$5,000	72	\$0	\$0	\$4,000	63			
5	Community Concepts, Inc - Big Brothers Big Sisters	\$0				\$5,000	63			
3	City Social Services-Case Management	\$101,513	89	\$54,106	\$76,135	\$57,000.00		\$57,000		
	SUBTOTAL	\$298,659	\$1,127	\$149,247	\$148,741	\$279,642		\$140,220		\$0
	Amount over/under Public Service Agency Cap					(\$134,588)		\$4,834		\$145,054
ADMINISTRATION & PLANNING										
A1	CD Office Administration					\$175,017		\$175,017		\$0
A2	Cities of L-A Joint Planning - Bridges			\$0	\$0	\$10,000		\$8,062		\$0
	SUBTOTAL				\$0	\$185,017		\$183,079		\$0
	Amount over/under Administration & Planning Cap					\$11,988		\$13,926		\$197,005
HOUSING										
B1	City Lead Match and Leverage				\$55,000	\$25,000		\$25,000		
B1	Housing Rehabilitation Program **				\$50,000	\$0		\$0		\$0
B2	Community Concepts, Inc - Weatherization Rehab	\$70,000		\$42,000	\$42,000	\$100,000		\$100,000		
B3	Rehab Office Administration			\$136,603	\$136,603	\$75,688		\$75,688		
B4	Fair Housing	\$5,000		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$2,000		\$2,000		
B5	Enhanced Code Enforcement	\$55,000		\$58,598	\$58,598	\$64,164		\$64,164		
	SUBTOTAL	\$130,000	\$0	\$242,201	\$347,201	\$266,852		\$266,852		\$0
INFRASTRUCTURE										
	Conversion of Downtown Street lighting					\$240,000		\$236,874		
	SUBTOTAL					\$240,000		\$236,874		
ACQUISITION, DISPOSITION & CLEARANCE										
	Acquire and demolish dilapidated properties	\$100,727		\$60,304	\$60,304	\$0		\$0		
	SUBTOTAL	\$100,727		\$60,304	\$60,304	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
	TOTAL OF ALL PROGRAMS				\$556,246	\$971,511	\$0	\$827,025		\$0
	Amount under/over projected allocation:					(\$144,486)		\$0		\$777,025
SOURCES OF FUNDS:										

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
LEWISTON FY 2015-2016 BUDGET

	(CFY2015) FFY2014	SCORES	(CFY2015) FFY2014	(CFY2015) FFY2014	(CFY2016) FFY2015	(CFY2016) FFY2015	(CFY2016) FFY2015
A. FY 15 Allocation (est.): \$	\$777,025						
Plus Contingency	\$50,000						
Less Social Services	(\$57,000)						
Less Enhanced Code Enforcement	(\$62,264)						
Less Rehab Admin: \$	(\$94,608)						
Less CD Admin: \$	(\$175,017)						
Total available for programs:	\$438,136						
B. FY 15 Program Income (FFY13)	\$190,000						
C. FY16 Projected Program Income							
Housing	\$84,000						
Commercial	\$94,000						
ESLP:	\$30,000						
Total FY14 Projected Program Income	\$208,000						
*Note: Program Income generated from CDBG Revolving Loan Pools cannot be used to fund other projects.							
It Must be used to recapitalize the loan pools. However, total program income is used when determining							
the caps set for Administrative Expenses and Public Service Agency funding (CFR 24.200(g)) CFR24.201(e)(1).							
Program Income generated by the Economic Stimulus Loan Pool (ESLP), administered by the LAEGC is counted as CDBG program income							
Caps:							
CD: Administration - (20% of Entitlement \$):			\$155,405				
Public Services -							
15% x (Grant + FY15 Program Income):			\$145,054				
Administration & Planning -							
20% x (Grant + Projected FY16 Program Income):			\$197,005				

Economic and Community Development

Lincoln Jeffers

Director

Lewiston



2007



To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Lincoln Jeffers
RE: CDBG Consolidated Plan
Date: March 11, 2015

Congress created the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) in 1974. It is a federal program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that provides funding used to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and opportunities to expand economic opportunities, primarily to low and moderate income persons.

As the second largest city in Maine, Lewiston was designated as a CDBG Entitlement Community at the program's inception. As such, the city receives an annual allocation of CDBG funds based on a program formula that is determined by Congress and the amount they appropriate each year. Over time the level of funding Lewiston receives has declined from \$1.3 million in 2000, to approximately \$777,000 in the upcoming program year. Lewiston's CDBG funding level has been relatively flat over the last several years.

As an Entitlement Community Lewiston has significant administrative and reporting requirements to HUD. Among those requirements is the drafting, every five years, of a 5 year strategic plan, known as the *Consolidated Plan* that outlines how CDBG funds will be utilized over the term of the plan.

Auburn is also an Entitlement Community and is drafting a new Consolidated Plan. Auburn and Lewiston are the two members of a HOME Consortium which was formed to receive funding from another HUD program, the HOME Investment Partnership, funding from which can only be used create affordable housing for low income households. Auburn is the managing partner of the HOME Consortium. By HUD rules each city must develop their own Consolidated Plan, but they need to be submitted electronically together under the HOME Partnership agreement, which Auburn will do as the managing partner. Because of the lean level of community development staffing in each city, and the fluidity of the populations served and the overlapping provision of services from social service agencies in LA, the City's jointly hired Planning Decisions to provide consulting services and assist in the drafting of the plans.

Public participation is an essential component of the development of a Consolidated Plan. Lewiston has a mayor appointed seven member CDBG Citizen Advisory Committee that, along with staff and consultant, has been engaged since the fall with six public meetings and interviews with stakeholder groups to identify the most critical eligible needs to which Lewiston's CDBG funds should be targeted.

A draft of Lewiston's Consolidated Plan is on the City's web site at <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/index.aspx?nid=651> . The document runs 95 pages and has a 20 page appendix. The document follows HUD's electronic template and is full of charts and tables. Because the Consolidated Plans are being submitted jointly, much of the HUD electronically populated demographic information is combined for the two cities, which provides a broad demographic profile for the region. Appendix A was created to provide much of the same information, but for Lewiston alone, which will be more useful for tracking and reporting as the plan is implemented.

Attached is the Strategic Plan section of the report. It articulates the challenges and goals that became clear over the course of the public meetings, demographic research and committee discussions. Following is a brief summary of the highlights of that section of the Consolidated Plan.

The bulk of Lewiston's CDBG funds are invested in or to benefit the residents of a Target Area, Census Tracts 201 -204 (map attached). Historically the city has used its funds primarily on housing improvements, commercial loans and grants for economic development, infrastructure improvements in the Target Area, and social services. So long as the broad national goals of the program are met - *developing viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low and moderate income* – there is considerable flexibility in how the funds are spent. HUD rules limit spending to 20% for administration of the program and no more than 15% for social service agency funding.

The 2015 -2019 Consolidated Plan has 4 high priority, 3 medium priority and 1 low priority goals. They are:

High Priority

- A. Support people in their efforts to transition out of poverty
- B. Prevent homelessness
- C. Improve the safety and energy efficiency of the housing stock
- D. Reduce lead hazards in housing

Medium Priority

- A. Increase neighborhood pride through investment in infrastructure
- B. Promote jobs and economic growth
- C. Create more stable and diverse mixed income neighborhoods

Low Priority

- A. Support Fair Housing and increase housing choice.

Poverty/Homelessness

The demographic data and Consolidated Plan planning process identify poverty and intergenerational poverty as significant issues in the Target Area. Two out of every three children under the age of 18 living in the Target Area are growing up in poverty, as compared to one out of every five in the rest of Lewiston. The plan encourages funding for social service agencies that address the issues of intergenerational poverty, especially for the whole family. The plan recommends social service funding that meets basic needs, as well as programs that provide services that help keep people from becoming homeless, or that move them from homelessness to a more stable living situation. The plan encourages a "housing first" strategy, which finds permanent housing for people as a first step towards making a better future. Programs that provide services that help people connect with education, job training, or work will be given preference over the creation of more emergency shelter beds. The plan encourages continuation of a security deposit program that helps people that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless with the necessary funds to secure stable housing.

Poverty can be attributed to not having a job, as well as to a lack of education or the skill set needed to secure employment that pays a livable wage. At the time the demographic information was generated for the plan the unemployment rate for Lewiston outside the Target Area was 7%. The unemployment rate for Census Tracts 201 -204, which make up the Target Area, varied from 10% to 24% (Pg. 58). Education levels are much lower for residents age 16 to 65 in the Target Area, with a markedly higher proportion of residents without a high school degree, and a lower proportion with an Associate degree or higher (Pg. 59). The annual median earnings for someone who did not graduate college is \$22,321; for those with some college or an Associate's degree it is \$31,466; and for a Bachelor's degree \$40,132. (Pg. 60) To move people out of poverty they need to have the education, skill set and attitude that will allow them to secure more gainful employment.

In the last year of the prior Consolidated Plan the City funded a pilot of the *Bridges Out of Poverty* (BOP) program. BOP recognizes the significant difference in life experiences, world view, attitudes and motivations between people of lower, middle and upper income brackets. BOP maintains that the way people function in the world is governed by the unwritten rules of income class in which they were raised and live. Through its programming BOP endeavors to help people recognize and understand the rules by which they are living, and helps them to learn the rules to be able to function successfully in other economic classes. The BOP pilot program is underway. Early indications from participants have been positive. The plan calls for further evaluation of the BOP and to work to incorporate it more broadly and to a higher degree if it proves to be effective. The plan also calls for more workforce readiness and direct skills training.

In an effort to increase the number of jobs available to low/moderate income people, Lewiston's commercial loan and grant programs require one job to be created for every \$25,000 of funding provided for projects. The majority of the commercial funds are invested in the Target Area.

Improve Housing Stock

Lewiston has approximately 15,000 housing units. Citywide 43% of them were built before 1950. For housing units occupied by renters, 60% were built before 1950, and 91% were built before 1980. Properties built before 1980 are at risk for containing lead paint. At the time of the 2005 -2009 American Community Survey (ACS) report Lewiston had 6,581 renter occupied housing units built before 1980. Of those 55% had children present. Testing has shown that Lewiston and Auburn children under age 6 have lead poisoning rates 3 times the state average.

In 2014 Lewiston received a total of \$3.4 million in Lead Hazard Control and Green and Healthy Homes Initiative grants to help address this problem. A total of 225 homes will be made lead safe, and of those, 160 homes will be made dry, clean, ventilated, free from pests and contaminants, well maintained and safe. The grants will help fund education programs for tenants and landlords designed to keep homes lead safe, as well as job training for lead remediation workers. The Consolidated Plan calls for \$70,000 to be allocated annually to meet match requirements for the \$3.4 million in federal lead and healthy homes funding.

The plan calls for continued funding of a dedicated code enforcement position dedicated to the Target Area; as well as continued capitalization of residential loan programs for housing that serves low and moderate income households. The loan funding is targeted to 1-4 unit properties, but also leaves the door open to fund programs for larger multi-family buildings if the Council wishes to authorize such a program. The plan allows funding to continue to flow for demolition, but also suggests the city partner with the private sector to rehabilitate derelict properties that are salvageable. Support for construction of new low/moderate income housing is also allowed.

Infrastructure

The demographic and census data, as well as public meetings attended by landlords and tenants note the prevalence of and deleterious effect blight has on neighborhoods. The plan calls for investment in infrastructure that will help combat blight and poor public services. Investment in goals articulated in the City's Comprehensive Plan, Riverfront Island Master Plan and Downtown Neighborhood Action Plan are encouraged; as is using the funding to close gaps that will result in better implementation of the City's Complete Street Policy.

Stable and Diverse Mixed Income Neighborhoods

Owner occupied housing accounts for 68% of the housing outside of the Target Area. The home ownership rate is only 15% in the Target Area. Owner occupancy of properties tends to increase stability, care taking and pride in neighborhoods. Civic engagement tends to increase with owner occupancy. The plan calls for loan programs that are focused on 1 -4 unit properties, which are more likely to be owned by owner occupants. Programs to assist with down payments and closing costs are encouraged. Cooperative housing, which is a form of home ownership that lowers the cost of entry and puts cooperative members in control of the condition and maintenance of their property are eligible for funding under the city's housing programs. The plan encourages

programs that will educate tenants and landlords about their rights and responsibilities.

The plan articulates that while market rate housing is welcome anywhere, it is most likely because of market and physical conditions to be developed in the Target Area west of Park Street running to the river. Several market rate projects have been developed in historic buildings there in recent years and each was filled before or shortly after completion. Workforce housing is more likely to be developed in the Target Area east of Park Street. The significant number of fires and demolitions in this area has left an often blighted landscape. Stability needs to be brought to this area of the city. Workforce housing and mixed income projects are encouraged east of Park Street. Mixed income and market rate housing is encouraged west of Park Street.

Fair Housing

Federal law prohibits housing discrimination based on a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or disability. In 2013, City staff, in conjunction with Auburn, the Lewiston and Auburn Housing Authorities and a consultant researched and wrote an *Impediments to Fair Housing* report which identified fair housing issues in the community. The major findings of the study were a lack of knowledge among both tenants and landlords as to their rights and responsibilities. Also identified was the shortage of a local mortgage funding mechanism for borrowers whose religious beliefs don't allow the use of conventional mortgage financing. The plan calls workshops to address the educational needs identified, and for continuing to seek alternative funding mechanisms that could increase access to capital for those currently limited in their access by their belief system.

As noted early in this memo, public involvement is important to the development and approval of a Consolidated Plan that reflects the needs and desires of the community. More than 100 stakeholders have already been engaged in the plan development process through public meetings, surveys and dialogue. In addition to the public workshop being held on March 17th, the Consolidated Plan was posted on the City's web site on March 13th at the address:

<http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/index.aspx?nid=651>

Copies of the draft Consolidated Plan will be available for public review in the Economic and Community Development Department at City Hall (27 Pine Street, Lewiston) from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Monday through Friday. There will be a 30 day public comment period starting on March 16, 2015. Written comments on the Consolidated Plan should be directed to: Lincoln Jeffers, Director, Economic and Community Development, City Building, 27 Pine Street, Lewiston, ME 04240.

I look forward to further discussion with the council about the Consolidated Plan at the March 17th workshop.