



CDBG Public Works Opportunities

The Public Works program within CDBG recognizes the importance of the availability and condition of infrastructure and community facilities. Funded projects shall develop the state's communities and counties by providing residents with basic infrastructure and/or facilities with the opportunity to maximize energy efficiency and provide a suitable living environment.

To be eligible, applicants must either be a Nebraska incorporated municipality or a Nebraska county. Another eligibility requirement for CDBG funds is the community/county must be considered low-to moderate income (LMI) per the HUD income limits. A multitude of projects are included as eligible activities within the Public Works program, see below:

Facilities

- Community Center
- Senior Centers exclusively for persons aged 62 and over
- Nonprofit centers for day care, dependent care, primary health, and mental health care outpatient clinics
 - Excluding shelters defined as: hospitals, nursing homes, convalescent homes, battered spouse shelters, shelters for the homeless, halfway houses, group homes, temporary housing;
- Remodel shelter facilities for the homeless (excludes costs for operation)

- Accredited public libraries
- Neighborhood parks
 - A new facility/improvement or a quantifiable increase of an existing facility/improvement;
- Single- or multi-service fire/rescue buildings
 - Fire trucks are specifically considered “public facilities” and thus eligible;
- Removal of architectural barriers for accessibility;
- Tornado-safe shelters in manufactured home parks
 - Containing not less than 20 manufactured housing units that are within such proximity of shelter to be of use in a tornado.

Infrastructure

- Street improvements including curb, gutter, and sidewalk;
- Storm sewer improvements;
- Flood control designed to influence or affect the flow in a natural water course such as a river, stream, or lake;
- Removal of architectural barriers for accessibility;
- Drainage improvements (e.g. retention ponds or catch basins);

The maximum grant amount for a Public Works project is \$250,000. No more than \$8,000 may be used for construction management, and no more than 10% of the amount of the grant may be used for general administration. The CDBG cost per beneficiary cannot exceed \$3,000, except for daycare centers where it cannot exceed \$5,000.

The application deadline for Public Works projects is July 30th, 2017. Contact our office today to discuss potential projects and eligibility.

More information is available at

http://opportunity.nebraska.gov/files/crd/cdbg_guidelines/2017/Chapter4-PublicWorks.pdf

Nebraska Lead Program Seeking Applicants

The Nebraska Leadership Education / Action Development (LEAD) Program is Nebraska's only comprehensive state-wide agricultural leadership development program. Participants are selected each year for a two-year fellowship. During that time, the LEAD program focuses on preparing future agricultural leaders by exposing them to diverse societal and business thinking.



The LEAD program provides candidates with exposure to relevant experiences, important leadership skills, and a strong knowledge base to help combat major challenges facing the state of Nebraska.

With the evolving economy and the increase in urban livelihood, it is essential to prepare future generations of agriculturalists to be leaders to give agriculture a voice, as well as find ways to increase productivity and longevity.

LEAD 37 Applications and more information is available at <http://lead.unl.edu/>



Surpassing the Business Competition

As important as it is for your products to stand out, it is equally important for your business to leave a lasting impression on consumers. Competition amongst businesses is highly competitive, thus as business owners you must find ways to soar above the rest.

Showing an invested interest in your clientele can go a long way towards building trust. Keeping the customers informed about upcoming products and current events within your store creates an attachment to you and an investment in your business. Clients want to know they can rely on the

information you are providing them, in exchange you are more apt to receive open honest feedback and customer loyalty.

Beyond just taking into account customer feedback, businesses should be collecting valuable data with each transaction they make. This information can be used to better direct marketing efforts or to target specific clientele. Constantly collecting data will give you an opportunity to get to know your customers better and help you assess their needs to maintain them as a client. For more information, <https://www.score.org/blog/3-ways-businesses-can-trump-competition>



#whatshappeningWCNDD

What are you doing this spring? Send us your pictures to mburke@west-central-nebraska.com with the hashtag #whatshappeningWCNDD and we will share them on our Facebook page. Meanwhile, see if you can guess where this is ...

Civic and Community Center Financing Fund Program Last Chance in 2017

Annually, the Department of Economic Development accepts applications from Nebraska municipalities for grants to support the development of civic, community, and recreation centers under the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund program.

The fund may be used for new construction of or the renovation and/or expansion to existing civic, community, and recreation centers, which may include the conversion, rehabilitation, or reuse of historic buildings. The fund may also be used for preliminary planning related to the development or rehabilitation of eligible projects. The definitions of eligible projects are:

- Civic Center- a facility that is primarily used to host conventions, meetings, and cultural events and/or a library. A civic center therefore includes space for conventions, meetings, and cultural events and/or a library.
- Community Center- the traditional center of a community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings, arranged around a main street and intersecting streets. A community center is therefore an area of multiple buildings with both internal and external elements. A civic center may or may not be in a community center.
- Recreation Center- a facility used for athletics, fitness, sport activities, or recreation that is owned by a municipality and is available for use by the general public with or without charge. A recreation center does not include any facility that requires a person to purchase a membership to utilize such facility.
- Planning- engineering and technical studies directly related to eligible projects.

The program operates on a two-part application process. Previous years included a pre-application component and required invitation to submit a full application. Beginning in 2017, a municipality seeking a grant will submit a letter of intent to apply and complete a full application online using <https://neded.fluidreview.com>. The letter of intent shall be signed by the applicant municipality's chief elected official and received by the Department by April 1 of the current program year.

To see if your project is eligible to apply, please review all of the program fund guidelines, <http://www.neded.org/community/grants/applications/cccff> or contact Jenny Mason with DED for more information: 402-471-6280 or jenny.mason@nebraska.gov

Important Deadlines:

Civic and Community Center Financing Fund	April 1, 2017
CDBG Planning	April 1, 2017
CDBG Tourism	May Open Cycle
CDBG Pre-App Public Works	May 8, 2017 (Pending)
CDBG Downtown Revitalization	May 31, 2017
Nebraska LEAD 37 Application	June 15, 2017
CDBG Public Works	July 30, 2017
CDBG Pre-App Housing	August 4, 2017 (Pending)
CDBG Water & Waste Water	Open Cycle