

# Massachusetts FY 2019 CDBG Program Application

Information on Proposed Grant Application and Existing Grants & Sustainable Development Principles  
City of Amesbury - Office of Community and Economic Development



Public Hearing - February 5, 2019 - 6:00 PM - City Hall Amesbury

## General Information

Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (MCDBG) Program grants are provided through Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended by the U.S. Congress. For the Federal Fiscal Year 2019 application cycle, the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is making approximately \$22.3 million in funding available to non-entitlement Massachusetts communities through its Community Development Fund (CDF) program. This year, using HUD Low-Moderate-Income community percentages, DHCD assigned communities a LMI score based on a scale of one to ten, with a score of 10 representing the highest need. The City of Amesbury has a score of 6 out of 10.

The following are some of the types of eligible activities for which MCDBG Program funding is most frequently used:

- Planning
- Housing rehabilitation (private or public) and other housing activities
- Projects to rehabilitate and stabilize existing neighborhoods, commercial areas and downtowns
- Infrastructure
- Construction and/or rehabilitation of community facilities
- Handicapped accessibility improvements and
- Public social services

All activities using CDBG funds must meet one of the following three National Objectives:

- Provide benefit to low- and moderate-income persons;
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight;
- Meet a critical community need (defined as an unanticipated event such as a disaster).

## Status of Current MCDBG Program Grants

Amesbury currently has one open grant from FY 2016. The FY 2016 CDF regional grant with Merrimac included three activities: a regional housing rehabilitation pro-



gram, assistance to Our Neighbors Table and assistance to Pettengill House. The goal of the housing rehabilitation program was to rehabilitate 21 units of housing – 12 units in Amesbury and 9 units in Merrimac. All activities under the FY 2016 grant have been completed. The final quarterly report has been submitted and closeout should be completed this month. The FY 2016 grant met its program goal of rehabilitating 21 units of housing occupied by low or moderate income families, across two communities, and provided social service assistance to nearly 700 Amesbury residents.

## Proposed FY19 MCDBG Program Grant

Amesbury is proposing to submit a FY19 Community Development Fund grant application on its own that will include a Housing Rehabilitation Program, an architectural barrier removal project at City Hall and up to three social service programs. Amesbury's maximum possible CDF grant award as a solo community is \$800,000. The three social service programs currently under consideration for inclusion in the application are: Our Neighbors Table, Pettengill House and the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center.



- **Our Neighbors Table** has statistically met the food security needs of Amesbury, and last year served 1 out of 8 residents. In 2018, Our Neighbors Table grocery programs received 14,325 visits from Amesbury residents in need of





food assistance. Nearly all of Our Neighbors Table guests live at or below 200% of the poverty level. Our Neighbors Table expects to provide more than 654,000 meals to over 2,100 Amesbury residents in 2019.

- **The Pettengill House Inc.,** is a community social service agency that provides financial support to identified at-risk, low income and underserved elders, children and families within the City of Amesbury. As part of this proposal Pettengill House will partner with the City of Amesbury to provide financial supports to improve family stabilization and provide basic needs to identified individuals, children and families. Of the nine communities which Pettengill House supports Amesbury residents comprise 40% of the 3,089 clients, 1,231 individuals (604 adults 101 elders and 526 children) 567 of whom are deemed homeless, without permanent housing 144 individuals in Amesbury (108 adults and 36 children).



- **The Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center** provides support services, counseling and emergency financial assistance to victims of domestic abuse. The Geiger Crisis Center brings together the police department, District Attorney's Office, probation, parole and corrections departments to intervene in the most dangerous domestic violence situations to ensure the safety of victims. Survivors residing in the city of Amesbury have consistently utilized the most domestic violence

services. In FY18, JGCC provided 1,813 direct services to 163 adults 31 children from Amesbury alone; also providing over \$10,000 in emergency financial assistance. Amesbury survivors make up 25% of all survivors from Essex County who received domestic violence services. The direct services provided include advocacy, counseling and legal assistance.

### Community Development Strategy

The DHCD has removed the Community Development Strategy (CDS) from its application process but it should be noted that all of the activities proposed for inclusion in this grant application meet priority goals of the City's CDS.

### Sustainable Development Principles

The Massachusetts' Office of Commonwealth Development has developed sustainable development principles that it promotes as part of state policy to promote Smart Growth. Applications for many of the Commonwealth's assistance programs, including the CDBG program, are evaluated for their consistency with the ten sustainable development principles, summarized here:

1. Concentrate Development and Mix Uses
2. Advance Equity
3. Make Efficient Decisions
4. Protect Land and Ecosystems
5. Use Natural Resources Wisely
6. Expand Housing Opportunities
7. Provide Transportation Choice
8. Increase Job and Business Opportunities
9. Promote Clean Energy
10. Plan Regionally

To receive MCDBG funding, a proposed project must be consistent with these principles. Both the proposed housing rehabilitation program and architectural barrier removal project are in compliance with the State's Sustainable Development Principles. This requirement is not applicable to social service programs.