

Project NOW

Community Action Agency

Community Services Block Grant
2018 Community Action Plan
January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

Prepared by: Jen Howard Project NOW, Community Services Coordinator
418 19th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201

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**Project NOW, Inc.
2018 Community Action Plan**

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I. Community Action Plan Summary

Introduction and Project NOW Profile

The 2018 Project NOW Community Action Plan “CAP” serves as the planning guide for Project NOW’s Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The “CAP” details the integration of the CSBG program with other Project NOW and community efforts to reduce the problems of poverty within Henry, Mercer and Rock Island Counties. The “CAP” also identifies the problems and needs of the economically disadvantaged; details the resources accessible to meet the needs; and maps out the general direction that will be taken to meet the needs; and the role the CSBG program will play in reducing the effects of poverty.

Project NOW, Inc. Community Action Agency was founded in 1968 and one year later was designated as a Community Action Agency by the Rock Island County Board of Supervisors. In 1978, Henry and Mercer County Boards followed.

Project NOW’s 3 county service area, located in the northwestern region of Illinois, encompasses more than 2,600 square miles. Project NOW’s Administration Building is located in Rock Island County. Rock Island County is primarily an urban region, Henry County is a mixture of rural and urban, and Mercer County is primarily rural.

This “CAP” describes how the 2018 CSBG funds are integrated into Project NOW’s general operation and the 2018 CSBG Work Program components detail the use of multiple resources in the majority of the work programs.

Project NOW’s Executive Director provides administrative oversight to all Project NOW programming including CSBG program activities. Project NOW’s Board of Directors approves the “CAP”, CSBG grant, reviews the CSBG program outcomes and participate in program evaluation, providing input into the effectiveness as well as problem areas that CSBG programming can address.

Process Used to Develop the Plan

The “CAP” is Project NOW’s planning guide for CSBG and describes related program activities for low-income residents in Henry, Mercer and Rock Island Counties. The 2018 “CAP” builds on previous planning and community organizing efforts, including the 2017 “CAP”, the Continuum of Care Strategic Plan and the CSBG-IS Report.

Project NOW has updated the assessment of needs for our low-income population and the service delivery system. Demographic data is presented from the 2010 Census, the 2015 American Community Survey, and the 2015 Population Estimates Program completed by the U.S. Census Bureau. The “CAP” also uses data from customer surveys, partner agency community needs assessments, service providers, the general public and the annual point-in-time homeless count.

Once the “CAP” is prepared, Project NOW’s Board of Directors reviews the plan and the proposed CSBG Work Programs. Once approved, the Board of Directors authorizes staff to submit the “CAP” to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Needs Assessment – In the process of assessing the needs of the low-income population in our service area, Project NOW gathered data from the U.S. Census Bureau and American Fact Finder, Social IMPACT Research Center, Illinois State Board of Education,

Illinois Bureau of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity – CSBG, Weatherization and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Head Start, Illinois Department of Corrections, Northwestern Illinois Continuum of Care’s Point-in-Time homeless count and local agency data.

Description of the Service Delivery System – Project NOW’s Outreach Department operates intake locations in Aledo, Kewanee, Moline and Rock Island where residents can access services. We also have a number of satellite offices that we use to meet customers that have transportation issues and during our busy LIHEAP Utility Assistance Program. For those customers that are home bound an appointment is scheduled for Project NOW staff to assist them in their home, allowing them to have access to services. Senior citizens and those that are disabled can utilize Project NOW’s Senior Transportation services for door-to-door transportation to an outreach office, and Senior Services employees regularly take energy assistance applications at senior housing sites.

Description of Linkages – An informed outreach/referral network is necessary for the effective delivery of services to the low-income population. The process of informing the community of services, referrals to other community services, case management and follow-up services are detailed in this section of the “CAP”.

Coordination – This section describes how resources are coordinated internally and externally. In Project NOW’s service area, existing networks of social service agencies provide programs and services targeted towards low-income citizens. Usually people living at the poverty level requesting services are in need of multiple services. Project NOW participates with local agencies through informational displays, presentations, meetings and other functions that promote our services and enhance coordination between agencies.

Description of Innovative Community and Neighborhood-Based Initiative – This section describes how Project NOW continues to work with community and neighborhood organizations in activities promoting self-sufficiency, education, community awareness, and strengthening families. Through public meetings, information forums and networking, Project NOW continues to reach out to neighborhood and community based organizations to form working partnerships to strengthen communities.

Youth Programing – This section describes Project NOW’s committed effort in youth programs over the years. Project NOW uses the CSBG funding to network with several agencies to assist with youth initiative programs.

Outcomes – This section brings together the information presented in the previous sections to form the problem statements that lead to the CSBG Work Programs. The priorities of the CSBG program were reviewed and strategies were selected which could be effectively administered and have the greatest positive impact on the targeted population. The outcomes section develops problem statements identifying gaps in services thus leading to development of CSBG work program components. The CSBG national goals for each program activity are stated, and the outcome measures for each activity are detailed with a description of our monitoring mechanisms.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Project NOW conducts an annual, community wide, needs assessment for the “CAP” and CSBG application process. The needs assessment includes updated demographic information as well as information gathered from the community needs assessment, customer’s needs/satisfaction survey, food pantry and nutritional survey and the annual point-in-time homeless count. The needs assessment has two sections: 1) The demographic/survey data is presented in **tables and graphs beginning on page 18**; and 2) A narrative section that analyzes the data using the CSBG Program categories to help identify problems impacting our poverty population. The demographic and survey data include:

A. Types of Data Collected

All demographics and customer data appears on pages 18-36. The following sources of information were used in assessing the needs of low-income people and determining program strategies for Project NOW’s service area:

- **Table 1 Demographics by Gender, Race, Ethnicity, & Age** – Tables 1 lists general characteristics of population. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, & ACS.
- **Table 2 Population and Poverty**– Table shows 2015 population in poverty. Source: US Census Bureau & ACS 2015
- **Table 3 Area Median Income** – Table shows area median income. Source: U.S. Census Bureau & Small Area Income & poverty estimates.
- **Table 4 Unemployment Rates by County**: This table shows the unemployment rate and a comparison to last year. Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security
- **Table 5 Labor Force by Age, Sex, Race, Ethnicity, and Education**: This table provides labor force information for the 2nd quarter of 2014. Source: U.S. Census Bureau
- **Table 6 SNAP & TANF**: This table shows other assistance programs (SNAP & TANF) by households. Source: IL Dept. of Human Services
- **Table 7 Free and Reduced Lunch**: Table shows total Free and Reduced Lunch for 2011-2016. Source: Illinois State Board of Education
- **Table 8 High School Dropout Rates**: This table shows high school dropout and chronic truancy rates for the 2015-16 school year. Source: Illinois State Board of Education
- **Table 9 Rental Housing, Fair Market Rents and Housing Wages**: Source: Poor By Comparison, Report on Illinois Poverty, U.S. Dept. of HUD
- **Table 10 Point-in-Time Homeless Count**: Table shows results of Point-in-Time homeless count conducted on January 24, 2017. Source: Northwestern IL Continuum of Care
- **Table 11 Project NOW Demographics**: Table shows customer characteristics served calendar year 2016. Source: 2016 CSBG IS Survey
- **Table 12 Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program**: Table shows the characteristics of customers served during program year 2017. Source: Weather Works
- **Table 13 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**: Table shows the characteristics of customers served during program year 2017. Source: LIHEAP.net
- **Table 14 Head Start Demographics**: Table shows customer characteristics served during program year 2016-17. Source: Head Start
- **Table 15 Community Needs Assessment**: Table shows community needs assessment during program year 2016. Source: Community Needs Assessment

B. Data Analysis/Problem Identification

Project NOW's service area is located in the northwestern part of Illinois on the east side of the Mississippi River. Rock Island County is part of the Quad Cities which includes part of Iowa. Project NOW's service area is both urban and rural with a large variation in population. Rock Island County is mainly urban while Henry and Mercer Counties are mainly rural. The **population** varies greatly between our three counties; **Rock Island - 147,161, Henry County - 49,883, and Mercer County -16,107**, (2015) Population estimate, U.S. Census Bureau) with all three counties decreasing in population slightly from last year's U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

The 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, there were 95,262 housing units in the service area. 91.5% of the housing units were occupied, while **8.5% were vacant**. Of the occupied units, **75.5% were owner occupied**. Much of the housing stock in this area is old, with 66% of the homes being built prior to 1970.

The **Median Household Income (MHI)** for the three counties are; **Henry County - \$53,998, Mercer County - \$52,503 and Rock Island County - \$49,875**. There were 30,554 (14%) of the services areas population who are below the poverty level.

An analysis of the needs and problem areas affecting low-income persons was conducted using information presented in the **tables, graphs, surveys on pages 18-36**. The identified needs/problem areas are categorized according to the service categories as directed.

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1. **Employment/Economic Development** - The unemployment rate for our service area as of May 2016, was 4.7%, a decrease from last year's rate of 6.1%. We are higher than both the State of Illinois (4.3%) and the 4.5% national average. When our customers were surveyed, 28.89% stated that various employment assistance was a need.

2. **Education** - Educational concerns continue to be an issue with low-income persons. The educational issues are twofold; 1) Among adults, a lack of education and vocational skills keeps many low-income people in very low paying unskilled jobs; 2) Among low-income youth there are issues with completing high school, receiving job skills and the digital divide issues. Table 8 indicates a **dropout rate of 2.2%** for the 2015-2016 school year. Project NOW's service area's **chronic truant rate is 4.3%**. 21.31% of our surveyed customers reported education is a need for their families. Many educators point to the "digital divide" - where limited access to computers by low-income people results in reduced knowledge of electronic communication - as a key factor in their losing ground in the job market.

3. **Income Management** - With such a severe lack of resources persons in poverty must make every effort to make their dollars stretch. In the customer survey the largest needs are for Housing and Rent, Utilities, Clothing and Furniture, and Food. Customers seeking cash assistance participate in budget and housing counseling. With **11% of our workforce not having a high school education** they are lacking basic skills on money management. The issue is compounded when looking at **Table 9** which shows low-income people pay a disproportionately high percentage of their income for housing needs.

4. **Housing** - There are a total number of **101,689 households in our service area** with 25,016 (25%) of them being rental households. Decent Affordable Housing is a major concern.

Affordable housing is generally defined as that in which the occupant pays no more than 30 percent of their gross income for housing costs, including utilities. As shown in **Table 9**, the housing wage is \$13.69 (housing equals 30% of salary). This is the amount a full time worker needs to earn per hour to be able to afford a two bedroom unit at Fair Market Rent. This is 166% of the minimum wage (\$8.25). Further, a household working at minimum wage would **need to work 66 hours per week** to afford a two bedroom unit. A disabled person, receiving Supplemental Security Income of **\$733 per month can only afford to spend no more than \$220** in monthly rent for a one bedroom unit.

5. **Emergency Services** - Persons living at or below poverty do not have many resources available to cope with an emergency situation. With limited and often fixed incomes families struggle to maintain their housing, nutrition and medical needs. A high utility bill, unexpected medical costs or loss of food stamps can become a crisis for our customers.

The service area poverty rate (**Table 2**) indicates that there is **30,554 people living in poverty**. Children and seniors are especially prone to poverty, with **25% of children** under age 5 living in poverty and **16% of seniors** over age 65 living in poverty.

In the needs assessment, **39.81% of our customers report that affordable housing and rent is a serious problem** for their families. Customers also reported utilities, clothing, furniture, and health services (dental, medical, mental) are concerns for them and their families. Project NOW's CSBG program provides emergency assistance to over 150 households annually with the most frequent request being health services.

Homelessness is another issue facing people living at or below the poverty level. The poverty population is always at risk of a crisis situation, and for a segment of the at-risk population, homelessness does occur. In **Table 10**, the **Continuum of Care's annual point-in-time homeless count** conducted on January 24, 2017 reported a total of 243 homeless people which included sixty-seven children.

6. **Nutrition** - Proper nutrition among low-income residents is a twofold problem. One issue is being able to afford food and the other is inadequate knowledge about nutrition. **Table 6** indicates 15,081 households received supplemental nutrition assistance (SNAP) in 2016.

With the need so great for food, several organizations and churches have taken it upon themselves to establish soup kitchens. The Mt. Zion Baptist Church is open Monday to Thursday for evening meals, Hope United Church of Christ is open for Sunday evening, Rock Island Township is open Monday to Friday for evening meals, Two Rivers First United Methodist Church is open for lunch on Saturday and Christian Care Shelter is open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner. There are 12 food pantries in our service area.

There are several programs within our area that focus on nutrition for children: local Health Departments' Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Illinois Free and Reduced School lunch programs. In our service area **47.4% of children are eligible for free and reduced lunches**, (i.e. the family income is at or below 185% of poverty).

There are currently 56 sites in our area that provide free lunch to children through the Illinois State Board of Education's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

7. **Linkages** - Low-income persons may have limited knowledge of available services and typically have more than one issue to be addressed, so an informed outreach/referral network is critical for effective service delivery. The CSBG program had over 14,000 persons receiving outreach/referral services in 2016.

Our customer survey found that **92% of surveyed customers were satisfied with services.**

8. **Self-Sufficiency** - A primary goal of the CSBG program and other programs operated by Project NOW is to provide a comprehensive family case management program by promoting, empowering and encouraging individuals and families towards self-sufficiency. Establishing stable housing, employment opportunities and improving living conditions for low-income and at-risk populations are high priorities.

Families living in poverty often times do not have the ability to pull together resources and need comprehensive programs geared toward self-sufficiency.

9. **Health** - Healthcare is another major problem for low-income residents. Question #15 of the customer survey reports that, 26.36% of the respondents stated medical, dental, substance abuse and mental health services are a need for their families. Project NOW collaborates with local County Health Departments to provide services for low-income persons, including sponsoring health fairs, lead screening for children, immunization notices for school children, announcements of breast and cervical cancer screenings, providing outreach and applications for the State of Illinois "All Kids" Programs.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Project NOW engages in long-term planning strategies that require input from community leaders, social service groups and agencies, consumers and community members. Information is collected through surveys and public meetings and is assembled into the development of programs addressing the long-term solutions to problems affecting members of the low-income communities in the service area.

Project NOW meets with various groups that consist of social service organizations, police departments, school districts, religious organizations and members of the community. Membership to these groups are free and open to anyone. Groups typically meet on a monthly basis to share information and work together to make services accessible to the community. Participating organizations often use these groups to connect and partner with other organizations to share their resources in providing services. Project NOW serves as the lead agency for the Northwestern Illinois Continuum of Care and is responsible for development of the Homeless Strategic Plan.

The service delivery system is described below using each of the CSBG work program category, identifying internal as well as external resources within the service area.

1. **Employment/Economic Development** - The Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce work to stimulate economic growth and to

create jobs for eastern Iowa and western Illinois; to improve the Quad Cities as a whole. Project NOW is a long standing member of both Chambers of Commerce.

Project NOW coordinates with The American Job Center to pay for training for high demand occupations including: Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and Welding.

2. **Education** - CSBG funding is used to provide a Skills Training Program which offers training in resume writing, interviewing and computer skills. Project NOW partners with The American Job Center, the local Workforce Investment Act agency, to provide funding for vocational training. We provide funds to Black Hawk Community College for their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program and Welding; and 160 Driving Academy for their Commercial Driver's License (CDL). CSBG funds are also used for the Scholarship Program as a means of financial assistance for low-income individuals attending college.

Head Start is served by two agencies in our service area. Rock Island/Milan School District serves the City of Rock Island, while Project NOW serves the remainder of the service area. Head Start develops partnerships with community day care providers and local school districts to ensure that comprehensive child development services are available.

3. **Income Management** - Project NOW administers the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) to provide deposit and rental assistance. This program assists individuals/families quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness.

Project NOW partners with R.I.A Federal Credit Union to provide financial fitness and education to customers seeking emergency assistance funds. Project NOW's Transitional Housing program provides intensive case and income management to its participants.

4. **Housing** - Project NOW operates several programs promoting safe, stable, healthy and affordable housing. Project NOW has ninety affordable housing units throughout our service area that are significantly lower than Fair Market Rent. We currently offer Weatherization, Homebuyer with Rehab and Foreclosure Prevention, Emergency Solutions Grant, Homeless Prevention and Transitional Housing through various departments.

Project NOW refers customers to the Rock Island, Moline, Greater Metro, Henry County and Mercer County Housing Authorities for Section 8 and Housing Choice Voucher Program. Project NOW partners with Bridging the Gap to provide semi-annually Stand Downs for homeless veterans.

5. **Emergency Services** - Project NOW is very strong in our provision of emergency services including Energy Programs such as: Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program "LIHEAP" which provides funding to assist eligible households to meet the cost of home energy bills. MidAmerican Energy provides funding through its ICARE program to assist eligible households to meet the cost of heat related energy bills, water heaters and small weatherization repairs. Ameren provides funding through its Warm Neighbors Cool Friends program to assist eligible households to meet the cost of heat

related energy bills. Project NOW's CSBG program offers assistance with food, medical, dental, appliances, clothing, furniture, car repairs and information/referral.

The Department of Human Services' Emergency and Transitional Housing Grant, Supportive Housing Program and Homeless Prevention Grants provides housing subsidies and customer assistance for security deposits, rent and utilities. Project NOW operates 14 units of Transitional Housing for homeless individuals and families. The program operates as scattered site housing along with supportive services. Funding for this program is through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Illinois Department of Human Services and the Rock Island County 708 Mental Health Board. Project NOW works with local shelters in providing homeless services, 3 shelters in Illinois and 3 in Iowa.

6. **Nutrition** - Project NOW's Senior Services department partners with Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging to provide Home-Delivered Meals to serve over 60,000 meals annually to home bound seniors. In addition, Project NOW has 7 Congregate Meal sites throughout our service area that serve an additional 16,000 meals annually.

There are currently 56 Summer Food Service Programs throughout our service area. Illinois served meals to 107,000 children in program year 2016. Project NOW served 2,004 meals in 2016 to low income children.

River Bend Food Bank is the sole non-profit distributor of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) product for eastern Iowa and western Illinois. The foodbank provides food to over 300 charitable feeding programs and distributes over 8 million pounds of food each year.

7. **Linkages** - Project NOW networks with many local agencies and associations to coordinate and plan effective service delivery systems for low-income residents, giving customers direct access to our services. We conduct public meetings, presentations and workshops throughout the county to inform people of existing services. We maintain and produce a resource packet full of essential information to assist customers looking for housing/landlord listings, assisted housing projects, legal services, shelters, and other useful data. Project NOW also produces pamphlets and media releases to keep the public informed of services.

Project NOW has offices in each of our 3 counties. Henry County has an office in Kewanee, Mercer County has an office in Aledo and Rock Island County has offices in Moline and Rock Island. These offices are readily accessible using public transportation. Project NOW provides door-to-door service for disabled and elderly in Mercer and Rock Island Counties.

Project NOW also has a website where anyone can access information. The information is updated on an as needed basis to reflect the latest program information.

8. **Self-Sufficiency** - There are several projects providing case management and coordination of programs for the low-income population. Project NOW, through its HUD Transitional Housing Program and the Department of Human Services Supportive Housing Program aid homeless families in the transition from homelessness to family self-sufficiency.

Project NOW partners with the Rock Island Housing Authority to provide self-sufficiency and supportive housing to help families gain independence from public assistance

programs. The Family and Community Development case management model is used in this work.

9. **Health** - Project NOW provides funding for medical prescriptions through the CSBG emergency assistance program. Local health departments coordinate health programs for each county which includes personal health services and immunizations, health promotion and education, and environmental health services. Project NOW and the Cities of Moline and Rock Island are addressing lead paint homes for the low-income population and partners with the Health Department to perform lead screening for children. Project NOW administers The Healthy Homes Initiative to eliminate lead-based paint hazards in low-income housing.

Project NOW has 6 hospitals in the service area. There are 3 additional local hospitals in Iowa. Genesis Hospitals and Unity Point Health provide visiting nurses for quality home health care. There are also several mental health providers to help those with mental illness.

Community Health Care provides quality medical care. An affordable sliding fee scale based on a patient's family size and income is available to patients who qualify. There are currently 5 locations in Rock Island County with additional sites offered in Iowa.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF LINKAGES

Coordination Efforts

An informed outreach/referral network is vital for an effective delivery of services to our low-income population. Project NOW works closely with many of the social service agencies in the area to coordinate service delivery to low-income individuals and families. Project NOW maintains formal and informal cooperation agreements with other agencies to facilitate service provision. Through networking arrangements, Project NOW staff remains at the forefront of the resource and service delivery area, while providing quality outreach and referrals for our low-income customers.

Project NOW maintains outreach sites in all 3 counties served as well as numerous satellite sites. Staff at these outreach sites are employed by Project NOW and they perform intake applications for "LIHEAP", CSBG, Housing, Clothing, Food, Employment/Training Programs and provide information and referral to other community programs.

Pamphlets and brochures describing our programs and services are available at locations throughout our service area. The staff conducts workshops with Head Start parents, community groups, food pantries and other site events during the year.

The Northwestern Illinois Continuum of Care has instituted a central database for homeless activities – ServicePoint, which records and stores homeless customer information on the HUD mandated Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This system provides information on customer service levels, characteristics and service needs of homeless persons entering the CoC system. Project NOW uses HMIS data locally and also participates in the national Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). The AHAR is a report to Congress on the nature and extent of homelessness in the United States.

Intake, Assessment and Referral

Interaction with other social service provider's keeps Project NOW staff aware of programs benefiting our customers. When customers contact Project NOW for assistance, the outreach worker begins an intake assessment. This assessment provides the outreach worker with information necessary on how best to help the customer. Outreach workers refers the customer to necessary services. Several Project NOW services are short-term, with only one or two contacts with the customer (i.e.: dental, medicine, and utility assistance).

Case Management

Project NOW has two programs requiring long-term commitments by the customer and agency, such as Transitional Housing and Family and Community Development. For these programs, Project NOW uses the Family and Community Development (FCD) case management approach, involving an assessment and development of the Family Self-Sufficiency scale. Participants in the programs receive referrals to other support services providers while in the program. In these instances, Project NOW staff communicate directly with other agency staff to specify needed services and to follow-up on the referral. The referral and case management are confidential and done for the benefit of the customer.

Follow-up

Follow-up procedures differ for each of the CSBG work program components; some require only one or two contacts with the customer (i.e.: dental, medicine, and utility assistance). With these programs the follow-up may be a phone contact with other agencies also providing assistance to a particular family confirming the emergency situation is resolved. Transitional Housing and Family and Community Development require long-term commitments by the customer and Project NOW. Customers in these programs are required to set goals and work towards them. The staff usually contacts these customers biweekly or monthly to follow-up on their progress.

V. COORDINATION

Project NOW coordinates the CSBG program internally with other services provided by Project NOW, and externally with other social service organizations to ensure a comprehensive service delivery. This coordination may occur through several methods. Information about services is circulated through the social service network via meetings, newsletters, fax, websites, flyers, email, and/or by telephone. Project NOW maintains an information/referral network within the service area and with many of the social service providers. Project NOW is involved with several community collaborations to coordinate services and partners with local agencies in cooperation agreements. The CSBG Program components are reviewed below for internal and external coordination of resources.

1. **Employment/Economic Development** - Project NOW uses CSBG funding to partner with the local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Agency to operate a Skills Training program, which provides classroom training in high growth fields/careers of Certified Nursing Assistance (CNA), Commercial Driver's License and Welding.
2. **Education** - Project NOW provides CSBG scholarships to economically disadvantaged students in the service area. The scholarship program coordinates with Black Hawk College, Western Illinois University, trade schools and local school districts.

3. **Income Management** - Project NOW's Community Services Department coordinates income management with R.I.A. Federal Credit for our Transitional Housing Program and Supportive Housing. The income management may be accomplished through workshops with multiple customers or one-to-one counseling sessions.

4. **Housing** - Counseling services are coordinated with other housing services offered by Project NOW including the emergency rehabilitation, weatherization, and housing development. Weatherization of homes is provided through the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program. Project NOW created and maintains an assisted housing list of available units for seniors, disabled and low-income residents as well as a landlord listing to help renters find a place to live. Both of these resources are shared with agencies and municipalities to make sure the information is available to help people locate appropriate housing and are updated on a regular basis.

5. **Emergency Services** - Project NOW provides rent and security deposit assistance in crisis situations. This program is coordinated with other federal, state and local resources to optimize the funds available. The CSBG Emergency Assistance focuses on food, medical, dental, appliances, clothing, furniture, car repairs and information and referral services, as these areas demonstrated the greatest need with few resources. Project NOW networks with service providers to minimize service duplication, increase the efficiency of program delivery, and provide effective outreach and referral.

Finding shelter for the homeless is a priority targeted by Project NOW and the Northwestern Illinois Continuum of Care. Project NOW works with other shelters, transitional housing and rental assistance programs to locate longer term housing and support for homeless persons. Homeless services are coordinated with shelter providers and emergency assistance providers for outreach and referral. Project NOW operates a Transitional Housing Program, providing twenty units of scattered site leased housing for homeless families and individuals along with supportive services for up to 2 years. Project NOW also works closely with IL Department of Human Services, IL Department of Employment Security, local housing authorities and the Partners in Job Training & Placement for support services, employment, housing and training programs.

6. **Nutrition** - Project NOW provides referrals to local food pantries for nutritional food for low-income residents throughout the area. Project NOW's Senior Services operates the Home Delivered Meals Program for meals for home bound senior citizens and person with disabilities. Senior Services also works with local area churches to provide congregate meals. Project NOW partners with the Illinois State Board of Education to operate a Summer Food Service Program to feed children a nutritious meal during the summer months.

7. **Linkages – Outreach and Referral** - Outreach and referrals are performed for participants in each of the CSBG program components. Customers requesting services from Project NOW or partner agencies usually need additional services and are referred by staff to appropriate resources. Throughout the year, Project NOW and partner agencies host and participate in community events/workshops to increase knowledge of available services. Project NOW staff distribute pamphlets at workshops and informational meetings. Project NOW has a detailed book of services which is available to the public.

8. **Self-Sufficiency** - Project NOW partners with local housing authorities to provide supportive services for their customers. The program consists of case management services that help participants maintain their housing and work towards self-sufficiency.

9. **Health** - Project NOW is addressing lead paint in homes of low-income persons and partners with the Rock Island County Health Department, Cities of Rock Island and

Moline. Project NOW continues to promote awareness of services offered through the CSBG through various collaborations with social service partners.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES

Project NOW participates in several community and neighborhood-based activities promoting self-sufficiency, education, community awareness, strengthening families and encouraging effective parenting. In recent years, Project NOW has been involved in several innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives using our CSBG program:

- A. Project NOW has partnered with the American Job Center, the local Workforce Investment Act Agency, to provide funding for training in high demand fields. Courses offered by Black Hawk College are Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Welding. Courses offered by the 160 Driving Academy are Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
- B. Project NOW has partnered with many community organizations for the annual Point-In-Time Count held on 1/24/17. Project NOW served as the lead agency for this count and coordinated efforts across a 15 county area.

VII. YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Project NOW recognizes the need to address the issues confronting youth in low-income communities. As **Table 2** shows, youth make up 21% of our poverty population. Table 8 shows high school dropout rates and chronic truancy rates.

Project NOW works with youth and their families through our Head Start, Youth and Family Transitional Housing, Family/Community Development, Outreach and Nutrition programs.

Head Start works intensively with low income families with children aged 3-5 years, ensuring the children are ready for kindergarten. Head Start helps families transition from daycare or the home to a center-based Head Start program and from Head Start to public school. Family development services, parenting classes, family fun nights, family literacy book distributions, and medical/dental/mental health screenings and follow-up are part of the comprehensive services that Head Start provides. Screenings are conducted for medical, dental, vision, hearing, development and speech. Child development advocates assist parents in assessments and in securing treatment for any suspected disabilities or healthcare needs, and Head Start funds may be used to pay for services that cannot be funded through other means. 10% of Head Start enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities. Every Head Start child participates in the Nutrition Program at the free lunch level. Family members are engaged in program activities as volunteers, and parents make decisions about program policies and procedures through parent committees and policy council.

Project NOW offers **8 units of Youth Transitional Housing** in Rock Island County, and houses youth aged 16-21 with or without dependent children. Participants under age 18 must have parental approval or be emancipated or court-ordered to live independently in order to qualify. A Case Worker meets with each participant regularly to assess needs, make appropriate service referrals and assist with goal development and attainment.

Project NOW partners with area agencies (Bethany, Robert Young Center, Catholic Social Services, U of IL Extension, etc.) to provide education and training in the areas of parenting, life skills, and counseling services. The program emphasizes and expects for each youth to expand their educational level or vocational skills. Child care, education, transportation, food and personal items assistance are provided. Youth live independently and learn the importance of paying utilities on time, buying groceries, cooking, housekeeping and participating fully in their communities. A Job Coach assists each participant with job and life skills. This program encompasses all of the Family and Community Development requirements. In addition to Project NOW, Bethany for Children and Families has added four units of youth Transitional Housing.

Project NOW, school superintendents, local city officials and many neighborhood volunteers provide a Community Nutrition Program to children living in low-income neighborhoods. CSBG funds and Il State Board of Education funds are used to provide lunch at local churches and housing authorities. In 2017, Project NOW served 1,163 summer meals to children.

VIII. OUTCOME

The previous sections of the Community Action Plan evaluate the needs, describe resources available and identify gaps in services for low-income persons. This information leads to establishing problem statements for low-income persons and forms a path to the CSBG Work Programs addressing the needs, and outcome measures intended for each work program.

The CSBG work programs detailed below target gaps in services (identified as problem statements), and have a measureable impact on poverty. Project NOW establishes outcome measures for each of our work program components. The program achievements will be monitored through follow-up surveys, questionnaires, customer interviews and outreach. The problem statements, the 2018 CSBG Work Programs, National Goal and the intended outcome measure are listed according to the CSBG program categories.

1. EDUCATION

Problem Statement (Work Program 2.7) - Low-income individuals cannot afford tuition for post-secondary education.

Work Program 2.7 – Scholarships to low income individuals to local Illinois colleges.

National CSBG Goal 2 - The conditions in which low-income people live is improved.

Outcome Measure(s) - Make progress toward post-secondary degree/vocational training.

2. INCOME MANAGEMENT

Problem Statement (Work Program 3.1) – Low-income people do not have access to free budgeting and credit counseling and are easily victimized by predatory lenders.

Work Program 3.1 – Develop monthly budgets that incorporate current income and debt.

National CSBG Goal 1 - Low-income people become more self-sufficient.

Outcome Measure(s) - Low-income people use income more efficiently and effectively.

3. HOUSING

Problem Statement (Work Program 4.2.2) – Many families and individuals lack knowledge regarding tenant rights and how to be responsible in order to maintain housing.

Work Program 4.2.2 – Provide renter counseling, education on budgeting, housekeeping, affordable housing, and being a good neighbor.

National CSBG Goal 3 - Low-income people own a stake in their community.

Outcome Measure(s) - Low-income people own or actively participate in management of their housing.

Problem Statement (Work Program 4.4) – Many people on a fixed income or low-income have trouble finding affordable housing.

Work Program 4.4 - Provide affordable housing to low-income persons residing in the three county service areas.

National CSBG Goal 1 – Low-income people become more self-sufficient

Outcome Measure(s) – Obtain or maintain affordable housing.

4. EMERGENCY SERVICES

Problem Statement (Work Program 5.2) - There are many working individuals who do not earn enough to provide basic life necessities.

Work Program 5.2 - Provides emergency assistance to customers facing a crisis and unable to meet basic needs.

National CSBG Goal 6 -Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieves their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Outcome Measure(s) - Emergency needs of low-income people are ameliorated.

Problem Statement (Work Program 5.5) – Low-income individuals and/or families do not have enough income to purchase clothing and household items.

Work Program 5.5 – Provide clothing and furniture to low income households.

National CSBG Goal (6) -Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieves their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Outcome Measure(s) – Low-income people have more resources to meet basic needs.

5. NUTRITION

Problem Statement (Work Program 6.2) - There are many individuals and families who may be eligible for food stamps but do not receive them.

Work Program 6.2 – Help ensure that eligible individuals and families are informed of benefits and assist with initial application for program.

National CSBG Goal 6 - Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieves their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Outcome Measure(s) – Low-income people have more resources to meet basic needs.

6. LINKAGES

Problem Statement (Work Program 7.1) - Many individuals and families do not have the community resources needed to stabilize their living situations.

Work Program 7.1 – Provide information and referrals for low-income persons.

National CSBG Goal 1 - Low-income people become more self-sufficient.

Outcome Measure(s) - Receiving intra/inter referral services.

Problem Statement (Work Program 7.4) – Unavailability of transportation, especially where public transportation is not available, keeps households from gaining unemployment and/or maintains essential services for their household.

Work Program 7.4 – Provide transportation assistance to those living in rural areas and/or those who do not have easy access to public transportation.

National CSBG Goal 2 – Conditions in which low-income people live are improved.

Outcome Measure(s) – Availability of essential services

Problem Statement (Work Program 7.9) – Lack of coordination amongst agencies that serve the low income and homeless.

Work Program 7.9 – Serve as Lead Agency for Northwestern Illinois Continuum of Care.

National CSBG Goal 4 - Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieves their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Outcome Measure(s) – Availability of essential services

7. SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Problem Statement (Work Program 8.5) - Families work on barriers to move forward toward employment, education, financial literacy, basic needs, life skills, stabilization.

Work Program 8.5 – Provide intense case management that strengthens families and helps them to move toward self-sufficiency and family stabilization.

National CSBG Goal 6 - Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Outcome Measure(s) - Indicate improved family functioning since participating.

8. HEALTH

Problem Statement (Work Program 9.2) - Low-income people cannot afford medical and dental care that is not covered by the Medicaid card.

Work Program 9.2 – Provide assistance for medications and dental needs.

National CSBG Goal 2 – The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.

Outcome Measure(s) - Children or adults whose health condition was improved due to access to health care services.

Problem Statement (Work Program 9.9) - Low-income people cannot afford insurance and need assistance enrolling for required insurance.

Work Program 9.9 – Enroll low income persons for Medicare and Medicaid.

National CSBG Goal 2 – The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.

Outcome Measure(s) - Children or adults whose health condition was improved due to access to health care services.

Project NOW

Community Action Agency

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CUSTOMER DATA

Table 1 County Population by Gender/Race/Ethnicity/Age

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, ACS

	<u>ROCK ISLAND CNTY</u>		<u>HENRY CNTY</u>		<u>MERCER CNTY</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
POPULATION	<u>147,161</u>		<u>49,883</u>		<u>16,107</u>		<u>213,151</u>	
GENDER								
MALE	72,422	49%	24,752	49.6%	7,994	50%	105,168	49%
FEMALE	74,739	51%	25,131	50.4%	8,113	50%	107,983	51%
TOTAL	<u>147,161</u>	100%	<u>49,883</u>	100%	<u>16,107</u>	100%	<u>213,151</u>	100%

RACE

WHITE	120,888	82%	46,841	94%	15,692	97%	183,421	86%
BLACK	13,906	9%	890	2%	76	0%	14,872	7%
AM. INDIAN	411	0%	47	0%	8	0%	466	0%
ASIAN	3,159	2%	257	1%	51	0%	3,467	2%
NTV HAWAIIAN	35	0%	7	0%	0	0%	42	0%
MIXED	8,762	6%	1,841	4%	280	2%	10,883	5%
TOTAL	<u>147,161</u>	100%	<u>49,883</u>	100%	<u>16,107</u>	100%	<u>213,151</u>	100%

ETHNICITY

HISPANIC	18,061	12%	2,628	5%	344	2%	21,033	10%
NON-HISPANIC	129,100	88%	47,255	95%	15,763	98%	192,118	90%
	<u>147,161</u>	100%	<u>49,883</u>	100%	<u>16,107</u>	100%	<u>213,151</u>	100%

AGE

Under 5	9,406	6.40%	2,780	5.60%	825	5.10%	13,011	6%
5 to 9	8,980	6.10%	3,043	6.10%	976	6.10%	12,999	6%
10 to 14	9,149	6.20%	3,465	6.90%	1,121	7.00%	13,735	6%
15 to 19	9,296	6.30%	3,406	6.80%	981	6.10%	13,683	6%
20 to 24	9,472	6.40%	2,706	5.40%	827	5.10%	13,005	6%
25 to 34	18,530	12.60%	5,354	10.70%	1,570	9.70%	25,454	12%
35 to 44	17,239	11.70%	5,735	11.50%	1,878	11.70%	24,852	12%
45 to 54	19,522	13.30%	7,168	14.40%	2,378	14.80%	29,068	14%
55 to 59	10,728	7.30%	3,794	7.60%	1,147	7.10%	15,669	7%
60 to 64	9,630	6.50%	3,397	6.80%	1,202	7.50%	14,229	7%
65 to 74	13,515	9.20%	4,949	9.90%	1,760	10.90%	20,224	9%
75 to 84	7,793	5.30%	2,894	5.80%	1,045	6.50%	11,732	6%
85 & over	<u>3,901</u>	<u>2.70%</u>	<u>1,192</u>	<u>2.40%</u>	<u>397</u>	<u>2.50%</u>	<u>5,490</u>	<u>3%</u>

Analysis of Tables 1

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (Table 1). Project NOW's service area's estimated population is 213,151, with 105,168 males and 107,983 female. There are **37,446 people over age 65** and **53,428 age 19 or younger**. Median age for our service area is **41.9**.

Table 2 Population in Poverty by County/Family/Age

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2015

	<u>ROCK ISLAND CNTY</u>		<u>HENRY CNTY</u>		<u>MERCER CNTY</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
POPULATION	<u>147,161</u>		<u>49,883</u>		<u>16,107</u>		<u>213,151</u>	
AREA								
Population	147,161		49,883		16,107		213,151	
Population in Poverty	23,808	16%	5,215	10%	1,531	10%	30,554	14%

FAMILY TYPE

Female Head of Household	2,289	63%	716	65%	282	66%	3,287	64%
Male Head of Household	195	5%	47	4%	16	4%	258	5%
Married Head of Household	<u>1,147</u>	32%	<u>339</u>	31%	<u>132</u>	31%	<u>1,618</u>	31%
Households in Poverty	3,631	5%	1,102	8%	430	9%	5,163	6%
Total Households	67,699		13,600		4,723		86,022	

AGE

Under 5 in Poverty	2,614	28%	535	18%	216	24%	3,365	25%
Under 5 Population	9,488		2,926		910		13,324	

0 to 17 in Poverty	7,948	24%	1,614	14%	452	13%	10,014	21%
0 to 17 Population	32,757		11,625		3,594		47,976	

Over 65 in Poverty	4,345	18%	1,273	14%	340	11%	5,958	16%
Over 65 Population	24,394		8,806		3,094		36,294	

Analysis of Table 2

In our 3 county area, the U.S. Census data shows there were **5,163 Households** living in poverty; the total number of **female head of households** in poverty was **3,287 (63% of all households in poverty)**; **3,365 (25%)** of children under age 5 live in poverty; **5,958 (16%)** of persons age 65 and over live in poverty. 2014 poverty data reflects an increase in poverty in all 3 counties over the past year. Rock Island County had the largest increase. Official poverty data is based on the federal poverty thresholds, it is not geographically specific and does not reflect what it takes for families to make ends meet.

Child Poverty

Children are particularly vulnerable to poverty and often have higher poverty rates than the general population. According to the **2013 US Census**, there were 10,014 (17.7%) children under the age of 18 living below the poverty line.

Extreme Poverty

Extreme poverty is living on an annual income that is **less than 50% of the poverty line**. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's, American Community Survey, 4.7% of Henry County and 5.8% of Rock Island County live in extreme poverty.

Table 3 Area Median Income

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

	<u>ROCK ISLAND CNTY</u>	<u>HENRY CNTY</u>	<u>MERCER CNTY</u>	<u>STATE OF ILLINOIS</u>	<u>UNITED STATES</u>
YEAR					
2013	\$ 49,875	\$ 53,998	\$ 52,503	\$ 55,126	\$ 51,371
2014	\$ 48,160	\$ 52,117	\$ 53,626	\$ 56,212	\$ 52,250
Difference	\$ (1,715)	\$ (1,881)	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,086	\$ 879

Analysis of Table 3

Median household income fell in both Henry and Rock Island County (an average of \$1,798) and increased in Mercer County by \$1,123. Financial security is the backbone of a strong community and economy. The current economic climate speaks to the need for quality jobs allowing people to work and not live in poverty.

Table 4 Unemployment Rates by County

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

	ROCK ISLAND COUNTY	HENRY COUNTY	MERCER COUNTY	STATE OF ILLINOIS	UNITED STATES
May 2016	6.3%	6.1%	6.0%	5.6%	4.5%
April 2017	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.4%	4.4%
May 2017	5.3%	4.7%	4.2%	4.3%	4.4%
Change over Month	0.7%	0.1%	-0.4%	-0.1%	0.0%
Change over Year	-1.0%	-1.4%	-1.8%	-1.3%	-0.1%

Analysis of Table 4:

Rock Island & Henry counties continue to have higher unemployment rates than the State and the rest of the country; our service area averaged a decrease in the unemployment rate of 1.40%.

Table 5 Labor Force by Race/Age/Sex/Ethnicity/Education

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

RACE	ROCK ISLAND CNTY		HENRY CNTY		MERCER CNTY		TOTAL	
WHITE	61,596	88.7%	13,120	95.8%	2,645	97.0%	77,361	90.1%
BLACK	5,046	7.3%	316	2.3%	42	1.5%	5,404	6.3%
AMERICAN INDIAN	311	0.4%	39	0.3%	6	0.2%	356	0.4%
ASIAN	1,521	2.2%	99	0.7%	18	0.7%	1,638	1.9%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN	80	0.1%	8	0.1%	0	0.0%	88	0.1%
MIXED	864	1.2%	109	0.8%	16	0.6%	989	1.2%
TOTAL	69,418	100%	13,691	100%	2,727	100%	85,836	100%

AGE

14 to 18	1,856	3%	491	4%	108	4%	2,455	3%
19 to 21	3,508	5%	733	5%	119	4%	4,360	5%
22 to 24	3,612	5%	708	5%	136	5%	4,456	5%
25 to 34	13,845	20%	2,482	18%	448	16%	16,775	20%
35 to 44	15,053	22%	2,691	20%	535	20%	18,279	21%
45 to 54	15,136	22%	2,943	21%	597	22%	18,676	22%
55 to 64	12,590	18%	2,618	19%	552	20%	15,760	18%
65 to 99	3,818	6%	1,025	7%	232	9%	5,075	6%
Total	69,418		13,691		2,727		85,836	100%

SEX

FEMALE	32,388	47%	6,838	50%	1,392	51%	40,618	47%
MALE	37,030	53%	6,853	50%	1,335	49%	45,218	53%
	69,418	100%	13,691	100%	2,727	100%	85,836	100%

ETHNICITY

HISPANIC	5,749	8%	650	5%	71	3%	6,470	8%
NON-HISPANIC	63,669	92%	13,041	95%	2,656	97%	79,366	92%
	69,418	100%	13,691	100%	2,727	100%	85,836	100%

EDUCATION

Less than High School	7,577	11%	1,438	11%	267	10%	9,282	11%
Diploma or Equiv. no college	18,756	27%	4,204	31%	891	33%	23,851	28%
Some college or AA	19,680	28%	3,876	28%	793	29%	24,349	28%
BA or Adv. Degree	14,429	21%	2,238	16%	418	15%	17,085	20%
Education attainment not available (workers <Age 24)	8,976	13%	1,932	14%	364	13%	11,272	13%
Total	69,418		13,688		2,733		85,839	100%

Analysis of Table 5:

The labor force in our service area for the 2nd quarter of 2014 was 87,040. Our work force is primarily white with 78,936 people or 90.69% of the work force. Of the total workforce, 47.98% is female with the remaining 52.02% being male. 92.5% of the workforce identifies as non-Hispanic of Latino. Roughly 60% of our workforce falls between the ages of 35-64. The majority of our work force has some college or a degree.

Table 6 Assistance Programs by Households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, ACS

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

	<u>ROCK</u>		<u>HENRY</u>		<u>MERCER</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	<u>ISLAND</u>		<u>CNTY</u>		<u>CNTY</u>			
	<u>CNTY</u>		<u>CNTY</u>		<u>CNTY</u>		<u>CNTY</u>	
Receive SNAP	11,434	17%	3,146	23%	501	11%	15,081	18%
Do not receive SNAP	<u>56,265</u>	83%	<u>10,454</u>	77%	<u>4,222</u>	89%	<u>70,941</u>	82%
Total Households	67,699		13,600		4,723		86,022	

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

	Payment Cases	Cost Per Case	Total Cost
July	38,768	\$308	\$11,951,575
August	37,998	\$304	\$11,559,028
September	37,350	\$305	\$11,377,754
October	35,946	\$307	\$11,024,762
November	35,027	\$299	\$10,487,579
December	34,779	\$304	\$10,571,513
January	33,422	\$299	\$9,997,334
February	32,625	\$294	\$9,604,228
March	<u>31,670</u>	\$297	<u>\$9,392,095</u>
Total	317,585		\$95,965,870
Average	35,287	\$302	\$10,662,874

Table 6 Analysis: Table 8 shows total # of households (cases) enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program during 2016. This benefits low-income families and individuals to help buy food they need for good health. Our service area is below the State and the National Average.

Table 7 Eligible for Free (130%) & Reduced Lunches (185%)

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

	ROCK ISLAND COUNTY	HENRY COUNTY	MERCER COUNTY	STATE OF ILLINOIS
2011-2012	37.5%	34.9%	51.6%	49.2%
2012-2013	40.5%	40.6%	52.4%	50.6%
2013-2014	55.5%	46.0%	44.8%	56.8%
2014-2015	60.2%	47.0%	43.2%	53.8%
2015-2016	60.1%	48.9%	41.8%	40.9%
2016-2017	68.9%	41.9%	31.3%	60.7%

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY	% of students eligible for free/reduced lunches
Carbon Cliff-Barstow SD 36	100%
East Moline SD 37	100%
Hampton SD 29	32%
Moline-Coal Valley CUSD 40	54%
Riverdale CUSD 100	23%
Rock Island SD 41	100%
Rockridge CUSD 300	18%
Silvis SD 34	100%
United Township HSD 30	57%

HENRY COUNTY	% of students eligible for free/reduced lunches
Alwood CUSD 225	42%
Annawan CUSD 226	32%
Cambridge CUSD 227	40%
Colona SD 190	86%
Galva CUSD 224	50%
Geneseo CUSD 228	22%
Kewanee CUSD 229	73%
Orion CUSD 223	15%
Wethersfield CUSD 230	38%

MERCER COUNTY	% of students eligible for free/reduced lunches
Mercer CUSD 404	38%
Sherrard CUSD 200	26%
United CUSD 304	34%

Table 7 Analysis:

Our service area continues to increase in the # of children eligible for free and reduced lunches. Mercer County had a slight decrease and Henry County had a slight increase. Rock Island saw a significant increase in the # of eligible children and is the only county in our service area that is above the State average. Henry County has 3 school districts; Colona, Galva and Kewanee, that are 48.89% eligible. Mercer County has 41.78% eligible. Rock Island County has 60% of its school districts; Carbon Cliff-Barstow, East Moline, Moline-Coal Valley, Rock Island, Silvis and United Township all above the 50% eligible.

Table 8 High School Drop Out Rates

Source: Illinois District Report Card for 2015-2016

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY	Chronic Truant	Drop Out Rate	Graduation Rate
Moline-Coal Valley CUSD 40	7.6%	2.0%	91.0%
Riverdale CUSD 100	0.2%	1.0%	94.0%
Rock Island SD 41	14.1%	3.0%	81.0%
Rockridge CUSD 300	1.0%	1.0%	96.0%
United Township HSD 30	16.2%	8.0%	92.0%
County Average	7.8%	3.0%	90.8%

HENRY COUNTY	Chronic Truant	Drop Out Rate	Graduation Rate
Alwood CUSD 225	0.8%	2.0%	93.0%
Annawan CUSD 226	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Cambridge CUSD 227	0.7%	1.0%	90.0%
Geneseo CUSD 228	0.0%	1.0%	95.0%
Kewanee CUSD 229	12.0%	7.0%	77.0%
Orion CUSD 223	0.5%	2.0%	94.0%
Wethersfield CUSD 230	6.6%	5.0%	92.0%
County Average	2.9%	2.6%	91.6%

MERCER COUNTY	Chronic Truant	Drop Out Rate	Graduation Rate
Sherrard CUSD 200	1.8%	1.0%	92.0%
United CUSD 304	2.6%	1.0%	86.0%
County Average	2.2%	1.0%	89.0%

Table 8 Analysis:

Project NOW's service area's graduation rate is lower than the 97.8% State average; our rate for chronic truants is significantly lower than the State average of 8.7%. **Drop outs** include students in grades 9-12 who have been removed from the district-housed roster for any reason other than death, extended illness, graduation/program completion, transfer to another public/private school or expulsion. **Chronic Truants** are students who are absent from school without valid cause for 9 or more of the last 180 school days.

Table 9 Rental Housing, FMR & Housing Wages

Source: Poor By Comparison, Report on Illinois Poverty. January 2016

	Henry County	Mercer County	Rock Island County	Illinois
Renters as a % of Households	21.40%	21.90%	30.50%	33.60%
% of Severely Rent-Burdened Households	15.70%	16%	23%	24.60%
Fair Market Rent for a 2 Bedroom	\$738	\$738	\$738	\$1,039
Estimate of Mean Renter Hourly Wage	\$10.29	\$10.14	\$14.32	\$15.25
Monthly Rent Affordable @ Mean Renter Wage	\$535	\$527	\$745	\$793
Wage Needed to Afford Two Bedroom Apartment at FMR	\$13.69	\$13.69	\$13.69	\$19.98
Two Bedroom Housing Wage as a Percent of Illinois Minimum Wage	166%	166%	166%	242%
Work Hours per Week at Illinois Minimum Wage to Afford a Two Bedroom at FMR	66	66	66	97

FAIR MARKET RENTS

One Bedroom	\$ 578
Two Bedroom	\$ 738
Three Bedroom	\$ 969
Four Bedroom	\$ 1,061

Analysis of Table 9:

In Project NOW's service area, the housing wage is \$13.69. Housing wage is the amount a full time worker (160 hours per month) needs to earn per hour to be able to afford a two-bedroom unit at Fair Market Rent, paying no more than 30% of their income on rent. \$13.69 is 166% of the minimum wage of \$8.25. Further, a household working at minimum wage would need to work 66 hours per week to afford a two-bedroom unit. A Supplemental Security Income recipient receiving \$733 monthly can afford to spend no more than \$220 in monthly rent, while the Fair Market Rent for a one bedroom is \$578.

Table 10 Homeless Survey, January 24, 2017

Source: Poor By Comparison, Report on Illinois Poverty. January 2016

Total Number of Households:	169
Total Number of Adults:	176
Total Number of Children	67
Total Number of Persons:	243

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA BY PERSONS

Gender

FEMALE	131	54%
MALE	112	46%
TOTAL	243	

Race

White	140	58%
Black / AA	93	38%
Asian	0	0%
Am. Indian	3	1%
Native Hawaiian	2	1%
Multiple Races	5	2%
Total	243	

Ethnic Background

Hispanic	22	9%
Non-Hispanic	221	91%
TOTAL	243	

Household Type

Only Adults	131	78%
Only Children	1	1%
Adult(s) & Child(ren)	37	22%
TOTAL	169	

Table 11 Project NOW Customer Demographics, 2016

Total unduplicated number of persons: 20,275
 Total unduplicated number of households: 8,529

Gender

Female	11,708	58%
Male	8,567	42%
TOTAL	20,275	

Health Insurance

Yes	4,756	23%
No	15,519	77%
TOTAL	20,275	

Age

0-5	3,442	17%
6-11	2,993	15%
12-17	2,393	12%
18-23	1,251	6%
24-44	4,893	24%
45-54	1,858	9%
55-69	2,372	12%
70+	1,073	5%
TOTAL	20,275	

Disabled

Yes	2,339	12%
No	17,936	88%
TOTAL	20,275	

Family Type

Single Parent (F)	853	10%
Single Parent (M)	58	1%
2 Parent House	442	5%
Single Person	3,724	44%
2 Adults 0 kids	236	3%
Other	3,216	38%
TOTAL	8,529	

Ethnicity

Hispanic	2,290	11%
Non-Hispanic	17,985	89%
TOTAL	20,275	

Family Size

One	3,515	41%
Two	1,587	19%
Three	1,309	15%
Four	983	12%
Five	586	7%
Six	329	4%
Seven	125	1%
Eight or More	95	1%
TOTAL	8,529	

Race

White	10,859	54%
Black / AA	5,972	29%
Am. Indian	44	0%
Asian	765	4%
Hawaiian	4	0%
Other	2,422	12%
Multiple Races	209	1%
TOTAL	20,275	

Table 12 Home Weatherization Assistance Program 16-17

Total number of occupied units: 64

Average household size: 2.3

Gender	Count	%
Female	39	61%
Male	<u>25</u>	39%
TOTAL	64	

Race	Count	%
White	46	72%
Black / AA	11	17%
Asian	1	2%
Hispanic	5	8%
Other	<u>1</u>	2%
TOTAL	64	

Head of Household Age	Count	%
Under 21	0	0%
21-44	18	28%
45-59	24	38%
Over 59	<u>22</u>	34%
TOTAL	64	

Income Range	Count	%
Zero Income	3	5%
1-4,000	5	8%
4,001-8,000	2	3%
8,001-12,000	14	22%
12,001-16,000	14	22%
16,000-20,000	8	13%
20,001 +	<u>18</u>	28%
TOTAL	64	

Sources of Income	Count	%
Wages	34	53%
Social Security	23	36%
Unemployment	4	6%
Supplemental Security	6	9%
Other	<u>8</u>	13%
TOTAL	75	

Household/Housing Characteristics	Count	%
With Elderly Members	22	34%
Elderly Count	26	
With Young Children	14	22%
Children Count	17	
With Disabled Members	14	22%
Disabled Count	14	
Head of Household Disabled	12	19%

Table 13 LIHEAP Customer Demographics 16-17

Total Applications: 7,400

Household Size

One	2,972
Two	1,316
Three	1,033
Four	758
Five	407
Six	205
Seven	80
Eight	28
Nine	20
Average	3

Poverty Range

< 50%	2,100
51% - 100%	2,751
101% - 150%	1,834
> 150%	247
Zero Income	749
\$1 to \$100	251

Ownership Type

Ownership Type	2,016
rent	2,736
Subsidized	2,025
Other	71

Primary Fuel Type

Natural Gas	5,300
Electric	1,104
Propane	95
Fuel Oil	1
Cash	11

Child Age Range

Child Age Range	Applicants	Households
2 & Under	1,235	1,060
3 - 5	1,217	1,060
6 - 17	4,306	2,383

Age Range

18 - 20	554	513
21 - 44	4,153	3,376
45 - 59	2,326	2,095
60+	2,015	1,857

Disabled

Disabled	1,850	1,761
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Ethnicity

AA	4,787	1,953
Asian	618	147
Hispanic	1,434	577
Ntve. American	28	19
Other	615	271
White	8,288	4,317

Gender

Female	9,047	5,607
Male	6,723	4,331

Income Source

Wages	2,816	2,644
Social Security	2,703	2,422
Unemployment	150	151
SSI	1,185	1,115
TANF	211	212
AABD	47	47
General Assistance	35	34
Other	958	949

Table 14 Head Start Program Year 2016-2017

Race

White	245	65%
Black / AA	88	23%
Asian	12	3%
Other	0	0%
Multiple Races	<u>30</u>	8%
TOTAL	375	

Age

3 - 4	155	41%
4 - 5	183	49%
5 & Older	<u>37</u>	10%
TOTAL	375	

Sex

Female	187	50%
Male	<u>188</u>	50%
TOTAL	375	

Parental Status

One	202	54%
Two	<u>173</u>	46%
TOTAL	375	

Relationship to Primary Adult

Adopted, Natural, Step	151	96%
Foster	5	3%
Grandchild	1	1%
Niece/Nephew	0	0%
Other	<u>0</u>	0%
TOTAL	157	

Analysis of Table 14:

In 2015 there were 13,011 total children under the age of 5 in our service area; 3,365 of these children lived in poverty. 3,693 are enrolled in a preschool program. We are in the process of analyzing this data further for possible future Head Start locations to ensure we are reaching the most vulnerable children.

TABLE 15
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Illinois Department of
Commerce &
Economic Opportunity
Community Services
Block Grant

ILLINOIS COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES

Customer Needs Assessment

Illinois's community action agencies are conducting a study of the needs individuals and families may be experiencing in their lives. Results from the study will be considered by the community action agencies for planning, developing, and delivering agency programs, services, and activities.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer each question by checking the appropriate box (or boxes) or providing a written response. After completing the survey, please return it where you received it.

All surveys will be kept confidential. Thank you for participating.

1. What county do you live in? _____ 2. What is your household's zip code? _____

3. Are you a male or female? Male Female Other

4. Are you aged 55 or over? YES NO

5. Are you married or living with a partner? YES NO

6. **EMPLOYMENT:** Which employment needs could you use help with (select all that apply)...

- Getting training for the job that I want
- Getting an education for the job that I want
- Finding a permanent full-time job that will support me or my family
- Knowing what jobs are available
- Learning how to interview for a job
- Learning how to write a resume
- Learning how to fill out job applications
- Learning computer skills to apply for jobs
- Obtaining appropriate clothing for my job
- Obtaining equipment (e.g. tools) for my job

7. **EDUCATION:** Which education needs could you or a family member use help with (select all that apply)...

- Obtaining a high school diploma or GED/HSED
- Obtaining a two-year college degree
- Obtaining a four-year college or university degree
- Choosing a career
- Choosing a technical school program
- Learning how to use a computer
- Learning or improving communication or language skills
- Learning English (as a second language)
- Getting financial assistance to complete my education
- Completing college aid forms (including FAFSA forms)

8. **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL ISSUES:** Which financial and/or legal needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...

- Budgeting and managing money
- Opening a checking or savings account
- Filling out tax forms
- Understanding credit scores
- Solving problems with a credit card or loan company
- Solving problems with utility or telephone company
- Solving problems with payday loans

- Solving bank foreclosure/bankruptcy/repossession problems or issues
- Solving divorce problems or issues
- Solving child custody problems or issues
- Solving child support problems or issues
- Solving restraining order problems or issues
- Getting protection in domestic violence situations
- Getting legal assistance with deportation or immigration issues
- Getting legal assistance when denied services

9. **HOUSING:** Which housing needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...

- Finding affordable housing that fits my family's needs
- Getting financial assistance with a down payment or closing costs to buy a home
- Qualifying for a loan to buy a home
- Obtaining home ownership education
- Obtaining renter/tenant rights and responsibilities education
- Learning basic home repair and property maintenance skills
- Getting financial assistance with rent payments
- Getting financial assistance with rent deposits
- Making my home more energy efficient
- Making changes to my home for a person with disabilities
- Getting emergency shelter

10. **FOOD AND NUTRITION:** Which food and nutrition needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)

- Getting food from food pantries, food banks, or food shelves
- Having enough food at home
- Learning how to shop and cook for healthy eating
- Learning how to stretch my food dollar
- Getting emergency food assistance
- Getting meals delivered to my home
- Enrolling in the Food Assistance Program
- Learning how to model healthy eating for my children
- Getting nutritious foods during pregnancy
- Obtaining breastfeeding education and assistance

11. Do you have children (under the age of 18) living with you? YES NO *(If NO, skip questions 12 and 13)*

12. **CHILD CARE AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT:** If you have children (under the age of 18) living with you, which child care and/or child development needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...

- Finding child care in a convenient location
- Finding quality licensed child care
- Finding affordable child care
- Finding child care for babies
- Finding child care for toddlers
- Finding child care for preschoolers
- Finding evening or nighttime child care
- Finding weekend child care
- Finding a quality preschool
- Finding a before/after school program
- Preparing my preschool child for public school

- Getting financial assistance with child care costs
- Getting financial assistance with school supplies
- Getting financial assistance with school fees
- Getting financial assistance with school or club activities

13. **PARENTING AND FAMILY SUPPORT:** *If you have children (under the age of 18) living with you, which parenting and/or family support needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...*

- Learning how to discipline my children more effectively
- Learning how to communicate and deal with my teenage children
- Learning how to deal with my children who have displayed bullying or violent behavior
- Learning how to deal with the bullying or violent behavior of my children's friends
- Learning how to talk to my children about drugs and alcohol
- Learning how to talk to my children about sex, AIDS, STDs, etc.
- Learning how to help my children cope with stress, depression, or emotional issues
- Learning how to set goals and plan for my family
- Communicating better with my children's care provider or teachers

14. **TRANSPORTATION:** *Which transportation needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...*

- Having access to public transportation
- Having dependable transportation to and from work
- Getting financial assistance to buy a dependable car
- Getting financial assistance to make car repairs
- Getting financial assistance to buy car insurance
- Getting financial assistance to pay car registration or license fees
- Getting a driver's license
- Getting to and from medical or dental appointments
- Getting myself to and from school
- Getting my children to and from child care
- Getting my children to and from school
- Getting my children to and from school or club activities
- Going shopping and doing errands

15. **HEALTH:** *Which health needs could you or a family member use help with (select all that apply)...*

- Having affordable health insurance
- Having affordable dental insurance
- Having health care available in my community
- Having dental care available in my community
- Getting my health insurance questions answered
- Finding a doctor willing to accept Medicaid (Title XIX)
- Finding a dentist willing to accept Medicaid (Title XIX)
- Getting financial assistance for regular medical checkups
- Getting financial assistance for regular dental checkups
- Getting financial assistance for medicine and prescriptions
- Getting financial assistance for items such as glasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, etc.
- Getting financial assistance for long-term health care
- Obtaining family planning or birth control education and assistance
- Getting good medical care before my baby is born
- Getting regular check-ups, developmental screens, or physicals for my children
- Getting my children tested for lead poisoning
- Getting immunizations for my children
- Getting treatment for a drug or alcohol problem

- Getting treatment and services for mental health
- Dealing with stress, depression, or anxiety
- Dealing with problems related to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse

16. **BASIC NEEDS:** *Which basic needs could you or your family use help with (select all that apply)...*

- Getting basic furniture, appliances, or house wares
- Getting personal care items such as soap, diapers, toilet paper, etc.
- Getting clothing and shoes
- Doing yard work or snow removal
- Doing house work or laundry
- Managing medications
- Having a reliable phone
- Having access to the Internet
- Getting financial assistance with my utility bills (heating, electric, and/or water)

17. Are there any problems or needs that you or your family faced within the last 12 months that you were unable to get help with?

YES NO If YES, please list those problems or needs:

18. What is ONE thing you would like to see improved in your neighborhood?

19. How did you learn about our agency? Select all that apply:

- Family or friend
- Current or former agency customer
- The household I grew up in had received agency services
- Health care provider
- A state agency
- Other social service agency
- Brochure or flyer
- Websites/Internet
- Newspaper
- Phone book
- A mailing
- Television
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Local Church
- Billboard
- Radio
- Other

20. What are your sources of household income? Select all that apply:

- No income
- TANF
- Employment income
- Social Security
- SSI
- Other
- Child support or alimony
- General Assistance
- Unemployment insurance
- Self-employed
- Pension

21. In the last 12 months, how has your household's income situation changed?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

22. What time of day would you prefer to come to one of our locations (offices) for assistance? Select one:

- Weekday hours of 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
- Saturday hours from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
- Weekday evening hours from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
- I am not able to come to any of your locations

23. What services has your household received from our agency within the last 12 months? Select all that apply:

- Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) _____ _____
- Weatherization _____ _____
- Head Start/Early Head Start _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

24. If you know anyone with an incarcerated adult in their family, do they ever talk about particular concerns that could be addressed through... Select all that apply:

- Transportation assistance Child care assistance Job skills training Medical bill assistance
 Mentor or after school programs for children Financial assistance Stress relief Other

25. When you think about your adult family, friends and neighbors, how many of them might say something like "there's too much month at the end of my money?" or "where am I going to find money to pay for that?" Select one:

- Almost none (0 to 5%) Some (6 to 33%) Quite a few (26 to 66%) Most (67 to 95%) Almost everyone (96 to 100%)

26. When you think about your family, friends and neighbors, how many of them may have difficulties finding or buying enough quality food to provide at least three meals per day? Select one:

- Almost none (0 to 5%) Some (6 to 33%) Quite a few (26 to 66%) Most (67 to 95%) Almost everyone (96 to 100%)

27. When you have time to rest or are ready to sleep, what kind of issues in your family or neighborhood keep you up?

28. If given the opportunity, would you be willing to serve on a local board or committee that represents and makes decisions for families with low-incomes? YES NO Unsure If YES, please provide your name and phone number:

FIRST NAME: _____ LAST NAME: _____
PHONE NUMBER (999-999-9999): _____

Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. I was helped in a timely manner. YES NO N/A (not applicable)
2. I was treated with respect. YES NO N/A
3. The staff were friendly and helpful. YES NO N/A
4. I got the information and/or the services I needed. YES NO N/A
5. I was informed about other agency or community services. YES NO N/A
6. I would recommend your agency to family and friends. YES NO N/A

7. What is ONE thing you would change about the services you received from our agency?
