

**PROGRAM YEAR 2017
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
APPLICATION GUIDEBOOK**

FOR:

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM
GENERAL ACTIVITIES FUNDING**

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Application Fact Sheet

The Harris County Community Services Department (CSD) invites qualified organizations with eligible projects to apply for Community Development Block Grant (General) Program funds. Harris County seeks organizations that can demonstrate the capacity to assist the Department in meeting the priority needs (Measurable Objectives) of the Program Year 2013 – 2017 Consolidated Plan.

Prior to responding to the application, each qualified organization is urged to review the Guidebook and read the instructions carefully. Before submitting the application, check all calculations and review the package to ensure that all sections are complete, and required forms are included. Inaccuracies, omissions and use of application forms from previous competitions will be grounds for rejection. All proposals will become part of Harris County's official files, and if awarded, will be incorporated by reference into the Agreement with Harris County.

Application Submittal

- All applicants are encouraged to attend the Applicant Conference to be held July 13, 2016 (please review timeline on p. 14). Please visit our website at www.csd.hctx.net under the Funding Opportunities page or email rfp@csd.hctx.net to register for the conference.
- HCCSD will offer Technical Assistance, July 14-15, 2016 and July 18-20, 2016, for applicants who have at minimum mostly completed applications. Members of the Development Staff will be available for consultation on specific application questions. Please sign up during the Applicant Conference or email rfp@csd.hctx.net to schedule your appointment. There will be no technical assistance given after July 20, 2016.
- Submit no more than three (3) proposals in response to the PY2017 RFP. If submitting more than one proposal, prioritize each application (Priority 1, Priority 2 or Priority 3). Indicate the Priority on the first page of each application.
- Bind only with binder clips. Insert labeled tabs for the sections as outlined in the Application Checklist. Do not use sticky notes as a substitute for tabbed dividers.
- **Submit three (3) hard copies (two originals and one copy) and one electronic PDF bookmarked copy of the application and budget forms on disc or USB drive in their original excel format.** Include scanned copies of all attachments in the electronic submission. Indicate whether the proposal is an original or copy on the first page of each application. All proposals must:
 - ✓ Include all attachments in their entirety as outlined on the Application Checklist.
 - ✓ **Include the job number # 16/0164 on the outside of its sealed envelope. Each copy of the proposal must be in an individually sealed envelope and clearly marked with the job number and be clearly marked as "Original" or "Copy."**
 - ✓ Copies should NOT have any form of binding or be submitted in a folder or binder, but held together with binder clips only.
 - ✓ All originals **must** be signed in **blue** ink.

Proposal Due Date: Monday July 25, 2016 by 2:00 P.M. CDT
Harris County Purchasing Department
1001 Preston, Suite 670 (6th Floor), Houston, Texas 77002
Late proposals will NOT be accepted

Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all participating jurisdictions to submit a long-range strategic planning document called the Consolidated Plan. The PY2013-2017 Consolidated Plan describes the housing and community development needs of Harris County for this five-year period. The document represents Harris County's vision for improving the quality of life in the low-income areas of the County. It also gives specific details on what will be accomplished and how it will be done. It is through the Consolidated Plan that Harris County determines its funding priorities each program year.

The Annual Action Plan (AAP) is the annual update to the Consolidated Plan. The AAP describes resources available, how those resources are to be utilized, including funded projects, and the geographic distribution of those resources. The AAP process has been specifically created to assist in mapping one-year actions for community development and making good use of available federal, state and local resources.

**The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans
can be viewed on our website at www.csd.hctx.net**

Harris County Service Area

All projects, excluding homeless projects, must benefit low-income residents of Harris County's service area, which includes unincorporated Harris County and the 12 cities within the County that have signed cooperative agreements. Presently, the County has cooperative agreements with the following cities: Deer Park, Galena Park, Humble, Jacinto City, Katy, La Porte, Morgan's Point, Seabrook, Shoreacres, South Houston, Tomball, and Webster. Houston, Baytown and Pasadena utilize their own community development resources and are not within the Harris County service area. Homeless projects may be located throughout Harris County, including Houston, Baytown and Pasadena.

Review the included Service Area Map for guidance. If your organization is unsure or cannot determine its project location or service area relative to Harris County's Service Area, please contact CSD staff via phone or email to request a verification by our Planning Section.

PY2013-2017 Consolidated Plan Measurable Objectives

Measurable Objectives are developed following an analysis of existing conditions and an extensive citizen participation process. The following chart illustrates the measurable objectives outlined in the PY2013-2017 Consolidated Plan. Harris County has assigned a priority classification (high, medium, low) to each objective. *High* priority indicates that Harris County will expend entitlement funds on that activity. *Medium* priority indicates that Entitlement funds may be expended on these activities, if available. *Low* priority indicates that minimal funds will be allocated for that particular need.

Table 1: PY2013 – 2017 Consolidated Plan Objectives

PRIORITY	OBJECTIVE
Public Facilities	
M	Objective 1: Neighborhood or Social Service Facilities - Provide improvements and/or construction of 5 neighborhood or social service facilities benefiting 2,000 low- and moderate-income areas by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 20,000 residents of low- and moderate-income communities by promoting the availability of public facilities to meet unmet neighborhood needs. Neighborhood facilities include but are not limited to community centers, multi-purpose centers, and arts and crafts facilities. Social Service Facilities are structures, which provide space for the purpose of providing a needed service to low- and moderate-income persons such as group homes, libraries, and healthcare facilities.
H	Objective 2: Senior Centers - Provide improvements to 3 senior center facilities located throughout the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 1,500 elderly individuals by promoting the availability of facilities to serve unmet needs. Senior centers are facilities that exclusively provide space for services to persons aged 65 years and older.
H	Objective 3: Youth Centers - Provide improvements to 2 youth centers located in the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 1,000 youth by promoting the availability of facilities to serve unmet needs. Youth centers are facilities that primarily provide space for services to persons aged 18 years and younger.
M	Objective 4: Parks - Provide improvements to and/or construction of 5 parks/recreational facilities benefiting low and moderate-income areas by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of 2,500 residents of low and moderate-income communities by promoting the availability of green space and playground areas to serve recreational and leisure needs.
Infrastructure	
H	Objective 1: Street Improvements - Construct and improve 15 miles of roadways benefiting low-income areas of the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 10,000 low- and moderate-income persons.
H	Objective 2: Water/Sewer Improvements - Provide improvements to 90,000 linear feet of water/sewer lines and 4 water/sewer facilities benefiting low- and moderate-income areas within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018, for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 50,000 low- and moderate-income persons. Improvements may include, but are not limited to sewage treatment facilities, rehabilitation of manholes, rehabilitation of water storage tanks, and construction and maintenance of lift and pump stations.
H	Objective 3: Sidewalks/Pathways - Construct and improve 3 miles of sidewalks/pathways benefiting low and moderate-income areas within the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018, for the purpose of improving the living environment and improving the quality of life for 5,000 low- and moderate-income persons.
H	Objective 4: Flood drain improvements - Construct and improve 1,000 feet of flood drains benefiting low and moderate-income areas of the Harris County service area by February 28, 2018 for the purpose of improving the living environment and quality of life of 5,000 low- and moderate-income persons.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Limitations of the RFP

Harris County Community Services Department reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals received. In addition, Harris County reserves the right to negotiate with all qualifying organizations or to cancel in whole or in part an application if deemed in the best interest of Harris County as it relates to the Consolidated Plan. Organizations may participate in negotiations and resubmit any proposed expenses, technicality, or other revisions of their proposal as requested by CSD.

Available Funds

The information below provides an estimate of how funds will be distributed and are subject to change. While Harris County anticipates receiving similar levels of funding annually, these estimates may vary based on allocations from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The following list provides a breakdown of *estimated* available funds during PY2017:

CDBG

General- Estimated at \$1,550,000 for shovel ready projects

- \$1,000,000 for all projects
- \$ 550,000 set-aside for Disaster Recovery Projects*

Harris County reserves the right to reallocate funding between categories to ensure funding of the most qualified projects that best address community needs as reflected in the Consolidated Plan Measurable Objectives.

Eligible Applicants

Non-profit organizations (including faith-based organizations providing services in a secular manner), municipalities and local governments who deliver services to low-income clients within Harris County's service area may apply for funding. All non-profit organizations **must have non-profit status with supporting documentation from the IRS at the time of application** to be considered for funding through Harris County. Harris County will verify debarment status through the System for Award Management (SAM) and the Office of Foreign Assets Control's Specially Designated National and Blocked Persons List. Applicants listed as debarred in either system may not be considered for funding through Harris County.

Tax Policy for all Applicants

Pursuant to TX Local Government Code 262.0276, Harris County requires that all applicants' taxes be current to be eligible for assistance. Whether or not an applicant's taxes are delinquent will be determined by an independent review of the Tax Office records. Applicants who believe a delinquency is reflected in error must contact the Tax Office to correct any errors or discrepancies prior to submitting their proposal in order to ensure that their proposal will be considered. Tax records are available online at the Tax Office website found at www.hctax.net. Prior to submitting a proposal, applicants are encouraged to visit the Tax Office website, set up a portfolio of their accounts and make their own initial determination of the status of their tax accounts. Furthermore, if during the performance of this contract, an applicant's taxes become delinquent, Harris County reserves the right to provide notice to the Auditor or Treasurer pursuant to Texas Local Government Code §154.045.

Related to 2016 Tax Day Flood Disaster Declaration

Disbursement of Funds

Harris County funds are provided to awarded organizations **on a reimbursement basis only**, except in the case of acquisition projects where funding may be provided at closing. This means that funds will be available to the organization **after** it has paid for eligible project costs; however, no costs incurred prior to contract approval may be reimbursed. Harris County requires that organizations provide documentation that they will have at least three months of working capital (see p.17) or have an open line of credit through a financial institution to cover project costs. Working capital must be in the form of liquid assets. Future funding through donations, capital campaigns or other grant sources are not considered working capital. Organizations must follow the applicable standards in OMB Super Circular (2 CFR 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) to receive reimbursement.

Conflict of Interest

The standards in OMB Super Circular (2 CFR 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), provide that no employee, officer, or agent shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when an employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award. All organizations must complete and submit the Conflict of Interest Disclosure section of the application to document any perceived or actual conflict of interest.

Minimum Criteria

The proposed project must:

- Provide services that benefit residents of the Harris County service area, including unincorporated Harris County or one of the 12 cooperative cities
- Meet at least one of the Consolidated Plan Measurable Objectives
- Document meeting one HUD National Objective. If serving low to moderate income populations, the project must document income eligibility, per HUD income guidelines

Disaster Recovery set-aside projects must:

- Show proof (pictures, engineer report) that the project was damaged or failed to function due to April 17-24, 2016 Floods.
- Provide documentation that they have applied for or in the act of applying for FEMA Public Assistance.

Low-income is defined as earning less than 80 percent of the median family income (MFI). The 2016 MFI for the Houston, Texas, Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area is \$69,200 for a family of four. The table below denotes the most recent low-income limits released by HUD. Please note that these limits are updated annually.

Income Levels	Household Size							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Extremely Low Income 0- 30 % of Median	\$14,550	\$16,600	\$20,160	\$24,300	\$28,440	\$32,580	\$36,730	\$40,890
Very Low Income 31 – 51%	\$24,250	\$27,700	\$31,150	\$34,600	\$37,400	\$40,150	\$42,950	\$45,700
Low Income 51 – 80%	\$38,750	\$44,300	\$49,850	\$55,350	\$59,800	\$64,250	\$68,650	\$73,100

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Effective Fri., March 28, 2016)
<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2016/2016summary.odn>

All applicants must complete the application in a professional manner, with all sections completed in their entirety, as well as demonstrate knowledge and experience in the area of the program proposed. Applicants must also retain any required licensing and other qualifications needed to carry out the proposed program (i.e. day care centers, medical clinics, etc.)

Organizations must demonstrate financial viability and capacity to operate a federally-funded program strictly on a reimbursement basis. A financially viable organization is one that is able to:

- Operate for three to six months pending reimbursement without financial hardship
- Demonstrate an existing and consistent cash flow
- Have a separation of duties for personnel, time allocations, etc.

Organizations that are current subrecipients **must be in good standing** with the County (i.e. have no outstanding reporting delinquencies, monitoring findings, or program capacity issues) to be considered for funding.

Fair Housing and Equal Access to Housing

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act), as amended prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transaction, and provides equal access to housing. As required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Harris County must produce and implement a Fair Housing Plan that includes an analysis of Impediments to Housing Choice. Harris County’s Fair Housing Plan can be found on the CSD website at <http://www.csd.hctx.net/PYConsolidatedPlan.aspx>. The Fair Housing Plan sets several strategies to improve housing choice in addition to elimination of housing overt discrimination, these include strategies to improve the quality of community amenities and services. CSD encourages all organizations to review the Harris County Fair Housing Plan and the HUD Fair Housing Planning Guide at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/images/fhpg.pdf> and create strategies for your organization to encourage Fair Housing in Harris County.

On February 3, 2012, HUD published a final rule in the Federal Register entitled Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity. The rule creates a new regulatory provision that generally prohibits considering a person’s marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity (a person’s internal sense of being male or female) in making housing assistance available. Now lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are guaranteed equal access to all housing for all types of housing (affordable, permanent, transitional and emergency) funded through HUD.

Review Criteria

At the time of submission, all applications are reviewed by Harris County staff for eligibility based on a number of threshold factors. While evaluating applications for initial eligibility, reviewers use the following established criteria:

- Does project meet at least one National Objective or applicable program objective?
- Does project address a Measurable Objective outlined in the PY2013-2017 Harris County Consolidated Plan?
- Is project located within the Harris County service area and/or serve Harris County service area residents?
- Does project include the required leverage or eligible match?
- Is the application complete, and is all of the requested information included in the application?
- Has the organization been debarred?
- Is the organization listed with the Office of Foreign Assets (OFAC) as engaging in terrorist activities?

The second phase of the review process addresses the specific projects being proposed. The following criteria are used in making project recommendations:

- Priorities of the Consolidated Plan
- Completeness of proposal
- Diversity of funding base
- Prior history with federal funds
- Availability of working capital
- Need and community impact
- Measurable goals and objectives
- Program administration and operational expenses
- Submission of Schematic Design plans, if a construction project
- Organizational capacity
- Financial capacity
- Duplication of services
- Geographic distribution of projects
- Past and current performance/Risk Assessment
- Projected outcomes
- Reasonable projected costs
- Leveraging or matching funds
- New or renewal project

If applicable:

- Construction work descriptions, shovel ready plans, schedules, photos and cost estimates
- Relocation policy
- Marketing plans
- Other program required information (i.e.: Davis-Bacon Labor policy, Affirmative Marketing Plan, participation of a homeless or previously homeless person in policy and decision making, and Minority Outreach Plan, Lead-Based Paint, etc.)
- HCCSD will use its discretion to select projects that will be visited during the RFP process. Site visits should accurately reflect the descriptions provided in the application.

Monitoring Reviews

Upon funding of an awarded project, monitoring becomes an important component of the Grants Management process. It is critical that Harris County and subrecipients maintain the appropriate documentation to support their activities in accordance with federal guidelines and Harris County Community Services reporting requirements.

In conducting performance reviews, Harris County will primarily rely on information obtained from the subrecipient's performance reports, records from on-site monitoring, and audit reports. Performance monitoring reviews typically result in a formal written report from Harris County summarizing the monitoring review and indicating whether or not the subrecipient was found to be in compliance with all applicable regulations or requirements.

Due to federal requirements related to the expenditure of funds, Harris County will require monthly reporting for all public service projects. A regular review of expenditures will be conducted for public facilities, infrastructure and affordable housing projects to ensure timely use of funds. Delays in the use of funds as compared with the submitted expenditure plan will result in the possible de-obligation of awarded funds.

Recordkeeping

Accurate recordkeeping is crucial to the successful management of grant-funded activities. Insufficient documentation will likely lead to monitoring findings. Please pay careful attention to guidelines outlined within the eligible activities section of the HCCSD website. If it is determined that the supporting documentation is incorrect or insufficient, reimbursement will be denied for costs associated with the ineligible expense.

Access to Records

HUD and the Comptroller General of the United States, or their authorized representatives, in addition to Harris County Staff have the right to access Grantee and subrecipient program records.

Design Criteria

Submission of design plans are critical to understanding the proposed project and allowing for a thorough review. All applicants submitting a construction oriented proposal are required to submit a minimum of Schematic Design unless the previously awarded activity for the program year is to complete design plans. Applications shall include but are not necessarily limited to the following items provided or conducted by the project Architect or Engineer:

1. Visit the Project site to assess the impact of utility availability to the site (water, sewer, electrical power and telephone). Apply for and receive utility data outlet statement from CenterPoint or other electrical service provider.
2. Provide appropriate recommendations for the design of proper drainage and erosion control.
3. Provide soil and foundation (geotechnical testing) investigations or any special surveys and tests which may be required for design.
4. When necessary, field-verify existing conditions, improvements and utilities for continuity or coordination with the Project to be constructed.
5. Identify and secure all design and construction requirements for approval from all governmental/utility agencies and departments having jurisdiction over this project, including but not limited to: TPDES (See Number 5A and 5B below), TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATION (TDLR), HARRIS COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT, CITY OF HOUSTON OR LOCAL CITY, CENTER POINT ENERGY, CORPS OF ENGINEERS, HARRIS COUNTY CENTRAL TECHNOLOGY. Provide contact person(s) and telephone numbers from each agency.
 - a. SWPPP: For projects that will disturb one acre or greater of land (or be part of a larger common plan of development with the potential to disturb one acre or greater) the Architect shall include in specifications, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that is in accordance with state and local regulations. The SWPP shall include the necessary forms

required in obtaining coverage under the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) General Permit TXR150000 for storm water discharges associated with construction activities.

- b. SWQMP: For projects meeting the definition of “new development” or “significant redevelopment” as defined by the local storm water regulations and/or ordinances, the Architect shall develop a Storm Water Quality Management Plan and procure a Storm Water Quality permit from the local regulating authority prior to advertising for bids.
6. The Architect shall prepare for approval by the County, electronic Schematic Design Documents consisting of drawings and other documents illustrating the scale and relationship of Project components in Adobe (pdf) format with mark-ups and comments enabled.
 7. Architectural Design/Documentation responding to program requirements:
 - a. Site plan
 - b. Floor plans at 1/8” – 1’-0” scale for each level
 - c. All elevations at 1/8” = 1’-0” scale
 - d. Two or more building sections at 1/8” = 1’-0” scale
 - e. Outline specifications indicating major systems and material choices for the project
 - f. Other illustrative materials – renderings, models or drawings necessary to adequately present the concept
 - g. All drawing sheets shall be 24” tall x 36” wide maximum or larger as approved by County Engineer
 8. Structural Design/Documentation consisting of recommendations regarding basic structural materials and systems, analyses, and development of conceptual design solutions for:
 - a. Preferred structural system and layout
 - b. Alternative structural systems
 9. Mechanical Design/Documentation consisting of consideration of alternative materials, systems and equipment, and development of conceptual design solutions for:
 - a. Energy source(s)
 - b. Energy conservation
 - c. Heating and ventilating
 - d. Air Conditioning
 - e. Plumbing
 - f. Fire protection
 - g. General space requirements
 10. Electrical Design/Documentation consisting of consideration of alternative systems, recommendation regarding basic electrical materials, systems and equipment, analyses, and development of conceptual design solutions for:
 - a. Power service and distribution
 - b. Lighting
 - c. Telephones
 - d. Computers
 - e. Fire detection and alarms
 - f. Security systems
 - g. Electronic communications
 - h. General space requirements

11. Civil Design/Documentation consisting of a consideration of alternative materials and systems and development of conceptual design solutions for:
 - a. On-site utility systems
 - b. Off-site utility systems
 - c. Fire protection systems
 - d. Drainage systems
 - e. Paving
 - f. Traffic flow, access and impacts
12. Landscape Design/Documentation services consisting of consideration of alternative materials systems and equipment and development of conceptual design solutions for land forms, lawns, and plantings based on program requirements, physical site characteristics, design objectives and environmental determinants.
13. Interior Design/Documentation services consisting of space allocation and utilization plans based on functional relationships, consideration of alternative materials, systems and equipment and development of conceptual design solutions for architectural, mechanical, electrical and equipment requirements in order to establish:
 - a. Partition layouts
 - b. Furniture and equipment layouts
14. Materials Research/Specifications consisting of:
 - a. Identification of potential architectural materials, systems and equipment and their criteria and quality standards consistent with the conceptual design.
 - b. Investigation of availability and suitability of alternative architectural materials, systems and equipment.
Coordination of similar activities of other disciplines.

Application Details and Scoring

CDBG GENERAL	
Section	Points Available
Exhibit A – Application Information	7 points
Exhibit B – Organizational Information	20 points
Exhibit C – Project Information	45 points
Exhibit D – Project Budget Information	28 points
Total	100 points

PROGRAM SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

General Funds

Eligible Activities – Activities funded with CDBG funds must benefit low- and moderate-income persons based on income eligibility or presumed low-income population documentation. Income limits and details regarding presumed populations can be found on the Community Services website at www.csd.hctx.net on the Funding Guidelines page.

For PY2017, Harris County has an estimated \$1,550,000 of CDBG General funds available for shovel ready projects with a minimum of schematic design plans completed (see pages 10-12 for more information). Design projects will not be considered at this time. Eligible activities will include; streets/sidewalks and drainage improvements, public facilities and water/sewer projects. Priority may be given to projects related to Disaster Recovery.

Match/Leverage Requirements - Harris County requires that organizations applying for CDBG General funds to provide a minimum of 20 percent leveraging. Applications will receive favorable scoring based on higher leveraging funds. ***Harris County will not consider applications requesting more than 80 percent funding.***

Homelessness Funding – Any project serving individuals that are homeless are required to provide services in accordance with the HUD Emergency Solutions Grant Program Interim Regulations published in December 2011 and Harris County Standards of Service (found at www.csd.hctx.net/rfq.aspx). In addition, individuals receiving services under these programs must be eligible under the HEARTH Homeless Definition Final Rule released by HUD on December 5, 2011. Grantees must also comply with other requirements for serving homeless individuals, including use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Systems Coordination and participation in coordinated access. These requirements are discussed in greater detail in the ESG program specific requirements section.

PY2017 RFP TIMELINE

Activity	Date
Distribution of Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to mailing list	June 7, 2016
Public Notice regarding Request for Proposal	June 27, July 4 and July 11, 2016
Issue RFP (<i>Available for Download</i>)	June 27, 2016
Applicant Conference (see below for schedule)	July 13, 2016
Technical Assistance Week (<i>By Appointment Only</i>)	July 14-15, 2016 & July 18-20, 2016
RFP DEADLINE (<i>Due to Purchasing Office</i>)	July 25, 2016
Publication of Recommended Projects & Request Final Budgets	October 2016
Commissioners Court Approval and Mailing of Conditional Award Letters	December 2016
Contract Negotiations	December 2017
Program Year Begins	March 1, 2017
Applicant Workshops	
CDBG General Applicant Conference	July 13, 2016 10:00 am- 12 noon

WHAT'S NEW?

The Harris County Community Services Department has made changes to the application process this year, including:

CDBG General

- Harris County has approximately \$1,550,000 of CDBG General funds available for shovel ready projects with a minimum of schematic design plans completed (see pages 10-12). Design projects will not be considered at this time. Pre-awarded projects for PY2017 are not eligible to apply for additional funds.
- Of the \$1,550,000 total, \$550,000 has been set-aside for Disaster Recovery projects. Priority will be given to projects related to Disaster Recovery. Disaster Recovery Projects are those that request funds to repair or reconstruct Infrastructure/Public Facilities that failed to function or was damaged during the April 17 – 24, 2016, Presidential Disaster Declaration period.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

MATCH and LEVERAGE

What is match?

Match is the value of funds and/or resources an organization commits to provide for a proposed project.

What is the difference between match funds and leveraged funds?

- Match funds must be applied specifically for the proposed project. They can be in the form of cash, donated time, goods, services, etc. and will be verified by our Grants Management section during the contract period.
- Leveraging is the use of credit or awarded funds to improve an organization's budget capacity. They are attained after initial funding, serve as a supplement to the project budget, and are in addition to requested funds and matching fund amounts.

What is the required match/leverage for CDBG programs?

While there are no federal match requirements for CDBG, Harris County requires that organizations applying for CDBG General Funds provide a minimum of 20 percent leveraging funds. Applications will receive favorable scoring based on higher leveraging funds. **Harris County will not consider applications requesting more than 80 percent funding.**

What other sources can matching funds come from?

Match funds can come from a variety of sources, such as other service providers, in-kind contributions, special events, fundraisers, and non-federal grants.

Can a commitment letter from an architect be used as in-kind funds?

A commitment letter from an architect or other professional service provider can be used as in-kind funds as long as the commitment letter states what services are to be performed, if the usual fee is a flat rate or hourly basis. If hourly, the letter must include the hourly rate and estimated number of hours to be used toward the proposed project.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Can I submit more than one application?

Yes. Organizations may submit an application for up to three projects; however, each application must be given a priority (Priority 1, Priority 2 or Priority 3).

What is required in the project description?

Project Description should include a basic scope of services for the *request for proposal only*. Applicants should not include detailed historic or programmatic information in this section.

Can I submit applications for more than one source of funds?

Yes. Organizations are allowed to submit up to three (3) applications to any single or combination of sources. *For example, an organization may submit a Priority 1 application to the CDBG Public Services program and a Priority 2 application to the ESG program.*

If my organization received funds last year, will we automatically receive funds this year?

No, each RFP is a competitive process. HUD grants are not designed to be used as permanent funding. Applicants and subrecipients are encouraged to pursue other sources of funding.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Where can I find additional information about CDBG, HOME, & ESG regulations?

CDBG regulations can be found at:

www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/index.cfm

HOME regulations can be found at:

www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home/index.cfm

ESG regulations can be found at:

[www.https://www.hudexchange.info/esg/esg-law-regulations-and-notice](https://www.hudexchange.info/esg/esg-law-regulations-and-notice)

How do I create a PDF with bookmarks?

Use information found here for PDF bookmark guidance:

http://help.adobe.com/en_US/acrobat/X/standard/using/WS58a04a822e3e50102bd615109794195ff-7ccf.w.html

Can I create my own RFP forms?

No, only HCCSD application forms will be accepted.

When will the contract period begin?

Contract periods will be determined during contract negotiations and after the conditional award of funds but will likely begin March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2018. Conditional awards are issued upon Commissioners Court approval.

Does a new organization need a financial audit?

A new organization does not need a financial audit unless currently managing more than \$750,000 in federal funds, but must submit a certified financial statement completed by an independent certified public accountant (CPA).

What type of documents may be used as working capital documentation?

Any of the following may be used as proof of your organization's working capital:

- A letter from your financial institution on letterhead, stating your line of credit amount within the text
- At least 3 months of account statements from your financial institution
- If the non-profit has a thrift shop, they may submit a copy of the IRS 990 or 990-T form as proof of the thrift shops profits.

Capital documentation must be a demonstration of **liquid assets** covering at least 90 days of expenses for the organization. Grants from other organizations or private donations are not eligible as working capital.

Does a private, non-profit applying for funds need a 501(c) (3)?

Yes, all private non-profits must have their 501(c) (3) or 501(c) (4) status from the Internal Revenue Service to be eligible for funding. Documentation of 501(c) (3) or 501(c) (4) status must be included in each proposal.

Can a for-profit collaborate with an existing 501(c) (3)?

Yes, organizations may collaborate with an existing 501(c) (3) or 501(c) (4), but the lead applicant must be a 501(c) (3) or 501(c) (4) organization.

What is a DUNS number?

A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number, for each physical location of your business. DUNS Number assignment is FREE and can be obtained at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Can the Board of Directors receive pay from the entitlement funds?

No, the Board of Directors cannot be paid with federal entitlement funds. Only personnel involved in the daily operations and program-related work may be compensated.

Where can I get a copy of the Consolidated Plan?

The Consolidated Plan may be downloaded at http://www.csd.hctx.net/pr_consolidatedplan.aspx.

Where can I get a copy of prior year Annual Action Plans?

Annual Action Plans may be downloaded at http://www.csd.hctx.net/pr_annualactionplan.aspx.

Where can I get a copy of the OMB circulars?

The OMB circulars may be downloaded from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's web site at www.whitehouse.gov/omb.

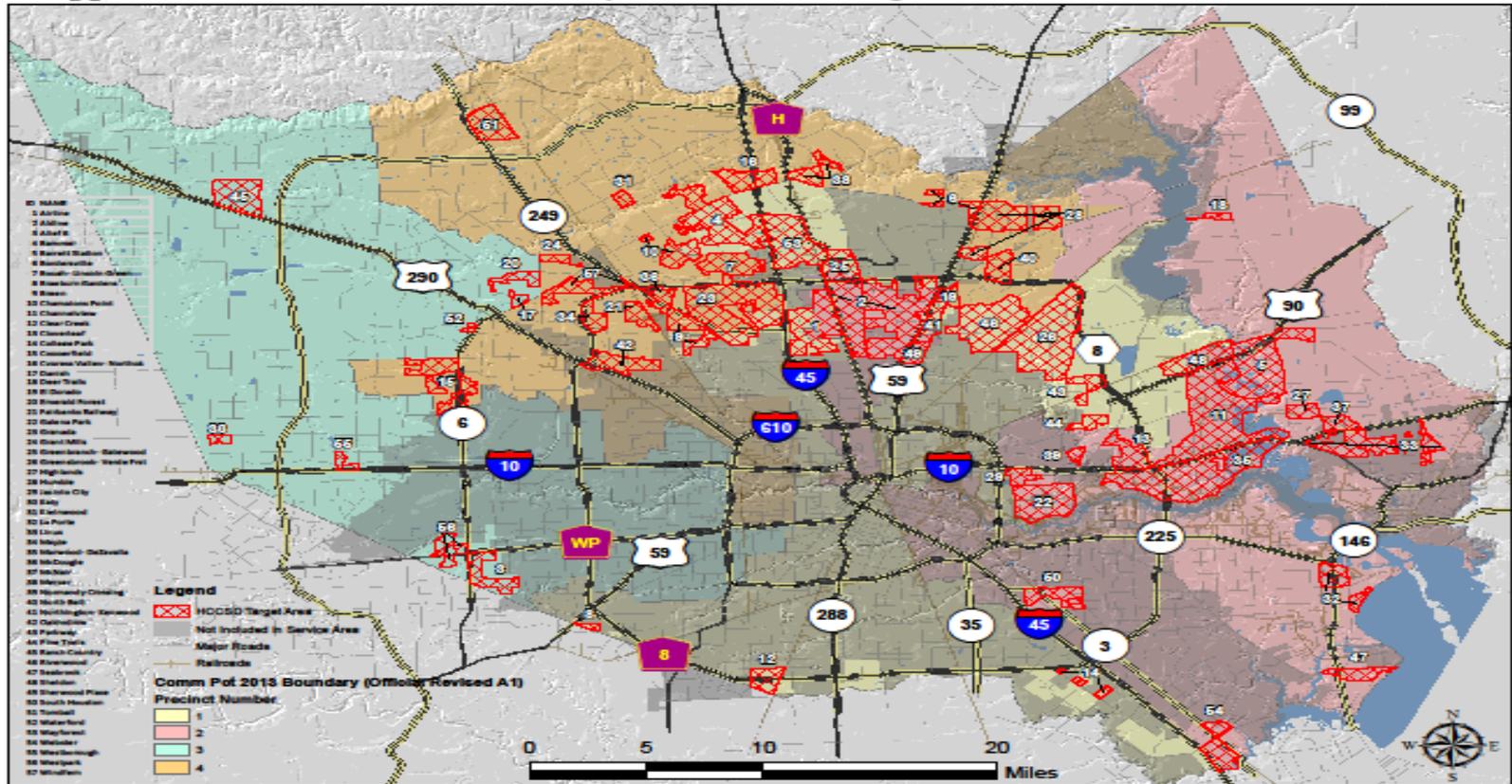
If I have questions or need help, who do I contact?

You may contact the Development staff at (713) 578-2000 or by email at rfp@csd.hctx.net.

Attachment A



Harris County Service and Target Areas 2015



Note: Service Area includes 12 Cooperative Cities: Deer Park, Galena Park, Humble, Jacinto City, Katy, La Porte, Morgan's Point, Seabrook, Shoreacres, South Houston, Tomball, and Webster

To view Map go to the following link: http://www.harriscountytexas.gov/CmpDocuments/103/Target%20Area%20Maps/HC_SERVICE_AND_TARGET_AREAS_2015_Red_Hatch.pdf