

FY 2017
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)
“DRAFT ACTION PLAN”
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP, PA

Prepared For:
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP
3608 West 26th Street
Erie, PA 16506

Prepared By:
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PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

April 5 to May 4, 2017

FINAL PUBLIC HEARING

April 27, 2017

FY 2017 CDBG “DRAFT ACTION PLAN” MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP, PA

This document represents Millcreek Township’s “Draft” CDBG Action Plan for FY 2017. The plan identifies the amount of CDBG funds the Township is expected to receive/apply for from HUD and how the Township proposes to use the grant monies to address its housing and community development needs as identified in the Strategic Plan Summary (see EXHIBIT 1) of its Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP) which covers FY’s 2013 through FY 2017.

Pursuant to the Township’s Citizen Participation Plan, this “Draft Action Plan” is being made available for public review and comment for a thirty (30) day period – April 5 through May 4, 2017 - at the following locations:

- Millcreek Township Municipal Building, 3608 West 2th Street, Erie, PA 16506
- Erie County Department of Planning, 150 East Front Street, Suite 300, Erie, PA 16057
- Millcreek Township website- www.millcreektownship.com/

Any comments, concerns, or questions regarding this Draft Plan should be directed to:

Mr. Joseph T. Berdis, CDBG Administrator
Erie County Department of Planning
150 East Front Street, Suite 300, Erie, PA 16507
jberdis@eriecountypa.gov

A final public hearing to take comment on Township’s proposed use of its FY 2017 funds has been scheduled for 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 27, 2017 in the Assembly Room of the Millcreek Township Municipal Building, 3608 West 26th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania 16506. The Township’s “Final” Action Plan (funding application) will be submitted to HUD by May 19 with a program start date of July 1, 2017.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Millcreek Township is entitled to apply for and receive an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to the provisions of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Grant of 1974, as amended. It is not entitled to receive HOME, ESG or HOPWA funding. The Township became a HUD entitlement municipality in 1998 when it surpassed 50,000 in population and since then has received approximately \$5 million in CDBG funding (see EXHIBIT 2). The Township’s CDBG program is administered by the Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP). **Of note, it is still unknown what the FY 2017 allocation will be, but it is anticipated to be the same amount as last year’s grant which was \$234,020.**

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

CDBG funds can be used to undertake a wide array of activities which include, but are not limited to:

- water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer construction
- street rehabilitation/reconstruction
- sidewalk and curb replacement including installation of curb-cut ramps for ADA accessibility
- park/recreation improvements
- removal of architectural barriers to provide handicapped accessibility
- single family housing rehabilitation
- homeownership assistance
- fair housing activities
- public services (*not to exceed 15% of the grant allocation*)
- administration- general and planning (*not to exceed 20% of the grant allocation*)

NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Each “Eligible” activity must meet one (1) of the following three (3) “National Objectives”:

- ✓ Principally benefit low-to-moderate income persons
- ✓ Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight
- ✓ Meet a community development need having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community and other financial resources are not available to meet the need

Of the three (3) objectives, the *primary objective* is to Principally Benefit Low- to-Moderate Income (LMI) persons and at least 70% of the grant monies must go towards this effort. A LMI person is one whose income is 80% of the area’s median income (AMI). The criteria for how an activity may be considered to benefit Low-to-Moderate Income persons can generally be categorized as follows:

Low Mod Area Benefit (LMA) – An “area benefit” activity is one that benefits all residents in a particular area, where at least 51% of the residents are LMI persons. Typical area benefit activities include street rehabilitation, water and sewer line replacement, and curb/sidewalk replacement. HUD permits an exception to the 51% LMI area benefit requirement for entitlement communities that have few, if any, concentrations of LMI persons. These communities are allowed to use a percentage less than 51% to qualify activities under the LMI Benefit category. Millcreek Township falls under this “exception criteria” and its LMI threshold is 37.18%. Concentrations of LMI persons can be determined by HUD census data (see attached map) or income surveys.

Low Mod Limited Clientele (LMC) – LMC generally refers to a clientele that are *presumed by HUD to be principally low-to-moderate income persons*. This presumption covers abused children, battered spouses, elderly persons, severely disabled adults, homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with AIDS and migrant farm workers. Activities that would be expected to qualify under the LMI Limited Clientele category include: installation of ADA curb-cut ramps; construction of a senior center; and public services for the homeless and elderly.

Low Mod Housing Activities (LMH) - The “Housing” category of LMI National Objective qualifies activities that are undertaken for the purpose of providing or improving permanent residential structures which, upon completion, will be occupied by LMI households. The most common LMH activity is owner-occupied single family housing rehabilitation

FY 2017 PROCESS

Each fiscal year agencies, groups and organizations which assist residents of Millcreek are provided an opportunity to request a share of the CDBG funding. Application packets were mailed out by the ECDP on February 3, 2017 to several of these groups and a public hearing was held on February 16, 2017 to explain the program and solicit input on potential projects. The last day to submit a project/funding request was March 10, 2017. The list below identifies the applicants, proposed projects /funding requests, and how the Township proposes to utilize its funding which as previously mentioned is anticipated to be **\$234,020**.

APPLICANT	PROJECT	FUNDING REQUEST	PROPOSED FUNDING
Millcreek Twp. Eng. Dept.	Sidewalk Accessibility Project – Phase VI	\$170,000	\$177,216
Erie Redevelopment Auth.	Single Family Housing Rehabilitation Project	\$75,000	\$0
Erie Center on Health & Aging, Inc.	Regional Senior Center Operational Support Project	\$10,000	\$10,000
-	<i>Set aside</i> for General Program Administration	\$30,000	\$30,000
-	<i>Set aside</i> for Planning Administration to prepare a new Five Year Consolidated Plan covering FY’s 2018-2022 as well as the Year 1 Action Plan for FY 2018.	\$16,804	\$16,804
TOTAL		\$309,020	\$234,020

A brief description of the projects/activities proposed to be funded follows:

SIDEWALK ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT- PHASE VI

The common curb is one of the most encountered barriers impeding the daily movement of physically disabled persons. Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local governments to make pedestrian crossings accessible to people with disabilities by providing curb ramps. Without these ramps, sidewalk travel and street crossing can be difficult, dangerous and in some cases impossible for people who use wheelchairs, scooters, and other mobility aids.

Millcreek Township signed a consent decree in 2011 agreeing to install approximately 1,300 ramps by 2022. Beginning with FY 2012 and continuing through and including FY 2015, the Township has used its CDBG funding to install approximately 620 ramps. An additional 140+ ramps will be installed this summer (2017) utilizing FY 2016 CDBG monies. The Township desires to continue with this effort (Phase VI) and is therefore proposing that **\$177,216** in FY 2017 CDBG monies, plus local funds, be used for the removal, design, and replacement of an additional 140 curb-cut ramps. The specific locations have not yet been determined, but no ramps will be constructed in a designated floodplain.

Each ramp will be designed in the field to accommodate existing conditions and sidewalks. They will conform to ADA standards regarding running slope and cross slope as well as the inclusion of detectable warning surfaces (truncated domes). A level landing will be required at the transition between the existing sidewalk and new ramp for a turning area. Each ramp will be thoroughly inspected once completed. The contractor will also install an asphalt transition area connecting the newly installed ramp to the existing roadway surface to assure sidewalks are truly accessible. These asphalt transitions will be removed when the roadway is resurfaced by the township at which time compliant crosswalks will be installed.

The project meets the LMI National Objective of the CDBG program in that it will benefit the handicapped that are presumed by HUD to be generally low-to-moderate income persons. Additionally, funding of the activity will address a high priority "Community Development Need" [*Infrastructure/Sidewalk Accessibility Improvements*] as identified in the Township's Five Year Strategic Plan.

Cost Estimate

	Description	Cost
1	Remove, design, and install ramps; including installation of asphalt transitions to roadways (140 ramps x \$1,325 [+/-] per ramp)	\$185,500
2	Mobilization of equipment, materials and manpower to each location	\$10,000
	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$195,500

REGIONAL SENIOR CENTER OPERATIONAL SUPPORT PROJECT

Millcreek Township officials remain committed to helping senior citizens of the community and as such propose to provide **\$10,000** in FY 2017 CDBG funds to the Erie Center on Health and Aging Inc. (*dba* LifeWorks Erie) to support continued operations of the Regional Senior Center. The funds will be used to underwrite expenses related to salary and benefits of a senior center staff member responsible for programming and service delivery. The Township has funded the Center with CDBG monies ten times over the past 19 years for a total of \$243,492.

The project meets the LMI National Objective of the CDBG program in that it will benefit the elderly who are presumed by HUD to be generally low-to-moderate income persons. Additionally, funding of the activity will address a high priority "Community Development Need" [*Public Services/Senior Services*] as identified in the Township's Five Year Strategic Plan.

Background Information

The Regional Senior Center represents a merger between the former Millcreek Senior Center and the Erie Center on Health & Aging, both of which are independent, non-profit, 501 (C) (3) corporations. The Erie Center on Health & Aging, Inc. is the corporate merged entity. The underlying objectives of the agency is to promote optimal aging by providing opportunities for intellectual, emotional, psychological, spiritual, mental, and physical health and wellness.

The Erie Center on Health and Aging Inc. (*dba* LifeWorks Erie) has its primary location at 4th and Peach Streets in the City of Erie, however, many of the routine services are provided at locations throughout the County, including Millcreek, for convenience and easy access. Participants in the Center's programs come from over twenty (20) County zip codes.

The Center's programming provided in Millcreek Township includes:

- ✓ Health workshops, health screenings, health talks, and flu clinic sites at the Millcreek Township Building and Asbury Church which are funded through the Millcreek Township General Fund.
- ✓ Additional programming proposed through the FY 2017 grant would encompass programs and services provided in Millcreek Township outside of the two locations listed above, including:
 - Disease management through our **Chronic Disease and Diabetes Self-Management Programs**, which are evidence based programs, developed at Stanford University, and delivered by lay leaders to groups of individuals that have a chronic condition. Participants are taught tools that they can use to better self-manage their conditions, maintain active and fulfilling lives and to reduce unnecessary doctors and hospital visits.
 - Falls prevention programs - **A Matter of Balance and Healthy Steps for Older Adults** - are designed to help older adults remain independent for as long as they can. Falls are the leading cause of injury related hospital stays for older adults in Pennsylvania. Healthy Steps for Older Adults is appropriate for anyone over the age of 50 and covers how to stay active, make one's home safer, and manage medications that might interfere with balance or steadiness when ambulating. Matter of Balance is for participants who have a fear of falling or have fallen before. This course covers how to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, setting realistic goals for increasing activity, changing home environment to reduce risk factors and how to exercise to increase strength and balance.
 - **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** is a self-care education program for family caregivers. The program provides tools and strategies to better handle the unique challenges caregivers face including self-care behaviors, managing emotions, self-efficacy, and available community resources.
 - **Immunization program** for influenza and pneumonia. This past flu season, the Center offered flu vaccinations at over 25 community locations in Millcreek Township.

REGIONAL SENIOR CENTER OPERATIONAL SUPPORT PROJECT *(continued)*

Cost Estimate

	City of Erie	GECAC	United Way	Millcreek CDBG	Millcreek General Fund	TOTAL
Wages	\$9,500	\$94,500	\$39,500	\$8,300	\$14,300	\$166,100
Benefits	\$700	\$26,400	\$ 8,900	\$1,700	\$2,900	\$40,600
Supplies	\$2,800	\$56,600	\$ 3,400	\$0	\$1,100	\$63,900
Other	\$0	\$32,300	\$ 2,900	\$0	\$2,400	\$37,600
TOTAL	\$13,000	\$209,800	\$54,700	\$10,000	\$20,700	\$308,200

The above total project cost of **\$308,200** represents operating costs for several programs for seniors including: health education and preventive health screenings including flu and pneumonia vaccinations. The FY 2017 CDBG funds will be used to partially support the wages and fringe benefits of the Director of Health and Wellness (RN), for health screenings, health education and vaccinations all within Millcreek Township.

ADMINISTRATION – GENERAL

The Township will provide **\$30,000** in FY 2017 CDBG funds to the Erie County Department of Planning for overall program management, coordination, monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

ADMINISTRATION -PLANNING

The Township will set aside **\$16,804** in FY 2017 CDBG funds to hire a consultant to complete a new, mandated Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP) covering Fiscal Years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. Also to be completed is the First Year Action Plan for FY 2018.



EXHIBIT 1

Five Year Strategic Plan Summary

Millcreek Township prepared a Five Year Consolidated Plan (FY's 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017) in order to strategically implement federal programs that fund housing, community development, and economic development activities within the municipality. Through a collaborative planning process, involving a broad range of public and private agencies, the Township developed a single, consolidated planning and application document for the use of federal entitlement funds available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

The Five Year CP for Millcreek Township serves the following functions:

- A planning document that enables the Township to view its HUD funding, not in isolation, but as one tool in a comprehensive strategy to address housing, community development, and economic development needs.
- An application for CDBG Program funds under HUD's formula grant.
- A strategy document to be followed in carrying out HUD programs.
- An action plan that provides a basis for assessing performance in carrying out use of CDBG Program funds.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to address the needs outlined in the Strategic Plan is anticipated to be approximately \$200,000 for each of the next five years. ***The three overarching objectives guiding the proposed activities are:***

- Providing Decent Affordable Housing
- Creating Suitable Living Environments
- Creating Economic Opportunities

Outcomes show how programs and activities benefit a community or the people served. ***The three outcomes that will illustrate the benefits of each activity funded by the CDBG program are:***

- Improve Availability/Accessibility
- Improve Affordability
- Improve Sustainability

All future activities funded in the next five years will support at least one objective and one outcome. ***The Township's framework for realizing the objectives and outcomes include the following goals:***

- Provide decent, affordable housing
- Provide a suitable living environment
- Expand economic opportunities
- Increase homeownership
- End chronic homelessness

During the five year period (2013-2017) covered by the CP, Millcreek Township proposed to undertake the following activities to address its housing and non-housing community development needs. Below is a summary of the needs, goals and accomplishments to date.

HOUSING NEEDS

Need: Housing improvements including single family and/or rental housing rehabilitation as well as home modifications for handicapped persons.

Goal: Make improvements to five (5) units.

Accomplishments: No homes have been rehabilitated / modified.

Accomplishments/Other- Public Housing Improvements: FY 2015 CDBG funds in the amount of \$3,200 provided for the installation of an automatic door operator on the main interior entrance door of the Gerald S. Salsbury Building which is a three-story elderly housing complex owned and managed by the Erie County Housing Authority.

Need: Support efforts to expand the supply of assisted rental housing.

Goal: Provide funding to undertake a planning study to determine the potential for affordable housing developments for seniors and special needs populations.

Accomplishments:

The Township allocated \$10,095 in FY 2013 CDBG funds for H.A.N.D.S to undertake a planning study the information from which would be used to complete a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) application through the PA Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) for two (2) affordable housing developments – one for senior citizens and the other for special needs populations. The project was deleted as it became apparent that the funding was inadequate to undertake a study of such magnitude. The grant monies were subsequently transferred to the Phase II Sidewalk Accessibility Project

The Township allocated \$11,000 in FY 2014 CDBG funds for H.A.N.D.S to undertake the same effort as noted above, with the exception that the study would just focus on a senior development. The project was deleted as H.A.N.D.S was unable to acquire a site/building. The grant monies were subsequently reprogrammed to supplement the FY 2015 CDBG funded Phase IV Sidewalk Accessibility Project.

A vacant County building in Millcreek Township looks promising as a site for development. Given this opportunity and the continued need for affordable rental housing units, the Township most recently allocated FY 2016 funds in the amount of \$11,000 for H.A.N.D.S to once again undertake the planning study which is expected to be completed by June 30, 2017.

NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Need: Infrastructure - - Sidewalk Accessibility Improvements

Goal: Construct curb-ramps for handicapped accessibility. The Township is under a 2011 Consent Decree to install approximately 1,300 curb ramps by 2022.

Accomplishments:

- One hundred forty-eight (148) ramps were installed in the summer of 2014 utilizing \$151,663.69 in FY 2013 CDBG funds.
- One hundred fifty-four (154) ramps were installed in the summer of 2015 utilizing \$29,818.31 in residual FY 2013 monies and \$157,173 in FY 2014 funds.
- One hundred seventy (170 ramps) were installed in the summer of 2016 utilizing \$171,675 in FY 2015 funds plus \$11,000 in FY 2014 reprogrammed monies from a deleted project.
- Approximately one hundred fifty (150) ramps will be installed in the summer of 2017 utilizing \$177,216 in FY 2016 CDBG funding.

Need: Infrastructure - -Flood Drain Improvements

Goal: Construct one (1) flood drainage facility.

Accomplishments: There has been no activity regarding this goal nor will there be during the remainder of the Five Year CP. The Township has not identified /acquired a site for construction of a flood detention basin.

Need: Infrastructure - - Water/Sewer Improvements

Goal: Replace or extend one (1) water line and or/sanitary sewer line.

Accomplishments: There has been no activity regarding this goal nor will there be during the remainder of the Five Year CP. Also, the Township is no longer in the business of providing water service as its water system and assets have been sold to the Erie Water Works.

Need: Infrastructure - - Street and Sidewalk Improvements

Goal: Reconstruct one (1) street and replace existing sidewalk.

Accomplishments: There has been no activity regarding this goal. Consideration was given to using CDBG funds to make additional road/sidewalk improvements in the Highland Park area as was done with FY 2009, 2010 and 2011 CDBG funds; however, the area no longer meets the requisite *37.1% LMI threshold* according to the most current Low/Moderate Income Summary Data (LMISD).

Need: Public Facilities - - Recreation Improvements

Goal: Improve one (1) park.

Accomplishments: There has been no activity regarding this goal. Consideration was given to using CDBG funds to purchase and install playground equipment and construct sidewalks at Wander Park.

Need: Public Facilities - - Senior Center

Goal: Assist in the establishment of a new senior center.

Accomplishments: The Township allocated \$15,000 in FY 2014 CDBG funding to MECCA, the administrative agent of a new senior center in the Township known as the J.O.Y. Center. The funds were to be used to help pay for additional employee hours so that the Center could expand its days of operation from 3 to 5 days a week. The Center ended up ceasing operations and the grant funds were transferred to the multi-year funded Phase III Sidewalk Accessibility Project.

Need: Public Services - - Senior Services

Goal: Assist the Erie Center on Health and Aging (*dba LifeWorks Erie*) by providing CDBG funding to the Regional Senior Center help offset operating costs.

Accomplishments: FY 2014 and FY 2015 CDBG funds in the amount of \$9,000 and \$10,000 respectively was provided to the Erie Center On Health and Aging to help the Regional Senior Center offset expenses related to salaries and fringe benefits of senior center staff directly responsible for programming and service delivery. Services provided consisted of health screenings, flu/pneumonia vaccinations, podiatry services, and health education workshops. The Township most recently provided \$10,000 in FY 2016 CDBG funding to the ECHA to continue with this effort.

Need: Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

Goal: Address impediments to fair housing as identified in the Fair Housing Analysis

Accomplishments: Erie County completed a Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in March 2015. The Township approved the A/I, including a Fair Housing Action Plan, by means of a Resolution (2015-R-23) on November 10, 2015.

The Township most recently provided FY 2016 CDBG funds in the amount of \$5,804 to the Erie County Human Relations Commission to hire a qualified, independent consultant to test the rental housing market for possible discrimination.

EXHIBIT 2

**MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP HUD CDBG PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS
(FY 1998 through FY 2016)**

GRANT YEAR	ALLOCATION	+/- (\$) DIFFERENTIAL	% DIFFERENCE
1998	\$307,000	-	-
1999	\$309,000	(+) \$2,000	+ 0.65%
2000	\$306,000	(-) \$3,000	- 0.97%
2001	\$316,000	(+) \$10,000	+ 3.27%
2002	\$306,000	(-) \$10,000	- 3.16%
2003	\$311,000	(+) \$5,000	+ 1.63%
2004	\$302,000	(-) \$9,000	- 2.89%
2005	\$283,944	(-) \$18,056	- 5.98%
2006	\$254,483	(-) \$29,461	-10.38%
2007	\$252,478	(-) \$2,005	- 0.89%
2008	\$241,989	(-) \$10,489	- 4.15%
2009	\$242,161	(+) \$172	+ .0.07%
<i>2009 (Stimulus \$)</i>	<i>\$65,721</i>	-	-
2010	\$260,948	(+) \$18,787	+ 7.76%
2011	\$217,656	(-) \$43,292	-16.59%
2012	\$195,478	(-) \$22,178	-10.19%
2013	\$210,482	(+) \$15,004	+ 7.68%
2014	\$207,716	(-) \$2,766	- 1.31%
2015	\$215,875	(+) \$8,159	+ 3.92%
2016	\$234,020	(+) 18,145	+8.41%
TOTAL	\$5,039,951		

Insert Map