



Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Substantial Amendment 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan 2019 Annual Action Plan

Responsible Organization

City of Columbia Community Development Department
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City of Columbia Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Substantial Amendment to the 2019 Annual Action Plan

Summary

The City of Columbia, South Carolina (City) annually receives funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that includes Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. For receipt of these funds, the City must submit a 5-year long range plan known as the Consolidated Plan. Each year of the five-year plan, the City must develop an Action Plan describing how funds will be used to address the goals and strategies in the 5-year Consolidated Plan

According to the City's Citizen Participation Plan and Federal Regulations, an increase or decrease of over 50% of the budgeted funding amount or a change in the general activity or national objective of an activity, requires a substantial amendment to the Annual Action Plan which is a component of the Consolidated Plan.

The following proposed changes require modification of the City of Columbia 2019 Annual Action Plan:

- De-obligation of FY2019-2020 CDBG funds that were conditionally obligated to the Katheryn Bellfield Center Teaching Kitchen Renovation Project in the amount of **\$732,330**
- Reallocation of **\$476,000** in FY 2019-2020 CDBG funding for the Playground and Park Renovations Project to enhance three parks:
 - Lorick Park - **\$140,000**
 - EB Sessions Park - **\$146,000**
 - Fairwold Park - **\$190,000**
- Reallocation of the remaining CDBG FY2019-2020 funding of **\$256,330** to the City of Columbia Affordable Housing Loan Program
- Total Reallocation of CDBG FY2019-2020 Funding is **\$732,330**.

Fiscal Impact

There will be minimal impact on the current fiscal year (2019-2020) CDBG entitlement as we are proposing to de-obligate funds from a project that was conditionally funded, The Katheryn Bellfield Center Teaching Kitchen Renovation Project, and reallocate those funds to two different projects/programs, the Playground and Park Renovations Project (\$476,000) and the City of Columbia Affordable Housing Loan Program (\$256,330).

Other identified funding sources withdrew confirmation of funding from The Katheryn Bellfield Center Teaching Kitchen Renovation Project, causing the funding gap to expand beyond CDBG funding availability. Therefore, the project could not move forward. The Playground and Park Renovations Project has secured all funding and will move forward, increasing the quality of life for our Citizens.

The Playground and Park Renovations Project, like The Katheryn Bellfield Center Teaching Kitchen Renovation Project, is Non-Public Service. As such this de-obligation and reallocation will not impact our Public Service/Admin funding caps nor our FY2019-2020 Entitlement Funding amount.

The Affordable Housing Loan Program will continue our priority of providing access to safe, decent and affordable housing for the Citizen of the City of Columbia. The Affordable Housing Loan Program offers individuals and families who cannot access traditional financing from for-profit lending institutions and credit unions full, first position financing with the potential buyer needing only a modest \$500 down-payment. The loan is repayable with a fixed interest rate of only 3% and features Homeownership and Financial training, provided for free by the City.

Community Impact

The City proposes, through this Substantial Amendment to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan, to rehabilitate three parks within Columbia City Limits: Lorick Park (1600 Lorick Avenue), E.B. Sessions Park (3200 Beaumont Avenue) and Fairwold Park (5924 Eddy Street). These parks, which also house playgrounds, are currently in disrepair and are not safe for use. These playgrounds and parks will serve a combined population of 7,855 people, 71.2% (5,600 people) of which earn low to moderate incomes. E.B. Sessions Park is in the Targeted Redevelopment Area of Booker Washington Heights and both Lorick and Fairwold Parks are in the Eau Claire Redevelopment Area.

Renovating these playgrounds and parks will provide the Citizens of Columbia options for increased physical, mental and emotional health. Playgrounds and parks offer developmental opportunities to increase social skills, creativity, problem solving and deductive reasoning. Access to parks and recreational opportunities have also been strongly linked to reductions in crime and to reduced juvenile delinquency. Parks and Playgrounds spur economic development, increase quality of life and form the core of many neighborhoods by bringing the residents of our communities together.

The Substantial Amendment to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan will also provide for the reallocation of funding to the City of Columbia Affordable Housing Loan Program. This program, already in existence and highly sought after by both potential homebuyers and realtors, will provide two to three individuals or families the opportunity to purchase a home. Homeownership builds equity, establishes permanence and adds to the City tax base. By providing below market interest rates, and a low down payment this program will result in delivering on the commitment to provide our citizens with the opportunity, and the responsibility, of becoming homeowners in the City of Columbia.

This Substantial Amendment will not change the CDBG National Objective, to benefit low to moderate income persons.

Citizen Participation

The Citizen Participation Plan requires a 30-day comment period, allowing reasonable opportunity for citizen comments and ongoing citizen access to how the grants funds are being used. A legal notice will be posted in various intentional public locations, in the State Newspaper and on the City of Columbia website. All comments and views of citizens received will be considered in preparation of the Substantial Amendment.

Public comments regarding the amendment will be accepted starting **September 6, 2019** and ending **October 7, 2019 unless otherwise noted**. A summary of all comments will be attached to the substantial amendment and submitted to HUD. Send comments to Community Development Department, 1401 Main Street, 4th Floor, Attn: Community Development, Columbia, South Carolina 29201 or email comments to CoCCommDevCompliance@ColumbiaSC.gov.

The full Citizen Participation Plan is available on the City of Columbia's website at: <https://columbiasc.gov/depts/community-development/COLA%20CP%20PlanFinal52015.pdf>

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