

City of Medford CDBG PY50/FY2025

The following packet provides information on proposed Medford CDBG funding for the City's Fiscal Year 2025 including:

1. Summary of the Medford CDBG Program and projected funding and timelines for the coming year
2. Table of Public Services funding requests and recommended funding amounts
3. Details for Public Services funding requests and explanations of funding recommendations

Summary of Medford CDBG Program

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), is a program of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that began in 1974. The City's FY2025 will be Program Year 50 of CDBG funding.

The City of Medford is a CDBG entitlement community, meaning that we receive a direct CDBG grant from HUD each year. However, the amount of our entitlement grant has been steadily declining over the past several years, and the following are the amounts of our entitlements for the past 3 years:

CDBG PY47/Medford FY2022	\$1,569,784
CDBG PY48/Medford FY2023	\$1,489,182
CDBG PY49/Medford FY2024	\$1,423,649

For the coming year, PY50/FY2025, we are still awaiting the announcement of our CDBG grant allocation from HUD, and HUD has announced that it expects to release that information by May 8, 2024. However, based on the 12% cut overall to the CDBG budget at the federal level, we estimate that our allocation for next year will be approximately **\$1,252,811**. Accordingly, the figures presented in the draft Annual Action Plan are based on that estimate, and we propose adjusting those figures up or down proportionally once the final amount has been released.

The program year for CDBG follows the City's fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. Each year we are required to submit to HUD an Annual Action Plan detailing how the City expects to use its annual entitlement in the coming year. Typically, the Annual Action Plan must be submitted to HUD by May 15th each year, but due to delays in Washington on determining the budget for next year, this year that deadline has been extended and a final date has not yet been set.

Every 5 years the City is also required to establish a Consolidated Plan identifying housing and community development priorities for the coming 5-year period. FY2025 will be the 5th year of our current Consolidated Plan, and over the next year we will work to develop the City's Consolidated Plan for the next 5 years, which will be presented to the Council in the Spring of 2025.

The CDBG Grant benefits low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons (those earning less than 80% Area Median Income (AMI)). The following table lists AMIs based on family/household size for the federal fiscal years 2023 and 2024:

Persons in Household or Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
FY2023 80% AMI	82,950	94,800	106,650	118,450	127,950	137,450	146,900	156,400
FY2024 80% AMI	91,200	104,200	117,250	130,250	140,700	151,100	161,550	171,950

CDBG provides a flexible annual grant for entitlement communities to address the causes and consequences of poverty. Uses include public facilities, parks, public service agencies, housing, and economic development. All CDBG-funded projects must meet one of the CDBG National Objectives of:

1. Benefiting low- and moderate-income persons (at least 51% of the persons benefitted must be LMI to qualify);
2. Preventing or eliminating slums or blight; or
3. Meeting other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community and other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

From our annual CDBG entitlement:

- Up to 15% may be allocated to public services such as those listed in the attached list of recommendations for funding.
- Up to 20% may be allocated to administrative costs. Administrative costs include paying for staffing positions such as the CDBG & Grants Manager and the Housing Planner, as well as certain studies such as the zoning study currently being conducted by Innes Associates.

The balance of the funds for the year, together with any funds remaining from prior years, may be allocated to projects. Funded projects for the current year have included:

- Work on the Engine 3 and 5 Fire Stations
- Redesign of the McGlynn Playground
- Street improvements at Gourley Road/Dwyer Circle and Pinkert Street
- Community Gardens at La Prise Village and Tempone Apartments

Expected projects to be funded for the coming year include:

- Continued work on McGlynn Playground
- Continued work at Gourley Road/Dwyer Circle
- ADA improvements for intersections on George and Main Streets
- ADA improvements to sidewalks and curb cuts at other intersections in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods
- Improvements at Tufts Park

In the coming year CDBG funding will also be used to launch a Housing Rehab Loan Program to assist residents with certain repairs that will allow them to stay in their homes; and to fund Economic Development programs including establishing a Vacant Storefront District Program and a Small Business Technical Assistance Program to provide consulting services to small businesses in need of guidance to succeed.

In addition to our annual CDBG allocation, in 2020 the City also received CDBG-CV funding to prepare, prevent, and/or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. A small portion of that funding has not yet been expended. As noted in the attached summary we recommend allocating the majority of those remaining funds to public services programs providing housing assistance, which HUD has determined has a nexus to the pandemic response.

**CDBG Public Services Requested Funding
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (PY50)**

Public Service Funding available:
PY50: \$187,922(Estimated)
PY49 \$213,547

Organization Name	Amount of CDBG funds requested	Amount of CDBG funds received prior year (PY49)	Recommended amount PY24-25 (PY50)
CDBG Funding			
Bread of Life	\$9,072.00	N/A funded through ARPA	\$0.00
Communitas	\$5,000.00	N/A funded through ARPA	\$0.00
The Community Family	\$10,000.00	\$3,947.00	\$4,000.00
The Immigrant Learning Center	\$10,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Magan Transport LLC	\$127,000.00	Funded through ARPA, supplemented with \$30,000 CDBG-CV	\$30,000
Medford Council on Aging	\$36,575.00	\$30,000.00	\$25,000.00
Medford Public Schools	\$10,000.00	9,600.00	\$8,922.00
Mystic Valley YMCA/Mystic Community Market	\$12,000.00	10,000.00	\$12,000.00
S.C.M. Community Transportation	\$140,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$85,000.00
The Welcome Project	\$40,000.00	N/A – new applicant	\$6,000.00
West Medford Community Center	\$21,000.00	\$21,000.00	\$17,000.00
		TOTAL	\$187,922.00
CDBG-CV Funding			
Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)	\$42,331.00	\$42,331.00	\$42,000.00
Housing Families	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
		TOTAL	\$62,000.00
		CDBG-CV Funds Remaining	\$7,037.61

Summary of CDBG Public Services Funding Requests

CDBG PY50/FY25 FUNDING

The Community Family

Request for Funding: \$10,000

Recommended Funding: \$4,000

The Community Family is requesting continued CDBG funding to provide assistance to subsidize specialized Alzheimer services and activities provided at The Buddy Coholan Memory Loss Center to Medford residents. The Community Family is requesting \$10,000 to support 74 days of adult day health services to 15-20 participants with roundtrip transportation to the center and special care products not provided through the participants' insurance and minimal therapeutic activity supplies.

Magan Transport

Request for Funding: \$127,000

Recommended Funding: \$30,000

Magan Transport is seeking to extend its senior transportation program in the City of Medford, supported by CDBG funds. Their program aims to promote preventative health among senior residents by removing transportation barriers that hinder access to essential services crucial for maintaining well-being, such as medical care. They achieve this by offering complimentary ambulatory transportation services to disabled individuals and those aged 62 and above, facilitating access to SNAP-eligible farmer's markets, pharmacies, non-emergency medical appointments, and, as needed, delivering food from local food pantries and the Senior Center's weekday grab-and-go lunch to quarantining or homebound individuals.

Magan Transport was funded through ARPA for FY24, but funding only covered their services through March, 2024. An additional grant of \$30,000 was made from CDBG-CV funding to cover services through the end of FY24. The recommended additional funding of \$30,000 for FY25 will enable them to continue to provide services at the same level through the 1st quarter of FY25, or reduced level services for a longer period in the new year.

Medford Council on Aging

Request for Funding: \$36,575

Recommended Funding: \$25,000

The Medford Council on Aging/Senior Center will continue to broaden its reach to older adults in Medford, and to expand its services to low- and moderate-income Medford residents, including underserved and at-risk populations, in total serving approximately 600 residents. Funded services will include:

- The Social Worker provides information, crisis intervention, case management and advocacy to the Medford Residents. The Social Worker has in office hours and makes home visits to those who are homebound.
- The Outreach Volunteer Coordinator provides Medford residents volunteer opportunities such as receptionists, office assistant, nutrition support, program facilitator, trip escort, newsletter delivery, intergenerational program and more.
- The Handyperson offers home repairs that will help the older resident remain in their home safely, such as installing lock boxes, changing bulbs and batteries, and adding handrails and safety bars so the elderly can live safely in their homes. Appointments are made with our main office and then distributed to the handyperson.
- The Recreational Transportation offers day trips scheduled by the Senior Center to locations that our participants may not normally be able to visit. This program helps to reduce isolation in the elder population, particularly within the fragile low income and mobility impaired sectors.
- MVES Title III match is under the umbrella from the local AAA/ASAP. Their goals are to secure and maintain maximum independence and dignity in a home environment with appropriate supportive services, to remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence, and to provide a continuum of care for vulnerable older adults. Mystic Valley Elder Services is Medford's local ASAP, and services all Medford residents over 60+, who call and sign up with their office directly.

Medford Public Schools

Request for Funding: \$10,000

Recommended Funding: \$8,922

Funding from CDBG will provide much-needed tuition assistance to an estimated 20 low-income families who need after-school care for their school-age children. Though tuition is kept affordable (relative to surrounding and like-districts), some families still struggle to afford the cost of the program. The consequence for families who cannot afford to send their children to after school programs can be detrimental if it means children are left unattended or unsupervised or that a caregiver cannot work. The CDBG scholarships will serve as a "safety net" for families whose financial circumstances change. The ability to tap into the scholarship will provide program continuity for children and keep them in a safe, supportive environment. The Medford Public Schools operates four after school programs in the Brooks, Missituk, McGlynn, and Roberts elementary schools.

Mystic Valley YMCA/Medford Community Market

Request for Funding: \$12,000

Recommended Funding: \$12,000

The Mystic Valley YMCA is seeking operating support for the Mystic Community Market, a free food market run by the Mystic Valley YMCA. The market has been in operation since early 2020 at 291 Mystic Avenue, the Walnut Street Center in Medford. It is the largest free food market in the area and served nearly 5,000 residents of Medford and surrounding

communities in 2023 with fresh groceries once per week totaling more than 1.5M pounds. Each visit provides at least a 25 lb. bag of fresh produce, shelf-stable items, lean protein, and dairy. The Market is more important than ever, as Census data indicates that 7.4% of the City of Medford lives in poverty (in accordance with national household income guidelines), and using new methodology as of 2024, the Greater Boston Food Bank reports that 21% (1 in 5) of Medford residents (approximately 5,270 people) struggle with food insecurity. Food insecurity (not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality to meet one's basic needs) can impact all people, regardless of whether they meet the national poverty guidelines.

CDBG funding will support operating costs and allow the Market to maintain current service levels, and the Mystic Community Market and its partners will play a vital role in achieving the Hunger Free by 2028 Pledge made by Medford Mayor Breanna Lugo-Koehn, the Medford City Council, and Medford School Committee in 2020.

SCM Community Transport

Request for Funding: \$140,000

Recommended Funding: \$85,000

Community transportation effectively answers the needs of those who are too frail to drive or take public transportation but wish to live autonomously in their homes. Independent living lowers healthcare costs overall, enabling seniors and disabled citizens to remain vibrant contributors to a community and its economy. SCM proposes to continue to provide critically needed, door-to-door Medical and shopping transportation services to Medford's senior and mobility-impaired residents. Driving is done by their licensed, friendly, well-trained, and supervised staff, and provides services to approximately 200 Medford senior and disabled residents.

The Welcome Project

Request for Funding: \$40,000

Recommended Funding: \$6,000

The Welcome Project provides a comprehensive English Language for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) class that has been operating within Medford for the last year and a half. This project, called English For Parents, is based on an initiative they started in Somerville seven years ago. These courses are designed to educate immigrant parents in English, increasing their competency and dispelling the idea that they cannot participate in their child's education. Therefore, they are proposing an education program at the Medford Public Library that will run on a timeframe that mirrors the public school schedule, operating for two semesters, fall and spring, and will enroll at least 75 students each semester. They anticipate a drop-off of around 20 to 25 students between semesters, with their spots being given to parents on our waiting list. They therefore assume that at least 100 immigrant parents will benefit from this program this coming fiscal year.

Note that while the amount recommended for funding is substantially less than the amount requested by The Welcome Project, we have spoken with the applicant and confirmed that they would be able to proceed with the program by supplementing with funding from other sources.

West Medford Community Center

Request for Funding: \$21,000

Recommended Funding: \$17,000

For nearly 90 years, the West Medford Community Center has provided Elder Services Programming to Medford Seniors. Their Elder Service program is a stimulating, nurturing gathering place where Seniors can find social and intellectual interactions that will leave them better for the experience. WMCC's Elder Services operates three days per week at the West Medford Community Center and seeks to address the needs of Elderly Medford residents to remain independent, contributing members of the community. WMCC provides opportunities for the Medford Elder's need for diversity, inclusion, engagement, community conversation and celebration through consistent and complimentary social, educational, arts and cultural events and activities allowing participants to grow and learn from one another. These events bring an awareness of the value of the Senior to younger generations as well as the whole of Medford. WMCC's Elder Services Program is directed by Terry Carter, who has an eleven-year tenure with the West Medford Community Center as the Elder Services Director. In addition, their program is supported by many collaborators in and around Medford. Specifically, the City of Medford Public Health Nurse, Jillian Hertig, partners to provide Covid vaccine clinics, flu vaccine clinics, blood pressure clinics, and relevant presentations on health prevention topics. Mystic Valley Elder Services provides weekly healthy, nutritious meals and educational materials around making healthy meal choices. Melrose Wakefield Hospital provides additional blood pressure clinics, relevant health educational materials and activities to the program monthly as well as providing 20 grocery bags per month. Brookline Bank provides experts and assists in locating experts around financial health like estate planning, home equity, money management and cybersecurity, etc. The West Medford Senior Club, Medford Public Servants, and city employees visit regularly to keep seniors informed on Medford priorities, policy changes, new or changing services, meeting points of contact, etc. This program will serve approximately 55 Medford seniors.

CDBG-CV FUNDING

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)

Request for Funding: \$42,331

Recommended Funding: \$42,000

The City of Medford's CDBG funding will be used to support ABCD's emergency rental and utility assistance program and housing counseling services, serving 20 Medford residential households through the contract period. Funding will support direct financial assistance and a housing counselor who will disperse financial assistance and provide mediation with

landlords, coaching around payment plans, and support with applications for the forgiveness of arrearages when applicable for Medford residents. ABCD has been providing these housing services to Medford residents since 2015, but additional CDBG funds can expand the program to serve more residents.

Housing Families

Request for Funding: \$20,000

Recommended Funding: \$20,000

Housing Families' comprehensive, holistic model includes the Homelessness Prevention & Legal Services Program (HPLSP), which provides free legal services, homelessness prevention case management, and rental assistance to housing insecure families. Housing Families respectfully requests \$20,000 from the City of Medford to underwrite the HPLSP throughout the fiscal year of 2025. The program will provide free legal assistance and advocacy to more than 200 Medford residents in 2024-2025.

RECOMMENDED NOT TO FUND

Bread of Life

Request for Funding: \$9,072

Recommended Funding: \$0.00

In cooperation with the Medford Housing Authority, Bread of Life provides food security and food access for low and moderate-income Medford families through monthly delivery of free groceries to families who are residents of Medford Housing Authority properties at Willis Avenue and LaPrise Village.

This program was funded through ARPA in FY24 and funded by CDBG in FY23. ARPA funding will continue until September 2024. Recommended not to fund through CDBG for FY25 due to reduction in available funds and because similar services are being provided through the Mystic Community Market, and there is a preference for Medford service providers.

Communitas

Request for Funding: \$5,000

Recommended Funding: \$0.00

This funding would be used to pay for staffing and fees related to 3 programs operating in the City of Medford.

- The Special Olympics swim program is located at the Medford High School pool.
- The Special Olympics track program is located at Hormel Stadium
- An arts and crafts program held at a Medford location for school age students with developmental disabilities.

This program was funded through ARPA in FY24 and funded by CDBG in FY23. While a worthy program, recommended not to fund through CDBG for FY25. With the significant reduction in CDBG funding, not all programs are able to be funded, and our focus for funding is on core, essential services such as housing, transportation, and food resources.

The Immigrant Learning Center

Request for Funding: \$10,000

Recommended Funding: \$0.00

The ILC was founded in 1992 to give immigrants “a voice” by providing free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to immigrant and refugee adults over 16 years of age. Five levels of ESOL classes address a range of English proficiency from very low and beginning to intermediate levels. For those students who cannot read and write in their native language, they offer literacy classes. Additional offerings include a Family Literacy Program which assists students who are parents or caregivers of school-aged children. Workshops promote the importance of reading to children and navigating the U.S. education system. Next Steps workshops are for higher-level students whose goals include college enrollment, job training programs, and career development. They also offer citizenship classes for students who are preparing for the citizenship exam.

This program has been funded by CDBG in prior years. Recommended not to fund through CDBG for FY25 due to reduction in available funding and because similar services are being provided through the City and the Medford Public Library, and there is a preference for Medford service providers. In particular, we have heard from residents that they prefer not to travel to Malden for ESOL services.