

The Village of Oak Park 2024 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Funding Application Guide

*A guide for successful preparation and submittal of the
2024 CDBG Funding Application*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2024 FUNDING CYCLE IMPORTANT INFORMATION	3
CDBG PROGRAM HISTORY AND OVERVIEW	3
VILLAGE OF OAK PARK PRIORITIES	3
NATIONAL OBJECTIVES	3
PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES	5
APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMITTAL GUIDANCE	5
APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA	6
FUNDING CYCLE TIMELINE AND APPLICATION WORKSHOPS	8
APPENDIX	9
KEY CONTACTS	9

2024 FUNDING CYCLE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Applications must be submitted via the online application submission forms by March 1, 2024 at 5:00pm.** No paper copies or emailed applications will be accepted.
- All 2024 CDBG proposed projects must be consistent with Oak Park's current [2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan](#).
- Application scoring criteria is detailed in the Application Guide (page 6).

CDBG PROGRAM HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

The CDBG program is authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended. The primary objective of this program is the development of viable communities, achieved by providing the following, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income:

- Decent housing
- A suitable living environment; and
- Expanded economic opportunities

Each year, the Village of Oak Park uses a competitive application process to make a portion of its CDBG funds available to non-profit groups in the form of public service grants. The CDBG regulations allow the use of grant funds for a wide range of CDBG public service projects, including, but not limited to: employment and job readiness services, services to assist at-risk children and families, health services, addiction disorder services, fair housing counseling and outreach, day care programs, services for teen and young adult parents, services for senior citizens, services for homeless persons, services to assist victims of domestic violence, and services to assist persons with disabilities.

VILLAGE OF OAK PARK PRIORITIES

Through the consolidated planning process, the Village develops priorities that determine how funding is allocated. Newer priorities are created through the citizen participation process and will eventually be approved by the Village of Oak Park Board of Trustees. The [PY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan \(Con Plan\)](#) for Housing and Community Development priorities are: Public Service, Public Infrastructure, Homelessness, Affordable Housing, Public Facilities, Economic Development, and Administration and Planning, but draft priorities are expected to be known by the time the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee reviews applications and hears application presentations. In the application scoring process, proposals that address the Con Plan priorities may receive additional points.

NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The CDBG statute and regulations set forth eligible projects and the national objectives that each proposed project must meet. The CDBG national objective that must be met through a Public Service and Public Facility projects are to benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons. To meet the LMI national objective, the category of limited clientele projects is used.

The limited clientele category is a way to qualify specific projects under the LMI benefit national objective. Under this category, 51 percent of the beneficiaries of a project have to be LMI persons. With respect to determining the beneficiaries of projects as LMI and qualifying under the limited clientele category, proposed projects must meet one of the following tests:

- Benefit a clientele that HUD defines as generally presumed to be principally LMI. This presumption covers abused children, domestic violence victims, elderly persons, severely disabled adults, homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with HIV/AIDS and migrant farm workers; or
- Require documentation on family size and income in order to show that at least 51 percent of the clientele are LMI; or
- Have income eligibility requirements limiting the activity to LMI persons only; or
- Be of such a nature and in such a location that it can be concluded that clients are primarily LMI.

The low- and moderate-income limits change annually and will do so later in 2024. Until then, the following 2023 HUD chart will be used to determine the LMI status of proposed clients:

Household Size	Very-Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income
	0-30% of Median	31-50% of Median	51-80% of Median
1 Person	\$23,200	\$38,650	\$61,800
2 Persons	\$26,500	\$44,150	\$70,600
3 Persons	\$29,800	\$49,650	\$79,450
4 Persons	\$33,100	\$55,150	\$88,250
5 Persons	\$35,750	\$59,600	\$95,350
6 Persons	\$40,280	\$64,000	\$102,400
7 Persons	\$45,420	\$68,400	\$109,450
8 Persons	\$50,560	\$72,800	\$116,500

The applicant must include a plan for determining household income and project eligibility and include intake documentation that demonstrates the collection of this data if proposing to serve LMI residents through the documentation test. This includes income verification procedures or self-certification; however, self-certification procedures have specific requirements and applicants intending to utilize this strategy should receive approval of Village staff prior to proposing this option. Projects proposing to serve presumed beneficiaries or another eligibility

test should also describe their process for ensuring project eligibility and include intake documentation that demonstrates compliance.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The following activities may not be assisted with CDBG funds:

- Buildings or portions thereof, used for the general conduct of government as defined at Sec. 570.3(d) cannot be assisted with CDBG funds. This does not include, however, the removal of architectural barriers under Sec. 570.201(c) involving any such building.
- General government expenses.
- Political activities. CDBG funds shall not be used to finance the use of facilities or equipment for political purposes or to engage in other partisan political activities, such as candidate forums, voter transportation, or voter registration.

The following activities generally may not be assisted with CDBG funds:

- Purchase of equipment.
- Operating and maintenance expenses for Public Service. Any expense associated with repairing, operating or maintaining public facilities, improvements and services is ineligible. Specific exceptions to this general rule are operating and maintenance expenses associated with public service activities, interim assistance, and office space for program staff employed in carrying out the CDBG program.
- New housing construction.
- Income payments. Income payments means a series of subsistence-type grant payments made to an individual or family for items such as food, clothing, housing (rent or mortgage), or utilities, but excludes emergency grant payments made over a period of up to three consecutive months to the provider of such items or services on behalf of an individual or family.

Note: This is not a comprehensive summary of all CDBG ineligible activities. Applicants should consult the Resources included in the Appendix for additional information. Certain activities may be eligible under the HUD rules. As such, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the CDBG Department to determine project eligibility and sources of documentation prior to submission of an application. Department contacts may be found in the Appendix.

APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMITTAL GUIDANCE

Prospective funding applicants are **required** to attend the Application Training Workshop on **February 7, 2024**. This workshop will cover general CDBG funding eligibility requirements, funding application format and content, and submittal protocols.

Submittal

Applications must be submitted via the online application submission forms. No paper copies or emailed applications will be accepted.

The application submission form for CDBG projects can be found here:

<https://www.oak-park.us/village-services/housing-programs/community-development-block-grants>

Complete all applicable sections of the fillable application before submitting. Make sure that the person who signed your application is the person authorized in your resolution. Application attachments are required and must be submitted as part of your application. The application, all required attachments, and any other attachments an applicant wishes to include must be submitted through the online application submission forms.

Application documents and submission forms can be found here:

<https://www.oak-park.us/village-services/housing-programs/community-development-block-grants>

Applicants with questions regarding appropriate submittal should contact the Department prior to submission. Contacts may be found in the Appendix.

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications are reviewed by Village of Oak Park CDBG staff to determine completeness, eligibility and consistency with Oak Park's current Consolidated Plan. The Community Development Citizens Advisory Commission (CDCAC) will then review completed applications, participate in the applicant's grant proposal presentation to learn more about perspective subrecipients, and provide recommendations to the Village of Oak Park's Board of Trustees for final approval. Applications are reviewed and recommended by means of a competitive application evaluation process, in accordance with specific criteria detailed below.

While a well-written application is no guarantee of funding, you should make every effort to make the application complete and concise. In addition to completeness and eligibility, the categories below will be used to evaluate applications. The scoring process for individual applications and the criteria used in reviewing public service/planning applications are described below.

****Note:** The individual application score is the primary factor in determining the recommended awards, but it is not the only factor that will be considered during the application review process. Other factors may include, but not be limited to: the income level of the project area and municipality, an applicant's recent CDBG funding level, and an applicant's fiscal resources.

Program Eligibility	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
<p>Project Eligibility:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The activity or project is eligible under the CDBG program.</p> <p><i>If the project is not an eligible CDBG activity, the project will not be considered.</i></p> <p><i>10 points for yes.</i></p>	10	
<p>Meets a National Objective:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency demonstrates how the project or activity meets one of HUD's National Objectives.</p> <p><i>10 points to projects that benefit at least 51% low and moderate income persons.</i></p> <p><i>5 points to projects that prevent or eliminate slums or blight</i></p> <p><i>5 points to projects that meet an urgent need.</i></p>	10	
<p>Participant Eligibility:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency demonstrates a clear understanding of the internal process to determine participant eligibility and document household income.</p> <p>Type of Population Served:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency serves one of the following populations:</p> <p><u>Presumed low/mod:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persons experiencing homelessness, • abused children, • victims of domestic violence, • severely disabled adults, • illiterate adults, • persons with HIV/AIDS, • Elderly persons • mental health <p><u>Low/Mod Income:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 51% or more low/mod income persons as defined by HUD. <p><i>10 points for yes. If no, project not eligible.</i></p>	10	
Agency Overview	Maximum Points	Points Awarded

<p>Background and Need:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>The agency fully described the organization’s mission, how long the agency has been operational and information and/or examples of collaboration with other agencies.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>The agency describe their ability to meet reporting requirements.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>If an agency has received CDBG funds in the past, have their reports been submitted on time? Have the reports been accurate?</p> <p><i>The experience of the applicant, including the length of time in business and experience in undertaking projects of similar complexity as the one for which funds are being requested, will be evaluated.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the applicant will be evaluated in terms of its past performance in relation to any local, state, or Federal funding program. The past performance will refer to attainment of objectives in a timely manner and expenditure of funds at a reasonable rate in compliance with contract. Compliance with the contract will include but not be limited to the submission of reports and adherence to the scope of services.</i></p> <p><i>For those applicants that have not received CDBG funding from HCD in the past, allocation of points up to the maximum of 10 points will be awarded, dependent upon thorough documentation of similar past performances submitted with the application.</i></p>	10	
<p>Compliance with federal and local regulations:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency demonstrates compliance with federal and local regulations.</p> <p><i>The applicants will be evaluated on demonstration of having the necessary experience and capacity (staff and financial) to administer the proposed program in compliance with federal and local regulations.</i></p>	10	
Project Narrative		
<p><input type="checkbox"/>The agency sufficiently describes the proposed project, activity, or service.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency sufficiently describes the need for proposed project, activity, or service.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>The activity addresses a priority need identified in the</p>	12	

<p>Consolidated Plan.</p> <p><i>The activity will be evaluated in terms of the documentation and justification of the need for the activity.</i></p> <p><i>Activities with excellent documentation and justification will be awarded a maximum of 10 points; average 5 points; and poor 0 points.</i></p> <p><i>An additional 2 points will be awarded to projects that address a priority need identified in the Consolidated Plan.</i></p>		
Approach	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
<p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency describes how the project or activity will serve the Oak Park community and why the services are needed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency described how services may differ from other similar services offered in the community.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency describes their marketing and outreach approach.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency incorporated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) into the request and program.</p> <p><i>Higher points should be awarded for agencies who provide a unique service to the community.</i></p> <p><i>Higher points should be awarded for agencies who expand their outreach and marketing to places target populations are most likely to be.</i></p>	5	
<p>Logic Model:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The agency demonstrates the purpose, activities, outcomes, and goals of the proposed manner in a clear and appropriate manner.</p> <p><i>The agency will be evaluated on if their proposed outcomes appear reasonable and effective in order to accomplish the proposed program purpose.</i></p>	5	
Timeline		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Agency provides a comprehensive timeline to implement services.</p> <p><i>Points will be awarded to applicants based on documentation and information provided, showing that the resources, such as funding,</i></p>	5	

<i>site control, etc., needed to implement the proposed activity are available and ready. Maximum points will be given to activities that are ready to move forward quickly. These criteria take into consideration factors that may accelerate or slow down the ability to implement the activity in a timely manner</i>		
Budget Narrative	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
<input type="checkbox"/> The agency provides a clear budget description with adequate details, including all funding sources. <input type="checkbox"/> The activity is considered cost reasonable. Evaluation includes the cost incurred per person per unit and the justification for a particular level of funding. <input type="checkbox"/> The agency did not return the prior year CDBG funding. <i>The activity will be evaluated in terms of its implementation costs and funding request relative to its financial and human resources up 8 points will be awarded to projects that clearly provide criteria.</i> <i>An additional 2 points will be awarded to projects that have not returned prior year funds.</i>	10	
Budget	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
<input type="checkbox"/> The agency provided a clear and complete budget worksheet and revenue table. <i>Points will be awarded based on the ratio of the amount of eligible leveraging funds to the amount of CDBG funds requested:</i> <i>1.1 or more: 10 Points</i> <i>.50-1: 5 Points</i> <i>less than .25: 2 Points</i>	10	
Attachments and Application Completeness	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
<input type="checkbox"/> All attachments required are accurate and current. <input type="checkbox"/> Application is complete and accurate. <i>Applications will receive up to 3 bonus points, based on completeness. Applications that have not been signed will not be considered.</i>	3	
	100	

FUNDING CYCLE TIMELINE AND APPLICATION WORKSHOPS

February 8, 2024	CDBG PY 2024 Workshop
March 1, 2024	PY 2024 CDBG Application Due Date
April 2024	Subrecipient presentations
May – June 2024	Subrecipient notification of CDCAC recommendations and revisions submitted to CDCAC if applicable
September 2024	Recommendations and Agreements submitted to Village of Oak Park Board for Approval
October 1, 2024	Program Year 2024 Begins

APPENDIX

Resources

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development:
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment
- Community Development Block Grant, National Objectives & Eligible Activities for Entitlement Communities:
https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CDBG_Guide_National_Objectives_Eligible_Activities.pdf
- Playing by the Rules: A Handbook for CDBG Subrecipients on Administrative Systems:
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/687/playing-by-the-rules-a-handbook-for-cdbg-subrecipients-on-administrative-systems/>

KEY CONTACTS

Applicants are encouraged to contact staff with questions regarding funding eligibility, application preparation, and/or application submittal. Inquiries should be directed as noted below:

All communication should include the following email when contacting CDBG Staff:

grants@oak-park.us

Grants Manager

Vanessa Matheny, MSW

Phone: 708-358-5416

Email: vmatheny@oak-park.us

Grants Coordinator

Nick Meier

Phone: 708-358-5419

Email: nmeier@oak-park.us