

CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Memorandum

To: Michael Lester, Chair, Planning Board, City of Central Falls

From: Peter Friedrichs, Director, Planning + Economic Development, City of Central Falls

Date: 9/21/2015

Re: CDBG PY2015 Comprehensive Plan and State Land Use Plan Compliance

This document serves to provide citations demonstrating Program Year 2015 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) conformance with the Central Falls Comprehensive Plan and State Guide Plan:

1. City Parks Safety and Security

This project closely aligns with State Goal 5, “promote the preservation of the open space and recreational resources” and corresponding Municipal Goal “preserve, maintain and upgrade the City’s recreational facilities,” as well as Municipal Policy 1 “Continue to explore the possibilities of expanding the City’s outdoor recreation facility to serve the needs of the multicultural population.” State Goal 6, Municipal Policy 2 is a directive ““Expand the City’s recreation and open space resources, utilizing State and Federal funds received through grants and appropriations.”

2. Nuisance Property Enforcement

This epitomizes State Goal 3, Municipal Policy 1: “Expand housing code enforcement.”

3. Closing Cost Assistance

State Goal 3 is “To promote a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups, which recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the State,” which along with Municipal Goal 3: “Encourage greater community involvement in neighborhood renewal,” closely aligns with the intent of this project. Municipal Policy 3 specifically prescribes efforts such as this: “Work with non-profit housing development corporations.”

4. Home Ownership Program

The same aspects of the Comprehensive Plan that apply to Closing Cost Assistance are pertinent for the Home Ownership Program.

5. Youth Enrichment Program

The Youth Enrichment Program has direct correlation with State Goal 2, “To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the State,” and Municipal Policy 8, “Expand the service sector of the City’s economy.” It also provides activity for State Goal 5, Municipal Goal: “To preserve, maintain, and upgrade the City’s recreational facilities.”

6. Bicycle Master Plan

This project is a critical component of State Goal 1: “To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities.” Corresponding Municipal Policy 2 is also applicable: “Continue to develop riverfront recreational opportunities.”

7. Neighborhood Health Station

The Neighborhood Health station is a broad project aligning to multiple elements of the Comprehensive Plan: State Goal 5, Municipal Goal “To preserve, maintain and upgrade the City’s recreational facilities;” State Goal 6, Municipal Goal 2 “Promote redevelopment of blighted areas;” Municipal Policy 2 “Expand the City’s recreation and open space resources, utilizing State and Federal funds received through grants and appropriations.”

8. Workforce Training Equipment

Workforce Training Equipment has direct correlation with State Goal 2, “To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the State,” and Municipal Goal 3 “Use the existing State and Federal resources to provide assistance to employees and employers,” as well as Policies 4 “participate with area communities in the development of a regional economic development strategy,” 6 “Work with local social service agencies to expand daycare and job training programs, and 8 “Expand the service sector of the City’s economy.”

9. Workplace ESOL Classes

Workforce ESOL Classes has direct correlation with State Goal 2, “To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the State,” and Municipal Goal 1 “Establish self-help organizations within the business community,” and 3 “Encourage small business development,” as well as Policies 4 “participate with area communities in the development of a regional economic development strategy,” 6 “Work with local social service agencies to expand daycare and job training programs, and 8 “Expand the service sector of the City’s economy.”

10. Tenant Education Curriculum

State Goal 3 is “To promote a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups, which recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the State,” which along with Municipal Goal 3: “Encourage greater community involvement in neighborhood renewal,” closely aligns with the intent of this project.

11. Housing Rehabilitation

This epitomizes State Goal 3, Municipal Goal 1: “Improve the existing housing stock” and Policy 2 “Continue municipal housing rehabilitation programs.” It also aligns with Goal 3 “Encourage greater community involvement in neighborhood renewal” and Policy 3 “Work with non-profit housing development corporations.”

12. Our Safe Home

This project aligns with State Goal 3 “To promote a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups, which recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the State.”

13. Project Renew

This project aligns with State Goal 2, Municipal Goal 1 “Establish self-help organizations within the business community” and 4 “Continue the Dexter Street Revitalization Initiative begun in 1997.” State Goal 3, Municipal Goal 3 is also relevant “Encourage greater community involvement in neighborhood renewal.”

14. Pawtucket Soup Kitchen

This project aligns with State Goal 2, Municipal Policy 4 “Participate with area communities in the development of a regional economic development strategy.”

I have attached abstract descriptions of the proposed activities for the City’s Program Year 2015 Community Development Block Grant for review and general comment by the Planning Board.

6. Certification of Local Planning Board

The following certification must be completed and submitted as part of the final application:

I hereby certify that, at a meeting held on October 2, 2105 at 6:00 PM, the Planning Board of the City of Central Falls reviewed the proposals contained in this application and has been given opportunity to comment on said proposals. The Planning Board certifies that to the best of its knowledge, the activities proposed are not in conflict with the general policies set forth in the Comprehensive Community Plan of the City of Central Falls.

Date: October 2, 2015

Signature:

Title: Chair, Planning Board

7. Local Prioritization of Project Proposals (do not include local administration).

Project Priority	Project Title	Amount Requested	National Objective			Pre-Agreement Consideration?
			LMI	SB	UN	
1	City Parks Safety and Security	\$ 90,000.00	X			N
2	Nuisance Property Enforcement	\$ 25,000.00	X			N
3	Closing Cost Assistance	\$ 50,000.00	X			N
4	Home Ownership Program	\$ 25,000.00	X			N
5	Youth Enrichment Program	\$ 99,166.66	X			N
6	Bicycle Master Plan	\$ 10,000.00	X			N
7	Neighborhood Health Station	\$ 40,000.00	X			N
8	Workforce Training Equipment	\$ 10,000.00	X			N
9	Workplace ESOL Classes	\$ 10,000.00	X			N
10	Tenant Education Curriculum	\$ 55,000.00	X			N
11	Housing Rehabilitation	\$ 0.00	X			N
12	Our Safe Home	\$ 6,666.67	X			N
13	Project RENEW	\$ 10,000.00	X			N
14	Pawtucket Soup Kitchen	\$ 5,000.00	X			N
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8. Project Proposal Abstracts (do not include local administration). For each activity, provide a project abstract. Be sure to specify how the CDBG funds will be used, who/how many will benefit, the need for the activity, other funding, and any other information that will assist the CDBG Committee in their review. 10 line limit. The space for each abstract will expand as needed to contain inserted text.

Project Priority	Project Title	Amount Requested	
1	City Parks Safety and Security	\$ 90,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>These funds will enable the City to undergo much-needed upgrades to its water and electrical utilities in City parks throughout the City. As a result of the negotiated sale of its water system during the bankruptcy, the City is no longer able to utilize water service in its park without backflow preventers. This left all of the park water features dry this past summer, preventing residents from cooling down in their parks. Additionally, many of our parks are without electrical service and lighting, making them unable to be utilized for events critical to the diverse communities of the City and unlit at night, creating dangerous harbors for vagrants. These parks are critical community assets currently unable to be used to their full potential.</p>		
2	Nuisance Property Enforcement	\$ 25,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Following the national housing crash and Great Recession and the City's own bankruptcy, the quality of the housing stock in the city declined dramatically. Consequently, myriad Minimum Housing Code issues exist throughout the City, to the health and safety of our residents. The Mayor has created a Nuisance Property Task Force to address this issue, however the City is limited in its ability to send out officials to enforce the Code for delinquent properties, due to the limited availability of part-time staff. This funding would allow for additional enforcement officers to address the dozens of properties that are not in compliance with the Minimum Housing Code and improve the health, safety, and well-being of residents across our community. This will support the \$100,000 the city included in its 2015 budget for the Task Force and the recently created Assistant Director for Code Enforcement.</p>		
3	Closing Cost Assistance	\$ 50,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>This program, administered by Pawtucket-Central Falls Development, will provide gap financing for homebuyers in the City. Federal Housing Authority and Rhode Island Housing programs provide excellent opportunities for local homebuyers, but sometimes gaps still exist, particularly for residents of limited means. This project would target low and moderate income persons earning less than 80% AMI and would consist of deferred loans that would be forgivable over time. We anticipate we will be able to issue up to 20 loans in the first year of this program that will result in homeownership that would not otherwise be possible.</p>		
4	Home Ownership Program	\$ 25,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>This program would create a bilingual homebuyer education course provided by our local Community Development Corporation, Pawtucket-Central Falls Development (PCF) to expand already available homebuyer courses. This program would provide education to residents interested in owning their own home and stabilizing our neighborhoods. Data has shown that educated homebuyers are less likely to experience foreclosure. This program expects to serve 150 residents in its first year. Additional costs will be covered by PCF's developer fees.</p>		
5	Youth Enrichment Program	\$ 99,166.66	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Youth are the future of Central Falls. This program will take advantage of existing school facilities, in effect, extending the school day and keeping kids off the streets to provide after school</p>		

	<p>opportunities to expand the horizons of our youth. Saturday activities are planned as well. Funding will support a staff member to coordinate the program and activities with the Center for Dynamic Learning and the Urban Debate League (including a match from the school system). This will be matched by federal meals program funding, city funds for renovations to control building access and expanded janitorial services. We anticipate this program will serve approximately 200 students six days a week September-June. Currently there are no public reaction opportunities outside of the summer. We have a very successful Child and Adult Food Care Program June-August.</p>		
6	Bicycle Master Plan	\$ 10,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>As a community of nearly 20,000 within 1.4 square miles and one in which over ¼ of households do not have access to a car, bicycling provides an attractive (and sometimes necessary) mode of transportation to our residents. This planning activity will create a Bicycle Master Plan for the city, detailing the best streets for upgraded bicycle infrastructure and an understanding of associated costs. This complements existing efforts within the city, including recently installed bicycle repair centers, the Recycle-A-Bike program, and a \$10,000 grant from Citizens Bank's Growing Community Initiative for a protected bike lane. The City has limited capacity to assist the recipient of the grant without undergoing a Bicycle Master Plan to understand the idea location and feasibility of a protected bike lane.</p>		
7	Neighborhood Health Station	\$ 40,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>The City has partnered with former Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, Dr. Michael Fine, to create a first-of-its-kind innovation in healthcare. The nation's first Neighborhood Health Station, which will be housed in Rhode Island's most socioeconomically challenged community, Central Falls, will address two pressing healthcare issues facing thousands of Rhode Islanders in communities throughout the state: 1) Lack of access to quality healthcare, wellness and physical fitness options in a centralized, community-minded setting; and, 2) Escalating healthcare costs and delivery inefficiencies. CDBG monies will provide seed funding for a community health worker to expand the critical partnerships necessary to implement this community resource. The City is actively pursuing additional funding from the public and private sectors, as well as key stakeholders, to supplement this application.</p>		
8	Workforce Training Equipment	\$ 10,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Blackstone Valley Community Action Program is launching a workforce training initiative to train un-and under-employed adults in fields in need of workers. This funding would provide for the purchase of fixtures for a commercial kitchen to provide a location for training for culinary skills. Hospitality and Tourism has been identified as a growing job sector by the State of Rhode Island. This field has multiple factors that provide a pathway to the middle class, including a low need for English fluency, low need for education level, and forgiveness for previous criminal activity. This program is targeting students in the Central Falls School District who are in danger of not graduating. Community Service Block Grant funds, Pawtucket CDBG funds, and Individual Training Accounts are being used to supplement Central Falls CDBG funds. The program expects to serve at least 60 trainees in its first year.</p>		
9	Workplace ESOL Classes	\$ 10,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Progreso Latino (PL) will provide workplace-centered English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to Central Falls' residents throughout the grant period. There is an extremely high demand for adult English language education. PL maintains a waiting list of 200 students year-round. PL will place 40 students into the appropriate level of English language instruction and</p>		

	<p>help them develop individualized education plans to reach their career and life goals. ESOL students will benefit from a system of personalized academic supports, including one-on-one tutoring, interactive educational software programs in PL's computer laboratory and access to PL's job club and work supports programming. The ESOL courses will offer 80-90 hours of instruction per trimester, 75% of participants will complete their module, and that 55-60% will pass from one level to the next.</p>		
10	Tenant Education Curriculum	\$ 55,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>The Housing Network of Rhode Island proposes to develop and implement a statewide Tenant Education curriculum to be targeted at low income renters at or below 80% of Area Median Income. In addition to offering this program to "fair market" tenants, it is our intent to leverage a number of our partnerships to target specific populations such as persons transitioning out of the homeless system into transitional and permanent affordable housing as well as folks who are currently on affordable housing waitlists across the state. Over a series of 8-10 classes, topics covered will include life skill development, resource development, how to select a rental unit, the rental process, fair housing, Landlord Tenant Act, and the eviction process. The Housing Network of Rhode Island's \$55,000 PY15 CDBG request seeks to leverage a NeighborWorks America grant for \$120,000 that was recently awarded. The Housing Network of Rhode Island plans to serve at least 300 low income renters within the CDBG program year through this program.</p>		
11	Housing Rehabilitation	\$ 0.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>The City has an aging housing stock of affordable housing units, owned by Central Falls Housing Authority, Central Falls Affordable Housing Corporation, Pawtucket-Central Falls Development Corporation, and private organizations. In order to maintain their eligibility as affordable units and for the safety and security of their occupants, many are in need of updating. The City received \$200,000 for the rehabilitation of affordable housing units in PY2014. The City requests to hold this item in its PY2015 award and request funding for individual projects as they are identified and PY2014 funds are exhausted.</p>		
12	Our Safe Home	\$ 6,666.67	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Our Safe Home is designed to provide safety for families while providing comprehensive case management services in order to help families secure and maintain permanent housing. We provide a homelike setting in a sensitive and caring environment. Services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure staff availability to families. Families are provided with basic needs such as: a safe home, food, clothing, linens and personal items. Our agency is currently the only agency in the Blackstone Valley area of Rhode Island that provides specialized shelter services to victims of domestic violence. In 2014, emergency shelter was provided to 101 women and their children. Additionally, 5,189 shelter nights were provided. If funding is received, it will be utilized to support the expenses associated with our Safe Home..</p>		
13	Project RENEW	\$ 10,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	<p>Project RENEW has helped create dramatic decreases in prostitution arrests in the cities of Central Falls and Pawtucket over the past nine years, and has enabled the Central Falls Police, along with Pawtucket Central Falls Development Corporation (PCFDC), to win the national Metlife Community Police Partnership award twice in a six year span (2006, 2011). In 2013 the project expanded to include a site in Providence, at Amos House, to serve a greater number of high risk women. However, this request strictly funds a portion of the case manager position based at PCFDC, who provides intensive case management, basic needs, referrals, and HIV prevention and testing services for over 100 high-risk Central Falls/Pawtucket women every year.</p>		

	Her position is a critical resource for the Central Falls police, who have testified many times on the impact of the project on not only the women themselves, but for the community safety and quality of life of the city as a whole.		
14	Pawtucket Soup Kitchen	\$ 5,000.00	Insert abstract below:
Abstract >	The Pawtucket Soup Kitchen serves hungry residents of Pawtucket and Central Falls. This funding will support food and program supply costs. In 2014, Pawtucket Soup Kitchen provided 30,500 unduplicated meals.		
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