

Step Up to Better Housing

Developed in 1996 by the citizens and city staff of Lawrence, and adopted by the City Commission in 1997.
Updated in 2010.

Community Development Advisory Committee
with guidance from the Community Commission on Homelessness

A SUMMARY GUIDE:

to identify spending goals and priorities associated with CDBG and HOME allocations

Emergency Housing

Temporary options for immediate & safe shelter for individuals and families who are homeless, transient, or experiencing an emergency situation.

Emergency Shelter: A short-term facility (90-120 days) used to get people off the street in order to stabilize for movement to better housing options. This option does not include or account for shelters that serve special populations (Willow Domestic Violence Center, First Step House, Family Promise, etc.)¹

Emergency Temporary Housing: A parallel alternative to the shelter, where people can obtain immediate housing while awaiting a spot in Transitional Housing (TH) or other longer-term housing, working to address housing barriers.

NEEDS

- Year-round, 24-hour emergency shelter with appropriate services for transients or chronically homeless, addicts, and other populations in need.
- Emergency housing for families.
- Shelter for battered women and their children.
- Shelter with peer support for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

STRATEGIES

- Consider emergency shelter needs when investing available funds.
- Seek private and public funds to strengthen Lawrence emergency shelters.
- Endorse expansion efforts of well-managed existing shelters.
- Promote collaborative efforts with community-based providers.

Transitional Housing

Housing and services designed to promote residential stability, increase skills, enhance self-determination and move people who are homeless to permanent housing within 24 months.

NEEDS

- Short-term housing units and services.
- Support for people with certain criminal backgrounds who are precluded from other housing options.
- Case-management funding.

STRATEGIES

- Consider transitional housing needs when investing available funds.
- Endorse efforts to develop transitional housing in Lawrence.
- Encourage landlords to accept tenants who receive rental assistance.
- Support various case-management efforts.
- Ensure that housing is compliant.

¹ As defined by the Community Commission on Homelessness Housing Vision Chart (10-13-2009)

Permanent Housing

A variety of ownership and rental choices including permanent supportive housing arrangements.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Permanent housing with ongoing support services.

Permanent Housing: Assisted or non-assisted public or private housing with no time limit.

NEEDS

- Low-income homebuyer and rental assistance.
- Programs to help sustain homeownership.
- Public and private policies which promote permanent housing for people with low-incomes and for people with disabilities.
- Permanent supportive housing.
- A stock of decent affordable homes for purchase and rent.

STRATEGIES

- Continue to invest funds for homebuyer assistance
- Consider supportive service needs for low-income elderly, persons with disabilities, and other at-risk populations when investing available funds.
- Continue to invest funds in rehabilitation, weatherization, and emergency funds.
- Secure more tenant-based rental assistance.
- Encourage landlords to accept tenants who receive rental assistance.
- Encourage landlords to accept tenants with poor or criminal histories.
- Facilitate proper code enforcement.
- Support agencies that provide housing stabilization services.

Revitalized Neighborhoods

NEEDS

- Continued revitalization in low-moderate income neighborhoods.
- Continued environmental code enforcement.
- Education for homeowners and renters.
- Capital improvement projects (stormwater, paving, sidewalks, parks)
- Identification of blighted housing based on housing appraiser's information.

STRATEGIES

- Promote neighborhood improvement.
- Improve existing housing stock.
- Encourage neighborhood associations.
- Encourage programs that promote crime prevention.
- Insure that housing is code compliant.
- Increase rental inspection rates and environmental code enforcement.
- Endorse mixed-income development.
- Support efforts to meet American Disabilities Act and Fair Housing Act requirements.
- Provide outreach and education to owners and residents regarding International Property Maintenance Code.

Community Facilities

NEEDS

- Funding for capital improvements for structures housing agencies that provide services to low-moderate income individuals.
- Assurance that the investment is working for the community.

STRATEGIES

- Support efforts by local nonprofits and other organizations serving the low-moderate income population by funding facilities and facility maintenance improvements.