

Cumberland County Community Development Block Grant General Information – Overview of the Federal CDBG Program

The following pages provide a general overview of the CDBG program and the types of activities, projects and programs that can receive funding. It's not possible to provide information addressing every regulation, issue and circumstance. Individuals and communities are encouraged to contact the Community Development Office for information and answers to your questions.

Aaron Shapiro	207-699-1905	shapiro@cumberlandcounty.org
Maeve Pistrang	207-699-1906	pistrang@cumberlandcounty.org

I. Eligible Activities for CDBG Funding

Public Services
Housing
Planning
Public Facilities
Public Infrastructure
Downtown Revitalization
Economic Development

II. National Objectives

All CDBG funded activities must meet one of the “national objectives” of the program:

- Benefit to low/moderate income persons
 - Area-wide, direct benefit, or limited clientele basis
- Prevention or elimination of slum/blight conditions
- Addressing an urgent need

III. Public Service Activities

Note: Funds awarded for public service activities must not exceed 15% of the total HUD Grant award to Cumberland County.

The public service must be either:

- a new service; or
- a quantifiable increase in the level of an existing service

Examples of eligible Public Service activities include: operating, equipment and program material expenses for child care, health care, job training, recreation programs, educational programs, public safety services, fair housing, senior

citizen services, homeless services, drug abuse counseling and treatment and energy counseling and testing.

These services must be provided to:

1) Persons who are members of the following groups that are currently presumed by HUD to meet eligibility requirements. The presumption may be challenged if there is substantial evidence the group served by the project is most likely not comprised of principally low and moderate income persons.

Abused Children
Homeless Persons
Battered Spouses
Illiterate Adults
Elderly Persons
Migrant Farm Workers
Severely Disabled Adults
Persons Living with AIDS

Or

2) The service is available to *all* the residents in a particular primarily residential area, and at least 51% of those residents are low/moderate income persons.

Or

3) The service is limited to a specific group of people, at least 51% of whom are low/moderate income persons.

IV. Planning Activities

Examples of Planning Activities include: studies, analysis, data gathering, preparation of plans and action steps to implement plans.

These plans could be for individual projects, community development plans, neighborhood plans, environmental or historic preservation studies or other similar activities.

No documentation concerning the “national objectives” of the CDBG program is required for planning activities.

V. Public Facilities & Public Infrastructure

Public Facilities and Public Infrastructure projects concern the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and installation of public improvements and facilities. Except for handicap accessibility improvements, CDBG funds can not be used for buildings for the general conduct of government such as town offices.

Examples of projects include: streets, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, parking, water & sewer lines, senior centers, community buildings and handicap accessibility.

Buildings owned and operated by non-profit entities may qualify for funding if the facility is available to the general public. To qualify for funding and meet a “national objective” of the CDBG program the public facility or infrastructure must:

1) Benefit all the residents in an area which is primarily residential and for the Cumberland County CDBG program must belong in the lowest quartile of census block groups, which is referred to as the “**exception**” rule list. A special community income survey may be conducted by a qualified consultant to demonstrate that an area meets the standard of the “exception rule” list.

Or

2) Be used for an activity designed to benefit a particular group of persons and greater than 51% of these are qualified as low/moderate income;

Or

3) Entail the rehabilitation or historic preservation of the facility or improvement and qualify as a “slum/blight” activity;

VI. Downtown Revitalization

Downtown Revitalization projects typically contain public facilities or infrastructure improvements focused on the village center or downtown of a community. These projects may incorporate façade improvement loan/grant programs, the provision of public services, housing rehabilitation or other activities. The project may be a single activity or a holistic approach. Each component of a Downtown Revitalization project must meet one of the “national objectives” of the CDBG program.

VII. Housing

The most common CDBG funded housing activity is Housing Rehabilitation. Opportunity Alliance (formerly PROP) has implemented a region-wide housing rehabilitation program for the County for the past 5 years. An individual community or collaborative of communities may wish to implement its own program. Housing Rehabilitation activities qualify for CDBG funds when the housing is occupied by low/moderate income residents.

VIII. Economic Development

Examples of Economic Development activities include: the construction, rehabilitation or installation of commercial buildings and other real property equipment and improvements; or assistance to private for profit entities in the form of grants, loans, loan guarantees or technical assistance. A loan program targeted to micro-enterprises is an economic development activity.

Economic Development activities meet the CDBG “national objective” of benefiting low/moderate income persons through the creation or retention of jobs. Greater than 51% of the individuals hired or retained as a result of the economic development activity must qualify as low/moderate income.