



PY 2016 Ohio Consolidated Plan Residential Public Infrastructure Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: September 30, 2015

Location of Meeting: Creekside Conference and Events Center in Gahanna, Ohio

Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Erin Begue
Joyce Gray
Michelle Hyer
Craig Knapke
Dennis Miller
Joy Padgett
Jessie Powers
Jeannette Wierzbicki
A.C. Wiethe

Others in Attendance:

Michelle Hister
Melissa Zoller

Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) Employees:

Ben Kepple
Tim Leasure
Mary Oakley
DJ Pasquariello
Josh Roth

The following is a summary of the major topics discussed during the meeting

Introduction

- Timothy Leasure, Office of Community Development (OCD) Community Development Analyst, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
- Introductions were made

The following is a summary of the discussion that took place at the meeting:

Program Update

- The Residential Public Infrastructure Program sections from the PY 2013 and PY 2014 Ohio Consolidated Plan Annual Performance Reports were distributed to the committee members for review. ODSA awarded 18 grants in PY 2013 totaling \$8,704,400 and 18 grants in PY 2014 totaling \$7,016,100.
- There is \$7.89 million available for PY 2015. Two projects have been approved totaling \$745,200. One application is currently under review. Demand for grant funds is lower than in previous years. Committee members cited two reasons for decreased demand. Projects are increasingly expensive as the remaining unserved areas are remote with small populations. Communities are also more dependent on income



surveys to qualify service areas using the required American Community Survey data. OCD continues to receive inquiries about funding availability, and demand is expected to increase.

Planning

Community Development Implementation Strategy

- OCD presented a summary of the Community Development Implementation Strategy (CDIS) submissions received with the PY 2015 Community Development Program applications. All Community Development Allocation communities were required to submit a CDIS submission. Local participation levels varied. Also, not all communities appeared to identify water or sanitary sewer needs or coordinate with Residential Public Infrastructure Program administrators. OCD expects greater coordination in the future and will develop guidance based on best practices identified.

American Community Survey (ACS)

- Low- and moderate-income (LMI) numbers from the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) Low- and Moderate Income Summary Data (LMISD) were used to qualify service areas for the PY 2014 and PY 2015 Residential Public Infrastructure Programs. ACS data is only available at the place or census tract/block group level and does not include census tracts or block groups within defined cities, villages, and townships.

Qualifying Projects under the Area Benefit LMI National Objective

- There are two methods applicants can use to qualify service areas; ACS data and income surveys. PY 2014 was the last year in which ACS data and survey data could be combined to determine the percentage of low- and moderate-income persons in a service area. Committee members expressed dissatisfaction with the ACS data and discussed the cost and time required to conduct income surveys. Committee members requested OCD review the income survey sample size requirements and period for which an income survey is valid.

Application Documents

- The PY 2015 Residential Public Infrastructure Program application is available in OCEAN. A Letter of Interest must be submitted to OCD in order to gain access to apply. The Letter of Interest must include:
 - a brief description of the proposed project and project area;
 - a summary of other funds committed to the project;
 - a copy of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) Permit to Install or Plan Approval, if applicable;
 - a brief description of the community's current water and wastewater systems;
 - the community's Chief Elected Official's name, address, telephone number and email address of; and
 - the community grant writer's name, address, telephone number and email address .
- Only one community has submitted an application in OCEAN for PY 2015, so the committee was unable to provide feedback on the process or application documents.



PY 2016 Residential Public Infrastructure Program Discussion

Eligible Applicants

- Non-entitlement counties, cities and villages are currently eligible to apply for Residential Public Infrastructure Program funding. OCD discussed eliminating villages as eligible applicants. This would require villages to apply through their county of jurisdiction to access grant funds. The discussion resulted in mixed opinions from the committee members. Some committee members felt the impact would be minimal since counties can apply on the behalf of villages and use memorandums of understanding to administer the funds. Other members thought this requirement would complicate program administration by involving another governmental unit and require additional coordination with other funding sources awarded directly to villages. Committee members also expressed concern that short-staffed county grantees would not be able or willing to take on additional grants on behalf of villages.

Administrative Capacity

- Including administrative capacity in the grant rating criteria was discussed. Mandatory training for administrators and public officials was required previously. Committee members supported additional training.

Minimum Grant Amount

- The minimum grant request, beginning with PY 2016, will be \$100,000. Projects with grant requests less than \$100,000 will be eligible for application under the Community Development Critical Infrastructure Program.

Memorandum of Understanding

- OCD recognizes executed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) signify a commitment of grant funds and, therefore, cannot be an application requirement. OCD will accept a draft MOU as an attachment to the application. OCD will evaluate the draft agreements for compliance during application review. OCD will approve the draft prior to grant agreement issuance or will add a special condition to the grant agreement.

Collaboration and Regionalization

- OCD discussed collaboration, such as shared billing or maintenance services, as a component of regionalization scoring. Applicants that collaborated would receive less than the full point value awarded for regionalization. However, there was not any support from the committee. Regionalization and collaboration will continue to be encouraged whenever feasible. Regionalization will continue to be scored during application review.

Sustainability

- OCD is reviewing a project's service area population and age to better understand demographics and the long-term project viability. This information is not being used currently to score applications. The committee also discussed asset management and long-term planning, and the challenges facing small, rural communities.

Fair Housing

- Committee members were reminded that the Residential Public Infrastructure Program is federally funded and subject to fair housing requirements. Village and non-direct Community Development Program cities were encouraged to collaborate with their county of jurisdiction to ensure requirements are fulfilled.



Training and Wrap-Up

- The committee members were notified of the Housing Training Conference from November 4-6, 2015, at the Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron, Ohio. The Community Development Training Conference will be held at the same location November 16-18, 2016.
- The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.