

2015-12th Plan Year-Community Development Block Grant Action Plan - Proposed Amendment Summaries 7-1-15 to 6-30-16

The Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development is a requirement of the 1990 National Affordable Housing Act and the Community Development Plan, for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A local Consolidated Plan is required of Entitlement Communities receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds under HUD's housing and service programs related to the needs of low to moderate income persons. The City of Morristown's third five year Consolidated Plan was developed in 2014.

Each year Entitlement Communities, as designated by HUD, must submit an Annual Action Plan to HUD at least 45 days prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year. The Citizen's Participation Plan assures that citizens have adequate time to review and comment upon funding proposals within the Action Plan. Any information received during the comment periods or the public hearings will be attached to the Action plan prior to submittal to HUD.

The Annual Action Plan is a document that describes the City of Morristown's HUD funded projects and community development related activities that are planned to be conducted within the community in the upcoming fiscal year. These activities must be consistent with the City's 5 year Consolidated Plan. Each year the CDBG program and the proposed allocation of funds are presented during public meetings to allow community members input prior to completion, approval, and submission of the Action Plan.

The initial Public Hearings to solicit input regarding community needs for this Action Plan were held on Jan 30, 2015 and Feb 13, 2015. A draft of the proposed Action Plan was made available to the public April 8, 2015. Two Public hearings were held to solicit comments on the draft Action Plan on April 23, 2015 and May 1, 2015. The final public hearing for City Council to review the Action Plan was held on May 5, 2015. A final comment period was allowed prior to final submission. All comments were requests for funding.

While the proposed amendment is not a substantial change from the original plan, the City wishes to allow for as much citizen participation as possible (The City is simply moving funds from one approved project to another). A public notice announcing the proposed amendment was posted on Sept. 8, 2015 to solicit public comment. A public hearing will be held on Sept. 11, 2015 to further allow for comment. Interested parties are encouraged to review and comment on the planned revisions at the public hearing or within 15 days following the public meeting. The proposed revisions are outlined below. The revision plan for the 2015 funds will be available at Morristown-Hamblen Library, the Chamber of Commerce, City Center Planning Department, and online at mymorristown.com. The completed plan revisions, with public input and comment, will be submitted to HUD for approval no later than September 28, 2015.

All programs funded by the City of Morristown with CDBG entitlement funds must be in accordance with HUD regulations. The City of Morristown's FY 2015 funding represents the 12th year of receiving entitlement grant funds. The amount of funding for FY 2015 is \$246,780.00.

The current Action Plan for 2015 funds the following;	
Homeowner rehab/Emergency Assistance	\$82,424
Parks and Recreation(Talley-Ward)	\$20,000
MHCS Homeless prevention program	\$10,000
TVCH CoC HUD HMIS Program	\$10,000
Façade Economic Development Program	\$35,000
Farmers Market Phase II	\$40,000
Administration (20%)	<u>\$49,356</u>
TOTAL	\$246,780

The proposed amendment will simply postpone the Talley-Ward project and move the \$20,000 that was designated for it to the Façade program. This move is necessary due to the unanticipated number of qualified applicants wishing to participate in the Façade program. This program continues to have a significant impact on the City of Morristown and the way it is perceived by individuals. Each project is briefly described below.

Talley-Ward Recreation Center

The Talley-Ward recreation facility is the only gym owned and operated by the City of Morristown’s Parks and Recreation Department. It is used at least 8 months per year for adult/youth basketball programs, adult volleyball, and other free access recreation programs. The gym was built in the early 1960’s and the current main level entrance is in disrepair, energy inefficient and not handicapped friendly. The building has a capacity of 600 people and both floors are accessible to handicapped individuals through outside entrances. However, the restroom facilities available on the top floor are not as handicapped friendly as they could be. The CDBG funds were to be used to update the men’s and women’s restrooms on the top floor level in order to make them more usable and more handicapped accessible.

Façade Program/Economic Development

The Façade Improvement Grant program seeks to encourage downtown and South Cumberland St. building owners and tenants to invest in the neighborhood of the Target Areas by financially assisting with appropriate exterior renovations to their buildings. The intention is to stimulate building improvements while being mindful of the historical significance and uniqueness of the downtown/Radio Center structures. Replacing damaged, boarded or bricked-up windows, main level storefront improvements, cornice repair and repainting or removing paint from buildings that have been previously painted is a priority.

The Building Façade Improvement Grant is a reimbursement program and requires that the property or business owner contribute a minimum of 50% of the total cost of the renovation. The maximum grant amount will be \$5,000. Grants will be paid upon successful completion of the project and submission of proper documents. Grant funds will be disbursed on a first come-first served basis as long as funds are available for the program.

Eligibility

To qualify for the Façade Improvement Grant, the building must be located within the 'Downtown Core' neighborhood or the South Cumberland St. area. The applicant must either be the building (property) owner or tenant of the property; however, if the applicant is the tenant, the property owner must provide written permission for any improvements. Exterior building improvements may consist of painting (excluding previously unpainted masonry), paint removal, storefront renovations, window repair/replacement, door repair/replacement, awnings (excluding facades adjacent to the overhead sidewalk system), signage, exterior lighting, masonry repainting, cornice repair/replacement and parapet improvements. Other improvements may be considered upon request. Grant funds may also be used for professional and permit fees.

Building improvements shall reflect the architectural integrity of the entire building and the neighboring traditional streetscape. The sides of buildings (secondary facades) which are highly visible from nearby streets or public parking areas may be included in and are encouraged to be part of the building improvements. Participants are expected follow the standards set forth in the Crossroads Development District *Renovation and Preservation Guidelines*.

Administration

The Façade Improvement Grant program will be coordinated by the City of Morristown's Community Development Corporation. Grant applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee consisting of the Community Development Corporation Program Director, CDBG Grant Coordinator, President of the Downtown Morristown Association and members of the Crossroads Development Partnership Design Committee.

Process

The grant process can be broken down into seven typical steps:

Step 1: Schedule a meeting with the Community Development Corporation Program Director and City of Morristown Chief Building Official to discuss the proposed building renovations, grant availability and the application process.

Step 2: Develop a documented plan for the project. Improvements should follow the recommendations set forth in the Crossroads Development District's *Renovation and Preservation Guidelines*. At a minimum, the following information will be required to be submitted with the grant application:

- Color photo(s) of the existing building façade(s)
- Elevation drawings or renderings of proposed improvements. Dimensions of changed openings, cornice work, signage, awnings, etc. should be included. Simple window replacement, repair work or painting would not require drawings.
- Samples of paint color(s), illustrative product specifications for windows, lights, awnings, signage, millwork, etc. and information on any proposed cleaning methods.
- At least two estimates for the cost of the work to be completed.

Step 3: Submit a complete grant application with the required attachments.

Step 4: The Grant Review Committee will review the application and make a recommendation. Applications will be reviewed and awarded within one month of submittal.

Step 5: _____ If the applicant needs more time to start their project, he or she must provide a written statement with a reasonable explanation for the extension. Work should be completed as quickly as possible. Any changes necessitated while the project is under construction must be approved by the Grant Review Committee prior to installation. All construction must be done in accordance with applicable codes. It is the responsibility of the building owner, tenant or their designee to obtain any applicable building or sign permits.

Step 6: The renovation is inspected by the Grant Review Committee to verify that the submitted plan has been followed and construction completed satisfactorily.

Step 7: The applicant will submit a grant payment request letter accompanied by proof of expenses and proof of payment. Grant funds will be paid within 30 days of the approved grant payment request.