



COUNTY OF LEHIGH
Office of Community Development

Laurie A. Moyer
Grants Management Specialist

March 1, 2023

Dear Grant Applicant:

The County of Lehigh is accepting applications for the following grant programs:

- Community Development Block Grant program (Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 197, as amended). The 2023 CDBG allocation is estimated to be \$1,229,243.
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, as amended). The 2023 HOME allocation is estimated to be \$500,000. The 2022 HOME allocation is also available in the amount of \$750,000.
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). The 2023 AHTF allocation is estimated to be \$500,000.

The AHTF Notice of Funding Availability and the CDBG and HOME applications are available for download via the Lehigh County Department of Community & Economic Development's webpage on Lehigh County's website (<https://www.lehighcounty.org/Departments/Community-Economic-Development>).

CDBG

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, Bethlehem, and Lower Milford Township. Enclosed you will find multiple grant applications. 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 CDBG projects.

- Construction Projects
 - Projects located in a low- to moderate-income (LMI) municipality will receive priority consideration for funding. Municipalities designated as LMI are Catasauqua, Coplay, Hanover, Fountain Hill, Macungie, and Slatington.
 - Projects must meet one of Lehigh County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan goals.
 - Consideration will also be given to projects not located in an LMI community. Such projects should meet the following criteria:
 - Ability of the new project to be completed between January 1, 2024 and August 31, 2024.
 - Applicability to Lehigh County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan goals.
 - Hard cost match of 10% of request is dedicated by the applicant to completing project construction.
 - CDBG request doesn't exceed \$125,000.

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- Public Service Projects
 - Projects not funded via FY 2022: 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.
 - Projects funded via FY 2022 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 funded via FY 2022 and not asking for an increase in funding do not need to prove an increase in need.
 - All projects must fit into Lehigh County’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan goals and substantiate the ability to spend down the requested amount between October 1, 2023 and September 31, 2024.

Two separate CDBG applications are available. Except for agencies submitting a public service project, all applicants should complete the ‘Public Facility, Construction and Other Projects’ application. 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.

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

HOME

The County of Lehigh is seeking applications from housing organizations for projects benefiting Lehigh County residents living outside of the city limits of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Lower Milford Township. Enclosed you will find a HOME application, as well as an application for CHDOs (Community and Housing Development Organizations). Each application includes program requirements, as well as the forms that must be submitted for each project. Funding determinations will be made in accordance with Lehigh County’s Annual Plan Process guidelines. HOME requires a 25% match.

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

AHTF

The County of Lehigh is seeking applications from housing organizations for projects benefiting Lehigh County residents. Unlike CDBG and HOME, the geographic location of the project is not restricted for AHTF. Enclosed you will find a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) which includes guidance on creating an application. Funding determinations will be made in accordance with guidance set forth within Ordinance 2007-182.

The submittal of an AHTF application does not trigger federal regulations for the project.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Lehigh County Department of Community & Economic Development will hold two (2) public hearings in March. The public hearings are duplicate sessions which will include discussion on the application process, provide information on project eligibility and fundability, and collect comments about the CDBG and HOME programs from the public.

- **March 23, 2023 at 3:00 pm** via Zoom
 - For an invitation to the Zoom, please contact Cyndi King at cyndiking@lehighcounty.org.
- **March 28, 2023 at 10:00 am** in Room 225 of the Lehigh County Government Center.

The Lehigh County Department of Community & Economic Development will hold another public hearing on **July 11, 2023 at 12:00 pm** in Room 225 of the Lehigh County Government Center to announce the CDBG and HOME awards, as well as collect comments about the programs from the public prior to sending the FY 2023 Annual Plan to HUD. Awards for AHTF will be announced at a later date.

The due date for all applications is **April 17, 2023**. Applications can be submitted via mail or email. Emails shall be directed to cyndiking@lehighcounty.org. **Applicants who choose to mail their submissions must include one original and three copies of the primary application**. Multiple copies of sundry supporting documents are not desired. Please do **not** use binders (three-ring or plastic binding). Applications must be postmarked by April 17, 2023 in order to be considered for funding.

It is important to make CDBG and HOME applicants aware that the *submittal* of an application triggers federal regulations for the project. The applicant should assume, for planning purposes, that from the time of submittal of the 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, regardless of source, to the *overall* project until the applicant receives a certification from Lehigh County that the environmental review is clear. Committing funding to a project prior to receiving the certification can jeopardize an award of federal funding. Should the application ultimately not be funded, 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, HOME and AHTF program, please do not hesitate to call me at (610) 871-1964.

Sincerely,

Laurie Moyer
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