

**Community Development Advisory Committee**  
**CDBG Public Hearing Minutes**

**Hybrid meeting with both in-person and via Zoom.**

**Wednesday, July 16, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

Lower-Level Conference Room 23 Union Street Norwich, CT  
06360

**Present:** Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services, Deanna Rhodes, public hearing presiding officer; Director of Community Development, Patricia Mullins; Program Assistant, Sandra Gaitan-Brown; Community Development Staffer, Nallely Chavez.

**Members of the public present included:** Michael J. Vaz, Executive Director, Thames River Community Services, Inc.; Lance Bauer, Ph.D., Grant Writer, Madonna Place, Norwich; Nathaniel Colome, Program Manager, Madonna Place, Norwich. Attending via Zoom were Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) members and Norwich residents, Gemma Fabris and Mark Marcy.

1. The Public Hearing was called to order at 5:31 pm by presiding officer Norwich Director of Planning and Neighborhood Services, Deanna Rhodes, who welcomed all, read the rules of order.
2. Introductions.
3. Ms. Rhodes introduced the Director of the Office of Community Development, Patricia Mullins. Ms. Mullins began by outlining that the purpose of the public hearing was to hear public comment on Norwich community development needs and on the 2025-2029 Five -year Consolidated Plan and PY51 Annual Action Plan. She summarized the goals and priorities of the Plan, which include:
  - Providing decent, affordable and safe housing;
  - Creating a suitable living environment;
  - Expanding Opportunities for Low-to-Moderate Income Persons

Ms. Mullins stated that the City's expected allotment for 2025 is \$839,095.00, and she further explained the City's process for its expenditure:

- There are 13 projects, including Community Development Administration, to be undertaken in 2025
  - The Office of Community Development solicited proposals from agencies and organizations seeking to access CDBG funding for specific projects. The Community Development Advisory Committee held a series of public meetings in early 2025 to review proposals and recommend projects for PY51 to the Norwich City Council;
  - The Norwich City Council voted on and passed a resolution to accept the recommendations of the CDAC after providing a 30-day public comment period;
  - The Resolution including the list of the 13 projects was provided in a handout to those present, and is attached to these minutes;
4. At the conclusion of Ms. Mullins address, Ms. Rhodes opened the hearing to public comments. Comment: Mr. Mark Marcy commented that some years ago the City of Norwich and Habitat for Humanity had worked together in developing several units of affordable housing, but more recently the city had assessed taxes on the properties discouraging further partnership. Mr. Marcy asked what action the Norwich Office of Community Development might be planning to take in this regard. Mr. Marcy said he also wanted to explore drafting a policy memo from the CDAC to the City of Norwich.

Response: Ms. Mullins responded that while she believed that Habitat for Humanity is a great organization, having been in the position of Director for only a short while she is not informed about the program Mr. Marcy was referring to. She agreed to look into the matter and explore ways to work with Habitat in the future. Ms. Mullins also suggested bringing the matter of a policy memo up at the next CDAC meeting.

Comment: Mr. Michael Vaz requested to read into the record a prepared statement, outlining the services provided by Thames River Community Services, Inc. to Norwich families headed by young adults and some of the challenges those families face, including lack of safe housing, child-care, mental health care and economic stability. Mr. Vaz stated that what these families need most is stable housing, personalized support and economic opportunities. These are the services that Thames River Community Services attempts to provide, and that CDBG funding is crucial to this effort. Mr. Vaz stated that CDBG assistance is essential to advancing the Thames River mission of bringing stability, dignity and hope to Norwich 's most vulnerable population. The full text of Mr. Vaz's statement is attached here.

Response: Ms. Mullins thanked Mr. Vaz for his comments and assured him that this information would be included in the CDBG planning process.

Comment: Ms. Gemma Fabris thanked the Norwich Office of Community Development for their work on developing the Norwich Five-year Plan and for holding the public hearing, allowing Norwich residents the opportunity to comment.

Response: Ms. Mullins thanked those present both in-person and via Zoom for taking the time to attend the public hearing and for their input and also thanked Ms. Rhodes for officiating and the Community Development staff for assisting.

5. Ms. Mullins provided information on how the public may make oral or written comments regarding community developments needs and the Norwich 5-year Plan and PY51 Annual Action Plan, by contacting her at:

Patricia Mullins  
Director  
Office of Community Development  
23 Union Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
860-885-2911  
[pmullins@cityofnorwich.org](mailto:pmullins@cityofnorwich.org)

Ms. Mullins stated that the Office of Community Development is always interested in hearing from Norwich residents and comments from the public are welcome at any time.

6. Adjournment  
After confirming that there were not any more comments or questions, presiding officer Deanna Rhodes adjourned the public hearing at 6:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Gaitan-Brown  
Community Development Program Assistant

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Michael Vaz, and I represent Thames River Community Service, a Norwich-based nonprofit that has served our community for over 30 years. We provide housing and supportive services to young families experiencing homelessness—specifically, parents aged 18 to 24 and their children—many of whom are aging out of foster care, escaping unsafe situations, or living in deep poverty.

These families face extraordinary barriers: lack of safe housing, limited access to child care, mental health needs, and economic instability. What they need most is stable housing, personalized support, and opportunities to build a better future. That's where we come in—with transitional and supportive housing, life skills coaching, employment preparation, and connections to permanent housing and community resources.

But we cannot do this work alone. Thames River Community Service needs sustainable funding and infrastructure support to maintain our aging facility, expand capacity, and keep our residents safe—especially through investments in security, technology, and emergency response systems like the intercom system we're currently working to replace.

Community Development Block Grant support is essential to advancing our mission and helping our most vulnerable residents find stability, dignity, and hope. We urge the City of Norwich to continue prioritizing housing and services that address homelessness and lift families out of crisis.

Thank you for your time and commitment to a stronger, more equitable Norwich.

**Public Hearing**  
July 16, 2025  
City of Norwich, CT  
Office of Community Development  
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program  
**DRAFT 2025-2029 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2025 Annual Action Plan**

**Summary of the goals and priorities of the Plan**

For the 5-year period beginning in 2025, the City will focus on three main priorities that have multiple objectives and outcomes:

- 1.) Providing Decent, Affordable and Safe Housing:** includes conserving & improving existing housing; assist in providing homeownership; assisting in the development of affordable housing; removing barriers related to accessibility; improving housing specific to shelters, homelessness prevention and/or rapid rehousing and/or permanent supportive housing.
  
- 2.) Create a Suitable Living Environment:** includes programs that focus on self-sufficiency, health and safety. These objectives and outcomes include providing funding for financial education, outreach, access to benefits, removing barriers around transportation related to medical/health, reducing domestic violence; providing funding for education and/or training related to residents under the age of 18, that may lead to improved employment opportunities; providing funding for projects that create neighborhood or infrastructure improvements, including community facilities/infrastructure in income qualified census tract/block groups.
  
- 3.) Expanding Opportunities for Low-to-Moderate Income Persons:** includes services associated with job creation, job training and increasing employment opportunities for Norwich residents.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the following is a true and attested copy of a resolution adopted by the Council of the City of Norwich at a meeting held on July 7, 2025 and that the same has not been amended or rescinded:

**WHEREAS**, the City of Norwich is an entitlement community receiving U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars of \$838,095; \$29,421.47 anticipated return of loan (administration) for program year 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) has held public meetings and voted on their recommendations for CDBG allocations in the months of March and May; and

**WHEREAS**, the allocation process is subject to a 30-day comment period prior to being placed into effect and the Council of the City of Norwich must hold a public hearing regarding the recommendations prior to the final vote on the allocation.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH** that the Council shall allocate the Community Development Block Grant recommendations for PY 2025.

<b>CDBG Requests - PY51 (2025-2026)</b>			
Actual PY 2025 Allocation		\$ 838,095.00	
Total Anticipated Funding for PY51		\$ 838,095.00	
	PY51 Request	CDAC Recommendation	Council Recommendation
CD Office - Administration (20% of Grant Funds)	\$ 189,000.00	\$ 167,619.00	\$ 167,619.00
Anticipated Return of Loan Admin	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 29,421.47	\$ 29,421.47
Total Projected Admin Expenditures	\$ 202,000.00	\$ 197,040.47	\$ 197,040.47
<b>Public Services</b>			
Children in Placement - Guardian ad Litem (GAL)	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 22,500.00
Human Services - Norwich Works	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Human Services - Norwich Housing Assistance	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
Martin House- Housing Advocacy and Placement	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Madonna Place COPE	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Human Services - Gemma E. Moran United Way Food Drop at Rose Senior Center	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Rose City Learning Center	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 24,500.00
Norwich Police Department - Policing E-Bike P	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
TVCCA	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Thames River Community- Employment Support P	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Safe Futures-Norwich Domestic Violence	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
<b>Total Public Services</b>	<b>\$ 330,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 217,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 217,000.00</b>
<b>Non-Public Services</b>			
NHA JFK Heights Phase II Boiler Replacement	\$ 225,000.00	\$ 203,476.00	\$ 203,476.00
Norwich Public Works - Main St Sidewalks	\$ 506,231.40	\$ -	\$ -
CD Property Rehabilitation	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00
<b>Total Non-Public Services</b>	<b>\$ 981,231.40</b>	<b>\$ 453,476.00</b>	<b>\$ 453,476.00</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>			
Public Service	\$ 330,000.00	\$ 217,000.00	\$ 217,000.00
Non-Public Service	\$ 981,231.40	\$ 453,476.00	\$ 453,476.00
CD Administration	\$ 189,000.00	\$ 167,619.00	\$ 167,619.00

Dated at Norwich, Connecticut this 8th day of July, 2025

ATTEST: *Roseanne Muscarella*

Roseanne Muscarella  
City Clerk

## Public Hearing

July 16, 2025

City of Norwich, CT

Office of Community Development

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

### DRAFT 2025-2029 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2025 Annual Action Plan

**Purpose:** The purpose of this public hearing is to provide information on the city's process for developing the above referenced plans, and to hear public input and comment with regards to the community development needs of the community, with the intent to include those comments in the plans

#### Process Highlights:

- Norwich is a CDBG Entitlement Community, and as such receives HUD CDBG funding each year
- HUD requires the submittal of an Annual Action Plan to identify how the city will use the funds
- Once every 5 years HUD also requires the city to draft a consolidated plan, identifying the goals and strategies the city will use in meeting its community development objectives
- The 2025-2029 Consolidated Five Year Plan & 2025 Annual Action Plan is due on August 16, 2025
- The process for developing the plan includes input from the community through its Community Development Advisory Committee(CDAC), consultation with partnering agencies and organizations, and input from the general public
- The City of Norwich expects to receive \$839,095 in funding from HUD for 2025 (PY51)
- Future year allotments are anticipated to be 'flat-funded' at approximately the same amount
- Throughout the year the Community Development staff consults with representatives of various agencies such as the Norwich Housing Authority, the Norwich Humans Services programs and other public health and services providers to receive their expertise and understand their client and operational needs
- The Consolidated 5-year plan discusses overarching goals and strategies, while the 2025 Annual Action Plan more specifically outlines projects to be undertake in the upcoming year
- The Office of Community Development solicited proposals from agencies and organizations seeking to access CDBG funding for specific projects and the CDAC held a series of public meetings in early 2025 to review proposals and recommend projects for PY51 to the Norwich City Council.
- The Norwich City Council passed a resolution to accept the recommendations of the CDAC after providing a 30-day public comment period
- There are 13 projects, including Community Development Administration, to be undertaken in 2025; a list of projects, sub-recipients and costs is included with the materials available at this hearing, as well as within the draft plans. Five-year goals and strategies are also provided on a separate hand-out.
- This meeting space is ADA accessible. Please let us know if you need additional accommodations.
- We do request that everyone present sign in on the attendance sheet, and that those participating remotely state your names and addresses for the record
- Anyone wishing to make written comment is invited to address their comments to:  
Patricia Mullins, Director  
Office of Community Development  
23 Union Street,  
Norwich, CT 06360  
[pmullins@cityofnorwich.org](mailto:pmullins@cityofnorwich.org)