

A. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM

The Downtown Revitalization Grant (DR) Program provides funds to communities to implement comprehensive, integrated, and innovative solutions to the problems facing their downtown districts. These community revitalization projects must be part of a strategy that targets downtown service and business districts and will lead to future public and private investment. Qualified applicant communities must have a downtown district meeting the definition in 30-A M.R.S.A. Section 4301(5-A).

1. Eligible activities - include all those eligible under the Public Facilities, Public Infrastructure, Housing Assistance or Micro Enterprise Assistance programs as relevant to the revitalization of a downtown district; and eligible planning activities necessary to complete the Project Development Phase.

2. Exclusions: See Section 1H (4) (5).

3. Match – All communities applying for DR Program funds must certify that they will provide a minimum cash match equivalent to 25 percent of the total grant award. This minimum 25% match must consist of private sector investments directly related to the project. Any additional project funding over the minimum 25% may come from any source public and/or private. All match must be fully committed at time of application.

4. Planning Requirements: Applicants must have completed a comprehensive downtown revitalization planning process within the past five years. Communities with plans older than five years must demonstrate that their plans are under active implementation, the action plan remains valid, or have been updated within the past 5 years. The proposed DR activities must be in the plan as recommended actions necessary for downtown revitalization.

5. Maximum DR Award: \$300,000

6. Bonus Points for Applicants with Maine Downtown Center Designation: Applicants will receive three bonus points if they have been designated as a Main Street Maine Community by the Maine Downtown Center, or one bonus point if they have been designated as a Maine Downtown Network Community.

7. Demonstration of National Objective: Applicants must demonstrate that the project meets the National Objective of 1) benefiting 51% or greater low/moderate income persons or 2) preventing or eliminating slum or blighting conditions. Census information, a certified town-wide income survey, or an officially adopted declaration of slum/blight conditions conforming to the requirements of Title 30-A M.R.S.A § 5202 and HUD must be submitted to OCD. ***These demonstrations must be made as part of the Letter of Intent and Verification of CDBG National Objective submitted to OCD.***

8. Selection Process – The selection process will consist of two stages

(a) Stage 1:

Letter of Intent and Verification of CDBG National Objective:

All communities wishing to submit a DR application must submit a Letter of Intent. After review for completeness and eligibility, units of general local governments may be invited to make a full application. Please refer to Page 5 of this document for Program deadlines and due dates.

(b) Stage 2:

Application: The maximum length of an application is **six pages, not counting required attachments.**

Please refer to Page 5 of this document for Program deadlines and due dates.

Each application will be rated in relation to all others. Members of the Review Team will assign a Review Point Total for each application reviewed. Review Point Totals will consist of the sum of the three scoring areas below and be determined by the total of each sub-scoring area.

Impact (40 points):

- Describe the scope and magnitude of the problems you seek to address, and how they are obstacles for revitalizing the downtown. – 8 points
- Explain how these problems negatively impact the viability of existing downtown businesses, or new development and expansion. –12 points
- Demonstrate how the problems affect LMI persons, or how they contribute to slum/blight conditions. –8 points
- Explain why DR funds are necessary for the project, and describe what efforts have been made and where you have searched to secure other grant or loan funds, –12 points

Development of Strategy (40 points):

- Clearly link the proposed DR activities to action steps outlined in your community's Downtown Plan, and explain how the project will stimulate economic activity in the downtown. –12 points
- List the specific activities to be addressed in this downtown revitalization effort, and identify the tasks to be undertaken with DR funds and the activities to be undertaken with each other source of funds. –12 points
- Define how the proposed DR activities provide a solution to the problems and assist in improving the area's viability, and how the activities will have a positive impact on LMI persons, or on alleviation of the slum/blight conditions. –8 points
- Describe the capacity and experience of the administrator who will be implementing the project, describe the engineering and design work completed to date, provide a project timeline, and explain how DR funds will be expended in a timely manner. – 8 points

Citizen Participation (20 points):

- Effective use of media (newspapers, radio, TV, web etc.) to further public awareness and participation. – 4 points
- Relevance of listed meeting/hearing comments (not counting required public hearing) and the overall citizen participation process in application and project development. – 4 points

- Involvement of downtown and local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, development groups or other business related organizations in identification of problems and development of the application and project. – 4 points
- Involvement of potential LMI project beneficiaries in development of the application and project, and how the required public hearing relates to the application development and citizen participation process. – 4 points
- How other local resources (cash and in-kind) are directly related to the project, and the establishment of a cash value equivalent for all in-kind commitments. – 4 points

Maine Downtown Center Designation Bonus – 3 bonus points will be assigned to each applicant community designated as a Main Street Maine Community by the Maine Downtown Center, and a 1 bonus point will be awarded to those communities designated as a member of the Maine Downtown Network.

Business Friendly Community Designation Bonus – 3 bonus points will be assigned to each applicant community certified as a Business-Friendly Community at time of application.

9. Final Application Score – Each application will receive a Final Application Score assigned by members of the Review Team plus any applicable Maine Downtown Center Bonus. The top scoring applicants will be considered for an invitation to proceed to the Project Development Phase as funds allow.