



City of Oelwein
Community Development and Housing Needs Assessment

Community Development and Housing Needs of Low and Moderate Income Persons

- Encourage multifamily housing (High)
 - Provide lots and tax abatement to encourage multi-family housing. The city will work with developers and contractors to build multifamily homes that can be rented or owned.
- Decrease the number of substandard housing units in the City (High)
 - The city of Oelwein will tear down 5-6 homes annually. Homes are only torn down if the rehabilitation of the home costs more than the home is worth. Empty lots will be sold to neighbors or provided to a developer or contractor.
- Minimize hardship by assisting in the rehabilitation of homes. (Medium)
 - Fund programs provided by the Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund.
- Provide yearly financial support for the Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund which is for rehabilitation for low to moderate income applicants. (High)
 - The city provides \$20,000 for this fund. All funds are used in the city and are matched by federal dollars.
- New construction incentives along with a tax abatement program (High)
 - Promote the city's tax abatement program that favors multifamily housing.
- 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.
- Apply for downtown development funds for housing (Low)
 - Work with the state of Iowa on programs that specifically help downtown buildings and their upper story housing units.

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)
 - Entrance into the commercial market is a high cost. Providing local dollars at low interest 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

- Update water and sewer infrastructure (High)
 - Make improvements every other year for water and sewer. Use rate increases to fund projects with cash. Apply for CDBG funds to supplement projects.
- Continued code enforcement to ensure that current properties do not fall apart (High)
 - Code enforcement is key to making sure property owners are maintaining their properties.
- 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 incentivize building in town. Create a tax program that provides property tax relief to new builds, especially multi-family.
- Work with the chamber and their housing committee (Medium)
 - Plan and make goals that the city and the chamber can accomplish together.
- Work toward a new housing study (Low)
 - The city's last housing study is seven years old.
- 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 encourage 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)
 - Continue to apply for federal funds that will help remove 70 properties from the flood plain
- Sanitary Sewer Improvements. (High)
 - Continue with improvements to meet Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) compliance with state standards.

Discussed at the June 9th, 6:00 pm City Council Meeting of the City of Oelwein, Iowa.

Approved by Resolution No. _____-2025 at the July 14th, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting of the City of Oelwein, Iowa.

Number of local residents participating: _____