

GOAL SUMMARY

Assessment of Fair Housing 2017, City of Ithaca, NY

GOAL # 1	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
Prohibit discrimination on the basis of source of income, by establishing local (jurisdiction and region) law(s) establishing protection, authorizing enforcement entity and creating meaningful protocol.	1.1. In Year 1: Gather best practices and recommendations for implementation models from at least three communities with similar characteristics (i.e. college towns, high value rental markets)	Source of Income Discrimination	Disparities in Access to Opportunity
	1.2. In Year 2: Introduce legislation within 12 months for adoption in 24 months.	Displacement of residents due to Economic Pressures	Disproportional Housing Needs
	1.3. In Year 2-3: Upon adoption of legislation, publish an explanation of Source of Income Protection and the enforcement authority and protocol on City's website, for the purpose of educating the public to the new law, where to obtain more information, receive counseling, or file a complaint	Location and Type of Affordable Housing	Publically Supported Housing Location and Occupancy
	1.4. In Year 3: Orient landlords and tenants to new legislation in publically-available free workshops.	Impediments to Mobility	Disability and Access
		Lack of Access to Opportunity due to High Housing Costs	<i>Segregation/Integration</i>
		Insufficient on-campus housing at Cornell University, in combination with growing enrollment, results in students out-bidding non-student households for off-campus housing	<i>Enforcement</i>
Discussion:	1. Local and State law does not prohibit discrimination in housing based on source of income. Sixty-two percent of area landlords surveyed in March 2017 stated their properties do not accept HCV or other subsidies. While the survey completed by 90 landlords was not designed to gain statistically significant correlations, the result reinforces community perceptions that many landlords do not accept third party payments. Community engagement of residents and subject matter experts indicates housing choice and opportunity are severely curtailed due to limited supply of properties accepting third party payments. HCV providers indicate many vouchers are lost due to inability to find a landlord willing to accept a HCV in a rental market with a vacancy rate below 2%.		

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Discrimination in housing based on source of income disproportionately impacts Blacks and disabled persons. In the jurisdiction, 27% of HCV holders are Black, compared at 6% of the total population. Persons with disabilities under the age of 65 make up 7% of the population of the City, but compose 28% HCV holders. The elimination of source of income discrimination and acceptance of payment for housing, regardless of source of income, will increase fair housing choice and access to opportunity.3. The most common third party tenant-based rental assistance programs available are Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), which assist LMI persons; Social Security Disability (SSI), which assists persons with disabilities; Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) that assists homeless veterans, and general assistance from Tompkins County Department of Social Services, which assists homeless persons.4. This goal could have positive impact on other Fair Housing Issues, namely: Segregation/Integration and Enforcement. |
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GOAL #2	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
<p>Increase supply and access to affordable housing options, particularly at extremely low, very low and low income-levels, especially in high opportunity neighborhoods.</p>	<p>2.1a. In Year 2: Meet with local HCV administrators to evaluate if adopting Small Area Fair Market Rents (by zip code) or Exception Payment standards for high rent areas of the County will increase access to high opportunity neighborhoods without significant unintended consequences or a significant reduction in HCVs issued.</p>	<p>Source of Income Discrimination</p>	<p>Disability and Access</p>
	<p>2.1b. In Year 3: If determined to be viable and beneficial, establish Small Area Fair Market Rents or Exception Payment standards to establish multiple payments within the County, in conjunction with a transition plan to mitigate any unintended consequences.</p>	<p>Location and Type of Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Publically Supported Housing Location and Occupancy</p>
	<p>2.2a. In Years 1-5: In an ever more constrained funding environment, prioritize activities that increase access to affordable housing for LMI individuals such as productions of new unites, security deposit assistance and tenant-based rental assistance for HUD Entitlement grant funding.</p>	<p>Lack of Access to Opportunity due to High Housing Costs</p>	
	<p>2.2b. In Years 1-5: In an ever more constrained funding environment, prioritize provision of gap funding when needed to facilitate construction of new affordable housing units for HUD Entitlement grant funding.</p>	<p>Lack of affordable, integrated housing for individuals who need supportive services</p>	
		<p>Community opposition (landlords not accepting Housing Choice Vouchers and other forms of government-subsidized income)</p>	
		<p>Impediments to mobility (lack of exception payment standard to fair market rent)</p>	
		<p>Increasing enrollment at Cornell Univ (~100 students per year increase)</p>	
<p>Discussion:</p>	<p>1. There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in the City of Ithaca. Almost three-quarters of City residents are renters, and over half of them pay over 30% of their</p>		

income for housing—the standard at which renters are considered to be cost-burdened. Approximately one-third of renter households are severely cost-burdened paying over 50% of their income for housing. Several protected class groups experience severe housing cost burdens at elevated rates compared to the 27% Non-Hispanic White households. Black (43%), Hispanic (47%), and Asian (44%) renter households face the highest rates of severe housing cost burden.

2. The prevailing market rent rate varies throughout the County, yet the payment standard for the current Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is based on a single countywide rent standard. Rental housing units located in the urbanized area offering close proximity to employment, public transportation, services, and good schools command significantly higher rents than outlying areas in the County. The 2018 HUD Small Area Fair Market rents analysis by zip code suggest the market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the City of Ithaca is over \$250 higher than a similar apartment in an outlying area that lacks convenient public transportation, so the HCV program may be overpaying in lower-rent areas and not offering enough rent for HCV holders to secure housing in opportunity neighborhoods with higher rents.

GOAL #3	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
Establish clear local authority and meaningful mechanisms for enforcement of fair housing law.	3.1. In Year 1: Review local protections to specify enforcement authority and meaningful enforcement process.	Lack of clear and effective fair housing enforcement authority	Disparities in Access to Opportunity
	3.2. In Year 2: Introduce amended legislation within 12 months for adoption within 24 months	Lack of local private fair housing outreach and enforcement	<i>Segregation/Integration</i>
	3.3. In Year 3: Upon adoption of amended legislation, publish fair housing enforcement information on City website for the purpose of educating the public on where and how to obtain fair housing counseling or file a complaint.	Lack of local public fair housing agencies and organizations	<i>Disability & Access</i>
		Lack of state or local fair housing laws	<i>Enforcement</i>
Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of an effective legal mechanism to enforce fair housing rights was identified in the <u>2015 Analysis of Impediments</u> and the <u>City's 2015 Fair Housing Action Plan</u>. At that time, the Tompkins County Office of Human Rights (OHR) was drafting a comprehensive anti-discrimination ordinance that expanded protections and established clear procedures and mechanisms for enforcement at the county level, with primary enforcement authority granted to the OHR. The OHR-proposed anti-discrimination legislation has not advanced toward adoption, so the need for an effective local enforcement mechanism remains. 2. These Contributing Factors have <i>negative impact on fair housing or civil rights compliance</i>, a HUD-identified criterion for prioritization. 		

GOAL #4	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
<p>Prevent displacement in neighborhoods where there is either an established trendline of displacement or imminent threat of displacement (i.e. adjacent high-value neighborhoods with few for-sale homes). Explore Small Area Fair Market Rents, mini-repair for low-income homeowners, and expansion of Community Housing Land Trust for owner-occupied homes.</p>	<p>4.1. In Year 3: Analyze home sale data across the region to identify trendlines that indicate actual and imminent threat of displacement. Indicators include neighborhood home prices rising above median for the jurisdiction and changes in the neighborhood composition.</p> <p>4.2. In Years 1-5: Prioritize (1) small repair (i.e., "mini-repair" program) and rehabilitation of homes owned by LMI homeowners in neighborhoods identified as experiencing displacement and (2) creation of new affordable housing opportunities in gentrifying neighborhoods.</p> <p>4.2a. In Year 2: Meet with local HVC administrators to evaluate if adopting Small Area Fair Market Rents (by zip code) or Exception Payment standards for high rent areas of the County would expand access to high opportunity neighborhoods without significant unintended consequences or a significant reduction in HCVs issued.</p> <p>4.2b. In Year 3: If determined to be viable and beneficial, establish Small Area Fair Market Rents or Exception Payment standards to establish multiple payments within the County, in conjunction with a transition plan to mitigate any unintended consequences.</p>	<p>Displacement of Residents due to Economic Pressures</p>	<p>Segregation/Integration</p>
<p>Discussion:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rapidly rising rents and property taxes related to home prices were frequently cited during the community engagement process as a major concern and the primary cause for involuntary departures from a place where an individual has been living. Such commenters frequently lamented that new home locations were less desirable than their prior neighborhood. 2. It appears that increased housing costs are pricing lower income residents out of many neighborhoods in the City, where transit and access to services and goods are convenient, to locations outside City or to lower opportunity neighborhoods. This trend is resulting in reduced racial and economic diversity in several neighborhoods. Between 1990 and 2015, the percentage of Black residents in Southside, Titus Flats/South of the Creek, and Washington Park neighborhoods declined by 50% as home prices and rents in these neighborhoods increased sharply. In the same time period, the number of Black residents almost tripled in the somewhat isolated West Hill city neighborhood located south of Elm Street, where the privately-owned, subsidized, 235-unit West Village apartment complex is located. 		

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| | <p>3. Mapping out the location of HCV units reveals a "doughnut" pattern with relatively few units located within the City and a concentration of HCV units located to the west of the City in the Towns of Newfield, Enfield and Ithaca. Many of these outlying areas have lower market rents so HCV holders can find rental housing in these locations as the countywide HCV payment standard may exceed the local market rent, but such locations frequently require car ownership for journey to work and access to groceries and services, so the combined index of housing and transportation cost may exceed the index value in locations in the City where the market rent is higher but where transit is convenient and destinations are often within walking distance.</p> |
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GOAL #5	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
Address the need for a Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals	<p>5.1. In Year 3: Revise City Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan in order to incorporate a Language Assistance Plan (LAP) to increase access to City services and programs for persons from varying language backgrounds and national origins.</p> <p>5.2. In Year 4: Implement LAP across City departments.</p> <p>5.3. In Year 4: Partner with existing community groups to conduct outreach to LEP individuals, service providers, and the general public to raise awareness of the new LAP, its purpose, and how to access it.</p>	Lack of meaningful language access for individuals with Limited English Proficiency	Disparities in Access to Opportunity
Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <u>2015 City of Ithaca Fair Housing Action Plan</u> endorsed the <u>2015 Analysis of Impediments</u> finding that the lack of a Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals constituted an impediment to fair housing for LEP persons. The City of Ithaca recently reaffirmed by resolution its commitment to fostering a city that is welcoming and inclusive for all individuals, regardless of nationality or citizenship status. 4.6% of the residents of the City are Limited English Proficiency individuals according to HUD-provided data. The top three languages spoken by LEP individuals are Chinese, Korean and Burmese. 2. International students make up almost 20% of the students enrolled at Cornell University, including a higher percentage of graduate students. While the students generally have strong English language skills, their family members may have Limited English Proficiency. Many of these students and their families are City residents. No matter the reason a person with Limited English Proficiency has come to Ithaca, the City seeks to ensure their inclusion. It is therefore important for the City establish a Language Assistance Plan to increase access to City services and fair housing resources. 		

GOAL #6	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
Address policies and practices that result in displacement, eviction of, and/or lack of housing support for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.	6.1. In Year 4: Request the assistance of local experts (Freedom from Violence Workgroup) to convene task force to identify and recommend best practices for protecting the housing rights of domestic violence survivors.	Displacement of and/or lack of housing support for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking	Disparities in Access to Opportunity
	6.2. In Year 5: Collaborate with Advocacy Center to provide training on specific rights and protections for domestic violence survivors to prevent housing discrimination.		Disproportionate Housing Needs
Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Victims of violence or other crime need to be able to call the police for protection without fear that loss of housing will result. In addition to the specific protections for the specific for Domestic Violence (DV) survivors provided by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), DV survivors are protected under FHA. HUD has found that discrimination against DV survivors can constitute sex discrimination, as four out of five DV survivors are women. 2. This Contributing Factor has <i>negative impact on fair housing or civil rights compliance</i>, a HUD-identified criterion for prioritization 		

GOAL #7	Metrics, Milestones & Timeline for Achievement	CONTRIBUTING FACTOR(S)	FAIR HOUSING ISSUES
Create an Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing-directed goal within the 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan	7.1. In Year 1: Add new goal to 2019-2023 Consolidated Plan. 7.2. In Year 2: In time for 2019 Action Plan Funding Cycle, establish guidance (i.e. review criteria) for projects considered for funding in each Action Plan cycle that prioritizes those projects that address one or more underlying priority contributing factors that create, contribute to, perpetuate or increase the severity of a fair housing issue.	Contributing Factors prioritized in 2017 AFH	Disparities in Access to Opportunity
			Disproportional Housing Needs
			Publically Supported Housing Location and Occupancy
			Disability and Access
			Segregation/Integration
Discussion:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HUD Entitlement funds awarded to the City provide discretionary annual fiscal resources to fund projects and programs that expand access to opportunities, increase the supply of affordable housing and address other fair housing issues. The 5-Year Consolidated Plan creates a strategic plan for use of HUD Entitlement funds. 2. Establishment of an AFH-directed goal in the Consolidated Plan will help direct funds to projects that advance fair housing goals and encourage applicants for funding to consider how their project address fair housing issues. 		