

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

**GRANTS AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, February 13, 2019
6:15 PM (Approximately)**

Chairperson: Tiffany O'Neill
Vice Chairperson: Anna Durbin, Anthony C. Stevenson

AGENDA

1. **PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT 2019 -
2020 FUNDING NEEDS**



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT 2019 - 2020 FUNDING NEEDS

The Committee will hold a public hearing to obtain the views of citizens and local organizations on the Township's housing and community development needs for the 2019 - 2020 fiscal year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
☐ ISSUE BRIEFING	Issue Briefing
☐ PUBLIC NOTICE	Backup Material
☐ STRATEGIC PLAN	Backup Material

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Grants and Community Development Committee
Issue Briefing

Topic: Citizens Participation on Housing and Community Development Needs in the Township for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 CDBG Funding

Prepared By: Emily Crane, Community Development Technician

Date: February 8, 2019

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

No action is required at this time. This is the first of two public hearings to inform the community and obtain public comment on the Township application for Federal Funding through HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

HUD requires the municipality to hold public hearings to obtain input from the community on housing and economic development needs for low to moderate income people.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

Federal regulations require citizens participation through public hearings to receive the community’s input regarding the Annual Action Plan submittal to HUD for fiscal year 2019-2020 CDBG funding to the Township. Activities are based on the Township’s 5-Year Consolidated Plan which states the goals and objectives to benefit low to moderate-income people.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The Township will hold public hearings in February and April and will adopt the CDBG annual budget in May. This budget must be submitted to HUD by May 15th to request funding from HUD. This date is subject to change based on the date of HUD’s release of actual allocation funds. Similar to last year, HUD will not accept Action Plans submitted using estimated allocation amounts, but also does not know when actual grant amounts will be available. HUD recommends moving ahead with normal Citizen Participation Process and suggests several methods for building in the flexibility that may be needed. The Action Plan has been approved by the Board in the past based on estimated numbers with built in flexibility. The only difference this year is that the submission date to HUD may change.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

In fiscal year 2018 the Township received \$987,152 in Federal funding under HUD’s CDBG program. This funding supplements Township funds used to supply services to

low to moderate-income people in the community and rehabilitation of public facilities.

VI. Staff Recommendation: This is a public hearing and does not require action by the Board of Commissioners so no staff recommendation is needed.

**LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2019 (YEAR XLV)
January 6, 2019**

Lower Merion Township is preparing its Action Plan for Funding Year XLV (2019). These planning documents are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the receipt of federal entitlement monies. The Plans will assess and prioritize needs for housing, economic development, historic preservation, street and sidewalk repairs, and public services specific to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Since 1975, the Township has used these funds to provide a variety of activities that create viable urban neighborhoods, decent housing, suitable living environments and economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate-income residents of the Township.

The following schedule of events has been established for your information and participation:

JANUARY. Applications for organizations and agencies interested in receiving funding from the Township's 2019 CDBG Program will be available on January 7, 2019. Mailings will be made to citizens, community organizations and others describing the CDBG program and inviting comments and recommendations. Anyone interested in receiving a copy should contact the Building and Planning's Community Development Division at the number listed below.

FEBRUARY. A public hearing will be held at the Lower Merion Township Administration Building at 75 E. Lancaster Avenue, Ardmore, in the 2nd floor Board Room at approximately 6:00 p.m. on **February 13, 2019**, to obtain the views of citizens on the Township's housing and community development needs for this fiscal year.

Deadline for applications on 2019 funding – **Friday, February 15, 2019 by 4:00 p.m.**

MARCH. All submitted applications will be evaluated for eligibility and fundability; applicants will be contacted if there are any questions or clarifications required. Staff findings and recommendations will be prepared for management and Board of Commissioners' review.

The Annual Action Plan, including the Community Development Objectives and Projected Use of 2019 Funds will be published on **March 10, 2019** and public comments will be received and reviewed by Township staff.

APRIL. A public hearing will be held on **April 10, 2019** at the Lower Merion Township Administration Building at 75 E. Lancaster Avenue, Ardmore, in the second floor Board Room at approximately 6:00 p.m. The public hearing will obtain the views of citizens on the proposed CDBG Action Plan for Year XLV and review the program performance for Year XLIV.

Lower Merion Township's Board of Commissioners will conditionally approve proposed Community Development activities for 2019.

From April 1st through May 1st, the Annual Action Plan will be available for public review. The Board of Commissioners will consider any comments and views received on the Proposed Plan. The Committee will recommend adoption of a Resolution on **May 8, 2019** approving the filing of the Year XLV application for LMT.

The Board of Commissioners will approve the Action Plan and adopt the Resolution on **May 8, 2019** at Lower Merion Township's Board of Commissioners room on the second floor of the Township building.

The Plan is made available to the public and Notice of Revisions, if necessary, will be published in the newspaper.

The 2019 Annual Action Plan will be submitted to HUD by May 15th, 2019, unless extended by HUD.

JUNE. Comments will be reviewed as required by HUD.

JULY. The first day of Federal Program Year XLV is July 1, 2019.

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TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020

Statutory Goals

Use federal, state and local resources to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for individuals and families in Lower Merion Township.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Community & Economic Development: Goal # 1 Improve and expand public facilities and public services which serve low income families, seniors, and youth.

Objective 1.1 Continue improvements to the Township's senior centers and the community centers that serve low income neighborhoods to assure quality facilities for this segment of the population.

Objective 1.2 Seek to identify and financially support a new affordable care provider with facilities improvements if needed.

Objective 1.3 Continue community programs to be run by the Department of Parks & Recreation.

Objective 1.4 Renovation and/or reconstruction of parks and playgrounds in low income areas of the Township.

Community & Economic Development: Goal # 2 Improve the infrastructure and general safety conditions in low-income areas to increase safety and accessibility, and to spur investment.

Objective 2.1 Undertake the reconstruction of street and sidewalk restoration projects in low-income areas of Lower Merion Township.

Objective 2.2 Undertake the reconstruction of sanitary sewer: make water and storm drainage improvements that serve the low-income areas of Lower Merion Township.

Objective 2.3 Continue the program to improve handicapped accessibility throughout the Township through the construction of ADA compliant curb cuts.

Objective 2.4 Periodically evaluate and remove physical conditions that adversely affect the health and safety of residents in low-income areas, i.e. spot blight.

Community & Economic Development: Goal # 3 Support and expand affordable social, housing, transportation and health services.

Objective 3.1 Seek to identify and provide financial support for staffing and programs for a new affordable child care provider.

Objective 3.2 Continue the availability of transportation services for elderly and low-income youth through the use of the mini-bus service.

Objective 3.3 Continue to support mental health services.

Objective 3.4 Continue to support services for victims of domestic violence.

Community & Economic Development: Goal # 4 Increase viability of Township's business corridors.

Objective 4.1 Continue to implement a façade treatment program for retail business districts and encourage participation in the DCED façade incentive program.

Objective 4.2 Continue the Township's business loan program designed to create job opportunities for low and moderate income individuals.

Community & Economic Development: Goal # 5 Provide planning services and develop strategies to implement Housing and Community Development objectives.

Objective 5.1 Continue working with non-profit housing organizations to identify existing housing stock appropriate for development of affordable housing.

Note: Objective 1.1 also applies to this goal

HOUSING GOALS

Housing: Goal #1: Increase the supply of affordable rental housing units for elderly and other low income households.

Objective 1.1 Work with developers to create new assisted rental housing for low income households.

Objective 1.2 Work with developers to create new family and elderly affordable housing in the Mixed Use Special Transportation (MUST) District, created as a result of the Ardmore Transit Center Master Plan.

Objective 1.3 Work with the Montgomery County Housing Authority and property owners in Lower Merion to increase the number of Housing Choice Voucher households in the Township.

Objective 1.4 Work with the Township Planning Commission to assist developers to create affordable housing in accordance with the Township's proposed Affordable Housing Ordinance if adopted by the Board of Commissioners. This Ordinance encourages new developments to include affordable housing units or to provide funds to assist affordable housing developers to create new units.

Housing: Goal #2: Preserve the supply of rental units for the elderly and other low income households.

Objective 2.1 Assist providers of affordable rental housing to guarantee Code compliant units for their low income occupants.

Objective 2.2 Continue to operate the Township's rental registration and inspection program to guarantee that all rental units in Lower Merion are Code compliant.

Objective 2.3 Reinstate the Township rental rehabilitation program should there be renewed interest from landlords.

Housing: Goal #3: Improve the safety of housing units in Lower Merion Township for low and moderate income families.

Objective 3.1 Continue to distribute lead-based paint educational materials to homeowners undertaking housing rehabilitation work.

Objective 3.2 Work with non-profit housing rights organizations to extend outreach efforts within the Township for lead-based paint and home ownership workshops.

Note: Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 4.1 also apply to this Goal.

Housing: Goal #4: Preserve and improve the condition of homes occupied by low income homeowners.

Objective 4.1 Rehabilitate 50 housing units for low income homeowners by the end of Year 5.

Objective 4.2 Continue efforts to incorporate energy efficiency into the housing rehabilitation program.

Objective 4.3 Expand outreach to low income homeowners about the Lower Merion housing rehabilitation program.

Housing: Goal #5: Increase homeownership opportunities for low income households in Lower Merion.

Objective 5.1 Continue to provide assistance to non-profits to provide housing counseling programs for low and moderate income homebuyers.

Objective 5.2 Increase outreach efforts for the Home Ownership Program.

Objective 5.3 Continue to work with non-profit and for-profit developers to create new affordable housing units to be sold to low income households in Lower Merion with a five year goal of five (5) units.

Housing: Goal #6: Increase understanding of and compliance with fair housing laws.

Objective 6.1 Provide financial support to the fair housing rights agencies for fair housing outreach, education, and compliance.

Objective 6.2 Assist in the organization and participate in the outreach efforts to conduct workshops annually on Fair Housing for realtors, landlords, management companies, newspapers and consumers within Lower Merion Township.

Objective 6.3 Disseminate fair housing brochures with rental unit renewal licenses.

Objective 6.4 Refer Fair Housing complaints to the Township's Human Relations Commission and other HUD approved agencies for testing as a follow up to guarantee non-discrimination in the sale and rental of housing.

HOMELESS AND SPECIAL NEEDS GOALS

Homeless and Special Needs: Goal #1 Continue outreach for homeless persons and families in Lower Merion and persons threatened with homelessness.

Objective 1.1 Assist Montgomery County where appropriate to improve outreach and assessment of homeless persons and families.

Objective 1.2 Continue to assist organizations that provide counseling and services to clients that are homeless or near homeless and victims of domestic violence.

Objective 1.3 Continue to assist organizations that provide counseling and services to clients that have AIDS/HIV or alcohol or substance abuse.

Homeless and Special Needs: Goal #2 Prevent premature institutionalization of elderly homeowners and renters.

Objective 2.1 Provide chore services to elderly persons in non-profit housing developments as requested.

Objective 2.2 Continue to provide bus service for the elderly, and the physically and mentally challenged.

Objective 2.3 Continue to assist a non-profit to provide supplemental transportation services for the elderly and the physically and mentally challenged.

Objective 2.4 Continue to assist a non-profit to provide outreach services to the elderly and the physically and mentally challenged.

Objective 2.5 Continue to assist the senior centers to provide a program coordinator and instructors for various activities.

Objective 2.6 Continue to make accessibility modifications for homeowners an integral part of the Township's housing rehabilitation program.

Homeless and Special Needs: Goal #3 Improve accessibility for frail elderly and physically and mentally disabled.

Objective 3.1 Provide for Special Programs for the physically and mentally challenged.

Objective 3.2 Continue to fund counseling services to provide medication supervision and psychiatric services to stabilize persons with mental health problems.