

City of Columbus
Fiscal Year 2024
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Grants
Draft Annual Action Plan Summary

Introduction

The City of Columbus Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section, solicited project proposals for the use of Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funding in the summer of 2023.

The City receives annual allocations from HUD for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which has a 15% public service cap¹ and a 20% administration cap², the HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) program which funds affordable housing opportunities, the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program, and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program which provides homelessness prevention and shelter assistance.

This summary of the Draft 2024 Annual Action Plan provides an overview of the projects the Grants Management Section plans to include in the City's submission of the FY 2024 Annual Action Plan to HUD. The projects are expansions of existing programming and new programming to serve low- to moderate-income Columbus residents. Expenditures must be consistent with community needs, priorities and strategies stated in the City's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, and compliant with federal regulations in 24 CFR 570.

Projects are listed in the sections below under a City of Columbus Strategic Plan Goal which are identified in the City's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. The Strategic Plan Goals are:

- 1.) Preserve and expand affordable housing
- 2.) Program management, capacity building and/or administration
- 3.) Ensure safe and sanitary property conditions
- 4.) Provide housing for special needs populations
- 5.) Provide homebuyer education and other counseling
- 6.) Ensure equal access to housing
- 7.) Foster business expansions in areas of need
- 8.) Foster development of skills for residents in need
- 9.) Provide educational/recreational youth programs
- 10.) Improve health outcomes
- 11.) Provide housing and services for persons with HIV
- 12.) Increase access to housing and emergency shelter
- 13.) Public facilities/infrastructure improvements

¹ Public Service is defined in 24 CFR Part 570.201 (e) as services including but not limited to those concerned with employment, crime prevention, child care, health, drug abuse, education, fair housing counseling, energy conservation, welfare, homebuyer downpayment assistance, or recreational needs.

² Administrative cost is defined in 24 CFR Part 570.206 and is related to the planning and execution of community development activities.



FY 2024 HUD Allocations

In August 2023, Grants Management estimated the below amounts to be the total grant awards for each HUD grant allocation for 2024. The total budget available for each program for the 2024 program year may be larger than the annual allocation when accounting for program income, returned funds, or unexpended funds from past years.

FY 2024 Program	Estimated Entitlement Award
Community Development Block Grant	\$7,600,000
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS	\$2,600,000
HOME Investment Partnership	\$5,000,000
Emergency Solutions Grant	\$600,000

Citizen Participation Process for the FY 2024 Annual Action Plan

During each year of the City’s HUD Annual Action Plan development process, the City follows its Citizen Participation Plan which is approved within the City’s HUD 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. The section below outlines the efforts made to date by the City to engage with the public throughout the development of the City’s FY 2024 Annual Action Plan.

CDBG Application Workshops

The Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section hosted a public workshop on April 11th at 2:30 PM to provide an overview of CDBG regulations and release a “pre-application” that could be submitted to receive technical assistance comments. Twenty-six members of the public, representing various non-profits and community organizations, attended.

A second public workshop was held May 23rd at 3:00 PM to announce the opening of the FY 2024 CDBG grant application and assist prospective applicants in understanding the CDBG program and refining their project ideas. Thirty members of the public attended.

Both meetings were held at 141 N. Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215, in the conference room located on the bottom level of the City of Columbus’ parking garage. The meetings were advertised through social media and email.

The Grants Management Section also hosted five public workshops at local libraries to allow prospective applicants to receive assistance with their applications and technical support in person. A total of thirty-eight members of the public attended across all five workshops. These workshops were held at the following times at Columbus Metropolitan Library branches around the City:

- June 6, 2023 at 3 PM at the Karl Road Branch – 5590 Karl Rd
- June 8, 2023 at 9:30 AM at the Driving Park Branch – 1422 E Livingston Ave
- June 12, 2023 at 9 AM at the Linden Branch – 2223 Cleveland Ave
- June 13, 2023 at 9:30 AM at the Hilltop Branch – 511 S Hague Ave
- June 22, 2023 at 3 PM at the South High Branch – 3540 S High St

First Public Comment Period

The City of Columbus started a thirty (30) day public comment period on August 6th, 2023 when a notice was published in the Columbus Dispatch and a summary of applications received was made available on the City's Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management webpage. The Grants Management Section will accept comments through September 6th, 2023.

During this comment period, the City received 26 emailed comments from members of the public in support of various projects or funding priorities.

Nine of the emailed comments specifically supported funding the proposal received by Bridgeway Academy for improvements to their HVAC and lighting systems.

Ten of the emailed comments supported funding the proposal received by Rickenbacker Woods Foundation for the development of a new playground adjacent to their existing buildings on E Livingston Ave.

One comment supported funding the proposal by WeeCare for business support to home-based child care providers, and four comments provided general support for funding to increase access to child care and support child care providers.

One comment supported funding the construction of the Hiawatha Park Drive pedestrian and bicycle improvements being designed by the Department of Public Service.

One comment supported funding the Housing Accelerator Program proposed by the Columbus Urban League, a program designed to provide wrap-around case management services for residents facing housing instability.

First Public Meeting – Review of all Applications Received

The Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section hosted a public meeting on August 23rd, 2023 at 5:30 PM. A summary of all project proposals received by Grants Management for HUD funding was shared and available for discussion. The meeting was held at 141 N. Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215, in the conference room located on the bottom level of the City of Columbus' parking garage. The meeting was advertised through email and a legal advertisement in the Columbus Dispatch newspaper, which was published on August 6th, 2023.

The public meeting was attended in-person by eighteen members of the public, and virtually by another five, most of whom were representing organizations that had submitted applications for CDBG funding. Six individuals requested to speak in support of the following organizations and CDBG projects: The Refuge, Ours Brothers Keepers, Homeport, Bridgeway Academy, HEART 4 Kids, and the Hiawatha Park Drive pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

Second Public Comment Period

The City of Columbus started a second thirty (30) day public comment period on October 9th, 2023, following the selection of projects for inclusion in the draft 2024 Annual Action Plan. The comment period will run until November 10th, 2023. A notice was published in the Columbus Dispatch and a draft 2024 HUD Annual Action Plan was made available on the City's Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management webpage.

Second Public Meeting – Columbus City Council Finance Committee Hearing

The Finance Committee of Columbus City Council and the Department of Finance and Management, Grants Management Section hosted a public hearing on October 17th at 5:00 PM. Projects that have been selected for inclusion in the draft 2024 Annual Action Plan were discussed, as was a draft budget. The meeting was held in Council Chambers at 90 W Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. The meeting was advertised through social media, email, and a legal advertisement in the Columbus Dispatch newspaper. Each of the projects selected for inclusion in the AAP were represented by a staff member from the City or from proposed subrecipient organizations, and these staff each spoke in support of the proposed projects. One member of the public spoke in support of the Bridgeway Academy HVAC and Lighting Upgrades project.

Submitting public comments to Grants Management

Public comments on proposed projects, funding priorities, and draft Annual Action Plans are welcome during posted public comment periods and throughout the year by emailing the Grants Management Section at grantsmgmt@columbus.gov. When comment is being sought specifically on a portion of the Annual Action Plan or Consolidated Plan planning process, information will be posted on the Grants Management website at <https://www.columbus.gov/finance/financial-management-group/Grants-Management/>

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The draft FY 2024 CDBG budget for eligible activities is \$8,000,000. This total budget is made up of the anticipated FY 2024 allocation from HUD awarded to the City and program income (PI) generated during 2024. If available, unexpended funds from past years’ awards will also be included in a final FY 2024 budget. Prior to submitting the 2024 Annual Action Plan to HUD, the City will update estimates for unexpended past years’ funds and anticipated PI generated from CDBG funded programs. Activities proposed for the 2024 budget are listed below, categorized by project and strategic goal from the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan.

Funding Resources (estimated)	Budget
2023 CDBG Entitlement Award	\$7,600,000
Past Years’ Unexpended Funding	TBD
Program Income	\$400,000

Fair Housing – Budget: \$200,000

Strategic Goal: Ensure equal access to housing

The Legal Aid Society of Columbus – Fair Housing Program

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$200,000
- The Legal Aid Society of Columbus (LASC) requests funding to continue and build upon LASC’s fair housing program. LASC is building a central, comprehensive fair housing program that combats housing discrimination and lifts barriers to achieve racial equity, fair housing choice and opportunity for all residents in Central Ohio. Funding will be used to provide fair housing enforcement attorneys and a testing coordinator position.

Housing Repair and Homeowner Assistance – Budget: \$200,000

Strategic Goal: Preserve and expand affordable housing

Habitat for Humanity Mid-Ohio – Roof Repair Program

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$200,000
- Habitat for Humanity Mid-Ohio requests funding to provide roof replacement and repair services for low- to moderate-income homeowners in the City of Columbus. Habitat for Humanity has operated a Home Repair program since 2012, and has expanded to add Roof Repair in recent years. The funding allows for replacement of sixteen roofs.

Housing and Family Services - Budget: \$100,000

Strategic Goal: Provide housing for special needs populations

Refuge, Inc. – Recovery Housing Renovations

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$100,000
- The Refuge requests funding to upgrade and repair housing units used by participants in the Refuge’s residential addiction recovery program and Project 614 long-term sober housing program. Funding is requested for housing units in the Franklinton and Hilltop neighborhoods. Repairs include but are not limited to: bathroom renovations, roof replacements, gutter replacements, and replacement of damaged front porches.

Health and Wellness Services - Budget: \$235,000

Strategic Goal: Improve health outcomes

Sanctuary Collective d.b.a. Sanctuary Night – Expanding Capacity & Operations

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$100,000
- Sanctuary Night provides services for persons experiencing sexual exploitation by offering trauma-informed and survivor-led care and support. CDBG funding will support their growing staff, occupancy, and supply needs.

Community Development for All People (CD4AP) – Healthy Eating and Living (HEAL) Program

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$85,000
- CD4AP’s HEAL Program seeks to build a healthy community by increasing access to fresh food and engaging people in healthy eating and living activities including nutrition, cooking, and exercise classes as well as community-building events. CDBG funds are requested to support HEAL staff, occupancy, supplies and other direct and indirect costs.

Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center – Free Care Program

- CDBG Funding Proposed: \$50,000
- Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center is proposing the use of CDBG funds for the technology, personnel, medical and patient supplies expenses in 2024 associated with the Free Care Program. The Free Care program offers medical and social services to about 845 low income Columbus residents per year.

Infrastructure Improvements - Budget: \$3,070,598

Strategic Goal: Public facilities/infrastructure improvements

Department of Public Service – Cleveland Avenue at Myrtle Avenue Intersection Improvements

- Proposed budget: \$275,597.80
- The City of Columbus, Department of Public Service requests CDBG funding for the redesign of the intersection of Cleveland Avenue at Myrtle Avenue in order to realign the curve at the north leg of the intersection to meet current standards via resurfacing and restriping. The funding would also be used to replace the traffic signal and adjust curb alignments. The improvements should make the intersection safer for all roadway users and reduce the threat of vehicles departing the roadway and striking businesses and buildings at the intersection.

Department of Public Service – Wheatland Avenue Street Improvements

- Proposed budget: \$2,795,000
- The City of Columbus, Department of Public Service requests CDBG funding to widen Wheatland Avenue from Violet Street to Glenview Avenue and convert the roadway to two-way traffic within the project limits. The improvements will provide a direct route for new developments, including the CDBG-supported Mid-Ohio Food Collective “Farm on the Hilltop,” and provide additional capacity for all modes of transportation.

Non-profit Facility Upgrades and Efficiency Improvements - Budget: \$3,394,402

Strategic Goals: Public facilities/infrastructure improvements; Provide education/recreational youth programs

Rickenbacker Woods Foundation – Genesis Project

- Proposed budget: \$440,000
- The Rickenbacker Woods Foundation & Learning Center is the caretaker of the boyhood home of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and operates youth programs and other community activities. CDBG funds are requested to acquire property adjacent to the facility and to build a new playground and parking lot expansion.

Directions for Youth & Families (DYF) – Ohio Avenue Youth Center HVAC Improvements

- Proposed budget: \$231,972.20
- DYF’s Ohio Avenue Youth Center operates after-school and youth programs to thousands of students on the east side of downtown. CDBG funding is requested to update their facilities with new modern equipment, including the HVAC system and walk-in freezer, to provide a healthier, safer and more energy-efficient facility.

Gladden Community House – HVAC Improvements

- Proposed budget: \$750,000
- Gladden Community House is the settlement house, or neighborhood-based community center, to serve the very low-income Franklinton and near west side neighborhoods of Columbus. CDBG funding is requested to assist in replacing their failing rooftop HVAC unit serving the basement preschool and first-floor offices, meeting rooms, and gym.

Clintonville-Beechwood Community Resources Center (CRC) – Pantry Renovations

- Proposed budget: \$58,680
- CRC’s Family Services Program (“pantry”) goes beyond the typical food pantry to pair clients with outreach workers to assess all of a client’s needs for food, health, clothing, housing, and social integration. CDBG funds are requested to complete critical renovations needed at the pantry including HVAC upgrades, floor supports, lighting, water damage remediation, and exterior improvements.

St. Stephen’s Community House – HVAC Upgrades

- Proposed budget: \$238,676
- St. Stephen’s mission is to strengthen families and empower our community, serving over 24,000 Franklin County residents per year. CDBG funds are requested to assist in renovating critical needs in their 63,000 square foot facility, including upgrading the HVAC system and replacing the roof.

Bridgeway Academy – HVAC & Lighting Upgrades

- Proposed budget: \$575,074
- Bridgeway Academy requests funding to replace and upgrade HVAC and lighting systems at their facility at 1350 Alum Creek Drive. The facility houses Bridgeway Academy, which provides educational services for children and young adults with autism and developmental disabilities; Bridgeway Therapy Center, which offers therapeutic services for students aged 18 months through adulthood; and Columbus Early Learning Centers, which provides early learning care to low-to-moderate income families.

Department of Finance and Management - Westside Early Learning Center (WELC) Parking Lot Construction

- Proposed budget: \$1,100,000
- The City proposes constructing a new parking lot adjacent to the recently completed Westside Early Learning Center facility on Clarendon Ave. WELC provides free, high quality pre-kindergarten services to children on Columbus' west side.

Administration and Planning - Budget: \$800,000

Strategic Goal: Program management, capacity building and/or administration

Department of Finance and Management – Grants Management Administration

- Proposed budget: \$800,000
- Grants Management Section staffing and contracting in the Department of Finance and Management for administration of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grants.

CDBG Activity Summary Table

CDBG Activities	Proposed Funding
Grant awards to external partners	
The Legal Aid Society of Columbus – Fair Housing Program	\$200,000.00
Habitat for Humanity Mid-Ohio – Roof Repair Program	\$200,000.00
Refuge, Inc. – Recovery Housing Renovations	\$100,000.00
Sanctuary Night – Expanding Capacity & Operations	\$100,000.00
Community Development for All People (CD4AP) – Healthy Eating and Living (HEAL) Program	\$85,000.00
Helping Hands Health and Wellness Center – Free Care Program	\$50,000.00
Rickenbacker Woods Foundation – Genesis Project	\$440,000.00
Directions for Youth & Families (DYF) – Ohio Avenue Youth Center HVAC Improvements	\$231,972.20
Gladden Community House – HVAC Improvements	\$750,000.00
Clintonville-Beechwold Community Resources Center (CRC) – Pantry Renovations	\$58,680.00
St. Stephen’s Community House – HVAC Upgrades	\$238,676.00
Bridgeway Academy – HVAC & Lighting Upgrades	\$575,074.00
Grant awards to internal City projects	
Department of Public Service – Cleveland Avenue at Myrtle Avenue Intersection Improvements	\$275,597.80
Department of Public Service – Wheatland Avenue Street Improvements	\$2,795,000.00
Department of Finance and Management – Westside Early Learning Center Parking Lot	\$1,100,000.00
Department of Finance and Management – Grants Management Administration	\$800,000.00

HOME Investment Partnership (HOME)

The draft FY 2024 HOME budget for eligible activities is \$5,650,000. The total budget is made up of the anticipated FY 2024 allocation from HUD awarded to the City, and anticipated program income generated by HOME funded programs. The table below notes funding sources contributing to the FY 2024 HOME budget. Proposed projects are listed according to the strategic goal that they address.

Funding Resources (Estimated)	Budget
2024 HOME Entitlement Award	\$5,000,000
2023 HOME Program Income	\$650,000

Strategic Goal: Preserve and expand access to affordable housing

Housing Development

- HOME Budget: \$3,730,000
- Providing gap financing for new construction and substantial renovation rental projects.

Downpayment Assistance

- HOME Budget: \$150,000
- Up to \$7,500 in downpayment and closing costs for low- to moderate-income homebuyers.

Rebuilding Lives Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)

- HOME Budget: \$325,000
- TBRA for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Set Aside

- HOME Budget: \$750,000
- Required set aside of 15% of HOME fund allocation for awards to city certified CHDOs.

Community Housing Development Organization Operating Support

- HOME Budget: \$200,000
- Operating support provided to CHDOs by the Community Development Collaborative.

Strategic Goal: Program management, capacity building and/or administration

Department of Development – Housing Division Admin

- HOME Budget: \$450,000
- Housing Division staffing and contracted services in the Department of Development for administration of HOME Investment Partnership funded programs.

Community Development Collaborative (CDC) – Operating Support (Administration)

- HOME Budget: \$45,000
- CDC funding for administration of CHDO operating support.

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)

The draft FY 2024 HOPWA budget for eligible activities is \$2,600,000. The total budget is made up of the anticipated FY 2024 allocation from HUD awarded to the City. The HOPWA funds awarded to the City are intended to serve the entire Columbus Metropolitan Area, and funds are awarded to social service agencies across the service area that support the eligible population. Proposed projects are listed according to the strategic goal that they address. HOPWA services are limited to the delivery of Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), Permanent Housing Placement (PHP), Short-Term Rental, Mortgage, and Utility assistance (STRMU), and Supportive Services. Each HOPWA subrecipient provides a combination of these services based on the needs of the population served.

Strategic Goal: Provide housing and services for persons with AIDS

Lancaster Fairfield Community Action Agency

- HOPWA Budget: \$330,000
- Funding will be used for TBRA, PHP, STRMU, Supportive Services, and admin costs.

Equitas Health

- HOPWA Budget: \$1,066,000
- Funding will be used for TBRA, PHP, Supportive Services, and admin costs.

Faith Mission

- HOPWA Budget: \$799,000
- Funding will be used for TBRA, PHP, Supportive Services, and admin costs.

Licking County Coalition for Housing

- HOPWA Budget: \$327,000
- Funding will be used for TBRA, PHP, STRMU, Supportive Services, and admin costs.

Strategic Goal: Program management, capacity building and/or administration

Department of Development – HOPWA Administration

- HOPWA Budget: \$78,000
- Staffing and other costs for HOPWA grant administration.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

The draft FY 2024 ESG budget for eligible activities is \$600,000. The total budget is made up of the anticipated FY 2024 allocation from HUD awarded to the City. Proposed projects are listed according to the strategic goal that they address.

Goal: Increase access to housing and emergency shelter

Department of Development – Emergency Solutions Grants Programs

- ESG Budget: \$600,000
- ESG funding is sub-awarded to the Community Shelter Board (CSB) to operate emergency shelters and provide other eligible services to Columbus residents who are homeless and at risk of homelessness. Emergency shelters provide access to beds for men and women in Columbus and Franklin County. Beyond providing a secure and clean place to sleep, shelter programs provide access to basic services such as showers, meals, healthcare and material assistance, along with supportive services, referrals to additional supportive services as needed, and crisis assistance. Shelter programs have resource centers that provide internet access, telephones, employment leads, job training resources and other community resources. ESG-funded Direct Housing programs provide services and financial assistance to families exiting emergency shelter programs into their own homes, with the goal of long-term stabilization.