

Announcement of Funding Availability: Community Investment Partnership Program Job Creation and Economic Infrastructure Expansion Grants

OVERVIEW:

The County of Northampton will award Job Creation and Economic Infrastructure Expansion Grants funded from the Community Investment Partnership Program (CIPP). The CIPP program provides resources to Northampton County's aging communities that lack access to resources in implementing comprehensive community revitalization plans and strategies that will improve the quality of life for our citizens and create opportunities to stimulate, attract and sustain economic development.

The CIPP is a new approach designed to assist the County in prioritizing and allocating resources for the Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development (NCD CED). NCD CED is funding the program using approximately \$1 million dollars of Northampton County Local Share Table games revenue. Several new grant, financing and technical assistance programs have been developed that will be used in conjunction with current programs to support community development and economic growth in our communities. CIPP funding includes:

- **Grants**
 - Community Improvement Grants
 - Façade Grants
 - Public and Non-Profit Capital Improvements Grants
 - Implementation and Operational Grants
 - Entrepreneurial and Workforce Development
 - Community Planning & Technical Assistance Grants
 - Job Creation and Economic Infrastructure Expansion Grants

- **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**
 - Business Boost Loan Program
 - Economic Reinvestment Loan Program

NCD CED understands that each community is unique and contains a variety of assets. The CIPP is designed to encourage Northampton County communities to take a comprehensive approach to community revitalization while offering the flexibility of the benefits and financial resources in order to meet the variety of needs. It is a voluntary program that will allow communities to partner with the County in implementing strategically targeted efforts that will enhance economic prosperity and improve quality of life. This approach will encourage communities to leverage their limited resources with other available public and private resources. For the purposes of these guidelines, a community may be an individual municipality or group of contiguous municipalities. Where appropriate multi-municipal projects will receive preference.

NDCED strongly encourages community-based organizations, public agencies, business leaders, private developers, financial institutions, and private citizens to work in partnership with local government to develop a comprehensive approach to address community and economic development needs. These partnerships will create a more attractive place to live as well as encourage business retention, expansion, and job-creation in Northampton County.

THIS FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT COVERS THE JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION GRANTS. This is the third of multiple funding announcements for CIPP grant and loan programs. Separate funding announcements will be available on the Northampton County website. For profit and non-profit entities are eligible to apply for Job Creation and Economic Infrastructure Expansion Grants, generally up to \$50,000. NDCED reserves the right to fund proposals at higher or lower amounts at its sole discretion.

PROPOSAL DEADLINES:

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and are subject to the availability of funds.

PROJECT SELECTION:

All grants will be awarded based on merit and at the sole discretion of NDCED. Eligible Projects will meet the Job Creation and Economic Infrastructure Expansion Grant Guidelines and Application Requirements found below. The projects that can most effectively address each of the following Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment and Resource Conservation (Principles), where applicable, will receive preference:

- Redevelop First
- Provide Efficient Infrastructure
- Concentrate Development
- Increase Job opportunities
- Foster Sustainable Businesses
- Restore and Enhance the Environment
- Enhance Recreational and Heritage Resources
- Expand Housing Opportunities
- Plan Regionally; Implement Locally
- Be Fair

A full copy of the Principles are attached as Exhibit I.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

Parties interested in submitting an application should submit a notice of intent e-mail to mhartney@northamptoncounty.org. The notice should include the following:

- Name of the entity applying for the grant
- A brief project description.
- A budget with sources and uses
- The anticipated dollar amount you plan to request
- The contact person for the application

An electronic application package will be provided via e-mail upon receipt of the notice of intent e-mail and a preliminary eligibility determination performed by NCDCEd. The complete application will also be available on the Northampton County website: www.northamptoncounty.org. Click on 'County Government' and the 'Community and Economic Development.' Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide these materials in alternate formats upon request.

It is strongly encouraged that potential applicants arrange a pre-application conference with DCEd staff. The application and all supporting materials must be submitted electronically. If you are unable to submit an electronic application, you are required to obtain prior approval from NCDCEd to submit a paper application. Questions about the application process and guidance on the eligibility can be directed to Mark Hartney at 610-559-3200 x7 or mhartney@northamptoncounty.org.

PROGRAM CONDITIONS:

- Grants are awarded based on merit and subject to the availability of funds.
- **There are no guarantees that grantees will receive the entire amount of their grant request.** Therefore, all applicants are urged to have contingency plans should they not receive their entire grant request.
- All items submitted in the Application and as requested by NCDCEd will become part of the binding grant agreement between the organization and the County of Northampton.
- Funding is provided through the Northampton County local share assessment of gross table games revenue under the Pennsylvania Race Horse Development and Gaming Act, 4 PaC.S. §§ 1101, et seq., therefore all projects must comply with applicable PA laws with regard to grant funding. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, prevailing wage provisions for construction projects above \$25,000 and competitive procurement practices.

REPORTS:

Grantees are required to submit Semi-Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports to NCDCEd. Disbursement of funds and future grant awards are contingent upon the timely submission of these reports.

Questions and concerns may be directed to:

Mark Hartney, Community and Economic Development Administrator
Phone: 610-559-3200, x 7
Email: mhartney@northamptoncounty.org

JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

OVERVIEW:

Northampton County seeks to grow its economy and achieve prosperity for its residents by recruiting and expanding the availability of quality jobs. We see to add high value, knowledge-driven industries and retain quality growing industries that support our communities. Specific targeted industries include Agriculture and Food Processing, Food and Beverage Manufacturing, High Performance Manufacturing, Life Sciences Research and Manufacturing, and High Value Business Services. This program is designed to help and support companies to make investments in their facilities, machinery, equipment, training and some soft costs that will result in the creation and retention of jobs in Northampton County. The grant funds awarded under this program will facilitate job creation and/or retention as well as growth and expansion of economic infrastructure within its borders. It is intended to enable the County to respond quickly and effectively to the dynamic forces of the County's economy and to the nature of industrial recruitment and retention. The program seeks to encourage, attract and retain sustainable investments and jobs to Northampton County communities and to provide resources improve their economic development infrastructure, expand their tax base and improve their general economic health and welfare.

Typical grant awards will not exceed \$50,000 and will be based upon a sliding scale of \$5000 - \$10,000 per job created/retained based on wages and health care benefits provided as follows:

- \$5,000 – Base hourly wage of \$19.18* and at least 50% healthcare benefit premiums covered
- \$10,000 – Base hourly wage of \$23.99** and at least 50% healthcare benefit premiums covered

ELIGIBILITY:

- For-profit entities
- Non-profit entities
- Projects must be located in Northampton County

ELIGIBLE USE OF FUNDS:

- Building and land acquisition
- Construction or rehabilitation of buildings
- Purchase or upgrade of machinery or equipment

- Technology enhancements
- Infrastructure improvements
- Job training and retraining
- Development fees and site preparation

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- Project must have public benefit.
- Funds cannot exceed 30% of project.
- Private investment of 30% or greater.
- Jobs are to be permanent full time positions.
- Base hourly wage must equal or exceed \$19.18* and at least 50% of healthcare benefit premiums covered.
- Business must demonstrate it is fiscal soundness.
- Costs incurred prior to application are typically not eligible expenses.
- Grant Agreement may not extend longer than five years (5) years. All jobs must be created within three (3) years of grant award and maintained for an additional two (2) years. Minimum grant agreement length is three (3) years.
- Failure to meet agreement terms will result in 200% restitution of the grant award.
- Payroll documents will be required to substantiate job creation/retention
- Other factors that may impact award amounts include project location, company size, project need, and available funds.

*\$19.18/hr. is an annual full time wage of \$39,900 which is 80% of the Median Income for the FY 2015 Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA HUD Metro FMR Area 1-person household.

**\$23.99/hr. is an annual full time wage of \$49,900 which is 100% of the Median Income for the FY 2015 Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA HUD Metro FMR Area 1-person household.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

At minimum funding requests should include the following information:

- **Project Narrative** – Describe the project, why the funds are needed, how they will be spent, and the benefit that will result. Be specific so that the reviewer understands the project, understands what is to be accomplished, how it will be accomplished and how the community will benefit.
- **Public Purpose** – Describe how the public is served by the funding of this application.
- **Project Budget** – Please complete the CIPP Sources and Uses Budget Spreadsheet.
- **Financial Health Opinion Letter** – The applicant must submit an opinion letter from an independent auditor or approved other CPA that based on their review of the company's books the company is of sound fiscal health

- **Audited Financial Statements** – The applicant must allow County Staff to perform an on-site review of the company’s audited financial statements for the last (3) years and affirm the financial health opinion letter submitted by the applicant.
- **Employment levels** – Please submit a statement detailing current and projected employment levels including wage rates.
- **Discussion of Leverage** – Please discuss how the project/activity will leverage additional funds and resources.
- **Evidence of Matching Funds** - Match funds are defined as those funds in addition to those being requested through this application that are necessary to complete the project. Evidence can be demonstrated in the form of award or commitment letters from federal, state and local governments or agencies, as well as private funding commitments i.e. letter of credit.
- **Municipal Support Resolution** - A resolution of municipal support is required from all applicants. The resolution must authorize the filing of the application, state the amount requested, summarize the purpose of the request.
- **Project Map** – Map(s) of sufficient size and quality to describe the project location with regard to the nature of the application.
- **Project Timeline** - A project timeline that tracks the key activities and the dates necessary to achieving the project’s goals and objectives.
- **Cost Estimates** – An estimate of how much the project will cost. The estimate should cite a credible source for the estimate.
- **Miscellaneous** - Other information/documentation that NCDCED may identify after the application is submitted.