



City of Trenton

2017 Application Guidelines Community Development Block Grant & Emergency Solutions Grant

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I. Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to guide interested parties through the City of Trenton's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Request for Proposals (RFP) process for FY 2017. This handbook provides a general overview of this process and applicable requirements and is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a full disclosure of all applicable federal, state and/or local rules, regulations, procedures and/or reporting requirements.

The CDBG Entitlement Communities Program provides federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to nearly 1,000 of the largest localities in the country. The statutory primary objective of the CDBG Program is the development of viable urban communities, principally for low to moderate income persons (LMI), through:

1. Decent housing;
2. Suitable living environment; or
3. Expanded economic opportunity.

Since 1974, the CDBG Program has provided a flexible source of annual funding to communities nationwide. The program offers local governments, with citizen participation, the opportunity to fund certain projects, programs and/or public services provided that these meet one of three national objectives:

1. Benefit low/moderate-income (LMI) persons, or
2. Prevent or eliminate slums and blight, or
3. Meet an urgent need.

The ESG program provides funding to: (1) Engage homeless individuals and families living on the street; (2) Improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families; (3) Help operate these shelters; (4) Provide essential services to shelter residents; (5) Rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families; and (6) Prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.

Funding Period

CDBG/ESG funds grants can be used to fund activities that occur during the period of July 2017 through June 2018. Please note that funds may not be available until September 2018.

Funds Available / Grant Amounts

Total funding amounts from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are estimates and subject to change.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):

Estimated \$100,000 available for Youth Engagement Public Services

Emergency Solution Grant (ESG):

Estimated \$150,000 available for Rapid Re-Housing (includes Street Outreach)

Estimated \$50,000 available for Emergency Shelters Operations and Support

Application Request Limitations:

Considerations may be made on a case by case basis for additional grant amounts requests.

\$15,000 minimum request for all CDBG applications

\$15,000 minimum request for all ESG Emergency Shelter applications

Changes to the 2017 Application

The application was revised substantially since last year. The CDBG category is limited to Public Services Youth Engagement only.

It is important to note that the CDBG and ESG applications are combined into one application. If you are applying for projects under both grants, you will need to submit a separate application for each project/program (i.e. one project/program per application).

Once again, the City will use an online grant application system called ZoomGrants (<http://www.zoomgrants.com>) to facilitate application process. All information and documentation must be submitted directly to ZoomGrants in order to be considered part of your application. No corrections or additional material will can be accepted after the deadline unless specifically requested by the City.

Please proofread your application carefully. It is suggested that applicants write each section in word processor software and then pasting it into the system after it has been spell-checked. Please note that certain characters do not convert well from some word processors. In particular, apostrophes and quotation marks tend to become question marks when pasted into ZoomGrants. *Please re-read each section for errors before submitting the application!*

Most of the questions in the application should be self-explanatory. However, several questions merit additional information and explanations. Please find the application question included in the next section. Additional instructions are also included where needed. If you need additional information on any question, please contact Farrah Gee at (fgee@trentonnj.org).

Technical Assistance Workshop – Optional

Please join us for the technical assistance workshop on June 2' 2017 at 1PM in City of Trenton Council Chambers, 319 East State Street, Trenton, NJ . Please allow extra time to find parking. We hope that this will make the workshop more productive for everyone.

II. Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit corporations and faith-based organizations are eligible to apply for CDBG/ESG funds. Your organization's main office need not be located within the City limits of Trenton. However, the beneficiaries or participants of your program must be low income Trenton residents.

Nonprofit Corporations

Each participating agency must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax- exempt 501(c)3 or (c)4 entity. You must submit a copy of your Letter of Determination from the IRS with your proposal. Groups that have **not** been recognized by the IRS as tax exempt entities are encouraged to apply for such status and, in the meantime, may apply for grants through other organizations that have tax exempt 501(c)3 of (c)4 status.

Faith-Based Organizations

HUD Notice 04-10 issued on September 29, 2004 provides for equal treatment of Faith-based organizations participating in the CDBG program. The following conditions apply:

1. Faith based organizations are eligible for CDBG funds on an equal footing with any other organization.
2. Faith based Organizations need not "spin-off" secular entities to participate.
3. The sub recipients may carry out its role and mission, independent from federal, state, and local government, provided that it does not use direct HUD funds to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytizing.
 - Sub recipients may continue authority for internal governance and may select Board members based on religion.
 - Faith based sub recipients may display religious symbols and icons and retain Title VII exemption that permits hiring employees based on religious bias.
 - However, Section 109 of the HCDA Act of 1974 would apply to employees who administer CDBG activities, and job applicants may not be discriminated against on the basis of religion.
4. An organization funded directly through a sub grant may still engage in religious activities during the provision of public services, provided they are voluntary for participants in HUD funded activities and occur separately from HUD-funded activities.
5. If the CDBG activity provides a voucher that permits the beneficiary to choose from a number of service providers, the HUD funds are provided indirectly and the Faith-based organization is exempt from prohibitions against incorporating religious activities into their HUD funded services.
6. No applicant for CDBG-funded services provided by the Faith-based organization can be discriminated against or given preferential treatment on the basis of religion.
7. Where space is shared between eligible and ineligible activities, recipients are advised to carefully refer to CPD Notice 04-10, Section VI covering cost allocations and Section VII regarding disposition of property. This is available on HUD's website at www.hudclips.org. Click on "Notices and Handbooks."
8. Like any recipient of HUD funds, Faith-based organizations are responsible for complying with HUD regulations and are subject to monitoring by the City of Trenton.

III. Ineligible Activities

CDBG

Generally, the following types of activities are ineligible for CDBG funding:

- Acquisition, construction, or reconstruction of buildings for the general conduct of government;
- Certain income payments to individuals;
- Construction of new housing by units of general local government; or
- Political activities.

ESG

Generally, the following types of activities are ineligible for ESG funding:

- Transitional housing is no longer an eligible expense of ESG funds. Agencies seeking funding for transitional housing are invited to apply under to the City's Community Development Block Grant Program.

In addition, the City will not be funding projects for homeless prevention in this round. Approximately 10% of ESG funds will be retained by the City administrative expenses and HMIS support. Agencies seeking funding for homeless prevention programs are invited to apply to the City's Community Development Block Grant Program.

IV. Use of Funds

CDBG

The purpose of the CDBG Program is to benefit low- to moderate-income households/persons by funding projects that revitalize neighborhoods, increase affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services. Under this current application cycle, the City of Trenton is accepting applications for Public Services Youth Engagement, only.

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. This includes the lease of a facility, equipment, and other property needed for the public service.

To be eligible for CDBG assistance, the project/program must provide a new service or demonstrate a quantifiable increase in the level of an existing service above that which has been provided in the previous 12 calendar months.

Public Services:

Public services generally refer to projects that provide social services and/or other direct assistance to individuals or households. Including but not limited to services concerned with employment, crime prevention, child care, health, drug abuse prevention, education, energy conservation, welfare and/or recreation needs. Applicants shall consider the following with regard to the project activities described in the RFP:

- 1) Assistance provided with CDBG funds is limited to City of Trenton residents.
- 2) No allocation of CDBG funds less than \$15,000 will be made to Public Service projects.
- 3) Direct cash payment to individual clients is not an eligible project activity

ESG

Eligible activities for ESG funds will be divided into two categories:

- 1) Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals; and
- 2) Operations and Support for Emergency Shelters.

The City intends to award the Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals Program (including Street Outreach) to one (1) agency. Multiple awards may be made for Emergency Shelter projects.

Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals

Approximately \$150,000 will be awarded to a single agency for the implementation of a *Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals* program (including Street Outreach). It is anticipated that funding will be sufficient to serve at least twelve (12) individuals for twelve (12) months with a complete set of wrap-around services, including:

- Housing search & placement;
- Housing stability case management based on the Housing First approach;
- Legal services; and
- Credit repair.

Effective rapid re-housing will move homelessness quickly into permanent housing and decrease the overall number of people that are homeless in the community. *Rapid Re-housing for Individuals* will be an assertive outreach/case finding/case management program. The focus is on individuals with less than six (6) months of homelessness and moderate barriers to housing. The goal is diversion from long-term homelessness. The program will demonstrate strategies for this population who may have some history of prior employment or eligibility for benefits that may have been lost. The successful applicant will put into practice the core principles of the Ten Year Planning Process, as well as the priorities of HUD and the Emergency Solutions, in addressing largest need in our community. Specifically, the Ten Year Plan recognizes that:

- a) When people are stably housed, everything else stabilizes;
- b) The system must have the capacity for immediate response; and
- c) Those with the highest needs should receive the most enriched services.

The goals of *Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals* are:

- To demonstrate a seamless system with a single point of entry for the single non-chronic homeless population to divert this population from long-term homelessness.
- To develop and demonstrate a rapid re-housing strategy for individuals who have a short history of homelessness (less than six (6) months) and moderate barriers to housing.
- To demonstrate that intensive case management services result in housing stabilization and retention.

Examples of moderate barriers to housing for this non-chronic single population include but are not limited to:

- Poor or no rental history
- Eviction history
- Recent employment but currently unemployed
- History of losing employment
- No high school diploma
- Limited English proficiency
- Mental health issues that are currently stabilized
- Substance abuse history but denies current use
- Poor credit history
- Owing back child support

Federal regulations do permit the use of ESG funds for short and medium term rental assistance, utilities and security deposits. However, by targeting individuals eligible for GA, the successful applicant is expected to minimize the use of ESG for housing expenses.

Targeted Population

The *Rapid Re-housing for Individuals* program will target “literally homeless” (as defined by US HUD) single persons that are on General Assistance (GA) or eligible for GA in order to decrease their length of time on the streets or in shelter through the provision of Rapid Re-housing with intensive wrap around services is a top priority.

Street Outreach

All projects applying for the Rapid Re-Housing for Individuals award must include a Street Outreach component in their program to help identify candidates for rapid re-housing as well as candidates for SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery (SOAR) case management services. The successful applicant will be expected to provide reporting on *all* individuals contacted in order to help the Continuum of Care identify new and changing underserved populations. The goal of this assertive outreach is to identify individuals who are not active help-seekers or are allusive, periodic users of available services and are at risk for long term homelessness.

- The most vulnerable individuals who are at high risk for long term homelessness may already be receiving assistance through MCBOSS or have lost their financial benefits due to non-compliance with WFNJ requirements.
- These individuals will have moderate barriers,
- In addition, through assertive outreach, and through the use of the Universal Screening Tool identify those individuals that may be appropriate for a more intensive intervention will be referred to existing services within the community and will apply for SSI/SSDI through the SOAR case management services.
- Outreach will occur at sites where single individuals may seek shelter, food and a place to spend time. This will include, but not be limited to, the Rescue Mission, the Salvation Army Drop-in Center and the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen.

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Emergency Shelters

Approximately \$50,000 will be made available to one or more agencies to offset costs related to Shelter Operations.

Eligible expenses under Shelter Operations include: building maintenance; rent, security; fuel, insurance; utilities; food, furnishings; equipment; and supplies for operation.

Visit HUD's Housing Resource Exchange for additional details on eligible expenses for Emergency Shelters: <http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewEsgDeskguide>.

V. ZOOMGRANTS™

The online application process through ZoomGrants consists of two steps.

NOTE: All users must first click the ZoomGrants link on the City's website to access the application.

- Create an Account – Returning ZoomGrants applicants can use log-in and password from a previous year.
- Proposal –Proposals are due by 11:59 PM (PST) on June 23, 2017.

Enter basic information such as name, amount requested, and application/project name. Because spellcheck is not available in ZoomGrants, we recommend using a word processor to count the number of characters and check spelling, then cut/paste back into ZoomGrants. Applications may be saved by clicking outside of the answer box.

Supporting documentation, letters of support, commitment/collaboration letters can also be uploaded in the 'Documents' tab.

The final proposal submitted online consists of the following:

- Proposal questions
- Budget tab
- Tables tab
 - Project Outcomes, Activities and Outputs
 - Project Timeline
 - Board Members Listing
- Documents tab:
 - 501 © IRS Determination Letter
 - Copy of the most recently submitted IRS Form 990
 - Current Financial Audit, , Audited Financial Statement or Annual Financial Statement
 - A-133 Audit if applicable
 - In-Kind Application
 - Letters of Support
 - Additional documents as needed
 - Cost Estimate (NCIP ONLY)

For Technical Assistance please contact ZoomGrants directly at 1-866-323-5404 (toll free) or by email at Questions@ZoomGrants.com. The City's 2017 CDBG and ESG application can be found at the following link: <https://zoomgrants.com/gprop.asp?donorid=2062&limited=1332>.

VI. Grant Review

Deciding who should receive funding is a difficult and time-consuming process. A volunteer committee composed of City employees and community representatives will review applications and complete the scoring process. Project scores guide the prioritization of projects; priorities are then submitted to City Council for approval.

SELECTION PROCESS

Funding priority will be given to projects that:

- Are clearly defined as to scope, location, need, budget, and goals;
- Meet the 2015-19 Consolidated Five-Year Housing and Community Development Plan Strategic Goals
- Can begin immediately and finish within the contracted time;
- Demonstrate the applicant has the capacity and the capability to carry out the project successfully;
- Establish means for program evaluation and accomplishment tracking;
- Have adequate community support, and address an identified community need;

- Impact a significant number and/or percentage of low- and moderate-income persons;
- Maximize the use of outside funds and services and coordinate with other public and private efforts;
- Help end homelessness and/or create connections with employment in the community.

REVIEW PROCESS

A Grant Review Committee will be convened to review and score each application. The Committee will be divided into groups by application category. Reviewers will be chosen based on their familiarity and experience on a given program category. For instance, reviewers of applications in the Homeless Services or Prevent category will be reviewed by experts in homeless services. Reviewers may include City staff, County Officials, community leaders and educators.

Once the Grant Review Committee has prioritized the projects, City staff will present recommendations to City Council for review and approval. A second public hearing will be conducted to review the scoring process and solicit applicant and citizen comments. An email will be sent to all applicants after Council approval letting them know the funding status of their project proposal.

Any agency recommended for funding will receive a thorough administrative review prior to funding. In addition to a thorough assessment of project viability, agencies may need to provide various policies and financial and insurance instruments to assure compliance with HUD requirements. Please refer to the City of Trenton CDBG Policies and Procedures Manual for more information.

FY 2017 Income Limits Summary

FY 2017 Income Limit Area	Median Income	FY 2017 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Trenton, NJ MSA	\$95,400	Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits (\$)*	20,050	22,900	25,750	28,600	30,900	33,200	37,140	41,320
		Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$)	33,400	38,200	42,950	47,700	51,550	55,350	59,150	63,000
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$)	47,600	54,400	61,200	68,000	73,450	78,900	84,350	89,800

Source <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il17/Section8-IncomeLimits-FY17.pdf>

Application Questions

1. **Organization Type**
2. **Number of years the Organization has been in operation**
3. **Briefly describe the history and purpose of the Organization. (1500 Characters)**
4. **Choose one (1) eligible Category that best describes this proposal:**

CDBG Public Services Youth Engagement – Education

Educational enrichment programs, tutoring, college prep, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs

CDBG Public Services Youth Engagement – Career Exploration

Career Focused Mentoring, Assessments, Counseling, Apprenticeships, Internships, job search tools, provide youth with practical experiences to learn about careers, develop networks, and experience the workplace

CDBG Public Services Youth Engagement – Life Skills Development

Personal qualities, not technical, that translates to successful job performance. These skills can be provided through a variety of means, including classroom instruction, tutoring, mentoring, youth programs, volunteering, and service-learning. Anger, time and money management

ESG Rapid-Rehousing & Street Outreach

RR -These activities are designed to move homeless people quickly to permanent housing through housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and/or medium term rental assistance.

SO - These activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of unsheltered homeless people by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, and/or critical health services.

ESG Emergency Shelter Operations

These activities are designed to increase the quantity and quality of temporary shelters provided to homeless people, through the renovation of existing shelters or conversion of buildings to shelters, paying for the operating costs of shelters, and providing essential services.

5. **Briefly describe the proposed project/program, the work to be performed, the service to be provided and the population to be served. (1500 Characters)**
6. **Please describe the proposed program/project Outcome(s). Outcomes should be quantifiable and measurable benefits to unduplicated City of Trenton's LMI individuals/households.**

Ensure that the outcome(s) represents what your project can realistically deliver within the time frame. The info listed will be included in the project scope of work/scope of services,

should the project be approved for funding

OUTCOMES should describe the results, impact and/or change expected from the proposed program/project. A simplistic way to express an outcome is to think about the goals of the program/project and ask the question “what will occur as a result of your project/program implementation?”

- 7. Was the proposed project/program funded by the City of Trenton in FY 2016? If yes, Please demonstrate how the project will result in a quantifiable increase in access and/or the level of an existing service provided to COT LMI community.**

If No, please type N/A below.

Examples of quantifiable increases include:

- a) an increase in the total number served, without an increase to the unit cost;
- b) an increase to what is being provided (i.e. adding distribution of milk or juice to meals); and
- c) a reduction to the cost per client for same level of service provided. For applicants that received FY 2016 CDBG funding for the same project that is being proposed for FY 2017, ensure that all clients/households to be served in FY 2017 are proportional to the level of service you are currently providing to document quantifiable increases. For example, if the FY 2016 was to serve 100 clients then the proposed FY 2017 total to be served should represent a quantifiable increase from the 100 clients anticipated to be served.

- 8. Are the beneficiaries of the proposed program/project Individuals or Households?**

I = Individuals

HH = Households (Activities benefiting youth/children must use HH Income to determine eligibility)

- 9. Enter the estimated number of unduplicated City of Trenton individuals (I) or households (HH) within the following income categories that will benefit or be served by the proposed project/program in the program year.**

Extremely Low Income (less than 30% of Median Family Income)

Low-Income (more than 30% but less than or equal to 50% of Median Family Income)

Moderate-Income (more than 50% but less than or equal to 80% of Median Family Income)

Project Benefit to Low and Moderate-Income Individuals or Households (CDBG Public Services & ESG)

The information listed will be applied toward the development of the City of Trenton’s Annual Action Plan and project scope of services, should the project be approved for funding. **“Unduplicated” refers to counting an individual served by the project once during the FY 2016 one-year period, regardless of the quantity of services provided.** Make sure your totals are accurate.

- 10. Please list the Address/Location of proposed project/program**

List all locations where CDBG/ESG sponsored programs will be provided

- 11. How will you evaluate the success of the proposed program/project? How will you track**

program accomplishments? (2500 Characters)

- 12. List each of the organization's existing and proposed staff members and positions that will be involved in the administration, management and/or operation of proposed CDBG/ESG activities.** (6500 Characters)
Include the following information for each staff member: Name, Title Position (describe experience and qualifications), Salary and the total percentage (%) of their salary that would be funded under CDBG.
- 13. Describe any partner agencies/organizations involved in the proposed project/activity. Define the roles and responsibilities of each.** (2500 Characters)
- 14. Please describe the other sources of funding for the proposed project/program that would supplement the CDBG/ESG.**
- 15. If the proposal is approved at the requested amount, what percentage of the entire Organization's operating budget would be funded by CDBG/ESG?**
- 16. Briefly describe your organization's fiscal management, including financial reporting, record keeping, accounting systems, payment procedures and audit requirements.** (1000 Characters)
- 17. If you are applying for ESG Rapid Re-Housing for individuals, please explain your Street Outreach Plan.**
If you are not applying for RRH, please type N/A below.
- 18. I acknowledge that if awarded a grant from the City of Trenton, I am responsible to collect and submit reports that include Race/Ethnicity and Household Income on the participants benefiting from the project/program.** Supporting documentation must be retained for a minimum of five (5) years.