



# City of Bessemer, AL 2020 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

Submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
Development.

# COVER PHOTO

## Bessemer Rail-Trail.

Located in the heart of the city, the Rail-Trail is located within a low-to-moderate income Census tract and Census bloc. Bessemer's "Rail-Trail" was once **an elevated railroad line** known as the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad that ran parallel to Highway 150, or 14<sup>th</sup> Street South in Bessemer, from 1946 to 1988. The line was abandoned in 1988 and CSX railroad donated the land to the city. The city opened the first phase of the trail in 2018, having used federal & state funds. A second and third phase of the trail is being partially financed with funding from the city's CDBG grant.

## Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 2
- CR-05 – Goals and Objectives..... 3
- CR-10. Racial and Ethnic composition ..... 6
- CR-15 Resources and Investments ..... 7
- CR-20 Affordable Housing ..... 8
- CR-25 Homeless and Other Special Needs ..... 11
- CR-30 Public Housing.....13
- CR-35 Other Actions.....14
- CR-40 Monitoring .....20
- Citizens Participation Plan.....20
- CR- 45 CDBG .....21
- PR26 Financial Statement.....Appendix



## INTRODUCTION

The city of Bessemer is an entitlement community under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The CDBG program was authorized by Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The program provides annual grants to cities, counties and states to develop strong communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, with primary benefits going to persons with low-to-moderate incomes (LMI). Each year the city of Bessemer receives an annual federally-calculated allocation under the program to develop program-eligible activities meant to address three national objectives:

- Benefits to LMI persons;
- Slum and blight removal;
- Urgent development needs which pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community that have developed within the past 18 months and for which the city is not able to finance on its own nor with other funding sources.

Every five years and each year, the city adopts or develops activities meant to meet a national objective and be eligible. These activities are developed with input from the greater Bessemer community (including residents, elected officials, staff and interested parties). Activities adopted by the city are funded with CDBG funds.

As part of its CDBG regulatory requirements, the city is required by HUD to submit an annual evaluation of progress towards achieving the goals, objectives and outcomes of the activities. This **Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report**, or **CAPER**, was prepared by the Economic and Community Development Department and is intended to comply with HUD regulations found at 24 CFR Part 91.

CDBG regulations require grantees to submit the CAPER to HUD within 90 days of the close of a grantee's program year.

The city of Bessemer's Program Year (PY) extends from June 1 of each year to May 31 of the following year. The city's Economic and Community Development staff prepared this report for the program year of June 1, 2020, thru May 31, 2021. The report will be submitted to HUD by August 27, 2021.

## CR-05 – Goals and Objectives

### **Progress the jurisdiction has made in carrying out its strategic plan and its action plan. 91.520(a)**

**This could be an overview that includes major initiatives and highlights that were proposed and executed throughout the program year.**

The 2019-20 Program Year proved to be a trying one for the city of Bessemer's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent social distancing requirements greatly hindered the city's ability to initiate programs outlined in its 2020 Five-Year Consolidated Plan. Activities such as the Historic Façade Grant and the installation of Bus Shelters in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods were directly affected by the pandemic and its restrictions. The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority, which works with the city on bus shelter installation, realized supply chain issues in PY20 which hindered the effort. Meanwhile, local businesses were impacted by COVID restrictions. Other projects outlined in the plan were delayed.

Another impediment to carrying out objectives outlined in the plan was the limited staff. The department operated in PY20 with only one full-time equivalent (FTE), greatly reducing departmental capacity. The city plans to improve staffing levels within the Economic and Community Development Department in PY21 to carry out its goals and objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan.

With these difficulties in mind, the city focused its efforts in PY20 on its Emergency Housing Grant program. This program is aimed at providing emergency home repair and improvement assistance to elderly, low-to-moderate income, homeowners or disabled low-to-moderate income homeowners, regardless of age, and dependent resident family members who are disabled. Participants must be 62 years of age or older or permanently disabled. Grants of up to \$7,500 are available for households that qualify for the program.

A total of 17 households were assisted by the program during the 2020 program year. The average costs of repairs for each grantee was about \$5,000 with repairs focusing on roof replacements and HVAC replacements. About half of those who received assistance are categorized as extremely low-income clients.

The city also completed ADA improvements to the entrance to the Bessemer Recreation Center to provide easier access to the facility for those with disabilities.

The city was reviewing its programs and operations at the end of PY20 to ensure funding is disbursed in PY21 and the remaining years of the comprehensive plan period.

## Comparison of the proposed versus actual outcomes for each outcome measure submitted with the consolidated plan and explain, if applicable, why progress was not made toward meeting goals and objectives. 91.520(g)

Categories, priority levels, funding sources and amounts, outcomes/objectives, goal outcome indicators, units of measure, targets, actual outcomes/outputs, and percentage completed for each of the grantee's program year goals.

The outline for PY20 goals and objectives by category is below.

Goal	Category	Source/ Amount	Indicator/ Outcome	Unit of Measure	Expect ed- Strate gic Plan	Actual - Strate gic Plan	Perce nt Compl ete	Expect ed - Progr am Year	Actua l - Progr am Year	Percent Complete
<b>Emergency Repair Grants</b>	Affordable Housing	CDBG \$	Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated	Household Holding Unit	30	17	56%	15	17	113%
<b>Public Facilities</b>	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG \$	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than LMI Housing Benefit	Persons Assisted	26530	0		26530	26530	100
<b>Historic Façade Grants (Downtown Historic District)</b>	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG \$	Façade treatment/business building rehabilitation	Businesse Assisted	10	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Public Improvement</b>	Non-Housing Community Development	CDBG \$	Public service activities other than LMI Housing benefit	Persons Assisted	26530	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Public Improvement (Bus Shelters)</b>	Non-Housing Community Development		Public facility or Infrastructure other than LMI Housing benefit	Persons Assisted	26530	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Program Administration</b>	Other	CDBG \$	Public facility or Infrastructure activities,	Persons Assisted	26530	0	0	0	0	0

			Façade treatment/business building rehabilitation. Homeowner Housing added. Homeowner Housing rehabilitated. Jobs created/retained. Businesses assisted.							
<b>Delivery Costs</b>	Other	CDBG \$	Façade treatment/business building rehabilitation. Homeowner Housing added. Homeowner housing rehabilitated. Jobs created/retained. Businesses assisted.	Business Homeowner Housing Unit Household Housing unit. Jobs Business Assisted	5	0	0	0	0	0

**Assess how the jurisdiction’s use of funds, particularly CDBG, addresses the priorities and specific objectives identified in the plan, giving special attention to the highest priority activities identified.**

Priority #1: The city of Bessemer strives to provide rehabilitation assistance to low, and low-to-moderate homeowners by upgrading the existing stock of affordable housing through rehabilitation of structures which could be viewed as substandard, but are suitable for rehabilitation. The city prioritizes the affordable housing c, with an emphasis placed on accommodating senior residents through the Emergency Housing Repair Grant program. These rehabilitation services are available to low, low-to-moderate income homeowners. During PY20, the city successfully provided emergency repair grants to some 17 structures through the Emergency Housing Repair Grant Program. The city increased the threshold of assistance available through the Emergency Housing Grant program by \$2,500 in PY20, from \$5,000 to \$7,500 due to increased costs in housing construction costs and to meet the needs of residents in the program.

## **CR-10– Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted.**

**Describe the families assisted (including the racial and ethnic status of families assisted).**

### **91.520(a)**

**Describe the families assisted (including the racial and ethnic status of families assisted). 91.520(a)**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>CDBG</b>
White	6287
Black or African American	<b>19102</b>
Asian	
American Indian or American Native	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25389</b>
Hispanic	1141
Not Hispanic	<b>24248</b>

### **Narrative**

The city of Bessemer is 72.4 percent Black/African-American and about 22 percent White, according to the most recent Census data. The remaining portions of the population are disbursed among the various racial and ethnic groups. The city has a growing Hispanic community which now comprises about 4.3 percent of the population. With a large African-American population, it is not surprising that many of the programs and activities initiated by the city end up benefitting this racial group. Of those who requested assistance under the Emergency Housing Repair Grant program in the 2020 Program Year, the overwhelming majority of applicants were African-American with non-Hispanic backgrounds. The repairs to the Recreation Center doors were completed in 2020 and will benefit all Bessemer residents, but especially those with disabilities.

## CR-15 – Resources and Investments. 91.520(a)

Identify the Resources made available.

Source of Funds	Source	Resources Made Available	Amount Expended During Program Year
<b>CDBG</b>	Public-federal	\$710468	\$227,274

### Narrative

As mentioned previously, the city focused its efforts on the Emergency Repair Grant program due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the reduction in available staff. Funds were available through the CDBG grant allocation and Program Income. The majority of the city's funding was used to provide assistance under the Emergency Housing Grant Repair program. A total of \$91,750 (40% of expended funds) was used for Emergency Repair Grants. Another \$76,341.57 (33.5%) was used for Housing Delivery and Program Delivery costs. The completion of ADA improvements on the doors of the Bessemer Recreation Center accounted for \$21,711.78 (9.5%) of available resources. The remaining \$37,471 was used for Program Administration and Revolving Loan Fund payouts. A total \$227,274, or 21 percent of available funds, were expended during PY20. Again, this is due to COVID-19 restrictions and low staff levels in PY20.

### Identify the geographic distribution and location of investments

Target Area	Planned Percentage of Allocation	Actual Percentage of Allocation	Narrative Description
<b>Bessemer, Alabama</b>	100	100	

### Narrative

All programs were available city-wide.

### Leveraging

The city is not currently leveraging any CDBG funds with other sources.

## CR-20 – Affordable Housing 91.520(b)

Evaluation of the jurisdiction’s progress in providing affordable housing, including the number and types of families served, the number of extremely low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income persons served.

	One-year Goal	Actual
<b>Number of Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units</b>	0	0
<b>Number of Non-Homeless households to be provided affordable housing units</b>	15	17
<b>Number of Special Needs households to be provided affordable housing units</b>		0
<b>Total</b>		

Table 5 – Number of Households

	One-year Goal	Actual
<b>Number of households supported through Rental Assistance</b>	0	0
<b>Number of households supported through The Production of New Units</b>	0	0
<b>Number of households supported through Rehab of Existing Units</b>	15	17
<b>Number of households supported through Acquisition of Existing Units</b>	0	0
<b>Total</b>		

Table 6 – Number of Households

**Discuss the difference between goals and outcomes and problems encountered in meeting these goals.**

The department was able to provide emergency repairs to senior housing despite the presence of COVID-19. COVID restrictions were an initial concern, but as restrictions eased, the program was able to make gains. In homes where repairs were made under the program, residents were able to remain in their homes, improving the overall affordable housing stock within the city limits and enjoy a suitable living environment which could help sustain older neighborhoods.

General repairs included:

- Electrical improvements
- Roof repairs
- HVAC replacements.

A hindrance which accounts for the difference in some goals and outcomes was the reduction in staffing. The Director of the department retired in Jan. 2020, leaving only one FTE (full-time equivalent) on staff to handle the workload.

**Discuss how these outcomes will impact future annual action plans.**

The creation of sustainable living environments and accessibility is the primary outcome of the activities and will therefore be central to the creation and adoption of future action plans.

**Include the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income persons served by each activity where information on income by family size is required to determine the eligibility of the activity.**

Number of Households Served	CDBG Actual	HOME Actual
<b>Extremely low-income</b>	10	n/a
<b>Low-income</b>	6	n/a
<b>Moderate-income</b>	1	n/a
<b>Total</b>	17	n/a

Table 7 – Number of Households Served

**Narrative**

The percentage of Bessemer residents who are either extremely low income, low income or moderate income remains among the highest in the state of Alabama. Bessemer's rate of 65 percent LMI is the highest in Alabama. The breakdown within this category is as follows:

Extremely Low income – 36%

Low income – 20 %

Moderate income – 9 %.

This is reflected somewhat in the breakdown among those who received Emergency Repair Grants in PY20. The highest numbers (10) were among those deemed of extremely low income, followed by low income (6) and moderate income (1). About 59 percent of all who received assistance through the program were extremely low income, while 35 percent of those were low income individuals. This approximates somewhat to the population percentages for each category for the entire city.

The city of Bessemer does not receive HOME funds.

## **CR- 25. Homeless and Other Special Needs 91.220 (d, e); 91.320 (d, e); 91.520(c)**

### **Evaluate the jurisdiction's progress in meeting specific objectives for reducing and ending homelessness through:**

The city of Bessemer does not receive ESG funds, which are designated for homeless activities. The city outlined in its Consolidated Plan a desire to identify the homeless and at-risk for homeless population within the city. The Economic and Community Development Department contacted the One Roof organization and began discussions on how to allocate CDBG dollars or CDBG-CV dollars towards these type activities. Several proposals were outlined and are currently being considered, especially with the impacts of the pandemic on renters and mortgage holders. Those discussions are expected to continue into the early quarters of PY21 with hopes of identifying potential areas to collaborate to address objectives to reduce and end homelessness in Bessemer.

### **Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assisting their individual needs.**

The city's discussions with One Roof focused on how to identify unsheltered persons and assisting them with individual needs. The discussions are expected to continue in PY21 with hopes of identifying ways to collaborate.

### **Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons**

The city has no funding for emergency shelters and transitional housing needs. Again, discussions with One Roof are designed to identify a possible collaborative efforts to address issues such as emergency shelters and transitional housing.

**Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: likely to become homeless after being discharged from publicly-funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); and, receiving from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs.**

The city's CDBG funded Emergency Housing Repair Grant program is designed to remove barriers associated with disabilities and medical condition of the homeowners. The city has an on-going partnership with Medical West in which the hospital can notify the city of discharged patients in need of further assistance, such as wheelchair ramps, ADA accessibility and other factors which could impact an individual's ability to remain in their homes. The repair projects completed in PY20 were able to accomplish this goal by keeping individuals within their homes. The city still has some progress to make towards improving relations with youth facilities and correction programs/institutions, as well as public and private agencies which address housing, health, social services, employment education and youth needs. Due to the limited presence of these organizations within the city limits, the city has had to seek partnerships outside of Bessemer to address these areas of need.

**Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again.**

Again, due to the limited presence of agencies within the corporate limits of Bessemer who work in these areas, the city has had to seek partnerships with organizations who work regionally. Discussions with various agencies began in PY20 and are expected to continue into PY21. One of the stated goals of the city's discussions with One Roof on expanded partnerships was to identify at-risk families and those who suffer from chronic homelessness in order to develop strategies and solutions.

## **CR-30 - Public Housing 91.220(h); 91.3200**

### **Actions taken to address the needs of public housing.**

The city has worked cooperatively with the Bessemer Housing Authority to address the needs of residents and management. The city of Bessemer, through the Office of the Mayor, appoints members to the Bessemer Housing Authority's Board of Directors. In addition, the city contacts the BESHHA when developing plans to address the needs of extremely low-income and low-income persons. In PY20, BESHHA representatives took part in forums and public hearings sponsored by the Economic and Community Development Department aimed at helping the city identify programs under the city of Bessemer's CARES Act allocation. Two programs emerged with input from the BESHHA: a microenterprise assistance program and a rental/utility assistance program. The microenterprise assistance program included a provision for public housing residents to take part. These two programs began in earnest in May 2021 and the results are not reflected in this CAPER but should be available in the 2021 CAPER.

The city consulted with the BESHHA on the location of bus shelters under the Bus Shelters/Public Facilities activity. Again, the installation of shelters was slowed due to supply issues with the BJCTA. However, a bus shelter installation was identified near the Southside Homes Public Housing Community and will be installed once issues with the BJCTA are addressed.

### **Actions taken to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership.**

The Bessemer Housing Authority has an active Resident Advisory Board. The board meets monthly and provides input to BESHHA officials on matters of concern to residents and provide comments on the BESHHA's annual and five-year plans. The BESHHA has an established Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program aimed at assisting housing residents in transitioning from public housing to self-sustainability, including homeownership. The city of Bessemer has agreed to partner in this effort by identifying properties for which the BESHHA can build new housing units or acquire units for residents who have successfully become homeowners.

### **Actions taken to provide assistance to troubled PHAs.**

The Bessemer Public Housing Authority is not a troubled PHA and is therefore not subject to this category.

## **CR-35 - Other Actions 91.220 (j-k); 91.320 (i-j)**

**Actions taken to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment. 91.220 (j); 91.320 (i).**

The city of Bessemer's 2020 Analysis of Impediments did not identify any land use controls, tax policies, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations and policies affecting the return on residential investments which were barriers to affordable housing. The AI identified other areas of concern which could be deemed as barriers to affordable housing. These were primarily related to affordable housing stock, knowledge of credit and the ability to work with financial institutions. The city partnered with the United Way Housing Alliance in April 2021 as part of Fair Housing Month in an effort to inform Bessemer residents of their rights under the Fair Housing Act. Future cooperation with the organization will be discussed in PY21 in an effort to expand these type workshops to inform Bessemer residents. The city has also been in contact with developers about expanding the affordable housing stock in Bessemer.

**Actions taken to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.  
91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The city of Bessemer has several Census tracts which would qualify as areas of the underserved. The primary efforts of the city have focused on directing funding into these areas in order to provide lift to residents. The city has not identified any obstacles to meeting underserved needs, but is constantly reviewing policies, procedures and operations which could impact the underserved. The city continued in PY20 to assess the ability of those with disabilities to access public facilities. About 25 % of Bessemer's population has some type of disability according to the most recent Census figures. Projects in the PY20 plan were targeted to those with disabilities, such as the recommended Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements at Enoch Brown Park and improvements at the Bessemer Public Library and near the Foundry Recovery and Rescue center at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and

18<sup>th</sup> Street North. These projects had not commenced at the conclusion of PY20, but remain a part of the city's plans. Nevertheless, the city recently completed ADA improvements in other areas through the use of city funds, including a project to improve the ADA access at the Bessemer Recreation Center, which commenced in PY20. Finally, the city's Emergency Housing Repair Grant program provides assistance to those with disabilities, including the installation of wheelchair ramps.

**Actions taken to reduce lead-based paint hazards. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The city tests for lead-paint hazards in homes under the Emergency Repair Housing Grant program. The city set aside a separate lead-based paint testing as part of the program in its PY21 Action Plan. The city notifies all participants of the dangers of lead-based paint. Contractors working under the city's CDBG program are required to have all required certifications for the proper abatement of lead-based paint hazards. The city has consistently followed this policy.

**Actions taken to reduce the number of poverty-level families. 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The city of Bessemer has experienced tremendous job growth in the last 10 years. This is expected to lead to a reduction in the poverty rate, which stands at 26 percent according to the most recent Census estimates from the American Community Survey. In PY20, Carvana opened a new facility in the city which will employ some 450 persons. Amazon opened the state's first Robotics Distribution and Fulfillment Center in Bessemer in March 2020. This facility currently employs some 5,000 individuals. Bessemer residents account for 10 percent of Amazon's workforce, according to company estimates. Amazon also announced plans to build a new delivery station in the city. All in all, some 1,500 new jobs are expected in the city in the next 3 to 5 years. The job market in the city is flourishing. However, the poverty rate remains stubbornly high in some areas. The following chart gives a perspective of poverty-rates in selected Census Tracts within Bessemer, as well as the employment rate in these communities based on HUD rates is attached in the appendix.

Some of this challenge can be tied to educational attainment in the city. Census data shows the total percentage of persons over age 25 in Bessemer with a high school diploma/equivalent or higher is just 83.1 percent, compared to a state average of 86.1 percent and a national average of 88 percent for this same age group. The percentage of persons in the city with a bachelor's degree or higher is just 14.4 percent, compared to 25.5 percent for the state of Alabama and 32.1

percent for the United States. In addition, Bessemer's elderly population (those 65 and older) of 18.7 percent is higher than both state (17.3) and national (16.5) averages.

These figures will continue to put Bessemer at a disadvantage. However, the city has made some strides in creating meaningful employment and efforts were made in PY20 to connect residents with these jobs. Discussions between the Economic and Community Development Department, the Mayor's Office, Jefferson County's Community Development and Workforce Development Department, and the State of Alabama Career Center took place in the early part of PY20 prior to the onset of COVID-19. The pandemic preempted these discussions as local efforts became focused on pandemic response. These discussions are expected to resume and continue into the upcoming years to continue efforts to lower the poverty rate in Bessemer.

Finally, the offering of public transit and the installation of bus shelters is meant to assist with providing Bessemer residents transportation access in a growing job market.

#### **Actions taken to develop institutional structure, 91.220(k); 91.320(j)**

The city made several modifications to its delivery system in PY20, despite a lack of staff. A new Policy and Procedures Manual for the administration of the CDBG program was completed in the second quarter of PY20. This manual will help guide institutional decisions going forward to ensure better delivery of the program and compliance with CDBG requirements. The Citizens Participation Plan and the Language Access Plan were both updated in the second quarter of PY20 to ensure better delivery of services for all residents.

The city expanded its partnerships with local non-profits due to the need to address the impacts of COVID-19. While not reflected in the PY20 outcomes, the provision of CARES Act funding fostered new relationships between the city and non-profit partners such as the United Way of Central Alabama/Meals on Wheels, the Birmingham Urban League, which assists homeowners and renters, and Create Birmingham, which aids microenterprises and entrepreneurs. The Economic and Community Development Department and the Mayor's Office also began discussing

potential partnerships or expansion of partnerships with other service agencies such as the Salvation Army of Greater Birmingham and One Roof.

Finally, the city maintains a strong relationship with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham. Habitat completed four new affordable homes in Bessemer in PY20, although CDBG funding was not used in this effort. Habitat also announced plans in the fourth quarter of PY20 to build up to 100 new housing units within the city of Bessemer.

The city expects to continue these partnerships in the upcoming years.

**Actions taken to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies. 91.220(k); 91.3200)**

The city of Bessemer's non-profit sector is limited in terms of agencies able to work within the city to address private housing and social services. Therefore, the city has taken the approach of collaboration with regional private housing and social service agencies. The city maintains a strong relationship with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham. The agency completed three new houses in Bessemer in PY20, although HUD funding was not a resource in the projects. The new houses were located in a moderate to higher income neighborhood of the city.

The city also maintains a strong relationship with the Bessemer Housing Authority. The BESHHA worked with the city to identify possible activities related to the city's receipt of CDBG-CV funds. The BESHHA and the city are also collaborating on ways to expand the supply of housing in the city, including the creation of a new housing community.

The city of Bessemer's non-profit sector is limited in terms of agencies able to work within the city to address private housing and social services. Therefore, the city has taken the approach of collaboration with regional private housing and social service agencies. New partnerships were created in PY20 with Create Birmingham, the Birmingham Urban League and Meals on Wheels in direct response to COVID-19.

These new partnerships have included engagement with the BESHHA to ensure residents of public housing are aware of various new programs entering the market.

**Identify actions taken to overcome the effects of any impediments identified in the jurisdiction's analysis of impediments to fair housing choice. 91.520(a)**

Despite the pandemic and limited staffing, the city was able to make some gains in addressing issues identified in its analysis of impediments to fair housing choice.

- ***Renew efforts to address housing affordability and reduce housing costs among lower income residents.*** The city initiated a housing repair program in its 2019 Action Plan to help offset some costs related to housing costs for non-seniors. This program remains a part of the city's proposed activities but it suffered tremendously in PY20 due to a lack of staff. The city placed a down payment assistance program in both its PY19 and PY21 plans with the hopes of finding an agency to partner with on homeowner education in order to make homeownership available for lower-income residents a reality. This is part of an effort to improve the homeownership rate within the city, which currently stands at 56 percent. The city will again look into building capacity and finding partnerships to initiate programs related to housing affordability and the reduction of housing costs in PY21.
- ***Pursue efforts to improve the supply of affordable, quality housing in Bessemer.*** There was much success in this area in PY20. Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham worked with the city to identify land for a new \$20 million mixed-income community. Site work for the new 125-unit community began in earnest in the fourth quarter of PY20 and is expected to provide more options for affordable, quality housing in Bessemer, especially with the influx of new jobs to the area. The city of Bessemer sold its former City Hall Building to a development partnership of Milwaukee-based Scott Crawford Inc. and Cardinal Capital in the final quarter of PY20. The development duo plans to transform the former City Hall building into a mixed-unit development which will include at least 40 housing units, many of which are expected to be market rate and available to Bessemer residents. A new non-profit, Bessemer Redevelopment Corporation, began working with the city in PY20 to identify and acquire vacant or blighted properties within the city's Northside community for potential redevelopment into single-family housing units. BRC's plan is to be a catalyst for redevelopment within the Northside community. It plans to work with the city to bring housing and rehabilitation services to two Census blocks with LMI populations of 85 percent and 87 percent respectively. The city began working with the Bessemer Housing Authority to make the Juanita Hill Place Development a reality within the city's Southside community

and a Census block with an LMI population of 88 percent. Request for Proposals were submitted in the fourth quarter of PY20 to qualified firms which could assist the city with an application to HUD for a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area, or NRSA, designation for the neighborhood. The discussions have focused on using CDBG funds to boost revitalization and availability of quality housing and other amenities in the area through the NRSA program. Finally, the city began working with STRADA Professional Services on development of an updated city Master Plan which will include a focus on new housing opportunities.

- ***Pursue programs aimed at providing Bessemer residents education relative to Fair Housing, financial management and credit worthiness, as a means to expand opportunity and impact housing stability.*** The Economic and Community Development Department and the Office of the Mayor teamed with the United Way Housing Alliance to co-sponsor the agency's Virtual Fair Housing Workshop in April 2021. The information was shared by the city on its website and across its social media platforms. The Virtual Fair Housing Workshop entitled *Fair Housing: Know Your Rights* was held on April 15, 2021. In addition to this partnership, Mayor Kenneth Gulley proclaimed April 2021 as *Fair Housing Month* in the city of Bessemer. The proclamation was made to draw attention to Fair Housing issues and inform residents of their rights under the Fair Housing Act. The plan is to continue this partnership and increase information on Fair Housing rights and choice to Bessemer residents.
- ***Seek to connect public transportation, housing, and employment opportunities being produced in the city.*** As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the city developed a program to install bus shelters strategically to connect residents to employment opportunities. This program suffered in PY20 from supply issues with the Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority. The proposed bus shelters were not able to be installed in PY20 and the city and agency were working to get shelters strategically installed in PY21. Nevertheless, the two agencies have looked at ways to connect residents to growing employment opportunities. The BJCTA unveiled plans in the fourth quarter of PY20 to expand service in Bessemer to meet the growing job demands. A final decision on changes to existing bus routes and expansion of services was being considered in PY21.

## **CR-40 – Monitoring 91.220 and 91.230**

**Describe the standards and procedures used to monitor activities carried out in furtherance of the plan and used to ensure long-term compliance with requirements of the programs involved, including minority business outreach and the comprehensive planning requirements.**

The City of Bessemer's Department of Economic and Community Development has committed to reviews of annual plan goals and projects on a quarterly basis, with additional reviews as required. The department included in PY20 a provision which entails a quarterly update to the Mayor, who then shares the information with the City Council. The department instituted an eligibility sheet to ensure compliance of programs. A review of the Language Access Plan was conducted in PY20 to ensure access to programs for those not native born. The department is also reviewing its strategy for Section 3 participation. This review will continue into PY21.

The city also reviews on a quarterly basis its expenditure rate. HUD requires no more than 1.5 years of grant funds available in the city's Treasury letter of credit on the annual test date in April.

## **Citizen Participation Plan 91.105(d); 91.115(d)**

**Describe the efforts to provide citizens with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on performance reports.**

The Citizens Participation Plan and the Language Access Plan were both updated in the first quarter of PY20 to ensure better delivery of services for all residents. The updated Citizen Participation Plan was formally adopted by the Bessemer City Council on October 20, 2020. Information on public hearing schedules and performance reports is now shared on the city's website. This city used this platform to help connect with residents during the adoption of programs related to the CARES Act and the adoption of the 2021 Action Plan. The city has adopted three ways of reaching residence and notifying them of public hearings and opportunities to comment on performance reports:

- Notice in a newspaper of general circulation within the city of Bessemer.
- Notice on the city's Community Development webpage.
- Posting at Bessemer City Hall.

Notice is given at least 15 days prior to the public hearings, notifying residents of the completion of the annual performance report and the mechanisms by which comments will be accepted.

The department will continue to monitor the progress related to engaging Citizens in the planning and evaluation process and will suggest edits and modifications as needed to ensure the residents of Bessemer across all classes and interest have access to comment and guide decision-making relative to programs goals and activities.

### **CR-45 – CDBG 91.520 (c)**

**Specify the nature of, and reasons for, any changes in the jurisdiction's program objectives and indications of how the jurisdiction would change its programs as a result of its experiences.**

The city of Bessemer, like many communities around the country, was impacted by the pandemic. The city will continue to pursue its programs and objectives, now that some semblance of normalcy is returning. The primary objectives over the next year will be to staff its department to accelerate programs and activities. These improvements in capacity do not necessitate any major changes in the programs and activities offered, but do demonstrate a desire to ensure the objectives of the programs and activities are met now that the pandemic restrictions have eased.

**Does this Jurisdiction have any open Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grants?** No.

**[BEDI grantees] Describe accomplishments and program outcomes during the last year.** N/A



# Appendix



## Maps and Charts



Line Item	Description	Amount	Percentage
01	UNRECORDED CORE FUNDS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	590,468.00	0.00
02	ENTITLEMENT GRANT	0.00	0.00
03	SHRILUS URBAN RENEWAL	0.00	0.00
04	SECTION 108 GUARANTEED LOAN FUNDS	229,769.50	0.00
05	CURRENT YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	0.00	0.00
05A	CURRENT YEAR SECTION 108 PROGRAM INCOME (FROM SI TYPE)	0.00	0.00
06	FUNDS RETURNED TO THE LINE-OF-CREDIT	0.00	0.00
06A	FUNDS RETURNED TO THE LOCAL CORE ACCOUNT	0.00	0.00
07	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL AVAILABLE	0.00	0.00
08	TOTAL AVAILABLE (SUM, LINES 01-07)	820,237.50	0.00
<b>PART II: SUMMARY OF CORE EXPENDITURES</b>			
09	DISBURSEMENTS OTHER THAN SECTION 108 REPAYMENTS AND PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	189,803.35	0.00
10	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL AMOUNT SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT	189,803.35	0.00
11	AMOUNT SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT (LINE 09 + LINE 10)	37,671.00	0.00
12	DISBURSED IN IDS FOR PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	0.00	0.00
13	DISBURSED IN IDS FOR SECTION 108 REPAYMENTS	0.00	0.00
14	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL EXPENDITURES	227,274.35	0.00
15	TOTAL EXPENDITURES (SUM, LINES 11-14)	227,274.35	0.00
16	UNRECORDED BALANCE (LINE 08 - LINE 15)	592,963.15	0.00
<b>PART III: LOW/MOD BENEFIT TRAIL REPORTING PERIOD</b>			
17	EXPENSED FOR LOW/MOD HOUSING IN SPECIAL AREAS	0.00	0.00
18	EXPENSED FOR LOW/MOD MULTIFAMILY HOUSING	0.00	0.00
19	DISBURSED FOR OTHER LOW/MOD ACTIVITIES	189,803.35	0.00
20	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL LOW/MOD CREDIT	0.00	0.00
21	TOTAL LOW/MOD CREDIT (SUM, LINES 17-20)	189,803.35	0.00
22	PERCENT LOW/MOD CREDIT (LINE 21/LINE 11)	100.00%	0.00%
<b>LOW/MOD BENEFIT FROM MULTI-YEAR CERTIFICATIONS</b>			
23	PROGRAM YEAR(S) COVERED IN CERTIFICATION	0.00	0.00
24	CUMULATIVE NET EXPENDITURES SUBJECT TO LOW/MOD BENEFIT CALCULATION	0.00	0.00
25	CUMULATIVE NET EXPENDITURES BENEFITTING LOW/MOD PERSONS	0.00	0.00%
26	PERCENT BENEFIT TO LOW/MOD PERSONS (LINE 25/LINE 24)		
<b>PART IV: PUBLIC BENEFIT (PB) CAP CALCULATION</b>			
27	DISBURSED IN IDS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES	0.00	0.00
28	P5 UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR	0.00	0.00
29	P5 UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	0.00	0.00
30	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL P5 OBLIGATIONS	0.00	0.00
31	TOTAL P5 OBLIGATIONS (LINE 27 + LINE 28 - LINE 29 + LINE 30)	590,468.00	0.00
32	ENTITLEMENT GRANT	183,386.66	0.00
33	PRIOR YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	773,654.66	0.00%
34	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL SUBJECT TO P5 CAP	37,671.00	0.00
35	TOTAL SUBJECT TO P5 CAP (SUM, LINES 32-34)	37,671.00	0.00
36	PERCENT FUNDS OBLIGATED FOR P5 ACTIVITIES (LINE 31/LINE 35)	590,468.00	0.00
<b>PART V: PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (PA) CAP</b>			
37	DISBURSED IN IDS FOR PLANNING/ADMINISTRATION	0.00	0.00
38	PA UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR	0.00	0.00
39	PA UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS AT END OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM YEAR	0.00	0.00
40	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL PA OBLIGATIONS	0.00	0.00
41	TOTAL PA OBLIGATIONS (LINE 37 + LINE 38 - LINE 39 + LINE 40)	37,671.00	0.00
42	ENTITLEMENT GRANT	590,468.00	0.00
43	CURRENT YEAR PROGRAM INCOME	229,769.50	0.00
44	ADJUSTMENT TO COMPUTE TOTAL SUBJECT TO PA CAP	820,237.50	4.57%
45	TOTAL SUBJECT TO PA CAP (SUM, LINES 42-44)		
46	PERCENT FUNDS OBLIGATED FOR PA ACTIVITIES (LINE 41/LINE 45)		



CPD Maps

Besemer, Alabama

Layers

Legend

Print

Reports

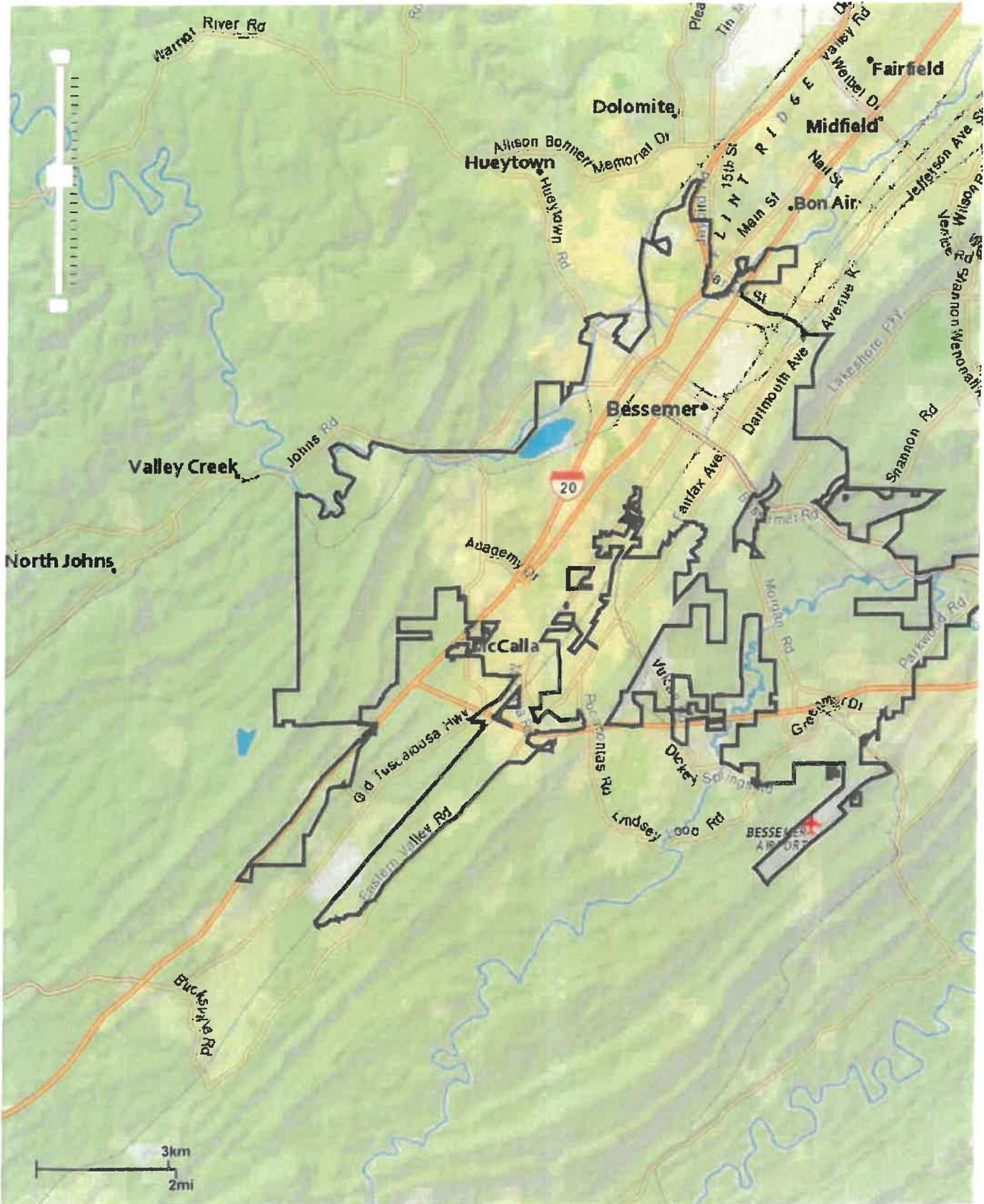
Data Toolkit

Map Query

Grantee Summary

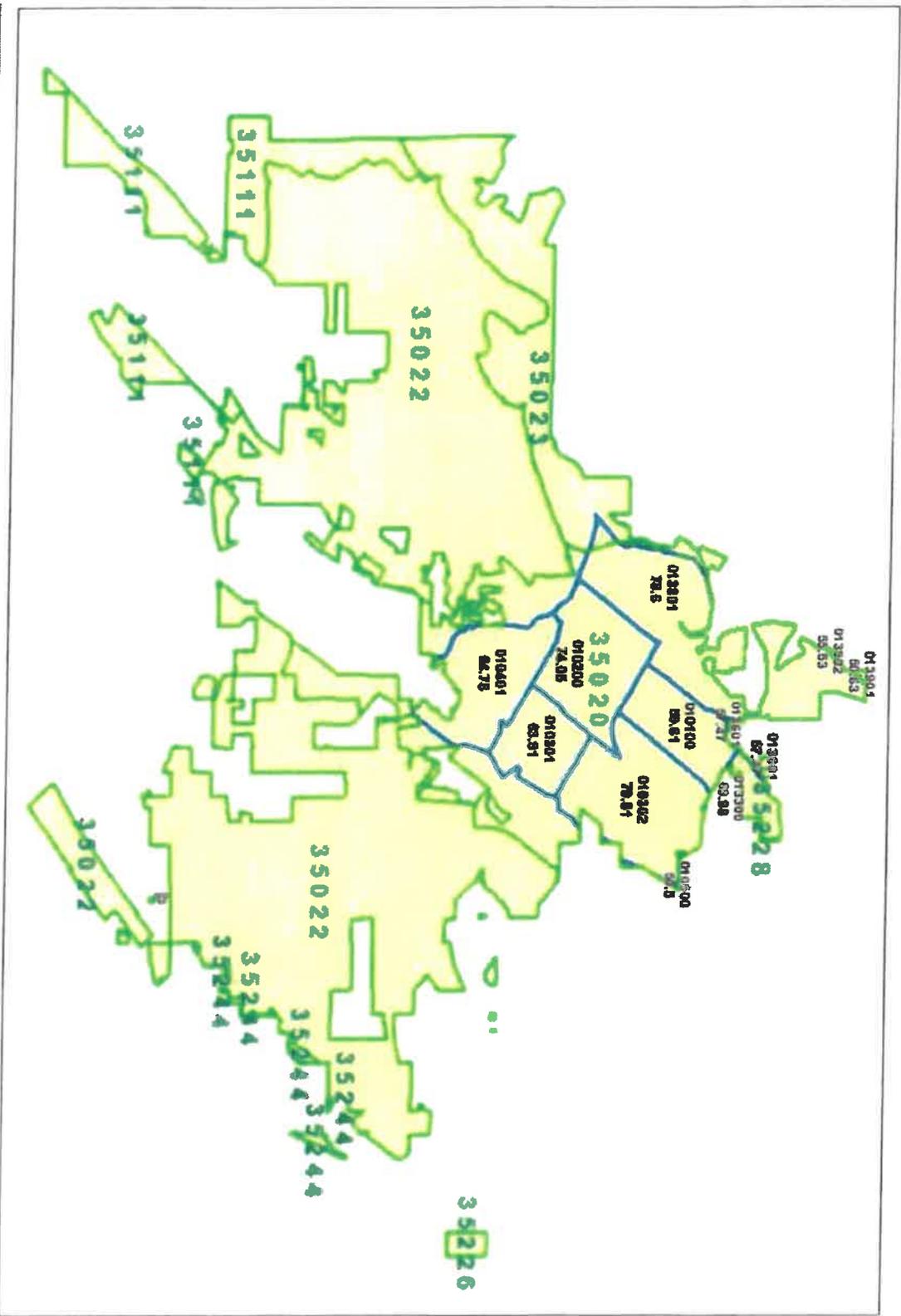
Basemap

More Info





# Low/Mod Income Census Tracts



Map: Top outline is the Circuit Rider. The bottom number is the District &



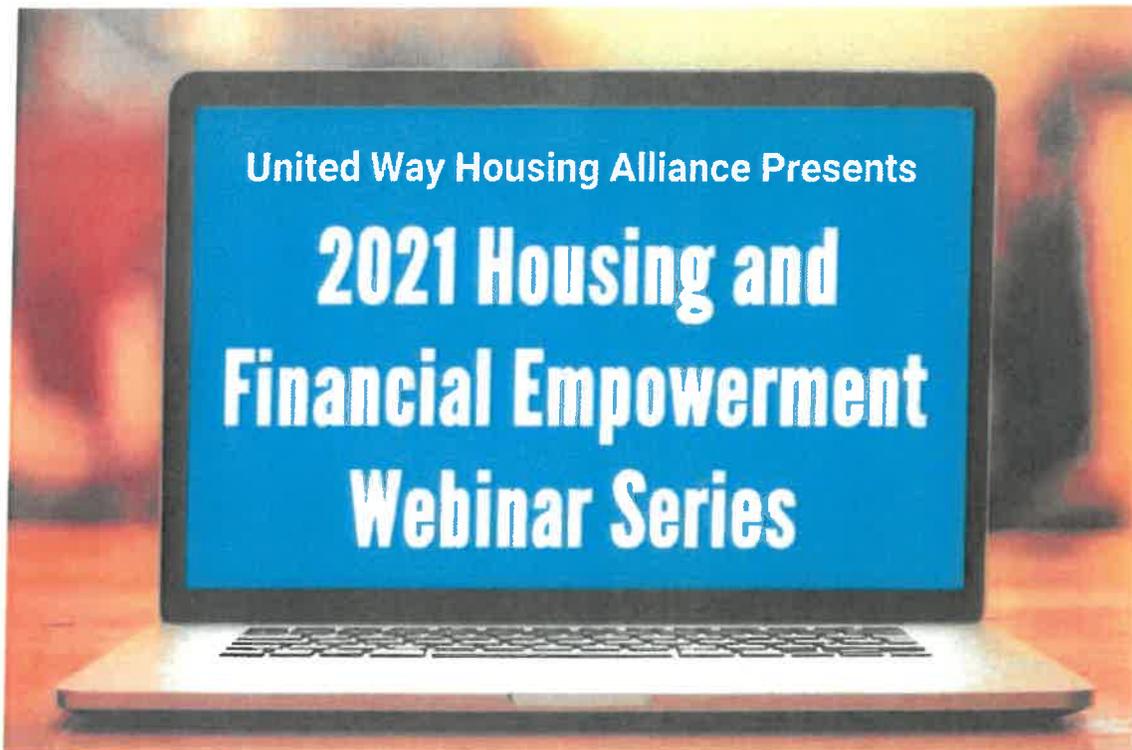


## A SNAPSHOT OF EMERGENCY REPAIR GRANT BENEFICIARIES

**(Some information is being withheld in order to comply with federal personally identifiable information or PII regulations found at OMB M-07-16).**

	Race	Sex	Census area	Cost and Emergency Repair
1.	B	F	103.02	\$7860 - HVAC
2.	B	F		\$4400 - Roof
3.	B	M	133	\$6980 - Roof
4.	B	F	102	\$5670 - Roof
5.	B	F	101	\$4400 - Rehab
6.	B	F	101	\$6900 - HVAC
7.	B	F	103.02	\$4900 - Roof
8.	B	F	103.02	\$3525 - Gas furnace
9.	B	F	101	\$7200 - Roof
10.	B	M	101	\$5950 - Roof
11.	B	F	104	\$3100 - Water lines
12.	B	M	103.02	\$3400 - Roof
13.	B	F	101	\$4625 - Roof
14.	B	F	103.02	\$3500 - Roof
15.	B	F	104	\$7150 - Roof
16.	B	F		\$4890 - Electrical
17.	B	M	104.02	\$7400 - Roof





In response to the needs of homebuyers and renters during COVID-19, United Way Housing Alliance is offering a comprehensive series of webinars. Our network of housing counseling agencies across the Southeast will present on various housing and financial topics in an easy-to-follow format. **For the schedule and registration info, please click here or visit <https://givepul.se/hgwehz>.**



**REGISTER NOW!**  
**SERIES BEGINS APRIL 15TH**

Thank you to our partners:

- BB&T/Truist
- CCCS of Mobile (Lifelines)
- Center for Fair Housing, Inc.
- City of Bessemer
- D&E Housing and Economic Empowerment Center, Inc.
- Family Services Center
- Horizon Counseling
- United Way of Central Alabama
- Walker County Community Action Agency

#### Topics include:

- Fair Housing – Know Your Rights!
- Renting 101
- Financial Literacy – Master Your Credit & Household Spending Plan
- Preparing for Homeownership
- Protecting Your Assets – A Guide to Post-Purchase
- Reverse Mortgages Debunked
- Identifying & Overcoming Financial Abuse

email: [hud@uwca.org](mailto:hud@uwca.org)



