

Bangor Five Year Strategic Plan Overview

Affordable Housing

Household Categories:

Highest Priority – All homeless individuals and households and very low-income elderly renter households and very low-income large renter families

Medium Priority – All persons with special needs, all low-income existing homeowners; all low-income small, related renter households; other low-income renter large households and all other low-income renter households; and all low-income first-time homebuyers.

Low Priority – All other first-time homebuyers

Activity Priorities (Highest priority to lowest)

1. Residential rehabilitation of housing occupied by or available to low-income households.
2. Rental assistance through increase availability of Section 8 existing housing certificates and vouchers.
3. Conversion of vacant residential and non-residential properties into affordable housing by private for-profits and property-tax-paying non-profits.
4. Advocating affordable housing financing which allows non-profits sufficient after-debt-service cash flow to make payments-in-lieu-of-taxes to the municipality to cover the cost of essential services.
5. Conversion of vacant residential and non-residential properties into affordable housing by non-profits who will make payments-in-lieu-of-taxes to the municipality to cover the cost of essential services.
6. Family self-sufficiency assistance for volunteer households living in, or eligible for, public housing or Section 8 housing who will work toward freedom from public assistance.
7. Expand communications, coordination and cooperation among the city of Bangor and public and private sector providers of affordable housing and related services to eliminate duplication or conflicting efforts and to facilitate the efficient and timely expansion of needed affordable housing opportunities.
8. Expansion of municipal code enforcement activities aimed at improving the condition of publicly subsidized private housing.

High Priority: Very low-income and other low-income (0-50%), elderly 1&2 member, renter households (combined grouping)

Activities:

Primary - Rehabilitation of the existing rental housing stock to preserve the existing inventory of affordable, but aging and substandard housing.

Secondary – If the demand for affordable elderly units exceed the market rate units available for conversion, new construction may be appropriate.

Secondary – Once adequate, standard, affordable housing is available for low-income elderly persons another activity of providing support facilities and services as needed by the low-income elderly. These may include:

- Subsidized or low-cost public or on-demand transportation
- Low-cost on-site prepared or delivered meals
- Visits by public health nurses, home health care providers, volunteer companions, social workers and psychological or spiritual counselors
- Assistance with shopping, housekeeping, laundry and personal care
- Medical exams, treatment and medications
- Group social activities, trips, entertainment, exercise classes and recreation
- Providing libraries and access to computers and internet services

High Priority: Very low-income (31-50%) and other low-income, large related renter households

Activities: Increasing the supply of rental units for large households by:

Primary – Rehabilitation

- Affirmatively target the Residential Property Rehabilitation Loan Program to units suitable for and occupied by or available to large households

Secondary – Acquisition, new construction and support facilities and services

- Encourage BHA to establish a priority for large related households on the Public Housing waiting list to be assigned available 3 or more bedroom units ahead of smaller households who may be higher on the list. This affirmative action would help to offset the much higher occupancy of these large units by smaller families
- Encourage Congress to require Public Housing and all affordable housing receiving federal subsidies, financing assistance or investment tax credits to pay their full share of local property taxes.
- Encourage HUD, Maine Housing and other providers of assistance and subsidies to affordable housing to require them to make available a number of affordable units suitable for large households.

High Priority: Very low-income (0-50%) and other low-income homeless individuals and families

Activities:

Primary

- Rehabilitation of existing or newly established shelters for additional shelter capacity, primarily the addition of private and secure shelter rooms for families and households with children
- Provision of supportive facilities and services (meals, laundry, clothing, case mgt. counseling, meds, transportation, job search etc.)

Secondary

- Rehabilitation assistance to existing or newly established shelters, to increase capacity, resolve code and life safety deficiencies, improve operating efficiency and make ADA modification and improvements.
- Assistance for the construction of, or conversion of existing structure to, new shelters, shelter plus care facilities, supported living facilities and transition housing.

High Priority: Very low-income (0-50%) and other low-income homeless youth

Activities:

Primary

- Income Maintenance Programs provide teens with income (cash or vouchers) to purchase basic necessities (food, housing, clothing etc.)
- Residential Services are various types of substitute care available when a teen can no longer live at home. The major precept of substitute care is to place teens in the least restrictive environment possible.
- Inpatient and outpatient substance abuse services. Indigent patients face long waiting lists that can delay treatment for weeks or even months.
- Mental Health Services where outpatient services are more readily available than inpatient. However neither are available in an amount equal to the existing need.
- Outreach services are provided by Streetlight Project. Two workers who go out on the streets of Bangor making contact with teens and gaining trust. They refer to available services while working to help them find an alternative to life on the streets.
- The soup kitchen at the Salvation Army offers a hot noon meal five days a week. Manna, Inc serves a free hot supper five evening a week with 60-80 people served at each meal. These are the only meals available unless they are staying in one of the shelters.

Medium Priority: Very low-income (0-50%) and other low-income, small related renter households and all other renter households

Activities:

Primary – Rehabilitation

Secondary – rental assistance, new construction and support facilities and services

Medium Priority: Existing Homeowners

Activities: Rehabilitation

Medium Priority: Low income 1st time homebuyers

Activities: Maine Housing programs, private lending institutions and rehabilitation

Medium Priority: Non-homeless low-income Persons with special needs

Activities: Transportation, Education, Meals, Legal Services, Crisis Intervention, Home Care services, Case mgt. referral and counseling,

Low Priority: All other homebuyers (combined grouping)

Activities: Maine Housing programs, private lending institutions and rehabilitation

Economic Development

Strengthen and diversify the economic base of the community:

- Create a variety of job opportunities for all elements of the labor force, provide good pay and benefits
- Reduce vulnerability to recession and declining trends in industries through diversification and increased market penetration

Improve the quality of life:

- Promote jobs and economic diversity
- Preserve, protect and strengthen neighborhoods and natural areas, stabilize the property tax base and seek alternative sources of revenue such as local option tax
- Make Bangor more attractive to new residents and businesses through more effective promotion and media penetration
- Provide youth and elderly residents with incentive to stay in Bangor

Target Specific Opportunities:

- Assist the reuse/redevelopment of the Bangor Waterworks, the waterfront, downtown former department store buildings, vacant airport and University College buildings and former industrial buildings
- Improve transportation connections to Southern Maine, New England, the maritime provinces and Europe by increased promotion of BIA, support extension of Amtrak service to Bangor, cooperate with State efforts on high speed ferry and rail connections to the coast etc.
- Promote location advantages, telecommunications facilities and transportation infrastructure including rail, highways, airport, pipelines and seaports
- Facilitate the redevelopment of the former rail yard at the waterfront

Create financial incentives:

- Retain and facilitate the expansion of existing businesses
- Enhance the City's ability to attract economic development through increased promotion and staffing
- Seek available resources from Federal, State and local and private sources
- Utilize tax increment financing, infrastructure improvements and gap financing to assist the development of vacant, underutilized and undeveloped properties

Strengthen Bangor's infrastructure to promote economic development:

- Support the creation of an airport/waterfront rail link
- Seek funds to continue the waterfront park and trail system into the Bass Park complex, stabilize the river shore in the rail yard area and create recreation amenities
- Encourage the development of the East-West highway and improved regional linkages
- Promote improved and expanded jet passenger service to national and international destinations

Enhance higher education and research and development opportunities:

- Improve education and training for higher levels of job skills
- Support increased funding for research in those areas that utilize available resources

Enhance the linkages between job training and placement and job creation and retention:

- Expand existing job training and employment services, including those for residents of subsidized and transitional housing
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to link the needs of business and industry with training resources

Strengthen and diversify the city's central business district:

- Reduce the vacancy in downtown's buildings
- Encourage promotional efforts and events designed to bring shoppers and visitors to the downtown
- Encourage developments in the waterfront area that will attract more tourists into the downtown area

Anti-Poverty Plan

The purpose of this plan is to identify strategies intended to reduce the detrimental impacts of poverty on the citizens, quality of life and economic well being of Bangor.

Strategies:

- Job creation and economic development
- Provision of housing and essential services
- Development of mechanisms to deliver social services and make jobs accessible to those living in poverty or threatened by it
- Maintenance of a broad range of educational and training programs

Property Acquisition, Relocation & Demolition

There are a number of residential and non-residential candidates for acquisition and demolition because they are blighting influences, deteriorated beyond feasible rehabilitation, present hazardous situation or otherwise deter development of job creation projects.

Property Demolition and Clearance

A modest number of residential properties exist in the City of Bangor which have not been maintained in a condition suitable for human habitation and have reached a degree of deterioration which makes their rehabilitation economically non-feasible.