

**AGENDA  
CITY OF LENOIR  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
801 WEST AVENUE  
TUESDAY, MAY, 26, 2020  
8:30 A.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ITEMS OF DECISION

1. Public Hearing; Melview Place: A public hearing will be held to consider a Rezoning Request for a vacant lot located at the end of Melview Place, NCPIN#2738693845, to change the zoning from I-1 (Light Industrial) to R-R (Rural Residential) in order for the applicant to build a single family residence. Staff recommends approval based on the following Consistency Statement: The proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan because it facilitates low-density residential construction in the ETJ, consistent with the policy concepts found in the plan. The proposed amendment is reasonable and in the public interest because it will preserve the rural character of the ETJ and prevent future intense uses in a low density area. The Planning Board and Staff recommend approval. **Note:** This public hearing was deferred from the May 19 City Council meeting per remote meeting statutes.
2. FY2020 Action Plan and FY2020-2024 Unifour Consortium HOME Plan: Approval of the FY2020 Action Plan for the City of Lenoir Consolidated Plan and approval of the FY2020-2024 Unifour Consortium HOME Program Plan as submitted by Rick Oxford, Plan Administrator, Western Piedmont Council of Governments. **Note:** This public hearing was deferred from the May 19 City Council meeting per remote meeting statutes.
3. Capital Project Budget Ordinance; 2020 Unifour Consortium HOME Program: Approval of a Capital Project Budget Ordinance in the amount of \$1,495,874.00 for the 2020 Unifour Consortium HOME Program as submitted by Rick Oxford, Plan Administrator, Western Piedmont Council of Governments. **Note:** This public hearing was deferred from the May 19 City Council meeting per remote meeting statutes.
4. Capital Project Budget Ordinance; 2020 Community Development Block Grant: Approval of a Capital Project Budget Ordinance in the amount of \$146,288.00 for the 2020 Community Development Block Grant as submitted by Rick Oxford, Plan Administrator, Western Piedmont Council of Governments. **Note:** This public hearing was deferred from the May 19 City Council meeting per remote meeting statutes.
5. Resolution of Support; NCDOT: N.C.G.S. §136-11.1 requires NCDOT to notify cities and counties when project funding exceeds \$250,000 and to obtain a Resolution of Support from said local government. NCDOT must have the aforementioned resolution of support before authorization of expenditures can be

approved.

Staff recommends approval of a Resolution of Support as requested by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for the Drainage Repair Project along US HWY 321 between Clover Drive SW and Dove Street SW at Bumgarner Camping Center. The estimated cost of the project is \$500,000.

## II. BUDGET WORK SESSION IF NEEDED

III. DISCUSSION; COVID-19: City Manager Scott Hildebran will lead a discussion regarding the current COVID-19 crisis.

## IV. CITIZEN COMMENT

## V. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. Update; Public Utilities – Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas

B. Update; Public Works Director Jared Wright

## VI. Community Development

A. Lenoir Business Advisory Board: The Lenoir Business Advisory Board will conduct a Zoom meeting on Thursday, May 28 at 6:00 p.m. Kaylynn Horn, Economic Development Director, will present a report of current projects.

B. Planning Board: The Planning Board did not meet in May. Planning Director Jenny Wheelock will present a report of current projects.

C. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board: The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board did not meet in May. Kenny Story, Recreation Director, will present a report of current activities.

## VII. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

A. Update – Finance Director Donna Bean

B. Update; Public Communications – Public Information Officer Joshua Harris

## VIII. PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Update; Police Department - Chief Brent Phelps

B. Update; Fire Department –Chief Ken Hair

## IX. OTHER

A. June Calendar

## X. ADJOURN

**CITY OF LENOIR**

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM: May 13, 2020**

**I. Agenda Item:**

R1-20: Re-zoning tract at the end of Melview Place

**II. Background Information:**

The applicant requests that the City re-zone the lot at NCPIN 2738693845 from I-1 (Light Industrial) to R-R (Rural Residential). The subject property is located at the end of Melview Place in the Extra-territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The owner is seeking to subdivide the lot to build a house. A rezoning to a residential zone is required for the property to be used primarily as a residence.

See attached staff report for the analysis and consistency statement supporting this request.

**III. Staff and Planning Board Recommendation:**

Approval of the re-zoning based on the following consistency statement:  
The proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan because it facilitates low-density residential construction in the ETJ, consistent with the policy concepts found in the plan. The proposed amendment is reasonable and in the public interest because it will preserve the rural character of the ETJ and prevent future intense uses in a low density area.

**IV. Reviewed by:**

**City Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Finance Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

*D. Wheelock*

**Planning Director:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Staff Report

## Zoning Amendment

### CASE NUMBER R #1-20

## LOCATION MAP/AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



Subject Property

Left: Melview Pl

## SUMMARY

### Owner

Barry Waters

### Applicant

Devin & Alisa Waters

### Location

Vacant lot at end of Melview Pl, +/- 6.2 AC

### NC PIN

2738693845

### Project Planner

Hannah Williams, CZO

Updated May 13, 2020

### Description of Request:

The applicant requests that the City re-zone said lot at the end of Melview Pl from I-1 (Light Industrial) to R-R (Rural-Residential).

### Staff Recommendation:

Approval of the request, based on the consistency statement on page 7.

### Planning Board Recommendation:

Approval of the request

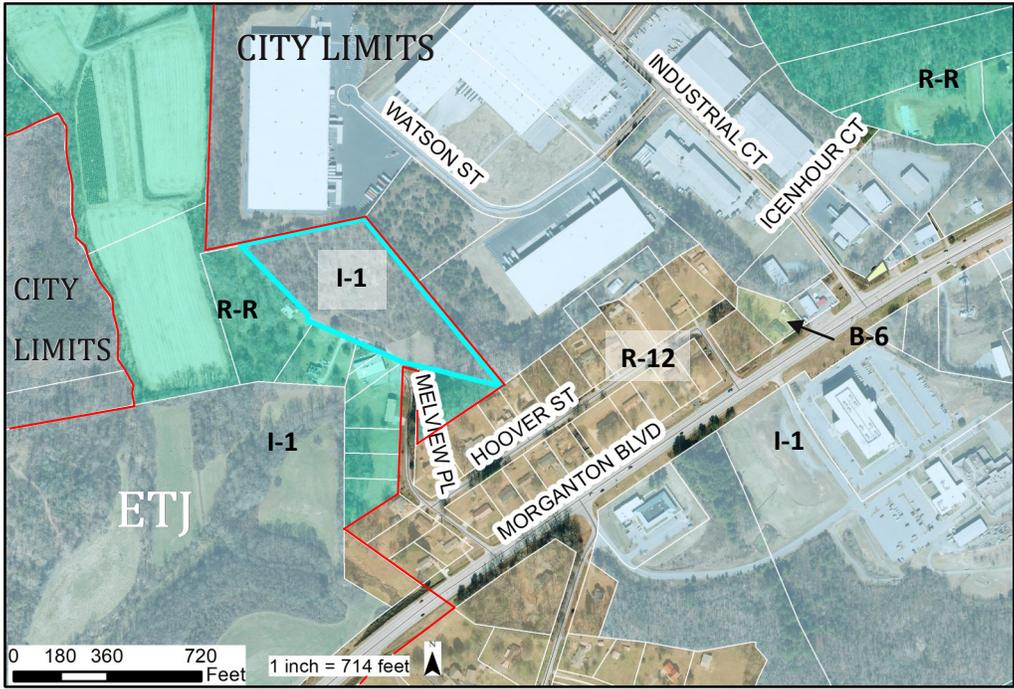
### Public Comment:

**Planning Board Meetings:** April 27, 2020. Notices were mailed to property owners within 100 ft. of the subject property on April 17, 2020.

**City Council (Public Hearing):** Scheduled for May 19, 2020.

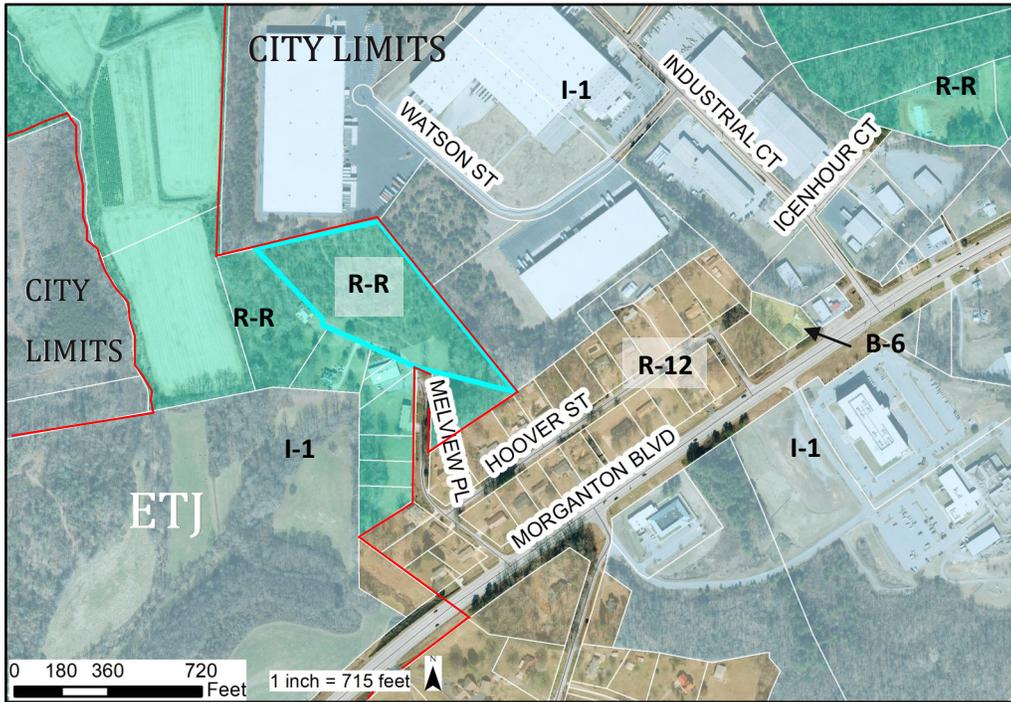
# EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONING MAPS

## Existing Zoning: I-1



Subject Property   
City Limits 

## Proposed Zoning: R-R



# AREA MAP



## BACKGROUND AND STAFF ANALYSIS

### Zoning Map Amendments

The City of Lenoir Ordinance establishes an official zoning map/atlas for the City of Lenoir. The zoning map may be amended from time to time by the City Council when public necessity, convenience, general welfare, or good zoning practice justifies the amendment. The zoning map cannot be changed until the Planning Board reviews the request and makes a report to City Council on the proposed change and the City Council holds a public hearing to consider the request.

### Reason for Request

This rezoning case rose from a minor subdivision review by staff. The owner, Barry Waters is seeking to create a lot out of a large tract of his land for his son and daughter-in-law to build a house. During the review, staff realized this intent and noted that the current zoning, Light Industrial (I-1) would not allow for the single family dwelling. In order to continue with their plans to build a house, the Waters family applied to rezone the tract to Rural-Residential (R-R).

### Intent of the Zoning Districts

I - 1 (Light Industrial) District is established to provide regulations for the development of areas generally devoted to light manufacturing, processing and assembly uses, warehousing, retail storage and other compatible uses that are limited in noise, obnoxious odors, with little to no adverse effects on adjacent areas. Some mixture of retail, wholesale, and industrial development may occur in this district, but residential uses are prohibited.

R - R (Rural Residential) District is intended to develop and maintain, in keeping with the existing and future land development patterns, those areas of extraterritorial jurisdiction for low density single family residences, double wide manufactured homes, and compatible uses. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and encourage a healthful environment for family life in areas where public or community water or public sewer may not be available. Any uses which would adversely affect or interfere with the residential character and development of these areas are excluded.

### Subject and Surrounding Properties

The subject property is located at the end of Melview Place in the Extra-territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The 6.2 acre tract is owned by Barry Waters, as are other adjacent tracts of land. Melview Place is a residential street off of Morganton Boulevard. Melview accesses a small block of midsize single family homes in the R-12 zoning district, served by city water and sewer utilities. As Melview heads north into the ETJ, the zoning changes to R-R. There are two single-family homes owned by members of the Waters family at the end of Melview Place, both served by the City's water system. There is also a large outbuilding, and a machine shop (117 Melview Pl).

The Waters land shares a boundary with the industrial park of Lenoir, where large manufacturing and distribution facilities such as UPS, Bemis, Malouf, and Polychem Alloy are located. The industrial park is also zoned I-1. At the time the industrial park was developing, the I-1 zoning district was chosen for most of the area to plan for future industrial uses. At the present, a single family home is the only planned development for the subject property.

### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

All decisions of the Planning Board and City Council should be based on consistency of the proposal with the comprehensive plan and any other officially adopted plan that is applicable. The subject property is identified as "existing nonresidential zone" on the future land use map of the Comprehensive Plan and does not offer a different use. Meanwhile, the land adjacent to the subject property and under the same ownership is designated as "existing low residential density." The Comprehensive Plan encourages policy that provides for housing. The plan also recommends that the ETJ be used for low-density residential purposes, as opposed to intense uses allowed by the industrial zoning districts. The applicant's request to rezone this property to residential would fulfill these policy concepts by allowing for the construction of a residence and preserve the rest of the tract from more intense uses.

## STAFF ANALYSIS CONTINUED

### Comparison of Allowable Uses

Sec. 600 of the Lenoir Zoning Ordinance establishes a chart of permitted and conditional uses for each zoning district. The I1 zoning district allows for many nonresidential uses, such as light manufacturing and commercial businesses. The RR zoning district allows for low density single-family residences, doublewide manufactured homes, duplexes, and other compatible land uses.

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### Comparison of Zoning Districts

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	I-1	R-R
Development Standards	Min Lot Size - 10,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Min Lot Size - 20,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
	Setbacks	Setbacks
	Front: 25'	Front: 40'
	Side Yard: 0'	Side Yard: 15'
	Abutting side Street: 25'	Abutting side Street: 25'
	Minimum Rear Yard: 0'	Minimum Rear Yard: 35'
Summary of Permitted Uses	Accessory Cottage or Apartment	Accessory Cottage or Apartment
	Adult Business/Adult Gaming Establishment	Dwelling, Single/Two-Family/Group
	Day Care Centers	Doublewide manufactured home
	Kennels	
	Hospitals	
	Eating and Drinking (with or w/o drive through)	**For conditional uses see Section 600, Table A & B in Lenoir Zoning Ordinance**
	Flea Markets	
	Green Houses	
	Manufacturing & Processing (Artisan & Light)	
	Office/Clinics	
	Public Service Facility	
	Personal Storage	
	Indoor Recreation	
	Retail (Light & Intensive)	
	Services (Automotive, Major Vehicle, Business & Personal)	
	Indoor Shooting Range	
	Studios and Specialty Schools	
	Veterinarians	
	Warehousing	

# SUBJECT PROPERTY: END OF MELVIEW PLACE



Above: Facing subject property from existing driveway (northern exposure)

Right: Aerial view of property (yellow marks area where photos are taken)



Above: Western view of property

Right: End of Melview Place, before private driveway begins

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND CONSISTENCY STATEMENT

Staff recommends that the Planning Board recommend approval of the request, based on the following consistency statement, and call for a Public Hearing for City Council to consider the request on May 19, 2020:

The proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan because it facilitates low-density residential construction in the ETJ, consistent with the policy concepts found in the plan. The proposed amendment is reasonable and in the public interest because it will preserve the rural character of the ETJ and prevent future intense uses in a low density area.

## PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Planning Board recommends approval of the rezoning request, based on the consistency statement above.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING  
CITY OF LENOIR**

A Public Hearing will be held during the Council meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. before the Lenoir City Council in the City/Council Chambers on the bottom floor of the Caldwell County Office building located at 905 West Avenue, Lenoir, NC. Notice is hereby given that the City of Lenoir and the Unifour HOME Consortium will hold a second public meeting to receive public input and comments for the FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for the City of Lenoir and the Unifour HOME Consortium, and the FY 2020 Action Plan. This Consolidated Plan, as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD), identifies needs, outlines goals, develops action plans and prepares budgets for the City of Lenoir and the Unifour HOME Consortium, for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and HOME funds for the next five years, beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2024. The City is also receiving Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus funds which will be part of this plan. The City will also be amending its FY-2019 Annual Action Plan and its Citizen Participation Plan at this meeting.

*In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

A 30-day comment period began February 07, 2020 to obtain citizen input before the plan is adopted but the comment period will be extended for 5 days following this Public Meeting. Written comments may be made in writing before May 26, 2020, to Rick Oxford, Community Development Administrator, PO Box 958, Lenoir, NC 28645.

The meeting is open to the public. Any person with a disability needing special accommodations or non-English speaking persons needing translation services should contact the City of Lenoir at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. For more information or to request a copy of the draft plan please contact Rick Oxford at (828) 322-9191, or 1(800) 735-2962 TDD.

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PUBLISH: May 09, 2020

Please run this ad on May 09, 2020.

Please run one time only.

Use Small Block Ad

**Use HUD, Fair Housing, and EEO logos.**

Affidavit Required

**Send Bill & Affidavit to:**

Attention: **Rick Oxford**

**Unifour Consortium/Lenoir CDBG**

**1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW**

**Hickory, NC 28601**

If you need further information contact: Rick Oxford at (828) 514-9191.

**CITY OF LENOIR  
FY 2020-2024 CONSOLIDATED PLAN  
HOME and CDBG FUNDING**

A Public Hearing will be held during the Council meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. before the Lenoir City Council in the City/Council Chambers on the bottom floor of the Caldwell County Office building located at 905 West Avenue, Lenoir, NC.

A 30-day comment period began February 07, 2020 to obtain citizen input before the plan is adopted, will be extended for 5 days following this Public Meeting. Written comments may be made in writing before May 26, 2020, to Rick Oxford, Community Development Administrator, PO Box 958, Lenoir, NC 28645. The City of Lenoir invites citizens to comment on its draft Consolidated Plan for 2020-2024. The draft plan can be viewed at the City's Office of Community Development, located at 801 West Ave NW. For more information or to request a copy of the draft plan please contact Rick Oxford at (828) 514-9191, or 1(800) 735-2962 TDD.

The Consolidated Plan is in two parts. The first is a five-year plan, which outlines the housing, and community development needs, and the goals, objectives and strategies that will be pursued between FY-2020 and 2024 to address these needs.

Summary of the Five Year Strategy.

The City serves as the Lead Entity for the Unifour Consortium HOME Program which includes all of local governments in Caldwell, Burke, Alexander and Catawba counties. Although significant housing initiatives have and will continue to take place by individual members of the Consortium, gaps in housing service have been identified. These include the lack of assistance for low and moderate-income household in purchasing housing, special needs housing development, affordable housing development (both rental and owner occupied), and housing counseling. The City and the Unifour Consortium has established the following significant elements for fillings these gaps and achieving its purpose of creating housing opportunities through this Consolidated Plan.

- Stimulating homeownership opportunities for very-low and low income homebuyers by the continuation of a four county-wide Down Payment Assistance Program for First-Time Homebuyers.
- Homeownership opportunities will be stimulated through home buying counseling for potential homebuyers
- Encourage and fund developers to increase the supply of standard, affordable housing through development of housing units under the HOME Program.
- Encourage and fund community based non-profit organizations through grants and loans for the purpose of in affordable housing through development of housing units under the HOME Program.
- Assist community based non-profit organizations with training and funding to help develop housing resources and staff capacity to address special needs housing throughout the Consortium area.
- Increase the supply of standard, affordable housing opportunities through the rehabilitation of existing housing units under HOME Program, utilizing deferred loans/grants to very-low and low-income families.
- Continue efforts to reduce and eliminate lead-based paint hazards through education and testing
- Provide assistance to agencies that assist homeless persons and families and those threatened with homelessness.
- Encourage efforts on a regional basis to further the study and address homelessness.
- Continuation of efforts to further Fair Housing and minimize relocation or displacement in all programs.
- Work with project purposed by local governments throughout the Consortium area which will result in affordable housing opportunities.

The City of Lenoir has established the following significant elements for achieving its strategic purposes and objectives through this consolidated plan.

- Installation of streets and sidewalks in CDBG eligible areas.
- Installation of greenways paths and/or bridges in CDBG eligible areas.
- Streets improvements in CDBG eligible areas.
- Installation of water & sewer in CDBG eligible areas.

- Elimination of slum and blight housing units and vacant buildings in the city through the acquisition and demolition and/or condemned structures.
- Increase economic and job opportunities for low and moderate income persons.
- Stimulating homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income homebuyers by providing down payment assistance through the HOME Unifour Consortium Program.
- Increase the supply of standard, affordable housing through the rehabilitation of existing structures.
- Continue supporting programs offered by non-profits that benefit low and moderate income people and meet the requirements of CDBG Program.
- Encourage efforts on a regional basis to further study and address homelessness.
- Continue efforts to create, maintain or improve new or existing parks or recreational facilities in CDBG eligible areas.
- Continue efforts to reduce and eliminate lead-based paint hazards through education and testing, utilizing services of the Caldwell County Health Department.
- Continuation of efforts to further Fair Housing and minimize relocation or displacement in all programs.
- Provide assistance and funding to Non-Profit organizations.
- Prevent, Prepare and/or respond to Coronavirus.
- Increase WiFi service to underserved low income areas.

The second part of the plan is a one-year action plan. It describes the City's allocation of federal funds in FY-2020 to address needs. The one-year plan is described below:

PROJECTED SOURCE of FUNDS:

FY- 2020 HOME Grant	\$1,145,874
Anticipated Program Income	<u>350,000</u>
Total Funding	\$1,495,874

Strategy Implementation Year 1: FY 2020 Action Plan:

PROPOSED USES

Down Payment Assistance	\$ 425,812
HOME CHDO	171,881
Development of Multi-Family Housing	384,300
New Construction	307,000
Program Income Admin	35,000
General Program Administration	<u>171,881</u>
TOTAL	\$1,495,874

PROJECTED SOURCE of FUNDS

FY 2020 Community Development Block Grant	\$ <u>146,288</u>
Total Revenues	\$ 146,288

Strategy Implementation Year 1: FY 2020 Action Plan:

PROPOSED USES

Public Facilities Improvements	\$ 117,031
Program Administration	<u>29,257</u>
Total Expenditures	\$ 146,288

Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Funds

PROJECTED SOURCE of FUNDS

Community Development Block Grant CV	\$ <u>86,056</u>
Total Funding	\$ 86,056

PROPOSED USES

Public Services	<u>\$ 86,056</u>
Total	\$ 86,056

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**Unifour Consortium/Lenoir CDBG**  
**1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NW**  
**Hickory, NC 28601**

**City of Lenoir**  
**FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan**  
**&**  
**Action Plan**  
**2020**

**City of Lenoir**  
P.O. Box 958  
Lenoir, NC 28645  
(704) 485-4245

For Submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
May, 2020

## FY 2020-2024 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

City of Lenoir

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## FY 2020-2024 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background. City of Lenoir has prepared this consolidated plan and action plan as required to received CDBG funds as an entitlement city. The purpose of the consolidated plan is to lay out housing affordability, community and economic development strategies, which address the needs of low and moderate income residents of Lenoir. The consolidated plan serves as a guide to be used in decision making for investors, non-profit organizations, community organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens. The consolidated plan, required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is designed to promote and coordinate citizen participation in the development of local priority needs and objectives.

Included within this document are a number of specific elements:

#### Housing Needs Assessment

- o The population of the City of Lenoir area is estimated at 18,228 (census 2010).
- o The median household income is \$29,369.
- o 81% of the population is white, 15% is African-American, 4% is Hispanic or Latino (of any race), 1% other (Native American, Pacific Islander, Asian, some other race).
- o The major housing issue throughout the City for very low to moderate income households is affordability, both for owner-occupied and rental housing.
- o There are 4,337 owner-occupied households in the City of Lenoir representing approximately 63% of the population.
- o Approximately 48% of all households have extremely low income to moderate incomes (census 2010).
- o 26% of owner occupied households are very low or low income households (census 2010).

#### Housing Market Assessment

- o There are few houses on the market which are affordable to first-time home homebuyers earning less than \$35,739. The average price on a re-sale house, **as of 2010**, in the Unifour area is approximately \$134,408 (NC multiple listing statistics 2010).
- o Approximately 9% of all housing units are considered suitable for rehabilitation.

#### Community Development Needs Assessment

- o Increase economic and job opportunities for low and moderate income persons.
- o Installation and improvements to sidewalks in low and moderate income areas.

- o Demolish and clear old vacant dilapidated buildings.
- o Develop new rental housing in the downtown area.
- o Installation of water and sewer lines.

#### Community Development Needs

- o Increase economic and job opportunities for low and moderate income persons.
- o Installation and improvements to sidewalks in low and moderate income areas.
- o Demolish and clear old vacant dilapidated buildings.
- o Develop new rental housing in the downtown area.
- o Installation of water and sewer lines.
- o Public Facilities Improvements to parks in low to moderate income areas, repairs to the Lenoir High School and construct of walking trails.

#### Housing Needs

- o The City of Lenoir serves as Lead Entity for the Unifour Consortium, made up of 28 local governments that receive HOME funds. Those funds will be used for downpayment assistance. It is expected that part of the HOME funds will be used within Lenoir.
- o Increased funding for rehabilitation of existing older housing is needed.
- o Abandoned and condemned buildings create blighted areas throughout the community and need to be eliminated or improved.
- o New construction of affordable housing units, both owner-occupied and rental, is needed.
- o Installation of water and sewer lines.

#### Financial Resources

The City of Lenoir community development program will be funded entirely by CDBG funds. Section 108 Loan funds will be sought as necessary.

#### Principles that Guide the Expenditure of Funds

- o The City of Lenoir strives to provide affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing for all City residents.
- o The City of Lenoir recognizes the need for on-going regional partnerships between the public, private and non-profit sectors, and continued intergovernmental cooperation between local, state and federal governments.

#### Items for Further Study

- o The city will continue working with area non-profit and regional organizations that address needs of special populations and homelessness.
- o Continued development of public and private partnerships that address housing options for the working poor should be explored.

### **CONSOLIDATED PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

The City of Lenoir's Consolidated Plan was developed and coordinated by the City of Lenoir Community Development staff. Interdepartmental cooperation was critical in developing

the consolidated plan as well as assistance from other public agencies, community groups, non-profit organizations, and other interested groups who work with or provide services to low and moderate income families. A good faith effort was made to meet with the various social service agencies that serve children, older adults, persons with disabilities and low-income families. Individual meetings with organization directors and employees were held throughout the community. Priorities were established based on citizen input, community needs and the goals and objectives of the City of Lenoir as established by the City Council and staff. The City of Lenoir contracts with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to provide technical assistance in the preparation of the consolidated plan and its subsequent implementation.

The area covered by this plan includes the Lenoir City Limits.

Service Providers Participation. Individuals, organizations and data, which were consulted for information to be included in the document, are as follows:

- \* City of Lenoir
- \* U.S. Department of Census, 2010
- \* Lenoir Public Housing Authority
- \* Western Piedmont Council of Governments
- \* Blue Ridge Community Action
- \* Caldwell County Health Department
- \* Cooperative Christian Ministries of Caldwell County
- \* Caldwell County Housing Task Force
- \* ALFA (AIDS Leadership Foothills Alliance)
- \* Family Guidance Center
- \* Employment Security Commission

Interviews were held with key individuals throughout the development process from the above organizations to receive information and data essential in order to draw a complete overview of needs. Needs that are currently being met and those that lack funding or not addressed at all were discussed. Gaps were identified through this process.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The City of Lenoir provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plans, Action Plans, any Substantial Amendments and Consolidated Annual Performance Reports. Particular emphasis is placed on participation by persons of low and moderate income who are residents of low and moderate income neighborhoods and/or slum and blighted areas.

The City of Lenoir provides citizens with reasonable and timely access to local information and records relating to the grantee's proposed use of Community Development Block Grant, HOME and other HUD funds. This is done through public meetings of the City which are advertised in a local newspaper of general circulation. Meetings will be held within the City limits in or near areas

identified as slum and blighted areas and areas of predominately low and moderate income residents. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. In-person public hearings are not required. The City of Lenoir may meet public hearing requirements with virtual public meetings if: 1) national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons; and 2) virtual hearing provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the City's certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.*

The City of Lenoir provides for public hearings to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the Consolidated Plan thru the citizen participation plan, including the development of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and any Substantial Amendments and review of program performance. Adequate notice is given for these meetings at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Every published advertisement issued by the City of Lenoir has the HUD, EEO and Fair Housing logos included. Two public hearings will be held per year to obtain resident's view and to respond to proposals and questions for the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan. Each of public hearing for will be advertised in News Topic 10 days prior. There will be a 30 day comment period prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan, and/or Action Plan. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Copies of the consolidated plan will be made available at libraries, government offices and public housing authority offices within the City. Copies of the plan and the summary will be available upon request to citizens and groups upon request. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive comments from citizens on the consolidated plan. The City of Lenoir will consider any comments or views in writing, or orally, received at the public hearing in preparing the consolidated plan, and such comments will be attached to the final consolidated plan. Timely access will be provided to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties to information relating to the consolidated plan. Prior to adoption of the Consolidated Plan or amendments, the City will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties 1) the amount of assistance available, 2) the range of activities that may be undertaken, 3) the estimated amount that will benefit low and moderate income persons, 4) plans to minimize displacement of persons, 5) the plan to assist any person displaced with types and levels of assistance, and 6) how and when this information will be made available.

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the City of Lenoir intends to minimize any displacement resulting from any HUD activities. However, should any displacement occur as a result of a HUD activity, the City intends to follow the regulations for displacement and relocation as described in 24 CFR 570.606.

Should any real property acquisition result because of a HUD assisted activity, the guidelines of 49 CFR part 24 subpart b will be followed.

The City of Lenoir will provide a translator for non-English speaking residents in the case of public hearings when the City is notified that any non-English speaking resident will attend the public hearing. An interpreter will be provided for hearing-impaired residents.

An annual audit will be performed to examine the use of CDBG and HOME funds by the City. This audit report will be available for public inspection.

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan. A public hearing will be conducted whenever amendments are proposed which add, delete or substantially change the adopted consolidated plan. Proposed amendments to the plan will be advertised in the News Topic, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive public comments. A change to the consolidated plan of 25% or more of the total budget is considered substantial. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Annual Performance Reports. A public hearing will be conducted prior to submission of the annual performance report. This public hearing will be advertised in the News Topic, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 15 days will be provided to receive public comments..

Record of Public Comments. The City will maintain on file an accurate record of comments made in reference to any stage of consolidated plan development, amendment and annual performance review.

Access to Records. Records regarding the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans and use of funds shall be maintained on file at the City of Lenoir Community Development Office for a period of not less than five years. This records are available for public inspection upon request during regular City business hours.

Technical Assistance. The City of Lenoir Community Development Office provides technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance. This assistance includes speaking at community meetings to inform persons of available grants and assistance. The Community Development Office works closely with and encourages the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments. Notices encouraging participation from residents of public and assisted housing are placed in public housing offices and in public buildings located in identified low-income areas. The City of Lenoir provides information and applications to local citizens interested in these programs

Complaints. The City will be responsible for receiving and responding in writing to written complaints and grievances related to the consolidated plan activities. City staff shall respond to written complaints and grievances in writing within 15 days where practicable.

## **PROGRAM YEAR**

The program year for the City of Lenoir shall run on a twelve-month cycle beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

## **AREA PROFILE**

Description of the City. Located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the City of Lenoir is the county seat of Caldwell County. Incorporated in 1851 and named in honor of Revolutionary War hero General William Lenoir, the city has become a major industrial center of northwestern North Carolina, as well as being the hub of commercial and governmental activity in Caldwell County.

The city has a council/manager form of government. The mayor is elected to a two-year term and the seven members of the council are elected to staggered four-year terms. Council members hold policy-making and legislative authority. They are also responsible for adopting the budget and appointing the city manager. The manager is responsible for implementing policies, managing daily operations, and appointing department heads. The city provides a full range of services. They include police and fire protection, solid waste collection, street maintenance, public improvements, planning and zoning, community and economic development, recreational activities, cemeteries and grounds keeping, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater collection and treatment. In addition to general governmental activities, the city has a special taxing district in the downtown area know as Main Street Lenoir that is devoted to development within the taxing district. As the City of Lenoir governing body exercises oversight of Main Street Lenoir, this activity is included in the reporting entity.

The furniture industry has been the major employer in the area for many years and a number of the nation's leading furniture manufacturers are headquartered in Lenoir. In recent years there has been significant diversification contributing greatly to the local economy. This diversification includes growing retail and service sector employment, medical and health care services.

### Demographics.

Total Population. Between 1920 and 2010, the total population of the City of Lenoir area increased from 14,192 to 16,793, an increase of 18.3%. Between 2000 and 2010 the population grew an additional 13.5%. This growth was due mainly to an annexation of areas to the east and south of the city.

Racial and Ethnic Composition. Whites average 81% of the population; Blacks comprise 15%;

Hispanics are 4% , and other races comprise less than 1% of the population. Major concentrations of racial/ethnic populations exist in the west - northwest portion of the city (Census tracts 301, 302 and 303).

## **MARKET AND INVENTORY CONDITIONS**

Total Households, Types and Size. According the 2010 Census of Population and Housing, there are 7,425 housing units within the City, 550 (7.4%) of which are vacant. Of the occupied units, 4,337(58%) are owner occupied. Of the vacant units only 9% are the owner occupied units and 39% are rental units. The remainder of the vacant units are seasonal, unoccupied, or abandoned dwellings.

Household Income. The Median household income in Lenoir is \$29,369. Census tract data show that three census tracts within the city have concentrations of households with incomes less than 80% of the median income - Census tracts 301, 302 and 303. These households are concentrated in areas north of Highway 18 and west of Highway 321. Low income Black Households (those comprising 10% or greater of areas of concentrated need) are located in these same areas and in the area between Highway 18 and Connelly Springs Road. It is estimated that 3,470 households have incomes less than 80% of the median; 2,018 households with incomes below 50% of the median; and 999 households with incomes below 30% of median. Data are not available detailing cost burdens per household within the city limits.

Thirteen thousand three hundred and thirty (38.3%) of the total households with incomes less than 80% of the median are those occupied by persons age 65 or older.

Condition of Housing Units. Of the 7,461 housing units in the City of Lenoir area, approximately 1,720 (27%) are considered to be substandard, and those suited for rehabilitation accounted for 1,652 or 96% of all substandard units. These figures are based on the number of homes built before 1950 plus the number of homes that lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Census data do not provide the condition of a housing unit beyond its age, completeness of plumbing and kitchen facilities, type of heat, water source and type of sewage disposal. An older home will need more repairs and updating but may be perfectly suitable for rehabilitation. A home lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities may not be cost effective to rehabilitate.

Data shows that only a very few housing units, less than 1 percent, lack complete kitchen and plumbing facilities.

Public and Assisted Housing Inventory. The City of Lenoir Housing Authority (LHA) owns 254 units of rental housing. A private management company manages ninety-seven of their units, and 157 of are managed by the housing authority. There are a total of 20 efficiency apartments, 48 one-bedroom units, 101 two-bedroom units, 67 three-bedroom units and 18 four-bedroom units in the PHA program. The vacancy rate is 0% with a waiting list of 169 needy families. Between 1993 and 1995 the Lenoir PHA spent approximately \$680,000 on the housing units for

rehabilitation.

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments Housing Authority provides housing subsidies for 321 families through the Section 8 certificate programs throughout Caldwell County. There are currently 237 families on the waiting list for the Western Piedmont Council of Governments Section 8 program in Caldwell County. Neither of the two housing authorities operating in Lenoir anticipates losses from their housing inventories.

Low Income Minority Households. Black households are the predominant minority in the City of Lenoir. There are 964 occupied Black households within the City. These account for 14% of the total occupied housing units. Of these, 616 (64%) have household incomes below the median income of \$29,369. Clearly a disproportionate housing need exists for Black households in within the City. Low income Black Households are located in Census Tract 301, 302 and 303 - areas north of Highway 18 and west of Highway 321 and in the area between Highway 18 and Connelly Springs Road.

Housing assistance focused in these areas is an ongoing need. Prior to achieving CDBG entitlement status, the City of Lenoir traditionally used CDBG, HOME and other housing funds for various forms of assistance for these areas. Assistance will continue to be needed for community development projects, housing rehabilitation, rental assistance, and homeownership.

Inventory of Facilities and Services for the Homeless and Persons Threatened with Homelessness. Homeless Needs. The homeless population is extremely difficult to estimate due to the various causes of homelessness and individuals involved. The 2010 Census states there are 15 homeless persons in Lenoir. Lenoir Emergency Outreach Shelter (LEOS) offers overnight shelter and a meal to homeless men. The Family Care Center of Catawba Valley offers a 90-day program providing housing to homeless families with children in thirteen units in Catawba County. Although they have increased their housing units to accommodate additional families, demand is still greater than their supply. Further, the Family Care Center operates a two-unit transitional housing program in Long View (Catawba County) to accommodate families for up to a year. Because of their central location within the area and the lack of other family shelters, they attract families from throughout the area. No data exists about the number of homeless minority persons or families.

Shelter Home of Caldwell County offers shelter to women and children for up to two weeks. Shelter Home accommodates up to 30 women and children at a time and offers meals and counseling and support groups. Programs include counseling for rape and sexual assault, court advocacy, an abuser treatment program, and early childhood support.

Shelter Home also shelters homeless women with children for up to two nights. Both the Shelter Home and LEOS House serve homeless persons from throughout Caldwell County.

The City of Lenoir serves as Lead Entity for the Unifour HOME Consortium, which

prepared a Continuum of Care plan for use by area non-profit organizations in their applications for homeless assistance funds. The City of Lenoir is included in that care plan narrative.

Inventory of Supportive Housing for Non-Homeless Persons with Special Needs. Persons with HIV/AIDS. The Center for Disease Control estimates that 1 in every 250 persons nationwide is infected with HIV. The Caldwell County Health Department reports that as of 2010 there were 45 persons Caldwell County that have HIV. Of these, 21 had AIDS. Further, 19 of these persons were receiving treatment for HIV and AIDS in Caldwell County. One-fourth of these persons can expect to become homeless, due both to the individual's inability to maintain employment and their caregiver's inability to adequately provide care. Funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency is used to assist these persons in finding shelter. Through consultation with the sole service provider addressing the needs of persons with HIV and AIDS and their families, the primary housing need identified is group housing or shared housing whereby those who become homeless can find shelter, and where necessary services can be economically provided. Based on these figures, a minimum of 6 units, are needed in Caldwell County to house those with HIV/AIDS.

Elderly. In 2010, older adults within the City age 60 + numbered 3,850, representing 23% of the total population. Frail elderly, who is generally described as those age 85 +, totaled 413, or 2.5% of the population.

Within the City of Lenoir, there are 250 nursing home beds and 486 adult care home beds. Increasing or decreasing the number of these beds is beyond the scope or purpose of the City of Lenoir Consolidated Plan. The nursing in Lenoir are as follows:

- o Lenoir Healthcare senior citizen center
- o Grandview Villa Assisted Living
- o Brookdale Lenoir
- o Koinonia
- o Shaire Center
- o TLC Family Care Home
- o Gateway Rehabilitation Center

There are three designated elderly apartment complexes within Lenoir -- Koinonia Apartments, LHS (Lenoir High School) Apartments and Arbor Glen Apartments. Combined these two complexes contain 128 units. Rent in both apartment buildings is based on income and currently report waiting lists. Koinonia currently reports a waiting list of 34 and LHS a waiting list of 16. Koinonia Apartments has constructed 40 new assisted living units. Arbor Glen has constructed 50 senior apartment units.

Consultation with the Western Piedmont Area Agency on Aging, which must complete a regional aging services plan every two years, the identified priority housing needs for older adults

in the service area are:

- o Owner occupied single family rehabilitation. In order to allow older adults to age in place, continued effort by the North Carolina Association of Area Agencies on Aging is being made to increase state and federal funding for in-home and community based services for older adults. However, many older adults live in homes that are themselves older and in need of repairs or modifications.
- o Assisted Living. A survey of older adults throughout the Unifour area revealed that there is a need for multi-family units that are linked directly to supportive services.

It is estimated that 179 persons age 60 and over are in need of supportive housing in the City of Lenoir at any one time. The types of support can range from assistance with transportation, shopping and housework to activities of independent living. However, it must be noted that long term care facilities and older adult apartments constantly have openings due to deaths and persons making other living arrangements.

Persons with Disabilities. Approximately 24% of all persons has some type of disability; yet, it is also estimated that less than one percent of existing housing units in the City of Lenoir area are accessible for disabled persons.

According to L.I.N.C., Live Independently Networking Center, persons with disabilities fall into two categories - those that are in need of assisted housing and those that need no financial assistance. In both categories the number of available, accessible units is inadequate. The North Carolina Building Code requires that any multifamily project containing more than eleven units construct 2% of the total units to accommodate handicapped persons. This translates into a development of 50 units must have at least one unit that meets accessibility standards.

LINC staff state that over 90% of the inquiries they receive are from individuals seeking accessible rental housing. According to LINC, approximately 10% of all persons with disabilities need some form of supportive housing. In Lenoir, that figure would be approximately 192 persons. The precise type of supportive housing would depend on the disability.

Needs Assessment. Lenoir is a city in need of affordable housing for very low and low-income families. Looking at the 2010 Census data, the median value of a home is \$79,800. An income of \$18,200 is necessary to purchase a home priced at that level. In 2010 approximately 2,350 households had incomes below that level. Out of the 4,365 owner-occupied households in the City of Lenoir approximately 40% are very-low to moderate income households. There are a total of 2,548 rental units, and approximately 72% of all renter households are very-low and low-income families. This indicates a gap between the need of safe and decent housing units among the working poor and the availability of affordable units. Elderly-occupied households and single wage earner households often do not have the financial resources of other families and tend to

experience greater need.

The City of Lenoir is in need of additional affordable housing for very low and low-income families. In 2010, 37 percent of all occupied units were rental units, indicating a need for homeownership assistance for low income families. Further, elderly households and single wage earner households often do not have the financial resources of other families and tend to experience greater need.

Lead Based Paint Needs. It is estimated that 61.5% of the housing stock, or 4563 units, contains lead based paint. Of these, it is estimated that between 20% and 26% of the occupied rental units contain lead based paint. This is lower than the state estimated average of 32%. In 1995, 970 children were tested for elevated lead levels. Thirty-nine of the children tested had lead levels higher than normal and considered dangerous. No children tested had lead levels significant enough to be classified as poisoned.

Available Resources. The City of Lenoir began receiving funds for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as an entitlement city in July of 1996. The allocation of Community Development Block Grant Funds from HUD will be \$146,288 for FY 2020. This amount varies from year to year.

Barriers to Affordable Housing. Several factors combine to create significant barriers to affordable housing. These include lower incomes, development codes that increase housing costs and lack of information about housing resources and obtaining housing.

Requirements in development and zoning codes have generally increased in the past decade. Most of the development requirements serve to improve and maintain better living environments in the long run, but developers pass increased costs onto the consumer, thereby driving up housing costs. Developers also add building restrictions to the deeds in new developments increasing costs. Further, real estate agent fees, mortgage origination fees, closing costs and loan costs drive up housing costs.

Conversely, the lack of development standards in past decades has left many units in the housing stock substandard due to poorly planned lots, inadequate infrastructure, and housing construction codes. Such homes are more affordable but can be physically unsafe, or poor investments for owners and mortgage investors.

Lack of information about obtaining housing is also seen as a barrier. Many local, state and federal programs exist to assist families purchase homes, rehabilitate homes or obtain rental housing. Yet the lack of a central source of information and outreach efforts hamper efforts to assist families seeking housing.

LINC identified several barriers to affordable housing for persons with disabilities. Federal

and state codes dealing with accessibility do not take into account the various types of disabilities or handicaps. Units designed for handicapped individuals may not be vacant. Public transportation may be a requirement may be a need for a disabled person, limiting their choices based on transportation service routes. Handicapped persons not needing rental assistance must pay additional costs to modify their homes based on their own disability.

## **FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

Summary of the Five Strategy. The City of Lenoir has established the following significant elements for achieving its strategic purposes and objectives through this consolidated plan.

- Repay Section 108 loan using annual allocation of CDBG funds
- Implement the above with the use of pending Section 108 Loan.
- Elimination of slum and blight housing units and vacant buildings in the city through the acquisition and demolition and/or condemned structures.
- Increase economic and job opportunities for low and moderate income persons.
- Stimulating homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income homebuyers by providing downpayment assistance through the HOME Unifour Consortium Program.
- Installation of sidewalks in CDBG eligible areas.
- Installation of greenways paths and/or bridges in CDBG eligible areas.
- Installation of water & sewer in CDBG eligible areas.
- Increase the supply of standard, affordable housing through the rehabilitation of existing structures.
- Continue supporting programs offered by non-profits that benefit low and moderate income people and meet the requirements of CDBG Program.
- Encourage efforts on a regional basis to further study and address homelessness.
- Continue efforts to create, maintain or improve new or existing parks or recreational facilities in CDBG eligible areas.
- Continue efforts to reduce and eliminate lead-based paint hazards through education and testing, utilizing services of the Caldwell County Health Department.
- Continuation of efforts to further Fair Housing and minimize relocation or displacement in all programs.

Priority Analysis and Strategy Development. The City of Lenoir has established its general priorities for allocating federal, state and private resources expected to be available over the five-year period of the consolidated plan. The data obtained from the 2010 Census and HUD Databooks indicate that low-income small related, low-income large related and elderly owner households were more likely to experience housing problems than other sub-populations. The growing number of severe housing problems in the 0 to 80% income categories, indicate the need for rehabilitation assistance. The City will continue to support applications for elderly and low-income housing rehabilitation and construction.

The City also supports any applications for funds which goals are to provide affordable, safe and decent housing to low and moderate income individuals and families.

Sources of Funds. All program activities will be paid by federal CDBG funds. Section 108 Guaranteed Funds may be utilized on activities that require funding in excess of the City's annual grant allocation.

Affordable Housing. The City of Lenoir has established its general priorities for allocating federal, state and private resources expected to be available over the next five year period. The data obtained from the 2010 Census of Population and Housing and HUD Databooks indicate low-income households are more likely to experience housing problems. Older adults will continue to experience housing problems due to that population's decreased incomes, the age of their homes and their increasing frailty as they age. The City of Lenoir will continue to support individual applications for HOME, CDBG and Rural Development Corporation funds to address these needs.

Priority has been given to improving areas of the city through infrastructure improvements and improvements to public facilities. The City of Lenoir supports any applications, which have goals of providing affordable, safe and decent housing to low and moderate-income families and individuals.

Public Housing Improvements. The Lenoir Housing Authority plans to improve the management and operation of the public housing units by applying for funds to refinance the 97 units currently managed by a private management company. Further, the LHA cooperates with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to increase homeownership among residents, and encouraging residents to apply for homebuyer assistance funds. The LHA also coordinates efforts with the Lenoir Police Department to reduce crime in at their units.

Public Housing Resident Initiatives. The LHA will work in the coming five-year period to increase resident awareness of energy factors, homeownership possibilities, credit counseling, drug elimination, and community activities. Together with the City of Lenoir, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, Blue Ridge Community Action the LHA hopes the residents of the authority will be able to accomplish more self-reliance and independence.

Homelessness and Other Special Needs. The City of Lenoir will work closely with the existing network of agencies and organizations that are addressing the needs of the homeless and those threatened with homelessness and those with special needs housing. The City of Lenoir will work with regional efforts by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments or the Unifour Consortium to study the causes and possible remedies for homelessness.

Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction. The number of homes built before 1970 is 4563 all of which

can be classified as potential hazards. Any units assisted with CDBG funds will be addressed for lead hazards on a unit-by-unit basis in accordance with all D-HUD regulations. With limited funds available, the abatement of lead from all units within the city is not possible. Lead based paint hazard and abatement information is made available at the CDBG office for all city residents upon request. Approved measures such as wet scraping to reduce the amount of lead disturbed during rehabilitation will be used.

Institutional Structure and Intergovernmental Cooperation. The City of Lenoir has a strong network of private institutions, non-profit and public agencies that carry out the distribution of funds allocated to help the very-low and low-income families of the City. The staff of the Lenoir Community Development Department has accumulated experience in carrying out these programs. Reporting directly to the city manager and the city council the community development department receives valuable input into most of their activities.

The City of Lenoir will continue to work with area service providers and agencies to remain aware of existing programs and make referrals as needed to individuals and families. The WPCOG staff assigned to the City of Lenoir will continue to be involved with various housing, aging, social service and non-profit agencies in order to stay abreast of other activities and expenditures.

Anti-poverty Strategy. The City of Lenoir is very aggressive in attracting new and diverse industries and commercial businesses into the area. Caldwell County attracts daily commuters from across the western piedmont areas of North Carolina and others that migrate to the county for employment.

Monitoring Standards and Procedures. The City of Lenoir will take every measure to ensure the City of Lenoir's long term compliance, completely and correctly, with provisions of this consolidated plan and all of the provisions of the CDBG program.

The City of Lenoir is committed in its efforts to develop and provide affordable housing and to meet the goals of their strategies outlined in this plan. The City of Lenoir will review the goals of their one-year strategy on a quarterly basis to determine progress made toward reaching the goals. The City of Lenoir shall be responsible for monitoring only those funds that it receives from DHUD. Each year's action plan will include specific measures by which all CDBG projects will be monitored by the City of Lenoir.

## ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN 2020

### Strategy Implementation-Year 1

<b>CDBG Funding</b>	<b><u>\$146,288</u></b>
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b><u>\$146,288</u></b>

In accordance with 24 CFR Part 91.220 of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development act of 1974, as amended, the City of Lenoir's One Year Action Plan outlines the activities that will be funded using CDBG funds.

#### A. Resources

##### 1. Federal

Federal resources are expected to be available to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the strategic plan of the CDBG Program. The City anticipates receiving \$146,288 in FY 2020. Any funds programmed for previous years, but not spent will be carried over to the 2020 programs.

#### B. Activities to be Undertaken

Priority 1. Public Facilities Improvements -\$117,031 for renovations at the Old Lenoir High School Complex which includes the Gym, the Auditorium and Mack Cooke Stadium.

Geographic Distribution: City Limits.

Priority 2: Program Administration - \$29,257 in CDBG funds to provide efficient and timely administrative services. Administration will be a key component to the success of the City of Lenoir programs. The staff will be responsible for preparing all documents required of the CDBG Program, monitoring and other requirements of the Program.

## V. OTHER ACTIONS

**A. Affordable Housing.** The City of Lenoir has established its general priorities for allocating federal, state and private resources expected to be available over the five year period. The data obtained from the 2010 Census of Population and Housing and HUD Data books indicate low-income households are more likely to experience housing problems. Older adults will continue to experience housing problems due to that population's decreased incomes, the age of their homes and their increasing frailty as they age. The City of Lenoir will continue to support individual applications for HOME, CDBG and Rural Development Corporation funds to address these needs.

Priority has been given to improving areas of the city through infrastructure improvements

and improvements to public facilities. The City of Lenoir supports any applications, which have goals of providing affordable, safe and decent housing to low and moderate-income families and individuals.

**B. Homelessness and Other Special Needs.** The City of Lenoir will work closely with the existing network of agencies and organizations that are addressing the needs of the homeless and those threatened with homelessness and those with special needs housing. The City of Lenoir will work with regional efforts by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments or the Unifour Consortium to study the causes and possible remedies for homelessness.

**C. Non-Housing Community Development Needs.** The City of Lenoir will seek to improve the downtown business area. This revitalization of this area is of extreme importance in maintaining the character of the City. New businesses, restaurants, and industry are needed to create new jobs and to increase the viability of the City.

**D. Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction.** The number of homes built before 1970 is 4563 all of which can be classified as potential hazards. Any units assisted with CDBG funds will be addressed for lead hazards on a unit-by-unit basis in accordance with all D-HUD regulations. With limited funds available, the abatement of lead from all units within the city is not possible. Lead based paint hazard and abatement information is made available at the CDBG office for all city residents upon request. Approved measures such as wet scraping to reduce the amount of lead disturbed during rehabilitation will be used.

**E. Public Housing Improvements.** The Lenoir Housing Authority plans to improve the management and operation of the public housing units by applying for funds to refinance the 97 units currently managed by a private management company. Further, the LHA cooperates with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to increase homeownership among residents, and encouraging residents to apply for homebuyer assistance funds. The LHA also coordinates efforts with the Lenoir Police Department to reduce crime in at their units.

**F. Public Housing Resident Initiatives.** The LHA will work in the coming five-year period to increase resident awareness of energy factors, homeownership possibilities, credit counseling, drug elimination, and community activities. Together with the City of Lenoir, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, Blue Ridge Community Action the LHA hopes the residents of the authority will be able to accomplish more self-reliance and independence expenditures.

**VI. MONITORING.** The City of Lenoir will take every measure to ensure the City of Lenoir's long-term compliance, completely and correctly, with provisions of this consolidated plan and all of the provisions of the CDBG program.

The City of Lenoir is committed in its efforts to develop and provide affordable housing and to meet the goals of their five-year strategy outlined in the consolidated plan. The City of Lenoir will review the goals of their one-year strategy on a quarterly basis to determine progress

made toward reaching the goals. The City of Lenoir shall be responsible for monitoring only those funds that it receives from DHUD.

All persons receiving assistance under the CDBG program must meet low and moderate-income requirements as determined annually by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Any acquisition and relocation will comply with the Uniform Relocation Act.

Any demolition/clearance/construction/site preparation work will be monitored in accordance with Davis-Bacon requirements. Environmental clearance will be received prior to expenditure of any HUD funds. Any asbestos and/or lead-based paint abatements will be done in accordance with applicable state and federal governing laws.

For every \$30,000 in CDBG funds spent on economic development, at least 1 new job will be created for low and moderate-income residents. All required procedures will be followed to ensure compliance with national objective to benefit low to moderate-income persons.

All construction work will be monitored in accordance with any Davis-Bacon requirements.

In order to ensure compliance the Western Piedmont Council of Governments will conduct the monitoring for this program.

**VII. Fair Housing – Barriers to Affordable Housing.** The City of Lenoir makes every effort in supporting affordable housing. The City serves as the Lead Entity for the Unifour Consortium which has 28 participating local governments. Within the Consortium, there are varying degrees of adopted zoning and land use controls, fees and other costs that will affect the cost of housing. Adopted zoning and subdivision codes that are currently in force are not considered to be excessive or exclusionary. The Consortium staff, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, will administer an Individual Development Account program with CDBG funds received by counties. These IDA program will be administered and available throughout the Unifour. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments is a HUD-approved comprehensive housing counseling agency, and as such, it will also continue to provide Home Equity Conversion Mortgage counseling to older adult homeowners.

Lack of education about purchasing home can be a barrier to affordable housing. The lack of a job, money, or even a person's language can be a barrier to fair housing. An analysis of impediments to fair housing has identified various hurdles to fair housing and suggest ways to make housing opportunities more fair.

**VIII. ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY.** The City of Lenoir is seeking new and diverse industries

and commercial businesses for the City. Data from the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina states that unemployment in Caldwell County averaged 6.2% in 2015 due to the loss of furniture and textile jobs to overseas labor market. Job-training programs through the Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) provide skill training and job placement assistance to over 150 adults and youth each year within Caldwell County.

**IX. COORDINATION OF EFFORTS.** The City of Lenoir has a strong network of private institutions, non-profit and public agencies that carry out the distribution of funds allocated to help the very-low and low-income families of the City. The staff of the Lenoir Community Development Department has accumulated experience in carrying out these programs. Reporting directly to the city manager and the city council the community development department receives valuable input into most of their activities. The City of Lenoir will continue to work with area service providers and agencies to remain aware of existing programs and make referrals as needed to individuals and families. The WPCOG staff assigned to the City of Lenoir will continue to be involved with various housing, aging, social service and non-profit agencies in order to stay abreast of other activities.

**X. SUMMARY OF CITIZEN COMMENTS.** A summary of citizen comments regarding the Consolidated Plan or the proposed 2020 Action Plan will be included here :

**XI. CERTIFICATIONS**

**Unifour Consortium  
City of Lenoir Lead Entity  
FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan  
&  
Action Plan  
2020**

**Unifour Consortium**

City of Lenoir, Lead Entity

P.O. Box 958

Lenoir, NC 28645

(704) 514-9191

For Submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
May, 2020

CONSOLIDATED PLAN  
FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan  
Unifour HOME Consortium

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## FY 2020-2024 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background. Unifour Consortium, comprised of four counties and twenty-four municipalities, located in the western piedmont region of North Carolina have prepared this Consolidated Plan as required to receive HOME funds and an HOME entitlement jurisdiction. The total twenty-eight participating Consortium members are contiguous and are in agreement as to the components of this plan. The Consolidated Plan serves as a guide for decision-making by investors, non-profit organizations, community organizations, elected officials and concerned citizens. The Consolidated Plan, required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is designed to promote and coordinate citizen participation in the development of local priority needs and objectives.

Included within this document are a number of specific elements:

#### Housing Needs Assessment

- o The population of the Unifour Consortium area is estimated at 363,036 o The median household income for the four county area is 41,360.
- o 89.2% of the population is white, 7.1% is African-American, 3.7% other (Native American, Pacific Islander, Asian). 6.5% of the population is Hispanic or Latino (of any race).
- o The major housing issue throughout the Unifour area for very low to moderate income households is affordability, both for owner-occupied and rental housing.
- o There are 98,389 owner-occupied households in the Unifour area representing approximately 72% of the population.
- o There are 38,089 renter households in the area, representing **28%** of the population.
- o Approximately 38% of all households have extremely low income to moderate incomes (Census 2000).
- o Nearly 29,775 owner occupied households are very low or low income households (Census 2010).

#### Housing Market Assessment

- o There are few houses on the market which are affordable to first-time homebuyers with households earning less than \$40,536. The average purchase price on a new or existing house in the Unifour area is approximately \$134,408.
- o Approximately 8.9% of all low-income owner-occupied households are experiencing housing problems.
- o Approximately 19% of all housing units are considered suitable for rehabilitation.

### Needs Assessment

- o There is a need for increased assistance for first-time homebuyers, including down-payment assistance and housing counseling.
- o There is a need for increased new construction of single-family affordable housing.
- o There is a need for increased new construction of affordable rental units for those with special needs, particularly older adults.
- o There is a need for increased funding for rehabilitation of existing older housing.

### Housing Needs Strategies

- o First-time low and moderate income homebuyers: HOME funding will be spent to provide down-payment assistance to approximately 43 low and moderate income families annually in the Unifour area.
- o Funding for community based non-profit groups that address the housing needs of the elderly, homeless, those threatened with homelessness, persons with HIV/AIDS, handicapped, and to those developing affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate income families: An average of Fifteen percent of the total annual HOME funding will be available for qualified non-profit organizations that address the housing needs of these populations.

### Financial Resources

- o The Consortium will be funded entirely by HOME funds, investments from non-profit organizations and private investments.

### Principles that Guide the Expenditure of Funds

- o The Unifour Consortium strives to provide affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing for all Unifour residents.
- o The Unifour Consortium recognizes the need for an on-going regional partnership between the public, private and non-profit sectors, and continued intergovernmental cooperation between county, municipal, regional, state and federal governments.
- o The Unifour Consortium promotes that affordable housing be available throughout the Unifour.

### Items for Further Study

- o Efforts should continue with area non-profit organizations that address needs of special populations and homelessness.
- o Continued development of public and private partnerships that address housing options for the working poor should be explored.
- o Outreach efforts are needed for immigrant populations to inform them of housing program and opportunities.

### Applicability

The Unifour Consortium, comprised of four counties and twenty-four municipalities therein, located in the western piedmont region of North Carolina has prepared this Consolidated

Plan as required By HUD to received HOME funds. The total twenty-eight participating Consortium members are contiguous and are in agreement as to the components of this Plan. (Please see map 1). The CDBG entitlement cities of Hickory, Lenoir and Morganton, all members of the Unifour Consortium have submitted their own Consolidated Plans. By reference those plans are incorporated into this Consolidated Plan.

## **CONSOLIDATED PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Lead Entity. The City of Lenoir acts as lead entity responsible for overseeing the development of the Unifour Consortium Consolidated Plan, to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The City of Lenoir has contracted with Western Piedmont Council of Governments to provide technical assistance during the development process and the resultant implementation. As lead entity, the City of Lenoir has provided for public meetings with in the Unifour Consortium program area to receive input from citizens, agencies, and interested parties concerning the identification of community needs and the development of strategies to address those needs.

A good faith effort was made to receive input from agencies, groups, organizations and others throughout the Unifour Consortium program area. Those consulted included:

- \* All 28 Consortium Member Local Governments
- \* Hickory Housing Authority
- \* Lenoir Housing Authority
- \* Morganton Housing Authority
- \* Western Piedmont Council of Governments
- \* Blue Ridge Community Action
- \* The Departments of Social Services of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties
- \* ALFA (AIDS Leadership Foothills Alliance)
- \* Family Care Center of Catawba Valley
- \* Cooperative Christian Ministries within Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties.
- \* Family Guidance Center
- \* Employment Security Commission.
- \* Foothills Area Programs
- \* Habitat for Humanities

Interviews were held with key individuals throughout the development process from the above organizations to receive information and essential data to draw a complete overview of needs. Needs that are currently being met and those that lack funding or not addressed at all were discussed. Gaps were identified through this process.

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The City of Lenoir provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plans, Action Plans, any Substantial Amendments and Consolidated Annual Performance Reports. Particular emphasis is placed on participation by persons of low and moderate income who are residents of low and moderate income neighborhoods and/or slum and blighted areas.

The City of Lenoir provides citizens with reasonable and timely access to local information and records relating to the grantee's proposed use of Community Development Block Grant, HOME and other HUD funds. This is done through public meetings of the City which are advertised in a local newspaper of general circulation. Meetings will be held within the City limits in or near areas identified as slum and blighted areas and areas of predominately low and moderate income residents. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. In-person public hearings are not required. The City of Lenoir may meet public hearing requirements with virtual public meetings if: 1) national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons; and 2) virtual hearing provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the City's certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.*

The City of Lenoir provides for public hearings to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the Consolidated Plan thru the citizen participation plan, including the development of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and any Substantial Amendments and review of program performance. Adequate notice is given for these meetings at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Every published advertisement issued by the City of Lenoir has the HUD, EEO and Fair Housing logos included. Two public hearings will be held per year to obtain resident's view and to respond to proposals and questions for the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan. Each of public hearing for will be advertised in News Topic 10 days prior. There will be a 30 day comment period prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan, and/or Action Plan. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Copies of the consolidated plan will be made available at libraries, government offices and public housing authority offices within the City. Copies of the plan and the summary will be available upon request to citizens and groups upon request. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive comments from citizens on the consolidated plan. The City of Lenoir will consider any comments or views in writing, or orally, received at the public hearing in preparing the consolidated plan, and such comments will be attached to the final consolidated plan. Timely access will be provided to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties to information relating to the consolidated plan. Prior to adoption of the Consolidated Plan or amendments, the City will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties 1) the amount of assistance available, 2) the range of

activities that may be undertaken, 3) the estimated amount that will benefit low and moderate income persons, 4) plans to minimize displacement of persons, 5) the plan to assist any person displaced with types and levels of assistance, and 6) how and when this information will be made available.

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the City of Lenoir intends to minimize any displacement resulting from any HUD activities. However, should any displacement occur as a result of a HUD activity, the City intends to follow the regulations for displacement and relocation as described in 24 CFR 570.606. Should any real property acquisition result because of a HUD assisted activity, the guidelines of 49 CFR part 24 subpart b will be followed.

The City of Lenoir will provide a translator for non-English speaking residents in the case of public hearings when the City is notified that any non-English speaking resident will attend the public hearing. An interpreter will be provided for hearing-impaired residents.

An annual audit will be performed to examine the use of CDBG and HOME funds by the City. This audit report will be available for public inspection.

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan. A public hearing will be conducted whenever amendments are proposed which add, delete or substantially change the adopted consolidated plan. Proposed amendments to the plan will be advertised in the News Topic, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive public comments. A change to the consolidated plan of 25% or more of the total budget is considered substantial. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Annual Performance Reports. A public hearing will be conducted prior to submission of the annual performance report. This public hearing will be advertised in the News Topic, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 15 days will be provided to receive public comments..

Record of Public Comments. The City will maintain on file an accurate record of comments made in reference to any stage of consolidated plan development, amendment and annual performance review.

Access to Records. Records regarding the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans and use of funds shall be maintained on file at the City of Lenoir Community Development Office for a period of not less than five years. This records are available for public inspection upon request during regular City business hours.

**Technical Assistance.** The City of Lenoir Community Development Office provides technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance. This assistance includes speaking at community meetings to inform persons of available grants and assistance. The Community Development Office works closely with and encourages the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments. Notices encouraging participation from residents of public and assisted housing are placed in public housing offices and in public buildings located in identified low-income areas. The City of Lenoir provides information and applications to local citizens interested in these programs

**Complaints.** The City will be responsible for receiving and responding in writing to written complaints and grievances related to the consolidated plan activities. City staff shall respond to written complaints and grievances in writing within 15 days where practicable.

## **PROGRAM YEAR**

The program year for the Unifour Consortium shall run on a twelve-month cycle beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

## **AREA PROFILE**

Historic and Economic Background. The Unifour area, comprised of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties, is emerging as a major social and economic center within North Carolina. The area is anchored by the cities of Hickory, Morganton and Lenoir and located at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Unifour is a landscape of gently rolling hills, forests of deciduous and pine, the heart of North Carolina's furniture industry.

Originally inhabited by the Catawba Indians, European settlers first came to the area in 1747, where they discovered a fertile valley shielded from extreme cold by the mountains and with abundant natural resources. The Unifour area was ideal for raising families, livestock and crops.

Throughout the nineteenth century, European settlers, primarily of German, Scotch-Irish and Italian descent, populated the area. Each of the counties was created by the North Carolina General Assembly and then individual communities incorporated. By the twentieth century, the Unifour had become synonymous with the development of the textile and furniture industries. Railroad and major roads had by then provided transportation links for the Unifour.

In the shadow of famed Grandfather Mountain, the Unifour is dominated by the Catawba River. First used as a transportation route for the Catawba Indians and later settlers, the Catawba River now serves as an abundant source of water, recreation and electric power for the area.

Today, the Unifour area is home to over 363,036 individuals living in four counties and 24 municipalities, each with its own history and characteristics. Furniture and textile industries remain the dominate strength of the area economy, but structured and well planned growth have helped attract a diversity of industries including fiber optics and growing retail and service sectors.

### Demographics.

*Total Population.* Between 2000 and 2010, the total population of the Unifour Consortium area increased from 292,405 to 341,851, an increase of 6.2%. The growth rate of the individual counties ranged from 9.5% in Caldwell County to 22% in Catawba County. Municipal population during the same time period increased from 134,256 to 145,264, an increase of 8.2%. Six municipalities -- Conover, Hickory, Hildebran, Glen Alpine, Rhodhiss and Lenoir -- experienced growth rates of over 10%. Between 2000 and 2010, the Unifour population increased 6.2% to 363,036.

*Racial and Ethnic Composition.* Table 1 illustrates the racial and ethnic populations within each of the counties. Whites average over 89% of the population. The Unifour area has also experienced an increased growth in the Hispanic and Asian populations since 2000. Map 3 illustrates the concentrations of minority households by Census tracts. Black households are the predominant minority in the Unifour area with concentrations centered in the cities of Hickory, Lenoir, Morganton, Taylorsville, rural areas of southern Catawba County and northwestern Burke County.

## **MARKET AND INVENTORY CONDITIONS**

*Total Households, Types and Size.* According to the 2010 American Community Survey, there are 158,469 housing units throughout the four county area. Of these, 99,369(74.3%) are owner occupied. Rental units consist largely of single- family detached homes (13,674), and mobile homes (11,045). The remaining 13,370 consist of duplex and multi-unit dwellings. Average rents are: Alexander - \$560; Burke - \$535; Caldwell - \$555; and Catawba - \$632. The vacancy rate for the area is low, averaging 8.4%. Rental units comprise the largest share of the vacant units at 14.5%, and vacant owner-occupied units rank lowest at 5.8%.

**Table 1. Population by Race**

Race	Alexander	Burke	Caldwell	Catawba	Total (%)
White	333,510	78,962	74,457	137,080	324,009(89.2%)
Black	2,229	5,960	4,289	13,381	25,859(7.1%)
Native American	109		432	212	458
Asian	365	2,891		413	4,532
Other	324	1,116		688	1,628
Hispanic	1,256	4,832	3,347		14,265
					23,700(6.5%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36,537</b>	<b>89,361</b>		<b>80,059</b>	<b>157,079</b>
					363,036(100%)

Source: 2010 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

When the occupancy of a home is more than one person per room, overcrowding exists. Table 2 illustrates the relatively low incidence of overcrowding on average. It should be noted that overcrowding occurs more often in owner occupied dwellings indicating large family households.

**Table 2. Occupants Per Room Per Dwelling**

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Number of Occupied Units</b>	<b>Units with 1 or more persons per room / Owner Occupied</b>	<b>Units with 1 or more persons per room / Renter Occupied</b>
Alexander	<b>12,603</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>95</b>
Burke	<b>32,856</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>262</b>
Caldwell	<b>31,044</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>272</b>
Catawba	<b>60,564</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>636</b>

**Household Income.** Based on median household incomes in 2010 and the household data available from that Census, Table 3 illustrates the numbers of extremely low, moderate and middle income households within each of the four counties. This table also shows the median household incomes per county. These median incomes are significantly less than the mean incomes, illustrating that the number of lower income households outweigh the incomes as a whole. 2000 median household incomes per county were: Alexander - \$38,684; Burke - \$35,629; Caldwell - \$35,739; and Catawba - \$40,536. In 2000, the median household income in the Unifour area was \$37,818. Map 2 illustrates the low and moderate income areas by Census Group throughout the region.

HUD provided data shows that several census tract block group have concentrations of households with 51% or more of all households with incomes less than 80% of the median income. These households are concentrated in the City of Lenoir and adjoining census tracts, south Hickory in Catawba County, in and around Taylorsville in Alexander County, and in western portions of Burke County.

**Table 3. Low and Moderate Income**

<b>County</b>	<b>Households by County</b>			
	<b>Extremely Low Income Households</b>	<b>Low Income Households</b>	<b>Moderate Income Households</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>
Alexander	<b>1,232</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>\$38,684</b>
Burke	<b>3,696</b>	<b>3,861</b>	<b>6,794</b>	<b>\$35,629</b>
Caldwell	<b>3,290</b>	<b>3,620</b>	<b>5,937</b>	<b>\$35,739</b>
Catawba	<b>4,493</b>	<b>5,113</b>	<b>8,961</b>	<b>\$40,536</b>

Source: 2010 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

**Low Income Minority Households.** Black households are the predominant minority in the Unifour area. Table 4 illustrates the number of Black households that fall into extremely low to middle household income categories.

HUD data shows that concentrations of Black Households exist in and around the cities of Lenoir, Hickory, and Newton, and in eastern Burke County. In the Cities of Hickory and Lenoir, these high concentrations also coincide as areas of low and moderate income.

Housing assistance focused in these areas is an ongoing need. The Cities of Hickory, Morganton and Lenoir have targeted minority neighborhoods in their respective Consolidated Plans. The non-entitlement municipalities have traditionally used CDBG, HOME and other housing funds for various forms of assistance for these areas. This assistance will continue to be needed for community development projects, housing development, housing rehabilitation, rental assistance, and homeownership.

**Table 4. Black Households by Income Level per County**

<b>County</b>	<b>Extremely Low Income Households</b>	<b>Low Income Households</b>	<b>Moderate Income Households</b>
Alexander	<b>90</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>118</b>
Burke	<b>298</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>415</b>
Caldwell	<b>394</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>319</b>
Catawba	<b>750</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>844</b>

Source: 2010 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

In Burke County the number of extremely low income Black households is 11.6% of all extremely low-income households. In Caldwell County the percentage of extremely low income Black households is 11.5% of all in that category. In these cases, the households are concentrated in and around the cities of Morganton and Lenoir. Ongoing study and input from these areas will be necessary to determine the greatest individual housing needs.

**Cost Burden per Household.** Table 5 shows the cost burdens for rental households and owner households in each of the counties.

The average cost in 2010 of purchasing a new or existing home in the Unifour area was \$134,408. That is an increase of \$13,145 (10.8%) since 2000. Approximately 38 percent of the households cannot afford this price. Household income of \$46,000 is needed to be able to afford the average price of a home in the Unifour area; the 2008 median household income for the Unifour area was \$41,400. Home prices vary throughout the Unifour based on areas of new construction, resort home developments, size and type of house, etc.

**Condition of Housing Units.** Based on 2010 data on housing units in the Unifour area, 22386 (14.1%) are considered to be substandard, and those suited for rehabilitation accounted for 20,829 or 93% of all substandard units. These figures are based on the number of homes built before 1950 plus the number of homes that lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Census data does not determine the condition of a housing unit beyond its age, completeness of plumbing and kitchen facilities, type of heat, water source and type of sewage disposal. An older home will need more repairs and updating but may be perfectly suitable for rehabilitation. A home lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities may not be cost effective to rehabilitate.

**Table 5. 30% Cost Burden Per Households, by County\***

<b>County</b>	<b>30% or Greater Cost Burden / Renter Occupied Households</b>	<b>30% of Greater Cost Burden / Owner Occupied Households</b>	<b>30% or Greater Cost Burden / 65+ Households**</b>
<b>Alexander</b>	<b>957</b> households	<b>2,251</b> households	<b>553</b> households
<b>Burke</b>	<b>3,956</b> households	<b>6,643</b> households	<b>3,025</b> households
<b>Caldwell</b>	<b>3,229</b> households	<b>4,496</b> households	<b>1,572</b> households
<b>Catawba</b>	<b>6,236</b> households	<b>9,612</b> households	<b>3,258</b> households

\*Figures shown indicate extremely low, low, moderate and middle-income households only.

\*\*These figures are for both rentals and owner occupied.

Figures for households with cost burdens of 50% or greater are not available.

Data shows that only a very few housing units, less than 1 percent, lack complete kitchen and plumbing facilities.

**Inventory of Facilities and Services for the Homeless and Persons Threatened with Homelessness.** The Unifour Consortium prepared and submitted to HUD a Continuum of Care Plan for use by area non-profit organizations that address the needs of homeless persons or those threatened with homelessness. That Continuum of Care Plan is incorporated into this Consolidated Plan and attached in the Appendix. As CDBG Entitlement Cities, Hickory, Morganton and Lenoir have each adopted the Unifour Consortium Continuum of Care Plan into their own Consolidated Plans upon recommendation by HUD.

**Homeless Needs.** The homeless population is extremely difficult to estimate due to the various causes of homelessness and individuals involved. Further, the four counties and their municipalities do not provide equal services. For example, no type of homeless/emergency shelter exists in Alexander County. Homeless persons and families and those threatened with

homelessness in Alexander County are referred to facilities and agencies in Iredell, Caldwell and Catawba Counties. This procedure may be perfectly justified since Alexander County DSS reports that they are unaware of any homeless persons within that county. The 2010 Census data reports only 10 homeless persons in Alexander County. No information is available about the numbers of minority homeless.

There are several levels of assistance available. There is an emergency shelter level where the individual is placed and is made aware of various programs. Once the individual has been through a needs assessment and has adjusted they are referred to the next appropriate level. The analysis of existing services and gaps is based on the Continuum of Care model presented by HUD.

Outreach and Intake Assessment. Within the four county area, few outreach programs exist for homeless persons. Outreach is limited primarily to the listing of emergency phone numbers in area telephone directories. Outreach is provided primarily through referrals made by and for various agencies, based on an individual's needs. When dealing with an area encompassing four counties, it is important to keep in mind that geographic distances and other spatial boundaries (ie: long distance telephone calls, service area boundaries) each play a role in the difficulty of outreach. An outreach coordinator/case manager is needed to expand and improve outreach programs.

Emergency Shelter and Assistance. Once clients reach shelter or a service provider they are given a variety of options. The Salvation Army and the Cooperative Christian Ministries can provide emergency rental assistance or emergency mortgage assistance to those threatened with homelessness. Further, the Cooperative Christian Ministries each offer a food bank and clothing for displaced persons. Their primary clients are domestic violence victims, and their aid is limited to a one-time service. DSS will provide referrals to families, and in some cases they will provide funds for a motel room. The Soup Kitchen of Hickory provides a meal to 110 persons per day. Also housed at the Soup Kitchen is the recently organized Good Samaritan Clinic which provides free medical care for homeless persons. This newly formed non-profit has one full-time medical staff person on duty at all times the Soup Kitchen is open, and local physicians volunteer medical services.

In total, for the four county area, agencies report between 66 and 78 homeless families per year seek their help, and between 12 and 15 individual homeless persons seek their help. There is no way to determine the accuracy of these figures. There is also no information to determine if the same persons and families receive aid from different agencies. A regional computer network will assist in improving the accuracy of these figures.

Emergency shelter is offered by the following agencies: Rex House offers overnight shelter and a meal to homeless men within Caldwell County, the Salvation Army offers overnight shelter to individuals and families, and there are shelters for victims of domestic violence in Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties. Christian Crisis Center of Alexander County offers a safe house for domestic violence victims. Alexander County DSS offers shelter at a local motel as needed. Options, Inc., in Morganton operates an emergency shelter for families fleeing home

violence. The Red Cross in Hickory provides emergency shelter to families and individuals during times of natural disaster.

The Family Care Center of Catawba Valley operates 9 emergency shelter apartments located in Catawba County for homeless families in the region where they may stay up to 90 days, and are planning to add 12 additional emergency units, as stated above.

Transitional Housing. The Family Care Center of Catawba Valley also operates 3 transitional units whereby a family may stay up to one year. The Family Care Center accepts clients from Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties. They are planning to add 12 additional units to the inventory of transitional units.

Permanent Housing. Permanent housing can be in the form of rental or owner-occupied units. Within the four county area there are five public housing authorities: The Western Piedmont Council of Governments, the Hickory Housing Authority, the Morganton Housing Authority, the Lenoir Housing Authority and the Valdese Housing Authority. There are a total of 1,013 units of conventional public housing, and housing subsidies for 1,178 families and individuals through Section 8 vouchers and certificates. Each housing authority maintains a waiting list. Persons and families that are homeless are given priority in that waiting list; however, the number of households that can be assisted is limited.

The City of Hickory administers a moderate rehabilitation program for low-income homeowners and rental properties. Between 20 and 25 families are assisted annually with this program. It also administers a down-payment assistance program in partnership with the NC Housing Finance Agency, Interfaith Housing, and Habitat for Humanity. This program has been in existence since 1986. Approximately 15 families are assisted annually.

Since 1996, the Unifour HOME Consortium has administered a down-payment assistance program for low-income first-time homebuyers. The Consortium has assisted more than 3000 families through the down-payment assistance program, since the Consortium was first funded in 1996.

Homebuyer counseling is available through the City of Hickory Community Development office for participants of the city's first-time homebuyer program. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments offers homebuyer counseling for its first-time homebuyer program and also through the IDA program.

The City of Morganton has worked with Options, Inc. as a subrecipient to purchase and renovate an existing building to expand their emergency shelter capacity for homeless families and victims of domestic violence.

Permanent Supportive Housing. The City of Morganton is home to three state institutions -- Broughton Hospital, Western Carolina Center and the North Carolina School for the Deaf. Each of these facilities house individuals from across North Carolina. Broughton Hospital is home to approximately 550 mentally ill persons. Western Carolina Center houses approximately 400

mentally ill and physically handicapped persons. The North Carolina School for the Deaf houses approximately 250 persons, primarily younger people, with hearing impairments.

Within the four county area there are 1,380 nursing home beds and 1,057 adult care home beds. These facilities provide a vital housing means for physically disabled and older adults who need assistance in living or who cannot live alone. Increasing or decreasing the number of these beds is beyond the scope or purpose of the Unifour Consortium; however, these facilities provide a vital component in the Continuum of Care of housing needs of those with little or no other long term housing options based on their health and physical condition.

**Public and Assisted Housing Inventory.** Within the Consortium jurisdiction there are five housing authorities: Hickory, Lenoir, Morganton, Valdese and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. Among the assisted housing available are 1,013 units of conventional public housing, and housing subsidies for 1,178 families and individuals through Section 8 vouchers and certificates.

All of the above mentioned housing authorities anticipate no losses from their housing inventories. Those that own and operate conventional housing units as of March, 1998 report 0% vacancy rates and continuous waiting lists of needy families.

**Table 6, Inventory of Public and Assisted Housing**

	Conventional Public Housing Units	Section 8 Vouchers and/or Certificates	Total
Lenoir Housing Authority	157		157
Hickory Housing Authority	757	449*	757
Morganton Housing Authority	280	30*	280
Valdese Housing Authority	121		121
Western Piedmont Council of Governments		1,017	1,017
	866	1,496*	2,332

**Inventory of Supportive Housing for Non-Homeless Persons with Special Needs.**

***Persons with HIV/AIDS.*** The Center for Disease Control estimates that 1 in every 250 persons nationwide is infected with HIV. In the Unifour area, over 100 persons are currently receiving treatment for HIV and AIDS. One-fourth of these persons can expect to become homeless, due both to the individual's inability to maintain employment and their caregiver's inability to adequately provide care. Funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency is used to assist these persons in finding shelter. Through consultation with the sole service provider addressing the needs of persons with HIV and AIDS and their families, the primary housing need

identified is group housing or shared housing whereby those who become homeless can find shelter, and where necessary services can be economically provided.

**Elderly.** In 2010, older adults (age 60 +) numbered 71,712, representing 19.8% of the total population. Frail elderly, which is generally described as those age 85+, totaled 4,068, or 1.9% of the population.

Within the Unifour area, there are 1,908 nursing home beds and 1,057 adult care home beds. Increasing or decreasing the number of these beds is beyond the scope or purpose of the Unifour Consortium. (See Appendix for a list of all Unifour area nursing homes, rest homes and designated elderly apartments.)

Designated elderly apartments are scattered throughout the Unifour area. Most were funded through various HUD or FmHA programs over the past fifteen years. A new 36-unit elderly apartment complex was constructed in 1997 in Morganton, and the Koinonia Apartments in Lenoir has constructed 40 new assisted living units. In all, there are 18 apartment complexes for seniors, containing 842 units. In all units, rents are determined by income. All of the apartment complexes report there are waiting lists that extend from a few months to several years.

Alexander County is the only county within the Unifour Consortium that has no designated elderly apartments. A market study conducted in September, 2010 concluded that 70-75 units could be absorbed within that county. Developers are looking at this area for elderly apartment.

In consultation with the Western Piedmont Area Agency on Aging, which must complete a regional aging services plan every two years, the identified priority housing needs for older adults in the service area are:

- 1) Owner occupied single-family rehabilitation. Continued effort is being made to increase in-home and community based services for older adults. Many older adults live in homes that are themselves older and in need of repairs, modifications and emergency repairs.
- 2) Assisted Living. A survey of older adults throughout the Unifour area revealed a need for multi-family units that are linked directly to supportive services.

**Persons with Disabilities.** Approximately 16% of all persons have some type of disability; yet, it is also estimated that less than one percent of existing housing units in the Consortium area are accessible for disabled persons.

The North Carolina Building Code requires that any multifamily project containing more than eleven units construct 2% of the total units to accommodate handicapped persons. Therefore, a development of 50 units must have at least one unit that meets accessibility standards. There is no data available as to the number of universally accessible units in existence in the four county area.

The City of Morganton is home to three state institutions, Broughton Hospital, Western Carolina Center and the North Carolina School for the Deaf. Each of these facilities houses individuals from across North Carolina. Broughton Hospital is home to approximately 550 mentally ill persons. Western Carolina Center houses approximately 400 mentally and physically handicapped persons. The North Carolina School for the Deaf houses approximately 250 persons, primarily younger people, with hearing impairments.

Lead-Based Paint Needs. It is estimated that **39.5%** of the area housing stock, or **57,103** units, contains lead-based paint. Of these, it is estimated that between 20% and 26% of the occupied rental units contain lead-based paint. This is lower than the state estimated average of 32%. Data is not available about the number of low-income households in units built prior to 1978.

**Table 7. Year Structures Built Per County**

<b>County</b>	<b>Estimated # of Structures Built Prior to 1970</b>	<b>% of Total Housing Units</b>	<b>Percent Occupied Rental Structures Built Prior to 1970</b>	<b>Median Year of Construction for all Structures</b>
Alexander	<b>3,495</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>32%</b>	1981
Burke	<b>12,012</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>33%</b>	1976
Caldwell	<b>10,590</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>36%</b>	1977
Catawba	<b>18,303</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>27%</b>	1982

Barriers to Affordable Housing. Several factors combine to create significant barriers to affordable housing. These include lower incomes, development codes that increase housing costs and lack of information about housing resources and obtaining housing, and language barriers of new foreign immigrants to the area.

The Unifour area is in need of additional affordable housing for very low and low-income families. Out of the 134,105 owner-occupied households in the Unifour area, in 2010, approximately 39% are very-low and low-income households. There are a total of 34,469 rental units in 2010, and approximately 62% of all renter households are very-low and low-income families. This indicates a gap between the need of safe and decent housing units for the working poor and the availability of affordable units. Elderly households and single wage earner households often do not have the financial resources of other families and tend to experience greater need.

Requirements in development and zoning codes have generally increased in the past decade. Most of the development requirements serve to improve and maintain better living environments in the long run, but developers pass increased costs onto the consumer, thereby driving up housing costs. Developers also add building restrictions to the deeds in new developments increasing costs. Further, real estate agent fees, mortgage origination fees, closing

costs and loan costs drive up housings costs.

Lack of information about obtaining housing is also seen as a barrier. Many local, state and federal programs exist to assist families purchase homes, rehabilitate homes or obtain rental housing. Yet the lack of a central source of information and outreach efforts hamper efforts to assist families seeking housing. Language and literacy barriers continue to prevent many from taking advantage of existing programs and opportunities.

Many agencies and local governments within the Unifour area have been operating various housing programs for years. Often these programs are sporadic, limited in time and vary greatly from one jurisdiction to another. No program exists regionwide that operates regardless of political or jurisdiction boundaries.

Although the Unifour mean income is the fifth highest in North Carolina, the median income is somewhat lower indicating that a larger portion of households are in the lower income categories. As stated earlier, an annual household income of \$46,000 is currently needed to purchase the average priced home valued at \$134,408. Those families not able to afford to purchase a home seek other housing options such as renting or purchasing a mobile home.

For persons with disabilities several barriers to affordable housing are evident. Federal and state codes dealing with accessibility do not take into account the various types of disabilities or handicaps. Units designed for handicapped individuals may not be vacant. Public transportation may be a requirement may be a need for a disabled person, limiting their choices based on transportation service routes. Handicapped persons not needing rental assistance must pay additional costs to modify their homes based on their own disability.

## **FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

Summary of the Five Year Strategy. Although significant housing initiatives have and will continue to take place by individual members of the Consortium, gaps in housing service have been identified. These include the lack of assistance for low and moderate-income household in purchasing housing, special needs housing development, affordable housing development (both rental and owner occupied), and housing counseling. The Unifour Consortium has established the following significant elements for fillings these gaps and achieving its purpose of creating housing opportunities through this Consolidated Plan.

- o Stimulating homeownership opportunities very-low and low income homebuyers by the continuation of a four county-wide Down-payment Assistance Program for First-Time Homebuyers.
- o Homeownership opportunities will be stimulated through homebuying counseling for potential homebuyers
- o Work with developers to increase the supply of standard, affordable housing through development of new housing units under the HOME Program.
- o Encourage community based non-profit organizations to develop the resources and capacity to address special needs housing throughout the Consortium area.

- o Increase the supply of standard, affordable housing opportunities through the rehabilitation of existing housing units under HOME Program, utilizing deferred loans/grants to very-low and low-income families.
- o Provide assistance to agencies that assist homeless persons and families and those threatened with homelessness.
- o Encourage efforts on a regional basis to further the study and address homelessness.
- o Continuation of efforts to further Fair Housing and minimize relocation or displacement in all programs.

Affordable Housing. *"Housing represents the chief means that families have of saving and forming capital. It also represents the key to successful community development. A neighborhood of homeowners is inherently more stable than one which has none. So, the key strengthening our society, or economy, and our families lies in improving access to homeownership."*

The Consortium has established its general priorities for allocating HOME funds expected to be available over the next five-year period. The data obtained from the 2010 Census of Population and Housing indicates that low-income households are more likely to experience housing problems. Older adults will continue to experience housing problems due to that population's decreased incomes, the age of their homes and their increasing frailty as they age. The Consortium will continue to support individual applications for HOME, CDBG and Rural Development Corporation funds to address these needs.

Priority has been given to making homeownership more available to low and moderate-income families and individuals. This will be addressed through down-payment assistance and counseling for those wishing to purchase a home. The Consortium supports any applications, which have goals of providing affordable, safe and decent housing to low and moderate-income families and individuals. The Consortium has set a goal of providing down-payment assistance to approximately 22 families from the FY 2020 budget.

Specifically, funds will be used to provide up to 20% loans to low to moderate income households, with incomes no greater than 80% of the area median income.

The down-payment assistance program was selected as the most pressing need at this point due to the increasing number of families moving to the Unifour area seeking employment. However, many of the jobs taken by new residents are lower income jobs. The down-payment assistance program will assist the working poor - those who are able to make rent payments but not save enough funds for a down-payment. By assisting individuals obtain their own homes, the Consortium hopes to increase the tax base of the area, strengthen neighborhoods, decrease transience, and empower and inspire families become a permanent fiber in the local community fabric.

Housing affordability will continue to be addressed through housing programs by individual members of the Unifour Consortium.

Homelessness and Other Special Needs. The Consortium will work closely with the existing network of agencies and organizations that are addressing the needs of the homeless, those threatened with homelessness and those with special needs housing. Implementation of the Continuum of Care plan will be done as federal funds are made available to agencies dealing directly with homeless issues.

The Consortium will set aside at least an average of 15% of its funding each year for investment in housing to be developed, sponsored or owned by community development housing organizations (CHDO's). These CHDO's must be non-profit organizations whose purposes are to provide housing or housing opportunities to low income persons or families or those with special needs. Further, to qualify for funds participating CHDO's must meet criteria as defined by HUD and approved by the Consortium. To qualify for funding, each CHDO must provide a match of 25%. The Executive Committee of the Consortium will recognize and approve CHDO's and approve funding applications.

Preference for CHDO funding will be made to organizations addressing the needs of the homeless, persons with HIV/AIDS, older adults, affordable housing opportunities, or concentrating in areas or neighborhoods identified to have a concentrated need for housing assistance.

Non-Housing Community Development Needs. The Unifour Consortium is not seeking to use funds for non-housing community development needs. However, in accordance with HUD requirements, the non-housing community development plans of the three entitlement cities within the Unifour Consortium are herein incorporated.

Barriers to Affordable Housing. With 28 participating local governments within the Consortium, there are varying degrees of adopted zoning and land use controls, fees and other costs that will affect the cost of housing. Adopted zoning and subdivision codes currently in force are not considered to be excessive or exclusionary.

Lack of education about purchasing home can be a barrier to affordable housing. The Consortium staff, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, will administer an Individual Development Account program with CDBG funds received by Caldwell County. This IDA program will be administered and available throughout the Unifour. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments is a HUD-approved comprehensive housing counseling agency, and as such, it will also continue provided Home Equity Conversion Mortgage counseling to older adult homeowners.

Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction. The number of homes built before 1978 is 57,103, all of which can be classified as potential hazards. Any funds used for rehabilitation will address the lead hazard on a unit-by-unit basis. With limited funds available, the abatement of lead from all units is not possible. Approved measures such as wet scraping to reduce the amount of lead disturbed during rehabilitation will be used. All recipients of HOME funds will be provided information outlining the dangers of lead-based paint.

Anti-poverty Strategy. Each member local government of the Consortium is very aggressive in attracting new and diverse industries and commercial businesses into the area.

Coordination Efforts. The Consortium will continue to work with area service providers and agencies to remain aware of existing programs and make referrals as needed to individuals and families. The WPCOG staff assigned to the Consortium will continue to be involved with various housing, aging, social service and non-profit agencies in order to stay abreast of other activities and expenditures. The same outreach efforts will be made with area social services providers and non-profit organizations.

The cities of Hickory, Lenoir and Morganton are all HUD entitlement cities. The Consortium will work with each of these cities to coordinate housing initiatives and efforts. If any conflicts or negative effects arise, the Consortium will investigate all possible ways to alleviate the cause(s).

To meet housing and community development needs, individual local governments within the Unifour Consortium have applied for and received funding through other federal housing assistance programs including CDBG, Rural Development Corporation, and the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. These localized programs assist low and moderate income, elderly and disabled owner occupied households.

Public Housing Improvements. Each of the four conventional public housing authorities (Morganton, Lenoir, Valdese and Hickory) are working with their local law enforcement/public safety agencies to reduce crime in their PHA's. Since 1996 over \$1.5 million has been spent to bring the public housing units into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Public Housing Resident Initiatives. Each of the five housing authorities within the Consortium jurisdiction is self-governing and responsible for administering its own funds. Appointments to each board are made from within their own memberships, and they each have their own policies regarding hiring, contracting and procurement.

Outreach efforts will be coordinated with each housing authority to inform residents of the down-payment assistance program and other housing assistance programs available within their jurisdictions. Within the Consortium jurisdiction there are five housing authorities: Hickory, Lenoir, Morganton, Valdese and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. Among the assisted housing available are 1,013 units of conventional public housing, and housing subsidies for 1,178 families and individuals through Section 8 vouchers and certificates. There is a need for private landlords for the Section 8 program throughout the Unifour area.

All of the above mentioned housing authorities anticipate no losses from their housing inventories. Those that own and operate conventional housing units as of December, 2004 report a 0% vacancy rates, and continuous waiting lists of needy families.

Each of the housing authorities will work to accomplish more self-reliance and independence through a variety of programs. They each will continue to strive to increase resident awareness of energy factors, job training, homeownership opportunities, credit counseling, drug elimination and community activities.

**IV. ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN 2020**  
**Strategy Implementation Year 1**

<b>Total HOME Funding for FY 2020</b>	<b>\$1,145,874</b>
<b>Total Estimated Program Income</b>	<b>350,000</b>
<b>Total Projected Resources</b>	<b><u>\$1,495,874</u></b>

In accordance with 24 CFR Part 91.220 of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, the City of Lenoir's One Year Action Plan outlines the activities that will be funded using HOME funds.

**A. Resources**

**1. Federal**

Federal resources are expected to be available to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the strategic plan of the HOME Program. The Unifour Consortium anticipates receiving **\$1,145,874 in FY 2020 HOME funds.**

**2. Other**

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$11,950** from Conover's Cline Village senior apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$9,788.00** from Hickory's Villas at Northview apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$7,339.00** from Hudson's Pine Mountain Trace apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$15,289.00** from Morganton's Glenwood Hills apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$15,286.00** from the Lenoir's Caldwell Gardens apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$19,570.00** from Hudson's Woodland Village senior apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$11,832.00** from Taylorsville's Milstead Woods apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$6,688.00** from the Lenoir's Viridian apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$7,249.00** from Hickory's Viewmont Square senior apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$7,075.00** from Morganton's Sienna apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$18,347.00** from Claremont's Oxford Crossing apartments.

The Unifour Consortium will receive a loan repayment in the amount of **\$18,347.00** from Lenoir's Arbor Glen senior apartments.

Based on past performance and the current number of loans on the books, additional program income of approximately \$201,240. is estimated to be received from the repayment of down-payment assistance loans, bringing the total program income to be received during FY 2020 to approximately \$350,000.

## **B. Activities to be Undertaken**

**Priority 1: Regional Down-payment Assistance Program: \$425,821** in HOME funds to provide Down-payment assistance for approximately 22 homebuyers in four-county area.

These HOME funds will be used to provide down-payment assistance for approximately 22 homebuyers in the four-county area. This program will provide up to 20% in down-payment assistance to low to moderate- income family with an income of no greater than 80% of the area median income. Applicant families will receive assistance on a first-come-first-served basis. The applicant family must have good credit and be able to obtain a loan.

Assistance will be provided in the form of 0% interest deferred loans. Repayment is due if and when a family sells or refinances. If the home is sold after ten years, one half of the loan amount is repayable to the Unifour Consortium at closing as program income and the other half is forgiven. Any such program income will be used for down-payment assistance prior to Treasury funds, in accordance with HUD HOME regulations.

Matching funds will be provided by local lending institutions through such means as reducing, waiving or discounting ordinary fees and charges such as origination fees, attorney fees, appraisal fees, flood certification fees, private mortgage insurance premiums, etc. Because these discounts will serve as the required local match, local government financial participation will not be required.

Applications will be processed through the program administrator's office at the Western Piedmont Council of Governments.

Geographic Distribution. Funds are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Priority 2: CHDO set-asides: \$171,881** will be set-aside community housing development organizations for investment in housing only to be developed, sponsored or owned by community housing development organizations (CHDO's). CHDO's are non-profit community-based organization whose purpose is to provide housing or housing opportunities to low income persons and families or those with special needs. Total matching funds of 25% may be required of CHDO's. Preference will

be given to those organizations that address the housing needs of the homeless, those threatened with homelessness, at risk persons, older adults, disabled persons, persons with HIV/AIDS, and CHDO's developing new affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate-income households. The Executive Committee of the Consortium will approve CHDO funding and activities.

Geographic Distribution. Funds will be distributed on a competitive priority needs basis for qualifying CHDO's located in the Consortium jurisdiction.

- Priority 3: Development of Multi-Family Housing: \$384,300** will be used to work with developers to increase the supply of standard, affordable housing through the development of new housing units under the HOME Program.
- Priority 4: New Construction: \$307,000** will be used for new construction in the City of Morganton.
- Priority 5: Program Income Administration: \$35,000** will be used to support the administrative services directly related to Program Income.
- Priority 6: Program Administration: \$171,881** in HOME funds will provide efficient and timely administrative services. Planning and administration will be a key component to the success of the Consortium programs. The staff will be responsible for preparing all documents required of the HOME Program, evaluation of applications, interviews with applicants, monitoring and other legal requirements of the Program.

## V. OTHER ACTION

**A. Affordable Housing.** Housing represents the chief means that families have of saving and forming capital. It also represents the key to successful community development. A neighborhood of homeowners is inherently more stable than one which has none. So, the key strengthening our society, or economy, and our families lies in improving access to homeownership. Housing affordability will continue to be addressed through the Unifour Consortium program and by housing programs of individual members of the Unifour Consortium.

**B. Homelessness and Other Special Needs.** The Consortium will work closely with the existing network of agencies and organizations that are addressing the needs of the homeless, those threatened with homelessness and those with special needs housing. Implementation of the Continuum of Care plan will be done as federal funds are made available to agencies dealing directly with homeless issues.

The Consortium will set aside at least an average of 15% of its funding each year for investment in housing to be developed, sponsored or owned by community development housing

organizations (CHDO's). These CHDO's must be non-profit organizations whose purposes are to provide housing or housing opportunities to low income persons or families or those with special needs. Further, to qualify for funds participating CHDO's must meet criteria as defined by HUD and approved by the Consortium. To qualify for funding, each CHDO may have to provide a match of 25%. The Executive Committee of the Consortium will recognize and approve CHDO's and approve funding applications.

Preference for CHDO funding will be made to organizations addressing the needs of the homeless, persons with HIV/AIDS, older adults, affordable housing opportunities, or concentrating in areas or neighborhoods identified to have a concentrated need for housing assistance.

**C. Non-Housing Community Development Needs.** The Unifour Consortium is not seeking to use funds for non-housing community development needs. However, in accordance with HUD requirements, the non-housing community development plans of the three entitlement cities within the Unifour Consortium are herein incorporated.

**D. Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction.** The number of homes built before 1978 is 78,348, all of which can be classified as potential hazards. Any funds used for rehabilitation will address the lead hazard on a unit-by-unit basis. With limited funds available, the abatement of lead from all units is not possible. Approved measures such as wet scraping to reduce the amount of lead disturbed during rehabilitation will be used. All recipients of HOME funds will be provided information outlining the dangers of lead-based paint.

**E. Public Housing Improvements.** Each of the four conventional public housing authorities (Morganton, Lenoir, Valdese and Hickory) are working with their local law enforcement/public safety agencies to reduce crime in their PHA's. Since 1996 over \$1.5 million has been spent to bring the public housing units into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

**F. Public Housing Resident Initiatives.** Each of the five housing authorities within the Consortium jurisdiction is self-governing and responsible for administering its own funds. Appointments to each board are made from within their own memberships, and they each have their own polices regarding hiring, contracting and procurement.

Outreach efforts will be coordinated with each housing authority to inform residents of the down-payment assistance program and other housing assistance programs available within their jurisdictions. Within the Consortium jurisdiction there are five housing authorities: Hickory, Lenoir, Morganton, Valdese and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. There is a need for private landlords for the Section 8 program throughout the Unifour area.

All of the above mentioned housing authorities anticipate no losses from their housing inventories. Those that own and operate conventional housing units as of March, 2020, report 0% vacancy rates and continuous waiting lists of needy families.

Each of the housing authorities will work to accomplish more self-reliance and independence through a variety of programs. They each will continue to strive to increase resident awareness of energy factors, job training, homeownership opportunities, credit counseling, drug elimination and community activities.

**VI. Monitoring.** The Unifour Consortium will take every measure to ensure the Consortium's long term compliance, completely and correctly, with provisions of this Consolidated Plan and all of the provisions of Title 1 of the National Affordable Housing Act.

The Unifour Consortium is committed in its efforts to develop and provide affordable housing and to meet the goals of their five strategy outlined in this plan. The Consortium will review the goals of their one-year strategy on a quarterly basis to determine progress made toward reaching the goals. The Consortium shall be responsible for monitoring only those funds that it receives from DHUD.

Specifically, for priority 1, the Unifour Consortium will ensure that all participants with the first-time homebuyer program meeting HUD income eligibility requirements via income verifications. Such verifications will be maintained on file with each applicant. Each unit purchased with HOME assistance will be meet price limits, as determined annually by HUD. Each purchase price per unit will be maintained on file for each applicant. To ensure the lead-based paint status of each home purchased with HOME assistance, the year of construction for each unit will be verified through county tax records and maintained in each file. For homes built prior to 1978, verification from a lead-based paint inspector will be required for certification that the unit is free of lead-based paint prior to closing. Under no circumstances will any unit built prior to 1978 be purchased with HOME assistance without proper certification of lead-free conditions if a child or children under age seven will reside in or be cared for within. Each unit purchased with HOME assistance shall be inspected by a qualified inspector to verify its compliance with Section 8 Housing Quality Standards at time of the closing. Such verification shall be maintained within each applicant file.

The Unifour Consortium will take every step necessary to ensure that CHDO's funded through the HOME program comply with the Consolidated Plan and all applicable Federal, State and local laws and policies. Specifically, for homeownership projects, each CHDO shall provide documentation of affordability by such means as deed restrictions, deeds of trust and promissory notes. CHDO's receiving funding for rental projects shall provide income verification for beneficiaries annually throughout the period of affordability. Rental project affordability shall be ensured by deeds of trust and promissory notes. All CHDO's shall provide annual project reports for their HOME assisted units throughout the period of affordability per project.

**VII. Fair Housing – Barriers to Affordable Housing.** The Unifour Consortium makes every effort in supporting affordable housing. With 28 participating local governments within the Consortium, there are varying degrees of adopted zoning and land use controls, fees and other costs that will affect the cost of housing. Adopted zoning and subdivision codes that are currently in force are not considered to be excessive or exclusionary.

Lack of education about purchasing home can be a barrier to affordable housing. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments is a HUD-approved comprehensive housing counseling agency, and as such, it will also continue to provide Home Equity Conversion Mortgage counseling to older adult homeowners.

**VIII. Anti-Poverty Strategy.** Each member local government of the Consortium is very aggressive in trying to attracting new and diverse industries and commercial businesses into the area.

**IX. Coordination of Efforts.** The Consortium will continue to work with area service providers and agencies to remain aware of existing programs and make referrals as needed to individuals and families. The WPCOG staff assigned to the Consortium will continue to be involved with various housing, aging, social service and non-profit agencies in order to stay abreast of other activities and expenditures.

The same outreach efforts will be made with area social services providers and non-profit organizations. The Consortium will coordinate its efforts with Blue Ridge Community Action, a local non-profit agency, which provides transitional housing units, new home construction, weatherization, rehabilitation and rental rehabilitation.

The cities of Hickory, Lenoir and Morganton are all HUD entitlement cities. The Consortium will work with each of these cities to coordinate housing initiatives and efforts. If any conflicts or negative effects arise, the Consortium will investigate all possible ways to alleviate the cause(s).

To meet housing and community development needs, individual local governments within the Unifour Consortium have applied for and received funding through other federal housing assistance programs including CDBG, Rural Development Corporation, and the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. These localized programs assist low and moderate income, elderly and disabled owner occupied households.

**X. SUMMARY OF CITIZEN COMMENTS.** A summary of citizen comments regarding the Consolidated Plan or the proposed 2020 Action Plan will be included here :

**XI. CERTIFICATIONS**

CITY OF LENOIR  
2020 UNIFOUR CONSORTIUM HOME PROGRAM  
CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCE

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Lenoir that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby adopted.

Section 1. The project authorized is the HOME project described in the work statement contained in the Grant Agreement (#M20-DC370208) between this unit and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. This project is more familiarly known as the FY-2020 Unifour Consortium HOME Program (City of Lenoir, is the lead entity).

Section 2. The officers of this unit are hereby directed to proceed with the grant project within the terms of the grant document(s), the rules and regulations of the DHUD and the budget contained herein.

Section 3. The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the project:

Revenue from HOME Grant	\$1,145,874
Anticipated Program Income	<u>350,000</u>
Total Revenues	\$1,495,874

Section 4. The following amounts are appropriated for the project:

Down Payment Assistance	\$425,812
HOME CHDO	171,881
Multi-Family Housing	384,300
New Construction City Morganton	307,000
Program Income Admin	35,000
General Program Administration	<u>171,881</u>
Total Expenditures	\$1,495,874

Section 5. The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain within the Grant Project Fund sufficient specific detailed accounting records to provide the accounting to the grantor agency required by the grant agreement(s) and Federal and State

regulations.

Section 6. Funds may be advanced from the General Funds for the purpose of making payments as due. Reimbursement requests should be made to the grantor agency in an orderly and timely manner.

Section 7. The Finance Officer is directed to report quarterly on the financial status of each project element in Section 4 and on the total grant revenues received or claimed.

Section 8. The Budget Officer is directed to include a detailed analysis of past and future cost and revenues on this grant project in every budget submission made to this Board.

Section 9. Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be made available to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for direction in carrying out this project.

Adopted this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph L. Gibbons, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Shirley M. Cannon, City Clerk

CITY OF LENOIR  
2020 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCE

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Lenoir that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby adopted.

Section 1. The project authorized is the Community Development Project described in the work statement contained in the Grant Agreement (#B-20-MC-37-0022) between this unit and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. This project is more familiarly known as the FY-2020 CDBG Entitlement Program.

Section 2. The officers of this unit are hereby directed to proceed with the grant project within the terms of the grant document(s), the rules and regulations of the DHUD and the budget contained herein.

Section 3. The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the project:

Revenues

Community Development Block Grant	<u>\$146,288</u>
Total Revenues	\$146,288

Section 4. The following amounts are appropriated for the project:

Expenditures

Public Facilities (Lenoir High School)	\$117,031
Program Administration	<u>29,257</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$146,288</u>

Section 5. The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain within the Grant Project Fund sufficient specific detailed accounting records to provide the accounting to the grantor agency required by the grant agreement(s) and Federal and State regulations.

Section 6. Funds may be advanced from the General Funds for the purpose of making payments as due. Reimbursement requests should be made to the grantor agency in an orderly and timely manner.

Section 7. The Finance Officer is directed to report quarterly on the financial status of each project element in Section 4 and on the total grant revenues received or claimed.

Section 8. The Budget Officer is directed to include a detailed analysis of past and future cost and revenues on this grant project in every budget submission made to this Board.

Section 9. Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be made available to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for direction in carrying out this project.

Adopted this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

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Joseph L. Gibbons, Mayor

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Shirley M. Cannon, City Clerk



CITY MANAGER  
SCOTT E. HILDEBRAN

CITY OF LENOIR  
NORTH CAROLINA

MAYOR  
JOSEPH L. GIBBONS

CITY COUNCIL  
J. T. BEAL  
T. H. PERDUE  
J. I. PERKINS  
R. S. PRESTWOOD  
D. F. STEVENS  
C. D. THOMAS  
B. K. WILLIS

CITY OF LENOIR  
RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT  
BUMGARNER CAMPING CENTER

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lenoir owns and maintains streets for use by the motoring public; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) also owns and maintains roads and highways for the motoring public within the City limits of the City of Lenoir; and

**WHEREAS**, NCDOT is requesting funding for the Drainage Repair Project along US Hwy 321 between Clover Drive SW and Dove Street SW at Campfire Properties, LLC, d.b.a Bumgarner Camping Center with an estimated construction cost of \$500,000; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C.G.S. §136-11.1, NCDOT is required to notify cities and counties when project funding exceeds \$250,000 and to obtain a resolution of support from said local government; and

**WHEREAS**, NCDOT must have the aforementioned resolution of support before authorization of expenditures can be approved.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City of Lenoir that by resolution of the City Council does hereby support the Drainage Repair Project along US Hwy 321 between Clover Drive SW and Dove Street SW at Bumgarner Camping Center with an estimated construction cost of \$500,000.00.

Adopted this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of May 2020.

SEAL

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Joseph L. Gibbons, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Shirley M. Cannon, City Clerk



# April 2020 Communication Report

By Joshua Harris, Director, Communication & Public Information 5/20/2020



**LENOIR**  
NORTH CAROLINA

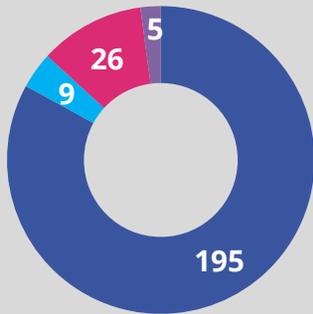
## CONTENT CREATION

News Releases	Photos	Videos	Radio Spots	Social Posts	Notify Me	Q&A	eSign
<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>145</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### New Followers

**235**



Facebook Twitter  
Instagram City Alerts

### Social Reach

**50,840**

Facebook ..... **25,273**

Twitter ..... **508**

### Video Views

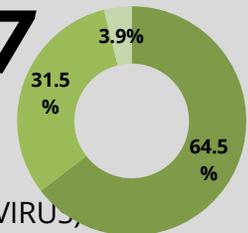
**3,881**

Facebook ..... **3,847**

YouTube ..... **34**

### Website Views

**31,407**



#### Top Pages

- 1 Payment Options
- 2 COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)
- 3 Caldwell County Sheriff and Police Chief
- 4 Water & Sewer Service
- 5 Jobs
- 6 City moving to automated garbage collection
- 7 Garbage Collection

### Total Followers



### Social Engagement

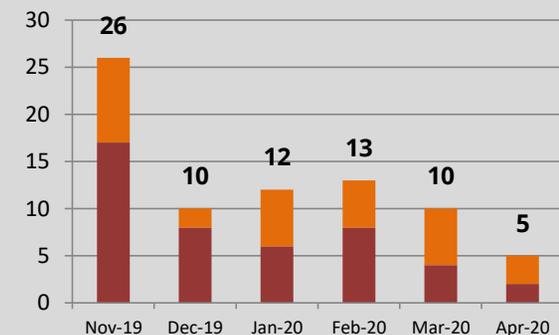


### Media Coverage

**5**

**Papers 2**

**Web 3**





# Top Facebook

Reach: The number of people who saw the post on their feed

Engagements: Reactions, comments, shares, photo/video views, and clicks

Total Facebook Followers

# 25,273

Last Month 25,078

Gain **195**

8,582 People Reached  
2,872 Engagements  
38 Comments 39 Shares

	Paid	Organic	Rate
Reach		<b>8,582</b>	
Engagements		<b>2,872</b>	33%
> Comments		<b>38</b>	
> Shares		<b>39</b>	

5,682 People Reached  
2,777 Engagements  
220 Comments 46 Shares 3.6K Views

	Paid	Organic	Rate
Reach		<b>5,682</b>	
Engagements		<b>2,777</b>	49%
> Comments		<b>220</b>	
> Shares		<b>46</b>	

5,049 People Reached  
1,180 Engagements  
29 Comments 17 Shares

	Paid	Organic	Rate
Reach		<b>5,049</b>	
Engagements		<b>1,180</b>	23%
> Comments		<b>29</b>	
> Shares		<b>17</b>	



# Top Tweets

*Impressions: Times people saw this Tweet on Twitter*

*Engagements: Times people interacted with this Tweet*

Total Twitter Followers

# 713

Last Month 704

Gain **9**



**City of Lenoir, NC** @CityofLenoir  
 Today is Census Day! Have you completed the Census? @uscensusbureau  
[pic.twitter.com/nvuGI7Hhxz](http://pic.twitter.com/nvuGI7Hhxz)

Impressions	737
Total engagements	4
Media engagements	3
Likes	1



**City of Lenoir, NC** @CityofLenoir  
 New job opening! Laborer, Sanitation Division  
<http://dlvr.it/RT6fZr> Click for more info.  
[pic.twitter.com/Zw7PBYG7Jb](http://pic.twitter.com/Zw7PBYG7Jb)

Impressions	685
Total engagements	3
Media engagements	1
Link clicks	1
Detail expands	1

**Downtown Lenoir, NC** @DowntownLenoir

Join us virtually in Downtown Lenoir this Saturday, April 18 from 7:00pm-9:00pm for a fun evening of live music, downtown trivia, and prizes!

Enjoy live virtual performances by Patrick & Kay Crouch, Joshua Marsh,... <https://www.instagram.com/p/B--LS-CF9Lf/?igshid=1fag8g8uem1d0> ...

Impressions	179
Total engagements	4
Detail expands	2
Retweets	1
Likes	1



# Top Instagram

Likes: The number of people who liked the post on their feed

Total Instagram Followers

# 3,154

Last Month 3,128

Gain **26**



**downtownlenoir** • Following  
Lenoir Downtown Historic District

**downtownlenoir** We just want to take a moment to say how proud we are to be members of this community. The last couple weeks haven't been easy on anyone - especially our small businesses - but it is so inspiring to see people coming together to support each other during this time. Thank you to everyone for continuing to support Downtown Lenoir and thank you to whoever drew this sidewalk art!

6w

**s2t\_at\_life** 🙏❤️🙏  
6w 1 like Reply

Liked by **beckygibbons85** and 55 others  
APRIL 4

Likes **56**

Comments **1**



**cityoflenoirnc**

**cityoflenoirnc** "We want to thank all of the linemen who work at the power companies that serve the City of Lenoir," Mayor Joe Gibbons said. "We appreciate everything you do to keep power on during all kinds of weather and conditions. Thank you for everything."

4w

Liked by **kicks103.3** and 37 others  
APRIL 18

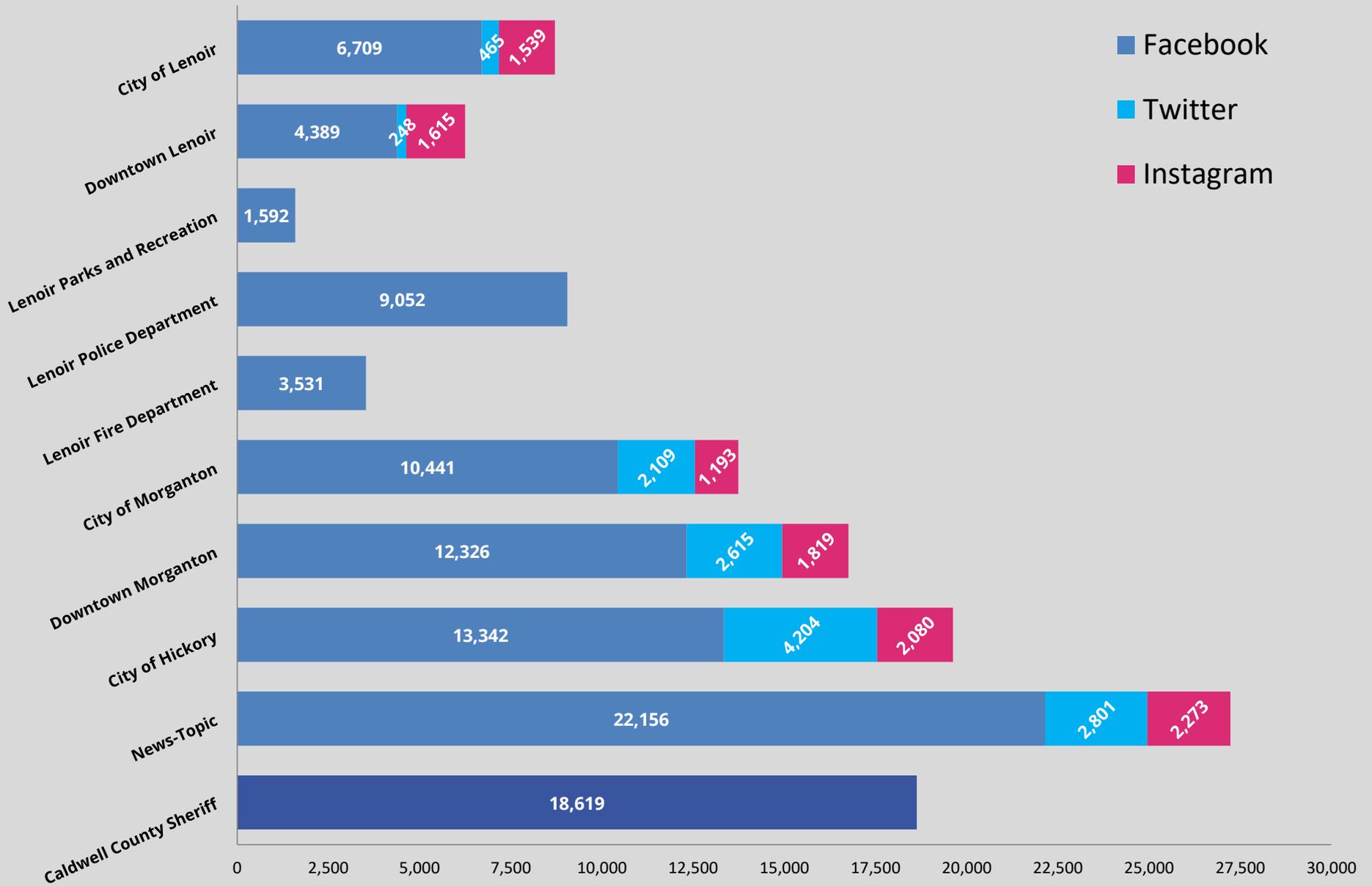
Likes **38**

Comments **2**



# Social Comparison

The chart below compares Lenoir's social accounts with surrounding organizations.





# Questions from the public

# 24

I needed a contact person for Bellvue Cemetery.

I am going to be putting a modular home on a lot in the city of Lenoir. The driveway will be coming off of a street with concrete curbs. Can you please tell me who to contact for requirements and restrictions on City of Lenoir driveways off of a street with concrete curb?

I was reaching out to you guys to see if there is anyway to have a few speed bumps installed on Beall St.

Garbage Collection Request

How much would it cost to fill a 26 ft by 52 inch swimming pool or 15,000 gallons

How do we opt out of (sanitation services)?

The recycling center is closed, but there is no sign posted to indicate that it will not be open today, Saturday, April 11.

What is the city policy for Nepotism and what is considered ineligible for employment?

I understand my garbage is picked up on Tuesday now. With the new more automated plan, is it still Tuesday?

Will trash bash still going this coming week?

I have a question about the address of the house my wife and I recently purchased

Is the Broyhill Walking park still open?

Bulk Garbage Collection Request

Clover Drive, Lenoir NC, The speed limit is 25mph. Drivers driving above 50mph in the MIDDLE of the road down the straight away all day, everyday RE Roy Coopers stay in place order, Smokey Mountain furniture has so many people in that store and they have remained open.

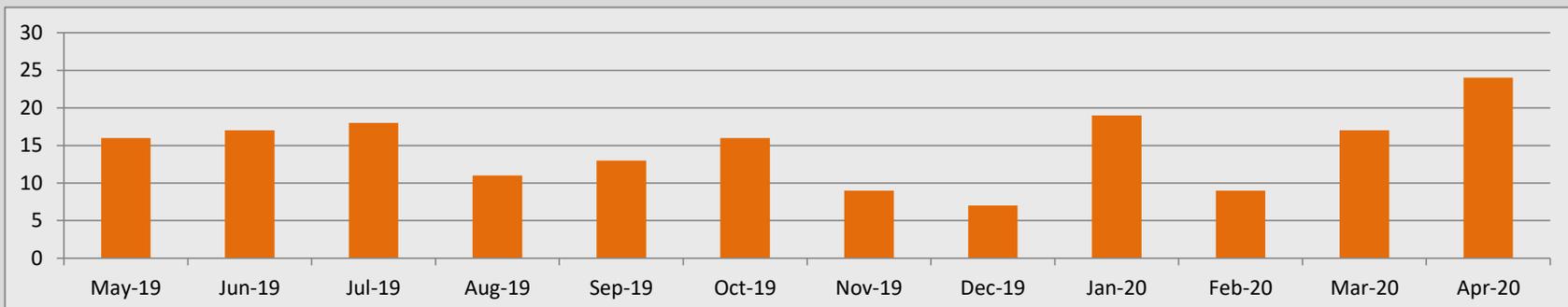
I seen this post from AGC that says the city deemed them essential but I thought that that was a state decision?

I have a piece of property in Lenoir. Who do I talk to about get the tenants evicted?

I seem to have misplaced my April utility statement. Can you tell me how much it is?

We noticed people still using the picnic area (greenway). Could those be roped off to not be used?

Garbage Collection Request





# June 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 6:00 p.m. City Council	3 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg.	4	5	6
7	8 11:45 a.m. City/County Services Committee	9 8:00 a.m. EDC	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 6:00 p.m. City Council	17 9:00 a.m. Staff Mtg.	18	19	20
21	22 5:30 p.m. Planning Board	23 8:30 a.m. Committee of the Whole	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
30		<b>Notes for July</b> <b>City offices will be closed on Friday, July 3 in observance of Independence Day.</b>				