



# Take it for Granted

*A quarterly newsletter released by Office of Community & Rural Affairs*

## Updates from the CDBG Program Director

*By Eric Ogle*



It has been a busy eight months since I started in October, and it doesn't look like things will slow down any time soon. Here are a few important updates you need to know about:

**Round 3 of 2017** – It is complete and I believe many of the changes that were made improved the process and

reduced the burden on GAs and communities. In the end, OCRA funded 21 out of the 34 communities that applied. The round was very competitive. There were a high number of communities with no threshold issues when compared to past rounds. We also reached our funding limit for the PFP and WDW programs. In general, applications that were not funded lacked enough documentation to support statements made in the narrative or failed to connect the narrative to the provided documentation in a clear and direct manner.

**Feedback Meetings** – New for Round 3, OCRA held feedback meetings with each community that applied but was not funded. At these meetings, we provided direct feedback on their application from the scoring process. This is different from the past when feedback was provided in more general terms. Each community also received a copy of the score report, which breaks down the score

and comments by each scoring question. For Round 1, scoring questions will be provided during the site visit. Overall, we feel these meetings have been successful as the communities and GAs have more insight into the process and action items to address if they choose to reapply. We understand these conversations can be challenging, but we hope in the long run they are a beneficial tool.

**Round 1 of 2018** – Round 1 is underway and as announced previously, a number of changes have been implemented. The single application packet streamlines the process, but it's important to include all of the documents are identified as required at proposal. To be on the safe side, I advise that you include as much as you have ready at proposal. This not only ensures you have the required items, but it allows our CLs to provide more technical assistance at the site visit. As a reminder, proposals are only submitted electronically. If the file is over 20 MB, you must submit it on a thumb drive.

Below is a summary of the changes made for Round 1:

- A single application packet covers both the proposal and application submissions. For the proposal, only a selection of sections are required and identified in the checklist with "RP."
- Clarified the purpose of the proposal and site visit. The multiple stages allow OCRA to provide technical assistance to communities and hopefully result in improved applications.

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## Updates from CDBG Director

- The maximum for an Environmental Review is raised to \$5,000.
- Digital signatures are now accepted.
- Limited media/promotion to one page. It should be a summary not the entire project description that can be used in a press release.
- Required census data on National Objective even if an Income Survey is used.
- Required the income survey be started by the due date of the proposal.
- Moved the legal section to the end.
- Added event and signage guidelines.

A recording of the informational webinar about the changes is [posted on our website](#). We encourage you to watch if you have not already done so.

## Continuing Education: OCRA GA Update training now available

Under the new Grant Administrator Certification and Continuing Education policy that was effective as of March 15, a certified Grant Administrator must complete six (6) CE credits each year to be able to renew their certification. Two (2) of the six (6) credits must be an OCRA GA Update. For 2018, only 3 CE credits are required, two of which need to be a OCRA GA Update training.

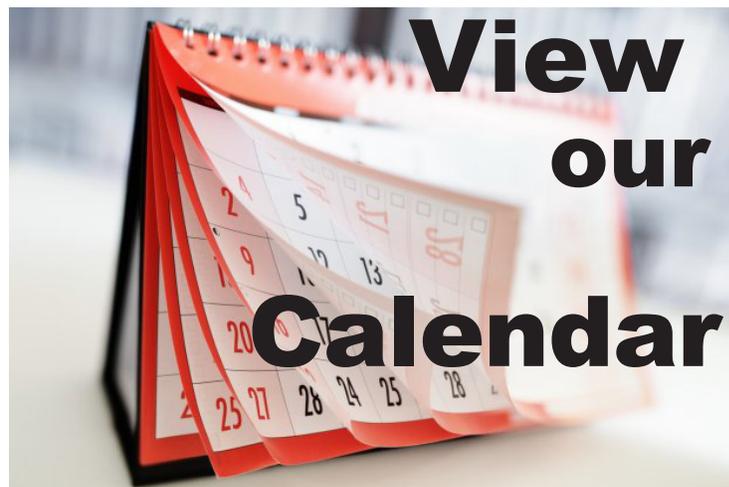
Below is a list of dates for the OCRA GA Update Training:

September 11, 1 – 4 PM  
Bedford Public Library  
1323 K Street  
Bedford, IN 47421

September 14, 1 – 4 PM  
Peru Public Library  
102 E Main Street  
Peru IN 46970

December 10, 1 – 4 PM  
Ft Harrison State Park Inn (room name pending)  
5830 N Post Road  
Indianapolis IN 46216

Register for these events by [clicking here](#).  
[Visit our website](#) for information about continuing education.



The complete 2018 calendar is available on our website. [View it now!](#)

## Calendar reminders

Please ensure you are aware of the following upcoming deadlines and events:

### May

- CDBG Rd 1 Proposals Due – Friday, May 25
- State offices will be closed on Monday, May 28 in observance of Memorial Day.

### June

- Quick Impact Placebased (QuIP) Grant Applications Due – Friday, June 1
- CDBG Rd 1 Site Visits / Follow Up – Monday, June 4 to Friday, June 22

### July

- State offices will be closed on Wednesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.
- Grant Administrator Certification 201 – July 10-12 (3 day course, offered once)
- Quick Impact Placebased (QuIP) Grant Award Announcement – Thursday, July 12
- CDBG Rd 1 Overdue Document/ In-Kind Check Due – Friday, July 13
- Main Street Community Exchange – Friday, July 13, in Hope
- CDBG Rd 1 Applications Due – Friday, July 20

All application have a submission deadline time of 4 pm (ET) to the OCRA office.

# Updates to the process

OCRA has been reviewing the planning grant program and given the program a substantial overhaul. As a result, new policies and documents will be released in the coming months. Most of the changes will take effect July 1, 2018 to coincide with the state fiscal year.



The first change we are excited to announce is about the process. The process, if approved, would start as of July 1, 2018 and [can be found on our website](#). The proposed process eliminates the Letters of Intent (LOI) and site visit. Instead, a community submits a completed application. If their CL provided technical assistance on the application, then it moves forward to threshold and scoring. If the CL was not involved with the application, a site visit will be scheduled to discuss the application. Similar to the scoring process for the regular CDBG program, a different regional CL and an OCRA PM will score the application. If funded, the application moves to award and the remaining process is similar to what is currently in place. If the application is not funded, the community will have a feedback meeting and be able to reapply after making adjustments based on the respective feedback.

As with the policy updates for the first quarter, we are following our public comment process. To comment, [click here](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Eric Ogle](#), CDBG Program Director.

## Follow these planning grant tips and tricks

Planning Grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis. They don't have to be submitted on the first or last day of the month.



When submitting your application, please alert your Community Liaison and Grant Services as this date is tracked and used as a milestone. Once submitted, planning grants generally take two months to be awarded. Planning Awards occur during the last week of every month except in special circumstances.

Once you have submitted the draft plan, it will be reviewed by OCRA. OCRA will notify you that the plan met the minimum technical requirements. At that time, you should schedule your second public hearing. Please note: you must wait to hold your public hearing until after

you receive notice from OCRA. After the hearing, submit the following documentation:

- publishing notice,
- hearing minutes,
- sign-in sheet and resolution.

Once the documents have been submitted, Grant Services will send you an official approval letter for your plan.

All items related to planning grants must be sent to [Adam Moschell](#) in Grant Services.

# LABOR



## Ensure these documents are sent to Grant Services during bidding

The following Labor documents must be submitted to Grant Services:

To verify the Pre-Bid Conference, submit the:

- Labor Form 3 Pre-Bid Conference sign-in sheet (dated)
- Labor Form 4 Pre-Bid Conference Guide acknowledgment (Please note: this form is recently updated)
- Keep signed minutes in GA/community files

To verify Pre-Construction Conference, we need:

- Labor Form 8 Pre-Construction Conference Acknowledgement (with all necessary signatures)
- Keep signed minutes and sign-in sheet in GA/community files

If bids come in over budget, please send the following documents to Grant Services:

- Bid Tab
- Bid Opening Minutes
- Sign-in Sheet

This demonstrates that the bid deadline was met. After the re-bid, send the re-bid supporting documents in to verify the locked-in bid opening date and for release of funds. These documents include:

- Copy of newspaper ad
- Publishers Claim
- Minutes (signed)
- Sign-in Sheet (dated)
- Certified Bid Tab (includes signature and seal)

## SAM update concerning alleged fraudulent activity

SAM has experienced some potential fraudulent activity and has changed the protocol for new and renewal registrations. Please see the text below for new instructions and the link to the site where additional information can be found. Registering in SAM or renewals will likely take a minimum of two weeks or more.

GSA's System for Award Management (SAM) is supporting an active investigation by the GSA Office of Inspector General (OIG) into alleged, third party fraudulent activity in SAM. At this time, only a limited number of entities registered in SAM are suspected of being impacted by this alleged fraudulent activity.



GSA has already taken proactive steps to address this issue and has notified affected entities. GSA will continue to work with the OIG and law enforcement agencies to take additional action as appropriate.

These proactive steps include requiring submission of an original, signed notarized letter identifying the authorized Entity Administrator for the entity associated with the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number before the registration will be activated. GSA posted instructions for domestic entities and instructions for international entities for easy reference. This requirement went into effect on March 22, 2018 for new entities registering in SAM. This requirement went into effect April 27, 2018 for existing registrations being updated or renewed.

As of April 27, 2018, entities renewing or updating their registration will be required to submit an original, signed notarized letter confirming the authorized Entity Administrator associated with the DUNS number before the registration is activated.

The proactive steps taken by SAM to address this fraudulent activity include requiring an original, signed notarized letter identifying the authorized Entity Administrator for the entity associated with the DUNS number before a new SAM entity registration will be activated.

For more information, [click here](#).

## New claim form for requesting draw downs

The current claim form, State Claim Voucher (State Form 11294), will be replaced with a new form specifically for CDBG funded grants. This change is to meet federal regulations and will be required as of July 1, 2018.

We will send a separate notification once the new form is finalized and available on the OCRA website. Until then, continue to use the current State Claim Voucher.



## Debarment of Contractors and Subcontractors

In addition to checking SAM to verify if a contractor or subcontractor has been debarred when awarding construction contracts, the HUD Limited Denial of Participation List at [this website](#) and must also be checked to determine that the contractor or subcontractor is not debarred from working on federal projects. Place a copy of the screenshot in the file to document it. When submitting Labor Form 6 to Grants Services, please include these printouts along with the form.

### Subcontractor Contracts

Remember that a copy of any subcontractor’s contract must be available at the monitoring visit.

## IDOA contractors & subcontractors prequalification information

Some of you may have been told that contractors and subcontractors must be on IDOA’s prequalified list to bid for public works projects. While this is true for **state public works projects**, it is not the case for local projects including those funded with CDBG funds.

Per IDOA’s application “IC 4-13.6-4 establishing certification is intended to acquaint the State with those firms that wish to engage in state work and to assure the citizens of the State of Indiana that those firms are capable” which means this list is only for public works projects completed by the state. Projects funded with CDBG funds are completed by local units of government so it does not apply.

## Qualifying by Census Data

There appears to be some confusion in completing the beneficiary page of the proposal and application when qualifying by census data.

If the national objective of an application is LMI area and the community is qualifying by census data, the total number of beneficiaries (Column K) must be taken from the [OCRA website](#), HUD DATA, Non Entitled County/City/Town:

|                     |    |    |       |     |     |     |     |        |
|---------------------|----|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Ambia Town, Indiana | IN | 18 | 01342 | 120 | 180 | 230 | 260 | 69.23% |
|---------------------|----|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|

In this example, the total number of beneficiaries is 260 and the LMI is 69.23 percent. Lines 1 to 10 on the beneficiary page must add up to 260.

If a community is qualifying by an income survey, the total beneficiaries are the number of people in the survey area. Please ensure the cover sheet, beneficiary page and the census or survey data are the same on all of these pages.

## Closeout and Monitoring process reminders

Once all expenses are paid and work is completed, Closeout Form 1 can be submitted. This will trigger the monitoring process. Don't submit Form 1 prematurely. On average, it takes two weeks to schedule the monitoring visit once Form 1 is received.

At the end of the visit, Grant Services will review with the grant administrator of record any issues, such as outstanding documents, which will need to be addressed or provided. The deadline to submit the documentation is two weeks from the date of the visit. If the deadline is not met, the issues will become a finding for the community. Additionally, the Grant Administrator will receive a finding of performance for timeliness.

Closeout Forms 2 and 3 should only be submitted after a letter of no findings or findings resolved is issued by Grant Services. Forms submitted prematurely will not be accepted.

## 2018 HUD Income Limits listing is now available

HUD has released the 2018 CDBG Income Limits and they have been posted at [in.gov/ocra/2617.htm](http://in.gov/ocra/2617.htm). This is an effective resource for any income survey that begins on or after June 1, 2018. The income limits chart looks different from previous years as we have included the income limits at 30, 50, 60 and 80 percent.



At this time, continue to use the 80 percent limits for income surveys.



*Miss an edition of this newsletter?*

All editions are posted to our website: [in.gov/ocra/2782.htm](http://in.gov/ocra/2782.htm). [Email us](#) if you have any problems viewing the newsletter, subscription questions or if you would like to suggest an article.

## INDOT accepting Local Trax matching grant applications through August 31

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) reminds Indiana cities, towns, and counties that the agency is accepting applications for the Local Trax matching grant program through August 31, 2018.

Local Trax provides at least \$125 million in state matching funds for communities interested in pursuing high-priority railroad grade separations, crossing closures, and other safety enhancements at railroad intersections with local roads.



INDOT began accepting project proposals from local agencies on May 1, 2018. The application window will remain open until August 31 and INDOT expects to announce awards in late summer. Local Trax requires local governments to provide only 20 percent of funding for land acquisition and construction with the state providing the other 80 percent.

[Visit this website](#) to learn more about Local Trax and how to apply.

The goal of Local Trax is to encourage partnership between the state, local governments, private businesses, and railroads to increase safety, improve mobility, and enhance the quality of life for Hoosiers.

Funding authorization for Local Trax was granted in HEA1002-2017, the long-term, sustainable road funding plan passed by the Indiana General Assembly and signed by Governor Holcomb in April 2017.

As you know, there have been some staff changes in Grant Services. To provide you with timely service, below is a list of topic areas and the appropriate person(s) to whom to direct information, documents and questions:

| <b>Program</b>      | <b>Assignment</b>               | <b>Primary</b>   | <b>Secondary</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>CDBG</b>         | COC (Certificate of Completion) | Megan            | Emily            |
|                     | Acquisition                     | Adam             | Beth             |
|                     | Action Plan                     | Beth             | Tammy            |
|                     | Assign Monitorings              | Adam             | Tammy            |
|                     | Civil Rights                    | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | DRGR Quarterly Reports          | Beth             | Tammy            |
|                     | Close-outs                      | Adam             | Megan/Tammy      |
|                     | Environmental Review            | Megan            | Emily            |
|                     | FEEPS                           | Emily            | Beth             |
|                     | FFATA                           | Adam             | Megan            |
|                     | Findings Report                 | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | HUD Labor Report                | Beth             | Tammy            |
|                     | IDIS                            | Adam             | Emily            |
|                     | MITAS                           | Adam             | Emily            |
|                     | Labor Standards                 | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | Modifications                   | Megan            | Tammy            |
|                     | Income Surveys                  | Adam             | Emily            |
|                     | In-Kind Requests                | Adam/Beth        | Tammy            |
|                     | Monthly CDBG Reports            | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | Monitoring                      | All              |                  |
|                     | Overdue Monthly Reports         | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | PER                             | Tammy            | Adam             |
|                     | Procurement                     | Emily            | Adam             |
|                     | Program Income Report           | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | Public Records Requests         | Beth             | Emily            |
|                     | QPR Submissions                 | Beth             | Tammy            |
|                     | Release of Funds                | Megan            | Emily            |
|                     | Section 3 Report                | Megan            | Beth             |
|                     | Semi-Annual Reports IDIS        | Emily            | Megan            |
|                     | Semi-Annual Reports Mitas       | Emily            | Beth             |
|                     | Stellar                         | Megan            | Tammy            |
|                     | Sub-Recipient Monitorings       | Emily            | Megan            |
|                     | Technical Assistance            | All              |                  |
|                     | Threshold Reviews - 1st         | All              |                  |
|                     | Threshold Reviews - 2nd         | Tammy            | Adam             |
| <b>CDBG-PL</b>      | Assign Threshold Reviews        | Adam             | Tammy            |
|                     | Assign Monitorings              | Adam             | Tammy            |
|                     | Monitoring                      | All              |                  |
|                     | Planning Grant Tracking         | Adam             | Emily            |
| <b>Tourism</b>      | All Grants                      | Adam             | Emily            |
| <b>ODD</b>          | Office of Defense Development   | Megan            | Emily            |
| <b>PBIF</b>         |                                 | Emily            | Adam             |
| <b>DEG</b>          |                                 | Emily            | Adam             |
| <b>OCRA Mtg Rep</b> |                                 | Tammy/Megan/Adam | All              |
|                     | Grant Agreements                | Adam/Emily       | Megan            |



## CDBG Updated Activity Codes (Mar 2018)

Below are some commonly used CDBG Matrix Codes for various activities. Please note that these will be appearing on your Grant Agreements in the budget table. If you have questions about what activities these codes cover please contact Grant Services or refer to the HUD website at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2545/matrix-code-definitions/>.

Also, please note that Engineering and Labor Standards will have the same code that matches the prime activity. When you submit your claim voucher, please list the code and reference if the dollars are for Engineering, Labor Standards or Construction specifically.

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>01</b>   | Acquisition  |
| <b>03</b>   | Construction Other (not often used)                                |
| <b>03A</b>  | Construction Senior Center   |
| <b>03B</b>  | Construction – Handicapped Centers                                 |
| <b>03D</b>  | Construction – Youth Centers                                       |
| <b>03E</b>  | Construction – Neighborhood Facilities                             |
| <b>03F</b>  | Construction – Parks, Recreational Facilities                      |
| <b>03I</b>  | Construction – Flood Drainage Improvements (Stormwater)            |
| <b>03J</b>  | Construction – Water/Sewer Improvements                            |
| <b>03K</b>  | Construction – Street Improvements                                 |
| <b>03L</b>  | Construction - Sidewalks   |
| <b>03M</b>  | Construction – Child Care Centers                                  |
| <b>03O</b>  | Construction – Fire Stations and Equipment (includes trucks)       |
| <b>03P</b>  | Construction – Health Facilities                                   |
| <b>03R</b>  | Asbestos Removal   |
| <b>04</b>   | Clearance and Demolition   |
| <b>05</b>   | Other Public Services  |
| <b>05H</b>  | Employment Training  |
| <b>14E</b>  | Rehab: Publicly or Privately Owned Commercial/Industrial (Facades) |
| <b>16A</b>  | Residential Historic Preservation                                  |
| <b>16B</b>  | Non-Residential Historic Preservation                              |
| <b>20</b>   | Planning   |
| <b>21A</b>  | Program Administration   |
| <b>21 E</b> | Environmental Review   |