



**Snohomish County
Human Services**

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**Public Facilities & Infrastructure Application Workshop Q & A
Conducted on 11/03/2011**

Question 1:

If you acquire property for a community center can you then apply for CDBG to pay down the balance of the mortgage?

Answer:

No, CDBG funds cannot be used to refinance existing debt. However, if you want to purchase a site for an eligible CDBG project, you could request funding to acquire the property. However, you must be careful not to violate the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) laws on limitations on pending clearance by signing any agreement before the NEPA review has been completed. Also, if you acquire property after your application is submitted to the County, only an Option to Purchase is allowable; a Purchase & Sale Agreement would violate the regulations.

Question 2:

Are we using 2010 Census data to determine low- and moderate-income areas?

Answer:

No, we are using 2000 Census data. Historically, it takes three-years to receive the updated census data in a format that is useful for the CDBG program. We expect the "2010 Census" data to be available in 2013.

Question 3:

What would happen if you didn't use the property for the intended use for the entire use restriction period?

Answer:

You would have to pay back the CDBG dollars in the amount of the current fair market value.

Question 4:

If you have a Limited Clientele Presumed Benefit do you have to report on their income levels?

Answer:

No, projects benefiting persons who are in one of the presumed benefit categories are “presumed” to be low- and moderate-income and no income data is required.

Question 5:

When are the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) presentations?

Answer:

Historically, the TAC meeting takes place at the beginning of February.

Question 6:

What do you mean by “site control?”

Answer:

Site control means that you have rights to the property either through a purchase and sale agreement, ownership, or lease.

Question 7:

Do you perform the NEPA review?

Answer:

Yes, the County is responsible for the NEPA.

Question 8:

With the shortfall of funding is there any weight given for the cost of the project? (I.e. funding 2-3 larger projects versus 8-10 smaller projects)

Answer:

Each project is reviewed, evaluated and funded on its own merit.

Question 9:

Due to the nature of the city process and the short amount of time to submit the applications, in the past you have allowed the city council approval to come in after the application deadline. Will you be allowing that this year?

Answer:

If you inform us in advance of submitting your application, we will accept the city council/board approval after the application deadline. You must let us know in advance by calling Debra May at 425-388-3264. The city council/board approval must be received prior to the TAC Meeting.

Question 10:

CDBG does not pay for professional services if a City has staff that are capable of doing the engineering work. With staff being cut considerably the current city engineering staff do not have the capacity to do the work for the project. In this case could CDBG dollars be used for professional services?

Answer:

The Policy Advisory Board (PAB) approved "Use of CDBG Funds for Professional Services Policy" does have a clause that allows the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) staff to review each situation on a case by case basis. The City may submit a request to allow the use of CDBG funds for professional services and OHCD will make a determination based on the information provided by the city. The policy is attached.

Question 11:

Is helping to improve your building to withstand an earthquake considered "public safety?"

Answer:

Yes.

Question 12:

Do the documents need to be in the order of the check list?

Answer:

No, not in the order of the checklist but there is a preferred order listed in the Application Instructions on page 25(C) it states "Assemble your application in the following order."

Question 13:

Is the application available in something we can fill out and send back?

Answer:

Yes. The application is on our website as a word document.

Question 14:

Do you have to consider greenhouse gas emissions for Environmental Review?

Answer:

No, not yet.

Question 15:

When you assess each Environmental Review item such as Noise and Hazardous Conditions is there a distance or range listed with which the proposed property must comply?

Answer:

Each question asks specific information regarding whether or not a possible environmental condition is a particular distance from the proposed property.

Question 16:

Do you have to be in a low-income area if you are doing ADA upgrades?

Answer:

No, ADA access or "barrier removal" projects are also eligible under the limited clientele benefit category.

Question 17:

What is the typical number of applications received and how many of those projects receive funding?

Answer:

Typically we received 15-18 applications and approximately 6-8 projects are funded.

Question 18:

Historically we bundled 3-4 smaller projects as a single application. Each small project was then bid separately to different contractors. Recently there has been less reception for that. Is this still the case?

Answer:

You can still bundle the work but it would need to be completed under a single contract with one prime contractor to oversee all projects. With each project there is a substantial amount of administrative work that must be done, i.e. bidding, preparing of bids specifications, pre-construction meeting, and labor standards administration, and

monitoring. To conduct this process for each sub-project would not only be cost prohibitive we simply do not have the staff capacity to do it.

Question 19:

If we submit more than one project is it possible to list our priority for the projects?

Answer:

If you are submitting more than one project we ask that you prioritize them and state on the "Applicant Authorization" form the priority number of each project. It is also important to discuss whether or not your project can be phased. TAC will take your prioritization into consideration.

Notes:

1. On page 30 of the application, Item E states "skip to Question #7." It should read "skip to question G."
2. On page 6 of the application, there is incorrect information under "Ineligible Projects/Activities," the first bullet which reads "Government buildings (except removal of architectural barriers for low-income areas)." It should read "Government buildings (except removal of architectural barriers)."