

Citizen Participation

HUD has each entitlement community write and follow a citizen participation plan to ensure that program funds are being spent on the needs of the community. There are a number of ways the public can have direct influence on the program.

1. Residents can **contact their community's MOC representative**. For a complete list of representatives, visit the program website or contact the program staff.
2. In preparation for the first program year, staff worked with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) to visit **regional and issue-specific groups** to determine community needs. The Lakes Region, Central, and Coastal Corridor Coalitions and an Islands communities group were consulted, as well as groups focused on homelessness, child care, housing and economic development.
3. **MOC meetings** are open to the general public, and there is time given during the first portion of each meeting for any short comments by the public. In addition, there is a public comment period before each vote the MOC takes.
4. There is a **formal public hearing** and comment period in April of each year when the 5-year consolidated plan and one year action plan is completed. Check the website or contact program staff for dates.
5. Lastly, **program staff** are always available to answer questions and hear ideas, questions, and concerns.

Participating Communities

Bridgton	New Gloucester
Cape Elizabeth	North Yarmouth
Cumberland	Pownal
Gorham	Raymond
Falmouth	Scarborough
Freeport	Sebago
Gray	South Portland-
Harpswell	Standish
Harrison	Windham
Long Island	Yarmouth
Naples	

For the town of: _____
Your rep is: _____
Contact info: _____



Cumberland County Government
Community Development Office

Aaron Shapiro, tel. 699-1905
Shapiro@cumberlandcounty.org
Elizabeth Trice, tel. 871-8380
Trice@cumberlandcounty.org
www.cumberlandcounty.org/cd

Cumberland County Courthouse
Executive Office
142 Federal Street
Portland, Me 04101



Cumberland County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program



Overview and Guide to Citizen Participation

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The CDBG Program

Introduction

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a program of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Every year since 1974, all 50 states and hundreds of “entitlement communities” - both cities and counties - have received funding through the program - \$3.7 Billion in 2006.

The state of Maine receives about \$14 million annually and distributes it through a competitive process. In addition, the cities of Bangor, Lewiston, Auburn, Portland, South Portland and Biddeford have been “entitlement communities,” receiving allocations directly from HUD.

History

Cumberland County became eligible to become an entitlement community as of the 2000 Census. The county began meeting with individual communities and the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) and convened a “design team” in 2006 to set the basic governance and administrative



structure of the program. Participating towns had to vote to leave the state’s competitive program to create the new county-wide program. In addition, the City of South Portland gave up its entitlement status so that the new program could be created. The first round of funding will arrive in July of 2007.

Governance

The Municipal Oversight Committee (MOC) is the primary governing body for the county’s CDBG program. With one representative from each participating town and one county commissioner, the committee meets regularly to review the work of program staff and make policy decisions for the program. All MOC meetings are public. The MOC by-laws, membership list, and meeting schedule can be found at www.cumberlandcounty.org/cd



Eligible Activities

CDBG funds can be used for a number of community development activities benefiting people and places in need. Activities fall under the broad categories of public services, public facilities, public infrastructure, economic development, housing, and planning.

Grant Applications

Grant applications are in a short, three-page format and are submitted by participating

communities in January of each year for funding the following July. The applications are reviewed by a team made up of the MOC chair, five MOC community representatives, one county commissioner, and two county Community Development staff. Applications are rated based upon significance of need, readiness, and impact (30 points each) and link to program priorities (10 points). Final recommendations must be endorsed by the MOC, and then by the county commissioners.

Year #1 Program Priorities:

- Access to post-secondary education – particularly in outlying areas
- Access to public services
- Affordable housing – homeownership, housing for elders, housing rehabilitation, & development of a regional affordable housing strategy
- Child care – early childhood & after school care
- Downtown revitalization
- Economic development – living wage jobs
- Public facilities & Infrastructure
- Sewer, septic & solid waste
- Transportation – Rt. 302, Rt. 1, commercial transport to islands
- Understanding & preventing homelessness

(Not listed in priority order)