

Hennepin County Community Development Block Grant 2018 Public Services Request for Proposals Guide



2018 CDBG Program Year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019)

Responses due by Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.



PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Hennepin County is requesting proposals to fund public service activities for low- and moderate-income families and individuals in suburban Hennepin County. Approximately \$400,000 in funding will be awarded to assist in the provision of a variety of public service activities, including (but not limited to) family, youth, and senior services. This funding is available through the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Funding is provided through Hennepin County in partnership with the cities of Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove, Minnetonka, and other participating cities.

APPLICATION AND FUNDING SCHEDULE

1. Distribution of Applications and Solicitation of Proposal.....January 4, 2018
2. Applications Due.....by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 27, 2018
3. Application Review.....March 2018
4. County Board approval of funding awards (subject to change).....May/June, 2018
5. HUD approval of funding awards (subject to change).....June/July, 2018
6. Contract Period.....July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applications will be received in the [Hennepin County Supplier Portal](#). In order to submit an application, you must first register with the Supplier Portal. For more information on how to register, please go to the [Supplier Portal Information Page](#). Please register with the Supplier Portal at least 5 business days prior to the application deadline.

Applications must be submitted using the fillable application form provided. Optional materials such as letters of support or additional pages may be submitted as separate attachments in PDF format. Failure to submit a proposal on time may be grounds for rejection of the proposal; however, the County reserves the right to accept proposals after the time and date specified at its sole discretion.

INQUIRIES

Please direct any questions to Spencer Agnew, 612-348-2205, Spencer.Agnew@hennepin.us or Tonja West-Hafner, 612-348-2599, tonja.west-hafner@hennepin.us.

ADDENDA

The County reserves the right to modify the RFP at any time prior to the application due date. If the RFP is modified, addenda to the RFP will be provided to all applicants known to have received a copy of the RFP. It is the responsibility of each prospective applicant to ensure receipt of all addenda. The County will modify the RFP only by formal written addenda. Applicant's proposal should be based on the specifications herein and any formal written addenda from the County.

COUNTY'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW, CANCEL, SUSPEND AND/OR MODIFY RFP

The County reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, suspend, and/or modify this RFP for any reason and at any time with no liability to any prospective applicant for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with the RFP or otherwise. Hennepin County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, to accept or reject any late applications, to rescind the request for proposals, to request additional information as deemed necessary to review any application, to negotiate with all qualified proposers, to use any or all proposer ideas and/or approaches presented, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this request for proposals, if it is in the best interest of Hennepin County to do so.

PROPOSER'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW OR MODIFY PROPOSAL

An application may be withdrawn on written request of the applicant prior to the proposal due date. Prior to the proposal due date, changes may be made, provided the change is submitted in writing and signed by an officer or authorized representative of the applicant. No modification, unless in writing, will be accepted.

PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE RETURNED

Upon submission, proposals will not be returned.

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

Under Minnesota law, proposals are private and nonpublic until the proposals are opened on the proposal due date. Once the proposals are opened, the name of the applicant becomes public. All other data in the proposal is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process. The evaluation process is completed when the County enters into a contract with an applicant. At that time, all remaining data submitted by all applicants is public with the exception of data exempted under Minn. Stat. Section 13.37 of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

If the applicant believes non-public data is included in its proposal, applicant shall clearly identify the data and cite the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act exemption(s). However, the applicant agrees, as a condition of submitting a proposal, the County will not be liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality, as may be related to the proposal. Pricing, fees, and costs are public data.

The applicant agrees to indemnify and hold the County, its officials, agents, and employees harmless from all claims arising out of, resulting from, or in any manner attributable to any violation of any provision of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, including legal fees and disbursements paid or incurred to enforce this provision.

PROPOSER'S COSTS

The County shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by applicant in connection with this RFP. Applicant shall bear all costs associated with proposal preparation, submission, and attendance at presentation interviews, or any other activity associated with this RFP or otherwise.

COLLUSION

If the County determines that collusion has occurred among applicants, none of the applications of the participants in such collusion shall be considered. The County's determination shall be final.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Applicant affirms that, to the best of its knowledge, its application does not present a conflict of interest with any party or entity, which may be affected by the terms of a contract resulting from this RFP. The applicant agrees that, should any conflict or potential conflict of interest become known, it will immediately notify the County of the conflict or potential conflict, and will advise the County whether it will or will not resign from the other engagement or representation. Further, the County may make reasonable efforts to avoid, mitigate, or neutralize an organizational conflict of interest by an applicant in all competitive procurements. To avoid an organizational conflict of interest by an applicant, the County may utilize methods including disqualifying an applicant from eligibility for a contract award or canceling the contract if the conflict is discovered after a contract has been issued. To mitigate or neutralize an organizational conflict of interest by an applicant, the County may use methods such as revising the scope of work to be conducted, allowing applicant to propose the exclusion of task areas that create a conflict, or providing information to all applicants to assure that all facts are known to all applicants. The County may, at its sole and absolute discretion, waive any conflict of interest.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENT

Applicants must submit one electronic copy of the Application Form in PDF format. Optional addenda, such as budget pages and letters of support may be included as PDF attachments.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR SELECTION

A selection committee comprised of staff from cities in suburban Hennepin County will review applications and make funding recommendations. Projects will be reviewed using established review and ranking criteria. The selection committee may request additional information prior to finalizing its funding recommendations. Funding recommendations will then be considered by the County Board, which will have final authority on funding allocations. Funding recommendations are expected to be presented to the Board in May, 2018, although this timeline is subject to change.

The County may require the entities selected for funding to submit fiscal, technical, or other revisions of their applications. The County reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to make a determination of awards regardless of the recommendations of the Review Committee, and reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to make fewer awards than recommended or no awards. This RFP does not constitute a commitment to make funding awards. Hennepin County reserves the right to cancel a funding commitment if the project is not proceeding according to the timeline submitted in the application.

FINANCING TERMS AND CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

Public services activities are typically awarded financial assistance in the form of a one-year grant. Financing terms will be determined by Hennepin County staff based on the project's timeline and operating budget. The minimum funding award will be \$5,000. There is no maximum funding award. Funds are anticipated to be available for eligible expenditures incurred after final contracts are executed, shortly after the May board action.

PART 2: PROPOSAL CRITERIA

COUNTY PRIORITIES

The Hennepin County [Five-Year Consolidated Plan](#) for suburban Hennepin County identifies **Education, Outreach, and Services** for low- and moderate-income households (at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) as a Priority Need. This includes a wide range of activities serving individuals, families, youth, and seniors, including:

- Domestic Abuse Counseling
- Emergency Assistance (including temporary/short-term housing assistance)
- Fair Housing Activities
- Financial Counseling (including homeownership counseling)
- Homelessness Prevention
- Job Training
- Senior Center Programming
- Senior Services
- Transportation Services
- Tenant Counseling
- Youth Counseling
- Youth Programming

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are governmental agencies, community-based organizations, tribal organizations, and nonprofit entities. Requests for individual assistance are not accepted through this RFP.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Federal regulations allow the use of CDBG funds for a wide range of public service activities, including but not limited to: job training, crime prevention, child care, health services, substance abuse services, fair housing counseling, education programs, energy conservation, services for senior citizens, services for homeless persons, welfare services (excluding income payments), and recreation services. CDBG funds may be used to pay for labor, supplies, and material as well as to operate and/or maintain the portion of a facility in which the public service is located.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Federal regulations do not allow CDBG funds to be utilized for political activities or for direct payments to households for the provision of basic services such as food, shelter, or clothing. However, short-term (up to three consecutive months) emergency assistance is allowed if payments are made directly to the provider of services on behalf of an individual or family.

LOW/MOD INCOME BENEFIT

Activities receiving CDBG public service funding must serve a client base of which a minimum of 51% of clients are "low/mod income" households, which is defined as having an annual gross income at or below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). Income limits are determined the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and adjusted on an annual basis. The current limits (effective June 15, 2017) based on household size are:

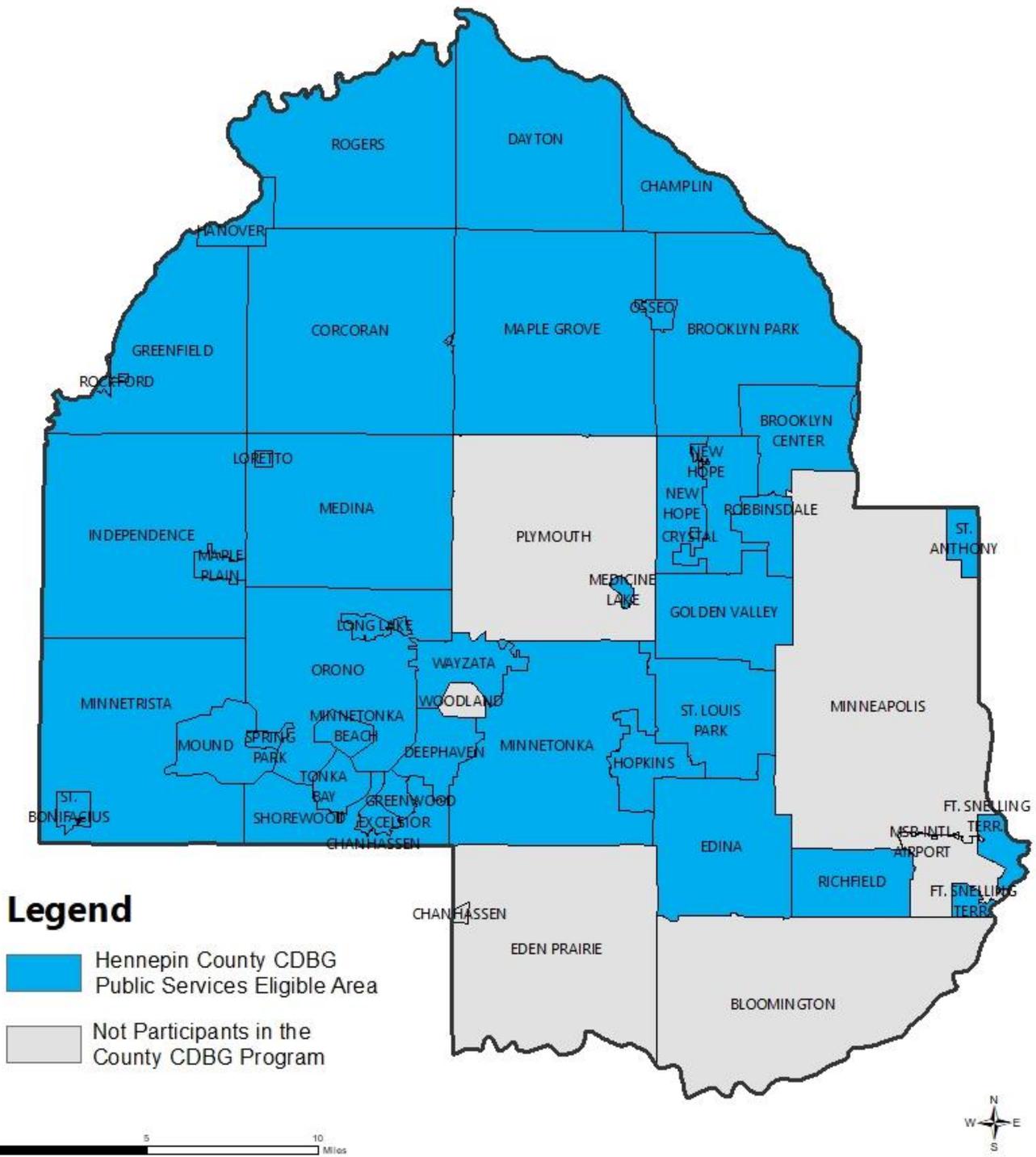
	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
30%	19,000	21,700	24,400	27,100	29,300	31,450	33,650	35,800
50%	31,650	36,200	40,700	45,200	48,850	52,450	56,050	59,700
80%	47,600	54,400	61,200	68,000	73,450	78,900	84,350	89,800

ELIGIBLE SERVICE AREA

Activities must serve one or more suburban cities which are participants in the Hennepin County CDBG program (identified in the map on next page). The cities of Minneapolis, Bloomington, Eden Prairie, and Plymouth are not participants in the County CDBG program and these areas are not eligible for funding through this RFP.

Hennepin County CDBG Program

Public Services Funding Area (Effective CDBG Program Year 2018)



OTHER CDBG PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Descriptions or summaries of laws, rules and regulations below are not meant to be definitive or conclusive; applicants are responsible for knowing and complying with all requirements, specifically federal regulations for Community Development Block Grants (24 CFR Part 570).

Anti-Discrimination In accordance with Hennepin County's policies against discrimination, no person shall be excluded from full employment rights or participation in or the benefits of any program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, public assistance status, or national origin; and no person who is protected by applicable federal or state laws, rules, or regulations against discrimination shall be otherwise subjected to discrimination.

Affirmative Action Projects shall comply with all applicable local rules and regulations for affirmative action. Where federal, state, and/or local policies and requirements for affirmative action and equal employment opportunity differ, the most restrictive policies and requirements shall apply. However, applicant shall provide any reports or other documentation required by each jurisdiction in order to demonstrate compliance with applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations.

Environmental Review A completed Environmental Review is required for all activities receiving CDBG assistance. The Environmental Review will be completed by County staff. Once an application has been submitted through this RFP, "no choice limiting action" may be taken by the applicant prior to receiving the Release of Funds. Choice limiting actions include, but are not limited to: any physical action on a site; commitment or expenditure of HUD or non-HUD funds for property acquisition, rehabilitation, conversion, lease, repair, or construction activities. Applicants that proceed with any choice limiting action(s) will forfeit access to CDBG funds for the project. Purchase Agreements for property should be contingent upon this requirement.

Financial Management Projects must follow federal requirements (described at 2 CFR Part 200) for allowable costs and other financial management requirements including single audit requirements, if applicable.

Financial Commitments Applicants shall identify all financial commitments necessary to complete the activity and provide third party documentation supporting all funding pledges, conditions/terms and applicable deadlines. Any in-kind contributions from the municipality, business sector, and/or community must also be detailed and included with the application. CDBG funds may not be used to substitute other local or state funding for the same activity in the prior 12 months.

PART 3: PROPOSAL RANKING CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed by Hennepin County staff to assure that the projects are eligible for CDBG funding and meet CDBG Program benefit requirements. Projects which do not meet basic CDBG eligibility criteria will be removed from further consideration. The Selection Committee will then utilize the following criteria to rate projects and formulate funding recommendations to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

Category 1: Timeliness of Expenditures and Activity Completion (0 to 10 points)

- The project will be completed and expend funds in a timely manner.
- The project schedule (interim milestones and completion) is reasonable.
- The project can be completed within the grant term (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019)
- Most or all needed funding has been committed.
- Priority given to activities that will be ready to request full or partial reimbursement by March 1, 2019.

Category 2: Feasibility and Organizational Capacity (0 to 10 points)

- The applicant has the staff expertise to implement the proposed activity
- The applicant has the staff expertise to ensure compliance with federal grant regulations.
- The project team has successfully completed similar CDBG or other federally-funded activities.
- The organization has the financial capacity to complete the project.
- The project is feasible to implement (including compliance with federal grant regulations) with identified financial and staff resources.

Category 3: Project Benefit (0 to 15 Points)

- The project will benefit a substantial number of people/households/housing units.
- Project provides benefit principally to low- and moderate-income persons.
- Project budget appears reasonable and CDBG funds are being prudently utilized.
- The project leverages funding from other local, state, or private sources.
- The project provides a benefit or service that meets a growing need.
- The project serves a large geographic area of the suburban county, or provides a service in a limited area that is lacking in similar services.
- The project serves an area or population with a high rate of poverty.

Category 4: Public Support and Consistency with Plans (0 to 10 points)

- The project addresses a high priority need identified in the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan.
- Project addresses a locally identified high priority community development need.
- Letters of support or other demonstration of community and/or constituency support of the proposed project have been submitted.