

**Cumberland County Community Development Program  
2014 CDBG General Program Application  
Regional Cover Page**

**Project Title** Special Needs: Therapeutic Recreation for County Residents with Severe Disabilities

**Regional Applicant** Cumberland County Commissioners

**Entity** The Center for Therapeutic Recreation, Recreation and Facilities Management Department, City of Portland

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**Contact Information**

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**Program Category**

Public Infrastructure/Facility \_\_\_\_\_ Downtown Revitalization

Public Service   X   Housing \_\_\_\_\_ Economic Development

**CDBG "National Objective"**

Low/Moderate Income: Area-Wide \_\_\_\_\_ Limited Clientele

Direct Benefit: Presumed Group **Adults with Severe Disabilities** (Identify Group)  
12-14 Participants

Slum/Blight: Area-Wide   N/A   Spot Basis   N/A  

**Amount of CDBG Funds Requested**   \$5000  

**Total Estimated Project Cost** \$5000

**Name of Authorized Official** *Amitasha Chandra, Department Head*

**Signature of Authorized Official**

*[Handwritten Signature]*

## Cumberland County Community Development Block Grant Proposal

### General Grant Program Application – 2014

Submitted by  
The Center for Therapeutic Recreation  
City of Portland, Maine

#### 1. Summary of Proposal Project (10 points)

The purpose of this grant application is to request an appropriation through the Cumberland County Community Development Block Grant process in the amount of \$5000. CDBG funds will provide partial support for the participation of Cumberland County adult residents with severe disabilities who would like to participate in the center's programs and do not have other funding streams, including municipal support, to do so. Therapeutic Recreation is the use of a recreation modality (e.g. swimming, art, social activities) to help individuals with disabilities improve, maintain and expand their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The Center for Therapeutic Recreation has a long history of providing therapeutic recreation and aquatics services to children and adults with disabilities who reside in Southern Maine since 1974. Originally a program of the city of Portland Recreation Department, the center was encouraged to leave city auspices in 1984 and incorporated as a nonprofit in order to serve a greater catchment area in southern Maine. In 2008, the center was faced with the loss of significant funding and explored options to merge with another nonprofit. Easter Seals Maine (ESME) approached the center about a partnership and in January 2009, the center joined ESME. On July 1, 2013, the center return to the city of Portland auspices and continues to provide quality professional community-based therapeutic recreation programs. Its goal is to enhance the quality of life experiences of individuals with disabilities at a reasonable cost with city and regional outreach. Participation in a structured recreation environment provided by trained professionals encourages skill attainment with the ultimate goal of full inclusion in the participant's community recreation programs. By eliminating barriers to community involvement and maximizing active participation, adults with severe disabilities are empowered to lead fuller lives and to contribute to their communities.

#### 2. Need for the Activity (20 points)

The magnitude and severity of the issue of providing services to this population is witnessed by the loss of state and local services due to the state's present economic condition and the heavy demand for services by special populations (Portland Press Herald, January 30, 2013). Individuals with severe disabilities are often excluded in the work place or lack skills to be potentially employed (Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, 2010). Social and physical isolation and the lack of available day programs place great burdens on families and the social system network. Thus, many adults with severe disabilities are faced with long periods of unconstructive use of time, are at risk for developing poor self-esteem and increased

behavior problems, and experience little physical activity – factors that decrease opportunities for enhanced quality of life. In addition, many young adults who are transitioning from high school are placed on long wait lists for day programs, in-home support and waiver opportunities further exacerbating boredom, social isolation, and overdependence on family members.

The number of people with disabilities over the age of five who reside in Cumberland County is 42,102 (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/23/23005.html>). It is estimated that 13,154 adults with disabilities are over the age of 65 living in Cumberland County (31%). Of this number, 2499 live below the poverty level (U.S. Census Data, 2000). No information is available on the number of adults who have severe disabilities and residents in Cumberland County or at what income levels.

The *Maine Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan, 2005-2010* (n.d.) describes the serious nature of Maine citizens relating to the lack of their physical activity and the growing problems associated with poverty and poor nutrition. To address these issues for all Maine citizens, the plan suggest that Maine citizens address changing their lifestyle by implementing a healthy diet and engaging in regular physical activity as outline by current research that recommends that “encouraging individuals to become involved in physical activity (that) can influence other health behaviors” (The Maine Physical Activity Plan, n.d.). At greater risk are those individuals with disabilities who have less frequent opportunities to engage in healthy behaviors that include regular exercise and physical activity. To address this concern, the Center for Therapeutic Recreation offers a therapeutic and adapted swimming program for children and adults with disabilities, and a long history of providing a wide range of active and passive recreation activities when resources are available.

The Healthy People 2020 paradigm “focuses on promoting the health and well-being of people with disabilities” (2013) and suggest that area for improvement and opportunities for engagement for improving their health status can be accomplished by (being included in public health activities, receiving well-timed interventions and services, interacting with their environment without barriers, and participating in everyday life activities (<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview>).

In keeping with the suggestions promoted by the Maine Physical Activity Plan and research conducted by the Healthy People 2020 program, the center recognizes the valuable guidance each has to offer. Opportunities to engage in physical activity will benefit those county residents with disabilities who need and want to participate in a structured, healthy physical activity that will contribute to their overall well-being. The rationale for participation is also tied to proactive social and physical health economics.

It is apparent that social and economic environments affect individual choices related to physical health, nutrition and physical activity. Therefore, appropriate interventions must address environmental factors as well as behavioral issues in the state’s effort to prevent and treat concerns related to weight, obesity and disease prevention (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Surgeon General, 2012). Maine can answer the Surgeon General’s challenge to improve the health and wellness of persons with disabilities; “Good health is necessary for persons with disabilities to secure the freedom to work, learn and engage in their families and communities” (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/disabilities>).

### **3. Management of the Proposed Activity (10 points)**

#### **a. Define who and how the grant funded project will be managed:**

The grant, if awarded to the center, will provide funding that pays for the center's hourly rate of \$40 per hour. The county resident would be asked to pay a registration fee of for his or her participation (at 50% of cost). The program's manager will oversee the administration of the grant and will be responsible for record keeping, filing reports and submitting reimbursement forms. All records including a participant intake file, income verification (for children) and records pertaining to the administration of the grant will be maintained for county audits. It is anticipated that the grant award of \$5000 will provide 125 hours of service to residents. County residents may select to participate in a program consisting of 30-to-90 minutes per week. The center has the capacity to serve between 12 and 16 residents with severe disabilities that have no other possible funding source to support their participation. Funding will be spread out over the funding period as determined by the county to accommodate as many residents as possible. Recent changes at the state level regarding service systems infers that those individuals with significant disabilities will lose or have the potential to lose funding for a variety of community services (Portland Press Herald, January 30, 2013).

#### **b. Explain the experience of the applicant.**

The center's manager has oversight experience with community development funding when the center was affiliated with the City of Portland and in recent funding cycles with the City of South Portland and Cumberland County. The center is committed to its mission of providing quality professional service to individuals with disabilities in Southern Maine and continues to search for various funding streams that will enhance service delivery at a reasonable cost.

#### **c. Demonstrate an ongoing commitment**

Professional therapeutic recreation services are provided to those individuals whose conditions may prevent them from fully participating in the mainstream community recreation programs. These individuals may require considerable support in order to participate in the center's program including dressing and undressing, self-care, one-to-one instruction, program adaptation, specialized equipment, and adherence to best practice.

Activities are designed to facilitate the development, maintenance and expression of an appropriate lifestyle of these residents while using community facilities with professional support. Recreation offers benefits and values within the human experience that enhances one's quality of life, recognizes diverse needs and learning styles, diversity and the personal interests of the individual. Recreation offers new and/or expanded opportunities for community inclusion and participation. The center's longevity as a municipal and nonprofit service provider attests to its commitment to service the recreation needs of individuals with disabilities in Southern Maine.

The consequence of not receiving CDBG funds means that residents of Cumberland County who qualify for the center's program would have a more difficult time receiving the services

that the center provides. It would require potential participants to pay total out-of-pocket costs for program fees. This would create a hardship for many individuals with disabilities who may already have limited financial means. Decreasing funding streams at the local, state and federal levels are creating difficult situations for many Maine residents. Tighter eligibility requirements are eliminating individuals who, in the past, would have been able to participate in many programs but cannot at this time due to limited means.

The opportunity to utilize CDBG funding provides the county and the center the ability to reach out to an underserved population; and to provide opportunities to establish and maintain healthier lifestyle, learn new skills that enhance greater avenues to join community programs, and to encourage social interaction with others, especially for residents who live in more rural towns in the county.

Partial funding will be used to help as many residents as possible based on the center's hourly rate and dependent on the grant award. Additional grant writing will be sought to help offset program costs as available and appropriate. The center's manager continues to write grants and one fundraising event for program operating costs to keep activities affordable for current and potential participants.

CDBG funds are critical for the center because it lost past county funding due to a restructuring of county priorities related to the Cumberland County Jail as well as economic conditions facing all levels of municipal government. In addition, few towns in the county provide appropriations for social services including therapeutic recreation. The present status of MaineCare cuts facing the disabled and elders will have greater impact on the most basic of health care and related services for those populations. The loss of these funds hurts the center's ability to offer funding support for county residents whose town does not appropriate funds for the program. Fewer county residents would be able to pay for these services. Thus, the center must look at every potential funding opportunity to help its participants and to promote its mission. Its biggest budget expense is personnel who are trained in providing therapeutic recreation and aquatic services.

**d. Describe efforts undertaken or planned to diminish future reliance on Cumberland County CDBG funds and continue the program without CDBG program funds.**

In July 2013, the center returned to the city of Portland Recreation Department. Many factors influenced this acquisition but the main determinant was based on the increasing needs of city residents with disabilities whose need for recreation services is emerging and the expertise and experience that the center's professional staff could provide. It is anticipated that it will take approximately two years to increase citizen's awareness of the program and to build a budget that will support participants. It is further anticipated that the program will reach out to individuals outside the city who have recreation needs that are not currently met by their communities. In doing so, it will need support from other sources including municipal funding streams to build a **Special Recreation Association**. Such an association is common in the Mid-West and is supported with municipal financial and in-kind

resources that offer regional programming for individuals with disabilities. The center's professional staff have the expertise, knowledge and experience to help develop this concept. With fewer revenue sharing dollars coming to towns and cities, and with a growing aging and disabled population, programs like this can fill a large void and enhance the region's quality of life. Pooling resources makes effective use of funding, facilities, and in-kind services. If funds are diminished and eventually are discontinued, fewer county residents will receive these services and the bridge to find new funding will take long to construct. It will fall to each municipality to provide services within its community for residents with disabilities who desire and could benefit from inclusion in town recreation programs. The center is willing to consult and work with towns and cities to explore programming options.

#### **4. Ready to proceed (20 points)**

The steps to complete for the project include the development of a press release alerting residents with severe disabilities that the grant has been received from the Cumberland County CDBG providing funding. The press release will provide contact information and a description of the program's purpose and eligibility.

Distribution of program flyers in community spaces and on bulletin boards advertising the program will be placed in municipalities and in center mailings to town funders. In addition, letters will be sent to all town managers asking that they share the information with their residents. Interested county residents who contact the center will receive application materials and a program schedule. Once enrolled, participants will receive frequent mailings of schedules, program notices and newsletters (when available).

Potential impediments to initiation and continuation of the project could include securing additional trained staff experience in working with special populations to accommodate the increased service need should the nature and needs of the participants seeking service require significant physical assistance. A waiting list could be established as demand increases. Waiting participants will be placed on a waitlist and will be accommodated in a timely manner.

#### **Implementation schedule for the project (10 points) (See attached)**

- 5. Budget for project (5 points) (See attached)**
- 6. Implementation schedule (5 points) (See attached)**
- 7. 7A) Need for CDBG Program Funds (15 points)**

##### **a. Why are CDBG funds critical**

The opportunity to utilize CDBG funding provides the county and the center the ability to reach out to an underserved population; and to provide opportunities to establish and maintain healthier lifestyle, learn new skills that enhance greater avenues to join community programs, and to encourage social interaction with others, especially for residents who live in more rural towns in the county. CDBG funds are critical for the center because it lost past county funding due to a restructuring of county priorities related to the Cumberland County Jail as well as economic conditions facing all levels of municipal government. In addition, few

towns provide appropriations for social services. The present status of MaineCare cuts facing the disabled and elders will have greater impact on the most basic of health care and related services for those populations. The loss of these funds hurt the program's ability to offer funding support for county residents whose town does not appropriate funds for the center. Fewer county residents would be able to pay for these services. Thus, the center must look at every potential funding opportunity to help its participants and to promote its mission.

**b. Other funding sources**

The center explores a variety of funding sources to round out its budget including municipal requests, school contracts, private paying participants, grants, fees for consultations and assessments, trainings, donations, and some fundraising. At this time, the program manager is also exploring some collaborative efforts with in-home support agencies; as well as offering more programs at an affordable cost to increase revenues.

**c. What is the impact on project if CDBG funds are not received**

The consequence of not receiving CDBG funds means that residents of Cumberland County who qualify for the center's program would have a more difficult time receiving the services that the center provides. It would require potential participants to pay total out-of-pocket costs for program fees. This would create a hardship for many individuals with disabilities who may already have limited financial means. Decreasing funding streams at the local, state and federal levels are creating difficult situations for many Maine residents. Tighter eligibility requirements are eliminating individuals who, in the past, would have been able to participate in many programs but cannot at this time due to limited means.

Partial funding will be used to help as many residents as possible based on the center's hourly rate and dependent on the grant award. Additional grant writing will be sought to help offset program costs. The center has had a sliding fee scale available for eligible participants but that has been placed on hold. A timeline for reinstatement has not been determined. The center's manager continues to write grants and host fundraising events for program operating costs to keep activities affordable for current and potential participants.

**8. County sponsored project (6 points)**

**References**

Bouchard, R. (2013). *Suit fails to care for 115 in need, suit claims*. Portland Press Herald, January 30, 2013.

Maine Disabilities Council,, 2010. *Realities of living in Maine with a disability*. Augusta: Maine Developmental Disabilities Council.

Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health (n.d.). *The Maine physical activity and nutrition plan, 2005-2010*. Augusta: Maine Department of Health and

Human Services, Public Health.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000. (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/23/23005.html>).

U.S. Department Health and Human Services. *Disability and health – Healthy People*. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from, [www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=9](http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=9).

U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Surgeon General (2012). *The surgeon general's call to action to improve the health and wellness of persons with disabilities: Vision for the future*. Retrieved January 30, 2013 from, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/disability>.

**Public Service Programs**

<b>Cost Category</b>	<b>CDBG Funds</b>	<b>Municipal Funds</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
Equipment-Purchase and Repair			1000	1000
Materials/Supplies Program/Office			2500	2500
Operations				
Salaries-FTE/Per diem	5000	35,886	109,707	150,593
Fringe				
Transportation-Employee Travel			3200	3200
Consultants-Instruction Support			200	200
Space/Rent				
Project Management				
Other – 1)Uniforms			750	750
Certification Training			685	685
Other – 2)Cell Phone			840	840
Postage			500	500
<b>Total Costs</b>	5000	35,886	119,382	160,268

**Provide the basis for determination of budget amounts:**

This budget reflects the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2015 for the Center for Therapeutic Recreation. In the current fiscal year, the CDBG grant supports the salary of one recreation therapist (per diem) who provides services to the recipients of the grant award. If funded, the allocation received will be used to continue this position.

### Project Implementation Schedule

Activity	Q #1 J - S 2014	Q #2 O - D 2014	Q #3 J - M 2015	Q #4 A - J 2015	Q #5 J - S 2015	Q #6 O - D 2015	Q #7 J - M 2016	Q #8 A - J 2016
Develop flyers, complete mailings	X							
Distribute flyers in community spaces/boards	X	X	X	X				
Press releases for area media	X							
Mail information to interested participants/towns	X	X	X	X				
Complete grant reports on monthly basis	X	X	X	X				
Complete project report at the end of grant period	X	X	X	X				
Project Completed:								