

**CITY OF NEWTON CONSOLIDATED PLAN**  
**Five Year Plan for Housing and Community Development**  
**July 1, 2005—June 30, 2010**





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*The following documents are available on  
the City's website:*

- Consolidated Plan Executive Summary
- Newton Consolidated Plan Full Report

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## **NOTE TO THE READER**

The FY06-10 Consolidated Plan has been prepared for submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in response to their requirement for a single document that addresses how the City of Newton and the 12 members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium plan to utilize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds. In FY06, the City of Newton will receive approximately \$2,642,645 in CDBG and ESG funds, along with an additional \$1,679,934 in HOME and ADDI funds as the lead entity of the 12-member WestMetro HOME Consortium. The Plan examines the need for these funds in the city of Newton and the HOME Consortium member communities and presents a series of recommendations, both short- and long-term, to address those needs.

This document is the result of an extended community involvement process designed to engage the citizens of Newton and the HOME Consortium member communities in an analysis of the issues that exist in their neighborhoods and in their towns and cities overall. This process also involved a wide range of groups, including nonprofit agencies and organizations, advisory committees, local housing authorities and others with an interest in the needs, challenges, opportunities and priorities of the communities as they look to the next five years.

This document was compiled by staff of the Housing and Community Development Division of the City of Newton Planning and Development Department and staff of the various HOME Consortium member communities. This document was placed in draft form in the Newton Free Library branches, as well as on the City of Newton website and locations in the HOME Consortium communities, for public review and comments. This final document reflects the feedback received from these audiences.

For more information on the planning process, or to request additional copies of the Plan, please contact the Housing and Community Development Division at (617) 796-1120.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan was developed in accordance with 24CFR Part 91, which requires that the Plan be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a prerequisite to receiving funds under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) formula grant programs. The overall goal of these programs is to develop viable urban communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons.

The Executive Summary briefly outlines the contents of the Consolidated Plan, which includes housing market analyses for the City of Newton and the members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium; housing and homelessness needs assessments (and, where appropriate, non-housing community development needs assessments); strategic plans, including priorities, goals, objectives and activities to address the identified needs; and one-year action plans for the FY06 program year which runs from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.

The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive planning document that identifies and prioritizes the housing and community development needs of low- and moderate-income residents, as well as of any target neighborhoods, and outlines strategies for addressing these needs over a five-year period. Preparation of the Plan provides an opportunity for Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium to undertake a citizen-driven collaborative planning process to establish a unified vision for community development actions. It offers the opportunity to shape the various housing and community development programs into effective, coordinated strategies for addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income persons in a comprehensive manner. The strategic plan portion of the Consolidated Plan sets forth specific objectives and strategies, annual and five-year goals, and benchmarks for measuring progress.

### NEWTON HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS, NEEDS AND STRATEGIES

The housing portion of Newton's Consolidated Plan is divided into three primary segments: a housing market analysis, a housing and homelessness needs assessment, and a housing and homelessness strategic plan for increasing the amount of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income people in Newton.

#### Summary Findings from the Newton Housing Market Analysis

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The Housing Market Analysis section of the Consolidated Plan provides a summary of Newton's housing stock and an overview of the city's housing market, information that was then used in the development of the needs assessment conducted by Housing and Community Development Division staff. Highlights of housing market analysis are listed below:

- Approximately two-thirds (21,703) of all housing units in Newton are owner-occupied, and one-third (9,498) are rental. The predominant housing type in Newton is single-family detached homes.
- The majority of Newton's housing stock was built before 1950, and a large number of buildings were constructed prior to 1900. In a 2004 review by the City's Assessing Department, the majority of housing units (83 percent) were considered to be in

average condition. Twelve percent of the parcels were considered to be in good condition, and only 1.4 percent was considered to be in excellent condition. Another 3.6 percent of the parcels were considered in poor to fair condition.

- Ninety-one percent of the total housing units in Newton were constructed prior to 1978, therefore, it is reasonable to assume that a high number of units occupied by low- and moderate-income households may have lead paint.
- In March 2005, the median sales price of a single-family home in Newton was \$775,780.
- From 1998 to 2004, median single-family sales prices in Newton increased by approximately 74 percent, from \$397,000 to \$691,400. Condominium prices rose by 83 percent, from \$233,000 to \$426,000 during this same period.
- From 1999 to 2004, HUD-designated fair market rents in the Boston MSA increased by 57 percent, from \$906 to \$1,419.
- In 2000, the total vacancy rate for Newton was 2.8 percent.

### **Priority Housing Needs in the City of Newton**

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The housing and homelessness needs assessment conducted for the Consolidated Plan identified the following six priority needs in the City of Newton.

- Increase the overall supply of a variety of affordable housing options and reduce the housing cost burden of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income persons, including special needs populations.
- Create homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income residents.
- Create rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.
- Enable the elderly to “age in place” without overly burdensome housing costs.
- Support existing emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing facilities for homeless individuals and families; and continue to support prevention programs for individuals and families at-risk of homelessness.
- Enhance and expand local support for affordable housing and maximize the effectiveness of local resources through collaboration, partnerships, education and efficient processes.

### **Priority Housing Objectives and Strategies for the City of Newton**

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The Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan lists ten primary objectives to meet the City of Newton’s six priority needs. A number of strategies have been developed to fulfill the various objectives. Following is a listing of the objectives and their related strategies.

- I. Reform land use and zoning policies.

- a) Examine land use and zoning models to increase affordable housing.
  - b) Identify “opportunity areas” most appropriate for and conducive to residential development.
  - c) Reduce zoning barriers to special permit development.
  - d) Reduce zoning barriers and provide incentives to encourage new residential development in village centers and “opportunity areas.”
  - e) Consider appropriate compact development in village centers.
  - f) Consider implementing Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning and Housing Production.
  - g) Consider establishing an Urban Center Housing-Tax Increment Financing Program as a technique the City can use to support the development of affordable housing in “opportunity areas.”
- II. Encourage affordable housing development.
- a) Continue to implement the City’s Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.
  - b) Continue to fund housing development projects with Community Preservation Act funds.
  - c) Continue using CDBG and HOME funds to create, develop and preserve affordable housing developments.
  - d) Continue funding the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund.
  - e) Expedite City approval and financial support of affordable housing projects through such tools as the One-to-Four Family Purchase and Rehabilitation Program.
  - f) Use the Newton Community Development Authority’s acquisition ability to acquire property and develop affordable housing.
  - g) Continue to help streamline the comprehensive permit process.
  - h) Continue to support and finance large, multifamily housing developments.
  - i) Provide relief from development-related fees for affordable housing.
  - j) Advocate for tax incentive or abatement programs that would allow for favorable tax consideration for owners and developers of affordable rental and homeownership units that include long-term affordability restrictions.
  - k) Create a Housing Trust Fund.
- III. Increase homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income people. Reduce the number of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income homeowners in Newton overly burdened by housing costs.
- a) Continue funding Newton’s homebuyer assistance programs (First Time Homebuyer and Newton Connection programs) and support use of the American Dream Downpayment Initiative.
  - b) Develop a community outreach and education program on homeownership opportunities.
- IV. Give priority to affordable rental developments using City funds.
- V. Facilitate the production of accessory apartments as affordable rental housing.
- a) Streamline the accessory apartment zoning process and offer a fund specifically for the development of accessory apartments through CPA or CDBG loans and/or grants.
  - b) Consider developing a program that provides a one-time rent subsidy for tenants who need assistance moving from transitional to permanent housing.
- VI. Reduce the number of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income elderly in Newton who are overly burdened by housing costs and enable elderly residents to “age in place.”
- a) Continue to fund Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund programs that benefit Newton elders.

- b) Examine the feasibility of developing a program that allows elders to donate their homes in exchange for services that allow them to remain in their homes and age in place.
  - c) Consider developing an elder home-sharing service.
- VII. Work towards ending chronic homelessness and other homelessness within the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care area.
- a) Implement a five-part strategy for ending chronic homelessness. The centerpiece of the strategy is maintaining and expanding the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium's two primary assets: a strong homelessness prevention infrastructure and an extensive stock of permanent supportive housing.
  - b) Continue to provide operating support to the emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities using CDBG and ESG funds.
  - c) Work with the MetroWest Continuum of Care, other regional continua and the state to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide level, including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.
- VIII. Streamline processes.
- a) Streamline City approval and financial support of small-scale residential developments.
- IX. Maximize collaboration and partnerships.
- a) Encourage joint ventures between community housing developers and human and social service providers.
  - b) Encourage the use of the "HousingWorks" clearinghouse for information about affordable housing and the provision of services.
  - c) Explore the feasibility of providing neighborhood incentives for affordable housing development.
- X. Encourage education and outreach.
- a) Consider providing resources for City board and committee members so that they can stay informed.
  - b) Provide opportunities to inform Newton residents on issues related to housing affordability.

## **NEWTON NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND STRATEGIES**

The non-housing community development portion of Newton's Consolidated Plan is divided into several sections, one for each community development program area.

### **Accessibility Needs**

The accessibility needs assessment conducted for the Consolidated Plan identified eight categories of needs: access on public thoroughfares, public buildings, parks and recreational facilities, public transportation, parking, commercial buildings, general public areas and nonprofit agencies. The top four accessibility priority needs, in order of importance, are:

1. Improvements to public thoroughfares
2. Improvements to public buildings
3. Improvements to parks and recreational areas and facilities
4. Improvements to nonprofit agencies

## **Accessibility Strategies**

The objectives and strategies developed to meet the four priority accessibility needs in Newton are:

### **Public Thoroughfare Improvements**

Objective: To improve access on public thoroughfares, especially sidewalks and street crossings

- Strategies:
- Install curb ramps at locations where there are none and replace them at locations where they do not meet state and federal access codes
  - Install audible pedestrian signals at complex, irregular intersections that currently have visual electronic signals
  - Advocate with the City for the construction of accessible sidewalks on all streets

### **Public Buildings Improvements**

Objective: To improve access to public buildings, facilities and programs

- Strategies:
- Make the Crafts Street and Walnut Street entrances to the Education Center accessible
  - Make the interior of the Education Center, including the elevator, more accessible for people with disabilities

### **Parks and Recreational Facilities Improvements**

Objective: To improve access to parks and recreational facilities

- Strategies:
- Construct an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground
  - Improve accessibility to existing athletic facilities in Cold Spring Park
  - Install an accessible connector path at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park to create an accessible walkway from Lyons Field along the Charles River to Purgatory Cove

### **Nonprofit Agency Improvements**

Objective: To improve access to nonprofit agency facilities and services

No strategies identified

## **Accessibility Projects**

The project(s) listed below were selected for funding during the FY06 and FY07 program years:

### **Public Thoroughfare Improvements**

The Mayor's Committee recommended that 30 curb cuts be installed in the vicinity of Newton South High School in FY06 to create accessibility from Parker Street to the school grounds. The Committee additionally recommended that 20 curb cuts be installed along Washington Street to make the entire street from Newton Corner to West Newton accessible.

In addition, the Mayor's Committee recommended that four additional accessible pedestrian signals be installed during FY07.

### **Public Buildings Improvements**

The Mayor's Committee recommended a project to make the exterior and the interior of the Public Schools Administration Building accessible to people with disabilities.

### Parks and Recreational Facilities Improvements

The Committee also recommended the approval of three Parks and Recreation Department accessibility projects. These projects are to construct an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground, to improve accessibility in Cold Spring Park and to install an accessible connector path at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park.

### Nonprofit Agency Improvements

No projects identified.

For FY08-10, the Committee will solicit, review and recommend accessibility project ideas related to public thoroughfares, City buildings, Parks and Recreation areas and facilities, and nonprofit access approximately 12-18 months prior to the funding cycle due to the uncertainty of funding levels and significant increases in design and construction costs.

### Economic Development Needs

The economic development needs assessment conducted for the Consolidated Plan identified four specific needs related to the use of CDBG economic development program funds:

- Increase collaboration with other human service or economic development agencies to create jobs for low- and moderate-income persons and start or expand low-and moderate-income-owned businesses.
- Continue to identify groups within Newton's low- and moderate-income population to which assistance should be targeted using the Family Day Care Program model (female heads of households, eldercare opportunities, etc.).
- Better market the existing loan program to better reflect changes in the economy and the resulting changes in economic development needs.
- Continue exploring opportunities for improvements to the loan program.

### Economic Development Strategies

The following strategies were developed based on the identified economic development needs, with the overall program goal of creating economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people.

- Create a program that matches low- and moderate-income persons with low- and moderate-income-owned businesses who want to expand and cover salary costs for a period of time (loan or grant).
- Work with human service agencies that serve targeted populations to develop grant or loan programs that meet the needs of their low- and moderate-income clients.
- Launch a marketing campaign that incorporates a newly designed economic development brochure and includes outreach to Newton businesses, local banks and human service agencies.

- Periodically review program guidelines, loan and grant applications, etc. to ensure that the process is as user-friendly as possible within the requirements of the CDBG program.

### **Newton Corner Target Neighborhood Needs**

In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (traffic, parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities), the Newton Corner Advisory Committee decided that traffic improvements were their highest priority, followed by parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities improvements, in that order. These priority needs were substantiated by feedback obtained at neighborhood public meetings.

### **Newton Corner Target Neighborhood Objectives and Strategies**

The following objectives and strategies to address the needs in the Newton Corner target neighborhood were developed through the needs assessment process:

#### **Traffic Improvements**

- Objective: To establish a pedestrian-friendly environment by improving pedestrian safety and access to all Newton Corner neighborhoods through enhancing the visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity of crosswalks
- Strategies:
- Upgrade all crosswalks that meet the listed objectives (better visibility, more durable, more attractive) within the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area and at key intersections near the rotary and install visible crosswalk indicator signage at all crosswalks.
  - Install a crosswalk across Washington Street from Park Street to the bridge that leads to Nonantum Place and Charlesbank Road.
  - Install crosswalks, better traffic lane markings and speed indicators at the Church Street/Richardson Street/Oakland Street/YMCA intersection.
  - Build an accessible footbridge across the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area to reconnect Newton Corner.

#### **Parks/Open Space Improvements**

- Objective: To replace existing wood carpet surfacing with new safety surfacing that is more sanitary, attractive, durable and accessible
- Strategy:
- Charlesbank Park: Create a safe, accessible park near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area since Farlow and Burr Parks are not easily accessible to pedestrians. Install new safety surfacing that meets listed objectives, new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.
- Objective: To replace the aging play equipment at Charlesbank Park with plays options appropriate for both toddlers and school-age children
- Strategy:
- Charlesbank Park: Create a safe, accessible park near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area since Farlow and Burr Parks are not easily accessible to pedestrians. Ensure that age-appropriate play equipment is available for both the toddlers and school-age children who use the park.
- Objectives: To install attractive, informative, uniform park signage and to beautify the parks through the provision of adequate, attractive and safe park amenities including seating and trash receptacles

- Strategies:
- Farlow Park: Install replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.
  - Boyd Park: Construct a new accessible pathway that connects to play fields and install new seating and trash receptacles by fields. Install new park signage.
  - Chaffin Park: Install new picnic tables, replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.
  - Carleton Park: Replace gate to match existing decorative front fence.

#### Public Infrastructure Improvements

Objectives: To expand street and/or sidewalk reconstruction planning to include burying overhead utilities and installing decorative street lighting to beautify the streets and improve safety  
 To assess opportunities for new and replacement street trees  
 To incorporate traffic-calming measures into street reconstruction design

No strategies identified

#### Public Facilities Improvements

Objective: To beautify City-owned properties to improve quality of life

No strategies identified

#### Newton Corner Target Neighborhood Projects

The project(s) listed below were selected for funding during the FY07 program year:

#### Parks/Open Space Improvements

- **Charlesbank Park Improvements**  
 Project ideas to be developed through the creation of a conceptual plan (apply for CPA funds to help implement)
- **Farlow Park Improvements**  
 Project ideas include the Installation of replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage
- **Chaffin Park Improvements**  
 Project ideas include the replacement of the walkway from Centre Street to Pruckner Walkway and the installation of new picnic tables, replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage

#### Public Facilities Improvements

- **Newton Corner Branch Library Handrail Installation**  
 Install handrails along the length of the new walkway  
 \*\*to be funded as part of a FY04 project

#### Traffic Improvements

- **Newton Corner Traffic Improvements**  
 Upgrade all crosswalks within/near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area to meet identified objectives

- **Church/Richardson/Oakland Traffic Calming**

Construct traffic calming measures at this intersection, including the possible creation of traffic islands and crosswalks, curb and sidewalk work, street repaving, and landscaping

Public Infrastructure Improvements

No projects selected in this area.

**Newtonville Target Neighborhood Needs**

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In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (public infrastructure, traffic improvements, parks/open space and public facilities), traffic improvements were identified as the highest priority, followed by parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities improvements, in that order.

**Newtonville Target Neighborhood Objectives and Strategies**

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The following objectives and strategies to meet the needs in the Newtonville target neighborhood were developed through the needs assessment process:

Traffic Improvements

- Objectives: To improve pedestrian safety and connectivity  
To better control and clarify traffic patterns to improve public safety
- Strategies:
- Conduct a comprehensive, target area wide traffic study that will develop traffic-calming measures at the Walnut-Watertown-Lowell intersection, control speeding on certain streets such as Central Street, and measure noise pollution levels.
  - Create a crosswalk by the post office at 897 Washington Street (This solution is not endorsed by the City's Traffic Engineer as a simple crosswalk could have the opposite safety effect on such a wide thoroughfare. Other ideas could be investigated but they would likely be complicated and require professional analysis).

Parks/Open Space Improvements

- Objective: To increase recreational opportunities for this neighborhood
- Strategies:
- Redesign triangular traffic island (formerly known as "Lowell Park") for active and/or passive recreational purposes.
  - Redevelop underutilized Verizon parking lot for park use (on Court Street).
  - Conduct a land use study that address the phasing out of incompatible land uses.

Public Infrastructure Improvements

- Objectives: To establish and emphasize a pedestrian-friendly and comfortable environment  
To beautify the neighborhood with new and replacement street trees  
To beautify the neighborhood through uniform and quality infrastructure
- Strategies:
- Install sidewalks where there are none, especially along Lowell Avenue, Central Avenue and Court Street.
  - Install granite curbing where needed to reduce "hodge-podge" appearance of certain streets including Lowell Avenue and Central Avenue.
  - Plant street trees where possible.
  - Conduct a light study to analyze the ideal amount of light needed and recommend appropriate residential street lights.

### Public Facilities Improvements

Objective: To raise the quality of life for area residents by minimizing nuisances

- Strategies:
- Mitigate noise at the Crafts Street DPW Yard.
  - Mitigate noise from Mass Turnpike, including planting “trash trees” (consider a partnership with the MTA).

### Newtonville Target Neighborhood Projects

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The project(s) listed below were selected for funding during the FY06 program year:

#### Traffic Improvements & Parks/Open Space Improvements

- **Lowell Park Recreation & Traffic Improvements**  
Restructuring the traffic and pedestrian patterns around Lowell Park and the addition of amenities to this open space

#### Public Facilities Improvements

No projects selected in this area.

#### Public Infrastructure Improvements

- **Newtonville Tree Plantings**  
20-30 trees throughout the target neighborhood
- **Newtonville Infrastructure Improvements**  
Install sidewalks and/or curbing where there are none or where they are substandard

### Nonantum Target Neighborhood Needs

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In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (public infrastructure, traffic improvements, parks/open space and public facilities), traffic improvements were the highest priority, followed by public infrastructure, parks/open space and public facilities improvements, in that order.

### Nonantum Target Neighborhood Objectives and Strategies

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The following objectives and strategies to address the needs in the Nonantum target neighborhood were developed through the needs assessment process:

#### Traffic Improvements

Objectives: To control excessive speeding on congested residential streets in order to improve public safety  
To impose size restrictions on congested residential streets to improve public safety  
To clarify and enforce parking regulations at corners

- Strategy:
- Conduct a traffic study to recommend changes that will achieve key objectives (especially on Chapel, West, Hawthorne, Adams and Pearl Streets).

Objective: To upgrade crosswalks at key intersections or along school routes to improve public safety

- Strategies:
- Upgrade crosswalks to improve visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity.
  - Install audible accessible pedestrian signals at major intersections.

### Public Infrastructure Improvements

Objective: To improve the aesthetics of public streets by reducing the number of barren residential areas

Strategy: • Plant street trees where needed, especially on California Street.

Objective: To improve the safety, accessibility, emergency access, and aesthetics of public streets and sidewalks

Strategies: • Reconstruct Cook Street .  
• Reconstruct Dalby Street.  
• Sidewalk improvements where needed.

### Parks/Open Space Improvements

Objective: To create/install a memorial(s) to commemorate Nonantum leaders and/or immigrant history

Strategy: • Create a new pathway dedicated to former NAC chairwoman Alice Webber between the new senior housing project and Stearns Park.

Objectives: To improve the aesthetics and accessibility of Magni Park  
To improve public health by upgrading bubblers in all parks

Strategy: • Possible park improvement ideas include new decorative fencing, a sunken garden, a fountain, and walkway replacement.

Objective: To improve the quality and condition of the Nonantum parks

Strategy: • Create shaded seating and/or install trees at Pellegrini Park.

### Public Facilities Improvements

Objective: To improve accessibility, aesthetics and public safety at the Pellegrini Park Activity Building, a community center and neighborhood polling place

Strategy: • Renovate the common areas in the Pellegrini Park Activity Building including the restrooms, kitchen and HVAC system.

## **Nonantum Target Neighborhood Projects**

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The project(s) listed below were selected for funding during the FY08 program year.

### Parks/Open Space Improvements

- **Magni-Coletti Park Improvements**  
Project ideas to be developed

### Public Facilities Improvements

No projects selected in this area.

### Traffic Improvements

- **Nonantum Traffic Improvements**  
Upgraded crosswalks and other traffic improvements
- **Nonantum Accessible Pedestrian Signals**  
1-2 installations in the village center

### Public Infrastructure Improvements

- **Cook Street Reconstruction**  
New roadway, sidewalks, granite curbs, and trees
- **Nonantum Tree Plantings**  
25-35 trees throughout the target neighborhood

### **West Newton Target Neighborhood Needs**

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The top three priority needs, in order of importance, are:

1. Improvements to the public portion of Cheesecake Brook
2. Noise and pollution mitigation measures along the West Newton target neighborhood section of the Massachusetts Turnpike
3. Traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures

### **West Newton Target Neighborhood Objectives and Strategies**

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The following objectives and strategies to address the needs in the West Newton target neighborhood were developed through the needs assessment process:

#### Parks/Open Space Improvements

Objective: To improve the accessibility and aesthetics of the public portion of Cheesecake Brook

Strategy: 

- Develop a concept plan for improvements to the public portion of Cheesecake Brook and implement the recommended improvements.

Objective: To improve the unused open space on Washington Street at Brookside Avenue

Strategy: 

- Develop a plan for adding seating areas (benches, picnic tables, game tables) and landscaping to beautify the area.

#### Public Facilities Improvements

Objective: To mitigate the noise and pollution problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike

Strategy: 

- Work with the Turnpike Authority to have noise barriers installed to reduce noise and pollution problems.

#### Traffic Improvements

Objective: To control excessive speeding on congested residential streets to order to improve public safety

Strategy: 

- Conduct traffic studies on identified streets (Washington, Eddy, Cross, Parsons and Albemarle) and introduce traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures.

#### Public Infrastructure Improvements

Objective: To improve public safety through the installation of sidewalks on heavily traveled roadways

Strategy: 

- Install sidewalks where there are none or where portions are missing.

Objective: To discourage parking on sidewalks and beautify streetscapes

Strategy: 

- Install granite curbing, trees, curb cuts and crosswalks along streets/sections of streets where none exists.

## **West Newton Target Neighborhood Projects**

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The project(s) listed below were selected for funding during the FY06 program year.

### **Parks/Open Space Improvements**

No projects selected.

### **Public Facilities Improvements**

The West Newton Advisory Committee voted unanimously to direct their full CDBG allocation to the Cheesecake Brook Improvement Project.

### **Traffic Improvements**

No projects selected.

### **Public Infrastructure Improvements**

No projects selected.

## **Public Services Needs**

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The public services needs assessment conducted for the Consolidated Plan identified six primary areas of need: children's service needs, adolescent service needs, adult/family service needs, elder service needs, service needs of people with disabilities and service needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. A number of needs within these six categories were then identified:

### **Children's Service Needs**

- \*Affordable childcare that includes support for relationships to adults, racial/ethnic/culture sensitivity, gender sensitivity
- Assistance to single mothers—parenting skills, employment, information and referral
- Early education (including school readiness and social/emotional wellness)
- \*Social/emotional support for children and families
- Stabilization of family and home settings
- Camp scholarships

### **Adolescent Service Needs**

- Summer programs for middle-school kids
- Transportation services
- Parental education about child/adolescent development and parenting skills
- Crisis intervention
- Comprehensive outreach services
- School-based or centralized comprehensive services for at-risk kids
- 24-hour hotline
- Teen drop-in centers with social/recreation and therapeutic services
- Intensive case management
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Family services to deal with "weak" parenting and family instability
- Lack of services for 18-20 year olds
- Stress reduction services

### **Adult/Family Service Needs**

- \*Affordable housing

- \*Affordable day care for children
- \*Information about available services
- \*Health care services/ health insurance
- \*Linguistic services for immigrants to lower language barriers
- \*Legal services and advocacy
- Financial assistance
- Budget planning
- Mental health counseling
- Support services for single parents
- Case management for multi-problem families
- Substance abuse treatment
- Family education on health issues

#### Elder Service Needs

- \*Transportation to services and activities (dial-a-ride)
- \*Affordable, adaptable housing with supportive services
- \*Connection to services through information and referral
- Linguistic services for immigrants
- Money management services
- Identification of isolated elders
- Mental health intervention
- Socialization
- Nutrition and exercise
- Connection to the community

#### Service Needs of People with Disabilities

*Includes adults with developmental disabilities or chronic mental illness and adults with severe physical impairments):*

- \*Affordable accessible housing
- \*Available transportation
- \*Meeting the living needs of an aging population
- \*Employment opportunities
- Assistance with transition to greater independence
- A lack of services for 18-24 year old developmentally disabled persons
- Support to aging parents of people who are disabled
- Greater access to community resources
- Physical accessibility

#### Service Needs of People who are Homeless or At-Risk of Homelessness

- \*Subsidized, affordable housing
- \*More shelter beds
- \*More transitional housing with services
- \*Permanent supportive housing
- \*Mental health counseling services
- \*Financial assistance and rent subsidies
- \*Case management
- \*Job training and employment opportunities
- Legal services

- Substance abuse treatment
- Information about community resources
- Comprehensive services to homeless children
- Transportation
- 

\*Need received repeated emphasis

### **Public Services Objectives and Strategies**

In order to address the public service needs identified in the needs assessment, two requests for proposals (RFP) were issued in the fall of 2004—one for human service grants and one for emergency shelter grants—to local service providers with the caveat that providers submit proposals that responded to the priority public service needs. The Human Service Advisory Committee (HSAC) reviewed all the proposals using criteria including project eligibility and documented need for service. The HSAC also attempted to allocate funding as equally as possible among the different service groups. The Committee recommended funding 39 public service programs in FY06 for a total of \$457,000. Of this amount, \$380,000 will be distributed as 35 five-year grants and \$40,000 would comprise one one-year grant. The programs that have been recommended for funding and the amount they will receive are below.

<b>Barry Price Center</b>	
– Job Developer/Job Coach	\$18,000
<b>Barry Price Center</b>	
– Person Centered Planning	\$4,000
<b>Bowen After School Program</b>	
– Tuition Assistance Program	\$7,000
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b>	
– Teen Programming	\$6,000
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b>	
– Camp Scholarships	\$3,000
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b>	
– Kids Corps Scholarships	\$6,000
<b>CASCAP</b>	
– Service Coordinator, Nonantum Village Place	\$9,000
<b>Charles River ARC</b>	
– Music Therapy	\$4,000
<b>Charles River ARC</b>	
– ASPIRE Program	\$6,000
<b>Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly</b>	
– Caring Choices	\$9,000
<b>Massachusetts Association for the Blind</b>	
– Visually Impaired Elders	\$4,000
<b>Newton Child Care Fund</b>	
– Child Care Scholarship Fund	\$15,000
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b>	
– English as a Second Language	\$2,000
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b>	
– CareConnections	\$9,000
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b>	
– Director of Resident Services	\$7,000

<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b>	
– Hamlet Youth Center	\$5,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Child Care Scholarships	\$20,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Adult Day Health Care	\$9,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Teen REACH Drop-in Center	\$32,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Mentor Connection	\$5,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Higher Ground Teen Program	\$11,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– The Parents Program	\$28,000
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b>	
– Parent Child Home Program	\$7,000
<b>Newton Creative Start</b>	
– Early Childhood Program Scholarships	\$8,000
<b>Newton Health Department</b>	
– Mental Health Intervention for the Elderly	\$35,000
<b>Newton Housing Authority</b>	
– Resident Services Coordinator	\$18,000
<b>Newton Human Services Department</b>	
– Youth Outreach Counseling	\$19,000
<b>Newton Human Services Department</b>	
– Newton Senior Center	\$48,000
<b>Newton Human Services Department</b>	
– COA Outreach Worker	\$8,000
<b>Newton Parks &amp; Recreation Department</b>	
– Summer Camp Scholarships	\$3,000
<b>NWW Committee</b>	
– Clinical Services and Supports	\$7,500
<b>NWW Committee</b>	
– Wednesday Night Drop In	\$6,500
<b>NWW Committee</b>	
– Community Access	\$6,000
<b>Peirce Extended Day Program</b>	
– EDP Scholarship Program	\$6,000
<b>Plowshares Childcare Program</b>	
– Childcare Scholarships	\$13,000
<b>REACH</b>	
– Hotline and Outreach Services	\$5,000
<b>Riverside Community Care</b>	
– Substance Abuse Treatment	\$22,000
<b>Riverside Community Care</b>	
– Family Crisis Stabilization	\$6,000
<b>The Second Step</b>	
– Case Manager	\$20,000

## **WESTMETRO HOME CONSORTIUM HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS, NEEDS AND STRATEGIES**

### **Summary Findings from the WestMetro HOME Consortium Housing Market Analysis**

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This section of the WestMetro HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan presents a regional analysis of the housing market based on data submitted by the 12 communities of the Consortium contained in their respective Consolidated Plans.

- The housing market in the WestMetro regional area is strong. Housing sales volumes are high, and prices continue to escalate. The inventory of lower-priced, entry-level housing stock remains limited throughout the region.
- Although some of the WestMetro communities note that there has been a softening of the rental housing market, rents clearly exceed the amount that lower-income households can pay without being cost burdened (e.g. payment of more than 30 percent of income in rent).
- In all but three of the WestMetro HOME Consortium communities, single-family units account for the majority of the housing stock. Only in one community—Brookline—is the majority of the housing stock in five-or-more-unit structures.
- Generally, the Consortium communities, with the exception of Framingham, indicate that there are no areas of racial/ethnic concentration.
- Generally, most of the WestMetro communities have a mix of subsidized housing, some of which is owned and operated by a local housing authority and some of which is privately owned and operated. Many of the WestMetro communities have local housing authorities which also administer Section 8 vouchers.
- The majority of the WestMetro communities have some level of supportive services for elderly and frail elderly, but there is a wide range within the Consortium in the number of housing units which are set-aside for these populations.
- Most of the WestMetro Consortium communities have some level of housing facilities and supportive services for persons with disabilities, particularly for persons with mental health or mental retardation disabilities. However, housing facilities and supportive services for persons with HIV/AIDS are extremely limited, and many of the Consortium members indicate that there are few persons living with HIV/AIDS residing in their communities.

### **Priority Housing Needs in the WestMetro HOME Consortium**

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The WestMetro Consortium includes some of the most affluent communities in the Boston metropolitan area. It also includes some of the region's neediest small cities and towns. Despite the relative wealth of many families in the Consortium's service area, housing quality, suitability and affordability problems persist in all 12 communities. The result is a shortage of housing choices at all market levels and for all types of households. However, the most obvious unmet needs exist among lower-income families, senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Based on the foregoing, the following needs appear to be the highest priorities on a Consortium-wide basis (in no particular order):

Priority #1: Housing needs of small family renters with incomes below 30 percent of area median income (AMI).

Priority #2: Housing needs of elderly renters and homeowners with incomes below 30 percent of AMI.

Priority #3: Housing needs of elderly renters and homeowners with incomes at 31 to 50 percent of AMI.

Priority #4: Housing needs of small families with incomes at 31 to 50 percent of AMI.

Priority #5: Housing needs of homeowners with incomes at 51 to 80 percent of AMI.

### **Priority Housing Objectives and Strategies for the WestMetro HOME Consortium**

On a Consortium-wide basis, the objectives and strategies that have been identified to meet the highest priority needs enumerated above are the following:

Objective: To increase the supply of affordable rental housing

Strategy:

- In a number of WestMetro communities, there will be a concerted effort to identify available parcels of Town-owned land with an eye toward new construction of both affordable rental and homeownership housing, including the construction of additional public housing units.

Objective: To increase the supply of affordable homeownership housing

Strategy:

- In order to increase the supply of affordable homeownership housing, WestMetro Communities will implement and also continue homeownership assistance programs which provide down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers and buy-downs of properties. Communities will work to ensure that this inventory of affordable homeownership properties is preserved through the use of permanent affordability mechanisms. In addition, the state Local Initiative Program will be utilized when possible.

Objective: To increase the supply of affordable rental housing for the elderly and to ensure that services are adequate to enable elderly homeowners to age in place

Strategies:

- With respect to the creation of additional affordable rental housing, strategies pertaining to *existing* rental stock are accessing rental vouchers; working toward the legalization of accessory apartments; implementation, in some instances and continuation in others, of programs which provide zero percent rehabilitation loans; and de-leading programs to encourage owners of small multifamily properties to “preserve” existing family rental units.
- In order to increase the supply of affordable rental housing for the elderly and to ensure that elderly homeowners may age in place, WestMetro HOME communities will work to access rental vouchers; work toward the legalization of accessory apartments; and to implement, and in some instances continue, zero percent rehabilitation loan programs that enable elderly homeowners to address costly, necessary repairs on a fixed or restricted budget.

Project	Sources of Funding -->	FY2005 Current Budget	FY2006 Proposed	FY2007 Proposed	FY2008 Proposed	FY2009 Proposed	FY2010 Proposed
<b>FUNDING EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE</b>							
o New Federal Grant Funds		\$2,700,000	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897
o New Program Income (Projected)		\$462,652	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000
o Grant Funds Carried Over				\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
o Contingencies Carried Over			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
o Program Income Carried Over			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE</b>		<b>\$3,162,652</b>	<b>\$2,905,897</b>	<b>\$2,905,897</b>	<b>\$2,905,897</b>	<b>\$2,905,897</b>	<b>\$2,905,897</b>

<b>PROPOSED PROJECTS</b>							
<b>HOUSING, HUMAN SERVICES &amp; ABR PROJECTS</b>							
<b>HOUSING REHABILITATION</b>							
o Rehab & Finance Services		\$460,069	\$501,879	\$511,917	\$522,155	\$532,599	\$543,250
o NHRF Loans & Grants Total		\$554,622	\$554,622	\$554,622	\$554,622	\$554,622	\$554,622
- Revolving Loan Funds		\$357,254	\$357,254	\$357,254	\$357,254	\$357,254	\$357,254
- LOC Grants		\$197,368	\$197,368	\$197,368	\$197,368	\$197,368	\$197,368
o NHRF Relocation Fund		\$24,671	\$24,671	\$24,671	\$24,671	\$24,671	\$24,671
o Elder Home Small Repairs		\$98,684	\$98,684	\$98,684	\$98,684	\$98,684	\$98,684
<b>HOUSING REHABILITATION TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,138,046</b>	<b>\$1,179,856</b>	<b>\$1,189,894</b>	<b>\$1,200,132</b>	<b>\$1,210,576</b>	<b>\$1,221,227</b>
<b>FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER PROGRAM</b>							
o First Time Homebuyer Program		\$64,145	\$64,145	\$64,145	\$64,145	\$64,145	\$64,145
<b>FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER TOTAL</b>		<b>\$64,145</b>	<b>\$64,145</b>	<b>\$64,145</b>	<b>\$64,145</b>	<b>\$64,145</b>	<b>\$64,145</b>
<b>HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>							
o Affordable Housing Dev. Funding Pool		\$479,470	\$479,470	\$479,470	\$479,470	\$479,470	\$479,470
o Housing Development Services		\$149,486	\$152,476	\$155,525	\$158,636	\$161,808	\$166,663
<b>HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TOTAL</b>		<b>\$628,956</b>	<b>\$631,946</b>	<b>\$634,995</b>	<b>\$638,106</b>	<b>\$641,278</b>	<b>\$646,133</b>
<b>ADA COMPLIANCE &amp; ARCH. ACCESS</b>							
o Access - Public Facilities		\$148,026	\$148,026	\$148,026	\$148,026	\$148,026	\$148,026
- School Admin. Building Access Improvements		\$19,737					
- Burr Park Activity Building Access		\$29,605					
- Curb cuts		\$98,684					
- School Admin. Building Access Improvements			\$80,000				
- Curb cuts			\$50,000				
- Projects to be identified			\$20,000				
- Curb cuts				\$50,000			
- Public facilities and parks access				\$80,000			
- Accessible pedestrian signals				\$10,000			
- Projects to be identified				\$10,000			
- Projects to be identified					\$150,000		
- Projects to be identified						\$150,000	
- Projects to be identified							\$150,000
<b>ACCESS &amp; ADA TOTALS</b>		<b>\$148,026</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES</b>							
o Human Services Asst. Prog. (LOC)		\$405,000	\$398,900	\$398,900	\$398,900	\$383,900	\$383,900
o Human Serv. Asst. Prog. (program income)		\$93,800	\$54,300	\$54,300	\$54,300	\$54,300	\$54,300
o Human Services - Contingencies		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES TOTALS</b>		<b>\$498,800</b>	<b>\$453,200</b>	<b>\$453,200</b>	<b>\$453,200</b>	<b>\$438,200</b>	<b>\$438,200</b>
(Cannot Exceed 15%)		15.65%	15.60%	15.60%	15.60%	15.08%	15.08%
		\$478,058	\$435,885	\$435,885	\$435,885	\$435,885	\$435,885
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>							
o Family Day Care Grant Program		\$7,500	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
o Economic Development Loan Pool		\$17,500					
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOTALS</b>		<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Housing, HS, ED, &amp; Access TOTALS</b>		<b>\$2,502,973</b>	<b>\$2,504,147</b>	<b>\$2,517,234</b>	<b>\$2,530,583</b>	<b>\$2,529,199</b>	<b>\$2,544,705</b>

Project	Sources of Funding -->	FY2005 Current Budget	FY2006 Proposed	FY2007 Proposed	FY2008 Proposed	FY2009 Proposed	FY2010 Proposed
<b>PUBLIC FACILITIES PROJECTS</b>							
<b>Neighborhood Improvements</b>		\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171
o Nonantum		\$197,368			\$197,368		
- Pellegrini and Stearns Park Improvements		\$197,368			\$197,368		
- Projects to be identified							
o West Newton			\$197,368				
- Projects to be identified			\$197,368				
o Newton Corner				\$197,368			
- Projects to be identified				\$197,368			
o Newtonville						\$197,368	
- Projects to be identified						\$197,368	
o Newton Corner							\$197,368
- Projects to be identified							\$197,368
<b>Engineering Design &amp; Construction Support</b>		\$14,803	\$14,803	\$14,803	\$14,803	\$14,803	\$14,803
<b>PUBLIC FACILITIES TOTAL</b>		\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171	\$212,171
<b>PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION</b>							
<b>CD PROGRAM MANAGEMENT</b>							
o Program Administration		\$457,028	\$466,169	\$475,492	\$485,002	\$494,702	\$504,596
o Citizen Participation		\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
<b>PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TOTALS</b>		\$461,028	\$470,169	\$479,492	\$489,002	\$498,702	\$508,596
(Cannot exceed 20%)			14.73%	14.92%	15.11%	15.37%	15.55%
<b>CONTINGENCIES</b>		\$4,934	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL ALL BUDGETS</b>		\$3,181,106	\$3,191,487	\$3,213,897	\$3,236,756	\$3,245,072	\$3,270,472
<b>RECAP - FUNDING EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE</b>							
o New Federal Grant Funds		\$2,700,000	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897	\$2,543,897
o New Program Income (Projected)		\$487,054	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000	\$362,000
o Grant Funds Carried Over			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
o Contingencies Carried Over			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
o Program Income Carried Over			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE</b>		\$3,187,054	\$2,905,897	\$2,905,897	\$2,905,897	\$2,905,897	\$2,905,897
<b>BUDGETS OVER (UNDER) FUNDING</b>		(\$5,948)	\$285,590	\$308,000	\$330,859	\$339,175	\$364,575

# **PART I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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## INTRODUCTION

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This document encompasses the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan (the Plan) for the City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium, which consists of the towns of Bedford, Belmont, Framingham, Lexington, Lincoln, Natick, Needham, Sudbury, Waltham and Watertown, and the cities of Brookline and Newton. The City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium are required by federal law to submit the Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a prerequisite to receiving funds under the following formula grant programs:

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)
- American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI)
- Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG)

The overall goal of these three programs is to develop viable urban communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. The provision of decent housing includes assisting homeless persons and persons at-risk of homelessness; maintaining the affordable housing stock; increasing the availability of affordable permanent housing; and increasing the supply of supportive housing that provides services for people with special needs. A suitable living environment includes increasing access to quality public facilities and services; restoring and preserving historic properties; improving the safety of neighborhoods; revitalizing deteriorating neighborhoods; and conserving energy resources. Lastly, providing expanded economic opportunities consists of creating and retaining jobs for low- and moderate-income people and assisting small businesses owned by low- and moderate-income people.

The purpose of the Consolidated Plan is to:

**Identify** the demand for affordable housing; housing conditions, cost burdens and market conditions; the extent of homelessness; needs of special populations; and the economic and community development needs of residents.

**Describe** the strategies developed to address housing, homelessness, economic development and community development needs in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

**Report** on specific items required by HUD, such as plans to remove barriers to affordable housing, the citizen participation plan and public housing resident initiatives.

**Discuss** specific projects and programs that will be funded with CDBG, HOME and ESG funds.

The preparation of the Plan provides an opportunity for Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium to undertake a citizen-driven collaborative planning process to establish a unified vision for community development actions. It offers the opportunity to shape the various housing and community development programs into effective, coordinated strategies for addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income persons in a comprehensive manner. The strategic plan portion of the Consolidated Plan sets forth specific objectives and strategies, annual and five-year goals, and benchmarks for measuring progress.

The Consolidated Plan serves as a planning document and helps advise decision-makers and interested public and private organizations on goals, strategies and funding recommendations for the City of Newton and the HOME Consortium communities. It is intended that the Plan will encourage other agencies to enter into collaborative relationships that help foster the leveraging of funds and expand housing opportunities and services to low- and moderate-income households.

In addition to examining local needs, development of the Plan offers HOME Consortium communities a chance to take a look at the region as a whole and to allocate funds for programs and projects that address the needs of both the individual communities and the region. The lead agency for the development of the plan is the Housing and Community Development Division (the Division) of the City of Newton's Planning and Development Department.

The Consolidated Plan covers the five-year period running from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2010. In addition to the Plan, each Consortium member is required to prepare an Annual Action Plan that identifies how the HUD funds included in the Plan will be spent over the upcoming program year and notifies HUD of any changes to the five-year strategy.

The City of Newton had several goals in mind as work on the FY06-10 Plan began. These included:

- Gaining an understanding of the significant changes that have occurred in Newton since the 1990 U.S. Census was released and the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan was written;
- Obtaining broader and more in-depth input from citizens and other interested parties such as social service agencies and organizations on the City's and the region's (when applicable) housing and community development needs and goals;
- Conducting a more in-depth look at the regional housing and community development needs; and
- Developing assessable performance measurements for each program area

For the purposes of the Plan, in addition to gathering citizen input on housing and non-housing community development needs, the City of Newton and members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium also referred to relevant information from reports and studies generated by various agencies that document housing, community and economic development needs and implementation strategies. These reports and studies include the *City of Newton Recreation and Open Space Plan*; the *City of Newton Comprehensive Plan Update 2005*; the *FY2001-2005 City of Newton Consolidated Plan*; *A Shared Vision for Massachusetts Youth and Young Adults, 2003*; and *Going It Alone: The Struggle to Expand Housing Opportunities for People with Disabilities*, among numerous others.

There is one significant change in the content of the FY06-10 Plan from the FY01-05 Plan. The FY06-10 Consolidated Plan includes a new element of the strategic planning process—a performance measurement system for determining how well programs and services are meeting the needs of Newton's low- and moderate-income residents. Newton has adopted the Council of State Community Development Agency's (COSCEA) Performance Outcome Measurement System, which offers a comprehensive approach to measuring the outcomes of Newton's housing and community development programs.

The Consolidated Plan is organized into ten parts:

- **Part I: Introduction** – Provides an overview of HUD’s goals, the purpose of the Consolidated Plan and the approach to developing the Plan.
- **Part II: Managing the Process** – Provides a summary of how the Plan was developed and information on citizen participation, consultation and performance measurement.
- **Part III: Community Profile** – Provides demographic and other relevant information on the City of Newton and its residents.
- **Part IV: Housing and Homelessness** – Comprised of two sections: the Housing Market Analysis, which provides information on the general market and inventory conditions in Newton and the region, and the Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan, which describes the housing needs of Newton’s low- and moderate-income residents and the objectives and strategies developed to address these needs. This section includes information on populations with special needs, including the homeless, the elderly and persons with disabilities and provides information on the performance measurement system in place for evaluating Newton’s housing programs. An appendix relevant only to housing issues is also included.
- **Part V: Non-Housing Community Development Needs Assessments and Strategic Plans** – Provides information on the non-housing community development needs of Newton’s low- and moderate-income population in the areas of human services, accessibility, neighborhood improvements and economic development. A strategic plan for each program area details the objectives and strategies developed to address these needs. Also provides information on performance measurement in each program area.
- **Part VI: Appendix** – Includes HUD Tables 1A and 2A and various documents, including a Glossary of Terms, Citizen Comments, Institutional Structure, Coordination, Anti-Poverty Strategy, Citizen Participation Plan, Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan, Housing and Community Development Program Advisory Committees, Monitoring Policy, and Public Housing Resident Initiatives for the City of Newton.
- **Part VII: One-Year Action Plans** – FY06 one-year action plans for the City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium communities.
- **Part VIII: WestMetro HOME Consortium Regional Consolidated Plan** – Includes a regional Housing Market Analysis, Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment and Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan for the HOME Consortium communities.
- **Part IX: WestMetro HOME Consortium Appendix** – Includes documents such as Resale and Recapture Provisions, Citizen Participation Plan and Monitoring Policy for the WestMetro HOME Consortium.
- **Part X: WestMetro HOME Consortium Member Consolidated Plans** – Includes the FY06-10 HOME Consolidated Plans and Annual Action Plans for the 11 other HOME Consortium members. This submission also includes the non-housing community development plans for Brookline, Framingham and Waltham, which will be submitted separately

## **PART II**

# **MANAGING THE PROCESS**

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## MANAGING THE CONSOLIDATED PLANNING PROCESS

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The lead agency responsible for overseeing the development of the Consolidated Plan (the Plan) is the Housing and Community Development Division (the Division) of the City of Newton's Planning and Development Department. In addition to serving as the lead agency for the City of Newton's CDBG and ESG consolidated planning process, the Division also serves as the lead entity for the HOME portion of the Consolidated Plan for the WestMetro HOME Consortium. The HOME Consortium consists of the towns of Bedford, Belmont, Brookline, Framingham, Lexington, Lincoln, Natick, Needham, Sudbury and Watertown, and the cities of Newton and Waltham. Brookline, Framingham and Waltham are also CDBG grantees, and as such, their CDBG Consolidated Plans will be part of this submission. The table below indicates the major public agency in each Consortium community that will be responsible for administering programs covered by the Plan.

HOME CONSORTIUM COMMUNITY	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY
Bedford	Planning Board
Belmont	Planning and Zoning Division of the Office of Community Development
Brookline	Planning and Community Development Department
Framingham	Planning and Economic Development Department
Lexington	Planning Department
Lincoln	Planning Board
Natick	Community Development Department
Needham	Planning Board
Newton	Housing and Community Development Division of the Planning and Development Department
Sudbury	Planning Board
Waltham	Housing and Planning Departments
Watertown	Department of Community Development and Planning

### ***DATA SOURCES***

Data sources for Plan include the U.S. Census 2000, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the Newton Housing Authority (NHA) and various Massachusetts state agencies. In addition, as the lead agency of the planning process, Division staff formed various partnerships and relationships with community groups, residents and interested citizens, and social service agencies and organizations that provide assisted housing, health services and social services,

including providers to elderly persons, children, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and the homeless. Extensive citizen outreach was conducted, and significant efforts were made to reach all sectors of the community in order to gauge housing and non-housing community development needs affecting the broadest range of residents.

### ***SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS***

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Work on the Consolidated Plan began in February 2004 as staff began meeting with advisory committees to discuss the Consolidated Plan development process. Throughout the spring and summer months, a number of needs assessment meetings were held, involving advisory committee members, members of the public and housing and social service providers. During the late summer and fall, additional meetings were held in order to develop objectives, strategies and project ideas for addressing the identified needs.

In November 2004, a public hearing was held before the Newton Planning and Development Board to present the draft needs, objectives and strategies and to receive feedback from Board members and members of the public. Following that meeting, further refinement of the draft Plan took place, taking into account the additional input received. In February 2005, a full draft of the Plan was presented at a public hearing before the Planning and Development Board. After the conclusion of the 30-day comment period and prior to submitting the Plan to HUD in May 2005, the document was reviewed and recommended by Newton's Board of Aldermen and Newton's Mayor.

During the development of the Plan, the Division also coordinated with other City departments, including the Parks and Recreation Department, the Department of Public Works, the School Department and the Public Buildings Department, specifically in terms of neighborhood and accessibility improvement projects. Staff from these departments were invited and encouraged to attend both the advisory committee and the public meetings.

Information on the needs and the resulting objectives, strategies and project ideas was shared with departments so that they would be aware of residents' priorities. An application process for neighborhood improvement and accessibility projects was instituted to ensure that departments incorporated the input into their planning processes. The advisory committees along with Division staff then reviewed applications and selected the projects they wanted to recommend for funding. More information about this process is included in the Neighborhood Improvements section of this Plan.

Division staff also worked closely with staff members of the 11 other WestMetro HOME Consortium communities to develop the Consolidated Plan. More information on this process can be found in the Regional Consultation and Outreach section of this document.

### ***LOCAL CONSULTATION AND OUTREACH***

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A number of methods were employed to gather citizen and agency input, including focus groups, advisory committee meetings and other public meetings. The following table details the specific areas of consultation required by HUD and a brief synopsis of the ways in which the City of Newton complied with these requirements. Information on the specific methods employed in the HOME Consortium communities can be found in the individual communities' sections of the Consolidated Plan. In addition, a list of the organizations that were consulted for the Newton portion of the Consolidated Plan appears in Appendix C, Institutional Structure.

24 CFR CITATION	REQUIREMENT	ACTION TO COMPLY
91.100(a)(1)	Affordable housing/housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held three Newton Housing Partnership meetings.</li> <li>• Held two focus groups with housing service providers and developers.</li> </ul>
	Health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held four Human Service Advisory Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Held one health services providers focus group.</li> </ul>
	Social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held four Human Service Advisory Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Held six social services providers focus groups.</li> </ul>
	Homeless services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held two focus groups with housing and service providers.</li> <li>• Held two Homelessness Consortium meetings.</li> </ul>
91.100(a)(2)	Lead-based paint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conferred with Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.</li> </ul>
91.100(a)(3)	Adjacent local government (non-housing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carried out ongoing information-sharing among the HOME Consortium member jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
	State government (non-housing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilized information from the State of Massachusetts on non-housing community development concerns and provided drafts of the Consolidated Plan for review.</li> </ul>
91.100(a)(4)	Metropolitan planning agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a draft of the Consolidated Plan for review by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.</li> </ul>
91.100(b)	HOPWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newton does not receive HOPWA funds.</li> </ul>
91.100(c)	Public housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Newton Housing Authority executive director and staff participated in two housing provider focus groups.</li> </ul>

In addition to the activities listed above, a number of meetings were held in the City's four target neighborhoods to discuss the neighborhood improvements program. In the two older target neighborhoods—Nonantum and portions of Newton Corner—several meetings were held with the neighborhood advisory committees in order to determine needs and then develop objectives and strategies to address those needs. These needs, objectives and strategies were then presented to the public at a meeting to which all residents in the target neighborhood were invited.

In the two new target neighborhoods—portions of West Newton and Newtonville—two public meetings were held to discuss needs and to develop resulting objectives and strategies. For the first meeting in both neighborhoods, which were held in July 2004, flyers were hand-delivered to all target neighborhood residents. Attendees were recruited for neighborhood advisory committees at this meeting. In September 2004, a second public meeting was held in these two neighborhoods, and all target neighborhood residents were invited via a flyer mailed to their homes.

The Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities also hosted two public meetings to obtain input from residents on the City's accessibility needs. In addition, the Committee met a number of times to discuss the needs presented and to develop objectives, strategies and projects that addressed these needs. Flyers announcing the meetings were posted at the local library, City Hall and the Newton Senior Center. Additionally, a list of all the City's faith communities was compiled, and flyers announcing the meetings were mailed to congregations throughout the City.

### ***REGIONAL CONSULTATION AND OUTREACH***

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On a regional level, Newton maintains contact with municipalities within the region through its involvement in the WestMetro HOME Consortium, which consists of 12 member communities in the Boston suburban area. Through this forum, Division staff is able to share in regional planning activities that relate to affordable housing development. Besides individual contact between Newton and member staff, the Consortium also holds meetings on an approximately bimonthly basis. This offers members an opportunity to raise and resolve particular issues, to discuss new programs and projects, and to develop both a local and a regional outlook on affordable housing development.

The City of Newton is an active organizational member of the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), a non-profit umbrella organization for affordable housing and community development activities throughout Massachusetts. CHAPA's mission is to encourage the production and preservation of housing that is affordable to low-income families and individuals. Membership in the organization includes non-profit and for-profit developers, advocates, bankers, property managers, architects, consultants, homeowners, tenants, local planners, foundation and government officials, and others throughout the state who are interested in affordable housing development. CHAPA meetings and forums provide Division staff with a venue for gaining insight into both local and regional developments in the affordable housing arena.

Newton is also a member of the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is composed of seven agencies, seven municipalities and a public advisory committee that collectively carry out the federally mandated "continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process for the region." Through its work with MPO members such as the Massachusetts Highway Department, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and cities and towns such as Boston, Framingham and Salem, the City of Newton actively participates in regional transportation planning activities.

Housing and Community Development Division staff is also active both nationally and regionally as members of the National Community Development Association (NCDA). NCDA is a national nonprofit organization comprised of more than 550 local governments across the country that administer federally-supported community and economic development, housing and human service programs, including the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs. Division staff attends

regional and national NCEA meetings local government officials and policy makers can share information and resources.

Division staff is also actively involved with a number of collaborative efforts that include representatives from agencies and organizations outside of Newton. Throughout the year, collaborative groups such as the Human Service Providers Network and the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium meet to discuss issues and needs in Newton and the surrounding communities. Housing and Community Development Division staff takes the lead in coordinating these meetings.

In terms of the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium, which includes representatives from the three communities and shelter housing and service providers throughout the region, Division staff manages the annual planning process, the development of the annual funding application and the point-in-time count of homeless people in the three communities. Staff has also been working closely with other members for the past several months to draft a plan to end homelessness.

In an effort to obtain regional input on the Consolidated Plan and the City of Newton's strategies and objectives, copies of the draft were sent to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for comment concerning regional issues and impact.

#### ***PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY CONSULTATION AND OUTREACH***

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There are no proposed activities in the FY06-10 Newton and WestMetro HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan that are currently being funded or jointly funded with the Newton Housing Authority's (NHA) Capital Fund Program. The NHA's plan is to use funding from the Capital Fund Program for the modernization of existing units. Should Capital Fund Program resources become available in the future for activities that have a broader community impact, such as the construction of new units of housing, the NHA will coordinate with the City.

Staffs from the Division's Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund (NHRF) program and the NHA have an ongoing relationship as they work jointly on projects involving the rehabilitation and renovation of NHA units. Additionally, consultation with the NHA took place during the summer of 2004 focus groups on affordable housing and in discussions with the Housing Authority concerning priorities, objectives and strategies identified in the Plan. The NHA contributed to several sections of the Consolidated Plan related to Housing Authority activity and received a draft of the Plan to review for consistency with its Five-Year Public Agency Plan.

#### ***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

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In September 2003, HUD released information on the development of local performance measurement systems for formula grant programs such as CDGB, HOME and ESG. HUD's intention is that the performance measurement system will "make the Consolidated Plan more results-oriented and useful to communities in assessing their own progress toward addressing the problems of low-income areas." The FY06-10 Newton and WestMetro HOME Consolidated Plan includes a performance measurement system for determining how well programs and services are meeting the needs of Newton's and the HOME communities' low- and moderate-income residents. Information on the performance measurement systems adopted by the 11 other HOME Consortium communities can be found in their individual sections of this Plan.

In the fall of 2003, Starfish Associates, a Fairport, New York-based performance measures consulting firm conducted training sessions for Newton Housing and Community Development staff and sub-grantee staff, and for members of the Human Service Advisory Committee. The goal of the training was to provide Division personnel and advisory committee members with an understanding of performance measurement and to assist human service providers/sub-grantees in developing outcomes for their agency or program(s), as well as in identifying indicators and measures for these outcomes.

Newton funded approximately 40 human service programs during both FY04 and FY05. The FY06-10 CDBG funding application for human service providers, which was released in the fall of 2004, required applicants to indicate the most important desired outcomes of the service they provide or would like to provide. The application stated that applicants would be asked to describe to what extent they are achieving the desired outcomes in their CDBG program reports.

In order to streamline the performance measurement data from this large number of human service programs, Division staff made the decision to adopt the Council of State Community Development Agency's (COSCDA) Performance Outcome Measurement System, which offers a comprehensive approach to measuring the outcomes of Newton's housing and community development programs. The COSCDA system consists of five possible outcomes under which results will be reported. The outcomes are:

- 1) Improving availability or accessibility
- 2) Creating affordability
- 3) Promoting sustainability or livability
- 4) Enhancing community health/safety/quality
- 5) Providing economic opportunity

In addition to facilitating human service performance measurement reporting, another factor that made the adoption of the COSCDA model attractive was the fact that one or more of these outcomes is applicable to each of Newton's six other program areas—housing development, housing rehabilitation, neighborhood improvements, accessibility, economic development and Homelessness Consortium. The five outcomes also address the goals of the HUD programs, which are to create a suitable living environment, to provide decent affordable housing and to create economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people. Each CDBG, ESG and HOME activity undertaken in Newton will apply one or more of these outcomes as a performance measure.

More detailed information on the performance measure(s) adopted for each program area can be found in the individual program area sections of this Consolidated Plan. In addition to inclusion in the Plan, subsequent Annual Action Plans and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPER) will reflect the addition of the performance measurement system.

### ***CITIZEN PARTICIPATION***

The Consolidated Plan regulations (24 CFR 91.105) state that each jurisdiction must adopt a citizen participation plan. Citizen participation has been an established priority of the Newton Housing and Community Development program for many years, and citizen participation plans exist for both the Newton CDBG and ESG programs and for the WestMetro HOME Consortium. The Consortium-wide plan is discussed in greater detail in the HOME section of this Plan.

In terms of citizen participation in the Newton CDBG and ESG programs, as mentioned above in the “Local Consultation and Outreach” section, citizen participation was sought through a number of means during the development of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan. Newton residents, nonprofit organizations and agencies, advisory committees and members of the business community were invited to attend public hearings and to review and comment on the draft plan.

A link to the draft plan was also placed on the City of Newton website at <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Planning/whatsnew>. A notice regarding the two public hearings held on the plan also ran in the local Newton newspaper at least ten days prior to the meeting and provided the location, time of the hearing and information on the anticipated funding. In addition, information about the availability of the draft plan for comment was posted on the notice board at the Newton Free Library and at the four branch libraries.

The full text of the Newton Citizen Participation Plan can be found in Appendix F.

# **PART III**

# **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

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## COMMUNITY PROFILE

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### BACKGROUND

The city of Newton, known as the Garden City, is located six miles west of downtown Boston and consists of 14 diverse villages, from the urban Newton Centre to the primarily residential Waban. The city, which lies in the so-called Boston Basin of the Appalachian Mountain Range, encompasses 18.20 square miles, approximately 20 percent of which is open space. Newton is bordered by Waltham and Watertown on the north, Boston and Brookline on the east, West Roxbury and Needham on the south, and Wellesley and Weston on the west. The city is governed by an elected mayor and a 24-member Board of Aldermen who represent Newton's eight wards. In 2004, Newton received the Safest City Award from Morgan Quitno Press, a Lawrence (KS) based publishing and research company.

In its early history, the area that is now Newton was primarily an agricultural region. It was settled in 1630 as a district of Watertown and was subsequently annexed by Cambridge in 1636. Newton was incorporated as a separate municipality in 1688. The city was one of the country's first railroad suburbs, and its proximity to Boston and its well-developed transportation network have helped make it the urbanized residential city it is today.

In 1688, Newton established its first river mill along the Charles River, and the city shortly became home to several other mills along its riverbanks. The mills provided the backdrop for an industry in Newton that slowly evolved towards the manufacturing of products such as plastics, paints and confections. The manufacturing industry encouraged a growing community of workers to settle in nearby surrounding neighborhoods. Evidence of this trend can still be seen in the pockets of worker and two-family homes surrounding the old mill areas.

The development of Newton's current residential character was largely shaped by the introduction of the Worcester Turnpike (also known as Route 9 and Boylston Street) and the Boston-Worcester Railroad. The construction of the Worcester Turnpike, which was completed in 1809, broadened Newton's commerce by providing a way for products to be transported more efficiently and in addition, brought people to Newton on their way to Boston.

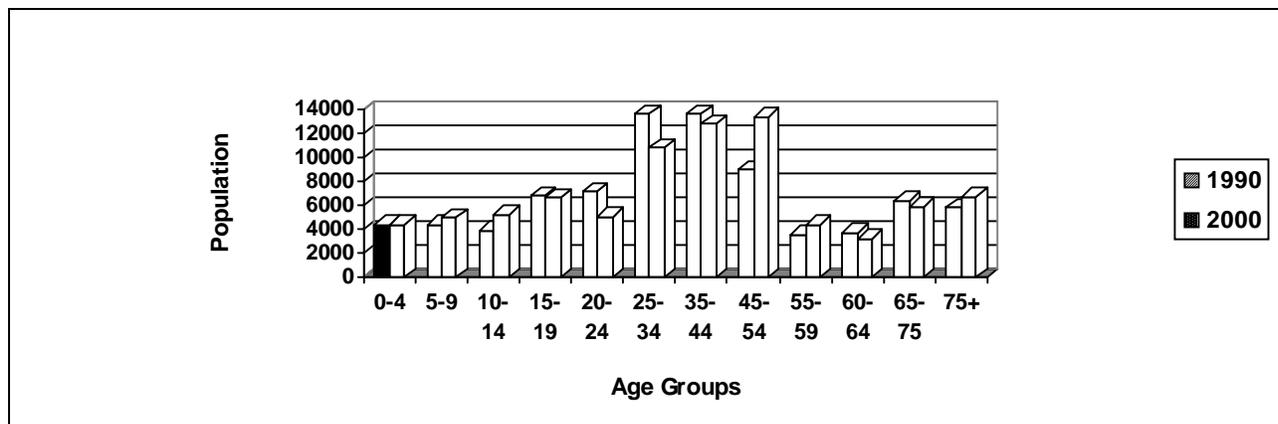
The completion of the first ten-mile leg of the Boston-Worcester Railroad in 1834 to West Newton expanded Newton's accessibility both as a residential community and a summer haven for affluent Bostonians. For the next 60 years, frequent commuter rail service to Boston was instrumental in establishing Newton as a desirable residential suburb, and many new houses were constructed in neighborhoods within easy reach of railroad depots. Today Newton is noted as having one of the finest and most comprehensive collections of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban residential architecture, with a wide range of building types, materials and styles.

### POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Newton's population, which peaked at 92,384 in the 1960s, increased slightly between 1990 and 2000, rising from 82,585 to 83,829. According to the U.S. Census 2000 (Census), the three largest age groups in 2000 were 45-49 year olds, 34-44 year olds and 25-34 year olds, respectively, which together accounted for 44.2 percent of the city's population. The graph below illustrates the decrease in the number of residents from 20 to 44 years old and the

substantial increase in the number of baby boomer residents in the 45-54 year old category. The median age<sup>1</sup> in Newton in 2000 was 38.7, an increase from the 1990 figure of 35.7.

**Fig. 1: Changes in Newton’s Population Age Groups, 1990-2000**



Newton’s population density was higher than that of Massachusetts as a whole in 2000. Newton has 4,643.6 persons per square mile and 1,778.8 housing units per square mile area, while Massachusetts had a density of 809.8 persons per square mile and 334.4 housing units per square mile.

The number of households in Newton grew from 29,455 in 1990 to 31,201 in 2000, and the average Newton household had 2.5 persons, down from 2.6 in 1990 and 2.7 in 1980. Almost 75 percent (74.5 percent) were households of two or more persons, with 88.7 percent of these identifying themselves as family households<sup>2</sup>. Almost one-third of households (9,760) included children under 18 years old, with eight percent of these households (2,500) having female heads of household, outnumbering male-headed households by almost three to one. Of the 25.5 percent of one-person households in the city, 71.9 percent were female householders.

According to the Census, 5,578 individuals in Newton were living in group quarters, constituting 6.7 percent of the City’s population. Group quarters include hospitals, dormitories, nursing homes, jails and group homes.

The city of Newton contains 32,112 housing units, 911 of which were vacant at the time of the Census. The housing stock is 60 percent single-family dwellings, 18 percent two-family dwellings and 22 percent multi-family housing and apartment buildings. Newton has a high rate of owner-occupied housing. Of the 31,201 occupied housing units, 21,703 or 69.5 percent were owner-occupied according to the Census. In 2000, there were 9,498 renter-occupied units as compared to 9,158 in 1990. This represents an increase of 3.5 percent. Some of the housing stock—primarily rental properties—serves students of the several colleges and universities located in or near Newton.

<sup>1</sup> This measure divides the age distribution in a stated area into two equal parts: one-half of the population falling below the median value and one-half above the median value.

<sup>2</sup> A family includes a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption. All people in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A family household may contain people not related to the householder, but those people are not included as part of the householder’s family in Census tabulations. (*U.S. Census Glossary*).

## RACE AND ETHNICITY CHARACTERISTICS

During the period from 1990 to 2000, there was a 3.6 percent decrease (2,792 individuals) in the number of White residents of the city to 88.1 percent of the population and a concurrent 72.4 percent increase in the number of Asian residents of Newton. The number of Black/African-American and American Indian/Alaska Native residents decreased during the ten-year period, while the number of Hispanic/Latino residents of any race increased from 1,638 to 2,111 (28.9 percent). Even though the number of Black/African-American and American Indian/Alaska Native residents of the city is decreasing, the overall racial and ethnic diversity of Newton is increasing due to the considerable growth in the number of Asian and Hispanic/Latino residents.

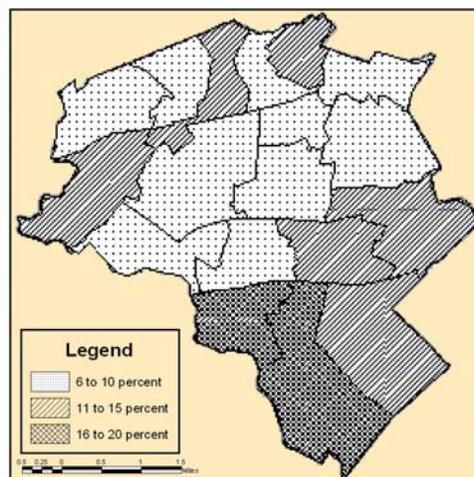
**Fig. 2: Newton's Racial and Ethnic Composition, 2000**

	WHITE ALONE	ASIAN ALONE	BLACK OR AFRICAN-AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	HISPANIC OR LATINO (OF ANY RACE)
1990	92.8%	4.5%	2.1%	.1%	2.0%
2000	88.1%	7.7%	2.0%	.07%	2.5%
Percent Change	-3.6%	72.4%	-3.7%	-35.8%	28.9%

In terms of Newton's foreign-born population, according to the Census, 15,116 residents (18 percent) were born outside of the U.S. This is a significant increase from the 1990 figure of 10,758. The three primary locations from which foreign-born residents immigrated were Europe, Asia and Eastern Europe. More than 21 percent (21.2 percent) of Newton residents reported speaking a language other than English at home.

Racial and ethnic minority households are distributed throughout Newton and are not concentrated in any one specific area. The map below illustrates the percentage of minority households by census tracts, according to the Census 2000. As indicated by the map below, the majority of census tracts contained from six to ten percent racial and ethnic minority households.

**Map 1: Percent Minority Population in Newton by Census Tract, 2000**



It should be noted that the Census 2000 for the first time allowed the designation of two or more races, therefore making it somewhat difficult to assess trends. Because of this difference in Census classifications, comparison of the population composition in 2000 with that of 1990 cannot be completely accurate.

### INCOME AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS

The number of low- and moderate-income<sup>3</sup> Newton residents decreased by almost half between 1970 and 2000. In 1970, more than 40 percent of Newton residents were low- and moderate-income. In 1980, the number of low- and moderate-income residents had declined to 33 percent, falling to 25 percent in 1989 and down to 21 percent in 1999. Simultaneously, Newton's median household income<sup>4</sup> (MHI) has risen considerably, from \$55,720<sup>5</sup> in 1980 to \$78,681 in 1990 to \$86,052 in 2000, more than doubling the 2000 U.S. median household income of \$41,994 and far surpassing the Massachusetts figure of \$50,502. Newton's MHI also falls near the higher end of the scale when viewed in comparison with that of surrounding communities, as noted in the table below.

**Fig 3: Boston Metropolitan Area Median Household Incomes, 2000**

CITY/TOWN	1999 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Boston city	\$39,629
Waltham	\$54,010
Framingham	\$54,288
Watertown	\$59,764
Brookline	\$66,711
Belmont	\$80,295
<b>Newton</b>	<b>\$86,052</b>
Needham	\$88,079
Lexington	\$96,825

In terms of median family income<sup>6</sup>, according to the Census, Newton's was \$105,289 in 1999. Inflation-adjusted median family income in the City was \$94,308 in 1989 and \$69,967 in 1979. This constitutes a growth rate in median family income of 11.6 percent over the 1989-1999 period and a 50.5 percent increase from 1979 to 1999.

According to the Census 2000, 42.7 percent of employed Newton residents earned \$100,000 or more annually, and 14.7 percent of these residents earned \$200,000 or more. Concurrently, 28.1 percent of residents earned \$49,999 or less annually. While 12.4 percent of the U.S. and

<sup>3</sup> Low-income individuals make 50 percent or less than the area median income, while moderate-income individuals make 80 percent or less than the area median income.

<sup>4</sup> A household is defined by HUD as one or more persons occupying a housing unit. The median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and other having incomes below the median.

<sup>5</sup> 1980 and 1990 numbers are adjusted for inflation.

<sup>6</sup> A family is defined by HUD as a household composed of two or more related persons. The term family also includes one or more eligible persons living with another person or persons who are determined to be important to their care or well being. The median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and other having incomes below the median.

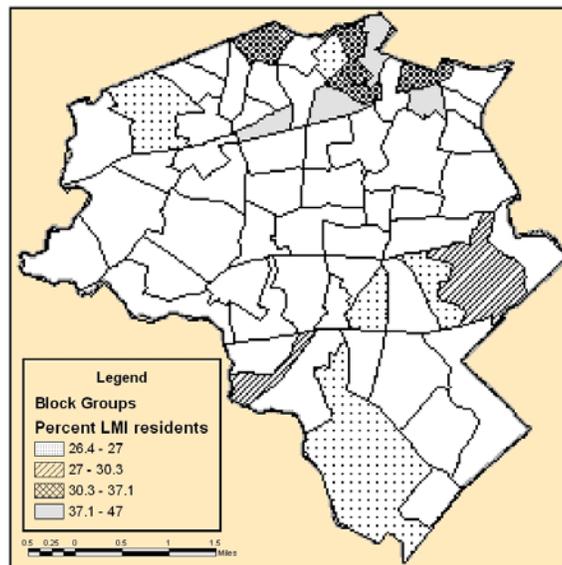
9.3 percent of the Massachusetts populations fell below the poverty line<sup>7</sup> in 2000, only 4.3 percent of Newton residents did so. Although this poverty rate holds steady from 1990, 47 more Newton residents fell below the poverty line between 1990 and 2000. In comparison with other Boston metropolitan communities, however, Newton's poverty rate is at the lower end of the scale, as evidenced in the table below.

**Fig. 4: Boston Metropolitan Area Percentage of Residents Living in Poverty, 2000**

CITY/TOWN	PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS BELOW THE POVERTY LINE
Boston city	19.5%
Brookline	9.3%
Framingham	8.0%
Waltham	7.0%
Watertown	6.3%
Belmont	4.4%
<b>Newton</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
Lexington	3.4%
Needham	2.5%

As is the case with Newton's racial and ethnic minorities, the city's low- and moderate-income population is spread throughout the community. There are no Census block groups with 51 percent or more households at or below 80 percent of area median income. As shown in Map 2, the highest percentage of low- and moderate residents in a block group ranged between 37.1 and 47.0 percent. Four block groups fell into this category: one in West Newton, one in Newtonville, one in Newton Corner and one in Nonantum.

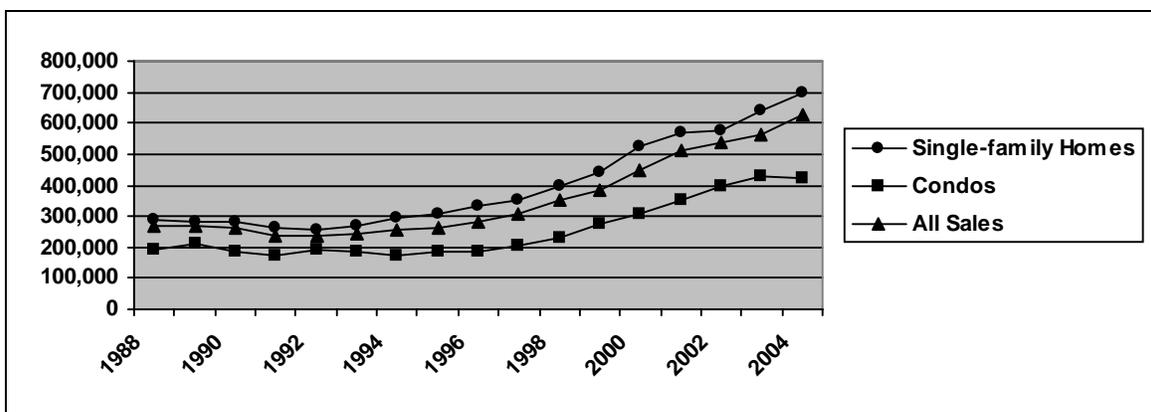
**Map 2: Census Tracts with Greatest Low- and Moderate-Income Population, 2000**



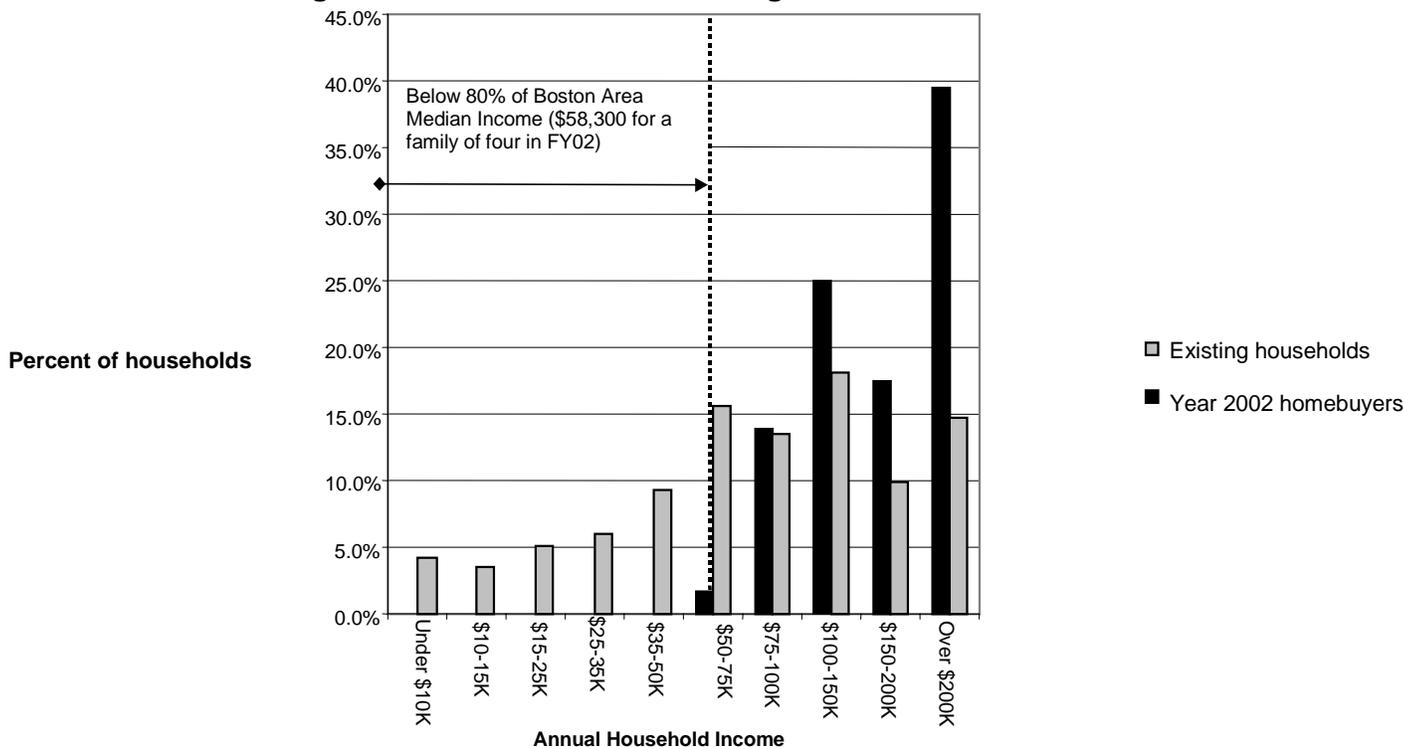
<sup>7</sup> According to the 2004 federal poverty guidelines, a family of four making \$18,850 or less annually is below the poverty line.

During the first 70 years of the 20th century, the population of Newton was far more economically diverse than it is today. Although the income range of Newton's residents varies from a low of less than \$10,000 to a high of more than \$200,000 per year, those at the lower, moderate and even middle ends of the income range are less able than ever before to obtain housing in the city. With a median housing price of \$692,000<sup>8</sup>, the people purchasing homes in Newton tend to be those at the upper end of the income range, as evidenced by the figures below.

**Fig. 5: Median Sales Prices of Newton Housing by Year**



**Fig. 6: Incomes of New and Existing Newton Homeowners<sup>9</sup>**



<sup>8</sup> "Middlesex Registry." *Banker and Tradesman* 13 Dec. 2004. 16 Dec. 2004.

<[http://www.bankerandtradesman.com/issues/pdfs/BTREC121304\\_Middlesex.pdf](http://www.bankerandtradesman.com/issues/pdfs/BTREC121304_Middlesex.pdf)>.

<sup>9</sup> City of Newton Comprehensive Plan Update 2005 Community Workshop. October 29, 2002. Existing resident household income was obtained from the U.S. Census 2000. Homebuyer income was computed from MLS data on October 22, 2002.

In terms of Newton renters, the median monthly rent was \$1,038 in 2000 according to the Census. Gross rent as a percentage of household income was 35 percent and greater for more than 2,406 (25.3 percent) of Newton renters in 1999.

Newton, on one hand, has a highly prosperous, rapidly growing and thriving community. There are, however, an increasing number of people who are experiencing economic distress as the city and the region continue to become a more expensive place to live. Understanding this divergence is key to understanding the city and the unique challenges it faces.

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The City of Newton has always prided itself on the quality of its public school system. Newton's school system has 15 elementary, four middle and two high schools. The current enrollment for the 2004-05 school year is 11,415. Eighty-seven percent of Newton's 2002-03 high school graduates went on to higher education.

In 2000, 94.5 percent of Newton residents were high school graduates or higher, 29.1 percent had a bachelor's degree, and 38.9 percent had a graduate or professional degree. Of the population ages 16 to 19, 97.7 percent were enrolled in school.

Newton's workforce experienced a drop in the unemployment rate in the period between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, 3.3 percent of the City's residents were unemployed versus 1.3 percent in 2000<sup>10</sup>. This is in contrast to a national unemployment rate of 3.9 percent and a Massachusetts rate of 2.6 percent in 2000. In comparison with other communities in the Boston metropolitan area, Newton's rate is at the lower end of the scale and is less than half of Boston's.

**Fig. 7: Boston Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates, 2000**

CITY/TOWN	UNEMPLOYMENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE LABOR FORCE
Brookline	1.2%
Lexington	1.3%
<b>Newton</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
Needham	1.4%
Belmont	1.4%
Watertown	1.7%
Framingham	1.9%
Waltham	2.1%
Boston city	2.8%

The greater part (24,419 or 65.3 percent) of Newton's workforce is in management, professional and related occupations. The majority of the remaining workers are in sales and office occupations (21.0 percent); service occupations (7.8 percent); production, transportation and material moving occupations (3.3 percent); construction, extraction and maintenance occupations (2.5 percent); and farming, fishing and forestry occupations (0.1 percent). Thirty-two percent of Newton's residents work in educational, health and social services; 20.0 percent are employed in professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management

<sup>10</sup> Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance. Labor Force and Unemployment Data. [http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi\\_lur\\_a.asp#4](http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi_lur_a.asp#4)

services; and 9.9 percent work in finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing. Median earnings were \$65,565 for full-time, year-round male workers and \$46,885 for similar female workers.

According to the Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance, formerly the Division of Employment and Training, at the end of the first quarter of 2004, there were 3,647 business establishments in Newton. This is compared to 3,366 in 1990. The majority (34 percent) of those employed outside the home traveled between 20 to 34 minutes to work, while 21 percent traveled 14 minutes or less. Only 5.2 percent of workers traveled an hour or more to their job. Almost 30 percent (29.2 percent) of Newton residents worked in Boston, followed by 27.0 percent who work locally in Newton. The top ten locations where Newton residents worked is shown in the table below.

**Fig. 8: Top Ten Locations Where Newton Residents Worked, 2000**

<b>CITY/TOWN</b>	<b>NUMBER OF WORKERS</b>	<b>PERCENT OF WORKERS</b>
Boston	12,917	29.2%
Newton	11,925	27.0%
Cambridge	2,984	6.8%
Waltham	2,011	4.6%
Brookline	1,075	2.4%
Wellesley	903	2.0%
Framingham	803	1.8%
Needham	801	1.8%
Watertown	630	1.4%
Burlington	523	1.1%

# **PART IV**

## **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS**

This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan provides an analysis of the current status of housing and homelessness in Newton. The document is broken down into three primary segments: a housing market analysis, a housing and homelessness needs assessment, and a housing and homelessness strategic plan for increasing the amount of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income people in Newton, each of which contains a number of subsections.

The housing market analysis is broken down into the following subsections:

- Summary of Newton's Housing Stock
- Overview of Newton's Housing Market

The housing and homelessness needs assessment is broken down into the following subsections:

- Overview of Newton's Population And Households
- Overview of Newton's Extremely Low-, Low- and Moderate-Income Populations
- Housing Opportunities in Newton by Populations
- Housing Cost Burdens for Newton's Populations
- Overcrowding in Newton
- Homelessness Needs
- Physical and Regulatory Barriers to Affordable Housing
- Priority Needs Analysis
- Appendix

The housing and homelessness strategic plan is broken down into the following subsections:

- Objectives
- Strategies
- Proposed Annual Accomplishments
- Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement

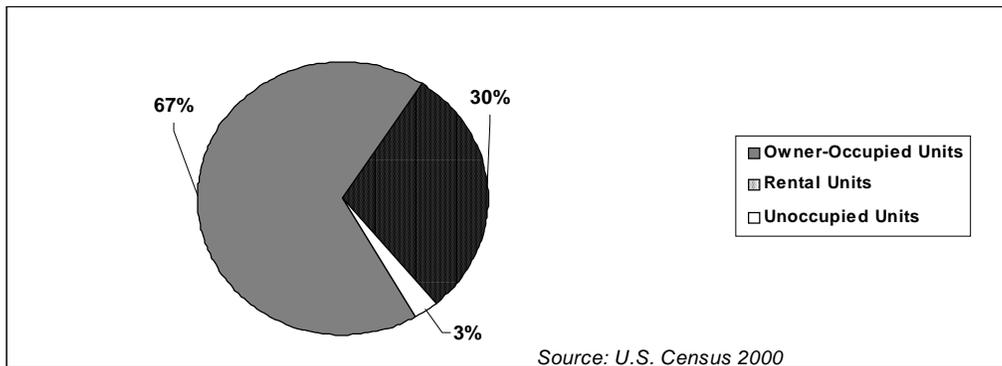
# HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

## Section 1: Summary of Newton’s Housing Stock

*What is the current state of housing in Newton?*

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the City of Newton has approximately 32,112 total housing units and 31,201 occupied housing units. Approximately two-thirds (21,703) of all housing units are owner-occupied, and one-third (9,498) are rental (see Fig. 11). The predominant housing type in Newton is single-family detached homes, comprising 56 percent of the total housing stock (single-family attached units account for five percent of the total stock). Two-family properties comprise another 18 percent of the overall housing stock, and housing units in multifamily dwellings ranging from three to 50+ units account for 21 percent of the housing stock.

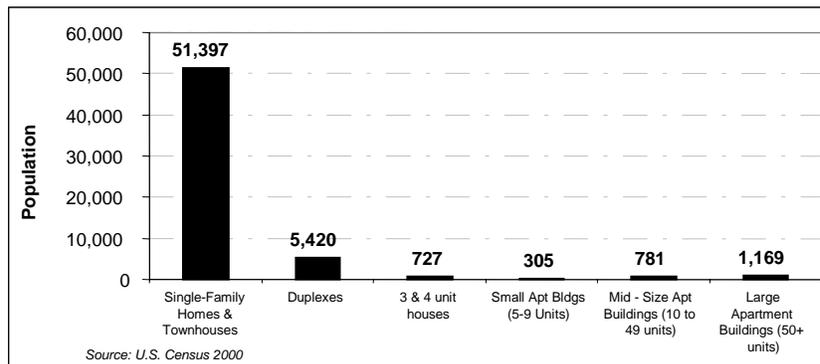
**Fig. 9: Housing Tenure in Newton, 2000**



### Homeowners and owner-occupied housing

Newton has approximately 59,799 residents living in owner-occupied housing. Eighty-two percent of the City’s homeowners live in single-family properties. Nine percent of Newton’s homeowners live in duplexes, four percent live in attached townhouses, and two percent live in large buildings consisting of 50 or more units (see Fig. 12).

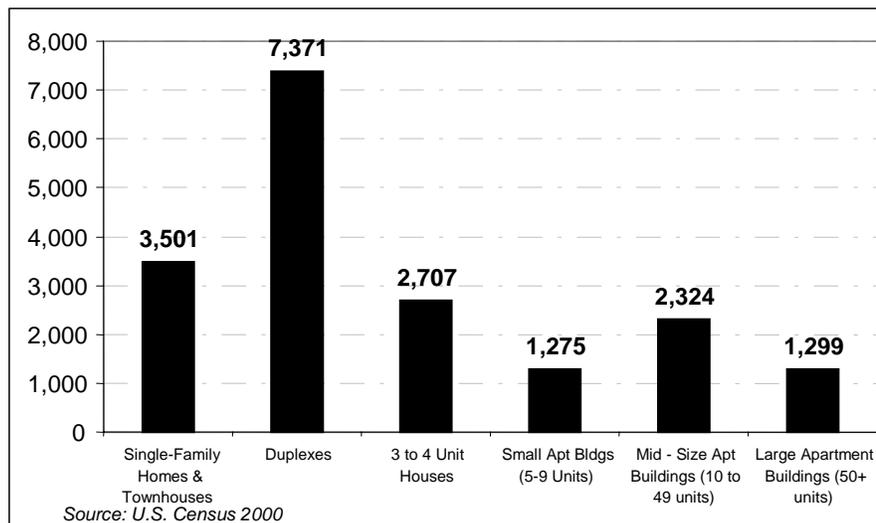
**Fig. 10: Where Newton Homeowners Live, 2000**



## Renters and rental housing

The City of Newton has approximately 18,477 residents living in rental housing. Forty percent of the City's renters live in two-family buildings and 19 percent live in single-family houses (see Fig. 13).

**Fig. 11: Where Newton Renters Live, 2000**



## Housing and land use in Newton

The majority of Newton's housing is on single-family lots that range in size from 5,000 square feet to more than an acre. The population density in Newton, currently at 4,600 persons per square mile (ppsm), is lower than its neighbors to the east, such as the City of Boston, with 12,000 people per square mile, Brookline (8,400 ppsm), and Watertown (7,900 ppsm). However, Newton's population density is higher than Needham (2,300 ppsm), Wellesley (2,500 ppsm) and Weston (600 ppsm), its neighbors to the west. The most densely populated areas in Newton are in the north, specifically in the Nonantum and Newton Corner neighborhoods. Newton village centers are not characterized by higher density residential development, including multi-family housing and townhouses.

In actuality, many of the existing large apartment buildings are located away from village centers in southern Newton in the Thompsonville, Upper Falls and Oak Hill Park neighborhoods. Recent land use studies have shown that very little of Newton's housing—approximately 1,100 units—lies within the City's 13 village centers.<sup>1</sup> Newton's village centers are currently characterized by their numerous one-story commercial buildings and locally oriented shops.

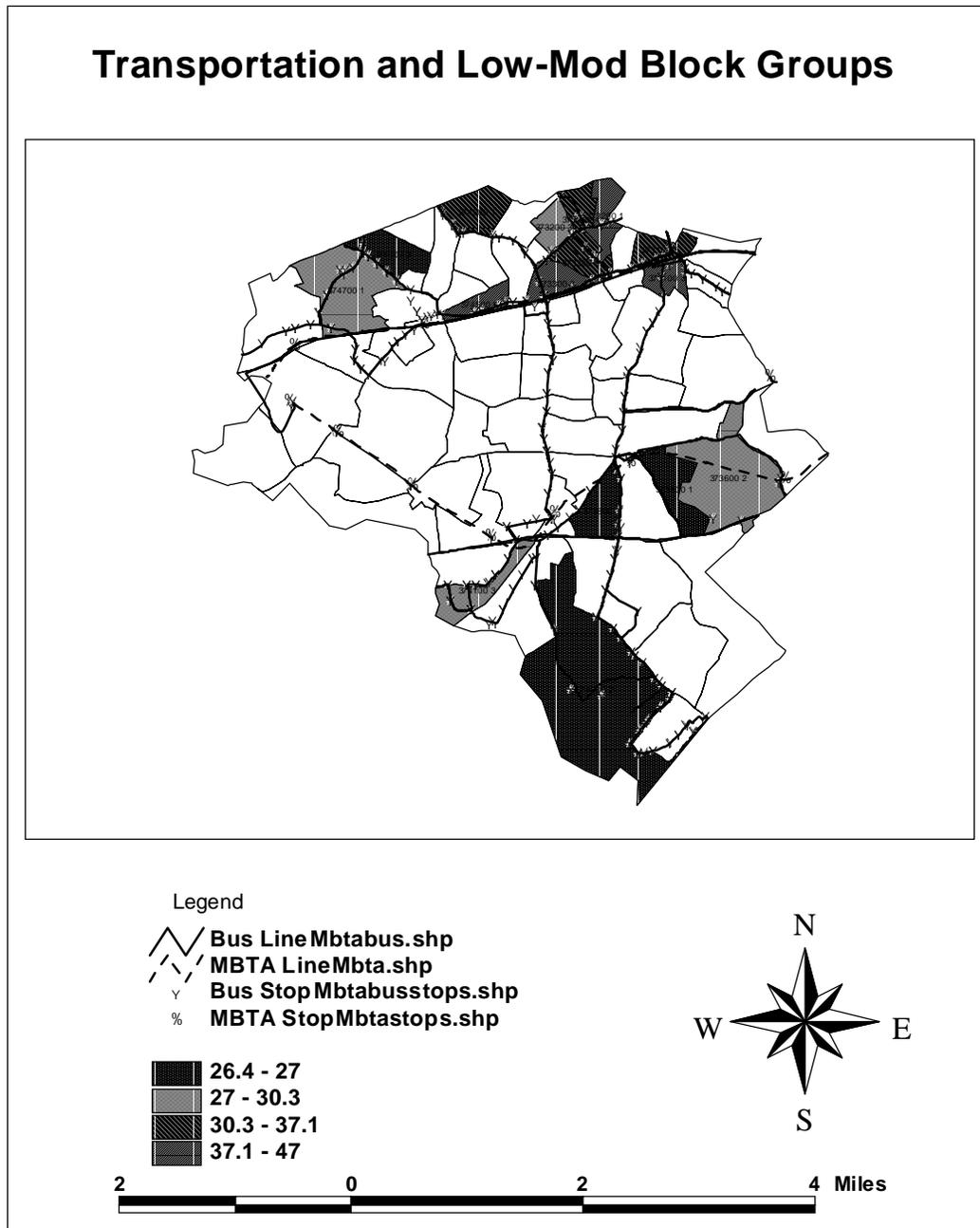
## Housing and public transit

According to the U.S. Census 2000, 5,445 individuals or 12.3 percent of Newton's workers 16 and older use public transportation to get to work. The City has a well-networked transportation infrastructure, including the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority's (MBTA) commuter rail, subway and bus service. All the low-to-moderate-income (LMI) block groups are served by

<sup>1</sup> Village centers were defined as areas zoned Business 1 or Business 2.

some form of public transportation. The commuter rail line to Boston is available from Auburndale, West Newton and Newtonville and is adjacent or within close proximity to 11 out of the 16 LMI block groups in the city. Portions of West Newton and Newtonville are two of Newton's CDBG target neighborhoods. The MBTA Green Line subway service has six stops from Riverside to Chestnut Hill and goes through four block groups. MBTA bus service is closely available to most of the LMI block group locations.

**Map 3: Transportation and Low- and Moderate-Income Block Groups**



## Overall conditions of the housing stock

According to the U.S. Census 2000, there are 32,112 total housing units in the City. Fifty-five percent or 17,808 of the units are single-family properties. Two-family properties comprise the next highest percentage of units (18 percent or 5,887 units).

The majority of Newton's housing stock was built before 1950, and a large number of buildings were constructed prior to 1900. The newest housing is located in areas away from the village centers. The largest concentration of housing built after 1950 is in the Oak Hill neighborhood in south Newton. Many of these houses were built in the post World War II housing boom and have since been updated, renovated, expanded or torn down and replaced by subsequent owners.

In July 2004, the City's Assessing Department ranked the exterior condition of 24,313 parcels—3,631 condominium parcels and 20,682 one-, two- and three-family parcels<sup>2</sup>—from poor to excellent condition. Eighty-three percent or 20,096 parcels were considered to be in average condition. Twelve percent of the parcels were considered to be in good condition, and only 1.4 percent was considered to be in excellent condition. Another 3.6 percent (873) of the parcels were considered in poor to fair condition.

The exterior condition of the Newton Housing Authority's (NHA) 68 parcels is listed separately in the assessor's database. Eighty-two percent of the Housing Authority's parcels are listed in good to excellent condition. Since 1992, the Housing Authority has spent more than \$5 million modernizing its four federally-subsidized developments—the Parker House, Jackson Gardens, Horace Mann Apartments and Norumbega Gardens—consisting of 226 total units. The modernization effort, which is ongoing, includes such work as replacing heating systems, kitchens and windows, and upgrading bathrooms to improve operations and the living environments of the low-income residents. The common areas of the senior and disabled housing developments in the Housing Authority's portfolio<sup>3</sup> are all accessible for people with disabilities. In addition, a total of 34 individual units are accessible for people with disabilities.

## Lead-based paint hazards

Approximately 91 percent of the housing units in the City were constructed prior to 1978 according to the U.S. Census 2000. The federal government banned the use of lead-based paint for consumer use in 1978. Consequently, most residential properties constructed prior to 1978 contain lead paint. Lead-based paint has been proven to be hazardous particularly to children under age six who may ingest it or breathe dust that contains lead. Lead poisoning can cause permanent damage to the brain and other organs in young children and can result in learning and behavioral problems.

According to information from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the incidence rate of blood lead levels in children in Newton has decreased in all blood lead level categories (moderately-elevated, elevated and lead poisoned). Most significantly, incidence rate levels from FY99 to FY03, which is the most current data available, show that the number of children confirmed for the first time with moderately-elevated blood lead levels decreased from ten to

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Assessor's data is collected as individual parcels. For the purposes of this needs assessment, a parcel may be considered synonymous with a residential building.

<sup>3</sup> Centenary Village, Echo Ridge, Hamilton Grove, Horace Mann, Parker House, Jackson Gardens, Norumbega Gardens, Nonantum Village Apartments and New Hyde Apartments

three percent, and the number of children confirmed for the first time with elevated blood lead levels decreased from five to one. The number of lead-poisoned children decreased from two to zero. By comparison, there were 23 communities in Massachusetts determined to be “high risk” for incidences of lead paint poisoning by the Department of Public Health in data collected from July 1, 1996 through June 30, 2001. Statewide, there were 2,713 cases of children with elevated blood lead levels during this period. Seventy-three percent or 1,985 cases were from a high-risk community.

The City does not have an inventory of housing units with lead-based paint hazards occupied by low- to moderate-income households. However, U.S. Census 2000 information reports that 6,980 of the total number of households in Newton are occupied by low- and moderate-income households. Since 91 percent of the total housing units in Newton were constructed prior to 1978, it is reasonable to assume that a high number of units occupied by low- and moderate-income households may have lead paint. In addition, the City does not maintain an inventory of environmental hazards that may impact the health and safety of low- and moderate-income households. However, in the 2004 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), Housing and Community Development Division staff reported that it remediated hazards such as lead-based paint, asbestos, oil spills and sewage leakages for 38 households.

**Fig. 12: Newton Childhood Lead Poisoning Incidences<sup>4</sup>**

POPULATION/INCIDENCE RATES	FY99	FY03
Children population (9-48 mos.)	2,825	2,932
Children (9-48 mos.) screened	2,524	2,382
Percentage	89 percent	81 percent
Children population (6-72 mos.)	4,633	5,026
Children population (6-72 mos.) screened	3,044	2,686
Percentage	66 percent	53 percent
BLL 15-19	5	2
BLL 20-24	3	1
BLL > = 25	2	0
Total > = 15	10	3
Total > = 20	5	1
Incidence Rate x 1000 children > 20	1.6	0.4
Percent housing built before 1950 according to the U.S. Census 1990, 2000	68 percent	65 percent

Incidence of blood lead levels (BLL)

BLL 15-19 Moderately-elevated

BLL 20-24 Elevated

BLL > = 25 Lead poisoned

BLL > = 15 Number of children confirmed for the first time with blood lead levels > = 15 mcg/dl

BLL > = 20 Number of children confirmed for the first time with blood lead levels > = 20 mcg/dl

The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund (NHRF), administered by the Housing and Community Development Division of the Planning and Development Department and funded through the

<sup>4</sup> Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Childhood Lead Poisoning Screening and Incidence Statistics by Community Fiscal Year 1999 and 2003.

CDBG program, provides federal funds for housing rehabilitation, including the remediation of lead paint. The Lead Paint/Asbestos Hazard Abatement program provides grants of up to \$15,000 per unit to remove lead paint and other environmental hazards for low- and moderate-income households. Direct or deferred payment loans at one percent interest are also available for projects that exceed the \$15,000 per unit threshold. The Small Grant Program for residents who are at least 62 years old and/or have a physical disability can provide up to \$15,000 per household to address lead paint hazards. The assistance is in the form of a grant and is not repaid by the homeowner.

Following the submission of the last Consolidated Plan in 2000, the federal government made the implementation of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 (or "Title X") mandatory. Prior to 2000, federally-assisted housing projects in Massachusetts had to meet state lead paint requirements which were more stringent than the existing federal regulations but only applied to households with children under seven. Title X broadens the definition of lead-based paint hazards and applies to virtually all assisted housing. The regulation outlines numerous protocols for remediating the presence of lead paint, including lead-contaminated dust, which is the principal cause of childhood exposure to lead. With the implementation of Title X, nine out of ten NHRF cases now include some lead paint procedure. Because NHRF funds are not limited to a specific neighborhood or target area, there is an opportunity to remediate or abate lead-based paint hazards on a citywide basis.

**Section 2: Overview of Newton’s Housing Market**

The housing market in the Boston MSA remains strong. According to the National Association of REALTORS quarterly report on median sales prices of existing single-family homes for metropolitan areas, median sales prices in the Boston metropolitan area increased by 9.4 percent between fourth quarter 2003 and fourth quarter 2004. The inventory of lower-priced, entry-level housing stock remains limited throughout the region.

Newton’s residential markets share the strength of the region. Historically, Newton has been an affluent suburb, and its housing values have been and continue to be higher than average for the Boston MSA. The median sales price of a single-family home in Newton in 2003 was \$637,750, and the median sales price in 2004 was \$691,400. The median sales price of a condominium in Newton in 2003 was \$430,000 and \$426,000 in 2004. In March 2005, the median sales price of a single-family home in Newton had risen to \$775,780.

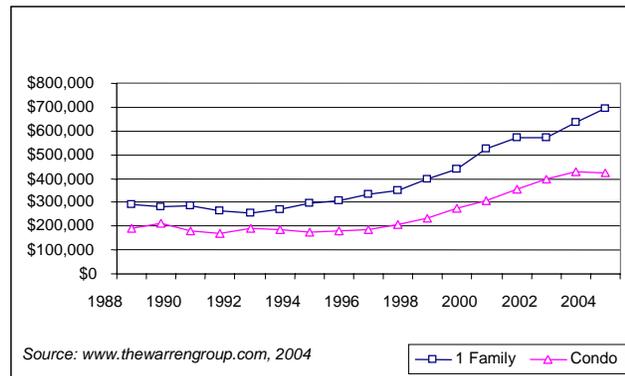
**Fig. 13: Median Single-Family Home Sales Prices, 2004**

TOWN/CITY	MEDIAN SALES PRICE
Waltham	\$397,450
Brighton	\$442,500
Watertown	\$450,000
Newton	\$691,400
Brookline	\$975,000
Weston	\$1,202,500

### Market trends: sales prices

The median sales prices of single-family homes and condominiums in Newton have increased rapidly in the last five years. From 1998 to 2004, median single-family sales prices in Newton increased by approximately 74 percent, from \$397,000 to \$691,400. Condominium prices rose by 83 percent, from \$233,000 to \$426,000 during this same period (see Fig. 17).

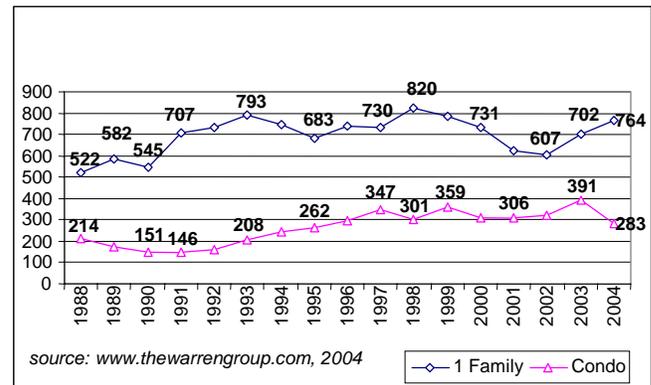
**Fig. 14: Median Sales Prices, Newton 1988-2004**



### Sales volumes

As nationwide home sales set new records for volume in 2004, sales volumes for single-family houses in Newton have remained steady, with an average of 723 sales per year for the past ten years. Newton had a peak sales volume of 820 houses in 1996 and a recent low of 607 homes sold in 2002 (see Fig. 18).

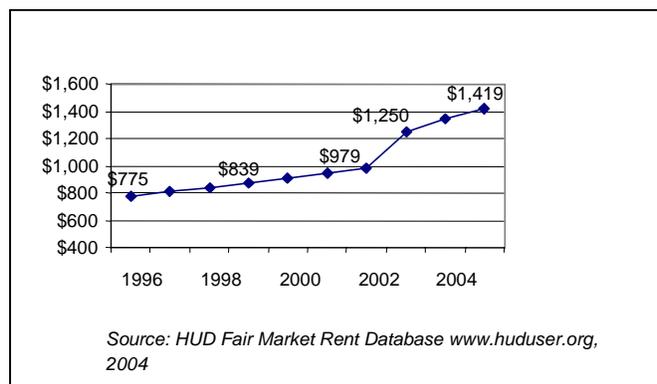
**Fig. 15: Number of Sales in Newton, 1988-2004**



Although single-family home sales have remained stable, condominium sales have increased steadily at an average increase of approximately five percent per year since 1988. From 2002 to 2003, condominium sales increased by 22 percent, the largest increase since 1993, before dropping off slightly in 2004.

### Rental prices

**Fig. 16: Boston MSA Fair Market Rents, 1995-2004**



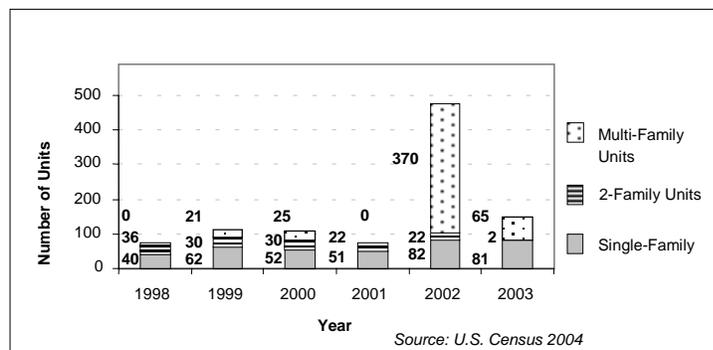
Fair market rents are an estimate of gross housing costs (cost of shelter plus utilities except telephone) and are the level below which 40 percent of the rental units on the market are rented. Over the past five years, from 1999 to 2004, HUD-designated fair market rents in the Boston MSA increased by 57 percent, from \$906 to \$1,419. This amounts to an average annual increase of more than nine percent per year. Recent low interest rates have softened the rental markets slightly. However, market forecasts for higher interest rates and increases in the number of households have led to projections for a rebound in this sector.

### Vacancy rates

Newton has low vacancy rates compared to the region. According to the U.S. Census 1990, Newton had a 3.5 percent vacancy rate, while the Boston MSA had a vacancy rate of 6.4 percent. In 2000, the total vacancy rate for Newton was 2.8 percent, while the overall vacancy rate for the Boston MSA was 3.9 percent. Vacancy rates for Newton have consistently been lower than the Boston MSA, and as a result, have decreased less dramatically than regional vacancy rates from 1990 to 2000.

### Construction trends

**Fig. 17: Building Permits Issued in Newton, 1998-2003**



Although more than half of Newton's housing units are single-family homes, construction trends continue to create additional units in other types of housing.

Recent trends, illustrated in Fig. 20, show that single-family homes comprise slightly more than half of all building permits for new construction. However, in certain years, a small number of multi-family housing

developments added a large number of housing units.

According to the U.S. Census, the number of housing units in Newton has increased by approximately five percent every ten years since 1960, at an average rate of approximately 150 additional units of housing per year. From 1990 to 2000, while the overall housing stock increased by 1,615 units (five percent), less than one-fourth of these units were new single-family homes. According to the Census, the number of detached single-family homes in Newton increased by only 373 units (2 percent) during this period, at an average rate of 37 single-family houses constructed per year.

Building permit data (see Fig. 20) however, shows average annual issuance of approximately 40 to 80 building permits for new single-family homes. The gap between permits issued and new units recorded in the Census supports the finding that a number of new, single-family residences are replacing existing dwellings and are not increasing the housing stock. In addition, land dedicated to single-family homes is becoming increasingly scarce. Historical data from the City assessor shows that the number of single-family home parcels increased by only 30 from 1990 to 2000.

## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Section 1: Overview of Newton's Population and Households

Newton's population in 2000 was 83,829 and included 31,201 households<sup>1</sup>, two-thirds of which (20,485) were families<sup>2</sup>. The size and composition of Newton's households and families is similar to that of the surrounding Boston metropolitan area and the Massachusetts average. The average household size in Newton is 2.51, which equals the average household size for the state, and is only slightly higher than the average household size of 2.48 for the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)<sup>3</sup>. Approximately 31 percent of Newton families have children under the age of 18, which is comparable to the overall average of 29.2 percent of Boston MSA families with children.

**Fig. 18: Comparative Population Statistics, 2000**

	NEWTON	BOSTON MSA	MASSACHUSETTS
Population	83,829	3,406,829	6,349,097
Households	31,201	1,323,487	2,443,580
Families	20,485	824,145	1,576,696
Average Household Size	2.51	2.48	2.51
Percent Family Households	65.7 percent	62.3 percent	63.5 percent
Households w/ Children <18	9,696	386,663	748,865
Percent Households w/ Children <18	31.1 percent	29.2 percent	30.6 percent

Source: U.S. Census 2000

#### Population by age and growth trends

Newton's population has changed very little in the past ten years, increasing by only 1.5 percent, while the population of Massachusetts increased 5.5 percent during the same time period. Like Massachusetts, Newton's population increase is largely the result of an increase in the number of children under the age of 18, which has grown 16.3 percent and now comprises 21.2 percent of the city's total population. Compared to the population of the Boston region and the state, Newton's population distribution is somewhat older, but with a similar percentage of children under 18. Newton's median age is 38.7, older than the Massachusetts' median age of 36.5 years and the Boston MSA median of 36.3 years.

<sup>1</sup> A household includes all the persons, related or unrelated, who share a single housing unit.

<sup>2</sup> A family is defined as two or more persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption.

<sup>3</sup> A Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is defined by the federal Office of Management and Budget as "A Core Based Statistical Area associated with at least one urbanized area that has a population of at least 50,000. The Metropolitan Statistical Area comprises the central county or counties containing the core, plus adjacent outlying counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the central county as measured through commuting."

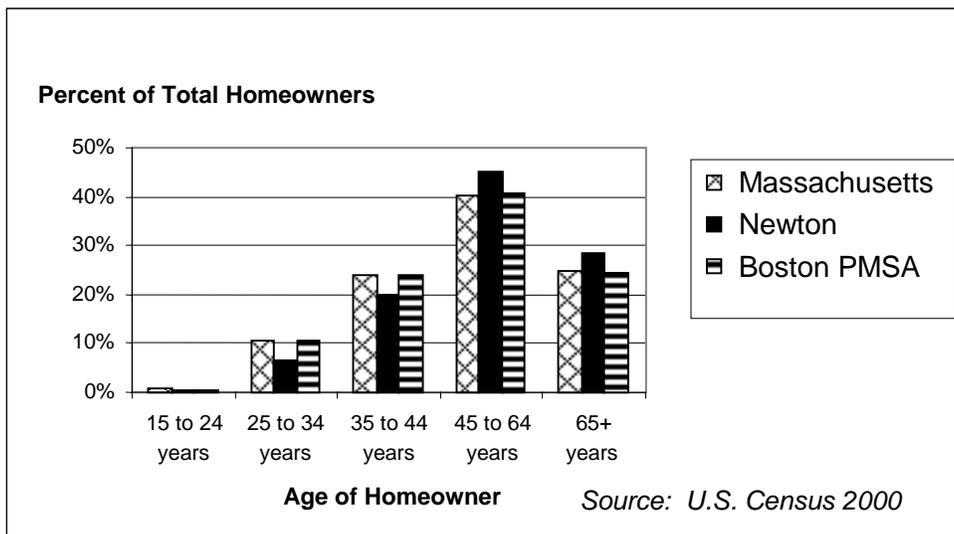
**Fig. 19: Population Composition and Change: Newton vs. Massachusetts, 1990—2000**

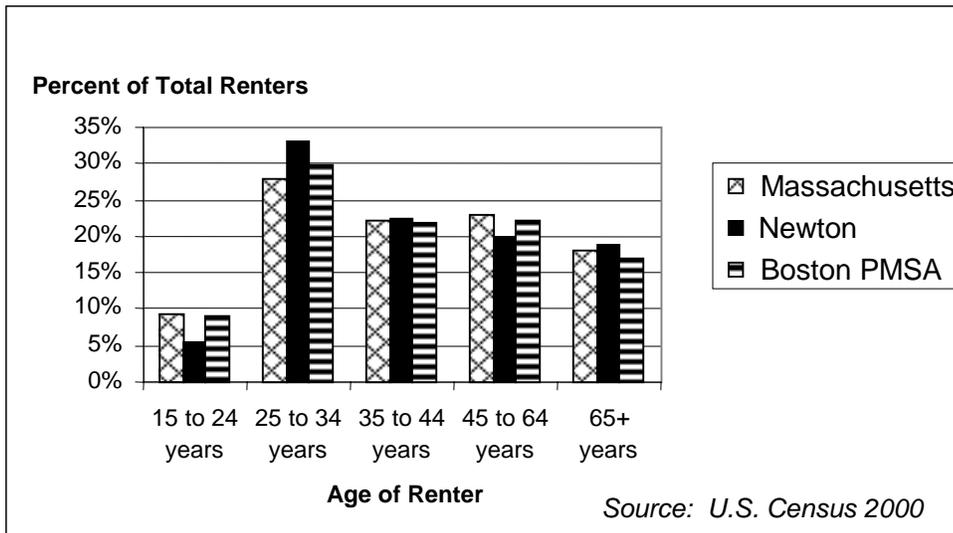
	1990	2000	PERCENT CHANGE
Total population			
Newton	82,585	83,829	1.5 percent
Massachusetts	6,016,425	6,349,097	5.5 percent
Population under age 18			
Newton	15,310	17,811	16.3 percent
Massachusetts	1,353,075	1,500,064	10.9 percent
Population over age 62			
Newton	14,560	14,549	0.0 percent
Massachusetts	977,276	997,277	2.0 percent

Data suggests that the comparatively older population of Newton may be a direct result of the city's high housing prices. For homeowners, data suggests that a scarcity of starter homes has limited the number of younger homeowners aged 25 to 34 and even 35 to 44 years old, skewing the population of homeowners to older adults and the elderly (see Fig. 20).

As shown in Fig. 20 below, homeowners aged 45 and older comprise a higher percentage of homeowners in Newton than in Boston and the state as a whole. In addition, homeowners aged 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 comprise a much lower percentage of the total number of homeowners in Newton. This suggests that older, higher-income homeowners over 45 years old have displaced potential homeowners aged 25 to 34 and 35 to 44. These younger, prospective homeowners, especially those 25 to 34 years old, choose to rent in Newton and thereby comprise a higher percentage of renters than is average for the Boston area or the state. Higher numbers of renters aged 25 to 34 increases the demand for rental housing, and it also appears to result in the displacement of younger renters under 24 years old, who comprise a much lower percent of renters in Newton than is average for the Boston area or the state.

**Figs. 20 and 21: Newton Homeowners and Renters by Age**

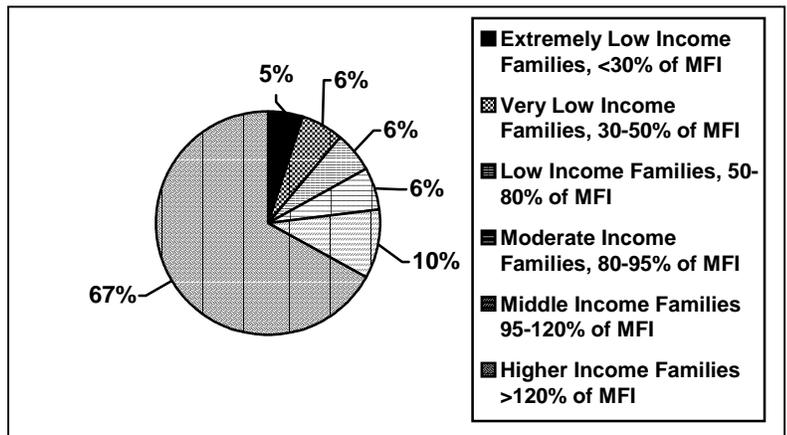




Local incomes

Newton’s labor force earns a much higher income than that in the surrounding Boston MSA. While the U.S. Census 2000 median family income (MFI) for the Boston MSA was \$68,341, the median family income for Newton families was more than 54 percent higher at \$105,289. As a relatively affluent community, approximately two-thirds of Newton’s families earn more than 120 percent of the median family income for the Boston MSA.

Fig. 22: Families in Newton by Income Level



Incomes for Newton residents have also been rising faster than incomes throughout the Boston MSA. The Newton MFI increased 50 percent from 1989 to 1999, while the MFI for the Boston MSA increased by only 39 percent.

Income growth and housing

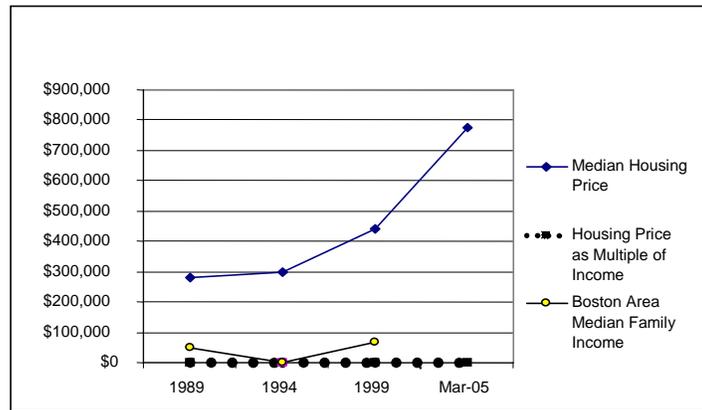
Though family incomes in Newton have increased, local housing prices have increased even more quickly. In 1999, the median price of a single-family home in Newton was \$439,625, which was 6.4 times the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Boston area MFI of \$68,772. From January to March 2005, the median single-family home sales price in Newton was \$775,780, 9.4 times the current HUD MFI of \$82,600.

Fig. 23: Income Growth, 1989-1999

	NEWTON CITY	BOSTON MSA
Median family income, 1989	\$70,071	\$49,266
Median family income, 1999	\$105,289	\$68,772
Percent increase, 1989-1999	50 percent	39 percent

Source: U.S. Census 2000

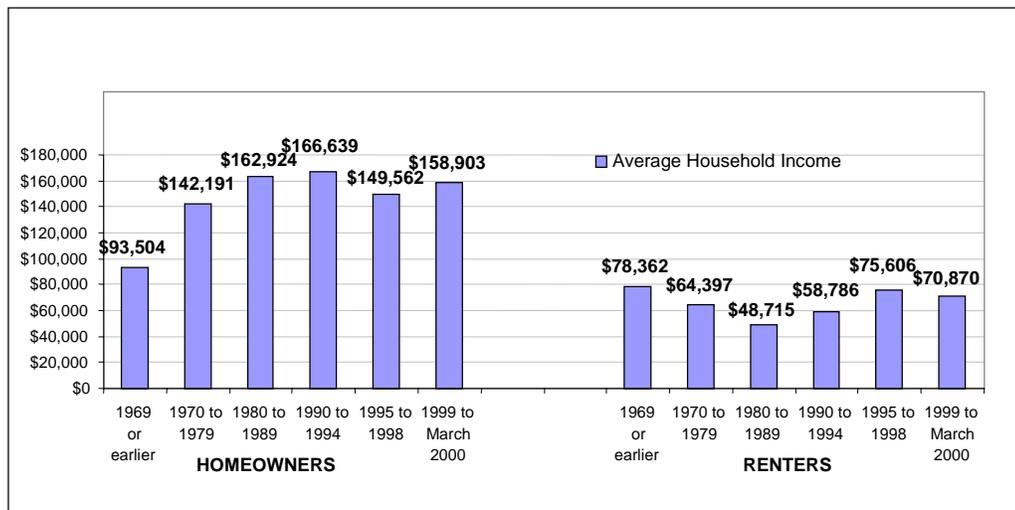
**Fig. 24: Median Family Incomes and Housing Prices**



**Fig. 25: Newton Housing Prices and Area Income Levels, 1989-2004**

YEAR	BOSTON AREA MFI	MEDIAN HOUSING PRICE	HOUSING PRICE AS MULTIPLE OF INCOME
1989	\$49,266	\$279,450	5.7
1994	\$51,300	\$296,500	5.8
1999	\$68,722	\$439,625	6.4
March 2005	\$82,600	\$775,780	9.4

**Fig. 26: Average Income of Newton Households by Year Moved Into Home, 2000**



## Section 2: Overview of Newton’s Extremely Low-, Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Populations

*What defines a household as being extremely low-, low- or moderate-income?*

HUD categorizes lower-income households into categories: very low- income (HOME program only), low-income (CDBG and HOME programs), and moderate-income (CDBG program only). The following table (Fig. 27) provides information on the definitions of the various low-income categories for all the Newton housing programs, including CDBG and HOME<sup>4</sup>.

**Fig. 27: Newton Housing Income Eligibility Categories**

2000 Household Income as Percent of Area Median Income													
	<10%	10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-95	100	100-110	110-120
CDBG	Low-Income					Moderate-Income							
HOME	Very Low-Income					Low-Income							
CPF <sup>5</sup>	Low-Income					Moderate-Income			Middle-Income				
IZO <sup>6</sup>	Low-Income					Moderate-Income			Middle-Income				

<10% - 30% AMI = \$24,780 for a family of four  
 31% - 50% AMI = up to \$41,350 for family of four  
 51% - 80% AMI = up to \$66,150 for a family of four  
 81% - 100% AMI = up to \$82,600 for a family of four  
 81% - 120% AMI = up to \$99,120 for an family of four

The current Boston MSA median family income is \$82,600. Accordingly, extremely low-income households earn up to \$24,780; low-income households earn up to \$41,300; and moderate-income households earn up to \$66,080.

The MFI for the Boston MSA should not be confused with the median family income for the City of Newton, which is significantly higher at \$105,289. The Boston MSA is an area that includes Newton, as well as the City of Boston and a number of other communities, and is determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. HUD uses the median family income of metropolitan areas, rather than individual cities and towns, to identify extremely low-, low- and moderate-income households eligible to participate in state and federal housing assistance programs.

<sup>4</sup> The Consolidated Plan regulations define extremely low-income households as those that earn from zero to 30 percent of the median family income for the surrounding MSA.

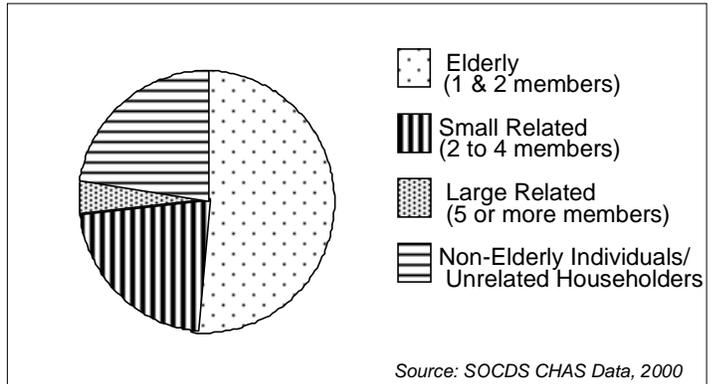
<sup>5</sup> Community Preservation Funds

<sup>6</sup> Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance

*Who are Newton's LMI households?*

**Fig. 28: Newton's LMI Family Households by Family Type**

As of 2000, Newton had approximately 2,517 extremely low-income, 1,885 low-income and 2,578 moderate-income households, for a total of 6,980 lower-income households. Fifty-two percent (3,584) are elderly households, which are defined as households headed by a person over 62 years of age. Twenty-two percent (1,542) of lower-income households are small, non-elderly households of two to four persons, and four percent, or 100 households, are large households of five or more persons (see Fig. 28). Half of Newton's lower-income households are renters (3,573), and the other half are homeowners (3,407).



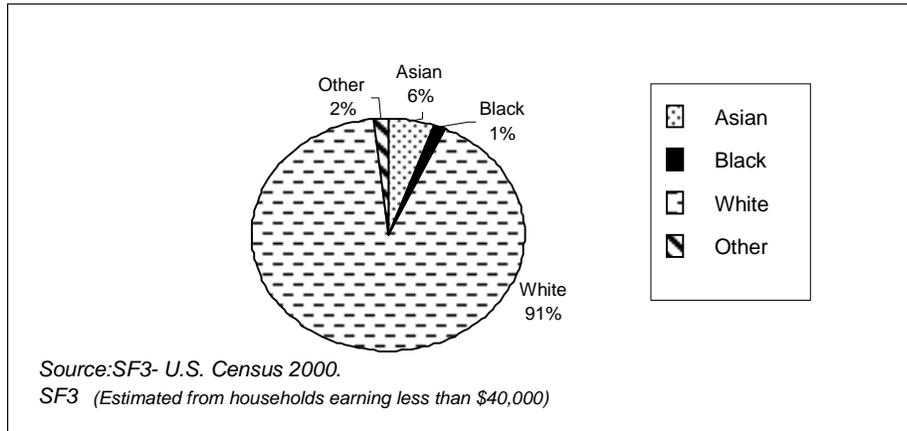
Extremely low-, low- and moderate-income households by race and ethnicity

Newton's lower-income population maintains a distribution similar to that of the overall population relative to race, and there are no areas of minority concentration (see Fig. 29). While White households comprise 92 percent of the total number of households in Newton, they also comprise 91 percent of the lower-income households in Newton. Similarly, the breakdown of lower-income households by ethnicity mirrors the overall ethnic distribution in the city (90.5 percent White, non-Hispanic households relative to an overall distribution of 91 percent such households in Newton (see Figs. 30 and 31 on the following page).

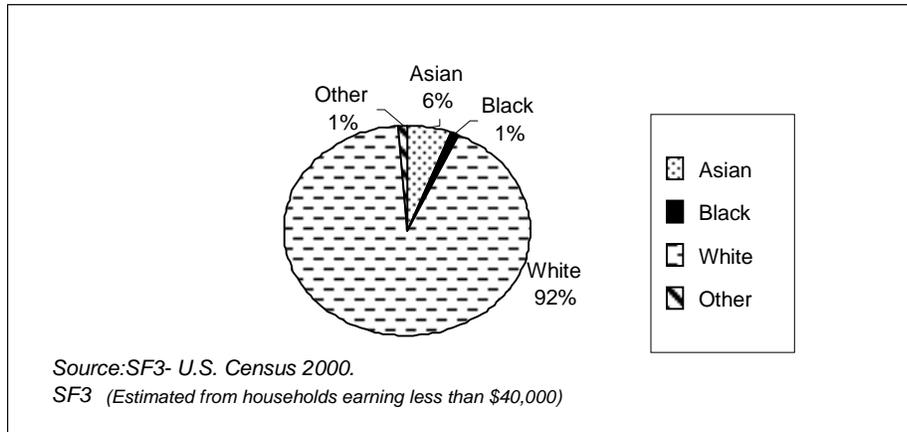
**Fig. 29: Newton Households by Income and Ethnicity, 2000**

ETHNICITY OF HOUSEHOLDER	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF TOTAL	LMI HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF LMI HOUSEHOLDS
White, Non-Hispanic	28,365	92.0 percent	6,257	90.5 percent
Hispanic	461	1.5 percent	99	1.5 percent
Non-White, Non-Hispanic	2,395	7.5 percent	573	8.0 percent

**Fig. 30: Newton's Total Households by Race**



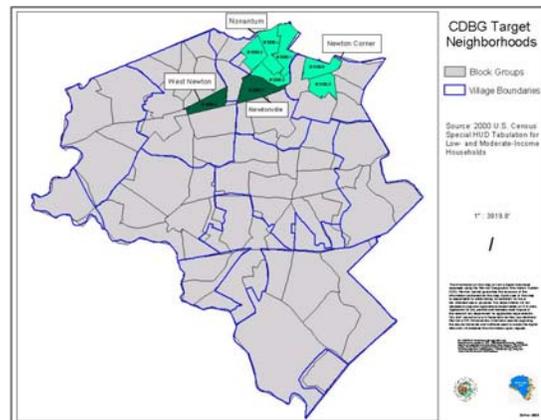
**Fig. 31: Newton's LMI Households by Race**



Where do Newton's lower-income households live?

Half of Newton's lower-income households live in rental housing (3,573), and the other half are homeowners (3,407). Lower-income households are distributed throughout the City, and the U.S. Census 2000 reported that Newton had no census tracts with a majority of LMI residents. There are four areas of Newton with relatively high concentrations of low- and moderate- income households that are designated as CDBG target neighborhoods by the city (Map 3).

**Map 4: Newton's CDBG Target Neighborhoods**



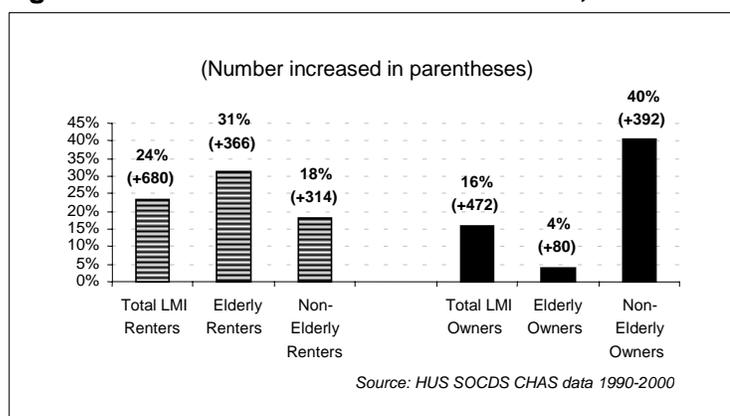
### How is Newton's lower-income population changing?

The number of households considered extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income in Newton is growing. Although the total number of households in Newton only increased six percent from 1990 to 2000, from 29,455 to 31,201, the total number of LMI households grew 17 percent, from 5,828 to 6,980.

As illustrated in Fig. 26, people recently moving into Newton have higher-than-average incomes, and therefore the increase in low- and moderate-income households is not considered to be among new households moving into the city. Rather, new low-income households are most likely longer-term households whose incomes have not increased to match inflation and rising living costs.

**Fig. 32: Percent Increases in LMI Families, 1990-2000**

As shown in Fig. 32, the increase in low- and moderate-income households has largely been an increase in non-elderly homeowners and elderly renters. The largest increase was among non-elderly lower-income homeowners, whose numbers increased by 40 percent, followed by a 31 percent increase in lower-income elderly renters. From 1990 to 2000, 392 non-elderly homeowners, 80 elderly homeowners, 360 elderly renters and 314 non-elderly renters moved into the ranks of those considered to be extremely low-, low- or moderate-income. Overall, the number of lower-income renters increased 24 percent, and the number of lower-income homeowners increased by 16 percent.



Overall, the number of lower-income renters increased 24 percent, and the number of lower-income homeowners increased by 16 percent.

## Section 3: Housing Opportunities in Newton by Population

### Housing Opportunities for LMI households

#### Market-based homeownership opportunities for LMI households

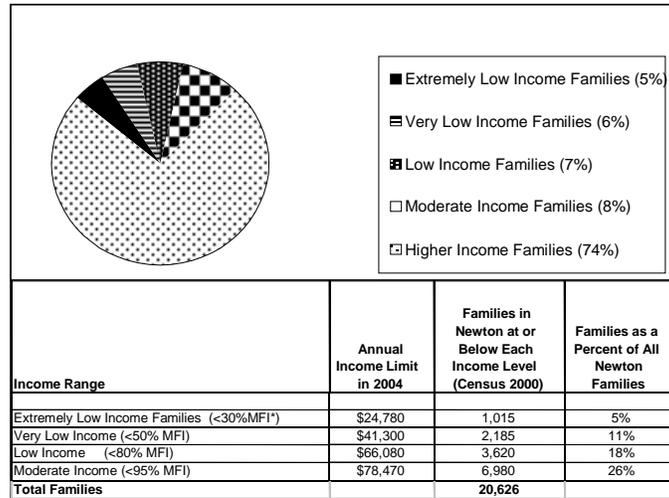
The local housing market in Newton does not provide sufficient housing opportunities for the city's low- and moderate-income households. In order for a median-income family of four earning \$82,600 to afford to buy a house in Newton priced at the March 2005 median sales price of \$775,780, the family would need to provide a down payment of approximately \$400,000.<sup>7</sup> A moderate-income family of four earning \$66,080 a year would need to provide a down payment of \$450,000 for such a house. Financial gaps such as these have left homeownership in Newton an option exclusive to the wealthy and one that is largely out of reach for people with lower incomes, such as renters, young families, first-time homebuyers and children of existing Newton homeowners.

<sup>7</sup> Century 21 Affordability Calculator assuming conventional, 30 year loan at 5.875 percent interest.

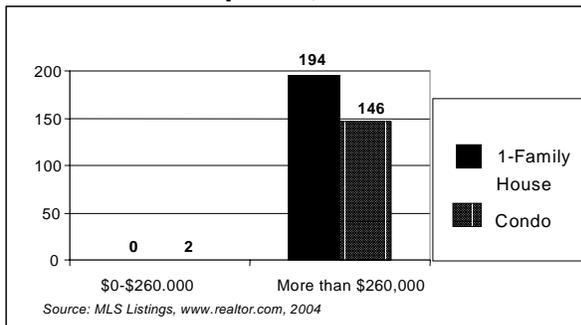
**Fig. 33: Newton Housing Market by Level of Affordability**

AFFORDABILITY LEVEL	HOUSING PRICE LEVEL	TOTAL AFFORDABLE HOMES AND CONDOS AVAILABLE	AFFORDABLE HOMES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL HOMES ON MARKET
Extremely low-income	Up to \$97,000	0	0.0%
Very low-income	Up to \$160,000	0	0.0%
Low-income	Up to \$260,000	2	0.6%
Moderate-income	Up to \$320,000	6	1.9%
<b>Total homes on market</b>		<b>313</b>	

**Fig. 34: Families in Newton by Income Level**



**Fig. 35: Availability of Affordable Newton Homes, April 20, 2005**



A snapshot of housing market listings (see Fig. 35) shows that the current housing market in Newton continues to provide housing that is only affordable to households with incomes well above the Boston MSA's median family income level. As of April 20, 2005, there were 340 houses and condominiums on the market in Newton. Only two of those units (both condominiums) were priced less than \$260,000, a price that would make them affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of the 2004 Boston MSA median family income of

\$66,080<sup>8</sup>. In fact, 130 of the 298 homes on the market had a price tag of more than \$1 million. While households earning less than 80 percent of MFI comprise approximately 22 percent of all Newton households, less than one percent of the houses on the market are within their reach. The lack of affordable homeownership opportunities for LMI households in Newton suggests a potential shift in the general character of the community and a need to improve housing opportunities for LMI households.

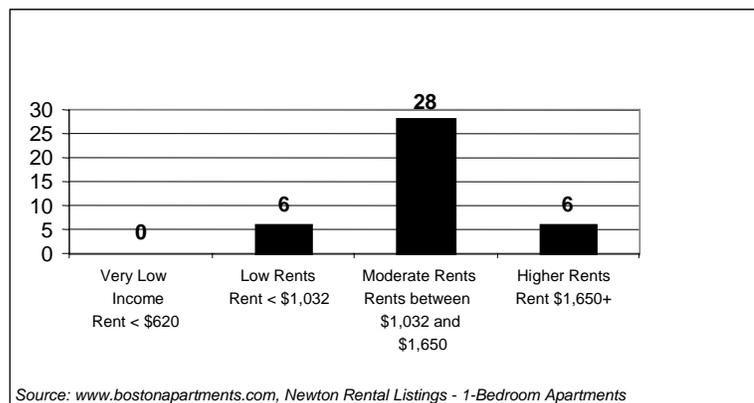
*How much housing is needed? (Scenario 1: If the market served LMI households)*

On average, approximately 1,026 homes, (723 single-family homes and 303 condominiums) are sold in Newton every year. Currently, 11 percent of all Newton homeowners are low- and moderate-income households. In order to maintain the current demographic distribution among homebuyers in Newton, 11 percent or 113 of the 1,026 homes sold per year would need to be affordable to LMI households. Currently, only 0.6 percent of homes or a projected six units per year are sold at an affordable price. This amounts to a shortage of approximately 107 homes per year that are affordable to LMI households. Over the five-year period covered by the Consolidated Plan, this amounts to a deficit of 535 affordable homeownership units.

*Market-based rental opportunities for LMI households*

**Fig. 36: Sample of Available One-Bedroom Rental Units by Affordability Level**

As stated previously, in the last five years, HUD-designated fair market rents in the Boston MSA have increased by 57 percent, rising from \$906 to \$1,419. Aggregated rent data from the Newton Assessing Department as of August 2004 shows reported Newton median rents ranging from \$913 for a studio to \$1,050 for a one-bedroom apartment to \$1,400 for two-bedroom apartment<sup>9</sup>.



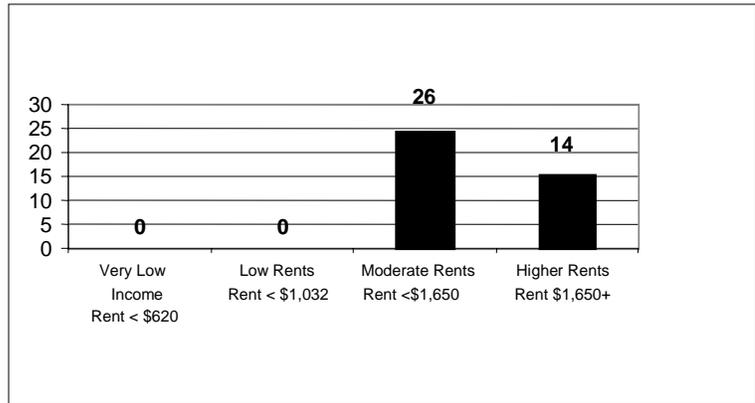
A random sample of 40 one-bedroom and 40 two-bedroom apartments advertised in August 2004 (see Figs. 36 and 37) shows advertised prices to be somewhat higher than reported by the Assessing Department. Advertised rental housing on the market in Newton is priced at levels affordable<sup>10</sup> to moderate-income residents earning up to \$66,080 but is largely unavailable to low-income residents earning less than \$41,300. The median rent advertised for one-bedroom apartments was \$1,300 a month, while two-bedroom apartments were priced at a median of \$1,500 a month. Six apartments, all one-bedrooms, were priced below \$1,032, which was the maximum price affordable to a low-income household.

<sup>8</sup> Maximum affordable housing price as determined by the affordability calculator at www.ginniema.gov. for a conventional 30-year loan at 5.875 percent interest and a 15 percent downpayment.

<sup>9</sup> Assessor's data for 2005 was not available at the time the document was submitted to HUD.

<sup>10</sup> Affordable rents were defined as those priced at or below 30 percent of a resident's income.

**Fig. 37: Sample of Available Two-Bedroom Rental Units by Affordability Level**



*How much rental housing is needed? (Scenario 2: If the rental markets served extremely low-income households)*

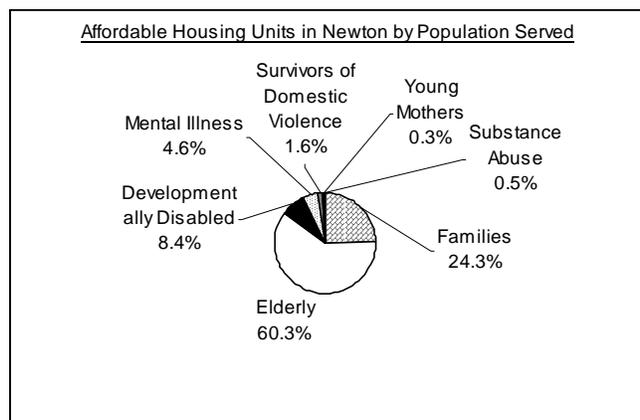
Currently, 1,604 households, or 17 percent of all Newton renters are considered extremely low-income. In order for the market to maintain this current demographic distribution among renters in Newton, 17 percent of the rental units, or approximately seven out of every 40 units rented, would need to be affordable to low-income households at rents below \$620 per month. This level is less than half of the fair market rent of \$1,419.

Of a sample of 40 units advertised for rent, none were priced at a level affordable to extremely low-income households. Though there are rental units in Newton that are not advertised on the market, the sample suggests that the market price of rental housing is too expensive for extremely low-income households.

*Below-market [subsidized] housing needs and opportunities*

The high price of market-rate housing in Newton creates an increased demand for below-market rental and homeownership opportunities for extremely low-, low- and moderate-income households. While there are 6,980 LMI households in Newton, the city's current inventory of affordable housing units is 1,472. All but 11 units, which are for homeownership, are for rental housing. There are also 35 transitional units for survivors of domestic violence, young mothers with children and women with or without children with substance abuse addictions. Four hundred and eighty-one units of these units are subsidized rental housing managed by the Newton Housing Authority. The NHA manages several large buildings, as well as houses secured with proceeds resulting from Newton's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO). Subsidized rental housing operated by nonprofit housing agencies or private sector landlords provides additional units.

**Fig. 38: Affordable Housing Units in Newton by Population Served**



### *Below-market units with expiring affordability restrictions (expiring-use units)*

According to the subsidized housing inventory generated by the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), 524 units, or slightly less than one-third of Newton's affordable housing inventory, have affordability restrictions attached to subsidized mortgages or HUD project-based rental assistance that expire. The majority of these units are owned by nonprofit affordable housing organizations that are expected to renew their affordability restrictions. However, two developments, Peirce House located at 88 Chestnut Street and New Falls Apartments located at 2281 Washington Street, are owned and managed by for-profit entities. The developments have Section 8 project-base rental assistance for a total of 70 affordable units (New Falls has 41 units and Peirce House has 29 units). The Section 8 contract for New Falls Apartments has been renewed annually since 2000. The Section 8 subsidies for the Peirce House units expire in April 2006.

### *Public housing in Newton*

The Newton Housing Authority has been the principal source of subsidized housing in the city since 1959, owning and managing 491 units, or 33 percent of all subsidized housing in Newton. The Housing Authority manages both federal and state subsidy programs that provide housing to individuals and families whose annual household income does not exceed 50 percent of area median income (AMI) and many times is much lower. The agency also administers the federal Section 8 Rental Subsidy Program that enables individuals and families to live in privately-owned and managed units. As of June 2004, the Housing Authority administered 441 Section 8 vouchers with a total monthly allocation of approximately \$500,000. Fifteen Section 8 vouchers were dedicated to victims of domestic violence, and 25 vouchers subsidized units for single homeless men with mental illness at the Newton YMCA.

The NHA is currently experiencing a high demand for both HUD- and state-sponsored housing units and Section 8 vouchers. Waiting lists at the Housing Authority alone include thousands of households. Due to the length of the waiting list for Section 8 vouchers, the application process is currently closed. The HUD-sponsored units for seniors, people with disabilities or income-eligible individuals have a three- to five-year waiting list. Waits for entry into state-sponsored senior and disabled units are also estimated to be three to five years, while waits for the approximately 90 family housing units are seven to ten years. Emergency priority families, who compose approximately ten percent of this waiting list, have an estimated five-year wait for housing.

Over the past 20 years, the Newton Housing Authority has observed a trend in the demographics of its client population. Housing Authority facilities accommodate a number of special populations including the elderly and individuals with physical and/or developmental disabilities. Due in part to the deinstitutionalization of people with mental illness and other disabilities in the 1980s and an aging population, the number of Housing Authority residents with mental illness who are residing in elderly housing developments is increasing. In response, the agency has continuous on-site support services and a successful Resident Services Outreach Program to enable residents to maintain their independence in their apartments. The NHA is also exploring partnerships with health care and social service providers that will allow these individuals to remain in their units but receive the specialized care they require.

The Housing Authority does not have medical information on its residents and cannot estimate, with any accuracy, the number of their residents who need or receive supportive services.

However, according to the Resident Services Coordinator,<sup>11</sup> Springwell, a nonprofit organization located in Watertown that provides programs and services for the elderly and their caregivers, and the state Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) both provide supportive services to Housing Authority residents. Springwell, formerly West Suburban Elder Services, provides assistance such as homemaking care, including the provision of meals and assistance with laundry and housekeeping, personal care which can include assistance with bathing and dressing, financial management, nutritional assistance, transportation and case management, among other services. Springwell provides supportive services to the residents at the Nonantum Village development located at 245 Watertown Street. Through the Care Connection program, Springwell provides a 20-hour a week on-site coordinator who meets with residents, assesses their needs and coordinates and monitors the delivery of support services. Depending on the needs of the individuals, services can include personal care (bathing, dressing, shopping and homemaking, among other activities), assistance with heavy chores, transportation, money management, nutritional services, etc.

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission is responsible for vocational rehabilitation services, community services and for eligibility determination for Supplemental Security Income/ Supplemental Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI) benefits programs for Massachusetts residents with disabilities. Although the number of residents assisted by the MRC is unknown, Springwell was providing services to 58 elderly residents as of July 2004. The Housing Authority does not know the number of residents who may be receiving privately paid supportive services.

Residents are involved in the operation and management of the Housing Authority through participation at monthly tenant organization meetings which are held at each development. One member of the five-member governing Board of Commissioners must be a Newton Housing Authority resident. In addition, both current Housing Authority residents and those on NHA waiting lists have also been targeted as potential clients of Newton's two first-time homebuyer programs and have been sent information about the program and the assistance available.

In 1991, the balance of the inclusionary zoning fund (\$40,472.30), was transferred to the Newton Housing Authority from the Newton Community Development Authority. Since the transfer of funds in 1991, the Housing Authority has received \$2,159,967.46 in cash payments in lieu of housing units as a result of the inclusionary zoning ordinance and has expended \$2,098,633.36 towards the creation of 62<sup>12</sup> units of affordable housing. The revised 15 percent IZO which was adopted in April 2003 and amended in December 2004 includes a provision allowing developers to provide a cash payment if the proposed development is six or fewer units. The payment is made to a housing development fund and then distributed to the Housing Authority and the City's Planning and Development Department for the development of additional affordable housing.

Over the last several years, the Housing Authority has established an important partnership with Habitat for Humanity. The two organizations are currently involved in a joint rental and homeownership project at a West Newton site adjacent to the Dolan Pond conservation area. The development is located at 76 Webster Park and includes the restoration of an existing building and the new construction of a duplex. The existing single-family building will be owned and managed by the Housing Authority and will provide one unit of rental housing. Habitat for Humanity will construct the duplex at the rear of the site and sell the two units to income-eligible

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<sup>11</sup> Conversation with Resident Services Coordinator, Mignonne Marchand on January 11, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Memo from Qui Chau, Newton Housing Authority, dated January 18, 2005.

homeowners. All three units will be deed restricted in perpetuity and will provide housing for households up to 80 percent of area median income.

### ***Housing needs of elderly and frail elderly persons***

Newton has 3,584 low- and moderate-income elderly households, representing approximately 52 percent of the total low- and moderate-income households in Newton. According to the U.S. Census 2000, Newton had a total of 3,866 elderly persons with at least one disability. Approximately 888 (60 percent) of the 1,472 affordable housing units are dedicated to the elderly.

There are a number of nonprofit organizations located in Newton and adjacent communities that provide housing and/ or supportive services to the elderly, including the Newton Housing Authority, the Newton Community Development Foundation, Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly, Springwell, Inc., Community Living Network, Inc., Committee to End Elder Homelessness and the Newton Council on Aging and Senior Center. There are two for-profit companies that provide elderly housing and management services in Newton: Benchmark Assisted Living, which owns and manages Evans Park at Newton Centre (formerly Heritage at Vernon Court) located at 430 Centre Street and The Falls at Cordingly Dam, located at 2300 Washington Street and Meredith Management Corporation, which owns and manages the Peirce House located at 88 Chestnut Street.

In 2005, CASCAP, a nonprofit housing development organization located in Cambridge recently completed a 35-unit rental development for income-eligible individuals and/or their spouses who are at least 62 years old. The Nonantum Village Place development, located at 239 Watertown Street, provides 34 units of affordable housing. Like other housing providers—the Newton Housing Authority and Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly, for example—CASCAP is partnering with Springwell, Inc. to provide supportive services to its residents. Cooperative Living of Newton, Inc. is currently in the process of rehabilitating 45 Pelham Street, a former nursing home, into ten units of rental housing for low- and very low-income elders. The \$2.8 million development is scheduled to be completed by fall 2005.

The types of supportive services that are available to the elderly and frail elderly in Newton include meals (home-delivered or at the Newton Senior Center lunch site), transportation, counseling, help with daily activities such as monitoring medications, bathing, and dressing, financial management, shopping, recreational/fitness and educational programming, etc. Through the Newton Health Department, residents of all ages, including the elderly, may visit a public health nurse at various locations throughout the City, including the Senior Center, City Hall and the Newton Free Library for monitoring and referrals.

The housing and supportive services needs of the elderly/frail elderly are similar to other special needs populations. Depending on their individual needs, elders may require occasional services—transportation to a medical appointment, for example—or a variety of interrelated services such as daily hot meals, counseling and ongoing case management related to mental health issues, etc.

The Newton Council on Aging and Senior Center estimates that the two greatest needs affecting seniors are the lack of adequate transportation services and the lack of an informational clearinghouse where both providers and seniors in need can access information

and referrals about the availability of services and programs.<sup>13</sup> For example, although transportation is available to Newton seniors, it is primarily limited to medical appointments and grocery shopping. There are a number of unmet transportation needs that service providers have identified, including transportation to hospitals to visit a sick spouse, attending worship services or shopping at a mall, all of which help ameliorate senior isolation and loneliness. In addition, lack of public transportation and linguistic barriers prevent some seniors from accessing needed services.

Although the exact number of elders that need housing and supportive services cannot be identified with any certainty, data from Springwell, Inc. helps to illuminate the degree of need. As of August 2004, Springwell, Inc. was providing medical escort services, money management assistance, volunteer shoppers, group adult foster care services, home care assistance and assistance through The Friendly Visitor Program to approximately 400 elders. At the time, there were 20 seniors on the waiting list for services. This statistic does not include the following: 233 seniors receive regional transportation services; 250 seniors receive home-delivered meals, 50-60 seniors receive a hot lunch at the Newton Senior Center, and 44 caregivers receive support services in caring for their elderly family member.

The Newton Senior Center provides services to 3,000 seniors on an annual basis. Through its Elder Grants Program, the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund averages approximately 80 grants or loans per year for repairs, rehabilitation and accessibility improvements to enable low-income and elderly homeowners with disabilities to age in place within their homes. However, the Newton Senior Center reports that one of the unmet needs of Newton seniors is the ability for non-income eligible residents to finance small- to medium-range home repairs and accessibility modifications.

**Fig. 39: Inventory of Housing Stock for the Elderly**

<b>PROVIDER</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>TOTAL/AFFORDABLE UNITS</b>
Barkan Management	New Falls Apartments 2881 Washington Street	60/41; 20 elderly
Benchmark Assisted Living	Evans Park at Newton Corner 430 Centre Street	115/23
Benchmark Assisted Living	The Falls at Cordingly Dam 2300 Washington Street	90/5
CASCAP, Inc.	Nonantum Village Place 239 Watertown Street	35/34
Community Living Network, Inc.	Pelham House 45 Pelham Street	10/10
Community Living Network, Inc.	CLN House 390 Newtonville Avenue	11/11
Jewish Community Development Foundation	Coleman House/Campus House 1, 11 677 Winchester Street	146/144
Jewish Community Development Foundation	Golda Meir House 1, 11 160 Stanton Avenue	199/176
Meredith Management	Peirce House 88 Chestnut Street	34/29

<sup>13</sup> Conversation with Jayne Colino, Director, Council on Aging and the Newton Senior Center, on January 18, 2005.

PROVIDER	ADDRESS	TOTAL/AFFORDABLE UNITS
National Development of New England	Cabot Park Village 280 Newtonville Avenue	100/20
Newton Community Development Foundation	Casselman House 195 Summer Street	43/43; 35 elderly; 8 younger disabled
Newton Community Development Foundation	Warren House 1600 Washington Street	59/21; 1 elderly
Newton Community Development Foundation	John W. Weeks House 7 Hereward Road	75/42; 32 elderly and disabled
Newton Housing Authority	Horace Mann Apartments 674-690 Watertown Street	73/73
Newton Housing Authority	Jackson Gardens 111 JFK Circle/Green Street	64/64
Newton Housing Authority	Norumbega Gardens 46 Ash Street/Auburn	57/57
Newton Housing Authority	Parker House 21 Parker Street	33/33
Newton Housing Authority	Chapter 667-4 scattered sites	5/5
Newton Housing Authority	Centenary Village 234 Central Street	12/12
Newton Housing Authority	Echo Ridge 76 Thurston Street	40/40; 36 elderly
Newton Housing Authority	Hamilton Grove 541 Grove Street	42/42
Newton Housing Authority	Nonantum Village 245 Watertown Street	42/42; 26 elderly
<b>Total number of affordable units for the elderly</b>		<b>888</b>

### ***Housing needs of persons with mental or physical disabilities***

Newton's low- and moderate-income population includes persons who require permanent housing with supportive services. Currently, Newton has a total of 203 units dedicated to individuals with disabilities, including developmental/physical disabilities and mental illness. The primary providers of affordable housing for this population include the Newton Housing Authority, Newton-Wellesley-Weston Committee for Community Living (NWW), Riverside Community Care, Advocates, Inc. and the West Suburban YMCA.

The type and scale of supportive services depends on the individuals being served. Most residents who live in housing developed with state and federal housing financing programs are on fixed incomes (the average income is \$600 a month) and depend on rental subsidies to maintain their housing status. According to Advocates, Inc., one of the principal providers of housing for individuals with mental disabilities in Newton, reductions in federal Section 8 rental subsidies and Fair Market Rents is dramatically altering the ability of providers to assist some of the most economically vulnerable populations in the community. The greatest housing need for

persons with disabilities is an ongoing subsidy source that will enable them to live in a permanent, affordable housing unit with the support services they require.

Like other populations requiring supportive services, individuals with mental and physical disabilities rely on life-skill training, including financial management, cooperative living assistance, medication management, social skill development, etc. Advocates, Inc. estimates that there may be up to 80 to 90 individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities in Newton, not including the elderly or children, who require housing and supportive services. This estimate includes the approximately 55 clients already under the care of Advocates, Inc. and also reflects individuals returning to the community from mental health institutions, which also make up a portion of Advocates, Inc.'s client population.

**Fig. 40: Housing Stock in Newton Available to People with Disabilities  
(Developmental/physical disabilities and mental illness)**

PROVIDER	ADDRESS	BEDS/UNITS
Advocates, Inc.	Alternative Homes, Nonantum Place	8 beds
Advocates, Inc.	Walnut Street House, Walnut Street	11 beds
Advocates, Inc.	Scattered site rental units	12 beds
Advocates, Inc.	West Street	5 beds
Barkan Management	New Falls, Washington Street	21 units
DARE Family Services	Mount Vernon Street House, Mount Vernon Street	7 beds
Horace Mann Educational Associates Residence	Washington Street	4 beds
Newton Community Development Foundation	Boylston Street House, Boylston Street	4 beds
Newton Community Development Foundation	Warren House, Washington Street	3 units
Newton Community Development Foundation	John W. Weeks House, Hereward Road	2 units
Newton Community Development Foundation	Casselmann House, Sumner Street	8 units
Newton Housing Authority	New Hyde School Apartments, Lincoln Street	14 units
Newton Housing Authority	Thurston Road	4 units
NWW	Beard House, Bontempo Road	4 beds
NWW	Coyne Road	6 beds

PROVIDER	ADDRESS	BEDS/UNITS
NWW	Grove Street	6 beds
NWW	Orchard Avenue	8 beds
NWW	School Street	2 beds
NWW	Juniper House, Newtonville Avenue	7 beds
NWW	Webster Street	6 beds
Riverside Community Care	Grove Street	4 beds
Riverside Community Care	Albemarle Road	5 beds
Riverside Community Care	Tremont Street	8 beds
Riverside Community Care	Osbourne Path	4 beds
Riverside Community Care	Ward Street	3 beds
Riverside Community Care	California Street	8 beds
West Suburban YMCA	Church Street	28 SROs
<b>Total units</b>		<b>203</b>

### ***Housing needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS***

According to the Massachusetts AIDS Surveillance County Report issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, there were 87 Newton residents who were living with HIV/AIDS as of October 1, 2004. In addition, the City of Waltham had 135 documented cases of people with HIV/AIDS, and the Town of Watertown had 56 cases. Currently, there is only one facility for persons with HIV/AIDS serving the 12-member WestMetro HOME Consortium, of which Newton is a member.

People living with AIDS/HIV have a continuum of needs depending on the status of their health and whether there are other issues such as substance abuse, mental illness, poverty, unemployment, etc. that compound the severity of their diagnosis. The Hurley House Recovery Home, located in Waltham, is the only treatment facility in the HOME Consortium that identifies men with HIV/AIDS as one of its target populations. The Hurley House, a substance abuse treatment center, provides long-term residential treatment (more than 30 days) for up to 20 individuals with co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders. Eligible clients include men with HIV/AIDS and men returning to the community from the criminal justice system that have substance abuse addictions.

In general, support services for people living with HIV/AIDS can include case management, transportation, mental health services, meal preparation and food assistance, adult day care

and drop-in centers, child care, support for family members and care providers and housing advocacy, among others.

### ***Housing needs of persons with alcohol or other drug addictions***

The severity of an individual's addiction and any contributing factors such as the lack of employment or mental health issues, for example, determine the type and need for housing and supportive services. Agencies such as the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, Brookline Health Department, Riverside Community Care, South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), Advocates, Inc. and the Hurley House Recovery Home all provide treatment programs related to drug and alcohol addictions. Several of these programs and a list of their services are highlighted below:

- Riverside Community Care, a nonprofit agency based in Dedham, provides a comprehensive range of programs, including mental health care, developmental and cognitive disability services, health and human services, and substance abuse treatment. Riverside's service area includes the five communities adjacent to Newton—Watertown, Waltham, Westin, Wellesley and Needham. Substance abuse counseling is available through Riverside's Adult Mental Health Services, and substance abuse prevention and counseling is provided through the agency's Child and Family Services. The Riverside Outpatient Center at Newton, located on Eldredge Street, provides outpatient counseling, medication services, intensive case management, linkages with community support services and substance abuse counseling.
- Advocates, Inc. provides treatment and counseling for dually-diagnosed clients with mental illness and substance abuse. Advocates offers both acute-care outpatient services and residential treatment (supportive housing) for actively using dually-diagnosed residents. One of Advocates' satellite counseling centers is located in Waltham, one of the WestMetro HOME Consortium communities.
- SMOC, located in Framingham, with clinics in Framingham and Marlboro, provides individual and group treatment, medication management and individual consultation services for individuals with addictions. The agency has a 23-bed facility which provides a medically supervised detoxification program for alcohol, heroin and cocaine addiction. A Relapse Prevention Manager works with the detoxification program to identify clients who are resistant to treatment but who access the detoxification program more than four times a year. SMOC also operates sober housing for single adults who are in the process of recovery. Sober houses are located in Framingham, Marlboro and Hudson. In addition, SMOC provides services at the Sage House, a congregate family facility, offering intensive six- to nine-month residential drug treatment for homeless families struggling with addiction and at the Serenity House, a six-month residential substance abuse program for women ages 18 and older.

## Section 4: Housing Cost Burdens for Newton’s Populations

### *Are Newton’s LMI households burdened by housing costs?*

More than two-thirds (67 percent) of all LMI households in Newton, approximately 4,600 households, are facing housing problems<sup>14</sup>. This means that they are either overly burdened by housing costs or living in inadequate housing conditions or both. In Newton, 97 percent of the LMI households with housing problems are experiencing cost burden from high housing costs. Fig. 41 underscores the high rates of cost burden faced by LMI households in Newton, where a total of 2,814 LMI households face the severe cost burden of paying more than half their incomes on housing.

Cost burden is slightly more prevalent among LMI homeowners as approximately 69 percent of them are cost burdened and almost half (48 percent) are severely cost burdened. LMI renters are also very likely to be cost burdened, with approximately 61 percent cost burdened, and a third (33 percent) severely cost burdened. Among renters, elderly renters are less likely to be cost burdened but just as likely to be severely cost burdened as non-elderly renters.

In total, non-elderly renters and owners are most likely to be cost burdened, and non-elderly LMI homeowners, a group comprised of 1,363 households, are especially likely to be cost burdened, with 80 percent reporting housing problems, 77 percent reporting cost burdens, and 61 percent reporting severe cost burdens.

**Fig. 41: Total Cost Burden for LMI Households, 2000**

	RENTERS			OWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Total Lower Income Households	3,573	1,540	2,033	3,407	2,044	1,363
Percent with housing problems	64 percent	56 percent	71 percent	70 percent	64 percent	80 percent
Percent with cost burden >30 percent	61 percent	55 percent	66 percent	69 percent	64 percent	77 percent
Percent with cost burden >50 percent	33 percent	34 percent	33 percent	48 percent	40 percent	61 percent

Source: SOCDs CHAS Data, 2000

### **Cost Burdens by Income Group and Family Type**

*Cost burdens for extremely low-income households (earning less than 30 percent of the median family income)*

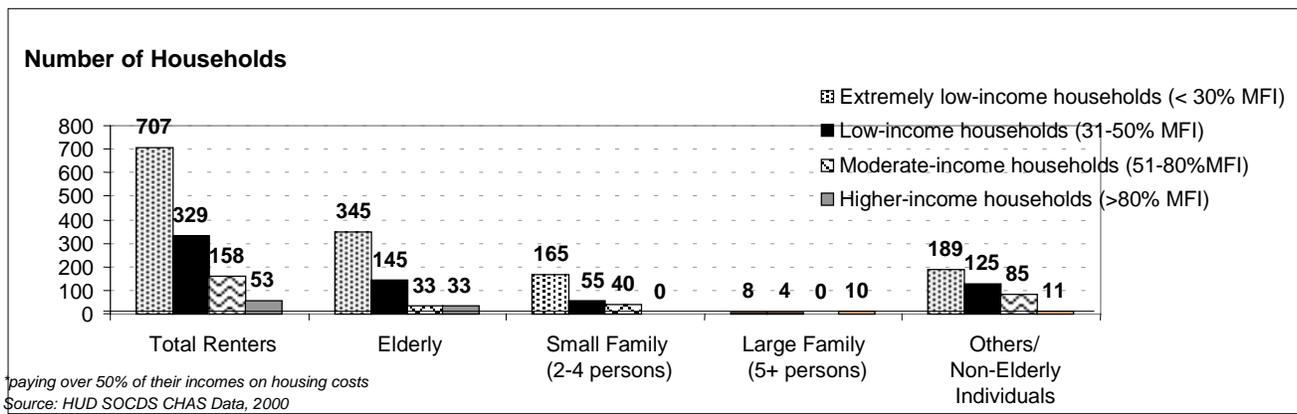
There are approximately 2,517 extremely low-income households in Newton who earned less than \$20,502 in 2000. Approximately two-thirds of them—1,604 households—are renters, while one-third of them—913 households—are homeowners. Extremely low-income households are

<sup>14</sup> Housing problems are considered to be cost burdens greater than 30 percent of income and/or overcrowding and/or not having complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

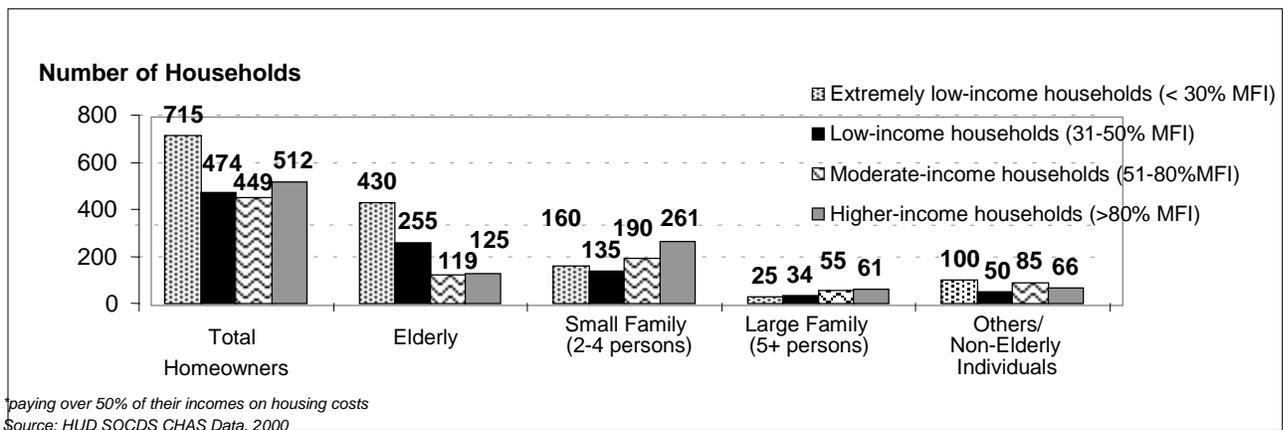
the most severely cost burdened, as 1,422 households, or 56 percent pay more than half of their incomes on housing costs.

Within the group of extremely low-income residents, housing problems are most prevalent among homeowners, especially those who are elderly. Eighty-nine percent of all extremely low-income homeowners and 92 percent of all elderly extremely low-income homeowners face housing problems, and 78 percent of all extremely low-income homeowners pay more than half their incomes on housing costs. Among renters, housing problems are slightly more prevalent in non-elderly renter households than elderly households, occurring at rates of 67 percent to 52 percent, respectively.

**Fig. 42: Total Number of Renter Households with Severe Cost Burden\* by Income and Family Type**



**Fig. 43: Total Number of Homeowner Households with Severe Cost Burdens\* by Income and Family Type**



**Low-income households (31-50 percent MFI)**

There are approximately 1,900 low-income households in Newton earning from 31 percent to 50 percent of the area median family income (\$20,502 to \$34,170). There are more low-income homeowners (1,094) than renters (791). More than three out of every four low-income households (77 percent), or 1,450 households, face housing problems. Severe cost burdens

are only slightly lower for low-income households than extremely low-income households, with 803 households paying more than half their incomes on housing.

Low-income homeowners are only slightly less cost burdened than renters, but low-income renters are the most frequently burdened group of renters in the city, with 78 percent experiencing housing problems as opposed to the rate of 59 percent for extremely low-income renters. This fact suggests that extremely low-income renters may be receiving more housing support services than low-income renters. Among both renters and homeowners, housing problems are slightly more prevalent in non-elderly households than in elderly households, at rates of 67 percent to 52 percent, respectively.

#### *Moderate-income households (51-80 percent MFI)*

There are approximately 2,600 moderate-income households in Newton earning from 51 percent to 80 percent of the area median family income in 2000 (\$34,170 to \$54,673). Approximately 55 percent of these households (1,400) are homeowners, and 45 percent (1,178) are renters. While overall rates of housing problems are similar between owners and renters, the number of moderate-income homeowners facing severe cost burden is much larger than the number of renters, with 449 moderate-income homeowners facing severe cost burdens and only 158 moderate-income renters facing similar severe cost burdens.

Unlike what occurs with extremely low-income homeowners, severe cost burdens for low- and moderate-income homeowners occurred more frequently in non-elderly households. For the moderate-income group, 75 percent of non-elderly homeowners face housing problems, and more than half (52 percent) pay more than half their incomes on housing costs. Only 34 percent of elderly moderate-income homeowners face any kind of housing problem, and only 16 percent paid more than half their incomes on housing costs.

#### *Elderly households*

There are approximately 3,584 extremely low-, low- and moderate-income elderly households in Newton. Elderly households of all income levels were one of the most frequently cost burdened and severely cost burdened households in Newton. This is most likely due to the high representation of elderly households within the extremely low-income group, a group identified as facing the most severe needs in Newton for both renters and homeowners. Though they account for approximately only one-quarter of the total households in Newton, elderly households comprised 59 percent of the City's extremely low-income households (1,478 households).

Forty-four percent of extremely low-income elderly renters and more than three-quarters (77 percent) of extremely low-income elderly homeowners experience severe cost burdens. Elderly households of all incomes comprise 44 percent of the total number of households facing severe cost burdens. While extremely low-income homeowners struggle, the most disproportionate need among all income groups is experienced by elderly renters. While 13 percent of Newton's renters are severely cost-burdened, 27 percent of Newton's elderly renters are similarly burdened.

#### *Small households*

Small households of two to four related persons comprise 22 percent or 1,543 of Newton's LMI households. There are approximately 14,000 small households of all income levels in Newton,

accounting for 45 percent of the total households. Next to elderly households, small households experience the highest rate of severe cost burden, with 325 of the 1,543 households (21 percent) facing severe cost burdens. Two-thirds (160 households) of Newton's extremely low-income small households pay more than 50 percent of their income on rent.

Among lower-income homeowners with incomes of less than 80 percent MFI, 66 percent of small-family homeowners are severely cost burdened. This is 19 percentage points higher than the overall rate of severe cost burden for lower-income homeowners of 48 percent.

### *Large households*

There are 292 large LMI households of five or more related persons, comprising four percent of Newton's LMI households. The 2,429 large households of all income levels comprise 7.7 percent of the total number of households in Newton. Rates of cost burden are much higher for large family homeowners than renters. Large household renters face housing problems that are most frequently not cost burden, with 86 percent of low-income renters report housing problems, but only 14 percent reporting cost burden. Homeownership costs are a severe burden for almost all large-family LMI homeowners, especially those making between 30 and 50 percent of MFI. Seventy-seven percent of large household low-income homeowners face severe cost burden, which is 34 percentage points higher than the overall rate of severe cost burden for low-income homeowners.

### *Other households*

Other households are defined as individuals living alone or unrelated individuals sharing a housing unit. Similarities within the data suggest that needs for other households are similar to the needs of small households. Rent burdens are highest for extremely low-income renters (189 households) and decrease for low-income (125 households) and moderate-income households (85 households).

Since this group contains a larger total number of renters than the small family group, it also has a higher total of severely cost burdened renters (410 households). Similar to small households, homeownership cost burden numbers hold steady for other households, even with increased incomes, but the total number of severely cost burdened other household homeowners is smaller since there are more small family homeowners. The other households group has the third largest number of severely burdened households (712 households).

### *Cost burdens by race*

Though low- and moderate-income households mirror the race and ethnicity distribution of the city, cost burden differed according to household race, and in many cases, minorities were more likely to experience housing problems. Forty-eight percent of Newton's 488 Hispanic/Latino households reported housing problems, which was 22 percentage points higher than Newton's overall rate of 27 percent. Black Non-Hispanic homeowners were less likely to have housing problems, but the rate of housing problems for Black Non-Hispanic renters was 14.3 percentage points higher than the overall rate for all Newton renters of 33 percent. Asian households were also approximately ten percent more likely to have housing problems, with problems for homeowners 11 percent higher than for Newton's overall homeowner rate of 24 percent.

*Trends in LMI housing cost burdens in Newton*

Overall, the number of LMI households experiencing housing problems has increased dramatically, as shown below in Fig. 44. Much of this growth is perceived to be from the overall growth in the number of lower-income households in Newton, which is thought to be from a re-categorization of existing Newton households using higher income standards and not from new households moving into the city. This change demonstrates an increase in the need for affordable housing assistance dedicated to lower-income households in Newton.

From 1990 to 2000, the number of LMI renters with housing problems increased by 25 percent, and the number of LMI homeowners with housing problems increased by 39 percent. The largest increase in housing problems for homeowners occurred for those facing the most serious problem, severe cost burden. The number of severely cost burdened homeowners paying more than half of their incomes on housing increased by 68 percent for all LMI homeowners, 51 percent for those that are elderly and 88 percent for non-elderly LMI homeowners.

**Fig. 44: Changes in the Number of LMI Households with Housing Problems, 1990-2000**

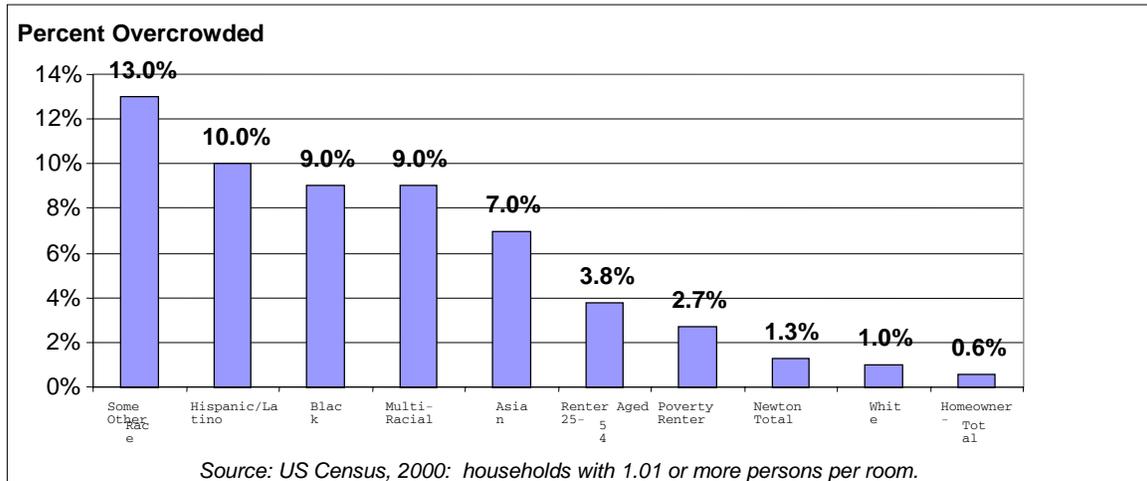
	RENTERS			HOMEOWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Percent change in LMI Households	24 percent	31 percent	18 percent	16 percent	4 percent	40 percent
Change in persons with housing problems	25 percent	18 percent	29 percent	39 percent	18 percent	70 percent
Change in households with cost burden >30 percent	10 percent	18 percent	5 percent	39 percent	18 percent	67 percent
Change in persons with cost burden >50 percent	1 percent	49 percent	-20 percent	68 percent	49 percent	88 percent

*Source: SOCDs CHAS Data, 1990, 2000*

**Section 5: Overcrowding in Newton**

HUD defines an overcrowded household as a household with more than 1.01 person per room. Overcrowding is not an issue for the majority of Newton households, and according to the U.S. Census 2000, 98.7 percent of all occupied housing units in Newton had one person or fewer per room. Only 396 households (1.3 percent) of Newton’s total households were reported as being overcrowded. Newton’s percentage of overcrowded households is well below the Boston MSA’s rate of 3.2 percent and the Massachusetts rate of 2.9 percent but is above the U.S. Census 1990 figure of 0.8 percent.

**Fig. 45: Overcrowding Rates in Newton by Various Populations, 2000**



*Overcrowding by tenure*

Two-thirds of all overcrowded households in Newton are renter households, totaling 261 households, or 2.7 percent of all rental households. One-third of all overcrowded households are homeowner households, comprising 135 households, or 0.6 percent of all owner-occupied units.

*Overcrowding by age*

Approximately 90 percent, or 351, of Newton’s 396 overcrowded households are headed by an individual between the age of 24 and 54, a group which comprises approximately 60 percent of the total number of households in Newton. While 1.3 percent of all Newton households are experiencing overcrowding, approximately one percent of homeowners in this age group are overcrowded, while approximately four percent of all renter households in this age group are overcrowded. In addition, two percent of renters aged 65 to 74 were living in overcrowded conditions.

*Overcrowding by income*

According to the U.S. Census 2000, overcrowding among households in poverty<sup>15</sup> is only slightly higher than the overall rate for all of Newton’s households. Whereas 1.3 percent of all Newton households are considered overcrowded, 1.7 percent, or 23 of Newton’s 1,387 poverty-level households are overcrowded. Overall, approximately six percent of Newton’s 396 overcrowded households are below the poverty level, a group which comprises four percent of the total population.

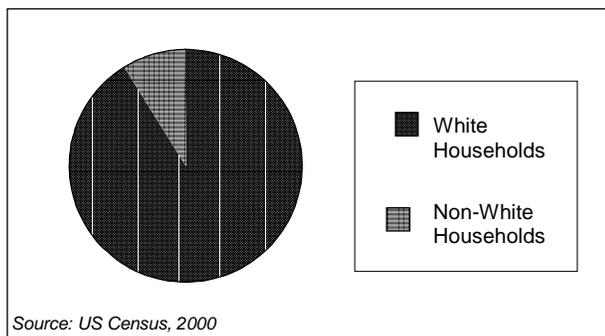
*Overcrowding by race*

Overcrowded households in Newton are likely to be from non-White households, and race is one of the largest sources of disparity in terms of local overcrowding. As shown in Figs. 46 and 47, minority households comprise only nine percent of Newton’s total households, but account

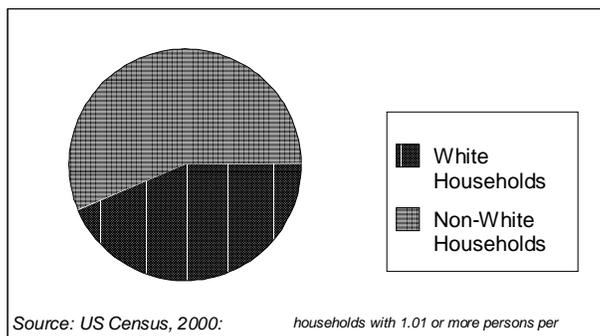
<sup>15</sup> Households in poverty are those meeting the U.S. Census definition of poverty, which is separate income grouping than extremely low-, low- or moderate-income groups defined previously in this report.

for approximately 57 percent of Newton’s overcrowded households. The two minorities with the largest number of overcrowded households are Asians and Hispanic/Latinos. Asian households, comprising only six percent of the total population, comprise 31 percent of Newton’s overcrowded households, while Hispanic/Latino households, comprising one percent of Newton’s total households, comprise 11 percent of Newton’s overcrowded households.

**Fig. 46: Total Newton Households by Race**



**Fig. 47: Overcrowded Newton Households by Race**



Non-White Newton households are more likely to be overcrowded than White households. While 1.3 percent of Newton’s residents were considered to be living in overcrowded conditions, ten percent of Newton’s Hispanic/Latino households, nine percent of Newton’s Black and multi-racial households, and seven percent of Newton’s Asian households were experiencing overcrowding in 2000. Thirteen percent of the households of some other race reported overcrowding.

**Section 6: Physical and regulatory barriers to affordable housing**

Existing plans and discussions in Newton have pointed to four general physical and regulatory barriers to the construction of affordable housing in the City of Newton.

The first regulatory barrier to affordable housing in Newton is the lack of a sufficient amount of developable land zoned to permit compact types of residential use. Business district zones have restrictive dimensional requirements that discourage mixed-use development and the creation of additional residential development above retail. These zones also prohibit types of developments such as efficiencies, or single room occupancy (SRO) units, which may provide more affordable alternatives to larger homes and condominiums.

The second major barrier to affordable housing in Newton is dimensional and parking standards which are often unreasonably and unmanageably prohibitive to development, even within land that is zoned for residential use. For instance, in village center areas, historic lot sizes are often much smaller than the minimum lot size required for new residential development either by-right or by special permit. When an existing lot is smaller than the minimum lot size required for a special permit, the application may not be filed, and no negotiations for any development may be initiated.

Street and utility requirements present a third regulatory barrier that hinders affordable residential development. Standards within the city for required street widths, curbing types and sidewalk surfaces are intended to meet public safety needs. However, some standards may be

unnecessary or irrelevant for the safety needs of certain developments and only add unnecessary costs that inhibit residential development.

The fourth regulatory barrier to affordable housing development is the project approval process, which includes procedures and fees that add to project costs and delays. Very limited by-right development possibilities in the city make special permitting a necessary step for any type of development other than single-family housing. The permitting process can be cumbersome, and developers may not have a single point of contact in the departments they work with. This makes it difficult to obtain consistent information about permitting requirements. The project review process is regarded by some developers as inefficient and time-consuming. They are concerned that the review process for smaller-scale developments, which may not require transportation impact studies, landscape plans, etc., is the same for large developments. In addition, fees often do not reflect the true costs to the community and do not differentiate between community-responsive developments such as affordable housing and other types of private developments.

## **Section 7: Homelessness Needs Assessment**

### *Continuum of Care System*

Newton is part of the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care (COC), one of 23 Continuums in Massachusetts formed as a result of HUD's annual competitive application process for Continuum of Care funds. These Continuums are made up of the geographic area of one or more contiguous cities and/or towns. The purpose of forming these continuums is to bring communities together in a coordinated planning effort to work towards alleviating homelessness.

Within the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care geographic area, the entity that meets regularly to carryout this goal is the Homelessness Consortium. Formed in the mid-1990s, the Consortium is made up of representatives from nonprofit organizations, municipal government, state agencies, businesses and religious organizations, as well as homeless and formerly homeless people.

The following paragraphs describe the inventory of facilities and services available to help people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, the nature and extent of homelessness within the Continuum of Care system and the identified priority needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

### *Components of the Continuum of Care System*

The Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care system is designed to help homeless individuals and families move from homelessness to self-sufficiency and permanent housing. The components of this system that are currently in place are described below. Note that because homelessness is a regional problem, and many of these services are provided on a regional basis, some facilities and services listed are located outside of the COC area.

- **Prevention**

Several programs, including those offered by the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, Jewish Family & Children's Service, Middlesex Human Service Agency and the Newton Human Services Department, provide emergency assistance to prevent eviction, mortgage default and/or avert related short-term crises in order to prevent homelessness. Funding for these programs comes from Newton's Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program, the Federal Energy Program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Food and Shelter Program, and several private sources, including the Brookline Community Fund, the Horace Cousens Industrial Fund and the Perpetual Benevolent Fund.

Additionally, legal assistance is provided by the Boston College Legal Assistance Bureau, the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, Jewish Family & Children's Service, the Lawyers Clearinghouse and Mediation Works, Inc., to help extremely low- and low-income individuals and families in danger of eviction. Emergency food assistance is provided by the Hellenic Gospel Church Food Pantry, Jewish Family & Children's Service, the Newton Food Pantry, the Newton Service Unit of the Salvation Army, Project Bread, St. Paul's Church Emergency Food Pantry and the Salvation Army-Brookline Unit to help extremely low- and low-income individuals and families stretch their budgets and sustain housing.

- **Outreach, Intake and Assessment**

The three communities which comprise the Continuum of Care area do not have a large population of unsheltered homeless. This may be attributed in large part to the strong network of homeless prevention services described above. However, the Continuum communities do have systems in place, working with police, clergy and businesses, to provide outreach, intake and assessment services to identify homeless people in these communities. In Brookline in particular, the community with the largest documented unsheltered homeless population, case managers from the Brookline Community Mental Health Center and the Brookline Health Department who are experienced in assessment and intervention for people with chronic mental illness and/or substance abuse conduct regular street outreach, checking commercial centers, parks, subway stops, etc., to engage individuals over time and build relationships. Once rapport is established, outreach workers assist clients in securing shelter and services.

If families become homeless, the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), with its closest office in the adjacent Continuum of Somerville, serves as the central outreach location for accessing shelter and services. Service providers in this COC assist families with transportation to get them to the DTA office and will advocate with DTA to ensure the families can access shelter, benefits and services.

- **Supportive Services**

Supportive services are provided through a wide array of community-based organizations, public agencies and municipal departments. Some examples are:

- **Case management:** Families receive case management services on-site at the transitional programs where they are staying. Specialized case management services for homeless people with disabilities are available specifically for both adults and youth suffering from chronic substance abuse, mental illness or a dual diagnosis. Once homeless people move to permanent supportive housing in this Continuum, on-site case managers are in place at some facilities to assist people with settling into their housing (e.g. learning tasks of daily living, accessing treatment, benefits, services, etc).
- **Life Skills:** Case managers at residential programs all along the continuum assist homeless families and individuals, through one-on-one counseling and group workshops, with developing the life skills to live independently (e.g. housekeeping, shopping, parenting, budgeting). The Village Bank, a local bank headquartered in Newton, provides free financial management classes to any agency's clients within the Continuum upon request.
- **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment:** Access to treatment and other substance abuse services are provided by such agencies as the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, the Brookline Health Department and Riverside Community Care, including follow-up care and assistance with enrollment into support groups.
- **Mental Health Treatment:** A particular strength of this Continuum is the range of treatment and related resources available to all persons with chronic mental illness, both those who are homeless and those in housing. These services include crisis intervention, stabilization, individualized case management and comprehensive treatment and support services provided by

Advocates, Inc., the Brookline Community Mental Health Center, Riverside Community Care and Vinfen.

- ***AIDS-related Treatment:*** Staff at all programs is trained in working with people with HIV/AIDS and refers them to the AIDS Action Committee for specialized services.
  - ***Education:*** Residents of transitional housing and permanent supportive housing programs are linked to Adult Basic Education, ESOL and GED preparation classes when appropriate. For young homeless adults (16-22) in the Transition to Independent Living Program and New Pathways Emergency Shelter Program, case managers assure youth stay in and graduate from high school or GED programs.
  - ***Employment Assistance:*** Clients are linked to one-stop career and job readiness programs provided by the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training at their Newton office. Other training, including job search assistance and assistance in obtaining unemployment benefits is provided by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, Jewish Vocational Services and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Services.
  - ***Child Care:*** CDBG funds for childcare scholarships and the Head Start Program provide childcare assistance for income-eligible families in the Continuum.
  - ***Transportation:*** Since many state and regional offices that assist people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness are located outside of the Continuum, agencies within the Continuum use a wide array of resources to help their clients obtain these critical services. Providers in the Continuum will transport clients in agency vehicles and provide free bus and subway tokens and taxi vouchers.
- **Emergency Shelter**

The only emergency shelter located within the Continuum is the New Pathways Program offered by the Brookline Community Mental Health Center. This program partners up to 15 homeless young adults at a time with “foster families,” who provide temporary housing until permanent housing becomes available.

The main provider of emergency shelter for both homeless adults and families from the Continuum is Middlesex Human Service Agency, with individual and family shelters located in the adjacent city of Waltham. They operate both men's and women's emergency shelters, with a combined total of 60 beds. They currently operate two family shelters in Waltham – Mary's House and Sandra's Lodge—with two more being developed—Hestia House and Olivia's Place. Mary's House provides emergency shelter for up to four months for seven homeless families. Sandra's Lodge is an intake family shelter for up to 35 homeless single mothers and their children. The City of Newton provides an annual allocation of ESG funds for operating support for these shelters. The Pine Street Inn is also an important emergency shelter resource for homeless individuals from the Continuum. It operates men's and women's shelters in nearby Boston and provides shelter for 700 homeless individuals each night.

- **Transitional Housing**

There are six transitional housing programs in the Continuum communities. Of the transitional housing units for families, 19 are for survivors of domestic violence and their children, five are for families in general, and seven are for families where a family member is recovering from substance abuse. There are only four transitional housing beds for homeless individuals. These units are listed in the table below.

**Fig. 48: Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care Transitional Housing Units/Beds**

PROVIDER NAME	FACILITY NAME	LOCATION	TARGET POPULATION	UNITS/BEDS
Brookline Center	Transition to Independent Living	Brookline	Individuals	4 beds
Catholic Charities	Genesis II (Genesis House)	Newton	Women with/without children recovering from substance abuse	7 units/ 13 beds
CAN-DO	Kayla A. Rosenberg House	Newton	Young parents with children	5 units/ 15 beds
The Second Step	Garfield House	Newton	Survivors of domestic violence and their children	3 units/ 9 beds
The Second Step	Original Residence	Newton	Survivors of domestic violence and their children	8 units/ 20 beds
The Second Step	New Residence	Newton	Survivors of domestic violence and their children	8 units/ 26 beds
<b>Total</b>				<b>31 units/ 87 beds</b>

- **Permanent Supportive Housing**

One of the Continuum’s strengths is the regional role it plays in providing permanent supportive housing opportunities specifically designated for homeless people. There are currently 134 beds of permanent supportive housing located in the Continuum, but even with this number, a shortage still exists. The scarcity of permanent, affordable units in Newton increases the amount of time residents must stay in transitional units before finding new, permanent homes, creating a backlog in the system.

*Nature and Extent of Homelessness*

An important activity that the Homelessness Consortium undertakes annually to better plan for the alleviation of homelessness is the annual point-in-time survey of homeless people within the Continuum communities. The survey provides a “point-in-time” snapshot of homeless people and their needs. The most recent point-in-time count was conducted on February 26, 2004. A mail survey form was distributed to all housing and service providers within the Continuum. Agency responses to the mail survey were based on direct interviews with clients, further verified by client case records. In addition to the mail survey, a street count was conducted on the same day by the municipal health, human service and police departments.

The survey form used for both the sheltered and unsheltered count was designed to capture information necessary to determine if the person met the HUD definition of being chronically homeless, to determine whether the respondent was part of a HUD-identified subpopulation and also to gather demographic information, reasons for homelessness and information on housing and service needs.<sup>16</sup> Phone and electronic outreach was conducted prior to the day of the survey to remind agencies of the importance of their participation. To ensure adequate coverage within the Continuum on the day of the survey, staff from the Town of Brookline and the City of Newton was available to help administer the survey. Completed survey forms were mailed to the Brookline Planning and Community Development Department, where staff followed up on any confusing responses and tabulated the results.

A summary of the results of the survey is listed in the following table and paragraphs. Since the towns of Brookline and Watertown have reported the information for the people surveyed in their communities in their needs assessment sections of this Consolidated Plan, the information provided is for homeless people living in Newton on the day of the survey. Cumulative information for the three-community Continuum, as listed in the 2004 Continuum of Care application for HUD funds, is shown in the regional housing needs assessment.

**Fig.49: Homeless Population and Subpopulations Chart for Newton**

		<b>CURRENT INVENTORY IN 2004</b>	<b>UNDER DEVELOPMENT IN 2004</b>	<b>UNMET NEED/GAP</b>
<b>Individuals</b>				
<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	15	0	5
	Transitional Housing	4	0	5
	Permanent Supportive Housing	117	5	50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Persons in Families with Children</b>				
<b>Beds</b>	Emergency Shelter	154	0	15
	Transitional Housing	83	0	0
	Permanent Supportive Housing	12	0	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>

As shown in Fig. 49, at the time of the survey there were four homeless individuals and 27 homeless families living in transitional housing facilities in Newton. There were no unsheltered people. These numbers correspond to the types of facilities serving homeless people in Newton. Newton does not have an emergency shelter but does provide critical units of transitional and permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families.

Of the respondents to the survey, 70.5 percent were female, and 29.5 percent were male. In terms of the racial/ethnic breakdown of respondents, 66.7 percent stated that they were White, 15 percent stated that they were Black/African American, ten percent stated that they were Latino/Hispanic, and 8.3 percent said they were of another race/ethnicity.

<sup>16</sup> HUD's definition of chronically homeless is "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either: a) been continuously homeless for a year or more, or b) has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

### Priority Needs of Homeless Individuals and Families

The priority needs of homeless individuals and families were developed based on needs identified by homeless respondents to the point-in-time survey on February 26, 2004; the annual update to the inventory of emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing facilities specifically for homeless people, and the information gathered from the focus group for service needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, described more fully in the Human Service needs assessment section of this document.

When asked to identify their needs, all of the individuals and families surveyed on February 26, 2004, overwhelming, though not surprisingly, said they needed permanent housing. The second biggest identified need was for job finding/training assistance (35 percent), followed by transportation assistance (31 percent). Other needs cited included domestic violence services, counseling, health care (including prescription assistance) and detoxification assistance.

The needs gathered from the point-in-time survey were almost identical to those developed by the focus group for service needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The need for all types of housing—emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and permanent affordable housing—was echoed by the focus group. Additionally, job training and employment opportunities, transportation assistance, mental health counseling services, and substance abuse treatment were again cited as needs. Homelessness prevention, in the form of financial assistance to maintain housing, was also cited as a priority need.

Finally, as shown in the following chart taken from the 2004 Continuum of Care application, there is a need to expand the current inventory of facilities available to shelter and house both homeless individuals and families. The largest needs are for additional permanent supportive housing units for homeless individuals and for additional emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing units for homeless families.

**Fig. 50: Continuum of Care Shelter and Housing Gaps Analysis**

HOMELESS POPULATION	SHELTERED		UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
	Emergency	Transitional		
Homeless Individuals	14 (N)	4 (N)	4 (N)	22
Homeless Families with Children	37 (N)	27 (N)	0 (N)	64
Persons in Homeless Families with Children	68 (N)	70 (N)	0 (N)	138
Total (individuals + persons in families)	119	101	4	224
HOMELESS SUBPOPULATIONS	SHELTERED		UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Chronically Homeless	0 (N)			0
Severely Mentally Ill	10 (N)		1 (N)	11
Chronic Substance Abuse	10 (N)		1 (N)	11
Veterans	4 (N)		1 (N)	5
Persons with HIV/AIDS				
Victims of Domestic Violence	22 (N)			22
Youth (Under 18 years old)				

(N)=Enumeration

It is also worth reiterating that there is a tremendous need for permanent affordable housing in general. The emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities in the Continuum and across Massachusetts are operating at full capacity with increased lengths of stay. Until more permanent affordable housing opportunities become available, this situation is not likely to improve.

#### *Continuum of Care System Planning and Coordination Needs*

In addition to the needs listed in the previous section, during the 2004 application process for HUD Continuum of Care funds, the Planning Committee of the Homelessness Consortium analyzed the current Continuum of Care system to determine planning and coordination needs. These needs were then discussed at a meeting of the entire Homelessness Consortium to obtain feedback and make any needed additions or corrections. These needs are summarized below. Actions developed to address these needs are discussed later in the Housing and Homeless Strategic Plan section of this Plan.

- Need to improve the Continuum's coordinated response to assist unsheltered chronically homeless people with appropriate street outreach and access to services

For years, the Brookline Health Department and the Brookline Mental Health Center have conducted successful street outreach to unsheltered homeless people, especially persons with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse. They assess and engage individuals and assist them with accessing and obtaining shelter and services. Using this established model as a guide, the Homelessness Consortium needs to establish Continuum-wide protocols.

- Need to improve the Continuum's ability to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness in the overall Metro West region (the area covered by the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care and the MetroWest Continuum of Care), including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.

As discussed previously, homelessness is a regional problem, and many of the services provided to assist homeless individuals and families are provided across jurisdictional boundaries. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that people in institutions, such as prisons or mental health care facilities, are not being discharged into the community without appropriate housing and support services available to them. As a result, the Homelessness Consortium recognizes the need to be able to join with the adjacent MetroWest Continuum, other Continuums in Massachusetts and state agencies in coordinated planning efforts to alleviate homelessness.

## **Section 8: Priority needs analysis**

### *Methodology behind Priority Needs Table 2A*

Table 2A, located in the Appendix, prioritizes housing need by household type and by income level from zero to 80 percent of area median income. Renter households include *small related* families, *large related* families, the *elderly* and *all other* households.<sup>17</sup> The table also includes

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<sup>17</sup> *Small Related*: A household of 2 to 4 persons that includes at least one person related to the householder by blood, marriage, or adoption.

*owner* and *special needs* categories.<sup>18</sup> Each category was assigned a relative priority of housing need based upon the following factors: size of a population in each income level relative to the overall size of the population in need, size of population in need relative to the other types of populations in need, the severity of cost burden experienced, the current inventory of affordable housing available to all low- and moderate-income populations, consideration of the populations (non-elderly homeowners and elderly renters) that have experienced the largest increases in growth from 1990 to 2000 and needs articulated from working experience by focus group members, affordable housing developers and providers, including the Newton Housing Authority and providers of housing with supportive services. The priority ranking for special needs populations was based on the criteria listed above, as well as an estimate of need provided by Advocates, Inc.

In light of the trends mentioned in the Housing Market Analysis and the Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment, six housing needs have been identified as priorities for the City of Newton to address over the next five years.

In Newton, there is a need to:

**NEED #1:** Increase the overall supply of a variety of affordable housing options and reduce the housing cost burden of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income persons, including special needs populations.

**NEED #2:** Create homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income residents.

**NEED #3:** Create rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.

**NEED #4:** Enable the elderly to “age in place” without overly burdensome housing costs.

**NEED #5:** Support existing emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing facilities for homeless individuals and families; support prevention programs for individuals and families at-risk of homelessness; continue to work to create new units of permanent supportive housing, with some designated for people who are chronically homeless; and improve the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium’s ability to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide basis, including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.

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*Large Related:* A household of 5 or more persons that includes at least one person related to the householder by blood, marriage, or adoption.

*Elderly:* A one or two person household in which the head of the household or spouse is at least 62 years of age.

*All Other:* A household of one or more persons that does not meet the definition of a small related, large related, elderly, or special populations household. This category includes all households with only unrelated individuals present except those qualifying as elderly or special populations households

<sup>18</sup> *Special Needs:* A household of one or more persons that includes persons that have mobility impairments or disabilities, (i.e., mental, physical, developmental, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families) or persons with alcohol or other drug addiction that may require housing with supportive services

**NEED #6: Enhance and expand local support for affordable housing and maximize the effectiveness of local resources through collaboration, partnerships, education and efficient processes.**

Further discussion of these needs and how the City of Newton plans to address them can be found in the Housing Strategic Plan.

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## HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS***

The City of Newton is an affluent community with attractive housing, good schools, regional accessibility and local amenities that make it a desirable place to live. The attractiveness of the community is reflected in its high land values and housing prices, which continue to rise more rapidly than local wages and area median income (AMI). Rapidly increasing housing prices have reduced the affordability of the City's housing stock to potential homeowners, especially entry-level homeowners and the City's low- and moderate-income residents, who make up almost a quarter (22 percent) of all households in the City. The overall lack of housing available to households across all income levels impacts the entire inventory of housing stock, ranging from entry-level homeownership housing to emergency shelters for the homeless.

In light of these trends, which have been established by the housing market analysis, needs assessment and focus groups, six housing needs have been identified as priorities for the City of Newton to address over the next five years.

In Newton, there is a need to:

- NEED #1:** Increase the overall supply of a variety of affordable housing options and reduce the housing cost burden of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income persons, including special needs populations.
- NEED #2:** Create homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income residents.
- NEED #3:** Create rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.
- NEED #4:** Enable the elderly to "age in place" without overly burdensome housing costs.
- NEED #5:** Support existing emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing facilities for homeless individuals and families; support prevention programs for individuals and families at-risk of homelessness; continue to work to create new units of permanent supportive housing, with some designated for people who are chronically homeless; and improve the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium's ability to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide basis, including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.
- NEED #6:** Enhance and expand local support for affordable housing and maximize the effectiveness of local resources through collaboration, partnerships, education and efficient processes.

## **OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

The overall goal of the Newton housing program is to create more housing opportunities and reduce the cost burden of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income households in the city. The objectives and strategies outlined below have been developed to help meet this goal. The high priority objectives and strategies grew out of the needs assessment process facilitated by the City housing and community development staff in partnership with the Newton Housing Partnership, human service professionals, local housing providers and Newton residents. In the summer of 2004, City housing development staff hosted two focus groups with housing developers and social service agencies providing affordable housing and services in Newton. The purpose of the focus groups was to identify housing needs in the community and to develop potential strategies to address these needs. Each strategy, though only listed once, may in fact accomplish several of the needs and objectives listed throughout the Housing Strategic Plan.

### **NEED #1:    **Increase the overall supply of a variety of affordable housing options and reduce the housing cost burden of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income persons, including special needs populations.****

The number of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income households in Newton is growing. Although the total number of households in Newton only increased six percent from 1990 to 2000, the total number of low- and moderate-income households grew 20 percent. The lack of a sufficient supply of affordable housing options reduces the opportunities that low- and moderate-income households have to live in Newton. With extremely limited opportunities to purchase an entry-level or “starter” home in Newton, moderate-income residents may purchase homes beyond their financial capabilities and incur overly burdensome housing costs, or rent and defer homeownership and its benefits to the future.

Newton’s extremely low-, low- and moderate-income population also includes persons who require permanent housing with supportive services. The type and scale of supportive services depend on the individuals being served. Most residents who live in housing developed with state and federal housing financing programs are on fixed incomes and depend on rental subsidies to maintain their housing status. The greatest housing need for persons with disabilities is an ongoing rental subsidy that enables them to live in permanent affordable housing with the supportive services they require.

Newton needs to increase the supply of affordable housing and reduce the housing cost burden for its extremely low-, low- and moderate-income residents. Proposed strategies to address these needs are identified below and are categorized into two objectives. The proposed strategies included under Objective A are in response to current land use policies in Newton. The proposed strategies under Objective B reflect the need to increase the overall affordable housing stock, including the development of all types of affordable housing.

### **Objective A: Reform Land Use and Zoning Policies**

- ❖ Objective A focuses on the importance of the City, the Newton Housing Partnership, the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, the Planning and Development Board and other groups and interested individuals to continue to identify and examine potential changes to existing land use policy in Newton. Possible land use and zoning changes to consider include rezoning, mixed-use zoning, accessory apartment zoning and permitting revisions, and the expansion of linkage programs. There is a growing interest in exploring

ways to increase housing options, reduce traffic and preserve the vibrancy of the village cores and business districts by encouraging additional housing development in and around these areas. More flexible zoning would enable or encourage property owners to develop residential units in or near village centers that are served by public transportation. Reducing land use barriers may encourage the development of affordable housing in previously untapped areas of the community. The intent of the following land use strategies is to help create more opportunities to build affordable housing in Newton.

### **Strategies:**

#### **❖ Examine land use and zoning models to increase affordable housing.**

The Comprehensive Planning and Advisory Committee and City staff are in the process of completing a comprehensive master plan that includes a section on housing and housing affordability. The plan identifies the gaps in housing availability in Newton and recommends strategies that help increase opportunities for the production and preservation of housing units. Among other proposed actions, the comprehensive plan identifies opportunities for affordable housing in commercial areas through revisions to the current zoning ordinance.

#### **❖ Identify “opportunity areas” most appropriate for and conducive to residential development.**

“Opportunity areas” are areas throughout the city that have the greatest potential for residential development and meet smart growth principles. Opportunity areas may include village centers or neighborhoods served by public transit with access to complimentary resources such as schools, grocery stores and social services. Opportunity areas can be the basis for establishing overlay districts that allow for more flexible zoning. Overlay districts can allow for flexible design and development standards to match the specific needs and opportunities of each area. Opportunity areas could be the basis for Chapter 40R smart-growth zoning districts.

#### **❖ Reduce zoning barriers to special permit development.**

When by-right development is not possible, developers may apply for a special permit from the Board of Alderman. However, development options are limited under the special permit process. The following proposed changes to the special permit requirements should be examined as a way to help reduce regulatory barriers to the development of affordable housing:

1. Increase maximum special permit FAR (Floor Area Ratio) limits for residential uses within opportunity areas/overlay districts.
2. Reduce minimum lot size per housing unit in mixed-use districts from 10,000 to 1,200 square feet.

#### **❖ Reduce zoning barriers and provide incentives to encourage new residential development in village centers and “opportunity areas.”**

The following proposed changes should be examined as a way to help reduce regulatory barriers to the development of affordable housing:

1. Reduce the minimum lot area and frontage requirements for residential development in Business Districts.

2. Allow lower on-site parking requirements in Business and Mixed Use Districts where transit alternatives exist. An overlay district could permit fees in-lieu, off-site and shared parking arrangements to fulfill parking requirements.
3. Provide development bonuses or increase the maximum special permit FAR limits for mixed-use residential developments that are sited in an opportunity area or village center and are sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood character.

❖ **Consider appropriate compact development in village centers.**

The Board of Aldermen may reduce the density requirement of a particular zone in order to permit a developer to create additional units. Typically, this is accomplished through the special permit process which requires a developer to reserve 15 percent of the additional units—produced through the approval of a special permit—for affordable housing. The City could adopt other means of working with density to achieve the objective of developing more affordable housing.

❖ **Consider implementing Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning and Housing Production.**

In an effort to expand the supply of housing in Massachusetts, the State legislature recently adopted Chapter 40R, a measure that grants municipalities financial rewards for adopting special zoning districts for the construction of multifamily housing and single-family housing on small lots.

Chapter 40R, which was signed into law in June 2004, has often been described as the carrot approach to expanding the supply of affordable housing. To participate in the voluntary plan, municipalities agree to create special "smart-growth" zoning districts close to transportation nodes, town centers, or vacant retail and commercial sites where housing can be built on less costly lots. To be eligible for financial benefits, municipalities must submit comprehensive plans outlining the housing they plan to build in the districts. The law requires that at least 20 percent of residential units in district projects with more than 12 units must be affordable, and provides mechanisms to ensure that at least 20 percent of the total residential units built in the districts are affordable.

Once a smart-growth district is approved by the State, a municipality becomes eligible for incentive payments based on the housing it plans to build in the district(s). These payments range from \$10,000 for 20 units or less to \$600,000 for 501 or more units. If no construction begins in the district within three years of receipt of the incentive payment, the municipality must repay the state.

In addition to the incentive payments, communities with approved smart-growth districts receive bonus payments of \$3,000 for each unit of new housing that receives a building permit, and they become eligible for favorable treatment when state discretionary funding is available.

❖ **Consider establishing an Urban Center Housing-Tax Increment Finance Program as a technique the City can use to support the development of affordable housing in “opportunity areas.”**

The Urban Center Housing – Tax Increment Finance (UCH-TIF) Program is a tax exemption program where cities and towns grant annual real estate tax exemption on all or part of the increased value of improved property in designated commercial centers. The UCH-TIF

Program is presently in the public comment period and has not yet been approved by the state legislature.

The goal is to encourage residential growth, affordable housing and commercial growth in commercial centers. The UCH-TIF Program can run for up to 20 years and requires an execution of an UCH-TIF agreement. Program highlights consist of housing development, including affordable housing, tax savings for developers, new tax revenue for municipalities, levying special assessments and revitalization of commercial centers. To qualify as affordable housing on DHCD's Subsidized Housing Inventory, a development must be primarily residential, 25 percent of all units must be affordable, resident incomes in affordable units must be at or below 80 percent of area median income, and a 40-year affordability restriction must be executed.

Municipalities must approve a UCH-TIF Plan and a UCH-TIF Zone. A UCH-TIF Plan includes development plans for the UCH-TIF Zone, a schedule and cost of public construction, costs recoverable through special assessments, delegation of power to execute UCH-TIF agreements and identification of specific TIF properties. A UCH-TIF Zone consists of a predominance of commercial land uses, high daytime or business population, high concentration of daytime traffic and parking and the need for multi-unit residential properties.

The UCH-TIF Program supports smart growth principles and, if adopted, can be partnered with other programs such as the District Improvement Finance Program, Chapter 40R and other housing development programs, and state and federal grant and loan programs.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Over the next year, City zoning, land use and housing staff will examine existing land use policies in conjunction with the Zoning and Planning Committee of the Board of Aldermen, the Newton Housing Partnership and the Mayor to determine the feasibility of implementing the land use strategies identified in the Consolidated Plan. The proposed strategies require Aldermanic approval to implement. Revisions to the current zoning regulations will help encourage the development of additional affordable housing throughout the community.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Changes to existing zoning and land use policies will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

**Objective B: Encourage Affordable Housing Development**

- ❖ Encourage the development of all types of affordable housing to help Newton achieve the State mandate of having ten percent of its housing stock affordable to households at or below 80 percent of area median income under M.G.L. Chapter 40B.

**Strategies:**

- ❖ **Continue to implement the City's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.**

Newton was one of the first cities in the Commonwealth to enact an inclusionary zoning ordinance. The original ordinance required developers building residential units to set aside a certain number of units as affordable to households earning no more than 80 percent of

area median income or to make a cash contribution. The ordinance resulted in the creation of 225 new affordable units, 50 of which, with limited affordability restrictions, have been lost as affordable housing through conversion to market-rate units.

The ordinance was revised in 2003 to make it a more effective housing development tool. The new inclusionary zoning ordinance increases the required percentage of affordable units from ten percent to 15 percent in developments over six units requiring a special permit. The new ordinance more clearly stipulates when a developer is mandated to provide either units or cash payment in lieu of units. In case of the latter option (development of between two and six units), the funds are directly applied to the development of affordable housing units. The amended ordinance also allows both rental and homeownership units to qualify as inclusionary units. Depending on the number and type of inclusionary units (rental or homeownership) in a development, the area median income of qualifying households may range from 80 percent or less for rental units to up to 120 percent for homeownership units.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

A taskforce was convened in 2004 to evaluate the effectiveness and clarity of the revised ordinance. As a result, several technical amendments to the ordinance were adopted that among other things, clarified that the Newton Housing Authority is responsible for rental developments, while the Planning and Development Department is responsible for ownership developments.

It is the responsibility of City housing, land use and zoning staff to provide technical assistance to developers and others to enable them to understand the revisions to the ordinance. It is difficult to forecast the number and type of units produced under the ordinance since development projects are market driven.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. The inclusionary zoning ordinance will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Continue to fund housing development projects with Community Preservation Act funds.**

The Community Preservation Act provides a financial resource and subsidy for housing developers that produce affordable housing opportunities or "community housing" to households at or below 100 percent of area median income. In FY03 and FY04, the Community Preservation Committee, a volunteer body whose members are appointed by the Mayor, committed funds to five community housing projects: Nonantum Village Place located at 239 Watertown Street, 18-20 Cambria Road, 45 Pelham Street, 19 West Street and 76 Webster Park. This commitment resulted in 45 affordable housing units. The Newton Connection Homebuyer Program, a 24-month pilot program funded with Community Preservation Funds, has provided assistance to one income-eligible homebuyer since the program's inception in 2004. The program's goal is to assist up to five homebuyers.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The relationship between the Newton Housing Partnership and the Community Preservation Committee will continue to be strengthened and enhanced by reviewing proposed housing development projects together. The high cost of housing development in Newton requires

multiple funding sources, including federal sources and often Community Preservation Funds to make a project financially feasible. The City will continue to commit federal funding sources such as CDBG and HOME to projects that also include Community Preservation Funds as a source.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. The Community Preservation Fund will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Continue using CDBG and HOME funds to create, develop and preserve affordable housing developments.**

Since 1991, federal CDBG and HOME program funds have been used to develop 348 units of deed-restricted affordable housing in Newton. More than one-third of these units (126 units or 36 percent) are reserved for the elderly. Units reserved for persons with developmental disabilities (90 units or 26 percent) and families (58 units or 17 percent) comprise the next highest populations assisted with CDBG and HOME program funds.

Complementing the City's housing efforts are many active nonprofit organizations that provide affordable housing in Newton. These nonprofits include the Newton Community Development Foundation, Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization, Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly, Newton-Wellesley-Weston Committee for Community Living, The Second Step, Riverside Community Care, Advocates, Inc., Community Living Network, Inc. and CASCAP, Inc.

In addition to providing financing for affordable housing production, CDBG funds capitalize the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund (NHRF), which provides low-interest loans and grants to income-eligible households to make improvements to their property. The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund also administers a First Time Homebuyer Program funded with CDBG and HOME program funds. Like the Newton Connection Program Homebuyer Program, the First Time Homebuyer Program provides up to \$5,000 in down payment assistance and a mortgage write down up to \$90,000 for income-eligible homebuyers.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The City will continue to provide CDBG and HOME program funds to housing sponsors to develop rental and homeownership housing affordable to extremely low-, low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Housing development projects that include CDBG, HOME and Community Preservation Funds are deed restricted in perpetuity.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced and the number of NHRF cases funded. The CDBG and HOME funds will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units and funding 312 Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund cases.

❖ **Continue funding the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund.**

The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund was established in 1976 and provides funding to low- and moderate-income Newton residents for housing rehabilitation, de-leading, asbestos and underground oil tank removal, energy conservation and adaptive changes for the elderly

and people with physical disabilities. NHRF, which is administered by the City's Planning and Development Department and funded through the CDBG program, provides financial assistance to income-eligible homeowners, rental property owners and organizations that serve low- and moderate-income individuals in the form of grants, deferred payment loans and low-interest loans.

The program's success lies in its flexibility, which allows NHRF to develop programs that respond to needs in the community as they arise. For example, as the population continues to age, communities such as Newton are increasingly interested in programs and strategies that address issues related to aging. One of NHRF's most successful initiatives is its Elder Grants Program that was developed to assist Newton's elderly residents with small-scale emergency repairs and accessibility improvements enabling them to safely and comfortably age in place.

NHRF is proposing to revise many of its existing programs in response to a number of factors including: the increased cost of rehabilitation, the need to fund larger, more expensive projects, the opportunity to partner with the Newton Housing Authority and the need to expand the affordable housing inventory by requiring deed restrictions in perpetuity. Highlights of the proposed revisions are outlined below:

### **Homeowner Loans and Grants**

#### *Elder Deferred Loans*

- Reduce interest rates to zero percent for low-income homeowners and three percent for moderate-income homeowners.
- Extend term to ten years with interest then extendable indefinitely without additional interest.

#### *Non-elder Deferred Loans*

- Reduce interest rate to zero percent for low-income homeowners and three percent for moderate-income homeowners.
- Extend term to ten years with interest then extendable indefinitely without additional interest.
- Interest is non-accruing until project completion or 180 days after closing, whichever is first.

#### *Grants*

- Reduce term from ten to five years.
- Forgive 20 percent annually.

### **Accessibility, Hazard Abatement and Energy Conservation Grants**

- Increase accessibility grants from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per unit.
- Increase hazard abatement grants from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per unit and increase cap from \$15,000 to \$25,000.
- Develop energy conservation grant program and provide \$10,000 grant per unit.
- Develop limited funding set aside for Newton Housing Authority units and other Section 8 subsidized units for hazard abatement and accessibility. Limit grants to \$15,000 per unit.
- Provide nonprofit organizations with accessibility grants up to \$15,000 per unit, energy conservation grants up to \$10,000 per unit and hazard abatement grants up to \$15,000 per unit.

### **Nonprofit Direct Loans**

- Increase funding assistance from \$40,000 per unit to \$100,000 per unit.
- Increase funding for single room occupancy (SRO) units from \$10,000 to \$25,000 per unit.
- Reduce interest rate from three percent to zero percent for deed-restricted units.
- Extend term from 20 to 30 years with interest accruing and payments starting 20 days after certificate of occupancy, or 180 days after closing, whichever is first.
- Propose funding for both rental and homeownership units instead of rental units only.

### ***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund will continue to revise its program guidelines to make them more effective and responsive to Newton's changing needs. NHRF will continue to provide funding to low- and moderate-income Newton residents for housing rehabilitation, de-leading, asbestos and underground oil tank removal, energy conservation and adaptive changes for the elderly and people with physical disabilities. In addition, NHRF will work with nonprofit organizations and the Newton Housing Authority to help develop new affordable units through its rehabilitation programs. Finally, NHRF will require, when possible, the use of Energy Star qualified products and practices as part of its rehabilitation program guidelines.

### ***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced and the number of NHRF cases funded. The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund programs will fund a total of 312 rehabilitation cases.

### **❖ Expedite City approval and financial support of affordable housing projects through such tools as the One-to-Four Family Purchase/ Rehabilitation Program.**

The opportunity to develop large projects is limited due to the lack of available developable land. Therefore, there is a need for small-scale projects consisting of one to four units that can take advantage of existing properties. The City's One-to-Four Family Purchase/ Rehabilitation Program has proven effective in filling this need. The program was designed to streamline the approval process for projects that do not require any zoning changes. Once a housing sponsor identifies a potential affordable housing development project and submits a complete One-Stop application, housing staff can begin reviewing the proposal and assessing its financial feasibility. Since the Planning and Development Board and the Mayor have already approved the program guidelines, no additional approvals beyond the staff level are necessary, and a funding commitment can be made. This streamlined process enables affordable housing developers to make prompt decisions about site acquisition in a fast-moving real estate market.

In FY04, the City of Newton entered its first full year of administering the One-to-Four Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program, which provides up to \$100,000 per unit of assistance for developers and nonprofits looking to acquire property for affordable housing. Assistance in the form of deferred, forgivable loans is available to assist with the acquisition of existing units and to bring them up to HUD Housing Quality Standards and lead safety standards. To date, the One-to-Four Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program has funded four projects: 18-20 Cambria Road, 19 West Street, 20-22 Falmouth Road and 163 Jackson Road, resulting in a total of 11 new affordable housing units.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The City's Purchase/Rehabilitation Program has proven to be an effective tool for the development of affordable housing. The City will continue to administer this program, however, the City will also investigate new ways to streamline the review and approval process to ensure that housing developers can keep pace, to a greater extent, with the housing market.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. The One-to-Four Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Use the Newton Community Development Authority's (NCDA) acquisition ability to acquire property and develop affordable housing.**

In conjunction with the Newton Housing Authority, the City has developed legislation to give the NCDA, the legal entity in the City which can secure property, the "right of first refusal" in the event that a property funded with CDBG, HOME or Community Preservation Act funds is available for resale. With direct property acquisition capabilities, NCDA can play a stronger role in creating or retaining affordable housing in the city. The proposed changes would enable NCDA to acquire property directly without approval of the Board of Aldermen but with appropriate procedural oversight and would give the NCDA the opportunity to buy affordable properties before they enter the general housing market. During FY03, the Newton Housing and Community Development Division developed a proposal that would implement these changes. The draft legislation has been approved by the Board of Aldermen and has been forwarded to the Massachusetts State Senate.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Once the State approves the legislation to enable the NCDA to acquire property and develop affordable housing, the NCDA will investigate opportunities to use this new tool and pursue prospective properties as they become available.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. The Newton Community Development Authority's ability to acquire property to development affordable housing will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Continue to help streamline the comprehensive permit process.**

Chapter 774 of the Acts of 1969 (also known as Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws or the "Anti-Snob Zoning Act") was established to support the development of subsidized low- and moderate-income housing. The Act established a streamlined process that enables developers to make one comprehensive application to build affordable housing to a local Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). A comprehensive permit, which encompasses all local requirements and regulations including zoning, is reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may allow construction at a greater density than allowed by-right. In communities such as Newton, where less than ten percent of the housing stock is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, the ZBA's decision can be appealed to the State Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) if the application is denied or if ZBA conditions make the

project unfeasible. The Housing Appeals Committee may uphold a local ZBA decision or overrule the ZBA by granting or amending a comprehensive permit.

The comprehensive permit process is a significant resource for addressing the shortage of affordable housing in a community. Although Newton is limited in the amount of vacant land it has available for new residential developments, the City can still use the application process as a way to influence the amount and quality of the affordable units that are produced.

During the past fiscal year, the Newton Housing Partnership (NHP), a volunteer group of housing and planning professionals appointed by the Mayor to review and comment on all affordable housing-related activities in the community, continued to formalize their role in the comprehensive permit review process. Prior to a comprehensive permit hearing before the ZBA, the NHP works with the developer of the proposed development and makes recommendations on the number of affordable units, the size of affordable units compared to market-rate units, additional costs such as parking, etc. The Newton Housing Partnership also makes recommendations regarding the site design, including the materials, massing and density of a project, as well as how well it is integrated into an existing neighborhood. The Partnership also considers what amenities a proposed development includes and, if it is a family development, what resources are available for children.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The Newton Housing Partnership and City staff will continue to review applications for comprehensive permits and work collaboratively with developers to help them create affordable housing that meets the needs of the community. By working closely with developers before a proposed project is finalized, the Partnership and staff can help developers identify and address potential problems at an earlier stage in the development process.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Streamlining the comprehensive permit process will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Continue to support and finance large, multifamily housing developments.**

The scarcity of available, developable land and the high cost of development limits the amount of new affordable housing that can be constructed in Newton. To overcome this problem, the City can continue to support affordable housing by financing larger-scale rehabilitation projects (five or more units) and developing strategies to address the long-term preservation of existing affordable units. For example, the City funded 45 Pelham Street, a ten-unit rental development for low-income seniors, with both CDGB and Community Preservation Funds.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The City will continue to support the development of larger-scale projects that provide housing for underserved low- and moderate-income households in the community.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Supporting and financing large, multifamily housing developments will contribute to the creation of a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Provide relief from development-related fees for affordable housing.**

Various municipal fees increase the cost of developing affordable housing. By waiving all or a percentage of the fees, the City can reduce some of the predevelopment-related expenses associated with developing affordable housing. Municipal fees associated with housing development and rehabilitation can include special permit fees, site plan approval and extension fees, building permit fees, elevator fees (e.g. elderly housing, special needs), electrical/gas/sewer hook-up fees, land development application fees, administrative site/plan review fees and accessory apartment review fees. Development-related fees could be waived completely or partially depending on the number of affordable units and the term of their affordability.<sup>1</sup> Another variation of the fee waiver model is to defer fees until a developer receives permanent financing for a project.

In general, predevelopment-related fees are approximately five percent of the total cost of a project. While permits/fees are less of a line item expense than many other development costs, they are an additional expense to nonprofits that may already be stretching their financial resources.

Providing relief for development-related fees can be a significant way for the City to demonstrate its commitment to affordable housing without an annual budget allocation. Reduced fees directly impact the cost of development and help developers compete for non-City sources of funding due, in part, to the City's in-kind support.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Planning and Development Department staff will work with the City Assessor, Chief Budget Officer, public officials and nonprofit housing developers to determine the financial feasibility of reducing or eliminating development-related fees for affordable housing units.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Relief from development-related fees will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing.

❖ **Advocate for tax incentive or abatement programs that would allow for favorable tax consideration for owners and developers of affordable rental and homeownership units that include long-term affordability restrictions.**

Tax incentives can be used to encourage developers to produce affordable housing or to attract limited partners for affordable housing development. Local municipalities can create provisions to waive certain taxes as a way to support the production of low-income housing. For example, the City of Newton could consider a property rebate program which reduces or

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<sup>1</sup>Housing development projects in Newton that are funded with CDBG, HOME and/or Community Preservation Funds are deed restricted in perpetuity. Projects that are approved under M.G.L. 40B must adhere to the affordability requirements of the financing source, usually at least 30 years.

waives property taxes for owners of rental property who agree to comply with federal Section 8 housing assistance program rent restrictions. In mixed-income developments that consist of both market-rate and affordable units, the percentage of taxes affecting the subsidized unit could be waived/reduced. The City could also consider assessing the value of homes with affordability restrictions lower than homes without restrictions. This would reduce the tax burden placed on owners of deed-restricted affordable homes who are currently taxed as if their units could be sold at market-rate prices.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Over the next five years, Planning and Development Department staff will examine the feasibility of creating tax incentive or abatement programs in Newton as a way for the City to demonstrate its support for developing affordable housing.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Tax incentive or abatement programs will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

❖ **Create a Housing Trust Fund.**

The lack of available land and the high cost of acquiring any units that come on the market, make developing affordable housing in Newton prohibitive without large public subsidies. The annual allocation of federal housing development funds that the City receives is not adequate for meeting the needs outlined in the Housing Needs Assessment document. To help meet the demand for more affordable housing, the City will consider creating a Housing Trust Fund to help finance the development and preservation of affordable units in Newton. A Housing Trust Fund can augment existing resources for housing development and, in time, can become a significant funding vehicle for financing affordable units in the City.

On January 7, 2005, Governor Mitt Romney signed into law a measure that enables cities and towns to establish affordable housing trust funds to help produce housing for low- and moderate-income households. Prior to the signing of this legislation, state municipal finance law required municipalities to file home rule petitions for the approval of legislature to invest funds or deposit property into an affordable housing trust fund. This new local option provision establishes the necessary infrastructure for communities to create these funds.

Under the new law, a city or town appoints a board of at least five trustees, one of whom is the chief elected officer of the municipality. Several powers are delegated to the board including, accepting property from any entity, including funds from sources such as impact fees; purchasing or transferring property; borrowing and pledging property as collateral; executing deeds and leases; managing and making improvements to real property; extending time for payment of obligations to the trust; and overseeing funds designated by local ordinance or by-law to the trust. The trust is exempt from property or income tax, is subject to the open meeting law and is subject to uniform procurement processes with some exceptions.

The new law also allows cities and towns that have adopted the Community Preservation Act, such as Newton, to appropriate funds to the affordable housing trust fund so that these appropriations can be utilized for housing-related matters in accordance with the CPA.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Over the next five years, Planning and Development Department staff will examine the feasibility of creating an affordable housing trust fund as another way the City can financially support the development of affordable housing.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Creating an Affordable Housing Trust will contribute to the creation of a total of 53 affordable housing units.

**NEED #2:     **Create homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income residents.****

Though family incomes in Newton have increased, local housing prices have increased even more quickly. In 1999, the median price of a single-family home in Newton was \$439,625, which was 6.4 times the HUD median family income (MFI) of \$68,772. From January to June 2004, the median single-family home sales price in Newton was \$675,000, 8.2 times the current HUD MFI of \$82,600. Data suggests that a scarcity of starter homes has limited the number of younger homeowners aged 25 to 34 and even 35 to 44 years old. In addition, the inventory of lower-priced, entry-level housing stock remains limited throughout the region.

Furthermore, the 39 percent increase in cost-burdened<sup>2</sup> low- and moderate-income homeowners from 1990 to 2000 suggests that many low- and moderate-income households in Newton are choosing homeownership at all costs. In the last ten years, the homeownership rate among low- and moderate-income households in Newton has also slipped below 50 percent,<sup>3</sup> as compared to an overall homeownership rate of 67 percent. Therefore, there is a need to increase homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income residents.

**Objective:**

- ❖ Increase homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate- and middle-income people. Reduce the number of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income homeowners in Newton overly burdened by housing costs.

**Strategies:**

- ❖ **Continue funding Newton's homebuyer assistance programs (First Time Homebuyer and Newton Connection Homebuyer programs) and support use of the American Dream Downpayment Initiative.**

The City of Newton offers two homebuyer assistance programs: the First Time Homebuyer program (FTHB) and the Newton Connection Homebuyer program. The First Time Homebuyer program, which is funded with CDBG and HOME program funds, is available to first-time homebuyers who meet certain income-eligibility requirements. Eligible applicants

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<sup>2</sup> According to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), a household is "cost burdened" if it spends more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing costs. "Severely cost burdened" households spend more than half of their household incomes on housing costs.

<sup>3</sup> HUD, CHAS DATA, 1990 & 2000.

can receive up to \$90,000 in buy-down assistance towards the purchase of a home in Newton.

The Newton Connection program was developed as a companion to the existing FTHB program and is funded with Community Preservation Funds. The Newton Connection Homebuyer program provides \$90,000 towards the purchase of a home to income-eligible households looking to buy in Newton. Eligible homebuyers must work or live in Newton, have children enrolled in a Newton school, or have graduated from a Newton high school within the last ten years. This program serves households below 80 percent of area median income. Units assisted under both programs are deed restricted in perpetuity.

The American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) program was signed into law on December 16, 2003. The goal of the ADDI is to increase the homeownership rate, especially among lower-income and minority households, and to revitalize and stabilize communities. ADDI helps first-time homebuyers with the biggest hurdle to homeownership: down payment and closing costs. The program was created to assist low-income first-time homebuyers in purchasing single-family homes by providing funds for down payment, closing costs and rehabilitation carried out in conjunction with the assisted home purchase. ADDI funds may be used to purchase one- to four- family housing, condominium units, cooperative units or manufactured housing. Additionally, individuals who qualify for ADDI assistance must have incomes not exceeding 80 percent of area median income.

In FY04 and FY05, the WestMetro HOME Consortium received a total allocation of \$158,445, and Consortium members anticipate that in subsequent fiscal years they will receive additional ADDI allocations. The purpose of the WestMetro HOME Consortium's American Dream Downpayment Initiative Program is to pool ADDI funds received by the Consortium members. Up to \$10,000 per unit is available to low- and moderate-income households for down payment assistance. These funds help enable qualified households to purchase a housing unit in a Consortium community at an affordable price. When a Consortium member determines that it has a homeownership unit or units eligible for ADDI funds, the community can apply to the ADDI pool for up to 25 percent of the total fiscal year's allocation on a first-come, first-served basis. In Newton, ADDI funds can be used in conjunction with Newton's First Time Homebuyer program and Newton Connection Homebuyer program, thereby reducing the purchase price for first-time homebuyers even further.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Newton anticipates funding six families annually through its homebuyer assistance programs. Depending on the amount of funding available, the City will also encourage prospective first-time homebuyers to consider applying for funds under the American Dream Downpayment Initiative program. The City will cultivate interest in the availability of ADDI funds within the WestMetro HOME Consortium and try to leverage the funds with established homebuyer programs.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced and the number of NHRF cases funded. Newton's homebuyer assistance programs will contribute to creating 18 affordable housing units.

❖ **Develop a community outreach and education program on homeownership opportunities.**

Facilitate discussions and examine possible partnerships between the City and such large employers as Newton Wellesley Hospital and Boston College. Some examples of programs that the City may want to consider include:

1. An employee matching down payment program that would enhance and augment the Newton Connection and First Time Homebuyer programs.
2. A program that provides homeownership information and counseling sessions at job sites.
3. A home-sharing service such as Student Housing Exchange (see [www.studenthousingex.com](http://www.studenthousingex.com)), which matches homeowners with extra space with students or professionals who are able to provide homeowners with maintenance or extra income.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Discern interest in developing outside partnerships and collaborations with larger Newton employers.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. The development of a community outreach and education program on homeownership opportunities will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

**NEED #3: Create rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.**

Two-thirds of all low-income households in Newton are renters. From 1990 to 2000, approximately 350 elderly renters and 300 non-elderly renters moved into the ranks of those considered to be extremely low-, low- or moderate- income. Overall, lower-income renters increased 24 percent. Advertised rental housing on the market in Newton is priced at levels affordable (rents priced at or below 30 percent of a resident's income) to moderate-income residents earning up to \$66,080 but is largely unavailable to low-income residents earning less than \$41,300. Currently, 1,604 households, or 17 percent of all Newton renters, are considered extremely low-income households. In order for the market to maintain this current demographic distribution among renters in Newton, 17 percent of the rental units, or approximately seven out of every 40 units rented, would need to be affordable to low-income households at rents below \$620 per month. This amount is less than half of the fair market rent of \$1,419 for Newton.

Limited homeownership opportunities increase the demand for rental housing. Increased demand without a corresponding increase in the supply of rental units has pushed rental price levels up, as shown in the 22.5 percent increase in median gross rents in Newton from 1990 to 2000<sup>4</sup>. Low- and moderate-income renters now face housing cost burdens at rates equal to or greater than those of low- and moderate-income homeowners, but unlike homeowners, none of a renter's burden is captured as equity in their home. In addition, housing cost burden impedes a renter household's ability to save for future homeownership.

When these households are priced out of the market in Newton, increased demand is placed on rental assistance programs and existing subsidized rental units, including public housing units.

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000.

There is a great demand for these housing opportunities, but unfortunately, vacancies are scarce. The widening gap between subsidized, affordable rents and market-rate rents has turned “housing of last resort” into “housing as the only option” for an increasing number of households in Newton. For example, the Newton Housing Authority has extremely long waiting lists with estimated waits of approximately three to five years and up to ten years for certain family units. Clearly, there is a need to increase rental opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.

### **Objectives:**

- ❖ Give priority to affordable rental developments using City funds.
- ❖ Facilitate the production of accessory apartments as affordable rental housing.

### **Strategies:**

- ❖ **Streamline the accessory apartment zoning process and offer a fund specifically for the development of accessory apartments through CPA or CDBG loans and/or grants.**

An accessory apartment is a separate unit within a single-family, owner-occupied housing unit. Newton requires a conditional use permit within an area zoned as single-family residential for approval of accessory units. Newton currently allows for the expansion of up to 1,000 square feet for accessory units through special permit. The current process is cumbersome, and very few homeowners have gone through the process of seeking approval for a special permit to add an accessory apartment. There are opportunities to improve the legislation, such as increasing the allowable square footage or changing the zoning to enable people to develop accessory apartments as regulated without having to apply for a special permit. Streamlining the application process in order to enhance the production and use of these units for affordable housing is key. The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund can provide financial and technical assistance to homeowners interested in developing an accessory apartment in their home.

### ***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The City will continue to work with Community Living Network, Inc. (CLN) to develop an accessory apartment program and revise zoning regulations. The City and CLN hope to have an accessory apartment pilot program approved by the Board of Aldermen and capitalized with Community Preservation Funds in 2005.

### ***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City’s ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of rental housing units produced. Streamlining the accessory apartment zoning process and offering a fund specifically for the development of accessory apartments through CPA or CDBG loans and/or grants will contribute to developing 25 units of affordable rental housing.

- ❖ **Consider developing a program that provides a one-time rent subsidy for tenants who need assistance moving from transitional to permanent housing.**

The City was asked by human service providers to examine the feasibility of developing a rent subsidy program based on a successful pilot program run by the State Department of Transitional Assistance in 2004. Based on this model, the program would provide a one-time rent subsidy to a low-income formerly homeless household living in transitional housing in Newton to help them move into an affordable rental unit in Newton. Subsidies would offer

a one-time payment to affordable housing providers to cover first and last month's rent, as well as a partial subsidy towards the annual rent.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Determine the level of need for a program such as this and the amount of funds needed to capitalize the program. Identify nonprofit organizations that may be interested in partnering with the City in developing and managing the program.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. A program that provides a one-time subsidy for tenants who need assistance moving from transitional to permanent housing will help create affordable living opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

**NEED #4:    Enable the elderly to “age in place” without overly burdensome housing costs.**

There are approximately 3,584 extremely low-, low- and moderate-income elderly households in Newton. Elderly households of all income levels are one of the most frequently cost burdened and severely cost burdened households in Newton. In particular, elderly renters are the most severely cost-burdened population. Elderly households comprise 59 percent of the City's extremely low-income households. There is a need to enable the elderly to “age in place” without overly burdensome housing costs.

**Objective:**

- ❖ Reduce the number of extremely low-, low- and moderate-income elderly in Newton who are overly burdened by housing costs and enable elderly residents to “age in place.”

**Strategies:**

- ❖ **Continue to fund Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund programs that benefit Newton elders.**
- ❖ **Examine the feasibility of developing a program that allows elders to donate their homes in exchange for services that allow them to remain in their homes and age in place.**

This type of program could provide life tenancy and free maintenance for elderly homeowners who donate their homes to the Newton Housing Authority or a nonprofit housing provider who is willing to provide services in exchange for the donation.

Donating homeowners would age in place and receive services from the agency to which they donate their housing. The homeowners or their estates would receive a tax benefit for their donation.

- ❖ **Consider developing an elder home-sharing service.**  
The City should consider facilitating the development of an elder home-sharing service similar to one offered by the University of Massachusetts Community Services and Housing Resource Center HomeSharing Initiative. The HomeSharing program matches people who

are interested in sharing space in their home with people who will provide services in exchange for an affordable place to live. The HomeSharing program enables elderly residents to stay in their homes longer by providing such benefits as cost sharing, companionship, an overnight presence, yard work or housework, additional income and basic elder care.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

In the next five years, determine if there is interest in developing the new programs listed above. Identify nonprofit partners to assist in developing and administering the programs.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of cases funded by the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund. Programs that enable the elderly to "age in place" will preserve affordable units and contribute to the 300 total cases funded by the Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund.

**NEED #5: Support existing emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing facilities for homeless individuals and families; support prevention programs for individuals and families at-risk of homelessness; continue to work to create new units of permanent supportive housing, with some designated for people who are chronically homeless; and improve the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium's ability to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide basis, including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.**<sup>5</sup>

As stated previously, there is tremendous need for more permanent affordable housing, including units designated for people who are chronically homeless. This unmet need creates a backlog in the emergency shelter and transitional housing system, and facilities operate at capacity with extensive waiting lists because their residents have nowhere else to go. At the same time, as stated in the Public Services section of this Plan, there is a growing need for homelessness prevention assistance, particularly in the form of financial assistance and legal assistance to prevent eviction. Short-term assistance to help families and individuals living on the brink of homelessness can prevent them from becoming homeless and entering the inundated shelter and transitional housing system.

Through the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and CDBG programs, the City of Newton currently provides operating assistance to many emergency shelter and transitional housing facilities and homelessness prevention programs. Until more units of permanent affordable housing, with and without services, are produced for the people currently in the emergency shelter and transitional housing system, in conjunction with prevention assistance reaching everyone who is at-risk, it is anticipated that the backlog of individuals within the emergency shelter and transitional housing system will continue, and the need for operating assistance will remain. Additionally, as the housing market continues to flourish at a rate well beyond the cost of living, homelessness prevention programs will continue to need financial assistance to meet the demand for these services.

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<sup>5</sup> HUD's definition of chronically homeless is "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either: a) been continuously homeless for a year or more, or b) has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

In addition to the specific needs listed above, the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium also identified two broader planning and coordination needs: improve the Consortium's coordinated response to assist unsheltered chronically homeless people with appropriate street outreach and access to services and improve the Consortium's ability to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide level, including discharge planning issues.

### **Objectives:**

- ❖ Work towards ending chronic homelessness and other homelessness within the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum of Care area.

### **Strategies:**

- ❖ **Implement a five-part strategy for ending chronic homelessness. The centerpiece of the strategy is maintaining and expanding the Consortium's two primary assets: a strong homelessness prevention infrastructure and an extensive stock of permanent supportive housing.**

*Planning and Coordination:* The Planning Committee of the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium sets goals and action steps to address chronic homelessness. It is assisted by the City of Newton in making sure this strategy moves forward. The Planning Committee and City of Newton have also begun discussions with the MetroWest Continuum of Care regarding development of a joint ten-year plan to end all homelessness, with priority on ending chronic homelessness. Regardless of whether a formalized plan is developed jointly, the two continua are working together more closely. The two have a natural connection: chronically homeless individuals from this area primarily use shelters in the MetroWest Continuum, and the permanent supportive housing in the Consortium helps meet the housing needs of homeless people using shelters in MetroWest. The City of Newton and Advocates, Inc., which is the primary housing provider for the chronically homeless in both continua, are leading this coordination effort with MetroWest.

*Data Collection:* The Consortium conducts an annual point-in-time survey of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people that has been the first step towards data collection on chronic homelessness. Starting in 2004, more nuanced information has been gathered regarding disabilities and length of homelessness in order to better enumerate this subpopulation. These efforts were continued and further improved in 2005. The City of Newton will also receive Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program funds from HUD to establish a dedicated Homeless Management Information System, which will allow for better data collection on the characteristics of the chronically homeless and their needs.

*Prevention:* The Consortium has a strong system in place to respond when disabled individuals are in crisis and at-risk of losing their housing. It includes psychiatric crisis intervention, short-term respite care, case management, financial assistance with rent and utility arrearages and relocation, legal services, eviction prevention and stabilization services for those transitioning to housing. The new Advocates Homeless Prevention Initiative and the ESG-funded Mediation Works Eviction Prevention Program, both implemented in 2004, further strengthen this system. The prevention strategy is to maintain this base of resources and to continue to supplement it, as gaps are identified, so that low-income disabled persons can remain in housing, both those who were previously homeless and those who were not, but would be at-risk for chronic homelessness.

*Outreach, Assessment, and Access to Mainstream Resources:* The strategy is to take methods and protocols being used by providers in some communities and replicate them in all three of the Consortium communities. For years, the Brookline Health Department and the Brookline Community Mental Health Center have conducted and are skilled in street outreach to the unsheltered homeless, especially to persons with serious psychiatric illness and/or substance abuse. They assess and engage individuals, and assist them with accessing and obtaining shelter, services, mainstream benefits and housing. As part of the improved planning process, Brookline, Newton and Watertown have begun to work together via the Planning Committee and the Consortium to learn about the Brookline protocols for replication in Newton and Watertown. Next steps also involve working more closely with the local police departments to improve street outreach, assessment and referral. Additionally, the selection of Newton as one of three Massachusetts communities to lead a Social Security Administration outreach and screening initiative targeting the chronically homeless (implemented by Advocates, Inc.) will significantly advance the Consortium's strategy of improved access to mainstream benefits for this population.

*Permanent Supportive Housing:* The Consortium's greatest asset in preventing and reducing chronic homelessness is its extensive stock of permanent supportive housing. As part of the annual application process for Continuum of Care funds, the Consortium supports the creation of additional permanent supportive housing funds by assigning the highest priority to projects that produce new units of permanent supportive housing.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments and Outcomes:***

Annually an additional 250 families and individuals who are at-risk of homelessness are expected to receive assistance through the use of CDBG and ESG funds. It is estimated that an additional four to five units of permanent supportive housing will be created in Newton during each year of this five-year plan. Additionally, the Consortium will implement a continuum-wide model of outreach, assessment and accessing mainstream resources utilizing the Brookline model. These accomplishments will have two outcomes: improving accessibility and availability of decent housing and essential services for homeless individuals and families, and increasing affordable housing opportunities.

❖ **Continue to provide operating support to the emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities using CDBG and ESG funds.**

An important part of the Consortium's objective of ending both chronic homeless and other homelessness is the provision of emergency shelter and transitional housing. As stated earlier, until all persons at-risk are able to maintain their housing and a sufficient number of affordable housing opportunities are created, emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities will remain necessary.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments and Outcomes:***

Annually, through the use of CDBG and ESG funds, the Housing and Community Development Program hopes to assist approximately 200 homeless people through the provision of operating assistance for emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities. The provision of emergency shelter and transitional housing will have the outcome of improved accessibility and availability of decent housing and essential services to homeless individuals and families.

❖ **Work with the MetroWest Continuum, other regional continua and the state to plan and implement strategies to end homelessness on a regional and state-wide level, including ensuring that discharge planning issues are appropriately addressed.**

Staff in the Housing and Community Development Division of the City of Newton's Planning and Development Department serves as the Consortium's contact in regional and state-wide planning efforts to end homelessness, including discharge planning efforts. City staff will continue to attend quarterly meetings for local continua, organized by the Department of Transitional Assistance, that are intended to improve statewide coordination, including review of the state's implementation of discharge planning policy and inappropriate discharges being seen at the local level. In addition to facilitating state-wide planning around homeless, these meetings offer an opportunity for continua representatives to come together and share experiences and learn from each other.

As stated earlier, the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Continuum and the WestMetro Continuum have also begun working together to coordinate planning efforts. It is anticipated that this collaboration will continue to increase over the coming years.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments and Outcomes:***

Related to the discharge planning strategy, the City will monitor the discharges into the three Consortium communities to ensure that if an inappropriate discharge occurs, the appropriate service and housing provider agencies are contacted immediately to provide any needed assistance to the person being discharged. In terms of the regional and state-wide planning efforts, the Consortium will continue to participate in state-sponsored quarterly meetings and to work collaboratively with the MetroWest Continuum and other continua in the region. These coordination efforts will have two outcomes: improving accessibility and availability of decent housing and essential services for homeless individuals and families, and increasing affordable housing opportunities.

**NEED #6: Enhance and expand local support for affordable housing and maximize the effectiveness of local resources through collaboration, partnerships, education and efficient processes.**

The demand for subsidized housing for extremely low- and low-income households includes an increased demand for residents with special needs. As the waiting lists for affordable, assisted-living units expand, many individuals with special needs must take the first unit available, including one in public housing facilities. Public housing agencies, in order to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse base of low-income residents, are responding with a wider variety of social services for assisted living within subsidized developments. These services add further strain on agencies with limited units, limited resources and divergent areas of expertise.

One of the important observations voiced at focus group sessions with housing and service providers is the critical link between services and affordable housing. Strong links and partnerships between services and affordable housing can accelerate the placement process and create more of a quality living environment for consumers.

The need to increase local support and maximize the effectiveness of local resources was a running theme throughout the Consolidated Plan focus groups. As service providers experience substantial cutbacks to their funding, many are being forced to collaborate and form new partnerships in order to continue providing services to their clients. Furthermore, as housing development projects become more complicated and costly, there is a greater need for political buy-in and support from local leaders, political advocacy groups and the general public. Education, public outreach and advocacy in order to combat not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) attitudes that are based on misinformation were identified as being key to increasing local support. Overall, there is a need to increase local support for affordable housing and to

maximize the effectiveness of local resources through collaboration, partnerships, education and efficient processes.

### **Objective A: Streamline Processes**

- ❖ Make the development and permitting process more streamlined for the city and affordable housing providers.

#### **Strategies:**

- ❖ **Streamline City approval and financial support of small-scale residential developments.**

*See Need #1, strategies to meet Objective B.*

#### ***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

The City will continue to support the Purchase Rehabilitation Program, and in the next year Planning and Community Development staff will work closely with the Newton Housing Partnership, the Community Preservation Committee, and affordable housing developers to identify additional ways to streamline the approval process for small-scale residential developments. Housing Development staff also plans to develop a completed One-Stop Application template for affordable housing developers to use as reference. This model will help developers submit completed applications as incomplete applications cause delays in the project review process.

#### ***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Streamlining City approval and financial support of small-scale residential developments will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units.

### **Objective B: Maximize Collaboration and Partnerships**

- ❖ Maximize effectiveness of local resources through collaboration and partnerships.

#### **Strategies:**

- ❖ **Encourage joint ventures between community housing developers and human and social service providers.**

As part of the development process, the City will request linkages between new affordable rental units and service providers, when appropriate, to increase the number of units in the community with supportive services.

- ❖ **Encourage the use of the "HousingWorks" clearinghouse for information about affordable housing and the provision of services.**

HousingWorks is an on-line service (found at [www.housingworks.net](http://www.housingworks.net)) designed for individuals and organizations seeking information about affordable housing. HousingWorks was developed to help groups as diverse as state and federal agencies, for-profit management companies, housing authorities, housing advocates and the homeless communicate, share and distribute information more easily and efficiently.

HousingWorks, which was developed to reduce or eliminate barriers to subsidized, affordable and special needs housing, provides a variety of information, including HUD data, contact information about provider organizations with a description of their mission, updates on section 8 waitlists, location of available units, etc.

The City of Newton will encourage local affordable housing and service providers to use this system. Use of the HousingWorks service would enhance linkages between Newton's affordable housing providers.

❖ **Explore the feasibility of providing neighborhood incentives for affordable housing development.**

This initiative would pair City-funded neighborhood improvements with affordable housing development by providing incentives for neighborhoods to support affordable housing projects.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

In the coming year, Planning and Community Development staff will consider requiring developers to form partnerships and link services, where appropriate, to leverage financial resources. In addition, housing and community development staff will help housing developers and human and social service providers to collaborate on housing development projects.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement:***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Maximizing effectiveness of local resources through collaboration and partnerships will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units and funding a total of 312 Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund cases.

**Objective C: Encourage Education and Outreach**

- ❖ This objective focuses on gaining citywide support of affordable housing by educating the Newton community on the importance and value of affordable housing. It also includes keeping public officials, board members, nonprofits and City staff highly informed and proficient in addressing housing issues. Misconceptions and the lack of education and outreach on the need for affordable housing affect a community's ability to provide housing to people who are most in need of it. The lack of public education and awareness makes it difficult for the Newton Housing Partnership and social services providers, whose clients need housing, to advocate for a comprehensive affordable housing agenda in the City. Education and outreach can be an important means of creating neighborhood support where potential developments will be located and thereby, avoiding costly delays. Concurrently, the City needs to formalize its support for housing affordability and underscore the importance of working toward the goal that ten percent of the housing stock in Newton is affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

**Strategies:**

- ❖ **Consider providing resources for City board and committee members so that they can stay informed.**

The City should consider recommending that board and committee members take at least one training seminar relating to affordable housing, local planning or zoning per year to stay current on the latest rules and regulations affecting their work.

❖ **Provide opportunities to inform Newton residents on issues related to housing affordability.**

The City, local nonprofits and housing advocates should work collaboratively to inform the community on issues related to the lack of affordable housing for low, moderate- and middle-income households.

***Proposed Annual Accomplishments:***

Send notices and offer training seminars such as ones hosted by the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) and the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative run by the University of Massachusetts Extension to Housing Partnership members, the Community Preservation Committee, the Planning and Zoning Boards, the Board of Alderman, the Mayor, City staff, nonprofit service providers and affordable housing developers.

***Proposed Outcome and Performance Measurement***

The proposed outcome is to create affordability. The City's ability to create affordability will be measured by the number of new affordable housing units produced. Education and outreach will contribute to creating a total of 53 affordable housing units and funding a total of 312 Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund cases.

***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

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There are significant obstacles that make developing affordable housing in Newton a difficult task to achieve. The biggest impediment to developing affordable housing in Newton is lack of available developable land for new housing coupled with extremely high land prices, restrictive zoning and the cost of life safety requirements. High housing prices have significantly reduced homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income individuals. From 1998 to 2004, the median single family sales price in Newton increased approximately 74 percent from \$397,000 to \$691,400.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, there is an overall shortage of rental units throughout the city of Newton, as well as extremely low vacancy rates. Fair market rental prices in the past five years have also increased 57 percent, rising from \$906 to \$1,419 in 2004. Data suggests that rising housing prices have not been matched by rising incomes among Newton's lower-income residents, and the total number of families considered to be of low and moderate income rose 20 percent from 1990 to 2000.<sup>7</sup>

To create feasible affordable housing development opportunities, affordable housing developers need to be able to compete in the real estate market with quicker response times and must have the financial resources to develop a project from the predevelopment stage through occupancy. Lack of sufficient operating funds and capital can be significant obstacles to the development of housing. In addition, the approval and permitting processes are complicated and time-consuming, and there is frequently neighborhood opposition to proposed affordable housing developments. The lack of available developable land underscores the need to evaluate existing zoning and land use policies that impede development except for that which is by-right. Changes to the zoning ordinance require Aldermanic approval, and with a general lack

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<sup>6</sup> From the web site found at [www.bankerandtradesman.com](http://www.bankerandtradesman.com).

<sup>7</sup> Though overall median income levels in Newton have risen. 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census.

of community awareness and support for affordable housing, it is difficult to revise current land use policies.

Finally, although the Community Preservation Fund is an extremely important financial resource for the development of community housing, the City's federal funding is shrinking. The amount of CDBG and HOME funding continues to diminish each year, making it more difficult for the City to support its nonprofit affordable housing providers and fill the gap in financing for affordable housing developments.

# **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX A: HUD TABLE 1A HOMELESS NEEDS

### Homeless Individuals

		Estimated Need	Current Inventory	Unmet Need/Gap	Relative Priority <sup>1</sup>
Beds / Units	Emergency Shelter	20	15	5	Low
	Transitional Housing	9	4	5	Medium
	Permanent Housing	167	117	50	High
	<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>60</b>	
Supportive Services Slots	Job Training				
	Case Management				
	Substance Abuse Treatment				
	Mental Health Care				
	Housing Placement				
	Life Skills Training				
	Other				
Subpopulations	Chronic Substance Abusers				
	Seriously Mentally Ill				
	Dually Diagnosed				
	Veterans				
	Persons with HIV/AIDS				
	Victims of Domestic Violence				
	Youth				
	Other				

### Homeless Persons in Families with Children (COC)

		Estimated Need	Current Inventory	Unmet Need/Gap	Relative Priority
Beds / Units	Emergency Shelter	169	154	15	Low
	Transitional Housing	83	83	0	Medium
	Permanent Housing	27	12	15	High
	<b>Total</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>30</b>	
Supportive Services Slots	Job Training				
	Case Management				
	Substance Abuse Treatment				
	Mental Health Care				
	Housing Placement				
	Life Skills Training				
	Other				
Subpopulations	Chronic Substance Abusers				
	Seriously Mentally Ill				
	Dually Diagnosed				
	Veterans				
	Persons with HIV/AIDS				
	Victims of Domestic Violence				
	Youth				
	Other				

<sup>1</sup> Relative priority rankings obtained from page 22, of the 2004 Continuum of Care Application, Exhibit 1.

**APPENDIX B: HUD TABLE 2A  
HOUSING PRIORITY NEEDS SUMMARY TABLE**

PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS (households)		Priority Need Level High, Medium, Low		Unmet Need	Goals
Renter	Small Related	0-30%	L	175	–
		31-50%	M	145	–
		51-80%	H	235	20 units
	Large Related	0-30%	L	8	–
		31-50%	L	4	–
		51-80%	L	15	–
	Elderly	0-30%	L	473	–
		31-50%	L	219	–
		51-80%	L	153	–
	All Other	0-30%	H	245	1 unit
		31-50%	H	225	2 units
		51-80%	H	290	2 units
Owner	0-30%	H	1,790	300 cases	
	31-50%	L	8,397	7 cases	
	51-80%	M	2,562	18 units 5 cases	
Special Needs		0-80%	M	80-90	10 units
<b>Total Goals</b>					53 units 312 cases
<b>Total 215 Goals</b>					53 units 312 cases
<b>Total 215 Renter Goals</b>					25 units
<b>Total 215 Owner Goals</b>					312 cases 18 units

## APPENDIX C: COST BURDENS BY INCOME LEVEL, 2000

*Table A-1: Extremely Low-Income (<30 Percent MFI) Cost Burdens*

	RENTERS			OWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Total extremely low-income households	1,604	918	686	913	560	353
Percent with housing problems	59%	52%	67%	89%	92%	85%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	56%	52%	62%	89%	92%	85%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	44%	38%	53%	78%	77%	81%

*Table A-2: Low-Income (31-50 Percent MFI) Cost Burdens*

	RENTERS			OWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Total low-income households	791	334	457	1,094	720	374
Percent with housing problems	78%	66%	87%	77%	73%	84%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	75%	66%	82%	77%	73%	84%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	42%	43%	40%	43%	35%	59%

*Table A-3: Moderate-Income (51-80 Percent MFI) Cost Burdens*

	RENTERS			OWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Total moderate-income households	1,178	288	890	1,400	764	636
Percent with housing problems	63%	57%	65%	53%	34%	75%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	59%	53%	61%	50%	34%	70%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	13%	12%	14 %	32%	16%	52%

Table A-4: Middle- and Higher-Income (>80 Percent MFI) Cost Burdens

	RENTERS			OWNERS		
	Total Renters	Elderly	Non-elderly	Total Owners	Elderly	Non-elderly
Total middle- and higher-income households	5,931	548	5,383	18,298	3,900	14,398
Percent with housing problems	14%	23%	13%	15%	9%	17%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	12%	21%	12%	15%	9%	16%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	1%	6%	0.4%	3%	3%	3%

## APPENDIX D: HOUSING PROBLEMS AND COST BURDENS BY FAMILY SIZE AND INCOME, 2000

*Table B-1: Extremely Low-Income (<30 Percent MFI) Housing Problems and Cost Burdens*

Household Type and Income	RENTERS		OWNERS	
	Small Households	Large Households	Small Households	Large Households
Total extremely low-income households	250	32	190	45
Percent with housing problems	74%	88%	90%	56%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	70%	25%	90%	56%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	66%	25%	84%	56%

*Table B-2: Low-Income (31-50 Percent MFI) Housing Problems and Cost Burdens*

Household Type and Income	RENTERS		OWNERS	
	Small Households	Large Households	Small Households	Large Households
Total low-income households	175	28	220	44
Percent with housing problems	83%	86%	86%	77%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	83%	14%	86%	77%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	31%	14%	61%	77%

*Table B-3: Moderate-Income (51-80 Percent MFI) Housing Problems and Cost Burdens*

Household Type and Income	RENTERS		OWNERS	
	Small Households	Large Households	Small Households	Large Households
Total moderate-income households	385	40	323	103
Percent with housing problems	66%	63%	80%	77%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	61%	38%	76%	57%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	10%	0%	59%	53%

Table B-4: Middle- and Higher-Income (>80 Percent MFI) Housing Problems and Cost Burdens

Household Type and Income	RENTERS		OWNERS	
	Small Households	Large Households	Small Households	Large Households
Total middle- and higher-income households	2,135	174	10,425	1,963
Percent with housing problems	14%	51%	16%	17%
Percent cost burden <30 percent	11%	22%	15%	15%
Percent cost burden <50 percent	0%	6%	3%	3%

## **APPENDIX E: EXISTING PROGRAMS AND TRENDS OF AFFORDABLE UNIT DEVELOPMENT IN NEWTON**

### **I. HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**

Newton receives approximately \$700,000 in federal Community Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funds annually, which it utilizes to create, preserve, purchase and rehabilitate affordable housing in the city. A significant portion of CDBG funds and all HOME funds are allocated toward increasing the number of affordable housing units and/or assisting low- and moderate-income households in purchasing and/or upgrading existing homes in Newton. From 1991 to 2005, HOME and CDBG funds have been used to leverage other funding, which has led to the creation of 329 units of long-term, deed-restricted affordable housing in Newton.

#### *CDBG Housing Development Projects*

In FY05, Newton will utilize \$479,470 in CDBG funds specifically on affordable housing development projects. The City's housing development funds are used in part to assist the efforts of many active nonprofit housing developers. These include the Newton Community Development Foundation (NCDF), Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization (CAN-DO), Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE), Newton-Wellesley-Weston Committee for Community Living (NWW), The Second Step and Riverside Community Care. During the past year, CDBG and/or HOME funds were allocated to several new housing development projects, all of which were subject to a minimum 50-year affordability requirement.

#### *HOME First Time Homebuyer's Program*

In FY05, Newton allocated \$189,244 in HOME funding for the First Time Homebuyer Program to provide assistance to income-eligible first time homebuyers purchasing units in Newton. The program offers up to \$90,000 in below-market interest rate loans, as well as up to \$5,000 in the form of a grant for closing cost assistance. This program helps to mitigate some of the existing obstacles that prevent low- and moderate-income households from purchasing homes in Newton.

#### *CDBG/HOME 1-4 Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program*

In an effort to expedite the approval process for HOME- and CDBG-funded projects, in FY02 the Housing and Community Development Division (Division) implemented a new program: the 1-4 Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program. This program is set up specifically to streamline the approval process for projects that do not require any zoning changes. Under this new process, as soon as an agency identifies a potential affordable housing development project, Division staff meets to review the project proposal. After staff reviews the proposed project and assesses its financial feasibility, a funding commitment can be made. Because the Planning and Development Board and the Mayor have already approved the program guidelines, no additional approvals beyond the staff level are necessary. This allows affordable housing developers to make quick decisions about site acquisition in a fast-moving real estate market.

In FY04, the City of Newton entered its first full year of administering the 1-4 Family Purchase/Rehabilitation Program, which provides up to \$100,000 per unit of assistance for

developers and nonprofits to acquire property designated for affordable housing. The assistance went directly towards the acquisition of property, which also lessens the burden on and provide incentives for developers to create affordable housing units within the City.

#### *Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund (NHRF)*

The Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund, also funded by the CDBG program, provides funds for housing rehabilitation for Newton residents who meet federal income guidelines. Funds are available in the form of grants, deferred loans and low-interest loans. NHRF also provides technical assistance from rehabilitation specialists, including lead paint inspections, and financial counseling by financial officers.

Funds can be used for a variety of housing projects such as:

- Modifying unsafe and/or unhealthy conditions
- Renovations to accommodate people with disabilities
- Removal of lead paint, asbestos and other hazards

#### *NHRF Small Grant Program*

This program provides funds to residents over 62 years old and/or people with disabilities. The maximum grant is \$3,000, and there is no repayment. This program is widely used to make small improvements for homeowners.

#### *NHRF Low Income Grant Program*

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to qualified households for housing rehabilitation. There is no grant repayment unless the house is sold within ten years.

#### *NHRF Lead Paint/Asbestos Hazard Abatement Grant*

Grants of up to \$15,000 are available to remove lead paint and/or asbestos hazards. It is often recognized that landlords hesitate to rent to households with young children solely because of the state and federal lead paint laws. The NHRF program offers grants and below-market interest rate loans for the de-leading of properties in Newton. Providing financial assistance encourages landlords to de-lead properties, which in turn, makes more units available to LMI families with small children.

#### *NHRF Historic Preservation Loans*

The purpose of this program is to encourage appropriate repairs to historic properties. Funds are provided in the form of forgivable deferred loans.

#### *Utilization of ENERGY STAR Products*

In 2002, HUD, the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy agreed to collaborate in the endorsement and support of ENERGY STAR qualified products in HUD-financed and -assisted housing. The partnership encourages federal programs such as CDBG and HOME to incorporate ENERGY STAR products and practices in new construction and rehabilitation. An ENERGY STAR building is at least 30 percent more energy efficient than a comparable building constructed to meet 1993 Model Energy Code.<sup>2</sup> To the greatest extent possible, housing projects that are assisted with City CDBG and HOME Program funds will meet ENERGY STAR standards.

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<sup>2</sup> Letter from Roger D. Colton, Fisher, Sheehan & Colton, dated October 24, 2004.

## **II. Community Preservation Act**

In November 2002, Newton voters adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Money raised from a one percent surcharge on real estate taxes and a Massachusetts state matching fund is used to acquire, create and preserve open space; acquire and preserve historic resources; acquire, create and preserve land for recreation use; create, preserve and support community housing; and rehabilitate or restore these acquisitions/developments. The CPA provides an additional funding resource for affordable housing developers, and CPA-funded community housing can benefit households up to 100 percent of area median income.

CPA funds can also be used to assist private affordable housing developers in leveraging other federal and state funds, and can be used to fund both large- and small-scale multi-family developments which are not eligible to receive CDBG or HOME funding.

During FY03, the City of Newton participated in its first full year utilizing CPA funds. That year, \$1.2 million was expended on projects classified as community housing, while an additional \$1.1 million was spent on NAME, a project combining community housing and open space. In FY04, \$975,000 was allocated for community housing projects. As of May 2005, \$2,161,710 in Community Preservation Funds have been reserved for community housing projects.

### *Newton Connection Homebuyer Program*

The CPA-funded Newton Connection Homebuyer Program provides up to \$90,000 to income-eligible persons that are looking to purchase a home in Newton and that have a Newton connection. A connection is defined as someone who lives or works in Newton, has children enrolled in a Newton school or has graduated from a Newton high school within the last ten years. The program was developed as a companion to the already-existing First Time Homebuyer Program, which is open to income-eligible homebuyers who have not owned property during the past three years. The Newton Connection Homebuyer Program is in its pilot year. An anticipated minimum of five low- and moderate-income households will be assisted each year.

## **III. Other Strategies**

### **A. Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance**

Newton's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) allows the City to address housing needs for yet another economic demographic, households at or below 120 percent of AMI. The IZO strengthens the partnership between the City's Planning and Development Department and the Newton Housing Authority in their goal of preserving and enhancing economic diversity.

The 15 percent IZO was adopted in April 2003 and amended in December 2004. The IZO applies to all two-or-more unit new developments requiring a special permit. Among the several components of the IZO is a provision that allows developers to increase density by .5 units for every affordable unit created. This lowers the acquisition cost of land per unit for developers. Another significant component of the IZO is a provision that requires developers to make a cash payment to a municipal agency that will be used for the future development of affordable housing units, providing the proposed development

is less than six units. The City will use the cash payments to subsidize the development of affordable housing units.

**B. Newton Community Development Authority**

The Newton Community Development Authority (NCDA) was established in 1975 to act as an urban renewal agency and as an agent of the City. Currently, the NCDA's primary function is to act on behalf of the City to secure mortgages necessary for affordable housing development, housing rehabilitation and economic development projects funded with CDBG, HOME and Community Preservation Act funds.

Division staff has proposed legislation to allow the NCDA to rapidly acquire property to preserve affordability for households that qualify as low- or moderate-income. Currently, the NCDA is legally allowed only to purchase property from the City, which, by law, must undertake a very time-consuming process in order to acquire property. Therefore, in most cases, the NCDA cannot act swiftly enough to preserve existing affordable housing units that are for sale.

The proposed change in the legislation will allow the NCDA to hold property on a short-term basis and resell it as quickly as possible to eligible buyers in accordance with the restrictions placed by local, state and federal housing programs. During FY04, the City's Board of Aldermen approved the proposed legislative changes. The City is currently waiting for State Senate approval of the proposed changes to the Home Rule legislation.

**Trends of Affordable Unit Development in Newton**

<b>CDBG HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS</b>			
<b>Total Annual Funds</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Total Annual Affordable Units Created/Assisted</b>	<b>Total Affordable Units in Five Years</b>
Est. \$479,470	Program will continue at a stable funding level	11	53
<b>INCLUSIONARY ZONING (15 PERCENT ORDINANCE) PROJECTS</b>			
<b>Average Total Annual Construction</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Total Annual Affordable Units Created</b>	<b>Total Affordable Units in Five Years</b>
15	15 percent of total units dedicated for affordability	2	20

<b>NEWTON HOUSING REHABILITATION FUND ASSISTANCE</b>			
<b>Average Number Units Rehabilitated Per Year</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Average Total Affordable Units Rehabilitated Per Year</b>	<b>Total Assisted Households in Five Years</b>
60	Current funding will continue	62	312 cases
<b>HOME FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER PROGRAM</b>			
<b>Average Total Annual Funds</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Average Total Assistance Loans Per Year</b>	<b>Total Assisted Households in Five Years</b>
\$64,145	Program will continue pace of 14 total households assisted in the 3.5 year history of the program	4	20
<b>NEWTON CONNECTION HOMEBUYER PROGRAM</b>			
<b>Total Annual Funds</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Total Annual Affordable Units Created</b>	<b>Total Affordable Units in Five Years</b>
\$500,000	Program will be funded \$500,000 per year, allocating \$90,000 per household	3	15
<b>NEW AFFORDABLE UNITS THROUGH 40B COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT</b>			
<b>Average Number 40B Units Built Per Year</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Average Total Affordable Units Created Per Year</b>	<b>Total Assisted Households in Five Years</b>
20	Estimate based on number of affordable units developed by two most recent 40B projects—Arbor Point at Woodland Station (36) and Avalon at Chestnut Hill (43)—and limited potential sites for large-scale development	20	100
<b>ELDER/PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE</b>			
<b>Average Number of Units Rehabilitated Per Year</b>	<b>Assumption</b>	<b>Average Total Affordable Units Rehabilitated Per Year</b>	<b>Total Assisted Households in Five Years</b>
60	Current funding will continue	60	300 cases

### Summary of Projected LMI Households in Newton Receiving Affordability Assistance

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>AVERAGE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED</b>	<b>FIVE-YEAR TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS ASSISTED</b>
CDBG Housing Development Projects	11	53
Inclusionary Zoning	2	10
First Time Homebuyer Program	4	20
Newton Connection Homebuyer Program	3	15
40B Comprehensive Permits	20	100
<b>Subtotal: Affordable Units Added</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>198</b>
Elder/People with Disabilities Rehabilitation*	60	300
Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund Program*	5	10
<b>Subtotal: LMI Homeowners Assisted</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>Total LMI Households Assisted</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>508</b>

\*Rehabilitation assistance does not include affordability restrictions except for financing to nonprofit housing development organizations.

# **PART V**

## **NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

# **ACCESSIBILITY**

This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessment and the strategic plan for accessibility improvements. For the purposes of this document, the terms “access” and “accessibility” refer to the condition of one’s physical environment that permits relatively safe and unrestricted use by people with disabilities. In general, the test for accessibility is whether or not a condition is in conformity with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336) and the regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (521 CMR). For instance, an accessible path of travel is one that is useable by people with disabilities and which conforms to the regulations derived from both the state and federal laws.

An indicator of the importance of a thorough assessment of access needs in Newton is the U.S. Census 2000. The Census reported that 3,394 people with physical disabilities, age 16 and over, live in the City of Newton, representing four percent of the City’s population. While this percentage may seem low, the obstacles faced by people with physical disabilities on a daily basis justify the allocation of CDBG funds towards improving accessibility, thereby removing barriers to community living for people with disabilities. Newton’s Consolidated Plan, and the strategic plan for access improvements specifically, strives to ensure self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of Newton individuals with disabilities.

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## ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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### ***NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS***

The access needs assessment process in Newton is carried out by the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities (the Committee), in conjunction with staff from the Housing and Community Development Division (the Division). The Committee is a group of citizen advocates for access, and for the past 31 years, it has been the only continuing advocacy group for people with disabilities in Newton. It has had an active role in informing City leaders of the needs and priorities of Newton residents with disabilities.

Members of the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities are appointed directly by the Mayor. The Committee currently has nine members, seven of whom are people with disabilities. Thus, their perception of access needs is, to a great extent, a personal process.

The needs discussed in the following paragraphs were obtained by the Committee in a variety of ways. The Committee has always been receptive to testimony and comments on accessibility needs in the City of Newton from any resident. Additionally, the needs assessment process is ongoing as situations are brought to the attention of staff and the Committee throughout the year. Issues of accessibility that are raised before the Committee are noted and discussed. When the issue is one that requires only a temporary solution, the person within the City who is most appropriate for dealing with the issue is approached with a request from the Committee to deal with the issue and to solve the problem as expeditiously as possible. Alternatively, when major or long-term access problems are brought before the Committee, an appropriate long-term planning process that might involve several City departments is undertaken.

In addition to information on access needs gathered at regular meetings, the Mayor's Committee held two public hearings in conjunction with its regularly scheduled meetings in April and May of 2004. These meetings were publicly announced through news releases in the two most widely read local publications, the *Newton TAB* and the *Boston Globe West*. In addition, notices were posted at the local library and were mailed faith communities throughout the City.

The Committee also solicited comments from City officials, including representatives from the Public Buildings Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, the School Department, the Human Services Department, the Department of Public Works and the Planning and Development Department. At the Committee's June 2004 meeting, members reviewed all the input received at the two public hearings. In July of 2004, the Committee made recommendations for objectives and strategies to address the identified needs.

The following comments regarding accessibility needs in Newton were received by the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities at the April and May 2004 public hearings. The needs have been sorted into eight categories.

#### **Access on public thoroughfares**

- Curb ramps are needed at street crossings where they are either non-existent or unusable
- More accessible (audible) pedestrian signals are needed to aid people who are blind or have major sight impairments at complex, busy intersections
- Sidewalks are needed in the many locations where no sidewalks now exist or where sidewalks are impassable because of deteriorated conditions

- Trimming of overgrown bushes and trees is needed where they block public sidewalks

### **Public buildings**

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- Neither major entrance to the Education Center, the public schools administration building, is accessible
- City polling places that are inaccessible include:
  - ✓ Newton North High School—the ramp to the polling place is too narrow
  - ✓ Emerson Community Center—the ramp to the polling place is too steep
  - ✓ Horace Mann School—the passageway to the polling place lacks sufficient turning space at the entrance
- Vending machines in public buildings are not accessible
- The Waban Branch Library and the Auburndale Branch Library, two of only four branch libraries in the City, are not accessible
- Wheelchair accessible restrooms are needed in all public buildings
- Fire Station #4, which hosts some community meetings on the second floor, is not accessible

### **Parks and recreational facilities**

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- The Newton Centre Playground has no accessible entrance
- An accessible path is needed around the playground at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park to connect with two other accessible paths.
- Cold Spring Park has a loop walkway that is not accessible
- Burr Park has no accessible parking
- Cabot Park pathways are not accessible

### **Public transportation**

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- Newton's commuter rail stations have limited access

### **Parking**

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- More on-street accessible parking spaces are needed in commercial areas

### **Commercial buildings**

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- No comments received

### **General public areas**

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- No comments received

### **Nonprofit agencies**

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- No comments received

Each need was recorded because it currently affects the ability of people with disabilities to gain access to buildings and services in Newton. Although no compilation of needs can be totally exhaustive, the process of reviewing and evaluating the various needs did produce a comprehensive list of priorities for FY06-10 CDBG access funding.

### ***UNMET NEEDS FROM THE FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

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The FY01-05 accessibility needs assessment identified several needs that remain unmet, although projects have been designed to address all of them. There are two primary reasons for the delay in addressing these needs. The first is that due to the lack of a dedicated in-house

designer, on-call architects must be employed to draft plans for accessibility improvements. This results in a very lengthy design period that often stretches into multiple fiscal years. Additionally, CDBG funds are not sufficient to tackle all the access needs that are identified during the planning process and that arise during the Consolidated Plan implementation period. The following table indicates the status of unmet needs from FY01-05:

NEED	STATUS
Newton Community Service Centers (NCSC) front entrance access	Project on hold due to changes in NCSC plans for an accessible entrance
Police Annex access	Project was initially bid in 2004, but the low bid was \$66,000 over budget. A decision was made to modify the design and re-bid with completion anticipated in 2005.
Accessible pedestrian signals	Partially complete; additional locations have been added
Ware's Cove bathroom access	Design is in process. A large increase in budget will be needed; expected completion in 2005
Ware's Cove nature trail	To be included in FY06-10 strategic plan because of insufficient funds available to complete the project in the FY01-05 period
Education Center access improvements	To be included in FY06-10 strategic plan because of insufficient funds available to undertake the project in the FY01-05 period
Burr Park Activity Building access	Awaiting design completion; expected completion in 2005
Curb ramps	Ongoing as new locations are identified
Auburndale Branch Library access	Design and construction documents are now complete; completion expected in 2005
Polling place access	Substantial progress has been made in acquiring signage to designate accessible parking for voting and in improving building access through ramps and door replacement. Only two City polling places remain to be made accessible in FY06

***PROMINENT ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS***

The development of priority needs allows Housing and Community Development staff to focus on what Newton residents view as the most pressing needs in their community. The Mayor's Committee began the process of prioritizing the existing accessibility needs in the City during the spring and summer of 2004.

From the comments received at two public hearings and from discussions among members of the Mayor's Committee and relevant City departments, it became evident that improvements to public thoroughfares, municipal buildings and other public facilities, parks and recreational facilities, and nonprofit agencies were seen as places with the most prominent accessibility needs, in that order. Accessibility improvements to parking lots and commercial buildings were ranked only slightly lower as priorities. In addition, completion of those projects that were

designed to address needs from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan is also a high priority. Accessibility of public transportation would have been a high priority, but all accessibility improvements to commuter rail, trolleys and buses are under the jurisdiction of the regional transit authority.

The top four accessibility priority needs, in order of importance, are:

### **1. Improvements to public thoroughfares**

There are many factors that create problems for people with disabilities as they attempt to travel independently throughout the City. Some intersections are still lacking curb ramps, thus making street crossing difficult, if not impossible for pedestrians who use wheelchairs. There are also a number of intersections with substandard curb ramps that fail to comply with state and federal access regulations. Until the CDBG access program began to fund the purchase of audible, accessible pedestrian signals, there was only one intersection in the City with audible signals. CDBG funds have paid for ten additional intersections to be equipped with accessible signals, and there are plans to fund at least five more intersections. Curb ramps and accessible pedestrian signals were identified as needs in the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan, and the need continues.

### **2. Improvements to public buildings**

Unmet needs from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan include access to the Police Headquarters Annex, the Auburndale Branch Library, some City polling places and the Public Schools Administration building, the Education Center. Projects addressing the first three needs, however, should be complete by the end of FY05. Making the Education Center accessible to people with disabilities is considered by the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities to be the chief priority in the public buildings category for the FY06-10 period.

### **3. Improvements to parks and recreational areas and facilities**

The Committee has selected three parks and recreational facilities access needs to address during the FY06-10 period. They include the lack of an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground, lack of access within Cold Spring Park and the lack of an accessible trail through the Ware's Cove area of Auburndale Park. The unmet needs from FY01-05 include accessible bathroom facilities at Auburndale Park and Burr Park, an accessible trail at Auburndale Park and connection of the accessible trails at Nahanton Park with an accessible parking area. Work is underway on projects to address these four needs, and these projects should be completed by the end of FY05.

### **4. Improvements to nonprofit agencies**

The need for improved access to nonprofit agencies and services has remained fairly high and consistent through the past 30 years. The major unmet need from FY01-05 is the lack of front entrance access to the Newton Community Service Centers at 492 Waltham Street in West Newton. This building houses the largest community social service complex in the City and it is currently only accessible at its rear entrance. Design work is currently underway to create an accessible entrance and parking at the front of the building. Although no other specific needs are currently identified, staff anticipates such needs arising as agencies create new services or restructure existing services.

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## **ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

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### ***OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***

Once the Mayor's Committee prioritized the accessibility needs, they were then charged with developing objectives and strategies for addressing the needs. These objectives and strategies are detailed below.

#### **PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve access on public thoroughfares, especially sidewalks and street crossings

- Strategies:
- Install curb ramps at locations where there are none and replace them at locations where they do not meet state and federal access codes
  - Install audible pedestrian signals at complex, irregular intersections that currently have visual electronic signals
  - Advocate with the City for the construction of accessible sidewalks on all streets

#### **PUBLIC BUILDINGS IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve access to public buildings, facilities and programs

- Strategies:
- Make the Crafts Street and Walnut Street entrances to the Education Center accessible
  - Make the interior of the Education Center, including the elevator, more accessible for people with disabilities

#### **PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve access to parks and recreational facilities

- Strategies:
- Construct an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground
  - Improve accessibility to existing athletic facilities in Cold Spring Park
  - Install an accessible connector path at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park to create an accessible walkway from Lyons Field along the Charles River to Purgatory Cove

#### **NONPROFIT AGENCY IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve access to nonprofit agency facilities and services

No strategies identified

### ***FUNDING ESTIMATES***

Below are the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified accessibility needs in the City of Newton. These cost estimates are a crucial factor in the planning process as strategies may often require more funding than is allocated through the CDBG accessibility program. For better or worse, funding availability plays a paramount role in what CDBG projects can and should be pursued. If a cost estimate exceeds the CDBG funding and there are no funds to be leveraged, developing a project to carry out the strategy may not be a prudent use of CDBG funds.

#### **PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Install curb ramps at locations where there are none and replace them at locations where they do not meet state and federal access codes

**Total Funding Needed:** The first priority in terms of improving accessibility in the City of Newton is to make improvements to public thoroughfares. During the summer and fall of 2004, approximately 50 curb ramps were installed under the Newton CDBG accessibility program. These curb ramps cost approximately \$2,800 each to construct. It is hoped that an additional 250 curb ramps – 50 curb ramps per year – can be installed during the period of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan. To achieve this total, approximately \$700,000 will be needed.

**Strategy:** Install audible pedestrian signals at complex intersections that have visual electronic signals

**Total Funding Needed:** As was the case with the installation of curb ramps, a number of audible pedestrian signals were installed during FY04 and FY05. There is an agreement with the City that CDBG funds will pay only for hardware, while labor to install will be paid by the City. Hardware costs have varied, depending on the complexity of individual intersections; however, the average cost for equipment to serve a single intersection is approximately \$3,000. Consequently, the total funding needed to install audible pedestrian signals at ten additional intersections during FY06-10 is \$30,000.

## **PUBLIC BUILDINGS IMPROVEMENTS**

**Strategy:** Make the major front and rear entrances to the Public Schools Administration building (Education Center) accessible

**Total Funding Needed:** A number of meetings between staff in the Housing and Community Development Division, the Public Buildings Department, the School Department, an architect and members of the Mayor's Committee have taken place over the past year to discuss making the Education Center, the public schools administration building, accessible to people with disabilities. Currently, there is a walkway and a ramp that leads to the Walnut Street front entrance, but both are too steep. The Crafts Street rear entrance which connects directly to the building's parking lot, is at the second floor level and is accessible only by stairs, so it is not wheelchair accessible. The estimate for creating accessible entrances at both of these locations is \$415,000.

**Strategy:** Make the interior of the Education Center, including the elevator, more accessible for people with disabilities

**Total Funding Needed:** At the meetings mentioned above, three key improvements to the inside of the Education Center were discussed. These are:

1. Install audible and visible fire alarm signals
2. Improve interior signage
3. Improve access routes to the elevator
4. Install audible floor passing signals and an emergency phone in the elevator cab

The total estimated cost for these improvements is \$85,000.

## **PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Construct an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground

Total Funding Needed: Currently, the Newton Centre Playground has no accessible entrance. Plans are underway to build a new accessible playground at the park. This strategy would fund the development of an accessible automobile entrance from Centre Street and an accessible walkway from Bowen Street to the new accessible playground and to the basketball and tennis courts.

Housing and Community Development staff has worked on several walkway projects in the past several years, including ones at Nahanton Park and Dolan Pond. By using the final budgets from these previous projects, an estimate of \$95,000 has been developed for construction of two accessible entrances to the Newton Centre Playground.

Strategy: Improve accessibility in Cold Spring Park

Total Funding Needed: Currently, Cold Spring Park has a loop walkway that is not accessible. A project to make the park fully accessible would be well beyond the scope of CDBG accessibility program funds; however, it has been determined that an accessible walkway connecting accessible parking with the tennis courts, basketball court and softball field would greatly improve access to the park for people with disabilities. Again, using the Nahanton Park and Dolan Pond projects as a guideline, the estimated cost for this project is \$30,000.

Strategy: Install an accessible connector path at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park to create an accessible walkway from Lyons Field along the Charles River to Purgatory Cove

Total Funding Needed: There is an accessible path at this well-used park from Lyons Field on Commonwealth Avenue to the Auburndale Park Field House and playground near the Charles River. There are currently plans to use conservation funds to build an accessible path from the north perimeter of the playground northward to Purgatory. Unfortunately, the two paths will not connect. The construction of an accessible path from the field house and around the playground could connect the other two paths and would result in one complete accessible path from Lyons Field to Purgatory Cove. The estimated cost for this new connector walkway is \$25,000.

## **NONPROFIT AGENCY IMPROVEMENTS**

No strategies identified

### ***PROJECTS***

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Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority accessibility needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments, including the Department of Public

Works, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Building Department. Housing and Community Development staff then worked closely with staff in these departments to develop project ideas. The Mayor's Committee and Housing and Community Development staff reviewed these project suggested and selected the projects below for CDBG funding.

**PUBLIC THOROUGHFARE IMPROVEMENTS**

The Mayor's Committee recommended that 30 curb cuts be installed in the vicinity of Newton South High School in FY06 to create accessibility from Parker Street to the school grounds. The Committee additionally recommended that 20 curb cuts be installed along Washington Street to make the entire street from Newton Corner to West Newton accessible.

A general assessment of additional intersections lacking proper curb cuts will be carried out each summer to determine the location of curb cuts and public thoroughfare improvements for FY07-10. Emphasis will be put on commercial areas and high traffic areas such as village centers and schools.

In addition, the Mayor's Committee recommended that four additional accessible pedestrian signals be installed during FY07.

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS IMPROVEMENTS**

The Mayor's Committee recommended a project to make the exterior and the interior of the Public Schools Administration Building accessible to people with disabilities.

**PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

The Committee also recommended the approval of three Parks and Recreation Department accessibility projects. These projects are to construct an accessible entrance to the Newton Centre Playground, to improve accessibility in Cold Spring Park and to install an accessible connector path at Ware's Cove at Auburndale Park.

**NONPROFIT AGENCY IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects identified.

In terms of funding allocations, the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities voted unanimously to recommend the expenditure of funds on accessibility projects, as follows:

FY06	FY07
Construction of curb cuts— \$50,000	Construction of curb cuts— \$50,000
Accessibility work at Public Schools Administration Building—\$80,00	Parks and Recreation areas and facilities— \$80,000
Previously recommended projects that require additional funding—\$20,000	Accessible pedestrian signals— \$10,000
	Project to be identified— \$10,000

With the exception of curb cut construction, which is recommended for funding each year of the Plan, for FY08-10, the Committee will solicit, review and recommend accessibility project ideas

related to public thoroughfares, City buildings, Parks and Recreation areas and facilities, and nonprofit access approximately 12-18 months prior to the funding cycle due to the uncertainty of funding levels and significant increases in design and construction costs.

### ***PROPOSED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

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For FY06, the goals of the Newton Housing and Community Development accessibility program are:

- Install 50 new curb cuts installed, 30 of which will be in the vicinity of Newton South High School and 20 of which will be on the pedestrian route along Washington Street from Newton Corner to West Newton Square.
- Develop design and construction documents for an accessible entrance to the Public Schools Administration Building at 100 Walnut Street.
- Develop a design for the construction of an accessible walkway around the playground at Ware's Cove in Auburndale Park to link an existing accessible path from Commonwealth Avenue with a newly constructed path from the playground along the Charles River to Purgatory Cove.
- Develop a design for two accessible entrances to Newton Centre Playground. One of these entrances, from Centre Street, will accommodate automobiles for parking only for people with disabilities, and the other entrance will be a walkway from Bowen Street.
- Develop a design for an accessible walkway connecting the tennis courts with the basketball court and the softball field at Cold Spring Park.

For FY07, the goals of the accessibility program are:

- Install 30 new curb cuts where no regulation curb cuts exist in high traffic areas and in dense commercial districts.
- Construct an accessible entrance to the Public Schools Administration building at 100 Walnut Street. The entrance will feature a covered vertical lift from the main parking lot to the second floor of the building where the main executive offices are located.
- Construct an accessible walkway around the playground at Ware's Cove in Auburndale Park, thus completing a single accessible path from Lyons Field at Commonwealth Avenue along the Charles River to Purgatory Cove, bordering on Waltham.
- Construct an accessible walkway at Cold Spring Park connecting the tennis courts, the basketball court and the softball field at Cold Spring Park.

The goals of the Newton Housing and Community Development accessibility program for FY08 are:

- Install 30 new curb cuts where no regulation curb cuts exist in high traffic areas and in dense commercial districts.
- Construct accessible entrances to Newton Centre Playground from Centre Street and Bowen Street. The Centre Street entrance will be connected to a new vehicle entrance with accessible parking spaces.

The FY09 goals of the accessibility program are:

- Install 30 new curb cuts where no regulation curb cuts exist in high traffic areas and in dense commercial districts.

The goals of the accessibility program for FY10 are:

- Install 30 new curb cuts where no regulation curb cuts exist in high traffic areas and in dense commercial districts.

AREA OF ACCESS IMPROVEMENT	FY06 GOALS	FY07 GOALS	FY08 GOALS	FY09 GOALS	FY10 GOALS	FIVE-YEAR GOALS TOTAL
Public thoroughfare improvements	50	30	30	30	30	170
Public buildings improvements	1	1 (from FY06)	0	To be determined	To be determined	1
Parks and recreational facilities improvements	3	2 (from FY06)	1 (from FY06)	To be determined	To be determined	3
Nonprofit agency improvements	0	0	0	To be determined	To be determined	0

***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

The proposed outcome of Newton’s accessibility improvement program will be increased accessibility for people with disabilities. Through the CDBG funding allocated to the Housing and Community Development accessibility program, people with disabilities will have access to a greater number of destinations and will be able to travel more readily throughout the City on public streets to stores, theaters, restaurants and City buildings. They will also have enhanced accessibility to City services and functions, including parks and recreation areas and facilities.

In order to measure whether access improvements have increased availability or accessibility, several performance measures will be employed, each appropriate to the respective access project. In terms of access improvements to public thoroughfares, the number of curb cuts installed annually will be tracked as a measure of increased availability or accessibility. For public buildings improvement projects, staff will measure annually the number of public governmental and educational buildings that now comply with state and federal access regulations. For projects that focus on parks and recreational facilities improvements, the number of parks and recreational facilities made accessible, either fully or in part, will be tracked annually. These measures will indicate the Division’s level of success in improving availability or accessibility of facilities and or services for people with disabilities throughout the city.

***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

The most common two obstacles to meeting underserved needs are financial limitations and procedural issues. In terms of financial limitations, there are many competing priorities for uses of CDBG funds. As a result, the annual expenditure on projects directly aimed at creating accessibility is less than \$150,000. Given this level of financial resources, not all needs may be met. Thus, it is imperative that an open public process take place leading to the careful selection of the highest priority needs.

Once a need has been identified, appropriate steps must be taken toward the development of a plan, the inclusion of appropriate professional services in the design and specification process (e.g. engineers, architects, etc.), public bidding of work that cannot be carried out by municipal employees, the hiring of a contractor and project management leading to the completion of the project. Each of these steps can be lengthy. Because engineers and architects hired by the City to design projects often have many other priority projects in their workload, the accessibility projects can take a year or more from conception to final design with specifications.

The City bidding process is also slowed by the fact that many potential Citywide bid projects are funneled through a relatively small Purchasing Department staff in preparation for public bidding. Once a contractor is selected, it generally takes four to six weeks to execute a contract, partially due to delays in the contractor obtaining insurance and bonding. Finally, it is often the case that the contractor has several projects in hand and, thus, takes longer to complete the project in question than originally anticipated. Other delays involve waiting for necessary building materials and the occasional need to reconstruct parts of the project that are not done precisely to specifications. Frequently, projects extend for two years or more from time of approval to their completion. The time period can be even greater in those instances where it is discovered through the bidding process that the project cost estimate was too low and, thus, the project budget is insufficient at the time of bidding to carry out a contractual arrangement. In these instances, either steps must be taken to increase the budget or, more likely, the scope or design of the project must be modified to reduce the overall cost.

# **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

This assessment examines economic development needs of the City of Newton as they relate to CDBG economic development programs. Community Development Block Grant regulations allow funds to be spent on economic development programs that create or retain jobs for low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons and/or assist low- and moderate-income businesspersons with starting or expanding their business.

With these regulations in mind, the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), a committee appointed by the Mayor and representing local lenders, business owners and nonprofit organizations, held two meetings on August 11 and September 10, 2004, to discuss economic development needs and formulate strategies to address those needs.

The results of these meetings are described in the following sections listed below:

- An explanation of existing CDBG-funded economic development programs
- A compilation of data related to economic conditions and trends from the U.S. Census 2000 and other sources
- The economic development needs as identified by the EDAC based on the data analysis and their experience with the existing economic development programs
- Unmet economic development needs that were listed in the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan
- Economic development strategies to address stated needs
- Proposed accomplishments and obstacles

### ***EXISTING CDBG-FUNDED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS***

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In order to assess economic development needs and plan strategies and programs to address those needs, an overview of existing CDBG-funded economic development programs is necessary as many of the needs relate to expanding or improving these current programs.

To be eligible for CDBG-funded economic development assistance, a business must meet specific job creation, retention, and/or income requirements. Once eligibility has been established the application is then reviewed by the EDAC based on established program guidelines. In general, economic development assistance provided with CDBG program funds may be used to help business persons purchase land, buildings, equipment, furnishings, construction, lease-holder improvements, and working capital. Specific programs currently available are described in the following paragraphs.

#### **Technical Assistance**

The purpose of the technical assistance component is to help businesses become self-sufficient so that they can independently utilize bank and/or City programs in the future. Upon expressing an interest in the micro-enterprise loan program (discussed in the following paragraph), entrepreneurs are encouraged to partake in appropriate business counseling and/or training, if necessary, through the Boston College Small Business Development Center (BC-SBDC) or an equivalent resource. The technical assistance component is intended to assist in the development of a business plan, as well as strengthen marketing, management, and financial capabilities. If additional business counseling is required by the City, either prior to loan approval or throughout the course of the loan, the business owner must agree to complete it.

(Business counseling through the BC-SBDC is free. Training courses are offered at a nominal fee).

### **Microenterprise Loan Program**

The Microenterprise Loan Program is designed to help low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs start, continue, or expand businesses in Newton. The program aims to increase the microenterprise's capacity by offering support through business counseling and loan assistance. Microenterprise loans are available to assist businesses with the acquisition of land, buildings, equipment, furnishings, construction, lease-holder improvements, and working capital. Loans are offered at 75% of prime rate at the time of loan approval, with a payback of 1 to 10 years, prorated according to the amount borrowed. Microenterprise loans range from \$5,000 to \$35,000 per loan.

### **Family Day Care Grant Program**

Created in FY04 in partnership with the Newton Community Service Center's Family Day Care System, the Family Day Care Grant Program is designed to assist low- to moderate-income Newton residents start, continue, or expand an in-home family day care through small grants of up to \$2,500. Grant funds may be used for any purchases required by the day care licensing authority including but not limited to items under the following categories: licensing fees, baby equipment, napping needs, outdoor play/activities, arts and crafts, literacy activities, pretend play toys, and business-related home improvements (i.e. radiator covers and outdoor fencing).

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Data related to economic conditions and trends in Newton and the region was gathered from the U.S. Census 2000 and other governmental sources, much of which is also listed in the draft Economic Development Strategy of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

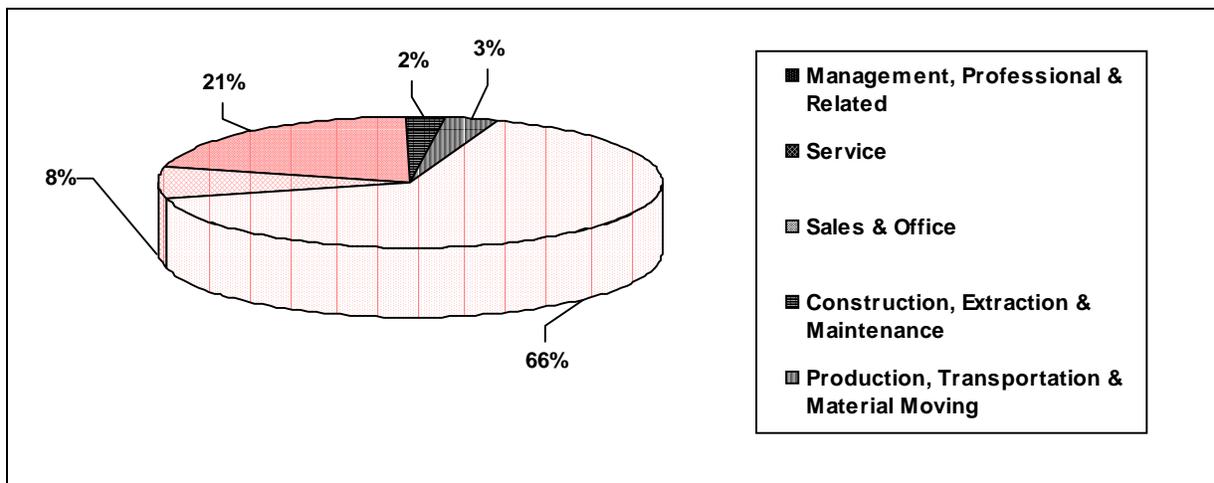
**Fig. 51: Median Household Income, 1990-2000**

COMMUNITY	1990 MEDIAN HH INCOME	2000 MEDIAN HH INCOME	% CHANGE 1990 TO 2000
Newton	\$59,719	\$86,052	+44.09%
Boston	\$29,180	\$39,629	+35.81%
Brookline	\$45,598	\$66,711	+46.30%
Cambridge	\$33,140	\$47,979	+44.78%
Needham	\$60,357	\$88,079	+45.93%
Waltham	\$38,514	\$54,010	+40.23%
Watertown	\$43,490	\$59,764	+37.42%
Wellesley	\$79,111	\$113,686	+43.70%
Weston	\$95,134	\$153,918	+61.79%
Massachusetts	\$36,952	\$50,502	+36.67%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Fig. 52: Occupation of Employed Newton Residents\*, 2000**

(\*defined as 16 years and over)



Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Fig. 53: Job Growth 1998-2009**

OCCUPATION	% INCREASE
Computer support specialists	88%
Computer engineers	76%
System Analysts	74%
Paralegals and legal assistants	64%
Biological scientists	55%
Dental assistants	50%
Financial analysts	44%
Social/Human service assistants	42%
Securities & commodities brokers	41%
Personal/home care aides	33%
Speech pathologists/audiologists	33%
Teachers, preschool	32%
Occupational therapists	30%
Teachers, special education	30%

Source: Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance

**Fig. 54: Newton's Largest Employers, 2003**

1000+ employees	Boston College City of Newton	Newton Wellesley Hospital
250-999 employees	Whole Foods Education Development Center H. C. Starck Inc.	Marriott Corporation Reed Business Information
100-249 employees	Aspect Medical Systems CCS Companies Bertucci's Brick Oven Pizzeria Bloomingdale's Mt. Ida College Clarks Companies N.A. EMC Corporation Fessenden School Fraser Engineering Co. Harmon Law Office HRPT Properties Trust Intra Net Inc. ITT Industries Cannon-CNK Switch Products	Jewish Community Center Lasell College Learning Prep School Medsource Technologies M.J. Flaherty Company New England Cable News Newton Healthcare Center Novacel Shaw's Supermarket Solomon Schecter Day School Stone Institute TRO/Ritchie Organization

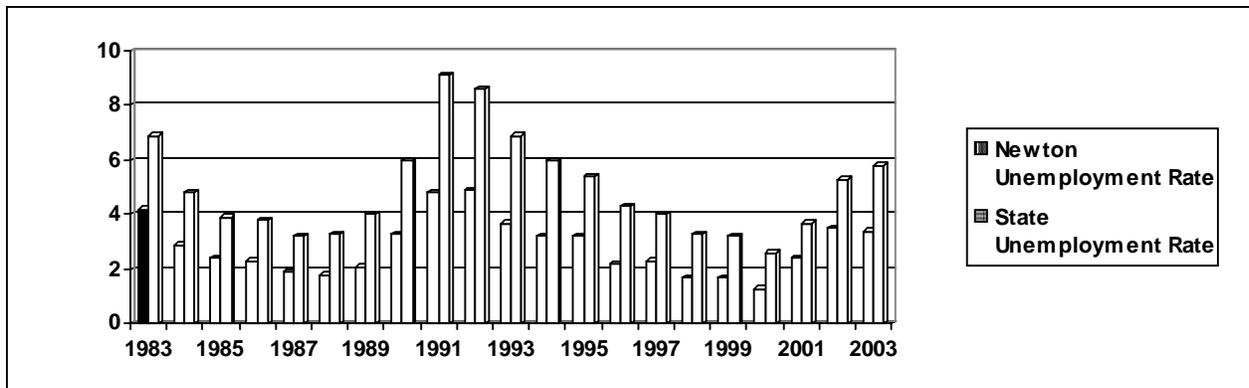
Source: City of Newton Planning and Development Department (2003)

**Fig. 55: Worker Destinations, 2000**

CITY OF RESIDENCE	TOP 15 DESTINATIONS	COUNT	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Newton	Boston	12,917	29.7%
	Newton	11,925	27.4%
	Cambridge	2,984	6.9%
	Waltham	2,011	4.6%
	Brookline	1,075	2.5%
	Wellesley	903	2.1%
	Framingham	803	1.8%
	Needham	801	1.8%
	Watertown	630	1.5%
	Burlington	523	1.2%
	Natick	486	1.1%
	Quincy	440	1.0%
	Bedford	338	0.8%
	Marlborough	323	0.7%
	Malden	291	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Fig. 56: Unemployment Rate in Newton and Statewide**



Source: Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance

**Fig. 57: 2004 Tax Rates in Massachusetts Communities**

COMMUNITY	COMMERCIAL TAX RATE	RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE	DIFFERENCE FROM NEWTON
Newton	\$19.37	\$10.20	\$0.00 / \$0.00
Boston	\$33.08	\$10.15	+\$13.71 / -\$0.05
Brookline	\$17.26	\$10.63	-\$2.11 / +\$0.43
Cambridge	\$19.08	\$7.63	-\$0.29 / -\$2.57
Needham	\$18.56	\$9.45	-\$0.81 / -\$0.75
Waltham	\$26.31	\$9.20	+\$6.94 / -\$1.00
Watertown	\$19.90	\$10.35	+\$0.53 / +\$0.15
Wellesley	\$8.56	\$8.56	-\$10.81 / -\$1.64
Weston	\$9.67	\$9.67	-\$9.70 / -\$0.53

Source: City of Newton Planning and Development Department (2004)

### ***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS***

The growing need for the City's CDBG-funded economic development program is indicated based on an analysis of data presented in the prior section. The unemployment rate in Newton has jumped from a 20-year low of 2.6 percent in 2000 to 3.7 percent in 2001, with a bigger jump to 5.3 percent in 2002 and then up to 5.8 percent in 2003. Though Newton's unemployment rate is consistently lower than the State rate, both have shown the same proportion of increase during this period, as shown in Fig. 56. Additionally, the number of low- and moderate-income people in Newton, as well as the number living in poverty, has increased by 20 percent in the last ten years.

These numbers indicate that more people are in need of economic assistance than in the past decade, and there is a larger base of people who might qualify for economic development assistance. Finally, although not represented in the data presented in the previous section, the recent increased interest in the current Microenterprise Loan Program is also an indicator that the current economic downturn has increased the need for the program.

Based on this data, their individual expertise and knowledge of the current loan and grant programs, the EDAC developed the following specific needs related to the use of CDBG economic development program funds:

- Increase collaboration with other human service or economic development agencies to create jobs for low- and moderate-income persons and start or expand low-and moderate-income-owned businesses
- Continue to identify groups within Newton's low- and moderate-income population to which assistance should be targeted using the Family Day Care Program model (female heads of households, eldercare opportunities, etc.)
- Better market the existing loan program to better reflect changes in the economy and the resulting changes in economic development needs

- Continue exploring opportunities for improvements to the loan program

***UNMET NEEDS FROM FY01-05 PLAN***

The economic development needs identified in the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan were grouped in the following categories: institution and economic development needs, business development needs and employment needs. Listed below is a summary of each need stated in the prior Consolidated Plan and accomplishments made in each area during the FY01-05 period.

NEED	ACCOMPLISHMENT	CURRENT STATUS
Provide assistance with capital and startup costs for microenterprises in or near village business centers	The Microenterprise Loan Program has been revamped to better meet the needs of microenterprises.	The need for this type of assistance is evidenced by increased interest in the program.
Assist medium-sized businesses which impact the village environment through help with expansion, capital and other eligible costs while creating jobs for LMI individuals	In FY04, the Economic Development Loan, which provided loan funds of up to \$150,000 for small- and medium-sized businesses, was eliminated in order to concentrate on the Microenterprise Loan Program.	The EDAC has decided to concentrate on providing assistance to microenterprises, which more directly impacts LMI persons and allows for a greater number of smaller loans.
Provide affordable day care for LMI individuals so they can find or maintain a job	In addition to providing day care scholarships to LMI families through the CDBG Human Services Program, the EDAC created the Family Day Care Grant Program. These grants help create new day care slots, many of which are subsidized. Having an in-home day care as a business allows the LMI business owner/parent to receive affordable day care for his/her children.	The need for subsidized day care continues to grow (see the Human Services needs assessment).
Assist low- and moderate-income persons as they transition from welfare to work, reenter the job market, or seek general employment or business assistance	This need has been addressed to some extent through the creation of the Family Day Care Grant Program.	More work is needed in the form of outreach to other service providers who potentially work with this population.
Improve communication among institutions and agencies addressing business and economic development problems and opportunities in Newton	The Planning and Development Department has developed a brochure to assist business owners who wish to start or expand a Newton-based business. The CDBG-funded loan and grant programs are highlighted, in addition to other information contained in the brochure.	Increased marketing efforts and outreach to other organizations are needed to continue to expand the existing loan and grant programs to meet Newton's needs.

While many of these needs have been addressed to some extent through changes made to the economic development loan programs, the creation of the Family Day Care Grant Program and increased communication efforts among institutions and agencies addressing business and employment development opportunities in Newton, continued efforts need to be made in these areas. The objective and strategies developed to further address these needs are discussed in the following section.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

### ***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES***

As stated in the previous section, economic development needs as they relate to the CDBG program have been identified as follows:

- Increase collaboration with other human service or economic development agencies to create jobs for low- and moderate-income persons and start or expand low-and moderate-income-owned businesses
- Continue to identify groups within Newton’s low- and moderate-income population for which to target assistance
- Better market the existing loan program, keeping the economic changes in mind
- Continue exploring opportunities for improvements to the loan program based on changes in the economic environment

Consistent with these needs, Table 2B in the Appendix lists direct financial assistance, technical assistance and microenterprise assistance as high priority needs. Respectively, it is estimated that \$132,500 annually is needed to address these needs.

The following strategies were developed based on the identified economic development needs, with the overall program goal of creating economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people.

OBJECTIVE/NEED	STRATEGY
Increase collaboration with other human service or economic development agencies to create jobs for low- and moderate-income persons and start or expand low-and moderate-income-owned businesses	Create a program that matches low- and moderate-income persons with low- and moderate-income-owned businesses who want to expand and cover salary costs for a period of time (grant or loan)
Continue to identify groups within Newton’s low- and moderate-income population to which assistance should be targeted (female heads of households, eldercare opportunities, etc.)	Work with human service agencies that serve targeted populations to develop grant or loan programs that meet the needs of their low- and moderate-income clients
Market the existing loan program to better reflect changes in the economy and the resulting changes in economic development needs	Launch a marketing campaign that incorporates a newly designed economic development brochure and includes outreach to Newton businesses, local banks and human service agencies
Continue exploring opportunities for improvements to the loan program based on changes in the economic environment	Periodically review program guidelines, loan and grant applications, etc. to ensure that the process is as user-friendly as possible within the requirements of the CDBG program

***PROPOSED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OBSTACLES***

The proposed goals and accomplishments of the economic development program during the five-year period covered by this plan are listed below.

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>PROPOSED ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT</b>	<b>PROPOSED OUTCOME</b>
Microenterprise Loan Program	Award three loans annually	Create economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people
Family Day Care Grant Program	Provide two-three new grants per year	Create economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income
Proposed Targeted Grant Programs	To be determined as specific program opportunities are developed	Create economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people

In order for the economic development program to be successful, it is necessary to maintain a balance of outreach to low- and moderate-income people and potential partners in the business, financial and human service communities, while periodically evaluating the program in relation to economic conditions and making changes to address underserved needs.

With this in mind, program performance will be measured by whether the annual accomplishments and the proposed outcomes have been obtained. Grant and loan recipients will be asked to report on how successful their participation in the program was in meeting the proposed outcome.

# **NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS**

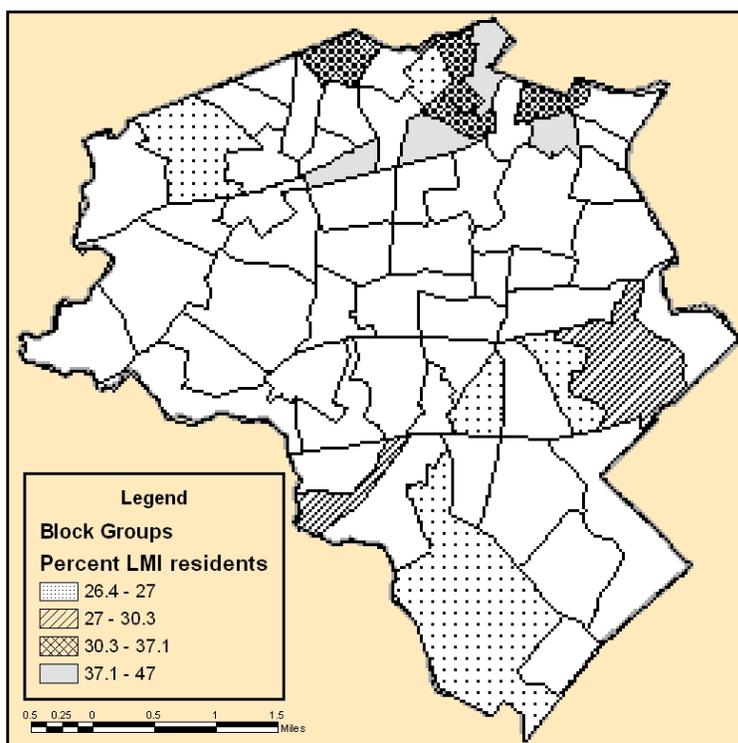
The City of Newton’s neighborhood improvement program uses federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to improve the public facilities and infrastructure in eligible neighborhoods throughout the City. According to federal CDBG regulations, these area benefit activities may only be undertaken within neighborhoods that meet a requirement that 51 percent of the area’s households have an income that is 80 percent or less than the area median income (AMI). None of the census block groups within the City of Newton meet this requirement.

Consequently, HUD allows cities and counties to use an “exception approach” when there are no areas within the jurisdiction that have at least 51 percent low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents. In order to be designated as a target neighborhood using this approach, a neighborhood must be within the highest quartile of the City in terms of the concentration of low- and moderate-income residents.

Based on the U.S. Census 2000 released in the spring of 2003, which established an LMI threshold of 26.3 percent, 16 block groups were eligible for designation as target neighborhoods. However, as a result of limited CDBG funding, Newton has a policy in place to limit the number of target neighborhoods, prioritizing the eligible areas by highest LMI concentration and connecting contiguous block groups where possible.

The percentage of low- and moderate-income residents ranged from 26.4 to 47 percent in the 16 eligible block groups. Four block groups fell into the highest percentage category (37.1 to 47 percent) of low- and moderate-income residents—one in West Newton, one in Newtonville, one in Newton Corner and one in Nonantum. In terms of Nonantum, two contiguous block groups contained 30.3 to 37.1 percent low- and moderate-income residents, and one contiguous block group contained 26.4 to 27 percent. In Newton Corner, one contiguous block had 30.3 to 37.1 percent low- and moderate-income residents (for target neighborhood boundaries, see maps at the end of each individual neighborhood section).

**Map 5: Census Tracts with Greatest Low- and Moderate-Income Population, 2000**



After thoroughly analyzing the data, four target neighborhoods were established. Two were current target neighborhoods—Nonantum and portions of Newton Corner, and two were new neighborhoods—portions of Newtonville and West Newton\*. Funding rotates between the four neighborhoods every three years. Newtonville’s funding will be split between FY06 and FY09 because as a new target neighborhood, some needs are of a more pressing nature. The following list delineates when each neighborhood will be funded.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Target Neighborhood</b>
FY06	West Newton and Newtonville <sup>1</sup>
FY07	Newton Corner
FY08	Nonantum
FY09	Newtonville <sup>2</sup>
FY10	Newton Corner

The needs assessments process for these neighborhoods began in the fall of 2003. Conditions and needs were collected for each of the four target neighborhoods from a variety of sources:

- Windshield surveys of streets, curbs, trees, curb cuts and sidewalks conducted by Housing and Community Development staff;
- Field visits to area parks by Parks and Recreation staff and Housing and Community Development staff;
- Historical knowledge of and research conducted by Housing and Community Development staff;
- Written and verbal information from staff from other City departments; and
- Meetings with advisory committee members, interested citizens and area residents.

The public infrastructure windshield surveys were designed to capture a great deal of information. The surveys included the following categories:

- Public or private status of streets
- Sidewalk conditions, including continuity and uniformity
- Curb conditions, including continuity and uniformity
- Curb cut conditions
- Roadway conditions
- Tree plantings

Based on these categories, each street was assigned an overall rating. The rating system used was as follows:

- **Excellent:** Continuous and uniform sidewalks and curbs; roadway, curb cuts and sidewalks have no bumps or cracks; near perfect condition
- **Good:** Continuous and uniform sidewalks and curbs; roadway, curb cuts and sidewalks showing minor wear
- **Decent:** Sidewalks and curbs are continuous and mostly uniform; roadway, sidewalks and curb cuts are aging and demonstrating moderate wear but no urgent issues

<sup>1</sup>A portion of West Newton was designated as a target neighborhood for the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan cycle. According to U.S. Census 2000 information, however, this neighborhood no longer fell in the top quartile of LMI areas of the City. Therefore, this neighborhood was eliminated, and a new portion of West Newton, which met the 26.3 percent threshold, was designated for funding during the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan cycle.

<sup>2</sup> Partial funding

- **Poor:** Sidewalks and curbs noticeably lack uniformity and/or continuity; roadway, curb cuts and sidewalks have many cracks, patches and bumps; beginning to have negative impact on neighborhood
- **Horrible:** Sidewalks and curbs are missing in parts, and a mixture of materials is used; roadway, curb cuts and sidewalks present problems of an urgent nature; visually unappealing.

Staff began holding advisory committee and public meetings in the summer of 2004. Attendees at the meetings were informed of the CDBG regulations that area benefit activities must be primarily residential in nature and must meet locally identified needs. A list of the types of eligible neighborhood improvement projects was presented, as well as the types of projects that are ineligible, such as maintenance work.

In Nonantum and Newton Corner, where there were already advisory committees in place, members discussed the neighborhood's needs and then developed draft priorities, objectives and strategies to address those needs at a number of meetings. The advisory committees then presented the draft needs, objectives and strategies to the area residents at public meetings held in September 2004. Feedback from a wider audience was gathered at the meetings, and priority needs, objectives and strategies were established.

In terms of the two new target neighborhoods, two public meetings were held in both Newtonville and West Newton to gather information on neighborhood needs. At the second round of meetings, held in September 2004, attendees were asked to prioritize the needs and to develop objectives and strategies for addressing them.

The needs assessment process provided a tool for City staff, advisory committee members, interested citizens and area residents to determine, categorize and ultimately prioritize the most pressing needs. It became evident through the needs assessment process that there were four principal categories of neighborhood need:

- Public Infrastructure (roadways, sidewalks, curbs, curb cuts, street trees, water and sewer)
- Public Facilities (public buildings such as fire stations and libraries)
- Parks/Open Space
- Traffic

In general, public infrastructure projects were not placed high on the neighborhoods' priority lists as they are very costly and the benefits tend to be isolated to residents of the particular street. Traffic issues and parks/open space improvements were much higher priorities for residents.

Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority neighborhood improvement needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments, including the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Building Department. Departments were then requested to apply for funding for specific projects where they have jurisdiction taking this information into account. The advisory committees and Housing and Community Development staff then reviewed these applications and selected specific projects to recommend for CDBG funding.

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## NEWTON CORNER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessments and strategic plan for neighborhood improvements in the Newton Corner target neighborhood. The document is broken down into two sections, each containing a number of subsections.

The needs assessment for the Newton Corner target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Demographic Information** – This subsection identifies the significant demographic characteristics of the neighborhood including population, race, age and household information.
- **Needs Assessment Process and Findings** – This subsection explains the process by which the needs assessment was conducted. The following subsections describe the neighborhood conditions.
  - **Traffic Needs** – This subsection describes the traffic needs and concerns in the target neighborhood.
  - **Parks/Open Space Needs** – This subsection presents the conditions of the passive and active recreational amenities at the parks and open spaces serving the residents in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Infrastructure Needs** – This subsection identifies the major roadway, sidewalk and curb needs in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Facilities Needs**– The subsection discusses the needs at any City-owned property, including schools and libraries in the target neighborhood.
- **Prominent Neighborhood Needs** – This subsection presents the needs identified by the Newton Corner advisory committee, interested citizens and members of the public.

The strategic plan for the Newton Corner target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Objectives and Strategies** – This subsection lists the objectives and strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Funding Estimates** – This subsection lists the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Projects** – This section lists the projects that were selected by the advisory committee to be undertaken during the period of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan.
- **Proposed Goals and Accomplishments** – This section details the proposed goals and accomplishments for the two years that neighborhood improvements will be funded in Newton Corner.
- **Target Neighborhood Map** – This map provides a graphic representation of the locations of the planned projects.

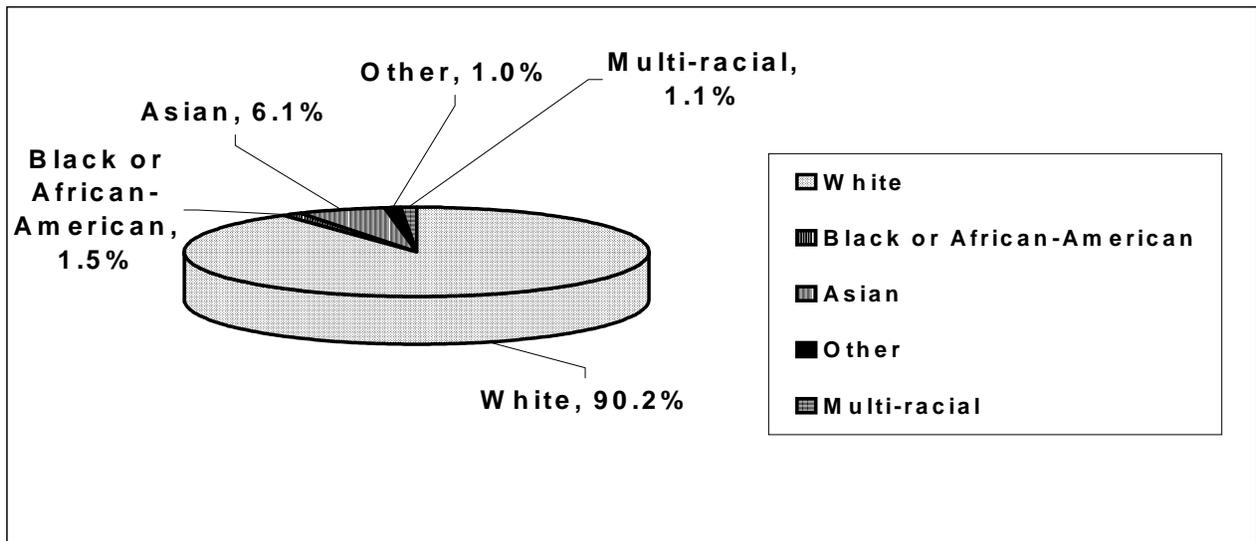
## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Data for the Newton Corner target neighborhood was gathered from the U.S. Census 2000 (Census) and from public hearings, public comments and continuous discussions with community leaders and public officials. The Newton Corner target neighborhood covers .24 square miles, encompassing two census block groups: 3731.03 and 3731.05.

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the Newton Corner target neighborhood—which is bounded by Jewett Street, Church Street and Oakland Street on the west; the Town of Watertown on the north; St. James Street and Park Street on the east; and Newtonville Avenue, Eldredge Street, and Church Street on the south—has 2,151 residents. This figure represents a 2.5 percent population decrease from 1990.

Of this population, 2,127 residents, nearly 99 percent, identified themselves as being of one race, with 90 percent of these respondents identifying themselves as White (see Fig. 56). The next largest racial group is Asian, accounting for 6.1 percent of the population. Only 2.6 percent of the White population is Hispanic or Latino. The minority population in the Newton Corner target neighborhood increased from 8.2 percent in 1990 to 9.8 percent in 2000.

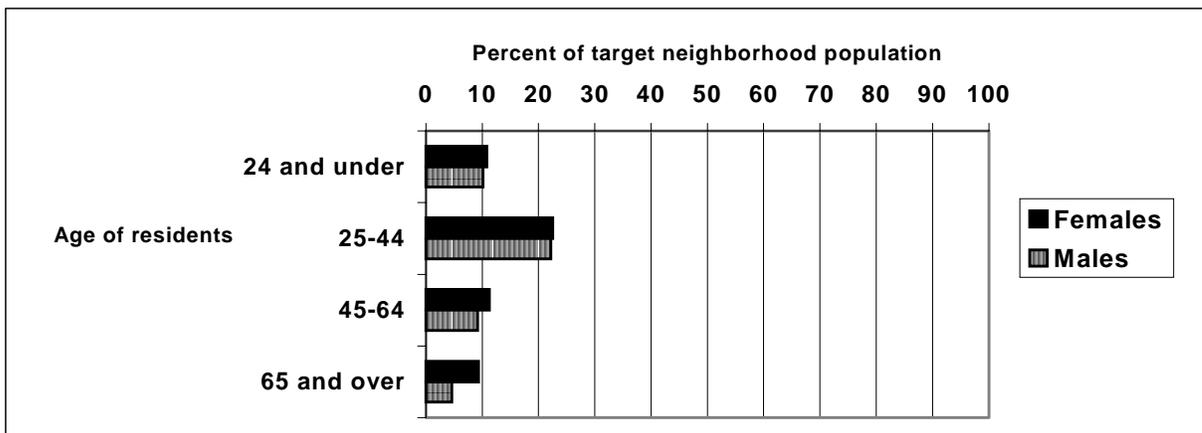
**Fig. 58: Newton Corner Target Neighborhood Racial Composition, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

Forty-four percent of the target neighborhood residents fall into the 25- to 44-year-old category. The categories “19 and under” and “65 and over” comprise roughly the same percentage, 14.8 percent and 13.8 percent, respectively. The smallest population in both genders is in the 65 and older range. The median age in the neighborhood is 36.7 years old.

**Fig. 59: Newton Corner Target Neighborhood Age and Gender Breakdown, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

There are 1,040 households in the Newton Corner target neighborhood, with an average household size of 2.07 and an average family size of 2.82. Only 18.1 percent (188) of the households contain one or more people less than 18 years old; 26.1 percent (49) of these family households with one or more people under 18 are single householders (77.6 percent female head of household and 22.4 percent male).

There are 1,080 housing units in the Newton Corner target neighborhood; 1,040 of them (96.3 percent) are occupied, and 40 are vacant (3.7 percent). Renters occupy the majority of homes (63.8 percent). Of the 386 owner-occupied units, 34.7 percent of owners (134 units) have lived in the neighborhood for more than 25 years.

A total of 771 disabilities were reported in the Newton Corner target neighborhood. The majority of disabilities apply to elderly/retired populations (69.5 percent) and working-age adults (30.1 percent). The categories of disabilities with the highest numbers are “Go-outside-home disability<sup>1</sup>” with 36.3 percent, “Physical disability<sup>2</sup>” with 20.5 percent, and “Self-care disability<sup>3</sup>” with 14.1 percent.

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS**

During the five-year period covered by this Consolidated Plan, Newton Corner will be the recipient of neighborhood improvement funds in both FY07 and FY10.

Housing and Community Development Division staff began the Newton Corner needs assessment process in the fall of 2003 with a systematic windshield survey of the neighborhood. The first needs assessment discussion was held on June 23, 2004, with the Newton Corner Advisory Committee (NCAC). Attendees were presented with staff findings and were encouraged to visit sites in order to make their own judgments. They were also asked to bring up any other needs that were not documented by City staff.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to go outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor’s office. U.S. Census 2000.  
<sup>2</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying. U.S. Census 2000.  
<sup>3</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that substantially limits one or more basic self-care activities such as dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home. U.S. Census 2000.

On July 8, 2004, the NCAC reconvened, and advisory committee members discussed what they viewed as the neighborhood needs after visiting sites throughout the neighborhood. After much discussion, several priorities were established, along with draft objectives and strategies for addressing them. A public hearing was held on September 14, 2004, to which all the residents of the target neighborhood were invited. More than 35 residents, advisory committee members and city staff assembled to discuss the draft needs, priorities, objectives and strategies. The information below provides a summary of the needs discussed at these three meetings.

### **Traffic Needs**

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Traffic is a major concern in the Newton Corner target neighborhood due to the presence of entrances to and exits from the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) at a rotary around the Sheraton Hotel. Based on the Newton Police Accident Report for the period of January 2001 to January 2004, Newton Corner is home to five locations that rank in the top 50 problem intersections in Newton. These five locations are, in descending order:

- 1) Centre Avenue and Centre Street
- 2) Centre Street and Washington Street
- 3) Centre Street and Church Street
- 4) Centre Avenue and Washington Street
- 5) 275 Washington Street/Druker Management

These five intersections accounted for 190 accidents over a three-year period. The Centre Avenue and Centre Street intersection logged the most accidents in the City during this period, with a total of 76. Not far behind is the intersection of Centre and Washington Streets with 62 traffic accidents during the three years. The remaining three Newton Corner intersections listed above occupy the 14<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> slots on the accident report.

Not surprisingly, four of the five locations are clustered around the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary. Because this area is a major commuter/transportation node and is not primarily residential in character, automobile-related traffic improvements at these intersections are not an eligible use of CDBG funds. However, the intersection of Centre and Church Streets does meet this criterion and is eligible for improvements.

Pedestrian improvements, such as crosswalks and audible pedestrian signals, are eligible throughout the target area because these improvements serve area residents. In addition to pedestrian improvements at the rotary, a resident at the public meeting suggested installing crosswalks and curb cuts at the Church Street/Richardson Street/Oakland Street/YMCA intersection, which is heavily traveled by both pedestrians and drivers and is located near the rotary area.

The possibility of installing specialty crosswalks, such as ones constructed of brick, at busy intersections was raised. The Department of Public Works, however, is not in favor of these types of crosswalks due to maintenance and wear issues. However, stamped asphalt and concrete technologies, which look similar, may be considered. Any additional crosswalk signage must be well placed so that it is noticeable among the large number of traffic signs already in the area.

Audible pedestrian signals are being placed throughout the City at busy or dangerous intersections, primarily under the CDBG accessibility program. The City traffic engineer identified the intersection of Washington and Church Streets, which is in the target neighborhood, as a location in need of upgraded accessible pedestrian signals.

Excessive speeding in the area was also brought up by a number of residents at each of the three meetings. Electronic speed display signs might prove useful in areas of chronic speeding. The Pearl Street pilot project for testing these devices will be under development in Spring 2005. If the signs result in reduced speeds on Pearl Street, these signs may be considered for other locations.

The traffic engineer also relayed two other traffic improvements needs:

- 1) The guardrail on Charlesbank Road is constantly hit by cars rounding the sharp curve and must be replaced on a regular basis. While CDBG funds cannot pay for routine maintenance, funding could be used for the construction of a better and stronger barrier.
- 2) There is a need for additional commuter parking. Even though this is a significant need that impacts parking on the residential streets in the target neighborhood, it does not meet the CDBG National Objectives for neighborhood improvements.

The City of Newton and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA) continue to work together to address neighborhood issues stemming from the Turnpike's presence in the neighborhood. The January 2003 report *Effects of the July 1, 2002 Boston Extension (I-90) Toll Increase on Newton Neighborhoods* identified a number of short- and long-term mitigation projects. The MTA has taken some steps to improve the quality of life in Newton Corner by providing the majority of the funds for the new traffic signal at Park and Tremont Streets. The City hopes that this partnership will continue and will result in more projects to counter the negative impacts of the Turnpike.

### **Parks/Open Space Needs**

Housing and Community Development staff visited the five parks within the Newton Corner target neighborhood with Parks and Recreation Department staff to assess conditions and establish Parks and Recreation priorities. The five parks in the target area are Boyd Park, Carleton Park, Charlesbank Park, Chaffin Park and Farlow Park. (Note: Boyd Park, which is outside the target neighborhood boundaries, lies between the Newton Corner and the Nonantum target neighborhoods and serves low- and moderate-income residents from both areas. It is therefore eligible for funding.) Parks and Recreation staff assessed the parks in at least 12 categories including playgrounds, accessibility, signage, seating and play fields and gave the parks an overall rating. The priority levels assigned were "High," "Medium" and "Low".

The following components were evaluated by Parks and Recreation staff at each of the parks.

**Signage:** Almost all of the parks need new signage. New signage is likely to model the recently installed CDBG-funded Carleton Park sign.

**Accessibility:** Farlow Park rates the best in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities, while Boyd, Chaffin and Charlesbank Parks need accessibility improvements. Carleton Park, because of its small size and limited usage, is not as high a priority.

**Open Space:** In general, the open spaces (passive recreation areas) in the target neighborhood are in good shape; only Charlesbank Park needs improvement.

**Play Fields:** Only Farlow and Boyd Parks have soccer and ball fields, and both parks' fields are in poor condition. Despite the poor rating at Boyd, little can be done to improve the field because of the lack of irrigation opportunities.

At Farlow, irrigation, though installed, is not effective because of the poor soil quality.

Courts: Only Farlow and Boyd Parks have basketball courts. Boyd's will be replaced in spring 2005 with CDBG funding, and Farlow's three half-courts designed to serve elementary school children are in decent condition.

Lighting: Given that all parks close at dusk, lighting is not required in parks. Still some parks have lights that are incorporated into the overall design; Chaffin and Farlow Parks have attractive historic gaslights lining the walkways. Boyd Park has lights around the basketball court that are never used. There may be a need at Boyd Park for appropriate-scale security lighting. Carleton and Charlesbank Parks have no lighting and do not need any.

Playgrounds: Only Chaffin Park does not have a playground. Boyd, Carleton, and Farlow Parks have playground equipment in decent/good condition. Charlesbank's playground area needs resurfacing.

Fencing: Fencing is a concern in all of the parks except for Chaffin because it has none. In most cases, only the fabric needs replacement.

Trash Receptacles: All the parks, except for Carleton Park, have old and/or unattractive trashcans. Most parks have oil drums that serve as trashcans. Parks and Recreation is researching this issue in order to develop City standards.

Trees/Landscaping: Proper design and maintenance of landscaping and trees is critical for a park's success. A good example of this principle can be seen in Farlow and Chaffin Parks; good design has produced long-lasting positive results. By contrast, Boyd and Charlesbank Parks lack a landscaping design. Carleton Park recently underwent minor landscaping and tree pruning, but additional work would be beneficial.

Seating: Except in Carleton Park, which has two benches in good condition and a new picnic table, all the other parks need new or replacement benches and picnic tables. One of the goals of the Parks and Recreation Department is to match all the seating equipment within each park and, where possible, make the switch from wooden to recycled plastic bench slats.

Water Fountains: Only two of the five parks have bubblers. Boyd Park's bubbler will be replaced this fall. Farlow's drinking fountain does not work. It is recommended that one be installed at Charlesbank Park if possible. Chaffin and Carleton Parks do not need this amenity.

Parking: None of the parks have dedicated parking except for Boyd, which shares its lot with Lincoln-Eliot School. This lot will be slightly reworked and re-stripped during the fall of 2004 to improve access to the park. The other parks rely solely on street parking.

The following list contains the overall priority rating and the needs given high priority by the Parks and Recreation Department.

	BOYD PARK	CARLETON PARK	CHARLESBANK PARK	CHAFFIN PARK	FARLOW PARK
<b>OVERALL RATING</b>	MEDIUM/HIGH	LOW	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
<b>HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Fencing</li> <li>• Trees/Landscaping</li> <li>• Seating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing (new gate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Playground (resurfacing)</li> <li>• Water Fountain</li> <li>• Other: stone wall stabilization; stair railings; vehicular entrance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Seating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Seating</li> <li>• Water Fountain</li> <li>• Other: bridge restoration</li> </ul>

At the September 2004 public meeting, a resident suggested that the retaining wall in Chaffin Park be replaced as it is in poor condition. Another resident added that they would like to see the current Chaffin Park walkway, which is cracked in several places, replaced with a new accessible walkway.

A resident who frequents Charlesbank Park with her children stated that she believes there were more pressing needs at the park than signage and a vehicular entrance. She said that there are roughly 35 families with young children who use the park, and she would like to see the existing play equipment replaced with more diverse play options for children of all ages. She expressed her desire for new rubberized safety surfacing instead of the current wood carpet.

### Public Infrastructure Needs

There are 50 streets contained within the Newton Corner target area—including 13 private ways. Housing and Community Development staff visited all the streets in the fall of 2003 to analyze the various street components, such as sidewalks, curbs, trees, curb cuts and roadways, then issued an overall rating for each street. In order to narrow the field of streets recommended for reconstruction, staff suggested considering only streets with a rating below “Decent”—those receiving a rating of “Decent/Poor,” “Poor,” and “Horrible”—as appropriate for improvements.

While some private ways are in serious need of repair, given the resources, staff recommended only considering public streets for reconstruction. As a result, 17 streets were given below “Decent” ratings—10 “Decent/Poor” streets, six “Poor” streets, and one “Horrible” street. This includes Baldwin Street, Crescent Square, Eldredge Street, Elmwood Street, Hollis Street, Jefferson Street, Maple Avenue, Mt. Ida Street, Newtonville Avenue, the lower portion of Oakland Street, Richardson Street, Russell Road, Thornton Street, Vernon Street, Waban Street, Washington Street and Wesley Street. Many of these streets had missing sections of sidewalk and curbing or the conditions of the infrastructure had deteriorated enough to have a negative appearance and possibly a detrimental impact on public safety.

The NCAC viewed street improvements as a normal City function and were reluctant to set CDBG funds aside for reconstruction projects. However, the NCAC wished to express its preference that future Newton Corner street reconstruction planning be more progressive than current practice. The committee is advocating that the project development phase including the following elements: elimination or reduction of wire pollution, installation of decorative and appropriate-scaled streetlights, planting of street trees and traffic-calming measures.

At the September 2004 public meeting, a resident suggested that the nearby Charles River Greenway should be made accessible to neighborhood residents. Some sections of sidewalk leading to the Greenway are missing, and crossing Nonantum Street to access the Greenway is very difficult due to the lack of crosswalks. Another resident suggested making Peabody Street one-way so that drivers will stop using it as a shortcut to Galen Street.

### **Public Facilities Needs**

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There are four publicly owned buildings or properties in the target area. These include Underwood School, Newton Corner Branch Library, Richardson Street Parking Lot and the Newton Corner Parking Lot. The Newton Corner Parking Lot is located in a primarily commercial district, while the Richardson Lot is situated in a primarily residential area. The Newton Corner Branch Library will soon be undergoing Community Preservation Act-funded renovations, however, other ideas such as the relocation of the property's original gazebo which now resides at the Newton History Museum may be considered for CDBG funding in the future.

### ***UNMET NEEDS FROM FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

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Over half of the needs in the Newton Corner Target Neighborhood from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan were addressed or will be addressed shortly. The fulfilled needs include reconstruction of Charlesbank Road, Orchard Street, and Nonantum Place, installation of a traffic signal at Park & Tremont Street, beautification at the Pearl & Thornton traffic island, tree plantings, and miscellaneous improvements at Carleton Park. During the 2005 construction season, much of Boyd Park will be renovated and traffic-calming signs will be posted on Pearl Street. The following list demonstrates the unmet needs.

- Renovate Farlow and Chaffin Parks and the Pruckner Walkway with new benches, walkways and limited seed or sod- will address the need to improve this neighborhood park area in the center of Newton Corner.
- Improve private ways with curbing, new roadways, and sidewalks, and pay for income-eligible residents' betterments- will address the need to improve the condition of the private ways in Newton Corner including Maple Circle, Charlesbank Terrace, and Thornton Place. (*Note: given limited resources, funding private ways is no longer an eligible activity.*)
- Reconstruct Channing Street with new sidewalks, improvements to overhead wires, new light fixtures and trees if feasible- will address the need to improve the condition of Channing Street.
- Reconstruct Oakland Street from Church Street to dead end with new sidewalks, new or restored curbing, and trees if feasible- will address the need to improve the condition of Oakland Street.
- Install benches throughout the target neighborhood- will address the need to improve seating and gathering areas in high pedestrian traffic areas in Newton Corner.
- Reconstruct Arlington Street in spots from Park Street to Nonantum Street with new sidewalks, new curbing, and trees- will address the need to improve the condition of Arlington Street. (*Note: this street is no longer within the Newton Corner Target Neighborhood based on income data from the U.S. Census 2000.*)

### ***PROMINENT NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS***

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At the second needs assessment meeting on July 8, 2004, NCAC members were asked to indicate their priorities from the needs listed below, which are in no particular order.

- Traffic-calming measures
- Burying overhead utilities
- Street tree plantings
- Decorative street lighting
- Pedestrian safety and accessibility
- Beautification of City-owned property
- Better seating and trash receptacles at parks
- More durable and accessible safety surfacing for playgrounds
- Attractive, informative, uniform park signage
- Playground equipment catering to a wide range of ages

In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (traffic, parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities), the NCAC decided that traffic improvements were their highest priority, followed by parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities improvements, in that order. These priority needs and the resulting objectives and strategies developed to address them were substantiated by feedback obtained at the neighborhood public meeting.

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## NEWTON CORNER STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***

Although efforts will be made to address all identified needs, the development of priorities allows Housing and Community Development staff to focus on what the residents view as the most pressing needs in their community. The objectives and strategies below, which are listed in order of priority, were developed through the needs assessment process.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

**Objective:** To establish a pedestrian-friendly environment by improving pedestrian safety and access to all Newton Corner neighborhoods through enhancing the visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity of crosswalks

**Strategies:**

- Upgrade all crosswalks that meet the listed objectives (better visibility, more durable, more attractive) within the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area and at key intersections near the rotary and install visible crosswalk indicator signage at all crosswalks.
- Install a crosswalk across Washington Street from Park Street to the bridge that leads to Nonantum Place and Charlesbank Road.
- Install crosswalks, better traffic lane markings and speed indicators at the Church Street/Richardson Street/Oakland Street/YMCA intersection.
- Build an accessible footbridge across the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area to reconnect Newton Corner.

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

**Objective:** To replace existing wood carpet surfacing with new safety surfacing that is more sanitary, attractive, durable and accessible

**Strategy:**

- Charlesbank Park: Create a safe, accessible park near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area since Farlow and Burr Parks are not easily accessible to pedestrians. Install new safety surfacing that meets listed objectives, new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.

**Objective:** To replace the aging play equipment at Charlesbank Park with plays options appropriate for both toddlers and school-age children

**Strategy:**

- Charlesbank Park: Create a safe, accessible park near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area since Farlow and Burr Parks are not easily accessible to pedestrians. Ensure that age-appropriate play equipment is available for both the toddlers and school-age children who use the park.

**Objectives:** To install attractive, informative, uniform park signage and to beautify the parks through the provision of adequate, attractive and safe park amenities including seating and trash receptacles

**Strategies:**

- Farlow Park: Install replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.
- Boyd Park: Construct a new accessible pathway that connects to play fields and install new seating and trash receptacles by fields. Install new park signage.
- Chaffin Park: Install new picnic tables, replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.

- Carleton Park: Replace gate to match existing decorative front fence.

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objectives: To expand street and/or sidewalk reconstruction planning to include burying overhead utilities and installing decorative street lighting to beautify the streets and improve safety  
 To assess opportunities for new and replacement street trees  
 To incorporate traffic-calming measures into street reconstruction design

No strategies identified.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To beautify City-owned properties to improve quality of life

No strategies identified.

At the January public meeting, staff presented the objectives and strategies developed by the advisory committee members and interested citizens, with input from other City departments. Additional suggestions and feedback from the area residents were recorded. After all of the ideas were noted, attendees were asked to vote for their top three priority strategies. Below are the results of the prioritization.

VOTES	STRATEGY	AREA OF NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
16	Improvements to crosswalks around the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area and at key intersections near the rotary	Traffic Improvements
12	Improvements to Charlesbank Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements
12	Improvements to Farlow Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements
7	Install walkway railings at the Newton Corner Branch Library	Public Facilities Improvements
6	Improvements to Chaffin Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements
6	Traffic calming at Church/Richardson/Oakland Streets	Traffic Improvements
4	Pedestrian improvements to the Charles River Reservation	Traffic Improvements
2	Conduct implementation study for MTA improvements	Traffic Improvements
2	Conduct feasibility study for a footbridge over the Turnpike	Traffic Improvements
0	Install a crosswalk at Park and Washington Streets	Traffic Improvements
0	Improvements to Boyd Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements
0	Improvements to Carleton Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements

## CDBG PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

To establish a pedestrian-friendly environment by improving pedestrian safety and access to all Newton Corner neighborhoods through enhancing the visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity of crosswalks
To replace existing wood carpet surfacing with new safety surfacing that is more sanitary, attractive, durable and accessible
To replace the aging play equipment at Charlesbank Park with plays options appropriate for both toddlers and school-age children
To install attractive, informative, uniform park signage
To provide adequate, attractive and safe seating and trash receptacles at parks

### ***FUNDING ESTIMATES***

Below are the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs in the Newton Corner target neighborhood. These cost estimates are a crucial factor in the planning process as strategies may often require more funding than is allocated through the CDBG neighborhood improvements program. For better or worse, funding availability plays a paramount role in which CDBG projects can and should be pursued. If a cost estimate exceeds the CDBG funding and there are no funds to be leveraged, developing a project to carry out the strategy may not be a prudent use of CDBG funds.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

**Strategy:** Upgrade all crosswalks that meet the listed objectives (better visibility, more durable, more attractive) within the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area and at key intersections near the rotary and install visible crosswalk indicator signage at all crosswalks.

**Total Funding Needed:** According to the City's traffic engineer, new upgraded crosswalks could be installed around the rotary and at other key intersections at an estimated cost of \$7,500 per crosswalk. It is estimated that ten crosswalks need to be improved. In order to increase visibility of these crosswalks, appropriate signage and indicators need to be installed. It is estimated that this would cost \$1,000 per crosswalk. Finally, crosswalks may require infrastructure improvements such as curb cuts and this is estimated to cost \$10,000. All totaled, this project idea could cost \$95,000.

**Strategy:** Improvements to the Church Street/Richardson Street/Oakland Street/YMCA intersection including the possible creation of traffic islands and crosswalks, curb and sidewalk work, street repaving, and landscaping.

**Total Funding Needed:** Based on the proposed conceptual plan distributed at the January 2005 meeting, it is estimated that the project would cost approximately \$55,000. This estimate is based on the work being done by City crews. It should be noted that an item was recently docketed with the Board of Alderman to implement these improvements. If approved, some City funds may be available, which would stretch the limited CDBG funds further.

Strategy: Connect to the Charles River Reservation across Nonantum Road at the end of Jefferson Street and Maple Street (suggested method: footbridge feasibility study).

Total Funding Needed: The estimated cost of conducting a study to determine if a footbridge is feasible is \$20,000.

Strategy: Conduct an MTA improvements implementation study to continue partnership with the MTA to identify, design and fund traffic improvements in Newton Corner.

Total Funding Needed: Based on the cost of the study done for the signal at the intersection of Park Street and Tremont Street, it is estimated that a study would cost approximately \$20,000.

Strategy: Conduct a feasibility study and develop a concept plan for the design of an accessible footbridge across the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area to reconnect Newton Corner.

Total Funding Needed: The estimated cost of conducting the study and developing a plan is \$30,000.

Strategy: Install a crosswalk across Washington Street from Park Street to the bridge that leads to Nonantum Place and Charlesbank Road.

Total Funding Needed: The estimated cost of design and installation of the crosswalk is \$50,000.

#### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Charlesbank Park: Create a safe, accessible park within the Newton Corner-Massachusetts Turnpike loop since Farlow and Burr Parks are not easily accessible to pedestrians. Install new safety surfacing that meets listed objectives, new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage. Ensure that age-appropriate play equipment is available for both the toddlers and school-age children who use the park.

Total Funding Needed: This estimated CDBG-funded cost for this project is \$15,000 for the development of a concept plan and \$20,000 for the installation of new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage. The cost of the concept plan is based on prices received for Pellegrini and Stearns Parks in Nonantum. Community Preservation Act funds will be requested for the installation of new play equipment, safety surfacing and other improvements identified in the concept plan.

Strategy: Farlow Park: Install replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.

Total Funding Needed: Based on information provided by the Parks and Recreation Department, the estimated cost of these improvements is \$32,000. This includes the replacement of slats on 12 existing benches and the installation of eight new benches, park signage, eight decorative trash cans and two new picnic tables.

Strategy: Chaffin Park: Replace walkway from Center Street to Pruckner Walkway and install new picnic tables, replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage.

Total Funding Needed: Based on information provided by the Parks and Recreation Department, the estimated cost for these improvements is \$20,000. Of that total, it is estimated that the new accessible walkway would cost approximately \$10,000. Other project costs include the installation of two new decorative trash cans, 2 new picnic tables, park signage and replacement slats for 4 benches.

Strategy: Boyd Park: Construct a new accessible pathway that connects to play fields and install and new park signage.

Total Funding Needed: The new accessible walkway is estimated to cost \$16,500. This is based on an estimated cost of \$25 per square yard, plus 15 percent for contingencies and 5 percent for inflation. New signage is estimated to cost \$2,500. This estimate is based on the cost of the Carleton Park sign purchased in 2004.

Strategy: Carleton Park: Replace gate to match existing decorative front fence.

Total Funding Needed: The cost of the replacement of the existing chain-link gate with a new gate to match the decorative fencing is \$5,000.

#### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Install handrails along the new walkway at the Newton Corner Branch Library.

Total Funding Needed: The estimated cost for the fabrication and installation of handrails to run the length of the walkway is \$8,500. The estimate is based on the cost of other handrails installed recently at other City facilities.

#### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

No strategies identified.

#### ***PROJECTS***

Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority neighborhood improvement needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments with jurisdiction over these areas, including the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Building Department and staff met with them to develop potential projects. The NAC and Housing and Community Development staff reviewed the departments' information then selected the projects below for CDBG funding.

Based on the prioritized strategies identified at the public meeting on January 13, 2005, and the estimated \$185,000 that will be available for neighborhood improvements annually, the following is a list of projects that may be implemented in the Newton Corner target neighborhood in FY07.

## **PROPOSED FY07 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

Estimated Project Cost & Budget

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Charlesbank Park Improvements** **\$35,000**  
Project ideas to be developed through the creation of a conceptual plan (apply for CPA funds to help implement)
  
- **Farlow Park Improvements** **\$30,000**  
Project ideas include the installation of replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage
  
- **Chaffin Park Improvements** **\$20,000**  
Project ideas include the replacement of the walkway from Centre Street to Pruckner Walkway and the installation of new picnic tables, replacement slats on existing decorative benches and/or new seating, new trash receptacles and new park signage

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Newton Corner Branch Library Handrail Installation** **\$8,500\*\***  
Install handrails along the length of the new walkway  
\*\*to be funded as part of a FY04 project

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Newton Corner Traffic Improvements** **\$72,500**  
Upgrade all crosswalks within/near the Massachusetts Turnpike rotary area to meet identified objectives
  
- **Church/Richardson/Oakland Traffic Calming** **\$27,500**  
Construct traffic calming measures at this intersection, including the possible creation of traffic islands and crosswalks, curb and sidewalk work, street repaving, and landscaping  
(total estimated cost = \$55,000 additional funding to be requested)

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects selected in this area.

### **PROPOSED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Newton Corner Advisory Committee hopes to be able to implement all five of the proposed projects listed above. In order to be able to do this, additional resources will have to be leveraged. Following are the proposed goals and expected accomplishments for the five FY07 projects:

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>GOALS</b>	<b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS</b> <b>(# PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVED)</b>
Newton Corner Traffic Improvements	Calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety through improved crosswalks	7
Church/ Richardson/ Oakland Traffic Calming	Calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety through road reconfiguration and new crosswalks	1
Charlesbank Park Improvements	Improve the safety and aesthetics of Charlesbank Park	1
Farlow Park Improvements	Improve the safety and aesthetics of Farlow Park	1
Chaffin Park Improvements	Improve the safety and aesthetics of Chaffin Park	1
Total Public Facilities Improved		11

### ***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

The proposed outcome of the Newton Corner target neighborhood improvement efforts will be promoting sustainability or livability. The Newton Corner Advisory Committee members and other residents who have attended the needs assessment and objectives and strategies meetings believe that the proposed projects will increase their quality of life and the livability of their neighborhood. They feel that the parks, particularly Charlesbank Park, are in need of major improvements to bring them up to the quality of other Newton parks. They also feel that their quality of life is negatively impacted by the Massachusetts Turnpike dividing their neighborhood and the lack of pedestrian safety in and near the rotary that loops around and over the Turnpike. Finally, they feel that there are a number of elderly people who use the Newton Corner Branch Library who would benefit from handrails being installed along the new walkway, improving access to this important community resource. The performance measure employed will be a written survey distributed to all the affected residents in the Newton Corner target neighborhood. It is believed that the resounding finding will be that these improvements have increased the livability of the neighborhood.

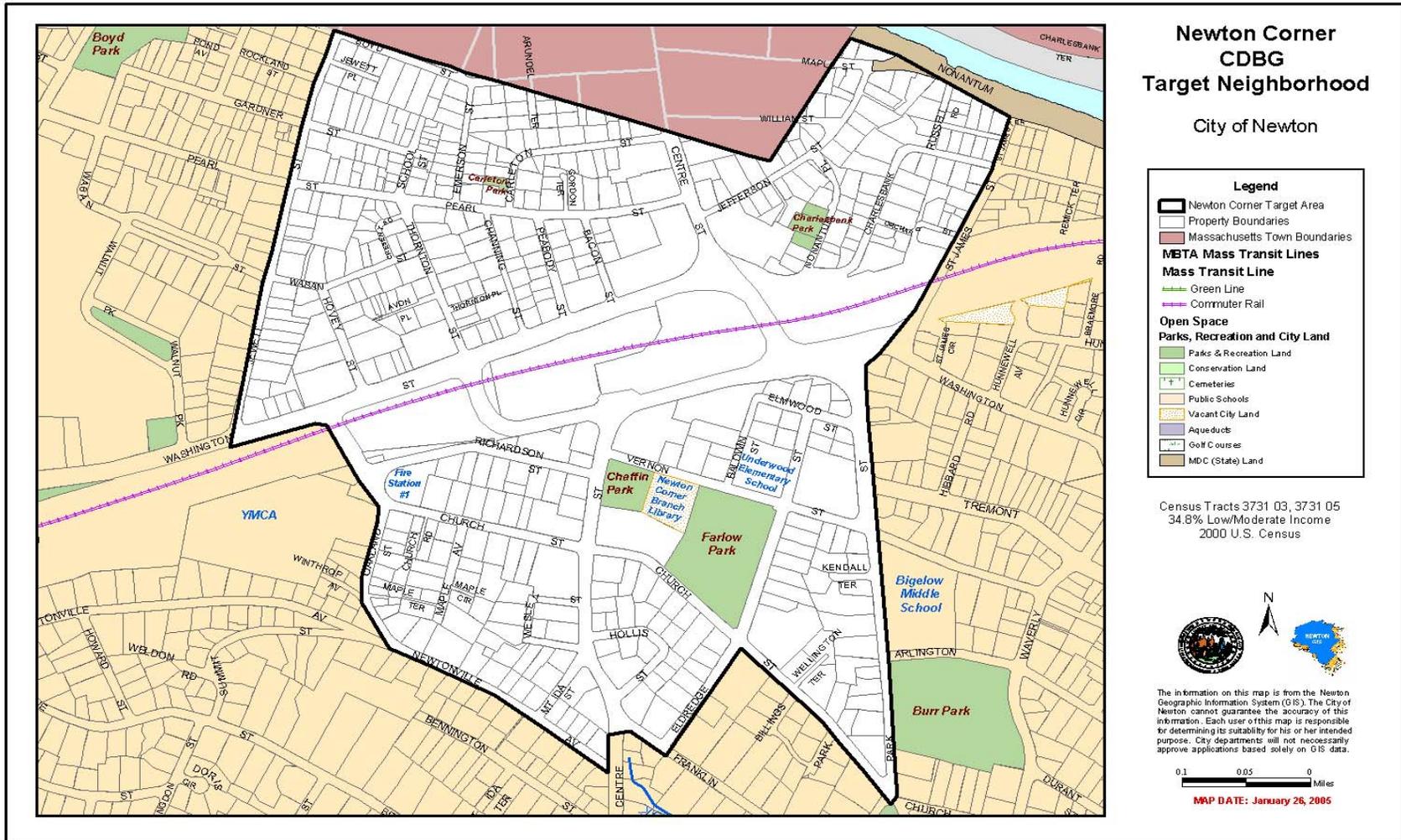
### ***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

The primary obstacle to meeting underserved needs is the lack of sufficient funding. Twelve priority needs were identified in the Newton Corner target neighborhood by attendees at the public meetings held in summer and fall of 2004 and winter of 2005, however, the available CDBG funding will fund only the five of the needs. In fact, the CDBG funding alone will not be sufficient for completing three of the projects. Additional funding will be requested from the Department of Public Works for the implementation of the Church/Richardson/Oakland Traffic Calming project. Furthermore, Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds will be sought for implementing the majority of the improvements for Charlesbank Park, as the CDBG funds will be primarily used to develop a park master plan and for some incidental improvements. Lastly, CDBG funds will be coupled with CPA funds to restore Farlow Park to its former grandeur.

An additional obstacle to meeting underserved needs is posed by the necessity of the involvement of state agencies in addressing some of the identified needs. For instance, solving the noise, pollution, and traffic problems resulting from the Massachusetts Turnpike requires the cooperation of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. While the Turnpike Authority has been

responsive in the past, convincing them that they need to spend upwards of \$1.1 million to address numerous neighborhood needs in Newton Corner presents a challenge.

**MAP 6: NEWTON CORNER TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD**



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## NEWTONVILLE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessment and the strategic plan for neighborhood improvements in the Newtonville target neighborhood. The document is broken down into two sections, each containing a number of subsections.

The needs assessment for the Newtonville target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Demographic Information** – This subsection identifies the significant demographic characteristics of the neighborhood including population, race, age and household information.
- **Needs Assessment Process and Findings** – This subsection explains the process by which the needs assessment was conducted. The following subsections describe the neighborhood conditions.
  - **Traffic Needs** – This subsection describes the traffic needs and concerns in the target neighborhood.
  - **Parks/Open Space Needs** – This subsection presents the conditions of the passive and active recreational amenities at the parks and open spaces serving the residents in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Infrastructure** – This subsection identifies the major roadway, sidewalk, curb, curb cut and street tree needs in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Facilities** – The subsection discusses the needs at City-owned properties, including schools and libraries in the target neighborhood.
- **Prominent Neighborhood Needs** – This subsection presents the needs identified by the newly formed Newtonville Advisory Committee, interested citizens and members of the public.

The strategic plan for the Newtonville target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Objectives and Strategies** – This subsection lists the objectives and strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Funding Estimates** – This subsection lists the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Projects** – This section lists the projects that were selected by the advisory committee to be undertaken during the period of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan.
- **Proposed Goals and Accomplishments** – This section details the proposed goals and accomplishments for the years that neighborhood improvements will be funded in Newtonville.
- **Target Neighborhood Map** – This map provides a graphic representation of the locations of planned projects.

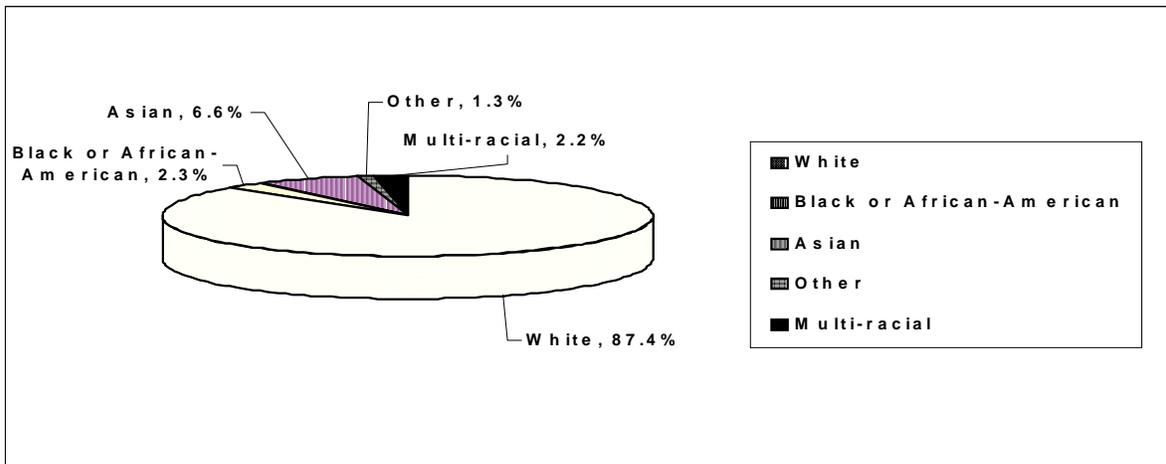
**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Data for the Newtonville target neighborhood was gathered from the U.S. Census 2000 (Census) and from public hearings, public comments and continuous discussions with community leaders and public officials. The Newtonville target neighborhood covers .17 square miles, encompassing one census block group: 3733.03.

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the Newtonville target neighborhood—which is bounded by Lowell Avenue on the west, Watertown Street on the north, Crafts Street on the east, and Washington Street on the south—has 870 residents. This figure represents a 4.4 percent population increase from 1990.

Of this population, 851 residents, nearly 98 percent, identified themselves as being of one race, with 87.4 percent of these respondents identifying themselves as White (see Fig. 58). The next largest racial group is Asian, accounting for almost seven percent of the population. Only 3.4 percent of the White population is Hispanic or Latino. The minority population in the Newtonville target neighborhood increased from 7.8 percent in 1990 to 12.6 percent in 2000.

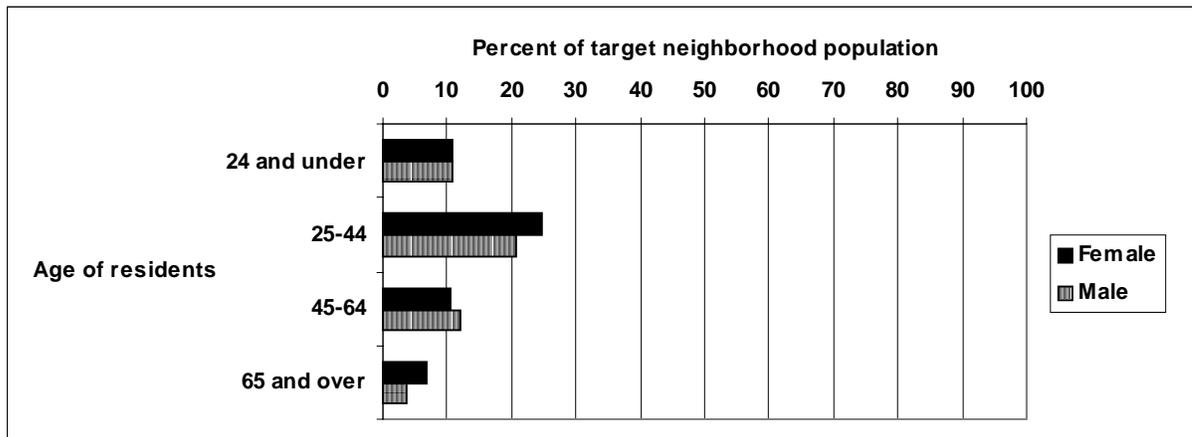
**Fig. 60: Newtonville Target Neighborhood Racial Composition, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

Forty-five percent of the target neighborhood residents fall into the 25- to 44-year-old category. Unlike the other target neighborhood, the categories “19 and under” and “65 and over” do not comprise roughly the same percentage; there are relatively fewer older residents (10.6 percent) and more persons 19 and under (16.8 percent). The smallest population in both genders is in the over 75-year-old and older range. The median age in the neighborhood is 35.3 years old.

**Fig. 61: Newtonville Target Neighborhood Age and Sex Breakdown, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

There are 410 households in the Newtonville target neighborhood, with an average household size of 2.12 and an average family size of 2.90. Twenty percent (81) of the households contain one or more people less than 18 years old; 27 percent (22) of these households with one or more people under 18 are single householders (100 percent female head of household).

There are 422 housing units in the Newtonville target neighborhood; 410 of them (97.1 percent) are occupied, and 12 are vacant (2.9 percent). Renters occupy the majority of homes (61.7 percent). Of the 157 owner-occupied units, 50.3 percent (79 units) of owners have lived in the neighborhood for more than 25 years.

A total of 115 disabilities were reported in the Newtonville target neighborhood. The majority of disabilities reported apply to elderly/retired populations (73.9 percent) and working-age adults (26.1 percent). The categories of disabilities with the highest numbers are “Physical disability<sup>1</sup>” with 26.1 percent, “Mental disability<sup>2</sup>” with 23.5 percent, and “Go-outside-home disability<sup>3</sup>” with 19.1 percent.

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS**

This is the first time in the 30-year history of the Newton Housing and Community Development Program that this area of Newtonville has been eligible as a target neighborhood. Newtonville’s neighborhood improvement funds will be split between FY06 and FY09.

As a new target neighborhood, the needs assessment process in Newtonville began from the ground up and was rather detailed and comprehensive. There was no formal structure in place for generating citizen participation or for gathering needs data. There was existing data on a portion of the target neighborhood from its successful bid to be designated as a local historic district, but that information was concentrated solely on housing conditions.

<sup>1</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying. U.S. Census 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to learn, remember or concentrate. U.S. Census 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to go outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor’s office. U.S. Census 2000.

In the fall of 2003, once the new Newtonville target neighborhood was identified through Census information, Housing and Community Development staff did a thorough windshield survey of the neighborhood. Public facilities in the Newtonville target neighborhood are limited to the Department of Public Works Crafts Street yard. Therefore, the survey concentrated on documenting the condition of streetscapes, including sidewalks, curbing, curb cuts and street trees, and open space, consisting of a traffic island at the intersection of Walnut, Lowell and Watertown Streets and a small median on Prescott Street.

The first Newtonville public meeting to gather information on neighborhood needs was scheduled for July 20, 2004, and flyers were hand-delivered to all the residents of the target neighborhood. Ten residents and four staff members were in attendance. Staff presented information detailing Newton's Housing and Community Development Program and the neighborhood improvements program specifically. Information was shared on eligible neighborhood improvements, past and current projects, the Consolidated Plan development process and the Newtonville Advisory Committee that was being formed. Discussion then turned to what the residents saw as the public facilities needs in the target neighborhood.

A second public meeting was held on September 23, 2004. A flyer was mailed to all neighborhood residents announcing the meeting, and 11 neighborhood residents were in attendance.

### **Traffic Needs**

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The traffic needs in this neighborhood are varied. The City's Traffic Engineer has recommended that the CDBG Program fund an implementation study to determine which projects the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA) should implement next as outlined in the report "The Effects of the July 1, 2002 Boston Extension (I-90) Toll Increase on Newton Neighborhoods". Once a project or two is identified, the CDBG Program could also design the project and approach the MTA to implement it.

Several intersections are in need of better striping, including designating turn-only lanes and clarifying the turn radius. Speeding on residential streets is a concern citywide and in this neighborhood Central Avenue is mentioned as being of most concern as it is used as a cut-through from Watertown to Washington. Other reported needs are pedestrian improvements around Walnut-Lowell-Watertown as is a main crossing for students at three nearby schools. The timing of the traffic lights on Walnut Street and Lowell Avenue could be better coordinated so that there are fewer backups, resulting in less pollution to the residents.

### **Parks/Open Space Needs**

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While there are no parks in the Newtonville target neighborhood, there are two parcels of open space that fall under City jurisdiction. In terms of open space needs, staff concentrated on the traffic island at the intersection of Walnut, Watertown and Lowell Streets as the median on Prescott Street is quite small. The traffic island measures .58 acre and has a history as being a former park- "Lowell Park". It is presently a vast open space dotted with trees and hosts a bus shelter. Pedestrian access to this future amenity will also be studied. Other opportunities may exist for new parkland including the rarely used Verizon parking lot on Court Street and possibly from the conversion of industrial land.

### **Public Infrastructure Needs**

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There are 20 streets contained within the Newtonville target neighborhood, including six private ways. The streetscape survey included the 14 public streets or sections of public streets in the

target neighborhood. One street received an overall rating of “Excellent;” three streets received an overall rating of “Good;” two received a “Good/Decent” overall rating, five received a “Decent” rating, with the remaining three streets receiving overall ratings of either “Decent/Poor,” “Poor” or “Poor/Horrible.” A number of these streets had missing sections of sidewalk and curbing or the conditions of the infrastructure had deteriorated enough to have a negative appearance and/or a possible negative effect on public safety.

### **Public Facilities Needs**

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There are no publicly owned buildings within the Newtonville target neighborhood. The only two public properties are those mentioned above in the Parks/Open Space Improvements section: a traffic island at Walnut, Watertown and Lowell Streets and a small median on Prescott Street.

### ***UNMET NEEDS FROM FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

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There are no unmet needs in the Newtonville target neighborhood from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan as this area was not a CDBG target neighborhood during that period.

### ***PROMINENT NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS***

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At the September public meeting, residents were asked to indicate their top three priorities from the following needs, which are listed in no particular order:

- Traffic-calming measures
- Tree plantings
- Storm drain concerns
- Noise mitigation at the DPW Crafts Street yard
- Develop the open space at the intersection of Walnut, Watertown and Lowell Streets
- Install infill sidewalks where necessary
- Install inill granite curbing
- Conduct a lighting study to analyze the need for additional and/or replacement appropriate-scaled residential lights

In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (public infrastructure, traffic improvements, parks/open space and public facilities), traffic improvements were the highest priority, followed by parks/open space, public infrastructure and public facilities improvements, in that order.

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## NEWTONVILLE STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***

Although efforts will be made to address all identified needs, the development of priority needs allows Housing and Community Development staff to focus on what the residents view as the most pressing needs in their community. The following objectives and strategies were developed through the needs assessment process.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

- Objectives: To improve pedestrian safety and connectivity  
To better control and clarify traffic patterns to improve public safety
- Strategies:
- Conduct a comprehensive, target area wide traffic study that will develop traffic-calming measures at the Walnut-Watertown-Lowell intersection, control speeding on certain streets such as Central Street, and measure noise pollution levels.
  - Create a crosswalk by the post office at 897 Washington Street (This solution is not endorsed by the City's Traffic Engineer as a simple crosswalk could have the opposite safety effect on such a wide thoroughfare. Other ideas could be investigated but they would likely be complicated and require professional analysis.).

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Objective: To increase recreational opportunities for this neighborhood
- Strategies:
- Redesign triangular traffic island (formerly known as "Lowell Park") for active and/or passive recreational purposes.
  - Redevelop underutilized Verizon parking lot for park use (on Court Street).
  - Conduct a land use study that address the phasing out of incompatible land uses.

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Objectives: To establish and emphasize a pedestrian-friendly and comfortable environment  
To beautify the neighborhood with new and replacement street trees  
To beautify the neighborhood through uniform and quality infrastructure
- Strategies:
- Install sidewalks where there are none, especially along Lowell Avenue, Central Avenue and Court Street.
  - Install granite curbing where needed to reduce "hodge-podge" appearance of certain streets including Lowell Avenue and Central Avenue.
  - Plant street trees where possible.
  - Conduct a light study to analyze the ideal amount of light needed and recommend appropriate residential street lights.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

- Objective: To raise the quality of life for area residents by minimizing nuisances
- Strategies:
- Mitigate noise at the Crafts Street DPW Yard.
  - Mitigate noise from Mass Turnpike, including planting "trash trees" (consider a partnership with the MTA).

In addition to prioritizing neighborhood needs at the September public meeting, attendees were asked to vote for their top three priority strategies. Below are the results.

VOTES	STRATEGY	AREA OF NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
7	Conduct a traffic study to recommend traffic-calming measures especially around the Walnut Street & Lowell Avenue intersection and along Central Avenue	Traffic Improvements
6	Redesign triangular traffic island for active and/or passive recreational purposes	Parks/Open Space Improvements
4	Infill sidewalks where needed (especially Lowell Avenue, Central Avenue, Court Street)	Public Infrastructure Improvements
3	Conduct a lighting study to analyze the need for additional appropriate-scaled residential lights	Public Infrastructure Improvements
1	Tree plantings where needed	Parks/Open Space Improvements
1	Noise mitigation at the Crafts Street DPW Yard	Public Infrastructure Improvements
0	Install infill granite curbing	Public Infrastructure Improvements
0	Address storm drain concerns	Public Infrastructure Improvements
Not voted on but will pursue possible partnerships	Noise mitigation on Massachusetts Turnpike property	Public Facilities Improvements
	Install a crosswalk to the post office at 897 Washington Street	Traffic Improvements

### ***FUNDING ESTIMATES***

Below are the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs in the Newtonville target neighborhood. These cost estimates are a crucial factor in the planning process as strategies may often require more funding than is allocated through the CDBG neighborhood improvements program. For better or worse, funding availability plays a paramount role in what CDBG projects can and should be pursued. If a cost estimate exceeds the CDBG funding and there are no funds to be leveraged, developing a project to carry out the strategy may not be a prudent use of CDBG funds.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Newtonville Traffic Study  
 Total Funding Needed: The purpose of such a study is first to identify the problem areas, devise a traffic model in order to determine the impacts of various traffic-calming efforts. The study would encompass the entire target area with heavier emphasis on particular intersections including Walnut-Watertown-Lowell, Lowell-Washington, and Walnut-Washington. Measuring noise levels throughout the target area would be another component. Such a comprehensive study is estimated at \$40,000.

Strategy: “Lowell Park” Traffic & Pedestrian Improvements (Phase 1)

Total Funding Needed: It is estimated that redirecting and calming the traffic flow and making safer and more visible pedestrian crossings could cost up to \$50,000. The traffic study would investigate various design options and their effectiveness at addressing the concerns. Some preliminary ideas for improvement include making Lowell Avenue Ext. a one-way road heading eastbound, installing raised crosswalks to the park, and narrowing the roadway on Walnut Street.

Strategy: MTA Improvements Implementation Study  
Total Funding Needed: In order to keep the momentum flowing on turnpike mitigation (many of which were listed in the report “The Effects of the July 1, 2002 Boston Extension (I-90) Toll Increase on Newton Neighborhoods”, it was suggested that an implementation study be done to prioritize the projects and perhaps design one or more of the top designs. This represents the model used for installing the Park and Tremont Traffic Signal; the City designed the project and the MTA funded the majority of the construction. It is estimated that this study could cost \$25,000.

Strategy: Post Office Crosswalk  
Total Funding Needed: A simple crosswalk cannot be installed across such a wide road. The solution could require a more complicated and expensive process. Some options may include narrowing the street or installing a traffic signal. Because there is no clear solution, no cost estimate could be determined.

Strategy: Newtonville Traffic Calming  
Total Funding Needed: Traffic calming is primarily needed on Central Avenue. The easiest solution, installing a stop sign at one of the cross streets, would require no CDBG funding. However stop signs are not the most effective traffic-calming tools. Other solutions, including speed display signs could cost up to \$25,000.

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: “Lowell Park” Recreational Improvements (Phase 2)  
Total Funding Needed: Until Phase 1 is completed, the scope of work needed cannot be determined. Therefore an estimate cannot be calculated. However, if assuming the most basic improvements, including pathways, benches, and landscaping, the project cost could equal \$50,000. If more decorative items were to be added or recreational areas (i.e. bocce court, etc) the cost could total up to \$100,000. Taking the average, the “Lowell Park” Phase 2 project may need funding of \$75,000.

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Newtonville Infrastructure Improvements  
Total Funding Needed: The infrastructure in the Newtonville Target Neighborhood is discontinuous and nonuniform. The residents hope to change these conditions to improve both public safety and aesthetics.

The exact need has not been quantified but there are four streets that have sidewalk sections missing and at least five streets with partial curbing. There are more streets that have non-matching materials. To redo all of this infrastructure is not realistic, so the residents thought it more feasible to focus on the missing infrastructure portions initially. A concrete sidewalk that is 4" thick and 5 feet wide, costs about \$40 square yard. Assuming each lot is 75 feet wide (average of range 60-90 ft.) and that 20 lots need sidewalks, also factoring in a contingency and inflation, the sidewalk portion of this project could equal \$40,000. There appear to be more lots without curbing than sidewalks so taking the estimate to 30 lots without curbing, at a rate of \$30 per linear ft. plus contingency and inflation, this portion of the project could total \$80,000. The total infrastructure need for infill sidewalks and curbing is estimated at \$120,000.

Strategy: Newtonville Tree Plantings  
Total Funding Needed: Overall, the Newtonville Target Neighborhood rates average-to-barren with respect to street tree coverage. The opportunity for street trees here is good, even given its small size. There are 14 public streets in the target area. Assuming that 2-3 trees could be planted on each street, up to 40 trees could be planted. Estimating \$600 per tree and including contingency and inflation costs, the total funding needed is for Newtonville Tree Plantings is \$30,000.

Strategy: Newtonville Light Study  
Total Funding Needed: A consultant would be required to assess the current lighting conditions and make recommendations for improvement in the neighborhood. The City's Traffic Engineer believes that \$10,000 is sufficient for such a study.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Newtonville Noise Pollution Study. See above "Newton Traffic Study" which will analyze noise and make recommendations to address the concerns.

Total Funding Needed: It is too difficult to estimate what the mitigation solutions would cost at the stage but an individual noise study could cost \$10,000.

## ***PROJECTS***

Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority neighborhood improvement needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments with jurisdiction over these areas, including the Department of Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department. Departments were then requested to provide feedback and cost estimates for the top priorities. The NAC and Housing and Community Development staff reviewed the departments' information then selected the projects below for CDBG funding.

In anticipation of funding cuts, \$185,000 was budgeted annually for the Neighborhood Improvement Program (previously \$200,000 per year). Newtonville is schedule to receive funding in FY09, but the funding will now be split into two fiscal years—FY06 and FY09—so that

this new target neighborhood will not have to wait more than three years to see any improvements. The NAC was asked to recommend projects whose budgets equal the amount of Phase 1- \$92,500. Phase 2 projects will be developed in FY07-08.

**PROPOSED FY06 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

Estimated Project Cost & Budget

**TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS & PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Lowell Park Recreation & Traffic Improvements** **\$62,500**  
 Restructuring the traffic and pedestrian patterns around Lowell Park and the addition of amenities to this open space

**PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects selected in this area.

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Newtonville Tree Plantings** **\$15,000**  
 20-30 trees throughout the target neighborhood
- **Newtonville Infrastructure Improvements** **\$15,000**  
 Install sidewalks and/or curbing where there are none or where they are substandard

**PROPOSED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Newtonville Advisory Committee has recommended three projects for FY06. Here are the proposed goals and expected accomplishments for these projects:

PROJECT	GOALS	ACCOMPLISHMENTS (# PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVED)
Lowell Park Traffic & Open Space Improvements	Calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety as well as beautify Lowell Park	2
Newtonville Tree Plantings	Beautify the residential streets through tree plantings	25
Newtonville Infrastructure Improvements	Improve the safety and aesthetics of the area's sidewalks and/or curbs	10
Total Public Facilities Improved		37

**PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

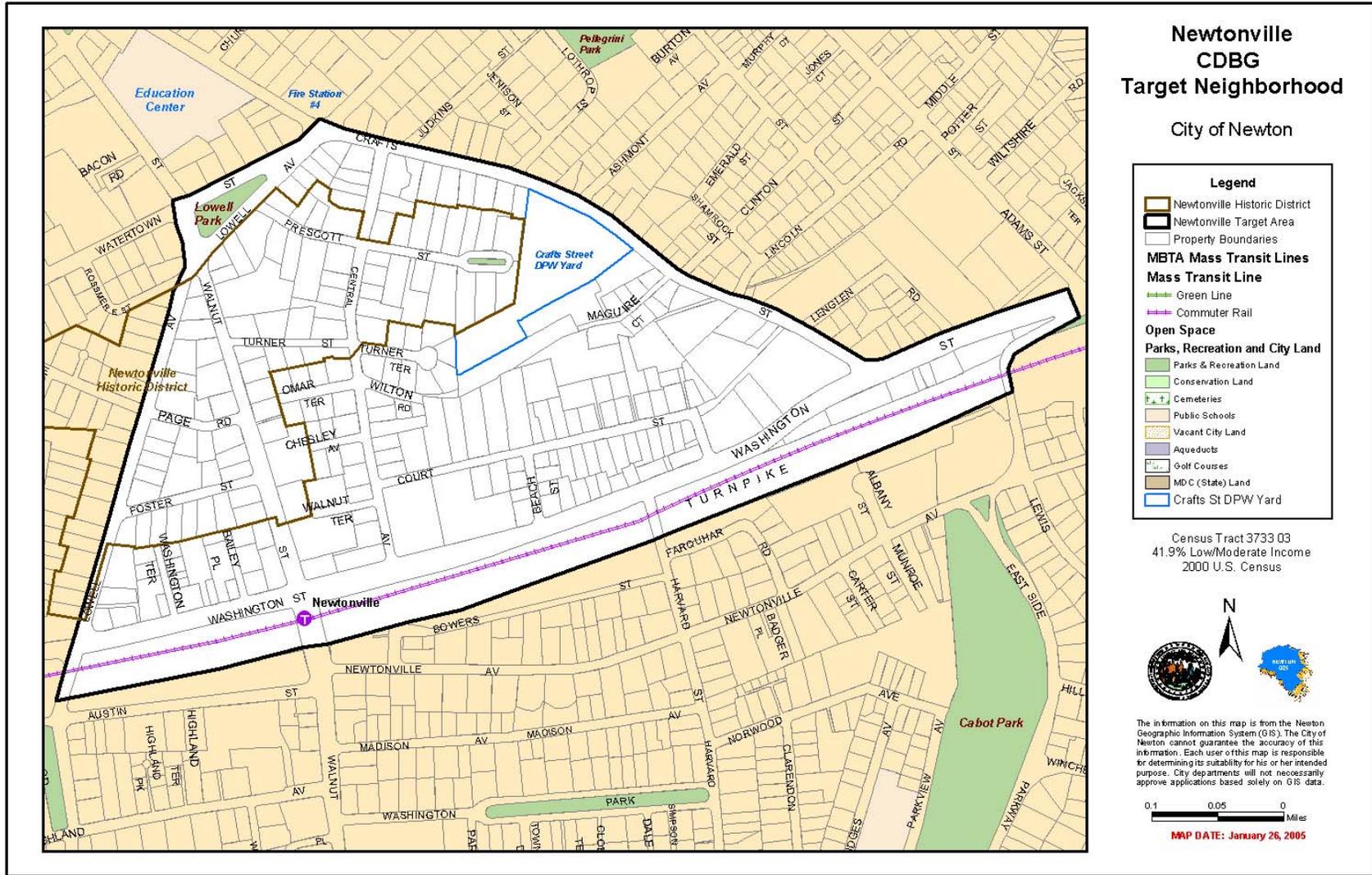
The proposed outcome of the Newtonville target neighborhood improvement efforts will be promoting sustainability or livability. The Newtonville Advisory Committee members and other residents who have attended the needs assessment and objectives and strategies meetings have assembled an array of projects that are expected to increase the quality of life and the livability of their neighborhood. Measuring the impact of the above proposed improvements will be accomplished with a written survey distributed to all the affected residents in the Newtonville target neighborhood. It is believed that the resounding finding will be that these improvements will clearly increase the livability of the neighborhood, particularly by increasing access to open space.

***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

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The primary obstacle to meeting underserved needs is the lack of sufficient funding. Nine priority needs were identified in the Newtonville target neighborhood by attendees at the public meetings held in summer and fall of 2004, however, the available CDBG funding will fund only the three of the needs. In fact, the CDBG funding alone will not be sufficient for completing one project; additional and substantial funding will be requested from the Department of Public Works for the implementation of the traffic portion of the Lowell Park project and CPA funds may be requested for the recreational component.

**MAP 7: NEWTONVILLE TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD**



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## NONANTUM NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessment and the strategic plan for neighborhood improvements in the Nonantum target neighborhood. The document is broken down into two sections, each containing a number of subsections.

The needs assessment for the Nonantum target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections

- **Demographic Information** – This subsection identifies the significant demographic characteristics of the neighborhood including population, race, age and household information.
- **Needs Assessment Process and Findings** – This subsection explains the process by which the needs assessment was conducted. The following subsections describe the neighborhood conditions.
  - **Traffic Needs** – This subsection describes the traffic needs and concerns in the target neighborhood.
  - **Parks/Open Space Needs** – This subsection presents the conditions of the passive and active recreational amenities at the parks and open spaces serving the residents in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Infrastructure Needs** – This subsection identifies the major roadway, sidewalk, curb, curb cut and street tree needs in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Facilities Needs** – The subsection discusses the needs at City-owned properties, including schools and libraries in the target neighborhood.
- **Prominent Neighborhood Needs** – This subsection presents the needs identified by the Nonantum advisory committee, interested citizens and members of the public.

The strategic plan for the Nonantum target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Objectives and Strategies** – This subsection lists the objectives and strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Funding Estimates** – This subsection lists the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Projects** – This subsection lists the projects that were selected by the advisory committee to be undertaken during the period of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan.
- **Proposed Goals and Accomplishments** – This subsection details the proposed goals and accomplishments for the year that neighborhood improvements will be funded in Nonantum.
- **Target Neighborhood Map** – This map provides a graphic representation of the planned project locations.

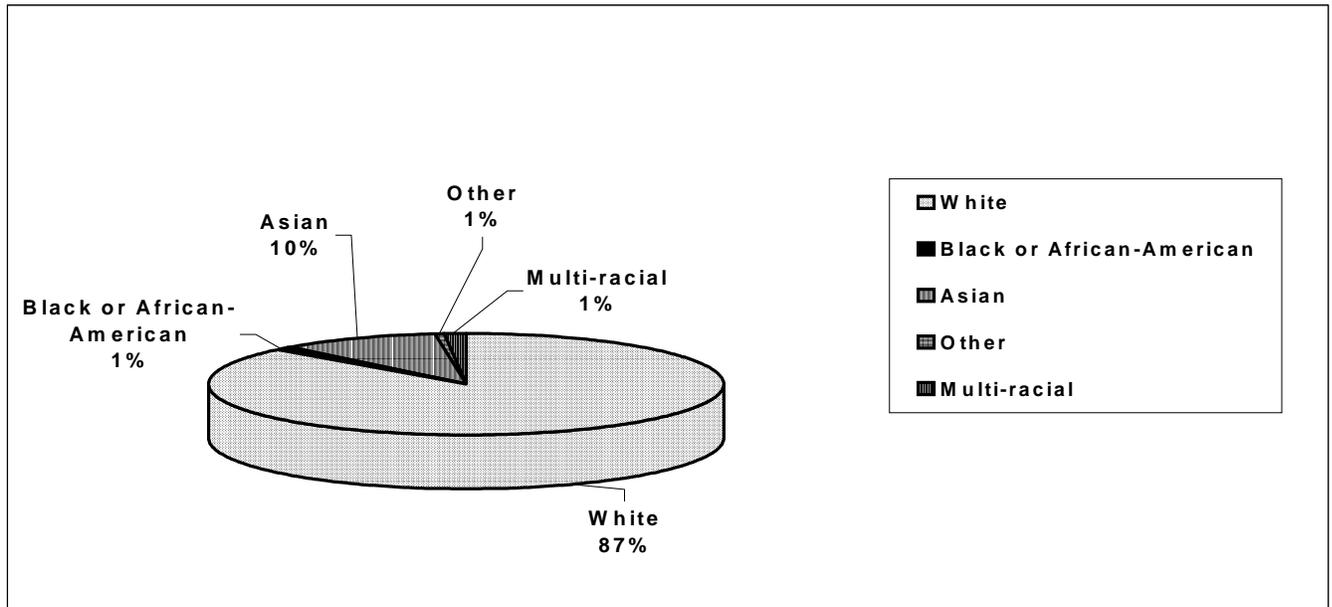
## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Data for the Nonantum target neighborhood was gathered from the U.S. Census 2000 (Census) and from public hearings, public comments and continuous discussions with community leaders and public officials. The Nonantum target neighborhood covers .51 square miles, encompassing four census block groups: 3732.01, 3732.02, 3732.03, and 3732.04.

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the Nonantum target neighborhood—which is bounded by Crafts Street and Broadway Avenue on the west; California Street on the north; the Town of Watertown and Jackson Road on the east; and Washington Street on the south—has 4,594 residents. This figure represents a 2.5 percent population increase from 1990.

Of this population, 4,533 residents, nearly 99 percent, identified themselves as being of one race, with 87 percent of these respondents identifying themselves as White (see Fig. 60). The next largest racial group is Asian, which accounts for 10.2 percent of the population. Only 2.5 percent of the White population is Hispanic or Latino. During the 10 years between 1990 and 2000, the minority population in Nonantum increased from 7.1 percent to 13.1 percent.

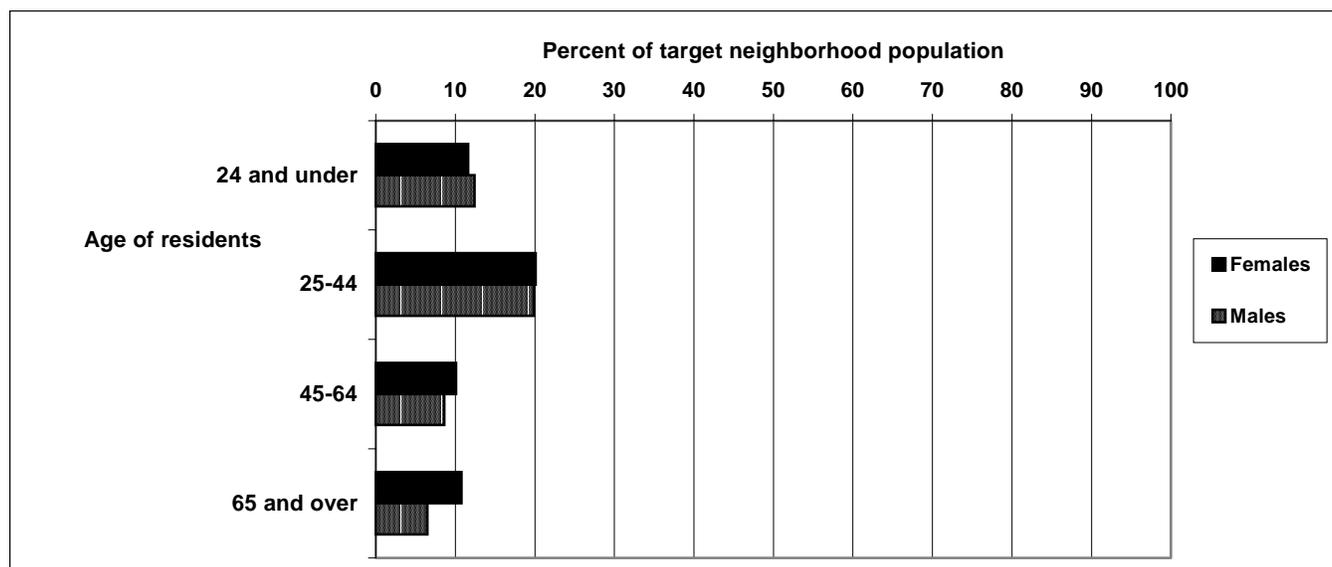
**Fig. 62: Nonantum Target Neighborhood Racial Composition, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

Forty percent of the target neighborhood residents fall into the 25- to 44-year-old category. However, unlike the other three target neighborhoods, Nonantum has a rather large population of adults age 64 and older. This age group accounts for 17.2 percent of the target neighborhood population. The median age in the neighborhood is 36.7 years old.

**Fig. 63: Nonantum Target Neighborhood Age and Gender Breakdown, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

There are 1,962 households in the Nonantum target neighborhood, with an average household size of 2.36 and an average family size of 3.03. Only 23.2 percent (456) of households contain one or more people less than 18 years old; 30.7 percent (140) of these family households with one or more people under 18 are single householders (80 percent female head of household and 20 percent male). Of the 1,962 households, 29.9 percent have at least one resident aged 65 or older; 40.6 percent of these households are single-person households.

There are 2,026 housing units in the Nonantum target neighborhood; 1,962 of them (96.8 percent) are occupied and 64 are vacant (3.2 percent). Renters occupy the majority of homes (57.9 percent). Of the 826 owner-occupied units, 54.1 percent (447 units) of owners have lived in the neighborhood for more than 25 years. Even renters tend to remain in the area; 22.3 percent have resided in the Nonantum community for more than 15 years.

A total of 1,812 disabilities were reported in the Nonantum target neighborhood. The majority of disabilities apply to working-age adults (60.7 percent) and elderly/retired populations (38.4 percent). The categories of disabilities with the highest numbers are “Go-outside-home disability<sup>1</sup>” with 30.6 percent, “Employment disability<sup>2</sup>” with 22.2 percent, and “Physical disability<sup>3</sup>” with 18.7 percent.

### ***NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS***

During the five-year period covered by this Consolidated Plan, Nonantum will receive neighborhood improvement funds in FY08. Due to the ineligibility of the former (FY01-05) West

<sup>1</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to go outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor’s office. U.S. Census 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to perform activities related to working at a job or business. U.S. Census 2000

<sup>3</sup> Defined as a physical, mental or emotional condition lasting six months or more that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying. U.S. Census 2000.

Newton target neighborhood, which was slated to receive neighborhood improvement funds in FY05, Nonantum also received CDBG funds in FY05.

Housing and Community Development planning staff began the Nonantum need assessment process in the fall of 2003 with a systematic windshield survey of the neighborhood. The first needs assessment discussion was held on July 7, 2004 with the Nonantum Advisory Committee (NAC). Attendees were presented with staff findings and were encouraged to visit sites in order to make their own judgments. They were also asked to bring up any other needs that were not documented by City staff.

On July 28, the NAC reconvened, and advisory committee members discussed what they viewed as the neighborhood needs after visiting sites throughout the target neighborhood. After much discussion, several priorities were established, along with draft objectives and strategies to address them. A public hearing was held on September 28, 2004, to which all the residents of the target neighborhood were invited. More than 30 residents, advisory committee members and City staff assembled to discuss the draft needs, priorities, objectives and strategies. The information below provides a summary of the needs discussed at these three meetings.

### **Traffic Needs**

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As is the case with the other three target neighborhoods, traffic is a major concern in the Nonantum target neighborhood. Based on the Newton Police Accident Report for the period of January 2001 to January 2004, Nonantum is home to four locations that rank in the top 50 problem intersections. These five are, in descending order:

- 1) Crafts Street and Watertown Street
- 2) Adams Street and Washington Street
- 3) Adams Street and Watertown Street
- 4) Jackson Road and Washington Street

These four intersections accounted for 81 accidents over a three-year period. The intersection of Crafts and Watertown Streets came in seventh on the list of 50 with 29 accidents. Not far behind is the intersection of Adams and Washington Streets with 25 traffic accidents over three years. The remaining two Nonantum intersections listed above occupy the 40<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> slots on the accident report.

The NAC expressed a great deal of concern over traffic-related issues, including speeding, parking problems (especially at corners), running of stop signs, lack of enforcement and use of residential streets as shortcuts. While a number of these issues are not appropriate for CDBG funding, electronic speed display signs might prove useful in areas of chronic speeding. Traffic-calming measures might also be a possibility for addressing some of the traffic needs in Nonantum.

In addition, pedestrian improvements, such as crosswalks and audible pedestrian signals, are eligible throughout the target area because these improvements serve area residents. Automobile-related traffic improvements that are primarily residential in character may also be considered for funding.

### **Parks/Open Space Needs**

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Parks and open space conditions were not examined thoroughly because a consultant has been hired to undertake master planning at both Stearns and Pellegrini Parks during FY05. Any possible needs, objectives or strategies will be addressed in the master plan. In addition, Forte

Park is ineligible for CDBG funding because it serves a much larger service area than the Nonantum target neighborhood.

### **Public Infrastructure Needs**

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There are 64 streets contained within the CDBG target area, including 16 private ways. Staff visited all the streets to analyze various street components, such as sidewalks, curbs, trees, curb cuts and roadways, and then issued an overall rating for each street. In order to narrow the field of streets recommended for reconstruction, staff suggested considering only streets with a rating below “Decent”—those receiving a rating of “Decent/Poor,” “Poor,” and “Horrible”—as appropriate for improvement.

While some private ways are in serious need of repair, given the resources, staff recommended only considering public streets for reconstruction. As a result, 15 streets were given below “Decent” ratings—11 “Decent/Poor” streets, three “Poor” streets, and one “Horrible” street. These streets include Adams Court, Broadway Street, Capital Street, Cook Street, Crafts Street, Dalby Street, Jackson Road, Jackson Terrace, Jenison Street, Judkins Street, Lincoln Road, Melville Avenue, Murphy Court, Pond Street and Woodrow Avenue. Many of these streets had missing sections of sidewalk and curbing or the conditions of the infrastructure had deteriorated enough to have a negative appearance and possibly a detrimental impact on public safety.

The NAC had only two recommendations for street reconstruction: Cook Street and Dalby Street. Cook Street was a higher priority because it is the only street in the core village area that has not yet been reconstructed. Advisory committee members view street reconstruction as having a positive impact on the community as it improves safety, accessibility, emergency access and aesthetics, thereby enhancing community pride.

### **Public Facilities Needs**

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There are few publicly owned buildings or properties in the Nonantum target area. These include: Nonantum Branch Library and the Pellegrini Park Activity Building. The needs of the Pellegrini Park Activity Building were analyzed during the FY05 Nonantum parks master planning process.

### ***UNMET NEEDS FROM FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

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Many of the needs in the Nonantum Target Neighborhood from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan remain unmet. Only two needs were met during this period: West Street Reconstruction and Forte Park Lighting. The following list demonstrates the unmet needs.

- West Street Junkyard: the need to rehabilitate this unused lot for community use or housing (*Note: there is a \$25,000 CDBG grant available to assist with environmental testing in order to reuse the property.*)
- Tree Plantings: the need to improve barren areas in Nonantum
- Reconstruction of public streets including Jackson Terrace, Jackson Road, Faxon Street, Jasset Street, and Beech Street: the need to improve the condition and safety of the roadways
- Sidewalk and Curb Replacement on Ashmont Avenue, Broadway Street, Jenison Street, and Nevada Street: the need to improve the condition and safety of the sidewalk and curbs
- Reconstruction of private ways including Adams Terrace, Lenglen Road, Riverdale Road, Midland Road, and a portion of Los Angeles Street: the need to improve the condition and safety of the private roadways

### ***PROMINENT NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS***

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At the second needs assessment meeting on July 28, 2004, NAC members were asked to indicate their priorities from the needs listed below, which are in no particular order.

- Traffic-calming measures
- Upgraded crosswalks
- Street tree plantings
- Memorial to commemorate Nonantum leaders and/or immigrant history
- Improvements to Magni Park
- Installation of audible pedestrian signals
- Street reconstruction
- Sidewalk improvements

In terms of the four main areas of neighborhood improvements (public infrastructure, traffic improvements, parks/open space and public facilities), traffic improvements were the highest priority, followed by public infrastructure, parks/open space and public facilities improvements, in that order.

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## NONANTUM STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***

Although efforts will be made to address all identified needs, the development of priorities allows Housing and Community Development staff to focus on what the residents view as the most pressing needs in their community. The objectives and strategies below were developed through the needs assessment process.

#### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Objectives: To control excessive speeding on congested residential streets in order to improve public safety  
To impose size restrictions on congested residential streets to improve public safety  
To clarify and enforce parking regulations at corners

Strategy: 

- Conduct a traffic study to recommend changes that will achieve key objectives (especially on Chapel, West, Hawthorne, Adams and Pearl Streets).

Objective: To upgrade crosswalks at key intersections or along school routes to improve public safety

Strategies: 

- Upgrade crosswalks to improve visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity.
- Install audible accessible pedestrian signals at major intersections.

#### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve the aesthetics of public streets by reducing the number of barren residential areas

Strategy: 

- Plant street trees where needed, especially on California Street.

Objective: To improve the safety, accessibility, emergency access, and aesthetics of public streets and sidewalks

Strategies: 

- Reconstruct Cook Street.
- Reconstruct Dalby Street.
- Sidewalk improvements where needed.

#### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To create/install a memorial(s) to commemorate Nonantum leaders and/or immigrant history

Strategy: 

- Create a new pathway dedicated to former NAC chairwoman Alice Webber between the new senior housing project and Stearns Park.

Objectives: To improve the aesthetics and accessibility of Magni Park  
To improve public health by upgrading bubblers in all parks

Strategy: 

- Possible park improvement ideas include new decorative fencing, a sunken garden, a fountain, and walkway replacement.

Objective: To improve the quality and condition of the Nonantum parks

Strategy: 

- Create shaded seating and/or install trees at Pellegrini Park.

*NOTE: During FY05, a comprehensive planning process was undertaken for both Stearns and Pellegrini Parks. The priorities in this category may need to change depending on the results of this master planning effort.*

**PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve accessibility, aesthetics and public safety at the Pellegrini Park Activity Building, a community center and neighborhood polling place

Strategy:
 

- Renovate the common areas in the Pellegrini Park Activity Building including the restrooms, kitchen and HVAC system.

At the September public meeting, staff presented the objectives and strategies developed by the advisory committee members and interested citizens. Additional suggestions and feedback from the area residents were recorded. After all the ideas were noted, attendees were asked to vote for their top three priority strategies. Below are the results of the prioritization.

VOTES	STRATEGY	AREA OF NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
16	Conduct a traffic study to recommend changes that will achieve key objectives (especially on Chapel, West, Hawthorne, Adams, Washburn, and Pearl Streets)	Traffic Improvements
13	Upgrade crosswalks to improve visibility, permanence, durability and uniformity	Traffic Improvements
10	Tree plantings where needed, especially on California Street	Public Infrastructure Improvements
9	Improvements to Magni Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements
9	Install audible pedestrian signals at major intersections	Traffic Improvements
3	Reconstruct Cook Street	Public Infrastructure Improvements
0	Reconstruct Dalby Street	Public Infrastructure Improvements
0	Sidewalk improvements (along JFK Circle and north side of California Street)	Public Infrastructure Improvements
<b>Not voted on as may be part of an FY05 project</b>	Renovate the common areas in the Pellegrini Park Activity Building, including the restroom, kitchen and HVAC system	Public Facilities Improvements
	Plant new trees in the picnic area at Pellegrini Park and/or install shaded seating	Parks/Open Space Improvements
	Create a new pathway dedicated for former NAC chairwoman Alice Webber between the new senior housing project and Stearns Park	Parks/Open Space Improvements

**FUNDING ESTIMATES**

Below are the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs in the Nonantum target neighborhood. These cost estimates are a crucial factor in the planning process as strategies may often require more funding than is allocated through the CDBG neighborhood improvements program. For better or worse, funding availability plays a paramount role in what CDBG projects can and should be pursued. If a cost estimate exceeds the CDBG funding and there are no funds to be leveraged, developing a project to carry out the strategy may not be a prudent use of CDBG funds.

## **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

- Strategy: Conduct a traffic study to recommend changes that will achieve key objectives (especially on Chapel, West, Hawthorne, Adams, and Pearl Streets).
- Total Funding Needed: According to the City's traffic engineer, a traffic study encompassing the entire target neighborhood and with a complex scope of work could cost anywhere from \$25,000-50,000. The primary purpose of the study is to identify the problem intersections, the cut-through streets, and the main pedestrian routes, and devise concept plans for improving the flow of motorists and pedestrians to create a calmer and safer Nonantum. For the purposes of budgeting, \$30,000 was agreed upon as a reasonable cost for this strategy.
- Strategy: Upgrade crosswalks and implement other recommendations from the traffic study.
- Total Funding Needed: Raised crosswalks are being analyzed by the City as a possible traffic calming measure in certain situations. The neighborhood is dually concerned with increasing pedestrian safety while decreasing the volumes and speed of vehicles on residential streets. Raised crosswalks may be a possible solution for both these concerns. New striping in other locations may also be considered. Assuming some locations are found to meet the criteria for raised crosswalks, it is estimated that 3-4 crosswalks could be built at an estimated cost of \$10,000 per crosswalk. This leaves \$10,000-20,000 for other traffic-related improvements. This strategy requires at least \$50,000 in funding.
- Strategy: Install audible pedestrian signals at major intersections.
- Total Funding Needed: According to the City's traffic engineer, key intersections could be upgraded to have audible accessible pedestrian signals for approximately \$5,000 per intersection. There are three intersections along Watertown Street, the village's main street, that have traffic signals but only two of these locations have significant pedestrian volumes. The new pedestrian signals may also include a countdown screen similar to the equipment at Walnut and Washington Streets. It is estimated that two intersections will be upgraded (at Watertown & Adams and Watertown & Chapel), therefore the total funding needed would be \$10,000.

## **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Strategy: Tree plantings where needed, especially on California Street.
- Total Funding Needed: Through the needs assessment process, each street was visited and current conditions were evaluated. 30 of the streets in the target area were categorized as having an opportunity for more street trees. Estimated two trees per street at a cost of \$600 per tree, the total funding needed is for Nonantum Tree Plantings is \$36,000. The \$600-per-tree estimate factors in current prices (between \$400-500 per tree), other factors (such as berm

widening where needed), inflation (Nonantum is funded next in FY08), and contingencies.

Strategy: Reconstruct Cook Street.  
Total Funding Needed: In 2004, West Street was reconstructed including new sidewalks, reset granite curbs, and new trees at a cost of \$397,000. West Street is roughly 1,500 feet long. Cook Street is only two streets away but measures only 900 linear feet. Basing the estimates on West Street and a 15 percent contingency and 5 percent inflation per year, reconstructing Cook Street could cost approximately \$300,000.

Strategy: Reconstruct Dalby Street.  
Total Funding Needed: Dalby Street measures around 1,450 linear feet, nearly exactly the same as West Street. Again, using West Street as a basis for comparison, and adding in a 15 percent contingency and 5 percent inflation per year, reconstructing Dalby Street could cost approximately \$500,000.

Strategy: Infill sidewalks  
Total Funding Needed: The residents had some concern about poor existing sidewalks but for the most part there was interest in installing sidewalks where there are none, as a matter of public safety. 26 parcels were found to be without sidewalks, many of these parcels were on Broadway Street, California Street, Jenison Street, and Dalby Street. Staff judged that average lot width to be 55 ft. Assuming a 5 ft. sidewalk and a price of \$40 square yard for concrete as well as contingency and inflation, the infill sidewalk project could cost \$40,000.

## **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Create a new pathway dedicated to former NAC chairwoman Alice Webber between the new senior housing project and Stearns Park.

Total Funding Needed: *This strategy will likely be addressed during FY05 following the master planning at Stearns and Pellegrini Parks.* Predevelopment concepts estimate that the walkway could be up to 250 ft. long by 5 ft. wide. Assuming the material will be bituminous concrete like the existing pathways, the cost is approximately \$25 per square yard. Adding in a 15 percent contingency and 5 percent inflation per year, creating a new walkway to connect the two resources may cost \$4,500. Though the pathway can be created through the CDBG Neighborhood Improvements Program, the naming of the pathway must be petitioned by area residents through the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Strategy: Plant new trees in picnic area at Pellegrini Park and/or install shaded seating.

Total Funding Needed: *This strategy will likely be addressed during FY05 following the master planning at Stearns and Pellegrini Parks.* Shaded seating is a more realistic option, as it is believed that trees will not thrive

in this section of the park. A concrete base with benches and/or picnic tables covered by outdoor fabric panels could be priced at up to \$20,000.

Strategy: Improve Magni-Coletti Park through beautification. Ideas include installing new decorative fencing, building a fountain, laying a brick walkway, and/or planting a sunken garden.

Total Funding Needed: This small but significant park sits in the middle of the village center. It is currently in decent condition and is only in need of some beautification. It is not possible to implement all of the above ideas in a .47 acre park, so the community must discuss the options and pick only a few improvements. Staff estimates that \$30,000 would provide sufficient funding to improve this park.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Renovate the common areas in Pellegrini Park Activity Building including the restroom, kitchen and HVAC system.

Total Funding Needed: The Public Buildings Department has estimated that interior renovations at this building could cost up to \$25,000. This strategy will likely be addressed during FY05 following the master planning at Stearns and Pellegrini Parks.

***PROJECTS***

Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority neighborhood improvement needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments with jurisdiction over these areas, including the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Building Department. Departments were then requested to provide feedback and cost estimates for the top priorities. The NAC and Housing and Community Development staff reviewed the departments' information then selected the projects below for CDBG funding.

In anticipation of budget cuts, \$185,000 was budgeted annually for the Neighborhood Improvement Program (previously \$200,000 per year). The NAC was asked to recommend projects whose budgets equal that amount.

**PROPOSED FY08 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

	Estimated Project Cost & Budget
<b>PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
• <b>Magni-Coletti Park Improvements</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
Project ideas to be developed	
<b>PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
No projects selected in this area.	
<b>TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
• <b>Nonantum Traffic Improvements</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
Upgraded crosswalks and other traffic improvements	
• <b>Nonantum Accessible Pedestrian Signals</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
1-2 installations in the village center	

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Cook Street Reconstruction** **\$75,000**  
 New roadway, sidewalks, granite curbs, and trees  
 (total estimated cost = \$300,000 additional funding to be requested)
  
- **Nonantum Tree Plantings** **\$20,000**  
 25-35 trees throughout the target neighborhood

***PROPOSED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

The Nonantum Advisory Committee has recommended five projects for FY08. Here are the proposed goals and expected accomplishments for these projects:

PROJECT	GOALS	ACCOMPLISHMENTS (# PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVED)
Nonantum Traffic Improvements	Calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety through improved crosswalks	5
Nonantum Accessible Pedestrian Signals	Improve pedestrian safety through accessible audible and visual pedestrian signals	2
Cook Street Reconstruction	Improve the safety and aesthetics of Cook Street	1
Nonantum Tree Plantings	Beautify the residential streets through tree plantings	30
Magni-Coletti Park Improvements	Improve the safety and aesthetics of Magni-Coletti Park	1
Total Public Facilities Improved		39

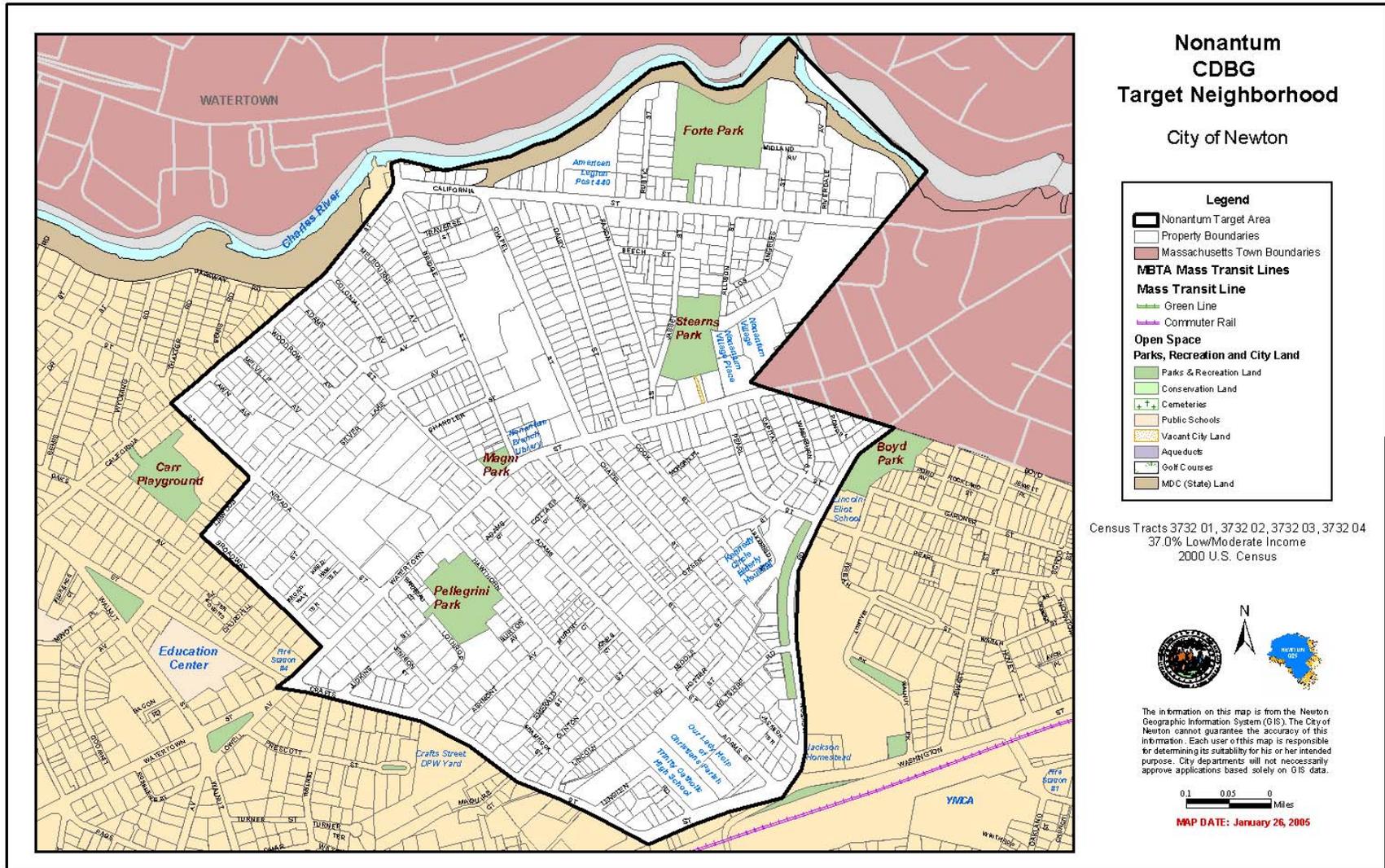
***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

The proposed outcome of the Nonantum target neighborhood improvement efforts will be promoting sustainability or livability. The Nonantum Advisory Committee members and other residents who have attended the needs assessment and objectives and strategies meetings have assembled an array of projects that are expected to increase the quality of life and the livability of their neighborhood. Measuring the impact of the above proposed improvements will be accomplished with a written survey distributed to all the affected residents in the Nonantum target neighborhood. It is believed that the resounding finding will be that these improvements will clearly increase the livability of the neighborhood.

***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

The primary obstacle to meeting underserved needs is the lack of sufficient funding. Eight priority needs were identified in the Nonantum target neighborhood by attendees at the public meetings held in summer and fall of 2004, however, the available CDBG funding will fund only the five of the needs. In fact, the CDBG funding alone will not be sufficient for completing one project; additional and substantial funding will be requested from the Department of Public Works for the implementation of the Cook Street Reconstruction project.

**MAP 8: NONANTUM TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD**



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## WEST NEWTON NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessment and strategic plan for neighborhood improvements in the West Newton target neighborhood. The document is broken down into two sections, each containing a number of subsections.

The needs assessment for the West Newton target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Demographic Information** – This subsection identifies the significant demographic characteristics of the neighborhood including population, race, age and household information.
- **Needs Assessment Process and Findings** – This subsection explains the process by which the needs assessment was conducted. The following subsections describe the neighborhood conditions.
  - **Traffic Needs** – This subsection describes the traffic needs and concerns in the target neighborhood.
  - **Parks/Open Space Needs** – This subsection presents the conditions of the passive and active recreational amenities at the parks and open spaces serving the residents in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Infrastructure Needs**– This subsection identifies the major roadway, sidewalk and curb needs in the target neighborhood.
  - **Public Facilities Needs** – The subsection discusses the needs at City-owned properties, including schools and libraries in the target neighborhood.
- **Prominent Neighborhood Needs** – This subsection presents the needs identified by the newly formed advisory committee, interested citizens and members of the public.

The strategic plan for the West Newton target neighborhood is broken down into the following subsections:

- **Objectives and Strategies** – This subsection lists the objectives and strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Funding Estimates** – This subsection lists the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs.
- **Projects** – This subsection lists the projects that were selected by the advisory committee to be undertaken during the period of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan.
- **Proposed Goals and Accomplishments** – This subsection details the proposed goals and accomplishments for the year that neighborhood improvements will be funded in West Newton.
- **Target Neighborhood Map** – This map provides a graphic representation of the locations of planned projects.

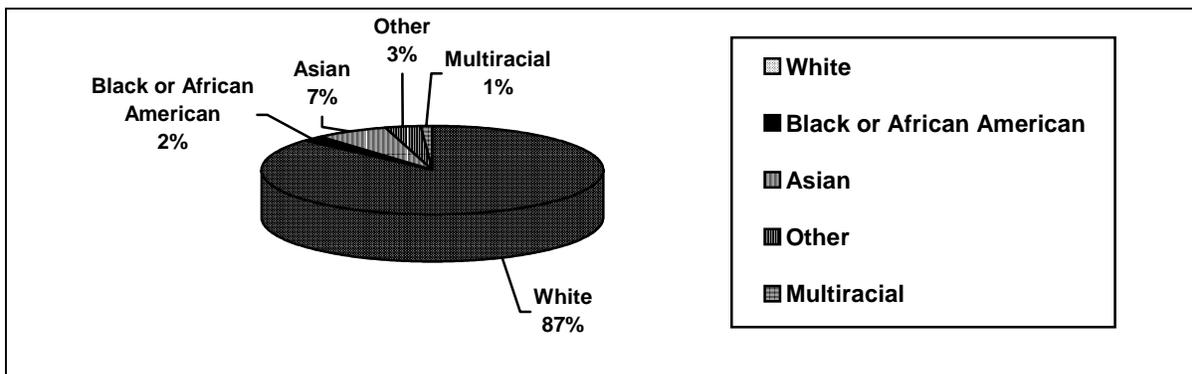
**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Data for the West Newton target neighborhood was gathered from the U.S. Census 2000 (Census) and from public hearings, public comments and continuous discussions with community leaders and public officials. The West Newton target neighborhood covers .12 square miles, encompassing census block group 3745 04.

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the West Newton target neighborhood—which is bounded by West Newton Square on the west, Watertown Street on the north, Brookside on the east and Washington Street on the south—has 723 residents. This figure represents a 40 percent population increase from 1990, when 517 people resided in this target neighborhood. This can be attributed, in part, to the increase in the number of housing units, which will be discussed later in this subsection.

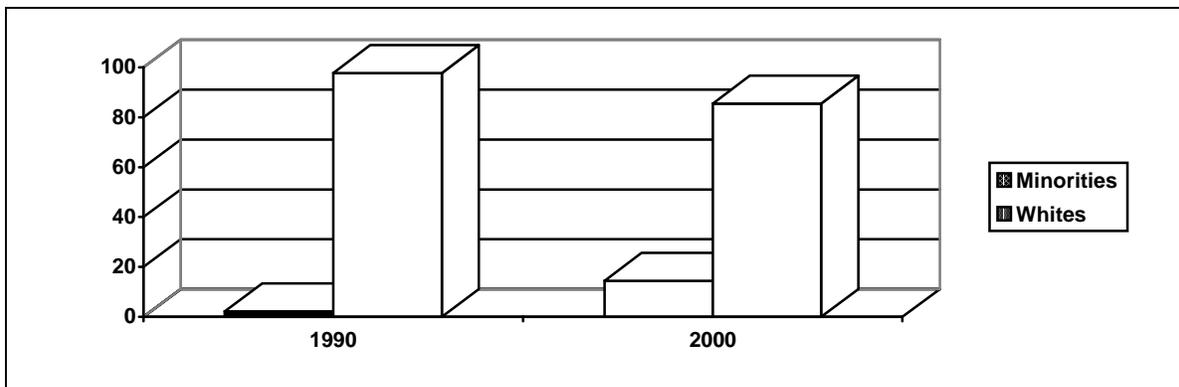
Of this population, 715 residents, or 99 percent, identified themselves as being of one race, with 87 percent of these respondents identifying themselves as White (see Fig. 62). The next largest population in the block group is Asian, accounting for seven percent of the population. Five percent of the White respondents are Hispanic or Latino. The minority population in the West Newton target neighborhood increased considerably during the ten-year period from 1990 to 2000, with non-Whites increasing from 2.2 percent to 14.4 percent of the population.

**Fig. 64: West Newton Target Neighborhood Racial Composition, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Fig. 65: Growth in West Newton Minority Population 1990-2000**



Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000

In terms of the gender of the residents, 350 are male (48 percent), and 373 (52 percent) are female. The majority of both male and female residents fall into the 25- to 39-year-old category, with 31 percent of the males and 33 percent of the females in this age range. Twenty-four percent (89) of the female and 32 percent (112) of the male West Newton target neighborhood residents are age 24 and under. The smallest population in both genders is in the 65 and older range. The median age in the neighborhood is 33.4 years old.

**Fig. 66: West Newton Target Neighborhood Gender and Age Breakdown, 2000**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

There are 270 households in the West Newton target neighborhood, with an average household size of 2.68 and an average family size of 3.19. Twenty-eight (76) are family households, while 72 percent (194) of household have no children under 18 years old. Fifty-five percent (61) of the 110 non-family households are female householders, and 45 percent (49) are male householders.

There are 281 housing units in the West Newton target neighborhood, compared to 191 in 1990. This growth can be linked in part to the increase in the number of older homes that have been turned into condominiums during the period between 1990 and 2000. Of the 281 housing units, 270 of them (96 percent) are occupied. The units are almost evenly split between renters and owners, with owner-occupied homes accounting for 53 percent of the total. Of the owner-occupied units, 31 percent (45 units) had new owners between 1990 and 2000.

A total of 111 disabilities were reported in the target neighborhood. The majority of disabilities apply to working-age adults (74 percent) and elderly/retired populations (14 percent). The categories of disabilities with the highest numbers are “Employment disability” with 58 percent, “Go-outside-home disability” with 13 percent and “Mental disability” with 12 percent.

***NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS***

This is the first time in the 30-year history of the Newton Housing and Community Development Program that this area of West Newton has been eligible as a target neighborhood. West Newton will be the recipient of neighborhood improvement funds in FY06, the first year of this Consolidated Plan.

As a new target neighborhood, the needs assessment process in West Newton began from the ground up and was rather detailed and comprehensive. There was no formal structure in place for generating citizen participation or for gathering needs data. Existing data on the needs in the neighborhood were from the mid-1970s and concerned the entire West Newton area.

In the fall of 2003, once the new West Newton target neighborhood was identified through Census information, Housing and Community Development staff did a thorough windshield survey of the neighborhood. Public facilities in the West Newton target neighborhood are limited. With no public parks, playgrounds or public buildings in the area, the survey concentrated on documenting the condition of streetscapes, including sidewalks, curbing, curb cuts and street trees, and open space, which consists of Cheesecake Brook and an undeveloped strip of land between Washington Street and the Massachusetts Turnpike.

The first West Newton public meeting to gather information on neighborhood needs was scheduled for July 22, 2004, and flyers were hand-delivered to all the residences in the target neighborhood. Fourteen residents and four staff members were in attendance. Staff presented information detailing Newton's Housing and Community Development Program and the neighborhood improvements program specifically. Information was shared on eligible neighborhood improvements, past and current projects, the Consolidated Plan development process and the West Newton Advisory Committee which was being formed. Discussion then turned to what the residents saw as the needs in the target neighborhood.

A second public meeting was held on September 21, 2004. A flyer was mailed to all neighborhood residents announcing the meeting, and 11 neighborhood residents were in attendance. The information below provides a summary of the needs discussed at the two meetings.

### **Traffic Needs**

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According to the Newton Police Accident Report for the period of January 2001 to January 2004, none of the intersections in the target area are listed in the top 50 locations of accidents in the City. There are only two intersections in the target neighborhood that even have traffic signals: West Newton Square and the intersection of Watertown Street, Albemarle Road and Brookside Avenue. According to information from Newton's traffic engineer, the equipment at West Newton Square is relatively new (2001), but the intersection at Watertown/Albemarle/Brookside could use some new equipment.

At both neighborhood public meetings, a number of residents brought up an increase in traffic and speeding on the side streets that run between Washington and Watertown Streets. Traffic has increased on these streets as drivers try to avoid congestion on Washington and Watertown Streets, which are major thoroughfares. Streets specifically mentioned were Parsons, Cross, Eddy and Albemarle.

Attendees also raised parking as a need that should be addressed. A number of streets have either asphalt curbing or no curbing at all, which allows cars to park on the berm and/or the sidewalk. On the flip side, however, some residents stated that they believe the number of cars parked on the street helps slow the traffic down and keeps cars from traveling even faster.

### **Parks/Open Space Needs**

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While there are no parks or playgrounds in the West Newton target neighborhood, there are two parcels of open space that fall under City jurisdiction: Cheesecake Brook and the open space along the south side of Washington Street at Brookside Avenue. In terms of the parcel on Washington Street, residents expressed a desire to transform this barren open space into a park with seating areas, game tables and landscaping. Although the parcel is not very large, a small park would make a nice addition to the neighborhood, which currently has no such amenities.

Cheesecake Brook, which is completely channelized, runs above ground along Albemarle Road from Eddy Street to Watertown Street before flowing into the Charles River. This section of the brook is public property and is therefore eligible for neighborhood improvement funds. Currently, access to the brook and the surrounding land is hindered by steep grades and a chain link fence atop both banks. Two locked maintenance gates and one locked pedestrian gate offer residents no access to the property.

At both public meetings, residents informed Housing and Community Development staff that people are using the brook and the surrounding land inside the fence as a dumping ground. City crews are not picking up this garbage regularly or maintaining the landscaping, which has become quite overgrown. According to residents, there are a number of rusting pipes in the brook, and the concrete walls are crumbling in certain areas. Neighborhood residents would like to see this portion of the brook improved and upgraded to a neighborhood resource instead of a neighborhood eyesore. They would like to see the brook used as open space with walkways, sitting areas and attractive landscaping. Some residents expressed interest in having the channel torn down and the brook returned to its natural state.

### **Public Infrastructure Needs**

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There are 14 streets contained within the West Newton target neighborhood, including two private ways and three streets which have both public and private sections. The streetscape survey included the 12 public streets or sections of public streets in the target neighborhood. Two streets received an overall rating of "Good," one received an overall rating of "Decent," with the remaining streets receiving overall ratings of either "Poor" or "Poor/Horrible." Many of these streets had missing sections of sidewalk and curbing or the conditions of the infrastructure had deteriorated enough to have a negative appearance and/or a possible detrimental impact on public safety.

Attendees at both public meetings raised the issue of missing sidewalks and curbing. The City of Newton does not pay for sidewalks but installs them through a betterments process. Some streets have a mixture of both asphalt and concrete sidewalks, and residents feel that this makes the neighborhood look neglected. In addition, some of the routes used by children to walk to school are on sidewalks with missing segments, and attendees believed this posed a significant safety hazard.

Another need that was expressed was the lack of curbing or asphalt curbs along portions of certain streets. Residents feel that this too contributes to making the area look rundown and unappealing. The curbing issue is also discussed above in the Traffic Improvements section.

Barren berms were brought up as a neighborhood improvement need at the second public meeting. Some residents felt that planting street trees would go a long way toward improving the physical appearance of the neighborhood. Pedestrian improvements to the Washington Street corridor were also raised at this meeting. Washington Street is a major Newton thoroughfare, and it is not particularly pedestrian-friendly in this section of the city. There are no sidewalks along the south side of the street or any crosswalks to that side of the street. Some residents feel that making one of the two major streets in the area more pedestrian friendly would go a long way toward improving the appearance of the neighborhood.

One of the prominent issues raised by almost all the attendees was the noise, pollution and vibration problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike.

## **Public Facilities Needs**

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There are no publicly owned buildings within the West Newton target neighborhood. The only two public properties are those mentioned above in the Parks/Open Space Improvements section: a portion of Cheesecake Brook and the open space along the south side of Washington Street across from Brookside Avenue.

## ***UNMET NEEDS FROM FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN***

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There are no unmet needs in the West Newton target neighborhood from the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan as this area was not a CDBG target neighborhood during that period.

## ***PROMINENT NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS***

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At the second public meeting, attendees were asked to indicate their top three priorities from the following needs, which are listed in no particular order:

- Traffic and speeding on neighborhood streets
- Improvements to Cheesecake Brook
- Parking problems
- Missing sidewalks and curbing
- Noise, pollution and vibration problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike
- Pedestrian improvements to Washington Street, including installing sidewalks, crosswalks and curb cuts
- Develop the open space on the south side of Washington Street
- Street tree plantings

One resident pointed out that he believed the priorities would not accurately represent input from a majority of the neighborhood's residents as there were only 11 neighborhood residents in attendance. Staff responded that all the neighborhood residents had been invited to participate in identifying the neighborhood needs at not one, but two, public meetings. In addition to these two meetings, a number of other opportunities existed for public input on West Newton target neighborhood needs, including advisory committee meetings, public hearings before the Planning and Development Board and hearings before various committees and the full body of the Board of Aldermen.

The top three priority needs, in order of importance, are:

1. Improvements to the public portion of Cheesecake Brook
2. Noise and pollution mitigation measures along the West Newton target neighborhood section of the Massachusetts Turnpike
3. Traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures

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## WEST NEWTON STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***

Although efforts will be made to address all identified needs, the development of priority needs allows Housing and Community Development staff to focus on what the residents view as the most pressing needs in their community. The following objectives and strategies were developed through the needs assessment process.

#### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve the accessibility and aesthetics of the public portion of Cheesecake Brook

Strategy: 

- Develop a concept plan for improvements to the public portion of Cheesecake Brook and implement the recommended improvements.

Objective: To improve the unused open space on Washington Street at Brookside Avenue

Strategy: 

- Develop a plan for adding seating areas (benches, picnic tables, game tables) and landscaping to beautify the area.

#### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To mitigate the noise and pollution problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike

Strategy: 

- Work with the Turnpike Authority to have noise barriers installed to reduce noise and pollution problems.

#### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To control excessive speeding on congested residential streets to order to improve public safety

Strategy: 

- Conduct traffic studies on identified streets (Washington, Eddy, Cross, Parsons and Albemarle) and introduce traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures.

#### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Objective: To improve public safety through the installation of sidewalks on heavily traveled roadways

Strategy: 

- Install sidewalks where there are none or where portions are missing.

Objective: To discourage parking on sidewalks and beautify streetscapes

Strategy: 

- Install granite curbing, trees, curb cuts and crosswalks along streets/sections of streets where none exists.

The table below lists the priority objectives as decided by the advisory committee, interested citizens and neighborhood residents.

<b>WEST NEWTON PRIORITY OBJECTIVES</b>
To improve the accessibility and aesthetics of the public portion of Cheesecake Brook
To mitigate the noise and pollution problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike
To control excessive speeding on congested residential streets to improve public safety

## ***FUNDING ESTIMATES***

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Below are the cost estimates for the strategies developed to address the identified needs in the West Newton target neighborhood. These cost estimates are a crucial factor in the planning process as strategies may often require more funding than is allocated through the CDBG neighborhood improvements program. For better or worse, funding availability plays a paramount role in what CDBG projects can and should be pursued. If a cost estimate exceeds the CDBG funding and there are no funds to be leveraged, developing a project to carry out the strategy may not be a prudent use of CDBG funds.

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategies: Create a master plan for improvements to the public portion of Cheesecake Brook  
Implement the recommended improvements

Total Funding Needed: In discussions with the Newton conservation agent, the possibility of removing the channel's cement walls and returning the brook to its natural state was eliminated as this could result in flooding in the area during periods of heavy rain. In terms of accessibility and aesthetic improvements, one option is to hire a landscape designer or architect to develop a plan for enhancing the brook. The conservation agent suggested the possibility of building a small retaining wall with a fence partway down the slopes of the bank and backfilling the land behind the wall to street level. This would allow for the installation of sitting areas and appropriate landscaping, thus establishing the area around the brook as usable open space.

A project such as this would involve a considerable amount of funding, especially if the project involved constructing a retaining wall, back filling land and installing a new decorative fence. Adding to the cost would be the purchase and installation of seating areas, lighting and landscaping. Therefore, the total amount of funding necessary to address the need of improving Cheesecake Brook is \$750,000.

Strategy: Washington Street open space improvements  
Total Funding Needed: Having the Parks and Recreation Department landscape design consultant develop a plan for this area would greatly reduce the cost of such a project. If the consultant drafted a plan, the only costs involved would be for materials and labor. Using the recent installation of benches, picnic tables and landscaping at Carleton Park in the Newton Corner target neighborhood as a baseline, the estimate for this project is \$15,000.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Work with the Turnpike Authority to have noise barriers installed to reduce noise and pollution problems in the target neighborhood

Total Funding Needed: The second priority is to develop mitigation measures along the portion of the Massachusetts Turnpike that lies in the target neighborhood. Residents identified noise, pollution and vibrations from the Turnpike and the trains that run between the Turnpike and

Washington Street as an area of need. There are no noise barriers along the north side of the Turnpike in this area, and although there are trees in some areas, there is a large swath of land with no trees to diffuse the noise and the pollution from the cars, trucks and trains.

In the past, Housing and Community Development staff has worked with Newton Aldermen and state representatives to encourage the Turnpike Authority to help fund improvements that mitigate the negative impacts of the Turnpike in Newton neighborhoods. Staff would pursue this method for addressing this priority need, realizing that CDBG funds might be used in part for the resulting improvements. According to information from the City traffic engineer, erecting a timber noise barrier between the Turnpike and the entire West Newton target neighborhood would cost approximately \$1.1 million dollars, with CDBG funds picking up approximately \$10,000 to \$20,000 of the cost.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Conduct traffic studies on identified streets (Washington, Eddy, Cross, Parsons and Albemarle) and introduce traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures

Total Funding Needed: Traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures were selected as the neighborhood's third priority need. Possibilities for addressing this need include conducting speed studies and allocating funding for mitigation measures, which might include construction of speed tables and/or chokers, or the installation of electronic speed display signs. Residents were informed by staff that speeding is an issue that is being addressed on a City-wide basis but that staff will work with the City's traffic engineer and transportation planner to address this need specifically in the West Newton target neighborhood.

Conducting a speed study on the five streets mentioned above would run approximately \$40,000 based on the cost estimated for the Newton Corner Pearl Street traffic study conducted in 2004. Introducing traffic-calming and speed-reducing measures on all the streets would be moderately costly. Implementation would run between \$25,000 and \$50,000 depending upon the recommendations.

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Strategy: Install sidewalks where portions are missing

Total Funding Needed: The primary areas where there are no sidewalks or portions are missing are on the corners where Albemarle Road intersects Watertown Street and Brookside Avenue. Only infill work would be required to complete the missing sidewalks on portions of Albemarle, with this work estimated to cost \$15,000.

Strategy: Install granite curbing along streets/sections of streets where none exists

Total Funding Needed: Of the 12 public or partially public streets in the target neighborhood, just over half have continuous curbing. Of these seven streets, one has asphalt curbing only. The remaining five streets do not have continuous curbing, which allows for parking on the sidewalks. Installing granite curbing in areas where there is none currently comes with an estimated price tag of \$50,000.

Strategy: Washington Street pedestrian improvements  
Total Funding Needed: Washington Street, which is one of Newton's busiest streets, lacks sidewalks along the south side of the street in most of the target neighborhood area. Completing the sidewalk on Washington Street would be an enormous undertaking due to both the length of the area in question and the resulting expense, and the complications involved with closing down one lane of eastbound traffic during construction. This work is estimated to cost \$100,000.

In addition to installing sidewalks on the south side of the street, pedestrian improvements could include tree plantings on the north side of Washington. With an average cost of \$500-\$600 per tree, planting 25 new trees would run an estimated \$15,000.

## ***PROJECTS***

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Upon completion of the objective and strategy development phase of the planning process, information on the priority neighborhood improvement needs and the objectives and strategies developed to address them was distributed to relevant City departments with jurisdiction over these areas, including the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Building Department. Departments were then requested to apply for funding for specific projects taking this information into account. The West Newton Advisory Committee and Housing and Community Development staff reviewed these applications and selected the projects below for CDBG funding.

### **PARKS/OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects selected.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

The West Newton Advisory Committee voted unanimously to direct their full CDBG allocation to the Cheesecake Brook Improvement Project.

### **TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects selected.

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

No projects selected.

## ***PROPOSED GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

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Since the West Newton Advisory Committee selected only one project to undertake with their CDBG funding, the goals will be to develop a concept plan for the Cheesecake Brook area, to apply for additional funding for the project (CPA) and to implement the plan for the area. In quantitative terms, the goal will be to improve one public facility in the West Newton target neighborhood.

### ***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

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The proposed outcome of the West Newton target neighborhood improvement efforts will be promoting sustainability or livability. The West Newton Advisory Committee members and other residents who have attended the needs assessment and objectives and strategies meetings have been unanimous in their belief that the improvement of the Cheesecake Brook area between Eddy Street and Brookside Avenue will increase their quality of life and the livability of their neighborhood. They feel that the brook currently divides the neighborhood and is an eyesore they have to see every day. The performance measure employed will be a written survey distributed to all the residents in the West Newton target neighborhood. It is believed that the resounding finding will be that improvements to the brook have increased the livability of the neighborhood.

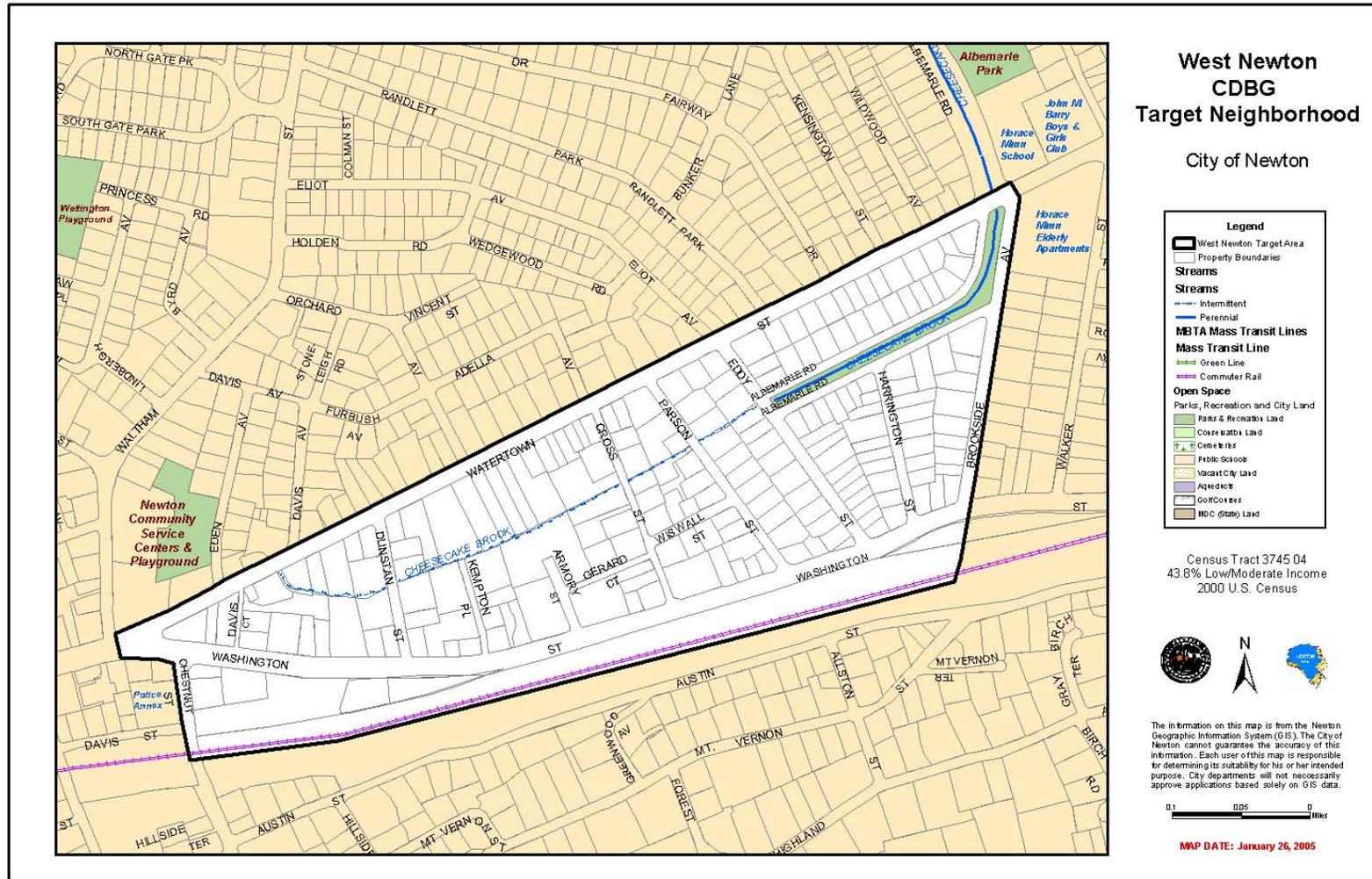
### ***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

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The primary obstacle to meeting underserved needs is the lack of sufficient funding. Eight priority needs were identified in the West Newton target neighborhood by attendees at the public meetings held in summer and fall of 2004, however, the available CDBG funding will fund only the number one priority. In fact, the CDBG funding alone will not be sufficient for completing the project; additional Community Preservation Act funds will be necessary for the project.

An additional obstacle to meeting underserved needs is posed by the necessity of the involvement of state agencies in addressing some of the identified needs. For instance, solving the noise and pollution problems from the Massachusetts Turnpike requires the cooperation of the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. While the Turnpike Authority has been responsive in the past, convincing them that they need to spend upwards of \$1.1 million to address a neighborhood need in Newton presents a challenge.

**MAP 9: WEST NEWTON TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD**



# **PUBLIC SERVICES**

This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains the needs assessment and the strategic plan for public services in Newton. For the purposes of this document, the terms “public services” and “human services” are interchangeable and include services such as child care, health care, job training/education programs, recreation programs, drug abuse counseling/treatment and services for homeless persons, among others, which may be provided by the CDBG grantee directly or by subgrantees.

CDBG regulations state that funds allocated to public services cannot exceed 15 percent of the total CDBG grant awarded for that program year, plus 15 percent of the total program income the grantee received during the previous program year; however the allocation may be less than 15 percent. In Newton, the CDBG public service program receives the maximum 15 percent allocation. Over the past three years, not including the current fiscal year, this amount has ranged from \$399,450 to \$410,400. However, when the 15 percent of previous year program income allocated to the CDBG public service program is added, the total amount allocated for public service programs has ranged from \$461,516 to \$518,200.

In addition to CDBG funding, the City of Newton also receives Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds. ESG funds are designated to be used as the first step in a continuum of assistance to prevent homelessness and to enable homeless individuals and families to move toward independent living. The objectives of the ESG program are to increase the number and quality of emergency shelters and transitional living facilities for homeless individuals and families, to operate these facilities and provide essential social services, and to help prevent homelessness. ESG grants can be used for facility operating costs (rent, maintenance, utilities or insurance), the rehabilitation or conversion of buildings into homeless shelters, the provision of essential shelter services and/or the prevention of homelessness. The City of Newton’s ESG grant has ranged from \$91,000 to \$100,081 over the past several years.

It is also worth noting that the City of Newton, as the lead entity for the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium, coordinates the annual application for HUD Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program funds. These funds are awarded annually through an extensive, highly competitive application process. Currently, six agencies receive Continuum of Care funds for 12 programs, totaling \$1,231,521. These funds are used to develop new units of transitional housing and permanent supportive housing, and to provide essential services to residents of existing housing. This money goes directly from HUD to grantee agencies.

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## PUBLIC SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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### ***NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND FINDINGS***

Prior to the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan (the Plan) needs assessment, the sole data collection instrument for public service needs was a questionnaire distributed to local human service providers. Housing and Community Development staff working on the FY01-05 Plan believed, however, that there might be a better method for compiling information on Newton's public service needs. Staff believed it was difficult, if not impossible, to devise a survey instrument that was totally objective. Additionally, responses were returned by only about 15 percent of providers, and responses were not received from a cross-section of providers but primarily from providers who were already receiving CDBG funds.

Staff felt that a series of focus groups held with human service providers and local residents would offer a better picture of the human service needs in Newton. They felt that information acquired through in-person focus groups would be timelier and more detailed than information obtained through questionnaires. Therefore, the primary method used to gather data on prevalent local public service needs for the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan was a series of focus groups. Announcements of the focus groups were placed in the *Newton TAB*, the local weekly newspaper, and service providers were invited directly.

Use of focus groups to gather data improved the reliability of information received as providers from a broad cross section of services were invited, including both subgrantees and providers who were not receiving grants. Local citizens were also invited and involved in the needs assessment process. The communication of needs information was improved by the fact that the participants were in a face-to-face situation so that information could be clarified in the course of their interaction, and issues could be explored in greater depth.

The Newton Human Service Advisory Committee (HSAC) endorsed the focus group method and helped formulate focus group questions. Members of the HSAC attended all the focus groups both as observers and recorders. Their active involvement in the process was significant because it provided them with information directly from providers and enabled them to effectively evaluate the data when faced with making decisions on priority needs and program funding allocations.

Focus groups for public service needs were held in May 2004. Groups were held in six service areas, which are noted in the table below:

<b>AREA OF FOCUS</b>	<b>DATE OF FOCUS GROUP</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</b>
Adults and families	May 3	14
People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness	May 4	15
Elders	May 6	12
Children	May 18	10
Youth	May 19	11
People with disabilities	May 20	9

A total of 56 service providers and ten Newton residents participated in the focus groups. Approximately 30 percent of the providers who participated were not recipients of grants through the CDBG public services program. The participants in each focus group represented a cross-section of service modalities.

Focus group participants were asked to state what they saw as the most urgent current and future needs of the service population in question. The implications of these needs were explored through thought-provoking questions raised by the moderator. A Housing and Community Development staff member or HSAC member was present at each group to record the information derived from the discussion. Each focus group lasted approximately 90 minutes.

The list below includes all the needs that were mentioned during the focus groups. An asterisk (\*) before a need denotes that the need received repeated emphasis.

### **Children's Service Needs**

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- \*Affordable childcare that includes support for relationships to adults, racial/ethnic/culture sensitivity, gender sensitivity
- Assistance to single mothers—parenting skills, employment, information and referral
- Early education (including school readiness and social/emotional wellness)
- \*Social/emotional support for children and families
- Stabilization of family and home settings
- Camp scholarships

### **Adolescent Service Needs**

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- Summer programs for middle-school kids
- Transportation services
- Parental education about child/adolescent development and parenting skills
- Crisis intervention
- Comprehensive outreach services
- School-based or centralized comprehensive services for at-risk kids
- 24-hour hotline
- Teen drop-in centers with social/recreation and therapeutic services
- Intensive case management
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Family services to deal with “weak” parenting and family instability
- Services for 18-20 year olds
- Stress reduction services

### **Adult/Family Service Needs**

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- \*Affordable housing
- \*Affordable day care for children
- \*Information about available services
- \*Health care services/ health insurance
- \*Linguistic services for immigrants to lower language barriers
- \*Legal services and advocacy
- Financial assistance
- Budget planning
- Mental health counseling

- Support services for single parents
- Case management for multi-problem families
- Substance abuse treatment
- Family education on health issues

### **Elder Service Needs**

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- \*Transportation to services and activities (dial-a-ride)
- \*Affordable, adaptable housing with supportive services
- \*Connection to services through information and referral
- Linguistic services for immigrants
- Money management services
- Identification of isolated elders
- Mental health intervention
- Socialization
- Nutrition and exercise
- Connection to the community

### **Service Needs of People with Disabilities**

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*Includes adults with developmental disabilities or chronic mental illness and adults with severe physical impairments):*

- \*Affordable accessible housing
- \*Available transportation
- \*Meeting the living needs of an aging population
- \*Employment opportunities
- Assistance with transition to greater independence
- Services for 18-24 year old developmentally disabled persons
- Support to aging parents of people who are disabled
- Greater access to community resources
- Physical accessibility

### **Service Needs of People who are Homeless or At-Risk of Homelessness**

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- \*Subsidized, affordable housing
- \*More shelter beds
- \*More transitional housing with services
- \*Permanent supportive housing
- \*Mental health counseling services
- \*Financial assistance and rent subsidies
- \*Case management
- \*Job training and employment opportunities
- Legal services
- Substance abuse treatment
- Information about community resources
- Comprehensive services to homeless children
- Transportation

### **UNMET NEEDS FROM THE FY01-05 CONSOLIDATED PLAN**

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Unlike economic development and target neighborhood programs receiving CDBG funds, public service needs tend to recur from year to year as the needs are almost always greater than the available funding. For instance, affordable child care, a major need in the area of children's

services in the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan, remains a major need. The same can be said, for example, for teen drop-in and teen substance abuse services, case management for multi-problems families, parent support services, mental health services for elders, integrative services for immigrants, employment opportunities for people with disabilities and legal assistance for homeless families, to name just a few needs that have been expressed. Even though services have been provided to meet many of these needs, there is never enough funding to assist everyone in Newton who needs assistance.

### ***PROMINENT PUBLIC SERVICE NEEDS***

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At the conclusion of the focus groups, the Human Service Advisory Committee met to review the information gathered. After reviewing the data and comparing it with priority needs from previous needs assessments, the HSAC prioritized the public service needs as listed in the following summary. Their findings were documented where possible through research, which also appears below. The needs were found to be equally important and are not prioritized within service areas.

#### **Children's Service Needs**

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- **Affordable child care**

A March 2003 report from the Children's Defense Fund reports that at that time, Massachusetts had 17,378 children on the waiting list for child care subsidies. The Massachusetts Community Partnerships pre-kindergarten program was cut by 7.5 percent in the fiscal year 2002 budget, and the budget for fiscal year 2003 imposed an additional cut of 8.4 percent. State funding for Head Start was also reduced by ten percent. In 2002, Massachusetts eliminated the \$5 million After-School and Out-of-School Time (ASOST) grants to communities. The budget for 2003 included a 67 percent cut in the only remaining school-age program<sup>1</sup>.

- **Child care that includes nurturing relationships with adults and support for racial / ethnic / culture / gender sensitivity**

In an article in *Hispanic* magazine, Tyrone Guzmán, executive director of El Centro Cultural Chicano in Minneapolis, stated, "Most child care programs address the same basic needs—affection, education, a safe environment—but we often forget that toddlers are developing a self-image that will be with them through adulthood. If minority children aren't introduced to role models and develop a strong bicultural identity, they won't know where they belong socially in the future."<sup>2</sup>

- **Camp scholarships**

Research suggests that camp participation impacts youth in multiple ways by enhancing affective (self-esteem and self-concept); cognitive (knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes); behavioral (self-reported behaviors and behavioral intentions); physical; social; and spiritual growth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Danielle, Ewen, and Hart Katherine. "State Budget Cuts Create a Growing Child Care Crisis for Low-income Working Families." *Children's Defense Fund* (2003). 16 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.childrensdefense.org/earlychildhood/childcare/state\\_budget\\_cuts\\_2003.pdf](http://www.childrensdefense.org/earlychildhood/childcare/state_budget_cuts_2003.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> Terry-Azios, Diana. "Easing Childcare Woes: Bicultural Daycare Centers Help Latinas Juggle Parenthood and Work." *Hispanic* Dec. 2000. 05 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.hispaniconline.com/cc/ca\\_woes.htm](http://www.hispaniconline.com/cc/ca_woes.htm)>.

<sup>3</sup> Powell, Gwynn M. "Youth Development at Summer Camp-Research Notes." *Camping Magazine* (2003). 3 Aug. 2004. <[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1249/is\\_3\\_76/ai\\_112411455](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1249/is_3_76/ai_112411455)>.

## **Adolescent Service Needs**

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- **Summer programs for middle-school age kids**

"When it comes to keeping kids on track, prevention is the best strategy," said Marian L. Heard, president and chief executive officer at United Way of Massachusetts Bay (UWMB). Heard, who was speaking about a \$300,000 grant UWMB made in partnership with the Black Ministerial Alliance, Emmanuel Gospel Center and Boston Ten Point Coalition for summer jobs and programming in Boston neighborhoods, went on to say that, "These new funds represent a short-term plan and a long-term investment in Boston's young people. Short-term, there is an urgent need for summer jobs for youth—giving them skills to help them handle real jobs in the future. Long-term, these grants will expand programs to give safe opportunities for leadership development, academic help and mentors."<sup>4</sup>

- **Crisis intervention and outreach services**

In 2000, the U.S. Surgeon General released a national blueprint to address a "public crisis" in mental health for children and adolescents. While one in ten children and adolescents suffer from a mental illness that causes some level of impairment, it is estimated that in any given year, less than one in five children and adolescents receive needed mental health treatment or services. Left untreated, mental illness in childhood and adolescence can lead to difficulties in school and a failure to develop friendships and social skills. Worse yet, an alarming number of children and adolescents with mental illness end up in the juvenile justice system.<sup>5</sup>

- **Teen drop-in centers with social/recreation opportunities and therapeutic services**

- **Substance abuse prevention and treatment services**

According to the Massachusetts 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 46 percent of high school students drank alcohol during the past month, and 27 percent reported episodic heavy drinking during the past month. Twenty-eight percent used marijuana during the past month, and eight percent had used cocaine at some point in time.<sup>6</sup>

- **Services for 18-20 year olds**

## **Adult/Family Service Needs:**

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- **Support services for single parents**

Cornell researcher Henry Ricciuti found that "Many single mothers lack the social, economic or parenting resources that are known to promote good parenting." Ricciuti stresses the need for making those types of parenting resources more readily available to single mothers in order to help them provide more supportive home and family environments for their children. "Potential risks to single-parent children could be greatly reduced or eliminated with increased parental access to adequate economic, social, educational and parenting supports," Ricciuti concludes.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> United Way of Massachusetts Bay. 11 July 2003. United Way. 16 Aug. 2004. <<http://www.uwmb.org/news/03summerjobs.htm>>.

<sup>5</sup> Knowledge Path: Mental Health in Children and Adolescents. Maternal and Child Health Library. 16 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.mchlibrary.info/KnowledgePaths/kp\\_mentalhealth.html](http://www.mchlibrary.info/KnowledgePaths/kp_mentalhealth.html)>.

<sup>6</sup> "2003 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results." Massachusetts Department of Education (2004). 9 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.doe.mass.edu/hssss/yrbs/03/execsum\\_results.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/hssss/yrbs/03/execsum_results.pdf)>.

<sup>7</sup> "Children of Single Parents." Online posting. June 2004. Rollercoaster ie. 4 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.rollercoaster.ie/research/Jun04\\_2.asp](http://www.rollercoaster.ie/research/Jun04_2.asp)>.

- **Substance abuse services**

In FY 2003, there were 48,946 admissions to Massachusetts substance abuse treatment services of persons reporting heroin use in the year prior to admission. Of these, only 152 people admitted were under 18 years of age. More than 22 percent (10,934) of adults receiving services were parents of children under six years of age, and 21.7 percent (2,378) of these parents reported living with their children. Thirty-seven percent (18,137) were the parents of children ranging from 6 to 18 years old, and 17.3 percent (3,145) of these admissions reported living with their children.<sup>8</sup>

- **Connection to services—including legal, health, financial and comprehensive budget planning services—through information and referral and advocacy**
- **English language skill development services for immigrants**
- **Emergency financial assistance**
- **Services to victims of domestic violence**
- **Case management for multi-problem families**
- **Parenting education**

### **Elder Service Needs**

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- **English language skill development for immigrants**

According to U.S. Census 2000 data, six percent (773) of Newton residents age 65 and older speak English either “not well” or “not at all.” Of these residents, 695 are considered to reside in “linguistically isolated households,” which is defined as: a household in which no member 14 years old and over (1) speaks English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well.” In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English.<sup>9</sup>

- **Support services to maintain elders in the community**

A 1998 report from the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute states that “The need for supportive services grows. As elders ‘age in place,’ public and private resources do not keep pace with the increasing need for supportive services. Some elders need assistance with housekeeping, getting to community activities, taking medications, grocery shopping and even feeding themselves.”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services. Substance Abuse Fact Sheet: Adult Heroin Admissions. 2003. 17 Aug. 2004. <<http://www.mass.gov/dph/bsas/data/factsheets/2003/heroin03.doc>>.

<sup>9</sup> United States. U.S. Census Bureau. U.S. Census 2000. 10 May 2004. 18 Aug. 2004. <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>.

<sup>10</sup> Housing for Populations with Special Needs. Comp. Friedman Donna, et al. 1998. University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. 18 Aug. 2004. <<http://www.donahue.umassp.edu/publications/housing/5-needs.html>>.

- **Adult day health care**

Twenty-three percent (22.4 million), or nearly one out of every four U.S. households, provides care to a relative or friend aged 50 or older. Approximately 13.3 million people, seven percent of U.S. adults, are spouses or adult children of disabled older people and have the potential responsibility for their care. Of these, about 85 percent (or 11.4 million) are adult children.<sup>11</sup>

- **Integrative services for isolated elders, linguistic minorities and immigrants**

- **Mental health intervention**

- **Connection to services through information and referral**

### **Service Needs of People with Disabilities**

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*Includes adults with developmental disabilities or chronic mental illness and adults with severe physical impairments):*

- **Meeting the living needs of an aging population**

The Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation's (DMR) waiting list for residential services has increased 500 percent since 1992. In January 1998, close to 3,000 individuals were on the waiting list for DMR residential services. Rapid expansion of the list is due to the growing numbers of individuals whose caregivers 60 years of age or older are increasingly unable to provide care.<sup>12</sup>

- **Employment and training opportunities**

Unemployment is one of the most profound issues facing the disability community. Only 32 percent of Americans with disabilities aged 18 to 64 are working, but two-thirds of those unemployed would rather be working.<sup>13</sup>

- **Services for young adults**

- **Recreational programs for individuals with severe and profound disabilities**

- **Integrative services for people with disabilities**

- **Increased access to community resources**

### **Service Needs of People who are Homeless or At-Risk of Homelessness**

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- **Financial assistance and rent subsidies**

In the July 2004 report *Hard Numbers, Hard Times: Homeless Individuals in Massachusetts Emergency Shelter, 1999-2003*, 60 percent of homeless shelter guests attributed their homelessness to financial problems and unemployment.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> National Adult Day Services Association. 17 Aug. 2004. <[http://www.nadsa.org/press\\_room/facts\\_stats.htm](http://www.nadsa.org/press_room/facts_stats.htm)>.

<sup>12</sup> Housing for Populations with Special Needs. Comp. Friedman Donna, et al. 1998. University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. 18 Aug. 2004. <<http://www.donahue.umassp.edu/publications/housing/5-needs.html>>.

<sup>13</sup> Economic Participation: Finding Good Jobs. National Organization on Disability. 17 Aug. 2004. <<http://www.nod.org/findingjobs/index.cfm>>.

<sup>14</sup> Hard Numbers, Hard Times: Homeless Individuals in Massachusetts Emergency Shelters, 1999-2003. Comp. Tatjana Meschede, and Brian Sokol. July 2004. John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies/The Center

In 2003, the state of Massachusetts eliminated the Emergency Assistance Rent Arrearage Program. Because there is now no program to help families with overdue rent payments, the number of families seeking shelters has risen by 15 percent.<sup>15</sup>

- **Legal services**

In 1999, more than 35,000 people in Massachusetts were homeless. According to a 2000 census, 573,421 (or 9.3 percent) of Massachusetts residents fell below the poverty level. That number in Boston reached 19 percent. Nearly one-third (191,140) of these individuals require legal assistance each year.<sup>16</sup>

In a paper on recommended strategies to prevent homelessness in New York City, “increasing the availability of anti-eviction legal services to help prevent eviction” was cited as method of expanding the resources that can prevent homelessness.<sup>17</sup>

- **Shelter costs**

- **Comprehensive services to homeless children**

for Social Policy. 17 Aug. 2004.

<<http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/csp/publications/Hard%20Numbers,%20Hard%20Times-Individuals%20in%20MA%20Emergency%20Shelters%201999-2003.pdf>>.

<sup>15</sup> Promise Children Massachusetts. Unitarian Universalist Church. 18 Aug. 2004.

<<http://www.promisemasschildren.org/Letters/EndHomelessnessFacts.htm>>.

<sup>16</sup> Shelter Legal Services Foundation. 2002. Shelter Legal Services Foundation. 26 Aug. 2004.

<<http://www.shelterlegalservices.org/>>.

<sup>17</sup> New York City Homelessness Prevention Efforts. 2004. National Alliance to End Homelessness. 25 Aug. 2004.

<<http://www.endhomelessness.org/best/NYprev2.html>>.

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## PUBLIC SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN

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### ***PROJECT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS***

The planning process for Newton's CDBG public services program operates somewhat differently than the process for the City's other program areas. Unlike the other program areas, objectives and strategies for addressing the individual needs are not developed because they would be the same for each need: to design or fund an appropriate public service program. Instead, a Request for Proposals (RFP) process is used to identify local public service providers with either existing CDBG- or ESG-funded or new programs that meet the needs.

In September 2004, following the development of the public services needs assessment, Housing and Community Development staff issued two RFPs—one for human service grants and one for emergency shelter grants—to local service providers with the caveat that providers submit proposals that responded to the priority public service needs. The RFPs explained that funding could be requested for new eligible programs or for existing eligible programs that had substantial additional need.

As was the case with the FY01-05 Consolidated Plan, providers were given the opportunity to request grants for human service programs for up to five years (this option is not available for ESG funds because the City's ESG grant allotment has heretofore fluctuated each grant year). Grantees were alerted that funding levels during the five-year period will be dependent on whether the City receives at least level funding from HUD in each successive program year. A total of 46 human service grant proposals were received, requesting an aggregate amount of \$813,581 for FY06. Eight ESG proposals requesting a total of \$135,320 were received.

Staff reviewed the proposals to ensure that the various public service programs were eligible under CDBG and ESG regulations before submitting them to the Human Service Advisory Committee members for review. HSAC members met in late November to review the applications, using criteria that included documented need for service, while attempting to balance funding allocations to each category of service recipients, including children, adolescents, adults and families, elders, people with disabilities, and people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Of the 46 projects that applied for funds, the HSAC recommended funding 36 previously funded human service projects in FY06, for a total of \$420,000. None of the applicants were recommended to receive more funding than they received in FY05, and 26 of the 36 funded applicants were recommended to receive cuts from previous funding amounts. Three new applicant projects were recommended for one-year grants should sufficient FY05 program income become available for the CDBG public service program. Of the 36 previously funded applicants who were recommended to receive public service funds, the HSAC prioritized 16 projects to receive small increments in their grants depending on the amount of FY05 program income available for public services. The funding recommendations were then submitted to the Planning and Development Board and the Mayor for approval.

There were eight Emergency Shelter Grant applications for FY06 and the HSAC recommended funding seven projects at a total of \$98,748. Project requests were evaluated based on their ability to address the major objectives of the Emergency Shelter Grant program.

## ***FUNDING ESTIMATES***

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Below are the cost estimates and the priority levels for the public service need categories that are listed in HUD-required Table 2B (see Appendix). The categories listed below encompass the Newton priority public service needs for low- and moderate-income residents. Cost estimates are not as critical a factor in the public services planning process because the needs are inevitably greater than the available CDBG and ESG funds. The amount of funds available, however, plays a paramount role in determining what CDBG public service programs can be funded, how much funding each program can receive, and what needs can be addressed. The estimates provided below are based on both the amount of CDBG funds requested for FY06-10 in each of the public service categories and from the information obtained from the focus groups.

### **Public Services (05)—High Priority**

For purposes of this Plan, general public services comprise those areas not covered by the other categories listed below, in particular services for single adults and families. The estimated amount of funds needed to address general public service needs is \$890,000.

### **Services for People with Disabilities (05B)—High Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed over the five-year period to address the service needs of people with disabilities is \$652,000.

### **Legal Services (05C)—Medium Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed to address the legal assistance needs of low- and moderate-income Newton residents is \$525,000.

### **Transportation Services (05E)—Medium Priority**

The need for transportation assistance was expressed in both the focus groups and in the results of the point-in-time survey of homeless people. However, because both inter-city and intra-city transportation services already provided by the state, by the regional transit authority, and by many private agencies, no local CDBG funds are set aside for this purpose.

### **Substance Abuse Services (05F)—High Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed to address the need for substance abuse treatment among low- and moderate-income Newton residents is \$340,000.

### **Employment Training (05H)—Medium Priority**

Based on requests received for CDBG funds, it is estimated that the amount of funds needed to address this need is \$100,000; however, in actuality this number is probably substantially higher based on the needs expressed in the focus groups and obtained from the point-in-time survey.

### **Health Services (05M)—Medium Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed to address health service needs is \$175,000.

### **Mental Health Services (05O)—Medium Priority**

Funding needed to address mental health needs is estimated at \$375,000.

### **Youth Centers (03D)—Low Priority**

There is no documented need for the creation of additional youth centers in Newton; however, there is a documented need to provide services at existing youth centers.

**Youth Services (05D)—High Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed to address youth service needs is \$608,000.

**Child Care Services (05L)—High Priority**

Child care services for low- and moderate-income families continue to remain a high priority need. The estimated amount of funds needed to address this need is \$820,000.

**Senior Services (05A)—High Priority**

The estimated amount of funds needed to address senior service needs is \$970,000

The following public service categories received a rating of “No Such Need,” therefore no funding was estimated for programs in these areas:

- Screening for Lead Based Paint (05P)
- Crime Awareness (05I)
- Child Care Centers (05M)
- Abused/Neglected Children Facilities (03Q)
- Abused/Neglected Children Services (05N)
- Senior Centers (03A)

***PROJECTS***

As mentioned previously, the Human Service Advisory Committee reviewed all proposals using criteria including project eligibility and documented need for service. The HSAC also attempted to allocate funding as equally as possible among the different population groups, including children, adolescents, adults and families, elders, people with disabilities, and people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Committee recommended funding 36 public service programs in FY06 for a total of \$420,000. Of this amount, \$380,000 would be distributed as 35 five-year grants and \$40,000 would comprise one one-year grant. In addition to these 36 recommended public service programs, three new applicants were recommended for one-year grants on the condition that sufficient FY05 program income become available for public services. The HSAC also prioritized 16 of the 36 previously recommended applicants to receive small increments in their grants depending on the amount of program income available for public services.

Applications for FY06 ESG grants were evaluated on their ability to meet ESG program objectives and, in particular, to serve the emergency needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The HSAC recommended that seven emergency shelter grants totaling \$98,748 be awarded for FY06.

The programs selected, the amount of funding allocated, the length of the grant period and the proposed one-, and where applicable, five-year goals for both the human service programs and the emergency shelter grant programs can be found in the following table.

**FY06-10 CDBG HUMAN SERVICE GRANTS: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED GOALS**

AGENCY/PROGRAM	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT ALLOCATED	LENGTH OF GRANT	PROPOSED GOALS (NUMBER OF LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES SERVED)	
				ONE-YEAR	FIVE-YEAR
<b>Barry Price Center</b> – Job Developer/Job Coach	25,000	18,000	5 years	9	25
<b>Barry Price Center</b> – Person Centered Planning	4,800	4,000	5 years	12	40
<b>Bowen After School Program</b> – Tuition Assistance Program	10,000	7,000	5 years	7	20
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b> – Camp Scholarships	7,500	3,000	5 years	8	35
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b> – Kids Corps Scholarships	12,000	6,000	5 years	9	40
<b>Boys &amp; Girls Club</b> – Teen Programming	6,000	6,000	5 years	15	55
<b>CASCAP</b> – Service Coordinator, Nonantum Village Place	16,440	9,000	1 year	34	-
<b>Charles River ARC</b> – ASPIRE Program	18,455	6,000	5 years	6	20
<b>Charles River ARC</b> – Music Therapy	4,160	4,000	5 years	14	25
<b>Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly</b> – Caring Choices	15,000	9,000	5 years	200	330
<b>Massachusetts Association for the Blind</b> – Visually Impaired Elders	6,000	4,000	5 years	35	75
<b>Newton Child Care Fund</b> – Child Care Scholarship Fund	30,000	15,000	5 years	45	190
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b> – CareConnections	12,500	9,000	5 years	110	185
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b> – Director of Resident Services	15,000	7,000	5 years	210	350

**FY06-10 CDBG HUMAN SERVICE GRANTS: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED GOALS**

AGENCY/PROGRAM	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT ALLOCATED	LENGTH OF GRANT	PROPOSED GOALS (NUMBER OF LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES SERVED)	
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b> – English as a Second Language	2,500	2,000	5 years	35	55
<b>Newton Community Development Foundation</b> – Hamlet Youth Center	9,000	5,000	1 year	70	-
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Adult Day Health Care	15,000	9,000	5 years	18	50
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Child Care Scholarships	30,000	20,000	5 years	14	45
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Higher Ground Teen Program	15,000	11,000	5 years	45	160
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Mentor Connection	15,000	5,000	5 years	12	30
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Parent Child Home Program	8,500	7,000	5 years	25	95
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – The Parents Program	35,000	28,000	5 years	50	140
<b>Newton Community Service Centers</b> – Teen REACH Drop-in Center	38,000	32,000	5 years	275	950
<b>Newton Creative Start</b> – Early Childhood Program Scholarships	14,500	8,000	1 year	2	-
<b>Newton Health Department</b> – Mental Health Intervention for the Elderly	50,000	35,000	5 years	50	70
<b>Newton Housing Authority</b> – Resident Services Coordinator	22,228	18,000	5 years	400	450
<b>Newton Human Services Dept.</b> – COA Outreach Worker	11,387	8,000	5 years	90	240
<b>Newton Human Services Department</b> – Newton Senior Center	49,590	48,000	1 year	2,000	-
<b>Newton Human Services Department</b> – Youth Outreach Counseling	29,000	19,000	5 years	45	140

**FY06-10 CDBG HUMAN SERVICE GRANTS: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED GOALS**

AGENCY/PROGRAM	AMOUNT REQUESTED	AMOUNT ALLOCATED	LENGTH OF GRANT	PROPOSED GOALS (NUMBER OF LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES SERVED)	
				ONE-YEAR	FIVE-YEAR
<b>Newton Parks &amp; Recreation Department</b> – Summer Camp Scholarships	5,000	3,000	5 years	75	250
<b>NWW Committee</b> – Clinical Services and Supports	7,500	7,500	5 years	75	160
<b>NWW Committee</b> – Community Access	10,000	6,000	5 years	40	70
<b>NWW Committee</b> – Wednesday Night Drop In	12,100	6,500	5 years	120	250
<b>Peirce Extended Day Program</b> – EDP Scholarship Program	9,000	6,000	5 years	10	30
<b>Plowshares Childcare Program</b> – Childcare Scholarships	20,000	13,000	5 years	50	150
<b>REACH</b> – Hotline and Outreach Services	7,000	5,000	5 years	190	850
<b>Riverside Community Care</b> – Substance Abuse Treatment	28,000	22,000	5 years	90	200
<b>Riverside Community Care</b> – Family Crisis Stabilization	10,000	6,000	5 years	40	140
<b>The Second Step</b> – Case Manager	30,000	20,000	5 years	10	35
<b>TOTALS</b>	666,160	457,000		4,545	5,950

The Human Service Advisory Committee has reviewed grant applications and made funding recommendations for the FY06-10 funding cycle. Approximately \$381,600 is available for human services in the FY06 City of Newton CDBG grant. There is an additional \$75,000 in program income that is expected to be received.

If additional program income becomes available to fund public service programs in FY06, the following programs will receive the following amounts, in the priority order shown, in addition to their base FY06 awards:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <b>NCSC, The Parents Program, \$3,000</b>                              | 9) <b>Barry L. Price Center, Person Centered Planning, \$500</b>  |
| 2) <b>Dept. of Human Services, Youth Outreach Counseling, \$4,000</b>     | 10) <b>Charles River ARC, ASPIRE Program, \$500</b>               |
| 3) <b>Barry L. Price Center, Job Coaching and Training, \$2,500</b>       | 11) <b>Dept. of Human Services, Newton Senior Center, \$3,000</b> |
| 4) <b>NCSC, Teen Center, \$1,000</b>                                      | 12) <b>Plowshares, Child Care Scholarships, \$1,000</b>           |
| 5) <b>NCSC, Higher Ground, \$1,000</b>                                    | 13) <b>Newton Health Department, Elder Mental Health, \$2,000</b> |
| 6) <b>Riverside, Adolescent/Family Substance Abuse Treatment, \$2,000</b> | 14) <b>Peirce Extend Day Program, EDP Scholarships, \$500</b>     |
| 7) <b>NWW Committee, Clinical Services and Supports, \$500</b>            | 15) <b>Bowen Afterschool Program, Tuition Assistance, \$500</b>   |
| 8) <b>NCSC, Child Care Scholarships, \$3,000</b>                          |   |

<b>FY06 ESG GRANTS : FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED GOALS</b>				
<b>AGENCY/PROGRAM</b>	<b>AMOUNT REQUESTED</b>	<b>AMOUNT ALLOCATED</b>	<b>LENGTH OF GRANT</b>	<b>PROPOSED GOALS (NUMBER OF LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES SERVED)</b>
				<b>ONE-YEAR</b>
<b>Mediation Works, Inc.</b> – Eviction Mediation Program	5,000	5,000	1 year	25
<b>Middlesex Human Service Agency</b> – Bristol Lodge Men’s and Women’s Shelters	\$11,000	\$11,000	1 year	228
<b>Middlesex Human Service Agency</b> – Bristol Lodge Soup Kitchen	11,000	11,000	1 year	500
<b>REACH</b> – Emergency Shelter	16,320	16,320	1 year	72
<b>Riverside Community Care</b> – Adolescent Homelessness Prevention	10,000	10,000	1 year	53
<b>The Horace Cousens Industrial Fund</b> – Emergency Assistance for Rent and Utilities	12,000	6,000	1 year	150
<b>The Second Step</b> – Transitional Residence	26,000	26,000	1 year	20

## ***PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT***

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As a result of decisions made by the Housing and Community Development staff and the Human Service Advisory Committee, applicants for CDBG public service grants in FY06 and beyond will be required to develop a logic model for their funded service, and they will report regularly on program outputs and outcomes. The overall performance measurement that will be employed to measure the success of the Newton public service program will be promoting sustainability or livability. Since Newton generally has between 35 and 40 public service grantees, the City will use this one outcome to compile individual outcome information from the agencies.

All applicants will answer the following two questions:

**1) List the main “outputs” of this service.** (*“Outputs” are direct products of program activities, such as hours of service, cases successfully closed, etc.*)

**2) What will be the most important desired “outcomes” of this service?** (What positive changes will occur in individuals, groups, or families as a result of this service? What benefits will result? What will be the value to the community?)

Those providers who receive public service grants have and will continue to receive technical assistance in the development of logic models. In particular, these grantees will be assisted in determination of appropriate indicators of change in their service population and the community at large as a result of their public services. Such indicators can be used in measuring outcomes.

Program report requirements are specified in each grant agreement and must be filed by all public service grant recipients no less than quarterly. In addition to listing all major program outputs in each program report, grant recipients are now required to evaluate their success in meeting their outcome goals based on individual, family, or group change and benefits to the community.

## ***OBSTACLES TO MEETING UNDERSERVED NEEDS***

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Based on information derived from grantees and other service providers within the City, we conclude that the single most common obstacle to meeting under-served needs is a lack of financial resources.

# **PART VI**

# **APPENDIX**

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## APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**Affordable housing.** Housing where the occupant pays no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utility costs.

**Community Development Block Grant Program.** A federal program created under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The CDBG program provides grants funds to local and state governments to be used to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing with a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities to assist low- and moderate-income residents.

**Community Housing Development Organization.** A federally defined type of nonprofit housing provider that must receive a minimum of 15 percent of all federal HOME funds. The primary difference between a CHDO and other nonprofits is the level of low-income resident participation on the Board of Directors.

**Consortium.** Geographically contiguous units of general local government consolidated to be in a single unit of general local government for HOME Program purposes when certain requirements are met.

**Continuum of Care.** A collaborative funding approach that helps communities plan for and provide a full range of emergency, transitional and permanent housing and service resources to address the various needs of homeless persons.

**Cost burden.** The extent to which gross housing costs, including utility costs, exceed 30 percent of gross income, based on data available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Elderly person.** A person who is at least 62 years of age.

**Emergency shelter.** Any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for homeless people in general or for specific populations of homeless people.

**Emergency Shelter Grant Program.** A federal grant program designed to help improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless, to make available additional shelters, to meet the costs of operating shelters, to provide essential social services to homeless individuals, and to help prevent homelessness.

**Extremely low-income.** Household whose income is between 0 and 30 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller or larger families, except that HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 30 percent of the median for the area on the basis of HUD's findings that such variations are necessary because of the prevailing levels of construction costs or fair market rents, or unusually high or low family incomes.

**Fair market rent.** (FMR) The rent that would be required to be paid in the particular housing market area in order to obtain privately owned, decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities. Separate FMRs are established by HUD for dwelling units of varying sizes (number of bedrooms).

**Family.** Defined by HUD as a household composed of two or more related persons. The term family also includes one or more eligible persons living with another person or persons who are determined to be important to their care or well being.

**HOME Investment Partnerships Program.** A federal grant program designed to help jurisdictions expand the supply of decent and affordable rental and ownership housing for extremely low-, low- and moderate-income people.

**Homeless person.** A person sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation or in an emergency shelter; and a person in transitional housing for homeless persons who originally came from the street or an emergency shelter.

**Homelessness prevention.** Activities or programs designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness, including (but not limited to):

- Short-term subsidies to defray rent and utility arrearages for families that have received eviction or utility termination notices
- Security deposits or first month's rent to permit a homeless family to move into its own apartment
- Mediation programs for landlord-tenant disputes
- Legal services programs for the representation of indigent tenants in eviction proceedings
- Payments to prevent foreclosure on a home
- Other innovative programs and activities designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness

**Household.** All the persons who occupy a housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, two or more families living together, one person living alone, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

**Housing problems.** Households with housing problems include those that (1) occupy units having physical defects; (2) occupy units that meet the definition of overcrowded; or (3) meet the definition of cost burden greater than 30 percent.

**Large family.** Defined by HUD as a family of five or more persons.

**Lead-based paint hazards.** Any condition that causes exposure to lead from lead-contaminated dust, lead-contaminated soil, lead-contaminated paint that is deteriorated or present in accessible surfaces, friction surfaces, or impact surfaces that would result in adverse human health effects as established by the appropriate federal agency.

**Low-income (very low-income in the HOME program).** Household whose income does not exceed 50 percent of the median family income for the area, as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 50 percent of the median for the area on the basis of HUD's findings that such variations are necessary because of prevailing levels of construction costs or fair market rents, or unusually high or low family incomes.

**Middle-income.** Household whose income is between 80 and 95 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 95 percent of the median for the area on the basis of HUD's findings that such variations are necessary because of prevailing levels of construction costs or fair market rents, or unusually high or low family incomes.

**Moderate-income (low income in the HOME program).** Household whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 80 percent of the median for the area on the basis of HUD's findings that such variations are necessary because of prevailing levels of construction costs or fair market rents, or unusually high or low family incomes.

**Overcrowding.** As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, a housing unit containing more than one person per room.

**Person with a disability.** A person who is determined to:

- 1) Have a physical, mental or emotional impairment that:
  - i) Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
  - ii) Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and
  - iii) Is of such a nature that the ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions; or
- 2) Have a developmental disability, as defined in section 102(7) of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 6001-6007); or
- 3) Be the surviving member or members of any family that had been living in an assisted unit with the deceased member of the family who had a disability at the time of his or her death.

**Poverty.** The U.S. Census Bureau utilizes the federal Office of Management and Budget's Directive 14 to define poverty. The Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or individual is classified as being below the poverty level. To compute poverty status, money income before taxes is computed. This does not include capital gains or non-cash benefits such as food stamps and housing subsidies. Poverty cannot be determined for people living in group quarters or for unrelated individuals under age 15 (such as foster children).

**Program income.** Gross income received by Newton directly generated by the repayment of CDBG or HOME loans or grants.

**Severe cost burden.** The extent to which gross housing costs, including utility costs, exceed 50 percent of gross income, based on data available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Small family.** Defined by HUD as a family of two to four persons.

**Subrecipient.** A public agency or nonprofit organization selected by a participating jurisdiction to administer all or a portion of the participating jurisdiction's HOME Program or that receives CDBG and/or ESG funding from the grantee. A public agency or nonprofit organization that receives HOME funds solely as a developer or owner of housing is not a subrecipient.

**Supportive services.** Services provided to residents of supportive housing to facilitate residents' independence. Examples include case management, medical or psychological counseling and supervision, childcare, transportation, and job training.

**Transitional housing.** A project that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time (usually 24 months). Transitional housing includes housing primarily designed to serve deinstitutionalized homeless individuals and other homeless individuals with mental or physical disabilities and homeless families with children.

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**APPENDIX B**  
**SUMMARY OF CITIZEN COMMENTS**

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This segment of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan contains a summary of written and verbal comments on the Plan.

There were no comments received on the City of Newton FY06-10 Consolidated Plan.

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## APPENDIX C INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

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The Newton Community Development Block Grant program began in 1975, with one Planning Department staff person and an initial grant of approximately \$650,000. Today, the Newton Housing and Community Development Division (the Division) boasts a staff of 16 and an annual combined Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) allocation of approximately \$2.6 million, plus an additional \$1.6 million it administers as the lead agency of the 12-member WestMetro HOME Consortium.

For the past 30 years, the Division has developed and managed a number of programs for city residents, all in keeping with the goal of increasing Newton's diversity by improving the economic, social, physical and housing environments for families and individuals with low or moderate incomes. Current programs administered by the Housing and Community Development Division include housing (development, rehabilitation, first time homebuyer and Newton Connection homebuyer programs), economic development, neighborhood improvements, accessibility improvements and homeless and human service programs.

Effective program delivery would not be possible, however, without the efforts of many other local, state, federal and private partners. Many agencies and organizations form the front line of community development in Newton. The institutional structure established to develop the City of Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan is broadly based and integrates the talents of key organizations and committees involved in the CDBG, ESG and HOME programs, and other housing and human service activities. This institutional framework for planning and implementing housing and community development activities operates with the goal of expanding programs and services to low- and moderate-income persons in the community.

Affordable housing production and community development programs within the City of Newton are driven primarily by the actions and interactions of three groups of actors: government agencies (or public institutions); nonprofit and for-profit organizations (especially developers and social service providers); and private lenders and corporations. Federal, state and local government agencies provide a significant portion of funding and support for affordable housing and community development activities and guide these activities through their policies, program guidelines, and in the case of housing authorities in the Consortium communities, the direct provision of housing units and services.

The various government agencies often act as principal funders of the housing and community development services provided by nonprofit and for-profit organizations. The nonprofit and for-profit developers and service providers, in turn, develop affordable housing projects, offer supportive services and influence the type of affordable housing projects built and the services offered. Private lenders also play an important institutional role within the delivery system by providing additional financing and by providing a conduit for the delivery of housing services to low- and moderate-income households.

The relationship between these three groups of stakeholders forms the basis of the housing and community development delivery system and plays a significant role in the housing and community development efforts within Newton and the HOME Consortium communities. After an overview of these stakeholders, the roles, strengths and weaknesses of the institutions involved are discussed. The section concludes with the Division's strategy for overcoming the gaps in the delivery system.

In Newton, in addition to these three chief stakeholder groups, a number of local advisory committees appointed by the Mayor provide both important input and perspectives on issues facing the community and offer well-informed advice to staff and local officials. The following groups are instrumental in providing guidance and direction to housing, community and economic development efforts in Newton:

- Four target neighborhood advisory committees:
  - ✓ Newton Corner Advisory Committee
  - ✓ Nonantum Advisory Committee
  - ✓ West Newton Advisory Committee
  - ✓ Newtonville Advisory Committee
- Economic Development Advisory Committee
- Human Service Advisory Committee
- Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
- Newton Housing Partnership
- Newton Planning and Development Board
- Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium (members are not appointed by the Mayor)

## ***ROLE OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS***

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### **Municipal Public Institutions**

In Newton, Housing and Community Development staff members work with a number of stakeholders at the municipal level in order to deliver effective programs to low- and moderate-income residents. All of these actors play a crucial role in Newton's institutional framework.

#### **City of Newton**

Housing and Community Development Division staff coordinates with the staffs of other municipal departments to ensure that the various City organizational units work together on issues that directly affect the provision of housing, neighborhood improvements, accessibility improvements and public service programs. These departments include the Parks and Recreation Department, the Public Works Department, the School Department and the Public Buildings Department. Division staff collaborates closely with their colleagues in the Planning Division of the Planning and Development Department on housing and economic development, neighborhood improvement and accessibility projects and to ensure that any planning efforts such as the Consolidated Plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan are coordinated, consistent and coherent.

In the fall of 2001, Newton voters adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Money raised from a one percent surcharge on real estate taxes and a Massachusetts state matching fund is used to acquire, create and preserve open space; acquire and preserve historic resources; acquire, create and preserve land for recreation use; create, preserve and support community housing; and rehabilitate or restore these acquisitions/developments. Since that time, Housing and Community Development staff and Community Preservation staff have collaborated on funding a number of projects, including creation of affordable community housing and the preservation of land for recreation use. The passage of the CPA has created an additional funding source for Housing and Community Development projects, and the two staffs will continue to work together to fund additional projects that benefit low- and moderate-income people.

#### **Newton Housing Authority**

The Newton Housing Authority (NHA), through the development and management of public housing units and administration of Section 8 vouchers and certificates, is the primary provider of housing for low- and moderate-income households in Newton. The NHA, which was

established in 1982, is an independent governmental entity overseen by a five-member Board of Commissioners, four of whom are appointed by the Mayor of Newton and one of whom is appointed by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. Each appointment is for a five-year term and is subject to confirmation by the Newton Board of Aldermen.

Since the NHA is an independent governmental agency, the City is not involved in the Housing Authority's proposed plans for demolition or disposition of property or any processes regarding personnel hiring, contracting or the procurement of goods and services. However, the NHA may request technical assistance from the Planning and Development Department for the following activities: site selection and acquisition, site engineering, land use and zoning analysis, permitting, funding assistance, financial analysis, design and architect selection and the development of specifications and working drawings.

The NHA receives CDBG funds from the Housing and Community Development Division for both program support and housing unit rehabilitation. Housing and Community Development public service funds have gone to support such NHA programs as the Early Bird Meal and Tenant Liaison Services at the John W. Weeks House. The NHA has also used CDBG funds to de-lead a total of five NHA-owned units located at 50-52 Fuller Street, 15-17 Jackson Terrace, and 23 Considine Road. The NHA has also used CDBG funds to remove architectural barriers on two units one at 68 Thurston Road and another at 541 Grove Street Unit 111.

The NHA also receives funding through Newton's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO). The ordinance, which was recently amended, requires private developers to either produce or fund the production of affordable housing units. The IZO is triggered when a special permit is required for residential development or for a business or mixed-use development that includes residential development beyond that allowable as of right. Under the terms of the IZO, 15 percent of the units in a proposed development must be reserved for sale or rental to households whose gross annual income does not exceed 120 percent of area median income.

In cases of developments that do not exceed six units, the developer may make a cash payment equal to three percent of the sales price at closing of each unit as verified by the Planning and Development Department. In the case of rental housing, the cash payment is equal to three percent of the estimated, assessed value of each unit as determined by the city assessor. Proceeds from the fund are distributed equally to the Newton Housing Authority and the Planning and Development Department and must be used exclusively for the construction, purchase or rehabilitation of housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Since the enactment of the original IZO in 1977, a total of 225 affordable units have been created, of which 143 are deed restricted in perpetuity. In addition, the Housing Authority has received a total of \$2,159,967.46 through the IZO of which \$2,098,633.36 has been used to provide affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate-income individuals and families.

The City reviewed the Housing Authority's FY2004 Comprehensive Plan as part of the process of developing the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan. Division staff is also responsible for certifying that the NHA's Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the Consolidated Plan on an annual basis.

As is the case with Newton, in each of the other 11 HOME Consortium communities, staff collaborates with their colleagues in other departments on housing development projects and with the local housing authorities to develop affordable housing opportunities.

## **State Public Institutions**

The City of Newton and the members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium rely on several state agencies to help carry out their housing and community development missions. The most important of these are the Department of Housing and Community Development, MassHousing, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Architectural Access Board and the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, which assist with housing efforts, and the Boston College Small Business Development Center, which assists Newton in the economic development arena.

### **Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development**

The state of Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Division of Housing Development supports the production of affordable rental housing, including units for persons with special needs, and the construction or rehabilitation of affordable homes and condominiums for purchase by income-eligible first time homebuyers. The Division's programs are the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, HOME, Housing Stabilization Fund, Housing Innovation Fund, Capital Improvement and Preservation Fund, Facilities Consolidation Fund and the Soft Second Program. In Newton, DHCD has helped to fund numerous housing development projects in combination with Newton's CDBG and/or HOME funding, including 228 Webster Street, 45 Pelham Street and 538 California Street. In other HOME Consortium communities, DHCD contributed funding to Belmont's B Street project and to Watertown's First Home program.

### **MassHousing (formerly Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency)**

MassHousing is a quasi-public agency that lends money at rates below conventional market to support rental and homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income families in Massachusetts. The agency relies on private nonprofit and for-profit developers to construct and operate the rental housing they finance, and on an extensive network of approved lenders to deliver home mortgage programs to first time home buyers. Loans from MassHousing have made a number of housing development projects possible, including 228 Webster Street, the Hamlet Townhouses and Weeks House in Newton and the Pine Street Inn at 1754 Beacon Street in Brookline.

### **Massachusetts Housing Partnership**

The Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) is a self-supporting state agency that works in concert with the Governor and the state Department of Housing and Community Development to help increase the supply of affordable housing in Massachusetts. MHP focuses its efforts in three main areas:

1. Advising and supporting communities in their efforts to build affordable housing. MHP's Community Housing Initiatives group supports communities, local housing groups, for-profit and nonprofit developers.
2. Providing long-term rental financing, using private funds from the banking industry and at no cost to the taxpayer.
3. Offering the SoftSecond Loan Program, a first time homebuyers mortgage program for families of low and moderate incomes.

MHP funds have helped to develop such Newton housing projects as Nonantum Village Place, a multi-unit affordable rental development for low-income seniors who are 62 years old and older and whose household income does not exceed 50% of area median income.

### **Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance**

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) has taken the lead in coordinating 24 Continuum of Care systems within the state. Although each of these groups competes annually

for Continuum of Care funds from HUD, through DTA's lead over the last two years, a more collaborative spirit has been established.

In February 2003, Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney created a new interagency commission, the Commission for Homeless Services Coordination, to focus on preventing the spread of homeless in the state and to identify immediate steps and long-term solutions to providing decent, safe and affordable housing to the homeless. At the time, more than a dozen state agencies were responsible for the systems and programs addressing the needs of homeless families and individuals. The Commission advises the Governor on ways to enhance coordination, improve the delivery system and prevent the spread of homelessness in Massachusetts.

#### Massachusetts Architectural Access Board

The Architectural Access Board (AAB) is a regulatory agency within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety. Its legislative mandate states that it shall develop and enforce regulations designed to make public buildings accessible to, functional for, and safe for use by persons with disabilities. To carry out the board's mandate, the "Rules and Regulations", which appear in the code of Massachusetts Regulations as 521 CMR 1.00, have been developed and amended. These regulations are incorporated in the Massachusetts building code as a "specialized code", making them enforceable by all local and state building inspectors, as well as by the Board itself. Division staff work closely with the AAB on accessibility, and when appropriate, neighborhood improvement projects.

#### Massachusetts Turnpike Authority

The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA), which was created by an act of the Massachusetts legislature in 1952, has played a major role in the development of the state's highway transportation network. The MTA maintains 1,100 lane miles of highway, including the 138-mile Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90), ramps, interchanges and service plaza approaches, and 260 bridges. A portion of the Massachusetts Turnpike runs through several Consortium communities, including Framingham, Natick and Newton. As a result, Newton has been able to work closely with the MTA to address issues that affect traffic patterns in the city. Recently, the MTA provided the majority of funding for the installation of a traffic signal at a Newton intersection affected by the Turnpike.

#### Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation

In 1978, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts created the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), a public-private, community development finance institution that provides technical assistance, pre-development lending, and consulting services to nonprofit organizations involved in housing development, workforce development, neighborhood economic development and capital improvements to child care facilities. CEDAC's Housing Innovations Fund (HIF), supports limited equity cooperatives, single-room occupancy housing, housing for special needs populations and other innovative housing projects. Funding from CEDAC has made several HOME Consortium housing development projects possible, including Nonantum Village Place, 228 Webster Street and 18-20 Coyne Road in Newton and 1754 Beacon Street in Brookline.

#### Boston College Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center at Boston College (BC-SBDC) provides free one-to-one counseling to prospective and existing small businesses on topics such as business plan development, conventional and non-conventional financing, cash flow analysis, organizational and personnel issues, and marketing. Economic development loan applicants who may benefit from assistance in developing their business plans are referred to the BC-SBDC.

## **Federal Public Institutions**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal agency with which the City of Newton and the HOME Consortium communities work most closely on their housing and, if applicable, community development programs. Mandates from other federal departments, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) are all communicated to local jurisdictions through HUD.

### **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs on a national basis and awards grants annually to entitlement communities including the City of Newton and the Towns of Brookline, Framingham and Waltham. HUD also provides technical assistance and training, collects and disseminates housing and community development information and monitors the Division's performance in administering funding.

HUD also administers a number of additional programs from which Consortium community residents benefit, including the McKinney Act Homeless programs, which help to fund Continuum of Care providers and Section 8 vouchers administered by local housing authorities. In Newton, HUD's Section 811 program has been a source of funding for several housing development projects, including the 18-20 Coyne Road and the Juniper House projects. In addition, the Section 202 program has provided funding for Newton projects such as Nonantum Village Place and Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly's Campus House II.

## **ROLE OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

The City of Newton and the members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium work regularly with community-based nonprofit housing and social service agencies and organizations. These organizations offer an efficient structure for delivering services, are flexible in developing and adapting programs, provide services in a culturally responsive manner and have an in-depth understanding of the people they serve. Due to the large number of agencies that assist in carrying out the housing and community development mission, the social service agencies are not mentioned individually.

### **Nonprofit Housing Organizations**

#### **Advocates**

Advocates provides quality human services and health care alternatives to individuals and families affected by psychiatric illness, chemical dependency and developmental disabilities. The agency provides a continuum of mental health and substance abuse services throughout the MetroWest area. Advocates develops affordable housing and manages over 30 group residences, respite services and supported housing. In addition to maintaining scattered site housing throughout the city, in FY04, Advocates utilized CDBG and CPA funding to purchase and rehabilitate a two-family Newton property to create a five-bed group residence for homeless persons with mental illness. Advocates will receive \$461,196 in FFY05 Continuum of Care funds to purchase and rehabilitate another two-family property in Newton to provide permanent supportive housing to their clients.

#### **Brookline Improvement Coalition (BIC)**

The primary mission of BIC is to develop affordable housing in the town of Brookline.

#### **Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization (CAN-DO)**

CAN-DO is a nonprofit developer of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents in Newton and is the city's only Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). The organization has developed and continues to manage a number of affordable housing projects in Newton, including 18-20 Cambria Road, the Louis Garfield House and four new projects currently in various stages of development. CAN-DO has also been successful in working with

local nonprofit social service agencies to develop affordable housing for their client populations, including the Newton Community Service Centers' Parents Program and the Newton-Wellesley-Weston Committee for Community Living (NWW).

#### Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA)

Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) is the nonprofit umbrella organization for affordable housing and community development activities throughout Massachusetts. CHAPA is the only statewide group representing all interests in the housing field, including nonprofit and for-profit developers, homeowners, tenants, bankers, real estate brokers, property managers, government officials and others.

CHAPA's mission is to encourage the production and preservation of housing that is affordable to low-income families and individuals. The organization pursues its goals through advocacy with local, state and federal officials; research on affordable-housing issues; education and training for organizations and individuals; and coalition and consensus building among broad interests in the field.

#### Community Living Network (CLN)

Community Living Network (CLN) is a nonprofit organization created to develop housing options and housing services for seniors in the city of Newton. CLN provides a congregate-living facility, as well as direct assistance to homeowners to enable them to remain in their homes as long as possible. CLN provides technical assistance with home modifications and renovations, education and advocacy programs, and information and referral services to seniors looking for assistance. CLN recently received CDBG housing development and housing rehabilitation loans and grants, along with CPA funding, to rehabilitate 45 Pelham Street into ten affordable rental units for the elderly.

#### Newton Community Development Foundation

Newton Community Development Foundation (NCDF) was founded in 1968 when priests, ministers and rabbis from the Newton Clergy Association joined forces with the Church Women United Organization to address the community's need for affordable housing.

NCDF has since developed six properties in the city of Newton and manages an additional two properties that were developed by CAN-DO. NCDF provides homes to hundreds of low- and moderate-income families, senior citizens and persons with disabilities. NCDF properties include The Hamlet, Warren House, Weeks House and Casselman House.

#### Newton-Wellesley-Weston Committee for Community Living (NWW)

NWW offers a wide spectrum of local services to individuals with developmental disabilities; provides support services to families of individuals with developmental disabilities; and offers programs to increase community awareness and receptiveness regarding persons with disabilities. Currently, NWW provides residential services in 11 homes to adults with varying levels of independent living skills. In addition, 20 more individuals living in apartments or local nursing homes receive support services from NWW.

#### Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH)

WATCH is a non-profit community development corporation founded in 1988 to serve the residents of Waltham. WATCH assists the homeowners and residents of Waltham by providing ownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income families, strong property restoration efforts and quality rental properties for low income families. The organization has renovated seven blighted properties and created 26 units of affordable housing, including six units of new construction recently completed on Charles Street.

### Watertown Community Housing (WCH)

Watertown Community Housing, Inc.'s mission is to advocate for the preservation, production and rehabilitation of safe housing in Watertown for low- and moderate-income persons, to develop affordable and moderately-priced housing for low- and moderate-income persons, to promote first-time homeownership and to help improve Watertown neighborhoods. Since 1994, WCH has provided 27 First Time Homebuyers with no-interest loans, and more than 300 residents have participated in WCH homebuying workshops. The organization also provides funding for home improvement projects. In 2002, WCH completed its first housing development project, the Quimby Street Condominiums.

### **Nonprofit Social Service Agencies**

Newton has dedicated the maximum amount allowable (15 percent) of its CDBG funds to supporting a network of nonprofit organizations that act as partners in protecting the city's most vulnerable residents. This nonprofit infrastructure functions as the principal social services delivery system through which Newton moves toward its goals of alleviating and reducing poverty. Division staff work with approximately 25 social service agencies, too many to list in the Consolidated Plan narrative; the agencies are listed on the last page of this document.

### Human Service Providers Network

The Human Service Providers Network, which is coordinated by staff from the Newton Housing and Community Development Division, is an informal association of local human service providers who meet regularly to establish an informative dialogue and increase collaboration and capacity building between the various human service areas. Providers Network meetings and conferences provide a forum for coordination and linkages between service providers in order to foster more effective comprehensive services for clients.

### Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium

The City of Newton is also the lead agency in the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium. The Consortium is the primary catalyst for identifying the needs of the homeless population in the three Consortium communities and building a local system to address those needs. The Consortium is comprised of local nonprofit agencies, private foundations, formerly homeless individuals, private businesses, state agencies, the city of Newton and the towns of Brookline and Watertown. Together these organizations provide a continuum of care system of outreach and assessment, emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing, homelessness prevention activities and supportive services to help people obtain or maintain permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

In addition, the Consortium coordinates the point-in-time survey of the homeless and prepares and submits Continuum of Care funding applications to HUD. In January 2005, HUD awarded the Continuum \$1,492,562 in Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program grant funds for ten projects. The funds will be used to provide housing and supportive services for homeless people at sites in each of the Consortium communities.

### Role of Faith-Based Organizations

A number of local faith-based organizations assist in meeting the emergency needs of homeless and low-income residents through meal programs and assistance with clothing, shelter, utilities and other basic needs. These organizations and/or their affiliated programs also help to develop housing and transportation opportunities. These organizations include the Salvation Army of Massachusetts, Interfaith AIDS Ministry, Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries, Jewish Family and Children's Service, the Hellenic Gospel Food Pantry and Lutheran Social Services of New England.

## **ROLE OF PRIVATE INDUSTRY**

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The principal private sector participants in the housing arena are:

- Lending institutions
- For-profit developers
- Realtors
- Construction industry and related businesses (engineering, architecture, etc.)

### Lending Institutions

A number of private lenders in Newton and the HOME Consortium communities provide financing for low- and moderate-income housing projects, allowing housing developers to leverage government funding with conventional loan products. Local lending institutions provide mortgages to housing developers that, in conjunction with CDBG and/or HOME funds, allow for affordable housing development. In Newton, local lenders also serve on the Economic Development Advisory Committee, and underwrite and recommend loans to eligible applicants.

In addition, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston (FHLB) offers its member banks four options for funding affordable housing and economic development in the Boston area. The Affordable Housing Program (AHP) provides funds for homeownership and rental housing proposals that benefit very low- to moderate-income individuals and families. The Community Development Advance is a reduced-rate advance for funding eligible affordable housing, economic development and mixed-use initiatives. The New England Fund (NEF) provides advances to support housing and community development initiatives that serve moderate-income households and neighborhoods, while the Equity Builder Program offers members grants to provide income-eligible buyers with down payment, closing cost and rehabilitation assistance, as well as offering matched savings programs. FHLB funds have been used in a number of housing development projects in Newton and have been critical to the success of the Division's housing development efforts.

Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) is another private lender and investor specializing in the financing of affordable housing and community development throughout Massachusetts. MHIC finances both large and small developments, including single room occupancy (SRO), assisted living, rental, commercial, ownership, cooperative and seniors housing. In the fall of 2004, MHIC committed \$1,050,000 for two CAN-DO housing development projects in Newton. MHIC also provided funding for Brookline's 1754 Beacon Street project.

### For-profit developers

Developers who undertake comprehensive permit (40B) projects in the Consortium communities work closely with housing staff. In Newton, both the Planning Division and the Housing and Community Development Division staff work with developers to determine the number of affordable units that will be created and how they will be marketed. In addition, private developers of residential properties are required to produce or make cash payments towards the development of affordable units under the City's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO).

### Realtors

Newton's new Internet-based Commercial Real Estate Clearinghouse, which local realtors can use to list available commercial properties, works in two ways to bring economic development opportunities to the city. First, the Clearinghouse facilitates the location of businesses in the city, and secondly, those businesses may then create employment opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents.

Housing and Community Development staff also works with local realtors if a First Time Homebuyer program recipient decides to sell his/her property. Realtors have assisted staff with

preliminary eligibility determinations for potential buyers and have conducted property showings. In addition, representatives from several local realty companies participated in the Inclusionary Zoning Task Force. Local realtors also work with nonprofit housing developers to locate properties that may be redeveloped as affordable housing sites.

**Construction Industry and Related Businesses**

None of the nonprofit housing developers aided by the City of Newton or the Consortium communities have their own construction companies, architects, engineers or attorneys. Private industry provides these skills and services on a fee-for-service, reduced rate or pro bono basis to design and complete housing projects.

***STRENGTHS AND GAPS IN THE DELIVERY SYSTEM***

<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>	<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>GAPS</b>	<b>OVERCOMING GAPS</b>
<b>PUBLIC:</b>			
City of Newton and Consortium member towns and cities	Availability of multiple funding sources; ability to coordinate permitting, environmental and development review of projects with planning staff; staff has resources for planning, technical assistance, program administration and coordination	Diminishing federal and state funds; limited staffing resources	Continue to foster coordination in planning processes; increase efforts to work effectively with City departments of jurisdiction
Newton Housing Authority and Consortium housing authorities	Capacity to acquire, rehabilitate, construct and manage an expanding supply of affordable housing	High level of demand leads to waiting periods of anywhere from two to ten years	Will continue to work to acquire new affordable housing units through the IZO and any other available funds
State agencies—DHCD, MHP, MassHousing, DTA, MTA, AAB, CEDAC, BCSBDC	Provide additional sources of funding for housing and community development activities; availability of technical assistance; high level of intergovernmental cooperation	Uncertain state funding levels; lengthy and burdensome application processes for state funding	Continue partnerships to increase access to funding to expand housing and economic development services

INSTITUTIONS	STRENGTHS	GAPS	OVERCOMING GAPS
Federal agencies— HUD	High level of cooperation between local and federal departments; technical assistance; housing and community development funding; planning directives	Uncertain federal funding levels	Continue to work closely with HUD to maximize program performance and access staff training resources
<b>NONPROFIT:</b>			
Housing organizations	Ability to link housing development with supportive services; willingness to undertake projects not attractive to private developers; provide vehicle for involvement of the private sector and business community in addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income persons	High land and property costs, increasing construction costs and zoning issues limit ability to produce housing; development projects are both time- and cost-intensive, limiting the number of projects that can be undertaken at any one time; necessity of numerous funding sources	Increase link between housing production and services; continue partnerships to increase access to funding sources other than HOME and CDBG
Social service agencies	Diverse nonprofit structure; ability to provide comprehensive array of services or to refer clients to other service agencies; coordination and cooperation	Year-to-year unpredictability of operational funding; differing levels of management experience from agency to agency	Continue to conduct interagency meetings to foster greater collaboration and efficiency of service delivery; continue annual monitoring of grantees
Faith-based organizations	Expands the City's available housing and community development services	May be less experienced in housing production; possible lack of experience with City procedures and requirements; limited involvement	Work with faith-based organizations to familiarize them with City's procedures and requirements
<b>PRIVATE INDUSTRY:</b>			
Lenders	Source of private funds for affordable housing and economic development projects	Underwriting standards usually require public up-front contributions; City funds subordinated to private lenders	Continue to work with lenders to develop more public/private partnerships

INSTITUTIONS	STRENGTHS	GAPS	OVERCOMING GAPS
For-profit developers	Provide affordable units to City's inventory through 40B and Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance; construction and project management experience	Few interested in low-income projects due to low profitability; not always well-informed on low-income and poverty issues; lack of firms owned by minorities and/or women	Continue to work closely with for-profit developers to maximize additional low-income units
Realtors	Increase economic development opportunities in Newton through Commercial Real Estate Clearinghouse; work with housing developers to locate properties that can be redeveloped as affordable housing or businesses	Limited realtor involvement in Clearinghouse and in affordable housing development activities	Increase outreach to local realtors to maximize involvement
Construction industry and related businesses	Provide necessary skills and services for housing production, rehabilitation and other construction projects	Not always knowledgeable regarding low-income housing issues and needs	Continue to work with construction industry and related businesses to Increase number of public-private partnerships

***STRATEGY FOR OVERCOMING GAPS IN THE DELIVERY SYSTEM***

Community members, service providers and government officials are concerned about their continued ability to access the resources necessary to meet the growing needs of residents in the Consortium communities, especially the most vulnerable residents. The majority of federal and state funding sources have been cut, and private and foundation giving has not generally been able to compensate for the drop in funding.

The most significant gap in the housing and community development delivery system is the lack of resources available to meet the needs in an efficient, long-term, effective manner. As noted in the housing sections of this Plan, the need for affordable housing far outstrips the currently available resources.

In Newton as in other Consortium communities, funding cutbacks at the federal level have made it virtually impossible for the local housing authorities to provide a sufficient number of units to meet the high level of demand from residents. In Newton, the time it takes to receive housing from the Housing Authority varies by program. Currently, the family public housing waiting list is running about seven to ten years for standard applicants and about two to five years for emergency cases. Senior and disabled programs are an estimated three to five year wait. Due

to the small size of the domestic violence and project based section programs, the waiting list is very lengthy. Additionally, there are approximately 400 people on the waiting list for Section 8 vouchers.

The lack of resources affects not only the ability of the delivery system to meet the direct needs of low- and moderate-income households, it also affects the efficiency of the system and its workers as they attempt to carry out daily housing and community development activities. Lack of financial resources for nonprofit and public agencies results in inadequate staffing levels, which, in turn, leads to the inability of these agencies to work as efficiently and productively as possible.

In order to overcome these gaps in service delivery, staff in the HOME Consortium communities will continue to work proactively to foster coordination among city/town departments and with planning processes. Staff will continue to develop and expand partnerships with state, federal and private industry stakeholders in order to maintain, and hopefully increase, housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents. Efforts will also be made to strengthen and support the capacity of local organizations to meet community needs and to be proactive in developing strategies to help meet the changing needs of local service providers.

## **Nonprofit Housing and Social Service Agencies**

The City of Newton and the members of the WestMetro HOME Consortium work regularly with community-based nonprofit housing and social service agencies and organizations. The following is a listing of the agencies that assist in carrying out the housing and community development mission of the City of Newton and the housing mission of the WestMetro HOME Consortium members.

### Newton Housing and Community Development Agencies

- Advocates, Inc.
- Barry L. Price Rehabilitation Center, Inc.
- Bowen After School Care Program, Inc.
- CASCAP, Inc.
- Charles River ARC
- Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization, Inc.
- Communities United
- Community Living Network
- Horace Cousens Industrial Fund
- John M. Barry Boys and Girls Club of Newton
- Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly
- Jewish Family & Children's Service
- MAB Community Services (formerly Massachusetts Association for the Blind)
- Mediation Works Incorporated
- Middlesex Human Service Agency
- Newton Child Care Fund
- Newton Community Development Foundation
- Newton Community Service Centers, Inc.
- Newton Senior Center
- Newton Wellesley Weston Committee for Community Living, Inc.
- Peirce School Extended Day Program
- Plowshares Education Development Center, Inc.
- Riverside Community Care
- The Second Step, Inc.
- Support Committee for Battered Women
- West Suburban YMCA

### WestMetro HOME Consortium Communities' Housing Agencies

- Bedford Housing Trust
- Belmont Housing Trust
- Brookline Improvement Coalition
- Needham Opportunities, Inc.
- Waltham Alliance to Create Housing
- Watertown Community Housing

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## APPENDIX D COORDINATION

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The City of Newton is committed to promoting and improving coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and government health, mental health and service agencies. Evidence of this commitment is apparent from the numerous focus groups, advisory committee meetings and public meetings held and the ongoing communication with the staffs of other City departments and other jurisdictions undertaken as both part of the development of the Consolidated Plan and as a regular component of Newton's housing and community development program. The specific actions that are currently being or will be undertaken to increase coordination are described in the following paragraphs.

The Housing and Community Development Division (Division) of the Planning and Development Department is the primary City entity responsible for coordination efforts. As such, for the past six years, Division staff has planned, organized and promoted a bimonthly Human Service Providers Network meeting for CDBG and ESG grantees and local non-grantee agencies. The meetings are held five times a year with an average attendance of 30 people from 25 different agencies. Past topics of these meetings have included:

- Current efforts to increase the stock of affordable housing
- Efforts being undertaken to make health care available for all
- Perspectives on mental health
- Human services and the law
- Emergency resources available to low-income families

Human Service Providers Network meetings increase the level of information available to providers concerning social problems and promote the sharing of ideas and strategies between them. The goal is to encourage providers to not only be in communication with each other but to also encourage them to find new ways to work cooperatively to provide services. Whereas providers in some communities complain of increased competitiveness in the face of shrinking public funds available for services, Division staff has found that when agencies interact and communicate, the intensity of the competitiveness is lessened.

Another major coordination effort led by Division staff is the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium, which is composed of local nonprofit agencies, private foundations, formerly homeless individuals, private businesses, state agencies, the City of Newton and the towns of Brookline and Watertown. Members of the Consortium work together to apply for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care funding and to provide a continuum of care system to help the homeless and people at-risk of homelessness to obtain or maintain permanent housing and self-sufficiency. Members also work together to coordinate the point-in-time survey of the homeless that is conducted annually in the three municipal member communities. The Homelessness Consortium meets monthly as a whole, with Planning Committee and HMIS Committee meetings scheduled at least bi-monthly.

The Newton Housing Partnership, a volunteer group of Newton residents with experience in affordable housing and related fields, meets monthly to review and comment on housing projects and to provide feedback to staff on programs and policy-related issues. The 14-member Housing Partnership, whose members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1990. The Housing Partnership is one of the most visible links between the City and private, for-profit businesses and nonprofit organizations that provide housing and/or services in Newton. This linkage enables the Housing Partnership to provide a peer review that is consistent and coordinated. In addition, many of the members of the Housing Partnership are involved in other volunteer efforts in Newton which helps provide the members with a sense of

context and historical perspective that otherwise would not exist. The Housing Partnership will be adding new members in FY06 and will continue to enhance the coordination process among public and private housing, health and social service agencies during the FY06-10 period.

Other ongoing efforts to form linkages between the City and other groups and organizations include the following examples. The City's housing staff attends the monthly Board of Commissioners' meetings at the Newton Housing Authority. Attending these meetings provides staff with the opportunity to address questions related to Housing Authority projects that involve City funds or federal CDBG funds. In addition, housing staff provides technical assistance and support to the Community Preservation Committee, a volunteer group appointed by the Mayor which reviews proposals for local Community Preservation Funds. Housing staff works with the committee on community housing projects that include an affordable housing component irrespective of whether a project includes federal funding sources.

Finally, Newton Housing and Community Development staff will encourage the use of the HousingWorks clearinghouse for information about affordable housing and the provision of services. HousingWorks is an existing on-line service (found at [www.housingworks.net](http://www.housingworks.net)) designed for individuals and organizations seeking information about affordable housing. HousingWorks was developed to help groups as diverse as state and federal agencies, for-profit management companies, housing authorities, housing advocates, and the homeless communicate, share and distribute information more easily and efficiently.

HousingWorks, which was developed to reduce or eliminate barriers to subsidized, affordable and special needs housing, provides a variety of information including HUD data, contact information about provider organizations with a description of their mission, updates on Section 8 waitlists, location of available units, etc. Use of the HousingWorks service would enhance linkages between Newton affordable housing providers.

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## APPENDIX E ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

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Poverty<sup>1</sup> is the condition of having insufficient resources or income. In its extreme form, poverty is a lack of access to meeting basic human needs, including adequate food, clothing, housing, water and health services. In Newton, according to information from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, median family income grew 11.6 percent between 1989 and 1999 and a whopping 50.5 percent between 1979 and 1999. Unfortunately, a number of Newton's low-income individuals and families, however, have not benefited from the strong economy and historically low unemployment.

According to data from the U.S. Census 2000, in 1999, 2.6 percent of families and 4.3 percent of individuals in Newton were living below poverty level. The 2004 federal poverty guidelines are listed in the table below.

Size of family unit	48 contiguous states and D.C.
1	\$9,310
2	12,490
3	15,670
4	18,850
5	22,030
6	25,210
7	28,390
8	31,570
For each additional person, add	3,180

While these are small percentages, they represent 546 families and 3,382 individuals, accounting for approximately 5.7 percent of the Newton population. Female-headed households account for 30.4 percent of the families living in poverty. More than 75 percent of these families include a child under age 18; almost 26 percent of these families include a child under five years old. With a median gross rent in Newton of \$1,083 according to the U.S. Census 2000, and a median housing price of more than \$750,000<sup>2</sup>, a family of three living on \$15,670 or less does

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau utilizes the federal Office of Management and Budget's Directive 14 to define poverty. The Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or individual is classified as being below the poverty level. To compute poverty status, money income before taxes is computed. This does not include capital gains or non-cash benefits such as food stamps and housing subsidies. Poverty cannot be determined for people living in group quarters or for unrelated individuals under age 15 (such as foster children).

<sup>2</sup> Lightman, Andrew. "Riding the Wave--While It Lasts." Newton TAB 3 Nov.2004, sec. A: 1+.

not have much hope of renting, much less purchasing, their own home without substantial financial assistance.

In Newton, the Housing and Community Development Division (the Division) of the Planning and Development Department is primarily responsible for coordinating the City's efforts to reduce the number of people living in poverty and to move low-income people to self-sufficiency. Division staff administers the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs, and the funds from these federal programs are used locally for programs and projects that provide the maximum benefit to extremely low-, low- and moderate-income persons. Division staff works in partnership with citizens, other City departments and the public and private sectors to accomplish its goal of reducing poverty through:

- Preserving and developing affordable housing opportunities
- Fostering employment and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income people
- Supporting the delivery of human services
- Improving the physical conditions of and strengthening the quality of life in Newton's neighborhoods

Division staff utilizes HOME and CDBG funding to provide homeownership, rehabilitation and rental opportunities through programs such as down payment assistance, rehabilitation assistance for owners and the development of new rental and homeownership units. CDBG funds are also used to create or retain jobs for low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons and/or assist LMI businesspersons with starting or expanding their business, and to improve the public facilities and infrastructure in eligible neighborhoods throughout the City. Fifteen percent of CDBG funding and 100 percent of ESG funding helps to support the delivery of human services to residents. Some of the programs funded provide job and life skills training, child care assistance and other services necessary for an individual or family to move out of poverty. For more information on the types of public service activities funded, please refer to the public services section of the Plan. Additionally, the City has a Section 3 program in place which encourages contractors working on contracts over \$200,000 to engage in training, hiring and subcontracting activities with low- and moderate-income residents and subcontractors in Newton.

Another key element of Newton's anti-poverty strategy is the activities carried out by the Brookline-Newton-Watertown Homelessness Consortium, which is comprised of local nonprofit agencies, private foundations, formerly homeless individuals, private businesses, state agencies, the City of Newton and the towns of Brookline and Watertown. The Consortium meets regularly to coordinate a continuum of care system that helps people move from being homeless or at-risk of homelessness to permanent housing and self-sufficiency. As detailed in the human services portion of this Consolidated Plan, there are a variety of services available to assist both people who are homeless and those who are at-risk of homelessness.

An additional element of Newton's anti-poverty strategy is, when possible, to direct funding to transitional housing programs that include support services. Transitional housing facilities run by organizations such as The Second Step, REACH and Advocates offer a variety of job-training and life skills management programs for their residents to help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Division staff also works closely with the Human Service Department's community social worker to address the needs of Newton residents living below the poverty line. The social worker provides services including information and referral, fuel assistance, case management and emergency financial assistance to residents in need. When appropriate, the community social worker refers clients to social service programs and affordable housing funded by CDBG and ESG dollars.

In terms of HOME funding, the WestMetro HOME Consortium is very concerned about those people living below the poverty level, especially with median housing prices soaring over the past decade. The Consortium makes every effort to assist those living below the poverty level by preserving and developing affordable housing and by providing linkages to area service providers when possible. Adequate housing has far-reaching positive effects on persons trying to escape poverty. It helps relieve overcrowding, creates an environment conducive to learning and employment, and significantly enhances the quality of life for low-income families. Additionally, housing is a primary means of generating wealth and of allowing individuals and families to escape poverty for good.

Other anti-poverty strategies with which the Division is involved include two new programs proposed for CPA funds: the tax credit for seniors program and the accessory apartment incentive program. The tax credit program for seniors is designed to provide financial assistance to the most economically vulnerable elderly homeowners in Newton. The initiative would provide income-eligible seniors aged 65 and older with tax credits of up to \$820 on their property tax bills. The program targets seniors whose gross annual incomes range from zero to 50 percent of area median income (AMI).

The accessory apartment incentive program will provide technical and financial assistance to Newton homeowners who want to create accessory apartment units for rental to low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Under this program, Community Preservation Act funds would be used to subsidize the costs related to creating code-compliant accessory housing units.

In terms of State anti-poverty programs, the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), formerly the Department of Public Welfare, is the state agency responsible for administering public assistance programs for needy citizens of Massachusetts and is the lead anti-poverty agency in the state. The DTA administers a number of programs that are geared towards reducing the number of poverty-level families and individuals and increasing self-sufficiency. These programs include: Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC), Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC), the Food Stamps Program and the Emergency Assistance Program.

The DTA has gone through a drastic change over the last decade as a result of changes in state policies and federal welfare reform, which has been moving away from providing lifelong welfare benefits rights to stressing self-sufficiency. The agency was successful in obtaining a ten-year waiver from the federal government to operate its state program under guidelines that were less stringent than those of the federal program. However, in 1997, DTA sought to reorder the priorities of the welfare system by integrating recipients into the work force in order to begin to break the cycle of poverty. The resulting major program objectives of the TAFDC program included:

- Requiring work and individual responsibility

- Making public assistance transitional in nature by assisting families in crisis without allowing welfare to become a way of life
- Maintaining and strengthening family life
- Encouraging teenage parents to live with their families or in supportive living situations and attain basic educational achievements.

In November of 2004, in anticipation of the expiration of DTA's ten-year waiver, a panel of experts expressed strong support for efforts to engage more Massachusetts welfare recipients in activities that will enhance their quest for financial independence. While the report supports continuing to count job training and education leading to a job towards the work requirements, it also calls for the expansion of activities that constitute work and involving local employers in the process of job preparation and placement.

In February 1995, when Massachusetts welfare reform was signed into law, there were approximately 103,000 families receiving \$693 million per year in cash assistance. As of November 2004, there were 49,000 families receiving \$313 million per year on the welfare rolls. Unfortunately, however, just because there are significantly fewer families on welfare today than there were ten years ago, it does not mean that these families have achieved self-sufficiency or that they are no longer living in poverty. As of December 2004, there were 59 Newton residents receiving TAFDC, 75 receiving EAEDC and 295 receiving food stamps<sup>3</sup>.

The Massachusetts Division of Career Services, an agency of the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development, operates the Workforce Training Fund, a state fund financed solely by Massachusetts employers with the purpose of providing resources to businesses and workers to train current and newly hired employees. The fund's major focus is on small- to medium-sized businesses that would not be able to make this type of investment without assistance.

One of the chief priorities of the fund is to finance projects that will result in job retention, job growth or increased wages. While the fund is not geared expressly towards alleviating poverty, the training received allows workers to expand their skill base and obtain or maintain a paying job. Since 1999, the Workforce Training Fund has awarded \$90 million to 1,710 companies to train 136,500 workers in Massachusetts.

The State of Massachusetts Department of Revenue also administers a real estate tax credit program for persons age 65 and older. The tax credit, known as the circuit breaker credit, allows eligible taxpayers to claim a refundable credit on their state income taxes for the real estate taxes paid on the Massachusetts residential property they own or rent that serves as their principal residence. The maximum credit allowed is \$820. The proposed Newton tax credit program is modeled on this state program.

Although there are a number of local and state programs that seek to reduce the number of Newton individuals and families living in poverty, assisting people below the poverty level to become self-sufficient is extremely difficult, primarily as a result of the high cost of housing. While the activities undertaken by the Housing and Community Development Division and the WestMetro HOME Consortium communities provide housing and other services, without new jobs that pay a livable wage and a slowdown in the rise of housing costs, even working families will continue to require subsidized housing and other services. Staff, however, will continue to use CDBG, HOME and ESG funds to provide assistance to the most vulnerable residents, those living below the poverty line.

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<sup>3</sup> Diane Younker, Director, Davis Square DTA office.

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## APPENDIX F

### CITY OF NEWTON CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

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The City of Newton annually receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) which it administers through the Housing and Community Development Division of the Planning and Development Department. The primary purpose of these formula grant programs is to develop viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. As a recipient of these entitlement program funds, the City is required to produce the following documents:

- Consolidated Plan – a five-year plan that documents Newton’s housing and community development needs, outlines strategies to address those needs, and identifies proposed program accomplishments
- Annual Action Plan – an annual plan that describes specific CDBG-, HOME- and ESG-funded projects that will be undertaken over the course of the upcoming fiscal year
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) – an annual report that evaluates the use of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds

This Citizen Participation Plan has been developed to provide citizens and other interested parties with opportunities to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs which primarily benefit Newton’s low- and moderate-income residents and to review and comment on each of the documents listed above.

Citizen participation in CDBG, HOME and ESG program activities ranges from conducting needs assessments and strategic planning to project selection, development, implementation and evaluation. The Citizen Participation Plan outlines the City’s responsibility for providing opportunities for active citizen participation. The goals of the Citizen Participation Plan are to:

- Encourage citizen participation by all Newton residents, emphasizing the involvement of low- and moderate-income residents, people living in CDBG target neighborhoods, people with disabilities, minorities and residents of assisted housing;
- Inform citizens of the Newton Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan, including funds available from CDBG, HOME, ESG and other Continuum of Care Homeless Programs and eligible activities under these programs;
- Give all citizens an opportunity to identify and respond to priority needs;
- Give all citizens an opportunity to identify and respond to priority proposed projects and the use of funds; and
- Give all citizens an opportunity to review and comment on program performance.

#### **1. Process for Citizen Participation**

Opportunities for citizen participation in the planning and development of the Newton Consolidated Plan, the subsequent Annual Action Plan and the CAPER will be provided through several levels of community involvement and outreach, including:

### Individual Citizens

The participation of individual citizens is the foundation of the City of Newton's Housing and Community Development Program. Reasonable efforts will be made to make all citizens aware of the Program-related meetings and events in their neighborhoods, as well as public hearings and citywide events that are related to the development of the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan and the CAPER. It is the goal of the Program to create opportunities for ample participation for all interested citizens, including, but not limited to, low- and moderate-income residents, persons living in CDBG target neighborhoods, people with disabilities, minorities and residents of assisted housing.

### Citizen Advisory Committees

In order to ensure citizen participation in all of the CDBG-, HOME- and ESG-funded program areas, a number of citizen advisory committees have been created, with membership appointed by the Mayor. These advisory committees make funding, programmatic and policy recommendations to the Planning and Development Board, which then makes recommendations to the Mayor.

- **Target Neighborhood Advisory Committees**

Open meetings are held at least quarterly in Newton's four CDBG "target neighborhoods" (the neighborhoods which have the highest concentration of low- and moderate-income residents). The Newton Corner Advisory Committee, the Newtonville Advisory Committee, the Nonantum Advisory Committee and the West Newton Advisory Committee are each chaired by a member elected by the Committee. Members are appointed for a term concurrent with the five-year Consolidated Plan and must reside in the target neighborhood at the time of their appointment.

In addition to appointed members, the Housing and Community Development Division also maintains a list of "interested citizens", made up of individuals who have expressed an interest in the Program. The Committees' recommendations for the expenditure of CDBG funds are the result of efforts to inform neighborhood residents, to solicit their input and to reach decisions that will provide the greatest benefit to the neighborhood. The Committees also serve in an advisory capacity for the implementation of projects in their neighborhood.

- **Human Service Advisory Committee**

The Human Service Advisory Committee is an advisory body made up of 11 Newton volunteers. The Committee members participate in public focus groups to help identify human service needs of Newton residents to include in the five-year Consolidated Plan. The Committee meets annually to review all applications for CDBG human service and ESG projects using criteria that include project eligibility and a documented need for service. The Committee then recommends grant awards to applicant providers who best meet these criteria. These recommendations are reviewed by the Planning and Development Board and approved by the Mayor before the grants are awarded. In addition to their work reviewing applications and making funding recommendations, the Committee meets at least quarterly to review program progress reports and expenditures. They also participate in the annual process of on-site monitoring of grantees.

- **Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities**

The Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities is a nine-member committee representing a wide array of disabilities. The Committee holds public meetings to gather data on existing access needs in the city and makes recommendations to the Planning and Development Board concerning proposed CDBG-funded access improvement projects and other CDBG-funded construction projects. This is only one of the Committee's responsibilities. They also work towards obtaining two broader goals: achieving equal access to civic life and activities for

people with disabilities and increasing community awareness of the environmental barriers faced by people with disabilities.

- **Economic Development Advisory Committee**

After staff determines that a loan or grant request is eligible for CDBG funds, the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), a committee appointed by the Mayor and representing local lenders, business owners and nonprofit organizations, reviews the application based on underwriting criteria. The Committee also periodically evaluates CDBG-funded economic development programs to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the community. The Mayor has allowed the EDAC the authority to make loan and grant awards; however, recommendations for policy and programmatic changes must be made to the Planning and Development Board and approved by the Mayor.

- **Newton Housing Partnership**

While the Newton Housing Partnership plays a critical role in the review and evaluation of CDBG- and HOME-funded projects, they are also instrumental in shaping housing policy for the city as a whole. The Partnership's mission is to foster, support and initiate land use, planning and fiscal policies and actions that ensure the development and preservation of housing to serve a socially and economically diverse community. In order to fulfill its mission, the Partnership acts in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen and its committees, the Planning and Development Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Community Preservation Committee and the City staff. Consisting of approximately 20 members, the Newton Housing Partnership represents Newton residents, organizations, businesses and institutions which are based in Newton or which serve the housing needs of Newton residents. Generally, the Partnership meets on the second Wednesday of every month at Newton City Hall.

#### Organizations, Agencies and the Newton Housing Authority

In developing a plan for the best use of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds, the Newton Housing and Community Development Program relies heavily on the input of other agencies involved in the development and implementation of projects to assist low- and moderate-income citizens, including the Newton Housing Authority, many area nonprofit organizations and state housing and community development agencies. These agencies and organizations are encouraged to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER and are asked to review and comment on the proposed documents.

#### Planning and Development Board

The Planning and Development Board, acting as the Community Development Board, is the citizen body that considers the recommendations made by the citizen advisory committees, other Newton agencies and organizations and citizens related to the CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs, and after a public hearing to allow for open discussion, forwards recommendations to the Mayor for final review and approval. Public hearings on the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER are conducted by the Board, as well as public hearings for proposed changes to the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. The Board is composed of residents of the City of Newton and is comprised of six full-members (one of which is appointed by the state Secretary of Housing and Community Development) and up to five alternate members. Unless their schedule is disrupted by a holiday or inclement weather, the Planning and Development Board meets on the first Monday of every month at Newton City Hall.

### Board of Aldermen

The Board of Aldermen is the final citizen policy body that reviews and takes action on the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan. After receiving the plan from the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen considers and then votes on the approval of the submission of the proposed Plan and on acceptance of the CDBG, HOME and ESG grants from HUD. After the Aldermen approve it, the Plan is submitted to HUD.

## **2. Public Meetings and Public Hearings**

Citizen advisory committees conduct public meetings to solicit public input on the Housing and Community Development Program. Even though each committee is made up of members appointed by the Mayor, all meetings are open to the public and participation is encouraged. Project recommendations made by the citizen advisory committees are considered by the Planning and Development Board at a public hearing.

Public hearings are required by law in order to obtain the public's views and to provide the public with the City's responses to public questions and proposals. As stated earlier, the entity responsible for conducting public hearings for the Newton Housing and Community Development Program is the Planning and Development Board. As required by law, the Planning and Development Board holds at least two public hearings each year to solicit input on housing and community needs, to review proposed uses of funds and to assess how funds were spent during the previous program year.

The two public hearings are:

- Proposed Annual Action Plan public hearing (generally held in March)
- Annual performance public hearing for the proposed CAPER (generally held in September)

During the development of the Consolidated Plan (once every five years), an additional three public hearings will be held. The three public hearings are:

- Needs assessment public hearing for the Consolidated Plan
- Proposed Consolidated Plan public hearing
- Proposed Citizen Participation Plan public hearing

In addition to the public hearings listed above, the Planning and Development Board will conduct a public hearing whenever a substantial change is proposed to the use of CDBG, HOME or ESG Program funds from that which was listed in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan.

A substantial change is defined, in accordance with 24 CFR 91.505(a), as:

- A substantial change in allocation priorities (any change greater than 25 percent in an individual project budget) or a substantial change in the method of distribution of funds;
- An activity (including those funded exclusively with program income) not previously covered by the Newton Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan; or a
- Substantial change in the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

Public hearings are held at Newton City Hall in a location that meets ADA accessibility standards. Reasonable accommodations will be made for people with disabilities upon request. Language interpreters will be provided for non-English speaking participants upon advance request.

Citizens and other interested parties may present oral comments at the time of the hearing and/or submit written comments for 30 days after the public hearing for the proposed Consolidated Plan and for 15 days after public hearings for the proposed Citizen Participation Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER and any substantial changes (may be waived in emergencies). The City will consider the views of all citizens, organizations and agencies, and other interested groups in preparing the final Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER.

### **3. Notice of Meetings**

All public meetings and public hearings are open to the public. Participation is encouraged. The following paragraphs describe the efforts that will be made to notify the public of public meetings and public hearings.

#### Public Meetings of the Advisory Committees

With the exception of the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities, meeting notices are mailed or e-mailed to both appointed members and interested citizens' mailing lists maintained by the Planning and Development Department. Meeting notices for the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities are e-mailed or mailed by the Human Services Department, the department with responsibility for providing the Committee with staff support. All meeting notices are posted on the Public Notice Board on the first floor of Newton City Hall, on the front page of the City's website in the City Calendar and are listed in the Planning and Development Department's weekly "Friday Report," which is e-mailed or mailed to more than 200 City officials, agency/organization representatives and residents. Notices for meetings of the Newton Corner and Nonantum Advisory Committees are also posted at the Newton Corner and Nonantum branch libraries.

#### Public Hearings of the Planning and Development Board

- Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER  
Public notices for public hearings for the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER will be advertised in the *Newton TAB* at least ten days prior to each hearing. Meeting notices will be e-mailed or mailed to Board members and posted on the Public Notice Board and broadcast on the television monitor, both on the first floor of City Hall. Notice will also be provided on the front page of the City's website in the City Calendar and listed in the Planning and Development Department's weekly "Friday Report" which is e-mailed or mailed to over 200 City officials, agency/organization representatives and residents. Notices will also be posted at the main library and at the branch libraries.
- Amendments to the Proposed Use of Funds  
Notices for public hearings for amendments to the use of funds proposed in the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan will be e-mailed or mailed to Board members and to members and interested citizens of the advisory committee(s) with oversight over the topic(s) at hand. Notice will also be posted on the Public Notice Board and broadcast on the television monitor on the first floor of City Hall. Notice will also be provided on the front page of the City's website in the City Calendar and listed in the Planning and Development Department's weekly "Friday Report" which is e-mailed or mailed to more than 200 City officials, agency/organization representatives and residents.

#### **4. Availability of the proposed Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER**

Notice of the availability of the proposed Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER will be published in the *Newton TAB* at least ten days prior to the public hearing. The notice will summarize the content and purpose of these proposed documents and will include a list of locations where copies of the documents may be examined. At a minimum, copies of the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER will be available in the Newton Housing and Community Development Office and on the Housing and on the Community Development Division's section of the Planning and Development Department's web page, located at <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/planning/whatsnew.html>.

#### **5. Access to Information**

In addition to opportunities to make oral comments at public meetings of the advisory committee and public hearings before the Planning and Development Board, any citizen, organization, agency or other interested party may submit written requests for information and submit written comments regarding the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER, and amendments to each, including the proposed use of funds and the benefit to low- and moderate-income residents. Copies of documents will be made available in other languages and/or in other formats (i.e. larger print) upon request. Documents from prior years will also be available upon request for at least the preceding five years.

Additionally, plans to minimize displacement and assist those displaced as a result of the activities in the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan are attached to this document.

#### **6. Comments**

Citizens, organizations, agencies and other interested parties are encouraged to submit their comments on the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER. All comment periods will begin the day of the public hearing held by the Planning and Development Board. Minimum comment periods are listed below:

<b>Type of Public Hearing</b>	<b>Comment Period</b>
Consolidated Plan	30 calendar days
Annual Action Plan	15 calendar days
CAPER	15 calendar days
Substantial Changes	15 calendar days

The City of Newton will consider all comments in preparing its final Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER for submission to HUD, and will include a summary of all comments received and the actions taken to address each comment.

Comments may be submitted via mail, e-mail or fax to:

Dee Spiro, Community Development Senior Planner  
Newton Housing and Community Development Program  
Planning and Development Department  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459  
E-mail: [dspiro@newtonma.gov](mailto:dspiro@newtonma.gov), fax: 617-796-1142

## **7. Timely Response**

The City of Newton will respond in writing within 15 days to any written comments, questions or complaints received regarding the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER or the Newton Housing and Community Development Program in general.

## **8. Technical Assistance**

Upon request, Newton Housing and Community Development Program staff will provide technical assistance to groups representing low- and moderate-income persons to develop funding requests for CDBG-, HOME- or ESG-eligible activities.

## **9. Use of the Citizen Participation Plan**

The City of Newton will be required to adhere to this Citizen Participation Plan, once adopted, as the official mechanism for obtaining citizen input into the Consolidated Plan process and during the administration of the programs covered by this Plan.

## **10. Jurisdiction Responsibility**

The requirements for citizen participation shall not restrict the responsibility or authority of the jurisdiction for the development and execution of its Consolidated Plan. The sole and final responsibility and authority to make determinations regarding the City's CDBG, HOME and ESG funding rests exclusively with the Mayor.

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## **APPENDIX G**

### **ANTI-DISPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION PLAN**

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#### ***PERMANENT RELOCATION***

It is the policy of the City of Newton Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) programs and the WestMetro HOME Consortium to take all reasonable steps to minimize displacement as a result of CDBG- and HOME-assisted projects, including:

- Considering whether displacement will occur during feasibility determinations
- Identifying potential relocation workload and resources early
- Assuring, whenever possible, that residential occupants of buildings rehabilitated are offered an opportunity to return
- Planning rehabilitation projects to include “staging” where this would eliminate temporary displacement
- Following notification procedures carefully so that families do not leave because they are not informed about planned projects or their rights

When a project does require relocation, in order to ensure the timely issuance of information notices to displaced households, etc., staff of the City of Newton Housing and Community Development Division or of the WestMetro HOME Consortium member communities will ensure that all notices are sent in compliance with both the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA).

#### ***TEMPORARY RELOCATION***

Temporary relocation often occurs as the result of lead abatement and other rehabilitation activities in renter- and owner-occupied units. Although the City of Newton Housing and Community Development Division is not required to, in most cases it pays for the temporary relocation of displaced renters and/or homeowners whose residences are being rehabilitated.

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**APPENDIX H**  
**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

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**Newton Housing Partnership**

Bob Engler, Chairman  
Jeff D'Agostino  
Christian Dame  
Ellen Feingold  
Philip Herr  
State Representative Kay Khan  
Elisabeth Kirsch  
Bart Lloyd  
Steven MacDowell  
Josephine McNeil  
Carol Ann Shea  
Jeanne Strickland  
John Wilson

**Human Service Advisory Committee**

Philip Whitbeck, Chairman  
Carol Beard (Planning and Development  
Board liaison)  
Charles A. Benedict  
Lucie Chansky  
Yee Cho  
Muriel Ellman  
Nancy Hunt  
Joan Kunitz  
Diane Laine  
David Rosen  
Dr. Carolyn Thomas

**Economic Development Advisory  
Committee**

Edward Casavant, Chairman  
Robert Brandwein  
Russell Doherty  
Charles Eisenberg  
Martha Felch  
Josephine McNeil  
Martha Sweet

**Mayor's Committee for People with  
Disabilities**

Jason A. Rosenberg, Chairman  
Rob Caruso  
Lucie Chansky

**Mayor's Committee for People with  
Disabilities (continued)**

Herb Cole  
Jini Fairley  
Linda Hiller  
Rosemary Larking  
Girard Plante  
Douglas Sweet  
Barbara Lischinsky, Interested Citizen

**West Newton Advisory Committee**

Dan Demeo, Chairman  
Amanda Annis  
Adriana Bauza  
Suzanne Demeo  
Lorraine Salvucci

**West Newton Interested Citizens**

Alan Brinkerhoff  
Ken Budreau  
Carol Lee Corbett  
Margaret Doris  
Sarah Fernandez  
Virginia Gardner  
Ray Hoefling  
Jonathan Katz  
Ted Kuklinski  
Rosemary Larking  
Alizon Lissance  
Shuqin Luo  
Margaret McCarthy  
Duncan Mills  
Michele O'Neill  
Dr. Jack Porter  
June Shoemaker  
Tim Snyder  
Sean Stetson  
Jane Thompson  
Clark Turner  
Charles Wagner  
Beth Webb

**Newtonville Advisory Committee**

Mark Chudy

**Newtonville Advisory Committee  
(continued)**

Michael Kaufman  
David Rosen  
Giles Taylor  
John Wilson

**Newtonville Interested Citizens**

Ellen Abele  
Phyllis Arcese  
Brenda Bemporad  
Adel Foz  
Bonnie Foz  
Anne Gough  
Patricia MacNeil  
Patrick Nuzzi  
Alex Reid  
Timothy Tyler  
Carol Warner

**Newton Corner Advisory Committee**

Tom Coan, Chairman  
Grace Breslin  
Lawrence Schafer  
Dr. Frederick Whoriskey

**Newton Corner Interested Citizens**

Roger Allen  
Maryan Amaral  
Barbara Bix  
Nancy Botari  
Karnig Boyajian  
Jim Boynton  
Dan Brabander  
Andrew Budson  
Carole Carter  
Steve Carter  
John Caruso  
Carl Chin  
Carol Connolly  
Andrew Copelotti  
Michele Copelotti  
Carlina de Assis  
Barbara Freer  
Andy Gluck  
Laurie Gordon  
Jerome Grafe  
Patty Greene  
Judith Groleau  
Terri Hackford

**Newton Corner Interested Citizens  
(continued)**

Andrew Hargens  
Philip Herr  
Arthur Hudson  
Ellen Hume  
Keith Jones  
Florence Kolb  
Peter Kronberg  
Nick Kyriakos  
Robert Lauricella  
Jean Leventhal  
Eileen Madden  
Tom Madden  
Wanda McSmith  
Jane Merrill  
Peter Metz  
Michael Milburn  
Sheila Mondshein  
Peter Munkenbeck  
Andrea Newman  
David Nicholson  
Amy Null  
Zdenek Odvarka  
Margo Quinlan  
Pat Rand  
Janet Rosen  
Sandi Solomon  
Gary Sparrow  
Clifford Stoltze  
Greer Swiston  
Viv Swoboda  
Muriel Taylor  
Corrinne Van Alstine  
Nancy Vela  
Benjamin Weisbuch  
Laurie Wolfe  
Pierre Wolfe  
Zhendi Yan  
Ethel Yukes  
Mike Zitomer

**Nonantum Advisory Committee**

Linda Anderson  
Loretta Busa  
Jaqueline Liriano Butera  
Joseph DiDuca  
Lou Fazio  
Ellen Lipoma  
Valerie Paolietti

**Nonantum Advisory Committee  
(continued)**

Anita Ulloa  
Kathy Zegarelli

**Nonantum Interested Citizens**

LaVinia Abel  
Christine Ackerman  
Kathi Ahern  
Ayman Alsheikh  
Anthony Antonellis  
Bernice Antonellis  
Judy Antonellis  
Cathy Bastianelli  
Jo Bennington  
Bev Bibbo  
Nicholas Bibbo  
Anne Blakely  
Philip Boucher  
Beth Busa  
Frank Butera  
Jim Callahan  
Al Cecchivelli  
Bill Coady  
Joe Colluci  
Patricia Covenor  
Regina Davis  
Don DeFilippis  
Andrea Del Grosso  
Jennie DeVito  
Damien Doucette  
Kenneth Doucette  
Kathy Elias  
G. Fontano  
Mike Goulet  
Maria Greenberg  
Rejane Hutchings  
Oscar LaRosee  
Dennis Leigh  
Christina Leone  
Stephen Leone  
Ron Polito  
Margaret Rose  
Randy Schiavone  
Ken Tocci  
Liz Tocci  
Mary Tramantozzi

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## APPENDIX I

### CITY OF NEWTON MONITORING POLICY

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#### ***HUMAN SERVICE AND EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT PROJECTS***

Annually, during the third quarter of each program year, Community Development staff will monitor human service subrecipient agencies. All new projects will be monitored during the first year of operation. Existing agencies/projects to be monitored will be selected based on the results of a risk analysis. This analysis shall consider such criteria as past performance of the agency/project, experience level of staff administering the project, newness of the project, etc. At least ten percent of all human service projects will be monitored each year. All monitoring documentation shall be filed in the monitoring folder within the project file.

The monitoring process shall include the following documentation:

- Risk analysis results and monitoring schedule
- Notification letter sent to subrecipient agency
- On-site monitoring visit documentation, including completion of steps outlined in the attached monitoring agenda
- Letter to the agency that outlines the result of the monitoring visit, including any follow-up action required

#### ***HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS***

Housing Development program staff will conduct annual monitoring of housing development subrecipients. Agencies/projects to be monitored will be selected based on the results of a risk analysis. This analysis shall consider such criteria as past performance of the agency/project, experience level of staff administering the project, newness of the project, etc. At least ten percent of all housing development projects will be monitored each year.

The monitoring process shall include the following documentation based on the specific type of project:

- Risk analysis results and monitoring schedule
- Monitoring schedule based on risk analysis results
- General notification letter sent to subrecipient agency announcing that they will be monitored for CDBG/HOME compliance and compliance with subrecipient agreement
- Confirmation letter sent confirming the date and time of monitoring visit, specific items be monitored listed – i.e., income limit documentation, lease agreements, unit inspections, performance goals, etc.
- Completion of an on-site monitoring visit, including completion of the following forms as applicable to the specific project: Lease Requirements Checklist, Housing Quality Standards inspection form, and CDBG or HOME Monitoring Form
- Completion of a letter to the agency that outlines the result of the monitoring visit, including any follow-up action required

#### ***FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER PROGRAM***

Newton Housing Rehabilitation Fund (NHRF) program staff will monitor First Time Homebuyer Program projects annually to verify that the property is being used as the homeowner's principle residence. Staff will mail a form to the homebuyer that asks them to sign a statement verifying that the property purchased with First Time Homebuyer Program funds is their principle residence and to return it the Newton Housing Office in a postage-paid envelope. If the

homeowner fails to return the statement or does not sign the statement, NHRF staff will attempt to contact the homeowner via phone or in person at their address.

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## APPENDIX J

### PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENT INITIATIVES

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The Newton Housing Authority has lead responsibility for capitalizing on the skills and interests of the public housing residents in its developments. The Housing Authority's Resident Services Coordinator is responsible for working with the residents to identify their needs and developing programs that enrich the residents' quality of life. Residents have the opportunity to become involved in the operation and management of the Housing Authority in two specific ways: Under the direction of the Resident Services Coordinator, residents at each development meet on a monthly basis to discuss specific needs and ongoing programming. The tenant organization meetings enable residents to discuss any issues that arise at a development, as well as help identify any gaps in the existing services and/or programs. In addition, *Housing Authority-M.G.L. c. 121B, sec.5* requires that one of the four Mayoral appointments to the Housing Authority's governing Board of Commissioners be a tenant who lives in a building owned and operated by, or on behalf of the Newton Housing Authority. The resident appointee attends the monthly Board of Commissioners' meetings and currently acts as a designated signatory for Housing Authority checks.

The Newton Housing Authority does not participate in the Section 8 Homeownership Program which enables tenants to apply their Section 8 voucher payments for rental housing toward homeownership expenses, including mortgage principal and interest payments, taxes and insurance. However, in 2004, two families with vouchers issued from the Quincy and the Framingham Housing Authorities accessed the Newton's First Time Homebuyer Program and acquired homes in the city through the Section 8 Homeownership Program.

The data in the Consolidated Plan enables both the Housing Authority and the City to identify and quantify housing needs in Newton and discern the gaps in housing availability. The data supports the Housing Authority's continuing mission to serve tenants at 30 and 50 percent of AMI. By providing an analysis of current data and proposed strategies to help mitigate the lack of affordable housing in the community, the Consolidated Plan is a resource to the Housing Authority as well as to the city.

**APPENDIX K  
TABLE 2B  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

<b>PRIORITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS</b>	<b>Priority Need Level</b> High, Medium, Low, No Such Need	<b>Unmet Priority Need</b>	<b>Dollars to Address Unmet Priority Need</b>	<b>Goals</b>
<b>PUBLIC FACILITY NEEDS (projects)</b>				
Senior Centers	N	-	-	-
Handicapped Centers	N	-	-	-
Homeless Facilities	N	-	-	-
Youth Centers	N	-	-	-
Child Care Centers	N	-	-	-
Health Facilities	N	-	-	-
Neighborhood Facilities	M	1	\$25,000	0
Parks and/or Recreation Facilities	H	11	\$1,230,000	8
Parking Facilities	N	-	-	-
Non-Residential Historic Preservation	N	-	-	-
Other Public Facility Needs	N	-	-	-
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE (projects)</b>				
Water/Sewer Improvements	N	-	-	-
Street Improvements	H	15	\$4,500,000	1
Sidewalks	M	29	\$500,000	1
Solid Waste Disposal Improvements	N	-	-	-
Flood Drain Improvements	L	2	\$75,000	0
Other Infrastructure Needs	M	12	\$650,000	7
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE NEEDS (people)</b>				
Senior Services	H	205	\$970,000	55
Handicapped Services	H	85	\$652,000	30
Youth Services	H	200	\$608,000	25
Child Care Services	H	75	\$820,000	20
Transportation Services	M	60	\$100,000	0
Substance Abuse Services	H	100	\$340,000	10
Employment Training	M	25	\$100,000	3
Health Services	M	150	\$175,000	0
Lead Hazard Screening	N	-	-	-
Crime Awareness	N	-	-	-
Other Public Service Needs	H	175	\$890,000	0

**APPENDIX K  
TABLE 2B  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS**

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>				
ED Assistance to For-Profits(businesses)	H	4	\$32,500	2
ED Technical Assistance(businesses)	H	5	\$25,000	0
Micro-Enterprise Assistance(businesses)	H	5	\$75,000	3
Rehab; Publicly- or Privately-Owned Commercial/Industrial (projects)	N	-	-	-
C/I* Infrastructure Development (projects)	N	-	-	-
Other C/I* Improvements(projects)	N	-	-	-
<b>PLANNING</b>				
Planning	H	1	\$100,000	0
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED DOLLARS NEEDED:</b>			\$11,792,500	

\* Commercial or Industrial Improvements by Grantee or Non-profit