



RICHLAND COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GUIDELINES FOR CDBG PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS | PY 2025-2026

The Richland County Community Development Office is launching their 2025 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Local nonprofits, Faith-Based Organizations, and County Departments are invited to submit Public Service, Public Facility, Infrastructure, Economic Development and Slum and Blight project proposals for consideration in the Program Year (PY) 2025-2026.

This competitive grant process begins Monday, March 10, 2025. The County is seeking funding applications for projects principally serving U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designated low-and moderate-income (LMI) residents and areas of *unincorporated* Richland County. Projects must meet HUD eligibility requirements and align with the 2022-2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan. Applicants must attend one of the CDBG Information Workshops and are strongly encouraged to review all materials available at <http://richlandcountysc.gov/CDBG-NOFA> prior to the submission **deadline of 11:59 PM on Friday, April 11, 2025.**

To ensure an eligible and competitive proposal, please review the following **Guidelines for CDBG Applications** along with these resources linked on the NOFA webpage: *2022-2026 Five Year Consolidated Plan*, *Richland County CDBG Policies & Procedures*, and the *HUD Playing by the Rules Handbook* for CDBG Subrecipients.

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GUIDELINES FOR PY 2025-2026 CDBG APPLICATIONS

I) BACKGROUND

Richland County released a **Notice of Funding Available (NOFA)** on March 9, 2025 to announce the anticipated availability of funding for the Program Year (PY) October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026 for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The CDBG Program is funded and regulated at the federal level by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered locally by Community Development Division of the Richland County Grants Department. The CDBG Program is authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The regulations implementing the CDBG Program are located in the 24 CFR, Part 570.

The County's objectives for this program are in accordance with HUD's National Objectives, which seek the development of a viable community through the implementation of activities principally for the benefit of low-and moderate-income (LMI) persons:

1. **Benefiting Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Persons**
2. **Addressing Slum or Blight; or**
3. **Meeting a Particular Urgent Community Need (i.e. natural disaster recovery)**

In addition, the Priority Needs identified in the 2022-2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan are as follows:

- **Priority Need 1:** There is a need to increase the supply of affordable housing for homeowners and renters, that is decent, safe and sanitary.
- **Priority Need 2:** There is a continuing need for services and housing opportunities for homeless persons and persons/families at-risk of becoming homeless.
- **Priority Need 3:** There is a need to increase housing opportunities, services, and facilities for persons with special needs.
- **Priority Need 4:** There is a continuing need to upgrade and improve community facilities, infrastructure, public services and revitalize socially and economically distressed neighborhoods in the County.
- **Priority Need 5:** There is a need to increase opportunities for economic advancement and self-sufficiency, as well as educational (social/life skills) training and empowerment for all residents of the County.

Richland County invites applications from qualified entities to apply for funding for projects and activities that are consistent with locally developed CDBG Program Priorities and to address the federal/local Consolidated Plan objectives.

II) FUNDING AVAILABLE

As a CDBG Entitlement Community, Richland County is granted a yearly allocation of CDBG funds based on HUD's allocation formula using annual population data. The County should receive the new allocation details by May 2025. For program year (PY) 2025, the County anticipates an award in line with the 2024 award of **\$1,718,460**. In order to receive these funds, the County must prepare a one-year Annual Action Plan for the use of Federal funds. At least 70% of the CDBG funds must benefit Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) persons living in unincorporated Richland County.

This CDBG NOFA process is part of developing the 2025 Annual Action Plan. Through a competitive grant process, the County intends to allocate a portion of its CDBG funds to non-profits, faith-based organizations, and County Departments for Public Service, Public Facilities Improvement, Infrastructure Improvement, and Slum and Blight Removal activities principally benefitting LMI residents and areas of unincorporated Richland County.

Projected funding levels for the following categories include:

- **Public Services | up to 15% of the total 2025 CDBG award** - Allocated for youth programs, services catering to persons with disabilities, senior services, job training, housing counseling, homeless prevention programs, as well as general social and welfare programs designed for low- to moderate-income (LMI) individuals/households or members of a HUD Presumed Benefit Population.
- **Public Facility and Infrastructure Improvements | up to \$750,000** - Allocated for enhancements to neighborhood and recreation facilities; nonprofit facilities providing public services; improvements to streets and sidewalks in CDBG target areas; upgrades to sewer, wastewater, and infrastructure (including broadband) in CDBG target areas; improvements for handicap accessibility and the removal of architectural barriers; and initiatives for slum and blight removal.
- **Economic Development, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Slum & Blight** – *Only County Departments are eligible for funding in these categories.* County Departments interested in submitting funding requests for Facade Improvement Projects, demolition of blighted properties, and small business grants must work directly with the Community Development Office and County Administration for project consideration.

The County intends to designate the remaining CDBG funds to Housing Revitalization for the County's minor home repair program (Operation One Touch), rental housing development, and Planning & Administrative funds to support Community Development staff.

This NOFA and Application are for a one (1) year funding request.

III) SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Please follow these guidelines for the submission of your Application for CDBG Funding:

- All information for the CDBG NOFA process including CDBG regulations and guidance on eligibility can be found online at <http://richlandcountysc.gov/CDBG-NOFA>.
- Please review these CDBG Proposal Guidelines before completing the Application.
- This is a competitive grants process. **The 30-Day Application Period begins Monday, March 10, 2025** during which eligible entities may submit Applications by the **deadline of 11:59 PM on Friday, April 11, 2025** for funding consideration.
- **Mandatory Information Workshop:** Community Development staff will lead CDBG Information Workshops during the month of March 2025 to help applicants develop project proposals for CDBG funding. *Pre-registration and attendance are required for all applicants. Organizations that received CDBG funds in PY23 or PY24 are not required but are encouraged to attend.* **Register for one of the CDBG application training workshops using links provided on the NOFA page.**
- **Applications:** Applications are only available on the Neighborly Platform linked on the NOFA page. Requests for support for all Public Service, Public Facility Improvement, or Public Infrastructure Improvements must come through this portal.
- County Departments interested in submitting funding requests for Facade Improvement Projects, demolition of blighted properties, neighborhood revitalization programs, or small business grants must work directly with the Community Development Office and County Administration for project consideration.
- County Departments with multiple eligible projects should consult with Community Development Staff on their application plans. Organizations may apply for both Public Service and Public Facility projects.
- For the 2025 Program Year, PY24 Public Service subrecipients receiving \$60,000 or more are only eligible to receive up to 50% of their most recent CDBG award for the same program.
- Subrecipients who have received funding in both PY23 and PY24 are ineligible for a PY25 award. Beginning in the 2024 Program Year, Richland County instituted a “one-year cooling off period” following two years' worth of funding. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Public Service applications seeking support for a pilot program should indicate in the application their interest in being considered for two (2) years of funding. The maximum award level in the second year would be up to 75% of the first year.
- Please submit all Application responses through Neighborly and provide supporting documents where specifically requested.
- All proposals are required to be consistent with Federal and local plans for spending. Therefore, it is required that each applicant is familiar with the County’s 2022-2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and the current PY24 Annual Action Plan available for reference on the County’s NOFA page.
- This CDBG funding period covers agency programs conducted between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026.
- **Federal Funding:** Applicants should understand that funds for payment under any CDBG Agreement are contingent upon the appropriation of funds by the Federal Grantor, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and approval of those funds by Richland County

Council. *If at any point, for any reason, funds are not received from the federal government, the County has no financial responsibility to provide funding.*

- **DEADLINE: All proposals must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Friday, April 11, 2025 for consideration for funding. Late proposals will not be accepted.**
- Community Development staff will review all proposals for eligibility and “right fit” to address the priorities designated 22-26 Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

Questions regarding the preparation of an Application should be directed to Markus Smith, CDBG Grants Analyst for Richland County at smith.markus@richlandcountysc.gov or 803-766-5190.

IV) ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES:

Each applicant should carefully review and follow these guidelines; the County has the right to reject any application proposal that does not adhere to them.

- **Eligible Applicants:**
 - i. Richland County Departments
 - ii. Private and Public 501 (c)(3) Non-Profit Organizations
 - iii. A member of the Richland County Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP)
 - iv. Faith-Based Organizations - In accordance with the U. S. Department of HUD Rule on Faith-Based Organizations (Faith-Based Initiative), September 30, 2003 (24 CFR Part 92 et al):
 - Faith-Based organizations are able to compete for federal grants for social service programs without having to completely separate their religious tone and mission from the services that:
 - a. Reduce poverty and provide services to LMI households or members of a HUD Presumed Benefit population.
 - b. Improve opportunities for low-income children/youth/families.
 - c. Revitalize low-income communities
 - d. Empower low-income families and individuals to become self-sufficient
 - Faith-based organizations are eligible to receive HUD funding on an equal footing with any other organization. Federal funds are not used to support inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization. Faith-based organizations are no longer required to form a separate, secular organization 501 (c) (3) to receive funds as was previously required.
 - Faith-based organizations may receive HUD funds to acquire, rehabilitate, or repair buildings and other real property, as long as the funds only pay the percentage of the total cost attributable to the HUD activities. However, HUD funds may not be used to acquire or improve sanctuaries, chapels, and other rooms that a congregation uses as its principal place of worship.
- **Service Area/Location:** Only proposals for projects benefiting *unincorporated* Richland County and its residents are eligible.
 - i. All beneficiaries/participants of proposed public service programs must be residents of unincorporated Richland County and verification records must be available for annual on-site monitoring visit.

- ii. Proposals for Public Facilities or Infrastructure improvements must be located in and primarily serving LMI residents of the unincorporated County.
- iii. See next section for more details on allowable costs for the Public Service project category.
- **Low/Moderate Income (LMI) Requirement:** At least 51% of beneficiaries/participants of public services, public facility improvements, or infrastructure investments must be low or moderate-income persons and documentation will be required for the annual on-site monitoring visit.
- **HUD Income Limits** –U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determines income eligibility for activities funded by the CDBG Program (*see table on Page 7*). It is imperative that applicants anticipate and plan for the methods they will use to determine and document either the incomes of the persons that they serve or that the area being improved is located in a HUD-designated Low-Moderate Area (LMA).

Questions on verifying income eligibility of a project should be directed to Markus Smith, CDBG Grants Analyst at smith.markus@richlandcountysc.gov.

FEDERAL INCOME GUIDELINES | RICHLAND COUNTY FY24

# of persons in household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30% LIMITS	\$18,250	\$20,850	\$23,450	\$26,050	\$28,150	\$30,250	\$32,350	\$34,400
VERY LOW	\$30,450	\$34,800	\$39,150	\$43,450	\$46,950	\$50,450	\$53,900	\$57,400
60% LIMITS	\$36,540	\$41,760	\$46,980	\$52,140	\$56,340	\$60,540	\$64,680	\$68,880
LOW INCOME	\$48,650	\$55,600	\$62,550	\$69,500	\$75,100	\$80,650	\$86,200	\$91,750

[Subject to revision upon the release of federal income limits for Fiscal Year 2025.]

- **Match Requirements:** A 25% match is required for all CDBG funded projects. In-kind services are not considered as matching funds.
- **Expending Funds:** CDBG Awards are disbursed as reimbursements. The County is seeking projects that can easily expend funds by September 15, 2026, although facility and infrastructure projects that require 12+ months will still be considered. Final awards may be revised based upon annual funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- **Public Service Project Requirements:** Priorities include youth programs, services for persons with disabilities, senior services, job training, housing counseling, homeless prevention programs, or other services for LMI individuals/households or members of a HUD Presumed Benefit Group meeting the following criteria:
 - i. A minimum request of **\$15,000** is required for Public Service proposals.
 - ii. CDBG funds will only be used to support new or expanded public services to residents of unincorporated Richland County. For existing services, applicants must demonstrate a quantifiable increase in the level of service provided.

- iii. Pilot Programs: Public Service applications seeking support for a pilot program should indicate in the application their interest in being considered for two (2) years of funding. If awarded, the maximum award level in the second year would be up to 75% of the first year.
 - iv. The Community Development team will prioritize organizations and projects with the capacity and structure to manage Federal funds, execute a program, and expend the CDBG award by September 15, 2026.
 - v. Allowable Costs: CDBG funds are restricted to funding direct program implementation costs that are necessary, reasonable and related to the grant (please see below section on **ALLOWABLE COSTS FOR CDBG GRANTS** - Page 8). for more details on allowable costs for the Public Service project category.
- **Public Facility and Infrastructure Improvement Project Requirements:** Improvements to Neighborhood and Recreation Facilities, Non-Profit Facilities providing direct services, Street and Sidewalk Improvements in CDBG Target areas, Sewer and Infrastructure Improvements in CDBG Target Areas, and Removal of Architectural Barriers to increase accessibility in line with The Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
 - i. **HUD Requirements for CDBG-Funded Construction-Involved Projects:**
 - All construction-involved CDBG-funded projects require that both Subrecipients and their Contractors adhere to Federal Regulations on the [Davis-Bacon Labor Act, Build America Buy America \(BABA\)](#) procurement requirements, and the [Part 58 Environmental Review](#) process.
 - Any construction-involved project receiving at least \$200,000 in CDBG funds will require both the Subrecipient and any contractor receiving more than \$100,000 in CDBG funds to adhere to [Section 3 Labor Laws](#).
 - NOTE: These are mandatory requirements which do add to the administrative burden of managing a construction/rehab project both for the Subrecipients and the Contractors. We encourage you to become familiar with these requirements and consider them as it relates to the level of funding you request and how you develop your budget.
 - ii. **Requests for improvements to Public Infrastructure owned and operated by a public entity must meet the following criteria:**
 - Infrastructure projects must be located in a HUD-designated LMA area (i.e. Census Tract shows 51% of population is LMI).
 - If the Census Tract is not LMA eligible, but the proposed project will positively impact a subset of households within the Census Tract, a Local Income Survey may be conducted to prove eligibility. *Any County project requiring a Local Income Survey must coordinate with the Community Development Office for consideration for approval.*
 - iii. **Requests for improvements to a Public Facility owned and operated by a public entity must meet the following criteria:**
 - Facility must be located in *unincorporated* Richland County (i.e. not located within the boundaries of any local municipality). Facilities that serve the

homeless population of Richland County which are predominantly located in the City of Columbia limits will be considered for funding.

- Facility must be owned by applicant. For projects involving acquisition of property, there must be an established relationship between the Applicant and the property (i.e. a long-standing rental agreement or lease-to-purchase agreement, an Option to Purchase Agreement, etc.).
 - In general, the facility must be open to the public during regular business hours (9a-5p) and provide a public service to LMI residents. Special consideration will be given for facilities that provide services outside of regular hours (i.e. afterschool programs, community centers, crisis prevention centers, etc.).
 - ADA and accessibility improvements need to be considered as part of the overall project. Consideration should be given to accessibly parking, entrances, service desks, bathroom facilities, and meeting spaces.
- iv. **Neighborhood Revitalization, Economic Development, Slum & Blight Removal Projects**
- County Departments seeking consideration for CDBG funding for a program or project in these categories, must coordinate with Community Development Staff, their Department Head, and the designated Assistant County Administrator for proposal development and consideration.

V) ALLOWABLE COSTS FOR CDBG GRANTS

The Federal regulations and guidance for all CDBG funding is found in the Federal Register 24 CFR, Part 570. Applicants are also encouraged to review the *Playing by the Rules Handbook* for CDBG Subrecipients when developing proposals.

Allowable costs for a CDBG grant depend on the type of program being funded. **Public Service projects have a separate set of allowable costs from all other CDBG-funded projects.** Please be sure to review the information below for your project category.

CDBG PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS

- **PUBLIC SERVICES | ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**
 - i. CDBG funds may be used to pay for labor, supplies, and materials as well as to operate and/or maintain the portion of a facility in which the public service is located. This includes the lease of a facility, equipment, and other property needed for the public service.
 - ii. Salaries and wages for staff directly carrying out CDBG activities.
 - iii. Purchases qualifying as supplies - items under \$5,000 per unit that are consumed within one year. (Ex: Computers under \$5,000.)
 - iv. Rent, mortgage, utilities, security, and related costs for space used by the CDBG program. Shared rent must be allocated fairly.
 - v. Food integral to program service delivery like youth and preschool or as part of a Food Bank program.
 - vi. Audit fees limited to the prorated CDBG share of the total budget.

- vii. Expenses related to marketing efforts to reach a target beneficiary population will be considered.
- **PUBLIC SERVICES | DISALLOWED EXPENDITURES**
 - i. Vehicle purchases and transportation costs, including insurance.
 - ii. Mileage for commuting or travel between home and work sites, mileage for travel by volunteers, and fuel costs/mileage tied to personal vehicle use.
 - iii. Note: Only Mileage and fuel that both exceed \$500 total for staff travel for official business is eligible.
 - iv. Insurance reimbursement is not supported for General Liability, Board of Directors Insurance, Motor Vehicles, Equipment, or any specialty insurance, even when program related. Insurance is the responsibility of the subrecipient for organizational activities.
 - v. Program funding that utilizes volunteers for construction/repair of a structure.
 - vi. Purchasing furnishings, personal property, equipment, fixtures, motor vehicles, or other personal property not an integral structural fixture is ineligible.
 - vii. Administrative costs that are not in direct service to beneficiaries or the execution of services for eligible direct program costs.
 - viii. For departmental applicants within Richland County Government, CDBG funds cannot be utilized for inherently government responsibilities.

NOTE: Non-profit agencies are exempt from paying federal unemployment tax, although State unemployment tax applies. You will not be reimbursed for any federal unemployment taxes you pay.

CDBG PUBLIC FACILITY & IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- **PUBLIC FACILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE | ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**
 - i. Acquisition & Construction Costs:
 - Purchase of land or buildings, costs and fees associated with closing.
 - Site Development: Costs associated with the preparation of the project site, including clearing, grading, and utilities.
 - Building Construction: Expenses related to the construction, renovation, or expansion of public facilities such as community centers, libraries, health clinics, and recreational facilities.
 - ii. Architectural and Engineering Services:
 - Costs related to hiring professionals for design and planning of project.
 - iii. Accessibility Improvements:
 - Modifications to ensure compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and eliminate barriers to accessibility.
 - iv. Energy Efficiency Upgrades:
 - Implementation of energy-efficient technologies and improvements in public facilities to reduce environmental impact and operational costs.
 - v. Environmental Review Costs:
 - Expenses associated with environmental assessments and reviews required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
 - vi. Equipment and Fixtures:

- Purchase of equipment, stationary fittings (i.e. lighting, cabinetry, signage, security systems, items integral to the facility), other items necessary for the operation of the public facility.
 - Equipment over \$5,000 per unit with a useful life exceeding one year, when integral to program operation, is eligible for consideration with County approval.
Example: lab equipment for an eye clinic
- vii. Infrastructure Improvements:
 - Construction or improvement of infrastructure related to a public facility, such as plumbing and electrical work, broadband access, parking lots, landscaping, security enhancements, lighting, recreation infrastructure.
 - Construction or improvement of infrastructure related to a residential area such as roads, sidewalks, sewer and water improvements, lighting.
- **PUBLIC FACILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE | DISALLOWED EXPENDITURES**
 - i. Purchase of equipment not integral to the function of the structure, furnishings, or personal property.
 - ii. Improvements to facilities used for exhibitions, spectator events and cultural purposes.
 - iii. Operating and maintenance expenses (The maintenance and repair of public facilities and improvements is generally ineligible e.g., filling potholes, repairing cracks in sidewalks, mowing grass at public recreational areas or replacing street light bulbs)
 - iv. Upgrades to facilities housing general government operations, unless changes directly increase handicap accessibility.
 - v. For departmental applicants within Richland County Government, CDBG funds cannot be utilized *for inherently government responsibilities*. This includes street resurfacing or pothole repair, which is maintenance, not reconstruction. Only milling and repaving with new asphalt is eligible. Sidewalk reconstruction and ADA ramp installation is encouraged where applicable.

VI) APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS:

- Only complete Applications received by the deadline of 11:59 PM on Friday, April 11, 2025 will be reviewed for eligibility and considered for the full application round.
- Community Development staff will review each submitted application for completeness, basic CDBG program eligibility, and alignment with the 22-26 Five-Year Consolidated Plan. Any application in which a threshold criterion (i.e. correct service area, meeting a National Objective, alignment with 5-Year Consolidated Plan, etc.) is not clearly met will be set aside and not considered for funding.
- As the Grantee of Community Development Block Grant funds, programs, services, facilities and infrastructure operated by Richland County are given priority consideration and will be funded according to program needs and in conformance with HUD eligibility requirements and national objective requirements. *Allocations to non-profit organizations are an additional benefit to the community when the funds are available in the total CDBG budget.* The County has a 2022-2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan, which guides these investments and requires the most efficient use of the CDBG allocations to accomplish HUD goals.
- Applicants who successfully submit a completed application will be notified of next steps within a general timeline as follows:
 - i. April – May 2025
 - **Public Service Applications:** Complete and eligible applications will be evaluated and scored by an Application Review Committee comprised of both citizens and County staff. Please refer to the Scoring Criteria section for additional details.
 - **Public Facility & Infrastructure Applications:**
 - a. Community Development staff will review the application for eligibility and alignment with Goals.
 - b. By Friday, April 18th – Projects selected for full evaluation will be notified and the following steps will occur:
 - i. County Staff will request a Site Visit for additional evaluation of project and consideration of ADA compliance in project plans.
 - ii. Applicant Organization will be required to schedule a Project Review meeting with Richland County Building & Inspections team to identify potential barriers for feasibility and other requirements (i.e. zoning, ADA requirements, etc.).
 - iii. Complete and eligible applications will be evaluated and scored by an Application Review Committee comprised of both citizens and County staff.
 - ii. July & July 2025
 - June - Community Development staff will submit the final list of recommended projects and funding levels to County Council for consideration, feedback, and approval.
 - June - All applicants will receive communication regarding the recommendation on their project proposal.

- June 14, 2025 – A draft of the 2025 Annual Action Plan (AAP) will be posted on display with the recommended projects for CDBG funding. A 30-day public comment period will begin. *Recommended projects will be listed in the AAP*
 - June 24, 2025 - The 2025 Draft Annual Action Plan will be considered at the County Council Admin and Finance Committee Meeting
 - June 26th, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the County Council Chambers – A Public Hearing will be held to allow public comment on the proposed AAP.
 - July 16, 2025 – Richland County Council will vote on the final draft of the 2025 Annual Action Plan.
- iii. August 2025 – The County will submit the final plan to HUD for approval.
 - iv. August – September 2025 – Contracting process for PY25 CDBG Projects begins.
 - v. October 1, 2025 - PY25 CDBG programming can begin.

VII) EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA:

Evaluation and Scoring Process:

Applications compete against other applications in the same category group (i.e. Public Services or Public Facility/Infrastructure). The Richland County Community Development Division has adopted an evaluation and scoring process to use points based on criteria factors such as performance goals, timeliness, priority need and project type. The application should be descriptive, but as concise as possible. Each application will be evaluated based only on the information provided therein. The process will use a maximum of 112 points for Public Services applications with bonus points available. The process will use a maximum of 100 points for Public Facility/Infrastructure applications with bonus points available. The 2025 scoring process will include criteria for both Bonus Points and Reduction Points (as outlined in the following pages).

An Application Review Committee comprised of both County Citizens and Staff will score the applications based on the adopted point levels per criteria factor.

Community Development staff will consider scored applications, available CDBG funds, and available match funds to select projects for the 2025 Annual Action Plan. Higher scored projects with large funding requests may not be selected based on available funding and lower scored projects with small funding requests may be selected based on available funding. The County's goal is to effectively and efficiently use the annual allotment to address as many priority-needs as possible.

Selected Projects & Annual Action Plan

Community Development Staff will recommend the draft 2025 Annual Action Plan to the Richland County Council in June 2025. Selected projects will be included in the Plan. The Plan will go on display for a 30-Day Public Comment Period which will include a public hearing to receive community feedback. County Council will consider adoption of the plan at the meeting on Tuesday, July 15, 2025. Applicants can expect to receive updates on the selection process and final decisions during the month of June.

Application Rating System:

CDBG funds are awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to Entitlement Communities who develop their own programs and funding priorities when it comes to investing these Federal funds. As the Grantee for these CDBG funds, Richland County staff and leadership have the discretion and authority to allocate and award funds based on County-identified community needs and priorities. *Past performance with any Richland County Grant (CDBG, HOME Investment Partnership, ARPA, or Community Impact Grant) will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process for returning applicants.*

Only applications received by 11:59 PM on Friday, April 11, 2025 will be considered for CDBG funding.

(See following pages for a detailed overview of the scoring criteria.)

The following scoring criteria will be utilized by the Review Committee for CDBG Public Services applications for the Program Year 2025.

PUBLIC SERVICES SCORING RUBRIC	POINTS AWARDED	AVAILABLE POINTS
A. Demonstrated Need for Services/Addressing the Need		20
B. Capacity and Experience for Service Providing		5
C. Capacity and Experience for Grants/Financial Administration		5
D. Program Design		15
E. Accessibility & Feasibility : Program Location & Promotion		10
F. Collaboration and Partnerships		10
G. Funding Request & Leveraging CDBG		12
H. Outputs & Impact Goals		10
I. Outcomes: Measurement & Evaluation		10
J. Populations Served/ Collecting Beneficiary Data		10
K. Readiness and Ability to Expend Funds		5
Preliminary Score		112
BONUS POINTS		12
REDUCTION POINTS		(-3)
Total Score	XXX	

The following scoring criteria will be utilized by the Review Committee for CDBG Public Facility and Infrastructure applications for the Program Year 2025.

PUBLIC FACILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE SCORING RUBRIC	POINTS AWARDED	AVAILABLE POINTS
A. Demonstrated Need for Project/Benefit vs Cost		20
B. Capacity and Experience for Executing and Managing Project		10
C. Capacity and Experience for Grants/Financial Administration		10
D. Experience with HUD Construction-Based Requirements (Section 3, Davis-Bacon Act, Environmental Reviews, Build America Buy America)		5
E. Project Design & Feasibility		15
F. Goals and Quantitative Outcomes		10
F. Citizen Participation and Partnerships		5
G. Funding Request & Leveraging CDBG		15
H. Readiness and Ability to Expend Funds		15
Preliminary Score		105
Secondary Evaluation Score (1-5) (i.e. County Assessments through Site Visit, Building & Inspections Mtg.)		5
BONUS POINTS		32
REDUCTION POINTS		(-3)
Total Score	XXX	

2025 Bonus Points and Reduction Points:

Priority Needs in Public Services: Up to 5 additional points	
<p>It is the intention of the Community Development Office to give priority consideration during the 2025 Program Year for programs and projects that address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lifting families economically through:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relieving financial strains for working families through access to affordable childcare, medical care, and provision of basic needs (food, shelter, other assistance) ○ Workforce development and adult education ○ Providing pathways to affordable housing (i.e. financial literacy training, credit counseling, housing counseling) • <i>Addressing or preventing homelessness</i> • <i>Senior Services</i> • <i>Services to adults with disabilities</i> 	

Priority Needs in Public Facility/Infrastructure: Up to 20 additional points	
• Facility providing emergency shelter or transitional housing	20 Points
• Sewer System	20 Points
• Water System	20 Points
• Facility Providing Direct Public Service to LMI population or Presumed Benefit Population	16 Points
• Streets and Sidewalks	12 Points
• Community Center	10 Points
• Recreational Facility/Parks	10 Points
• Senior Center	10 Points

Representation, Coordination & Innovation: Up to 5 additional points	
<p>It is the Community Development Office’s policy to encourage, support, and prioritize the following through grant-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public input and client participation during the project/program development process. • Leadership or a Board of Directors that includes individuals with “lived experience” or a dedicated mechanism for client involvement in planning and decision-making. • Investing in local, smaller-staffed organizations with less administrative overhead. • Multi-agency coordination and the co-location of public services. • Innovative pilot programs addressing priority areas. 	

Historical County Funding: Reduction of up to 3 Points

HUD CDBG awards are structured to offer varied support annually, intended to facilitate capacity building and startup resources for eligible entities to launch new initiatives or expand existing programs. These grants aim to enhance accessibility, sustainability, and service quality for low- and moderate-income individuals. It's important to note that HUD CDBG grants are not intended to establish a permanent funding source for local programs or projects, aligning with regulations to ensure their dynamic nature and prevent reliance on consistent year-over-year funding. It is a priority of Richland County Community Development to ensure equitable access to available resources for all eligible organizations.

The Community Development Office will consider previously awarded CDBG funds, as well as, other awarded County funds including American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Community Impact Grants, H-Tax Grants, and other forms of financial or in-kind support a program/project has received. 2025 Community Impact Grant awards will be taken into consideration. Past performance managing these prior awards will also be considered. Organizations who have received a significant level of funding from Richland County sources in the last three (3) years will receive point reductions relative to the levels they have received. Organizations that have not received more than \$100,000 over a three-year period will receive 2 additional points.

**** NOTE:** For the 2025 Program Year, PY24 Public Service subrecipients receiving \$60,000 or more are only eligible to receive up to 50% of their most recent CDBG award for the same program. Subrecipients who have received funding in both PY23 and PY24 are ineligible for a PY25 award. Beginning in the 2024 Program Year, Richland County instituted a “one-year cooling off period” following two years' worth of funding. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

**** NOTE:** Public Service applications seeking support for a pilot program should indicate in the application their interest in being considered for two (2) years of funding. The maximum award level in the second year would be up to 75% of the first year.

Funding Received from County over a 3-Year Period (since 7/1/2022)	Points Added	Points Deducted
\$0-\$100,000	2	0
\$101,000-\$250,000	0	1
\$251,000-\$400,000	0	2
More than \$400,000	0	3