

January 12, 2010

«TITLE» «FIRSTNAME» «LASTNAME»
«ORG»
«ADDRESS1»
«CITY», «STATE» «ZIP»

Dear «SALUT» «LASTNAME»:

Re: Applications for 2010 Community Development Funding
Deadline: Friday, March 5, 2010
Maximum grant: \$100,000
New Five-Year Plan

Onondaga County is soliciting project proposals for the 2010 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding cycle.

A new Consolidated Five Year Plan is required this year by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Please submit your municipality's new five-year plan with your project applications which will then be incorporated into the County's submission. This can be in letter format but should incorporate the needs of your municipality for the next five years. You are not limited to five projects or one per year. All future applications will have to be consistent with your plan. As with the project applications, a public hearing and board resolution are also required.

Priority will be given to projects that incorporate green technology and construction techniques.

We have not yet been notified regarding Onondaga County's allocation for 2010 funding because Congress has not yet passed the HUD budget even though the federal fiscal year began October 1st. The President requested a higher level of funding for the Program, but we expect it to be similar to prior levels that had already reflected several years of substantial reductions in the CDBG Program. The cuts were necessitated by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each year, we hope that Congress will restore some of the funding to the CDBG Program that is the only nationwide program assisting urban areas. The slow rate of expenditure of grant funds throughout the country has hurt the program's allocation. There has been a great deal of Congressional concern over the expenditure rate and that has affected the allocation process in the past.

If your project is selected, you must make every attempt to complete your project within one year. If the project is not substantially complete after one year, funding may be withdrawn. Also, please note that funding can no longer be stockpiled from year to year.

If you have balances from prior year projects, you may be penalized in the project selection process. Funding may be withdrawn unless you are able to spend your balances by June 30th, 2010. Please advise us immediately whether or not you will be able to complete your project by that time.

Please note that projects also must be consistent with Onondaga County's 2010 Plan which requires that no new infrastructure be built unless the project results in substantial economic development benefit to the community. The addition of new infrastructure without new population growth translates into higher property taxes for all county residents. Any new projects such as sidewalks must show a plan for future maintenance.

The primary objectives of the program are: 1) to assist the lower income people of the County and/or 2) to eliminate slums and blighting conditions. The following is a brief description of each category. Your proposed activity must do one or the other.

1) Low Income Benefit: If the purpose of your project is to benefit low income people, it must be under one of the following conditions:

- a) The project must be located in a low income area as documented by the 2000 Census or an income survey which you have conducted no earlier than 2000;
- b) The project must be an economic development activity which will provide direct employment opportunities for low income persons that can be documented; or
- c) The project must benefit either elderly or handicapped. Both groups are considered low income for purposes of the program. For example, a senior citizen center is eligible for funding regardless of its location as is renovating existing restrooms for handicapped accessibility in parks or other facilities. Building new restrooms is no longer considered eligible under handicapped accessibility since all new construction must be handicapped accessible by law.

Please refer to the maps of eligible areas based on the 2000 Census that we have enclosed. The shaded areas are eligible area(s) in your community. You may not have any eligible areas or the entire municipality may be eligible. **Please make a copy of the map and mark the locations of the activities you are submitting.** If you feel that an area is low income that is not identified on the enclosed map, you have the option of undertaking a door-to-door income survey. The survey must have a response rate of nearly 100%. Contact us for further details.

2) Eliminate Slums and Blighting Conditions: It is not necessary to prove that your project will benefit low income people if your project qualifies under this heading. In order to qualify under the category of eliminating slums and blight you must:

- a) Pass a local law or resolution which defines the meaning of slum, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating conditions in your community; and
- b) Include in the resolution the boundaries of your slum or blighted area; and
- c) Apply for a project that addresses one of these conditions.

LOCAL SHARE: It is required that your municipality provide a portion of the project costs which can be actual dollars or in-kind services. A rule of thumb is 25% of the total project cost. Those projects that leverage local dollars have a far greater chance of funding.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: If you wish to use Community Development funds to pay for the services of architects and engineers, you must be in compliance with 24 CFR Part 85, Uniform

Administrative Requirements, an excerpt of which is enclosed. You must solicit proposals from a number of firms before selecting one. The price for the services may not be a percentage of the project total, but rather must be a lump sum or based on an hourly rate.

Please be advised that if your project is funded and you wish to use grant funds to pay for architectural or engineering services, you will be required to provide documentation **that you have met the above requirements before your claim can be paid.**

RESOLUTION: Please note that your application must be accompanied by a resolution of your town or village board authorizing application and documentation of your public hearing.

HOUSING REHABILITATION: Housing rehabilitation is available now county-wide and we are completing about 200 units per year with a great deal of emphasis on lead paint reduction. In many cases, up to \$20,000 is available per unit. We are partnering with PEACE, Inc. and taking the application for their energy efficiency programs at the same time we conduct our applications. We also have a large amount of funding available for accessibility improvements to help disabled residents stay in their homes. The Lead Program can be undertaken at any location where the family is low income and there are children under six on the premises, either as residents or as frequent visitors, as in the case of day care centers or grandparents.

COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION: The Program can only be undertaken in low-income target areas or areas that have been designated by local resolution as a slum or blighted area. If you are interested in participating in Commercial Rehab, please inform us by letter with your submission.

All housing and commercial rehabilitation jobs are done directly under the supervision of our staff. We will provide you with a list of the properties that have been rehabilitated at your request. We welcome referrals and inquiries from you.

In summary, your application should include the following items:

1. Your new Five Year Plan with board authorization;
2. Documentation of benefit to low income people or elimination of slums and/or blighting conditions;
3. Leverage of local dollars; the requirement is 25%;
4. A summary of the use of green technology;
5. Documentation of public hearing both minutes and advertisement;
6. Resolution of town or village board authorizing the application;
7. Map locating the project;
8. Photographs of your project area; and an
9. Indication of your priority if you submit more than one application.

Enclosed you will find two (2) purple application forms entitled 2010 FUNDING REQUEST. We will be glad to provide more forms. If you would like us to e-mail the application, please e-mail Nina Andon-McLane at cdnando@ongov.net or download the application from our website at www.ongov.net/cd. Please be sure to submit your applications on purple paper, staple the applications and do not submit binders or extra copies.

Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation. If you have any questions, please call Nina Andon-McLane or me at (315) 435-3558.

Very truly yours,

Linda M. DeFichy
Administrator

Enc.

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