

State of Connecticut
Performance Report

Capital Projects Fund
2023 Report

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Executive Summary

Provide a high-level overview of the Recipient's actual uses of funding and progress made during the reporting period towards objectives stated in the approved Program Plan(s). The Executive Summary should also include an overview of key outcomes and any noteworthy challenges or opportunities identified during the reporting period.

During the period covered, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) made significant progress towards achieving the objectives outlined in the approved Program Plan. The funds were utilized effectively to develop the program and related documentation, establish a comprehensive communications strategy, and address potential challenges. Below is a high-level overview of DEEP's uses of funding, progress made, key outcomes, and noteworthy challenges:

1. **Development of Program Plan and Supporting Documentation**

DEEP successfully onboarded a skilled consultant who played a role in developing the Program Plan and all associated documentation. The consultant's expertise helped shape a comprehensive and well-structured plan that aligned with the State of Connecticut's goals and objectives.

2. **Completion and Approval of Program Plan**

The efforts of our team, along with the guidance of the consultant, led to the timely completion of the Program Plan. After rigorous review and necessary iterations, the plan was officially approved, signifying a crucial milestone towards program implementation.

3. **Establishment of Communications Strategy**

To ensure the successful launch and promotion of the program, a robust communications plan was developed. The strategy encompasses various channels, including digital media, regular web updates, and a thorough applicant webinar. This proactive approach aims to engage potential applicants, disseminate essential information, and foster stakeholder involvement.

4. **Key Outcomes**

The period under review yielded several key outcomes that reinforced our progress towards program implementation. Notably, we accomplished the following milestones:

- **Finalization of Program Plan:** The completion and approval of the Program Plan laid a strong foundation for the subsequent stages of the program.
- **Communication Readiness:** The comprehensive communications plan and related initiatives ensured that we were well-prepared to connect with prospective applicants and interested stakeholders.
- **Obstacle Identification and Resolution:** The challenges that arose during this period were promptly identified, and DEEP is actively working to resolve these issues in order to launch an effective and efficient program.

5. **Noteworthy Challenges and Opportunities**

Despite the overall progress, we encountered two noteworthy challenges that have temporarily impacted the timeline for program release:

- **Data Licensing:** The procurement and licensing of mapping data presented unforeseen complexities that required careful consideration to ensure compliance and data accuracy.
- **Application of State Labor Requirements:** Adhering to State labor requirements while designing the program demanded additional effort and adjustments to ensure full compliance.

6. **Program Launch Expectations**

As of the end of this reporting period, we anticipate resolving the identified barriers by August 2023. Once these issues are addressed, we are confident in the successful launch of the program and commencement of its implementation as per the Program Plan.

In conclusion, DEEP has diligently utilized the funding to accomplish critical program development milestones, establish a comprehensive communications strategy, and address challenges that emerged during the process. The dedication exhibited by DEEP's team has paved the way for a successful program launch in August 2023, with the ultimate aim of achieving the stated objectives and connecting our communities.

The New Haven Adult Education program has a rich history of serving residents, in particular those in distressed populations, to connect them to work, education, and healthcare monitoring opportunities. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, residents were particularly interested in the need for continuing and vocational education to stem its negative effects on vulnerable populations as expressed in community forums and surveys. The State of Connecticut identified New Haven Adult Education as an important provider of these services and selected the City of New Haven with the New Haven Adult Education Program as a cornerstone for the New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center.

The New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center is developing a Multi-Purpose Community Facility project that will invest capital assets designed to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring. The investment of American Rescue Plan Act funds is to fund the renovation and expansion of an existing vacant building owned by the City of New Haven, most recently used as administrative office space by the State of Connecticut for social services. The planned work includes the renovation of the existing space and the construction of an addition to further serve the needs of the Adult Education program. In addition, the planned work includes parking lot construction on two vacant nearby parcels that the City is in the process of acquisition.

New Haven Adult Education currently rents space elsewhere in New Haven that is substandard and ill-suited for the important programming offered by Adult Education both now and in the future. The construction of the New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center will significantly increase the ability to offer innovative programming that addresses the needs of New Haven's population, in particular groups that were also particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed plan provides a 40% expansion in the available floor area for programs in the building, with a more efficient layout that will provide work, education, and health monitoring services in one location.

The City of New Haven has used its own capital funding (both direct and in-kind) to date to fund conceptual design activities and building investigations. In addition, the State of Connecticut has allocated an additional \$500,000 from its American Rescue Plan Act allotment to the project to be used for design services. The conceptual design completed to date provides for 56,834 net square feet for the project.

New Haven held two community meetings on the New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center in the summer of 2022, where the concept of multi-faceted community training services was warmly received. In addition, there was significant support from the Newhallville neighborhood to host the Center, including support from all four neighborhood elected members of the Board of Alders. The New Haven Board of Education adopted 188 Bassett St as the location of the Center in August of 2022.

The state of Connecticut will fund \$5 million of a total estimated \$35 million cost to construct a modern, ADA compliant, multi-use public library in Manchester Connecticut with American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) funds. The State is in the process of awarding a grant commitment to Manchester; funds through the CFP program have not been distributed to Manchester yet.

The Manchester Public Library will encourage patrons to participate in programs, engage in community conversations, and discover ways to improve their lives. In addition, a larger main library will allow Manchester to accommodate significant growth in collections and technologies, while also promoting a renewed emphasis on in-library service, providing ample space for studying, collaborating, creating, reflection, civic and community engagement, and more. In addition, the library will also provide rich opportunities to reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity of Manchester. The funds put towards a modern and updated Manchester Public Library will address equity issues in an increasingly diverse community. The facility will be located in a census tract deemed highest level SVIS scale. These neighborhoods would have full access to public Wi-Fi, internet capabilities, and use of technology. In addition, the new facility will be ADA compliant to proactively engage those who need services as was not available before. The key outcomes are a multi-use public library that will be a catalyst for education, health, and job skill training for some of the state's most vulnerable populations which will include:

- Dedicated spaces for a variety of developmental ages
- Public computer access with high-speed internet service
- Universal design / American's with Disabilities (ADA) Accessible
- Instruction and program spaces to partner with adult education for continuing education
- A makerspace, including a 3-D printer and a multimedia studio

- A permanent office for the town's health equity staff

Uses of Funds

Provide a short narrative describing the intended and actual use of funds and the performance of each Program Plan. Recipients should reference the objectives and activities outlined in the approved Program Plan(s). The narrative should also explain the data, including performance indicators, submitted via the Project and Expenditure Reports during the reporting period and must address the following topics:

- *Activities implemented over the reporting period, including summaries of key milestones achieved, outputs produced, and outcomes achieved;*
- *Activities planned for the next reporting period;*
- *Narratives about individuals/households benefiting from CPF funds, including information about methods used for collecting and measuring success;*
- *Notable challenges and the status of each challenge;*
- *Overview and outcomes of ancillary costs incurred to support bringing the capital asset(s) into full use (e.g., focused advertising to increase broadband subscriptions in high-need communities, digital literacy training to support device loan programs, community engagement to support successful operations, etc.)*

If appropriate, include information on your jurisdiction's use (or planned use) of other federal funds including other programs under the American Rescue Plan, such as the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, and those under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, including the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program.

Note: Through the Performance Report, recipients are encouraged to link to public documents, including, but not limited to, legislation, dashboards, survey results, community engagement reports, and equity frameworks to support the Performance Report narrative. Treasury recommends that Recipients make use of infographics, tables, charts, pictures, case studies, and other explanatory elements in describing their programs.

During the period covered, DEEP made significant strides towards achieving the objectives outlined in the approved 'Connected Communities' Program Plan. The following is a comprehensive narrative addressing the intended and actual use of CPF funds, performance of the Program Plan, planned activities for the next period, narratives about beneficiaries, challenges faced, and outcomes of ancillary costs incurred to support program implementation.

Intended Use of CPF Funds and Program Plan Objectives:

The primary aim of the CPF funds received was to establish and implement a comprehensive broadband infrastructure program that facilitates low-income and multi-family curb-to-home and business broadband infrastructure buildout in underserved areas. The Program Plan was designed with the following objectives in mind:

1. Develop a well-structured broadband infrastructure program that aligns with State and federal goals and community needs, focusing on expanding access and improving internet connectivity.
2. Establish a strong communication strategy to engage potential applicants, local communities, and stakeholders effectively, fostering collaboration and support for the program.
3. Identify and address potential challenges and barriers that may arise during and before program launch and infrastructure deployment, ensuring a smooth and successful implementation.
4. Successfully launch the broadband infrastructure program for the benefit of underserved homes and businesses, bridging the digital divide and enhancing economic opportunities.

Activities Implemented, Key Milestones, and Outputs:

1. **Development of Comprehensive Program Plan and Supporting Documentation:** The CPF funds enabled us to onboard a consultant with expertise in broadband infrastructure projects. With their input, DEEP developed the Program Plan and all related documentation, including an interactive mapping application, application submission

portal, and a scoring matrix.

Key Milestone and Output: Completion and approval of the Program Plan.

2. **Establishment of Comprehensive Communications Plan:** Recognizing the significance of community engagement, we dedicated substantial efforts to create a comprehensive communications plan. Utilizing CPF funds, we have and/or have plans to implement: digital media campaigns, regular web updates, and applicant webinar(s) to engage potential participants and disseminate crucial program information.

Key Milestone and Output: Finalization of the communications plan, enabling us to effectively connect with target audiences and create awareness about the forthcoming broadband infrastructure program.

Outcomes Achieved:

1. **Issue Identification and Resolution:** Throughout the period covered, we encountered two notable challenges that impacted the program's timeline. These challenges were related to data licensing and the application of State labor requirements. However, interagency collaboration has helped us address these obstacles promptly.

Outcome: Identification and active resolution of challenges, reaffirming the program's readiness for a successful launch.

Activities Planned: As we progress towards program launch, the next period will focus on the following activities on an estimated timeline:

1. **Program Launch Preparation:** DEEP will finalize preparations for the program launch scheduled in August, ensuring all logistical aspects are in place for a seamless deployment.
2. **Application Deadline in October:** We will employ the communications plan to communicate the application deadline, making sure potential applicants are well-informed about the process and requirements.
3. **Award Announcement in December:** Following a thorough application review, successful applicants will be officially announced in December.
4. **Award Acceptance Deadline in January:** Accepted applicants will have until January to accept the award, confirming their participation in the broadband infrastructure program.

Individuals/Households Benefiting from CPF Funds: CPF funds will be instrumental in expanding broadband access and connectivity to underserved areas, especially in anticipation of the BEAD Program funds. Throughout the program's implementation, DEEP will collect data and narratives about the individuals and households benefiting from improved internet access. Surveys, interviews, and case studies will measure the program's success in meeting its objectives, offering valuable insights into the positive impact on beneficiaries and their experiences.

Notable Challenges and Status of Each Challenge: As previously mentioned, two challenges arose during the period covered relating to data licensing and State labor requirements that are being actively resolved with complete resolution expected by early August 2023.

The New Haven Adult and Continuing Education Center aims to become the most creative, innovative model for adult education in both Connecticut and the nation. The target outcomes of the model would include increased employment, household wages, and financial stability, as overall it will be less burdensome on local and state resources. The success of the program will lead to policy changes that best meet the needs of the adult learner at the local, state and national levels. This model will produce a talented workforce, which in turn, will encourage the recruitment, relocation, and retention of high-quality companies.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center solicits community feedback to inform instructional and operational priorities. Two community meetings held in July/August of 2022, engaged the public to discuss the future location for New Haven Adult Education. A special meeting of the New Haven Public Schools Board of Education was also held in August of 2022 to determine the appropriateness of the proposed site. New Haven Adult Education students and staff participate in regular focus groups, surveys, and 1 on 1 conversations to share thoughts and opinions. Community members and city alders visit classrooms to further understand adult education programming and student needs. On-going community feedback through various social media outlets is collected and analyzed by school administration. The New Haven Board of Education adopted 188 Bassett St as the location of the Center in August of 2022.

The City of New Haven has used its own capital funding (both direct and in-kind) to date to fund conceptual design activities and building investigations. In addition, the State of Connecticut has allocated an additional \$500,000 from its American Rescue Plan Act allotment to the project to be used for design services. The conceptual design completed to date provides for 56,834 net square feet for the project.

At this point in the design process, cost estimates have a significant range associated with them and the final cost of the project may exceed the allocated funding. In the event that the project cost may exceed the existing allocations at the completion of the design and bidding phases, the City of New Haven has committed to working with the State of Connecticut to fund any shortfall through measures including local bonding. As the magnitude of the shortfall (if any) is unknown at this time, it is not possible to commit precise amounts of funding beyond the allocated amount immediately. The State of Connecticut has allocated an additional \$500,000 from its American Rescue Plan Act allotment to the project to be used for design services. No other federal funding sources in addition to CPF are anticipated for this project at this time.

The state will update the activities completed/outcomes achieved/challenges encountered in the charts below.

Project Projection							
Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Targets Based on Federal & State Adult Education Benchmarks
Increase Student Enrollment	1320	1386	1455	1528	1604	1685	% Enrollment Target
Average % of students making an Educational Functional Level Gain via Pre/Post Test	23.55	26	28	31	34	38	10% Growth Target
Number of Graduates	132	142	153	164	176	190	7.5% Growth Target
Number of Students Earning Industry Recognized Credentials	14	17	20	24	29	35	20% Growth Target
% of Students earning a "Measurable Skills Gain" as defined by the Connecticut St. Dept of Education	27.5	30	33	37	40	44	10% Growth Target

Activity	Start Date	End Date	Description
Contracting/Selection	10/3/22	12/23/22	Grant documents and design team selection
Design Phase	12/26/22	10/13/23	Complete design phases through construction documents
Site Permitting	3/20/23	6/30/23	Secure planning + zoning approvals as needed
Construction	10/16/23	12/20/24	Construction activities

Activity	Start Date	End Date	Description
Contracting/Selection	Prior to Day 0	Day 0	Grant documents and design team selection
Design Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Contract - Month 1 Permit Set Due - Month 3 Design Development Set - Month 5 Final Construction Docs - Month 8 	Day 0	End Month 8	Complete design phases through construction documents
Site Permitting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submissions Due - Month 3 	Month 3	End Month 6	Secure planning + zoning approvals as needed
Bid/Contracting Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bid - Month 9 Award - Month 10 Contract Month 13 	Month 9	End Month 13	Bidding/Procurement/Contracting
Site Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Midpoint (50%) - Month 22 	Month 13	End Month 31	Construction of Project through Certificate of Occupancy
Project Closeout	Month 31	End Month 34	Final documentation and project closeout activities

The state of Connecticut will fund \$5 million of a total estimated \$35 million cost to construct a modern, ADA compliant, multi-use public library in Manchester Connecticut with American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund (CPF) funds. No Project and Expenditure reports were submitted during the reporting period because no CPF funds have been expended on this project yet.

Here is a timeline of progress on this project:

1. November 2022: Manchester’s voters overwhelmingly approved referendum to fund the construction of new library. The referendum vote was 13,185 in favor and 6,670 against.
2. February 2023: Town’s elected body appoints a Library Building Committee to lead the design and oversee construction of the new building.
3. March 2023-December 2023: design concepts finalized/ site acquisition.
4. January 2024-June 2024 site acquisition completed.
5. June 2024-October 2025: Construction
6. Late 2025: Opening of new library

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

- *Treasury encourages uses of funds that promote strong, equitable growth, including racial equity, in communities with a critical need, such as high-poverty and rural areas. For the purposes of CPF, equity and underserved communities are defined in the [Executive Order 13985 On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#), as issued on January 20, 2021 (EO 13985). Treasury additionally supports “equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality” EO 13985 at 7009.*

Performance Report 1 must describe efforts and outcomes during the reporting period to promote equity and address critical needs as described in each approved Program Plan. Each Performance Report thereafter must provide an update, using qualitative and quantitative data, on how the Recipient achieved or promoted equitable outcomes or progressed toward equity objectives during the reporting period, and any constraints or challenges related to increasing equity.

Please describe how the Recipient considered and measured equity and addressed critical need at various stages of the Program during the reporting period, including:

- Objectives:** Based on your definition of communities with critical need, are there particular historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups, including those living in rural areas and/or high-poverty areas, that the capital assets being funded by CPF are designed to serve? Include the definition of critical need used for each Program Plan.*
- Awareness:** How equal and practical was the ability for members of these communities, including households, businesses, and other organizations, to become aware of the services funded by CPF?*
- Outcomes:** What progress has the Program made toward addressing critical need(s) identified in targeted communities, such as closing gaps, reaching universal levels of service, or disaggregating progress by race, ethnicity, and other equity dimensions that are relevant to the policy objective? What methods (e.g., surveys, interviews) are being used (if applicable) to quantify and qualify Project and Program outcomes?*

Objectives

The Connected Communities Grant Program defines communities with critical need as those historically underserved, marginalized, and/or adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality, including residents living in rural areas and high-poverty regions. In our plan for program implementation, we have incorporated considerations that specifically address the needs of these communities. Our applicants are required to consult the Connected Communities Opportunity Map, which will provide information on potential project areas that DEEP has identified by applying the program’s goals and priorities to the location-based data. Considerations include whether the project is located in an area of low or moderate income, high unemployment, high poverty, or economic distress such as those designated as Distressed Municipalities by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and whether the applicant provides evidence of substantive community support that describes their specific needs and anticipated benefits. Applicants must provide a holistic justification

for why the communities they seek to serve have critical need in terms of internet access, affordability, reliability, and/or consistency. DEEP may also apply eligibility criteria aligned with the Program's focus on economically distressed communities and other communities with critical need in determining eligibility for funding of non-standard installations.

Awareness

Equity is not just about providing services; it is also about ensuring equitable access to information about these services. DEEP is committed to ensuring equitable and practical access for members of historically underserved communities to understand the potential benefits of the program. To achieve this, we are leveraging various communication channels, including digital and print media and community outreach to engage residents in these targeted communities. DEEP has developed a communications plan to create awareness about the program, eligibility criteria, and benefits in a manner that is accessible and inclusive.

Outcomes

While the program has not yet launched, DEEP is dedicated to making substantial progress toward addressing critical needs identified in the targeted communities, with an emphasis on closing gaps and reaching universal levels of service. Quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys and interviews, will be employed to assess Project and Program outcomes.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center has proudly served the residents of New Haven for over 30 years. Since 2002, over 48,000 students have attended state mandated courses including high school credentialing, English as a Second Language, Citizenship and GED preparation courses. During this time, approximately 3,800 adult learners have earned a high school diploma. In 2022, annual enrollment exceeded 1,300 students. Students range in ages from 17 - 70 and include individuals from over 80 countries who speak 23 diverse languages. Based on the Connecticut State Department of Education Local Profile from 2022, 58% of students are unemployed and seek immediate employment.

The New Haven Adult Education program has a rich history of serving residents, in particular those in distressed populations, to connect them to work, education, and healthcare monitoring opportunities. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, residents were particularly interested in the need for continuing and vocational education to stem its negative effects on vulnerable populations as expressed in community forums and surveys.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center offers free programs and services to New Haven Residents. There are no other fees associated with accessing the resources for New Haven Residents. Students who do not live in New Haven, who choose to access programming, activities and resources are charged a per semester fee.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center solicits community feedback to inform instructional and operational priorities. Two community meetings held in July/August of 2022, engaged the public to discuss the future location for New Haven Adult Education. A special meeting of the New Haven Public Schools Board of Education was also held in August of 2022 to determine the appropriateness of the proposed site. New Haven Adult Education students and staff participate in regular focus groups, surveys, and 1 on

1 conversations to share thoughts and opinions. Community members and city alders visit classrooms to further understand adult education programming and student needs. On-going community feedback through various social media outlets is collected and analyzed by school administration.

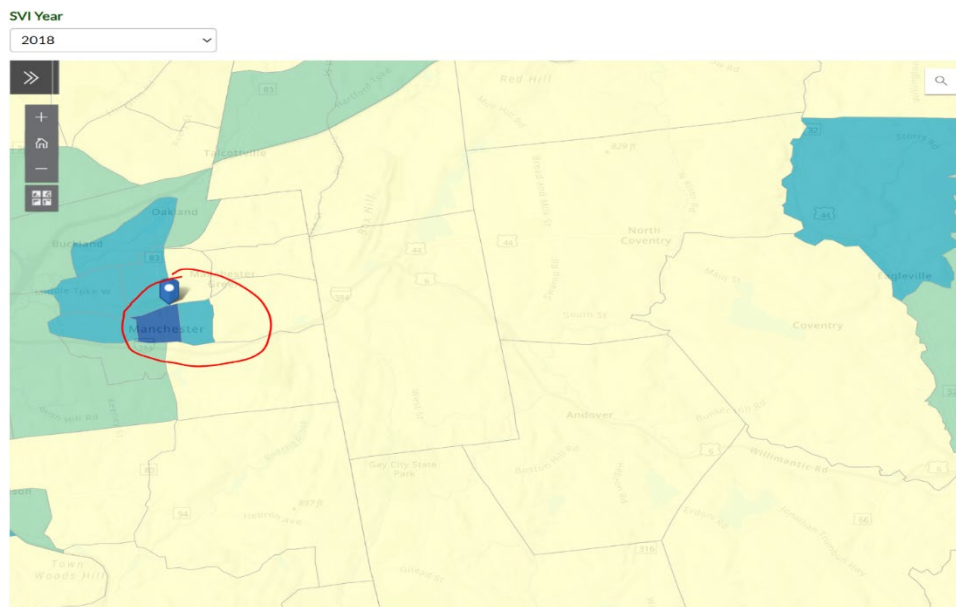
Currently, New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center serves 1400 students per year. As a result of this project, enrollment is projected to increase an estimated 5% per year through 2027 to exceed 1685 students annually. Specifically, the programming will be focused on work and education for populations historically experiencing barriers in these areas. Health support services will be integrated to reduce barriers of participation in education and workforce training.

Through the newly expanded programming, New Haven & Adult & Continuing Education Center will create a “Solutions Center” designed to equitably support all school operations. Flexible scheduling options including day, afternoon, evening and weekend class options, offered in-person and virtually. All students will be provided a digital device to use on and off site. The center will offer high speed reliable wi-fi and partner with providers to ensure all students have access. To support health and overall, wellbeing, all students will receive technology assisted devices to monitor personal data.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center will employ a continuous improvement data review cycle featuring on-site and virtual “Equity Checks”. A systematic review procedure of operations, programming, scheduling, health services, workforce training will be reviewed to ensure students and community members can access programs and services.

The new library will be in a neighborhood with a high Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). The SVI of this census tract is 0.8047, the highest level on the scale.

The systemic issues of equity and inequality are seen first-hand in this map, which covers neighborhoods with multi-million-dollar homes in the same snapshot as Manchester’s 5147 tract.



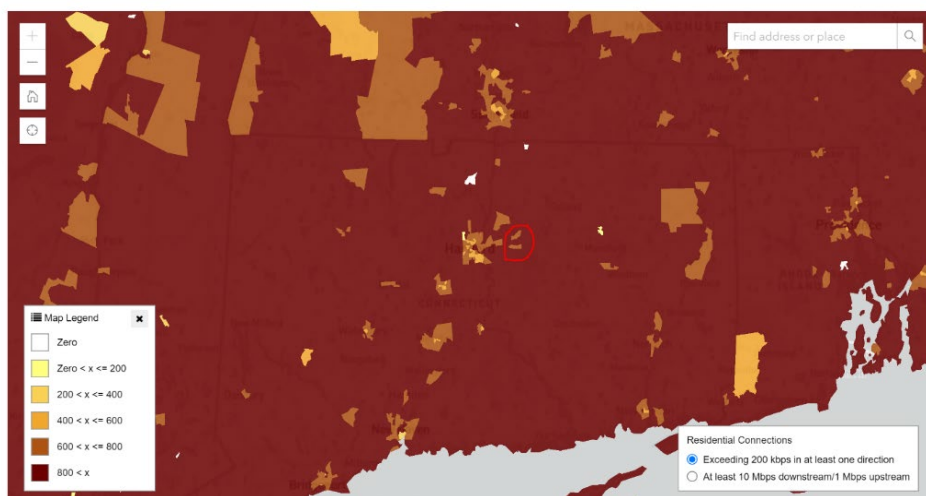
Below are noteworthy statistics on this neighborhood census tract from the latest data U.S. Census American Community Survey:

- 42% of households received food stamps/SNAP benefits, and 59% of households with children under 18 years of age.
- 21% of households live below U.S Poverty Line, and 55% of households with children under age 5
- Less than a third of households in this tract have health insurance through a private employer
- Only 4% of the population above age 25 has a bachelor's degree or higher
- 22% of households contained no individuals who had worked in the past twelve months

In addition, the digital technology gap is illustrated in this part of the state. Manchester has two census tracts, including 5147 (which is where the currently library exists and where a new one would be located), that are low on the FCC's Internet Access Map, as seen below:

Residential Fixed Internet Access Service Connections per 1000 Households by Census Tract - December 2018

As of December, 2018



A modern library will provide a space for residents of these neighborhoods to access free public Wi-Fi and help bridge the technology gap.

Residents of surrounding neighborhoods are more vulnerable than the average state resident and have greater need for an ADA compliant library:

- 17.3% of the population of the population in census tract 5147 has a cognitive difficulty, over three times the state average (4.7%)
- 11% of the population of the population in census tract 5147 has a self-care difficulty, over four times the state average (2.4%)

- 9% of the population in census tract 5147 has an ambulatory difficulty, 42% above the state average (5.8%)
- 22.4% have an independent living difficulty, over four times the state average (5.3%)
- 2.7% have a vision difficulty, 35% above state average.

In order to properly serve our most vulnerable populations and provide a modern library and civic space that can help them in the areas of education, work, and health monitoring, Manchester first must build a structure that is ADA compliant and welcomes and proactively engages those who need to service the most. Unfortunately, rehabbing the existing building is extremely expensive and violates certain historic preservation requirements, which is why the Town is seeking federal aid through the state to build a new main library branch in the same census tract that serves Manchester’s most vulnerable communities.

Labor

Describe workforce practices on any Broadband Infrastructure and/or Multi-Purpose Community Facility projects being pursued. How are projects using strong labor standards to promote effective and efficient delivery of high-quality projects while also supporting the economic recovery through employment opportunities for workers? For example, report whether any of the following practices are being utilized: project labor agreements, community benefits agreements, prevailing wage requirements, and/or local hiring.

Hiring practices include steps to ensure a diverse workforce specifically including individuals from marginalized backgrounds and the local community. Positions that do not require teaching certifications, will be filled with skills-based hiring practices. Candidates with the necessary skills and experiences will be given an equal opportunity as those with higher degrees and credentials.

Employee advancement and development will be a priority for the leadership team. All employees will have resources for growth, development, and opportunities for advancement. Internal and external professional learning communities will be established and open to all employees. Individualized employee coaching and support will be offered by program facilitators, school administrators, and peer to peer mentoring.

Community Engagement

Please describe how the Recipient incorporated or plans to incorporate feedback from communities, organizations, and constituents when selecting CPF Projects and how the Recipient plans to address feedback received during project construction and/or implementation.

Recipients should report on (and include quantitative information, such as counts) about the following activities related to community engagement in support of the implementation and operations of each Program and related Projects:

- *Community engagement efforts and activities that occurred with and/or in communities served by the Program; Recipients should include information about the types of organizations (such as training providers, community colleges, libraries, churches, and community-based groups) and, where possible, names of organizations and communities the Recipient and Subrecipient(s) were engaged with to support the implementation and operations of Projects;*
- *Outreach, advertising, and translation activities and services deployed to reach communities the Program is designed to serve; and*
- *Languages used in community outreach efforts and materials for people with limited English proficiency, and other approaches taken to solicit feedback from underserved communities. If relevant, Recipients must report on how funds will build the capacity of community organizations to serve people with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, populations with limited English proficiency, and other traditionally unserved or underserved groups.*

Recipients should also outline any plans to sustain, improve, and or grow community engagement efforts in the subsequent performance year.

DEEP is committed to actively engaging and soliciting feedback from communities, organizations, and constituents during the selection of projects and throughout the construction and implementation phases. Our approach focuses on transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness to ensure that the needs of the communities served by the projects are effectively addressed.

Completed and Active Stakeholder Outreach Initiatives:

1. **Meeting with State Agencies and Community Organizations Serving Underrepresented Communities**

Understanding the importance of inclusivity and tailored solutions, DEEP conducted individual meetings with state agencies and community organizations serving communities that would benefit from the program. Through these engagements, we identified and harnessed existing resources, avoiding duplication of efforts, and built relationships that will be leveraged throughout program implementation. Additionally, gaining insights into their specific plans and needs enabled us to customize our initiatives to better address the unique challenges faced by these communities.

2. **Stakeholder Roundtables**

As part of DEEP's commitment to inclusivity and collaboration, we organized quarterly stakeholder roundtables in three sessions to engage with various key stakeholders in government, industry, and community organizations. These discussions provide a platform for meaningful dialogue, allowing DEEP to identify opportunities and address obstacles to program success. The first round was held in April 2023 with the next planned for August 2023.

3. **Digital and Print Media**

DEEP has developed a number of informational print materials to distribute to stakeholders in addition to providing consistent web updates and social media posts for engagement. Highlights include a one-page summary of current and planned programs.

4. **Resident and Community Anchor Surveys**

DEEP assisted in the development and distribution of resident and community organization

surveys. These surveys gathered, and continue to gather, valuable insights and data, guiding the creation of actionable plans to address the specific needs of different groups and regions. The resident survey was available in both English and Spanish.

Planned Stakeholder Outreach Initiatives

1. Regional Community Forums

DEEP plans host Regional Community Forums in each of the nine Council of Government (COGs) regions to ensure full geographic coverage and direct engagement of communities, especially historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. These forums will provide a platform for direct engagement with community members, enabling us to gather valuable feedback and address concerns directly. Venues have been identified and the forums are being planned for September-November 2023.

2. Local Communications Plans

DEEP will ask that applicants submit the communications plan they intend to use to publicize and distribute information about the proposed project in the communities it will serve along with specifics on ACP registration and low-cost plan options.

3. Feedback and Grievances during Implementation

Throughout the construction and implementation phases, DEEP will maintain open channels of communication to receive feedback, grievances, and suggestions from stakeholders. Regular engagement and communication will allow provide a platform for stakeholders to voice their concerns. DEEP will ensure that all concerns are promptly acknowledged, investigated, and addressed in a timely manner.

4. Transparency in Reporting

To promote transparency and accountability, DEEP will make progress reports available to the public. These reports will include updates on project milestones, construction activities, and discussion on any feedback received and addressed. This process will foster trust and allow stakeholders to track the progress and outcomes of CPF-funded projects.

In conclusion, DEEP will strive to achieve sustainable and meaningful impacts while fostering positive relationships with all stakeholders involved in the CPF-funded projects.

New Haven & Adult Education Center will continue to offer efforts to engage the community to identify critical needs that were exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic and implement a plan to address those needs. Public forums including community meetings, public meetings of city and board of education officials, focus groups, surveys, interviews, and 1 on 1 conversations have outlined the critical needs of the community. Ongoing community engagement efforts include interactive social media accounts, educational workshops on relevant topics, resources fairs, advocacy activities, and partnerships.

New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center will continue to implement a variety of qualitative data measures to ensure all stakeholders thoughts and options were considered. Examples include:

- Community Town Hall Meetings
- 1 on 1 interviews with city residents, alders, Board of Education members, students, teachers

and staff.

- Surveys and Questionnaires
- Virtual and In-person forums and focus groups
- Advisory Committee inclusive of staff, students, community members, and partners to receive quarterly input and feedback.

Two community meetings held in July/August of 2022, engaged the public to discuss the future location for New Haven Adult Education. A special meeting of the New Haven Public Schools Board of Education was also held in August of 2022 to determine the appropriateness of the proposed site. New Haven Adult Education students and staff participate in regular focus groups, surveys, and 1 on 1 conversations to share thoughts and opinions. Community members and city alders visit classrooms to further understand adult education programming and student needs. On-going community feedback through various social media outlets is collected and analyzed by school administration. The New Haven Board of Education adopted 188 Bassett St as the location of the Center in August of 2022.

In 2020, Manchester established an office of Communications and Civic Engagement. The Office of Communications & Civic engagement serves to keep the Manchester community aware, informed, and engaged. We value transparency and accessibility, bringing important information directly to residents via Town communications channels, and this Library project will be an on-going engagement initiative, including ensuring that the critical needs of education, jobs, and health monitoring are addressed.

Moreover, there is a comprehensive public process on the planning and design of the new facility. In the past two decades, multiple architectural studies, needs assessment analyses, public focus groups, and opinion polls were conducted regarding this library's services offered and its space needs.

In 2021, the town's elected body created a 21st Century Library Task Force to gather community input on a potential new library. The results made it clear that the community is looking for a vibrant civic space that meets the changing needs of an increasing diverse population. As reflected in the Executive Summary:

We envision a Manchester Public Library where patrons will participate in programs, engage in community conversations, and discover ways to improve their lives. While accommodating significant growth in collections and technologies, a larger main library will have a renewed emphasis on in-library service, providing ample space for studying, collaborating, creating, reflection, civic and community engagement, and more. **It will also provide rich opportunities to reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity of our town.** With more than one million visits every five years, Mary Cheney Library is most likely Manchester's most heavily used all-ages town building. On average, the Manchester Public Library sees each resident walk through the doors four to five times per year seeking a diverse range of programs and resources in multiple formats and languages, and each borrows more than 12 items per year. What Manchester Public Library's patrons cannot find is adequate space for books, resources, and people. The book collection size has been stagnant since the 1960s; since the stacks filled up, every new book purchased means an older book must be discarded, even if it still circulates. Each book discarded diminishes the library's capacity to serve as keepers and protectors of cultural, literary, and intellectual history, and is an extremely inefficient use of library material funding. Currently, our book collection is 114th out of 165 public libraries in Connecticut for books per capita, simply because we have no room to keep even books that actively circulate.

In response to the Task Force final report, the Board of Director's has tasked the Town Administration with working with consult to develop building concepts and program design specifications for a new library that will function as multi-purpose civic space. The Town will utilize a portion of the new library to **directly enable work, education, and health monitoring.**

Manchester's current plan for a modern library, which incorporates substantial community engagement and a yearlong resident-led Task Force that analyzed critical needs, reflects this vision of building a multi-use public space that can serve as a catalyst in the areas of education, health, and job skill training for some of the state's most vulnerable populations.

As stated in the Task Force Final Report:

Since 2002, thousands of Manchester residents have participated in professional studies related to what they would like to see in a modern public library. Hundreds of others have been polled and surveyed regarding specific referenda. Still others have attended public fora, spoken at town meetings, and otherwise shared their views with town staff. Young people who were asked in 2002 if they wanted a teen room are now bringing their own children to the library and asking if there is a teen room yet. Those studies, combined with the annual statistical reports submitted to the Connecticut State Library and the library's own internal tracking reports, provide ample, consistent data showing what the people of Manchester would like from their library.

Still, the task force wanted to make sure that we had the most up-to-date feedback possible from the community, in order to determine the features and spaces that residents would most like to see in a modern library. The "Our Library, Our Future" community engagement effort ran from June 10 to July 31, 2021, with 1,134 local residents submitting responses to a survey that was available in English, Spanish, and Bengali, on both paper and via the town's Your Voice Matters website. In addition, more than 300 residents spoke with task force members at community events, nearly 200 people took a virtual tour of Mary Cheney Library's staff-only areas, and more than 1,400 website visits were logged.

Public awareness outreach was conducted in all nine of the town's voting precincts, with special efforts made to reach traditionally underrepresented groups and neighborhoods. The task force collaborated with the Office of the General Manager; Manchester Public Schools; the Department of Leisure, Family and Recreation; the Manchester Senior Center; the Department of Public Works; an array of businesses, social organizations, cultural and faith communities, and non-profits; print and digital media outlets; and key stakeholders like the Manchester Historical Society and the Downtown Manchester Special Services District.

The survey asked how residents felt about specific modern features and spaces that are commonly found in Connecticut's best libraries, including several peer libraries in our immediate area. It also asked residents to describe their priorities, values, and visions for the future of the library.