

City of Auburn Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing August 14, 2014



City of Auburn
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I. Introduction

A. Introduction to the Analysis of Impediments

The City of Auburn has prepared an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) to satisfy requirements of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended. This act requires that any community receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds affirmatively further fair housing. As a result, the City is charged with the responsibility of its federal programs in compliance with the federal Fair Housing Act. The responsibility of compliance with the federal Fair Housing Act extends to nonprofit organizations and other entities, including units of local government which receive federal funds throughout the City. This AI covers the entire City which receives its own allocation of CDBG funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Communities receiving CDBG funds are required to:

- Examine and attempt to alleviate housing discrimination within their jurisdiction
- Promote fair housing choice for all persons
- Provide opportunities for all persons to reside in any given housing development, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familiar status or national origin
- Promote housing that is accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, and
- Comply with the non-discrimination requirements of the Fair Housing Act.

These requirements can be achieved through the preparation of an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI). The AI is a review of a jurisdiction's laws, regulations, and administrative policies, assessment of conditions, both public and private, affecting fair housing choice (Fair Housing Planning Guide Volume 1).

B. Fair Housing Choice

Equal and free access to residential housing (housing choice) is a fundamental right that enables members of the protected classes to pursue personal, educational, employment or other goals. Because housing choice is so critical to personal development, fair housing is a goal that government, public officials and private citizens must embrace if equality of opportunity is to become a reality.

Under federal law, fair housing choice is defined as the ability of persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familiar status or national origin of similar income levels to have

available to them the same housing choices. Persons who are protected from discrimination by fair housing laws are referred to as members of the protected classes.

As a recipient of federal funds (i.e. CDBG), the City of Auburn has specific fair housing planning responsibilities. These include:

- Conducting an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice
- Developing actions to overcome the effects of identified impediments to fair housing
- Maintaining records to support the City's initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing

HUD interprets these three certifying elements to include:

- Analyzing housing discrimination and working toward its elimination
- Promoting fair housing choice for all people
- Providing racially and ethnically inclusive patterns of housing occupancy
- Promoting housing that is physically accessible to, and usable by, all people, particularly individuals with disabilities
- Fostering compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Fair Housing Act

This Analysis will:

- Evaluate population, household, income and housing characteristics by protected classes across the City
- Evaluate public and private sector policies that impact fair housing choice
- Identify blatant or de facto impediments to fair housing choice, where it may exist
- Recommend specific strategies to overcome the effects of any identified impediments

HUD defines an impediment to fair housing choice as any actions, omissions or decisions that restrict or have the effect of restricting, the availability of housing choices, based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status or national origin (Fair Housing Planning Guide Volume 1).

This Analysis serves as a basis for fair housing planning, provides essential information to policy makers, administrative staff, housing providers, lenders and fair housing advocates and assists in building public support for fair housing efforts.

The Analysis will serve as a "Point in Time" baseline against which future progress in terms of implementing fair housing initiatives will be judged and recorded.

C. Obligation of CDBG Recipients to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

In August 2009, Westchester County, NY settled a fair housing lawsuit brought against the County by the Ant-Discrimination Center of Metro New York, Inc. The outcome of this lawsuit is relevant to all HUD Urban County and City recipients, including the City of Auburn.

This \$180 million lawsuit filed in April 2006 charged that Westchester County failed to fulfill its obligation to affirmatively further fair housing and ensure non-discrimination in its programs. Westchester County is an Urban County under HUD's CDBG and HOME Programs. As a condition of federal funding, all such communities receiving federal funds from HUD must certify to HUD each year that they will conduct their programs in a non-discriminatory manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the federal Fair Housing Act. In making this certification, Westchester County was required to identify impediments to fair housing choice, take action to overcome those impediments and to maintain records of its analysis and actions *United States of America ex rel. vs. Westchester County*, No. 06 Civ. 2860 (DLC), 2009, S.D.N.Y. (August 10, 2009).

In the lawsuit, the Center charged that:

- Westchester County is a racially segregated county
- Westchester County's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) was flawed because it considered housing needs based solely on income and failed fully consider racial segregation and housing needs based on race
- Westchester County failed to inform municipalities receiving CDBG funds of their own obligation to consider the housing needs of persons living outside of the communities, not just the needs of residents living within their municipal limits
- Westchester County failed to require municipalities receiving CDBG funds to increase the availability of affordable housing or otherwise affirmatively further fair housing
- As a result of above, Westchester County made a false claim when it certified to HUD that the County would affirmatively further fair housing

At issue in this case was not whether Westchester County created affordable housing. In fact, since 1998, the County spent over \$50 million in federal and state funds to aid in the construction of 1,370 affordable rental units and another 334 affordable owner units. It was the geographical location of the affordable housing units that were created within the County that was the critical factor in the lawsuit.

The Center alleged that the County's AI did not analyze how its placement of affordable housing affected segregation and racial diversity. It concluded that the County assisted the development of affordable housing units in lower income communities and that as a result, it

increased the pattern of racial segregation in Westchester County. Furthermore, the suit charged that the County violated its cooperation agreements with local units of government which prohibits expenditures of CDBG funds for activities in communities that do not affirmatively further fair housing within their jurisdiction or otherwise impede the County's action to comply with its fair housing certifications.

Faced with the threat of losing the \$180 million lawsuit and being cut off from another \$30 million in HUD funding, Westchester County agreed to a settlement with HUD and the Anti-Discrimination Center of Metro New York *United States of America ex rel. vs. Westchester County*, No. 06 Civ. 2860 (DLC), 2009, S.D.N.Y. (August 10, 2009). Under the terms of the settlement, the County will pay 21.6 million to HUD in non-federal funds (*I.D.* at 4). These funds will be deposited in the County's HUD account and used to build new affordable housing units in specific census tracts with populations of less than 3% Black and 7% Hispanic residents (*I.D.* at page 6-7). An additional \$11 million will be paid to HUD, the Center and its counsel (*I.D.* at page 5). The County will add \$30 million in its capital budget to build affordable housing in non-impacted (i.e. primarily White) areas (*I.D.* at page 6). It is anticipated that the County will issue bonds to meet its financial obligations under the settlement (*I.D.* at page 36).

The significance of this legal settlement for urban counties and cities throughout the United States that receive federal funds from HUD is clear. First, the requirement to affirmatively further fair housing applies to all aspects of county and state government, not just HUD programs. Second, the lawsuit confirms that an urban county (or city) has an obligation to ensure that each local unit of government within its boundaries affirmatively furthers fair housing. When an urban county or city makes this pledge to HUD, it is making the promise not just in its own right but also on the behalf of each local unit of government within its jurisdiction. This does not necessarily mean that each municipality must finance and develop affordable housing, but it does mean that no municipality may impede or obstruct the creation of such housing by other entities. An urban county or city should provide CDBG and HOME funds to recipients that affirmatively further fair housing. Furthermore, an urban county or city should not provide CDBG or HOME funds to municipalities that impede fair housing as such actions undermine the urban county's or city's own obligation to affirmatively further fair housing. Finally, an urban county or city must take action to eliminate barriers to fair housing wherever they may exist within its jurisdiction (*I.D.* at pages 1-4).

II. Executive Summary

A. Who Conducted

The City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) contracted with the Rescue Mission to complete this report. Using the Fair Housing Planning Guide, Volume 1

issued by HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, the Rescue Mission with input and guidance from OPED chose to follow the HUD guidelines for entitlement jurisdictions as closely as possible.

B. Participants

Between 2010 and 2014 many organizations and individuals participated in the development of the 2014 Analysis of Impediments (AI). Some served on or attended City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce meetings and/or committees. Others attended CDBG public forums. Others generously shared data and reports their organization had been collecting on housing, income and other demographic information on those they serve. Others participated in focus groups or shared insights with the Rescue Mission. Special thanks to Mayor Michael Quill, Auburn City School District, Auburn Housing Authority, ARISE (formerly known as Options for Independence), Booker T. Washington Community Center, CARES, Inc., Cayuga Community College, Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes, Cayuga County Department of Mental Health, Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Chapel House, Chico Giving Back, City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce (especially Affordable Housing Committee, Community Awareness Committee, Gaps Committee and Discharge Planning work group), Cayuga County Sheriff's Department, Chapel House, City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development, City of Auburn Code Enforcement, City of Auburn Human Rights Commission, Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation, HUD Buffalo Office, Human Services Coalition, Orchard Street Area Association, New York State Department of Corrections, Partnership for Results, Rescue Mission, Spanish Action League, Timothy Donovan, *The Citizen*, United Way of Cayuga County, Unity House, Veteran's Administration, Wednesday Morning Roundtable, all the local financial institutions that assisted and the people of the City of Auburn who participated in focus groups, community meetings and surveys.

C. Methodology Used

The City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) contracted with the Rescue Mission to complete this report. Using the Fair Housing Planning Guide, Volume 1 issued by HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, the Rescue Mission with input from OPED chose to follow the HUD guidelines for entitlement jurisdictions as closely as possible.

This analysis primarily relied on existing data sources for the quantitative analysis, complimented with direct interviews for some more qualitative in-depth information. The qualitative sources primarily used were:

- US Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey;
- US Census Bureau's Census 2010 data;
- City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce, Affordable Housing Committee, Gaps Committee and Homeless Management Informative System data from June 2010 through June 2014;
- City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce surveys of housing vulnerable people from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014;
- HOPE program reports and experience from October 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011;
- Previous written papers and reports on applicable topics;
- Auburn Housing Authority NYS Homeless Housing Assistance Application;
- City policy guidance such as the Consolidated Plan and subsequent CAPERS.

During the same time this report was being drafted, the Rescue Mission hosted two focus groups, conducted twenty phone interviews and co-hosted a public forum with OPED. The direct invitees included housing advocates, property managers and a number of individuals who are most likely to face discrimination (minorities, people born outside the U.S. and people with disabilities). The Rescue Mission organized and participated in the focus groups and included a summary of results in Appendix 1 and included key findings throughout its analysis.

Using American Community Survey data to learn about Auburn residents and homes

The most recent Census Bureau information available about households living in Auburn is the results of the American Community Survey (ACS). This annual survey has been conducted in Auburn and all other U.S. towns with populations of at least 20,000 since 2006. Because the ACS only collects information from a limited number of randomly selected households each year, the results are estimates of what would be true if all households were asked the same questions. For the purposes of this report ACS single point estimates are only reported if error ranges are relatively small. In other places in the report, ranges indicating the error range around the point estimate are provided. There is a 90% chance that the actual value if all households were surveyed would be within the ACS error range.

D. Funding for the AI

The AI has been funded through the City of Auburn Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program using funding allocations from the Administration, Planning and Evaluation budget line.

E. Conclusions

1. Actions taken since last AI to overcome identified or possible impediments

- The City of Auburn has increased the number of affordable housing units. Greenview Hills, a 30-unit complex built under the New York State Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, opened in 2010 and created low income housing and special needs population housing in a predominately “white area.”. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project, consisting of 35 units that replaced 41 existing sub-standard units, is currently in lease-up. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project is located in one of the most “distressed” Census Tracts and the new housing is some of the most affordable and highest quality housing in the City. Both projects are evidence of increasing fair housing choice.
- The Auburn Housing Authority (AHA) has increased the occupancy rates in the three apartment complexes Melone Village, Brogan Manor and Olympia Terrace from approximately 90% in 2010 to approximately 98% in 2013 by lowering barriers for households to become eligible for public housing and more aggressive marketing. Approximately 31% of AHA occupants are “non-white” and 100% of occupants are low income or extremely low income households.
- The City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development contracted with the Rescue Mission to coordinate the City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce (HTF) using \$9,500 of CDBG Administrative funds annually. The HTF has since written a 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness that was accepted by the City of Auburn City Council in November 2010; promoted housing opportunities and fair housing through the Community Awareness Committee; the creation of the Affordable Housing Committee that has increased fair housing choice; Gaps Committee that has identified gaps in housing and services especially for low income and persons with disabilities; and HMIS data that has provided public and private planners with real time data on those served in HUD funded and other participating programs.

2. Possible Impediments Identified during 2014 AI

- Landlords not making needed repairs such as fixing stoves, refrigerators, heating equipment as well as not addressing lead and mold issues for low income households. Failure to make repairs has put these households at greater risk of becoming homeless and negatively impacted their quality of life.
- Landlords have refused to lease to some households based on source of income. In particular those households that have public assistance or Section 8 housing grants.
- Landlords not following proper legal procedures when retaking possession of premises from low income households violating basic due process.

- Landlords intentionally or unintentionally misusing City Code to condemn their own premises (i.e. not paying utilities to remove tenant, removing door to apartment).
- Denial of housing opportunities based on familiar status.
- Screening criteria at affordable housing complexes.
- Adults not able to get utilities turned on in their name.
- Predatory lending by rent to own and credit card companies.
- HUD Income Guidelines to access CDBG programs.
- HUD rent calculation formula for Section 8 and homeless programs.
- Housing discrimination complaints are not systematically categorized by outcome and basis of complaint.
- Annual detailed discrimination reports are not submitted to the Executive branch of Auburn City government.
- Failure to submit a proposal in response to the New York State OTDA RFP for Fair Housing Enforcement and Information programs.
- Failure to utilize Social Security's Ticket to Work Program

3. Recommendations

- Commission the City Manager and/or City Office of Planning and Economic Development to study a City Land Bank.
- Discrimination against people in protected classes by real estate and other housing professionals may go undetected and unaddressed if not adequately monitored and enforced. Considering the growing number of residents in protected classes, there is a greater need for fair housing awareness, education and enforcement opportunities.
- Track zoning variance and local permit applications as well as substantially adjusted residential permit applications to monitor any potential impediments to fair housing.
- Track housing discrimination complaints in more detailed systematic manner. Complaints should be tracked not only by number but outcome and basis and an annual report should be provided to the Auburn City government executive branch.
- Apply for New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEPH) funding in August 2014 to assist protected classes end homelessness and increase fair housing choice.
- Create City of Auburn Affordable Housing Fair by encouraging financial institutions to partner with realtors and public and private housing professionals to educate, prepare and equip renters for home ownership. This will help address the high renter rate in the City and increase minority and low income household home ownership.
- Create Central Coordinated Intake and Assessment System for all Housing Vulnerable and Homeless persons.

- Establish Bi-Annual Fair Housing Work Group

III. Jurisdictional Background Data

A. Demographic Data

The following information has been compiled from 2010 United States Census Bureau Data and United States Census Bureau 2008-2012 American Community Survey. The information included specifically speaks to the issues of Fair Housing and Housing Opportunities in the City of Auburn, New York. The analysis will document the changes in total population in the City over time and examine relevant racial/ethnic characteristics, age distribution, household types and income (City of Auburn, New York Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing 2009 page 3). The data presented will form an objective basis for documenting geographic concentrations/disparities which exist in the City of Auburn and what this data reveals in regard to the existence of impediments to fairing housing choice (*I.D.* at 3).

1. Population

This section of the Analysis of Impediments will examine the population of the City of Auburn utilizing United States Census Bureau data. Population characteristics will be examined relative to trends over time thus providing a context for examining employment, housing, age and income data.

City of Auburn Population 1950-2010

Year	Number (in thousands)	Percent increase or decrease
1950	36,722	
1960	35,249	-4.0%
1970	34,319	-2.6%
1980	32,548	-5.2%
1990	31,258	-4.0%
2000	28,574	-8.6%
2010	27,687	-3.1%

Source: United States Census Bureau

Changes in the local, regional, state and national economy since 1950 have negatively impacted local employment opportunities. The decline of local employment opportunities have contributed in the dramatic change in population over the past 60 years. According to the United States Census Bureau, the City of Auburn population reached its apex in 1950 with 36,722 people and since that time consistently declined in population. This translates to an overall decrease in the population of the City of Auburn of 24.6% in the past 60 years.

The 2009 Analysis of Impediments attributed the decline in population primarily to migration to other towns and villages in Cayuga County (*I.D.* at 3). However over the last 20 years Cayuga County has also lost population from a high of 82,313 in 1990 to 80,026. American Community Survey estimates show this downward trend continuing. The City of Auburn and Cayuga County like New York State continue to lose population. Even though migration from the City of Auburn to surrounding towns and villages, by those seeking for example lower taxes, cheaper housing prices or more land, was a primary reason for City of Auburn population at one time both the city and county have both lost population since 2000 at a similar rate.

2. Race/Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity was reviewed as part of the Analysis of Impediments as a whole and relative to concentrations of minorities with the City of Auburn by Census Tract. The Auburn Correctional Facility is a maximum security prison and the second oldest prison built in New York State (Correctional Association of New York State June 2011). The prison is located in the center of the City and prior to 2010 was given its own Census Tract (#420). In 2010 Census Tracts 419 and 420 were combined into Census Tract 421. The prison has a capacity of 1821 inmates and presently holds approximately 1724 inmates (*I.D.*). Even though the prison has a significant socio-economic impact on the City of Auburn, Census Tract #421 was omitted from the examination of geographic concentrations of minorities since inmates are not applying for mortgages, attempting to buy or rent residential properties.

In 2010 approximately 27,687 people lived in the City of Auburn. The City's population is predominantly White (86.3%). There were 3,798 "Non-whites" in the City or 13.7% of the City population. African Americans/blacks constitute the single largest category of the "non-white" population: 2,346 people, followed by Hispanics, 991 people, followed by two or more races, 855 people (2010 United States Census).

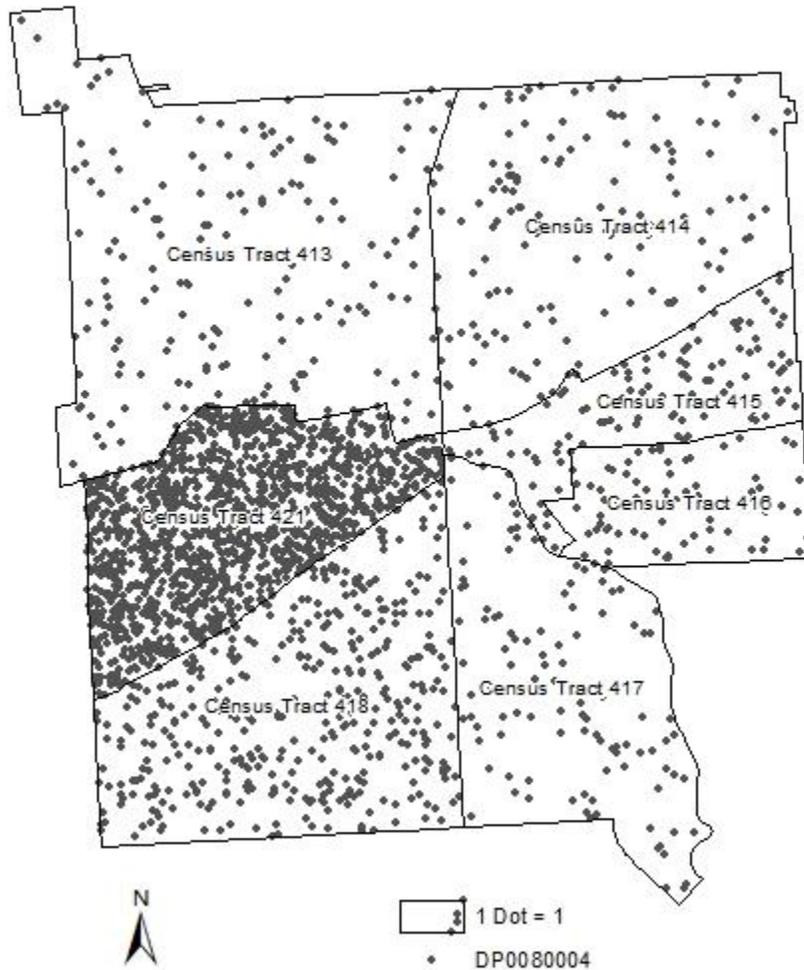
Even though the City of Auburn has become increasingly more diverse the past 20 years the percentage of non-whites in the City of Auburn (13.7%) is considerably less than New York State as a whole (29.1% of the population is non-white). African Americans/blacks constitute 8.5% of the total population of the City of Auburn compared to 17.5% of the New York State population (2010 United States Census). Hispanics constitute 3.58% of the population of the City of Auburn compared to 18.4% of the New York State population.

Composition of Auburn by race/ethnicity by decade

Race/Ethnicity	2000	2010	Percent Change
White	88.57%	86.3%	-5.6%
African American/Black	7.59%	8.5%	+8.11%
Native American/Native Alaskan	0.2%	0.3%	+50%
Asian	0.57%	0.61%	+3.7%
2 or more races	1.55%	3.09%	+93.44%
Hispanic/Latino	2.82%	3.58%	+22.95%

There is a distinctive pattern of spatial concentration of racial minorities in Cayuga County. While the City of Auburn comprises only 34.6% of the County's total population, nearly 63.5% of the County's minority population resides in the City.

Density of African Americans in Auburn, NY



Data Source: 2010 Census

There are four (4) Census Tracts in the City of Auburn which show a distinctive pattern of spatial concentration of the City's minorities (African Americans/Blacks, Hispanics). They are: Census Tract 418 which is 85% White, 6% African American/Black and 3% Hispanic; The Census Tract formerly known as 419 (419 & 420 were combined into Census Tract 421 in 2010, 420 is the prison) 88% White, 7% African American/Black and 3% Hispanic; Census Tract 413 91% White, 5% Black and 3% Hispanic; and Census Tract 415 96% White, 3% Black and 2% Hispanic (Mapping America 2014).

Census Tract 418 is home to the Auburn Housing Authority's 188 unit Melone Village public housing complex (31% of the complex's 400 residents were "non-white") and Oak Creek apartment complex. Because both complexes serve low income households and low income households in the City are disproportionately minority, these two sections of Census Tract 418

have a higher concentration of minorities than in other parts of the City. Indeed there are complete block groups of Census Tract 418 where no minorities are present.

Census Tract formerly known as 419 was identified in the last AI and the City of Auburn Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Third Annual Action Plan as a “distressed” census tract. “The City will continue to target census tract 419 with its infrastructure upgrades, playground improvements, and the distressed property program” (City of Auburn CDBG Third Annual Action Plan page 2). “This census tract is 77.4% low to moderate income and identified as Federally Distressed” (*I.D.* at 2). “In looking at areas with the greatest needs, this area is continually mentioned by city residents and public service providers” (*I.D.* at 2). The City has helped create Fair Housing Choices by its involvement in the SE Payne/Cornerstone Project. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project low income tax credit project, consisting of 35 units that replaced 41 existing sub-standard units, is currently in lease-up. 10 units have already been leased, and 25 units will soon become available. 120 households are already on SE Payne/Cornerstone’s waiting list. These units are some of the most affordable and highest quality in the City.

Census Tract 413 is home to the Auburn Housing Authority’s Olympia Terrace and Brogan Manor housing complexes. Olympia Terrace is a federally subsidized 50-unit public housing complex and contains two and three-bedroom units with 3 handicap-accessible apartments. Brogan Manor was once an 88 unit public housing complex that has undergone a conversion to tax credit property. Because both complexes serve low income households and low income households in the City are disproportionately minority these two sections of Census Tract 413 have a higher concentration of minorities than in other parts of the City.

Census Tract 415 is home to the City’s only emergency shelter Chapel House which serves more than 200 unique homeless men annually. A number of the men find apartments close to the Chapel House and contribute to a slightly higher concentration of low income and minorities households than in other parts of the City.

3. Age

Over the past 40 years the City of Auburn population has been getting older as a percentage of overall population. In 1970, there were 4510 residents over the age of 65 representing 13% of the total population. In 1990, the number of seniors both in terms of total numbers (5,719) and percentage of population (18.3%) reached respective highs for the past 50 years. In 2010, there were 4,515 residents 65 years and older representing 16.3% of the population (2010 United States Census).

City of Auburn residents age 65 and over 1970-2010

Year	Number in thousands	Percentage of population
1970	4,510	13%
1980	5,448	16.7%
1990	5,719	18.3%
2000	5,096	17.8%
2010	4,515	16.3%

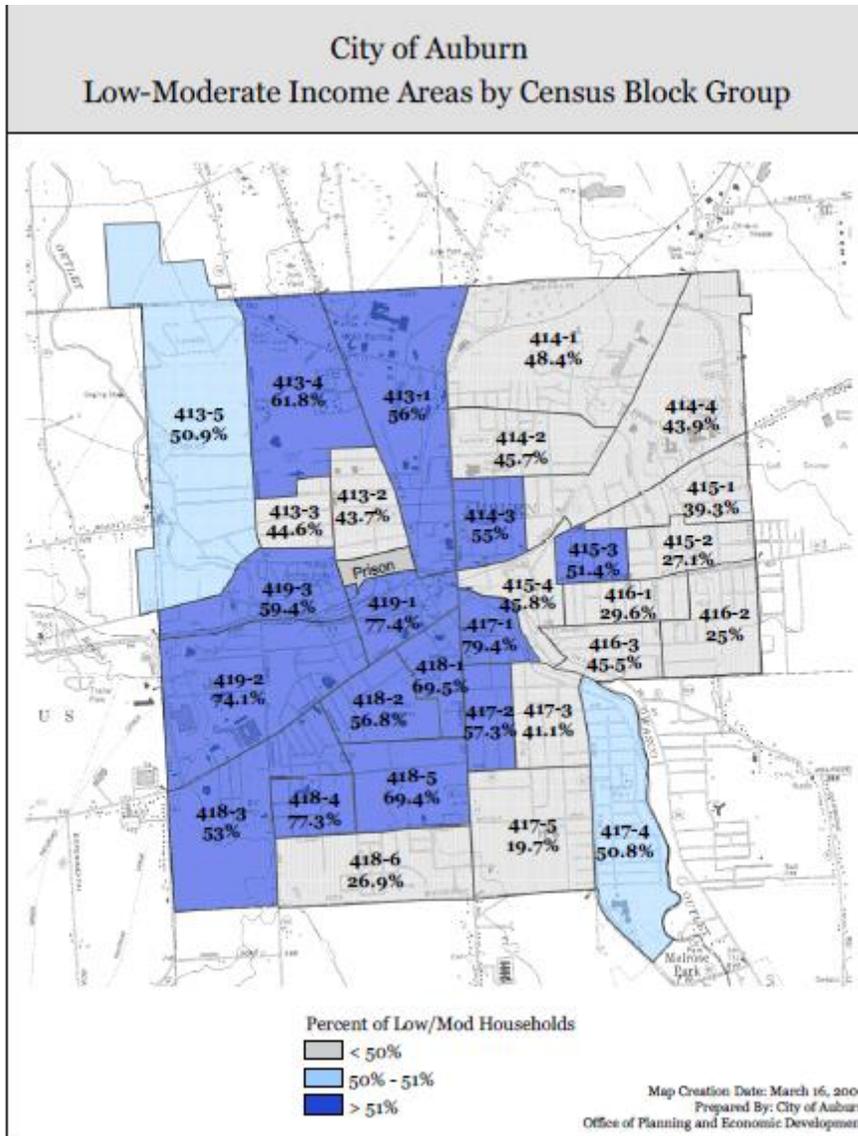
In the City of Auburn, seniors aged 65 years and older are the least likely to live in poverty. In 2010, only 12.5% of seniors lived in poverty compared to 17.9% of people age 18 to 64 and 24.2% of children under 18 (2010 United States Census). Seniors are also the least likely to become homeless in Cayuga County. In 2013, only 2% of all homeless persons were aged 61 years and older compared with 65.7% of people aged 18 to 60 years of age and 32.3% of children under 18 years of age (2013 City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Management Information System annual report).

B. Income Data

1. Household Income

The City of Auburn has a relatively high number of low and moderate income persons living within the City. The classification of low and moderate income status is based according to the eligibility guidelines for the HUD Community Development Block Grant program. Low income households are those households whose gross income is less than 51% of the HUD Adjusted Median Family Income (HAMFI) for the area. Moderate income households are those households whose income is between 51% and 80% of the HAMFI for the area.

The thematic map below was prepared by the OPED using Census Data and looks at HAMFI income levels for low to moderate income households. The map illustrates the geographic distribution of these households throughout the City relative to Census Tract Block Groups.



The low and moderate income block groups shown above represent the City’s most distressed area, formerly known as Census Tract 419 (CT 419 and CT 420 the prison were combined in 2010), as well as the bulk of the City’s public and affordable housing units.

The mean and medium family and household income has increased steadily since 1990.

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5 year estimates:

- Auburn Median Family Income was \$54,400
- Auburn Mean Family Income was \$62,925
- Auburn Median Household Income was \$38,321
- Auburn Mean Household Income was \$48,871

City of Auburn Income Cohorts for Households and Families

Income	Number of Households (%)	Number of Families (%)
Less than \$10,000	10.2%	6.4%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	8.3%	3.2%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	16.5%	11.1%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	11.2%	11.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13.2%	13.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.1%	20.4%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12.4%	16.4%
\$100,000 - \$149,000	7.9%	13.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1.7%	3.0%
\$200,000 or more	0.5%	0.9%

2. Persons Living in Poverty in the City of Auburn by Race/Ethnicity

The percentage of people living in poverty is a measure of overall economic health of an area (United Way Cayuga Community Profile – People Living in Poverty). The number of people living below the poverty line is also an indicator of the need for community and government supports (*I.D.*).

2012 Poverty Guidelines

Persons in Family/Household	Poverty Guideline
1	\$11,170
2	\$15,130
3	\$19,090
4	\$23,050
5	\$27,010
6	\$30,970
7	\$34,930
8	\$38,890

The City of Auburn has the highest concentration of households living in poverty in Cayuga County. More than 18% of the City of Auburn residents live in poverty compared with 12% of all Cayuga County residents (*I.D.*).

In the City of Auburn, seniors aged 65 years and older are the least likely to live in poverty. In 2010, only 12.5% of seniors lived in poverty compared to 17.9% of people age 18 to 64 and 24.2% of children under 18 (2010 United States Census).

Cayuga County Poverty by Race/Ethnicity

African American/Black	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	White
36%	27%	19%	12%

(United Way Cayuga Community Profile – People Living in Poverty 2007-2011)

3. Income and Disability

According to the American Community Survey, the City of Auburn has approximately 2,044 people with a disability ages 16 years of age or older (American Community Survey 2008-2012). Approximately 43.8% of persons with a disability are in the labor force in the City of Auburn compared with 48.2% statewide (*I.D.*) In the City of Auburn, persons with a disability are far more likely to be unemployed (14.9% unemployment rate versus 8.2% population as a whole) and make less money (*I.D.*).

Disability Employment

Place	Labor Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
City of Auburn	43.8%	14.9%
New York State	48.2%	16.3%

There are programs not currently being utilized in Auburn that incentivize work. Social Security's Ticket to Work Program is a free and voluntary program available to people ages 18 through 64 who are blind or have a disability and who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The goals of the Ticket to Work Program are to:

Offer beneficiaries with disabilities expanded choices when seeking service and supports to enter, re-enter, and/or maintain employment;

Increase the financial independence and self-sufficiency of beneficiaries with disabilities; and

Reduce and, whenever possible, eliminate reliance on disability benefits.

The beneficiary does not need a paper Ticket to participate. Under this program, eligible beneficiaries with disabilities who are receiving monthly cash benefit payments are entitled to participate by signing up with an approved service provider of their choice. This can be an Employment Network (EN) or a State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. The EN/State VR agency, if they accept the Ticket assignment, will coordinate and provide appropriate services

to help the beneficiary find and maintain employment. These services may be training, career counseling, vocational rehabilitation, job placement, and ongoing support services necessary to achieve a work goal. While participating in the Ticket to Work Program, beneficiaries can get the help they need to safely explore their work options without immediately losing their benefits and find the job that is right for them. Beneficiaries also can use a combination of work incentives to maximize their income until they begin to learn enough to support themselves. Therefore, the individual can:

- Go to work without automatically losing disability benefits;
- Return to benefits if he or she has to stop working;
- Continue to receive healthcare benefits; and
- Be protected from receiving a medical continuing disability review while using the Ticket and making the expected progress with work or educational goals.

Employers are provided financial incentives to hire persons with disabilities as well. Not utilizing the federal Ticket to Work program may be a possible impediment to fair housing choice because higher income leads often to the ability to afford more types of housing options.

C. Employment Analysis

The economic situation for Auburn is statistically represented by the employment activity in Cayuga County as a whole. No job data is available at the City or Town level. The County in this case encompasses a slightly broader geographic base than Auburn, but Auburn is considered the employment center for the County. Like much of Upstate New York, Cayuga County has experienced a significant decline in manufacturing employment over the last thirty years and a significant increase in low-wage, service-sector employment. All employment and industry data provided below was obtained from the New York State Department of Labor.

The economy in Cayuga County has improved slowly since the recession that occurred from December 2007 through 2009. According to the New York State Department of Labor, pre-recession unemployment hovered around 4.5%. The County's unemployment rate in March of 2014 was 7.2%, (slightly lower than the Statewide average of 7.3), down from 7.8% in February of 2013 and 8.2% in March of 2013.

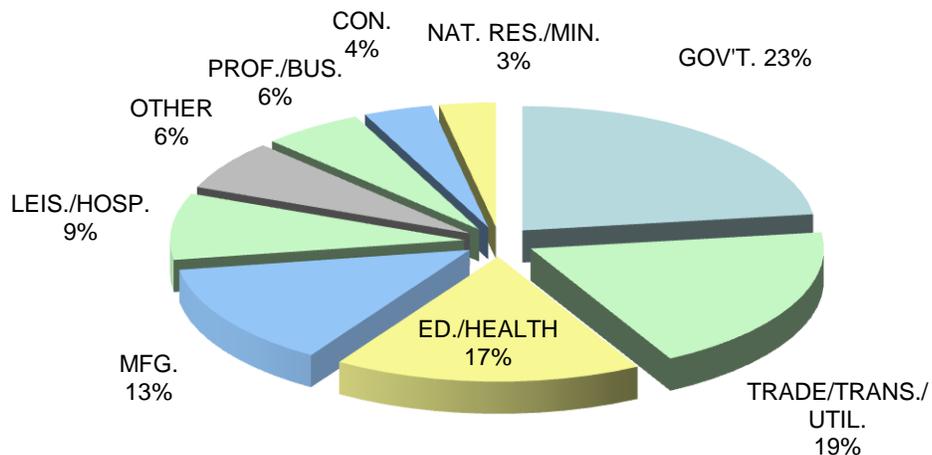
Year	Cayuga County Annual Average Unemployment Rate Source: New York State Department of Labor
2013	6.8%
2012	8.1%

The year year in	2011	7.9%	over decline
	2010	8.4%	
	2009	8.4%	
	2008	5.6%	
	2007	4.5%	
	2006	4.8%	

unemployment comes despite the fact that Cayuga County employers filled 300 fewer jobs in March of 2014 compared with March of 2013. The County has experienced year-over-year job losses each month dating back to May of 2013. The public sector has counted for most of the year-over-year job loss, with government jobs dropping by 300. The decrease in public sector employment is alarming, as the public sector is the largest employer in Cayuga County, and Government Industry average weekly earnings are quite high at \$929 per week (\$48,308 per year). Over the same one-year period, job growth occurred in Trade, Transportation, & Utilities, where average weekly wages are \$617 per week (\$32,084 per year).

Cayuga County Employment by Industry, 2013

Source: New York State Department of Labor



The County's largest employers include Auburn Memorial Hospital, the Auburn Correctional Facility, Cayuga Correctional Facility, and the Auburn Enlarged City School District. The vast majority of these jobs require higher education or high performance on New York State Civil Service exams. Two major manufacturers that provide over 730 jobs are not listed in the chart

below, as they are scheduled to close by the end of 2015: McQuay International and Clear Edge Filtration.

Cayuga County Major Employers		
Source: Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce		
Company	Business	Employment Count
Auburn Memorial Hospital	Medical Care	767
Auburn Correctional Facility	Prison	700
Cayuga Correctional Facility	Prison	525
Auburn City School District	Education	444
Cayuga Onondaga BOCES	Education	400
Wal-Mart Stores Inc.	General Merchandise	400
Cayuga County	Government	375
Xylem	Manufacturing	338
Wegman's Food Markets Inc.	General Merchandise	320
Cayuga Community College	Education	300
TRW Automotive Inc.	Manufacturing	300
Nucor Steel Auburn Inc.	Manufacturing	290
Union Springs Central School	Education	250
Bass Pro Inc.	General Merchandise	238
Owens-Brockway Glass	Manufacturing	210

Cayuga County's economy is heavily influenced by agriculture. Cayuga County is among the top sellers of agricultural products in New York State. Over 3,000 acres in Cayuga County are dedicated to certified organic production. The table below is proof of the industry's significance and presence in the County:

Ranking By Agricultural Products Sold Among New York Counties	
Grains and Dry Beans	1st
Corn	2nd
Dairy Sales	2nd
Oat	3rd
Wheat	3rd
Total Value	3rd
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture	

Cayuga County is centrally located between the larger cities of Rochester and Syracuse. Commuting patterns from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010-2012 American Community Survey indicate that only 62% of County workers have jobs in the County, reflecting a significant amount of out-commuting. The average commute time for all workers residing in Cayuga County is 22 minutes, meaning that lack of transportation is a major barrier to finding a job.

D. Housing Profile

1. Community Rental Overview

There is a lack of decent, safe, affordable housing in Auburn. Housing stock tends to be very old, with 50% of rented units built before 1940. This has implications for housing quality, energy usage, and need for repairs. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 51.5% of all available housing units were renter occupied (compared to 35% nationwide). Of the 7.5% of total housing units that were vacant (including single-family homes), only 3.4% of units were available for rent (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey).

Because Auburn is such a high renter city, the cost of housing is higher than it is in communities of similar size and demographic makeup. As a result, people making less than \$20,000 spend, on average, 38.1% of their income on monthly housing costs (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey). According to HUD, a household that spends more than 30% of its gross annual income on housing is at risk of becoming homeless.

High demand and increasing property taxes have driven up the price of rental housing and have made finding safe affordable housing very challenging for Very Low (50% AMI or below) and fixed income households. 2014 HUD fair market rents, including utilities, are as follows:

Unit Size	Rent <u>Including</u> Utilities
0 Bedroom	\$551
1 Bedroom	\$586
2 Bedrooms	\$746
3 Bedrooms	\$978
4 Bedrooms	\$1,168

Available units in Auburn advertised in the local newspaper and on Craigslist in June of 2014 are advertised at rents higher than the fair market rents listed above, with one-bedroom rent advertised at \$500 - \$550 plus utilities, two-bedroom rent advertised at \$650-\$725 plus utilities, and three-bedroom rent advertised at \$800 - \$950 plus utilities. According to the Auburn Housing Authority’s Utility Allowance Schedule for Multiple Dwelling Structures, advertised rents for 1 and 2-bedroom units run 2%-15% higher than HUD fair market rents, and 3-bedroom units can run up to 4% higher than HUD fair market rents.

Unit Size	Rent Advertised	HA Utility Allowance	Gross Rent Advertised	HUD Fair Market Rent Incl. Utilities
1 Bedroom	\$500-\$550	\$99	\$599-\$649	\$586
2 Bedrooms	\$650-\$725	\$132	\$782-\$857	\$746

3 Bedrooms	\$750-\$850	\$164	\$914-\$1,014	\$978
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Fair market and advertised rents must also be viewed in the following context: a family of 3 residing in Cayuga County is eligible for a maximum public assistance grant of \$679 per month to meet ALL of its needs, including rent.

There is a lack of quality, affordable housing in the area, especially for households requiring two or three-bedroom units. The waiting lists for the affordable housing complexes in the City of Auburn are long, and turnover is relatively low (Attachment A). Wait list times vary from six months to two years, depending on the complex. Income-based units are in particularly high demand, and these units have the lowest vacancy rates and the longest waiting lists. Due to the high demand for affordable housing in Auburn, affordable housing complexes are able to enforce strict screening criteria that often preclude the target population from obtaining housing.

Each of the affordable complexes in the City of Auburn has screening criteria that make it nearly impossible for households to be determined eligible and added to a waiting list (Attachment A). Target households often have poor rental history or lack rental history altogether, have poor credit history, or have criminal backgrounds. In the event that they are accepted into one of these affordable complexes, target households often do not have the ability to pay security deposits or set up utilities in their own names. Many have cycled through these complexes at one time or another only to be evicted for nonpayment of rent or other lease violations. As a result, these households have no option other than applying to be added to the waiting list for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which poses its own problems and is not an immediate solution for most households.

Cayuga County has experienced a net increase in affordable housing units in recent years. Greenview Hills, a 30-unit complex built under the New York State Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, opened in 2010. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project, consisting of 35 units that replaced 41 existing sub-standard units, is currently in lease-up. 10 units have already been leased, and 25 units will soon become available. 120 households are already on SE Payne/Cornerstone's waiting list. In addition, Oak Creek Townhomes and Brogan Manor, two affordable housing complexes in Auburn with a combined total of 238 units, are currently undergoing substantial rehabilitation. While the substantial rehabilitation projects will not result in an overall increase in the number of affordable housing units available, it is certainly a positive development for our community.

At the same time, the County has seen a decrease in the number of *extremely* affordable units available for the target population. For example, Brogan Manor was once an 88-unit public

housing complex with rents based on income and has now undergone a conversion to a tax credit property with increased, fixed rents and a minimum gross annual income requirement as follows: \$13,375 for a 2-bedroom unit, \$16,600 for a 3-bedroom unit, and \$18,475 for a four-bedroom unit. Oak Creek Townhomes, a 150-unit HUD Section 236 property with a Rent Supplement Program, also converted to a tax credit property with significantly higher rents and minimum income requirement levels that exceed those of Brogan Manor. The decline of public and/or extremely affordable housing, along with the poor economy have created the perfect storm for homeless and at risk households, and has contributed to the increased numbers seen by the local Department of Health and Human Services.

The best and last option for low income households is the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which has, in recent years, experienced large funding cuts. Two agencies in the county administer Section 8 vouchers, including Cayuga County Homsite and Auburn Housing Authority. The voucher program is income-based and screening includes a criminal background check only (no credit check, rental history check, or minimum income requirement). Homsite's wait list has 732 households on it with a projected wait time of 6 to 8 years, and the Auburn Housing Authority's list has 360 households on it with a projected wait time of 1-2 years, on average. Due to Federal funding cuts, Homsite has been unable to lease up vouchers since March of 2013; as a result, the number of vouchers funded has decreased by 8%, from 605 vouchers to 558 vouchers.

Agencies administering the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program report having a difficult time contacting housing vulnerable households once their names rise to the tops of the waiting lists. Households applying while residing in motels or staying with friends often forget to notify the administering agencies of address and phone number changes. The administering agencies report that calling listed emergency contacts and caseworkers yields some results, but not in the majority of cases. Even when a member of the target population is able to obtain a voucher, it proves difficult for the household to comply with the strict requirements of the program and maintain the voucher without case management or other supportive services in place. The main causes of loss of voucher are eviction and noncompliance with regulations pertaining to reporting changes in income and family composition. If a voucher-holder is evicted or found to be in noncompliance, assistance is terminated. Furthermore, relatively high fair market rents in the area, households' limited affordability, and poor rental history lessen the likelihood that voucher assistance alone will result in long-term housing stability.

2. Community Home Owner Overview

According to a review of MLS listings from Realtor.com, the average home price in Auburn is \$131,066, which is 13.7% lower than the average sold price in Auburn \$115,280. The average

home price per square foot in Auburn is \$69 (*I.D.*). The listings and properties in Auburn are only a part of the 4,154,605 properties and 84,738 homes for sale in New York. Because of this, the average home price and average home value of Auburn also influence the average home price \$272,288 (*I.D.*). Listing counts, Auburn home prices and home values in Auburn are sourced daily from listing and property data on realtor.com®, which is the most up-to-date and accurate aggregation of real estate listings in the industry and includes approximately 800 regional MLSs and is the official website of the National Association of Realtors®.

	Auburn	New York State
Avg. Home Price	\$131,066	\$272,288
Avg. Home Price Sq.Ft	\$69	\$109

According to the Zillow Home Value Index, the median home value in Auburn is \$83,600. Auburn home values have gone up 2.5% over the past year (*I.D.*). The median list price per square foot in Auburn is \$67 (*I.D.*). The median price of homes currently listed in Auburn is \$94,900 while the median price of homes that sold is \$91,180 (*I.D.*).

Foreclosures continue to be a factor impacting home values. In Auburn 4.5 homes are foreclosed (per 10,000). This is greater than the national value of 4.3 (*I.D.*). Mortgage delinquency is the first step in the foreclosure process. This is when a homeowner fails to make a mortgage payment. The percent of delinquent mortgages in Auburn is 7.5%, which is higher than the national value of 7.2% (*I.D.*). With U.S. home values having fallen by more than 20% nationally from their peak in 2007 until their trough in late 2011, many homeowners are now underwater on their mortgages, meaning they owe more than their home is worth (*I.D.*) The percent of Auburn homeowners underwater on their mortgage is 10.4% (*I.D.*).

3. Public Housing

The Auburn Housing Authority (AHA) administers three major housing complexes in the City of Auburn: Melone Village, Olympia Terrace and Brogan Manor. Melone Village is subsidized through State funds. Brogan Manor was once subsidized through State funds but has undergone a conversion to a tax credit property. Olympia Terrace is subsidized through Federal funds. In 2010 the occupancy rate at AHA complexes was 90%. Human services organizations raised potential impediments for becoming eligible for public housing in the summer of 2010 including poor rental histories or lack thereof, poor credit histories and criminal histories. In late summer of 2010 AHA modified the application process whereby a household working with a local non-profit could submit a supportive agency application. In 2011 AHA began an aggressive marketing campaign through the Internet, social media and an increased their presence at community meetings (i.e. City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce). As a result of these

efforts AHA increased the occupancy rates at its complexes to 98% by the end of 2013. The 2% vacancy rate is a result of normal turnover and evictions. It takes a nominal amount of time to get an apartment ready for the next household. Once renovations at Brogan Manor are completed AHA believes occupancy rates will remain at the 98% level.

Operating subsidies were provided to State Public Housing complexes for 45 years. This practice was discontinued in 1997, and resulted in a revenue loss of approximately \$150,000 per year to Melone Village and Brogan Manor (AHA November 4, 2011 report). In an effort to become financially solvent over the long term and to help solve the lack safe affordable housing in the City of Auburn, AHA formed the Auburn Housing Authority Development Corporation in 2011. In 2013, Brogan Manor, once an 88 unit public housing complex with rents based on income, undergone a conversion to a tax credit project with increased, fixed rents and a minimum gross annual income requirement. The downside of the conversion was the City's loss of extremely affordable units based on income. The upside of the tax credit project was that Brogan Manor was able to make more needed renovations and the overall quality of housing at Brogan Manor increased dramatically.

Tenants that face eviction due to falling behind on rent or other violations of their lease can avail themselves to an appeal process. Prior to going to housing court, any tenant that receives an intent to evict letter from AHA can request a hearing in front of a panel made of up of AHA Board members. Tenants may have an advocate or attorney with them and the procedure is audio recorded. Only if the panel agrees with the eviction decision does the process continue to regular housing court. Approximately 50% of tenants going in front of the panel receive additional chances and thus avoid eviction. In addition, AHA since November 2011 has contacted advocates to work with special needs tenants given an additional chance to help promote housing stability.

Melone Village & Melone Village Extension

Melone Village is a 188-unit complex and contains efficiency, one, two, three, and four-bedroom townhouses. Most units include basements with laundry hookup capability. Rent is income-based, and all utilities are included in your rental payment. Minimal excess utility charges may apply for washing machines, dryers, air conditioners, additional freezers or refrigerators, and aquariums

Melone Village is conveniently located on a City bus route. Residents' children attend Genesee Elementary School, Auburn Junior High School, and Auburn High School (bus stop is located in front of complex). Melone Village is lead safe

Income limits for Melone Village are as follows:

City of Auburn, New York
2014 Analysis of Impediments

1 person	\$35,000	5 persons	\$54,000
2 persons	\$40,000	6 persons	\$58,000
3 persons	\$45,000	7 persons	\$62,000
4 persons	\$50,000	8 persons	\$66,000

Income limits are adjusted annually based on median income in Cayuga County.

General Occupancy Standards: 2 per efficiency, 2 per 1-bedroom, 4 per 2-bedroom, 6 per 3-bedroom, 8 per 4-bedroom.

Construction:

Melone Village (100's, 200's, 300's): Completed August 1, 1952

Extension (400's, 500's): Completed February 1, 1965

Building Breakdown

Melone Village is comprised of 31 buildings. All are two-story buildings with the exception of 2 single-story buildings.

Efficiencies:	4
One Bedrooms:	30
Two Bedrooms:	74
Three Bedrooms:	64
Four Bedrooms:	<u>16</u>
Total Units:	188

Household Composition at Melone Village

Total: 400 individuals

Head of Household Characteristics (out of 177)

111 or 63% of our households are female-headed households

39 or 22% of our households are headed by an individual with a disability

9 or 5% of our households are married.

City of Auburn, New York
2014 Analysis of Impediments

Disabled:	15%	of all residents, 7% of all youth
Female:	212	53%
White:	276	69%
Hispanic:	28	7%
African American:	77	19%
Unknown:	19	5%
Youth:	167	42%
Aged 18+:	233	58%
Elderly:	29	7%

(AHA November 4, 2011 report)

Income Breakdown at Melone Village

Auburn Housing Authority Section 8:	50
Homsite Section 8:	22
HHS-vouchered Rent:	12 (3 on S8)
Average Annual Income:	\$13,422

(AHA November 4, 2011 report)

Rent Structure

Tenants pay 33% of their gross annual income towards rent. Utilities are included.

They may also pay small excess utility charges for washers, dryers, and air conditioners.

Rents do not fall below the base rent or exceed the ceiling rent for each unit size.

Size	Minimum Rent	Maximum Rent
Efficiency	\$122	\$363
1 Bedroom	\$136	\$437
2 Bedroom	\$177	\$540

City of Auburn, New York
2014 Analysis of Impediments

3 Bedroom	\$198	\$689
4 Bedroom	\$221	\$764

Turnover

Melone Village January 1, 2011 through October 31, 2011:	34 Moveouts (18%)
Brogan Manor January 1, 2011 through October 31, 2011:	<u>14</u> Moveouts (16%)
	48 Moveouts

The turnover rate is about 17%.

In addition to responding to work orders, maintaining the grounds (mowing, plowing, pick-up), coordinating purchasing, overseeing contractors (bathrooms, weatherization, porches, windows, doors), and carrying out special projects (community hall renovation, weatherization efforts, prep for Federal inspections, floor replacement), maintenance is preparing 6 units per month for occupancy (AHA November 4, 2011 report).

Waiting List

1-Bedroom	43
2-Bedroom	28
3-Bedroom	9
4-Bedroom	<u>0</u>
	80 Households

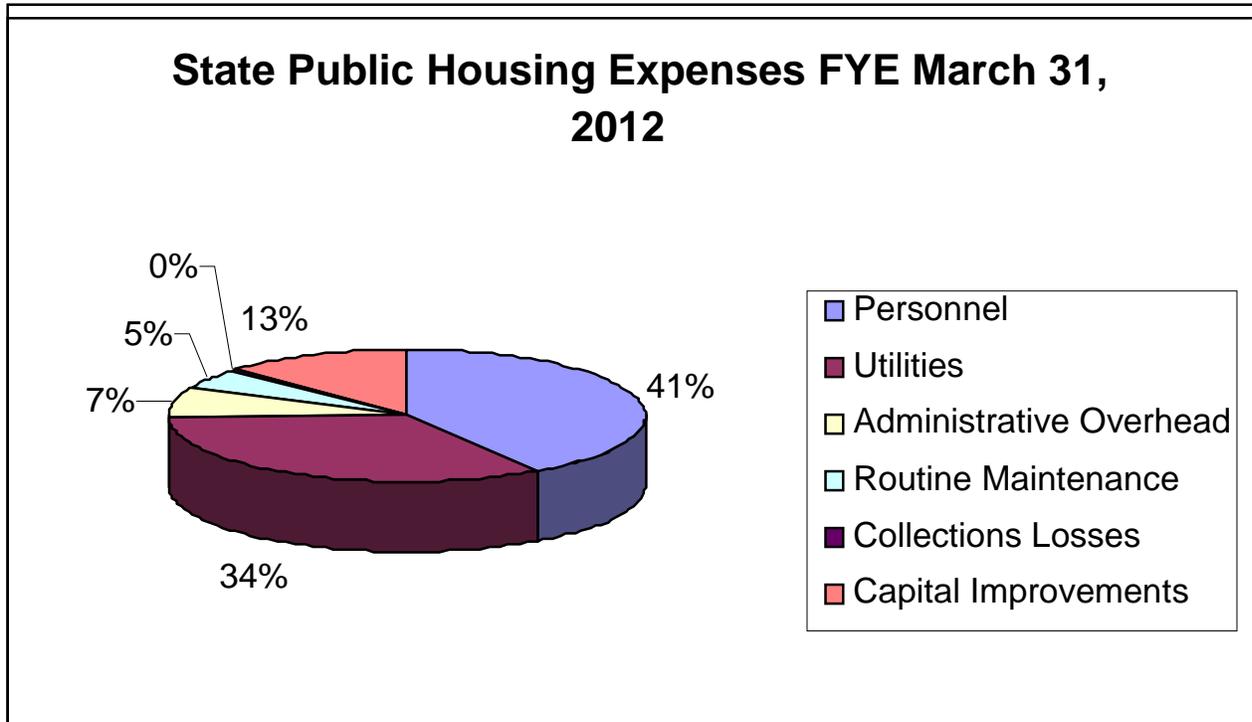
(AHA November 4, 2011 report)

Melone Village is part of one of the most diverse census tracts in the City of Auburn (#418). According to a November 2011 AHA report 31% of the 400 Melone Village residents were “non-white” and all are low income or extremely low income. Because rent is calculated on gross income (tenants pay 33%) and utilities are included and there are caps of what AHA can collect from recipients of public assistance (“welfare rents”) AHA sustains large annual losses that pose a threat to the future of Melone Village. Unless AHA can develop other revenue streams by the time capital improvements need to be made, Melone Village may become converted to a tax

credit property. The result would be increased fixed rents and minimum gross annual income requirements.

Budget for State Complexes

Total Budget for FYE March 31, 2012: \$1,579,402



(AHA November 4, 2011 report)

Brogan Manor

Brogan Manor is an 88-unit complex located adjacent to Olympia Terrace. Brogan Manor contains 2, 3, and 4-bedroom townhouses and is currently undergoing substantial rehabilitation. The newly-renovated units will contain brand new kitchens and bathrooms, carpeted bedrooms, washer and dryer hookups, and will be pre-wired for cable and internet. Residents will have access to a community computer lab with free wireless internet access, an on-site laundry facility, a playground, and a community garden. The property contains 5 handicapped accessible units and 5 audio-visual equipped units. Brogan Manor is a smoke-free complex – residents are not permitted to smoke indoors.

Brogan Manor is conveniently located on a City bus route. Residents' children attend Casey Park Elementary School (within walking distance), Auburn Junior High School, and Auburn High School. Brogan Manor is lead free.

Rents at Brogan Manor include utilities and are as follows:

2 Bedroom	\$535
3 Bedroom	\$664
4 Bedroom	\$739

Section 8 vouchers can be used at the property.

Eligibility is based on gross annual income. Income limits for Brogan Manor are as follows:

1 person	\$26,280	5 persons	\$40,500
2 persons	\$30,000	6 persons	\$43,500
3 persons	\$33,780	7 persons	\$46,500
4 persons	\$37,500	8 persons	\$49,500

Income limits are adjusted annually based on median income in Cayuga County.

General Occupancy Standards: 4 per 2-bedroom, 6 per 3-bedroom, 8 per 4-bedroom.

A minimum gross annual income requirement as follows: \$13,375 for a 2-bedroom unit, \$16,600 for a 3-bedroom unit, and \$18,475 for a four-bedroom unit. The first phase of the 15 million dollar renovation project was completed in the Spring of 2014 and an open house for the community was held.

Olympia Terrace

Olympia Terrace is a 50-unit complex and contains two and three-bedroom units with 3 handicap-accessible apartments. All units contain laundry hookups. Rent and utilities are income-based, but residents are responsible for contacting NYSEG and placing utility service in their own names.

Olympia Terrace is adjacent to Brogan Manor and is conveniently located on a City bus route. Residents' children attend Casey Park Elementary School (within walking distance), Auburn Junior High School, and Auburn High School. Olympia Terrace is lead free.

Income limits for Olympia Terrace are as follows:

1 person	\$35,000	5 persons	\$54,000
2 persons	\$40,000	6 persons	\$58,000
3 persons	\$45,000	7 persons	\$62,000
4 persons	\$50,000	8 persons	\$66,000

Income limits are adjusted annually based on median income in Cayuga County.

General Occupancy Standards: 4 per 2-bedroom, 6 per 3-bedroom.

As a recipient of Federal financial assistance through HUD, Olympia Terrace is required to meet the requirements of Section 504 regulations. On September 2009, the Director of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Buffalo Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office issued a Letter of Findings (LOF). As a result of the LOF, on June 22, 2010 AHA entered into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) with HUD in which AHA agreed to:

- Develop a Language Assistance Plan that addresses the identified needs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons AHA serves;
- Make a number of repairs and improvements to Parking and Passenger Loading Zones:
- Accessible Parking Space – Access Aisle: Both accessible parking spaces near units 101 and 102 must have adjacent access aisles that a minimum of 60 inches wide;
- Accessible Parking Space – Access Aisle: The accessible parking space near unit 150 must have adjacent access aisle that is a minimum of 60 inches wide;
- Accessible Parking Space – Signage - Height: The signage for the accessible space located in front of Unit 101 will be mounted not less than 60 inches above the space;
- Accessible Parking Space – Signage - Height: The signage for the accessible space located in front of Unit 102 will mounted not less than 60 inches above the space
- Repairs and Improvements to Unit Bathrooms:
- Doors – Hardware: The door hardware located at the entrance to the bathrooms in units 101, 102 and 150 shall be replaced with a device that is easy to grasp with one hand;
- Lavatory – Hot Water/Drain Pipes – Insulation: The hot water and drainpipes in units 101, 102 and 150 shall be insulated or otherwise covered;
- Water Closet – Back Grab Bar – Height and Mounting: Grab bars shall installed in unit 150;
- Water Closet – Side Grab Bar – Height and Mounting: Grab bars shall be installed in unit 150;
- Repairs and Improvements to Kitchens:
- Kitchens – Hot Water/Drain Pipes – Insulation: The hot water and drainpipes in units 101, 102, and 150 shall be insulated or otherwise covered;
- *The changes noted for Units 101,102, and 150 with respect to bathrooms and kitchens shall be made for ALL other Accessible Units at AHA.*

On June 15, 2011 HUD Buffalo Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office performed a follow up on-site visit to review AHA VCA progress. At that time AHA complied with the VCA and submitted documentation showing that specific provisions regarding accessible Parking and Loading Zones had been addressed, reviewed and are now closed (HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Region II Director letter to AHA Board Chair dated September 29, 2011). Also, all accessibility issues are complied with in units 101, 102 and 150 (*I.D. at page 1*). All specific provisions regarding accessibility are now closed (*I.D. at page 1*). Only one specific provision remained open: the adoption of a Limited English Proficiency and Language Assistance Plan. Once the Plan that the AHA Executive Director shared with HUD is reviewed and forwarded to the Board for adoption then the VCA will be officially closed (*I.D. at page 2*). The AHA four page LEP plan provides meaningful access to its programs and activities by persons with LEP (AHA Limited English Proficiency Plan Adopted September 6, 2011 page 1).

The plan defines what constitutes “Meaningful Access” (provides four-factor analysis) and makes provisions for Language Assistance, Translation of Documents, Formal and Informal Interpreters, Outside Resources, Monitoring and LEP Plan Distribution and Training (AHA Limited English Proficiency Plan Adopted September 6, 2011).

Olympia Terrace is presently accessible and in full compliance with Section 504 regulations including:

- Designated AHA staff person to coordinate 504 efforts;
- Implementation of an effective LEP Plan;
- Grievance process that addresses Housing and Accessibility issues;
- In 2014 Olympia Terrace has 50 low rent units (50 households totaling 102 people);
- Of the 50 Head of Households 11 were disabled, 5 Black/African American, 7 seniors, 37 women and 1 Hispanic (AHA Olympia Terrace Household Composition Report July 2014).

AHA Progress since 2009 Analysis of Impediments

Progress has been made in a number of areas since the 2009 AI. Since 2010, the Auburn Housing Authority (AHA) has taken a number of steps to reduce barriers to access public housing. In 2010, AHA became accepting support organizations recommendations from organizations. AHA has a supportive service application to make it easier for households with poor rental histories or lack there of, poor credit histories or lack thereof and criminal histories to be eligible for public housing. If the household is working with a non-profit organization, AHA is more likely to give a housing opportunity to a household that normally would not be eligible for public housing. This is a result of a meeting that local human services organizations had with AHA after they hired a new Executive Director.

In July 2011 AHA partnered with the Rescue Mission and DHHS on transitional and permanent housing for homeless families.

In 2014, AHA combined all the public housing applications into one application where the household could select which housing complex they would like to be considered for (i.e. Melone village, Brogan Manor, Olympia Terrace) versus having to fill out separate applications.

In 2014, AHA agreed to prioritize Section 8 applications from households whom were participants in HUD funded homeless programs that were being reallocated. Historically local Section 8 lists had been first come first serve.

On June 30, 2014, AHA submitted a 6.4 million dollar New York State OTDA Homeless Housing Assistance Application for The Merriman Street Family Transitions Project. The Merriman Street Family Transitions Project responds to critical supportive housing gaps by creating 28

new units of safe, affordable housing along with a community center where onsite services will be provided to homeless single women and families.

The Merriman Street Family Transitions project partners understand that individuals and families who are at-risk or have experienced homelessness may have a difficult time rebuilding their lives. By helping residents with life skills, education, job readiness, and financial literacy, the Rescue Mission will help restore a positive outlook for their future. Most importantly, by providing children with new, positive experiences, the Rescue Mission will enable families to imagine a future that is safe and stable.

The proposed Merriman Street Family Transitions Project address the goals of the City of Auburn's Ten Year plan to End Homelessness, is specifically mentioned as a needed action step in both the City of Auburn Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report and the 2014 City of Auburn Action Plan, and has been prioritized as a housing project by the Continuum of Care's Affordable Housing and Executive Committees.

4. DESCRIPTION OF HOMELESSNESS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

a. Number of Homeless Families and Individuals

Homeless data for Cayuga County is compiled from three sources:

1. The County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Annual Reports, which compile data from Cayuga County's HUD-funded Continuum of Care programs, the Chapel House Homeless Shelter, and the Rescue Mission Family Transitions Transitional Housing Program, and
2. The County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), and
3. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's (CSCAA) Domestic Violence Shelter.

A tally across all data sources indicates that there were 1,071 unique homeless people in Cayuga County in 2013, including 739 adults (69%) and 332 children (31%). There were 215 homeless families comprised of 610 people (278 adults and 332 children), 193 homeless single women, and 268 homeless single men. 57% of homeless people in 2013 belonged to a family, while the remaining 43% were single individuals. 75% of the homeless population would be eligible to be served by the proposed Merriman Street Family Transitions Project for homeless single women and families.

Data Source	Total Families	Adults in Families	Children in Families	Total People
HMIS	145	197	218	415
DHHS Motel Placements	54	65	91	156
CSCAA DV Shelter	16	16	23	39
Total	215	278	332	610

Data Source	Total Singles	Single Adult Women	Single Adult Men	Total People
HMIS	270	112	158	270
DHHS Motel Placements	168	58	110	168
CSCAA DV Shelter	23	23	0	23
Total	461	193	268	461

b. Characteristics of the Homeless Population in the Community

The charts above illustrate that the majority of the overall homeless population in Cayuga County is comprised of people in families (57%), while the remainder of the homeless population is comprised of single individuals (43%). Within homeless families, the average household size is 2.84 people. At least 70% (152 out of 215) of all homeless families are headed by a single adult, with 98% of those families headed by a single female (149 out of 152).

Specific Characteristics of people participating in Cayuga County’s HUD-funded Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs are tracked in the Homeless Management Information System. Of the 685 unique individuals participating in CoC Programs in 2013, the age breakdown was as follows:

- Age 0 – 17 32.3% or 221
- Age 18 -61 65.7% or 450
- Age 61+ 2% or 14

41% or 282 of homeless people were female and 59% or 402 were male. 8% or 55 were Hispanic/Latino, 20.7% or 142 were Black or African-American, 6.3% or 43 were Multi-Racial, and 68.8% or 471 were White.

Educational achievement among homeless people is significantly lower than it is among all County residents. While educational achievement is not specifically tracked in any of our databases, a survey of all programs and agencies serving the homeless indicates that approximately 70% of homeless adults in Cayuga County lack a high school diploma or a GED. Only 5% of all Cayuga County residents lack a high school diploma or GED (Source: United Way of Cayuga and Seneca Counties Cayuga and Seneca Community Profile).

Lack of education has a profound impact on the employability of homeless households: only 14.9% of participants aged 18-65 in Cayuga County's HUD-funded Continuum of Care Programs report earned income as a monthly income source, and those who are working are most often working in positions in retail, factory work, medical support positions (food service within hospitals and nursing homes and nursing assistants), and trades such as construction or driving (Sources: Cayuga County HMIS 2013 Annual Report and the 2013 Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency Community Needs Assessment).

Members of the local homeless population are often unable to work due to chronic health conditions, physical disabilities, mental health issues, or other disabling conditions. 30% of adults participating in CoC Programs have a disabling condition (Source: Cayuga County HMIS 2013 Annual Report). The most common disabling condition was a mental health diagnosis. The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reports that of the single individuals receiving Safety Net Assistance in December of 2013 and January of 2014, 72% were Work Exempt, meaning that they suffered from some disabling condition that prevented them from working. Of the families receiving Safety Net Assistance in December of 2013 and January of 2014, 33% of adults were Work Exempt. Disabling conditions reported to DHHS most often include mental health issues, substance abuse, learning disabilities, chronic health conditions, and physical disabilities. Additional barriers to employability in the homeless population include criminal history, lack of transportation, and lack of affordable and stable daycare options.

c. Number of Emergency Housing Placements

Single Men

Cayuga County has one emergency shelter for males: the Chapel House Homeless Shelter. Chapel House Homeless Shelter is a 19-bed facility with space for 4 additional overflow beds. In 2012, Chapel House sheltered 174 distinct individuals. The average length of stay was 34 days. In 2013, the number of distinct individuals housed increased by 24% to 215 individuals with an

average length of stay of 39 days. The shelter is populated from three sources: walk-ins/self-referrals, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) referrals, and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs referrals. Chapel House executed a contract to house up to 7 homeless veterans per night in May of 2012. While this contract has proven beneficial for the homeless veteran population in the community and has provided Chapel House with a much-needed steady income stream, it took available beds away from the DHHS and walk-ins. In 2013, DHHS paid \$32 per night for approximately 7 individuals per night for a total cost of \$82,237, up from \$28 per night for approximately 6 individuals per night for a total cost of \$58,563 in 2012.

Chapel House is often full, so DHHS has no option but to motel men on an emergency basis. In 2012, DHHS moteled 74 distinct single males with a median length of stay of 3.5 weeks. In 2013, the number of single males moteled nearly doubled, as DHHS moteled 110 distinct single males with a median length of stay of 3.5 weeks. The average rate per week for a room for a single male for one week increased from \$321 in 2012 to \$349 in 2013, as local motels caught on to the fact that DHHS was pressed for housing options for the County's homeless population.

d. Single Women & Families

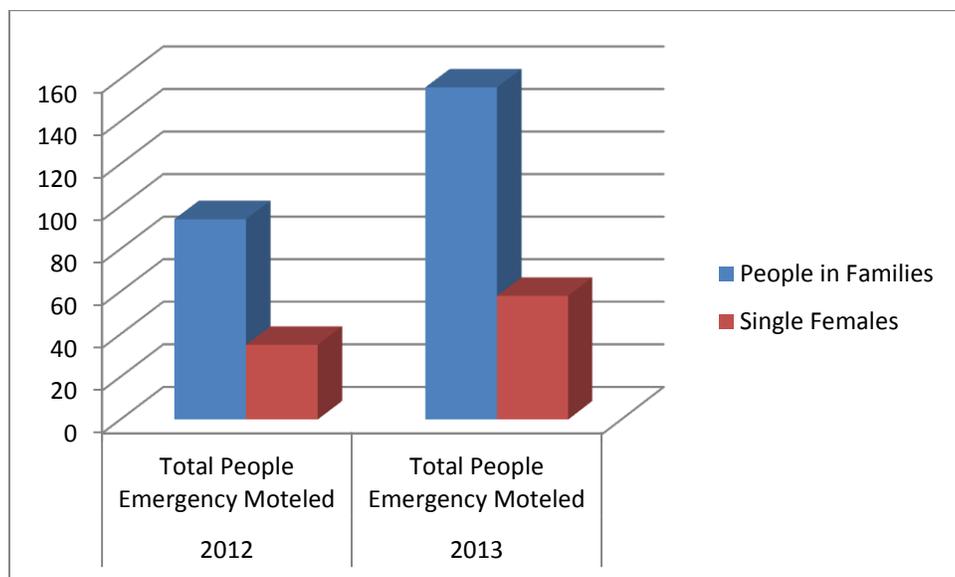
Cayuga County does not have any emergency shelter beds for females other than those who are fleeing domestic violence. The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency (CSCAA) runs a 9-bed domestic violence shelter in Cayuga County that provides emergency housing for victims of domestic violence for up to 90 days. In 2012, CSCAA housed 59 people, including 14 families (14 adults and 27 children) and 18 single females in its domestic violence shelter. The average length of stay for families and singles was 30 nights and 31 nights, respectively. Due to shelter overcapacity, CSCAA moteled 27 people, including 9 families (9 adults and 16 children) and 2 single females in 2012. A total of 57 people, including 15 families (15 adults and 38 children) and 4 single females were turned away from the shelter in 2012. The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) paid \$75,696 toward these services in 2012.

In 2013, CSCAA housed 52 people, including 12 families (12 adults and 23 children) and 17 single females in its domestic violence shelter. The average length of stay for families and singles was 47 nights and 28 nights, respectively. Due to shelter overcapacity, CSCAA moteled an additional 15 people, including 4 families (4 adults and 5 children) and 6 single females in 2013. A total of 79 people, including 22 families (22 adults and 42 children) and 15 single females were turned away from the shelter in 2013. DHHS paid \$129,691 toward these services in 2013. The increase in payment and the decrease in number of families served were due largely to the fact that the average length of stay for families increase by 57% from 30 nights to 47 nights. The increase in length of stay is due to households' inability to find decent, safe, affordable housing in the community on a Public Assistance budget: in 2013, 6 families and 4 single women had to

request extensions beyond the 90-day limit due to inability to locate safe, decent, affordable housing.

In the absence of an emergency shelter, DHHS is forced to motel virtually 100% of women and children who are determined to be literally homeless at initial intake. DHHS works primarily with three local motels to emergency house this population: the Scottish Inn & Suites, the Days Inn, and the Super 8. Local motels are able to charge a premium for these stays due to lack of competition.

In 2012, DHHS moteled a total of 32 families, including 42 adults and 52 children, for a total of 140 shelter weeks. The median length of stay for a family in the motels was 4 weeks. The total cost to DHHS was \$75,852, which means that DHHS paid motels, on average, \$542 per week per family. In 2013, DHHS moteled a total of 54 families (a 69% increase from 2012), including 65 adults and 91 children, for a total of 199 shelter weeks. The median length of stay for a family in the motels was 3 weeks. The total cost to DHHS was \$106,285, which means that DHHS paid motels, on average, \$534 per week per family. In 2012, DHHS moteled 35 single female adults for a total of 105 shelter weeks, with a median length of stay of 2 weeks. This number spiked in 2013, as DHHS moteled a total of 58 single female adults for a total of 314 shelter weeks with a median length of stay of 3 weeks. The average rate per week for a room for a single female for one week increased from \$321 in 2012 to \$349 in 2013.



e. Number of Transitional Housing Placements

Cayuga County has a total of 19 transitional units designated for the homeless. Of the 19 units, 10 are designated specifically for homeless women and families and 13 served homeless women or families in 2013. This number includes the 4 transitional housing units run by the Rescue Mission's Family Transitions Program, which is the program that we are seeking to expand via HHAP funding.

The Rescue Mission Family Transitions Program consists of 4 apartments (18 beds) for homeless single women and families referred by DHHS. The Program allows for up to a 90-day stay in transitional housing and includes intensive trauma-informed case management, permanent housing search and placement assistance, and follow-up case management for an indefinite period of time. In 2013, the Program served 23 households, including 4 single women and 19 families consisting of 29 adults and 72 children. The average length of stay in transitional housing among all households was 52 days.

The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency also runs a 6-unit Transitional Housing Assistance Program for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and/or stalking. Participants are provided with rental assistance and case management services for 6 to 24 months and follow-up services for a minimum of 3 months. In 2013, the program served 3 families (3 adults and 12 children) and 3 single females. The Program is currently full and has 20 homeless and at-risk families on its waiting list. The demand is so high that CSCAA has stopped accepting applications for the program.

The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency also runs a 9-bed New York State Supportive Housing Program for homeless young adults aged 18-25 without dependents. The program allows for transitional housing for up to 2 years and includes case management. The program is currently full, with six males and three females participating in 2013. The waiting list consists of 1 female and 3 males.

f. Number of Permanent Housing Placements

Cayuga County has a total of 33 permanent housing units designated for the homeless and approximately 33 spaces available in a supportive services only program that does not provide ongoing rental assistance. Of the 33 permanent housing units, 6 are designated specifically for homeless women and families and 21 served homeless women or families in 2013. The 6 units that are designated specifically for women and families are part of the Rescue Mission's Family Transitions Program, which is the program that we are seeking to expand via HHAP funding.

The Rescue Mission Family Transitions Program has a total of 6 permanent housing units designated for homeless women and families. In 2013, 8 families were served, including 11

adults and 26 children. The Program allows for an indefinite stay in permanent housing and includes intensive trauma-informed case management on an ongoing basis.

ARISE currently runs 2 HUD-funded Supported Housing Programs that serve homeless, disabled households. HUD typically provides funding for rental assistance for up to 18 households. Households participating in the Program also receive ongoing case management as long as they participate in the Program. The vast majority of referrals for the Program come from DHHS (moteled households) and the Chapel House Emergency Shelter. The breakdown of households served by the ARISE Supported Housing Programs is as follows: 7 families, 4 single females, and 7 single males.

The Auburn Housing Authority runs a HUD-funded, 5-voucher Shelter Plus Care Program for chronically homeless and disabled individuals. Currently, all participants in the Program are male. Individuals participating in the Program receive ongoing case management as a condition of participation in the program. As with the ARISE Supported Housing Programs, the vast majority of referrals for the Program come from DHHS (moteled individuals) and the Chapel House Emergency Shelter.

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency (CSCAA) administers a HUD-funded Permanent Housing Program for 4 households. Participating households must be chronically homeless and have a disabled head of household. The Program consists of rental assistance and case management services. The Program currently serves 2 single women and 2 families.

CSCAA also runs 2 HUD-funded Supportive Services Only Programs for homeless families and individuals. Funding typically allows for at least 33 households to participate at once. The Programs provide 6 months to 2 years of case management and can help with security deposit and first month's rent only, furniture purchase, and overdue utility payments. While helpful, this program poses obstacles for homeless households, because households must prove that they will be able to sustain permanent housing once it is secured. This is exceedingly difficult due to the lack of affordable housing in the community and the fact that many homeless households are relying solely on public assistance grants. In 2013, the Programs served 29 families, 12 single females, and 6 single males.

g. Existing Supportive Housing Resources

The only supportive housing services available for the homeless population include the ARISE supportive housing programs, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's (CSCAA) supportive services only and permanent support housing programs, CSCAA domestic violence program, and the Rescue Mission's Family Transitions Program. ARISE supported housing programs are only available to disabled homeless households. The CSCAA permanent supportive housing

programs serve chronically homeless households. The CSCAA domestic violence programs are only available to women and families who are fleeing domestic violence and have been forced to turn away single women and families due to overcapacity and lack of funding. Furthermore, these programs are not slated for expansion, and they are subject to renewal and federal funding cuts on an annual basis.

ARISE currently runs 2 HUD-funded supportive housing programs that serve homeless individuals and families where at least one member of the household has a disability. The programs provide rental assistance for up to 18 households and limited case management services (consisting of once-per-month contact). The vast majority of referrals for the Program come from DHHS (motel households) and the Chapel House Emergency Shelter. The breakdown of households served by the ARISE Supported Housing Programs is as follows: 7 families, 4 single females, and 7 single males. The ARISE programs are not exclusive to families and single women and have historically operated at 100% of capacity.

The Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency (CSCAA) ran 2 HUD-funded supportive services only programs for homeless families and individuals. Funding typically allows for at least 33 households to participate. The programs provide 6 months to 2 years of case management and can help with security deposits, first month's rent, furniture purchases, and overdue utility payments. While helpful, these programs pose obstacles for chronically homeless households, because households must prove that they will be able to financially sustain permanent housing once it is secured as a condition of receiving assistance. This is exceedingly difficult due to the lack of affordable housing in the community and the fact that many homeless households are relying solely on public assistance grants. In 2013, the Programs served 29 families, 12 single females, and 6 single males. In May 2014, HUD cut the funding to one the CSCAA supportive services only program along with 300 others nationwide.

CSCAA administers a HUD-funded permanent housing program for 4 households. Eligible households must be chronically homeless (homeless for one consecutive year or homeless 4 times in the past 3 years) and have a disabled head of household. The Program consists of rental assistance and case management services. The Program currently serves 2 single women and 2 families and rarely has a vacancy.

CSCAA also administers a 6-unit transitional housing assistance program that provides supportive housing services to homeless survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Rental assistance is available for 6 to 24 months, and follow-up services are available for a minimum of 3 months. CSCAA has worked with 11 families since the program was developed in May of 2012. The program is currently full and has 20 homeless and at-risk

families on its waiting list. The demand for this program is so high that CSCAA has stopped accepting applications for the program.

Finally, the Rescue Mission's 10-unit Family Transitions Program consists of 4 units of transitional housing and 6 units of permanent housing for homeless women and families. The program provides transitional housing to homeless single women and families at the time of engagement, and all referrals come directly from the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). 100% of households participating in the program have been emergency-housed at motels by DHHS. Households remain in transitional housing for up to 90 days until appropriate, sustainable permanent housing is located in the community or among one of the 6 permanent housing units leased by the Rescue Mission. Due to lack of affordable housing in the community, the Rescue Mission provides rental subsidies to in the range of \$50 to \$250 per month to families that otherwise would not be able to sustain permanent housing. In addition to providing housing, the program provides ongoing intensive case management using trauma-informed care principals, housing search and placement, employment services, educational services, clothing and other basic needs, and transportation to key appointments (DHHS, health care, employment, and GED classes). Rescue Mission staff is on site at least 5 days per week for at least 8 hours per day, and a Rescue Mission on-call number is available to all program participants. Rescue Mission staff connects program participants with needed services and helps school-age children connect with McKinney Vento school liaisons to ensure that homeless children continue their education. The Rescue Mission Family Transitions program is currently assisting 62 households, including 67 adults and 113 children.

h. Critical Gaps in Supportive Housing for the Target Population

There are a number of critical gaps in supportive housing for at-risk and homeless households. There are no preventive resources within the community for at-risk and homeless households; households literally have to become homeless to access any of the existing supportive housing programs. In addition, rental assistance programs in the area, such as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, have experienced dramatic funding cuts. A lack of affordable housing, trauma-informed case management services, and transportation also present significant barriers to the homeless population, even when other supportive services are already in place.

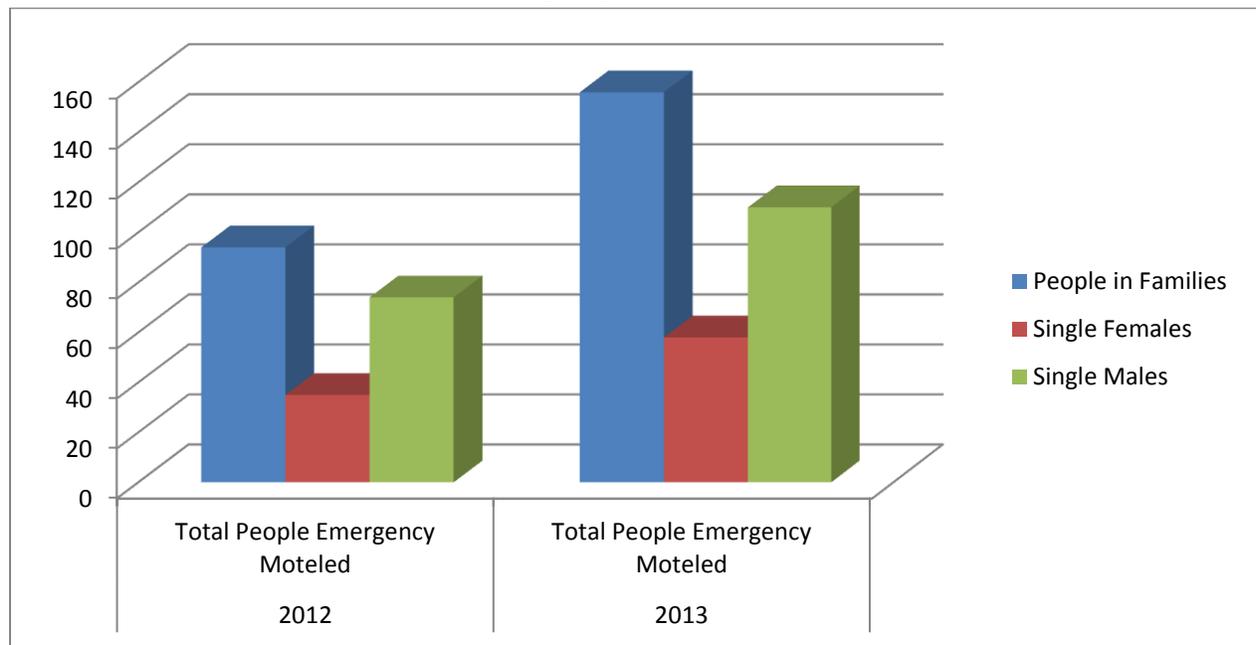
Within the last five years, Cayuga County has lost over \$1.5 million in funding for rental assistance and case management for homeless individuals and families. In 2012, the County lost over \$1.2 million (\$600,000 per year) in Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) funding that was made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. From October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011, HPRP funding was used to assist 242

households that presented as literally homeless and 488 households that were homeless vulnerable and in danger of becoming homeless.

During the same period, New York State cut \$330,000 in Medicaid funding that supported Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency's Take A Step Ahead Program (TASA). TASA was available to Medicaid eligible, pregnant, parenting and at-risk youth ages 10 to 22. Demographics at intake included the following: 100% below the poverty line, 96% single-parent households, 32% pregnant and/or parenting, 40% having a parent or sibling currently or previously incarcerated, 35% learning disabled or having a mental health diagnosis, and 42% having an IEP. Adolescent customers met with case managers to set individual goals that included preventing an unplanned pregnancy, obtaining employment, completing an education, enhancing parenting skills, budget counseling and securing basic living needs. Case managers and TASA customers planned activities and met regularly to ensure that goals were monitored and assessed so TASA customers could consistently work toward building the life skills needed to further self-sufficiency. Case managers also provided ongoing advocacy, referrals and follow-up to customers. TASA enrollment during its last year of operation included 153 individuals including 21 homeless adolescents (up from 107 enrolled in 2009 with 13 adolescents presenting as homeless).

Since there is no longer any prevention money and Cayuga County does not have an emergency shelter for women and families (other than the Domestic Violence Shelter), our community has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of people being emergency housed by the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services, living in cars, outdoors, and other places unfit for human habitation.

DHHS Emergency Motel Placements 1



2012 Population	Number of Distinct Households Emergency Housed in Motels	Total Motel Weeks	Median Length of Stay	Average Motel Cost per HH
Families w/ Children	32 including 42 adults, 52 children	140	4 weeks	\$321 per week
Single Females	35	105	2 weeks	
Single Males	74	415	3.5 weeks	

2013 Population	Number of Distinct Households Emergency Housed in Motels	Total Motel Weeks	Median Length of Stay	Average Motel Cost per HH
Families w/ Children	54 including 65 adults, 91 children	199	3 weeks	\$534 per week
Single Females	58	314	3 weeks	
Single Males	110	586	3.5 weeks	

Over the same period of 2009 to 2014, HUD funding for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs operating in Cayuga County decreased by 5%, and public housing operating subsidies declined by 40%. This has resulted in increased wait times for Housing Choice Vouchers and has impacted the ability of Auburn's federally-funded public housing property to admit applicants who have extremely low incomes. Cayuga County Homsite, which administers housing choice vouchers throughout Cayuga County, has not issued any new vouchers since April of 2013; when a household leaves the program, funding is not available to reissue a voucher to a

household on the waiting list. As a result, the number of vouchers issued by Homsite has declined by 8% from 605 vouchers to 558 vouchers and the wait list for vouchers has grown to 732 households. The Auburn Housing Authority also administers housing choice vouchers within the City of Auburn and has experienced similar declines in funding. There are currently 360 households on the Auburn Housing Authority's wait list for housing choice vouchers.

There is a lack of quality, affordable housing in the area, especially for households requiring two or three-bedroom units. The waiting lists for the affordable housing complexes in the City of Auburn are long, and turnover is relatively low (Attachment A). Wait list times vary from six months to two years, depending on the complex. Income-based units are in particularly high demand, and these units have the lowest vacancy rates and the longest waiting lists. Due to the high demand for affordable housing in Auburn, affordable housing complexes are able to enforce strict screening criteria that preclude the target population from obtaining housing.

Each of the affordable complexes in the City of Auburn has screening criteria that for many homeless households are an impediment to be determined eligible and added to a waiting list (Attachment A). Homeless households often have poor rental history or lack rental history altogether, have poor credit history, or have criminal backgrounds. In the event that they are accepted into one of these affordable complexes, homeless households often do not have the ability to pay security deposits or set up utilities in their own names. Many have cycled through these complexes at one time or another only to be evicted for nonpayment of rent or other lease violations. As a result, these households have no option other than applying to be added to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which poses its own problems and is not a short-term solution for most households.

Another critical gap in supportive housing is trauma-oriented case management services for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. In Cayuga County, more than 90% of all homeless singles women and families have experienced trauma (Source: HMIS, Rescue Mission Family Transitions Program, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency DVIP Program). Traumatic experiences can be dehumanizing, shocking, terrifying, singular or multiple compounding events over time, and often include betrayal by a trusted person or institution and a resulting loss of safety. Trauma may include physical or sexual abuse, neglect, intergenerational trauma, and disasters that induce powerlessness, fear, recurrent hopelessness, and a constant state of alert. The Rescue Mission's Family Transitions Program is the only case management program in the County that uses Trauma-Informed care principles. Trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives. Trauma-informed care facilitates the adoption of trauma-informed

environments in the delivery of a broad range of services, including mental health, substance use, housing, vocational or employment support, domestic violence and victim assistance, and peer support.

The final critical gap in supportive housing is transportation. Cayuga County is 73 miles long with most jobs and services concentrated in the City of Auburn. Public transportation is available, but buses do not run as frequently as in larger communities. Ready access to transportation makes it much easier to work, conduct an apartment search, conduct daily business (doctor's visits and shopping), participate in schools and religious organizations, and engage in other forms of civic life. 91% of all Cayuga County residents and 82% of Auburn residents own a vehicle (Source: United Way of Cayuga and Seneca Counties Community Profiles), while only 25% of homeless women and families own a vehicle. Very few supportive housing programs offer transportation services.

E. Familiar Status Case Study

Because of the limited quantitative data regarding familiar status and fair housing choice, the Rescue Mission Family Transitions program will be utilized as a case study. The program works with a significant number of single parents with young children. In addition the program works single grandparents raising grandchildren, unrelated adults, siblings living together.

Demographics of the Target Population

The demographics and characteristics of the target population (single women, families and families with children) are based on the Auburn Housing Authority's experience piloting the Family Transitions Program in partnership with the Rescue Mission (supportive services provider) and the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services (referral source) over a 32-month period from July 2011 through February 2014. All referrals into the Program were made by the Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services from a pool of families and single women being emergency housed in local motels. Between July 2011 and February 2014, the Rescue Mission Family Transitions Program served 87 households, including 283 unique individuals. 75 of the households served were families with children and 12 were single women.

The 87 households totaled 109 adults and 174 children. 95% of the households served (83 of 87) had experienced trauma and 87% (76 of 87) had a member of the household with a mental health and/or substance abuse issue. More than 90% of the households had a gross annual income that was at or below 30% of Area Median Income for Cayuga County at the time of admission. All households served were at or below 60% of the Area Median Income for Cayuga

County. At the time of admission, 74% of adults (84 of 109) lacked a high school diploma or GED, 45% of the children (79 of 174) were age 5 or younger, and 92% of the households served (80 of 87) were receiving food stamps.

Factors Creating and Perpetuating Homelessness

The target population includes homeless families and single women. Factors creating and perpetuating homelessness among the target population include trauma, poverty, lack of educational attainment, unemployment, lack of transportation, and lack of affordable housing.

In Cayuga County, more than 90% of all homeless single women and families have experienced trauma (Source: HMIS, Rescue Mission Family Transition program, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency Domestic Violence Intervention Program). Trauma includes physical, sexual and institutional abuse, neglect, intergenerational trauma, and disasters that induce powerlessness, fear, recurrent hopelessness, and a constant state of alert. Between 2009 and 2012, the number of domestic violence reports increased from 577 in 2009 to 758 in 2012 (Source: United Way of Cayuga and Seneca Counties Cayuga and Seneca Community Profile). 95% of households served by the Family Transitions Program were headed by adults who experienced trauma as children or young adults, which had a negative impact on performance and attendance in school. As a result, most of the adults who participated in the Family Transitions Program dropped out of high school in the 9th or 10th grade. Lack of educational attainment and life skills limited employment opportunities, and the employment opportunities that were available were minimum-wage jobs that lacked security.

Trauma survivors often develop mental health issues, and many attempt to cope with the trauma by abusing drugs and alcohol. 87% (76 of 87) of the Family Transitions Program households had a member of the household with a mental health and/or substance abuse issue. A majority of the adults with mental health and substance abuse issues had not learned to manage their mental health or substance abuse issues, and these in turn negatively affected relationships, ability to obtain or maintain employment, and housing stability.

Poverty is another major factor leading to homelessness for the target population. Within the City of Auburn, poverty rates for households headed by single women are alarmingly high. 68% of households headed by women (no husband present) with related children under the age of 5 fall below the poverty line. This compares to 41.5% of similar households statewide, and 55% in nearby Syracuse, 57.3% in Buffalo, and 64.2% in Rochester (Source: United States Census Bureau). 40% of the households served by the Rescue Mission Family Transitions were headed by a single mother with at least one child age 5 or younger. More than 90% of the households had an income at or below 30% of Area Median Income in Cayuga County at the time of admission. More than 80% of program participants received General Public Assistance or

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families at time of admission. The Public Assistance housing allotment is very modest and has only been raised once since 1990. A single woman on public assistance is provided with \$360 for living expenses in Cayuga County, where Fair Market Rent for a one bedroom apartment is \$586.

Lack of educational attainment, unemployment, and transportation issues have all played a factor in creating or perpetuating homelessness among the target population. 74% of adults (84 of 109) lacked a high school diploma or GED at time of admission into the Family Transitions Program, compared with 5% of all Cayuga County residents lacking a high school diploma or GED (Source: United Way of Cayuga and Seneca Counties Cayuga and Seneca Community Profile). Less than 10% of adults had gainful employment at time of admission. Finally, Cayuga County is 73 miles long with most jobs and services concentrated in the City of Auburn. Public transportation is available, but buses do not run as frequently as in larger communities. 91% of all Cayuga County residents and 82% of Auburn residents own a vehicle (Source: United Way of Cayuga and Seneca Counties Cayuga and Seneca Community Profiles), while only 25% of homeless women and families own a vehicle.

There is a lack of quality, affordable housing in the area, especially for households requiring two or three-bedroom units. The waiting lists for the affordable housing complexes in the City of Auburn are long, and turnover is relatively low (Attachment A). Wait list times vary from six months to two years, depending on the complex. Income-based units are in particularly high demand, and these units have the lowest vacancy rates and the longest waiting lists. Due to the high demand for affordable housing in Auburn, affordable housing complexes are able to enforce strict screening criteria that preclude the target population from obtaining housing.

Each of the affordable complexes in the City of Auburn has screening criteria that make it nearly impossible for our target population to be determined eligible and added to a waiting list. Households often have poor rental history or lack rental history altogether, have poor credit history, or have criminal backgrounds (Attachment A). In the event that they are accepted into one of these affordable complexes, our target households often do not have the ability to pay security deposits or set up utilities in their own names. Many have cycled through these complexes at one time or another only to be evicted for nonpayment of rent or other lease violations.

Reasons Why the Target Population Needs Supportive Housing

The Cayuga County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) describes many of the homeless households as “chronic TANF households” (Temporary Assistance for Needy

Families). These households repeatedly cycle through DHHS, because they have not been provided with the long-term supports and case management that they need to maintain permanent housing. Since the Family Transitions Program began in July of 2011, only 5 of the 87 households (6%) that entered the Family Transitions Program have returned to DHHS for emergency housing. This is due to the fact that Rescue Mission caseworkers provide ongoing trauma-informed case management services while connecting families to needed services and providing transportation to key appointments.

95% of the target population has experienced trauma. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Center for Trauma-Informed Care advocates for supportive housing using the trauma-informed care model for these households to become self-sufficient and maintain housing stability. Trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives. Trauma-Informed Care facilitates the adoption of trauma-informed environments in the delivery of a broad range of services including mental health, substance use, housing, vocational or employment support, domestic violence and victim assistance, and peer support. In all of these environments, Trauma-Informed Care seeks to change the paradigm from one that asks, "What's wrong with you?" to one that asks, "What has happened to you?" Currently, the only supportive housing program that utilizes trauma-informed care principles is the Family Transitions Program.

100% of the households served by the Family Transitions Program were homeless at the time of admission. The Family Transitions Program has experienced a great deal of success with the target population. 94% of households placed in transitional housing were eventually placed in stable, permanent housing. 80% of all households maintained their permanent housing status for at least one year. 96% of all adults with mental health and/or substance abuse issues were connected with appropriate services that played a role in increasing housing stability, and 29% of all adults who participated in the program were able to obtain employment, while an additional 11% were able to maintain their employment due supports put in place by the Rescue Mission.

The Rescue Mission Family Transitions Program has worked closely with local schools to ensure that school age children are enrolled. In the 32 months that the Program has been operating, 44 children have been re-enrolled in school. Program staff serves as a resource for principals, teachers and social workers. A number of teachers call Program staff if a child misses school just to make sure that everything is alright in the household. Teachers have reported positive behavioral and academic changes in the children since they have been in the Program. Positive youth activities are made available when children are not in school (i.e. fall, winter spring and summer recesses) such as arts and crafts, cookouts and summer camps. Currently, 14 children

in the program are Honor or High Honor students. The Program's Youth Employment Initiative connects young people with summer jobs to gain work experience and income.

Housing Search and Placement Challenges

The Rescue Mission Family Transitions households face numerous challenges when searching for an apartment including limited income; source of income (Section 8, public assistance) lack of affordable housing options; poor rental histories or lack thereof; poor credit histories or lack thereof and some criminal histories. In addition, the program has reported challenges with some landlords inquiring regarding family size, age of children and relationship status of unmarried people (i.e. same sex adults and siblings). There have been instances where households believe a housing opportunity has been denied based on familiar status. However, the reason given, if any, was based on one of the other barriers or that the "apartment is no longer available." The real or perceived denial of housing opportunities based on familiar status is a potential impediment to fair housing choice.

IV Evaluation of the City of Auburn Fair Housing Legal Status

A Local Fair Housing Complaints/Dispositions

The Auburn Human Rights Commission is centrally located at the Westminster Church on 17 William Street near Auburn City Hall. The Auburn Human Rights Commission was established by the City Council in 1964 to encourage and ensure that every individual has an equal opportunity to participate in the economic, cultural, and intellectual life of the community regardless of disability, creed, race, sex, age or national origin. In addition to these formal duties, the Commission sponsors a variety of events and activities including but not limited to, Legal Aid for the Economically Disadvantaged, Food Pantry, Juneteenth Day Celebration, Multi-Cultural Art Classes, Annual Human Rights Recognition Awards, Education Ad Campaign, a web-site, a lobby display in City Hall, and the Annual Human Rights Scholarship and Reception (City of Auburn Website 2014).

The Auburn Human Rights Commission handles most discrimination claims in the City. It also provides monitoring services for Minority participation in City Capital Projects under contract, provides general information to residents and responds to other inquiries from Commission members, provides general information to residents and responds to other inquiries from Commission members (2009 City of Auburn AI page 16).

There are 8 Auburn Human Rights Commission (HRC) members and the Auburn HRC posted most of their meeting minutes on the City of Auburn website from January 2001 through May 2007. In the meeting minutes the number of complaints, intakes and informational requested

are reported as one number. This is problematic because it lumps housing or employment discrimination claims in with informational requests for programs such as Black History Month.

In 2005 the Auburn HRC reported on the City of Auburn website an average of 47 complaints, intakes and information requests regarding housing, legal, discrimination program information, general information, landlord tenant repairs, employment questions, employment termination, legal assistance, Black History Month, Women's History Month and complaint on police during the months of February, May, June, July and August (Auburn HRC 2005 meeting minutes).

In 2006, Auburn HRC reported on the City of Auburn an average of 41.5 complaints, intakes and information requests regarding housing/eviction, housing, employment termination, truth in heating, general information, repairs, leases, rent hikes, disability, divorce, legal requests, upcoming program information, police complaints and sexual harassment for the months of January, February, March, April, May, July August, September, October and November (Auburn HRC 2006 meeting minutes).

In the July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013 Auburn HRC Financial Statements submitted to the City of Auburn, the HRC broke out complaints versus informational requests. The Auburn HRC reported data for nine months (April, May and June not reported). Auburn HRC reported 8 housing complaints, 3 legal complaints, 8 employment complaints and 340 informational requests and 11 investigations (Auburn HRC July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013 Financial Statements).

B Analysis

In fiscal year 2012-2013, the Auburn HRC had an operating budget of only \$14,355 to accomplish its broad mission (Auburn HRC July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013 Financial Statements). The Auburn HRC is budgeted for only one part-time employee (independent contractor). According to the Auburn HRC Commissioner most of the records are paper and not electronic. Data bases are not utilized to record data or run reports. No entity in Auburn responded to the New York State OTDA RFP for Fair Housing Enforcement and Informational Programs. This money could have provided the Auburn HRC additional money to fulfill its enforcement role and another agency could have provided greater educational and awareness opportunities around fair housing choice.

By way of comparison, the New York State Division of Human Rights posts an annual report on its website. The State agency tracks intakes versus case resolutions, process time, types of complaints, basis for the complaints and investigation and hearing outcomes. For the 2011-12 fiscal year 82% of complaints were Employment, 10.2% were Housing, 4.5% were Public Accommodations and 3.4% were Other (NYS Division of Human Rights FY2011-12 Annual Report page 6). The bases of for those complaints were 33.4% Race, 32.4% Disability, 25.3%

Opposing Discrimination/Retaliation Claim, 23.2% Sex, 17.8% Age, 15.9% National Origin, 5.7% Creed, 5.3% Conviction Record, 4.9% Sexual Orientation, 2.7% Martial Status and 5.1% Other (*I.D. at 7*). Investigation outcomes were 12.7% Settled, 13.5% Dismissals, 12% Probable Cause and 61.9% No Probable Cause (*I.D. at 10*).

The level of detail New York State Division of Human Rights gathers and reports provides a wealth of data on discrimination and provides the basis to track trends and patterns. Moreover, these agency performance reports are conspicuously posted on the New York State Division of Human Rights website. This allows the public to track progress or regression on specific discrimination trends in a fully transparent manner.

C Action Steps

Beginning in 2014-15, the Auburn HRC should begin tracking complaints using 4 categories (employment, housing, public accommodations and other). In addition, the Auburn HRC should track the basis for the complaints (i.e. race, disability, age, etc...) as well as investigation and hearing outcomes. The Auburn HRC should submit a brief annual report to a City of Auburn Department designated by the City Manager. Auburn HRC should be resourced appropriately to fulfill its mission. An entity should apply for future Fair Housing Enforcement and Informational Program dollars if they become available again.

V City Government Impact on Fair Housing Choice

A. Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Board of Appeals

The 2009 AI review of the residential components of the zoning ordinance (R1 – R4 Districts) “did not reveal any provisions or regulatory requirements, either by omission or inclusion, which may be interrupted as Impediments to Fair Housing Choice” (2009 AI page 21). However, the 2009 AI did not review the Zoning Board of Appeals, review zoning variances, local permit applications and substantially adjusted residential permit applications to monitor any potential impediments to fair housing.

The City of Auburn's Zoning Board of Appeals consists of seven individuals, serving for a minimum of three years (staggered) as appointed by the City's Mayor.

A. Operational considerations.

(1) Establishment. Pursuant to the provisions of § 81 of Article 5-A of the General City Law, a Board of Appeals is hereby established in and for the City of Auburn.

(2) Appointment. The Board of Appeals shall consist of seven members of which no more than four shall be of the same political party. The members of the Board of Appeals shall be

appointed by the Mayor. The terms of the initial appointees shall be for one, two and three years and thereafter for three years each. Appointments upon the retirement of the initial terms shall be for three years each.

(3) Appointment to fill vacancies. Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the unexpired term of the member or members whose term or terms become vacant. Such appointments to fill such vacancies shall be made in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) General grant of power. The Board of Appeals shall perform all the duties and have all the powers prescribed by the laws of the State of New York and as herein provided.

(5) Rules of procedure. The Board of Appeals shall perform and adopt rules in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and any others not inconsistent herewith or with the laws of the State of New York.

(6) Votes necessary for a decision. The concurring votes of four members of the Board of Appeals shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Code Enforcement Officer or to decide in favor of the appellant any matter upon which the Board of Appeals is required to pass under the terms of this chapter or to effect variation in this chapter. If four members of the Board of Appeals are present this shall constitute a legal quorum

B. Jurisdiction and authority.

The Board of Appeals shall be responsible for the interpretation of this chapter and shall adopt and make available to the public rules for the exercise of its functions. The duties and powers of the Board of Appeals shall be to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged that an error has been made in the enforcement of this chapter and to hear and decide requests for variances. The Board of Appeals shall perform such other duties as may be provided or made necessary by this chapter, including the interpretation of boundaries, the holding of public hearings, the referral of any pertinent matter to the Planning Board for review and recommendations, and the maintenance of records on all decisions and findings.

C. Procedures and requirements for hearing appeals from alleged error in enforcement.

(1) Any person, firm or corporation who or which deems himself or itself aggrieved by any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Code Enforcement Officer shall have the right to file a written appeal to the Board of Appeals within 20 days of the issuance of such order, requirement, decision or determination. The Board of Appeals shall decide each appeal within 60 days after the final hearing and shall give notice to all parties in interest. The decision of the Board of Appeals shall be immediately filed in its office and be a public record.

(2) The Board of Appeals shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing of the appeal and give due notice thereof to all parties and, not less than 10 days prior to the hearing date, shall publish such notice at least once in the local newspaper designated for such purpose by the City Council. See Subsection C(7).

(3) Unless otherwise specified by the Board of Appeals, decision on any appeal shall expire if the applicant fails to obtain any necessary building permit or comply with the conditions of such permit within six months from the date of authorization thereof.

(4) Every decision of the Board of Appeals shall be subject to review as provided in Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules. Such appeal may be taken by any person aggrieved or by any officer, department, board or bureau of the City.

(5) Stay of proceedings. A variance request shall stay all proceedings in furtherance of the action unless the Code Enforcement Officer certifies to the Board of Appeals, after the notice of the variance shall have been filed with him or her, that by reason of facts stated in the certificate a stay would, in his or her opinion, cause imminent peril to life or property, in which case proceedings shall not be stayed otherwise than by a restraining order which may be granted by the Board of Appeals or by the Supreme Court on application, on notice to the Code Enforcement Officer from whom the appeal is taken and on due cause shown.

(6) Information required on appeals to the Board of Appeals. All appeals from a decision of the enforcement officer to the Board of Appeals shall be in writing on forms prescribed by the Board of Appeals. Every appeal shall include the following:

(a) The name and address of appellant.

(b) The name and address of the owner of the district lot to be affected by such appeal.

(c) A brief description and location of the district lot to be affected by such appeal.

(d) A statement of the present zoning classification of the district lot in question, the improvements thereon and the present use thereof.

(e) A statement of the section or part thereof of this chapter under which the appeal is made and the reasons why it should be granted or a statement of the section or part thereof of this chapter governing the situation in which the alleged erroneous ruling is being appealed and the reasons for this appeal.

(f) A reasonably accurate description of the present improvements and the additions or changes intended to be made under this application, indicating the size of such proposed improvements, material, and general construction thereof. In addition, there shall be attached

a plot plan of the real property to be affected indicating the location and size of the lot and size of improvements thereon and proposed to be erected thereon.

(7) Public hearings regarding appeal. Upon filing with the Board of Appeals of an appeal as required by the terms of this chapter, the Board of Appeals shall fix a time and place for a public hearing thereof as follows:

(a) Public notice: By publishing a notice at least once, of not less than 10 days in advance of such hearing, in a newspaper of general circulation of the City.

(b) Notice to appellant: By mailing a notice thereof by registered or certified mail to the appellant.

(c) Notice to local officials: By delivering a notice to the Mayor, to members of the City Council, to the Planning Board, and to the City Manager.

(d) Notice to interested parties: By mailing a notice thereof to every association of residents of the City and any other interested party who or which shall have registered their names and addresses for this purpose with the Board of Appeals. Notice shall also be mailed to the owners of record of properties sharing a common boundary with the subject property and properties across a street and within 400 feet of the center line of the subject property's boundary line with said street when the application is for a use variance and within 100 feet of the center line of the subject property's boundary line with said street when the application is for an area variance in a residential zone.

(e) Nature of notice and posting. The notice required shall be posted upon instructions from the Board of Appeals and shall state the location of the building or lot in question and the general nature of the question involved. Upon filing an appeal a fee as established by the City Manager in the fee schedule shall be paid.

Appeals on the decisions of the Code Enforcement Officer and/or requests for use and area variance procedures and requirements may be obtained by contacting the City of Auburn Code Enforcement Office.

In 2012 members of the City Council approached OPED staff regarding concerns regarding home occupations, specifically the rooming and boarding of two individuals as a matter of right (City of Auburn Planning Board March 5, 2013 meeting). These concerns prompted the City to investigate the impact on single family resident neighborhoods, review the relevant sections of the zoning code and whether the zoning code was applied consistently. Subsequently the City of Auburn Zoning Ordinance was amended on May 16, 2013. Specifically Article IV including Sections 305-23, 305-24, 305-24.1, 305-24.2 and 305-26; Article V including Sections 305-32, 305-34 and 305-38; Article VIII including Section 305-64 and Article IX including Sections 305-77

and 305-80 (Ordinance #4 of 2013 Amending Chapter 305 of the Code of the City of Auburn entitled City of Auburn Zoning Ordinance). There is insufficient data to review the impact of these changing on fair housing choice specifically but not limited to familiar status.

OPED staff is currently reviewing the current City of Auburn Zoning Ordinance for ambiguities and proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are anticipated.

A recommended future action step would be to track zoning variance and local permit applications as well as substantially adjusted residential permit applications to monitor any potential impediments to fair housing. OPED indicated during interviews that the software upgrades will bring the capacity to do so .

B. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs

Each year the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awards the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to the City of Auburn to improve Auburn's neighborhoods. Citizen participation in the development of CDBG programs and the affirmative marketing of these programs is an ongoing effort. The OPED has developed a Citizen Participation Plan that is posted on the City of Auburn website. The formal citizen participation process for this year's action plan included a public meeting, and two (2) public hearings. In addition, the City gathered public input from a short community participation survey that was distributed to Cayuga County Health and Human Services Department and found online on the City of Auburn website as well as *The Citizen* website. The citizen participation meeting was held in October to solicit public input. This meeting was hosted in a neutral centrally located location, Auburn Public Theater, to encourage members of the community to attend. Attendees included current and past CDBG program participants as well as community agency representatives, neighborhood association members and the general public. Both public hearings were held at City Hall: The first meeting was held in early December at the Planning Board meeting and the second was held in was held in late January at a City Council meeting.

The City of Auburn has sought to remove barriers to accessing City programs and services. One important step to provide meaningful access to City programs is the City's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan. A super majority of individuals living in the City of Auburn read, write, speak and understand English. However, there are some people that do not speak English as their primary language. If these individuals have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English, they have limited English proficiency (August 2014 City of Auburn LEP). The plan defines what constitutes "Meaningful Access" (provides four-factor analysis) and makes provisions for Language Assistance, Translation of Documents, Formal and Informal Interpreters, Outside Resources, Monitoring and LEP Plan Distribution and Training (August 2014 City of Auburn LEP).

1. Home Repair Assistance Program

The CDBG program funds the Home Repair Assistance Program (HRAP), which allows the City of Auburn to address the housing improvement needs which have been identified within the City's neighborhoods and preserve the City's housing stock. This program provides loans primarily to owner occupants, and occasionally to investors, for rehabilitation to address major code violations and lead-based paint hazards. The HRAP is administered by the Office of Planning and Economic Development, with assistance from Cayuga County Homsite Development Corp.

HRAP provides assistance to both owner occupied home and for investors. Owner Occupied: Low and moderate income homeowners are eligible for no interest or low interest loan funds up to \$20,000. Investor: Landlords are eligible for low interest loan funds up to \$20,000 for single family homes and up to \$10,000 per unit for two to four unit homes.

2. Mortgage Assistance Program

The Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP) is for first time homebuyers in the City of Auburn. Applicants must meet income guidelines, be pre-approved by a lending institution, and complete an approved homebuyer's education course. MAP provides up to \$3,000 maybe available to a homebuyer for down payment or closing cost assistance.

3. Home Access Program

The Home Access program provides funding assistance to low and moderate income persons who are in need of home modifications and alterations in order to have full access to their residence. The program focuses primarily on the construction of ramps. The City of Auburn provides funding to ARISE (formerly Options for Independence), a not for profit agency and independent living center, who administers the program as a CDBG sub-recipient.

4. CDBG Human Services Program Funding

The City of Auburn provides CDBG Human Services Program Funding to a number of agencies including transportation, legal assistance and homeless/housing vulnerable programs that promote fair housing choice. The SCAT Van is an invaluable resource for seniors, students, the handicapped and low income residents who depend on it for transportation. With the expense of operating a vehicle, more and more people are being put into a position of dependence on public transportation. Visits to doctors' offices, pharmacies, grocery stores are not always convenient by bus, and for many of those situations, SCAT Van fills in the gap. Their mission: to provide specialized transportation services not rendered by existing social agencies for the elderly and disabled citizens of Cayuga County, at no charge. The SCAT Van program has seven fully accessible Vans offering door-to-door transportation throughout the county to needed

services for the elderly and disabled. Any person over 60 or any person under 60 with a disability that prevents using public transportation is eligible to use the service.

CDBG funding is provided for legal aid. This funding has assisted a number of low income residents receive legal consultations on a number of issues including housing, employment and access to public accommodations.

CDBG funding is provided support housing vulnerable/homeless households such as the Chapel House emergency shelter, the Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency and the Rescue Mission Family Transitions program.

5. Possible Impediments

In interviews with OPED staff who administer CDBG programs the HUD income guidelines are a barrier to fair housing choice for some people.

FY 2014 Income Limit Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person
Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits	\$13,150	\$15,000	\$16,900	\$18,750	\$20,250	\$21,750	\$23,250
Very Low (50%) Income Limits	\$21,900	\$25,000	\$28,150	\$31,250	\$33,750	\$36,250	\$38,750
Low (80%) Income Limits	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$54,000	\$58,000	\$62,000

Source:

<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2014/2014summary.odn>

OPED staff has identified a number of households who did not meet the HUD income eligibility criteria for City CDBG programs. Households that could benefit from these programs that promote fair housing choice were denied for being over income guidelines by a few hundred dollars.

C. Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Office is responsible for enforcing the Codes of New York State and Chapters 125, 178, 182, 230 and 305 of the Municipal Code of the City of Auburn. Chapter 182 deals with the housing code for residential areas. Chapter 230 deals with property maintenance and includes residential, commercial and industrial properties.

The Code Enforcement Office is also responsible for issuing permits, answering complaints for housing code violations and work being done without permits, referring to and accepting applications for Zoning and Planning Boards, Certificate of Occupancy and Home Occupancy inspections.

Code Enforcement investigates and logs complaints they receive. Since the 2009 AI, Code Enforcement has been called numerous times regarding apartment buildings where people were living but there were no functioning utilities due to non-payment by landlord/owner. One example of this was 7 Grover Street apartment building. In August 2011, Code Enforcement was called to 7 Grover Street, investigated and tenants were given 24 hours to vacate the premises. The tenants paid between \$450 and \$550 a month and utilities were included in the rent. The owner, Northeast Realty Investors, LLC, who were based in New York City failed to pay the utilities resulting in the utilities being shut off (*The Citizen*, August 17, 2011). All of the tenants were low income, two had Section 8 vouchers, two were seniors, two had disabilities and several were minorities (Auburn Housing Authority, City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce).

Code Enforcement does what it can to prevent people in these situations from ending up on the street. Code Enforcement routinely calls the City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce (HTF) for assistance placing households with no place to stay. Since 2011, Code Enforcement has called the HTF 8 times for assistance in cases where utilities shut off and people were living in violation of the City Code and had no other place to stay (City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce). In addition, Code Enforcement reports to the HTF places where homeless or housing vulnerable people are “squatting.”

During 2009-10 Code Enforcement received calls from one landlord where the door to the property was missing in violation of City Code. City Code investigated and condemned the property giving tenants 24 hours to vacate the premises. The landlord subsequently changed the lock and put the door back in place to be back in compliance with code. Options for Independence (a disability organization that was the lead agency of the federally funded Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-Housing Program HOPE) reported the landlord to the City of Auburn Homeless Taskforce (HTF) that the landlord did not want to formally evict the resident who was disabled and wanted to take a “short cut” by condemning the property. The HTF called Code Enforcement who confirmed the facts. In this extreme case the landlord used the City Code to violate the tenants to due process through housing court to reclaim the premises.

In these cases the City Code was used by private landlords in a manner that created an impediment.

VI Private Sector Impact on Fair Housing Choice

Because of limited quantitative data regarding housing discrimination in Auburn, the Rescue Mission and the City OPED chose to hold two focus groups, hold a public forum and conduct twenty phone interviews in order to explore potential instances of housing discrimination. Two 90 minute focus groups were held in Auburn at the Rescue Mission Family Transitions office. The first focus group was held on August, 2013. The second focus group was held on April, 2014. In addition a fair housing public forum was held on June 2014 at Auburn City Hall. The phone interviews were conducted between July 2013 and June 2014. In order to facilitate an open and frank conversation, participants were told that no identifying information would be included in the published report (See Appendix A)

One impediment to fair housing choice that was identified is landlords that are circumventing housing court or city code to remove tenants. These tenants often are low income households. One extreme example that occurred a few times during 2009 and 2010 was a landlord removing the front door to an apartment unit and subsequently calling City Code Enforcement on himself to get the property condemned. The result was the tenant(s) would have to immediately vacate the unit without having to go through the regular eviction process. After the tenant(s) would vacate the premises this landlord would change the locks and put the door back on the unit. The information was obtained through interviews with HOPE Program organizations (HOPE served more than 1600 people using Federal Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-Housing dollars between October 1, 2009 and December 31, 2011) and confirmed by City Code Enforcement. In addition, it is fairly common for landlords to serve 3, 7 or 30 day Notice to Quit forms on tenants without actually going through a court proceeding. Many people interviewed were not aware that as a legal tenant they did not have to vacate the premises without an eviction warrant or have the opportunity to due process in court.

Some landlords are not making needed repairs such as fixing stoves, refrigerators, heating equipment as well as not addressing lead and mold issues for low income households (Appendix A). Failure to make repairs has put these households at greater risk of becoming homeless and negatively impacted their quality of life.

Some landlords refuse to accept Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers or accept Public Assistance. Interviews with organizations, tenants and landlords are that landlords are more likely to work with Section 8 versus DHHS primarily because landlords are more familiar with HUD and vouchers are worth more. Source of income is increasing becoming a greater impediment to fair housing choice in the City of Auburn (See discussion Appendix A).

Adults not being able to get utilities turned on in their name are limiting fair housing choice in the City of Auburn. A number of households owe significant utility arrears. Some adults seek to

overcome this obstacle by placing the utilities in their children's name. Electric and gas companies typically only ask for social security numbers. Companies like NYSEG, do have a Customer Advocate to set up payment plans and get utilities turned on. However for many households with utility arrears they do not view housing that does not include utilities in the rent as an option (See Appendix A).

Screening criteria at used by many affordable housing complexes is perceived as an impediment to fair housing choice (See Attachment A).

There is insufficient data regarding lending and what neighborhoods realtors are showing members of protected classes to draw any conclusions. Discrimination against people in protected classes by real estate and other housing professionals may go undetected and unaddressed if not adequately monitored and enforced. Considering the growing number of residents in protected classes, there is a greater need for fair housing awareness, education and enforcement opportunities.

VII Informational Programs and Marketing

The City of Auburn, Auburn Housing Authority and community organizations conspicuously post Fair Housing posters highlighting discrimination based on religion, national origin, race/ethnicity and disability. During focus groups there was an identified need for annual training for agencies surrounding Fair Housing Issues and a desire for a more aggressive marketing and outreach campaign (i.e. social media, television, radio, public forums, engaging landlords) beyond simply posting Fair Housing posters. A pre and post test should be utilized during training to measure learning and aptitude on fair housing issues. Auburn should have an annual public forum regarding fair housing issues. The forum should be conspicuously advertised in the places such as local newspaper and through organizations that serve protected classes. The Auburn Citizen and local television stations such as YNN and Channel 9 news should be invited to cover the event. The public forum can be used to help promote fair housing as well as receive feedback from the community at large on possible fair housing impediments.

No agency applied for the New York State Fair Housing Enforcement and Informational funding available through the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance request for proposals when offered. The money available could have provided needed resources to train community stakeholders and raise community awareness around fair housing issues.

VIII Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

1. Actions taken since last AI to overcome identified or possible impediments

- The City of Auburn has increased the number of affordable housing units. Greenview Hills, a 30-unit complex built under the New York State Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, opened in 2010 and created low income housing and special needs population housing in a predominately “white area.”. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project, consisting of 35 units that replaced 41 existing sub-standard units, is currently in lease-up. The SE Payne/Cornerstone Project is located in one of the most “distressed” Census Tracts and the new housing is some of the most affordable and highest quality housing in the City. Both projects are evidence of increasing fair housing choice.
- The Auburn Housing Authority (AHA) has increased the occupancy rates in the three apartment complexes Melone Village, Brogan Manor and Olympia Terrace from approximately 90% in 2010 to approximately 98% in 2013 by lowering barriers for households to become eligible for public housing and more aggressive marketing. Approximately 31% of AHA occupants are “non-white” and 100% of occupants are low income or extremely low income households.
- The City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development contracted with the Rescue Mission to coordinate the City of Auburn/Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce (HTF) using \$9,500 of CDBG Administrative funds annually. The HTF has since written a 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness that was accepted by the City of Auburn City Council in November 2010; promoted housing opportunities and fair housing through the Community Awareness Committee; the creation of the Affordable Housing Committee that has increased fair housing choice; Gaps Committee that has identified gaps in housing and services especially for low income and persons with disabilities; and HMIS data that has provided public and private planners with real time data on those served in HUD funded and other participating programs.

2. Possible Impediments Identified during 2014 AI

- Landlords not making needed repairs such as fixing stoves, refrigerators, heating equipment as well as not addressing lead and mold issues for low income households. Failure to make repairs has put these households at greater risk of becoming homeless and negatively impacted their quality of life.
- Landlords have refused to lease to some households based on source of income. In particular those households that have public assistance or Section 8 housing grants.

- Landlords not following proper legal procedures when retaking possession of premises from low income households violating basic due process.
- Landlords intentionally or unintentionally misusing City Code to condemn their own premises (i.e. not paying utilities to remove tenant, removing door to apartment).
- Denial of housing opportunities based on familiar status.
- Screening criteria at affordable housing complexes.
- Adults not able to get utilities turned on in their name. A number of households owe significant utility arrears. Some adults seek to overcome this obstacle by placing the utilities in their children's name. Electric and gas companies typically only ask for social security numbers. Companies like NYSEG, do have a Customer Advocate to set up payment plans and get utilities turned on. However for many households with utility arrears they do not view housing that does not include utilities in the rent as an option. Thus limiting housing choice.
- Predatory lending by rent to own and credit card companies.
- HUD Income Guidelines to access CDBG programs. OPED has denied people for being as a little as a few hundred dollars over the guidelines for programs that would have increased fair housing choice in the city of Auburn.
- HUD rent calculation formula for Section 8 and homeless programs. HUD counts households that receive child support as part of their income and does not factor child support as an expense for those who pay it. As a result, there have been disabled individuals living on the streets and places unfit for human habitation even though they receive SSI/SSDI as income. And households that receive child support, especially low or extremely low income households, pay a higher rent and too often far into the HUD "housing vulnerable" category.
- Auburn Human Rights Commission is staffed part-time with limited resources and has a broad mission. Housing discrimination complaints are not systematically categorized by outcome and basis of complaint and forwarded to Executive branch of Auburn City government. When New York State OTDA issued request for proposals for Fair Housing Enforcement and Information programs no entity from Auburn applied for funds. The enforcement money could have helped resource the Auburn Human Rights Commission and a non-profit agency could have used the informational money to help educate and promote fair housing choice.
- Failure to utilize Social Security's Ticket to Work Program.

3. Recommendations

- Commission the City Manager and/or City Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) to study a City Land Bank. On June 29, 2011 New York Governor

Andrew Cuomo signed historic land bank legislation, allowing municipalities to take control of problem properties and then redevelop or dispose of them in a manner consistent with the public interest. The New York State Land Bank Act adds a new article 16 to the not-for-profit corporation law. This article allows municipalities to establish land banks for the purpose of acquiring real property that is tax delinquent, tax foreclosed, vacant or abandoned. Once municipalities establish a land bank, municipalities can then design, develop, construct, demolish, reconstruct, rehabilitate, renovate, relocate and otherwise improve upon banked real property. Since June 2011, 9 land banks have been created in New York State and subsequent legislation has authorized the creation of up to 20 land banks. In July 2013, New York State Attorney General's Office launched a Land Banks Community Revitalization Initiative, which is dedicating a portion of the funds awarded to New York under the National Mortgage Settlement to support legally designated Land Banks, formed under the New York State Land Bank Act of 2011 (New York State Attorney General Land Bank Community Revitalization Initiative). On October 29, 2013, the first round of grants awarded \$13 million to eight land banks statewide (*I.D.*). In the second round of funding, the Attorney General Office's Initiative will be making up to \$20 million available to land banks statewide. Applications for this second round of funding are available now (*I.D.*). Land Banks have had a tremendous impact helping to revitalize communities both nationally and through New York State. For example, in the first four years of the Cuyahoga Land Bank's (Ohio) existence "over 750 home renovations that were facilitated through private investment; field servicing and maintenance of thousands of properties pending disposition; over 2000 demolitions of seriously blighted and hazardous houses; lot re-use for homeowner yard expansions; urban agriculture, business expansion, faith-based and institutional land re-use" (Cuyahoga County Land Revitalization Corporation 2013 Annual Report page 4). In Syracuse, New York before the land bank was created, there were 3,800 properties eligible for foreclosure, and the existing collection policies were not adequately addressing the scale of the issue (Center for Community Progress, Luke Johnson February 27, 2014). With the creation of the land bank, however, the City and the County have been able to move towards a comprehensive foreclosure policy with the land bank taking title of those properties that do not get redeemed (*I.D.*). This is resulting in a marked increase in revenue coming into the city, a portion of which is being shared with the land bank to continue its good work (*I.D.*). However, Land Banks are not without challenges. Notably how to finance day to day operations and acquire capital to obtain or renovate real property (Madeline Fletcher, the Consulting Director of the Newburgh Land Bank). By commissioning the City Manager and/or OPED to sustain the viability, sustainability and impact of a City Land Bank, the City of Auburn

may gain a powerful tool to create or rehab the City's housing stock and potentially increase fair housing choice as well as foster economic development.

- Discrimination against people in protected classes by real estate and other housing professionals may go undetected and unaddressed if not adequately monitored and enforced. Considering the growing number of residents in protected classes, there is a greater need for fair housing awareness, education and enforcement opportunities.
- Track zoning variance and local permit applications as well as substantially adjusted residential permit applications to monitor any potential impediments to fair housing. According to the OPEd within the next 24 months the City will have the capacity to be able to track zoning variance and local permit applications through computer software. An analysis of these factors may identify patterns, potential impediments to fair housing choice or a lack thereof to be included in the 2019 AI.
- Apply for New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEPH) funding in August 2014 to assist protected classes end homelessness and increase fair housing choice.
- Create City of Auburn Affordable Housing Fair by encouraging financial institutions to partner with realtors and public and private housing professionals to educate, prepare and equip renters for home ownership. This will help address the high renter rate in the City and increase minority and low income household home ownership.
- Create Centralized Intake and Assessment System for all Housing Vulnerable and Homeless Persons. Currently Housing Vulnerable and Homeless Persons go agency to agency in search of assistance. This process is very timing consuming and frustrating for those seeking help and too often they are given a "referral" instead of housing assistance. The current system also promotes organization waste among agencies who ask similar questions to those seeking assistance. It is not uncommon for multiple agencies to be duplicating efforts to assist this population. A Central Intake and Assessment System will be more user friendly for consumers, streamline operations and prioritize those most at-risk.
- Track housing discrimination complaints in more detailed systematic manner. Complaints should be tracked not only by number but outcome and basis and an annual report should be provided to the Auburn City government executive branch.
- Establish Bi-Annual Fair Housing Work Group
The AI structure should provide for effective, ongoing relationships with *all* elements of the community including the chief executive with clear and continuous exchange of concerns, ideas, analysis, and evaluation of results (Fair Housing Planning Guide Volume 1, Chapter 2, page 12). Establish biannual Fair Housing work group made up Fair Housing Organizations, Local Government (i.e. City Planning, Code Enforcement, Planning Board), Advocacy groups (especially those that have housing needs of particular

segments of the population, such as people with disabilities; families with children; immigrants and homeless persons; and specific racial ethnic minorities); Housing Providers (both those who are aware of problems of providing affordable housing in Auburn and landowners); Banks and Other Financial Institutions, Cayuga Community College; Neighborhood Organizations (that can provide information, ideas or support in identifying impediments to fair housing choice at the neighborhood level and help in developing actions to address these problems); and have members of general public that are members of a protected class. The work group can review progress to plan action steps that remove impediments to fair housing choice as well as identify new or potential impediments.

Attachment A

**AFFORDABLE OR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING FOR FAMILIES IN AUBURN, NEW YORK
RENTS, WAITING LISTS, AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Complex	Development Program	Rent Structure	Wait List (# of hh)	Eligibility Criteria
Melone Village	NYS Public Housing	33% of Income	96 hh	Criminal History: Deny for Severe/Violent/Extensive&Current Rental Reference
Olympia Terrace	Federal Public Housing	30% of Income	40 hh	Criminal History: Deny for Severe/Violent/Extensive&Current Rental Reference
S.E. Payne Cornerstone	LIHTC	1 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$405+ 1 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$455+ 2 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$495+ 2 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$530+ 3 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$625+ 3 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$660+ 4 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$665+ 4 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$700+	120 hh	Criminal History: Deny for Felony in Past 10 Years, Deny for Drug Charge in Past 5 Years Rental Reference Credit Check Minimum Income Requirement or Must Have Section 8 HCV
Oak Creek	LIHTC *Converted from HUD Section 236 & Under Construction	1 Bdrm: \$472 + 2 Bdrm: \$551 + 3 Bdrm: \$747 +	8 hh 18 hh 4 hh	Criminal History: Deny for All Felonies and Misdemeanor Crimes Against a Person Rental Reference Credit Check Minimum Income Requirement or Must Have Section 8 HCV
Auburn Heights	HUD Section 8	30% of Income	2 years	Criminal History: Deny for All Misdemeanor & Felony Convictions Rental Reference Credit Check
Greenview Hills	LIHTC	2 Bdrm @ 30% AMI: \$275 + 2 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$440 + 2 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$510 + 3 Bdrm @ 50% AMI: \$550 + 3 Bdrm @ 60% AMI: \$645 +	2 bdrm = 6 months 3 bdrm = 1 year	Criminal History: Deny for All/Any Charges Rental Reference Credit Check Minimum Income Requirement or Must Have Section 8 HCV
Brogan Manor	LIHTC *Converted from NYS Public Housing	2 Bdrm: \$535 incl. 3 Bdrm: \$664 incl. 4 Bdrm: \$739 incl.	17 hh 12 hh 4 hh	Criminal History: Deny for Severe/Violent/Extensive&Current Rental Reference Minimum Income Requirement or Must Have Section 8 HCV
Genesee Gardens	HUD Section 8 Conventional	30% of Income 1 Bdrm: \$620 incl. 2 Bdrm: \$690 incl.	66 hh 15 hh	Criminal History: Deny for All/Any Convictions Credit Check Rental Reference

		3 Bdrm: \$750 incl.		
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Appendix A

Because of limited quantitative data regarding housing discrimination in Auburn, the Rescue Mission and the City OPEd chose to hold two focus groups, hold a public forum and conduct twenty phone interviews in order to explore potential instances of housing discrimination. Two 90 minute focus groups were held in Auburn at the Rescue Mission Family Transitions office. The first focus group was held on August, 2013. The second focus group was held on April, 2014. In addition a fair housing public forum was held on June 2014 at Auburn City Hall. The phone interviews were conducted between July 2013 and June 2014. In order to facilitate an open and frank conversation, participants were told that no identifying information would be included in the published report.

Focus group one consisted of seven members, four women and three men. Five participants worked for human or social services organizations and two were landlords.

Focus group two consisted of ten members, six women and four men. Three of participants had a documented disability and five were members of a racial or ethnic minority. All of the participants were either considered low or extremely low income according to HUD guidelines. Seven participants lived in public or subsidized housing.

The facilitator was provided with seven pre-arranged questions and was asked to elicit feedback on each question. However, the facilitator was allowed to have open discussion regarding relevant areas of interest as they arose. While the information from these groups is anecdotal, five findings were raised on numerous occasions and both groups agreed that they represent serious concerns. Those findings are:

Discussion Question #1: How familiar are you with the rights of a renter/homeowner and fair housing laws?

Responses from focus group 1: One person considered themselves an expert and the other six stated they are well acquainted with the rights of a renter/homeowner. Three participants stated they were somewhat familiar with fair housing laws and the other four stated they need more training.

Responses from focus group 2: Three people stated they are somewhat familiar with the rights of a renter/homeowner. Seven stated they needed from information/training. Six stated they have been afraid to assert their rights when renting for fear of jeopardizing their housing. When asked to elaborate the six stated that landlords refused or very slow to make repairs (ranging from three months to a year) in order to have a working stove, refrigerator or furnace. All ten participants had heard of fair housing and reported seeing signs and been given information

when applying for public housing. Three participants were somewhat familiar and seven stated they needed more training.

Discussion Question #2: Name the factors that are barriers or potential barriers to households looking to buy or rent?

Responses from group 1: Four of the participants were homeowners and three were renters. All seven agreed that the price of buying homes in Auburn was affordable. All participants felt based on their experience and others that if you were “middle class” that banks and financial institutions would provide financing to purchase a home. Of the three renters, two stated their high student loan payments “were their mortgage” and the other expressed concerns with the economy. All seven participants felt that many lower income households that worked with lacked the credit history, income and financial literacy to obtain and maintain a home. Five of the seven cited the age of the housing and cost of potential renovations to make homes energy efficient as a possible barrier. Three participants raised concerns over increasing property taxes a potential barrier to buy a home or become a landlord. All seven participants felt that price was biggest barrier to renting. Four participants stated poor or lack of rental history. The consensus was many more people rent than own in Auburn creating more demand for rental units. All seven felt that there was a lack of affordable housing especially for households living on fixed incomes or people working minimum or near minimum wage jobs. All seven cited households with pets having a significantly challenging time finding a landlord that allows pets.

Responses from focus group 2: Only two of the ten participants have ever owned a home. None of the ten participants presently own a home. Eight expressed a desire to own a home someday and the other two were not sure. Lack of income to pay for a mortgage, taxes, furniture and other home related expenses were identified as a barrier to home ownership. Seven of the participants stated not having savings for a down payment or if an unexpected event occurred was a barrier. Only three of the ten participants felt knowledgeable on how to apply for a mortgage. None of the ten participants felt that lenders discrimination against them or people they know. All ten participants felt the price of renting in Auburn is too high. All ten participants expressed concerns regarding rent and high cost of utilities in older units. Eight of the ten participants had been turned down at least once for rental history or lack thereof. Seven participants found it especially challenging to find apartments or houses that they could afford in a “safe” or “good neighborhood.” All ten participants stated that they and many people they know rent on the West End of Auburn and found not having a Laundromat as a barrier. Finding a landlord that accepts pets was identified by eight of the participants.

Discussion Question #3: Does the available housing stock match the current needs of the community?

Responses from group 1: Six of the participants said no and one said yes. Six felt there was enough housing in Auburn but the quality was lacking or could be improved. Six expressed concern that there are too many vacant properties that could be used for housing. The one participant that said felt there was a nice mix of high, medium and low end housing. The participant felt the City could upgrade or development more housing around areas that had water such as the Outlet near Owasco and Miller Street. All seven expressed need for more affordable housing. Two participants expressed concerns for need for more accessible housing for those with disabilities.

Responses from group 2: All ten participants said no. All ten participants expressed concerns regarding quality, safety and price. Three participants expressed concerns regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities. Seven of the ten expressed concern that some neighborhoods in Auburn were significantly nicer than others particularly near Hoopes Park, Lake Ave area near the High School and South Street area and that lacked opportunities to live in those areas due to affordability. Three participants were thankful that the City were building or upgrading playgrounds through the City especially in lower income neighborhoods.

Discussion Question #4: Have you or someone you know been denied the opportunity or steered away from buying or renting in a particular neighborhood in Auburn?

Responses from focus group 1: One human services professional stated when they call on behalf of a household looking for housing some landlords assume or flat state the household has a substance abuse or mental health issue. When the human services inquired professional why this landlord would say that the response was “why else would you be working with them?” Another participant stated challenge of assisting households in their program with pets. “Many people view their pet as a member of their family.” Many landlords have a strict no pet policy. Some households have a disability that would allow them to have a companion animal and ask for a reasonable accommodation but the perception and or experience of three participants in the group is that the landlord would deny the household for another reason or say the apartment has been rented. Three other participants stated issue of one psychologist who “abuses” companion animal by trying to allow more than one companion animal. The two landlords in the group stated it takes time and money to get an apartment ready after another tenant leaves plus advertising the apartment. They are looking for a tenant who will pay their rent on time, maintain the apartment and hopefully will want to stay for many years. One landlord prefers to work with households connected with human service agencies because “they are people who will do home visits, make sure the property is being maintained and even

provide financial assistance.” Five participants stated landlords sometimes inquire regarding ages of children, marital status and size of family. All seven participants stated they knew someone that was denied housing based on source of income, specifically public assistance or Section 8 housing voucher. Both landlords in the group accept Section and public assistance with one stating “money is green no matter where it comes from.”

No one in the group knew someone that was steered away from buying a home in a particular neighborhood but all the participants knew of someone where the seller or realtor emphasized how much the property was and whether or not they could afford it.

Responses from group 2: Seven participants complained that landlord lists available from public housing, DHHS and human services agencies all seem to have properties on the same streets. Participants cited Owasco Street, Washington Street, Jefferson Street, Franklin Street, Barber Street, Van Anden Street and Janet Street as some examples. No one in the group thought they or someone had been denied for race or ethnicity but everyone knew someone denied on basis of source of income. “Landlords always want to know if and where you work.” Another participant stated “most of the places my family could afford aren’t in areas with good neighborhoods with the better schools.” Six of the participants thought a small percentage of people who are low income “ruin it for the rest of us” by “not taking care their apartments” or “moving in people who aren’t on the lease” or “throwing loud parties that neighbors complain about.”

The participants did not know of anyone steered or denied buying a house in a particular neighborhood. However, the group stated the homes people they know can afford “are cheap and in tougher neighborhoods.” Other knew of people who “do rent to own deals” usually outside the City but “if they miss a payment they can lose everything.” Two participants stated they were aware of City programs to help home owners.

Discussion Question #4A: If you answered yes to question 4, was the problem reported to someone in authority? Who? If not, why not?

Responses from focus group 1: One participant called and referred a household to Legal Aid when the HPRP HOPE program was around (2009-2011) for assistance. Three participants called the Auburn Housing Authority (AHA) and DHHS when people were denied based on having Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher or public assistance housing grant and were told landlords do not have to accept Section 8 or public assistance.

One participant did not “push” the companion animal issue because the landlord “was one of their go to people” and “did not want to burn bridges” since they were very open to working with everyone else.

Responses from focus group 2: One participant called Auburn Human Rights Commission but did not want to file complaint. Why asked why person responded “Auburn is a small town and most of the landlords know each other and I don’t want to make it harder than it already is to find a place.” Five participants had called AHA and DHHS regarding landlords denied them based on having Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher or public assistance housing grant and were told landlords do not have to accept Section 8 or public assistance. One participant stated “it’s not what color I am but that I’m poor and there is a stigma if you are on public assistance or not working.”

Two participants were not aware that being denied for certain reasons were against the law so didn’t tell anyone in authority.

Discussion Question #5: Does the concern about lead paint and risk of lead poisoning affect housing choices for families with children?

Responses from group 1: No, All participants get or give lead paint disclosure form when renting. One participant suggested that all apartments have a visual lead assessment prior to having households like during the HPRP HOPE program. Three participants did not think that was practical.

Responses from focus group 2: Not until after the fact when the child gets sick. Two participants knew families with children who got sick from lead poisoning. A little girl put paint chips in her mouth at the apartment they were staying at on Owasco Street and was hospitalized as a result. The participant described it as a “scary and frightening experience” and said was just looking for a place they could afford. Focus group 2 was asked whether or not they or people they knew received lead disclosure forms. Three participants did not receive disclosure forms themselves and eight participants stated they knew people that did not receive disclosure forms. Six participants did not think landlords were required to provide the lead paint disclosure form.

Discussion Question #6: What unique housing challenges do Section 8 tenants face?

Responses from focus group 1: “Finding safe affordable housing that is both within Fair Market Rent and Rent Reasonable.” The majority of participants stated that most landlords once education about Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher think “it’s a good deal” and will work with households on Section 8. Two participants stated they knew landlords that will try to charge a higher amount for rent for Section 8 than they do for other apartments they have and they the agency explains it’s not rent reasonable. Five of the participants wish they were more Section 8 vouchers and shorter waiting lists. Four participants stated “our people do not apply for Section 8 at Homsite because the list is so long.”

Responses from focus group 2: Three participants stated sometimes they have a hard time explaining Section 8 to landlords who are not familiar with the program and they get frustrated. Others stated finding a place they can afford or “meets HUD standards.” Seven participants thought having Section 8 was a “huge plus” since they could “get a nicer place” and “didn’t have pay most of their money on rent.” Three participants stated AHA was very good explaining what Section 8 was, how to search for an apartment. Four the participants didn’t hear about when the AHA Section 8 list opened up. Five participants knew of people who were on the Homsite Section list “for years.” All tem participants wished Auburn had more Section 8 vouchers and shorter waiting lists.

Discussion Question #7: What unique housing challenges to households on public assistance face?

Responses from focus 1: All participants agreed simply trying to find a place you can afford. One person stated “good luck trying to find a one bedroom for \$360 a month including utilities.” Five participants thought most landlords looked negatively upon those households receiving public assistance. All seven participants stated if the landlord had a choice between a person who was working or on public assistance almost every time they would take the applicant who was employed. Five participants agreed that households on public assistance have limited housing options and all knew of a household that moved into units without a stove and/or refrigerator because that’s all they could afford. Others stated the places those households ended up “were not up to code.”

Responses from focus group 2: All ten participants stated the public assistance grant is not enough to find a decent place. Six participants stated they or someone they knew moved into places with bugs or mold because that’s all they could find. Not having basic appliances such as a stove or refrigerator or working heat. Seven participants stated they owed NYSEG money and if they had to find a new place “if the utilities were not included I would have to put them in my kid’s name.”