



## CUMBERLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

### STAFF REPORT

**From:** Courtney Kemp, Community Development Manager  
**Date:** March 10, 2025  
**Subject:** 2025 Annual Action Plan Including the CDBG & HOME Funding Budgets

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Two public hearings will be held on the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for 2025: March 17<sup>th</sup> and April 22<sup>nd</sup>. A final vote by the Commissioners endorsing the 2025 Annual Action Plan is scheduled for the April 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The Annual Action Plan will be submitted to HUD on May 15<sup>th</sup> or 60 days after the County receives our 2025 formula allocation from HUD.

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Identify expected CDBG and HOME grant funds for 2025
2. Review the application process for selecting CDBG projects
3. Familiarize you with the projects and programs recommended for funding

#### Available Grant Funds for 2025

HUD has not released the 2025 Formula Allocations for CPD Programs, including CDBG and HOME. This has happened in past years as well. Per guidance from HUD, we are moving forward using our expected allocation of level funding with a contingency plan for more or less funding than expected.

CDBG Allocation: ***Cumberland County is expected to receive \$1,543,932***

The total allocation is divided into four components:

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1. <u>Total Administrative Costs:</u>             | <b>\$307,000</b> |
| County Administration                             | \$ 205,000       |
| South Portland Administration                     | \$ 65,000        |
| Bridgton Administration                           | \$ 37,000        |
| 2. <u>County Community &amp; Regional Grants:</u> | <b>\$727,807</b> |
| 3. <u>Town of Bridgton Activities:</u>            | <b>\$163,000</b> |
| 4. <u>City of South Portland Activities:</u>      | <b>\$353,945</b> |

#### **I. Accepting and Selecting Applications**

The process for selecting the "County" (not South Portland or Bridgton) applications for 2025:

- Applications distributed November 12, 2024
- Application workshop November 26, 2024

# Cumberland County

- Pre-applications submitted by December 12, 2024
- Final applications submitted January 16, 2024

Following submission, applications were distributed to the Application Review Team. Team members were: Daniel Stevenson – Chair (Westbrook); Matt Sturgis (Cumberland); Kathy Tombarelli (Naples); Tori Hill (Yarmouth); Hailey Richardson (Bridgton); Josh Reny (South Portland) and Zach Mosher (Standish)

Team members reviewed the applications and assigned scores based upon established criteria. Applicants met with the review team on March 5<sup>th</sup> to briefly present their projects and answer questions.

## CDBG Program Applications

Project description – 10 points

Project management – 10 points

Implementation schedule – 5 points

Readiness to proceed – 20 points

Need for the project – 20 points

Need for CDBG funds – 15 points

Budget – 5 points

Distress score – 0-10 points

Multi-jurisdictional bonus – 5 points

Raw scores were totaled and converted to group ordinal rankings. The results of the collective rank order of applications became the basis for the allocation of funds.

## **II. Projects, Programs & Activities Recommended for Funding**

The Municipal Oversight Committee (MOC) recommends 6 grants for funding to the County Commissioners. Of these, three are region-wide activities and three are community-based projects.

### **Regional vs. community projects:**

Regional projects: \$ 281,229

Community projects: \$ 446,578

### **Funding by project type:**

Public Services \$ 135,000

Public Facilities & Infrastructure \$ 342,807

Housing \$ 250,000

County Administration \$ 205,000



## **Project & Funding Recommendations**

### **Public Services**

#### **County-wide Through These Doors- DV Outreach Advocacy Services**

**\$ 31,229**

Through These Doors (TTD), the local domestic violence resource center serving Cumberland County is requesting funding for the Domestic Violence Outreach Advocacy Services program. The funds would support a .5FTE advocate position to provide advocacy and support services to individuals and their families who are experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sex trafficking, and/or stalking within their intimate partner relationships. This program would extend support services to all communities in Cumberland County ( except for Bridgton, Brunswick, Portland, and South Portland).

Through These Doors would offer free and confidential advocacy and support services such as access to support groups ( online and in-person), 24-hr helpline, residential services, assistance navigating the civil and criminal justice system including helping filing protection from abuse orders, safety planning, and warm referrals to other community resources. An additional priority would be to assist survivors and their children stay safely housed by working with other community resources, housing assistance programs, and other grant/foundation resources. All these services provided by advocates would help individuals build the supportive resources needed in creating a safe, suitable livable environment.

Each year, the Greater Portland Outreach Site office provides advocacy and support services to approximately 600+ individuals and families. The advocate based in the Greater Portland Site office would provide advocacy and support services to 200+ individuals throughout Cumberland County during this grant cycle. In addition, the advocate would participate in answering daytime helpline calls 2-3x a month, assist people in filing protection orders, attend protection from abuse/harassment hearings to support survivors, safety plan and continue to build larger support networks for individuals accessing our services.

#### **Westbrook/Windham - My Place Teen Center**

**\$ 103,771**

The Improving Outcomes for Youth program (IOY) is for at-risk youth from Westbrook and Windham ages 10-18 who will gain competency and trust in school as an academic success pathway and avoid high-risk activities such as substance use and behaviors resulting in teen pregnancy. Participants will increase their knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding mental health wellness, managing difficult emotions, job and life skills, leadership scaffolding, financial literacy, adequate nutrition, proper hygiene, and exercise. My Place Teen Center staff and volunteers will manage the IOY curriculum. For new Mainers (immigrants and refugees), primarily, social-emotional development projects concentrate on issues surrounding acculturation to their new surroundings, avoiding harmful behaviors while maintaining and honoring traditional values. All subjects will focus on English fluency.

The overarching IOY goal is to provide safe, structured places for youth and young adults with low economic resources to develop resiliency, hope, and opportunities for positive life-learning and academic-enriching experiences. Research on high-quality, out-of-school time programming indicates that critical ingredients are positive adult relationships, active learning, inquiry-based approaches, and participant choice.



## **Housing**

### County-Wide Habitat for Humanity- Home Repair Program

\$ 150,000

Habitat offers health and safety repairs to local homeowners (all of whom make less than 80% of AMI) who wouldn't be able to afford said repairs on their own. With an extremely tight housing market in Cumberland County, these repairs that allow low/moderate income homeowners to remain in their homes is more critical than ever. They are expecting to repair 36 homes next year. At minimal to no cost for the homeowner.

### County-Wide Alpha One – Critical Access Ramp Program

\$ 100,00

Alpha One in entering their 16 year of operating this program. The program installs critical ADA access ramps at the homes of handicapped or elderly Cumberland County residents who otherwise would be severely hindered from, or unable to, leave their homes.

## **Public Facilities & Infrastructure**

### Freeport/Westbrook/Yarmouth – Childcare Job Creation

\$ 302,807

United 4 Child Care (U4CC) is collaborating with local businesses and the property owners of 2 Stonewood Drive in Freeport to address the urgent child care accessibility and affordability challenges faced by workers in Freeport and throughout Southern Maine, especially those who are asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed (ALICE), by developing a 10,065 square foot childcare center in an accessible location on U.S. Route I that will employ approximately 18 childcare providers and serve approximately 100 children, with 50 slots reserved for families who fit the low-to-moderate (LMI) definition.

The Town of Freeport seeks an Economic Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant to support the development team's conversion of long-vacant office space to a highly impactful use. The Freeport facility's new childcare positions will pay above the typical wages of similar positions in the region, while remaining within the LMI wage definition. The project not only creates quality employment opportunities, but will also enable 50 LMI families to access high-quality childcare at subsidized rates, doubling this project's unique impact. In addition, the requested CDBG dollars will be matched at least two-to-one by the development team.

### Town of Windham – Forbes Lane Neighborhood Park

\$ 40,000

The Town of Windham is seeking CDBG funds for the proposed project developing a neighborhood park on a 1.33-acre parcel of land purchased by the town in 2021. This parcel has been known locally as "the path," which served as a connection between two housing developments. The town is proposing to provide additional recreational amenities at this location to serve the residents in this area of Windham. Establishing connectivity in these neighborhoods through development of a trail suitable for walking and biking would be one key component of this project. Additionally, proposed are picnic tables, benches and a small neighborhood scale play area to be incorporated into the park plan. The picnic pavilion will be available to be reserved for use, which has been a practice in other Windham facilities. Access to a storage shed on the property will be provided through a combination keypad so that those so that those reserving the pavilion can utilize lawn games for their gathering.



### **Bridgton & South Portland Programs**

The program and activities conducted in the two set-aside communities of Bridgton and South Portland are integral components of the Cumberland County Community Development program. While not participants in the County application competition, their projects, activities, funds, planning, administration and regulatory compliance are integrated with the County's program.

#### **Town of Bridgton:**

**2024 Set-Aside Allocation** **\$192,180**

The Bridgton Board of Selectman held a public hearing on March 11<sup>th</sup> on the following funding recommendations from Bridgton's Community Development Advisory Committee. Once all public comment was received, the Bridgton Board of Selectmen approved the budget and contingency plan as recommended.

Public Facilities/Infrastructure **\$125,000**

Ham Complex Playground \$ 125,000

Public Services **\$ 30,180**

Community Center Navigator Program \$ 17,680

Bridgton Food Pantry \$ 12,500

Admin and Planning **\$ 37,000**

Program Administration \$ 37,000

#### **City of South Portland:**

**2024 Set-Aside Allocation** **\$423,936**

The City of South Portland continues to operate their CDBG program much as they did prior to relinquishing HUD Entitlement status in 2007. Coordination between South Portland and the County, particularly on administrative matters occurs on a regular and on-going basis. Sara Fleurant serves as the Community Development Coordinator in both Cumberland County and South Portland. South Portland finalized its selection of CDBG funded programs, projects and activities at their City Council meeting on March 4, 2025

Public Facilities/Infrastructure **\$198,445**

Pleasantdale Playground \$ 198,445

Port Resources Housing Rehab \$ 22,500

# *Maine* Cumberland County

<u>Public Services</u>	<b>\$63,000</b>
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TTD- Domestic Violence Outreach Support Services	\$ 15,000
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GPFP- Housing Stabilization Program	\$ 25,000
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SMAA – Meals on Wheels	\$ 25,000
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<u>Admin and Planning</u>	<b>\$ 65,000</b>
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Program Administration	\$ 65,000
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## **HOME Program Consortium**

All the communities of Cumberland County including Portland, Brunswick and the 25 members of our Community Development program have formed the City of Portland/Cumberland County HOME Consortium. Portland serves as the lead entity for the Consortium. All administrative and program delivery services are conducted by the City

Unlike CDBG, HOME funds can only be used for four types housing activities: housing rehabilitation, home ownership assistance, tenant based rental assistance and new construction of rental or ownership housing. Cumberland County uses 100% of our portion of the allocation for affordable housing development, our funds are used as leverage when affordable housing developers seek LIHTC and other funding sources. This year the County has \$123,766 in program income to add to the 2025 formula allocation of HOME funds.

<b>2025 funds</b>	<b>\$ 325,050</b>
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Program Income	\$ 123,766
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<b>Total Available in 2025:</b>	<b>\$ 448,816</b>
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