



City of Great Falls
HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM
2014/2015 Application Guidelines

General Rules

All applications must comply with Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) program regulations found at 24 CFR, Part 92 and described by the specific guidelines below.

Who May Apply

Any for-profit or non-profit organization, Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) or governmental agency may apply for City HOME funds. Fifteen percent of the funds are set aside for CHDOs. For-profit ventures are eligible for loans only. Applicants must comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Project Requirements

All Projects Must:

- Meet the objectives of the HOME program to: provide decent affordable housing to lower-income households, expand the capacity of non-profit housing providers, strengthen the ability of local governments to provide housing, and/or leverage private sector participation.
- Be located within the Great Falls city limits.
- Address one or more of the priorities and goals of the City of Great Falls 2010-2015 HUD Consolidated Plan. (See Priorities and Goals, HOME Application page 18-19).
- Be identified as an eligible HOME activity in one of the following categories: homebuyer assistance, homeowner rehabilitation, rental rehabilitation or new construction.
- Applicant has successfully fulfilled its commitments from prior year HOME grant awards.
- HOME projects must provide 25% match. In general, to be considered eligible match, a contribution must be made from non-federal sources (see page 12 HOME application). Contact staff with questions regarding eligible match.
- Renovation or new construction projects must include submittal of an 8 ½" x 11" floor plan and/or site plan of your construction project drawn to scale.

- **NOTE:** Non-federal matching contributions required under any other federal program, assistance to a project previously assisted with HOME funds during an existing affordability period, operating subsidies, project reserve accounts, assistance to ineligible properties such as commercial properties, temporary shelters, emergency shelters and student housing, and emergency repair program costs are Ineligible Activities for HOME program funding.

Project Ranking Criteria (100 possible points)

The following criteria will be used to evaluate and rank each proposal in comparison to all other proposals. A maximum of 100 total points may be obtained. It is important that each applicant provide thorough information and documentation in response to each of the ranking criteria. Proposals will be examined for completeness, soundness, and eligibility based on federal requirements prior to ranking.

Criteria and possible points for each application ranking category:

Housing Needs (20 points):

1. Proposed project addresses market concerns. Analysis clearly documents an inadequate supply of affordable, decent, safe, and sanitary housing stock to serve low and moderate households (owners or renters) that the proposed project would address. Long-term population trends and demographic projections have been taken into account and documented.
2. Proposal shows that the project meets housing needs and priorities that are established in the Consolidated Plan.
3. Discussion indicates alternative projects were considered and the applicant provides a strong rationale for the choice of developing this particular project versus other alternative projects.
4. Applicant describes how the proposed project will show quantifiable, measurable outcomes to meet HUD reporting requirements. A cost/benefit analysis indicates that the project is the best use of public funds.
5. Serious efforts to accomplish the leveraging of non-HOME funds to support the project are documented. Other possible resources available to help address the need have been considered.

Project Benefit (20 points):

A proposal will receive points based on the number and income level of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries having incomes at 30% of area median income (AMI) or below will be given a weighted score multiplier of 4 per unit, beneficiaries having incomes at 31-50% will be given a weighted score multiplier of 3 per unit,

beneficiaries having incomes at 51-60% will be given a weighted score multiplier of 2 per unit, and beneficiaries having incomes at 61-80% will be given a weighted score multiplier of 1 per unit. A higher percentage of eligible units that targets very low-income project beneficiaries will score more points than a project that has a high percentage of units targeting higher income beneficiaries.

The proposal must specifically identify the number and targeted income level of the beneficiaries to be served by the project.

Project Strategy (20 points)

1. The proposal shows appropriateness for area housing market (rehabilitation versus new construction or addressing vacant buildings) and appropriateness of size of development for the community.
2. The project includes a well-reasoned, cost-effective, appropriate, and achievable strategy.
3. The proposal demonstrates that the project is located in an area that provides project beneficiaries access to essential community services, for example: schools, medical services, shopping, and transportation.
4. The proposal identifies innovative strategies in the project's planning and design. Innovative strategies may include: energy conservation measures, value engineering measures, the use of longer lasting materials, other cost effective measures, enhanced physical accessibility, land use, aesthetically pleasing and/or historically correct design elements, financing, partnerships or other approaches the applicant believes to be an innovative practice.

Development Capacity (20 points):

1. Proposal clearly indicates the project will be undertaken by a stable, self-sufficient organization with a demonstrated track record and personnel experienced in completing quality development and/or management of low-income housing.
2. All potential environmental, regulatory, and technical issues which could impact the timely start-up and successful implementation of project activities are being considered.
3. Applicant demonstrates that the project will be completed within the contract period. More points will be awarded to applicants who most clearly demonstrate a readiness to proceed.
4. Applicant provides evidence of firm site control and provides evidence that site is properly zoned.
5. Applicant has provides construction plans and detailed work description for all projects containing construction activity. 8 ½" x 11" floor plans and site plan of construction project drawn to scale are provided.

6. The applicant has successfully managed past HOME funding awards. The applicant successfully fulfilled its commitments from prior grant awards.

Financial Management (20 points):

1. Applicant provides firm evidence of interim and permanent financing commitments to ensure the viability of the project.
2. Proposal demonstrates the total project budget is adequate to complete project as described, and fulfill need stated by entity.
3. Applicant demonstrates that HOME funding is providing gap financing.
4. Eligible match in the amount of 25% of requested grant has been adequately addressed.
5. Proposal shows HOME dollars are leveraged to the maximum extent possible.
6. Commitment letters from all non-HOME sources of funds are included.
7. The Uses of Funds demonstrates the applicant has made realistic assumptions and considered all costs associated with the project.
8. The applicant demonstrates that a minimum of funds will be budgeted as soft costs in comparison with other applications in the same round of competition (development fees, attorneys, consultants, architects, etc.).

Funding Process

Staff will be available to conduct pre-deadline review of application materials on or before Friday, January 10, 2014. To have applications reviewed for compliance with program requirements, applicants may bring materials to the Planning and Community Development Office, Civic Center, Room 112.

The total anticipated allocation for the City of Great Falls HOME activities for the federal Fiscal Year 2014 is unknown at this time. Of this amount, the City Commission will commit approximately 10% for program administration. The remaining amount will be available for HOME project funding.

Submit all complete applications for 2014/2015 HOME funding to the City of Great Falls Planning and Community Development Department, Civic Center, Room 112, **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 24, 2014**. Mailed applications must arrive before the deadline and sent to P.O. Box 5021, Great Falls, MT 59403-5021. For funding consideration, the application must arrive before the deadline.

City HOME program staff will review all applications for compliance with HUD regulations. Planning and Community Development Department staff will review

the applications, rank them using a point system, and make funding recommendations to the City Commission.

In summary, the application review and award schedule is:

January 11, 2013	Deadline for preliminary review of application materials by CDBG staff, if requested
January 24, 2013	Application deadline at 5:00 p.m.
March 18, 2013	Staff makes funding recommendations to City Commission at Commission work session
April 15, 2013	Public hearing on proposed HOME funding during City Commission meeting
May 6, 2013	City Commission approves final funding recommendations
August 1, 2013	Successful applicants sign contracts and undertake project activities