

2006-2008 Community Development Block Grant Program GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICATIONS

The Community Development Block Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

The County of York has participated in the Community Development Block Grant Program since 1977. During that time it has been able to fund approximately \$41 million in York County housing, public services, public facilities and planning projects!

Community Development Block Grant Program entitlement amounts vary from year to year, but the expected amount for the year 2006 is \$3 million.

Consolidated Plan, Three Year Project Plan, and Annual Action Plans

HUD requires the County to prepare a Consolidated Plan every five years which covers several HUD-funded programs operated by the York County Planning Commission (YCPC): Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG). The current consolidated plan, prepared by the Housing and Community Development (HCD) staff of the YCPC, covers the years 2005-2009 and primarily consists of three (3) parts:

1. An assessment of housing and community development needs;
2. The development of a strategy that prioritizes needs, establishes Goals and Objectives, and establishes actions, programs and projects that can be initiated or continued in order to satisfy the identified needs; and
3. Development of an Annual Action Plan that lists specific projects/activities that will be undertaken in a particular year to address priority needs and accomplish community goals and objectives.

Activities in the Annual Action Plan are drawn from the CDBG and ESG Three Year Project Plan and HOME program annual plan. Accordingly, this part of the Consolidated Plan changes each year. At this time, the HCD staff are beginning the preparation of the Three Year Project Plan for the years 2006 through 2008 by inviting municipalities and community service organizations to submit applications for projects and programs that they would like to undertake during these years.

The activities that are selected for the 2006 - 2008 CDBG and ESG Three Year Project Plan will form the framework for the Annual Action Plans for those years. However, the number of activities actually carried out will depend upon the amount of grant funds allotted by HUD for that program year.

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Application process

- May, 2005* A "Notice of Request for Projects for the CDBG Program Years 2006, 2007, and 2008" is mailed to all Municipalities and to presently funded Non-Profit Organizations. Additional application forms are available from:
Housing and Community Development Section
York County Planning Commission
100 West Market Street York PA 17401
Telephone (717)771-9870 FAX (717) 771-9511.
- July, 2005* Complete applications are due at the YCPC no later than **4:30 p.m., July 17, 2005**, (this means original, hard copy, with original signature, and attachments).
One original and one copy are required.
- Applications are reviewed by the HCD staff and a recommendation of the activities to be approved for funding in the Three Year Project Plan is prepared. The staff recommendations are reviewed by the York County Citizens Advisory Committee.
- August, 2005* The activities selected for funding are assembled into the Three Year Project Plan and advertised as a "Notice of Proposed Three Year Project Plan/Amendment to Consolidated Plan". Three Year Project Plan is presented for approval of the Board of Commissioners of York County.
- August, 2005* Applicants with approved activities are notified. Those funded in 2006 are requested to provide detailed budgets and descriptions. A copy of the Three Year Plan/Amendment to Consolidated Plan is sent to HUD.
- November, 2005* The first year of the Plan becomes the Annual Action Plan for program year 2006.

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Activities that ARE NOT eligible for CDBG funding: acquisition, construction, or re-construction of buildings for the general conduct of government (EXCEPT ADA improvements), political activities, certain income payments, & construction of new housing.

A. Eligible Activities: Each activity for which you are requesting funding must fall under one of the following types. There is a CDBG application form for each type. More than one application may be submitted under any or all types. Multi-year funding for an individual activity may be requested on one application form.

▶ **Public Facilities Activity**

Examples: Acquisition of real property

Relocation

Demolition

Rehabilitation of non-residential structures, including historic preservation

Construction and reconstruction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, curbs and sidewalks, neighborhood centers

ADA improvements to existing facilities

Public Facilities Activities must either principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons or eliminate slums and blight. Determination of whether a public facility project benefits principally low- and moderate-income persons is based on the service area of the facility. However, ADA improvements are presumed to benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

▶ **Public Services Activity**

There is a wide variety of public service activities, but in order to receive initial funding through the CDBG program, the activity must be either a *new service* or a *quantifiable increase in the level of an existing service*. Public services activities typically benefit principally low- and moderate-income persons. The County is limited by HUD regulations in the amount of CDBG funding that it may expend on public service activities in a given year.

▶ **Planning Activity**

Planning activities include comprehensive plans, Act 537 plans, community development plans, studies, and strategies and action programs to implement plans, including the development of codes, ordinances and regulations. *It is not necessary to show that planning activities benefit principally low- and moderate-income persons.* However, those that do receive special consideration.

The County has a limited amount of CDBG funds available for planning activities.

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B. National Objectives of the CDBG Program: all activities must meet one or more national objectives
Public Facilities activities typically meet a national objective by benefitting low- and moderate-income persons based on the *service area*. However, public facilities activities limited to ADA improvements are considered to benefit a *limited clientele* presumed to be low- and moderate-income. In cases where benefit to low- and moderate-income persons is not evident, addressing *slum and blight on an area or spot basis* may apply. In very limited cases, economic development may apply.

Public Service activities typically meet national objectives by benefitting low- and moderate-income persons based on *limited clientele*.

Planning activities are presumed to benefit low- and moderate-income persons and a citation is not needed.

1. Principally benefit Low- and Moderate-income persons

- ▶ Benefits will be available to *all residents in a particular service area* where a majority of the residents are low- and moderate-income persons (L/M)
 - a. The service area is located within a census tract (s) and block group(s) that is at least 41.7% L/M (information available from HCD staff); OR
 - b. An income survey has been conducted and the service area is at least 51% L/M (survey forms available from HCD staff); OR
 - c. The service area needs to be surveyed, but “we believe that it is L/M” and describe why.

OR

- ▶ Benefits will be available to a *limited clientele*, a majority of whom (at least 51%) are L/M
 - a. Clientele benefitting from the activity is presumed to be L/M (*abused children, battered spouses, elderly persons, severely disabled adults age 15 or older, homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with AIDS, and migrant farm workers*); OR
 - b. Eligibility requirements limit the activity exclusively to L/M persons; OR
 - c. Nature of the proposed activity, in combination with the project location, can support a presumption of primary benefit to L/M persons; OR
 - d. Documentation of verification of family size and income will show that L/M persons primarily benefit from the activity.

2. Addressing Slum/Blight on an Area or Spot Basis:

- ▶ Activity will address *slums or blight on an area basis*.
 - a. Activity is located in an area officially designated as a slum or blighted area under state or local law OR a substantial portion of deteriorated buildings and/or infrastructure exists in the area (slum and blight designated areas as well as the process for designation are available from HCD staff); AND

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Preparing an Application (cont')

B. National Objectives of the CDBG Program: (cont')

- b. The proposed activity will address one or more conditions which contributed to the area's deterioration.
- c. If the activity benefits primarily L/M *and* is in a slum/blight area, please note *both* in the application.
- ▶ Activity will address *slums or blight on a spot basis*.
 - a. Deteriorated buildings and/or infrastructure, including historic structures; AND
 - b. Activity specifically addresses the conditions of blight and physical decay.

Housing

- ▶ Activity will be carried out for the purpose of providing or improving *permanent residential structures*, which, upon completion, will be occupied by L/M households.
 - a. Description of how income eligibility requirements will be documented with verification of family size and income.

Economic Development

- ▶ Activity is designed to *create or retain permanent jobs* where a majority of the jobs (at least 51%), computed on a full-time equivalent basis, involve the employment of L/M.
 - a. Description of how the nature of the proposed activity, in combination with the project location, will primarily benefit L/M; OR
 - b. Description of how income eligibility requirements will be documented with verification of family size and income.

C. Community Development Priority Needs and Goals and Objectives: Applications must include a citation of the Community Development Priority Need, and Goal and Objective which the proposed activity is addressing:

Priority Need No. 1: Public Facility and Infrastructure Improvements

Goals- *To eliminate slums and blight, prevent blighting influences, provide needed community facilities, promote economic development, and eliminate conditions which are detrimental to the health, safety, and public welfare in York County neighborhoods and communities, principally those lived in by low and moderate income persons.*

Objectives- (a) Continue public improvements & redevelopment programs in neighborhoods & communities by upgrading housing, sanitary sewers, storm drainage, water supply, transportation, & public utility facilities, consistent with local, state, & federal plans & requirements.

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Preparing an Application (cont')

C. Community Development Priority Needs and Goals and Objectives: (cont')

- (b) To upgrade or install new public facilities in those low and moderate income areas where there are conditions threatening the health, safety, and welfare of the public or causing the deterioration and blight of properties.
- (c) To eliminate conditions which are a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community and are of recent origin.
- (d) To encourage adaptive reuse of vacant, obsolete or deteriorated commercial, industrial, public, institutional, historic, or large residential structures where there are conditions threatening the health, safety, and welfare of the public or causing a blighting influence.
- (e) To provide for the removal of material and architectural barriers from publicly and privately owned building, facilities, and improvements.
- (f) To support applications submitted to other entities that involve activities to improve existing or provide new public facilities and infrastructure that will principally benefit low and moderate income households.

Priority Need No. 2: Public Services

Goals- *To assist in providing new or increased levels of service to low and moderate and middle income households which support the economic and physical redevelopment of the County's distressed and deteriorating neighborhoods and communities whenever no other source of funding is available.*

- Objectives-**
- (a) To assist in improved and coordinated social services to low and moderate income persons, including the development of community, medical, and senior centers.
 - (b) To assist in adequate health care, housing and shelter, job training, on-going community action programs, including programs for the physically and mentally handicapped, and programs for those at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
 - (c) To support applications submitted to other entities that involve activities to meet public service needs of low and moderate and middle income households.

Priority Need No. 3: Planning

Goals- *To promote planning activities in order to enable public officials and organizations to make informed decisions in areas affecting housing and community development, particularly as they relate to lower income households.*

- Objectives-**
- (a) To assist in the preparation or update of various studies, plans, & ordinances that relate to housing and/or community viability & livability, as well as to provide an opportunity for the public to review information that is used in public policy making.
 - (b) To support applications submitted to other entities that involve planning activities to address housing and community development needs.

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Preparing an Application (cont')

C. Community Development Priority Needs and Goals and Objectives: (cont')

Priority Need No. 4: Economic Development

Goals - *To promote economic development in order to provide economic opportunities and employment for all segments of York County's labor force, but principally for lower and moderate income and unemployed persons.*

- Objectives-**
- (a) To assist in the implementation of a range of economic development plans for York County.
 - (b) To assist in the coordination of job training and economic development programs.
 - (c) To support applications submitted to other entities that involve activities to address economic development needs.

Review of Applications

The County always receives requests for funding far in excess of the amount of CDBG funds that it anticipates receiving. Accordingly, the funding process is very competitive. Each application is reviewed as follows:

Completeness First, the HCD staff will review each application for completeness, *including documentation* for the determination of how the proposed activity primarily benefits to low- and moderate-income persons or addresses conditions resulting in slum and blight. A copy of the Resolution approving the submission of the application will be checked. For non-profit agencies, a copy of the by-laws and listing of board members is required as well.

Eligible Activities Second, the HCD staff will review each proposed activity to see if it is an eligible public facilities, public service, or planning activity.

National Objectives Third, the HCD staff will review each proposed activity to see if it either benefits primarily low- and moderate-income persons, or addresses conditions resulting in slums and blight. The documentation of benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, or addressing conditions resulting in slum/blight areas, which is included in the application will be checked against the service area and/or beneficiaries.

The HCD staff will visit each proposed activity location to review the description of the proposed activity, its service area or beneficiaries, as well as the benefit to low- and moderate-income persons or slum and blight areas.

New public facilities and proposed extensions to existing will be checked against the Growth Areas Map adopted by the York County Planning Commission.

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Review of Applications (cont')

National Objectives Staff may choose to contact municipal officials, staff and or engineers, as well as, the staff and officers of non-profit agencies, for clarification or additional information.

Planning Activities Fourth, planning activities will be submitted to the York County Planning Commission County Long-Range or Current/Municipal staff for recommendation.

Finally, the HCD staff will consider the following, among other factors, when reviewing applications:

- ▶ In order to ensure compliance with HUD requirements, first priority is given to activities that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons, but slum and blight activities are also considered
- ▶ Activities with non-CDBG matching funds are given preference
- ▶ Cooperative efforts between municipalities and/or other entities are given preference
- ▶ Entities which have not received funding in the past 3 years receive special consideration
- ▶ Activities that are consistent with "Community Development Priority Needs and Goals and Objectives" are given special consideration
- ▶ Activities that are continuation of earlier activities are given special consideration

Questions? Need more information? Contact:

Joiann Galiano, Projects Coordinator
York County Planning Commission
100 W Market Street
York, PA 17401

Telephone: (717) 771-9870

FAX: (717) 771-9511

E-mail: jgaliano@ycpc.org