

## City of Oelwein



### Community Development and Housing Needs Assessment

#### Community Development and Housing Needs of Low and Moderate Income Persons

- Decrease the number of substandard housing units in the City (High)
  - The city of Oelwein has an older housing stock that requires significant investment. Often, these homes do not receive the needed investment because they are no longer attractive to home buyers or house flippers. The removal of depilated housing allows for new growth potential of neighboring properties and increases valuations for existing housing stock. Large scale demolitions open land for much needed multi-family. Use local option sales tax to fund demolitions and assistance programs.
- Minimize hardship by assisting in the rehabilitation of homes. (Medium)
  - Use local options sales tax to fund a revolving loan fund program. Exhaust all funds within one year and work with council on additional funds.
- Provide yearly financial support for the Fayette County Local Housing Trust fund which is for rehabilitation for low to moderate income applicants. (High)
  - The investment in the Local Housing Trust Fund brings in more dollars to the community to help housing. Homeowners are seeing much needed repairs and can live in their homes longer. This program is saving homes from demolition. Funds for this support comes from Local Option Sales Tax.
- Participated in the Rent to Own Home with NEICAC. (Low)
  - Work with local partner North East Iowa Community Action Corporation on their programs that help homeowners.
- New Construction incentives along with a tax abatement program (High)
  - Create a multi-family program that brings in investors to build large housing units. Create an aggressive residential tax abatement program that extends the current program.
- Continue to apply for First Time Homebuyer Funds (Low)
  - Work with Upper Explorerland to ensure this program is used effectively in Oelwein. Leverage both local and state dollars for this program and work on transitioning renters to new homes.
- Sell vacant lots for redevelopment (Low)
  - When the city can work with local and outside investors, the city should allow more flexibility on building on vacant lots.

#### Other Community Development and Housing Needs

- Provide additional affordable housing opportunities (High)
  - Look for local and outside investors who want to flip homes. The City can acquire abandoned homes and work locally to get those homes in the right hands for

reinvestment. Homes that still have good foundations should be renewed for the next generation.

- Provide additional job creation through the City of Oelwein's IRP Program. (Medium)
  - The entry into the commercial market is a high cost. Providing local dollars at low interested rates makes this transition for new businesses attainable. New jobs are created when new businesses are created. The City must be diligent in recruiting and retaining businesses that offer a living wage.

### **Planned or Potential Activities to Address Housing and Community Needs**

- Work with Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission to apply for a CDBG Community Facilities Grant for the RISE Ltd. Oelwein Day Habilitation Center Improvements Project
- Apply for assistance under the Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (High)
  - The City has used this program each year to remediate dilapidated homes. Taking down homes that have no future provide a brighter outlook for neighborhoods.
- Work on local programs that offer incentives for developers and local contractors on building houses and improving existing housing stock (High)
  - Use local option sales tax to incentive building in town. Create a tax program that provides property tax relief to new builds, especially multi-family.
- Create a housing task force that is accountable and sets goals (High)
  - Both Oelwein Chamber and the City are working with groups to focus on housing improvements. These groups meet monthly and work toward a larger plan.
- Implement plans from the Oelwein Housing Study (Medium)
  - The City continues to work on plans set by the Oelwein Housing study. This study was instrumental in pinpointing areas that need improvement to sustain and build the current housing stock.
- Work on reenergizing the Fayette County Habitat for Humanity Program (Low)
  - Consider being a part of a potential NE Iowa Habitat for Humanity if this is possible.
- Find housing that works for employees of Oelwein's largest employers (High)
  - Work on a system that identifies what current employees can afford, and incentive builders to build those multi-family units.
- Plan for infill only to avoid city infrastructure expansion cost (Low)
  - Identify which areas of the city can be improved and how infilling lots will lead to that improvement.
- Work on flood mitigation along Dry Run Creek (High)
  - Take the first step to remove parking lot and plaza building and provide a space for residents to social distance during a pandemic.
- Sanitary Sewer Improvements. (HIGH)
  - Continue with improvements to meet Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) compliance with state standards.

Discussed at the 4/22/24 and 6/24/24 Regular City Council Meeting of the City of Oelwein, Iowa.

Approved at the 6/24/24 Regular City Council Meeting of the City of Oelwein, Iowa.

Number of local residents participating: \_\_\_\_\_