

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

2012 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

Project Description

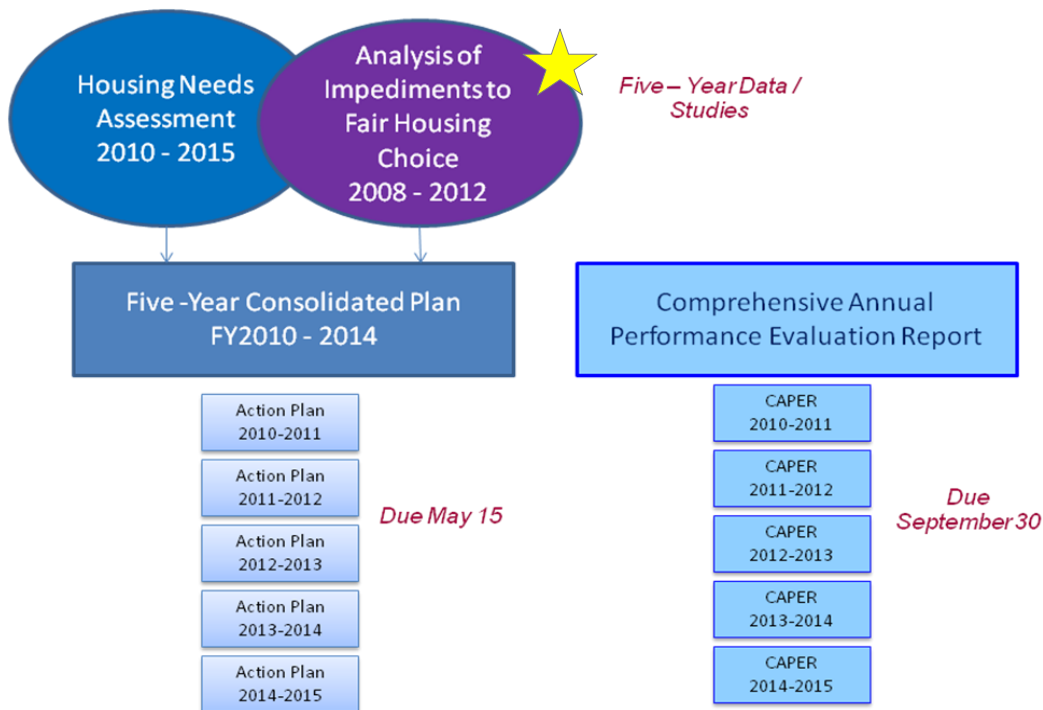
In 2012, the City of Billings - Community Development Division is required to conduct a study to analyze the impediments to fair housing choice in our community. The Analysis of Impediments (AI) is a review of impediments or barriers that affect the rights of fair housing choice. It covers public and private policies, practices, and procedures affecting housing choice.

Impediments to fair housing choice are defined as *any actions, omissions, or decisions that restrict, or have the effect of restricting, the availability of housing choices based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin*. The State of Montana also protects the following classes: *marital status, creed and age*.

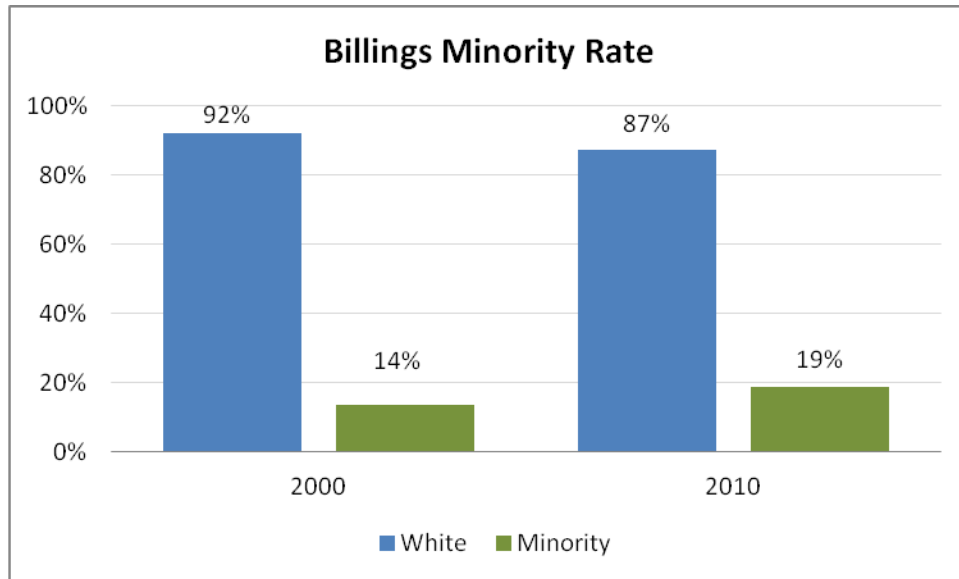
The AI serves as the basis for fair housing planning, provides essential information to policy makers, administrative staff, housing providers, lenders, and fair housing advocates, and assists in building public support for fair housing efforts. Conducting an analysis of impediments is a requirement for the City of Billings to receive federal funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and involves the following:

- An extensive review of a State or Entitlement jurisdiction's laws, regulations, and administrative policies, procedures, and practices.
- An assessment of how those laws affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing.
- An evaluation of conditions, both public and private, affecting fair housing choice for all protected classes.
- An assessment of the availability of affordable, accessible housing in a range of unit sizes.

The City utilizes the AI as a **primary planning tool** for the development and implementation of a plan to utilize federal funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) programs.

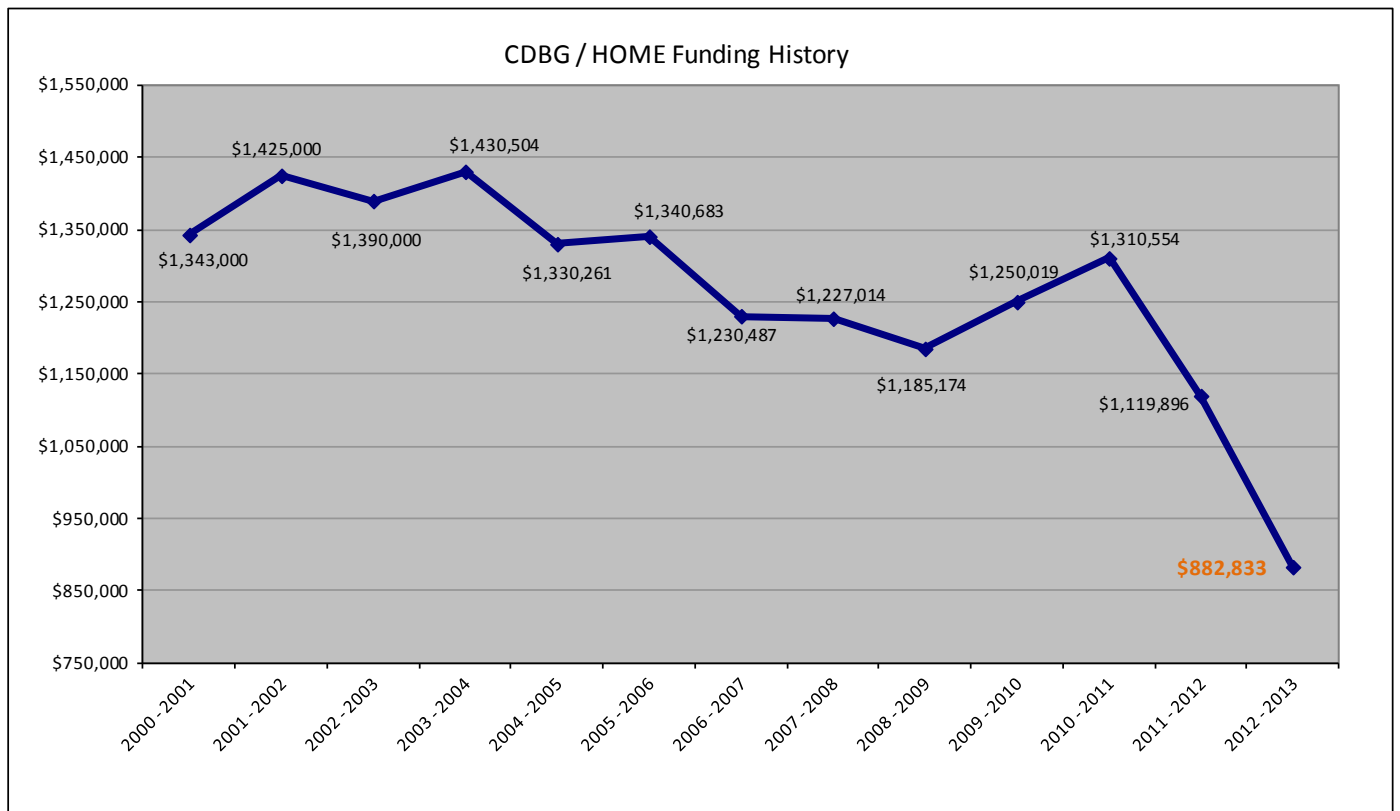


In 2012, this study becomes particularly important for the City of Billings due to many factors, including a near five percent increase in minority rates, according to the 2000 and 2010 Census.



Budget

The City has paid \$20,000 to \$45,000 for the study to be developed and updated in the past. Staff has reserved approximately \$15,000 for the project at the present time. Unfortunately, HUD’s allocations to the City of Billings have significantly declined over the past decade, making it difficult to reserve administrative funding within mandated caps (20% CDBG and 10% HOME) to conduct required studies.



Other Funding Sources

City staff has reserved approximately \$15,000 to conduct the study. To date, staff has approached the following organizations regarding funding:

- First Interstate Bank - \$1,000
- Billings Association of Realtors - \$1,000, an additional \$1,000 is pending
- Housing Authority of Billings - \$10,000
- Human Resource Development Council, District 7 - \$5,000 in addition to survey mailing

Time Frame

The City has the Request for Proposals process in order to conduct the study to plan for fair housing activities in the summer of 2012.

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