

NYS Homes and Community Renewal NYS CDBG Program – 2013 REDC CFA Community Renewal Fund

Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

New York State Homes and Community Renewal's Office of Community Renewal (OCR) administers the federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for the State of New York. The NYS CDBG program provides financial assistance to eligible cities, towns, and villages with populations under 50,000 and counties with an area population under 200,000, in order to develop viable communities by providing decent, affordable housing, and suitable living environments, as well as expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

The State must ensure that no less than 70% of its CDBG funds are used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons. The program objectives are achieved by supporting activities or projects that: benefit low- and moderate-income families; create job opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons; prevent or eliminate slums and blight; or address a community development need that poses a serious and imminent threat to the community's health or welfare.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND

In December 2013, five Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) were awarded \$13.2 million in funding through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) as part of the CDBG Community Renewal Fund (CRF). From this Fund, the Mohawk Valley REDC was awarded \$6 million, which, when combined with funds remaining from the 2012 Mohawk Valley REDC CRF, provides for approximately \$7 million in funds available for eligible projects in the region. In order to access this funding, eligible units of local government within the Mohawk Valley REDC will have to develop and submit applications on behalf of specific projects according to the plan described below, and related NYS CDBG Program application guidelines and criteria.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There will be two distinct application processes for the Mohawk Valley REDCs CRF funding. Public Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Housing project proposals will follow the same application process. Economic Development, Small Business, and Microenterprise Programs will follow a different process. The two processes are briefly discussed below:

Public Infrastructure/Public Facilities/Housing

Proposals for potential projects within one of these categories will be made using the Office of Community Renewal's full application kit. Full applications will need to be completed in their entirety and determined to be eligible. Once all on-time applications are screened for eligibility and completeness, they will be thoroughly reviewed and scored by the OCR in accordance with pre-established scoring processes and criteria for these activity categories. Successful applications will be determined and award recommendations made within the range of funds available for these activities. Once recommended applications are approved by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) Board, written notification will be sent to the applicants to inform them of their successful/unsuccessful application.

Eligible activities for public infrastructure may include water and sewer, stormwater, sidewalks and streets. Eligible activities for public facilities may include community centers and senior centers. Eligible housing activities may include housing rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, mobile home replacement, well and septic replacement and lateral connection assistance to existing public water and sewer.

All eligible applications received within this group of activities will be competitively scored against all other applications and award recommendations will be made up to the maximum amount of funds available for these activities within this CRF

allocation. The OCR reserves the right to award less than the amount requested, or to decline funding to an applicant for any low scoring applications, even if a balance of funding is available for these activities.

Economic Development/Small Business/Microenterprise:

Proposals for potential projects within one of these categories will follow a two-step process. First, applicants will initially be **required** to use the Office of Community Renewal’s Pre-Submission Form for Economic Development/Small Business/Microenterprise activities. Pre-Submission Forms are used to provide the OCR with a brief description of the project, information on the National Objective to be accomplished by the project, and identify the funding sources committed and available to the project. Upon receipt by the OCR, each Pre-Submission Form will be reviewed and approved or denied by the OCR for initial threshold eligibility only. Projects with OCR approved Pre-Submission Forms will proceed to the second part of the two-step process, whereby full applications will need to be completed in their entirety and determined to be eligible. Eligibility is reviewed throughout the entire application process as additional information and materials are received. Therefore, an approved Pre-Submission Form does not mean that a project will be deemed eligible after a full and complete application is received and reviewed. As applications are reviewed and scored by the OCR, in accordance with pre-established scoring processes and criteria for these activity categories, successful applications will be determined and award recommendations made within the range of funds available for these activities. As recommended applications are approved by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) Board, written notification will be sent to the applicants to inform them of their successful/unsuccessful application.

All eligible applications received within this group of activities will be scored on a rolling basis and award recommendations will be made up to the maximum amount of funds available for these activities within this CRF allocation. The OCR reserves the right to award less than the amount requested, or to decline funding to an applicant for any low scoring applications, even if a balance of funding is available for the region.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be non-entitlement units of local government. As mentioned above, eligible applicants are cities, towns, and villages with populations under 50,000 and counties with an area population under 200,000. Entitlement communities (such as Ithaca) are not eligible for state CDBG program funding. A list of eligible communities by County is available at the following link: <http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/EligibleCommunities.htm>.

Proposed projects must be eligible for funding under one of the following CDBG program categories:

CDBG Category	Minimum Funding Request	Maximum Funding Request
Public Infrastructure (City, Town, and Village applicants)	N/A	\$600,000
Public Facilities, Housing (City, Town, and Village applicants)	N/A	\$400,000
Public Infrastructure, Facilities, Housing (County applicants)	N/A	\$750,000
Public Infrastructure (Joint applicants)	N/A	\$900,000
Economic Development (All applicants)	\$100,000	\$750,000
Small Business Assistance (All applicants)	\$25,000	\$100,000
Microenterprise Programs (All applicants)	N/A	\$200,000

To establish consistency with the State’s FY 2013 CDBG allocations set forth in the NYS CDBG Action Plan for Program Year 2013, the OCR is setting funding limits for the two application processes. For the Mohawk Valley REDC, the OCR will allocate available funds to proposed projects in the following manner:

Community Development (housing, public infrastructure, and public facilities) – 50% or more
 Economic Development – 50% or less

All projects will be subject to all applicable programmatic and regulatory requirements associated with the use of NYS CDBG funds. This includes following federally required Citizen Participation requirements. Prior to submission of a full application, eligible applicants must issue a public hearing notice **and** hold a public hearing allowing for citizen feedback on the community and economic development needs of the community and any/all proposed project(s) prior to the submission of the application. Successful recipients who undertake activities after award will need to hold one additional public hearing sometime during the administration of the project. For additional information on the NYS CDBG Program requirements, review the CDBG Program Implementation and Exit Conference Presentations under the News and Information section of OCR’s website: <http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/>.

PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The project evaluation timeline for each funding category is as follows:

<u>Public Infrastructure/Public Facilities/Housing</u>	
April 9, 2014	Announcement of funding availability by OCR.
June 30, 2014	Deadline for submission of full application to OCR.

<u>Economic Development/Small Business/Microenterprise</u>	
April 9, 2014	Announcement of funding availability by OCR.
April 9, 2014-June 30, 2014	Rolling Deadline for Pre-Submission Form to the OCR.
On a rolling basis	OCR completes threshold review.
On a rolling basis	Eligible projects are invited to submit a full application to OCR.
July 15, 2014-August 29, 2014	Rolling Deadline for submission of full application to OCR.

These deadlines are critical to ensure that the OCR meets the federal commitment of funds deadline for Program Year 2013 funding. Therefore, for Economic Development/Small Business/Microenterprise projects, the OCR strongly encourages eligible applicants to submit Pre-Submission Forms and full applications to the OCR for review as soon as the project proposals are fully developed. The OCR will work with applicants on improvements to their project proposals and assist applicants in completing their full application as necessary.

Projects that do not meet program eligibility criteria or whose full application is not received by the application deadline will be denied.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Application forms and guidance are available on the OCR website:

<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/ConsolidatedFundingApplication.htm>

Guidelines for the use of NYS CDBG funds are available here:

<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/ProgramGuidelines.htm>

Information about NYS CDBG grant administration requirements can be found in the OCR Grant Administration Manual:

<http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/NYS-CDBG/GrantAdministration.htm>