



DUPAGE COUNTY
CSBG ADVISORY BOARD
AGENDA

August 18, 2026

Regular Meeting

11:30 AM

3500-B

**421 NORTH COUNTY FARM ROAD
WHEATON, IL 60187**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - CSBG Advisory Board – Regular Meeting – April 21, 2026- Action Item
4. **REPORTS –LISA HAMILTON**
 - Second Quarter 2026 CSBG Grant–Handout
5. **BUDGET REVIEW – GINA STRAFFORD-AHMED/LISA HAMILTON**
 - Review CSBG 2026 Year to Date-Handout
6. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - Scholarship update
 - Annual Board Self-Assessment Results
 - Strategic Plan Update
7. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - Review & Approve 2026 Needs Assessment Update - Action Item
 - Review & Approve 2027 Community Action Plan and Grant – Action Item
 - 2027 Needs Assessment Committee
 - Meeting dates for next year- January 19, 2027, April 20, 2027, July 20, 2027 or August 17, 2027 and October 19, 2027- Action Item
8. **211**
 - Second Quarter 2026 Summary Report
9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
10. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**
11. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**
 - GardenWorks Tour after meeting
12. **ADJOURNMENT – NEXT MEETING October 20, 2026**

2026 MEETING DATES:
October 20, 2026

Please contact Jennifer Diaz at (630) 407-6421 or via email jennifer.diaz@dupagecounty.gov by August 14th to confirm your attendance.



**DUPAGE COUNTY
CSBG ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES**

April 21, 2026

Regular Meeting

11:30 AM

**OUTREACH EMPLOYMENT CENTER
730 NORTH AVENUE
CAROL STREAM, IL 60188**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Kristin Sheffield at 11:39 AM.

2. ROLL CALL

Kristin Sheffield called for a motion to allow those on zoom due to work, illness or family emergency to participate in the meeting. Paula Deacon-Garcia made a motion to allow those on zoom to participate in the meeting, Greg Schwarze seconded the motion, and all voted aye. The motion was carried.

PRESENT: Kristen Sheffield, Vanessa Roth, Sergio Martinez, Michael C. Pesola, Kathleen McNamara, Beatriz Diaz, Wendy Williams, Greg Schwarze and Paula Deacon-Garcia.

ZOOM: Christina LePage, Don Davia and Molly Howieson

ABSENT: Cindy Cronin Cahill, Lynn LaPlante, Dawn DeSart, and Kari Galassi.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

No public comments were received at this meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kristin Sheffield called for a motion to approve January 20, 2026, meeting minutes Vanessa Roth made a motion to approve the minutes, Paula Deacon-Garcia seconded the motion, and all voted aye. The motion was carried.

5. REPORTS –LISA HAMILTON

Lisa Hamilton went over the 5th quarter 2025 CSBG Outcome Summary Reports. She explained that most clients have been rolled over into the new grant year. Teen parent Connection (food pantry) is wrapping up additional food pantry allocation, and we finished spending our water assistance under this grant. We are hoping to close out the 2025 grant soon once all funds are expended.

Lisa Hamilton reviewed the 1st Quarter 2026 CSBG Outcome Summary Reports. She shared that all programs have begun serving clients and are off to a strong start. Lisa also provided a brief overview of each program, outlining the services offered and how progress is being tracked. She announced that the scholarship program has officially launched, with an application deadline of

May 1, 2026, and encouraged Board members to help spread the word. Lisa also reviewed the status of the community initiative with GardenWorks. The community initiative anticipates opening two new gardens in 2026 and will continue maintaining six gardens from previous grant years. Teen Parent Connection's first car seat class is scheduled for April 25th; updated numbers will be reflected at the next meeting, and their food pantry was serving people under the 2025 grant through April. The Agency Capacity Building Activities section covers the annual report, updates to the needs assessment, and staff training. Lisa reported that all activities are currently in progress, with focus groups being arranged to help with our needs assessment update. The Community Services Annual Report is expected to be completed by July. Lisa explained that Disaster Assistance and Water Assistance have been separated for grant year 2026. Disaster Assistance funds are being reserved for emergencies such as fires, floods, or tornadoes. Water Assistance is projected to serve 35 families; to date, 1 family has been assisted. This year, the program will count families (previously it counted individuals) and will continue to service households who have been fully shut off from their water service. Handouts were provided.

6. BUDGET REVIEW – GINA STRAFFORD-AHMED

Gina Strafford-Ahmed reviewed the 2025 CSBG Budget and Expenditure Report in detail. She explained that most of the funding has already been spent, leaving a remaining balance of \$2,562.31. These remaining funds will be used for training, conference expenses, and postage. The funding is expected to be fully expended by the end of May. Gina noted that the grant will be closed out by the end of June. Handouts were provided.

Gina Strafford-Ahmed explained that the 2026 budget was approved by the County Board Human Services Committee in January, and invoices are now beginning to come in. She reported that the State has received only the first quarter of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding, despite the second quarter having already begun. The State is hopeful that second-quarter funds will be released soon. She noted that if the State does not receive the funding, legal action may be considered at the State level. Gina further explained that, following the next drawdown, all funds expended to date will have been drawn down, emphasizing that CSBG is a reimbursement-based grant. County Board Member Greg Schwarze stated that the County Chair included a budget line item, known as the Sustainability Account, to address potential federal funding issues. These funds may be available to cover expenses if the County does not receive reimbursement. Gina informed the Board that she will continue to provide updates regarding any developments related to funding. Overall, she reported that the subgrantees appear to be off to a strong start in the first quarter. Handouts provided.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Needs Assessment Planning: Gina Strafford-Ahmed explained that she, Lisa Hamilton, and Cassidy Drew will be traveling to Springfield for additional training on the new survey tools and assessment process. She also noted that Board members will be contacted and invited to participate in the process. Gina stated that there will be both a shortened community survey and an expanded community survey available for clients and community members. The surveys are expected to be accessible online through a QR code. She explained that while local agencies may add questions to the surveys, they cannot remove any questions because certain items are required by all Community Action Agencies to allow for statewide data aggregation and analysis. Gina reported that staff are currently working on organizing focus groups, and Cassidy Drew will be reaching out to schedule dates and times. Cassidy explained that the goal is to conduct four focus groups. To date, focus

groups have been scheduled with Outreach and the People's Resource Center. Additional participation is being sought from veterans groups, families, caregivers, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers of individuals with disabilities to ensure broad community input.

Strategic Plan: Gina Strafford-Ahmed stated we will have an update at the next meeting in August.

8. NEW BUSINESS- GINA STRAFFORD-AHMED

HOME DuPage Presentation: Maria Luengas from HOME DuPage presented information on the organization's new credit counseling program. She explained that the program is designed to help participants understand the importance of credit and provide individualized assistance with building or repairing their credit. The program is hands-on and requires commitment and active engagement from participants. Maria stated that the length of the program varies based on individual goals and may take up to one year to complete. Follow-up appointments are scheduled every 45 to 60 days, depending on each participant's needs. Maria also reviewed other services offered by HOME DuPage, including Financial Fitness and Financial Coaching programs. County Board Member Greg Schwarze asked about the differences between Financial Fitness, Financial Coaching, and the new Credit Counseling program. Maria explained that Financial Fitness consists of educational classes, Financial Coaching provides ongoing guidance and support, and Credit Counseling is the final step, during which clients review their credit reports and scores and receive individualized assistance to build or repair their credit. The Board requested that Maria send an email containing the program schedule so members can help promote the available services.

CSBG Scholarship: Lisa Hamilton asked the Board for volunteers to review/grade applicant's packets- Kathleen McNamara, Molly Howieson, Beatriz Diaz and Paula Deacon-Garcia all agreed to volunteer for the Scholarship committee. Lisa Hamilton thanked the Board and stated the deadline to apply is May 1, 2026. She explained the grading process to the Board and informed them the grading committee will meet in June.

Annual Board Self-Assessment: Lisa Hamilton explained DECO would like 100% Board participation in the assessment. An email will be sent out after the meeting with the survey. We will be going over the results at the next meeting.

9. 211

Lisa Hamilton reviewed in detail the 211 DuPage 2026 First Quarter Summary Report. She explained that housing and utility assistance remained the number one need and that the calls/texts are steadily increasing. She reminded the Board that they can see real time data on 211 counts which can be sorted by date monthly/yearly. She also shared that plans are underway to expand 211 services by adding a chat feature, with implementation anticipated by the end of the year. Handout provided.

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

GardenWorks site visit

11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Kristin Sheffield thanked the County Board Members for their continued engagement with the community and for recognizing and responding to the needs of County residents.

Board Member Greg Schwarze explained to the CSBG Board that the County Board approved \$4.8 million to fund three major programs that will address food insecurity throughout the County.

- \$2.5 million will go to Loaves & Fishes to expand the agency's food distribution hub.
- \$2 million will go to Northern Illinois Food Bank to provide fresh produce and other essentials for local food pantries.
- \$322,000 to the Conservation Foundation to expand its Farm to Pantry Program

12. ADJOURNMENT

Kristin Sheffield called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Greg Schwarze made the motion to adjourn, Paula Deacon-Garcia seconded the motion, and all voted aye. The motion was carried. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:51PM.

2026 MEETING DATES:

August 18, 2026, and October 20, 2026

Programs Funded by CSBG		Number Proposed to Enroll	Persons/ Families Serving	Complete	Progress			Failed	Drop Out	Rolled Over
					In	Out	Over			
WP 01.011 - Outreach Community Services		20	21	0	21	0	0	0	0	0
WP 01.031 - 360 Youth Services		60	34	0	34	0	0	0	0	0
WP 02.061 - Scholarship		7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Financial Fitness)		30	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Financial Coaching)		30	20	0	20	0	0	0	0	0
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Credit Repair Counseling)		24	22	0	22	0	0	0	0	0
WP 04.041 - Catholic Charities (Housing/Case Management)		75	23	15	8	0	0	0	0	0
WP 05.000 - GardenWorks (New Gardens) (Community Initiative)		2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
WP 05.000 - GardenWorks (Previous Gardens) (Community Initiative)		6	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
WP 05.081 - Teen Parent Connections (Car Seat Program)		70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 05.081 - Teen Parent Connections (Pantry)		540	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 07.011 - Family Self Sufficiency Program		35	42	0	42	0	0	0	0	0
WP 07.031 - I&R/211 Calls		55,000	16,567	16,567	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 07.031 - Community Outreach		7,000	3,058	3,058	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 07.031 - Basic Needs - (Clothing/Household Goods)		200	35	35	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 09.011 - Agency Capacity Building Activities		3	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
WP 10.01 - Disaster Assistance - (# of families)		5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WP 04.031 - Water Assistance (# of families)		35	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Programs Funded by CSBG		Number Proposed to Enroll		Persons/ Families Serving		Complete		In Progress		Failed		Drop Out		Rolled Over	
WP 01.011 - Outreach Community Services		22		22		1		0		2		5		14	
WP 01.031 - 360 Youth Services		41		42		8		0		10		1		23	
WP 02.061 - Scholarship		12		10		10		0		0		0		0	
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Financial Fitness)		30		30		30		0		0		0		0	
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Financial Coaching)		30		34		10		0		0		6		18	
WP 03.011 - H.O.M.E. DuPage - (Credit Repair Counseling)		6		11		0		0		0		0		11	
WP 04.041 - Catholic Charities (Housing/Case Management)		75		76		42		0		12		16		6	
WP 05.000 - GardenWorks (New Gardens) (Community Initiative)		2		2		0		0		0		0		2	
WP 05.000 - GardenWorks (2024 Gardens) (Community Initiative)		4		4		0		0		0		0		4	
WP 05.081 - Teen Parent Connections (Car Seat Program)		70		73		73		0		0		0		0	
WP 05.081 - Teen Parent Connections (Pantry)		790		870		870		0		0		0		0	
WP 07.011 - Family Self Sufficiency Program		40		42		6		0		0		2		34	
WP 07.031 - Comprehensive Intakes		5,000		6,006		6,006		0		0		0		0	
WP 07.031 - I&R/211 Calls		50,000		57,371		57,371		0		0		0		0	
WP 07.031 - Community Outreach		7,000		11,134		11,134		0		0		0		0	
WP 07.031 - Basic Needs - (Clothing/Household Goods)		200		227		227		0		0		0		0	
WP 09.011 - Agency Capacity Building Activities		3		3		3		0		0		0		0	
WP 10.01 - Disaster Assistance - (# of families)		2		0		0		0		0		0		0	
WP 10.01 - Water Assistance		150		132		0		0		0		0		0	

CSBG PY25
1/1/25 - 4/14/26
BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

	PY25 BUDGET	PY25 MODIFICATION 001	PY25 MODIFICATION 002	PY25 MODIFIED Final Budget	PY25 YTD EXPEND	PY25 UNSPENT
PROGRAM SUPPORT						
SALARY & FRINGE BENEFIT	792,542.00	(81,000.00)	39,025.00	751,707.11	751,707.11	0.00
OFFICE EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES	1,096.00	43,000.00	(18,000.00)	26,096.00	25,535.85	560.15
POSTAGE	250.00		(200.00)	22.31	14.13	8.18
TRAVEL	2,000.00	5,000.00	3,000.00	8,747.97	7,923.69	824.28
T&TA	0.00	14,500.00	3,048.00	18,800.03	18,800.03	0.00
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	1,795.00		11.00	1,833.69	1,833.69	0.00
REPEAT BOUTIQUE	0.00	6,000.00		6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
WIOA MOU	3,656.00	100.00		3,756.00	3,756.00	0.00
CATHOLIC CHARITIES (CMGT/BTSF)	65,000.00			65,000.00	65,000.00	0.00
360 YOUTH	55,242.00		(14,242.00)	41,000.00	41,000.00	0.00
OUTREACH COMMUNITY SERVICES	100,000.00	15,000.00		115,000.00	115,000.00	0.00
H.O.M.E. DUPAGE	46,888.00	40,000.00		86,888.00	86,888.00	0.00
TEEN PARENT CONNECTION	40,000.00		25,000.00	65,000.00	65,000.00	0.00
THE GARDEN WORKS	70,000.00	4,992.00	(31,563.00)	42,288.89	42,288.89	0.00
TOTAL PROGRAM SUPPORT	1,178,469.00	47,592.00	6,079.00	1,232,140.00	1,230,747.39	1,392.61
DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE						
FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY	15,000.00			18,150.92	18,150.92	0.00
DISASTER/EMER ASSISTANCE	10,000.00	31,340.00		38,189.08	38,189.08	0.00
HIGH TECH SCHOLARSHIPS	3,000.00	51,000.00		54,000.00	54,000.00	0.00
TOTAL DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE	28,000.00	82,340.00	0.00	110,340.00	110,340.00	0.00
ADMINISTRATION						
DIRECT COST STAFF	37,557.00	3,715.00	800.00	42,152.65	42,152.65	0.00
TRAVEL/TRAINING	4,500.00	5,000.00	1,307.00	10,740.00	9,570.30	1,169.70
COPIER RENTAL	535.00		(150.00)	381.26	381.26	0.00
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	598.00			599.63	599.63	0.00
DUES, MEMBERSHIPS	4,400.00	8,235.00	(7,650.00)	4,974.40	4,974.40	0.00
MEETING EXPENSES	550.00		(386.00)	163.06	163.06	0.00
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	48,140.00	16,950.00	(6,079.00)	59,011.00	57,841.30	1,169.70
SPECIAL						
T&TA	7,500.00	(7,500.00)		0.00	0.00	0.00
ROMA PROFESSIONALS TRAINING	7,500.00	(7,500.00)		0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL SPECIAL	15,000.00	(15,000.00)		0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	1,269,609.00	131,882.00	0.00	1,401,491.00	1,398,928.69	2,562.31

CSBG PY26
1/1/26-4/15/26
BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

	PY26	PY26	PY26
	BUDGET	YTD EXPEND	UNSPENT
PROGRAM SUPPORT			
SALARY & FRINGE BENEFIT	759,234.00	134,013.49	660,993.51
OFFICE EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
POSTAGE	250.00	0.00	250.00
TRAVEL	7,100.00	0.00	7,100.00
T&TA	8,400.00	0.00	17,400.00
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	1,795.00	269.04	1,525.96
REPEAT BOUTIQUE	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
WIOA MOU	4,426.00	745.25	3,680.75
CATHOLIC CHARITIES (CMGT/BTSF)	58,000.00	0.00	58,000.00
360 YOUTH	55,242.00	0.00	55,242.00
OUTREACH COMMUNITY SERVICES	115,000.00	34,291.19	80,708.81
H.O.M.E. DUPAGE	84,728.00	30,947.94	53,780.06
TEEN PARENT CONNECTION	40,000.00	0.00	40,000.00
THE GARDEN WORKS	70,000.00	7,766.87	47,233.13
TOTAL PROGRAM SUPPORT	1,211,375.00	214,033.78	1,027,114.22
DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE			
FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY	15,000.00	0.00	15,000.00
DISASTER/EMER ASSISTANCE	15,000.00	0.00	15,000.00
WATER ASSISTANCE	25,000.00	2,446.29	22,553.71
HIGH TECH SCHOLARSHIPS	35,000.00	0.00	35,000.00
TOTAL DIRECT CLIENT ASSISTANCE	90,000.00	2,446.29	87,553.71
ADMINISTRATION			
DIRECT COST STAFF	50,120.00	9,652.69	43,702.31
TRAVEL/TRAINING	12,000.00	0.00	11,000.00
COPIER RENTAL/PRINTING	1,535.00	88.17	1,446.83
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	600.00	101.28	498.72
DUES, MEMBERSHIPS	5,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
MEETING EXPENSES	550.00	0.00	550.00
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	70,305.00	9,842.14	59,697.86
TOTAL	1,371,680.00	226,322.21	1,174,365.79

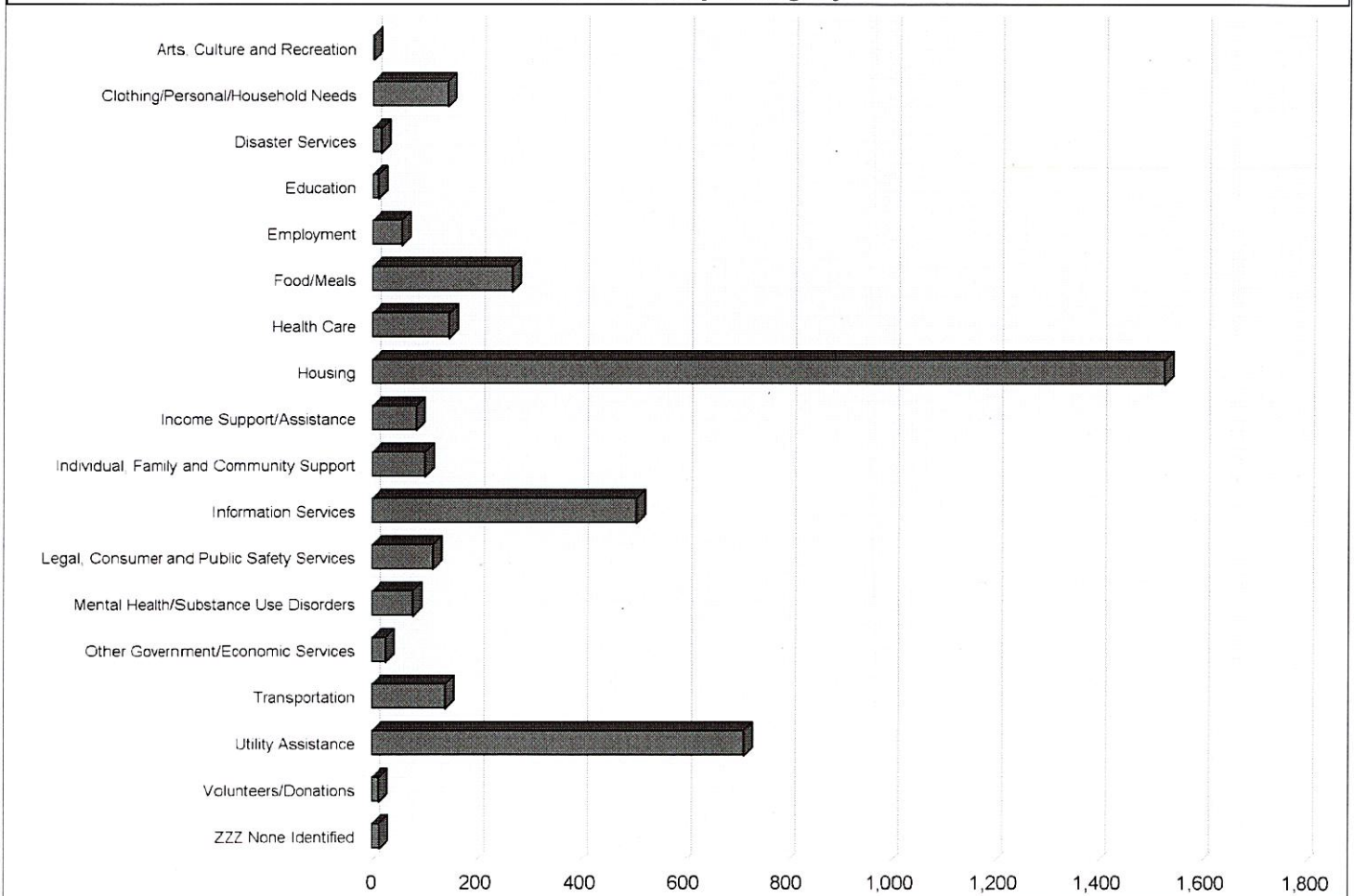
2-1-1 U.S. Problem/Needs Report

Summary

Report Period: 1/1/26 - 3/31/26

Need Category	Need Count	Percentage	Call Count	Percentage	Client Count	Percentage
Arts, Culture and Recreation	1	0.03%	1	0.04%		
Clothing/Personal/Household Needs	144	3.62%	124	4.58%		
Disaster Services	17	0.43%	16	0.59%		
Education	11	0.28%	8	0.30%		
Employment	56	1.41%	51	1.88%		
Food/Meals	269	6.76%	252	9.30%		
Health Care	148	3.72%	121	4.47%		
Housing	1,529	38.44%	1,143	42.19%		
Income Support/Assistance	85	2.14%	71	2.62%		
Individual, Family and Community Support	102	2.56%	82	3.03%		
Information Services	509	12.80%	501	18.49%		
Legal, Consumer and Public Safety Services	117	2.94%	95	3.51%		
Mental Health/Substance Use Disorders	79	1.99%	53	1.96%		
Other Government/Economic Services	26	0.65%	26	0.96%		
Transportation	141	3.54%	110	4.06%		
Utility Assistance	717	18.02%	660	24.36%		
Volunteers/Donations	13	0.33%	13	0.48%		
ZZZ None Identified	14	0.35%	30	1.11%		
Total:	3,978	100.00%	2,709	100.00%		

Need Count by Category



REFERRAL COUNT

Need Type	Total
211 Systems (TJ-3000.8500)	251
AARP Tax Aide Program Sites (DT-8800.0100-100)	29
Administrative Entities (TD-0300)	34
Adolescent/Youth Counseling (RP-1400.8000-050)	1
Adult Basic Education (HH-0500.0500)	5
Adult Day Programs (PH-0320)	3
Adult Literacy Programs (HH-4500.0500)	1
Adult Protective Services (PH-6500.0500)	4
Adult Psychiatry (RP-6400.0200)	2
Adult Residential Care Homes (BH-8400.6000-040)	1
Alcohol Use Disorder Support Groups (PN-8100.0500-070)	2
Animal Control (PD-0700.0400)	5
Animal Surrender Services (PD-7600.0700)	1
Autism Therapy (LR-0450)	3
Automobiles (BM-0500)	10
Automotive Repair and Maintenance (BM-7000.0500)	46
Baby Clothing (BM-6500.1500-100)	7
Banking and Financial Services (TB-0700)	4
Bereaved Parent Support Groups (PN-8100.1000-100)	3
Bereavement and Grief Counseling (RP-1400.8000-100)	2
Better Business Bureaus (DD-2100.1000)	7
Budget and Finance Offices (TD-0350.1000)	9
Building and Safety (TE-1000)	1
Burial Benefits (NS-1000)	2
Bus Fare (BT-8300.1000)	8
Career Counseling (ND-2000.1500-160)	7
Caregiver Consultation and Support (PH-0780)	2
Caregiver/Care Receiver Support Groups (PN-8100.4500-120)	1
Case Care Management (PH-1000)	2
Cell Phones (BM-5050.1500)	28
Centers for Independent Living (LR-1550)	3
Child Care Expense Assistance (NL-3000.1500)	15
Child Support Assistance/Enforcement (FT-3000.1600)	5
Children's Protective Services (PH-6500.1500)	2
Clinical Psychiatric Evaluation (RP-5000.1500)	1
Clothing (BM-6500.1500)	39

Clothing Vouchers (BM-6500.1500-130)	15
Community Clinics (LN-1500)	10
Community Meals (BD-5000.1470)	7
Community Mental Health Agencies (RM-6500.1500)	5
Comprehensive Disability Related Employment Programs (ND-6500.1500)	2
Comprehensive Job Assistance Centers (ND-1500)	19
Comprehensive Outpatient Substance Use Disorder Treatment (RX-8450.1150)	4
Computer Distribution Programs (BM-6000.1500)	1
Computer Literacy Training Programs (PL-7400.1500)	4
Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites (BD-5000.1500)	9
Consumer Protection Agencies (DD-2100)	2
Counseling Services (RP-1400)	14
Crime Victim Support (FN-1900)	1
Criminal Justice and Legal Services (F)	1
Crisis Intervention (RP-1500)	2
Crisis Intervention Hotlines/Helplines (RP-1500.1400)	11
Crisis Shelter (BH-1800.1500)	69
Debt Management (DM-1800)	5
Dental Care (LV-1600)	12
Detoxification (RX-1700)	2
Diapers (BM-6500.1500-150)	15
Discount Transit Passes (BT-8500.1000-180)	19
Domestic Violence Shelters (BH-1800.1500-100)	21
Domestic/Family Violence Legal Services (FT-3000.1750)	5
Driver Licenses (DF-7000.1850)	3
Economic Self Sufficiency Programs (PH-2360.2000)	4
Electric Service Payment Assistance (BV-8900.9300-180)	209
Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) (BH-3800.1920)	7
Emergency Veterinary Services (PD-9000.1800)	3
Eviction Prevention Assistance (FT-4500.1800)	9
Ex-Offender Employment Programs (ND-6500.1950)	4
Ex-Offender Reentry Programs (FF-1900)	2
Extreme Cold Warming Centers (TH-2600.1880)	9
Eye Care (LV-2400)	9
Family Based Services (PH-2360)	1

Family Crisis Shelters (BH-1800.1500-200)	2
Family Planning (LJ-2000)	2
Federal Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center/Website (LH-3500.0200-200)	5
Financial Literacy Training (DM-2000)	11
Food Pantries (BD-1800.2000)	140
Food Stamps/SNAP (NL-6000.2000)	49
Food Vouchers (BD-1800.2250)	5
Foreclosure Prevention Loan Modification/Refinancing Programs (BH-3500.3400-300)	29
Formula/Baby Food (BD-1800.8200-250)	9
Foster Care/Temporary Shelter for Animals (PD-7600.2100)	2
Free Transit Passes (BT-8500.1000-200)	9
Friendly Visiting (PH-1400.1900-230)	2
Furniture (BM-3000.2000)	5
Gas Money (BT-8300.2500)	17
Gas Service Payment Assistance (BV-8900.9300-250)	258
General Counseling Services (RP-1400.2500)	14
General Paratransit/Community Ride Programs (BT-4500.6500-280)	19
Glasses/Contact Lenses (LH-0600.9000-250)	1
Health Care (L)	3
Health Care Referrals (LH-2600)	1
Health Insurance Marketplaces (LH-3000.3050)	8
High School Equivalency/GED Test Instruction (HH-0500.2500-300)	2
Higher Education Awareness/Support Programs (HL-2500.2900)	4
Home Barrier Removal Grants (BH-3000.3520)	1
Home Delivered Meals (BD-5000.3500)	15
Home Health Care (LT-2800)	9
Home Maintenance and Minor Repair Services (PH-3300.2750)	18
Home Rehabilitation Services (BH-3000.3550-390)	3
Homeless Diversion Programs (BH-0500.3100)	7
Homeless Shelter (BH-1800.8500)	241
Homelessness Prevention Programs (BH-0500.3140)	30
Household Goods (BM-3000)	9
Housing Discrimination Assistance (FT-1800.3000)	5
Housing Expense Assistance (BH-3800)	24
Housing Search and Information (BH-3900)	119
Housing Shelter (BH)	85
Identification Cards (DF-7000.3300)	7

Immigrant Benefits Assistance (FT-1000.3300)	10
In Home Assistance (PH-3300)	5
Individual Counseling (RF-3300)	4
Information and Referral (TI-3000)	87
Job Finding Assistance (ND-3500)	2
Landlord/Tenant Assistance (FT-4500)	6
Lawyer Referral Services (FT-4800)	19
Legal Counseling (FP-4000)	26
Legal Services (FT)	28
Local Bus Transit Services (BT-4500.4700-500)	5
Low Cost Home Rental Listings (BH-3900.3050-440)	65
Low Income/Subsidized Rental Housing (BH-7000.4600)	49
Medicaid (NL-5000.5000)	18
Medicaid Information/Counseling (LH-3500.4900)	6
Medical Care Expense Assistance (LH-5100.5000)	11
Medical Equipment/Supplies (LH-5000)	9
Medical Expense Assistance (LH-5100)	6
Medicare (NS-8000.5000)	3
Medicare Information/Counseling (LH-3500.5000)	10
Mental Health Related Support Groups (PN-8100.5000)	3
Mobile Food Pantry Programs (BD-1800.5000)	8
Mortgage Payment Assistance (BH-3800.5000)	19
Motor Vehicle Registration (DF-7000.5500)	3
Municipal Police (FL-6500)	1
Neuter Spay Services (PD-9000.6000)	1
Paratransit Programs (BT-4500.6500)	26
Pediatric Developmental Screening (LF-7000.6520)	3
Personal Financial Counseling (DM-6500)	12
Personal Grooming Supplies (BM-6500.6500-650)	6
Prescription Drug Discount Cards (LH-6700.6250)	2
Prescription Expense Assistance (LH-5100.6500)	24
Property Tax Assessment Appeals Boards (DT-8400.6500)	2
Property Tax Exemption Information (DT-8700.6500-600)	5
Psychiatric Services (RP-6400)	2
Rent Payment Assistance (BH-3800.7000)	274
Rental Deposit Assistance (BH-3800.7250)	109
Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facilities (RX-8450.7000)	3

SSI Applications (NL-1000.8100-820)	52
Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (BH-7000.4600-700)	83
Section 8/Rental Assistance Program Rental Listings (BH-3900.3050-750)	15
Senior Housing Information and Referral (BH-8500.8000)	29
Senior Ride Programs (BT-4500.6500-800)	9
Separation/Divorce Support Groups (PN-8100.6500-750)	2
Shared Housing Facilities (BH-7000.4600-750)	60
Sheriff (FL-8200)	9
Social Security Numbers (DF-7000.8250)	5
Social Security Retirement Benefits (NS-7000.8000)	9
Speech and Language Pathology (LR-8000.8000)	2
Spouse/Intimate Partner Abuse Counseling (RP-1400.8000-020.80)	1
State Government Agencies/Departments (TD-0300.8000)	15
State Unemployment Insurance (NS-9000.9000)	7
Street Maintenance (TE-8000)	3
Student Financial Aid (HL-8000)	4
Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs (RX-8450)	9
Summer Camps (PL-6400.1500-820)	2
Supportive Housing (BH-8400)	14
TANF (NL-1000.8500)	7
Tax Preparation Assistance (DT-8800)	21
Transitional Housing/Shelter (BH-8600)	151
Transportation (BT)	39
Transportation Passes (BT-8500)	9
Utility Assistance (BV-8900)	30
Utility Service Payment Assistance (BV-8900.9300)	154
VITA Program Sites (DT-8800.9300-930)	25
VITA Programs (DT-8800.9300)	9
Veteran Education Benefits (HL-8000.1800-900)	5
Veterinary Care Expense Assistance (PD-9000.9000)	1
Volunteer Opportunities (PX)	3
Voter Registration Offices (TQ-1800.9000)	2
WIC (NL-6000.9500)	4
Water Service Payment Assistance (BV-8900.9300-950)	80
Weatherization Programs (BH-3000.1800-950)	2
Well Animal Checkups (PD-9000.9700)	1
Yard Maintenance (PH-3300.9750)	2
Total	3978

THE GARDENWORKS PROJECT

Quarterly Report – Q1 2026

Organization: The GardenWorks Project

Program: *Produce for People and Pantries*

Funder: DuPage County Community Services – Community Services Block Grant

Reporting Period: January 1 – March 31, 2026

Contact: Teri Wood, Executive Director, teri@gardenworksproject.org

1. Executive Summary

We are pleased to submit the first quarterly report on *Produce for People and Pantries*, a five-year initiative launched by The GardenWorks Project and supported by the DuPage County Community Services Block Grant. In its fourth year, the program continues to focus on increasing access to fresh, locally grown produce by installing and sustaining community gardens in partnership with food pantries, schools, housing communities, and local organizations.

During the first quarter, our focus was on site planning, partner engagement, and expanding garden locations for the 2026 growing season. As of March 31, two additional sites have been secured both located directly at food pantry locations. This proximity eliminates transportation barriers, donations timeframes, and ensures that freshly harvested produce can be distributed the same day. It also reflects the specific needs of each community served.

Community outreach, educational workshops, and participation in local events allowed The GardenWorks Project to share its mission and build momentum for the growing season during the winter months.

2. Q1 Program Goals & Activities

Goal	Activity	Status
Identify two new gardens	Secured two new sites	On track
Gardens (Program Wide)	Scheduling deliveries and planting dates	In progress
Donation Schedule	Identified pantry partners and delivery schedules	In progress

3. New Sites for 2026

- The Lift Market at Christ Church, 2S361 Glen Park Rd. Lombard, IL 60148
- Addison Township Food Market, Addison, 401 N. Addison Road Addison, IL 60101

4. Returning Sites: Each site will receive a spring cleanup, soil and compost refresh and seedlings designed to the specific needs of each site.

Installed in 2025

- **Villa Park Early Childhood Center**
- **Hope's House**
- **Bensenville Public Library:** This project was put on hold by the library in 2025. We are looking forward to supporting garden beds that will be used for donation at the food pantry within the library and a nearby senior center.

Installed in 2024

- **New Hope United Methodist Church**
Twice weekly Work & Learn events will continue from late May – Oct. New in 2026 is a new donation site at Neighborhood Food Pantry. Weekly donations will remain the same for Peoples Resource Center.
- **Colony Park Senior Apartments**
- **Project Rise**
- **Timber Lake Complex**

8. Upcoming Priorities (Q2)

- Complete all garden installations by end of May.
- Launch fresh produce tracking via the *Fresh Food Connect App*.
- Host volunteer events and educational programming to share our Grow a Row initiative.
- Finalize delivery schedules with food pantry partners.
- Continue outreach to identify 2027 garden sites.
- Strengthen communication with pantry directors to improve produce variety and delivery methods.

9. Reflection & Gratitude

The most significant achievement in Q1 has been the establishment of new partnerships with local food pantries, along with the renewal of existing relationships, all centered on community-led approaches to food access. By growing food directly outside pantry doors, this model ensures that fresh produce reaches individuals and families the same day it is harvested.

We are sincerely grateful to the DuPage County Community Services Department for their continued support, as well as to the dedicated volunteers, partners, and stakeholders whose commitment makes this work possible.

Community Services Block Grant Snapshot

Location	Partner	Program Type	Distribution	Town	2026 Support
Burhani Park	Project Rise	Garden-to-Food Pantry	Ann M Jeans Food Pantry, Willowbrook	Willowbrook	Compost Seedlings
New Hope Community Garden	Healthy West Chicago, WeGo Together for Kids, People Made Visible	Garden-to-Food Pantry	People's Resource Center & Neighborhood Food Pantry	West Chicago	Soil Compost Seedlings Garden Structures
Colony Park	Mercy Housing	Household Garden	Produce remains onsite	Carol Stream	Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Tools
Timber Lake,	WeGo Together for Kids, Healthy West Chicago	Household Garden	Produce remains onsite	West Chicago	Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Tools
Villa Park Early Childhood Center	School Staff	Household Garden	Produce remains onsite	Villa Park	Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Tools
Hope's House	Catholic Charities	Household Garden	Produce remains onsite	Villa Park	Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Tools
Bensenville Public Library	Library Staff / Community Volunteers	Food Pantry Garden		Bensenville	Seeds Seedlings
Lift Market	Church Staff / Volunteers	Food Pantry Garden		Lombard Serves anyone in DuPage County	Garden Beds Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Structures
Addison Township Food Pantry	Staff/ Volunteers	Food Pantry Garden		Serves, Addison, Wood Dale, Itasca, Elmhurst, Villa Park and Elk Grove	Garden Beds Soil Compost Seeds Seedlings Garden Structures

Respectfully Submitted, April 13, 2026
Teri Wood, executive director, The GardenWorks Project
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teri@gardenworksproject.org

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Phase 1

- Enrollment & Program Orientation
- Job Skills Class
- Resume Development
- Mock Interviews
- Worksite Placement

Phase 2

- Work at an OEC Placement Site
- Develop Strong Attendance & Reliability
- Strengthen Workplace Stability
- Receive Performance Feedback & Evaluation
- Build Job & Life Skills
- Explore Career Pathways
- Enhance Resume & Interview Skills
- Earn Credentials or Certifications
- Work Toward GED or College Goals

Phase 3

- Work in the Community (Internship or Employment)
- Strengthen Career Skills
- Advance Resume & Interview Readiness
- Earn Credentials & Certifications
- Continue Education (GED/College Pathways)

Phase 4

- Secure Full-Time Employment or Enroll in College/University
- Demonstrate Independent Work & Life Skills
- Graduate from the OEC Program
- Quarterly Follow-Up Support After Exit

CLINICAL CASE MANAGEMENT

Job Readiness

Academic

Mental Health

Housing

Transportation

Financial

Child Care

Other Areas of Support

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Social Activities

- Attend Fun and Community Activities
- Get Involved and Stay Engaged
- Build Friendships and Positive Connections

Faith Development (optional)

- Faith Exploration Opportunities
- Learning and Personal Reflection
- Connecting with Local Churches and Faith Communities

Outreach Employment Center (OEC) empowers emerging adults (ages 18–29) in DuPage County to build confidence, gain real-world work experience, and develop the skills needed for independent, successful futures. Through hands-on job training, personalized support, life skills development, and clinical case management, OEC helps participants take meaningful steps toward their goals.

