

National Association for County Community and Economic Development
Awards of Excellence Committee

2018 Awards of Excellence

8/17/2018 deadline

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Community Development Supplemental Grants - Cuyahoga County, Ohio

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Entry Form [top](#)**1. Enter the name of the agency or agencies responsible for the program entry:**

This information will be on the plaque if your entry wins the award.

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

2. Indicate the brief title of the program or name of the project to be considered for an award of excellence, using the exact wording that you would like to appear on a plaque, should your entry win:

Community Development Supplemental Grants

3. Indicate Congressional District(s) served by project and name(s) of U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators:

Ohio 9 - March Kaptur; 11 - Marcia Fudge; 14 - David Joyce; 16 - James Renacci; Sens Sherrod Brown, Robert Portman

4. Indicate the awards category for which you are applying:

REMINDER – Multiple categories require multiple processing fees.

- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Homeless Coordination/Assistance
- Affordable Housing
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program

Program/Project Summary

5. Briefly describe the problem, the innovative solution, and results.

This brief summary is important and will be used to describe your program/project in NACCED's awards packet, on the web site, and in any communications with Congress or the Administration.

Cuyahoga County now dedicates \$1 million per year of local funding to extend its highly successful municipal grant program, so all of its local governments and community development corporations can participate. Over the past 30 years, Cuyahoga County has used its federal Community Development Block Grant funds to support hundreds of locally designed and administered projects. Residents in each eligible municipality came together in public meetings to discuss and decide what projects to submit for funding each year. Because of this local involvement and control, the greatest needs in each community could be matched with available funding.

As Cuyahoga County studied the results of our municipal grant program, leadership realized that some municipalities were shut out by Community Development Block Grant funding rules. County leaders decided to use local funding, a portion of the tax revenue from a new casino in downtown Cleveland, to extend the municipal grant program countywide and open it up to community development corporations as well as cities. The extended program has been extremely well received. In its first year of operation, 2017, Cuyahoga County received 46 applications and made 22 awards. Projects funded by Cuyahoga County ranged from bus stop safety, to exterior repairs for homeowners, to community park improvements.

The 2017 program was so successful that Cuyahoga County Council voted to set aside \$1 million per year of casino tax revenues to continue the municipal grant program in future years. For the current year, 2018, Cuyahoga County received 35 applications and awarded funds for 20 projects. The types of projects funded in 2018 range from enhancing Cleveland's nationally known cultural gardens, to purchasing a van for senior transportation, to adding safety equipment to a railroad crossing shared by two adjacent communities.

Extending Cuyahoga County's longtime municipal grant program to the whole county, and opening funding to community development corporations as well as municipal governments, has multiplied the impact of the program and empowered residents in every Cuyahoga County community to request funding for their most needed projects. Oversight by Cuyahoga County staff ensures that all of the awarded funds are used for the intended purpose, while still allowing local control over project design and selection.

Problem or Need

6. What circumstances or situation in your county stimulated the need for this program or project? What were the objectives in designing the program or project?

As County leaders met with residents and elected officials in each local community, a common theme expressed by many local communities was their desire to have small but meaningful grants available to support locally identified and designed projects. Existing Community Development Block Grant funded municipal grants were viewed as an excellent model, but federal funding limits kept many local communities from participating. In particular, the Cuyahoga Urban County receiving Community Development Block Grant funds is limited to 51 suburbs, leaving out six larger urban communities and the community development corporations in their neighborhoods. While the larger urban communities do receive their own allocations of Community Development Block Grant funds (as "entitlement communities") they have so many needs to meet that they cannot afford to offer a similar grant program in their service areas.

Cuyahoga County's objective in designing its Community Development Supplemental Grant program was to keep the best features of its existing municipal grant program - local resident involvement, local project selection, and local project design - while bringing additional non-federal funds to bear to extend the areas where the program could be used.

Solution

7. Describe the critical elements of your project/program and how they remedy the problem or address the need described above. Include any key steps, decisions, partnerships, etc. How were the objectives met? Describe the innovation in this solution.

Cuyahoga County offers its new Community Development Supplemental Grants to all 59 municipalities, and all community development corporations, through a competitive process once per year. Key elements of our long time municipal grant program are continued in this new program. We encourage each municipality and each community development corporation to engage its residents in project selection and design. We engage County staff beyond our Department of Development in reviewing the applications and selecting projects for funding.

To ensure funds are used as planned, we enter into a formal written agreement with each municipality and/or community development corporation selected for funding, and we only disburse County funds as reimbursement for documented costs used to carry out the funded project. County staff inspect each project and document its completion with photos as well as written reports. This insures that funds are never wasted on work not done.

Costs and Sources of Financing

8. Describe in as much detail as possible the source(s) and use(s) of funds to construct the project or start up the program, as well as the sources and uses of ongoing operating funds if applicable. Describe any innovative or unusual cost savings or financing techniques.

Cuyahoga County appropriates \$1 million of its revenue from a casino located in downtown Cleveland each year to make Community Development Supplemental Grants. A small amount of casino revenue funding pays for County staff time to administer the grants each year. To save administrative costs, Cuyahoga County uses the same procedures for contracting, monitoring, and reporting that it has developed over the years for its federally funded municipal grant program.

Results

9. Describe the tangible results of the program. Describe how the project or program will be sustained over the long term. If the project or program is not currently operating, please explain why not. How or why do you think important aspects of this project or program might be adaptable to other communities?

In its first two years of this new program, Cuyahoga County has funded 42 locally designed projects that would otherwise not have happened. Each participating municipality and community development corporation has met a key need identified by its own residents. Just as each community in Cuyahoga County is different, so are the projects and needs met the grant program different. The program enjoys wide political support because all 59 municipalities within Cuyahoga County are eligible to apply each year. Due to this widespread support, it is highly likely that Cuyahoga County leaders will continue to dedicate casino revenues to the program each year.

Application Questions [top](#)

Documents [top](#)

Documents Requested *

Photos/Visual Documentation

Required? Attached Documents *



- [Village of Glenwillow Park Improvement](#)
- [Village of Chagrin Falls Streetscape Improvements](#)
- [Village of Brooklyn Heights Senior Van](#)
- [Tremont West Development Corporation Lincoln Park Gazebo](#)
- [St. Clair Superior Development Corporation Bus Shelter](#)
- [Mayfield Village Park Band Shell](#)
- [Lakewood Alive Public Art](#)
- [Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation Serenity Gardens](#)
- [City of Maple Heights Dunham Park](#)
- [One South Euclid Exterior Home Repair](#)
- [Entry Fee Payment Authorization](#)

Other

* ZoomGrants™ is not responsible for the content of uploaded documents.

