



Borough of Honesdale Wayne County, Pennsylvania

Three Year Community Development Plan FFY 2022 - 2025

Community Development Block Grant

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Introduction

The Borough of Honesdale is a four-square mile municipality that serves as the seat of Wayne County, Pennsylvania. The purpose of this plan is to analyze community conditions and needs and to plan for the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the next three fiscal years. CDBG funds are administered on behalf of Honesdale Borough by Wayne County.

The goal of this plan is to create visible community impacts that deliver greater efficiencies and bring about positive changes within the community. To be eligible for funding, projects must meet one of the three national objectives of the CDBG program:

1. Principally benefit (at least 51%) low- to moderate-income persons;
2. Aid in the prevention of slums or blight; and
3. Meet urgent community development needs

Low-Income and Minority Residents

According to HUD's Low- and Moderate-Income Survey Data (LMISD) (ACS 2011-2015), all six block groups in the Borough of Honesdale qualify as low- to moderate-income because at least 51% of residents have income at or below 80% of the area median.

Block Group	LMI Residents	% Residents With Income below 80% AMI
9607, 01	300	88.24%
9607, 02	695	68.14%
9607, 03	430	62.77%
9607, 04	490	64.05%
9607, 05	535	69.48%
9607, 06	545	74.66%

The percentage of residents who are not White varies among the block groups from 0% to 18.9%. There are two block groups where all residents are White and not Hispanic or Latino.

Block Group	% Non-White Residents	Hispanic/Latino
9607, 01	11.87%	6.64%
9607, 02	0	0
9607, 03	0	0
9607, 04	12.58%	12.58%
9607, 05	18.88%	15.73%
9607, 06	15.44%	8.3%

Assessment of Community Development Needs

Population Characteristics

There are 4,292 people and 1,946 households in the borough. Like many urban centers, the borough of Honesdale has a declining population. The population has declined nearly 12% in the last 20 years.

While there is a stable core of households that have been in the borough for more than 20 years, 30% of households (16.8% of homeowners and 44.4% of renters) moved to their current home in the borough within the past five years. More than half of Honesdale's population moved to the borough since 2010.

More than 24% of borough residents are age 65 and older, which is similar to the county. In 2010, just under 19% of residents were age 65 and older. About 19% of residents have a disability.

Most residents are White and non-Hispanic (91%). About 6.5% of residents are Hispanic or Latino, <1% are Black or African American, <1% are Asian, and 2.5% are two or more races. Most residents were born in the United States or its territories (97.5%). Just over 4% of residents speak a language other than English at home and the majority of them speak Spanish. Less than 1% of residents speak English less than very well.

The violent crime rate in Honesdale in 2019 was 47 per 100,000 people (compared to 99.9 in the county) and the property crime rate was 1,224.1 (compared to 742.9 in the county).

About 20% of households do not have a smart phone or computer in their home. (U.S. Census Bureau). More than 20% of households do not have Internet access.

Housing

There are a variety of housing styles in Honesdale and most homes are single unit detached properties. More than half of homes are connected to utility gas as their heating source. The majority (52.9%) of homes were built before 1940; 46.8% of owner-occupied homes and 59.5% of renter-occupied homes are at least 80 years old. Due to the age of the housing stock, code enforcement is needed to maintain the quality of housing. In addition, there are approximately 282 vacant housing units in the borough—about 43% of these are intended for seasonal or recreational use.

There is a similar number of renter households and owner-occupied households in the borough. Renters pay an average of \$599 per month. The median rent has increased faster than the median family income in Honesdale. The median value of an owner-occupied home is \$121,900. About 29% of homeowners and 45% of renters are cost burdened and pay more than 30% of their income toward housing expenses. Approximately 16.5% of rental units in Honesdale are subsidized. Housing costs in Honesdale have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The median sales price in August 2021 was \$285,000; one year before it was \$211,501.

Income and Jobs

The median household income in Honesdale is \$38,606. While the median household income for homeowners is \$54,208, it is only \$22,323 for renters. More than 80% of renters and 48% of homeowners have income at or below the area median.

In Honesdale, 46.1% of residents have income below 200% of the federal poverty level. The poverty rate increased from 14.7% in 2000 to 28.7% in 2019. The poverty rate in Honesdale is much higher than the county and the state. The poverty rate in Honesdale is higher for children under 18 (39.4%) and adults who have less than a high school education (42.3%). The poverty rate of people aged 65 and older is much lower (13.8%). More than 26% of households rely on SNAP ("food stamps") to purchase food.

Of the 1,100 residents who work full-time throughout the year, 14.3% work in construction, 1.4% work in wholesale, 19.3% work in retail, 1.2% work in manufacturing, 8.5% work in transportation, warehousing, and utilities, 9% work in finance, insurance, and real estate, 6.8% work in professional, scientific, administrative, and waste management jobs, 10.7% work in education, healthcare, and social services, 14.3% work in arts, entertainment, and recreation, 7.3% work in public administration, and 7.3% work in other services. In addition, more than 10% of households have self-employment income.

About 18.3% of households do not have a vehicle available. Most workers (76%) drive alone to work, 7% carpool, 10% walk to work, and nearly 6% work from home. The median travel time to work is 22 minutes.

Prior to the pandemic, the borough unemployment rate was 5.6%. This rate was higher for people with a high school diploma (8.1%) and some college (7.2%). The unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 52.6%. About 23% of people aged 65 to 74 and 10% of people age 75 and older participate in the workforce.

Public Facilities

The borough has a police department with both part-time and full-time officers. The borough is served by a volunteer fire department that includes four fire houses. Recruitment and retention of volunteers has become increasingly challenging. Ambulance service is provided by private companies.

Street improvements, especially road paving, is an ongoing need. Traffic calming improvements are also needed to ensure pedestrian safety. Additional off-street parking is needed in the central business district. The Bates Road bridge is in poor condition.

Both the Lackawaxen River and Dyberry Creek flow through the borough. Portions of the borough are in a floodway (Zone AE). The borough is in need of improved stormwater management to mitigate flooding. In August 2020, the mayor of Honesdale declared a disaster after flooding occurred from Tropical Storm Isaias. In May 2021, heavy rain caused rain and stones to clog storm drains and close roads. In July 2021, Apple Grove Park was closed after Dyberry Creek flooded. These are just a few examples of how Honesdale has recently been impacted by flooding.

There are several recreational facilities in the borough including Central Park, Apple Grove and pool facility, and Gibbons Park. All of these facilities are in need of upgrades to promote accessibility, improve appearance, and increased utilization.

The community has many historic sites and preservation is a goal. The Wayne County Historical Society is located in the borough.

Public Services

The Wayne County Library is located in the borough. The library needs various improvements as well as additional space and parking. The Wayne Memorial Hospital is located within the borough, at the edge of the central business district. It is a major medical facility meeting the healthcare needs of the borough and the region. There is a need for a senior center as well as public or private transportation to allow residents access to neighboring communities, medical facilities, and social services.

Economic Development

Although Honesdale is a largely built-up community with a strong central business district, there is additional economic development potential at the south end of the borough. Economic development is a goal of both the borough and the county. Several organizations are working toward economic development in the borough including the Wayne Economic Development Corporation, the Chamber of the Northern Poconos, and the Greater Honesdale Partnership. A Downtown Honesdale Revitalization Plan was finalized earlier in 2021.

Analysis of Community Development Needs of Low- to Moderate-Income Areas

The entire borough is considered low- to moderate income. See previous section.

Community Development Objectives

Objective 1: Improve roads to meet the needs of local residents and businesses while also supporting the borough's economic development goals

Short-Term and Long-Term Plan

Short-Term (1 Year) Plan

The borough will focus on road improvements over the next three years to complement implementation of the Downtown Honesdale Revitalization Plan and to make visible improvements that impact the daily lives of Honesdale residents. Because road improvements have not been prioritized in the past, there is a great need to focus on this activity.

Specifically, the following project has been identified:

- Repave Ridge Street from Cherry Street to Forest Street (FFY 2022)

Long-Term (3 Year) Plan

Over the next three years, the Borough will prioritize the following projects:

- Repave Watts Hill Road (FFY 2021 and FFY 2022)
- Repave Ridge Street from Gravity Street to Forest Street (FFY 2023)
- Repave Forest Street (FFY 2023)

As the borough begins planning for FFY2024 and beyond, it will take into consideration the following community needs and opportunities:

- Continue to support the emergent needs of low- to moderate-income residents and communities

Resources

The following resources were considered when developing this plan:

Data

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy
- U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
- PolicyMap
- FBI Uniform Crime Report
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- Realtor.com

Maps

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Low- and Moderate-Income Area Data
- PolicyMap
- Google Maps

Primary Research

- Public Hearing

Existing Plans

- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Consolidated Plan 2019-2023
- Downtown Honesdale Revitalization Plan

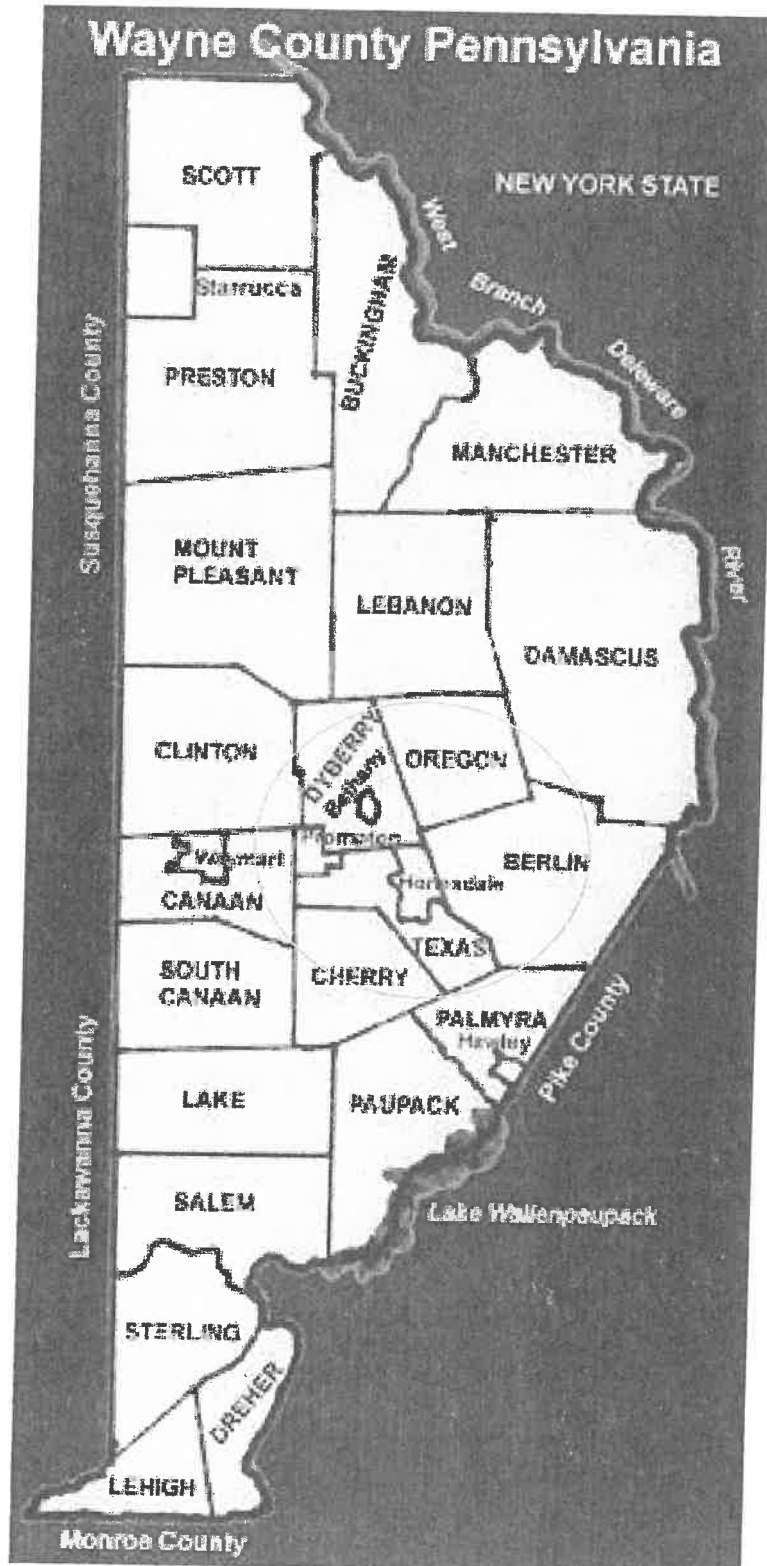
Funding Resources

Maps

These maps are included in the pages that follow:

- Location of Honesdale
- Honesdale Aerial Map
- Wayne County Census Tracts
- Honesdale Block Groups
- Percent of LMI Residents
- Percent of Minority Residents
- Activity Location Map

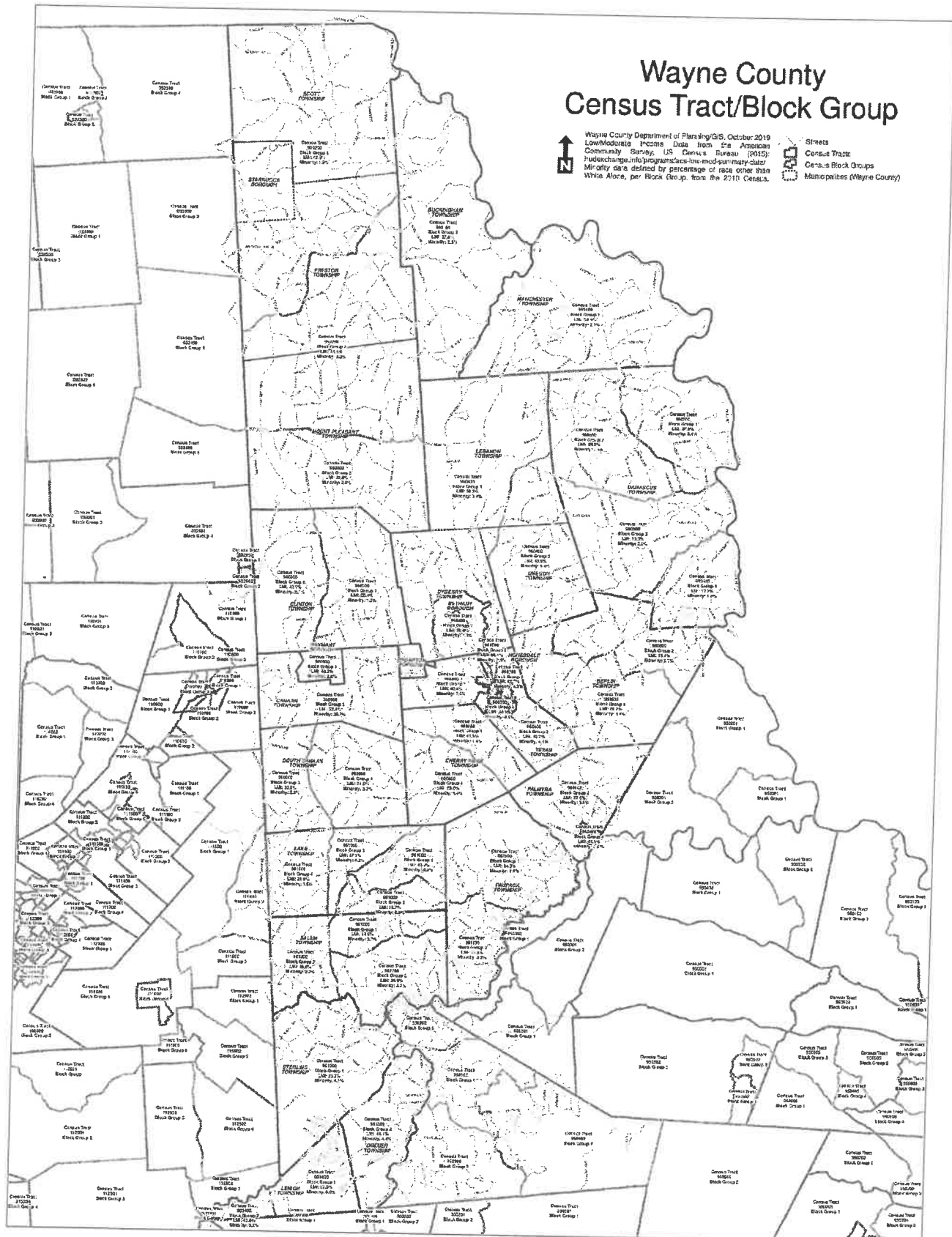
Location of Honesdale



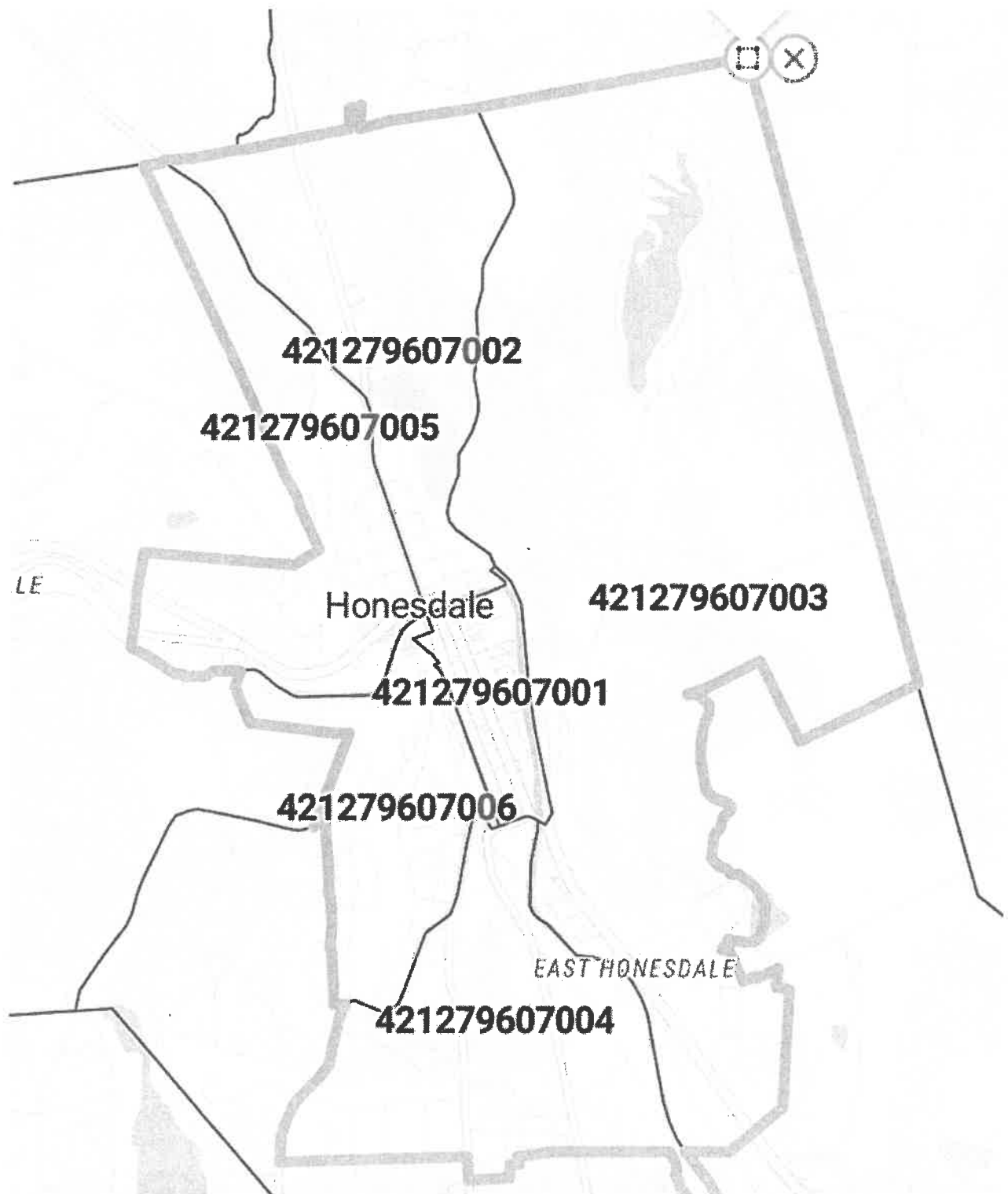
Honesdale Aerial Map



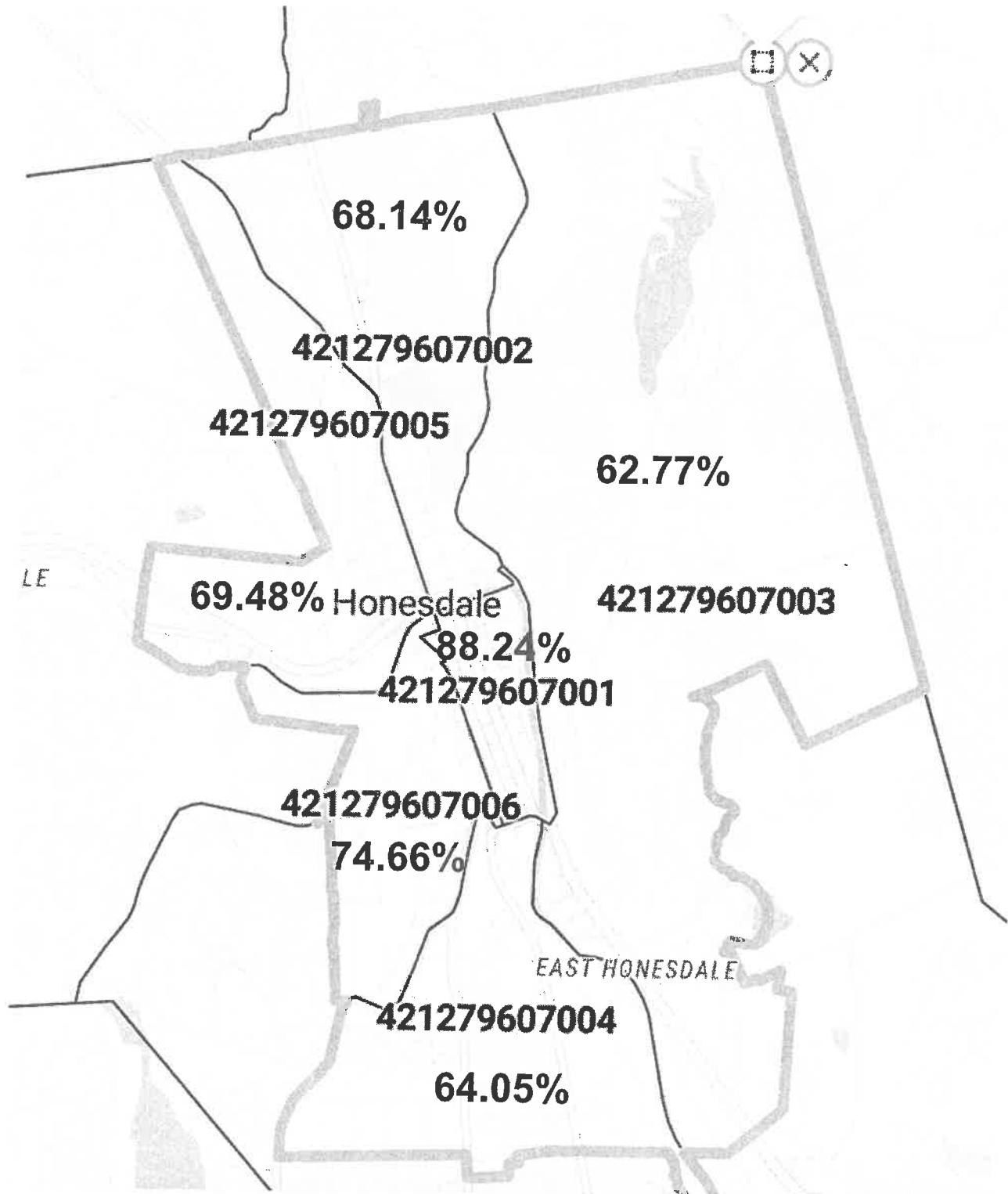
Wayne County LMI Area Map



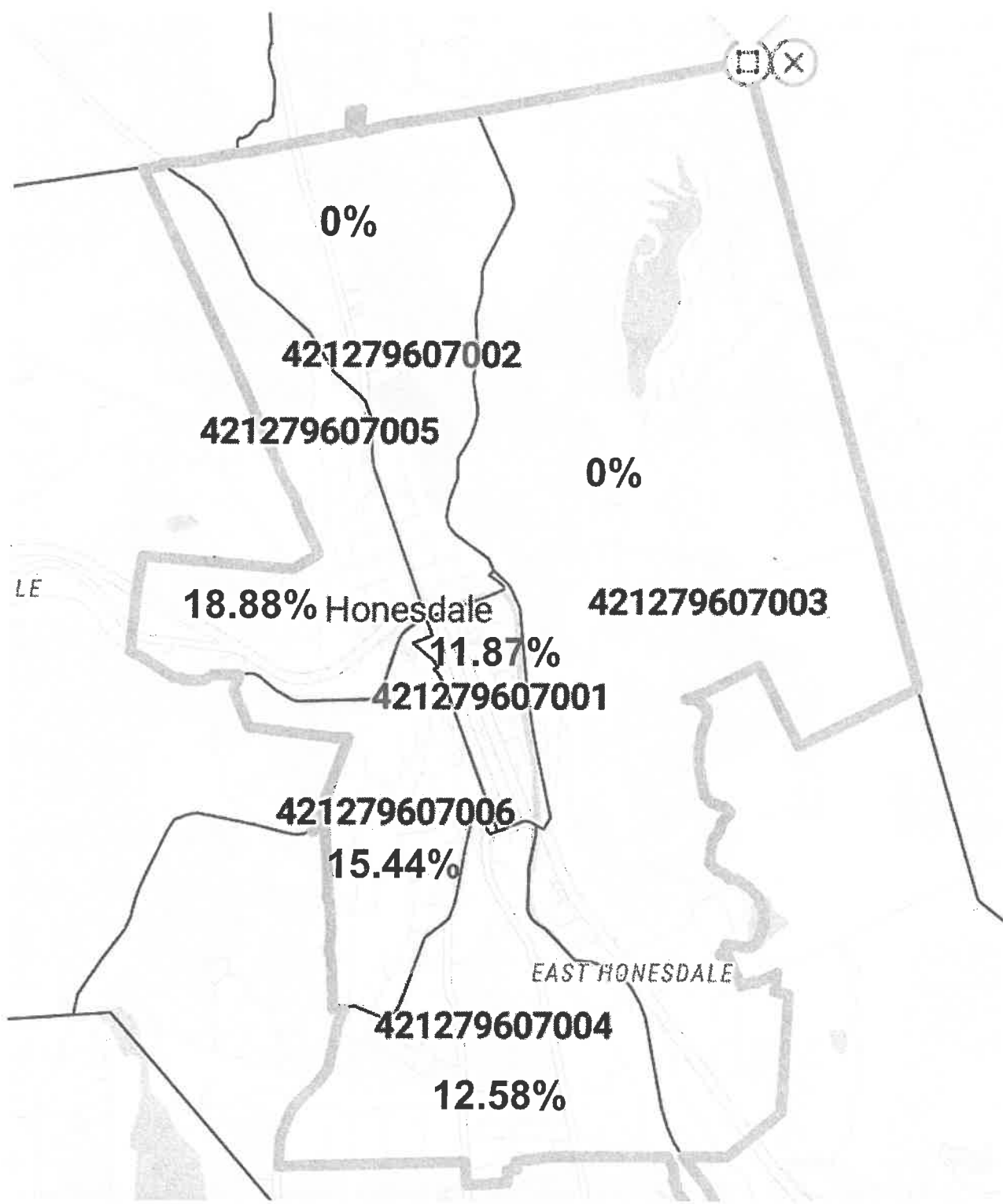
Honesdale Block Groups



Percent of LMI Residents



Percent of Minority Residents



Activity Location Map

