



COUNTY OF LEHIGH

Office of Community Development

Laurie A. Moyer
Grants & Housing
Manager

February 15, 2021

Dear CDBG Applicant:

The County of Lehigh is once again anticipating the appropriation of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The 2021 CDBG allocation is estimated to be \$1,288,293.

In anticipation of the 2021 CDBG allocation, the County of Lehigh is seeking applications from municipalities and non-profit organizations for projects benefiting Lehigh County residents living outside of the city limits of Allentown and Bethlehem. Enclosed you will find the grant application packet. This packet includes program requirements, as well as the application forms that must be submitted for each project. If you will not be responsible for completing the application, please forward it to the appropriate person within your organization.

Applications are being accepted for all projects as listed on the attached eligible CDBG activities list. Funding determinations will be made in accordance with Lehigh County's Annual Plan Process guidelines. Of particular interest, please be aware of scoring criteria for the following types of projects:

- Construction Projects
 - Ability of the new project to be completed between January 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022 (reimbursement processed by September 16, 2022).
 - Applicability to Lehigh County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan goals.
 - Project location is in a low- to moderate-income (LMI) municipality. Municipalities designated as LMI are Catasauqua, Coplay, Hanover, Fountain Hill, Macungie, Slatington, and Whitehall.
 - Hard match of 10% of request is dedicated by the applicant to completing project construction.
- Public Service Projects
 - Projects funded via FY 2020 and asking for an increase in funding must provide data proving that there was at least a 40% quantifiable increase in the need for services over the past 12 months.
 - Projects not funded via FY 2020: applications will be accepted for new or existing services. Applications for existing services must prove at least a 40% quantifiable increase in the need for the service over the past 12 months.
 - On the CDBG application webpage, there are examples illustrating public services and quantifiable increase in need. Please reference this page, entitled "Quantifiable Increase for Public Services" for details on satisfying the documentation requirements.
 - All projects must fit into Lehigh County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan goals and document the ability to be completed between October 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022.

Applications are available for download via the Department of Community & Economic Development's webpage on Lehigh County's website (<https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Community-Economic-Development/CDBG-Grant-Application>). Two separate applications are available. Except for agencies submitting a public service project, all applicants should complete the 'Public Facility, Construction and Other Projects' application. The appropriate application can be downloaded, completed and saved on your computer as a fillable form. **Applicants must save the application as a fillable pdf form and NOT a Word document or any format other than the original format.** Applicants should also notice the other documents available for download from the webpage. Information within the documents will need to be referenced when completing the application. Once the application is complete, it can be uploaded to Lehigh

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County, inclusive of all required supplemental documentation. *Again, the uploaded application must be in a fillable pdf format to be considered.*

All CDBG-funded projects are subject to an environmental review, which must be completed by the County before funds may be committed. Issues requiring remediation would need to be completed prior to the start of any project. Therefore, knowledge of any possible issues should be disclosed at time of application.

All those requesting funds for a construction project:

- Suggested for applicant to attend at least one (1) public hearing in March;
- All municipalities must contact Lehigh County to discuss qualifying the project's low- to moderate-income eligibility by April 2nd;

The Lehigh County Department of Community & Economic Development will hold a public hearing with two, duplicate sessions on **March 23, 2021 at 11:00 am and March 24, 2021 at 5:00pm**. The **dial-in phone number for both sessions** is: **(425) 436-6348** and the **access code** is: **289060** for both sessions. This public hearing will discuss the CDBG application process, provide information on project eligibility and fundability, and collect comments about the CDBG program from the public. The Lehigh County Department of Community & Economic Development will hold a second CDBG public hearing on **July 28, 2021 at 2:00pm** to announce awards and also collect comments about the CDBG program from the public prior to sending the FY 2021 Annual Plan to HUD. The **dial-in phone number** is **(425)436-6348** and the **access code** is **289060**.

The application due date is **May 3, 2021**. Applications may be uploaded via the Lehigh County website or emailed to cyndiking@lehighcounty.org.

Applicants who choose to mail their submissions must include one original and three copies of the entire grant submittal. Please do **not** use binders (three-ring or plastic binding). Applications must arrive in the office no later than 4 p.m. on the due date.

It is important to make applicants aware that the *submittal* of a CDBG application triggers federal regulations for the project. The applicant should assume, for planning purposes, that from the time of submittal of the CDBG application, federal regulations will apply to the project (e.g. procurement, environmental clearances, federal prevailing wages, providing documentation, etc.) Furthermore, applicants are not able to commit any funding including funding other than CDBG, to the *overall* project until the applicant receives a Notice to Advance from Lehigh County. Committing funding to a project prior to receiving the Notice to Advance can jeopardize a CDBG award. Should the application ultimately not be funded with CDBG dollars, compliance with federal regulations will no longer apply to the project.

In the meantime, should you have questions or need technical assistance pertaining to the CDBG program, please do not hesitate to call me at (610) 782-3855. Thank you.

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