

**Cumberland County Community Development Program
2012 CDBG General Program Application
Regional Cover Page**

Project Title Cumberland County Homelessness Prevention Program

Regional Applicant Cumberland County Commissioners

Non-Profit Entity The Opportunity Alliance

Contact Information Name Robin Oxenhorn

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Program Category

Public Infrastructure/Facility N/A Downtown Revitalization N/A

Public Service X Housing Economic Development N/A

CDBG "National Objective"

Low/Moderate Income: X Area-Wide X Limited Clientele

Direct Benefit: Presumed Group People at risk of homelessness (Identify Group)

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

Amount of CDBG Funds Requested \$65,000

Total Estimated Project Cost \$83,353

Name of Authorized Official Mike Tarpinian

Signature of Authorized Official 

2012 General Application Questions

Respond to the narrative questions in a maximum of five pages for non-economic development applications or six pages for economic development applications.

1. Provide a **brief summary** (400 words maximum) of the proposed project.
- **10 Points.**

Focus your answer on issues such as: What will be built? What will happen? Where will it happen? Who's in charge? Who will be served?
Be specific to the project and the CDBG funds requested.

*The Opportunity Alliance (formerly PROP) hopes to continue to provide Homelessness Prevention services to people at risk of homelessness. Individuals and families who are facing potential homelessness will be provided with housing focused case management services. The case management service will include: education about housing options, information about available resources, assistance with creating a stability plan, budgeting and on-going support through the process. The intention is to assist with information about options and resources and support through the process so clients are able to remain stably housed or to be quickly re-housed, ideally within their community. Any person over the age of 18 and resides in Cumberland County who is at risk of homelessness would be served. One full time case manager would provide the direct support to clients. The position will be overseen by the Director of Community Services.

The case management service will be provided in a variety of locations: The Opportunity Alliance offices in the Portland area (4 possible locations), in the community in which the person lives (i.e. at the library, town office, other social service agency, etc.) or in the person's home.

The case management service provision will work collaboratively with other service providers for additional services and resources, to make appropriate referrals and to assist with applications as is appropriate.

Community service providers will also be able to access the information and education for themselves to better serve their clients. Concerted outreach efforts to municipalities and service providers will be part of the mission.

The Director and the case manager will work with municipalities to find ways to effectively address the needs of those in danger of homelessness in their communities.

**The Opportunity Alliance (formerly PROP and Youth Alternatives Ingraham) is comprised of 50 integrated community based and clinical programs serving*

more than 20,000 people annually. For more than 40 years, we have provided early education and child care, nutrition programming, advocacy, information and referral, mental health and substance abuse treatment, as well as basic needs for people living in poverty. All of our programs attempt to serve families from a whole person/family/community approach that assures an increased use of best practices from all disciplines. To that end, we continually seek ways of integrating our programs into a seamless continuum of care. Our programming draws from a wide range of resources, blending evidence-based practices with practical experience and community resources. We place a particularly high value on services that empower individuals and families to connect with natural and community supports.

2. Provide a response to the four questions below defining and justifying the **need for the activity**. - 20 points

a. Convey the magnitude and severity of the issue to be addressed.

The Cumberland County Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program has been serving individuals and families at risk of homelessness or recently homeless since 2007. In the past 2 ½ years, since July of 2009, we have served over 450 families and close to 1200 individuals within those families with case management. In addition the program has responded to approximately 3000 calls from clients, service providers, municipalities, etc. looking for information about housing.

We have provided regional coordination for homelessness prevention for 5 years. We have served residents from every municipality in Cumberland County. In Westbrook, South Portland and Windham alone we have served 296 households and 754 individuals in those households.

Housing can be complex and difficult to navigate especially for many of the vulnerable population we serve. Having support and guidance and education through that process is a key to successfully staying housed or being rapidly re-housed. Staff will stay current and knowledgeable about any changes in the housing arena and be able to share that information with clients, the community and other service providers.

Many providers currently rely on the expertise of the current HPRP housing case managers in order to assist their clients.

In these economic times housing insecurity is greater than ever. Resources to provide support have dwindled greatly. We are unaware of any other program of this nature in Cumberland County. Funding through ARRA for the PROP/The Opportunity Alliance Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program will end June of 2012. It is our hope to

continue to provide this greatly needed service for the coming year in anticipation of additional funding becoming available.

- b. Identify the total number of people affected by the issue.
 - i. Out of the total number of people affected, identify the number of people from low/moderate income households.

Since July of 2009 we have provided case management to 471 households and 1200 individuals in those households. In that 2 ½ years we have served every municipality in Cumberland County. In the towns of South Portland, Westbrook and Windham alone we provided case management for 296 families and 754 individuals in those families. All of the families served in the program were low/moderate income. We would continue to serve low /moderate income exclusively.

- c. Describe to what extent the project makes in the long-term measurable difference in the economic and social health of the region.

When individuals and families are stably housed adults are able to find and secure work more easily. Children remain in school more consistently. Health risks would seem to be reduced. Allowing families and individuals to remain in their communities where they have built relationships and supports is key to stability both economically and socially. There has been a lot of research in recent years regarding "housing first" models. It has been shown that if people can be stably housed they are able to create healthier and more productive lives. This in turn benefits the community they live in by allowing them to be financially participatory in their community. The children in these families will have more stability, have increased and regular school attendance and not be moved around from school to school. They in turn will have a greater opportunity to grow up to be productive participatory engaged members of their community which will enhance the economic and social health of the region in which they live.

- d. Construction related activities: Convey how the project relates to the community's long-range planning and capital improvement needs.

[Answer to be evaluated on clarity, completeness and an assessment of the severity of the need for the project]

- 3. Provide a response to the three questions concerning **management of the proposed activity** – 10 points

- a. Define *who* will manage the grant funded project and *how* they will manage it.

The Community Services Director of The Opportunity Alliance (formerly PROP) will manage the grant funded project. We have a physical office for the case manager and Director at 73 Deering Street, Portland. The case manager will provide services in person or via phone to clients in need of housing case management. This case manager will also work with community providers to educate and share information so they are better informed. The Director will oversee the budget and day to day operations of the program. The current Director has been managing the current HPRP program for 2 years and has been fiscally and programmatically responsible.

- b. Explain the experience of the applicant in undertaking projects of similar complexity.

Since 2007, PROP has managed housing focused case management in Cumberland County. Most recently we have managed a \$600,000 grant for a 3 year Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program. We had up to 3 case managers providing service and financial assistance county wide to individuals and families at risk of being homeless or who recently became homeless. The program has been an identified model in the state that received high praise as being innovative and cost effective while serving large numbers of people in need.

All the data management, record keeping, releases, intake packets, tracking is already in place. We already have a wide net of community provider relationships with agencies, municipalities and advocacy agencies that know and respect the work of this program.

Many providers rely on our staff to help them help their clients. Without this program hundreds of at risk families in Cumberland County would have no place to turn. Portland has the only emergency shelters in the county, the City of Portland's Oxford Street and Family Shelters, and Preble Street's Women's Shelter. Those who become homeless in the county have few supports. Individuals who are at risk of homelessness often have only the option of going to towns as a last resort and town's loose considerable revenue by paying for emergency shelter in hotels. Families also loose in this situation as they become isolated from their informal sources of support and in many cases families become transient.

- c. Demonstrate that an ongoing commitment exists to continue the maintenance and operation of the activity or facility.

The Opportunity Alliance (PROP) is very committed to homelessness prevention work. We are hopeful that in FY14/FY15 additional federal support will become available or other grant funding and we will be able to continue to offer this much needed service in Cumberland County.

We would like to continue to provide Homelessness Prevention services in Cumberland County with a similar model next year. We would use CDBG funding as a "bridge" until the HEARTH Act or other funds become available. Being able to continue this program without interruption of service will be a huge efficiency and savings in the long run. These services are critically needed and the start up for an intensive program such as this could take up to 6 months. All the reporting, tracking, systems, processes and procedures have already been created and the staff knowledge base is deep and wide.

The agency will be contributing \$18,353.00 toward the FY 13 budget to insure its viability.

[Answer to be evaluated on clarity, completeness and demonstration that sufficient management capacity is ready and available]

4. Demonstrate that the project is ready to proceed – 10 points

For construction related projects:

- Describe the steps that have *been* completed or must *be* completed to bring the project to construction start. These may include: site control, matching funds, design, engineering, and cost estimates, procurement of permits, testing, consultations concerning life safety, ADA, or other special requirements, traffic studies, zoning, Planning Board approval.
- Describe any existing and/or potential impediments to project initiation.

For non-construction related projects:

- Describe the steps that have been completed or must be completed to initiate the project. These may include: community support, staffing, matching funds, securing an appropriate location, marketing and networking.

We have many steps already completed to easily step in to the continued work of this program. We have tremendous community support and an excellent reputation county wide. Having been in this arena for close to 5 years we know the work well, know how best to maximize resources and serve clients efficiently and effectively. We currently have two case managers in our HPRP program, one of whom may be interested in continuing on with the work. The agency has committed \$ \$18,353.00 to support the continued homelessness prevention work. We have a physical location for staff and several office locations to meet clients in. The program will be marketed on our website, in our outreach material, internally among the 50+ programs of The Opportunity Alliance as well as externally at coalitions and community groups. We are already involved in a number of housing related community groups and networking opportunities: ESAC, Region One, Balance of State Continuum of Care, etc. We have had an advisory board for our current program and would consider continuing with this model.

- Describe any existing and/or potential impediments to project initiation
Funding to sustain this very important program is the only impediment at the moment.

[Answer to be evaluated based on clarity, completeness and demonstration that the project can be substantially completed within 24 months]

5. **Implementation schedule** for project: Fill in the attached schedule form (*Appendix III*). - **10 points**

[Response to be evaluated on logic, completeness and reasonableness of assumptions]

6. **Budget for project**. Fill in the attached budget form *and provide the basis for determination of budget amounts (Appendix IV)*. - **10 points**
- a. 20% threshold match must be cash, in-kind direct labor, donated land or building materials and contracted project development services.
 - b. *County sponsored projects are not required to demonstrate matching funds.*

Applications will not be accepted without a completed budget.

7. **Economic Development/Job Creation Related Projects Only** – 10 points

This question will be answered by applicants seeking assistance for a private business. The project will meet a CDBG “national objective” by creating jobs for low/moderate income persons.

- a. Detail the financing package for the project, the steps taken to meet the business's capital needs and the need for CDBG funds to fill a financial “gap”.
- b. Specify exactly what the CDBG funds will be used for, i.e. capital equipment, facility improvement, working capital, etc.
- c. Describe the role the CDBG funds will have on the business's ability to remain competitive and create jobs within the period July 2012 to June 2013. Identify the number of jobs to be created during this period.
- d. Describe the market the business operates in, i.e., competitors, costs and product demand. What risks does the business face?

8. Provide a response to the four questions demonstrating the **need for CDBG program funds**. - 15 points

- a. Why are CDBG funds critical for the commencement and ultimate success of the project?

The current funding through ARRA that were designated for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program is ending in June 2012. We had a 3 year grant. There is very little funding for homelessness prevention currently at the federal or state level. We would like to keep the momentum that we have built over the last 5 years that has impacted several thousand lives in Cumberland County.

- b. Have you, or will you, seek funds from other sources? If so, what are those funding sources?

We have committed \$18,353 to the program for the next fiscal year. We will be allocating some of our CSBG funds to help support this program.

- c. What is the impact on the project if CDBG funds are not received or if only partial CDBG funds are received?

If we do not receive CDBG funds we will most likely need to end our homelessness case management program. This would be very unfortunate as much of the initial work of creating a cost effective and well utilized and necessary program has been done. Being able to seamlessly continue the work that has been established for the past 5 years would

make extremely good fiscal sense and would continue to serve hundreds of individuals and families.

On January 18, 2012, in a Huffington Post article, it was stated... "All in all, the conditions are right for national homelessness rates to start rising soon, according to a new report that examines many of the large-scale economic factors that force people out of their homes. The report, published Tuesday by the National Alliance to End Homelessness, suggests that a delayed wave of pain may be coming for low-earning renters and homeowners."

[Answer to be evaluated on completeness, clarity, and assessment of the need for CDBG funding]

9. **Distress Score**

Each community will be assigned a score from **0 to 10 points** based upon two factors:

- a. Percent of low/moderate income community residents of the total community population
- b. Percent of low/moderate income residents in the 25 communities of the Cumberland County Entitlement Jurisdiction that reside in the applicant community.

County sponsored projects serving region-wide initiatives will receive a distress score of **6 points**.

Project Implementation Schedule

<u>Activity</u>	Q #1 J - S 2012	Q #2 O - D 2012	Q #3 J - M 2013	Q #4 A - J 2013	Q #5 J - S 2013	Q #6 O - D 2013	Q #7 J - M 2014	Q #8 A - J 2014
Contract/ Environmental Review	X							
Reporting		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retain or hire case manager	X							
Advertise and market program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Outreach to community providers to educate about parameters of the Homelessness Prevention Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop resource packets regarding housing resources and information and keep updated	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Track numbers of clients/families served	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide housing focused case management to clients	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide information and referral to clients and providers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Public Service Programs				
Cost Category	CDBG Funds	Municipal Funds	Other Funds	Total
Equipment				
Materials/Supplies	78.00		22.00	100.00
Operations	12,368.00		3492.00	15,860.00
Salaries	37,955.00		10,717.00	48,672.00
Fringe	10.386		2933.00	13.319.00
Transportation	780.00		220.00	1,000.00
Consultants	78.00		22.00	100.00
Space/Rent	3082.00		870.00	3,952.00
Project Management				
Other – 1) Insurance, Telephone, Staff Development	273.00		77.00	350.00
Other – 2)				
Total Costs	65,000		18,353.00	83,353.00
Provide the basis for determination of budget amounts:				
<p>The budget is based on one full time housing case manager and some hours of supervision and program oversight by the Program Director. Office space for the case manager, phone and IT costs are factored in. Some travel is allowed for case manager to do home visits and visits in the community. A small allowance for interpreters (under consultants) should the need arise.</p>				

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORIZATION

At a duly authorized meeting of the Board of Directors of People's Regional Opportunity Program (PROP) held on July 27, 2011, it was VOTED that

Marc Doyon, Chairman
Gail Wilkerson, Vice Chairman
Ann Donaghy, Treasurer
Julie Bassett, Secretary
Michael Tarpinian, President/CEO
Paul L. Morgan, CMA, Chief Finance Officer

of this organization be authorized to execute contracts in the name of and on behalf of said organization. Such execution of any contract or obligation in this organization's name shall be valid and binding upon the organization.

ATTEST:

Marc A. Doyon
Marc Doyon, Chairman - Board of Directors

July 27, 2011