

The "Vision" of the Five Year Consolidated Plan is to serve as a consolidated planning document, an application, and a strategic plan for Lehigh County. As part of the Five Year Consolidated Plan, the community must develop priorities, needs and goals. The following priority needs and goals have been identified for Lehigh County for the period of FY 2024 through FY 2028 for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Programs:

HOUSING PRIORITY - HS

Need:

The County has been experiencing a growth in population and an influx of lower income persons which has created a housing shortage, especially affordable housing.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **HS-1 Housing Development** – Increase the number of decent, safe, sanitary, accessible, and affordable housing units in the County, both for owner-occupied and rental-occupied housing.
 - **HS-2 Homeownership** – Increase the opportunities for homeownership for low- and moderate-income households through downpayment/closing cost assistance, and housing counseling services.
 - **HS-3 Housing Rehabilitation** – Promote and assist in the preservation of existing owner-occupied and renter-occupied affordable housing stock in the County.
 - **HS-4 Rent and Utility Assistance** – Promote housing stability through rental assistance, utility payments, and deposits for low- and moderate-income tenants who are at risk of becoming homeless.
 - **HS-5 Fair Housing** – Affirmatively further fair housing by promoting and informing households on their rights and educating landlords, realtors, mortgage companies, sellers, etc. on fair housing practices which will reduce discrimination in housing.
 - **HS-6 Housing Supportive Services** – Promote and assist low- and moderate-income households to locate and/or remain in affordable housing through housing counseling and supportive services.
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HOMELESS PRIORITY - HO**Need:**

The County is situated at the crossroads of major interstate highways and the expanding metropolitan area of the East Coast which has brought an influx of homeless and at risk of homelessness persons into the area.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **HO-1 Housing Opportunities** – Increase the housing opportunities and living conditions of persons and families who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness.
- **HO-2 Continuum of Care** – Support the efforts and resources of the Lehigh County Continuum of Care to promote housing opportunities for emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing for the homeless and those who are at risk of homelessness.
- **HO-3 Support and Management Services** – Provide funding for supportive and management services to governmental and non-profit agencies and organizations to assist persons who are homeless or who are at risk of becoming homeless.
- **HO-4 Homeless Prevention** – Provide funding for programs and activities to address eviction and unfair housing practices which may contribute to homelessness.

SPECIAL NEEDS PRIORITY - SN**Need:**

The County is experiencing an increase in the number of persons aging in place, the elderly, persons with physical disabilities, developmentally delayed persons, etc. There is a need to improve living standards for persons with special needs by increasing and expanding public services and public facilities.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **SN-1 Housing** – Increase the number of decent, safe, sound, sanitary, accessible, and affordable units in the County for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and other special needs populations.
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- **SN-2 Accessibility** – Provide funds for improvements to owner-occupied housing and improve renter-occupied housing by making reasonable accommodations for persons who are physically disabled.
- **SN-3 Social Services** – Promote and support social service programs and facilities for all persons with special needs.
- **SN-4 Removal of Architectural Barriers** – Remove Architectural Barriers which restrict the mobility and access to public facilities and services for persons with physical disabilities.
- **SN-5 Transportation** – Provide funds for improving and expanding transportation and access services for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons with other special needs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY - CD

Need:

The County's infrastructure, community facilities and public services are being strained by its population growth, increased demand for services, and the age of the infrastructure and facilities. There is a need to improve, preserve, and create public facilities and infrastructure to support the growing population.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **CD-1 Community Infrastructure** – Improve and upgrade roads, bridges, utilities, sewer systems, ADA accessibility, etc. to meet the increasing demand of residents.
 - **CD-2 Community Facilities** – Improve, upgrade, and expand parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, libraries, public buildings, etc. to meet the needs of the population.
 - **CD-3 Public Services** – Provide funding to improve, expand, and create public services for social and welfare programs so they are available to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income residents in the County.
 - **CD-4 Food Programs** – Provide assistance for food and nutritional programs to address the needs of the unemployed, underemployed, elderly, disabled, and homeless individuals.
 - **CD-5 Clearance/Demolition** – Remove slum and blighting conditions through the demolition and clearance of buildings and sites that pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of surrounding residents.
 - **CD-6 Public Safety** – Provide funding to improve and expand fire protection, emergency health and management services, crime prevention, etc. to better serve the residents of the county.
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- **CD-7 Transportation** – Improve and expand public transportation with additional bus routes, improved bus shelters, increased time schedules, etc. to assist low- and moderate-income persons to access employment sites, medical treatment and essential services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY - ED

Need:

The local economy in the County has been expanding, however, there is a need for job training and services to meet the employment needs of companies.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **ED-1 Employment** – Provide funding to support job training, retention, and educational programs to address the need for a well trained labor force.
- **ED-2 Financial Assistance** – Provide funds for new development, expansion, and equipment purchases through economic development programs.
- **ED-3 Revitalization** – Provide assistance in acquiring land and making sites available for redevelopment to promote new development in areas of the County that need to be revitalized.
- **ED-4 Incentives** – Support local, state, and federal tax breaks, tax credits, development bonuses and planning initiatives to create orderly and positive economic development throughout the County.
- **ED-5 Coordination and Cooperation** – Promote, support and form public and private partnerships to improve employee access to jobs through public transportation and the supply of worker housing throughout the County.

ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT, AND PLANNING PRIORITY - AMP

Need:

There is a need for administration, management, and planning services to efficiently and effectively operate federal and state grant programs.

Goal:

Goals to address this priority:

- **AMP-1 General Administration** – Provide experienced management and oversight to maintain efficient and effective administration of the federal and state grant programs.
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- **AMP-2 Staffing** – Hire and retain professional staff and support personnel to provide efficient and sound management of the programs and activities.
 - **AMP-3 Planning** – Provide planning for special studies, environmental review records, fair housing choice activities, promoting Section 3 enterprises, training and outreach, and compliance with federal, state and local laws and ordinances.
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