

**Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Community Development Block Grant Program
Innovative Grant
Notice of Funds Availability
October 4, 2019**

I. OVERVIEW

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) hereby notifies interested Applicants of the availability of funds allocated from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The availability and use of these funds is subject to Federal CDBG regulations (24 CFR Part 570, Subpart I), and is further subject to DCA's policies and program requirements. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is the administrator of the State of Georgia's CDBG Program for Non-Entitlement Communities.

In releasing this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), the goal of DCA is to provide financial resources to communities who have developed plans that will create transformational change within the community upon the plan's implementation. As an effective conduit to funnel resources to help rebuild and invest in our nation's communities, Georgia's non-entitlement local governments have historically used CDBG for a variety of traditional infrastructure, economic development, and housing activities. Through this Innovative Grant, the expected outcome from successful applicants is to begin viewing the CDBG program differently than before. For example, rather than seeking projects with "benefit" to low-and-moderate income persons as defined by HUD standards, successful applicants will develop projects that not only provide a resource to these individuals (housing improvements, enhanced infrastructure, etc.), but more importantly begin answering the question of how the completion of the proposed project will begin to develop solutions toward the upward mobility of the individuals to be assisted and/or enhancing the efficiency of governmental services to provide a greater impact within their community.

The Department is committed to providing communities with the financial resources to adequately address local needs and to make an impact; specifically to initiate transformational changes. While transformational means different things to different people, for the purposes of this grant set-aside, DCA is defining transformational as an individual or series of activities that will support long-term, systemic and sustainable change. While there is no preconceived idea of what may or may not be fundable under this program, a sampling of ideas that could be transformative, should they be fully developed, may include, but not be limited to:

- A corridor revitalization effort that addresses blighting influences, enhances mobility access to employment centers, job skills training, and/or locations providing essential services;
- Consolidation of water and/or wastewater systems between jurisdictions whereby current maintenance of one or more of the systems may not be financially viable in isolation, but when paired with other systems results in greater levels of service provision through system upkeep, reduced overhead, and economies of scale;
- Deployment of broadband services throughout portions of the community to support educational, health care, employment/economic development and/or other initiatives that currently limit quality of life and opportunities for low-and-moderate income persons, providing the opportunity to improve the standard of living for community residents; or
- Development of a plan to address mental health issues within the community, supported by wrap-around services, including, but not limited to safe, affordable housing for those receiving services.

A copy of this NOFA and the Application package and other related materials will be available on the DCA website at the link listed below within seven (7) business days of the posting of this NOFA.

<https://www.dca.ga.gov/community-economic-development/funding-programs/community-development-block-grants-cdbg/cdbg>

II. AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR AWARD

DCA anticipates that approximately four million dollars (\$4,000,000) will be available under this NOFA. Funds will be set-aside from FFY2019 and FFY2020 at \$2,000,000 each to capitalize the Innovative Grant. DCA reserves the right to fund, in whole or in part, any, all, or none of the applications submitted in response to this NOFA.

III. MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUEST

DCA will award up to \$2,000,000 per application.

IV. MATCH REQUIREMENT

The minimum match requirement is 15% of the amount of the grant request. For example:

- \$2,000,000 award will have a \$300,000 match
- \$1,000,000 award will have a \$150,000 match

V. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Units of general purpose local government (cities or counties) that do not participate in HUD's CDBG Entitlement program. Pre-Applications / Applications may be submitted individually by one unit of general purpose local government, or jointly, by two (2) or more units of general purpose local government. Only one pre-application per general purpose local government, whether individually or jointly submitted, shall be eligible for competition. Generally, joint applications become necessary when the project benefit is not located within a single jurisdiction. Please consult DCA on questions concerning joint applications.

Receipt of an Annual Competition, Employment Incentive Program Grant, Redevelopment Fund Grant or Immediate Threat and Danger Grant does not disqualify an applicant for an Innovative Grant.

A. Additional Eligibility Requirements for Applicants – Local Governments

In addition to the requirements for all applicants, Local Governments must also meet the following requirements:

1. Local governments shall be in compliance with the audit report/grant certification form submission requirements as provided under O.C.G.A. Section 36-81-7 and Section 36-81-8.1.
2. Recipients of prior CDBG funding must resolve all outstanding audit, and/or monitoring (compliance) findings prior to an application for an Innovative Grant. Sanctions applied under any of the other CDBG grant programs will also apply to this program.

VI. ACTIVITY SUMMARY

All activities must be eligible under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and must meet a HUD National Objective. Section 105 of the Act enumerates eligible activities and 24 CFR Part 570.483 provides criteria for meeting HUD National Objectives. Applicants should note that each activity is eligible only to the extent that it benefits at least 70% low and moderate income persons (51% for economic development projects). Projects may also address an urgent need and/or elimination or prevention of slums and blight in an area designated by the applicant.

VII. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Pre-Application Submission Instructions

Deadline: November 27, 2019 at 5:00 PM
Submit to: Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Office of Community Development
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Any pre-application received after the designated date and time will not be considered for funding.

Submission of a pre-application is required. The purpose of the pre-application is for the applicant to notify DCA of its interest in making a formal application and for DCA to determine if a proposed application meets the intent of the set-aside and is eligible for funding. DCA shall have sole discretion to determine which applicants will be invited to submit a full applications.

B. Final Application Submission Instructions

Deadline: February 14, 2020 at 5:00 PM
Submit to: Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Office of Community Development
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Any application received after the designated date and time will not be considered for funding.

VIII. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

All pre-applications and applications will initially be reviewed by DCA to determine completeness. Complete Applications will be screened to determine whether the Application meets the minimum NOFA eligibility requirements. DCA will evaluate and rank each complete and eligible application according to the priorities identified herein. Those applicants formally invited to submit a full application will be requested to participate in a special session at DCA's CDBG Applicants' Workshop to be held in Pine Mountain, Georgia (Callaway Gardens) on December 9 & 10, 2019. Further details about this session will be made available on the agency's website.

IX. APPLICATION AWARD AND NOTIFICATION

All applications will be reviewed, evaluated, and ranked according to the priorities and preferences outlined in Section VII. DCA will consider the geographic distribution of these resources across the State prior to making final funding decisions. All award results will be posted on the DCA web site and Applicants notified in writing.

X. TIMEFRAME FOR COMMENCEMENT AND COMPLETION OF PROJECT

All CDBG funds must generally be expended and all development completed within twenty-four (24) months of DCA's anticipated contract start date of March 16, 2020. "Completion" is defined as all construction activities being complete, all development funds expended, all close out procedures have taken place, and certificates of occupancy issued (if applicable).

XI. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the basic CDBG rules previously outlined, a number of other federal and state regulations must be adhered to in the course of administering CDBG funds. The certifying official of the applicant is responsible for ensuring that the proposed program, activities, goals and timetables are in compliance with all federal and state laws, regulations and executive orders. Detailed requirements are outlined in the FY2018 Applicants' Manuals located at <https://www.dca.ga.gov/node/2341/documents/2254>.

For additional information regarding this Notice of Funding Availability, please contact Kimberly Carter, Director - Office of Community Development at (404) 679-0604 or kim.carter@dca.ga.gov.