



**State of Wisconsin**  
**Department of Administration**  
**DIVISION OF HOUSING & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

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**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
SMALL CITIES HOUSING PROGRAM**

**WHAT IS CDBG?**

The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing & Intergovernmental Relations (DHIR), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. The Department targets the housing program resources to those communities having the greatest need and the most competitive proposals. The available funding for housing is approximately \$8 million per year with the average 18-month grant being approximately \$450,000.

**WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF A CDBG HOUSING PROGRAM?**

CDBG dollars are flexible and responsive to local needs. CDBG funds are awarded as a grant to the community to help pay for activities identified in the successful application. In addition to addressing LMI housing needs, CDBG can be used to leverage other programs or serve as a local match. The grant also can be used as an incentive to involve the private sector in local community development efforts or to respond to area needs. Often the CDBG program serves as a catalyst for other community development projects.

**WHO CAN APPLY?**

General purpose units of local government (i.e., towns, villages, and cities with populations of less than 50,000 and counties other than Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Dane) are eligible to apply. Applications may be submitted individually or jointly with another jurisdiction where mutual action is needed to solve a shared problem.

Special purpose units of government such as redevelopment authorities, housing authorities, and sanitary districts cannot apply but may be chosen by grantees to operate the program. Indian tribes are not eligible because there is a special Indian Block Grant Program administered directly by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**

- ⇒ Rehabilitation, demolition, or removal of buildings.
- ⇒ Conversion of buildings into dwelling units.
- ⇒ Removal of architectural barriers.
- ⇒ Acquisition of real property.
- ⇒ Payment of relocation costs and benefits.
- ⇒ Homeownership opportunities for renters.
- ⇒ Neighborhood improvement activities.

## **REVIEW OF APPLICATION AND SELECTION OF GRANTEES**

The Department uses a point system for evaluation of applications and selection of grantees.

### **COMMUNITY NEED**

Distress indicators are evaluated and scored for each eligible applicant. The distress indicators are a measure of relative need and include substandard household condition and percentage of low-income households.

### **PROGRAM QUALITY**

Housing proposals are evaluated to determine their effectiveness in upgrading the quality and expanding the supply of decent, safe, and sanitary housing for LMI households. Successful programs have included residential rehabilitation (including accessibility improvements for persons with disabilities); conversion of commercial property to residential units; assistance to LMI renters to become homeowners; and small public facilities projects which enhance the target neighborhood housing efforts. Credit is given to communities that also propose to utilize other resources to accomplish their goals.

### **OTHER POINTS**

Additional points may be earned by applicants which have made an effort to provide equal housing opportunities to all people and whose program is designed to serve a relatively high percent of low-income households.

Regardless of the scores, at least 51 percent of the funds requested for all housing projects must directly benefit low- and moderate-income people.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

While the grant ceiling establishes the maximum which may be requested, individual grants will be awarded only in amounts commensurate with the size of the community, its capacity, and the scope of the proposed program.

**For more program information, contact:**

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