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Request for Proposals for 2025 CDBG Countywide Nonprofit Services

1. BACKGROUND

The Board of County Commissioners, Hamilton County, Ohio (“County”) will receive approximately \$3.8 million in 2025 Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) to benefit low to moderate income households and areas, create economic opportunities, provide safe & secure housing, and improve living environments for communities and residents. Of this amount, the County intends to expend up to \$500,000 for social services. Use of the funds for the purposes described herein is authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

The County on behalf of the Hamilton County Planning + Development Department (“Planning + Development”) is issuing this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) in order to receive proposals for certain non-profit services as further described herein that meet the objectives in the County’s 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan set forth at:

https://cms2.revize.com/revize/hamiltoncountyoh/Documents/Government/Departments/Planning%20and%20Development/Community%20Development/2025%20Consolidated%20Plan%20Draft_3-27-25.pdf

All contracts will be awarded to the non-profit entity whose proposal is most advantageous to the program with price and other factors considered. Non-profit entities that wish to submit a proposal must do so through the Neighborly software application.

Any contract resulting from this RFP will be that of a subrecipient relationship with the County and NOT that of a vendor/contractor. Any non-profit entity awarded a contract hereunder will be required to determine eligibility of any individual requesting services paid for with CDBG funding. Only those non-profit entities that are willing to enter into a subrecipient contract should submit proposals.

2. REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

A. Participating Local Governments

The geographical area of Hamilton County is comprised of 49 local governments including the City of Cincinnati. The City of Cincinnati receives its own HUD funding and therefore services to be performed for City of Cincinnati residents are not eligible to be paid for with County CDBG funding.

Of the remaining 48 local governments, there are currently 43 local governments that have elected to participate in the County’s HUD program (“Local Government(s)”). County CDBG funds can ONLY be used to provide services for individuals who reside outside the geographical boundaries of the City of Cincinnati and in a Participating Local Government.

Within the geographical area, Hamilton County has identified seven (7) jurisdictions that serve high poverty populations. These jurisdictions are as follows: Addyston, Arlington Heights, Cheviot, Elmwood Place, Golf Manor, Lincoln Heights, and Lockland.

B. Requested Services and Programs

1. Proposed services and programs should not include bricks and mortar housing related programs such as energy efficiency improvements, roof replacements or emergency housing repairs. Any request for proposals for these programs and services will be addressed under a separate process, if determined appropriate by Planning + Development.
2. The minimum funding amount is \$20,000, there is no maximum funding limit.
3. No more than 2 proposals outlining separate CDBG-eligible activities may be submitted per organization.
4. Only non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for CDBG funds under this RFP. CDBG funds cannot be used to fund any programs or services that currently receive funds from other Hamilton County sources. This does not include applicants seeking funding to expand programming (ex. If Hamilton County currently funds the program to serve ages 12-17, then applicants can request funding to serve 18+).
5. HUD does not allow CDBG funds to supplant other funding sources.
6. Government agencies are not eligible to submit proposals for funding under this RFP.

C. Income Limits for Persons Receiving Services

Proposed programs and services must benefit persons or households considered low- to moderate-income which is defined as 0% to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Services for senior citizens and youth under the age of 18 are 100% eligible as both groups of residents are presumed to be low- to moderate- income. See current limits below and sample data collection form attached. Non-profit entities awarded a contract must income-qualify all clients receiving CDBG services and collect demographic data required for the CDBG grant program.

2025 Hamilton County Income Limits

Effective 06/01/2025

AMI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30%	\$23,500	\$26,850	\$30,200	\$33,550	\$36,250	\$41,650	\$44,300
50%	\$39,150	\$44,750	\$50,350	\$55,900	\$60,400	\$64,850	\$69,350
80%	\$62,650	\$71,600	\$80,550	\$89,450	\$96,650	\$103,800	\$110,950

D. Eligible Uses of Funds

CDBG funds may be used for many programs and services; however, many of these services currently are funded or will be funded with other public funds. As such, the County has elected to accept proposals for the following eligible public services:

1. Healthcare
2. Childcare
3. Job Training/Workforce Development/Education Programs
4. Youth Services
5. Public safety programs
6. Services for Seniors
7. Eviction prevention (legal services only)
8. Food Access
9. Foreclosure assistance
10. Other legal services

E. Ineligible Uses of Funds

CDBG funds CANNOT be used for the following costs and expenses:

1. Administrative or operating costs that are not related in any manner to services being delivered;
2. Indirect costs that are not permitted by CDBG regulations, not adequately documented, or are not properly allocable to the services provided;
3. Costs for political activities, including lobbying;
4. Capital expenditures including purchase of vehicles, computers, printers, furniture, etc.; and
5. Any other costs and expenses not allowed by the federal regulations.

Additional information about eligible and ineligible uses of CDBG funds is found at:

<https://www.hud.gov/stat/cfo/financial-assistance-eligibility-reqs-fy2025#:~:text=Applicants%20must%20comply%20with%2031,must%20comply%20with%20these%20requirements.>

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The terms, conditions, specifications, and requirements of this RFP along with the Proposal shall be incorporated into any resultant contract. Failure to accept these obligations and enter into a contract on terms and conditions acceptable to County may result in cancellation of the award. The final contract will also contain additional provisions other than those that are set forth in this RFP.

A. CDBG Contract Template

Todd B. Portune Center for County Government, 138 East Court Street, Room 801, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Phone: 513-946-4550 | www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov

The County will draft subrecipient contracts using HUD's template contract that can be found at: [2025 Nonprofit Services CDBG Subrecipient Agreement Template](#)

B. The desired contract structure is one under which the non-profit entity designs, develops and implements the services and programs. The non-profit entity is solely responsible for the execution of the program and services, as set forth in this RFP.

C. The intent of the RFP is to secure pricing for a one-year term beginning on July 1, 2025. If contract one-year renewals will be considered, the County will notify awarded by June 30, 2025

D. Non-profit entities are strongly encouraged to utilize the question-and-answer period available during the proposal process.

E. Unless otherwise agreed to by the County, during the term of any contract and for such additional time as may be required, the non-profit entity shall provide, pay for and maintain in full force and effect, the insurance outlined in Exhibit A.

F. Payment is based upon successful provision of all goods and services. Unless otherwise agreed to by Planning + Development, the nonprofit entity is required to submit monthly invoices, performance reports and all required documentation within thirty (30) days from the end of the service month in order to receive payment. All required documentation and invoices must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the term of the contract.

G. Planning + Development will monitor each sub-recipient consistent with 24 CFR Part 84, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Proper accounting and financial controls are in place;
2. Program regulations are being followed;
3. Supporting documentation and information is maintained by the subrecipient and provided (as required) to Planning + Development for all expenses, determination of eligibility, etc.;
4. Services benefit low- to moderate-income persons and data is being collected and maintained;
5. Services are being delivered pursuant to any contractual obligation in a professional and timely fashion; and
6. Progress is being made towards performance goals. If adequate progress is not being made in quarterly intervals outlined in the contract, grant funds may be re-allocated to other service providers.

H. Federal Lobbying Prohibition Disclosure
All non-profit entities that receive CDBG funds must sign and follow the Certification for Federal Lobbying Prohibition Disclosure in contract documents as required by HUD. For additional information, please see: <https://lobbyingdisclosure.house.gov/ldguidance.pdf>

I. Insurance & Bonding

Agencies receiving CDBG funds must also agree to procure during the term of the agreement insurance policies of the types and of the coverage, containing the terms, and in the minimum amounts as specified in the subrecipient agreement.

J. Site Monitoring

The Hamilton County Planning + Development Department, Community Development Division will monitor the performance of Subrecipients against goals and performance standards as stated in the Subrecipient Agreement. Monitoring will be performed regularly to ensure appropriate expenditure of funds, to provide adequate technical assistance and to build rapport with the Subrecipient and the County. Monitoring will be conducted via virtual meetings, in-person visits and regular requests of submittals.

4. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The issuance of this RFP, receipt of Proposals, evaluation of Proposals, and the award of any resultant subrecipient contract will be made in conformance with federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations. All entities that desire to submit a Proposal must register and respond to this RFP via the Neighborly software application

<https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/hamiltoncountyoh/Participant/Login>

A. Program Schedule –

Date	Action(s)
June 4 th	RFP released
June 9 th at 3:00 PM	Optional Q&A meeting
June 16 th	Deadline for Submission of Questions
June 30 th at 4:00 PM	Deadline for RFP submissions
July 1 st – July 3 rd	Staff reviews proposals for completeness, eligibility, risk assessment and objective scoring; forward to Advisory Committee
July 17 th	Initial meeting for CDAC to discuss proposals
July 24 th	CDAC scoring deadline
August 24 th	Final meeting for Advisory Committee to make formal recommendations
Week of August 26 th	Make recommendations to the County Administrator

September	Present recommendations to Board of County Commissioners; Post-award meetings and contracts finalized and executed
July 1 st	*Contract start date

Contracts will be deemed fully executed at the beginning of the Program Year. Decisions may fall after this date, however, invoices on or after July 1st will be recognized for payment.

All non-profit entities who register on Neighborly will be invited to attend a virtual pre- proposal Q&A session on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 3:00 PM. Please visit the Hamilton County Community Development website or email Steve.Johns@hamiltoncountyohio.gov for instructions on how to access the Q&A session.

B. RFP Contact Person

The RFP Contact Person and mailing address /email address for questions about the RFP process, technical issues, the scope of services or to send a request for a post-proposal meeting is:
Steve Johns - Steve.Johns@hamiltoncountyohio.gov

C. Unauthorized Communication

Non-Profit entities shall not engage in unauthorized communication with any County officials. Unauthorized communication includes in-person visits, telephone calls, letters, emails, or faxes either directly or through a third party regarding the project/RFP to individuals associated with this RFP, as described below.

Communication regarding the RFP process, technical aspects, or requirements and specifications are to be sent to the RFP Contact Person at the email address or telephone number listed above. No questions can be received after the date set forth in the Program Schedule, listed above. The responses will be available through a link on the Hamilton County Community Development website. While a non-profit entity may not initiate discussions with County Individuals associated with the RFP, those County Individuals may initiate discussions with a non-profit entity to clarify proposals. Such communications are authorized communications.

If a non-profit entity attempts any unauthorized communication with County Individuals associated with this RFP, the non-profit entity's proposal may be rejected.

"County Individuals associated with this project" include:

1. County Public Officials;
2. County Project Managers and their staff assigned to the project;

3. Individuals involved with the evaluation process; and
4. Any employees of the Board or Planning + Development working on the project.

D. Examination of RFP

Non-profit entities must carefully examine the entire RFP and any addenda thereto, all related materials and data referenced in the RFP or otherwise available and shall become fully aware of the requirements, specifications, terms, conditions, and procedures.

E. Addendum to RFP

This RFP may be modified by one or more addenda. Any addenda will be posted on the Neighborly website.

5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

Non-Profit entities must certify that the Proposal and pricing will remain in effect for One Hundred Eighty (180) days after the Proposal submission date.

A. Preparation of Proposal

Proposals must provide a straightforward, concise delineation of qualifications, capabilities, and experience to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be concentrated on conformance to the RFP instructions, responsiveness to the RFP requirements, completeness, and clarity of content. The proposal must include all costs relating to the services offered.

B. Cost of Developing Proposal

The cost of developing proposals is entirely the responsibility of the non-profit entity and shall not be chargeable to the County or Planning + Development under any circumstances. All materials submitted in response to the RFP will become the property of Planning + Development and may be returned only at Planning + Development's option and at the non-profit's expense.

C. Public Records

All proposals submitted shall become the property of Planning + Development to use, or at its option, return to the non-profit entity. All proposals and associated documents will be considered to be public information and will be open for inspection to interested parties after award of the contract, unless identified as a trade secret or otherwise exempted from disclosure under the Ohio Public Records Act. Trade secrets or otherwise exempted information must be clearly identified and marked as such in the proposal. Each page containing such material must:

1. Have the basis for non-disclosure status stamped or written in the upper right-hand corner of the page and envelope; and
2. Be placed in the required order of the response format.

For example, if the non-profit entity has determined that Page 6 of the proposal contains exempt information, such as a trade secret, then:

1. The words “Trade Secret” would be clearly marked on Page 6; and
2. The page that is identified as containing a “Trade Secret” is placed after Page 5.

DO NOT MARK EVERY PAGE OF THE PROPOSAL AS TRADE SECRET OR OTHERWISE EXEMPT FROM DISCLOSURE OR YOUR PROPOSAL MAY BE REJECTED

The County and Planning + Development reserve the right to require reasonable evidence of the non-profit’s assertion that information is exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Public Records Act or other law, though the determination of whether information should be classified as exempt rests solely with the non-profit entity.

If a request is received from a third party to disclosure the non-profit entity’s identified exempt information, the non-profit entity will be notified of such fact. The non-profit entity shall promptly notify the County, in writing, that either i) the County is permitted to release the identified exempt information, or ii) the non- profit entity intends to take immediate legal action to prevent its release to a third party. A failure by the non-profit entity to respond within five (5) business days shall be deemed permission to the County to release such material or information regardless of any notation or marking that the non-profit entity may have made on such material or information as to the confidential or proprietary nature of such material or information.

The non-profit entity shall defend and indemnify the County and Planning + Development in all legal proceedings against County and Planning + Development which occur or result from County’s or Planning + Development’s withholding of the non- profit’s identified exempt information.

D. False or Misleading Statements

If, in the opinion of Planning + Development, information included within a proposal was intended to mislead the County in its evaluation of the proposal, the proposal will be rejected.

E. Delivery of Proposals

Proposals must be received via the Neighborly link no later than the deadline set forth under “Program Schedule”. Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. No paper, e-mail, facsimile, or telephone proposals will be accepted.

Planning + Development will review for completeness, but it is essential that the non-profit entities carefully review all items and statements in their final proposals, as well as all required attachments. Once received, proposals cannot be altered. Planning + Development, reserves the right to request additional information for clarification purposes only.

F. Acceptance and Rejection of Proposals

County and Planning + Development reserve the right to:

1. Award a contract for one or more of the proposed services;
2. Award a contract for the entire list of proposed services;
3. Reject any Proposal, or any part thereof; and
4. Waive any informalities in a Proposal.

Waiver of an immaterial defect in a Proposal shall in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the non-profit entity from full compliance with the obligations, terms, requirements, and specifications of the RFP, if the non-profit is awarded a contract.

6. ELIGIBILITY, REVIEW, EVALUATION AND AWARD OF CONTRACT

A. Eligibility Screening:

All applicants must meet the following conditions to move the application forward for scoring. Missing elements from the application will forfeit the applicant's right to be recommended for eligible award(s). All submitted applications will be accessible by the Hamilton County Community Development Advisory Committee (HC CDAC) for ongoing review.

Eligibility requirements:

1. Proposal demonstrates CDBG-eligible program/activity.
2. Complete proposal with all attached documentation including:
 - a. Utilization of Budget Template provided by HCCD,
 - b. Letter(s) of Support.
 - c. Attached intake form for client assessment including all demographic data
3. Signed Understanding of County Participating Jurisdictions

B. Preliminary Scoring:

A preliminary review of all submitted proposals will be performed to ensure the proposal meets all mandatory requirements. Those proposals that meet the mandatory requirements will be deemed as qualified. Those proposals that do not meet the mandatory requirements will be deemed non-qualified and will be rejected. Qualified proposals must meet the following mandatory requirements to be evaluated:

1. Timely submission of application;
2. Responses to all requested information in the Neighborly application including but not limited to:
 - a) Identifying Information
 - b) Primary Contact Information

- c) Program Description
- d) Program Budget and Program Sustainability
- e) Program Outcomes and Cost of Services
- f) Program Partnerships
- g) Experience and Qualifications
- h) Recent Audited Financial Statements
- i) Signed Verification Statement

Upon determination of eligibility, applications will undergo preliminary scoring of the objective elements (Elements A, B, C, and D listed below) by Community Development staff. Applicants receiving less than 60% of the available objective points may be eliminated from full review and scoring by the CDAC committee.

C. Evaluation

The Community Development Advisory Committee (“CDAC”) will review all qualified proposals and recommend programs and services for funding. The CDAC is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners and includes local government officials, as well as professionals from social service agencies, financial institutions, and development firms.

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by the CDAC based on the criteria set forth in Scoring.

The CDAC will determine what other information is required to complete the review process. The CDAC may request information from sources other than the Proposal to evaluate the program and services or to clarify the Proposal. Staff will conduct Risk Assessments of all eligible applicants with complete proposals and will provide information to the CDAC. All answers to questions posed by the CDAC to clarify the Proposal must always be in writing.

D. Scoring – Evaluation Factors and Relative Importance

Element	Explanation	Max Pts.
A. Leverage of Other Funds	No leverage: 0 points	20
	Up to \$1 for \$1: 5 points	
	\$1 for \$1.01 to \$1.50: 10 points	
	\$1 for \$1.51 to \$3.00: 15 points	

	\$1 for \$3.01 to \$5.00: 20 points	
B. Sustainability of Services	Applicant has collaborated with one or more organizations or stakeholders to execute service/program: 10 points	25
	Applicant has obtained commitments from other funding sources: 15 points	
C. Geographic Area*	Services are provided to two jurisdictions, consisting of one High Poverty Population*: 5 points	15
	Services are provided to three or four jurisdictions, consisting of two High Poverty Populations*: 10 points	
	Services are provided countywide or serve three or more High Poverty Populations*: 15 points	
D. Agency Impact	Capacity Building: 5 points	10
	Program or service aligns with agency's Strategic Plan: 5 points	
E. CDAC Discussion	The following issues will be considered: community impact; program uniqueness; innovation; scalability, research, demonstrated need, mastery of subject; solving problems not addressing only symptoms of a problem; serving an underserved population; opportunity doesn't exist elsewhere; urgency of need; past success measures; builds on organization's success, addresses policy agenda/priorities of Board of County Commissioners, prior performance with grant awards through Hamilton County Community Development.	30
Total		100

*High Poverty Populations are as follows: Addyston, Arlington Heights, Cheviot, Elmwood Place, Golf Manor, Lincoln Heights & Lockland

E. Proposal Selection

Proposal selection does not guarantee that a contract for services will be awarded. The Selection process includes:

1. All Proposals will be evaluated using the criteria set forth above.
2. Planning + Development staff and the CDAC will determine the responsible non-profit entity(ies) whose proposal(s) is (are) most advantageous to the program with price and other factors considered.

3. The CDAC's recommendations will be sent to the County Administrator and Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners has the final authority to award and authorize contracts.

4. Hamilton County Planning + Development will work with the selected non-profit entity(ies) and the Office of the Hamilton County Prosecuting Attorney to finalize details of the contract using the HUD contract template. If a contract cannot be agreed upon with terms and conditions satisfactory to the County, no contract will be awarded.