

South Portland City Council
Position Paper of the City Manager

Subject:

ORDER #125-15/16- Authorizing the City Manager to submit the FY 2016-2017 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan to the Cumberland County Community Development Program. Passage requires majority vote.

Position:

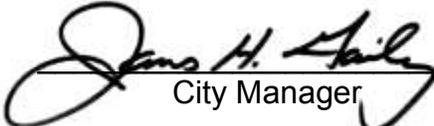
Entering into its tenth year as part of the Cumberland County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the South Portland CDBG program continues to receive a set-aside allocation of funds from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This set-aside equals 23% of the amount of funding the City of Portland receives in CDBG funds. For FY 2016-17, South Portland's grant will be \$412,033. In order for the funding to be approved, the City must submit and adopt the Annual Action Plan (annual budget) showing how funds will be allocated. The attached reflects plans for the next fiscal year.

On November 24, 2015, applications were made available to the public and City Departments through the City's Community Development office. The application period closed on January 8, 2016, and on February 10, 2016 the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) held a public hearing to provide a forum for applicants to address the Committee and further explain their requests. On February 24, 2016, the CDAC reviewed the applications and made their recommendations.

The public service portion of the City's program is highly competitive, and the 2016-17 requests from applicants exceeded the available 15% cap. The County program will also be using its entire public service cap, so the City is therefore limited to a total of \$61,805 for this portion of the program. The balance of the CDBG Program budget has been allocated to public infrastructure and facilities improvements, emergency housing rehabilitation and weatherization, planning, and program administration. The Plan outlines the services and projects to be funded. Once adopted by the South Portland City Council, Cumberland County will be responsible for submitting the City's Plan as part of the County's Annual Action Plan by May 15, 2016.

Requested Action:

Council passage of ORDER #125-15/16.


City Manager



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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Mayor

JAMES H. GAILEY
City Manager

EMILY F. CARRINGTON
City Clerk

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District Five
BRAD FOX

At Large
MAXINE R. BEECHER

At Large
THOMAS E. BLAKE

IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER #125-15/16

ORDERED, that the City Manager be and hereby is authorized to submit the South Portland Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan for FY 2016/17 to the County of Cumberland as authorized and submitted by the Community Development Advisory Committee.

Fiscal Note: \$412,033 - Revenue

Dated: April 4, 2016

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ANNUAL ACTION PLAN
JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017

BACKGROUND

The City of South Portland receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development via a set-aside from Cumberland County. This partnership with Cumberland County, which is entering its 10th year, continues to be successful for both parties. South Portland receives from Cumberland County approximately 23% of the value of the total allocation that the City of Portland receives, making the 2016-17 South Portland allocation **\$412,033**.

Funded projects must meet a national objective of benefitting low-moderate income persons or neighborhoods, eliminating slum/blight in the community, or addressing an urgent need such as a natural disaster. Eligible project activities include public facilities, infrastructure, housing rehabilitation, economic development, public services, planning, and administration. Public service activities are capped at 15% of the annual allocation amount and planning/administration activities are together capped at 20% of the annual allocation amount.

PROJECT SELECTION

In order to identify projects, the Community Development department conducts a competitive grant application process for program funds. City of South Portland departments as well as external agencies apply through this process. Their applications are then reviewed by the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC), a group of 7 South Portland residents. The CDAC makes funding recommendations to the City Council for approval. This year's schedule was:

- On November 24, 2015, the City of South Portland released the applications for FY 2016-17 funding. All applications were due to the Community Development office by January 8, 2016.
- On January 27, 2016, the CDAC held an initial review meeting.
- On February 10, 2016, the CDAC held a public hearing for all applicants to present their proposals and answer questions.
- On February 24, 2016, the CDAC discussed applications and developed funding recommendations.

- On April 4, 2016, the South Portland City Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed FY 2016-17 budget, and authorize the CDBG Program Coordinator to submit the FY 2016-17 Annual Action Plan to the Cumberland County Commissioners for their review and approval, and eventual submittal to HUD in May 2016.
- All meetings were noticed and open to the public.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Public Infrastructure/Facilities

The FY 2016-17 CDBG Program primarily focused on public infrastructure and facilities improvements in low-income target areas of the City. This year, those areas include Redbank, Brickhill, and Ferry Village.

Priorities for these projects, as identified in the 2012 South Portland Community Needs Assessment and the 2012-2016 Consolidated Plan are:

- Sidewalk rehabilitation
- Streetscape improvements
- Playgrounds and recreational open space
- Acquisition of water access
- Transportation enhancements

Housing

Staff recommended setting aside some funding for weatherization and emergency housing rehabilitation needs that arise in the City. Typically 2-3 households are able to benefit from this emergency rehab funding every year for needs such as heating system replacements or emergency roof repair. The weatherization program should be able to assist 5-8 households.

The priority housing needs identified in the planning process for the 2012-2016 Consolidated Plan are:

- Housing rehabilitation
- Housing weatherization and energy efficiency
- Heating system replacements
- Emergency repairs
- Infrastructure to support affordable housing

Public Services

The CDBG Program also continued to see competition for the small amount of public service funds available. One of the applicants was new this year, all others were returning applicants. In

order to accommodate all of the requests, some of the programs were recommended for a reduced amount of funding.

Identified priorities for public service funding are:

High Priority:

- Promotion of senior outreach and increased senior services
- Increased transportation services
- Affordable childcare
- Affordable inoculation/dental/eyewear services
- Domestic violence prevention programs and services for battered/abused spouses
- Subsidized City/non-profit recreation programming for after-school and summer

Medium Priority:

- Support services that provide independent living/literacy/financial capability and security
- Transition homes and shelters
- Increased services to the handicapped

Planning/Admin

One planning project applied for funding this year. Staff recommended funding for program administration at a level similar to prior years.

Economic Development

There were no economic development applicants for 2016-17. Priorities for such projects have been identified as:

High Priority:

- Loans/deferred loans/grants to small businesses retaining or creating new jobs
- Youth training programs
- Support of employment training and technical assistance

Medium Priority:

- Assist businesses to expand or relocate to South Portland
- Building façade improvements
- Assist business expansion within the City
- Infrastructure development

BENEFITS TO LOW AND MODERATE INCOME (LMI) RESIDENTS

All of the projects selected for funding this fiscal year will target and benefit LMI households, clients, or neighborhoods. Public infrastructure projects for FY 2016-17 are located in target areas, which are areas that are at least 46.53% LMI. Public service projects will serve at least 51% LMI individuals or households, and some service what HUD calls “presumed benefit” groups, such as the elderly and battered spouses.

MONITORING & TIMELINESS

The Community Development Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the on-going progress made by CDBG activities towards accomplishing program goals, expending funds, and complying with federal regulations. Infrastructure and facility projects are monitored for compliance with regulations concerning environmental review, procurement, and wages. Public service activities track and submit regular beneficiary reports and are expected to expend funds in a timely manner, as defined and measured by HUD.

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be used to evaluate the program’s annual progress. Each year, the CAPER will compare the specific accomplishments of each project to the accomplishments initially proposed. In addition, the City will work with the County CDBG program to ensure successful program implementation and compliance with all federal regulations.

Applicant	Project Name	Prev. Year's Funding (2015-16)	2016-17 Funding Request	Staff Recommendations	CDAC Recommendations
Public Services (15% cap \$61,805)					
City of South Portland	Recreation Scholarships	\$7,000	\$10,000		\$7,000
City of South Portland	Fuel Assistance	\$10,500	\$15,000		\$8,000
City of South Portland	Free Bus Pass Program	\$4,292	\$8,100		\$4,105
Family Crisis Services	Domestic Violence Outreach Support Services	\$5,000	\$5,000		\$5,000
Opportunity Alliance	Student Intervention and Reintegration Program (SIRP)	-	\$1,700		\$1,700
Opportunity Alliance	Redbank Hub Personnel	\$15,000	\$20,000		\$16,000
Southern Maine Agency on Aging	Meals on Wheels	\$10,000	\$10,000		\$10,000
South Portland Food Cupboard	Food Pantry Operations	\$10,000	\$15,000		\$10,000
			\$84,800		
Public Facilities/Infrastructure/Housing					
Boys & Girls Club	Club Learning Center & Cubby Storage	-	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
City of South Portland	Front Street/Preble Street Sidewalk	-	\$66,215	\$66,215	\$66,215
City of South Portland	Greenbelt Walkway Rehabilitation	-	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
City of South Portland	Pedestrian Crossings	-	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000
City of South Portland	Redbank Community Center Addition	-	\$100,000	\$110,000	\$110,000
City of South Portland	Home Weatherization/Energy Efficiency upgrades	-	\$5,000	\$8,013	\$8,013
City of South Portland/ Opportunity Alliance	Emergency Housing Rehabilitation	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
			\$247,215	\$270,228	\$270,228
Admin/Planning (20% cap \$82,406)					
City of South Portland	Redbank Master Plan	-	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
City of South Portland	Admin	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000
			\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
				Total	\$412,033

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE/IMPROVEMENTS

Boys & Girls Club – Learning Center & Cubby Storage

The Boys and Girls Club on Broadway plans to reconfigure 2 rooms into 1 larger room in order to accommodate staffing needs and maximize club use. The project will also include installation of additional cubbies for kids to store their belongings.

Application Request: \$12,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$12,000

Front Street/Preble Street Sidewalk

Replacement of the sidewalk on Front Street from Sawyer to Preble and the sidewalk on Preble Street from Front to Henley.

Application Request: \$66,215
CDAC Recommendation: \$66,215

Greenbelt Walkway Rehabilitation

Resurfacing and widening of the greenbelt between Harriett and Pine Streets.

Application Request: \$20,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$20,000

Pedestrian Crossings

Installation of 2 solar-powered flashing cross-walk signals in CDBG target areas.

Application Request: \$24,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$24,000

Redbank Community Center Expansion

Funds for the eventual construction of an addition on to the Redbank Community Center. 2015-16 CDBG funds were allocated for the design and engineering of the addition, which will begin soon.

Application Request: \$100,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$110,000

HOUSING

Home Weatherization/Energy Efficiency Upgrades

This program offers a free energy audit and minor weatherization improvements to low-income South Portland households. The program is projected to assist 5-8 households in 2016-17.

Staff Recommendation: \$8,013

CDAC Recommendation: \$8,013

Emergency Housing Rehabilitation

This program will offer emergency repairs and heating system repair/replacement for single-family low-income households. This program is designed to assist 2 to 3 households in 2016-17.

Staff Recommendation: \$30,000

CDAC Recommendation: \$30,000

PUBLIC SERVICES

The Public Service program provides funding to local public service activities that directly benefit citizens of South Portland. Eligible costs include operating expenses, staffing costs, equipment/supplies, and program materials. HUD caps public service programs to 15% of the County's entitlement funding. The City of South Portland shares this cap with the other communities in the Cumberland County program. South Portland's 2016-17 public service cap is **\$61,805**.

Bus Passes

The South Portland Bus Service requested \$8,100 to provide free 10-ride bus passes to help low income residents needing transportation to work, medical appointments, school and shopping. Over 300 10-ride tickets are expected to be distributed to low- and moderate-income residents through this program in FY 2015-16.

Application Request: \$ 8,100

CDAC Recommendation: \$ 4,105

Domestic Violence Outreach Support Services

Family Crisis Services provide advocacy for domestic violence victims in South Portland, including home visits, crisis hotline assistance, emergency shelter, and assistance with court protection orders.

Application Request: \$ 5,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$ 5,000

Fuel/Heating Assistance

The City of South Portland's heating assistance program has been administered since 2006. The program provides emergency relief to low-income households in need of heating assistance. The funding is expected to assist 50-60 households.

Application Request: \$ 15,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$ 8,000

Meals on Wheels

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging is requesting funding for the Meals on Wheels program, which would provide approximately 150 homebound elderly residents in South Portland, with approximately 12,570 home-delivered meals.

Application Request: \$ 10,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$ 10,000

Recreation Scholarships

This program provides funding for South Portland youth who want to participate in a summer recreation camp but do not have the financial means to do so. This funding would subsidize between 15-30 full and partial scholarships for summer camp.

Application Request: \$ 10,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$ 7,000

Redbank Neighborhood Resource Hub – Hub Personnel

This request provides partial funding for the staffing of the Resource Hub in the Redbank Neighborhood. Over 80% of households in the Redbank neighborhood are low-moderate income. The Hub works to promote neighborhood and community connections and governance with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of vulnerable families and child abuse cases. Community engagement opportunities created by the Hub include a Summer Breakfast Program, Neighborhood Connection Night, a neighborhood farmer's market, weekly Bread Bank, English classes, after school activities, and resources and referrals to services.

Application Request: \$ 20,000
CDAC Recommendation: \$ 16,000

Student Intervention and Reintegration Program (SIRP)

The Opportunity Alliance runs this certificate program to divert youth at risk for substance abuse issues or violations away from the criminal justice system and towards positive intervention. The South Portland Police refer youth to the program where they participate in a 12-hour educational course about the risks and harms of substance abuse.

Application Request: \$1,700

CDAC Recommendation: \$1,700

South Portland Food Cupboard

The South Portland Food Cupboard has been providing nutritious food to needy families for over 18 years and continues to serve over 600 people each month. Until 3 years ago the Food Cupboard operated rent-free out of the St. John the Evangelist Church. After moving into new space at 130 Thadeus Street that provided greater storage and operational capacity, the Food Cupboard faced high operating and leasing costs of \$2,000/month. This grant helps the Food Cupboard with those costs.

Application Request: \$ 15,000

CDAC Recommendation: \$ 10,000

ADMINISTRATION & PLANNING (Limited to 20% Cap):

Redbank Master Plan

This funding will allow the planning department and consultants to develop a master plan for the West End neighborhood of the City.

Application Request: \$15,000

CDAC Recommendation: \$15,000

Program Administration

The administration of the CDBG Program includes expenses for staff time, telephone, utilities, supplies, travel, advertising, and technology. At the end of the fiscal year, excess funds that are not expended on administration costs are reallocated to other eligible projects. The 2016-17 unused cap space for administration and planning has been allocated to other projects.

Staff Recommendation: \$ 65,000

CDAC Recommendation: \$ 65,000